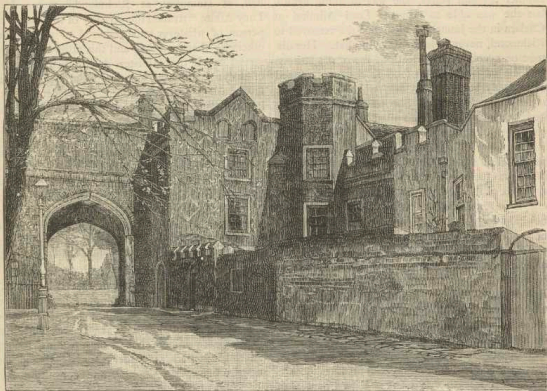


serve her famous complexion ; and quite right she was. This beauty of hers had been a talent—as all beauty is—committed to her by God ; it had been an important element in her great success ; men had accepted it as what beauty of form and expression generally is, an outward and visible sign of the inward and spiritual grace ; and while the inward was unchanged, what wonder if she tried to preserve the outward ? If she was the same, why should she not try to look the same ? And what

her death at last ; and this no sooner was supposed to be mortal, than her courtiers hastened from her palace to make their court to the King of Scots, her presumptive heir. This threw her into a deep melancholy ; and in the beginning of March, not only her limbs, but her speech, failed her very much, which made her so peevish, that she could bear nobody near her but the Archbishop of Canterbury, who gave her due attendance in prayer and exhortations. When death seemed to draw very



REMAINS OF THE OLD PALACE, RICHMOND.

blame to those who worshipped her, if, knowing that she was the same, they too should fancy that she looked the same—the Elizabeth of their youth—and should talk as if the fair flesh, as well as the fair spirit, was immortal ? Does not every loving husband do so when he forgets the grey hair and the sunken cheek, and all the wastes of time, and sees the partner of many joys and sorrows not as she has become, but as she was, ay, and is to him, and will be to him, he trusts, through all eternity ? ”

It was at Richmond that the long life and splendid reign of Elizabeth came to a close, on the 24th of March, 1603. “At the end of January, 1603,” says an old chronicle, “Elizabeth began to feel the first attacks of a distemper, which proved

near, her Council deputed the Lord Admiral to pray her to name her successor : to whom she faintly answered, ‘That she had already said her throne was the throne of kings, and she would have no mean person to succeed her.’ But being further desired by the Secretary to declare her pleasure more plainly, ‘I will,’ said she, ‘that a king succeed me. And who should that be but my nearest kinsman, the King of Scots ? ’ ”

If she was not forgotten in her life, at all events in her death she was deserted by all the friends who had fawned on her Majesty, and basked in the sunshine of her royal face. Death showed to her the hollowness of earthly friendships and courtly adulation.