

# Statesmen's Homes:

## Hatfield House.



**L**ORD SALISBURY is fortunate in having his ancestral residence within an hour's journey of Downing Street. In the busiest political times his lordship, when it pleases him, can enjoy his "bed and breakfast" in the noble apartments of Hatfield House, and even in the midst of a crisis can betake himself there from Saturday to Monday. Owing chiefly to the practical convenience of its position the name of the present Premier has been so much identified with Hatfield as to put out of our minds its earlier historical associations. On my first visit to Hatfield it was not until I was actually treading the soft verdure of the park that I remembered all that I had read of the place in relation to Henry the Eighth, Queen Mary and her sister Elizabeth, and James the First.

Yet the whole aspect of Hatfield must delight the antiquarian. The little town, with its many old houses seemingly thrown together in hap-hazard fashion, surmounted by a church which, although much "restored," has still the appearance of old age, has the *tout ensemble*, so to speak, of an historic past.

The only modern innovation I could discover in the town was a red-brick building, presented by Lord Salisbury to the town a few years ago, the ground floor of which is a Conservative club, and the first floor a public hall. In the promotion of concerts at this hall members of the family at Hatfield House

readily assist, and Lady Florence Cecil occasionally gives her services as a violinist. Even the railway station, large and ugly as it is, does not obtrude itself upon the old-fashioned little town, although Lord Salisbury, promptly recognising the boon of an express train, has had an entrance made to his park at the nearest possible point to the iron rails—about a hundred yards from the station. The Great Northern Railway Company, by the way, noting the great number of distinguished visitors whom the statesman entertained at Hatfield, have built at the station a private waiting-room for his and their convenience. Except when he is receiving some guests of great state, such as the Prince of Wales or the Shahzada, Lord Salisbury, however, never uses his privilege in this respect, always preferring the hard-boarded seat of the general platform whilst waiting for the train which is to take him back to his public duties in London.

Hatfield Park is a large piece of rising ground above the town, about ten miles in circumference, and having a carriage drive of two miles. It is almost equally rich in wood and pasture, but a considerable area has been converted into ornamental gardens. Passing through the massive iron gates which face the railway station, a drive of half a mile brings one to the north front of the house. The building has the shape of a parallelogram, 280 feet long and 70 feet wide, with a wing at either end, 80 feet in width and projecting to a length of 100 feet. The whole structure, partly Renaissance and partly Elizabethan in style, crowned by a clock tower 70 feet high,

and by turrets at four angles, has a most commanding effect, which its slight elevation over the little town and most of the surrounding country only serves to emphasise. The west wing was built as recently as 1835, but its grey stone, which ivy has already partly covered, so well harmonises with the rest of the building that one would never suppose it was less old. Ascending a few steps to the terrace one passes through a thick oaken door into the Marble Hall, which measures 50 feet long and 30 feet wide. It is lighted at the upper end by a large oriel window and at the lower end there is a long screen, finely carved and richly decorated. Among many pictures on the walls are portraits of Queen Elizabeth—as "Diana"—and of Mary Queen of Scots. Altogether there are some half a dozen original portraits of Elizabeth in the house. But as historical curios and souvenirs are to be seen in almost every room of Lord Salisbury's home it is well to have in mind on entering the great hall the history of the mansion which, to a large extent, they serve to illustrate. Hatfield was originally the property of the diocese of Ely, and here the bishops had their palace until the reign of Henry VIII. That monarch made some sort of a bargain with the Church, and Hatfield was added to

