ST. DONATS CASTLE, GLAMORGAN.

BEYOND Barry Dock and westward till Port Talbot is reached, the coast of Glamorgan offers few harbouring inlets, but is essentially rockbound, its cliffs merely breaking where primeval rills have formed little valleys reaching to the shore. On a spur hanging over the deepest and narrowest of these glens, man seems quite early to have encamped and entrenched himself, and as time went on the strong and stately castle of St. Donats took the place of a humbler defensive dwelling. It is of peculiar interest as being "the only ancient military building in the county which, having been always inhabited, is preserved without material alteration." We have here, however, no Norman keep, no Angevin stronghold. Only remnants of the earlier Plantagenet age appear incorporated with the Lancastrian and Tudor work which followed. But from the wide area over which these occasional survivals crop up it is clear that about 1300 a well-fortified dwelling of considerable extent occupied the site, and was probably girdled by the same curtain-walls as appear in the illustration we give of the castle in its entirety. Of this period the gatehouse offers, within and without, the most considerable remains. The lancet windows (set wide apart on the outer side to admit of the portcullis working between them) must date well before the time of the first Edward, and the canopied chimney in the guardroom is distinctly Early English. This is by no means a dark and repellent apartment. The combination of two windows fitted with seats by the side of the fireplace gives much sense of cheerful comfort, and there are two other windows besides. But the defensive object of the building is not forgotten, and the wide shoot below the corbelled-out upper walk of the tower gave ample scope for the pouring down of hot unpleasantnesses,



THE EARLY ENGLISH GATEHOUSE.

liquid and solid, upon those who tried to scale the ditch and tamper with the drawbridge which was the precursor of the present easy ingress.

Much about the time when these earlier portions of the present castle were erected, a new family of wealth and importance begins its ownership of St. Donats and takes part in Glamorgan matters, governmental and social. The extreme desire of Elizabethan antiquaries to prove long ancestries, and their richly-imaginative mode of dealing with the subject, succeeded in placing the Stradling family at St. Donats as early as 1090. Not only is there no reliable evidence that an Esterling was one of FitzHamon's twelve knights, or that there were any such knights, but there is evidence to show that in the thirteenth century the family of Hawey possessed St. Donats, as well as manors in Somerset and Dorset, and that it was the heiress of this house that brought all these estates, in Edward I.'s time, to Sir Peter Stradling, of a name and family of which there is no earlier English mention, and who was probably recently arrived from the Low Countries. Though by no means deserting their Somersetshire lands and interests, and occasionally serving that county in the shrievalty and in Parliament, St. Donats seems very soon to have become the chief home of the Stradlings, and its development into a castle of importance was assured. Its owners possessed a somewhat wider horizon and more intellectual culture than most of their neighbours, and at least three generations in succession reached Jerusalem, that Ultima Thule of mediæval travelling. Of these, the Sir Edward who died in 1453 is declared by Mr. Gamage, who studied the records of the Stradling family in 1726, before the scattering of their books and manuscripts, "on his return to have brought from Italy a man of skilful hands in stone carving, who made the ornamental columns that we see even to this day facing us in the walls of St. Donats." There is now no trace of such columns themselves, or of a place where they could have been, and as, by another account, Sir Edward died at Jerusalem, this Italian carver, who worked for a mere knight in a corner of Wales half a century before Torrigiano was employed in London by the King, is probably as mythical a person as the "Conradus de Esterlinge from the citie of Danske," who came to England with "Swannes Kinge of Denmarke" in 1000 A.D., and was placed at the top of the sixteenth century Stradling pedigree. Of the travels of Sir Edward's son Harry we have more authentic details. There seems to be no doubt that he was an early diarist, as, in the study at St. Donats, Mr. Gamage saw "his booke of travels," giving an account of all the lands and peoples he visited, and of the condition of Jerusalem as he found it. So scholarly was this fifteenth century knight that, attached to the diary, were "four superior poems" on the Holy Sepulchre in Latin, French, Welsh and Italian, "a language, with its books, much respected at St. Donats." All this is now lost,



GUARDROOM OF THE EARLY ENGLISH GATEHOUSE.

but there still survives one of the traveller's letters to his wife, written from Rome, and relating the adventures of himself and his companions on their journey out, than which "never men had so perilous a way as we had, save only, worship be to God, we were not let in no place or tangled." Earlier in his life, however, this same Sir Harry, much nearer home, had been seriously "let and tangled"; for as he sailed across Severn Sea from his Welsh to his Somerset home, he had been captured by Colyn Dolphin, a Breton pirate, and put to such heavy ransom that manors in three counties had to be sold to raise the needed sum of 2,000 marks. A terror to the Severn Channel was this Colyn, whom now Sir Harry, smarting under the indignity and the loss to his estate, determined to capture. He built the watch-tower which, though much repaired under James I., still crowns the opposite side of the glen to the



