

of Hales Owen Abbey. The mace of the bluff Harry had fallen heavy upon the pile : it had proved, in after times, a convenient quarry for the neighboring farm-houses, and the repair of roads and fences for miles around ; and so it now consists of but a few picturesque fragments cut apart by wide gaps, in which we fail to trace even the foundations, — fragments that rise insulated and tall, — here wrapt up in ivy, — there bristling with wall-flower, — over hay-ricks and antique farm-offices, and moss-grown fruit-trees, and all those nameless appurtenances which a Dutchman would delight to paint, of a long-established barn-yard, farm-house, and orchard. I saw, resting against one of the walls, the rudely-carved lid of a stone coffin, which exhibits in a lower corner a squat figure in the attitude of adoration ; and along the opposite side and upper corner, an uncouth representation of the crucifixion, in which the figure on the cross seems that of a gaunt ill-proportioned skeleton. Covered over, however, with the lichens of ages, and garnished with a light border of ground ivy, — a plant which greatly abounds amid the ruins, — its antique misproportions seem quite truthful enough, and impress more than elegance. One tall gable, that of the chancel, which forms the loftiest part of the pile, still remains nearly entire ; and its great window, once emblazoned with the arms of old Judge Lyttelton, but now stripped of stained glass and carved mullion, is richly festooned with ivy. A wooden pigeon-house has been stuck up in the opening, and half a dozen white pigeons were fluttering in the sunshine this morning, round the ivied gable-top. The dust of the old learned lawyer lies under the hay-ricks below, with that of nameless warriors and forgotten churchmen : and when the spade turns up the soil, fragments of human bones are found, thickly mingled with bits of painted tiles and stained glass.

It may be thought I am but wasting words in describing so