

this is probably incorrect, as his son John, afterwards second Lord Chatham, was born here in the previous year, though possibly his father may only have been renting the house. Mr. Timbs is in doubt as to the exact date of the purchase, but thinks that in all probability the great orator bought it about the time of his marriage, in 1754. Be this as it may, he gives a view of Hayes Place as a frontispiece to his volume. It appears to be a plain, heavy, solid, and substantial structure, of a

is varied by a little brook, which trickles through it on its way to join the Ravensbourne. On this spot the "great commoner" centred all his affections. His original purchase consisted of the old mansion, which he soon pulled down, and a few acres of ground, to which he soon made fresh additions, for he possessed good taste in landscape gardening. Two smaller country houses he bought from his neighbours in the first few years of his ownership, absorbing their grounds into his



HAYES PLACE IN 1760, FROM A CONTEMPORARY PRINT.



LORD CHATHAM.

large rural rectory. It is square, and has a high roof. The windows are small, and in the centre is a portico, with its top railed round, so as to form a sort of balcony. In other respects there is no feature to describe. It commands no distant view, being hemmed in by trees on every side. The park surrounding the house

type very common in the suburbs of London, apparently of the early Georgian era, and not unlike a very

own. One of these houses he soon pulled down; the other he kept as a sort of nursery, joining it to his own dwelling by a covered way; and it was in this house, and not in Hayes Place itself, that his favourite son William, afterwards the "heaven-born" prime minister of George III., first saw the light of day, in May, 1759. "His children," writes Walpole, "he could not bear under the same roof, nor communication from room to room, nor whatever he thought promoted noise. A winding passage between his house and the children was built with this same view." All traces of the second house and of the connecting passage have long ago passed away.

Yet such was the caprice of Pitt that in 1766 he sold Hayes to the Hon. Thomas Walpole, who