

**BATLEMENT AND TOWER.** By Owen Rhoscomyl. New York : Longmans, Green & Co. \$1.25.

This new work, presumably by a Welsh writer, who has made some reputation abroad by another recent book, is handicapped by being one of too many historical novels. It is better, however—far better—than most of its kind, in that it is much more spirited. There is no lagging nor dragging here. The story of the young Welsh chieftain who comes to England seeking new fortunes on the eve of the Revolution that beheaded Charles I. is stirring, if not entirely coherent. It is not always clear who the fighters are or what they are fighting about ; but there is, nevertheless, a vivid realisation of ferocious warfare. The whole atmosphere of the work is filled with the tramp of marching armies, the rattle of arms, the blare of trumpets and the roll of drums. The great fight is the battle of Naseby, and a short extract will show how strong, and fresh, and fine the descriptive work is.

“ Back to back the grim remnant gathered ;  
heaps and lines of dead around them and the  
mound of slain within. There was no cry for  
quarter ; no answer to the eager shout of victory ;  
no taunt to follow the gibe. Stern as Doom,  
silent as Fate, they fought on in terrible silence,  
as if they had been a ghostly host in some awful  
dream.”

Had the work been more consistent in excellence and devoid of its many weakening lapses, and had the author's constructive skill equalled his descriptive power, *Batlement and Tower* might have approached greatness. It is eminently readable as it is, notwithstanding its incoherence, its counterplots, its trapdoors, its assassinations, and its abductions—the creaking and worn-out machinery of the old-fashioned romance.