

III

THE GLAMOUR OF HAMPTON COURT PALACE

IN the summer of 1871 we moved to the charming home, where some of the happiest years of our lives were spent in unique surroundings, under the shadow and influence of an historical past of unrivalled interest, which left its impress on our memory and on our affections throughout all subsequent years. Yet, looking back now on the days of early youth, one realizes more clearly that the glamour, the inspiring influence of such associations and traditions, require the perspective of time to be viewed in their true proportions, and are less appreciated in the egoism of youth, when things present and things to come assume a paramount importance, than when seen from the vantage-point of a matured and retrospective survey of bygone days.

The fascinations of Hampton Court Palace, the history of its Royal occupants and the charm of its perfect Gothic buildings, were the more brought home to us by our great friendship with Mr. E. Law—a young man living with his parents in the Palace—who, working for the Bar at that time, was also commencing the researches both at Museums, Record Offices and at Hampton Court itself, which resulted in the first and full comprehensive history of Hampton Court Manor and Palace. It seems remarkable that it should have been left until the end of the nineteenth century

to produce an authenticated history of a royal residence, which, owing to the richness of its architectural beauty and the glory of its past records, makes it, with the exception of Windsor Castle, the most attractive of our Royal Palaces. It is true that sidelights have been thrown on the history of the place, its Gothic features and its occupants, by the various historians of Tudor and Stuart days, who have vividly described the magnificence of successive Royal and Diplomatic visits to Hampton Court, and that Mr. Brewer, in his *Calendar of State Papers*, has given us a revelation of Cardinal Wolsey's character and administration which cannot be surpassed, while Pugin and others of equal repute, have dwelt on many points of architectural interest of various parts of the building. Again, a further history by Dr. Hutton of St. John's College, Oxford, late Bishop of Winchester, was published a short time ago. But at the time we lived at Hampton Court we were dependent for our knowledge of the Palace and the historical events which had there taken place, on the records to which I have alluded, the oft-times misleading little guide-books of Hampton Court; and still more, on the guidance and data given by our young Hampton Court historian, who so well described the beauties of this almost perfect specimen of Tudor Gothic art standing side by side with the newer part of the Palace which again represents the best example of debased Gothic architecture of the Louis XIV period. In vivid colouring Mr. Law reproduces the masques, the entertainments, sports and pastimes which took place in the Palace, Park and Gardens in the years past, and peoples once more with living interest the Hall, the Chapel and the State Apartments, with the Kings and Queens and foreign potentates, who, in those three hundred years of pomp and splendour, sorrow and tragedy, took a leading part.

Under these influences, it was only natural that the Great

Hall, associated so intimately with the pomp and pageantry of bygone Stuart and Tudor days, where we passed so many hours; the State Rooms, which from William III's reign replaced the Great Hall as the scene of Court life and functions, and where our daily exercise was taken on rainy days; the Gardens where we spent the greater part of summer-time, and the Chapel, whose services we attended so regularly in our girlhood, were of exceptional interest. While for those living in the older part of the Palace built by the creative genius of Cardinal Wolsey, the success, magnificence and power of his earlier years contrasting so strongly with his later fall, poverty and disgrace, has a peculiar fascination.

Every niche and corner of this part of the Palace seemed pregnant with the sayings and doings of the great prelate, who, in Brewer's words, "raised England from the position of a third-rate State, to become the foremost in the world" by his brilliant statesmanship in holding the scales evenly balanced between the contending powers of Christendom. So complete was the influence of Wolsey on both home and foreign politics that ambassadors and potentates reported to their home governments, "He is omnipotent and seven times greater than the Pope himself."

The magnificence of Wolsey's entertainments is yet another example of the pomp and splendour which he maintained. A foreign envoy, when writing of the sumptuous entertainments given by the great Cardinal, says "the like of it was never seen, either by Cleopatra or Caligula, the whole Banqueting Hall being decorated with huge vases of gilt and silver, that I fancied myself in the Tower of Cræsus, where that monarch caused Divine honours to be paid to him." Gustinian remarks, when describing a banquet given as a finale to the Treaty of Hampton Court, "Supper and service was brought up with

such a pleasant noice & divers instruments of music," that the Frenchman was "wrapt in a Heavenly Paradise!" These splendours were repeated again in the ecclesiastical services held in the Chapel of Hampton Court. Cavendish tells us that the furniture of Wolsey's Chapel "passeth his capacity to declare the number of costly ornaments and rich jewells, used to be occupied in the same continually." Besides the vestments, crosses, candlesticks, bells, censers, chalices and pixes of gold and silver, and many images of saints and "Seyntes Aparell," there were two "coats for our lady"—one of crimson velvet, set with counterfeit pearls and the other of black damask, guarded with crimson velvet and bordered with white satin, and also a "coat for her son," of black velvet and guarded with cloth of gold.

Sixty priests in copes, a dean—"a great divine and a man of excellent learning"—a sub-dean, a repeater of the Choir, a gospeller, 12 singing priests, 12 singing children and 16 singing laymen, besides "divers retainers of cunning singing men that came at divers sundry principal feasts," made a considerable number of officers serving in the Chapel—"far excelling," the King declared, "his own music and his own Choir."

Henry VIII, who either reconstructed or rebuilt the Royal Chapel, added still more to its beautiful furnishings. During his time, the "holiday closets" or oratories adjacent to the Chapel were much embellished, while new stained glass was put in the windows and elaborately carved stalls, with "crests," or canopies also provided.

Even more striking was the splendid arched roof, with its great pennants of angels holding escutcheons with the King's and Queen's arms and mottoes, and boys playing on musical instruments were "gylt with ffyne gold and ffyne byse, set owtt wyth other fynne collers," and "set with antyke of leade, gylt with the Kynges worde."

The glory of the Chapel probably reached its zenith in the time of Elizabeth, and was greatly appreciated by visitors from abroad, one of whom (Hentzner) writes : " the Chapel of this Palace is most splendid in which the Queen's closet is quite transparent, having its windows of cut crystal while the chamber of Audiences shines with tapestry and gold and silver and silk of different colours." But of all this splendour, there only survived in our time the noble proportions of the building and its glorious roof, owing to the bigotry of Cromwell's troops. For after the Battle of Naseby in 1645, when Parliament took possession of the Palace, " all surviving traces of what were held to be idolatrous worship, were swept away with the religious emblems and artistic decorations of the Chapel."

Hampton Court was then, as now, a favourite resort in summer months for relatives and friends of those owning apartments in the Palace, who fully enjoyed the opportunity of studying the Palace in its unrivalled beauty and glorious contents, under the favourable conditions afforded by friends acting as cicerones and guides, the hospitality shown in the luncheons and teas in my mother's rooms, and the rest so welcome to all sightseers in the lovely Hampton Court Gardens.

Our frequent visits to the Great Hall favoured a close acquaintance with every detail of this unique building—the magnificent proportions of the Hall itself, the great beauty of the roof (the most splendid example of the perpendicular style seen in England), the bay window which illuminated the Hall on the west side, and the Royal dais, with its overhead canopy, on which stood King Henry VIII's table. On this dais was also placed the State Chair, from which royalty could follow the masques and entertainments given in the Hall below. So intimately did we become acquainted with the historical drama enacted within its walls, that it seemed

possible to picture once more the gorgeous splendour and magnificence of former days ; the minstrels in the Minstrel Gallery, arrayed in their picturesque costumes, playing on their various instruments for the delectation of the Royal Guest, the ambassadors and foreign princes seated down the sides of the long tables, which ran the length of the Hall, with the King seated in his Royal Chair, surrounded by attending courtiers, while the brilliancy of the scene was enhanced by the dazzling effect of the eight tapestries "wrought in silk and silver and gold thread," which hung on the wall and portrayed the "History of Abraham"—and the mellowed light of a thousand wax candles presented in the most pleasing guise the splendour of the ladies' attire and of the men's dress of the day.