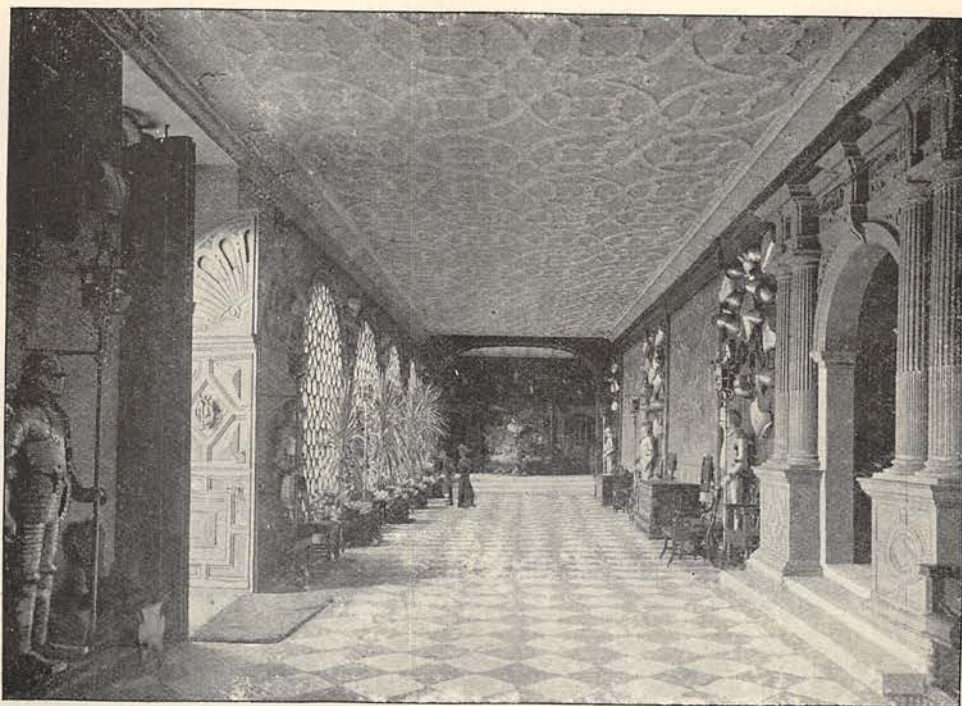
the possessions of the Crown; even now, however, the town is sometimes called Bishop's Hatfield. It is next heard of in history as the occasional residence of Edward the Sixth, and then as the pleasant prison-house of the Princess Elizabeth during the reign of Mary. Although in semi-captivity there, Elizabeth became very fond of Hatfield, and more than once re-visited it after she became Queen. On these occasions Lord Burghley visited the little town which was destined in after years to be linked with the name of his family. The circumstances in which this was brought about throw a curious light on the relations between sovereign and subjects at that time. On his way from Scotland to London, to assume the crown which united the two kingdoms, James the First spent the night at Theobalds, Lord Burghley's famous mansion near Waltham Cross, then in the possession of his second son, Sir Robert Cecil. This residence, which has long since disappeared, was so much to the liking of the King that he soon made it convenient to pay Sir Robert a second and longer visit. On that occasion his Majesty's first impressions of the comfort and splendour of Theobalds were fully borne out, and nothing would content him but that it should become his own. So he offered



KING JAMES'S DRAWING-ROOM.

Hatfield in exchange to Sir Robert Cecil, who, while regretting the loss of what had been his home from childhood, was probably glad to get so fair an equivalent. The King, in a magnanimous moment, appears to have added to his offer the rebuilding of the palace at Hatfield,

has been freely indulged in at Hatfield. Besides those of King James, there are Cromwell rooms, Wellington rooms, and Queen Victoria rooms. Lord Salisbury himself has given the name of Beaconsfield to two rooms which his late political chief occupied



THE ARMOURY.

(From a photograph by Elsdon & Son, Hertford.)

and for no better reason—certainly not because it was worn out—nearly the whole of the Norman structure in which Elizabeth had passed her girlhood was razed to the ground.

“King James’s” rooms commemorate the important part which that monarch had in the making of Hatfield House. The enormous bedstead, of the “four-corners” pattern, reminding one of the great bed of Ware, on which he is said to have slept when visiting Hatfield after the completion of the new building, has been kept intact ever since, as well as the tapestry—tapestry, it may be said, is one of the features of Hatfield House—with which the room was hung. In the sitting-room, resting on a splendid marble chimney-piece, is a bronze statue of the King. This apartment is so large and lofty that one can scarcely believe that the statue is life-size.

The common practice in great houses of naming rooms after the most distinguished men and women who have occupied them

in the west wing when visiting Hatfield. But for this practice, indeed, his lordship would not have known that the great Protector was ever an inmate of his ancestral house, and there is no further proof of Cromwell’s visit. Of the honour paid to Hatfield by Wellington, on the other hand, there is a striking memento in the French flags captured at Waterloo and presented by the Iron Duke to his host, the late Marquis of Salisbury, which hang from the music gallery in the Marble Hall.

