

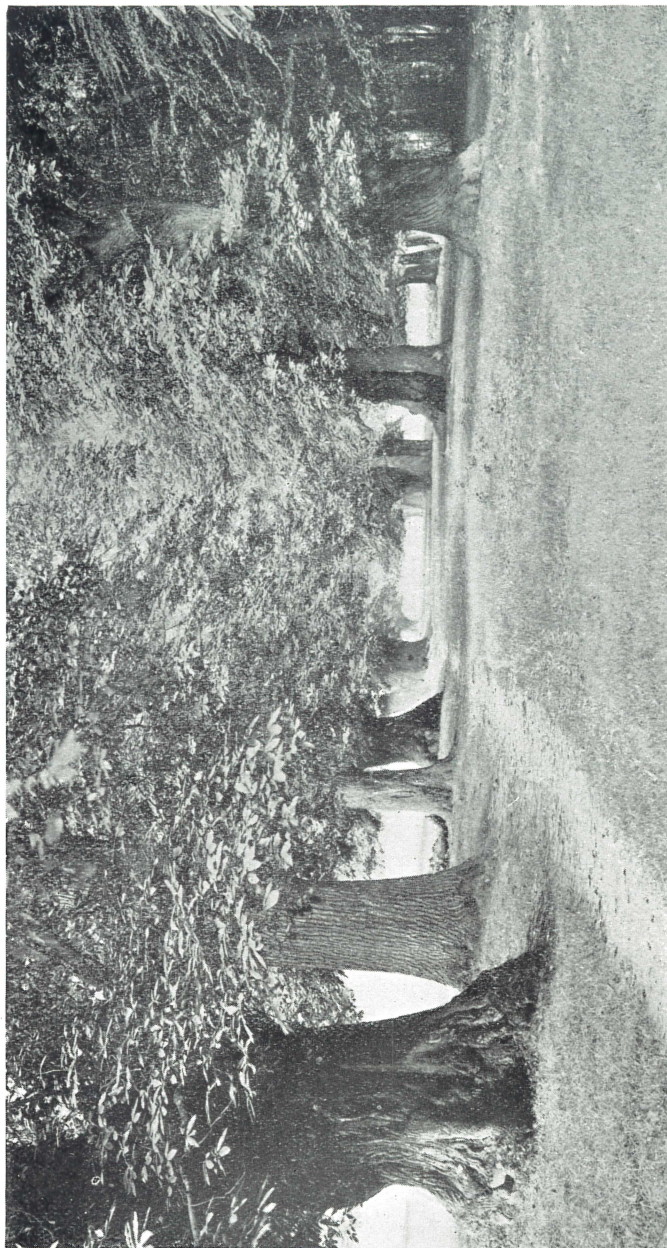
METRO-LAND

A GLORIOUS UNSPOILED
COUNTRYSIDE, SITUATED
IN MIDDLESEX, HERTS
AND BUCKS, EASILY AND
QUICKLY REACHED BY THE
METROPOLITAN RAILWAY



BAKER ST. STATION
N.W.1.

R. H. SELBIE,
GENERAL MANAGER.



THE AVENUE, RICKMANSWORTH PARK.

METRO-LAND

A FEW years ago Londoners were offered a new word—Metro-land. They adopted it at once, and though the gazetteers may not recognise it, it is now part of the living speech of men. Metro-land is Middlesex in one part, Herts in another, and Bucks in a third. Those who dwell within its borders pay their rates and taxes in those particular counties, but their homes are in Metro-land.

The precise boundaries of Metro-land are a little elusive. No one quite knows where Metro-land really begins—how far exactly beyond the long tunnel which forms the dark avenue of its approach from Baker Street. Does Metro-land begin at Willesden Green? I should rather guess Neasden or the pleasant slopes of Dollis Hill. But the cross roads by Blackbird Farm, and the old church at Kingsbury above the lake-like reservoir, standing in the square camp which the Romans made, before London was, these certainly belong to Metro-land.

Then take a stretch of country five or six miles wide on either side of the shining rails and follow on past Harrow and Rickmansworth, and through the Chilterns, and out into the vale beyond, and all that lies to right and left beyond Aylesbury to Quanton and the Claydons and Verney Junction, where London is far out of sight and mind, all this is Metro-land. It is a strip of the Home Counties and for charm and beauty, its like is hard, its superior harder still, to find.

