In September, 1865, some labourers were employed by the Improvement Commissioners of Bury in constructing a sewer across a piece of waste ground, named "Castle Croft," which had been previously cleared of some rickety buildings of a somewhat temporary character. In the course of their labours the workmen came upon the foundation-walls of the ancient castle of Bury. The Commissioners, with the assent of the Earl of Derby's Steward, determined to make further excavations in the interest of local historical knowledge. I visited the spot several times during the progress of the work, and carefully noted at the time any matters possessing the slightest archaeological importance.

The direction of the sewer was nearly from east to west. It crossed the remains of a wall, which was at first thought to pertain to the ancient keep of the stronghold; but subsequent excavations demonstrated this conjecture to be erroneous. The workmen next extended their labour in a line with this wall, in a southward direction. On reaching the south-west angle, a trench was driven eastward, along the line of the south wall, when the foundation and lower portion of the structure were exposed to view. The earth about the east wall was afterwards excavated in a similar manner. With the exception of
the north-east angle, which is covered with buildings, the boundary wall of an entire parallelogram was laid bare. Previous to this, however, I had suggested the propriety of digging a trench across the enclosure, which resulted in the discovery of an inner wall of very massive masonry, which, on being followed, proved to be the foundation of one side of the donjon or keep of the stronghold. When excavated on all sides, it was found to form a parallelogram, measuring, externally, about eighty-two feet by sixty-three feet. The dimensions of the outer enclosure are about a hundred and twenty feet by a hundred and thirteen feet.

The keep or donjon tower occupies about the centre of the larger enclosure, the foundations of which, as I had anticipated, were not of sufficient strength to have supported the heavy masonry common to the superstructure of such buildings. It did not appear to be in any place two feet in thickness. It exhibited indications of having slightly given way at some early period, from internal lateral pressure. Apparently with the view to support it and impart to it additional strength, strong buttresses, within a few feet of each other, seem to have been afterwards added. These buttresses are formed of well squared stones, and are of a different class of masonry from that of the wall they support. The stones exhibit the workmen's mark in the form of an X, with the upper as well as the lower points joined together, so as to give the figure somewhat the appearance of an hourglass. The fact that these buttresses are not "tied" into the main wall furnishes additional evidence of their more recent construction. The foundations of the donjon or inner structure are of massive masonry, and upwards of six feet in thickness. It is not improbable that the buttressed wall formed the enclosure called the inner baillie, and separated it from the larger outer court, which contained the stables, offices, dwellings for servants, retainers, &c. From Aikin's
map it appears that the outer enclosure was of considerable dimensions, measuring about six hundred feet by four hundred and fifty feet. The keep or citadel, including its surrounding wall, does not occupy the centre of this larger enclosure, but is situated nearer to its south-east corner. This is usually the case with Norman castles. Saxon keeps were generally built on or attached to the outer wall, as at Castleton in Derbyshire, and at Porchester in Hampshire. The keep of the former is inferior, in point of dimensions, to that of Bury; being only about fifty feet square. The external fortification is likewise much less, measuring only about two hundred feet by a hundred and fifty feet. The celebrated Norman keep at Rochester, which is regarded as an excellent specimen of its class, is only about seventy feet square.

It appears that a large amount of rubbish has accumulated on the site, some of it in relatively recent times. Where this has been removed we have evidence that the original earth had been removed on the outside from around the foundation of the buttressed wall, which, in conjunction with the original character of the site itself, would give to the ground on which the donjon and inner court are situated, the appearance of a slight mound or plateau, of some three or four feet in elevation. The original foundations of the buttressed wall are built against the side of this earth-mound. They are thickest in the centre of the south wall, where most probably stood the gateway. There is nothing in these foundation walls that indicates with certainty the date of the erection of the building. From some rudely carved ornamental stones, however, which lay scattered about, the superstructure appears to have been erected in what is termed the "decorated" style of "Gothic" architecture, which was chiefly adopted in England during the fourteenth century. This does not, however, necessarily imply that no other building previously occupied
the site, which has been evidently one of considerable natural strength. From Aikin's map it will be seen that the castle was protected, especially on the north and west sides, by a steep precipice, and that an ancient branch of the Irwell, or an artificial fosse, having connection with that river, skirted its base.

