

Admiral Byng was never married, and at his decease the estate came to his nephew, George Byng, Esq., whose eldest son, also George, was for upwards of half a century M.P. for Middlesex, and who died in 1847. Upon the death of his widow, Wrotham Park reverted to his brother John, a gallant Peninsular officer, who was in 1835 created Baron Strarford, and in 1847 advanced to an earldom; and from him it descended, in 1860, to his son, the present peer, who was well known in

his day on the turf, and has held several Court and administrative appointments.

At the southern extremity of the park is Hadley Common, where we meet with the obelisk or pillar set up to commemorate the battle of Barnet; but of this we shall have more to say in the next chapter.

Christ Church, adjacent to the town of Barnet, but in the parish of South Mimms, was built in 1852, at the expense of the late Captain Trotter, of Dyrham Park, but has since been enlarged.



HIGH STREET, HIGH BARNET.

CHAPTER XXXII.

HIGH BARNET.

"I will away towards Barnet presently."—SHAKESPEARE, *Henry VI.*, III., Act V., Sc. 1.

Situation and Extent of Barnet—Its Etymology—The Manor—General Appearance of the Town—Census Returns—Markets and Fairs—The Parish Church—The Grammar School—The old "Crown Inn"—Jesus Hospital—Almshouses and Charitable Institutions—The Town Hall—Barracks—Chapels and Meeting-houses—Ravenscroft Park—The "Physic Well"—Historical Associations—Inns and Taverns—The Battle of Barnet—The Obelisk.

THE small busy town of High Barnet stands at a fork where the road to Elstree and Watford branches off from the Great Northern road, along which Dick Turpin used to ride; and the long High Street still shows marks of having been a street of inns and posting-houses, as being in the old coaching days the first stage out of London on the road both to York and Manchester, for those roads diverge just beyond the northern end of the town.

The town stands high and "wind-swept," extending along a ridge which commands distant views in every direction, and it is from this circumstance that it acquired the prefix of "High." Mr. Thorne, in his "Environs of London," says it is the belief of the older natives that "Barnet stands on the highest ground between London and York." But this, we fancy, can hardly be the case. The town is also called Chipping Barnet, from its