

windows have a delightful outlook upon the courtyard. These corridors lead to the principal bed-chambers, which are mostly panelled, and contain some fine old carved bedsteads. Here, ancient tapestry still adorns the walls and conceals a secret cupboard; and a secret stair is hidden leading to the roof or "cockloft." It may be observed that though these chambers and galleries at Speke Hall are all lined with dark old oak, the character of the place is pleasant and lightsome, from the multiplication of windows, which, through their latticed panes, illuminate the quaint interiors. Whatever is here of internal plenishing is in style appropriate to the house, and the carved oaken furniture is not often surpassed. Many articles that formerly belonged to the old house have been recovered, and others added, all with a view to maintain the Tudor character.

The presence of antiquity dwells in the house, and the old armour calls up the memory of the dead-and-gone soldiers who had their home here. Coming back, they would scarcely mark

a change in their old abode. With accustomed footfall they might pace the corridors and enter the panelled chambers, which have suffered little alteration from their day to ours. At night mighty winds from the sea speak in the swaying boughs of the trees, just as they did of old. In the intervals the hooting of the owls is still heard from the gables, where they are encouraged to build, and are even provided with a doorway for exit and entrance. The old house is, indeed, a great survival, and a majestic monument of the past. It has been completely and most judiciously restored and preserved by successive owners of the family of Watt. Perfect taste has presided over the work, and nowhere is there any intrusion of the modern to break the spell of the old. For the last twenty years the work has been almost continuous, and is still in progress. To seek out every cause of weakness or decay, to remove, or at least counteract it, to renew what was past preservation with an exact facsimile of the old both in form and material—this is indeed conscientious restoration.



*A SIX-LIGHT OAKEN CHANDELIER.*