

SALTRAM, PLYMPTON, DEVON.

IT may be said of Saltram, the Earl of Morley's attractive seat, that it combines very completely the advantages of solid comfort and refined taste with the amenities of natural beauty. Situated only some three miles away from the busy town and port of Plymouth, the house commands a fine panorama of the estuary of the Plym, and of the Sound into which it flows, with the historic height of Mount Edgcumbe in the background.

The former house of Sir James Bagg in the time of Charles II., it was purchased early in the eighteenth century by Mr. George Parker of Boringdon, a very old manor house about two miles distant, and the superior beauty of Saltram

appears then to have attracted him. George Parker's son John and the latter's wife, Lady Catherine, a daughter of the first Earl Poulett, proceeded to build the present house on the site of its predecessor. The edifice cannot be said to possess any very great architectural pretensions, but is not

without a certain stately and yet simple dignity which characterises much of the architecture of that period. Moreover, apart from its architectural style, the mere size of the house would give it an air of impressiveness; and when to this is added an excellent harmony of scale and due proportion, the effect upon the spectator exceeds that exerted by many buildings of greater reputation. The house was in its main features completed by Mr. John Parker and Lady Catherine, and no important additions have been made by their successors.

On the southern and eastern sides the structure measures about 135ft., while on the western side it extends to 170ft. The exterior of Saltram is full of noble and quiet dignity,

but the real interest of the place is in the artistic value of the treasures which adorn the interior. A fortunate circumstance has filled the house with examples of perhaps the greatest English painter, who may, indeed, be regarded as the founder of the English school of painting—Sir Joshua Reynolds. As is well known, Sir Joshua was the son of the Master of the Grammar School at Plympton, a neighbouring parish, and the first Lord Boringdon became his very intimate friend. Thus the house contains many splendid works of Sir Joshua, and others by famous artists, the Saltram Gallery being well known to collectors as one of the most interesting in the country.



THE CHIMNEY-PIECE IN THE VELVET ROOM.

The suite of rooms on the ground floor is remarkable for the harmonious decorations by the brothers Adam. The Entrance Hall, and the staircase which opens out from it, have ceilings of elaborately ornamented plaster-work, probably by Italian artists. In the hall, too, are to be seen in great perfection examples

of the beautiful and delicate mouldings which are general throughout the house, particularly over the doorways. These are characterised by an extraordinary gracefulness of line, while conventional flowers and fruit are introduced, with an admirable restraint which renders the whole effect very successful. There is a classic bust over the mantel, and the sculptured adornments are most charming.

The staircase possesses an air of distinction which the observant visitor traces largely to the effect of its well-proportioned fluted columns. The walls are made beautiful by a number of large pictures from the brush of Angelica Kauffmann, who painted them especially for the house.



THE DINING-ROOM.



THE SALOON.

On the left of the Hall is the Library, a room of great dignity, with fine columns supporting the roof, and possessed with an air of studious repose; while the visitor who is accustomed to handle books notes with satisfaction the

On the right of the Library we enter the Small Dining Room and the Velvet Room, in both of which the ceilings are decorated with figures and garlands of flowers not less graceful and delicately decorative than those in the



THE VELVET ROOM.

extremely convenient arrangement of the bookcases which cover the walls, and in which it has evidently been the object of the designer that every book shall be within easy reach. The furniture of the chamber is of that solid and capacious order which seems to invite retirement.

Entrance Hall and staircase. Both rooms have beautifully carved mantel-pieces, being admirable works in various exquisite marbles. The Velvet Room is furnished in crimson velvet and gold, which has a peculiarly rich effect in conjunction with the white columns and



THE ENTRANCE HALL.



THE SMALL DINING-ROOM.

ceiling, and the Small Dining Room is rich in pictures.

Leaving the Velvet Room, we enter the Saloon, the proportions of which are two cubes of 25ft. The decorations are of the purest Adam type, and a charming touch of colour and variety is lent to the ceiling by medallions let in, painted by Zucchi, while from it depend very splendid glass lustres. The furniture of the Saloon includes some remarkably beautiful examples of old French cabinet work. Here are certain of the best pictures in the house, notably the great full-length portrait of the first Lord Boringdon's

wife, by Sir Joshua Reynolds, and portraits of Sir Thomas Acland and William Marquis of Lansdowne, by the same painter. The carpet is contemporary with the interior decoration, and is over 130 years old; and the old French chairs are in crimson silk with gold.

The Dining Room is remarkable for its general air of calm repose, and closer examination reveals many features of beauty and interest. Here, again, we find a ceiling by the brothers Adam, a not less worthy example, yet totally different in design, and marked by the same wonderfully fresh treatment of conventional lines

and foliage. The carpet, like that in the Saloon, is contemporary with the building, and the Chippendale chairs are in the best style of the master. The ornamentation is white on a buff ground, and on the walls and ceiling are paintings by Zucchi, inclosed in white carved frames.

