

to be met with in country towns of moderate size. It has the advantages of good railway communication with the metropolis by way of the South-Western line to Waterloo, and also by way of Hammersmith. The North London Railway has also a station here, with running powers over a portion of the South-Western line; the town can also be reached by the London and North-Western, the Midland, and the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway branches. Croydon excepted, there is probably no other town near London which has such frequent communication with the metropolis; and then there are omnibuses constantly in summer. There is also the silent highway of the Thames, which, in the summer months, becomes a crowded thoroughfare for pleasuring folk.

In 1845 an Act of Parliament was passed authorising the construction of a railway from the terminus at Nine Elms to Richmond, with power to raise a capital of £260,000 in £20 shares, and it was opened for public use about twelve months later. At that time the railway had a separate proprietary, which has since been amalgamated with the South-Western Company. The intermediate stations are Vauxhall, Wandsworth, Putney, Barnes, and Mortlake.

Access to London by the railway, or even by road, it need hardly be said, is now far more speedy than it was in the reign of Henry VIII., when we read that Cardinal Wolsey did his Majesty a mighty good service by carrying some dispatches abroad with extraordinary speed. Having taken leave of the king at Richmond about noon, he reached London at four o'clock the same day, in time to proceed to Dover the same evening, and so to catch the next day's passage boat to Calais.

Of late years the population of the town has largely increased. According to the census returns for 1871, its inhabitants then numbered about 15,000, which had increased to over 19,000 during the next decade.

The main thoroughfare, George Street, runs north to south for about a mile, and the town is nearly a mile in width, sloping gradually up the side of the famous hill, on whose summit is the entrance to the park, and also the well-known "Star and Garter" Hotel.

The Green, in the north-west corner of the town, was in former times an important adjunct to the old palace, for on its broad smooth surface jousts and tournaments were wont to be held. Here, in 1492, Henry VII. held a grand festivity, lasting about a month, the entertainments being carried on sometimes within the palace, and some-

times "upon the Greene, without the gate of the said manor. In the which space," as we learn from Stow's "Annals," "a combat was holden and doone betwixt Sir James Parker, Knt., and Hugh Vaughan, Gentleman Usher, upon controversie for the arms that Garter gave to the sayde Hugh Vaughan; but he was there allowed by the king to beare them, and Sir James Parker was slain in the first course."

Philip I., King of Castile, during his sojourn in England in 1506, after having visited Windsor Castle and London, was entertained by the king with great magnificence at Richmond, "where," as Holinshed, writes in his "Chronicles," "were many notable feates of armes proved both at the tylt and at the tourney and at the barriers."

In the statement drawn up by the Parliamentary Commissioners in the time of the Commonwealth the Green is described as containing "20 acres more or less . . . well turfed, level, and a special ornament to the place." It is also added that there were "113 elm trees, 48 whereof stand altogether on the west side, and include in them a very handsome walk." The old elms have greatly diminished in number, but of late years fresh trees have been planted in their place.

On the Green, Horace Walpole tells us, Lord Lonsdale, Lord Bath, and other members of the West End London clubs took a house where they could play cards in quiet on the dull English Sundays, which bored them so much.

The Green is now a large square, nearly surrounded by houses as well as lofty elms, which form a wide avenue on the north side. Its centre, a wide turf, marked by cast-iron posts, and bearing the initials of William IV., is used for cricket matches, bowls, &c. It is evident, from Lillywhite's "Cricket Scores," that Richmond had a good cricket club as late as 1827. Matches were still played in 1839, in which year Mitcham Union Club played East Sheen at cricket on Richmond Green.

On the Green is one of the Russian guns captured in the Crimea in 1855.

Richmond has its Free Public Library on the Green. It is a handsome building, and contains several thousand volumes. It may perhaps be worthy of note that this library, which was founded in 1881, was the first Free Public Library instituted within the area of "Greater London," and that its success has been so great that within the first three years of its existence five neighbouring towns have followed suit, and availed themselves of the Public Libraries Act, and many more are about to do likewise.