



LANGUM ; A VILLAGE IN "LITTLE ENGLAND
BEYOND WALES."

A FEW miles from the assize-town of Pembrokeshire, on the road to Her Majesty's Royal Dockyard at Pembroke, lies one of the prettiest villages in South Wales. Langum is situated on the borders of the magnificent harbour of Milford Haven, and near to the mouth of the River Cleddy. The waters of the broad Atlantic find their way to its beach, which always presents a lively appearance from the many nets and fishermen's boats lying about. It is a lovely spot! A splendid view meets the eye on every hand, your thoughts involuntarily turning to the beautiful scenery of the South of England, as well as to the lake-districts of the North; or they may fairly ramble away further still, even to the fairer clime of Southern Italy, so balmy is the air, so azure the sky. Standing at the entrance of one of its upland vales, bordered on either side with woods, interspersed with ruins, and enlivened here and there by groups of shepherds with their mountain-sheep, you look down upon a lovely sheet of water, here expanding itself into a noble stream, and fringed with rich foliage. Further on it is contracted into

the narrow Cloddy, flowing between sylvan banks, dotted with towers, ancient ruins, churches, and mansions, and reflecting from its glassy surface the varied forms of the surrounding hills. Strips of forest, straggling lines of detached trees, in some places run along the edge of the banks, or springing forth boldly from small fissures in their rocky sides, hang waving over the water below. As we have gazed upon the lovely scene, from nature our thoughts have been led up to nature's God, until we have shouted aloud, "O that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!" "O Lord, how manifold are Thy works! in wisdom hast Thou made them all."

This beautiful spot is inhabited by a race of hardy fishermen. Their cottages, which are in close proximity to the beach, are for the most part very neat and clean. The white-washed walls, the small sashes, the thatched roof, and the gardens attached to each, give them the appearance of farm-labourers' cottages in Kent, rather than the huts of weather-beaten seamen. The customs which prevail in this community are peculiar. Separate and distinct from the Welsh race, they claim descent from the Flemings, who landed at Milford, and took possession of that town, and also of Haverford, and possessed themselves of the surrounding country, in the reign of Henry I. From that time to this they have retained their distinctive character. You need not ask them the question, so often asked in the northern part of the Principality, *Fedrwch chiwi siarad Saesoneg?* ("Can you speak English?") as all of them are essentially English, so far as their language is concerned. These people, though now for the most part on a level with their Welsh neighbours, have retained for them, and their language, a sort of hereditary contempt. For instance, they affect not to know the name of a single individual inhabiting that part of a canton, or of a parish in which Welsh is spoken. To the inquiries of strangers they will answer, "*I donna knaw; a lives somewhere i' the Welshery.*" Among these people it is very seldom that a family unites with another by marriage outside the precincts of their own hamlet. Quaker-like, they intermarry with each other, so that they form a family of about five hundred souls. But in many instances the women keep their maiden-name after marriage. "Betty Philpen" is the daughter of "John Philpen," for instance; she marries "Joseph Skrymes;" but although recognised as the lawful wife of that goodman, she still retains her maiden-name, and is known in the village by that alone. They are known wherever they go, not only on account of their remarkable acuteness in business transactions, but their very physiognomy and garments proclaim their name. The short flannel dress, the red petticoat, the blue worsted stockings, the conical-shaped hat, and their constant companion, the pannier, as well as the interesting countenance, which is peculiarly theirs, with its oblong form, its gipsy-like colour, its Jewish eyes, and well-formed mouth, all bespeak their descent.

Men, women, and children are all engaged in one calling, and that

is fishing. Night and day their home is much on the deep, dredging for oysters, and catching fish for the markets of London and Bristol.

It was among this people that we spent a pleasant twelve months. We have often wended our way along their winding roads, and shady lanes, to tell its simple inhabitants the tale of a Saviour's love, and of "the better country" prepared for His people. Many times we have publicly addressed those hardy children of toil, as well as mixed up with, and made ourselves as one of, them, in their humble abodes. Hospitable as they are, the preacher was always received as an honoured guest; all were ready to receive him, and show him every kindness. Our first appearance there will not be easily forgotten. It was a time of unusual excitement among them. From the moment our horse's head came in sight, old and young were peeping through the windows, and standing at the doors of their cottages, to get a glimpse of the "young Minister;" while a flock of others was waiting at the neat little chapel to give him a hearty welcome, in the name of the whole people, to his new field of labour. Wesleyan Methodism has a stronghold in their hearts. We do not know whether it was first introduced into the village at the time of Mr. Wesley's tour through this part of the Principality; but it is known that he did preach at a place very near, and for very many years Methodism has been the religion of the majority of the inhabitants.

Their original mode of worship, the peculiar style of singing, the distinction which is rigidly observed in the disposal of the sittings for male and female worshippers, the gaudy dress of the young people, and their fiery enthusiasm, cannot fail to strike the most careless observer. In the latter respect they remind us of the warm-hearted Cornish miner, and of the Yorkshireman. Hearty responses are sure to be heard, and the tear is often seen under an impressive discourse directed to the conscience. Earnest and simple, they readily contribute their humble expressions of love to their Lord and Master; and, out of their little "all," give with a generous heart to His cause.

And although few in number, and that few almost unknown to the great body of their fellow Christians, yet in that retired hamlet on the banks of the Cleddy, sons and daughters of Methodism have their homes; some noble hearts are found there. We shall always remember them, and we now look forward with pleasing anticipation to the time when we shall meet in "the better country," and shall gather round the throne of one common Saviour.

Our woodcut gives a view of the upper part of the village, including the church on the right, and the Methodist chapel on the left, hand.

Bangor.

W. C.