

"The sweet and breezy margin of the sea."—Falconer.

HOW suggestive is the very title of this article—suggestive of fresh breezes and invigorating air, perfect rest and relaxation for mind and body after the heat, the worry, and the turmoil of professional work in the great and noisy Babylon for the previous ten months! Here on the clean, sweet, shingly beach, under the delightful rays of a mild autumnal sun, "with the blue above and the blue below," as Barry Cornwall says, one can always find that perfect repose, that thorough calm, so deeply appreciated by brain-workers, and indeed by all but the incorrigibly idle, such as those who are unlucky enough to be born with huge silver

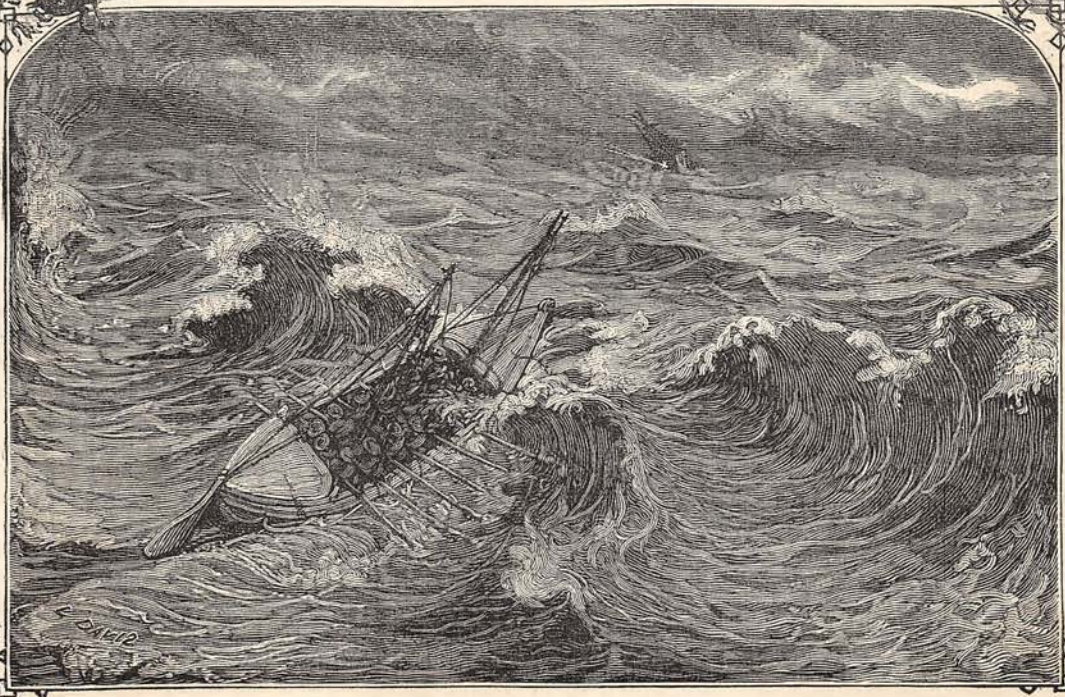
spoons in their mouths, and who manage to drive—or crawl, as the case may be—through life as one long, never-ending, but intensely weary holiday, and to whom nothing but perpetual feverish excitement and change of place and scene makes life at all even endurable—so fearful is the *ennui* induced in shallow, uncultivated minds by want of regular occupation. How much real genuine enjoyment, both mentally and bodily, do such people lose, and how utterly impossible is it for them to appreciate one tithe of the delight experienced by the over-worked dwellers in crowded cities whilst taking the much-coveted three or four weeks' holiday on

the green breezy downs of the countryside, or the fresh shingly beach of the sea!

