

league to league of its progress, the towers of palaces and of churches which for centuries have been hallowed by ennobling and holy associations; which flows by the favourite haunts of genius, or winds among the antique halls of consecrated learning; and which, after sweeping beneath the gigantic arches, domes, and temples of a vast metropolis, gives itself to the burthen of fleets and navies, and bears them magnificently forth to the ocean: such an object must necessarily be one of the highest interest to any one capable of appreciating the mentally beautiful and sublime; but when natural glories invest the same objects with a thousand independent attractions, who need be ashamed of owning an overpowering enthusiasm in the actual survey?"

Charles Dickens also gives his testimony—less full and free, it is true, than the foregoing. "We grant," says he, "that the banks of the Thames are very beautiful at Richmond and Twickenham, and at other havens, often sought, though seldom reached, by cockney excursionists."

"The royal parks of Richmond and Bushey," we find in "Picturesque Europe," "furnish convincing illustrations of the manner in which art judiciously applied may be made to assist nature. The tangled brakes, plenteous ferns, flower dells, tastefully-bestowed shrubs, and trees great and small, are an untold boon to the City-pent thousands of the metropolis, and an attraction to visitors from every clime. In Richmond Park there is a marvellous intermingling of the old and new. By the sides of irregular groups of time-worn giants of the forest, carrying us back to those very early times indicated by the mention, in the reign of Henry VIII., of certain portions as 'the new park,' there stand vigorous plantations of maturing and matured trees that prove the fostering care of more recent guardians. It is possible, taking care that the keeper's eye is not upon us, to wander away into absolute solitude, where the thick underwood conceals hare, rabbit, and pheasant, and where the graceful hind and fawn repose in undisturbed confidence, with rare and luxuriant ferns and mosses as their carpet. . . . Ivy and lichens conceal the deep wrinkles of age upon the knotted pillars which uphold the latter; and in its season the foliage is sufficiently dense to provide unbroken shade. It may truly be said of all woods and forests that, as a rule, 'distance lends enchantment to the view;' and, happily for the visitor, the public pathways which intersect Richmond Park seem to have been specially designed to show off the wooded portions to the best advantage."

Another author writes:—"The amateur painter

may also here find abundance of subjects on which to exercise his pencil or gratify his taste for nature and art: admiration of the former and knowledge of the latter being alike called into action by the scenery around him. The placid stream verifying Denham's description—

'Strong without rage, without o'erflowing, full'—

presents on one side emerald turf of the finest texture and brightest verdure, lofty elms, interspersed with chestnuts, poplars, acacias, and all the lighter shrubs, shading noble mansions with hanging gardens, and elegant cottages *ornée*; while on the other is seen the ancient village of Richmond, rising terrace-wise, and exhibiting every form of stately and of rural dwelling. A peculiar air of cheerfulness everywhere pervades the scene, which is alike remote from the noise and confusion attendant on the metropolis, and the sequestration which belongs to isolated dwellings in more remote districts. The pleasures of society and the tranquility of retirement are nowhere better combined and completely enjoyed than in this beautiful village and its vicinity."

The poet Thomson, who resided for some years at Richmond, thus sang its praises in "The Seasons":—

"Which way, Amanda, shall we bend our course?  
The choice perplexes. Wherefore should we chuse?  
All is the same with thee. Say, shall we wind  
Along the streams, or walk the smiling mead?  
Or court the forest glades? or wander wild  
Among the waving harvests? or ascend,  
While radiant summer opens all its pride,  
Thy hill, delightful Shene? Here let us sweep  
The boundless landscape: now the raptur'd eye,  
Exulting swift, to huge Augustus send;  
Now to the sister-hills\* that skirt her plain;  
To lofty Harrow now; and now to where  
Majestic Windsor lifts his princely brow.  
In lovely contrast to this glorious view,  
Calmly magnificent, then will we turn  
To where the silver Thames first rural grows.  
There let the feasted eye unwearied stray;  
Luxurious there, rove through the pendant woods  
That nodding hang o'er Harrington's retreat;  
And stooping thence to Ham's embowering walks,  
Beneath whose shades, in spotless peace retired,  
With her the pleasing partner of his heart,  
The worthy Queensberry yet laments his Gay,  
And polished Cornbury woe the willing muse,  
Slow let us trace the matchless vale of Thames;  
Fair winding up to where the muses haunt  
In Twit'nam's bowers, and for their Pope explore  
The healing god; to royal Hampton's pile,  
To Clermont's terraced height, and Escher's groves,  
Where, in the sweetest solitude, embraced  
By the soft windings of the silent Mole,

\* Highgate and Hampstead.