NOTES ON BROMLEY AND THE NEIGHBOURHOOD.*

BY PHILIP NORMAN.

Bromley, no doubt, sprang up as a town originally from being the residence of the Bishops of Rochester, who were connected with the place for so many centuries. The earlier history of its church and manor has been very well written by Dr. Beeby in Volume XIII. of *Archæologia Cantiana* (not to mention previous authors), and by Mr. Clinch in his *Antiquarian Jottings*, published in 1889. I will not needlessly go over the old ground, but will confine myself, as much as possible, to a record of curious facts about this town and neighbourhood likely otherwise to be forgotten, and of changes in its physical and social conditions from the time that my family first came to reside here until my own boyhood. Much of the information contained in this Paper is derived from a manuscript written by my father, who was one of the original members of the Kent Archæological Society, a contributor to its publications, and keenly attached to his native district.

My great-grandfather James Norman settled at Bromley Common about the year 1755, in a house built at the beginning of last century, and known as the Rookery, which is still standing, though much transformed and added to. It had been previously occupied by the Chase family and others; the Chase arms remain, painted on the ceiling of the staircase.

Bromley was then a small country town, with two annual fairs and weekly markets, first granted as long ago as the reign of Henry VI. The houses in general were thatched. There was no continuous main street through the town as at present. It was not till 1830 that an Act was passed to make a new

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street from the corner near the Bell Inn at one end, to near the White Hart at the other, thus continuing the main street more or less in a straight line, and avoiding the former circuitous route by the market-place. As lately as 1832 the town was still unlighted; there was merely a lamp before each of the principal inns. In the earlier years of my great-grandfather's residence only two carriages were kept in the parish, his own and that of the Bishop of Rochester. Bishop Pearce, who died in 1774, used to have public days, when he entertained those of his friends and neighbours who chose to attend. The Archbishop of Canterbury kept up a similar custom at Lambeth till comparatively recent times. Pearce was succeeded by Bishop Thomas, who rebuilt the palace, which has since been considerably altered. The former palace buildings appear in Hasted's view, said to have been drawn before the year 1756.

Even up to the latter part of the eighteenth century the roads about Bromley were very bad, and greatly infested by highwaymen and footpads. We know how in 1652 John Evelyn, the diarist, when riding from Tunbridge Wells towards London, was robbed and left bound in a thicket within three miles of Bromley, at a place he calls Procession Oak. This from his description must have been not far from Locksbottom. Almost within living memory the body of a man was hanging in chains by the bit of old road now disused near Green Street Green, and in my childhood the gibbet or part of it still existed at Chelsfield Hall. I believe that the culprit had been executed for robbing the mail. West of Chislehurst cricket-ground a modern finger-post happens to mark the spot called "Hangman's Corner," where, if we may believe tradition, another gibbet once stood. When James Norman first lived at the Rookery, the road across Bromley Common was little more than a track, and he had posts put up and painted white to mark it out. If business or pleasure took him to London, he used to ride, carrying silver-mounted horse-pistols in his holsters, while an armed servant rode behind him, the roads about Blackheath being considered especially perilous. My grandmother, wife of George Norman (whose monument is in Bromley church),

when driving in her carriage about the year 1793, at the bottom of Chislehurst hill, was stopped and robbed by highwaymen, one of whom insisted on shaking hands with her, and in so doing pressed a valuable diamond ring, which she had on, into her finger, thereby causing her considerable pain; but he did not take it. She had also managed to secrete her watch under the cushion, so that they only got her purse, containing a small sum. This shaking of hands was meant as a sort of reconciliation, the idea being that the victim so treated would be less likely to give evidence against the robber. The coachman on this occasion imagined that the voice of one of the highwaymen was that of a resident at Bromley, and, after depositing my grandmother at home, rode off to call on this man, but found him in bed; he was therefore presumed to be innocent. In those days, and even until my own time, close carriages used to have a bulge at the back called a sword-case, originally, of course, intended to hold a sword. My father in his boyhood was told of a certain Dr. Leith, a physician at Greenwich, who, travelling about the country at all hours and often with money, made up his mind that he would not be robbed, and killed or wounded several assailants in self-defence. Shooter's Hill was a noted place of resort for these freebooters. One of the tales current in the neighbourhood was that Sir David Dundas, afterwards Commander-in-chief, while on his way to Flanders, where the army under the Duke of York then was, together with his aide-de-camp was attacked by footpads, and in the conflict which ensued one of the latter was shot through the nose. A surgeon to whom the man applied, recognized the nature of the wound; he was taxed with the crime, and finally, turning King's evidence, helped to convict his companions.

