

whom he had lived on affectionate terms for forty-three years, passed away. He felt lonely and desolate in the midst of shows and tournaments; and his depression of spirits, coupled with the infirmities of old age, brought him to his end in 1598, and in his seventy-eighth year.

At his death Theobalds and the neighbouring estates passed into the possession of his youngest son, Sir Robert Cecil, who became Earl of Salisbury soon after the accession of James I. He not

The king had dined early in the day with Sir Henry Cocks at Broxbourne, and was accompanied by Sir Edward Denny, High Sheriff of Essex, and many of the Scottish and English nobility. An eye-witness of the reception, John Savile, thus describes the scene:—"As his Highness was espied coming towards Theobalds, the concourse of people was so frequent, every one desiring a sight of him, that it were incredible to tell of. And it was wonderful to see the infinite number of horse-



OLD THEOBALDS PALACE.

(From an Engraving in the "Gentleman's Magazine," 1836. See page 324.)

only succeeded to his father's country seat, but, like him, held the highest offices of state. He became Prime Minister to Queen Elizabeth, and was confirmed in that office by King James. Although the talents of Sir Robert were not equal to those of his father, yet he was the ablest statesman of his time. In three successive years he was made Baron of Essenden, Viscount Cranbourne, and Earl of Salisbury. In order to conciliate the favour of the new sovereign, Sir Robert embraced the earliest opportunity of honouring him. Accordingly, when his Majesty came from Scotland to take possession of the throne of England, in May, 1603, Sir Robert Cecil gave him a noble reception and princely entertainment at Theobalds.

men and footmen that went from the city of London that day thitherwards, and likewise from the counties of Kent, Surrey, Essex, and Middlesex, besides other counties. . . . When we were come to Theobalds, we understood his Majesty to be within the compass of three-quarters of a mile from the house. At which tidings we divided ourselves into three parts, each one taking a place of special note, to see what memorable accidents might happen within his compass: one standing at the upper end of the Walk, the second at the upper end of the first court, and the third (myself) at the second court's door; and we made choice of a gentleman of good sort to stand in the court that leads into the hall, to take notice