

THE EVOLUTION OF A MEDIÆVAL HALL.

By Edward W. Cox.

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IN considering the origin and development of the mediæval hall, it is the purpose of this paper to deal with the term "hall" only in its constructive sense, endeavouring to find its early and primeval prototypes, and to show how far its traditional form has been handed down from very remote periods, and from widely varying races, or, rather, branches of a primitive race, to our own age, as shown by the survival of its types among the simpler buildings still to be found among those rustic dwellings which have been spared, in quiet districts, from the destructive hand of modern improvement. The consideration will also be restricted rather to the structural feature of the great common apartment, and its details and necessary adjuncts, than to the more complicated and developed buildings to which the "hall" has transferred its name, as the designation of the whole mansion.

It must be borne in mind that there are two leading types of domestic building, having different

origins ; but in English examples the more ancient type—that of the great hall—has either prevailed wholly during long periods, or has been maintained in combination with the second, or oriental and classical, form of the galleried house. Of this latter and its origin it is only intended in this paper to speak incidentally, and to reserve for another essay the inquiry into the origin of this second type, and its introduction, its supersession, and recovery in England, and the modifications it underwent by the persistent continuity of the simpler type.

The parent of the hall, then, is the primeval house, and Gomme, in his *Village Communities*, gives us an ancient metaphor, which says that “the house fire is the seed out of which the house “has grown.” The very first idea of settled habitation by man, whether pastoral or agricultural, springs from the permanent location of the hearth, and the gathering around it of the family or tribe, no longer wholly nomadic or migratory ; and the first rough screen and cover set up around this fire was the origin of the house, and the prototype of the hall. The cult of hearth-worship, and the sacred character of the home fire, was thus the first step towards organised society. Ancient custom and folklore are full of its influence. The origin of chieftainship, of family or tribal government, is chiefly connected with its laws ; marriage customs and expulsion from a tribal community are influenced by its ritual.

Elton, in his *Origins of English History*, says—
 “The oldest customs connected with inheritance
 “in England and Germany were in their remote
 “beginnings based upon a worship of ancestral
 “spirits, of whom the hearth-place was essentially
 “the shrine and altar.” A few instances, collected
 by Gomme and Seeböhm and Simpson, will suffice

here, as our office is not to trace out the course of custom and belief, but to show the derivation of the hall or house from such beginnings. Edmund Spenser observes that "in Ireland on "the kindling of the fire or lighting of candles "they say certain prayers and use some other " (superstitious) rites "; which show that they honour the fire and the light. The same is affirmed by an early writer of Scotland. Shakespeare and Herrick, in England, refer to the same custom. "The breaking of cinders in Ireland, meaning the "trampling out of a man's fire, is considered the "greatest insult that can be offered him. It conveyed the idea of guilt to himself and his family." Expulsion from the ancient agricultural village community was marked by putting out the house fire and destruction of the house.

W. Simpson, in his learned book on *The Praying Wheel*, relates that at the Brahminical marriage ceremony "the bridegroom leads the bride three "times round the fire. The seventh step round "the fire makes the marriage ceremony complete." The preservation of the old chimney stack of ancient buildings, when all else has been rebuilt, and the old house not attached thereto; and the old tenure in Hampshire, by which, if a squatter could build a hut in one night and get his fire lighted before morning, he could not be disturbed, are teachings in the same direction. It is within living memory that in an ancient Cornish borough buried in the sand, two members of Parliament were, within the present century, elected upon the ruined chimney of the manor house, the only remaining relic of the former town. Popular tradition, referring to the tenure of certain property near Llandrillo, in North Wales, asserts that it is held on condition of the chimney of the ruined hall of Bryn Eurian being kept in repair. How far this

agrees with the title deeds I do not know, but it is certainly repaired from time to time, the rest of the house being a ruin.