Bromley Common, which contained about 250 acres, was of considerable length, running south-east. It began not far from where the turnpike used to stand, on the Bromley side of the turning off to Hayes Ford. The narrow strip nearest Bromley, only about twenty acres in extent, was called the Shooting Common; and here in Tudor times must have been the butts, where, according to law, archery was practised by the parishioners. Here also early in the last century

were played some famous cricket matches, among the first of which we have detailed record. I will give two notices of them. In the *Grub Street Journal* for 31 July 1735 is the following: "Yesterday at the cricket match on Bromley Common, between the Prince of Wales and the Earl of Middlesex for £1000, the Londoners got 72 the first hands, the Kentish men 95. London side went in again and got only 9 above the Kent, which were got the second innings without one person getting out, by the Kentish men who won the match." And in a paper of 1737 we read that, "Yesterday was played on Bromley Common the second great match between the Kentish men and those of London and Surrey, when the former maintained their honour and beat their adversaries at one hand. The press was so great that a woman's leg was broken by the crowd." My father himself played on that part of the common in his young days, and saw good matches played there. Along the high road to the south-east the common widened, extending to Cooper's Farm, to Skim Corner, to Keston Mark, and Barnet Wood. The Rookery and Oakley House stood close to it. What is called the Cherry Orchard and an adjoining field formed a sort of island, and here was a pond called the Leech Pond. The old Westerham road took a more westerly direction than the present, as far as Bencewell. The common was covered with heath, fern, and low furze; no doubt there was broom on it also, that grows so well in the parish to which it gives a name. In parts snipe were plentiful, the ground being wet. About 1805 there was a military camp on the common, which lasted for several weeks. On the eastern side of the high road, between the Rookery and Oakley, stood two large pollard elms, called respectively the large and small Beggar's Bush. There must have been a sort of thicket here, for Bromley historians speak of the Beggar's Bush, as so-called, "probably from its being a place of secrecy for highwaymen and footpads," and add that the old road was not only dreary, but afforded every facility for the commission of robberies.

The earlier cricket matches to which I have referred were played without any regular local organization, but by the

beginning of this century, and some time before, local cricket clubs had come into fashion. In the year 1812, as there were some keen cricketers among the gentry of the neighbourhood, a club was started, after a preliminary meeting at the Plough Inn, on the road to Farnborough. A site for a cricket ground was at once selected in Bromley parish, on a part of the common between the present church of Holy Trinity and the Crofton Woods, now belonging to my nephew, which is still known as Prince's Plain. The name is not to be found in early maps; it is said to have been invented at the first meeting, because while the subject was under discussion, the Prince of Wales (then Prince Regent) drove by on his way to Tunbridge Wells. The Hon. Colonel Windsor (afterwards Lord Plymouth) was elected president, and my father, then aged 19, was the first treasurer. In the list of original members occurred the following well-known names: Aislabie, Barnard, Berens, Cator, Eden, Grote, Harenc, Jenner, Leigh, Maberley, Stone, and Wells. Matches continued to be played on Prince's Plain until the enclosure of the common, when the club (which had hitherto been called the Prince's Plain Club) moved up to Chislehurst, where it still flourishes as the West Kent Cricket Club. In the early part of this century, when our food supply was almost exclusively drawn from this country, and when—the population being much smaller—there was not the same necessity for open spaces, the feeling with regard to waste lands and commons was the very reverse of what it is now. The idea then most in vogue was that the greatest possible amount of food should be extracted from the soil for the benefit of the people. Thus we find Dunkin in 1815 remarking in the usual guidebook style that, "though in the summer, when the heath is first in bloom, Bromley Common is extremely beautiful, it cannot fail of producing regret in the mind of the spectator that so great a tract of land is unproductive." The common was enclosed in 1822, in consequence of an Act of Parliament which, no doubt, reflected public opinion. My grandfather had successfully opposed such a measure twenty-five years previously, and at length yielded with reluctance when he found that his opposition would have been of no avail. The hedges that bounded the old common still in some

places remain, and with the help of maps its limits can easily be traced.

To return to the town of Bromley. The church living was a rectory in 1537, when, by order of Henry VIII., it was appropriated to the Bishops of Rochester, who were told to "appoint, ordain, and sufficiently endow perpetual vicars." The clergyman, however, was of later years always called curate or minister, till the time of the present vicar, the Rev. A. G. Hellicar. It was the custom for the Bishop to grant leases of the rectorial manor, parsonage house, glebe land, and tithes. We learn from Lysons that John Younge was lessee in 1646. In 1706 the lease was in the hands of William Emmet, whose granddaughter brought it to Mr. John Innocent. Their daughter Eleanora was the second wife of my great-grandfather James Norman, and this estate and some freehold property in Bromley was her dowry. The lease was always for twenty-one years, renewable with a fine every seven years. It continued in the hands of my grandfather till 1828.