From the time of Henry VIII's acquisition of Hampton Court, many additions and alterations were made to Wolsey's Palace, and the work was carried out with such rapidity that it was nearly completed on the occasion of the great festivities taking place on Anne Boleyn's marriage, when the King and Queen came to spend their honeymoon at Hampton Court. Here, in the Great Hall, the Queen presided at the superb entertainments, masques and sports organized in her honour in 1543-6, and at another banquet for the Viceroy of Sicily, when Henry VIII, in his usual appreciation of spectacular display, received the Captain-General of the Army of the Emperor in the Great Hall—"standing on a dais, under a canopy of gold and leaning on his gilt throne."

The Great Hall remained the centre of the Royal hospitality of all Tudor and Stuart Kings and Queens. The vast accommodation afforded in a building of so great a size facilitated the entertainments organized on an unprecedented scale, when invitations were extended not only to ambassadors, Royal guests and Court officials, but to

the retinues of the one and the retainers of the other. Sumptuous banquets also took place during the short reign of Edward VI, when the French Ambassadors arrived with a suite of three hundred gentlemen to press for the marriage of the English King with the Princess Elizabeth of France.

Here, again, Queen Mary, although more niggardly in her entertainments than others of the Tudor line, hoped to propitiate a none too ardent bridegroom by the festivities and banquets given in his honour, but which only evoked the ungracious criticism of the Spanish guests that "all Englishmen were drunkards and did not know if they belonged to God or to the devil, and that the ladies were so hideous, and their legs so ugly and ungraceful, especially in dancing, that not a single Spanish gentleman would give a farthing for any of them!"

It was in the Great Hall that Queen Elizabeth when celebrating Christmas in Royal fashion at Hampton Court Palace, witnessed the revels, masques and mummeries in the presence frequently of representatives of foreign powers, who came to claim the Queen's hand for their Royal master, or by the aspirants themselves, who hoped, by personal visits, "to come, to see and to conquer!"

Many other incidents portrayed the splendour of the life in the Great Hall in those days, but, alas, its glories became a thing of the past when the splendid rooms of the Palace designed by Wren, to meet William III's ambitions and his many requirements, were used instead of the Great Hall itself for all state festivities and functions.

As residents in the old part of Hampton Court, we were inclined to belittle the style and design of Wren's new Palace, yet there were considerable fascinations for us in the State Rooms, some of which were overlooked by the large side window of our drawing-room, and here we would often escort our friends and relations to admire the mar-

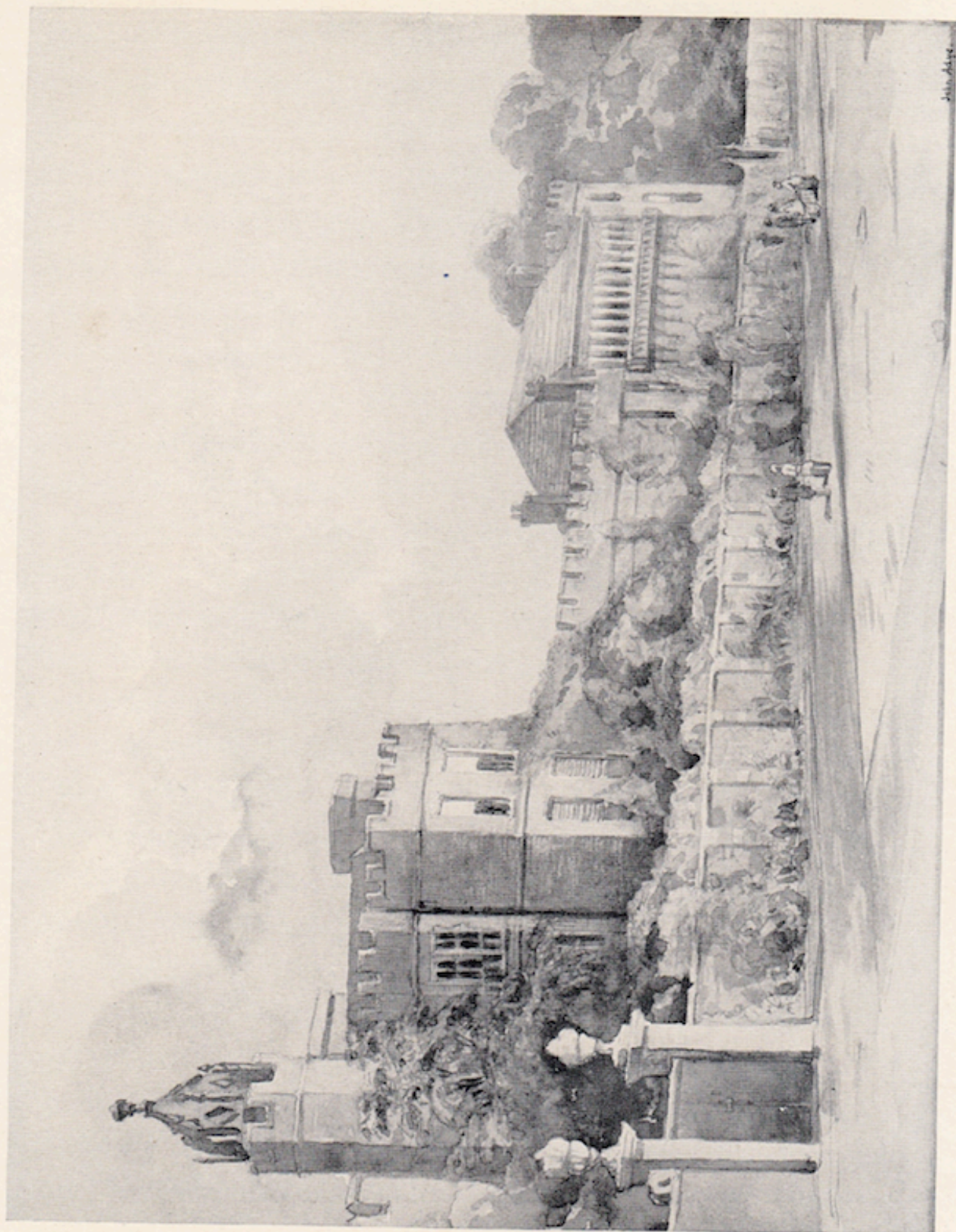
vellous pictures and *objets d'art* assembled in the rooms. Even compared with the grandeur of Tudor times, the furniture of the new State Apartments could well hold its own. In the King's Bedchamber stood the great four-poster, draped with hangings of crimson velvet, the King's clock, six feet high, the fine pier glass, the fireplace with carved oak mantel-piece, the silver sconces and the tapestry of the "History of Joshua," all made for a magnificence which compares favourably with the fitments of King Henry's day; while King William's Sitting Room and Audience Chamber, now known as the Second Presence Chamber, were all furnished in a yet more luxurious style.

The noble proportion of these apartments, their carvings and splendid fireplaces, the fire-dogs of silver gilt, the gorgeous beds and silk hangings, the Turkey carpets, the marble tables and china cabinets, and exquisite chandeliers of cut glass, made these State Rooms storehouses of art treasures, of priceless tapestries and pictures, never-ending sources of admiration to those who, in succeeding generations, inhabited or visited the Palace.

OUR APARTMENTS

DAILY LIFE AT THE PALACE

The apartments given to Lady Burgoyne and to my mother and her married sister, were situated in the older portion of the Palace—part of the huge edifice designed in such perfect taste by Wolsey and his advisers, on the Cardinal's acquisition of the Manor of Hampton Court from the previous owners, the Knights Hospitaller of St. John. This suite was one of the best in the Palace, having nineteen good rooms all told, with varying aspects, the drawing-room front window facing east, overlooking the fascinating



HAMPTON COURT PALACE, SHOWING THE APARTMENTS WHERE LADY BARRINGTON
LIVED BEFORE HER MARRIAGE

From the original water-colour by Major-General Sir John Adye, K.C.M.G., C.B., in the possession
of Mrs. Morton Philips.