Instances can be indefinitely multiplied. These few may suffice as relics of custom and folklore of the hearth, which can be shown to be handed down from the remotest antiquity, to indicate the fire and the hearth as the central object of the house, whence sprung the family headship, or father, or ancestor; and we are thus led to one at least of the first causes of classification and ranks of social life. As might be expected, this differentiation of class and rank shows itself at a very early time in the arrangements of the simplest structure built to contain the fire, and to lodge those to whom it belonged. To take later examples first, it will be found that the earlier ones are in general accordance with them in house plan. The mediæval hall is divided into three main portions. The lower end had a door at each side, separated by a screen, with one or more openings into the central part of the hall, in the middle of which was the hearth. At the upper end of the hall was the daïs, with its canopy. The part behind the screens was allotted to the servants and attendants, the central hall to the family and the retainers or men-at-arms and guests, the daïs to the master of the house and his wife; the fire being the central feature, above, around, and below which the various members of the household had their allotted places.

It is evident that such a distribution of the inmates could be made without any marked structural provision for it, but we shall see that as a matter of fact such constructional contrivances were developed at an extremely early period, reaching back into prehistoric ages. At the same time, the simplest and most artless buildings are to be found in every period, according to the degree

of civilization attained by the races who used the different forms of hall, so that there is a continuity of the various developments, showing a wide overlapping of custom, that enables us to compare the examples and trace out the evolutions with some accuracy.

It may be gathered from these facts that it would not be easy to divide the evolution of the hall from the simplest to the most complicated plan into periods, seeing that it arises rather from racial than chronological sequences; and that the races that have used the ancient types with so much unity of purpose have divided into different branches, some having adopted the improvements that were made in construction and convenience earlier than others, yet all showing very markedly a remote common origin. The simplest existing remains that we find in this country, and in Gaul, Germany, and Thracia, are the circular huts in the hilly districts, of which the complete form is known to us from sculptures on the columns of Trajan and Antoninus at Rome, showing the Gaulish houses; and one of these, with a Briton sitting beside it, clothed in sheepskin, or fur, is also found on a sculptured stone from the walls of Chester. These buildings have endured, owing to those in the hill districts being constructed of stone; and from their occupying lonely situations, where agriculture was scarcely possible, they have in some cases been little disturbed.

The larger of these houses are 18 to 25 feet in diameter, and have hearths in the centre. At one side, near to the doorway, excavations have shown that the querns and stone mortars, for bruising and grinding grain, are found, and others also without the doorway, in a kind of recess, or in a minor hut attached to the larger one. At the furthest side from the door is often found a rude stone seat.

Around the fire at night the inmates slept, with their feet towards it, and their heads towards the circumference.

These features, found in numbers of these dwellings, appear to denote the threefold division previously referred to; the servitors and women, on whom the labour of the household fell, next to the door, the body of the hall for common occupation, and the high seat beyond the fire for the master and head of the house. In these houses we, however, find a variation, which belongs to the smaller kind of residences. These have the fire not in the centre but at the back of the hut, furthest from the door, the smoke escaping through a hole at the back of the house; and at the sides of the hearth are stone seats, while next to the door, in some cases, there remain stone slabs, for the preparation of food. The reason for this change in the smaller residences is plainly the want of room for a central hearth and at the same time for habitation. We shall see later on that this alteration of plan has been handed down to comparatively late times, and that it attaches more particularly to the smaller class of mediæval dwellings.

Another variation, but conveying the same idea of the sacred common hearth, is to be found on the western coast of North Britain. The brochs are large round towers, with thick walls, in the thickness of which are many small chambers and narrow passages of access. Practically they are tribal houses, and their erection is attributed to the Picts, in the sixth and seventh centuries. They have never been roofed, and in the circular open court formed by the thick wall was the common tribal fire, which was never allowed to go out. Practically they are an extension of the family circular house, but this fashion of building, although

it recognises the common principle of the home or tribal hearth, did not obtain beyond the West of Scotland, although an analogous fashion is found in the early Irish raths.

But these relics, though from their permanent material they have survived to us, are by no means the only representatives of their class. In the lower country the materials of the house were rough timber and thatch, and in these we obtain a much closer approximation to the mediæval hall, and they have left their impress on its plan more markedly than the rude stone structures of the hills. It is natural to assume that the lowland houses must have been by far the most numerous, though their less enduring material has left us few, if any, existing early examples, but many survivals of their fashion of construction.

We may take here Seebohm's excellent description of the typical tribal or family house, from his work on *The English Village Community*, and then endeavour to trace back this class of building, if possible, to its origin, and forward to the development of the English mediæval hall.