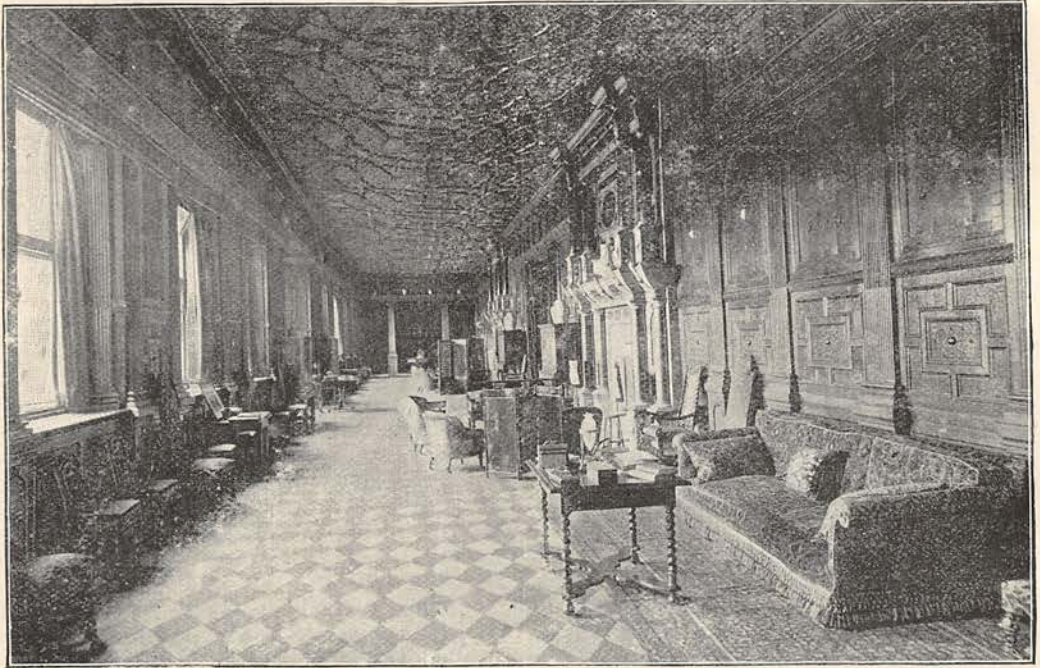
The apartment favoured with these trophies is one of the most spacious in the house, and on rent day, Lord Salisbury entertains there about 150 guests, the Marble Hall being used as a dining-room in summer. The winter dining-room is less sumptuous, but is full of interesting pictures, including portraits of the Cecil family by Vandyck, Kneller, and Lely. Equally interesting are the varied contents of the summer drawing-room, including an organ of the time of James the First,

Queen Elizabeth's tortoise-shell and silver jewel-case, fine chimney-pieces and antique furniture.

But the pearl of greatest price is to be found in the library. In the number and character of its books, Lord Salisbury's library is not superior to that of smaller houses in various parts of the country. But it contains a priceless collection of original manuscripts—the Cecil papers. They consist chiefly of about 13,000 letters, written, by the most eminent men and women of their age, to Lord Burghley, the Elizabethan statesman, and his son, Sir Robert Cecil. In these papers, which have been simply invaluable to historians, we seem to actually live in the "spacious times" of the great Queen, and to make the personal acquaintance of the distinguished men of her reign. Among other curious things are nine folios of verse written by the Queen herself a few years before her death—verses, which so far as they have been

strong-room in the basement of Hatfield House.

On the martial glories of England Lord Salisbury, in his speeches, has bestowed many an eloquent passage. One wonders whether he has found inspiration in composing them whilst striding up and down the armoury, which occupies the whole length of the south front of the house. For in this collection of weapons and flags there are to be found relics of all our great victories, from the Armada to Waterloo and Inkerman. The long apartment is lighted by electric lamps suspended from the lances of mailed figures, the suits of armour having been recovered from the wreck of one of the Spanish vessels in 1588 and presented by Lord Howard of Effingham to Lord Burghley. The plaster ceiling is elaborately decorated, whilst the outer wall of the armoury consists of open wood-work, carved in lace pattern. To obtain protection from wind and rain, however, Lord Salisbury has had



THE LONG GALLERY.

