

which side the drive-way led round from the entrance-gates, by the side of which stood a lodge-gate. This lodge is now converted into a grocer's shop, close by which is an inn, "The Nelson's Arms," still perpetuating the name of the admiral. In the bar is an original portrait of Nelson in colours, which goes as a fixture or heirloom with the house, and authenticates it. The worthy landlord values this picture greatly, and has refused very high offers for it.

"Not far from the Merton turnpike, and within a few miles of London," wrote the *Times*, August 22nd, 1849, "there is to be seen a field upon which stood the home of Nelson and of his mistress. It was left, with its debts and liabilities, to Lady Hamilton. These were large enough, for extravagance accompanied the meridian of her life, as it had characterised the dawn. The Government proving odourate to the last, the owner of Merton was dismissed from the place. She went for a time to Richmond, and then took temporary lodgings in Bond Street. Here she was chased by her importunate creditors, and for a time hid her-

self from the world. In 1813 we find her imprisoned in the King's Bench for debt, but charitably liberated therefrom by a City alderman. Threatened again with arrest by a coachman, the unhappy woman escaped to Calais. Here the English interpreter gave the refugee a small and wretchedly furnished house." She died at Calais, as we have said, having been glad to accept the scraps of meat which were put aside for the dogs, and at her death her remains were placed in a deal box without an inscription, her pall being a black silk petticoat, lent by a poor woman for the occasion. As no clergyman could be found in Calais, an Irish half-pay officer read the burial service over her; and as the cemetery in which she was buried shortly after was turned into a timber-yard, the ultimate fate of her bones is not known, and will not be known till the judgment day. Such was the end of the once brilliant, and, in spite of all her faults, patriotic lady, who a few years previously had helped Nelson to win his laurels. Alas! for the charity of those who stood aloof from her at the last, when Christian charity was needed.

CHAPTER LV.

MITCHAM.

Etymology of Mitcham—Situation and Boundaries of the Parish—General Description of the Village—The River Wandle—Mills and Factories—The Cultivation of Flowers and Medicinal Plants—Mitcham Common—The Green—Mitcham Famous for Cricketing—Railway Communication and Population—The "King's Head"—A "Mitcham Whisper"—History of the Manor—Hall Place—Rusball's Farm—The Cranmer Family—The Parish Church—The Registers—Christ Church—Schools and Chapels—Dr. Roberts' School—Miss Tate's Almshouse—Visit of Queen Elizabeth to Sir Julius Caesar—Sir Walter Raleigh—Dr. Donne—Mitcham Grove—A Relic of Antiquity—Mitcham a Rallying-point for Nonjurers—De foe's House—Moses Mendez, the Poet, a Resident here.

MITCHAM, in its origin, is the same as Mickleham: the great home, or village. In Saxon times it was probably a place of considerable population and importance: hence its name.

In the Domesday Survey this parish is designated Mickleham; and in other early records, as well as in many of more recent date, it is written *Miecham*, or *Micham*. Its present mode of spelling, which is further from its etymology, observes Brayley, was not universally adopted earlier than the middle of the last century.

It is strange that there should have been a Mitcham and a Mickleham within ten or twelve miles of each other—strange, at least, on the supposition that names were given for the sake of distinction, and in that case proving how little intercourse could have prevailed between districts almost in the same neighbourhood.

The parish is environed on the north and west

by Merton and Morden, whilst on the east it is bounded by Streatham, and on the south it unites with Croydon; and locally it is divided, by a narrow thoroughfare called Wykford, or Whitford Lane, into two portions, called respectively Upper and Lower Mitcham.

The village is very scattered. The main street extends about a mile along the high road between Tooting and Sutton, but the houses are very irregular in size and in distances.

Many old mansions, with wrought-iron gates and cedars still standing, attest that the place in former times was inhabited by not a few of the wealthier class. The River Wandle, which follows the line of the roadway through the parish, where it has not been disfigured by mills and factories adds not a little to the beauty of the level scenery hereabouts. There is a capital view of the Wandle at this point in *English Etchings* for November, 1882. Here