Little is known, of a reliable character, of the early history of Bury. The name itself is but one of the many forms which have arisen from the Anglo-Saxon *burh*, which signifies a hill, or fort, or defended homestead of any class. On the formation of our parliamentary system, the boroughs, in contradistinction to the counties or shires, were chiefly walled towns, or towns which provided for their own defence, and possessed privileges withheld from their rural neighbours, who were either the retainers, vassals, or serfs of the lords of the soil.

If we possessed any reliable evidence that the term "Bury" was applied to this locality before the Norman Conquest, we might reasonably endorse the opinion of more than one local historian, that it was one of the twelve "conjectured" important castles erected between the Ribble and Mersey during what is termed the "Saxon" period of our history. Mr. Baines (*Hist. Lanc.,* vol. i, p. 38) cites the Venerable Bede as his authority for fixing these twelve strongholds in the following localities:—"Well-ey, Wal-ton, Child-wall, Winwick, Black-stone, Pen-wort-ham, Seph-ton, Stan-dish, "Wig-an, Roch-dale, Middle-ton, and Berry." Penwortham is the only locality mentioned in the Domesday Survey as the site of a castle within the district named. On turning to book ii, chap. 9, § 3, of Bede's History, as directed by Mr. Baines, we find no reference to castles whatever, but much about the ordaining of bishops and the marrying of virgins. In fact the reference is either a clerical or a typographical blunder. Mr. Baines really intended to have referred the
historical student to the pages of that semi-romance writer, the Rev. John Whitaker, the author of a *History of Manchester*, an antiquary whose fertile imagination discerned Saxon "castles" often merely in the sound of the names of such places as those above quoted. There *may* have been some kind of fortress at Bury in Saxon times, but we have at present no reliable evidence of the fact, except that which is furnished by the name itself. That a Saxon fortification existed at Manchester, as well as a Roman *castrum*, is testified to by remains, and by direct reference to such a structure in the Saxon Chronicle. Consequently, the negative evidence of the Domesday survey is not destructive of the probability that a Saxon *burh* existed at Bury, as that document makes no reference to the ruins at Castle-field, or elsewhere in the township of Manchester. But probabilities should never be confounded with clearly demonstrable facts in matters pertaining to historical or archaeological research.

The earliest known reference to the place by its present designation occurs in the time of Henry II, when Robert de Lacy made a grant of certain lands in the parish. The name of Adam de Bury occurs in a "Perambulation de "Forestā" of the twelfth year of the reign of Henry III, amongst the Lansdowne MSS. He is likewise referred to, about the same period, in the "Testa de Nevill." The chief portion of the land was afterwards held by the Pilkingtons of Pilkington and Bury, by whom it was forfeited after the conclusion of the "Wars of the Roses." The victor at Bosworth field, Henry VII, conferred the estates upon the then Lord Stanley, afterwards the first Earl of Derby of the present family, by whose heirs it is still retained.

The earliest authentic record of the castle is no older than the reign of Henry VIII, but, from the very nature of that record, it must have been in existence for a long time previously. Leland, the "King's antiquary," when travelling
through the country, "in search of England's antiquities," about 1542-9, thus writes about the place:—"Byri on Irwell, 4 or V miles from Manchestre, but a poore market. There is a Ruin of a Castel by the paroch chirch yn the Towne. It longgid with the Towne sumtime to the Pilkentons, now to the Erles of Darby. Pilkenton had a place hard by "Pilkenton Park, 3 miles from Manchestre." Leland's distances are, of course, merely guesses at the truth. In such matters he is frequently in error.