Whilst the sea-beach is an enjoyable and health-giving resort, it cannot, at the same time, be doubted that there are beaches *and* beaches; and if most of them are places of healthy rest and recreation, it is quite possible that some are rather the reverse, either from mismanagement of the local authorities in not exercising sufficiently strict sanitary precautions, or from a variety of other causes which we need not now go into. Beaches, too, or sands like those of Ramsgate, Margate, or Yarmouth, from their size, are generally in the season crowded with those intolerable public nuisances, strangely supposed to be "entertainments," and consisting of the ubiquitous "nigger minstrels," organ-grinders, mock Italian vocalists and ballad singers, dancing dogs and acrobats, white mice, and Aunt Sallies, travelling photographers, German bands and blind fiddlers, not forgetting the modern Samson, whose entertainment

seems chiefly to consist of tossing about 56 lb. weights as if they were tennis-balls, with many more of the same genus, all of whom are sure to find ready and appreciative audiences, whose loud and noisy applause is generally in the inverse ratio to their monetary contributions; and if to all these peace disturbers we venture to add — although we do so with profound respect and reverence for the feelings of our much-enduring friend "Paterfamilias" — the hundreds of shouting, screaming, playful children, and squalling babies, scolding mammas, and long-suffering nursemaids, our picture is complete. Now, to pretend to seek for quiet and repose on such beaches as these is simply absurd, inasmuch as it is quite contrary to the nature of things that either of those qualities can possibly exist in such crowded and much-sought-after spots.

We all remember the clever cartoon of a contemporary, where Paterfamilias and his better-half are discussing the very important subject of the where-



abouts of their holiday outing, and Paterfamilias makes four conditions :—"It must not be far; it must not be dear; it must not be dull; and there must be *no niggers!*" All very wise and sensible, no doubt, if they could but be carried out. Ay, but there's the rub; for in any seaside resort that can be described as "not dull," and "not far" (from London), we all know from melancholy experience that the gratuitous exhibitions above enumerated are invariably met with in full swing. As, however, we find in most matters that there is no rule without an exception, so in the present case there is actually in existence a place that almost entirely comes up to the above requirements of Paterfamilias, inasmuch as it is not "far," certainly not "dull," and the nigger nuisance is rarely if ever met with. German bands are rather shy of the place, dancing dogs, white mice, wandering photographers, fortune-tellers, and all the troublesome noisy tribe that follows in their train, shun the place in disgust, partly perhaps because their great patrons are rarely found in this Elysium, for the simple reason that there is nothing to attract or amuse them in the way of cheap theatres, low music-halls, dancing-rooms, or other nocturnal (and very questionable) so-called "amusements," in which the whole genus so eminently delighteth. And yet the place and neighbourhood are full of the most interesting associations to those who have the intelligence, or care to take the trouble, to find them out.

Situated in the very centre of the coast forming the western boundary of the far-famed "Downs," so celebrated in song and story as a naval rendezvous during the great war, and opposite the only too famous Goodwin Sands, which bound and protect the Downs on their eastern side, the town of Deal (the place in question, which may be reached by the South-Eastern Railway) is at least remarkable as the generally admitted landing-place of the Romans; Julius Cæsar having disembarked his forces here on his first invasion, on the 26th of August, B.C. 55; and the flat, but now richly cultivated, fields lying to the west are generally pointed out as the site of the great encampment of the Roman army, whilst the vast fleet of war-galleys and transports, said to have been nearly 100 vessels, found ample anchorage accommodation in the neighbouring bay, afterwards the Portus Rutupinus—whose oysters, by-the-by, were famous with Roman epicures in the days of Juvenal, but whose shells only are now found at a depth of twenty-one feet below the surface of the cultivated land at present covering the spot. Here, too, at Rutupia, or Ebbs' Fleet, as some say, just 651 years afterwards, landed another eminent pioneer of civilisation, another mighty conqueror, who waged a great and glorious battle—not indeed, like Cæsar, with temporal weapons against the savage Britons, but with the sword of the Spirit against the not less savage and heathen Anglo-Saxon; and it is quite certain that Augustine's was no small or temporary victory, for he left—not only in Canterbury, but throughout this land—a name which will last as long as the world itself.

