

## P R E F A C E

**T**HE story of a great house has rarely, if ever, been so diversified by the accidents of Time, State, and Person, as is that of the mansion at Chelsea built by Sir Thomas More in 1520, and demolished by Sir Hans Sloane in 1740. That so fair an inheritance should but twice during two centuries have descended from father to son, and should have changed owners no less than thirteen times, is enough to make its history worth inquiring into; and curiosity grows into fascination as we discover what sort of people possessed it, and by what chances it was tossed from one to the other.

Without including the Crown, the Parliament, and the younger Duke of Buckingham's creditors, by whom it was seized on four several occasions, its successive owners were as follows:—

Sir Thomas More.

The first and second Marquises of Winchester.