It is certain that the De Bury family held land in the parish as recently as 1613, yet we find that the bulk of the property at the time of the "Wars of the Roses" was held by the Pilkington family. Sir Thomas Pilkington, a devoted adherent to the fortunes of the House of York, obtained from Edward IV a license to "kernel and embattle" his manor house at Stand, in the neighbouring township of Pilkington. It is not, therefore, improbable that Bury castle at this time ceased to be a manorial residence, and gradually fell into the ruinous condition in which it was seen by Leland. It is not known at what period the Pilkington family first acquired lands in Bury. In 1851, Roger Pilkington, however, is referred to as a tenant of the Duchy of Lancaster, "holding one knight's fee in Bury, which Adam de Bury formerly held of the honour of Lancaster." If any reliance can be placed on a traditionary date (1380) in a MS. in the possession of Mr. Shaw, of Bury, to which I shall hereafter refer, we may conclude that Roger Pilkington, or his immediate successor, was the builder of the more modern portion of the edifice. But this, as I have before shewn, does not necessarily preclude the possibility, or even probability of the existence of a fortress during the occupancy of the De Burys. Indeed the name itself is conclusive that some burh, or fortified residence did exist, or they would not have so described themselves. If it be true, as asserted in the MS. just referred
to, that a large archway stone was once found, on which were sculptured the De Bury arms, some such erection must have preceded the grant of the knight's fee, formerly held by this family, to that of Pilkington, which, as I have stated, took place previous to 1351. Notwithstanding the lapse of nearly four hundred years, there is yet much local popular sympathy with the now extinct Pilkington family, on account of the "spoliation" to which they were subjected after the battle of Bosworth, and yet it is by no means impossible, but, on the contrary, highly probable, that the Pilkingtons themselves had been put into possession of their neighbours' property for precisely similar reasons, after a previous defeat of the Lancastrian party by the adherents of the house of York.

Some remains of the castle existed in relatively recent times. Aikin, in his "Description of the country from thirty "to forty miles round Manchester," published in 1793, gives a plan of the foundations as they appeared at some previous period, but he mentions no date or authority for it. Mr. Baines says, (1836,) "Remains of the castle wall are to be seen in the tank of the gasometer near the Church, and, about twenty years ago, a fragment of this wall, about six feet thick, was found in excavating." He likewise records the finding of remains in the gardens which in more recent times occupied the site, including coins "from the mints of the "Edwards, Henry VIII, Elizabeth, and the Stuarts," but he states not by whom or when.

Some curious traditions still exist respecting this castle at singular variance with the known facts of history. Mr. Baines says—(His. Lan., vol. ii, p. 660)—"In the civil wars which "raged in Lancashire, in 1644, Bury castle was battered by "the Parliamentary army from an intrenchment called Castle "Steads, in the adjoining township of Walmerley; and from "that period the overthrow of this as well as of a large pro- "portion of the other castles of the kingdom may be dated."
Mr. Baines gives no authority whatever for this astounding statement. It ought to have been worth the while, one would think, of a local historian, before printing such a paragraph, to have instituted some inquiry into the history of the edifice at Bury, during the century which elapsed between Leland’s contemplating the “Ruine of a Castel,” and the redoubtable exploit of the Parliamentary army in 1644. The latter, indeed, owes its existence to mere vulgar tradition, which frequently makes sad havoc with both facts and dates, and even the reputations of celebrated or notorious individuals. In scores of places in England, the people have been taught by tradition to believe that any ruin, either of castle or abbey, owes its dilapidated aspect at the present day primarily to the battering cannon of the renowned Oliver Cromwell! The deeds of Thomas Cromwell, Secretary of State to Henry VIII, who took so prominent a part in the dissolution of the monasteries; the doings of the soldiers of the “Great Rebellion,” both Royalists and Roundheads; the fruits of castle-dismantling Acts of Parliament; nay, the very victories of old Time himself, have all been fused into one mass of incongruous traditionary lore, and tacked to the memory of the terrible Puritan chieftain. Many of the then remaining castles were certainly destroyed about the period Mr. Baines refers to; but very few, relatively, by the cannon of the Parliamentary armies. When the war was over, peaceful Acts of Parliament ordered the dismantling of numbers of these strongholds, with the view to prevent their use in any future civil commotion. Clitheroe and Greenough castles, in Lancashire, were dismantled by virtue of the power bestowed by such an act, passed at the close of the struggle referred to.