Not being able to add anything of interest to the accounts of Bromley Church by Dr. Beeby and others, I will here merely quote from an advertisement or proclamation issued by the churchwardens in June 1796, of which I have a rare, possibly a unique, copy. It illustrates the manners of the time, and seems to shew common sense and perhaps unconscious humour. After remarking that some of the inhabitants do not keep the Sabbath in the proper manner, they continue thus: "The law says 'that no tradesman, artificer, labourer, or other person shall exercise any worldly business or work of their ordinary callings on the Lord's day, except works of necessity or charity, on pain of every offender forfeiting five shillings or being publicly set in the stocks for two hours; and that no person shall publicly cry, shew forth, or expose to sale any wares, fruit, herbs, goods or chattels whatsoever on the Lord's day, on pain of forfeiting the same.' Crying and selling of milk before 9 in the morning and after 4 in the afternoon is excepted; and also mackerel, which may be sold on Sundays before and after divine service. The law likewise 'forbids all unlawful exercises or pastimes (such as gaming, and tossing up halfpence by rude boys and others), on pain

that every offender, being convicted within a month after the offence before one justice, shall forfeit for every offence three shillings and fourpence, or be set publicly in the stocks for three hours.' Persons continuing tippling in a public-house are liable to be fined, or set in the stocks for every such offence by the space of four hours. Drunkenness is also punished by statute with the forfeiture of five shillings or the sitting six hours in the stocks, by which time the statute, it is presumed, supposes the offender will have in some degree returned to a state of sobriety." The churchwardens finally endeavour to impress on the public their determination to enforce the law.

The two principal inns at Bromley have been from time immemorial the White Hart and the Bell; next in importance was the Swan, at the London end of the town. In the seventeenth century, between 1648 and 1672, when the need for small copper coins was felt throughout the kingdom, a large number of halfpenny and farthing tokens were issued by innkeepers and retail dealers, for local use. Among these were two from the White Hart, giving the names of two landlords, Thomas Ghost and Michael Lee, the second being dated 1664. Freeman, writing in 1832, says: "The greatest ornament perhaps to the place is the White Hart, one of the neatest buildings of the kind on the road from London to Hastings. The whole of the old front has been taken down, and the present front stands back from the road about 28 feet." It was then an important coaching inn, and continued to be so for many years—until my own childhood, when there was no railway nearer than Greenwich, and we used to get our supply of fresh fish by coach from Hastings. It has been said that in the palmy days of coaching upwards of 100 horses used to stand in the White Hart stables. The latest coachman of the old school who drove on the road between Bromley and London was Mr. Edwin Fownes, a splendid whip, who when the railway ruined his trade for a time kept the Crown public-house on Bromley Common. Afterwards modern coaching sprang up, and with his sons he helped to make it popular. Among driving men his name will not soon be forgotten. About the middle of this century, or rather earlier, when the late Mr. William Pawley was landlord of

the White Hart, he organized flower shows, and some first-class cricket matches in the White Hart Field at the back, also on at least one occasion in the large field between Freelands and the Palace. It was in the White Hart Field that Alfred Mynn and Felix played a single wicket match, 29 and 30 September 1846, Mynn winning by one wicket. A coloured lithograph of them on this occasion was produced by Felix, who, though a schoolmaster by profession, had much skill as a draughtsman. The big man's arm is placed lovingly on his rival's shoulder. The Bromley balls in the assembly room of that hotel are a pleasant recollection of my youth.

The Bell, like the White Hart, was a coaching house, but I think that here the posting business was more important. We all know how Miss Austen refers to this old hostelry in *Pride and Prejudice*, where she puts into the mouth of Lady Catherine the following words: "Where shall you change horses? Oh, Bromley, of course! If you mention my name at the 'Bell' you will be attended to." Within the recollection of persons not yet old a good posting business was still carried on here. Unless I am mistaken, the late Mr. Sutton continued to supply post-horses during the early sixties. At the entrance to the yard in my childish days were generally to be seen post-boys in their quaint costume, loitering about and waiting for a job, amidst the usual motley group of stable helpers. My grandmother, who died in 1853, used always to post to Southampton when in her old age she paid an annual visit to a sister residing there. The back of the Bell, which has been so lately rebuilt, presented a very picturesque appearance to the last. It must have been at least as old as the early part of the seventeenth century. The front was modernized about 1832, and a room on the London side added later, one of the carriage entrances being thus blocked up. Till the time of the railroad there were always three or four coaches which plied between London and Bromley only. Just within my memory dogs were much used for draught purposes about the neighbourhood of Bromley and elsewhere. They were sometimes brutally overdriven and knocked about, and at length their employment was prohibited by law, the penalty for a first offence being forty

shillings. The use of dogs as draught animals in England seems to have been of no great antiquity.