(From a photograph by Charles Vauhan, Acton, W.)

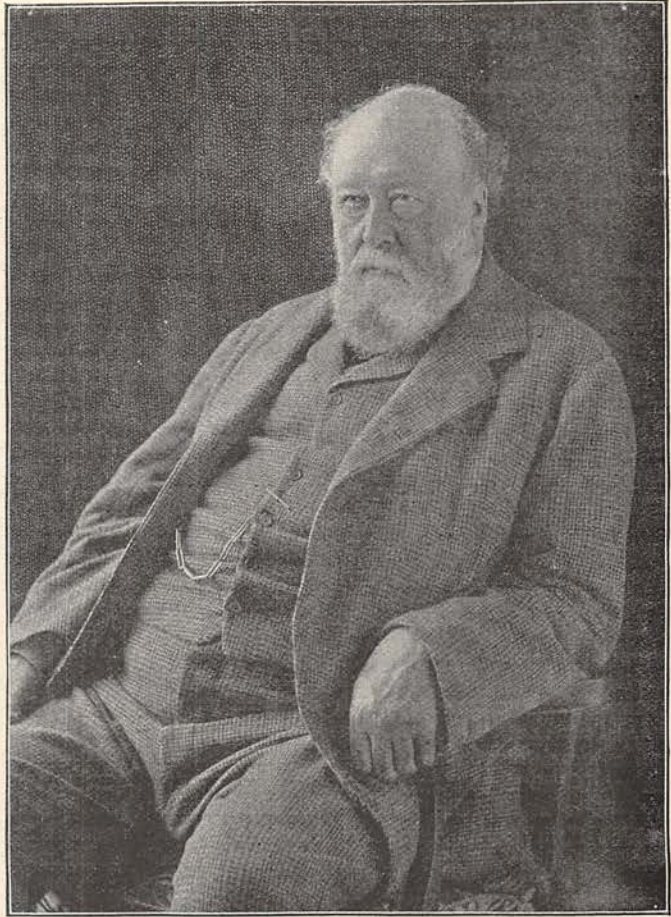
deciphered, are fuller of lamentation and woe than of poetry. In the library most of Lord Salisbury's friends have spent entertaining hours, poring over these faded leaves of a past which comes nearer and nearer as the minutes fly. The MSS. are bound together in boards, and carefully indexed, and are usually kept in a

the open places filled with glass, and the wall now rather resembles the *grille* of the House of Commons.

Above the armoury is the Long Gallery—the most splendid apartment in the house. On the Grand Staircase, by which one ascends, among several portraits is one of the fourth

Earl of Salisbury, to which a curious story attaches. A casual glance at the picture gives one the impression of a man with two heads—behind the features of the Earl peers another face in much fainter outline and of quite a distinct type—the face, in fact, of the unfortunate Duke of Monmouth. It seems that the Duke, when a favourite at Court, was a friend of the then Earl of Salisbury, and as a mark of his esteem presented the Earl with his portrait, which was hung in a position of honour at Hatfield. After Sedgemoor, however, it was not safe for the Earl to keep the picture on his walls and it was accordingly hidden away in the lumber-room. Years after, the discarded canvas, on which the features of the rebel Duke had entirely disappeared, was found by the fourth Earl of Salisbury at a time when he was about to have his own portrait painted, and in a spirit of economy he resolved to utilise it for this purpose. When this portrait came to be cleaned some years ago the face of Monmouth reappeared, to the confusion of the person engaged in the task. This, at any rate, is the explanation of the mystery which Lord Salisbury himself has accepted, if only for the want of a better.