"The tribal house is in itself typical of their (the tribe's) tribal and nomadic life. It is of the same type and pattern for all their orders, but varying in size according to the gradation of rank of the occupier. It is built, like the houses observed by Giraldus Cambrensis, of trees newly cut from the forest. A long straight pole is selected for the roof tree. Six well-grown trees, with suitable branches, reaching over to meet one another, and about the same size as the roof tree, are stuck upright in the ground, at even distances, on two parallel rows, three in each row. Their extremities bending over form a gothic arch; and crossing at the top each pair makes a fork, upon which the roof tree is fixed. These trees supporting the roof trees are called gavaels, forks, or columns, and they form the nave of the tribal house. Low walls of stakes and wattle shut in the aisles of the house, and over all is the roof of branches and rough thatch, while at the ends are the wattle doors of entrance. All along the aisles behind the pillars are placed beds of rushes, called 'gwelys' (lecti) beds, on which the inmates sleep. The footboards of the beds, between the columns, form the seats in the daytime. The fire is lighted on an open hearth in the centre of the nave, between the middle columns,

and in the chieftain's hall a screen runs between these central columns and either wall, so partially dividing off the upper portion, where the chief, the edling, and his principal officers have their own appointed places, from the lower end of the hall, where the humbler members of the household are ranged in order. The columns, like those in Homeric houses and Solomon's Temple, are sometimes cased with metal. The bed or seat of the chieftain is sometimes covered by a metal canopy. The kitchen and other out-buildings are ranged round the hall, and, beyond these again, the corn and cattle yard included in the tyddyn. The chieftain's hall is twice the size and value of the free tribesman's, and the free tribesman's twice the size of the treeog; but the plan of all is the same. They are built with similar green timber forks and roof tree, and wattled, with the fireplace in the nave and the rush beds in the aisles. In this tribal house the undivided household of the free tribesmen, comprising several generations down to the great-grand-children of a common ancestor, lived together.

Strabo describes the Gallic houses as great houses, arched, constructed of planks, and covered with a heavy, thatched roof; and Tacitus, in his *Germania*, describes similar stake and wattle German houses. Perrot and Chipiez, in their work on *Persian Architecture*, give examples of the modern Persian houses of timber, corresponding to a considerable extent to the British and Gaulish timber houses, but having a flat roof. They show from ancient sculptures that these are identical with the ancient Persian house. Viollet le Duc, in his *Habitations of Man*, gives us a similar Median house, with its six pillars, also flat-roofed; and houses with much likeness to these, and including similar arrangements to those developed in the mediæval halls, are found existing in the Indian village communities, and among the Dyaks of Borneo, and some of the more settled races of Central Africa, to which reference need only be made in order to show the wide prevalence of the type, as regards location. And if it can also be shown that it reaches back to very distant periods of time, a fair *primâ facie* case may be made out for assigning a common origin to those primitive states of society under which the first

beginnings of settled and organised life made their appearance.

We may turn now to some of the best-marked ancient remains and indications which are to be found still existing, in order to find how far back our knowledge of this type can be carried. The Etruscans, who occupied Northern Italy prior to the founding of Rome, were a civilised people. It is an accepted opinion that with most of the nations of antiquity the tomb represented the house of the dead, and it was modelled and furnished with appliances that were used by the living; and this fact is more or less true of most ancient and many modern races, in various stages of civilization. The Etruscan tombs, then, show us decorated and furnished chambers, supplied with objects of use and art of the fashion prevalent at the time. But it is natural for such customs to become conventional, and to preserve in the tombs certain earlier fashions; so that there is a gradual separation between the sepulchral and the living surroundings, the former retaining the earlier type. We find, then, among the humbler burials of the Etruscan and earlier Latin races, a peculiar form of cinerary urn, for containing the ashes of the dead, and this represents, not the civilized character of masonry buildings, but a house having a side door; and on the sides, which slope inwards towards the top in an obtuse conical form, are projecting ribs that represent the timber posts of the primitive house. This at a period when masonry buildings were in common use, perpetuates the more ancient tribal house as the dwelling of the departed, and indicates the fashion of a bygone time.