Fifty or sixty years ago, when the laws governing Parliamentary elections were by no means stringent, when the voting was open and continued for more than one day, an election for West Kent was a more picturesque affair than at present. The rival parties of course had their head-quarters at the Bell and the White Hart, the latter being the Tory house. There was not much talk as yet of Liberals and Conservatives. Bands paraded the town, flags flew, colours were displayed, plenty of drink was to be had for the asking. Such things led to an occasional skirmish, but I do not remember to have seen or heard of serious rioting. On one occasion Mr. T. L. Hodges, the Whig candidate, during the election made a progress through West Kent in a carriage and four, the postillions wearing light blue silk jackets. Among our notorieties at election time was Bob Sutton, the Chartist, a big man of shambling gait, who was always going to do something desperate—and never did it. He disliked the action of the Poor Law of 1834, in the local administration of which my father had taken an active part, and once when speechifying in Bromley High Street warned his hearers again and again that they would all end their days in "George Norman's workhouse." By trade he was a pork butcher, keeping a little shop near Storer's. He did not allow his public principles to interfere with business, but used in due season, when politics were dormant, to come to the Rookery and convert our pigs into the raw material for bacon, a performance in which I am ashamed to say that I took much interest.

Bromley in former generations was considered particularly healthy: for this reason many private schools were established here, of which that belonging to the Rawes family was the largest, containing at one time 150 boys, and existed for more than a century; a monthly magazine was kept up by the pupils as late as 1845. The house in the High Street where this school was carried on is now in the possession of Mr. Weeks. Mr. William Waring of Chelsfield was a pupil, and not long ago, when we examined the building together, he told me that its outward appearance had hardly changed

since his boyhood. In Wilson's *Description of Bromley* (date 1797), two other schoolmasters are named, Booth Hibbert and John Pieters. The former had the house and garden now occupied by Dr. Playfair; he bought it from my grandfather. Mr. John Pieters, a Fleming by descent, had the old house on Mason's Hill with the date 1660 in front, which now belongs to Mr. Soames. My grandfather had been at school there under a former master. In my own time Mr. Crook carried on a school of some reputation, in a house by the tenth milestone from London. It is next to Bromley House, once Colonel Tweedy's, and is now almost completely rebuilt. One of my elder brothers was with Mr. Crook, who had previously occupied Booth Hibbert's old house. The Bromley Academy, which far more recently was presided over by Mr. Thomas Morley, has been immortalized by Mr. H. G. Wells the novelist, his most distinguished pupil, who was born at No. 47 High Street, Bromley, 21 October 1866.

In the last century a girls' school was kept by Mrs. Hawkesworth, wife of the well-known writer, who was a friend of Dr. Johnson. It was probably owing to this friendship that the wife of the latter was buried at Bromley. But Johnson also knew the Rev. T. Bagshaw, a learned man, who was not only minister of Bromley (preceding Dr. Smith), but Chaplain of the College and Rector of South Fleet; he is mentioned more than once by Boswell. In my father's youthful days it was remembered that Dr. Johnson had visited the Rookery, and, as was natural, had found his way to the library there, then lately built. I have a manuscript copy of a hymn said to have been composed by Dr. Hawkesworth, and dictated to his wife about a month before his death in 1773. The old house in the High Street where the Hawkesworths resided is mentioned in Dr. Beeby's Paper; it was long ago pulled down. At the beginning of this century the most noted girls' school was that kept by Mrs. Chalklin at the Church House; she left the town before 1832. From that time for about twenty years the old red-brick house on the Bromley side of the Rookery, now known as Elmfield, was a girls' school kept by Miss Shepherd, a great friend of my parents. Among her pupils was Miss Dalbiac, who became sixth Duchess

of Roxburgh. This house had been occupied by a member of the Chase family, apparently the gentleman who so narrowly escaped a violent death at Lisbon during the earthquake of 1755, as recorded on his monument in Bromley Church.

One reads in Domesday of a mill at Bromley, of course a water-mill, where corn was ground for the manor. There is no authentic reference to a windmill in England until the next century. In 1291 two mills were here, of the estimated value of forty shillings. Possibly the site of the original corn-mill may be that described by Wilson in 1797. He says: "On the river Ravensbourne, close to the town, stands a mill many years used for grinding paper, but for the last two years it has been employed for grinding and polishing concave and convex mirrors from one to five feet diameter. The present occupier is Mr. Thomas Ribright, formerly an eminent optician in the Poultry, London. I received from the gentleman an invitation to visit his house and grounds. The situation of the mill is extremely pleasant; a large sheet of water with a pleasure boat upon it give an opportunity of enjoying one of the most pleasing prospects I ever beheld." So much for Mr. Wilson. I am not sure when the mill ceased to be used; it is not mentioned by Dunkin in 1815. The mill-pond still remains, near the foot of Martin's Hill, included in the grounds of what was formerly called Glassmill House, and is now known as Mill Vale, and occupied by Mr. H. Collins. There is a second and smaller pond less than a quarter of a mile due south; its overflow came into the main stream close to the moat of the ancient house called Simpson's. Many of us remember this building in a ruined state; it finally disappeared about 1869.