The Long Gallery is really the ball-room of Hatfield House, and on the occasion of the coming of age of Lord Cranborne—the Prime Minister's son and heir—in 1882, a thousand people danced on its finely polished oaken floor. The comparatively little furniture it contains is nearly all of Elizabethan patterns. The greatest curiosity in this splendid apartment, with its panelled walls and gilded ceiling, is, however, the genealogical tree of Queen Elizabeth. The linen-paper chart, which is twelve or fifteen yards long, traces the descent of the monarch from Adam and Eve; and, although found to-day in the mansion of the Cecils, must be regarded as a satire upon the claims of long descent. Nevertheless, it is said to have been the gift of Lord Burghley, the founder of the fortunes of Lord Salisbury's family, to the Queen, in whose



THE MOST HON. THE MARQUIS OF SALISBURY, K.G.  
(From a photograph by Elsdon & Son, Hertford.)

service he had achieved such great distinction. The Adam and Eve staircase at this side of the house is so-called from the picture which hangs there by Albert Dürer. At Hatfield there is evidently no disposition to forget our common ancestry in the grand old gardener and his wife!

The Premier himself spends most of his time in what he calls his "den," which consists of a laboratory, a dressing-room, and a bath-room on the ground-floor. A sight of the laboratory, with its large cupboard of chemicals, its bottles and capsules and other paraphernalia which have evidently been in recent use convinces one of the earnestness and keenness of the interest that Lord Salisbury is known to take in physical science, more particularly electricity. In this room his lordship himself planned the electric lighting of the house by means of the water-power of the River Lea which flows through a portion of the park.

The engines are at some saw-mills, with which the house is in both telegraphic and telephonic communication. Lord Salisbury has also applied his scientific talent to the problem of the water-supply of Hatfield, and the town now receives excellent water from the mains in Hatfield Park. In this room, too, there are some interesting suggestions of the skill to which Lord Salisbury has attained in the gentle art of photography. One is led to wonder by the sight of these things as to the career the statesman would have made for himself in science had not the accident of birth given him an early *entrée* into the world of *la haute politique*. Or would it have been literature after all, as his early contributions to the *Saturday Review*, when there was little prospect of the second son of the late Marquis succeeding to the title and estate, would indicate?

A remnant of the old building in which Elizabeth spent her girlhood is still standing close to what is called the "town entrance" to the park—the entrance which was in most use when my Lord Salisbury, on a visit to London, had to be driven along the great North Road in the family coach. This bit of Bishop's Palace, patched and repaired from time to time, and which was originally the great hall, is now put to the uses—the base uses, I am afraid some too zealous antiquarian may say—of a stable for the numerous horses employed in Lord Salisbury's service. The porter's lodge and the old stone archway are

also believed to have formed part of Hatfield House as Queen Elizabeth knew it. Close by is the burial place of the Duke of Wellington's favourite charger, which died, I believe, whilst its illustrious master was staying at Hatfield. There is also a quaint little walled garden, adorned by part of the pediments of the second Royal Exchange, which seems to have been the pleasaunce of the good bishops.

Pepys visited Hatfield in July, 1661 (as his fellow-diarist, Evelyn, had done eighteen years before), and, after referring to the splendour of the house, writes in his quaint style of "the gardens, such as I never saw in all my life; nor so good flowers, nor so great gooseberries as big as nutmegs." The London visitor to-day would probably not express himself so enthusiastically, but, on the whole, the park has as much interest for him as it had for Pepys or Evelyn who wrote of it as "a considerable rarity." The forest trees certainly look far finer from being over two hundred years older, the "Lion Oak," which was supposed to be seven or eight hundred years old when Pepys saw it, having now a celebrity far and wide. On the other hand, time has dealt rather roughly with the oak under which Elizabeth sat reading when the news of Mary's death was brought to her by a messenger who hastened to fall on his knees on the green turf and salute her Queen of England. Some people have discredited this little story, because Mary's death took place in the middle of the month of November and no young lady

with the common sense of Elizabeth would take her book in the open air at this time of the year. The Queen, when she visited Hatfield in 1846, was not of this number; her Majesty preferred to accept the counter theory that the afternoon of November 17, 1558, was a genial exception to the inclemency of our climate, and, in token of her faith in the old tale, picked an acorn from the tree and had it planted in Windsor Park. Lord Salisbury's gardeners declare that this was the last acorn the ancient tree ever shed. Whatever may be our view of the mid-November incident there is no reason to doubt that the pretty gardens, which are reached from the terrace on the