OUTER GATEHOUSE AND CURTAIN-WALL RISING FROM THE MOAT.

castle, and set men to observe the comings and goings of the pirate, who, sailing along one winter night, mistook this new erection for Dunraven Tower, and thus, getting wrong in his bearings, was cast ashore on Nash Sands, and with all his crew was summarily strung up by Sir Harry. The castle by this time must have largely assumed its present proportions. Its owners mated prudently, either for money or position. Sir Harry married a sister of Herbert of Raglan, whose strong Yorkish partisanship gained him the Earldom of Pembroke from Edward IV. Before him, Sir Edward had taken to wife Jane, daughter to Cardinal Beaufort—who had been a husband before he was a clerk—and thus reached relationship to the House of Lancaster. But earlier than these social had come several financial marriages, and if Sir Edward was a rich man and able to rebuild his house in the ampler fashion of his day, it was because, through his grandmother, he inherited, wholly in the case of the Berkrolls and partly in the case of the Turbervilles, the estates of these two important Glamorgan families. Thus was the fifteenth century stamp given to the castle which makes it so interesting to us to-day, later work being matters of exterior detail or interior decoration rather than radical additions to or replacements of the main fabric. The great antiquarian knowledge and architectural taste of its present owner have now repaired the ravages of time and of Victorian "restorers," and Mr. Latham's excellent views show the quite remarkable archæological and æsthetic value of this very considerable pile of mediæval buildings. Generally speaking, the illustrations explain themselves, and we shall make but a few comments as to the exterior features. Passing through the Early English gatehouse already alluded to, we find ourselves in the outer bailey which the curtain-wall encircles. It has been, as time went on, so largely filled with additional buildings that only small and detached portions remain open. Crossing it, we reach the second gatehouse, whence we enter the inner bailey or courtyard. On the left lies the hall, its ample projecting porch surmounted by a little oriel-windowed room, and balanced by the equal projection of the great recess of the hall. The whole is an excellent and typical composition, its massiveness lightened by the grotesque gargoyles and the wrought stone moulding and finials of the pierced and crenellated parapet. Both this and a more general view of the courtyard are given. The upper storey on the left-hand side of the latter is called the chapel, though there remain no interior evidences of such a use. But above is a picturesque little belfry whose bell-rope, passing down a hollow in the wall, might be pulled by the priest in his room below sitting in the quaint little windowed excrescence, which overlooks the whole court and where, between gatehouse and chapel building, the steep stone steps—like a bit of an Italian hill town—climb up to the chapel door and thence to the rampart walk. The awkward and useless minaret-like structures rising above the inner gatehouse are mere ungetatable boxes on solid columns of masonry—additions of a mid-Victorian owner who thought them an "improvement" on Gothic architecture. They might well share the fate of most of his other additions and insertions and be swept away. Many roundels are built into the castle walls, but are of different dates and origin. There are stone ones with coats of arms of Stradlings and allied families such as that over the gatehouse arch. These are English work of Elizabeth's day, and were, no doubt, suggested by earlier ones, such as that with the bust of Caligula between the gatehouse windows. It is one of a pair—the other is in the hall—similar to the eight which Wolsey used at Hampton Court. They are of Italian terra-cotta, and as the Pope is said to have sent over twelve, and one other pair is known, these are likely to be the last of the set and to have been brought here by the fourth Sir Edward. He was Sir Harry's grandson, and was knighted in 1514 under the Royal banner in the church at Tournay, which town had recently been captured and annexed. This faithful fighter of King Hal's shared his master's amorous disposition. Though land was granted in the parish of St. Bride—a suggestive name—to eleven of his natural children, it was clearly not enough to meet their requirements, as complaint is made that they had "no other living but by extortion and pilling of the King's subjects." In 1535 he died, and less gay and comfortable times awaited his legitimate son, Sir Thomas. The religious differences found him on the side of the older faith, which was well enough when Mary was Queen, and he sat in her Parliament and on her heresy commission; but it rendered him suspect under Elizabeth, and what seems to us a most trivial matter lodged him in the Tower. A storm broke an ash tree in twain at St. Donats, and at the fracture the inner and darker sections seemed to stand out against the outer and lighter ones in the figure of a cross. To minds suffering from religious friction and excitement, this natural accident appeared marvellous and was soon improved into a miracle, and when "those who could not conveniently go thither asked others to shew them a faithful drawing," very complete and elaborate pictures of a cross were made in London to Sir Thomas's order. Copies were soon freely disseminated, and a poem pointing a highly Catholic moral added. The matter came to Cecil's ears at a critical moment, when he thought a few examples had best be made, and Sir Thomas found himself in durance. After a while, however, the Lords of the Council, "having compassion of his ympotencye and aige," let him go home after taking his bond for reappearance before them if called upon. He was a martyr to gout, and spent much of his later time in his chamber, so that long before his death in 1571 his energetic and