Of Bromley tradesmen an interesting list was published by Wilson. Most of the old names have now disappeared. Among those which continued till my time I would mention the following:—"Nicholas Alexander, butcher." There were three generations of this family in the business. They had the shop at the corner opposite the Bell, and were predecessors of Covell and Harris.—"James Bath, farrier." One of his descendants used to ease the dying moments of our cattle and horses, when I was still in the nursery.—

"George Battersbee, brazier." In the next generation Thomas Battersbee was a schoolmaster at Chislehurst; the Bromley business was continued for many years.—"John Dunn, upholsterer." I am glad to think that the Dunns still flourish at Bromley.—"Eaton, and Isard, butchers." Isard is a well-known Kentish name.—"John Lascoe, saddler." He was predecessor of W. H. Ingles, and started the excellent charity for poor tradesmen of the parish.—"Godfrey Stidolph, nursery-man." His descendants continued in that line of business. They had a nursery garden just beyond the College on the Bromley Road, and within my memory one on the Farnborough side of Holy Trinity Church, Bromley Common.—"Storer, gingerbread baker." His very quaint old shop in the High Street has just been modernized. I seem to remember the taste of a certain sweet called a "bull's-eye" supplied at this establishment.—"Westbrook, corn-dealer." Several of the family about here have been farmers and corn-dealers.

Among trades which strike one as old-fashioned are "Edward Costin and Thomas Kibblewhite, stagemasters," and "William Day, leather-breeches maker."

"William Draper, wheelwright," is the only person on the list whom I remember. When I was a little child, his son was carrying on the trade at the wheelwright's shop between Mason's Hill and the turnpike, and he, a blind old man, living at the cottage behind, used to walk backwards and forwards along the straight path which led to the high road, feeling his way. Sometimes he would smoke a long clay pipe or "churchwarden." I talked to him more than once, for we knew the family well. I remember his telling me that he had served under my grandfather, who was Captain of the Bromley Volunteers, enrolled at the end of last century when there was risk of French invasion. I daresay they both took part in the great Kentish Volunteer Review before the King, at the Mote, Maidstone, 1 August 1799. My grandfather's sword is carefully preserved.

The shop at Bromley that I remember best was that of Nash, afterwards Nash and Lukey, linen-drapers and haber-dashers, who carried on business on the east side of High Street, in a house now occupied as a provision dealer's; but

there were none of the Nashes here as early as 1797. Fifty or sixty years ago the leading people in this part of the county all dealt with Nash, his goods, or samples of them, being conveyed about for approval in a light cart. One of my earliest recollections is that of being taken into the shop parlour or room at the back, where sat a little old man, Benjamin, brother of Joseph. In this room dainties were provided for my benefit, while through the window with wondering eyes I saw the operation of brewing being carried on in a courtyard. I have since been told that Nash's home-brewed beer was excellent, and was given away freely to those who appreciated its merits.

Near the Bromley Common end of the town my father remembered a small shop where pins, needles, thread, and such commodities were sold, which was called the "Black Doll," and had hanging near the door a black doll dressed in white. This sign was generally used by rag and marine store dealers, perhaps because such men were in the habit of trading with sailors who brought back commodities from the dark-skinned people of distant lands.

I will now say something about manners and customs long ago obsolete which my father recollected, or of which there was tradition in his boyish days. Our predecessors were very fond of clubs, where they dined together, exchanged news, and sometimes no doubt drank hard. At Bromley in the latter part of last century there was a Beefsteak Club. A bottle of cut glass, marked with the initials B.S.C. and a gridiron, is still in the possession of our family. Then there was a Bench Club, formed originally of the magistrates attending the monthly Bench, held at the Bell. Other members, such as Dr. Scott, were afterwards admitted, and it lasted till my father's manhood. One celebrated club dined three or four times a year at the Black Boy, St. Mary Cray. This consisted originally of the subscribers to Sir John H. Dyke's hounds, such as my grandfather, Squire Chapman of Paul's Cray Hill (who owned the inn), Mr. Grote (father of the historian), living in the large white house afterwards called Shortlands, Stephen Tessier of Mount Misery, and others. On such occasions a haunch of venison from Lullingstone used

to form part of the entertainment. All these clubs laid in their own wine, port especially, and some of the "Bench Club" stock was in existence till near the middle of this century.