The researches of Dr. Schliemann and Dr. Dörpfeld at Mykené, brought to light the plan

and ruins of the palace of the Atridæ, and the date of this building is estimated to reach back to the Homeric age, 1200 to 1400 years B.C. The plan of the great central building is a marvellous precursor of the English mediæval hall in all its features, and it also repeats the plan and divisions of the tribal house. But here there is no rude and primitive dwelling; at this early date the building, plainly as it discloses its origin, is a perfected structure, with all the additions and development of an early civilisation, derived, indeed, from the ruder early type, which is thus indefinitely set back, but showing a long-established pattern of the primeval house.

This building at Mykené, and a similar but less complete one at Tiryns, so perfectly presages the arrangement of the mediæval hall, that it is desirable to describe it more in detail. It consists of a large oblong structure, having at one end a portico, open in front, and formerly carried by pillars of timber, set on stone bases. Next to the house is a wall, in which are three large doors. This "prō-naos" corresponds to the screens at the lower end of the mediæval hall. Beyond this again is another apartment, the "naos," for the use of the men. Another wall divides this from the third section, but it is also pierced by large doors, and corresponds with the retainers' place in the hall, below the central fire; though in the English form the dividing line is indicated by a central truss of timber, and not by a masonry wall. In the third section, representing the daïs, high table, and hearth of the mediæval hall, is set the great hearth, a circular structure, of plaster, showing elaborate ornamentation painted round its circumference, which has been carefully renewed with fresh plaster and ornament when the old became worn,

indicating the honour paid to the genius or god of the hearth. On each side are set two pillars of timber, on stone bases, still remaining, which bore up the roof, upon which was an erection on short wooden supports, open at the sides, to allow the exit of the smoke, corresponding with the louvre on our English halls. This portion of the building was that allotted to the king and the members of his household.

This completes the hall itself, and it may be remarked in passing that upon this pattern the Greek and Roman temples of the gods were planned. The temple was the house of the god, whose statue occupied the cella or third section of the structure. Before him burned the altar; nearer the door was the naos, where the priests mustered, and where offerings were presented; and again without the pro-naos or portico, the screens open to the courtyard. Thus the house and the temple were derived from the same type.

There are, however, other marks of the progress of civilized life in this building that are also found in the English hall, after its emergence from the mere barbarism of a single apartment for all the inmates. Beside the main building stands the gyneceum, or separate women's apartment, much the same in appearance as that for the men, but somewhat simpler and smaller. This room also has its central hearth and naos. On the other side are the domestic offices, and these include a well-fitted bathroom. Thus we have at this early age the fully appointed house with all its offices, but retaining the marks of its derivation.

We may now describe a still earlier structure, having most of the same characteristics as the palace of Mykené. The recent researches of Dr. Dorpfeld, on the site of Ilium seem to indicate,

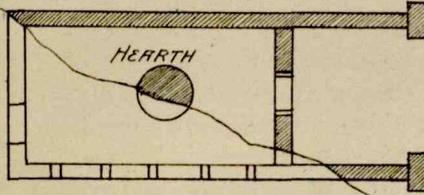
with some degree of certainty, that in the seven successive layers of cities that occupied that site, the second from the top and the sixth from the lowest stratum, was the Homeric Ilium. Dr. Schliemann considered that it would be found in the lowest stratum, and afterwards thought that it might be the next above the lowest. If the city examined by Dr. Dorpfeld is the Homeric Ilium, and its date 1200 to 1400 B.C., the five underlying strata are naturally much older. How remote their date may be it is hard to say, but the two lower cities appear to be just emerging from the age of stone implements. In the lowest city but one, Dr. Schliemann found a great hall of the same character as that of Mykené, with its great circular central hearth of burnt clay, and the gynecium adjoins it with a similar hearth. This structure is more rude in construction than that of Mykené; it is built of rough stone, unbaked brick, and timber, but though apparently a far earlier building, it has already attained the almost perfected plan, and left far behind the primeval house whence it drew its origin.

Thus we have found for this type not only a wide extension of space and racial use, but an extremely ancient date, and these taken together may safely be held to indicate a continuity from a common origin of unknown remoteness.