THE INNER GATEHOUSE FROM THE COURTYARD.

capable son was managing matters at St. Donats and the neighbourhood. Born in 1529, Edward, "5th of the name," went from Oxford to Rome, whence he returned to sit in Mary's Parliaments, as did his father, whose religious views he would then have shared. But he took care to conform to the new *régime*, and his correspondence with Secretaries of State and Presidents of Wales shows him to have ever been the trusted friend of the Government. He was knighted in 1575, and thrice was he Sheriff, no sinecure office at a time when we hear of "disorders and garboyles comitted w^th^in the county of Glamorgan, whereof is like to ensue a greater inconvenience and daunger then may well be endured w^th^out speedy reformacon." Nor was his office of Commissioner of Piracy without its troubles, for barks plying between the various ports from Bristol to Barnstaple were apt to be robbed, and the pirates to lurk in the inlets of the South Wales Coast. Moreover, the Cardiff townsmen were apt to aid and abet such, and if they were severely dealt with would complain to their lord, the Earl of Pembroke, who would forcibly ask "Cosen Stradlinge" what he meant by such interference. Public business was only part of the fifth Sir Edward's local activities. The endless requests for legal interference, friendly intervention or pecuniary aid which reached him from kinsmen and neighbours, prove the high estimation in which both his kindliness and his judgment were held. The produce of his deer park was in general demand, and sheriffs of all counties



STAIRWAY TO CHAPEL & RAMPARTS.



ORIEL OF PORCH CHAMBER.



THE HALL PORCH IN THE COURTYARD.



A GRINLING GIBBONS CONSOLE.

