

"Fifteen glad miles—road, common, or dell—
My pretty grey Brenda has carried me well ;
And blest be the calms and the solitudes there
Among the young leaves in the sweet spring air.
And hundreds of happy thoughts beside
Galloped with me in my Epsom ride.

"Nothing reck I for the race itself,
Is rogues with their poison and fools with their pelf ;
And as for its covetous follies and sins,
I care not a button which horse wins.
Colours, and riders, and all beside
Are nothing to me in my Epsom ride.

"But friends at lunch in their dusty drags,
And gay satin jockeys on swift, sleek nags,
And moving acres of human faces
Watching their fate in the feverish races ;
These are electric flashes beside
Dotting the day of my Epsom ride.

"Dream not thou that the day 's ill spent,
For my heart has been cheered and my mind unbent ;
And here in the saddle coming along
I've jotted you, friend, this Derby song,
To prove that Pegasus trotted beside
My pretty grey mare in my Epsom ride."



TATTENHAM CORNER. (See page 261.)

CHAPTER XXXIII.

CHESSINGTON, TALWORTH, LONG DITTON, THAMES DITTON, AND MOLESEY.

"The plain was grassy, wild, and bare—
Wide, wild, and open to the air."—TENNISON.

Situation and Boundaries of Chessington—The Church—Charitable Bequests—Castle Hill—Descent of the Manor—Hook—Barwell Court—Talworth—Long Ditton—Population—The Church—Descent of the Manor—Situation and Boundaries of Thames Ditton—Railway Communication—Population, &c.—The Parish Church—Schools and Almshouses—William and Mary Howitt—Ancient Weapons found here—Boyle Farm—The Dandies' Fête—Lord St. Leonards—Ditton House—The Swan Tavern—Thames Angling Preservation Society—A Famous Angler—Lines composed by Theodore Hook in a Point off Thames Ditton—Early History of the several Manors of Thames Ditton—Claygate—Imber Court—East Molesey—Population, &c.—The Church—The "Spa"—West Molesey—The Church—Cemetery—Molesey Hurst—Richard Baddeley the Actor—Molesey Grove—The Right Hon. J. Wilson Croker—Sir Robert Walpole—Other Residents—Appa Court.

THE long triangular tract of country which lies between Epsom and Kingston, for some reason best known to the natives of those parts, is but little known to Londoners. It has not the attractions of a breezy down, nor those of a rural valley ; there is no navigable river to water it, acting at the