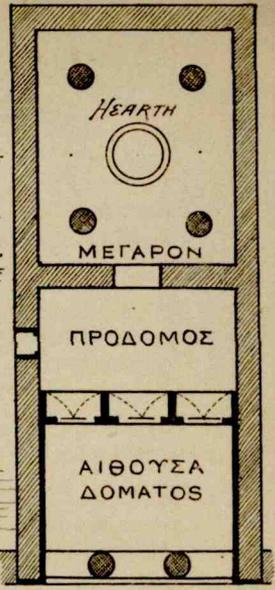
We may now endeavour to show how the features of the edifices, on whose characteristics we have commented, have influenced the mediæval halls of this country, more particularly those of our northern counties; and also seek to shew how their construction still survived to a comparatively late date in the smaller halls and cottages of our own vicinity, and the influence left by the primitive house in their construction. We have seen that the simple

TYPES OF PRIMITIVE AND MEDIÆVAL HALLS.

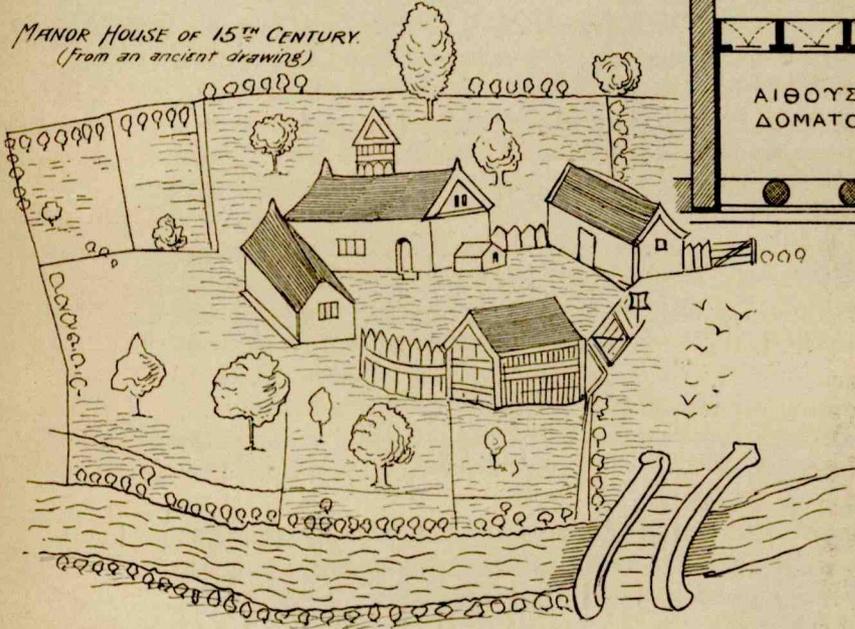
HALL OF PALACE. SECOND CITY ILIUM.



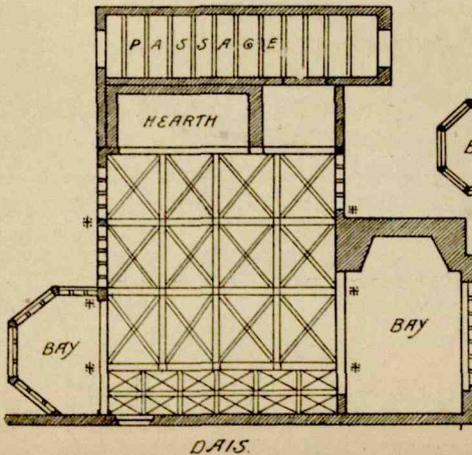
HALL OF
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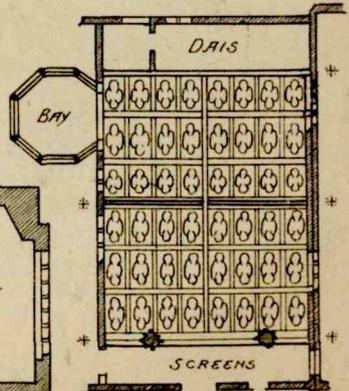
MANOR HOUSE OF 15TH CENTURY.
(from an ancient drawing)



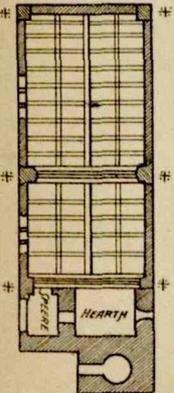
SPEKE HALL.



ORDSALL HALL.



A CHESHIRE
COTTAGE.