What is the particular charm of Metro-land? It is not "violently lovely," as Byron said of one of his early loves, but, like her, it "steals upon the spirit like a May-day breaking." Its charms are many and varied. Middlesex, where it still contrives to escape the fast-spreading tide of London, wears a pleasant homely face. The elms grow tall in its fields and pastures and in the broad plain that stretches below Harrow's airy ridge towards Uxbridge.

Harrow-on-the-Hill, crowned by church and school, is the capital of this Riding of Metro-land; Ruislip and Northwood are its lake district; Eastcote and Ickenham, Harefield and Pinner are its rustic townships. London is at your very door, if you needs must keep in touch with London, but it is always pure country at the corner of the lane beyond your garden fence. The town has stained the country less here than in Essex, Kent or Surrey, at the same radius of ten or twenty miles from Charing Cross.

But for many the best of Metro-land begins where the iron road starts to climb in among the Chilterns, which are the very heart of Metro-land—the flinty Chilterns with their tangled ridges, their stony yet fruitful fields, their noble beech woods and shy coppices, their alluring footpaths, their timbered cottages, scattered hamlets and pretty Georgian townships strung out along the high roads.

I know no more dainty group of little country towns than Rickmansworth, Amersham, Chesham, Missenden, and Wendover, leading on to the fine old market town of Aylesbury—English to the core—each with its ancient church, its old manor-house, its picturesque inns, and its exquisite setting of hill and wood. I know few more charming villages than the twin Chalfonts, Latimer and Chenies, Little Missenden, Penn, windy Cholesbury, the Hampdens, Great and Little, the Kimbles, and a score of others that might be named. Few streams run a brighter course than the Chess, and where will you find woods more delightful than those of Shardeloes and Penn, Hampden, Chequers and Halton?

Only a narrow tongue of “homely, hearty, loving Hertfordshire” lies in Metro-land, but within its pale are Rickmansworth and its lovely parks, and here is the waters-meet of Chess, Gade and Colne. Rickmansworth is a delightful old-world town, and Chorley Wood Common flames into yellow gold when the gorse is in flower.

Historical associations from the earliest times, camps and earthworks, old churches, old cottages, old inns, and a pleasant, simple country-folk to talk to, good roads, good paths and quick change of scene and view—Metro-land falls short in nothing which the heart of man can desire.

Are you in search of views? Then follow the line of the Chilterns where they rise steeply above the vale of Aylesbury on either side of Wendover from Tring to Risborough, and you shall have views that will linger sweet in the memory. Or try the views from Oving and Pitchcott, beyond Aylesbury, or climb to the little town of Brill, which is another Shaftesbury, so cunningly is it set towards all points of the compass. And if there are meadows where the grasses grow richer, and the may-trees throw a sweeter perfume on the air, than those of Aylesbury towards Hartwell and towards Eythrop, I know them not.

Metro-land—the land which the Metropolitan Railway is proud to serve—is a strip of England at its fairest, a gracious district formed by nature for the homes of a healthy, happy race,

F.



MILTON'S COTTAGE, CHALFONT ST. GILES.

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF METRO-LAND

DURING the successive epochs of the country's history Metro-land has occupied a prominent place. It is rich in antiquities and full of historical associations. The crests of the Chiltern Hills still shew the remains of many a British harrow, and at various places, especially in the neighbourhood of Great Missenden, traces may be seen of Grimm's Dyke, which is now generally believed to have marked the boundary of the old Kingdom of Mercia.

The brief particulars given below will serve to indicate some of the chief features of local interest in the places mentioned.

HARROW, renowned for its school, church and hill, traces its history back to 799. The church was founded by Lanfranc in the reign of William the Conqueror. At the school, now one of the most famous in the kingdom, Peel, Palmerston, Shaftesbury, and many another distinguished statesman, received their early education.

RUISLIP contains numerous relics of bygone days. Its church dates from the thirteenth century and within the tower is an ancient iron-bound chest and a curious carved oak bread cupboard which holds the loaves regularly distributed every Sunday in compliance with the provisions of the benefaction of Jeremiah Bright, made in 1697.



NEAR WENDOVER.

UXBRIDGE, reputed to have been founded in the time of Alfred, was in 1645 the scene of certain futile negotiations between Charles I and the Parliamentarians for the ending of the unhappy Civil War. The rooms of the old Treaty House where the conference took place are still preserved. On Lynch Green, Uxbridge, in 1550, three Protestants were burnt at the stake on account of their faith.