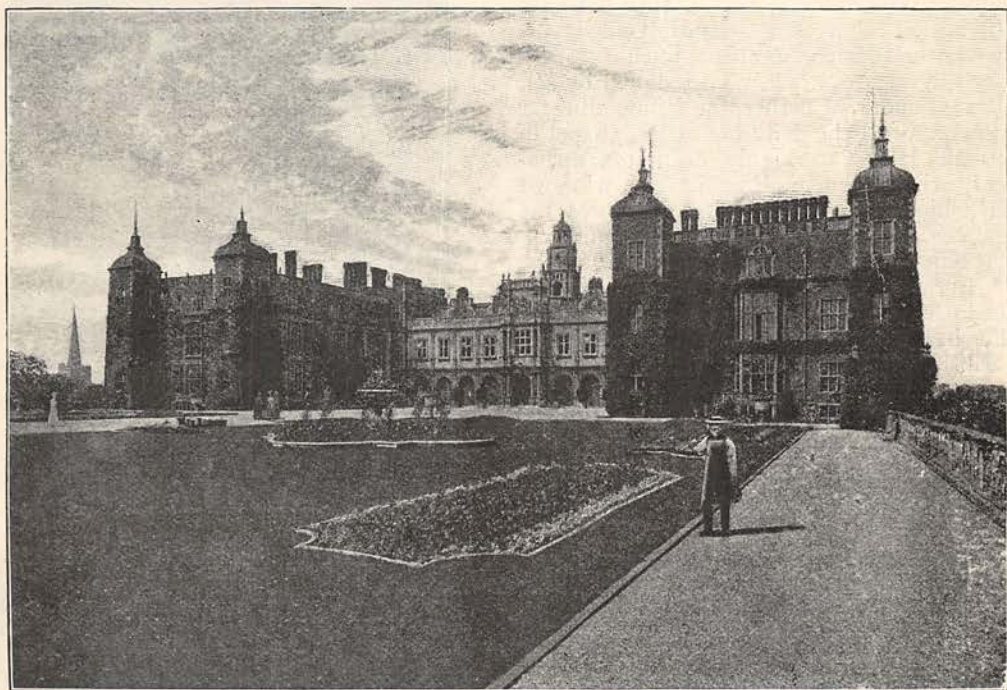
QUEEN ELIZABETH'S OAK.

(From a photograph by Chester Vaughan, Acton, W.)

west side of the house by a short flight of steps, were the favourite resort of the Princess Elizabeth. They are called the Elizabethan Gardens, and in the kind of plants and flowers that are grown there Lord Salisbury has endeavoured to preserve its Elizabethan character. The Privy Garden, on the other side of the house, which is sheltered by rows of lime trees, was designed

and daughters and by some of his occasional visitors, but they can never entice the statesman from his scientific hobbies in the laboratory.

As I have already indicated, Lord Salisbury has his parish church right at the gates of his domain. It is a cruciform building, with a central tower and spire added by the late Marquis. The whole church was restored at



HATFIELD HOUSE, SOUTH FRONT.

by James the First, who also stocked the park with its first deer, to the number of five or six hundred.

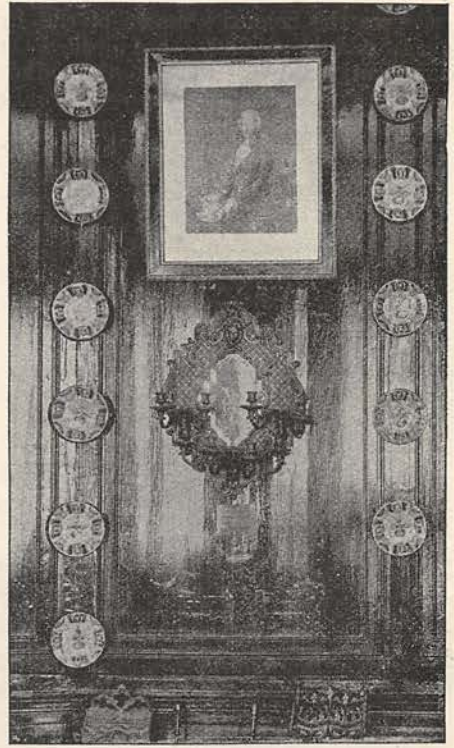
There are other old English features in Hatfield Park in the maze and the roserie. The maze consists of clipped yew hedges, which are also a feature of a long sloping garden in the form of terraces at the north end of the park, called the Vineyard. At one side of this garden is a large summer-house where, in bygone years, the family have been accustomed to meet together for afternoon tea. "The Vineyard" slopes down to the River Lea, in whose waters the Prime Minister, as a boy, had many a good day's fishing. In another part of the park there is a fine boating lake of four acres, whilst close to the house there are croquet and tennis lawns. These facilities for recreation are taken full advantage of by Lord Salisbury's sons