Dutch Gardens, with their stiff-set flower-beds and clipped yews, and the smaller canals bordered by avenues of lime-trees. These canals formed the dividing line between the Palace Gardens and the Home Park, with its magnificent sheet of artificial water which runs from Hampton Court Gardens to Kingston Gate. The other rooms of the apartments—dining-room, offices, etc., overlooked Tennis Court Lane—the main approach to our rooms, which led from the west front of the Palace to the Tennis Court passage immediately below our suite.

Our appreciation of the great beauty of the Tudor parts of the Palace must be partly attributed to the fact that two out of the three approaches to our apartments lay, fortunately for us, through courtyards and passages of exceptional beauty. One of these approaches traversed the quaint and picturesque building of what might be termed the "back premises" of the Palace, with a passage separating the big kitchen and butteries on the left, from the secondary entrance to the Great Hall on the right, the other approach, from the Barrack Yard, lay through the Great Gate and Main Entrance—the Base and Clock Tower Courtyards—through the newer part of the Palace built by William and Mary; and passing through the Chapel Court, reached two spiral staircases, one dignified by the name of the "front entrance," and the other by the "back entrance," leading to our apartments. These two courtyards, through which we passed day by day, are rightly considered the most attractive features of Wolsey's and Henry VIII's building, and are of the greater interest as presenting two varied aspects of Tudor architecture, each unique in its own way; for if the one (or Base Court) with its homely appearance and grass-grown courtyard, and the irregularities of its buildings, justly claims to be a perfect specimen of Tudor domestic Gothic architecture, the Clock Tower Court,

with its more composite series of buildings, has exceptional attractions of equal value in a different form.

The Great Gates and Main Entrance of the Palace, through which one passes into the first or Base Court, with the fine buildings and picturesque windows and turrets projecting on either side, still retain their architectural beauty, though deprived of their earlier noble proportions when George III reduced the front elevation from five to two stories. It is in this courtyard that the great Chambers were provided for foreign visitors of distinction, the interiors showing the approved plan of "double-lodgings," to which historians of the day so frequently refer, and which were furnished with magnificent tapestries, silk and damask hangings, and vessels of gold and silver.

In the second, or Clock Tower Courtyard, entered from the Base Court by Queen Anne Boleyn's Gateway, directly facing the astronomical clock, the elevations are of more striking appearance, with the Grand Staircase on the left, while on the right the fine mullioned windows and the rich panelled ceilings of the room inhabited by Cardinal Wolsey contrasted with the severer simplicity of the gem of the whole Palace, the Cardinal's Confessory and Closet in close proximity to Queen Anne's staircase.

Yet another entrance leading to our Apartments, the only approach for carriages and carts, was through the more sordid surroundings of Tennis Court Lane, the back entrance, in olden days, to offices and kitchens of the Palace. Great must have been the surprise of friends from Town and the neighbourhood when asked to alight at a small door of unpretentious character, to find, after traversing a small dark passage and mounting forty-nine corkscrew stairs, that they had emerged into a large suite of rooms of good proportions and great charm—though the little quaint hall at the head of our staircase scarcely told of the

large and spacious rooms opening therefrom, rooms which even now seem fraught with happy recollections of incidents and events taking place therein. Even the spiral staircase had its own history, for the forty-nine stairs, negotiable without effort by young people, but very trying for visitors and the more elderly occupants of the suite, were a veritable trap for the indiscreet, owing to the massive wooden shaft round which the steps ran, obscuring from view those mounting or descending the staircase. Criticisms of neighbours, or some inadvisable confidences could be easily overheard by those within hearing, but not within sight, and any little endearments which sometimes took place, even in the decorous surroundings and traditions of that place, were liable to untimely interruptions by the unsuspected appearance of friends hidden from sight till the last minute, by one of the turns of the spiral stairs.

On the right side of our entrance hall were found the very large drawing-room and best bedroom; on the left, steps led down to the high embrasure seats on one side of the corridor, facing the lovely east view and gardens, while our bedrooms on the other side overlooked the calm seclusion of the Chapel Court.

The spacious drawing-room was indeed the chosen rendezvous of our intimate friends and the centre of Palace entertainments, most popular with the younger generation, who thoroughly enjoyed the hearty welcome of their reception, the excellent teas provided in the large bay window at one side of the room, the society of two agreeable middle-aged ladies and the attractions of the younger members of the family and their friends. Here, again, took place the musical parties which were so popular with the Hampton Court inhabitants, in the combined talent of such first-rate performers as Captain Quintin Twiss, Colonel Barrington-Foote and other members of the Windsor

Strollers. Nor must we omit my aunt, Mrs. Wrottesley, then considered one of the finest amateur actresses of the day. Gilbert and Sullivan operas were produced with considerable success on several occasions, while, with a good deal of musical talent available in the Palace itself, many cheery evenings were organized for part-singing, for the presentation of the *opéra bouffes* of the day, and for various games and entertainments. The drawing-room was also, as we shall find in these pages, the harbour of refuge for the too daring young men of the place.

Our dining-room, where dances were given, in view of the instability of our drawing-room floor, also served as a boudoir for morning hours, in the days when no central heating was provided, and it was almost impossible to keep our large drawing-room, having three outside walls, at a livable temperature in the winter season.

A recital of our day's routine at Hampton Court portrays the daily round, the common task, the regularity and calm of Palace life, with the many pleasing variations provided by the recreations, games and exercise found in the parks, gardens and waterways of the Palace environments.

The morning sunshine on some of our bedroom windows facing south in the Chapel Court (and how wonderfully the sunshine of earlier times obliterates in retrospection the dark and gloomy days with which they must have been associated !) awoke us to early rising, breakfast and family prayers, when no dissipation of the previous night served as an excuse for the much-contemned habit of staying in bed for breakfast. The morning disposed of in reading and work, followed by the noonday promenade, when mothers and daughters took their daily constitutional up the Broad Walk to the Water Gallery, a suitable distance for the elder folk, while the young people either continued their exercise up the pleasant greensward running parallel with the

river embankment to the Pavilion, or made a yet longer expedition to Kingston, a pleasant two-mile walk through the Home Park to the shopping town of the neighbourhood.

Punctuality was the essence of our home life, and after lunch, at which friends from town were often present, strolls were taken in winter on rainy days in the cloistered shelter of the long colonnades, the afternoon nearly always ending in musical reunions, or teas and games in neighbouring Apartments, or varied possibly by some educational efforts, such as the great dissipation of the "Spelling Bees" then in vogue, and taking place in the rooms occupied by Mrs. Doherty, when the best speller received a most insignificant prize. These educational efforts, if ridiculous in the sight of young people of the present day, afforded scope for competition, and I was proud to figure at the head of the list, though the partiality of a somewhat elderly admirer who conducted the affair probably turned the scales in my favour.

In summer afternoons, we enjoyed strenuous games of lawn tennis, just then introduced, and at which game my sister and I became champion players. Boating expeditions to Kingston or up the river, and evening strolls after dinner on the Terrace front, often with the brilliant radiance of moonlight shedding its softened light on the Palace garden, and the fascinating reflections afforded in the small canals or in the wide expanse of water in the Home Park, concluded a day which, it must be claimed, was as full of interest and amusement as could be procured elsewhere. These evenings were the more appreciated when on Bank Holidays the vast crowds in cloisters and gardens made it difficult to reach our friends in other apartments during the day-time, leaving us to find amusement, during our enforced confinement to our rooms, in watching from our windows the odd

vagaries of excursionists whose great idea of holiday-making seemed to consist in the interchange between ladies and gentlemen of the wonderful headgear, chiefly decorated with paper imitation of ostrich feathers, and in the attendance on one lady of two men, each hanging on her right and left arm ! A further amusement was found in inscribing on the walls of private apartments, "The Queen's Paupers live here !" showing one side of the rooted conviction of the general public that the inhabitants of these rooms were either dependent on Royal bounty for the necessities of life, or on the other hand, lived in pomp and ceremony, dining with the Royal family every evening of their lives.

Skating also figured largely in our winter programme, when the cycle of cold winters seemed to recur far more frequently than in present times ; and was intensely enjoyed in the beautiful surroundings of the Palace grounds, on the smaller canals, when the larger pieces of ornamental water were considered unsafe. A quiet time for reading or correspondence was secured between tea and dinner, and small impromptu dances and evening parties were varied by the after-dinner visits of our young friends in the Palace.