During one of my visits to the excavations I was courteously permitted by Mr. J. Shaw, of Bury, to inspect and take a copy of the MS. document I have previously referred to. It was formerly the property of his late father, and is, I
understand, in that gentleman's handwriting. It is, however, dated "Bury, April 13th, 1840," and signed "T. Crompton," or "Kromptom," it is difficult to say which. As the document may be said to embody all the traditionary lore to which I have referred, I give it entire:

"BURY IN THE OLDEN TIME, OR THE SIEGE OF THE CASTLE, &c.—
"Bury Castle, supposed to be built in the reign of Richard II, in 1380. The date when erected cannot be positively ascertained. The coin of the Stewarts, &c., have been found in the foundations. The whole of the castle was destroyed by the Parliamentary army, in 1642—3, when the wars between Charles I and Cromwell deluged poor England in the blood of her children. Adam de Bury was attached to the unfortunate Charles's cause. He fell, with many others, a prey to the party spirit then raging so horribly in the land. The river Irwell passed by the north side of the castle, and run by the north-east turret. The site of the castle, which forms a parallelogram, was about eleven roods square, and from the foundations [the walls] seem to have been about two yards thick, with four round towers about sixty feet high each. A large stone has been found which belonged to the archway, with the arms of De Bury engraved thereon.

"This drama [qy.] is principally taken from a legendary tale of Bury Castle. Cromwell's army (by Stanley) was placed on Bury Moor: the cannon in an entrenchment at Castle Head [sic] on the Walmesley [sic] side of the river. Lord Strange arrayed his army of twenty thousand for the Royal cause, on Gallows Hill, Tottington side. The river opposite the castle, before the course was altered, was about a hundred to a hundred and twenty yards wide."

Traditionary lore, though on the whole generally founded on some fact or facts, which have become distorted, owing to their frequent oral transmission by persons utterly ignorant of their original significance, is scarcely ever to be relied on so far as individuals or dates are concerned. The stories do unquestionably indicate the retention in the popular mind of something of importance that took place in that mythical epoch, generally styled "the olden time," but not often accurately what that something may have been. In this
respect tradition deals with the past very much in the same manner as the cautious prophet or seer consulted by the legendary King Cole dealt with the future. A humorous rhymester informs us that—

On old King Cole's left cheek was a mole;
So he sent for his secre-ta-ri-e,
And bade him look in a fortune-telling book,
And read him his de-sti-ni-e.

So the secretary said, when his fate he had read,
And cast his na-ti-vi-ti-e,
That a mole on the face boded that something would take place,
But not what that something would be!

The people about Walton-le-dale, near Preston, speak of all the human remains found in the neighbourhood as pertaining to certain "Scotch warriors," slain in battle; but they jumble together, "in most admired disorder," the many engagements that have been fought in the neighbourhood, from that of Brunanburh, (A.D. 934-7,) when the celebrated "Cuerdale hoard" was deposited in the earth near the Ribble's southern bank, to the siege of Preston, in 1715, including Cromwell's great victory in 1648. Nay, the passage of the Pretender's army, on its march to and from Derby, in 1745, is sometimes confounded with the "Scotch warrior" conglomerate referred to. I have previously shown, on the most reliable authority, that Bury Castle was a "ruine" a century previous to the "Great Rebellion." No mention is made in any of the very profuse contemporary accounts still extant of the proceedings of both Royalists and Parliamentarians of any fortress at Bury, or of any fight in its neighbourhood. At the close of the year 1642, the Parliamentary forces held the following fortified towns in Lancashire:—Manchester, Bolton, Blackburn, and Rochdale; and the Royalists Preston, Lancaster, Liverpool, Wigan, and Warrington. Bury, if it had been in a condition for defence, would, of course, have been held by the Earl of Derby for the King. The Adam de
Bury, referred to in the document quoted, is either a myth, or the name of some earlier proprietor of the Castle at Bury, most probably some one compromised in the "Wars of the "Roses." Indeed, the family appears to have become extinct before the commencement of the struggle between Charles and the Parliamentarians. On this point the documentary evidence quoted by Mr. Baines [His. Lan., vol. ii, p. 663,] is very explicit. He says:

