

ODDS AND ENDS

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Odds And Ends by A. E. Marshall

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A. E. MARSHALL

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BY

A. E. MARSHALL.



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PREFACE.

THE "ODDS AND ENDS," which compose this unpretending publication, are entitled to their name from the circumstance of having been written without the smallest contemplation of being, at any time, thus connected together—a circumstance which, though too common in introducing such scraps to the public, may perhaps be considered entitled to attention from the motives which have led to their publication.

The writer resides in one of the most interesting districts of North Wales; and there, surrounded by objects of natural beauty, contrasted and brought out the more vividly by great works of art, has long dwelt with regret on the absence of some pen that could illustrate with the colours of history, or its kindred romance, scenes which no one can contemplate without emotion.

North Wales, and the Principality in general, is not merely a field where a Scott might revel in the profusion of its incidents of national characteristics and individual adventure; it is, as it were, the back-ground of the British History, as well in race, as in political constitution and social character.

Secluded from the rest of the empire by the tenacity with which its people adheres to the magnificent and powerful language of the earliest times, the Ancient Briton is doubtless in the rear of the ever-moving Saxon race; but the field of enquiry in the archæology of his history is so much the more rich, and would, it is believed, yield a harvest by which the literature of our country would be not a little advanced.

It may even be a fair subject of enquiry whether the very foundations of our laws—at all events that particular characteristic of those laws which has most distinguished them—that of springing out of the customs, habits, feelings, and experience of the people, is not essentially due to the soil of our country; in fact, that instead of having been, as is commonly supposed, imported by the Saxons, it is indigenous to Britain that the laws by which her people have been governed have ever sprung

mainly from the individual energy of character and upright balance of mind, which has at all events attended our administration of national and social duties from the earliest periods of recorded time. The transition from the Eisteddfod of the ancient Britons to the county court of the Saxons is as natural as from such county court to the various forms by which justice has been since administered.

To dwell further on such a topic would not here be appropriate; for, although such ambitious views are little apropos to mere "Odds and Ends" of poetry, and though, in fact, it would be more correct to say that the poetry is published rather for the purpose of offering such suggestions, than that such suggestions are offered for justifying the publication of the poetry, yet there must be a commencement of everything.

It not unfrequently happens that the more unpretending the commencement the more efficient becomes the completion of literary labours, so it may be permitted to entertain the hope that some mind worthy of, and equal to, the task, may be incited by the boldness of this small beginning, to carry out the objects here suggested, by freely giving to the public such facts as may be yet saved from the rapidly increasing torrent

of modern habits and innovations. Some such efforts are now required, in order to prevent this sweeping into oblivion of many ancient legends, or historical recollections, which may yet create, in the scenes and localities of North Wales, an interest in some degree similar to that by which so many less interesting localities of Scotland have been consecrated and made classic by Sir Walter Scott.

ODDS AND ENDS.



SNOWDON.

Home of the eagle!—cradle of the storms,
Thy wonders when th' amazed eye surveys,
The soul enkindles, all the fancy warms,
And every look doth new emotions raise.
Thy giant bulk, thy towering height sublime,
Inspire the mind with reverence and awe;
And waft the winged thoughts beyond the time
When first the rising sun thy summits saw.
Oh say, did Nature, with one mighty throe
Up-heave thy shoulders from the lab'ring earth?
Didst thou to fire and water's union owe
The prodigy of thy stupendous birth?
If thus it was, oh! how can thought of man;
Can fancy's flight, or poet's dream convey,
Or sage's deepest meditation scan
The sights, the sounds, of that portentous day?

! The native name of Snowdon is "Creigan-yr-Eyri," meaning "Eagle's Cliff."