

## STRAY NOTES.

LITTLE MORETON HALL.—The securing by the National Trust of Little Moreton Hall (illustrated in the frontispiece to this volume) must be a matter of satisfaction to all lovers of our old buildings.

The main portion of the Hall dates from about the middle of the sixteenth century. The porch to the great hall may be of earlier date, the treatment of the oak differing from that of the rest of the building. The great gallery was a later addition, as is testified by the brick buttresses at the east end. It speaks well for the structural strength of the edifice that the weight of the additional storey has not caused any appreciable sinking, though architects have for long shaken their heads over the unpleasant possibilities it might cause to the Gate House. We may be sure however that the Office of Works will keep a vigilant eye upon the matter.

The wainscoting and the chimney-pieces resemble those of Brereton Hall, built in 1585, and there is good reason for thinking that the same craftsmen were employed in the construction of both halls. This is made more probable by the fact that the Moretons and the Breretons were cousins. We find too the same tendency to insert moral aphorisms in the plaster work of both houses.

The Moreton family held the Hall until 1763, when the last of the male line of Gram de Moreton died. The Hall then passed to his nephew, a son of his sister Annabella Taylor, who in accordance with his uncle's will took the name of Moreton. He does not appear ever to have lived at the Hall, for he was Vicar of Firle, where he died in 1784. The house then passed to his son William, also in Holy orders, who presumably let the place to a farmer, for it was at this time that Ormerod noted in his *History of Cheshire* (1819) that "the house is occupied by farmers, but deserved attention is paid to the neat appearance and the preservation of the venerable pile." Later, the house became much neglected.

It is to the care of Elizabeth Moreton, a Clewer Sister of Mercy, who devoted much of her private income to its restoration, that we owe the present condition of the place.

So after many vicissitudes the old Hall has at last passed into the care of the Nation, to remain permanently a relic of a bygone age amid the "change and decay" by which we are surrounded in these modern days.

G. W. M.

CUCKSTOOL AT MARTON.—The Preston Quarter Sessions Rolls record the following orders :

8 October 1617. "It is ordered by the Corte that a Cooke stoole shalbee erected within the Townshippe of Great Marton by and att the chardges of the Inhabitants of the same Towneshipp for punishment of lewde persons inhabiting within the said Towne of Marton, and Layton."

13 January 1617/18. "Yt is ordered that there shalbee a Cuckestoole provyded and sett uppe in the Townshippe of Greate Marton and Little Marton in suche place as Edward Rigby Esquier shall thinke fitt, and that before the feaste of Easter next ; otherwyse the same Townshippe to bee fyned in such some as this courte shall thinke fitt."

As there is no further reference to this matter in the Sessions Rolls it would appear that the cuckstool was duly provided. There does not appear to be any other record of it.

R. S. F.

DIVERSION OF THE WYRE AT ST. MICHAEL'S.—The following order was made by Preston Quarter Sessions on 11 April, 1632 :

"Yt is ordered by this Cort that the some of foure score and four poundes shalbee presently collected and gathered within the hundred of Amoundernes for and towards the erecting, re-edifying and building of Michaells church bridge, now presented to bee in decay : and the making, repaireing and amending of the highway there ; and for the altering and exchanging of the River into a new watercourse for the future safty and good of the Cuntry."

The old bed of the river Wyre can still be seen to the north and west of the road past the school and the church at St. Michael's.

R. S. F.

FERRYMAN'S PRIVILEGE AT HAMBLETON.—Preston Quarter Sessions made the following order on 14 January, 1634-5 :

“ Forasmuch as itt doth appeare to this Corte that Hughe Parke of Hambleton doth keepe a Ferrye boate for transporting of passengers over the river of Wyre, for which hee and his predecessors of the mesuage and tenemente in Hambleton, wherein hee doth now inhabite, have ever beene Freed and never served the office of constable within the same towne in respect of his dayely service and attendance att the same River ; ytt is nowe therefore ordered that the said Parke, and the occupyers of the same mesuage and tenements, from henceforth shalbee Freed and discharged of and from the office of constable within the same towne dureing all such tyme as the said Ferrye boat shalbee there used and kepte.”

R. S. F.

THE LATE F. H. CHEETHAM'S BOOKS AND PAPERS.—The following particulars of Mr. Cheetham's bequest of his books, manuscripts and plans have been kindly furnished by Mr. A. J. Hawkes, Chief Librarian, Wigan. All material relating primarily to Southport and neighbourhood (within ten miles therefrom) was bequeathed to the Southport Public Library. All other printed books and pamphlets were bequeathed to the Wigan Public Library, with a stipulation that such of them as were already possessed in duplicate by the latter, but not by Southport Library, should be presented to Southport. His manuscripts, books and plans relating to churches and other buildings in various counties were bequeathed as follows :

<i>County</i>	<i>Bequeathed to</i>
Lancashire.	Wigan Public Library.
Durham.	Society of Antiquaries, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, for use of the Blackgate Library.
N. Riding, Yorks.	Middlesbrough Public Library.
Berkshire.	Reading Public Library.
Worcester.	Worcester Public Library.
Northants and Rutland.	Northampton Public Library.

