

## THE CAMP AT COLCHESTER—PRINCE ALBERT'S VISIT.

COLCHESTER, near which is the interesting scene represented by the engraving on page 285, is a place of no inconsiderable interest to the antiquary, having been one of the earliest Roman stations in Britain, and a town of some note in the Anglo-Saxon period. All around are vestiges of an ancient order of things—antiquated buildings, the wasting remains of walls, the imposing ruins of a strong castle, relics of an abbey and a priory, and other ecclesiastical remains.

The construction of the camp at Colchester, which commenced in July, 1855, was carried on without accident or delay, and the entire arrangement of the buildings has been with a view to the comfort and convenience of the troops.

The principal entrance to the encampment is from the military-road, and within a short distance of the old building, formerly used as a magazine. From this entrance, one of the main roads, 90 ft. in width, runs through the camp to the Mersea-road, and similar roads beyond the next battalions on the right. Through the centre of the barracks, from north to south, a run is formed 40 ft. wide, and each battalion is intersected by similar carriage-ways. The total number of erections is about 300, comprising six battalions of huts, each battalion complete in itself for both officers and men. The generality of the erections are uniform in size, and each house is detached, standing at the distance of 10 ft. from the next building.

### INSPECTION OF THE TROOPS BY PRINCE ALBERT.

On Monday, Prince Albert paid a visit to the camp at Colchester, and inspected the troops stationed there, under the command of Major-General Gascoigne. The day was singularly auspicious, and the neighbouring gentry and inhabitants generally for miles around came in great numbers to witness the ceremony. The Prince arrived by a special train at eleven o'clock, and having been received by General Gascoigne and his staff, was escorted on horseback to the town-hall, where an address was to be presented to him by the corporation, a detachment of the 11th Regiment forming a guard of honour. His Royal Highness wore the uniform of a Field Marshal, decorated with the insignia of the Bath, and rode a dark chestnut charger of great beauty. The whole length of the road, from the station to the centre of the town, which is remarkably picturesque, was lined with a dense crowd, anxious to see the pageant as it passed. Triumphal arches were erected at intervals along the route, banners floated from the church-spires, public buildings, and many private houses; and a joyous peal of bells was rung in honour of the occasion. The scene in the High Street, at the windows of which the flower of the gentry and inhabitants were assembled, was exceedingly animated, and the ovation which the Prince received there, and, indeed, wherever he went, must have been exceedingly gratifying to him.

On arriving at the town-hall, to which a select party, composed mostly of ladies, had been admitted, he was received by the mayor, aldermen, and several of the principal burgesses, and conducted to a dais at the end of the apartment. The recorder of the borough then approached and presented an address of congratulation and welcome, and expressing sentiments of loyalty and affection to her Majesty on behalf of the corporation.

Prince Albert, in acknowledging this compliment, said,—“Mr. Mayor and Gentlemen, I am deeply sensible of the kindness and cordiality which have marked your reception of me on this my first visit to your ancient borough. I have embraced with the greatest satisfaction this opportunity of becoming acquainted with a part of England which I had not before seen; and it is most gratifying to me to find among the people of Colchester the same zeal for the true interests and the honour of the country, and the same loyalty and affectionate attachment to their Sovereign, that I have found in all other parts of her Majesty's dominions which I have visited. To be the channel for conveying to the Queen the expression of such sentiments of loyalty and patriotism is as agreeable to me as I know it will be to her Majesty's heart to receive them.”

The Royal party, on leaving the town-hall, proceeded to the camp in the vicinity of the town, accompanied as before by General Gascoigne and his staff, escorted by a detachment of the West Essex Yeomanry as a guard of honour; and having inspected its general economy and the interior arrangement of some of the huts, they repaired to Wavenhoe Park, the property of Mr. Guerdon Behov, about three miles distant, where the troops had been sent early in the day for inspection. They consisted of the 88th Regiment, under the command of Colonel Maxwell, and four regiments of militia—namely, the West Suffolk, the West Essex, the East Norfolk, and the Essex Rifles—making an aggregate force of about 2000 men. The fine park at Wavenhoe, which was generously thrown open to the public on the occasion, without restriction, was singularly well adapted for a military review, and the spectacle there, which between 10,000 and 15,000 people assembled to witness, was exceedingly animated and picturesque. A strong detachment of the Essex constabulary and the borough police maintained the most admirable order.

Meanwhile the town of Colchester may be said to have been almost literally deserted. By far the greater part of the population, rich and poor, young and old, turned out to witness the review; and the road to Wavenhoe, some four miles in length, in the endless variety of vehicles called into requisition, the motley crowd of pedestrians, the ludicrous mishaps by the way, and the dense cloud of dust in which all alike were enveloped, strongly reminded visitors of a Derby day.

Arriving on the ground, Prince Albert received the salute of the General in command, and the bands of the several regiments played the National Anthem. The Prince, attended by his suite and by General Gascoigne and his staff, then rode along in front of the troops, who were drawn up in line for the purpose, and closely inspected them. Observing Captain Browne, who has recently returned from the Crimea with the loss of an arm, on the right flank of the 88th Regiment, he paused for a moment and desired that the gallant officer should be presented to him, which was immediately done. His Royal Highness then took up a position near the flagstaff; and the brigade formed into open columns of companies, and marched past in “quick time;” then in columns, at quarter distance; and, again, in contiguous close columns. They subsequently advanced *en échelon* of battalions and performed several other manoeuvres, finally lining for some distance the road on either side from the point of regress from the park. At the Prince's request the officers in command of the several regiments were presented to him, and, having expressed to General Gascoigne the pleasure which the appearance of the troops and the whole arrangements of the day had afforded him, he left about two o'clock, escorted as before.

The Prince, on his way to the station, visited the Asylum for Idiots, established in the suburbs of the town, the inmates of which had been assembled in the adjacent grounds to receive him; and at three o'clock, he took his departure for Buckingham Palace.