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Such was the calm tenor of life at Hampton Court in our time, and if unattractive to the young people of present days in the larger amount of pleasure and amusement they now consider indispensable, it satisfied the requirements of that date, and afforded more time for leisure and other interests than is possible at the high pressure of modern circumstances, and again made for a greater appreciation of home ties and affections—even for parents' society—than is found now in the preference for outside claims as ranking before home duties and responsibilities.

The services in the Chapel were not only of special interest to many of the Palace inhabitants, who loved the calm and old-world influence of its associations, but to many also from Molesey and villages around, who appreciated the privileges of worshipping in such unique surroundings, the excellent music provided by the organist and well-trained choir, and also the pleasure of seeing those about whose lives in the Palace there was a certain amount of mystery and to whose apartments they had little chance of access.

The appointment of the seats at that time was in the hands of Mrs. Heaton, the popular Housekeeper of the day, who must have had some difficulty in meeting the wishes of the many ladies, young and old, possessing strong convictions as to which were the best seats in the Chapel ! The sittings in the centre were reserved for Ladies of the Palace, who also had the use of the seats placed at right angles, slightly raised on either side and approached by two or three steps. Just behind were the long pews running the whole length of that part of the Chapel, occupied by the ladies on the one side and the gentlemen on the other, the ladies being unfairly placed with the full light upon them while the men were seated with their backs to the windows ! Each of these side pews was so constructed that, except when psalms and hymns called the congregation to their feet, nothing could be seen of life outside, and it is a matter of thankfulness that the claustrophobia menace had not then appeared ! In the ante-chapel, below the gallery, were the seats on one side for the servants and workmen of the Palace, and some chance visitors, for whom there was no room in the centre of the Chapel, and on the other side was placed the smart Cavalry Regiment quartered at Hampton Court, with the one or two officers in charge. The seats in the Royal Gallery were apportioned to other residents in the Palace,

and were approached by a broad staircase of handsome dimensions.

This Royal Chapel was the scene, as we probably all know, of an episode in the great tragedy of Queen Catherine Howard's life. The long gallery immediately behind the Royal pew communicated with the rooms in which she was kept prisoner previous to her execution, and the story goes that, on one occasion (a Sunday morning), knowing that King Henry VIII was at his devotions in the Chapel, she escaped from her custodians, hoping to gain access to the King, but was seized as she approached the door of the Royal closet, and led back screaming, in despair, to her prison quarters. Many are the stories of loud noises heard along the old Gallery from time to time, and I can only say for myself, that, sleeping in a room just opposite the gallery, I was awakened one night by the most extraordinary sounds and cries which I heard below.

There was a somewhat "low" Church tendency in the Chapel Services of those days, and it is difficult to imagine what the old ladies then living there would have thought of the modern evolutions of Anglican ideas in their thorough opposition to the mild efforts of our beloved Chaplain, Mr. Wodehouse, to move slowly with the time! I well remember the skirmish between the verger and Lady Isabella St. John, who was told at the door of the Chapel in Lent that meditations were proceeding, and in her indignation interrupted the thoughts and reflections of the worshippers by the loud inquiry, heard all over the Chapel: "Meditations! Meditations! and what *are* meditations?"

An amusing story in connection with the Chapel is told of Sir Horace Seymour, who had apartments in the Palace but a short time before we took up our residence there, who combined the bravery of a Greek hero and the good looks of an Adonis, and was a regular attendant at the Palace services.

He was present on an occasion when a lady fainted in the Chapel in the heat of a summer's day, and walking across from the gentlemen's pew, he picked up the fair one in his arms and carried her to his apartments where he left her in charge of the housekeeper and returned to his seat. On the following Sundays other ladies succumbed in the same way and on each occasion as if by prescriptive right the same gallant knight performed the same kind office for the sufferers. It was not until the aunt of Sir Horace, collaborating with the Chaplain, affixed a notice to the Chapel door, that "in future fainting ladies would be rescued not by Sir Horace, but by Bushman, the dustman," that this serious epidemic ceased.

Another farcical incident of adventure in connection with the immunity from seizure for debt which Hampton Court inhabitants enjoyed is told of a Mr. S., who, seriously involved with his creditors, was perforce obliged to take his daily exercise on the roof of the Palace, in the knowledge that bailiffs were waiting to seize him in the environments of the Palace below. Intensely bored with his enforced seclusion aloof, Mr. S. at length resolved to brave arrest and descended to terra firma, only to be seized by the emissaries of the law, by whom he would have infallibly been incarcerated in the debtors' prison, but for his resourcefulness and daring in shaking off his captors when close to the riverside, jumping into the Thames and emerging on the Surrey bank where he was safe from arrest by Middlesex bailiffs.

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The Chapel and its services played a considerable part in our life at Hampton Court. Its close proximity to our rooms gave almost a feeling of personal possession, for the long windows at the north side of the Chapel ran at right angles to our bedroom windows and faced those of one

of our own corridors and of our other bedrooms, and no service could take place without our willingly or unwillingly partaking in what was going on, for the words and singing were as distinctly heard as if we had been present at the service.

I have always valued the privilege of my first marriage taking place in such historic surroundings, though at the time the disadvantages of no approach to the Chapel except on foot, were keenly felt, when, on a bitterly cold snowy morning in February, walking even the short distance through the Chapel Court and small passage leading to the Chapel door, I was almost frozen in my white satin dress and bridal finery, the effect of which could not be spoilt by any heavy wraps !

Yet fresh in my memory were the ever-memorable Christmas mornings, when we hurried back from the Chapel to open the postal packets reaching us from far and wide. Here, again, the excitement of Valentine Day, then in full fashion, was thoroughly enjoyed, in the delightful uncertainty regarding the senders of the most ardent cards and valentines we received. Even now I recollect one especially appreciated effusion bearing the words, " To the idol of my soul ! " and as the touching inscription was signed with the initials of two admirers then living in the Palace, there was a pleasing uncertainty for all time, by which of the two the valentine was sent. Yet another year, a still more thrilling episode occurred in connection with the old-world custom, when a magnificent card arrived, on what was written " Wilt thou be mine, dear Valentine ? " the sender, I found later, felt deeply aggrieved that I had not at once taken this as a definite proposal !

In the long winter evenings, when no engagements claimed our presence elsewhere, hardly an evening passed without visits from one or other of the young men of the

place, who, knowing our "early to bed" habits, would rush away from their dinner-table to make sure of finding us still in the drawing-room. Nor were the cloisters the only means employed by the younger folk in reaching each other's quarters. The roof of the Palace served as a useful vantage-point for escaping observation and eluding the vigilance of those who would fain have kept their young folk at home.

In reviewing the years spent at Hampton Court, one of the more enduring impressions left on the mind is the appreciation of the friendly intercourse maintained in a community consisting of forty-five families, brought into close contact with one another in daily life, where gardens and grounds were shared by one and all, and where on bad days it was impossible to avoid rencontres with acceptable or unacceptable neighbours.

This good feeling under somewhat difficult conditions may be partly attributable to an unwritten code of customs and etiquette then prevailing in the Palace, which made for privacy where desired, and partly to the broader outlook on life of many of the inhabitants, who, owing to the greater interests of earlier years, were superior to the pettiness and jealousies of a more contracted sphere—and to the personal influence of our beloved Chaplain, Mr. Cameron Wodehouse, who is said never to have spoken an unkind word of anyone at any time!