DAIS.

original house contained within its compass both accommodation for the meals in the centre and sleeping arrangements in the sides between the timbers. Subsequent developments added a separate kitchen at the lower end, the master's chamber or solar at the dais end, and the bower, subsequently the withdrawing room, for the ladies and women of the household: between the kitchen and the hall were the pantry and the buttery, thus resembling the types of Mykené and Ilium in arrangement. Up to even a late date it was quite common to find no more than three to five additional apartments beside the great hall, and this holds good even with important buildings.

In a sixth century Welsh book, called the *Mabinogion*, copied and revised in the twelfth or thirteenth century, we find a minute description of the single building, with its side beds of straw, its earthen floor, and fire of chaff, that fills the house with smoke, which issues from the blackened gable. This account occurs in the section called *The Dream of Rhodabwy* and professes to describe a hall of the Arthurian period. Giraldus Cambrensis also speaks of the British house in the twelfth century as built of green wood and branches, with a central fire, around which the inmates sleep. Bede, in the 10th chapter, book ii, relating as a miracle the preservation from the fire that destroyed the house of a cloth containing earth, in which St. Oswald had been buried, incidentally describes the Saxon hall thus:—
“They sat long at supper and drank hard, with a
“great fire in the middle of the room; it happened
“that the sparks flew up and caught the top of the
“house, which being made of wattles and thatch,
“was presently in a flame. . . only the post on
“which the earth hung remained entire and un-
“touched.”

In the *Nibelungenleid* we find many allusions to houses of this character.

Whether the house be large or small, the provision for the oversight of the master is always most carefully made. The central seat at the high table will be found to command a view of the two side entrances behind the screens, also the door and passage leading to the kitchen and butteries, and the foot of the stairs at the lower end of the hall. On his one hand, at the sides of the dais, are the stairs to the solar and the door to the withdrawing room. Thus he is able to hold in view all that passes within the hall, and all who enter and leave the house. The same oversight will be seen to be practicable from the seat in the chimney corner of the cottage. None can pass the door or emerge from behind the speere unless in sight of the master, and the half-deck, with its ladder, is also in full view.

The regard in which positions in the hall was anciently held, is well illustrated in the old ballad of "The Heir of Lynne," who returns to beg from the churl who has bought the heritage he has squandered; and in one of those graphic touches that distinguish ancient ballad literature, he takes the lowest room in the house:

"Then hied he to John o' the Scales, his house,
And halted at the speere."

Mons. Viollet le Duc, in his clever work on *The Habitations of Man*, has traced out the evolution of simple timber construction in nearly all the architectural styles. Unfortunately the technical value of the work is diminished by the uncertainty whether the illustrations are taken wholly from existing buildings, or are his own conjectural restorations. The addition of essentially modern

features to his plans of the prehistoric house, such as chimney flues, &c., and other inaccuracies, seem to indicate the latter; while his description of the old English cottage is so wonderfully inaccurate, that it is plain he never examined this interesting type of residence.

In the lesser house we have described, we have not a structure derived from the ancient tribal house, or a modification of it in other materials. We have in these rustic homes, with but little change, the survival of the tribal house itself; and in the framing of the great and stately manor houses and mansions we have, side by side with them, the finished and ornamental development, sprung from the same source. A reference to a few of the examples in our own vicinity, out of the many remaining in the north and west of England, and in Ireland, may be useful. Three such houses still stand in Higher Bebington. There are in the same village at least two examples of the speere, or screen, flanking the fire. One has an oval and the other a square opening to view the door. At Brimstage is a very perfect and little-altered house, with its speere, half-deck, and great hearth still traceable. Prince Rupert's Cottage, formerly on Everton Brow, was quite unaltered till its destruction. Herdman gives a good drawing of the interior.

At Storeton were formerly four or five such buildings. Two or three remain, showing the trees or "gwelys" of the main frame. These may not long survive, as within the last year or two most of the ancient houses in Storeton have been destroyed or greatly altered. At Farnworth a fine specimen stands a little below the church. At Great Crosby several existed within a few years, and some remnants are still to be seen. At Burton

some of the cottages have the speere, and some show traces of the construction on "gwelys." A house built in this manner, but much altered, formerly stood in Sefton Park; one is still to be found at Oglet, another near Ditton.

