

classic, while Barrington and Pennant, had it not been for their humble correspondent, would have passed into oblivion by this time, so far as the general public are concerned. Thus it would appear that the guerdon of immortality is bestowed on devout though humble followers of literature, even when unsought for and unexpected. Can the same be said of any other calling? White united with true simplicity of style, an earnest love of his work, and the most conscientious striving after honesty and truth. That these homely and unpretending virtues have received such cordial and spontaneous recognition, is in itself a high testimonial to the fairness and soundness of judgment exhibited by the great English reading public.

White's house is only a few yards away from the churchyard, and he could gaze on the Plestor from his upper windows. It has been considerably added to since his time, but the additions have been made in good taste, and it is a comfortable picturesque-looking red-brick homestead. For twenty years it was occupied by Professor Bell, the editor of the best edition yet published of "The Natural History of Selborne," who ended his days here at the good old age of eighty-eight. He had collected a fine library comprising the different editions of White's works, and books likely to assist him in his editorial labours. It is a thousand pities that this was dispersed at his death instead of being kept as the nucleus of a Selborne museum and library of reference. Before leaving Professor Bell, one little circumstance is worth recalling. Everybody remembers Gilbert White's tortoise, and the interest he took in it. Curiously enough, Professor Bell's first work, published in 1832, was a "Monograph of the Testudinata." Can it be that we have here the link which first drew these two great minds together?

The present occupants of "The Wakes," as Gilbert White's house is called, are Mr. and Mrs. Read, and it is extremely fortunate that it has fallen into such good hands. Mr. Read is a gentleman of independent means, fond of hunting, shooting and other country sports, imbued with a genuine

appreciation of White's works, and keenly alive to the importance of preserving the interesting heirloom of which he is the possessor. Mrs. Read is a very charming lady, full of wit and vivacity, and an equally enthusiastic admirer of the Selborne naturalist. A little bird has whispered to me that some of these days we may expect from Mrs. Read a book, entitled "Selborne Up-to-Date." If so, I am sure it will be good reading, and that all ardent Selbornians will welcome its appearance.

No obstacles are placed in the way of visitors to Selborne inspecting the home of their favourite writer. When we knocked at the door we were received by a demure-looking Hampshire girl, who told us that we were welcome to go over it, the only conditions required of visitors being that they should write their names in the visitors' book, and deposit something in a box for a charity. We duly complied with these formalities in the hall which was formerly one of White's rooms. We subsequently inspected his



"THE WAKES" (GILBERT WHITE'S HOUSE).

kitchen, his study, his "Great Parlour," and bedroom. The old part of the house differs but little in its style and arrangement from many a farmhouse to be found in this part of Hampshire. The rooms are low—only seven feet high—a huge beam runs across the middle of the ceiling, and the floor is of substantial oak, now stained a rich brown by age, and kept as bright and clean as beeswax and "elbow grease" can make it.

When we were in the garden everything struck us as so pretty that we sent in to ask