Snobbishness certainly existed to a limited extent, and as usual was chiefly seen in those whose rank and social status should have precluded the irritating inferiority complex of others of less assured position. But as a rule, idiosyncrasies were discreetly handled, prejudices tolerated and even some possible indiscretions in earlier years regarded with an indulgent eye. Cliques also prevailed in Palace life, chiefly owing to supposed social distinctions, and to personal

proclivities, but these were less prevalent as time progressed, and my mother's influence was widely felt in discouraging all discriminations, though choosing as her intimates the persons most congenial to her own character and tastes. Gossip and censorious criticism were discouraged, in the pleasant reunions in her rooms, and an intellectual atmosphere introduced by the discussions of public interests and current affairs; my mother's kindness of heart, her wit and human sympathy with everyone she came across, attracted not only her own children and relatives, but all sorts and conditions at Hampton Court, more especially the young men of the day. The wonderful mastery of mathematics, history and languages possessed by my aunt, Miss Burgoyne, which had gained her, when quite a child, the sobriquet, conferred by Mr. Bernal Osborne of "England's little genius," led young and old, with any claims to brains and intellectual taste, to seek her society and to profit by the versatility of her gifts.

RESIDENTS IN THE PALACE IN OUR DAYS

It is evident, again, that the character and individuality of those occupying apartments in the Palace affected the tone and atmosphere of the place, and most fortunate we considered ourselves in our neighbours and fellow residents living there at that time. A tour of the private apartments and visits to their inhabitants, though bringing a host of memories of incidents occurring at that time to old habitués of the place, is only interesting to others reading these pages, in recalling the names of many celebrated men of the day, whose service to their country had gained for their widows or relatives a comfortable home in the Royal Palace.

Our own suite of apartments, being exceptionally large,

covered two other suites on the floor below. For instance, the delightful rooms facing east, immediately under ours, called "Prince Edward's Lodgings," were occupied by Mrs. Doherty, the widow of the well-known Judge, and her son. The apartments on the same floor, just underneath our cheerful schoolroom and kitchen quarters were then used by the two Miss Cuppages, whose constant complaints of the noise made by my children and their cousins, made them extremely unpopular, both with my sister and myself at that time, though later reflections on the nerve-racking games then enjoyed by the young people, immediately over the head of the two suffering old ladies, and in particular, a favourite sport of "Wild Indians" and jumps from a height, flatfooted, on to a bare floor, have since modified my earlier judgments and led me to recognize some tangible grievances !

Then, again, under Mrs. Doherty's rooms were those of the two aged Miss Walpoles, who had possessed apartments through the reigns of four sovereigns, and, when all in the Palace lived to an extreme old age, bore the palm in that direction, and at nearly a hundred years old, climbed up the spiral stairs to be present at our musical parties, of which my aunt, Mrs. Wrottesley, a leading amateur of the day, was the moving spirit. I well remember her favourite story of the two old ladies getting up and bowing gracefully to the platform, after a particular song, on the various troubles and difficulties of courtship ; if interminable stairs had to be surmounted to reach the object of one's affections ; she concluded with the words :

"But these long flights of stairs are a bore !

If I court any more, my love shall live on the ground floor !

Tootle-hum ; tootlehum, tey !"

and the elderly dames, evidently considering future courtships were still possible and bridling with satisfaction, made

a sweeping curtsy and accepted the allusions as applying directly to themselves !

Leaving these rooms and passing the Chapel door, brings us to the Fountain Court, with the ground-floor rooms looking into the gardens, and above the round window suites—a feature of Wren's buildings. Immediately above the State Apartments were living at that time, Mrs. Keith Falconer, and close at hand, Miss Longley, the daughter of the Archbishop of Canterbury, where I paid many visits, in our community of interest on religious subjects. Miss Somerset, an invalid confined to her apartments, and therefore greatly appreciative of the visits of young people, had also rooms in this part of the Palace, where, partly owing to my mother's hints of kindnesses to be performed to the aged, and partly to the sense of duty and a regard for old people (almost extinct in these days), we were frequent visitors. Lady Georgina Grey, who had been well known as a Society leader in London for many years, continued her hospitality and kindness to old and young alike when an inhabitant of the Palace, and many were the cheery evenings and amusing round games organized in her rooms. Lady Roberts, the mother of the famous Field-Marshal, had rooms also on the ground floor, and being a lady of as unassuming a character as her son, was also a great favourite in the Palace, and her musical parties much enjoyed by us all. Here we would sing our quartets and glees, led by a well-known music teacher from London, and the Field-Marshal on many occasions would add to the pleasure of the society by his genial manner and his kindness to his mother's guests.

On the third floor Mrs. Fitzroy, the widow of the Admiral of that name, had a charming suite of apartments, but unfortunately was the victim, owing to her unpopularity with the young men, of many practical jokes. A basket,

let down through a well staircase from a great height above, to receive parcels and letters, lent itself to ingenious methods for carrying out many pranks with its contents. On the same floor were also found the rooms of Mrs. Ellice, one of whose grandsons, "Sandy" Fortescue, was the chief instigator of most of the mischief in the place. This lady's superior fortune enabled her to give many pleasant entertainments and conferred on her a certain prestige amongst her neighbours, for even where rank and social superiority secured a great popularity, money then, as now, assumed a greater importance. On the ground floor of this courtyard were several kitchens (also the scenes of the young Fortescue's escapades) from which meals had to be carried up to the apartments at the top of the Palace, and fortunate were the inhabitants who, like my mother, had a separate kitchen, as well as pantry and servants' hall, on the same floor as her private apartments.

Walking through a vestibule at the foot of the great staircase we passed through another archway, above which the lovely old Tudor rooms of the Great Cardinal were then inhabited by the Hon. Lady Hill and her daughter and granddaughter.

Entering the Clock Courtyard on the left were the rooms of the three Miss Middletons, all of whom married during their occupancy of these apartments, one becoming the wife of Sir Evan Macgregor, for a long while Secretary to the Board of Admiralty. In the rooms adjoining were living the two Miss Gordons, one of whom, at an advanced age, still inhabits the Palace, while facing west, over the Main Entrance, looking up the Barrack Yard, was the suite of Lady Walpole and her two daughters, and on the opposite side of the archway or Great Gates, the Chaplain and his wife were given quarters. Again, on the south end of the Palace were the charming apartments overlooking the river,

occupied in turn, in our days, by Mrs. Hugh Campbell and later by Princess Frederica of Hanover—the latter a very popular personage at the Palace, who most unfortunately lost her only child of one year old while living there. Later, Lady Wolseley was given this suite—quite the most enviable in the Palace.

If, then, leaving the entrance gates behind us, we wend our way up Tennis Court Lane towards our own rooms, bearing to the right of the Old Fish Court, we reach the apartments inhabited at that time by Miss Wyndham—the proverbial news retailer of Hampton Court, and the charming suite given to Mr. Law and his second spouse, the former being one of the two last male inhabitants of the Palace owning apartments equally with his wife. Both these, and the rooms of the Lady Housekeeper, had their entrance in the courtyard running parallel with Tennis Court Lane, in which were found the old kitchen and serving rooms for the Great Hall. Mr. William Towry Law was an object of great interest, mingled with awe, to the young people of our day, for although he seldom appeared in Palace life, his chequered career, in leaving the Navy to become an Anglican priest, and later, an adherent to Roman Catholicism, was well known amongst us by the oft-quoted tract, “How I brought ten souls to Rome !” It appeared to be the tradition in this family that daughters unmarried, at any rate where the first wife’s relations were concerned, should be placed in convents, and desperate were the efforts of all in the Palace, when the last remaining daughter was still unwed at the advanced age of seventeen, to save the pretty girl from the career for which she had no vocation ! These efforts were crowned with success at the last moment, and a charming Mr. Elwes came forward in time to save another reluctant novice from taking the vows of the Church of Rome !

Continuing our way up the lane on the right-hand side were Miss Bernard's apartments, and on the left stood the Church Schools, where I taught every Sunday; while almost adjoining was the house of the Clerk of the Works, who organized and directed the alterations, repairs and changes constantly occurring in the Palace suites. I well remember how, at one Yuletide, this office was the centre of interest to all the young people of the place, as connected with the greatest adventures of the young Mr. Fortescue, to whom allusion has already been made. Twelve boards had been fixed in different parts of the building late in December, to announce that the Palace would be closed on Christmas Day, and in but two hours the young man, with extraordinary ingenuity, had removed them from their different positions and left them at the door of the Clerk of the Works. While eleven boards had been secured without too strenuous exertion, the twelfth was on the wall of the small recess in front of the Palace, under the very eyes of the sentry on duty! Nothing daunted, the young man, under pretext of giving a pick-a-back ride to the small son of a friend, hoisted the child on to his shoulders, with his back steadied against the wall, unhooked the board from its nail and carried it off triumphantly, leaving the sentry in blissful ignorance of what had occurred! The twelve boards were then left at the door of the Clerk of the Works, while the young man fled to our rooms, to prove the alibi which in his notorious reputation would certainly be necessary, as proof of his non-co-operation in the deed.