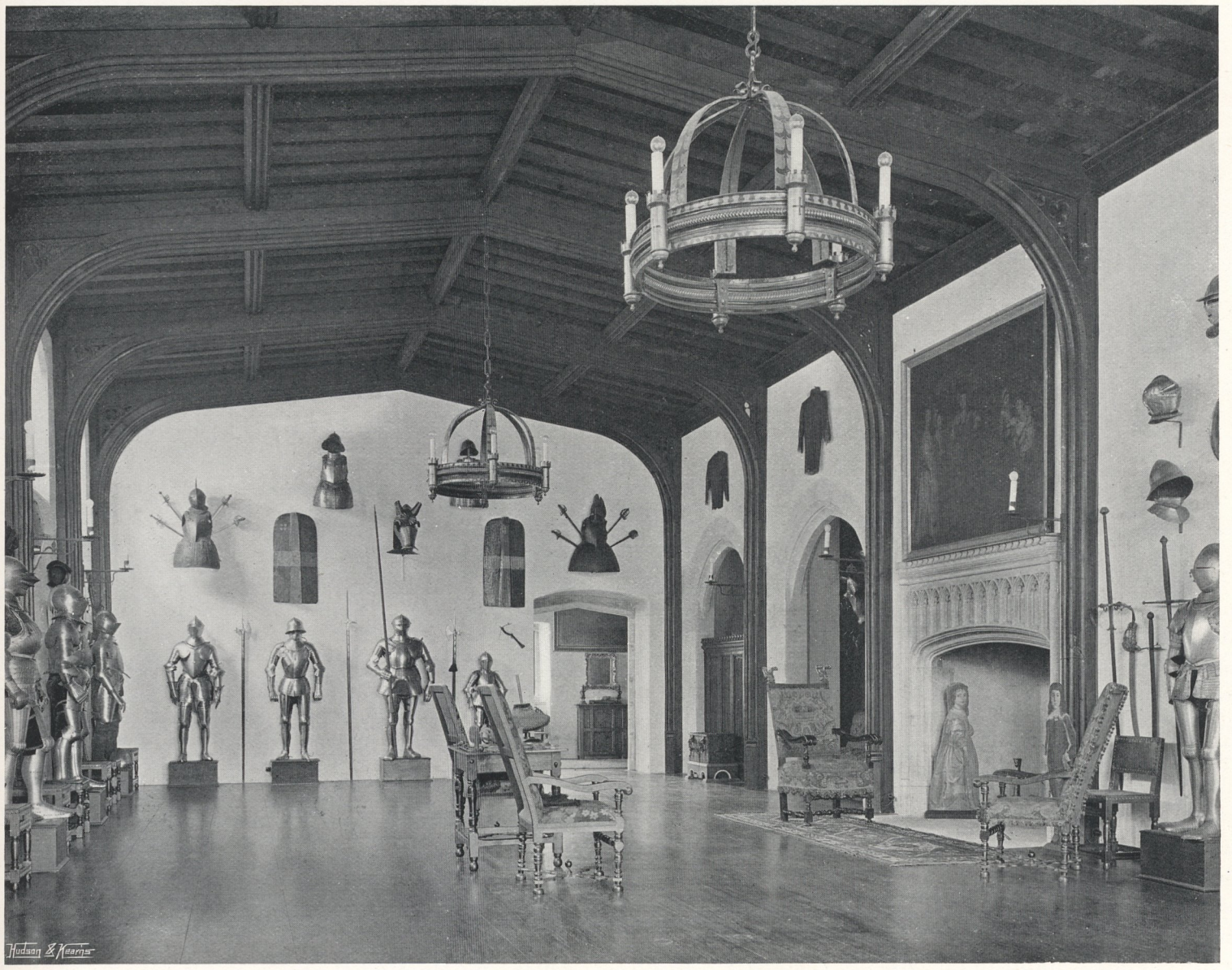


A CREDENCE AND BLACK JACKS.

around were not slow, when the visit of the assize judge was expected, to pray him to "bestowe a bucke" or "healpe them to a peece of fleashe." But though an active administrator and helpful friend, he was also a student and a lover of letters. He befriended John Davys, of whose Welsh grammar—long a standard work—he had 1,250 copies printed. He built the Cowbridge Grammar School, and formed a library at St. Donats. He himself went deeply, and with more zeal than discretion, into the study of genealogies, and wrote his "Winning of the Lordship of Glamorgan out of the Welshmen's Hands" with a view of numbering an Esterling among FitzHamon's knights and thus establishing his own eleventh century pedigree. Engineering also came within Sir Edward's wide compass, so that Wood, in the *Athenæ*, tells us that he was "at the charge of such Herculean works for the public good that no man in his time went beyond him." He tried to make the Ogmore inlet into a practicable harbour, and he built the St. Donats sea-wall, where the turbulent waters ever threaten to encroach and sweep up the glen. Nor did he omit to set the seal of his age on his house, which we will now enter by the porch. We find ourselves, as we should, behind the hall screen and below the gallery; but the old ones, unfortunately, were at some period destroyed, and their replacement, from designs by the late Mr. Garner, was part of the immense work of renovation carried on for some years by Mr. Morgan Williams of Aberpergwm, when he acquired the property at the close of the last century. Left of the screen are two arched doorways; through the first we may ascend to the gallery and to the porch chamber with its oriel, almost more charming within than without, set with stone seats and groined vaulting centring in a flat lion mask—a device found also in other parts of the castle. If, instead of going up to the gallery, we pursue our way on the level, we enter the picturesque apartment with many arched recesses and outlets now called the old hall, but whose original purpose is obscure. Here we begin to realise the wealth of fine genuine sixteenth century furniture—Gothic at its opening and Renascent at its close—with which Mr. Morgan Williams has so amply and appropriately fitted the castle. Some of it had always been in the old family seat of Aberpergwm in the northern part of Glamorganshire; but much he has himself during a long course of years carefully selected. Such a piece is the Gothic



THE OLD HALL.



THE ARMOURY.

cupboard which faces us in the old hall. It came, some thirty years ago, from that famous old Leicestershire house, Quenby Hall, included in this volume. Passing up the stairway to the right of this piece we find ourselves in the new armoury. Now that the Wallace Collection belongs to the nation, Mr. Williams has, perhaps, the finest lot of armour of any Englishman, and to house it adequately Mr. Garner contrived the vast room we depict in a hidden space between the curtain-wall and the great hall, so that scarce any new work appears on the outside. Returning now to the screen, the second doorway leads to the old buttery, still retaining its hatch, and thence we enter the old kitchen with its fire arch 16ft. across, fully capable of roasting whole such "buckes" or "peeces of fleashe" as Sir Edward's many applicants permitted him to retain for "making merie" at home. The offices are now conveniently situate for the service of the dining-room on the opposite side of the courtyard; but though put to different use, these ancient features of the domestic arrangements of our ancestors are carefully retained.

Passing through the screen, we enter the great hall, which is practically unaltered since



THE GREAT HALL AND ITS RECESS.



THE GREAT HALL AND ITS CHIMNEY-PIECE.