But quite apart from the historical or antiquarian associations of the very beautiful surrounding country, the beach here is always pleasant and always interesting. From the narrowness of the channel between the mainland and the Goodwin Sands, hundreds of vessels, of all nations and sizes, are not only continually passing and re-passing, often close in shore, but are found lying at anchor for days together when the wind is contrary, so that there is always "something going on," as the saying is, on the water to keep up both interest and amusement—a circumstance which cannot happen at such places as Brighton, Hastings, Bognor, Eastbourne, &c., because the vessels never approach sufficiently near to the shore to become objects of any curiosity at all. And then, too, the "population"—so to speak—of the beach, the hardy "hovellers" of East Kent, are well worth close observation, as they are of a few passing words of notice. Although the noun-substantive "hoveller," or the verb active "to hovel," will certainly not be found in the learned Johnson, yet it is fully understood in those parts, and is merely a modernisation of "Hobilièr," the title of the ancient Coastguard established in the Cinque Ports by King Edward III., so-called either from the "hobil," a quilted surcoat worn by these men, or from "hobbier" a small, stout horse ridden by the mounted division, whose duty it was to give instant warning on the approach of danger by rapidly riding from beacon to beacon. The modern representatives of the ancient "hobilièrs," when first seen by a stranger on a bright, calm summer's day, would be set down by him as an idle, lazy, useless set of fellows, who do nothing the live-long day but "loaf" about, smoking, drinking, and gossiping—passing time pleasantly enough in the genuine "dolce far niente" style, occasionally helping to man a capstan whilst hauling up a boat, or repainting their water-proofs, or overhauling their sails, tackling, and boat-stores. But let not the stranger be deceived by mere outward appearances; let him look a little more closely into the real state of things; and he will then discover that in fine summer weather there is hardly anything doing in the hoveller's particular line of business, as, with but few exceptions, he is neither a fisherman nor pleasure boatman, like those of Ramsgate, Hastings, or other such places. Fair breezes and calm weather, in truth, have no charms for the hoveller; what is intense enjoyment to the landsman, to him simply means loss of time, and consequently loss of money. The war of the elements is the hoveller's opportunity, and the greater and more terrible the strife of air and sea, the greater and more likely are his chances of a "good hovel," as the quaint term goes to express a job that pays. However idle and lazy these men may *appear*, the careless observer may be surprised to hear that they are in reality always on the alert, and their eyes are ever on the watch seaward. Not a ship passes up or down but is carefully scanned and noted; nothing, in fact, ever escapes their ceaseless vigilance. As soon as the wind changes or the weather begins to look "dirty," the denizens of the beach wake up and pull themselves together. Repeated consultations are

then held; the Fitzroy barometers, several of which are erected for public use, are constantly referred to, and any changes carefully noted. The horizon is repeatedly swept by telescopes of all ages and patterns, and the chances of a "job" on the Sands are anxiously discussed. Eager eyes, directed by quick intelligence and long experience, notice the deepening gloom and rising gale, and when the storm at length bursts forth in furious grandeur, when the breakers are rolling over the dreaded Sands, and dashing with terrible violence on the beach, then these miscalled "idle loafers"—but in truth brave and gallant hearts—fearing neither winds nor waves, immediately man one or other of their splendidly-built Deal boats, which always stand ready at their several stages, and, quickly launching her through the heavy surf, run up their close-reefed lug sail and steer direct for the dangerous Sands—not a very desirable place for any one to find himself in during a desperate gale of wind, and maybe in the darkness of the night as well. But these men never hesitate—nothing ever appears to daunt them; in fact, the word "danger" seems to find no place in their dictionary at all when there is a chance of rendering assistance to a ship in danger, or of saving the life of a fellow-creature. And only too often their brave exertions go wholly unrewarded, or rewarded so slightly that it is a source of positive wonder that these noble fellows will coolly risk their lives, and their property, at all in a cause always so hazardous, often so thankless, and generally so unproductive. But so it is; and yet the deeds of fearless daring and heroic bravery constantly performed by these men, whether in "hovelling" craft or as lifeboat crews, deserve the highest and most unqualified praise, to say nothing of the consummate skill and judgment exhibited in the very ticklish process of approaching a stranded ship, during the prevalence of a heavy gale, sufficiently near to rescue the unfortunate crew, and yet not so close as to occasion a violent collision, which would simply mean destruction to the boat and certain death to all on board. When these men go forth on their noble errands of mercy it is truly said that they carry their "lives in their hands," and an elegant and graphic modern writer—the Rev. John Gilmore—says of them, with perfect truth, "I claim a place for these men amidst the records of the bravest, grandest deeds of the heroism of the age"—a sentiment in which we most cordially agree.

