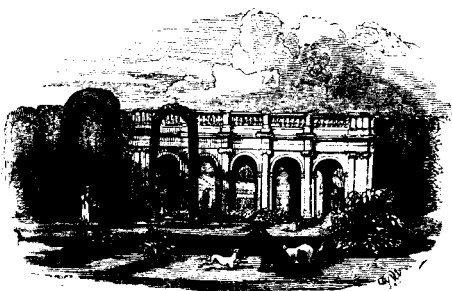


swirls, that shift and start and interlace, and pass hand in hand finally into the glassy sheet below, as they did when the Norman masons set them first in motion. They built to last, those "Middle-Aged" artisans. Prodigal of material, and not given to venturesome experiments on the capacities of the arch, like those who designed the flat elliptical spans of Waterloo Bridge, their rule was to make security more secure. They multiplied spans, made them high and sharp, and set them up on piers and starlings that occupied—and occupy yet where they have not been removed as impediments to the march of improvement—the greater part of the width of the river. From that portion of its course now under notice these old bridges have pretty well disappeared. Old London Bridge, the most considerable of them, and an exaggeration of their most fantastic traits, gave place to its elegant successor half a century ago, after having sustained the rush of waters below, and of a crowd of humanity, resident and locomotive, above, for five or six centuries. As we ascend the stream into regions less harried by the inexorable invader, Progress, they grow more and more common. They enhance the difference in the character of the scenery. Chronology and landscape march together. As we are borne into the country, we are led back, *pari passu*, into the past. It is taking a rustic tour into the Dark Ages by steam.

Not that the absurd little steamers which infest these waters—the equation of hull, cabin, paddle-box and pipe reduced to its lowest terms of a horizontal line and a vertical ditto erected on the centre—can penetrate far into the antique. Their field grows narrower year by year with the wash of the expanding city. These boats will always be the gondolas of London's Grand Canal, and all the more assuredly when the waterfront shall have been transformed by the completion of the long line of quay and esplanade now in progress; but, as with their less prosaic congeners of Venice, their operations outside of the city limits will be restricted.

It is in perfect keeping that the charms of the lush and mellow landscape that unrolls itself on either hand should be those of peace. Nearly two centuries and a half have passed since it was disturbed by battle. The fact helps us to realize the unspeakable blessing England's unassail-



GARDEN SCENE, CHISWICK HOUSE.