

laid, is universally sure. How few are allowed an equal time to probation! How many by their lives appear to presume upon more! To preserve the memory of this person, and yet more to perpetuate the lesson of her life, this stone was erected by voluntary contributions."

The present vicarage stands nearly opposite the church, and overlooking Martin's Hill, an open space to the west of the churchyard, which has been lately secured to the town by the exertions of the residents as a public recreation-ground. Owing to probable encroachments, and the possibility of its being split up into building plots, the Local Board, with a little outside assistance, purchased the freehold from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and the hill is now held in perpetuity for the benefit of the town. From this spot a fine view is obtained over Beckenham, Hayes, Sydenham, and the valley of the Ravensbourne.

In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1747 is the following account of a curious archaeological discovery in the churchyard here:—"In the year 1733 the present clerk of the parish church of Bromley, in Kent, by his digging a grave in that churchyard, close to the east end of the chancel wall, dug up a funeral crown, or garland, which is most artificially wrought in filagree work with gold and silver wire, in resemblance of myrtle (with which plant the funeral garlands of the ancients were composed), whose leaves are fastened to hoops of larger wire of iron, now something corroded with rust, but both the gold and silver remain to this time, very little different from their original splendour. It was also lined with cloth of silver, a piece of which, together with part of this curious garland, I keep as a choice relic of antiquity."

St. John's Church, in Park Road, was consecrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1880.

The growth of the parish necessitated in 1841 the building of a new church at Bromley Common, about a mile out of the town, on the Tonbridge road. It is an ugly Gothic edifice, dedicated to the Holy Trinity, built of flint, with stone dressings, and consisting of a nave, transepts, and dwarf towers. In the fields behind the church the Bromley races and steeplechases have been held for many years.

Bromley Palace, formerly the residence of the Bishops of Rochester, lies just outside the town, between Widmore Road and the railway. The approach to it is by a lodge opposite the School of Science and Art, and the carriage-drive passes through a fine avenue of lime-trees. As stated above, the Manor of Bromley was given to the Bishops of Rochester as far back as the eighth

century. Few estates in England can boast of having the same owners in A.D. 840 and 1840. In the turbulent reigns of the early Plantagenet kings it frequently changed hands; and about the middle of the seventeenth century it passed out of the possessions pertaining to that diocese. However, in 1660 Charles II. restored it again to its lawful owner, the Bishop of Rochester; and thus it remained as Church property till 1845, when it was purchased by Mr. Coles Child, who, in right of it, is lord of the manor.

The old palace, or manor-house, was probably erected about the year 1100, after the decision of Archbishop Lanfranc as to the area of the manor. It underwent many alterations at the hands of its successive occupants. Bishop Sprat, in 1669, restored a considerable portion of the original building, as did also Bishop Atterbury.

The palace was rebuilt by Bishop Thomas in 1775, as we are told by an inscription under the arms of the see of Rochester, which are carved in stone above the entrance-door. The house is a thoroughly substantial structure of that date, the red bricks of which its two storeys consist being relieved by stone dressings. It is built on a slope in a small park near the road, and closely adjoining the town. The park has fine elms and a pleasant avenue of limes leading to the house. The most noticeable feature in the house is a fine square central hall and staircase of dark oak. On the left of the entrance-door is the old chapel, consecrated in 1701; it is a dull, heavy room, and might almost be called gloomy, the ceiling being low and the windows small. In the porch is a scene, painted in glass—John Frindsbury, Rector of Bromley in 1328, excommunicating the Bishop of Rochester with bell, book, and candle, much as in our own days Bishop Phillpotts of Exeter "excommunicated" Archbishop Sumner.

On the re-arrangement of the see of Rochester the manor passed into the hands of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and the episcopal residence was transferred to Danbury, near Chelmsford, in Essex, and Bromley Palace became the seat of Mr. Coles Child, as mentioned above. This gentleman enlarged it, and otherwise improved it. The park front wears a greater air of antiquity than it really possesses, in consequence of the profusion of ivy with which it is covered.

The grounds in the rear of the palace are tastefully laid out, and the lawn is adorned by one of the finest and largest Portugal laurels in the kingdom. Its circular branches spread to the ground on all sides, and form within a leafy bower quite impervious to the rays of the summer sun.