Mention must be made of two interesting chimney-pieces, one in the Tapestry Room and the other in the Green Room. The former is simple, but every detail of the carving has its full effect, and the whole is a wonderful

example of artistic skill. The chimney-piece in the Green Room is distinguished by praiseworthy restraint of treatment, and in beauty and delicacy of design it forms a fitting companion to the one in the Tapestry Room.

Three portraits by Sir Joshua Reynolds have been removed to Lord Morley's house in London. There remain at Saltram altogether twelve of his works, including, in addition to those already mentioned, a portrait of Mrs. Parker and her son, and a beautiful picture of her two children, the first Earl of Morley and



THE STAIRWAY.

his sister Thérèse, who married the Hon. George Villiers, and was the mother of the Earl of Clarendon. The portraits by Sir Joshua Reynolds are by far the most important feature of the collection, but there are many other pictures by Italian and Dutch masters. In the Billiard Room is an interesting portrait of Sir Joshua himself by Angelica Kauffmann.

To describe the many beauties of a famous gallery is not, however, our purpose. We design to show the chaste beauties of a simple classic interior, offering, indeed, marked contrasts to the interiors of some other great houses, but with unquestioned character of its own. Many of the mansions illustrated in this volume belong to the earlier periods of our domestic architecture. There is value in a contrast of character in such structures, because it visibly represents the deeper currents of social life and intellectual tendencies. When the taste of Italy first affected English architectural forms it gave a pleasing and attractive variety, of which no one can escape the fascination. Hence was evolved the Jacobean style, afterwards developed and transformed into that we associate with the period of Queen Anne, which had delightful forms, and derived much of its beauty from the subtle hue of the materials used and the skill with which decorative details were formed in sculptured brick. But the course of change did not cease. There is never any real pause in the fruitful expression of individuality in any form of art, and not



A SCULPTURED MANTEL.

ings, there succeeded the character which we associate with the days of the Georges. Now, indeed, everything seemed changed. There had been fine craftsmanship in the masonry and carved adornments of the earlier styles, and in the later forms this was not extinct, though it was expressed in simpler form, and with a good deal of reserve imposed by the solid and plain tone of the time. Vastness now was deemed a merit, and the massive manner of Vanbrugh found many imitators in great and impressive

piles. In the houses of the time regularity was required, and the heavy central pile, with its lofty classic portico, was frequently associated with two perfectly symmetrical wings. Domestic individuality was at last cabined and confined, and it seemed almost as if the house had ceased to be the vesture of the man. Rooms must be of particular sizes, heights, and proportions; those at one end of the house could not differ markedly from those at the other; the disposal of the kitchens and domestic offices perplexed the soul of the architect; the chimney, which once had borne itself picturesquely aloft, was now constrained to shelter its diminished head behind a cornice or a balustrade. And yet there was vitality



THE TAPESTRY ROOM CHIMNEY-PIECE.

even in such a style, and the art workman displayed inimitable skill in fashioning his moulded lines, his festoons of fruit and flowers, his elaborate ornamental ceilings, his cedar panellings, his arched doorways, his sculptured adornments, and his admirable balustrades. Saltram is an excellent example of the very successful treatment of such things.

The family of which Lord Morley is the head seems to have no relationship with the Parkers of Shirburn Castle, now represented by the youthful Earl of Macclesfield. The Devonshire Parkers were settled at North Molton at the end of the fourteenth century, and their history becomes perfectly clear with Mr. Edmund Parker, whose will is dated 1611. His only son, John, who died in his father's lifetime, married Frances, daughter and heiress of Jeronemy Mayhew, of Boringdon, whence came the Boringdon estate, and by her had three sons.

The eldest, Edmund, married a daughter of Sir Edward Seymour, of the famous family of the Seymours of Berry Pomeroy, ancestors of the present Duke of Somerset, and by her had eight sons. Of these, Edmund, the heir, lived at Boringdon, the estate which came to him from his grandmother, and at the family seat at North Molton, where he died in 1691.

It was this Mr. Edmund Parker's great-grandson in the direct line who was the first of the family to be ennobled. His grandson, John Parker, who succeeded to the family estate in 1743, married Lady Catherine Poulett, second daughter of John, first Earl Poulett, as has been mentioned. The heir of Mr. John and Lady Catherine, also named John, was Member of Parliament for Devonshire from 1762 to 1784, and was advanced to the peerage of Great Britain in 1784 as Baron Boringdon of Boringdon, and was the father of the first Earl of Morley.



A DOORWAY IN THE HALL.