The hero of this escapade, with two brothers of a somewhat quieter turn of mind, were sent down regularly to their grandmother, Mrs. Ellice, for the holidays, in their father's rooted determination that three young men of an irresponsible age (the two elder were working for their Army examinations) should not be allowed to run loose

in his beautiful London house ! The darlings of their long-suffering grandmother and the terror to the Palace Police, who, it was rumoured, had to be largely subsidized to avoid prosecution, the second son, Sandy, was the chief offender, whose practical jokes certainly showed remarkable ingenuity, and though sometimes exercised on the unpopular residents in the Palace, were chiefly reserved for the excursionists of the day.

These sightseers were regarded by many in our time as quite unnecessary intruders, and great was the triumph of "Sandy" Fortescue when on one occasion he decoyed a large party into his grandmother's kitchen on the ground floor of the Fountain Court immediately below her apartments, on the assurance that this was the kitchen used by Queen Elizabeth, and having turned the key in the door, kept his victims close prisoners until their cries for help were heard by the police !

In another instance on a Bank Holiday, our young friend placed on the staircase, consisting of ninety stairs, leading to the apartments of an obnoxious critic of Fortescue failings, a placard he had purloined from the Grand Staircase, and on which was written "This way to the State Apartments", with the result that crowds of excursionists tramped up and down the long flight of stairs and hammered on the unfortunate lady's hall door from morning till night ! The proved alibis, to which allusion has already been made, were generally sought in connection with our apartments, and a thundering knock at our door invariably presaged a precipitate entrance into our drawing-room and instantaneous disappearance under a long-curtained settee, which stood in the large bay-window, for some considerable period of time.

Great was the alarm on one occasion when another terrific noise at the door led us to fear a domiciliary visit

from the police and then to our relief turned out to be the arrival of young Mr. Lambert, who was more or less in charge of these troublesome young men. But the amusement caused by these vagaries more than compensated for the anxious times when we thought real difficulty with the authorities might be ahead. These delinquencies, however, nearly led to considerable trouble, and only representations to the magistrate of the serious illness of the young man's father saved Mr. Sandy from being lodged in the county gaol, after a crowning defiance of the Law, in riding through the cloisters and colonnade of the Royal Palace on horseback !

The good looks of the elder brother, who certainly was very handsome, not only made him a favourite in the Palace circles, but seemed to give great personal satisfaction, for gazing at himself in a glass over our fireplace he would exclaim with great frankness and *naïveté*, which disarmed our criticism, "By Jove ! What a handsome fellow I am !" and other self-appreciative remarks. Later on, however, this attractive appearance caused some serious trouble, and on one occasion his visits to our apartments were made by the roof, in the well-grounded fear that a lady, to whom he had promised marriage, was waiting to waylay him in the cloisters below, armed with a special marriage licence !

This young man and his brother, even in their early days, showed a marked ingenuity in the subterfuges adopted for avoiding a return to school or to their crammer at the end of their triennial vacations. Even when a sprained foot, or rheumatism, which no one could insist was imaginary, had gained two or three days' respite from work, the young man, seen at last into the railway carriage by a fond aunt, descended from the train as it moved off on the other side of the line !

The office of Works in Tennis Court Lane, where the captured notice-boards were deposited by Mr. Fortescue, was then administered by Mr. Chart—an important personage in the Palace in those days. All work in the various apartments, contemplated by the inhabitants of the suites, had to be submitted for his approval, though oftentimes some little job, if a real improvement, would be carried out free of charge, despite the general rule maintained that when once the suites were prepared for incoming tenants, whose tastes were always considered, any further decorations must be at the charge of the respective owners of the apartments. To Mr. Chart's friendly consideration of the requests submitted to him, we must attribute the smooth working of the changes effected in those days at Hampton Court Palace.

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But to continue our way up Tennis Court Lane, at the extreme end lies, on the right side, the entrance to our own apartments, and in the small passage approaching our stairs was found one of the kitchens belonging to my mother, then only used as a useful box-room. On the left, opposite this entrance, lay the garden of Mr. Beresford, the Master of the Tennis Court, with the narrow passage on one side leading to the famous Hampton Court Tennis Court, where Henry VIII still found exercise in his old age, and Charles I played a last game the day he escaped from the custody of Colonel Whalley and sought refuge with the Parliamentarians at Windsor Castle. Mr. Beresford's house adjoined the Tennis Court, his gardens and house being chiefly associated in the minds of the residents in Tennis Court Lane at Christmas-time with a terrible odour of very high game, which poisoned the atmosphere for a considerable distance around, on the yearly occasions when he received the Royal present of a haunch of venison.

Perhaps owing to the recognition that our rooms overlooked his own house and that we were constantly the chief sufferers from this infliction, we received regular invitations to partake of the banquet, which, needless to say, was regularly refused, in the impossibility of sharing the food which should have been eaten quite ten days earlier !

Tennis Court Lane had further associations, which are amusing to recall. It was here that I first received instructions in riding, from two of the sons of Sir George Maude, Equerry to Queen Victoria, who then occupied for a good part of the year the Stud House in Bushey Park, where we spent many enjoyable days. Five sons, in a place where few men were available, were a great asset for parties and balls, for all the young men were of social disposition. One, recognized as the greatest flirt of the place ; another filling in his time the post of organist, painter, and of owner of a dressmaking establishment in town ; while the younger son—an admirer of my sister's—was a budding poet of no particular talent !

Our great friendship with this young man led to a close intimacy with the rest of the family, and to him and his brother may be attributed the splendid idea of educating my sister and myself in the arts of horsemanship. Lady Maude, a kind and helpful woman, warmly approved of these ambitious plans and two of the best horses from the Royal stud were selected for the honour of participating in this great venture. But though I had a good seat, I was a timid horsewoman, my sister far excelling me in this respect ; and even the support of the two stalwart young Maudes, each running on either side of our horses in our first lessons, and accompanying us later in rides in the Park, failed to lessen my nervousness. For some time I hesitated whether I should put an end to my equestrian pursuits, but my final decision was only taken when I

was informed by an expert on the subject that "a good horsewoman must feel part and parcel of her horse!" Recognizing as I did that I felt totally apart and distinct from the animal on which I was riding, that it was owing to his forbearance that I still maintained my seat, and to the regularity of his movements and the precision of his actions that I remained on his back at all, I considered it was high time to resume my pedestrian habits!

But no tales of Tennis Court Lane would be complete if we failed to record a historical incident occurring in Hanoverian times, and of which the Princess of Wales, mother of the future King George III, was the victim.

The Princess became *enceinte* while staying at Hampton Court in 1737, and the Queen fearing a supposititious child being foisted upon the Royal Family, insisted on the confinement taking place in the Palace, while the Prince, her son, who was then on the worst terms with his father, George II, was equally determined that the baby should be born in his Town residence. The night the Princess was taken ill, the King was playing at commerce, the Queen at quadrille, and the Princess Caroline and Lord Hervey, as usual, at cribbage, all in ignorance of the exciting events taking place in other parts of the Palace. The Prince, learning of the approaching accouchement of his wife, made immediate plans for leaving the Palace. Supported by the dancing-master on the one side and one of the Queen's Equerries on the other, she was placed (pleading all the time to be let alone) in the equipage which the Prince had had brought round to Tennis Court Lane.

On their arrival at St. James's at about ten o'clock at night, it was found that no preparations had been made although the midwife arrived in a few minutes. Warming-pans and all other necessary implements were sought from

neighbouring houses, and in the absence of any sheets, the bed had to be made with two table-cloths.