In my father's youth the time for the family dinner was from four till five. He did not remember a regular supper—though this, of a most substantial character, had been served a few years before his time—but he well recollected that a tray with compartments was always brought up about nine o'clock, containing some warm viands, as well as cold meat, tarts, etc. When he was a boy, ladies used hair-powder. Old and middle-aged gentlemen continued to do so for years afterwards, and had long hair behind tied in a pigtail. A little ground-floor room at the Rookery was the powdering room. Young men on very formal occasions were powdered; he had gone through the operation himself. A cocked hat when in full dress was essential; this became at length a folding *chapeau bras*. I am reminded that not a generation ago Earl Sydney, when he dined out, generally brought his high silk hat into the dining-room, which he handed to his servant, who waited behind his chair. Lord Richard Cavendish (uncle of the present Duke of Devonshire), who was living at 'Coopers,' Chislehurst, about 1865, also kept up a similar habit. Dressing a lady's hair at one time occupied three hours. Large sums were paid to hair-dressers. When the demand for their services exceeded the supply, the head sometimes had to be dressed long in advance. One effect of the French Revolution was to lessen the sale of hair-powder. Advanced Liberal politicians affected heads *à la* Brutus. Pitt's tax of 1795 on hair-powder must have dealt it the fatal blow, though, as we have seen, it lingered on for years. Embroidered coats and waistcoats and the wearing of swords were a little before my father's time. In his youth the ordinary dinner costume for a gentleman was a blue coat with metal buttons, white waistcoat, short breeches (either black or white), and silk stockings to match. The light shoes and pumps had buckles, which were also worn at the knee. Tight pantaloons with socks came in later. In the morning, breeches with gaiters or top-boots formed the common dress. The possession of top-boots was aspired to by every schoolboy as a patent of manhood.

Tight pantaloons and short boots called Hessians, after the light cavalry of Hesse, were also worn. The breeches were often of leather, and very tight. After the Battle of Waterloo the boots called Wellingtons and Bluchers were for a time the fashion. In the early part of the century neck-cloths used to be portentous. Enclosing a thing called a pudding, they lapped over the chin; sometimes several were worn.

My grandfather, as we have seen, hunted with Sir John Dyke's Foxhounds, kept at Lullingstone by subscription. He wore the hunt costume, a blue coat with hunting cap. The hounds were given up at the death of a later baronet; the West Kent hounds to some extent represent them. The Old Surrey, of long standing, was more of a cockney pack, but furnished good sport. Its country then extended as far as the site of the present Crystal Palace, and perhaps to places still nearer London. Among famous masters was Mr. John Maberley of Shirley House, whose term of office began in 1812. On account of a hunting dispute he fought a duel—the last that took place in our neighbourhood—with Colonel Hylton-Jolliffe of Merstham, who hunted the adjoining country. He was succeeded by Mr. Haigh, grandfather of Mr. Frederick Haigh, late of Bickley. His name is handed down to us in the well-known song:—

> It's good to drown care in the chase,
> It's good to drown care in the bowl,
> It's good to support Daniel Haigh and his hounds—
> Here's his health from the depth of the soul.

Another pack was kept by the Leighs of Bexley, which sometimes penetrated into Bromley Parish. My father remembered seeing it in the Great Meadow at the back of the Rookery. The Leighs were accused of poisoning pheasants, and their hounds were given up in consequence.

There were harriers at Sanderstead and elsewhere; and this reminds me of a great ally of my grandfather, the Rev. Henry Smith, D.D., who became Minister of Bromley in 1785, and in the latter part of his life also held the Rectory of Headley. He was a tradesman's son, born in Cumberland and educated at St. Bee's School and Queen's College, Oxford—a square burly man, of great strength of constitution. It

was said that he and his clerk could, on occasion, consume more alcohol without shewing signs of its effect than any two men in the parish. He was fond of hare hunting, and joining a few farmers, of whom Tom Soane of Milk Street was the leading spirit; they kept a small pack of harriers among them and hunted all the neighbourhood. I remember various hand-gates in the grounds behind the Rookery which were originally made to accommodate the Doctor. He was famed as a rider, and continued to hunt until, stricter views of clerical decorum coming into vogue, he received a strong hint from the Bishop that it was time for him to give up his sport. Dr. Smith was my grandfather's chaplain when the latter was High Sheriff of Kent in 1793. The manuscript of the sermon which he preached before the judges at Maidstone is now at the Rookery, and, curiously enough, is in my grandfather's handwriting. I should add that Dr. Smith married the daughter of Mr. James Wilson, who kept the Bell. He died in 1818, and on his death-bed sent my grandmother a ham of his own curing.