PINNER church, erected in the reign of Edward III. with its fine embattled tower from which rises a tall wooden cross, is well worthy of a visit. In the High Street are numerous half-timbered houses, prominent among them being one dated 1328. Two miles away is the ancient Manor House of Headstone, with its moat and clustered chimney stacks, associated with the name of Thomas à Beckett.

RICKMANSWORTH traces a legendary history back to the time when the Cassii fought against the legionaries of Julius Cæsar. In a period less remote Rickmansworth contributed again to history for at Moor Park lived Cardinal Wolsey, the Earls of Warwick, Pembroke and Monmouth. At Basing House lived William Penn, the founder of Pennsylvania, whilst the Bury gave shelter to Charles II, when pressed by his pursuers.

CHORLEY WOOD & CHENIES Station is 2 miles distant from Chenies, where stands the beautiful Tudor Manor House, rebuilt for the entertainment of Queen Elizabeth. Close by is the famous Mausoleum of the Bedford family, built in 1556 by Anne, Countess of Bedford. The windows are beautifully emblazoned with heraldic crests, and some of the monuments are among the finest of their kind. At Kings Farm, Chorley Wood, William Penn was married, and at Heronsgate is the estate purchased by the notorious Chartist, Feargus O'Connor, and laid out as a Chartist settlement.

CHALFONT & LATIMER Station serves the historic village of Chalfont St. Giles. Here in the half-timbered cottage, still preserved, Milton sought refuge from the terrors of the Great Plague, and wrote "Paradise Regained." At Jordans, close by, lie the remains of the immortal William Penn. Vache House in the neighbourhood, dates from 1277, and at the "The Stone," Cromwell is reported to have slept.



MISSENDEN ABBEY.

AMERSHAM, with its stately church, cobble-paved streets, quaint inns and gabled houses, retains the tranquillity of bygone days. The Town Hall, a solid building with arched and pillared basement, was built in 1682 at the charges of Sir William Drake to whom the picturesque Alms-houses, with their quaint doorways and diamond paned-windows are also due. In Amersham Church, John Knox and Richard Baxter have preached, whilst near by is the spot where numerous adherents to the Protestant faith were burnt at the stake.

GREAT MISSENDEN is rich in historical associations. On Castle Hill are the remains of a Norman camp and here pottery and other relics of the period have been found. Missenden Abbey stands on the site of one founded in 1133 for the Black Canons and a portion of the cloister of the older edifice still remains. Great Missenden Church dates from 1320. At Hampden House, 3 miles distant, lived John Hampden, the resolute statesman and patriot of the 17th century.

WENDOVER is of considerable antiquity, tradition affirming that here Cymbeline collected his forces to oppose the Roman legionaries and traces of Roman, Danish and British Camps are to be found amongst the hills. At Whiteleaf a cross cut in the Chilterns is said to commemorate a battle fought in 910 against the Danes. At Chequers Court, one of Oliver Cromwell's daughters resided—hence the numerous Cromwell relics; whilst in an earlier building, on the site, Lady Mary Grey, sister of the unfortunate Lady Jane Grey, was held prisoner.

AYLESBURY, converted by the ancient Britons into a strongly fortified seat, was held by them until its capture in 572 by Cuthwulf. During the Civil War, the Town was garrisoned by the Parliamentarians and at the Battle of Aylesbury, Prince Rupert suffered a temporary check at their hands. At Quarrendon are the picturesque ruins of a Chapel, attached to the Manor House of the Lees, and at Hartwell is the Mansion where lived the exiled Louis XVIII, and his gregarious retinue.



This entertaining hand-book, which contains numerous four-colour illustrations, maps, etc., graphically describes the districts served by the Metropolitan Railway and leads the reader through scenes of sylvan beauty, into charming country yet unspoiled.

It will take the reader into a score of romantic villages, and half-a-dozen charming little country towns. It will take him through the picturesque valley of the Misbourne; into parks like those of Latimer, Great Hampden and Shardeloes; to places of historic interest, and "haunts of ancient peace," to grey churches, to famous view points, to spreading commons, and to a multitude of out-of-the-way nooks and corners.

Obtainable at any of the Company's Stations; Information Bureau, 20, The Arcade, Liverpool Street Station, E.C.; or direct from the Commercial Manager, Baker St. Station, N.W.1.

Price 2d.