

sheep, and caused some of his company drive them towards Dudley; and therewith not satisfied, he entered also into the enclosed grounds at Prestwood, and there, with great violence, chased fourteen kyne, one bull, and eight fat oxen, and brought them to Dudley Castle, and kept them within the walls of the castle; and part of the said cattle and sheep he did kill and eat, and part he sent to Coventry, guarded by sixty men strongly armed with bows and arrows, calyvers, and forest-bills, there to be sold." Somewhat rough doings these, and rather of a Scotch than an English type: they remind one of a Highland *creach* of the days of Rob Roy. England, however, had a boy born to it twenty years after the event, who put an effectual stop to all such acts of lordly aggression for the future; and the keep of Dudley Castle shows how. Two of its rock-like towers, with their connecting curtain, remain scarce less entire than in the days of Dud or of Leofric; but the other two have disappeared, all save their foundations, and there have been thirty-two-pound shot dug out from among the ruins, that in some sort apologize for their absence. The iron hand of Cromwell fell heavy on the Castle of the Woods,—a hand, of which it may be said, as Barbour says of the gauntleted hand of the Bruce, that

“Where it strook with even stroke,  
Nothing mocht against it stand ;”

and sheep and cattle have been tolerably safe in the neighborhood ever since. It was a breezy, sunshiny day on which I climbed the hill to the old keep, along a steep paved roadway overshaded by wood. In the court behind,—a level space some two or three acres in extent, flanked on the one side by the castle buildings, and on the other by a gray battlemented wall,—I found a company of the embodied pensioners going