

entrancing dream! It and its rough awakening lying these many centuries behind us now.

A more perfect type of old English mansion there could not be, and it is fortunate that such a fair home of England should stand where it does, to greet the eyes of so many of England's returning sons and daughters, and to be their first prospect of her inimitable grace and security; and to beckon them westward, down into the heart of the delectable duchy, and thence on to that further fairyland of Lyonesse, where King Arthur, with his Round Table, held rule, and where the gallant Lancelot, Queen Guinevere, and the false Sir Modred dwelt.

SHORT HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE DUCHY OF CORNWALL.

The following historical facts are collected from Black's Guide to the Duchy of Cornwall:—

In the beginning of all things Cornwall and Devonshire were referred to as "The Tin Islands." Probably Phœnician and Carthaginian traders were their original settlers.

Cornwall formed the Kingdom of Damonia, and long resisted the Saxons, and remained almost unbroken in power till the days of the Norman Conquest. The Conqueror bestowed nearly the whole County on his half-brother, Robert of Mortain, and thus arose the "Earldom of Cornwall," "which was considered too important a possession to be held by anyone under Royal rank."

In 1336 the earldom was raised to a duchy by Edward III., in favour of his son, the Black Prince, and of his heirs, eldest sons of the Kings of England.

Cornwall has always been loyal to the Crown, and during the Civil War the Cornish people were heartily royalist, and fought stubbornly and well, gaining for the King, in 1642-3, the two important

battles of Braddock Down and Stratton.

Old Pendennis Castle has sheltered two Royal fugitives. Queen Henrietta Maria took refuge in it in 1644, on her voyage to France, and later Prince Charles (Charles II.) sailed thence to the Scilly Islands.

Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort visited Cornwall in 1846. The Queen stepped ashore at the pier at St. Michael's Mount, where the print of her foot has been marked by an inlaid brass.

SOME OLD CORNISH MANSIONS.

The history of Cornwall, as of most counties and countries, has been chiefly preserved in the records and relics treasured in the ancestral homes of its ancient families.

Cornwall is, perhaps, exceptionally rich in such houses, and has been, perhaps, also exceptionally fortunate, inasmuch as so many of its old families have proved fully worthy of their trust, and have kept the glories bequeathed to their care intact.

It would be impossible for me to attempt even to mention a fourth of the famous houses of Cornwall; so I think I had better recall the few likely to be familiar by name, or for some reason of special interest, to New Zealand readers.

St. Michael's Mount, crowned by the ancient granite castle which is the family seat of the St. Aubyns—"The Guarded Mount," "St. Michael's stupendous peak of rugged greenstone"—will, at least in poem and in picture, be familiar to all. The Mount is defended by two small and old batteries; but the wild waves of the Atlantic beating and breaking against its walls of rock have since long years been its only assailants.

The castle once sheltered and protected the hapless Lady Katherine Gordon, "The Fair Rose of Scotland," the beautiful wife of Perkin Warbeck.