and daughters and by some of his occasional visitors, but they can never entice the statesman from his scientific hobbies in the laboratory. As I have already indicated, Lord Salisbury has his parish church right at the gates of his domain. It is a cruciform building, with a central tower and spire added by the late Marquis. The whole church was restored at Lord Salisbury's expense in 1872. The Cecil Chapel (on the north side), which now has quite a modern appearance, is filled with mosaics depicting the parable of the Wise Virgins, the Apostles, etc. The builder of the chapel, the first Earl of Salisbury, with whom James the First exchanged Hatfield, is commemorated by a sumptuous marble monument, four female figures, personifying the four cardinal virtues, bearing his effigy in the robes of Lord Treasurer. St. Ethelreda's has also two fine stained-glass windows, put up by Lord Salisbury in memory of his sisters, Lady Blanche Balfour, the mother of the present leader of the House of Commons, and Lady Mildred Beresford-Hope. Lord Salisbury, like Mr. Gladstone, "sits under" the preaching of a son, Lord William Cecil, the second born, having been rector for some years. The church has accommodation for

700 worshippers, and the living which, it need scarcely be said, is in the gift of Lord Salisbury, is of the gross yearly value of £2,097.

Lord Salisbury's estate extends some distance on either side of Hatfield, and includes the villages and hamlets of Newtown, Newgate Street, and Hatfield Hyde. In the spiritual needs of these places the Cecil family have always shown a lively concern; since succeeding to the estate Lord Salisbury has built churches at Newtown and Hatfield Hyde. The latter edifice, a chapel-of-ease to St. Mary's, Newgate Street, was designed by Mr. Eustace Balfour. Further, the Prime Minister has maintained the daily use of the chapel in Hatfield House, a highly decorated apartment, with Flemish glass in the windows and a high gallery in which is preserved the regal chair of Queen Anne, wife of James I.


At King's Langley, a few miles from Hatfield, the Earls of Salisbury had a dower-house, called Cecil Lodge, but this has passed into other hands. The eldest son of the Marquis of Salisbury, Lord Cranborne, takes his title, of course, from the little town in Dorsetshire, where the Prime Minister is Lord of the Manor. The manor house which, with the estate, was the gift of James the First to Sir Robert Cecil, has been let for some years past



ROOM AT WALMER WHERE PITT AND NELSON MET.



PLAN OF THE MAZE AT HATFIELD.

S. Way to centre from South. N. Way to centre from North.  
 ——— Paths.  Hedges.

to a private gentleman. Dating from the 12th century, the house in its time has been the residence of kings. It was partly rebuilt by Henry the Seventh and was restored by Lord Salisbury after his succession to the title. For some time he occasionally resided there, and in 1875 undertook the cost of restoring the ancient parish church. With the acquirement of a *château* near Dieppe and a villa near Nice, Lord Salisbury and his family spent less and less time at Cranborne until the manor house was transferred to the tenancy of a stranger. The Prime Minister still maintains the villa La Bastide, at Beaulieu, although the stress of politics gives him but small opportunities of enjoying this resting-place on the Riviera; but as my readers will remember the Chalet Cecil was sold a short time ago.