My grandfather must have begun his shooting career soon after 1770. His father thought the gamekeeper was the proper person to supply the kitchen, and that his occupation was not suitable for a gentleman. My grandfather's first instructor was Dicky Westbrook of Hook Farm, his first weapon a musket which James Norman had carried in 1745 to oppose the young Pretender. During my grandfather's youth there were some partridges, hares, and rabbits, more woodcocks, snipe on the common, and a very few pheasants. The woods were little intersected by footpaths, the shooter having usually to struggle through the thick undergrowth as best he could, and to take his chance of a snapshot. One of my grandfather's guns was bell-mouthed, something like a blunderbuss, for spreading the charge at close quarters. The dogs used were pointers, very wild spaniels, sometimes perhaps beagles. Efforts at game-preserving were as yet feeble, and though poaching was against the law and there were sometimes conflicts with poachers, for regular sportsmen who were of any social position the whole country was in a manner open. Thus old Mr. Tom Hankey the banker, who removed

about 1775 from Clapham to the house at Southborough, where in our time the late Mr. Archibald Hamilton resided (and the nucleus of which had originally been a wayside inn), first sent his keeper with a team of spaniels on trial, who found in one day nineteen woodcocks in the neighbouring woods. He had no land of his own, and my grandfather at that time had not much, yet these two went almost where they pleased—all about the woods at Crofton, to Keston, and even as far as Rushmore Hill beyond Pratt's Bottom. Other people, without the claim of being from the neighbourhood, acted in the same way. Sportsmen came from London and shot over the whole country until they were stopped, and I believe that this was considered a somewhat ungracious act. A Bromley barber named Woodham, a little plain man with one leg shorter than the other, used to trouble the game-preservers, especially Mr. Cator. He shot on all unpreserved land, and when a game-preserver had a party out, he would place himself just at the boundary on the chance of a pheasant. One of his successful stations was close to a windmill which formerly stood near the London road, to the north-west of Salubrious Range, in front of a break between two woods. The site afterwards belonged to Colonel Long, Lord Farnborough having got it by exchange with Cator. The mill with its appurtenances was then a separate property. Woodham eventually married a well-to-do widow, and quitted Bromley. The officers of the army in camp or quarters used to be great marauders, and stringent regulations were issued from time to time by the Horse Guards to check their filibustering propensities. It must be remembered that duels were then rife, and public opinion called on a gentleman, if challenged, to fight. It was therefore risky to interfere with a man of the sword. Still, intruders were sometimes brought to book, when they used, if possible, to conceal their names in order to escape prosecution, which took place in the superior courts. My grandfather had two or three actions, the last with a man named England, who kept a public-house in the Old Kent Road. I may note that the possession of a licence did not give a right to kill game everywhere. One had besides to possess a "qualification," namely, a certain quantity

of land, or to be the son of a person holding a certain rank. This law was absurd and generally violated, but it might be enforced, and gave rise to litigation. A close time for game, that is, a fixed term during which it should be unlawful to kill, originated, I believe, about 1750. The beginning of the season was the 14th of September during part of my grandfather's career; later, no licence was required for woodcock, snipe, or rabbit. Things were put more or less on their present footing by the reform of the game laws under Lord Grey's administration.

As may be judged from my previous remarks, in the last century and the early part of this, landlords generally hired gamekeepers to shoot for them. For that purpose there was a keeper at Langley then belonging to the Burrells, at Wickham Court, and one employed by the Bishop of Rochester. Burgess, the Bromley shoemaker, killed game for the Bishop during many years; his usual attendant was one of the Aylings, a famous cricketer. Even the Princess of Wales, when living at Blackheath, had a gamekeeper named Grubb (shoemaker at Lewisham), who used to shoot for her, though there was no land over which she could have had any right, except perhaps the Crown property at Eltham and Shooter's Hill. Baker, the gamekeeper at Langley, when going out to shoot, used to fire at all the jays and magpies he saw, under the impression that a dirty gun killed better than a clean one. In my father's youth polecats were numerous; there is still a "Polecat Alley" in the neighbourhood of Hayes Common. He heard Dr. Smith speak of otter hunting in the Ravensbourne when first the doctor came to reside here.

The connection of our neighbourhood with the illustrious Pitt family is a fact hardly to be overlooked. Hayes Place, now the property of Mr. Everard Hambro, had belonged in the seventeenth century to a branch of the Scotts of Halden, and in 1757 was bought by the elder Pitt, the great Earl of Chatham, who rebuilt the mansion, which has since been so much altered that, externally at least, there seems to be nothing of his time now existing except the stables. In 1766 he sold it to the Hon. Thomas Walpole, but shortly afterwards persuaded the owner to restore it to him, and here he spent

much of the evening of his life. He was brought to Hayes Place from Downing Street shortly after his fatal attack in the House of Lords, and died there some weeks later, 11 May 1778. The following letter to his illustrious son, written not eight months before his death, is little known and seems worth printing, not only for the sake of its topographical allusions, but from its interesting reference to Viscount Mahon, afterwards third Earl Stanhope, who had claims to be remembered not only as a politician, but as a man of science. He was son-in-law of the Earl of Chatham, and great-grandfather of our esteemed President:—

"Hayes, 22 Sep. 1777.

