

titled "A Character of England as it was lately represented in a Letter to a Nobleman of France, 1659." The Frenchman by whom the letter is written—probably an English satirist in disguise—gives us such a graphic account of the Parks before the Restoration, that as the matter is fresh and bears upon the subject, I have no hesitation in quoting it at length :—

"I did frequently in the spring accompany my Lord N. into a field near the town which they call Hyde Park,—the place not unpleasant, and which they use as our '*Course*,' but with nothing that order, equipage, and splendour; being such an assembly of wretched jades and hackney coaches, as, next to a regiment of car-men, there is nothing approaches the resemblance. The Park was, it seems, used by the late King and nobility for the freshness of the air and the goodly prospect, but it is that which now (besides all other exercises) they pay for here in England, though it be free in all the world beside; every coach and horse which enters buying his mouthful and permission of the publican who has purchased it, for which the entrance is guarded with porters and long staves.

"The manner is, as the company returns, to stop at the Spring Gardens so called, in order to the Park as our *Thuilleries* is to the *Course*; the inclosure not disagreeable for the solemnness of the groves, the warbling of the birds, and as it opens into the spacious walks of St. James. But the company walk in it at such a rate as you would think all the ladies were so many *Atalantas* contending with their wooers, and, my Lord,