The sale of Lord Salisbury's home on the north coast of France practically coincided with his appointment as Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports which, in Walmer Castle, gives him a marine residence as long as he chooses to hold this honorary office. Walmer Castle may be described as the home of statesmen. Among others it has been occupied by Pitt, Lord Liverpool, the Duke of Wellington, Lord Granville, and Mr. W. H. Smith. Pitt and Wellington died there

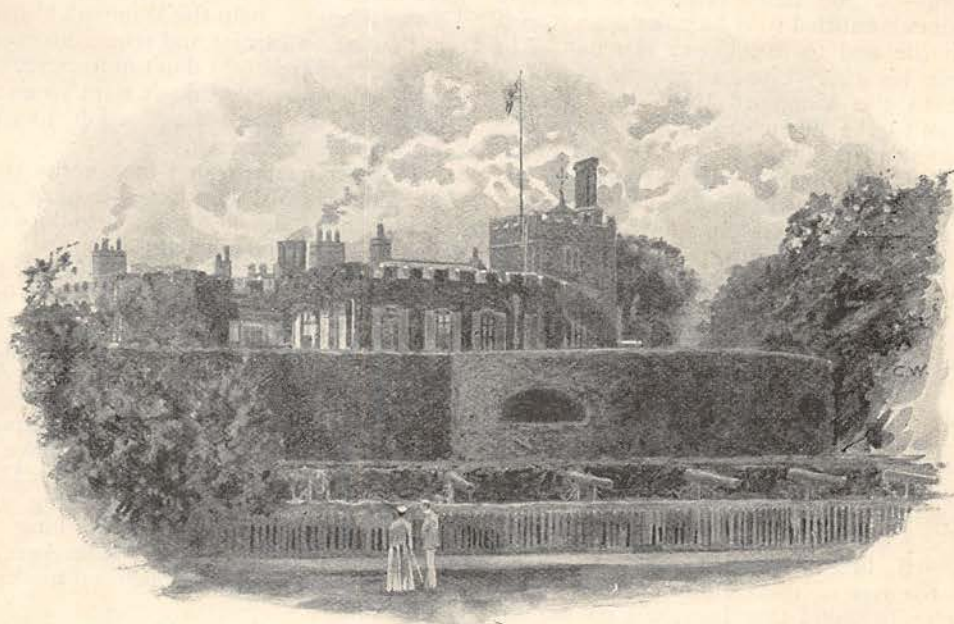


Walmer Castle is a comfortable, as well as historical residence—in summer time, at least. In outward seeming, it is still a grim fortress, with bare stone walls and ramparts protected by heavy guns, but within recent years a considerable degree of domestic enjoyment has been cultivated at comparatively little cost to the old structure. Approaching the castle from the land-side by pasture-fields you cross the moat (now dry and grass-grown) by an apparently ancient drawbridge and request admittance at a large oaken door still capable, I should say, of making a stout resistance if admittance were not conceded. One's first glimpse of the interior of the castle is not prepossessing, perhaps, in its favour as a place of residence; one passes the porter's lodge through a dark archway into a cold, cheerless-looking stone courtyard, which somehow suggests, but untruly, subterranean passages, there being nothing worse in this respect at Walmer Castle than dark, cavernous cellars, where gunpowder used to be stored. The next minute you are surprised to find yourself walking along well-carpeted and well-lighted corridors, warmly curtained and tapestried and decorated by many interesting pictures and engravings. The rooms, too, well furnished and with large fire-places, have unexpected possibilities in the way of social comfort, although many have an odd appear-

ance owing to the castellated shape of the outer walls and windows. By building over part of the old ramparts the late Earl Granville made a considerable addition to the size of the Castle as a place of residence, and it now contains over thirty bed-rooms and reception rooms.

The most interesting rooms are, of course, those in which Pitt and Wellington died. Whilst modern furniture has been introduced generally throughout the Castle, these bedrooms are kept much as they were when the Great Commoner and the Iron Duke breathed their last, and are now never used. During the short time the late Mr. W. H. Smith was Lord Warden he was assiduous in collecting together as many relics of Wellington as possible and placing them in the Castle, where they bear brass tablets to ensure their preservation as heirlooms. Of Pitt there are practically no relics to be found. The little room in which he took council with Nelson, whose fleet lay in the Downs, just before the hero's departure for the glory of Trafalgar was destroyed by Lord Granville, who added it to the drawing-room, by having the dividing wall taken down. Mr. Smith, fearing that the identity of this historic little chamber would be lost, had a tablet placed in the drawing-room recording these circumstances.

FREDERICK DOLMAN.



WALMER CASTLE.

(From a photograph by Poulton & Son, Lee, S.E.)