"The Bury family do not seem to have entirely ceased their connection with the parish for many reigns afterwards;* for by an inquisition post mortem, in the Duchi Records, vol. viii, number 24, in "31 Henry VIII, Ralph Bury was found possessed of lands in Bury, "Myddleton, and Tottington; and in the Harleian Coll. MSS. is preserved a monumental inscription on Thomas, son of John Bury, of "Bury Hall, co. Lanc., and Eliz., his wife, daughter of Thomas "Stafford, of Bradfield, Berks, Esq., dated 1613. The last mention in "the Duchi Records of this family is Richard Bury, a proprietor of "lands in Middleton, in 19 James I. The arms of Bury were Sa, a "chevr. between three plates, each charged with a cross patté gu." There can have been no "Adam de Bury attached to the "unfortunate Charles's cause," or his name would have appeared amongst the Lancashire "lords, knights and gentle-"men" who compounded with the sequestration commissioners for their estates in 1646. There is, however, no such name in the list. I suspect the "coin of the Stewarts, &c.," said to "have been found in the foundations," has had much to do with fixing a date for other and older traditions. But coin might be lost amongst the debris long after the castle had become dismantled or destroyed, and therefore the finding of it proves nothing but that the said foundations were in existence at the date when such coins were deposited.

Cromwell's army could not have been placed on Bury Moor, by either Stanley or any one else, in 1642-3, as that general

* That is, after the "Wars of the Roses"
did not enter Lancashire till 1648; and then his route lay by Stoneyhurst, Preston, Wigan, and Warrington. Lord Strange’s “army” of twenty thousand men really has reference to a recorded public meeting held on Bury Moor, the numbers stated as attending which are doubtless much exaggerated. A similar meeting was held on Preston Moor, and, singularly enough, as it was a numerous one, the same authority employs the same terms, twenty thousand, to express the fact.

The placing of the cannon at Castle Stead is another proof of the ignorance of some of the transmittors of this tradition. The cannon of the time of Charles I would have done little service at the distance, consequently no military man would have placed his small guns in such a position if there had existed at the time a castle worth battering.

It is evident that “this drama,” principally taken from a legendary tale, is of no value as a record of historical facts; but as very many persons place implicit reliance on these traditions, I have deemed it of sufficient importance to examine thus minutely the claims of this document to public credence.

I have said that there is generally a germ of truth at the bottom of this class of legendary stories; that, indeed, there was a “something” in each of them, if we could but discover in what that something consisted. In this case, it is highly probable that older traditions, having reference to the “Wars of the Roses,” may have been confounded with more recent events, and especially with succeeding civil wars. This, as I have shown, is by no means an uncommon occurrence. Singularly enough, Mr. Baines laments the lack of historical documents relating to Lancashire during the period when the rival houses of York and Lancaster struggled for supremacy. This unfortunate condition he attributes to the wilful destruction to which they were subjected by the partizans of both of the contending parties. The only local historical event of
much public importance recorded in connection with the bloody struggle for the sceptre of England by the Yorkists and the Lancastrians, relates to the capture of the unfortunate Henry VI, at "Bungerley hyppinge-stones," on the Ribble, near Clitheroe. It is, therefore, not impossible that some local events, lost to history, may have survived in the mutilated form in which tradition presents them at the present day, although all their real significance is irretrievably lost, and, what is worse, flagrant errors have usurped their place in the popular imagination.

