wing was laid by the Duke of Edinburgh, this being the first visit of royalty to Croydon since the reign of Elizabeth. From the date of its foundation, in 1867, to the present time, nearly 60,000 patients have been relieved in this institution. Though named the Croydon Hospital, its patients are not confined to that town and the surrounding neighbourhood, but, being the only general hospital between London and Brighton, it opens its doors to large numbers inhabiting that extensive district.

Besides the above-mentioned charitable institutions, bequests have been left by various persons for the benefit of the poor of the parish, who receive the same in money or bread.

CHAPTER XX.

CROYDON (*continued*).—THE TOWN AND SUBURBS.

"Oh! the rustics of Roydon!
Oh! the jolly colliers of Croydon."—PATRICK HANNAY, 1622.

Colliers, or Charcoal-burners—The "Sancy Collier of Croydon and the Devil"—References to the Colliers of Croydon by early Play-wrights—Condition of Croydon in the Reign of Elizabeth—Its Appearance in the present day—An Ancient Mill—The Bourne Brook—Croydon receives a Charter of Incorporation—Markets and Fairs, &c.—Census Returns—Railway Communication—The First Iron Tramway—Sanitary Condition of Croydon—The Town Hall—The Market House—Public Hall, &c.—Breweries and Manufactories—Croydon Union—The Barracks—Churches and Chapels—The Cemetery—Schools—Coursing Meetings—Noted Residents—Subordinate Manors of Croydon—Bensham—Whitehorse—Haling—Croham—Norbury—Ham—Colliers' Wood—The Freeing of Coulsdon Common—Discovery of Anglo-Saxon Remains—Duppas Hill—The North Downs.

"DURING that long period which preceded the landing of the Romans in Britain, the aspect of Croydon, doubtless, was very different from what it now is. Towards the south probably were, as there still are, tracts of heath and chalk lands, whose arid soil and iron-bound surface disqualified them for the production of other trees than those of a stunted growth; but mile upon mile, eastward and westward and northward, stretched the primeval forest, as yet uncleared by the axe. Through the lower parts of this leafy wilderness coursed unruly streams that, swollen in the rainy winter time, or flooded by the intermittent Bourne, . . . would overflow every impediment that arrested their progress. . . . . Meres and reedy stagnant pools abounded in the undrained surface of ancient Croydon. . . . . The wolf, the bear, the fox, the badger, and the wild cat, sought and obtained an asylum in the gloomy recesses of those woods; and the heron, bittern, snipe, and water-rail, were busy among the rushes and flags of the ponds which in our time have become clean meadows." *

Even so lately as two centuries ago Croydon was noted for its "colliers," as the charcoal-burners were called in the days before London was well provided with coal, or, as it was styled, sea-coal. From an old book, privately printed and without author's or printer's name, quoted *in extenso* in *Notes and Queries*, June 24th, 1882, we take the following extract:—

"We must all be aware of the comfort derived (from coal) and the indispensable necessity of coal in producing our great manufacturing and engineering wealth, and also that coal has not been developed for our use more than two centuries, and that before that our ancestors used to burn wood in their fire-places. But in preparing the more luxurious dainties of the table they required a more intense heat to prepare their gourmand dishes. Now, the City of London and their guilds of trades were foremost in these grand banquets, and they needed charcoal, and consequently charcoal burners, to produce that important auxiliary to aid in the preparation of their feasts. The men so employed were called 'colliers'—the same name that has descended to their fellows and all employed in coal-mines in procuring our grand motive power—fuel.

"It is most probable that London required charcoal long before any of our provincial cities and towns, for we find from the early writers that after the guilds of trades which flourished in Venice, Holland, and Belgium, &c., London became the greatest city for the establishment of guilds or companies."

It appears from this book that in the reign of Edward VI. there lived at the farm-house, still called Collier's Water, a noted collier named Grimes, whose range of the Beulah Hills afforded ample timber for his trade of collier, and the water in his stream for damping out the charcoal kiln. At this time the palace was occupied by Archbishop Grindal, who, disliking the constant smoke, sent his servants to seek out the cause of it, and, if possible, to suppress it. But Master Grimes would not put out his kiln, even at the bidding of the Archbishop, who there-

* Anderson's "Chronicle of Croydon."