the third Sir Edward built it in the early halt of the fifteenth century. Windows, arches, roof and chimney are all original and intact. Our illustrations show how right, in excellence of quality and restraint of quantity, is its furnishing, of which the chairs of early turned work form part. This form is supposed to have come from Byzantium to Scandinavia, and from Scandinavia to England at an early date, and continued to Henry VIII.'s time. The finest surviving example is probably that from Glastonbury, now in the Bishop's Palace at Wells ; those at St. Donats are reputed to have been abbots' chairs from Neath Abbey, whence they were transported to Aberpergwm at the Dissolution. In the hall, too, stands an interesting credence, which we figure separately, and which is one of the few sixteenth century pieces which Mr Williams inherited. On it stands one of the great silver-mounted black jacks made in 1653 for Lord Protector Cromwell, who was a relation of the Aberpergwm family, though they were not of his politics. It came from the Tower of London, after the fire there, and its fellow is at Powerscourt in County Wicklow. The other roundel of the Hampton Court series

appears below an opening into what is a long gallery, but may originally have been but a small solar. The normal fifteenth century arrangement, however, was here somewhat interfered with by pre-existing buildings. In any case, the gallery is not the definite creation of a particular moment, but an adaptation and extension of what was there earlier. It includes in its pleasantly irregular outer wall a round tower, and stretches on to the point in the southern curtain-wall where was situate a postern with an overhanging machicolated bastion over it arranged to drop things on any who attacked Over this now stands the gallery bay, certainly

The gallery is reached from a lobby and wide stone stairway opening out of the hall recess; this is likewise the way to what were, no doubt, built as the State chambers, now the dining and drawing rooms. The Gothic chimney-pieces show them to be coeval with the hall—indeed, the hall and drawing-room chimney-pieces are almost a pair—but their size and breadth made it easy to give them the proportions and fittings fashionable under Elizabeth. Upon them, therefore, the fifth Sir Edward largely concentrated his attention. He threw out so wide and deep a two-storied bay that both rooms acquired the then favourite L shape.



THE GALLERY.

not later than Elizabeth's reign, so that the fifth Sir Edward may have contrived the gallery—almost a necessary adjunct to a house of any pretension in his day—and given it this splendid southern outlook over the hanging gardens, the glen, the Severn Sea and the Devonshire coast beyond. The gallery is now full of old furniture, whereof the Gothic predominates, among which is a credence, seen on the right of our picture, and noticeable as being of deal. This clearly marks its foreign nationality amid many native pieces. Mediæval folk were in the habit of using the material at hand—the English their oak, the Swiss their pine, and it is from the latter country that this piece emanated.

He added panelling and plaster-work; in the case of the upper room removing the earlier attic and making a barrel ceiling. Much of this work was decayed or destroyed when Mr. Morgan Williams commenced operations. The dining-room panelling is original, with carved frieze, arched and pilastered overmantel and elaborate doorway. The panels, too, are interesting, being an early example of bolection mouldings, which were then not applied but worked in the solid. The ceiling is new, an excellent adaptation of one still extant at Sizergh Castle, a copy of which is in the Victoria and Albert Museum. For the drawing-room, whose walls were bare, panelling from three old rooms in



DINING-ROOM.



DRAWING-ROOM.