Great was the consternation when the Queen was called in the early hours of the morning, and was told of what had taken place and of the Prince's atrocious behaviour. Carriages were at once ordered to take her and the two elder princesses up to Town, while the Duke of Grafton, Lord Hervey and Lord Essex, were in attendance. Upon their arrival, they were met by the Prince with a great pretence of affection and respect, in the hope of convincing the public that he was a most devoted son.

One useful purpose was, however, served by the Queen's visit to St. James's, for, as she acknowledged: "I had my doubts upon the road that there would be some juggle, and only the sight of this poor little ugly she-mouse, instead of a brave large fat jolly boy, would have removed my suspicions."

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Supplementing the society which the Palace afforded, the friends living in the neighbourhood or just outside the Palace, in the attractive small houses on the Kingston Road, backing on to Bushey Park, contributed to the success of the Palace entertainments and introduced wider interests to our social gatherings, while the many sons of the Maude and Lambart families, the three grandsons of Mrs. Ellice and Mrs. Law's two clever sons, all glad to participate in Palace festivities, increased the number of available bachelors, and helped to redress the adverse balance in the preponderating number of young ladies in the Palace. The Officers of the Cavalry Regiment then quartered at Hampton Court also helped in this respect. Many agreeable friends settled in the neighbourhood were also profuse in their hospitality, notably Major and Mrs. Archer in their charming house at Hampton, Sir G. Maude

at the Stud House, and the Alfred Pagets, with their attractive families of sons and daughters, to whose lively week-end parties the Palace inhabitants were frequently invited. The fascinations and heart-breaking qualities of one of the gayest of Lord Alfred's daughters were well known far and wide, and even asserted themselves when the lady in question, suddenly converted under the influence of Messrs. Moody and Sankey, immediately won the heart and later married the Director of the Evangelistic Home to which she had repaired.

It was only natural that in the propinquity the Palace afforded for young men and maidens, partiality should be evinced by one for the other, but these preferences were, as a rule, of a transitory nature and in a few months' time a more attractive rival frequently appeared on the scene, justifying my mother's wise contention, when reminded by friends of the dangers of an impecunious match, that the young people knew full well that marriage was impossible without a penny on either side, though it is fair to relate two or three happy engagements have resulted since we left the Palace, between those so closely associated in daily life.

ENTERTAINMENTS—SUMMER AND WINTER

MUSIC, BALLS, TENNIS AND SKATING

Gala days, occurring from time to time in the annals of Hampton Court at that date, also deserve recognition. The weekly performance of the Bands of the Regiments then quartered at Hounslow and Hampton Court made for some of the most pleasurable of summer days, the bright colouring of the ladies' frocks and parasols relieving the stiff setting of the Dutch flower-beds, and the comfortable garden chairs kept for our use by the porter in the

vestibule of the west entrance to the grounds giving the comfort and sense of repose which the hard benches provided for the public by no means supplied. A certain feeling of superiority conferred by our privilege in this respect was, however, rudely dispelled when one bright summer day we were enjoying the music under the trees, close to the centre fountain, when one of our party, of somewhat portly build, suddenly collapsed through the too fragile seat with which he had been provided and was rescued with considerable difficulty in the eyes of a large crowd of sightseers, whose appreciation of the situation would have been vastly increased had they known the victim of the accident was a Peer of the Realm. Only a sense of humour on our part precluded the mortifying recognition of the jubilation expressed by the onlookers !

A day of considerable moment to Palace inhabitants occurred annually, when all turned out for the Sale of the Yearlings in Bushey Park, a sale attended by breeders of horses, racehorse-owners and others from far and wide, when the young ladies of the Palace, in hopes of outvying one another, appeared in the smart confections which had been the subject of thoughtful consideration for weeks previously and were to serve as their best summer frocks for the coming year.

Yet other events of special attraction were the balls given by private individuals, as well as by the Cavalry Regiments from time to time in the Oak Room. The dark panelling of this splendid ball-room, illuminated by wax candles in marvellous profusion round the walls, was a most becoming entourage for the lovely evening frocks and smart uniforms, while the Orangery next door served as a charming sitting-out room, and, when the gardens were illuminated by limelights and little lamps suspended from the boughs of the trees in the Private Gardens, the

whole effect presented a scene of unrivalled beauty, in the dim obscurity of the majestic building, with the brilliant illumination of the gardens beyond. Singing quadrilles were then the fashion of the day, but although many of the words sung were ditties of the past, there seemed something almost incongruous in the homely words sung by Kings and Queens of Stuart days we were then impersonating. One of Mr. Law's greater ambitions was to reproduce the masques which figured so largely in Tudor and Stuart times, and in which later Queen Anne, the wife of James I, took a leading part. But his attempt to re-introduce this special form of entertainment, though a partial success, naturally never equalled in design or magnificence the pageants of former days.

Still vivid in my memory as the greatest examples of the most brilliant pageantry I had then as a girl ever seen, are the splendid entertainment and ball given at Strawberry Hill in honour of their Royal Highnesses, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and to which two or three of the Hampton Court girls were taken by Miss Hardy (daughter of Nelson's Hardy). The lovely summer evening, the charming grounds lit up by innumerable fairy lights and the whole *mise en scène* made a fitting setting for the attractions of the Princess of Wales, then in the zenith of her beauty, and for the stately walk of the Royal couple as they passed through the long Drawing Room with guests exquisitely dressed and wearing the most gorgeous tiaras, standing on either side to watch and admire the procession as it passed.

But apart from such royal splendour we cannot forget the unconventional charms of life at Hampton Court in those days, the hastily improvised skating parties, taking place either in the afternoon or by moonlight ; one of our greatest pleasures in winter-time, when the joyful announce-

ment was made by the Palace officials that the ice would bear. Mr. Law, himself a wonderful skater, was again the leader in these delightful parties and alas ! in one instance held responsible by various critics for what might have been a serious disaster in the history of Hampton Court skating. On this occasion the smaller canals being crowded with people living outside the Palace, a diversion was made by taking a selected party to the Round Pond in the Home Park. Though the ice was passed as sound in the centre, breaks round the edges necessitated our getting over the water here by planks, which were afterwards removed to prevent unwelcome visitors from joining our exclusive set. In the meanwhile the Home Park keepers, ignorant of our movements, for some reason or other turned off the water, with the immediate consequence that nearly every member of the party disappeared like so many ninepins into the pond below, which fortunately was in no part deeper than four feet. Added to the general discomfort of such a situation was the realization that those who had watched from the bank our monopoly of what looked like first-rate skating were probably triumphant witnesses of the great catastrophe ! Yet with true nobility of soul, the Officers of the Regiments hitherto contemned by the ladies of the Palace as not up to the usual status of the previous smart occupants of Hampton Court Barracks, who had been precluded from sharing in our select skating party, forgetting the past, heroically jumped into the water to effect a rescue. A walk of two miles in wringing clothes was a disagreeable ending to an ill-fated experiment, which was celebrated by Mr. E. Law in an epic poem of considerable talent and wit.

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But more serious still than a chance immersion in icy-cold water was the fear of an outbreak of fire, the bugbear

of Hampton Court officials, at a time when no electricity was provided and oil lamps and other inflammable vessels were constantly in use—a fear well justified in view of the rotten state of some of the old Palace timber, the difficulty of detecting any mischief occurring before it had made too great progress, and the recognition of the inestimable loss to the nation of the destruction of the historic Palace and its valuable contents. The danger of conflagration was increased by the remarkable amount of space left between the ceiling of one apartment and the floor of the one immediately above, allowing in some cases a man to stand upright between the one and the other. This space naturally tended to create a blast of air, which quickly fanned any undetected flame, directly boards were raised or other openings effected.