In the well-known cottage of Anne Hathaway, Shakespeare's wife, at Shotterey, there is a good instance of the combination of the hearth and the speere. In the northern counties and Wales the speere is formed of a large upright slab of stone. One of these remains in the fifteenth century house at Kendal, called "The Castle Dairy."

During the long period from the Conquest to the reign of the Tudors it was customary for the retainers to sleep in the hall, and the floor was strewn with rushes. In the construction of mediæval halls, which were chiefly of timber, the primeval idea of the six trees, as the principal framework of the structure, is by far the most common method. The roof is supported by three great principals, of which the side pieces are carried down to the ground, and most frequently the side uprights of the screen, and the dais, and sometimes the central principal, which carries the louvre for the escape of smoke, will have the uprights set within the line of the outer walls, precisely as were those of the tribal house, and these three great frames formed the divisions of the hall. When the building was very large the same scheme prevailed, but secondary principals, always of a smaller and lighter character than the three chief principals, subdivided the spaces. Long after the hall ceased to be used as a sleeping apartment this fashion continued to prevail.

Instances of this method of building may be found at Ordsall, Samlesbury, Baguley, Denton, Smithells, and Little Mitton halls. At Rufford, the

principals are doubled in number, being six instead of the usual three. Even in those halls that have not open timbered roofs, but have a storey above the great hall, the conventional number of main timbers is used in the flat ceilings, as at Speke and Wardley and Lydiate. In the ancient halls of Wales this arrangement of the three main principals is almost invariable. A fine example of the 15th century, now destroyed, existed in Beaumaris, another at Hafodly in Anglesea, and the plan will be found the rule rather than the exception in great halls.

Another variation is found in the coupling of the central principal to support the louvre, thus making a series of four main frames or trusses ; but the two central ones are practically to be counted as one, as they are nearer together than the other trusses of the roof, and perform the same structural office as the single central one, and mark the division of the hall in the same manner as the single one.

Very few of the central hearths now remain. There was one, about the middle of this century, in the hall of Westminster school ; another formerly existed in the hall of the ancient bowyers' house at Conway, and had the unique feature of a timber and wattle and daub chimney suspended from the roof above it and not reaching the ground, instead of a lantern-shaped louvre of the usual form. The remains of a central hearth have been found in the refectory at Birkenhead Priory.

Very many of the Lancashire and Cheshire halls were built between the reigns of Henry VII and VIII and Charles I ; those of South Lancashire, between the Mersey and Ribble, which mostly take the conventional form, were largely constructed of timber, after the extensive disafforestments which took place at the end of the fifteenth and early in

the sixteenth centuries, shewing that this type of hall was the recognised traditional form surviving in a previously wild and secluded district.

We may now turn to the humbler buildings, for evidence of the continuity of the ancient Aryan form of house; and in doing so, we shall find it still more strikingly followed than in the great halls, and with less deviation from the original scheme, some of which actually reproduce the old plan. We have in our own neighbourhood sufficient excellent examples in the ancient cottages still existing in fair numbers in the rural parts of Cheshire and Lancashire, but fast disappearing, under the hands of local boards and village councils, whose belief it is that the wretched brick houses, with a number of small and stuffy cribs called rooms, are superior for sanitary purposes to the old roomy, long-fronted cottages, with their great house-place as a general living room, and their wide chimneys and hearths that drew off the close atmosphere with the smoke. These cottages are built with their six whole trees as a first framework. The trees are set in the ground and inclined towards each other, meeting at the ridge. These are called the crooks. Upon these the side walls and gables are framed. The solar or chamber and the room below it, representing the withdrawing room, are constructed as a half-deck, partly open to the house place. In other cases a part of the cottage is ceiled below the tie beams, and the inmates sleep close to the roof timbers. There is most frequently a division of timber and wattle-work at the lower end of the cottage, allotted to the cattle.

In the North of England and Scotland, until early in the present century, the beds, like the "gwelys" of the primitive house, were between the timbers. Probably many still remain in the humbler

cottages, and possibly in better houses they are set against the wall, like the berths of a ship, and boarded at the sides, and sometimes during the daytime closed with wooden doors. Such, in 1845, were the beds for the accommodation of travellers at the King's Inn, built by William III, at the head of Glencoe, wherein I have myself slept; and these are the direct successors of the tribal house arrangements.