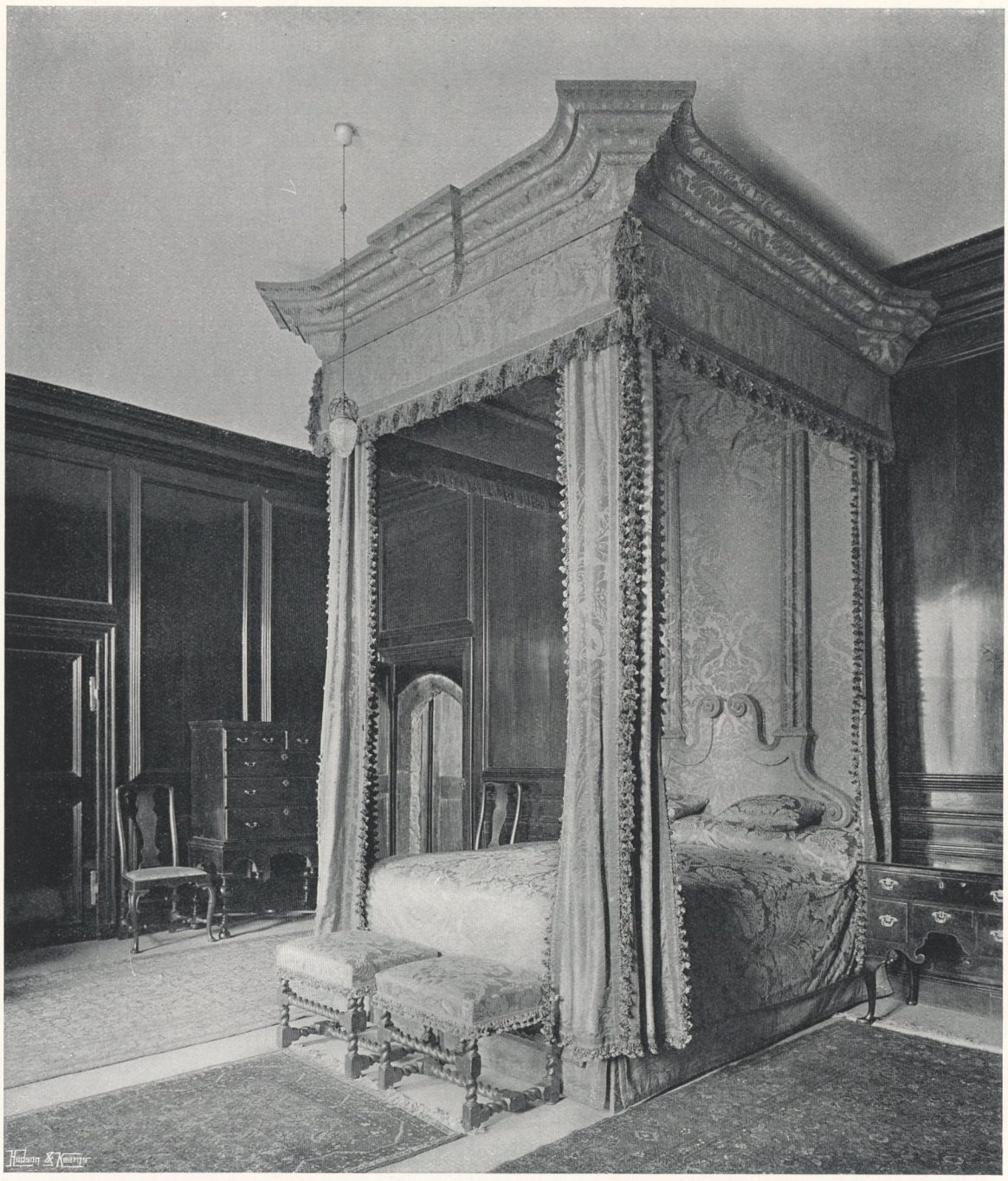


THE PAINTED CHAMBER.

Hertfordshire has been used, and forms an adequate setting for several fine pictures selected from the large number, family pictures for the most part, still at Aberpergwm. Facing us is Isaac Olivier's excellent equestrian portrait of Prince Henry, James I.'s eldest son. The portraits of Richard and Henry Cromwell, by Walker, the Parliamentarian painter, are on the side wall and do not appear in our illustration ; nor does a little panel picture of Philip II. of Spain, found, a good many years ago, thrown behind the panelling of one of the St. Donats rooms. Was a likeness of Queen Mary's husband a dangerous possession at the time that Sir Thomas Stradling lay in the Tower, and the incident of the cross-bearing ash tree had thrown suspicion upon the whole of the St. Donats household ? His son Edward had no desire to be implicated, and may well have thus disposed of it. Much fine stuff is in the drawing-room, such as the set of high-backed Charles II. chairs, with tapestry seats representing "Æsop's Fables." Here also stands the Grinling Gibbons console which we illustrate separately. This great master was, as we know, addicted to fitments rather than furniture. But the finished design and perfect craftsmanship of this piece make one feel confident that it was produced, if not by his hand, at least under his eye. A fellow-console is in the possession of Mr. Seymour Lucas. There was a late flat ceiling in the drawing-room, but a sketch dating from about 1820 still showed Sir Edward's of barrel shape, and ample evidence of the latter's character was revealed when the more modern one was removed, though not enough of it to give an idea of its patterning, and the present one is founded on that in the gallery at Chasleton in Oxfordshire. The deep, bold frieze, embodying the Stradling stag and the Williams lamb amid its arabesques, was designed by Mr. Bodley, who succeeded his late partner, Mr. Garner, as Mr. Williams's architectural adviser. It has cousinship with those at Sizergh and Chasleton, but is more especially suggested by that in the painted chamber. In this latter room the fifth Sir Edward gave play to his genealogical leanings, and amid the mermaids and the scrolls and the birds are set the coats of the chief families allied with the Stradlings. As the achievement over the chimney-piece (which is Gothic, showing that Sir Edward did not build, but merely decorated the room) consists of the Royal arms and Tudor supporters on a field of pomegranates, the inference is that this work dates from Queen Mary's time, when Sir Thomas was alive and his son Edward, recently returned from Rome, was beginning to make his taste and activities felt. Of the same date is the extraordinarily massive and elaborate bed which came out of the old castle of the Caradoc family in Gower. Late Georgian panelling had been put into this room, but, on its removal, the old painting was everywhere visible, and was faithfully redone by Mr. Morgan Williams himself. It was not only in this chamber that Sir Edward indulged in heraldic decorations. No doubt the many stone roundels already alluded to were set by him in various parts of the walls of the castle, but the hall suggested itself to him as a meet place to exhibit pictorially his new-formed views of the antiquity of his family. Although all this has now disappeared, together with the legend on which it rested, it was there when St. Donats was visited in 1756 by Bishop Pococke, who tells us : "Just on the sea is St. Donat's Castle, the seat of the Easterlings or Stradlings, one of the twelve Normans ; it is a very noble pile of old building round a court, and kept in fine order. There is a grand old hall, with the arms of the twelve Normans, and an account of the estates which fell to the share of each of them." The Bishop, however, found no Stradling to receive him, for the race of this "one of the twelve Normans" was extinct. Full of years and honour, the fifth Sir Edward had passed away in 1609. With him the highest point in the fortunes of the family and of the castle had been reached. Yet his cousin and adopted son, Sir John, poet and scholar, "a miracle for his forwardness in learning and pregnancy of parts," carried on the family traditions and was fifth of James's first batch of baronets in May, 1611. Dying in 1637, he left behind him a loyal and stalwart batch of sons and grandsons to fight and die for their King when the Great Rebellion broke out, and the sixth Sir Edward led his regiment at Edgehill. Taken prisoner on that field, he was freed by exchange, only to die at Oxford, leaving a son to continue the fight, and a widow who, at out-of-the-way St. Donats, was able to shelter the scholarly Ussher, Archbishop of Armagh, who found congenial occupation in the well-stocked shelves of the library.