I remember the extraordinary rapidity with which the floor of our drawing-room was torn up and swift measures taken to deal with a smouldering beam—but ten minutes after notice had been sent to Mr. Chart of smoke rising from the sides of our drawing-room carpet. No doubt the efficiency and promptitude of the excellent Hampton Court Fire Brigade (composed of several of the Palace workmen and one or two volunteers from outside) and men of the regiments then living in the Barracks, whose help was invaluable in case of real emergency, averted many possible catastrophes. Two fires did, in fact, occur within four years. The first, in 1881, was caused by the overflow of a spirit lamp in a cupboard in Mrs. Crofton's rooms and was easily extinguished, causing but little damage, but resulting in the sad death of a maid-servant, who succumbed to injuries received. The second was a far more serious affair and arose in Miss Cuppage's apartments just below our own, destroying a very considerable portion of her rooms and ours in Tennis Court Lane. Fire-engines were

summoned from far and wide, the Hampton Court Brigade and their soldier colleagues worked with superhuman effort and in a few hours the conflagration was extinguished; there was some good, even, in the damage wrought—for this part of Wolsey's building was then rebuilt with the facings and bricks which assorted well with the best specimens of Gothic architecture, replacing some ugly introductions of previous years. My mother, who had been in Town, returned to find her apartments on fire and many of the contents destroyed. One of the old ladies of the Palace had a narrow escape on this occasion and was only rescued from her rooms on the top floor by one of the men of the fire brigade, who was rewarded with the medal of the Royal Humane Society for the bravery he displayed.

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But in any account of life at the Palace we must not omit the amenities provided in the Hampton Court Parks and Gardens, which contributed not only to our own happiness when residents in the Palace, but to an equal if not greater extent to the pleasure and enjoyment of successive Kings and Queens in Tudor, Stuart and Guelph reigns. The outdoor life at Hampton Court, the facilities afforded for exercise and pastime, for rest and quiet, have appealed with resistless force and fascination to old and young, to Royal inhabitants, as well as to private individuals from the earliest occupation of the Palace to our own times.

It was here that Cardinal Wolsey so regularly said his offices in the gardens in which he took so much interest. It was here, again, that the joust in which King Henry VIII showed so much prowess took place in what in our own time was styled the Wilderness. He initiated "his awne darling Anne" in the mysteries of archery and shooting

at the butts in the Privy Garden. It was here that Queen Elizabeth took her morning walk at eight o'clock in the frosty mornings to "catch her a heate"—"walking with gravity rather than with grandity!" and here again that she enjoyed hunting in the Royal Parks in the picturesque style she much affected; here she received the clandestine visit of the Duke of Anjou and argued with Lord Melville on the rival attractions of the Queen of Scots and the Queen of England. And it was here Queen Mary, the wife of William III, took her daily exercise under the overhanging trees in Queen Mary's Bower, and spent the many years her husband was abroad at the war in the Watergate House close to the river, where she and her ladies spent their days doing the finest needlework or in personally cultivating their gardens, earning the high encomiums of Bishop Burnet who writes of the Queen: "In all these hours that were not given to better employment, she wrought with her own hands, and sometimes with so constant diligence as if she had to earn her own bread by it. It was a new thing to see a Queen work so many hours a day." An interesting feature of Queen Mary's activities in connection with horticulture at Hampton Court was her introduction of the *Agave Americana variegata*, and another tropical plant the *Agave Filamentosa*. The first was supposed to blossom once in a hundred years, and was therefore called the Century Plant. It was not, however, until after the flower had been planted in the Hampton Court Gardens over two hundred years that this tree suddenly burst into blossom, and its flower-stalk rose to a height of no less than sixteen feet, and carried thousands of pale yellow flowers. Still more strange was the survival of the *Agave Filamentosa*, which had been thrown into a dark dry cellar, in consequence of its giving every sign of premature decay, and it was only at the end of the nine-

teenth century it was suddenly discovered that the plant had revived and was not only alive and healthy, but had thrown out a fine white flower-stem. Eventually, its flower grew to a height of six feet, and carried hundreds of blossoms.

Great, also, in our days, was the appreciation of the small pieces of gardens which were granted to the ladies of the Palace for their own use. Though it must be admitted after the first pride of possession, and the weeks of fatiguing efforts to get the plots in order by those whose earlier town life precluded any previous knowledge of horticulture, the first enthusiasm soon evaporated, and outside help was invoked for the work. Just opposite our own rooms in Tennis Court Lane was a strip of garden allotted to our share. I remember, however, but few attempts were made to make it beautiful and profitable, and the only produce we therefore received were the very fine pears which hung in profusion in most years on the trees there, and which one of the Palace gardeners attended with the greatest care. Other small plots were provided in the Privy Gardens, close to the old Bowling Green and Banqueting House, while many living on the ground floor had their own pieces for cultivation immediately outside their windows, and I remember the beauty of the roof gardens on some of the low buildings in Fish Court.

But while the Palace authorities gratified as far as possible the wishes of the young people living in the Palace, when it came to the very many questions which had to be referred to higher authorities, the changes desired by tenants of apartments and gardens were difficult to effect, when the various members of the Lord Steward's Department, the Office of Works, the Lord Chamberlain and the Board of Her Majesty's Woods and Forest, had to be invoked on any trivial matter. The story is told of the lady who

wished to gain access to a small unappropriated garden at the foot of a disused staircase which communicated with our rooms, and the many steps which had to be taken and obstacles surmounted before her wish could be gratified. First, the Lord Chamberlain's Department had to be approached for permission to use the staircase and to open the doors at the top and below, but the passage which led from the foot of the stairs to the garden was not included in the permit given and the lady in question could not cross the threshold without the consent of the Board of Works. When once access to the passage was granted, the three boards to which we have alluded had again to be approached before approval could be given to pass through by a small iron gate into the garden itself. Such were the difficulties to be faced when red-tapeism was called into full play!

But the summer pastimes on the waterways of Hampton Court were equally if not more enjoyable than the skating expeditions in the winter months. How well I remember the pleasant hours passed on the river under the shadow of the overhanging trees, or in our canoes, with protecting boats in attendance, ready to effect a rescue from any untoward event! The expeditions up and down stream in the summer afternoons and the frequent visits to Kingston, where refreshing ices at the first-class caterers, "Messrs. Nuttall," concluded our pleasant outing. The delightful dinners at the river-side houses, when, in the moonlight return journey, guests were so well assorted that all would find themselves, without any apparent arrangement, in the company of those most congenial to their taste.

Such was our life at Hampton Court, and those who lived there at that time may well claim that a happier existence could not elsewhere be found. I smile now to think of the misplaced compassion of many friends kindly lamenting the "dull existence of those poor girls inhabiting the

Palace" ! Where else, it has well been asked, could we find the many outdoor and indoor attractions afforded in the Palace itself and in its unique and charming surroundings ? Summer and winter presented in turn their contrasting charms. In the winter months the sheltered home life, with its work and its duties, its quiet interest and its more festive distractions, and, in the glorious days of summertime, the amenities provided by the lovely grounds and parks and the exercise and pleasure found on the river Thames appealed to old and young alike.

Nor can we forget the great advantages conferred by our close proximity to Town, bringing us in touch with the intellectual, the artistic, social and literary interests otherwise unobtainable in a small self-contained community. Art, literature, music and drama were all brought within our reach, in the favourable opportunities afforded in the great metropolis, while leaders in politics, in State affairs, as well as those partaking in the exacting claims of a London social season, keenly enjoyed the days spent in the fresh air, the many attractions of Hampton Court, and the unconventionality and simplicity of Palace life.

Again, in any estimate of life's values, the warm friendship made possible in the close intercourse of chosen friends at Hampton Court, often continuing into after-life and frequently leading to even closer ties, must rank high amongst the privileges we then enjoyed. Nor did our interest and affections for the old Palace home terminate with marriage, or calls to other spheres. The warm and happy recollections of earlier Hampton Court days, so touchingly recorded in the letters of the Ladies-in-Waiting of the Hanoverian Court, were re-echoed in the correspondence of those living there at a later date, and constant visits to relations and friends still residing at the Palace were the most delightful of red-letter days ; while children

and children's children found in the time spent there with parents and grandparents some of their most enjoyable holidays. In my own case, scarcely a week passed, during the thirty years of my mother's residence at the Palace after my marriage, without long days or weeks being spent at Hampton Court in the still-entrancing associations with the place and its people.