"How can I employ my reviving pen so well as by addressing a few lines to the *hope* and *comfort* of my life, my dear William? You will have the pleasure to see under my own hand that I mend every day, and that I am all but well. I have been this morning to Camden-place, and sustained most manfully a visit and all the idle talk thereof for above an hour by Mr. Norman's clock; and returned home untired to dinner, where I ate like a farmer. Lord Mahon has confounded, not convinced, the incorrigible *soi-disant* Dr. Wilson. Dr. Franklin's lightning, rebel as he is, stands proved the more innocent, and Wilson's nobs must yield to the pointed conductors. On Friday Lord Mahon's indefatigable spirit is to exhibit another incendium to the Lord Mayor, Foreign Ministers, and all lovers of philosophy and the good of society, and means to illuminate the horizon with a little bonfire of 1200 fagots and a double edifice. Had our dear friend been born sooner, Nero and the second Charles would never have amused themselves by reducing to ashes the two noblest cities in the world. My hand begins to demand repose, so with my best compliments to Aristotle, Homer, Thucydides, Xenophon, not forgetting the civilians and law of nations tribe, adieu my dearest William!

"Your ever most affectionate father,

"Chatham."

Hayes Place was sold by Lord Chatham's heirs in 1785. William Pitt, the younger, who had been born there and was attached to the neighbourhood, that very year purchased Holwood, which he had known since he was a boy; and by an agreement with the vestry to pay £10 a year to the poor of Keston, got leave to enclose a large slice of Keston Common

and to throw it into his park—another proof of the indifference of our predecessors to open spaces. Pitt also turned the road and laid out money on the grounds, unfortunately obliterating part of the ancient camp there. In 1801 or 1802, being much in debt, he sold Holwood, which, after the mortgage on it was paid, brought him £4000. It is remarkable that my father, who died less than seventeen years ago, recollected distinctly being taken by my grandfather, in company with Mr. P. J. Thellusson of Plaistow Lodge (afterwards first Lord Rendlesham), to call on Pitt at Holwood. The great man was not at home, but as they drove away they saw his carriage at some distance. It stopped at the foot of the hill, and he walked up, perhaps to escape his visitors. The house in which Pitt lived was pulled down by Mr. Ward, a subsequent owner, in 1823; he rebuilt it further east.

A famous inhabitant of Bromley at the beginning of this century was James Scott, the medical man, who, beginning as a local practitioner, gained an immense reputation, his mental powers almost amounting to genius, while he inspired respect and love among all who knew him. He introduced a method of applying adhesive plasters and bandages, which was generally adopted not only in England, but elsewhere. He told my father that he made in one year over £11,000, and he left a fortune of more than £100,000. Many well-to-do people settled here to be under his care. Some of the older villas on Bromley Common were built for his patients. His son John Scott followed in his footsteps, but, giving up local practice, became a distinguished London surgeon. Scott's dressing and Scott's ointment are still known to every student of surgery. The son died comparatively young; his widow resided for many years at the Rectory or church house.

From mention of the building on what had been Bromley Common I am led to consider the population of the parish. Lysons, after studying the register, gives births and burials from 1580 to 1589 which would imply that the population was then about a thousand. In 1811, when the second general census took place, it was only 2965, and there was no great change till after the enclosure of the common. Building then began to some extent on the former waste, so that by 1841 the

population had increased to 4325. During the next decade schools were given up, causing a decrease of nearly 200. The departure of the Bishop of Rochester must also have had a depressing effect on the town. The last who occupied the Palace was Bishop George Murray, a man much beloved and of great influence, which he always exercised for good. His see being at that time a very poor one, he also held the deanery of Worcester; it had been previously the custom for Bishops of Rochester to hold other preferment. He married Lady Sarah Hay-Drummond, daughter of the Earl of Kinnoull. Among his sons are Canon Francis Murray of Chislehurst and Sir Herbert Murray, K.C.B., late Governor of Newfoundland. It is perhaps worthy of note that he was one of the last bishops who wore an episcopal wig. Archbishop Sumner, however, is known to have preached in one as late as 1859. Bishop Murray left the Palace about 1843, and it was bought by the late Mr. Coles Child in 1845-46.

We all know how, since the advent of railways, the whole face of the country has been changed. We have become suburban; in course of time, perhaps, we shall be absorbed and assimilated by that all-devouring monster London. The district may gain somewhat—a sort of importance as part of a huge mass—but it must inevitably suffer, as it has suffered already, by the loss of picturesqueness, of old land-marks, and interesting local traditions. We should therefore do our utmost to record such things while there is yet time, or in a few years even the remembrance of them will have passed away for ever.