The Restoration found the Stradlings somewhat exhausted both in stamina and fortune. Before the rebellion had broken out the sixth Sir Edward posed as a business man—a shareholder in the soap monopoly, a promoter of the scheme for supplying London with water from Hoddesdon, an agent for the collecting of some of Charles's doubtful taxes. If not the former, at least the latter operation proved financially disastrous, both to Sir Edward and to some of his neighbours. As fighters on the losing side he and his son suffered in their purse, and the earlier method of profitable marriages did not occur to their successors. Moreover, none of the last four baronets of the line was a distinguished man impressing himself on his country's annals. This decline from the past had, from our point of view, this advantage, that money and energy were lacking to remodel St. Donats in the classic style. It remained cared for but untouched, except that a few of the lesser rooms were relined in the taste of

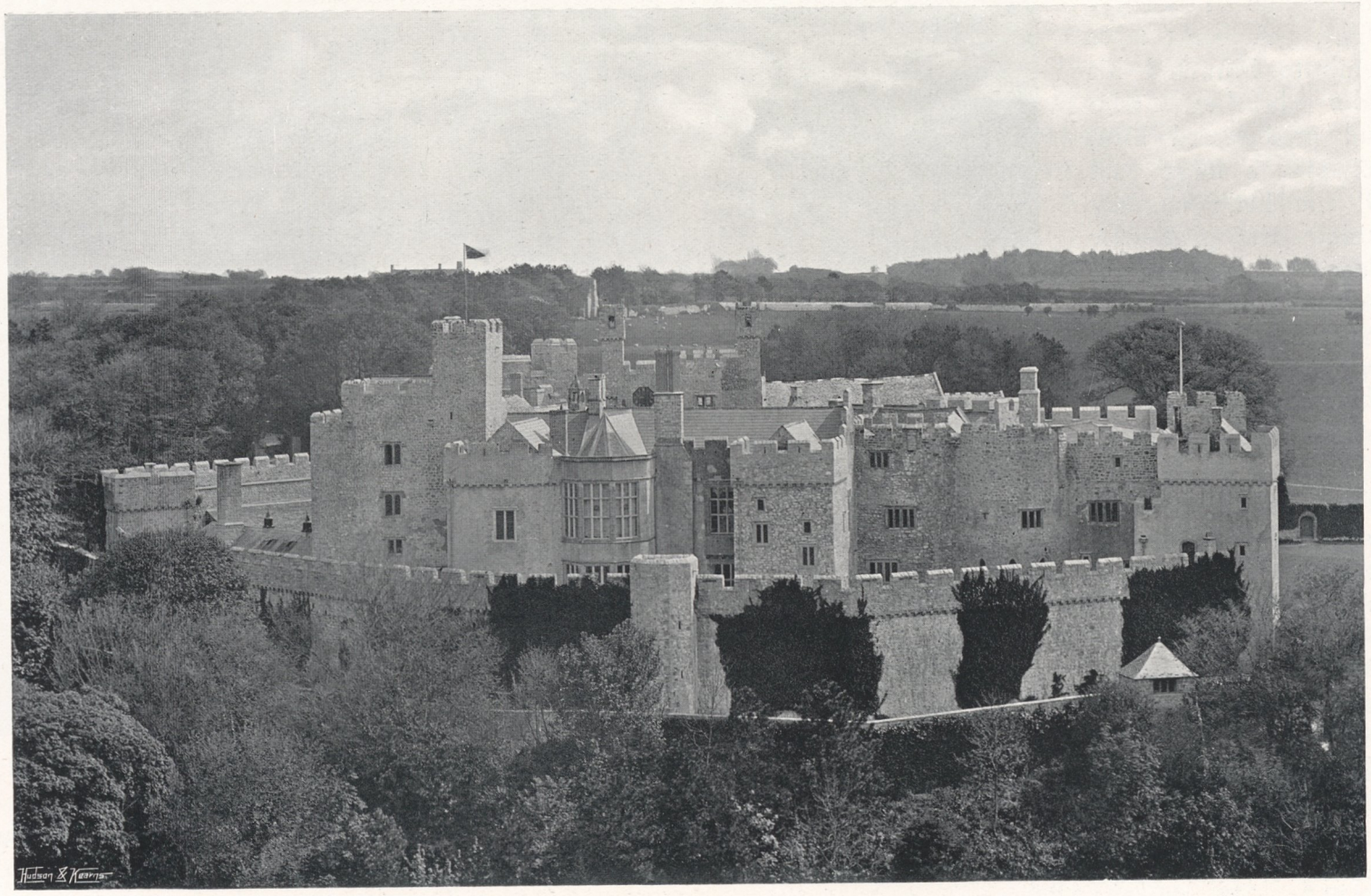
the day. The red parlour, with its ceiling of wreathed fruit and flowers and its well-designed panelling and mantel-piece, is a finished, if simple, example of Wren's day. No later in style, though surely somewhat later in date, is the Mahogany Chamber, whose rich dark panels are a good background for the stately crimson brocade bed. This room undoubtedly is a very early example of the employment of mahogany as a room lining—earlier than any at Houghton, where Sir Robert Walpole earned the reputation of being the first to use this recently-introduced wood in a lavish manner. By the time Houghton was complete the Stradlings were no longer improving St. Donats, for their long line of direct male descent was drawing to a close. Sir Thomas, the last of them, died under somewhat suspicious circumstances at Montpellier in 1738 at the age of twenty-eight. A great table tomb to him and his elder brother, who had predeceased him, occupies a large part of the little chantry which the fifth Sir Edward converted into a family mausoleum. It is attached to the church of St. Donats, which rises on a solitary tree-girt stretch of sward at the bottom of the glen. Surely to Sir Edward its chief interest must have lain in its narrow chancel arch of undoubted Norman date — concrete evidence of the existence of FitzHamon's knight! The rest of the edifice is clearly the work of the historic and not of the apocryphal Stradlings, and is of the same date as the main portions of the castle which we have attributed to the third Sir Edward, who died in 1453. None of the family, however, is known to have been buried there before the fourth Sir Edward, who was laid in the chancel in 1535. Later on his father's body was brought from Cardiff and placed beside