A curious survival of the arrangement of the side beds of the primitive house is to be found in the dormitories frequently made in the roofs of halls of more than one storey. Thus at Poole Hall, Cheshire, where the roof contains a long gallery, on each side, between the timbers, cubicles are partitioned off with boards; an arrangement which would reproduce the tribal house if this roof were built on the ground. At Chetham Hospital, Manchester, and in the south wing at Ordsall, the attics were similarly used. Down to the sixteenth century we find some evidence that the hall, the solar, and the kitchen were still occasionally built as separate structures. At Radcliffe Tower, a building of the late fourteenth century, there are three great chimneys in the tower, of stone, which was the kitchen. The great hall, with its three principals, had no chimney, but a central hearth; and this, with the solar and all other parts of the structure, was of wood. Gomme gives a drawing (here reproduced) of a manor house of the sixteenth century, arranged with all its accessories as separate buildings.

In these smaller houses the same variation is found as regards the site of the fire that we discover in the British huts on the Carnarvonshire hills, in Anglesea, and elsewhere: it is set to the end or gable of the house, whose narrow space prevents it

from being placed in the centre. This also modifies the position of the screen, which is set at the side of the fire next the entrance, the other flank of the fire being the wall of the house. Upon this screen, called the speere, the door opens, and it shelters the hearth from those entering as a kind of porch. Through the speere is sometimes cut a small opening, through which the master can see all who enter. In the larger halls a similar opening is made from the solar, or master's room.

An almost entirely unaltered cottage of this kind stood in School Lane, Woolton, which has been completely destroyed during recent years.

There is a feature in these cottages which continues a fashion prevalent in the British hut circles, which nearly always had their entrances turned away from the prevailing winds and weather. There are frequently no windows on the weather side of the houses, or, if they have any, it is seldom more than one, about nine inches or a foot square, near to the hearth, from which the master could watch any approach from that direction. At Higher Bebington and Storeton every cottage of any antiquity turns its back to the sea wind, and at that side is almost windowless; and in Burton are several others of the same character.

Another feature of the smaller houses arose from the necessity for building the gable, against which the fire is laid, of masonry or unflammable material. and from this the wide hall chimney originated. A beam laid from the speere to the opposite wall formed the chimney breast, and above this the wall at front and sides was gathered in to form an exit for the smoke. In the earlier halls the smoke escaped from the louvre, but many show no trace of a louvre. In several halls I have found windows set high up in the gables that have never been

glazed, and these (which seem to have received no previous notice) were substitutes for the louvre. Such arrangements existed at the hall of Chester Castle, according to the engravings of Grose and Buck and others; at the now-destroyed parsonage hall of St. Nicholas', Chester; and at Ordsall Hall, Manchester.

In many of the later halls, especially such as have rooms above them, the central fire being impracticable, there was an adaptation of the plan of the fireplace of the smaller house. The hearth was set so as to form part of the screen, and the rest of the breadth of the hall had a close screen, stretching from the fireplace, which stood to one side, with the entrance to the hall through it. Thus the space behind the screen became a passage. Such is the arrangement at Speke, Newton, and Lydiate Halls. These huge old stone chimneys frequently remain when all that was of timber has perished. One is to be seen in Higher Tranmere, attached to a modern house; at Higher Bebington a great one occupies the whole gable of a cottage in Mill Lane, all the rest of the house being wattle and daub.

It may even be said that the influence of primitive antiquity is to be seen in our modern houses. The screen space has shrunk to a passage, but it would be hard to explain why the arrangement of dining, drawing, and morning rooms should be the only accepted plan from which no departure may be made, unless such is to be found in the respect paid to tradition. The list of examples showing the origination of the great hall and its details might be indefinitely multiplied, both in our own country and in Europe, Asia, and Africa.

The consideration of the other main type, the galleried residence, its derivation and the modifi-

cations caused by its absorption into, or rather combination with, the great hall type, cannot well be discussed in a paper that deals only with the evolution of this one chief apartment of the mansion. And it has seemed to me of sufficient importance to trace on the present occasion, however imperfectly, the relations subsisting between the fabric of our mediæval great hall and modes of life which had their origin at a very remote period of the world's history.