During the recent excavations, the workmen came upon a small vault or chamber, which rumour immediately magnified into the entrance to a "secret passage" from the castle to some neighbouring edifice. Traditionary "secret passages," in connection with ruined castles or religious establishments, are very common affairs, and especially in Lancashire. They owe their existence, however, immeasurably more to the imaginative faculty than to solid masonry. Hundreds of people yet believe that a passage of this description once connected the priory at Penwortham, near Preston, with the religious house at Tulketh, on the opposite bank of the Ribble. The former place was but a poor "cell" under the monastery at Evesham, and the latter the temporary residence of Evanus and his monks during the erection of Furness Abbey. It is, therefore, highly improbable that a work somewhat similar in character, and not so very much less in magnitude, to the Thames tunnel, either could or would have been attempted under the circumstances, at the period referred to. And further, if so stupendous a work had been constructed, it could never have been a secret matter. These traditionary secret passages, most probably, in many cases, have had their origin in the telegraphic communication which the commanders of Roman military posts possessed by means of the semaphore and beacon lights, and which was known to
the vulgar merely by the results. The populace would be ignorant of the true means why certain "facts" could have been communicated, without the aid of a visible messenger above ground; hence the "secret" underground passage of the imagination became in process of time an article of implicit faith. During the late American war, certain important knowledge was technically said to have been secretly communicated by means of "the underground railway." This recent fact is, by no means, an unapt illustration of the hypothesis suggested. The case is strengthened by the circumstance that, both at Penwortham and Tulket, the remains of Roman speculae, or outposts, commanding the entire estuary of the Ribble, at the head of the tidal flow, have been found and recorded.

The chief interest, however, attendant upon the recent excavations at Bury lies in the fact that it has been by many antiquaries regarded as the site of a Roman station. Consequently, I directed my own investigations primarily to the examination of the foundations and the subsoil beneath, with the view to ascertain whether any indications of Roman occupation could be found. I detected not the slightest evidence which would justify the assumption that a fortress of any kind had existed on the site prior to the Norman Conquest. The present foundations had evidently been set upon or in the original or unmoved soil; at the least, no debris of any previous structure has been found below them. Near the north-west corner the workmen came upon a wooden conduit or drain, cut out of solid oak; but this gives no clue to the date of its construction. In the course of the excavations, a section of a well, sunk about forty years previously, was exposed. It had penetrated the inner baillie wall; and I was informed by persons who remembered the making of the said well, that the workmen employed thought, at first, that they had pierced the solid rock.
If ever there existed a Roman castrum in the neighbourhood of Bury, it does not necessarily follow that its site was afterwards selected for either a Saxon or Norman fortress. Indeed, the Saxons had a superstitious dread of dwelling in the houses of the people they conquered, and generally built their villages at the distance of about a mile from the ruins of the sacked Roman settlements. Such was the case at Manchester, for Knott Mill is about a mile from the nucleus of the modern city; Preston parish church is about a mile, in a straight line, from the Roman castrum at Walton-le-dale; and Warrington is about the same distance from Stockton Heath, where modern antiquaries now place the Condate of the Itineraries.

Strongly fortified places like London, Chester, York, and Lancaster, which are built on the debris of Roman fortresses, are generally believed to have successfully resisted the assaults of the barbarian invaders, and to have preserved their original municipal privileges by paying tribute to, or by other agreement with, the conquerors of the surrounding country. The locality of “Castle Steads,” in the township of Walmersley, about a mile and a third from Bury parish church, is admirably adapted as a site for a Roman castrum; but all traces of the ancient intrenchments have disappeared, and no trustworthy record exists of their specific character. Even Aikin’s map shews but one trench. One of the nearest sites to Bury where Roman remains have been found, independently of the road which passes over Cockey Moor, about a mile to the west of Bury, on its way from Manchester to Ribchester, is in this very township of Walmersley, not far from “Grant’s Tower,” and about three miles from Bury, in a straight line. It consisted of a “hoard” or buried treasure, and included coins, silver bracelets, rings, etc., which had been buried about the end of the third century.* This hoard was discovered in

1864. An earthenware vase filled with brass coins of the "lower empire," was found in Hooley Wood, near Heywood, on the estate of James Fenton, Esq., in 1856.

The identity of the route of the tenth Iter of Antonine is a subject of too much importance to be discussed at the close of a paper like the present. I therefore reserve it for a future communication. It is sufficient for my present purpose to state that the recent excavations at Bury have thrown no additional light upon the subject, excepting in so far as the negative evidence obtained is, as far as it goes, confirmatory of the view propounded by Dr. Robson, myself, and others, that the route of the tenth Iter passed through Warrington, Wigan, and Preston to Lancaster, and not through Manchester, Bury, and Ribchester to Overborough, as conjectured by the elder antiquaries.