him. This, however, did not suit the fifth Sir Edward, who dug them up and transferred them to the chantry, and hung there a set of painted panel pictures which yet remain. They represent these two ancestors, whose bodies he translated, and their wives kneeling. Behind them, in the same attitude, are their children, above them their shields of many quarterings, and below an inscription. A third picture is of Sir Edward himself and his wife, similarly depicted, except that in this case there were no children to set behind them. The inscription, giving the date of 1590 for this latest of the paintings, declares their joint wish and expectation of being buried here. This desire was duly carried out, their adopted son, Sir John, setting up a great pilastered and arcaded wall monument of alabaster to their memory with the motto, "Virtues hole praise consisteth in doing."



THE MAHOGANY CHAMBER.

With the end of the Stradling line came St. Donats' less prosperous days. At first it was cared for, as Bishop Pococke found, for it was held by the Mansell cousin from Margam near by. At his death the whole Stradling inheritance was in dispute among collaterals, and at the

ultimate division one of the best estates was sold to pay lawyers' fees. St. Donats fell to the share of the Tyrrwhits, and for a century "had no history," though it can hardly be described as a happy time for it. Then, it being considerably decayed, it was bought by Dr. Carne, who claimed kinship to the Stradlings. We have alluded to some of his alterations and repairs, and will mention them no further. Later on the place attracted the attention of Mr. Morgan Williams. Aberpergwm, though endeared by long associations, had its drawbacks, for the development of the South Wales coalfields, if it added to its value as an estate, detracted from its amenity as a residence. St. Donats, in the same county, had its interest as a mediæval relic heightened by its beautiful position and environment. It formed—or could be restored to form—an admirable setting to the ancient armour and early furniture which Mr. Williams began, early in life, to collect. "All comes to him who knows how to wait," and some time after Dr. Carne's death Mr. Williams was able to purchase the estate. It is a striking example of the happy conjunction of a man and place entirely suited to each other—needing each other for the full realisation of the ideas of the one and the possibilities of the other. Most fortunate is the result to those lovers of old-world fabrics and old-world ways who are able to feel themselves almost transported back to mediæval times when they are admitted through the ancient gatehouse and restored curtain-walls of the Stradling fortress by the kind permission of the courteous owner.



ST. DONATS CASTLE FROM THE WATCH-TOWER.