

half a mile from the Waddon Station, and three times that distance from Wallington Station, on the Epsom branch of the London, Brighton, and South-Coast Railway. There is also another station in Beddington Lane, about two miles further north, on the Wimbledon and Croydon line. Altogether, Beddington village seems to have been completely eclipsed by its "great house," called Beddington Park, and the parish church close by. In 1871 the population did not exceed 1,500, to which about a thousand has been added during the next decade. Besides the Female Orphan Asylum—whose sphere of usefulness was transferred hither in 1865 from the Westminster Bridge Road—there are in the parish some almshouses for the benefit of poor persons, called St. Mary's Hospital, which were built as a memorial to the Rev. James Hamilton, who was nearly twenty years rector of this parish, and who died in 1860. Additions have been made to these almshouses as a memorial of Sir Henry and Lady Bridges, of Beddington House; and another house was added in 1870 by Dr. Culhane, in memory of his deceased wife; and the quadrangle has been completed by the erection of a house by Mrs. Marianne Hamilton, in memory of her husband.

Beddington, as we shall presently see, is chiefly remarkable from its connection with the knightly family of the Carews. The park is still famous for the magnificence of its trees; and Mr. Smee, in his work entitled "My Garden," gives a drawing of "Queen Elizabeth's Oak," a leafless, and almost branchless, stump, which was ruthlessly removed to make some ugly new watercourses, and was carried to its last abode in a carpenter's yard at Croydon.

The windings of the Wandle in this park were much curtailed by Mr. Bridges, the present owner, though his alteration of its serpentine course can scarcely be said to have added fresh charms. The park is flat, but the trees at its south-west are fine. Under the Carews the park was filled with deer, but they were sold in 1852.

The great house faced the west, as does also its successor. With the exception of the great hall, no portion of the old mansion remains, and the original house, which was erected by Sir Francis Carew, and in which he twice had the honour of receiving the visits of Queen Elizabeth, was rebuilt—with the exception of the great hall—about 1709, at which time Beddington was in the possession of Sir Nicholas Carew, who was created a baronet by Queen Anne. This second house was a brick edifice with stone dressings, and consisted of a centre and two deep wings, forming three sides of a square, the intermediate area being enclosed from the grounds by iron railings. The

north wing was not habitable, the whole interior having, as stated above, been destroyed by fire soon after it was finished, and never restored. As it stood till 1865—when it was in the main pulled down in order to convert it to its present purposes as an asylum for female orphans—the house, though dismantled, was considered a good example of the domestic architecture of the Queen Anne period. "With the church, which adjoined it, backed by the majestic elms in the churchyard," writes Mr. James Thorne, in his "Environs of London," "it was one of the most picturesque, as well as one of the staliest, mansions of the old English gentry in the home counties. Of the interior, the finest feature was the great hall, 61 feet long, 32 wide, and 46 to the crown of the rich original open timber roof. 'A brave old hall,' Horace Walpole \* termed it. . . The lower part was re-panelled when the house was re-built, but the roof remains unaltered." It is impossible to enter this hall without being transported in memory to the dining halls of Christ Church and of Wadham College, Oxford, to both of which it bears a very near resemblance.

This hall, which still forms the central part of the building, is an elaborate example of Elizabethan workmanship, and is thus described in Brayley's "Surrey":—"The roof is constructed of oak, in the manner of our college halls; the principal ribs spring from large carved brackets, gilt, and form an equilateral pointed arch, which, being underset with smaller ribs, assumes a trefoil character; over each arch is a strong beam, forming a brace with the rafters. The flooring is composed of lozenge-shaped slabs of black and white marble, and the walls are wainscoted with oak in panels; those above the windows are decorated with paintings of military and naval trophies, executed in imitation of bronze. Over the door on the south side is a large boldly-carved and finely-embazoned shield of the Carew arms (in twelve quarterings), supporters, and crest, together with an escutcheon of pretence on the nombril point, viz. :—*Arg.* three fleurs-de-lis, in bend, between two cotises, *gules*; and the motto, '*Nil consistere sibi!*' On the opposite wall, above the fireplace, is a carved trophy, in very bold relief, which exhibits almost every kind of military implement, whether of ancient or modern warfare, known in Elizabeth's reign. The old fireplace has been filled in with coving, &c., and and-irons (3 feet 6 inches in height) substituted; the ends are of brass, and each ornamented with a demi-savage, supporting an eagle. On the great

\* See p. 190.