

From courts and senates Pelham finds repose.
 Enchanting vale ! beyond what'er the muse
 Has of Achaia or Hesperia sung !
 O, vale of bliss ! O, softly-swelling hills !
 On which the *Power of Cultivation* lies,
 And joys to see the wonders of his toil.

Heavens ! what a goodly prospect spreads around
 Of hills, and dales, and woods, and lawns, and spires,
 And glittering towns, and gilded streams, till all
 The stretching landscape into smoke decays."

The scenery of Richmond Hill has been the subject not only of much poetry, but also of many a *bon mot*. Thus, a certain French traveller, less magnanimous than the Vicomte d'Arlingcourt, once contemptuously observed that the Thames is merely "a little stream, which might be easily drained," a remark for which he was smartly reprimanded in the *Quarterly Review*. It is said that another foreign coxcomb, who had come to England for the special object of seeing this prospect, after gazing at it with an air of indifference, turned on his heel, saying : "Pretty enough, to be sure ; but, after all, take away the water and the verdure, and what is it ?"

The manor of Shene appears to have been comprehended in that of Kingston, which belonged to the Crown at the time of the Domesday Survey. Henry I. gave it to one of the family of Belet, to hold by the service, or sergeantry, of officiating as chief butler to the king. In the reign of Edward I. this property belonged to Robert Burnell, Bishop of Bath and Wells. The subsequent descent of the manor until it became vested in the Crown is rather uncertain.

"Both Lysons and Manning have asserted," says Brayley, "that the manor of Shene belonged to the Crown in the latter part of the reign of Edward I. ; but this seems inconsistent with the statements still existing in an ancient record relative to the holding of the manor by subjects in the reigns of Edward II. and Edward III. For though the first of our kings who held the entire manorial estate was Edward III., it appears that his father and grandfather occasionally resided at Shene, either as tenants of the lords of the manor or as owners of some portion of the property. A palace is said to have been erected by Edward III. on his manor of Shene ; and although some doubt is thrown upon the statement, it is certain that a royal mansion existed here in his time, for it was at the palace or mansion of Shene that death terminated his long and victorious reign, in 1377."

Baker, in his quaintly-worded "Chronicles," gives the following particulars of the death of Edward III. :—"The King, besides his being old and worn with the labours of War, had other causes

that hastened his end : his grief for the loss of so worthy a Son, dead but ten months before ; his grief for the loss of all benefit of his Conquests in *France*, of all which he had little now left but only *Callie*. And oppressed thus in body and minde, he was drawing his last breath, when his Concubine, Alice Pierce, packing away what she could catch, even to the Rings of his Fingers, left him, and by her example other of his attendants, seizing on what they could come by, shift away ; and all his Counsellours and others forsook him when he most needed them, leaving his Chamber quite empty. Which a poor Priest in the house seeing, he approaches to the King's Bed-side, and finding him yet breathing, calls upon him to remember his Saviour, and to ask mercy for his offences, which none about him before would do. But now moved by the voice of this Priest, he shews all signs of contrition, and at last breath he expresseth the name of Jesus. Thus died this victorious King at his Manor of *Shene* (now Richmond), the 21 day of *June*, in the year 1377, in the 64 year of his age, having reigned fifty years, four months and odd dayes. His body was conveyed from *Shene* by his four Sons and other Lords, and solemnly interred within *Westminster Church*, where he hath his Monument, and where it is said the Sword he used in *Battel* is yet to be seen, being eight pound in weight, and seven foot in length."

His grandson and successor, Richard II., may be supposed to have passed much of his time at this place during the life of his first queen, Anne of Bohemia, for, as historians inform us, on her death, which happened at Shene in 1394, he was so violently afflicted, "that he, besides cursing the place where she died, did also for anger throwe downe the buildings, unto which former kings, being wearied of the citie, were wont for pleasure to resort."

The palace remained in ruins during the reign of Henry IV. ; but Henry V., soon after he ascended the throne, restored the edifice to its former magnificence. Thomas Elmham says it was "a delightful mansion, of curious and costly workmanship, and befitting the character and condition of a king." The second palace stood a little further from the river than the former had done.

Edward IV. was fond of the chase here, and it is at Sheen that Bulwer, in "The Last of the Barons," lays the scene of the stormy interview between Edward IV. and the "King-maker" relative to the betrothal of the king's sister, Margaret. In the previous chapter will be found a picturesque description of the scene presented by the Court assembled in the park :—"A space had been