At all times of the day Deal beach is a scene of considerable animation, and the curious in such matters will find much both to amuse and instruct. The constant arrival or departure of the fine "hovelling" boats—especially when the Downs happen to be full of wind-bound ships—exhibit the skill and address with which these boats are so readily launched down the wide and very steep beach, and as readily hauled up to their stagings again. These boats are very useful whenever it is found necessary to communicate with vessels lying off, in taking out letters, orders, or stores; or in bringing off, or taking out, passengers, friends, or pilots. When many foreign vessels are anchored in

the roads, the pier and esplanade—especially if the band is playing—will often exhibit specimens of most of the maritime nations of the world, and the peculiarities of dress and manner, and the varieties of tongues spoken, all contribute to make up an amusing and animating picture.

But there is yet another object which, to strangers, is generally a source of some interest, and that is the famous Goodwin Sands, which extend north and south for a distance of ten miles, Deal being nearly opposite the centre. Looking over the Downs on a bright, warm summer's day, when everything above and around is calm and beautiful, a visitor can hardly bring himself to believe that the bright and glittering sea which bounds the horizon covers a spot which for many miles is little more than one fearful Golgotha—a vast grave of thousands of brave and gallant hearts who have been hurried to their doom with a rapidity and certainty alike appalling, together with the ships in which they had sailed, which were lost on the Sands—

"—a thousand fearful wrecks,
Wedges of gold, great anchors, heaps of pearl,
All scattered on the bottom of the sea!"

These dreaded Sands have had an evil reputation, as being the scene of constant wrecks for nearly 800 years—that is, from the period when, according to the ancient chroniclers, the fertile island called "Lomea" (the *Insula Infera* of the Romans) was overwhelmed by an inundation or sudden convulsion of nature in the year 1099, and thus became the Goodwin Sands. This island was the home of the "Kentish Firebrand," the turbulent and warlike Godwin, Earl of Kent. Here, in a convenient anchorage, now called "Trinity Bay," he is said to have kept his piratical fleet, and from thence his numerous naval expeditions, rebellious or predatory, as suited his fancy or necessities—for a mighty sailor, rebel, and pirate was Godwin—generally issued, to the terror of the king, the disquieting of his neighbours, and the discomfiture of his enemies. One of the old legends tells us, with a happy contempt for chronology, that the loss of the estate was a special judgment of Heaven upon the wicked earl for his manifold crimes; but, as the event did not take place, according to the best authorities, until 1099, nearly fifty years after Godwin's death, it is somewhat difficult to see how he, personally, could possibly have been affected by it in any way. Another legend—embodying a fine piece of retributive justice—tells us that these lands having been given by William I. to the See of Canterbury, the Chapter most improperly appropriated the funds and materials (which ought to have been applied solely towards keeping up the seawall—a defence on which the very existence of the island entirely depended) in the building of Ten-terden Church steeple, and, the wall falling to decay in consequence of this neglect, the sea broke through and utterly destroyed the fair estate for ever. Taking these, and many other such romantic and fanciful legends, for just what they are worth, it is certain that, whatever their origin, there are the Sands to

this day, exactly as they always were, like an evil genius lurking just beneath the waters, ready enough to swallow up, or otherwise destroy, every ship so unfortunate as to come within its deadly embrace. Perhaps on no part of our coasts were wrecks so common, or attended with such awful loss of life and property, as here on the Goodwin Sands, although latterly this has been very much abated owing to the fact that between Ramsgate and Kingsdown—a distance of about twelve miles—there are now four lifeboat stations, namely, Ramsgate, Deal, Walmer, and Kingsdown. A bright look-out is always kept at all these places, and therefore the moment a signal-gun is heard from one or other of the four lightships at the Gull Stream, the North Sands Head, the East Goodwin, or the South Sands Head, or a rocket or burning tar-barrel is seen exhibited by a ship in distress, a score of brave and willing hearts are instantly ready to man either of these life-boats, and fly to the assistance of their perishing fellow-creatures, generally with the most happy results, for the circumstance of a lifeboat failing in its endeavours is rare indeed. Great must be the sea and terrific the tempest that interfere with the work of one of these boats. Repeated instances are on record where a boat's crew has been out for periods of twelve and sixteen hours at a time, with neither food nor drink, drenched with spray, and perhaps half frozen besides, hovering round a stranded ship, making the most desperate efforts to rescue the suffering crew clinging convulsively to the rigging, a frail support that at any moment may give way beneath their feet and engulf the whole in the boiling surge. Again and again, through the pitchy darkness and the roaring breakers, does the boat and her brave, intrepid crew "advance to the charge;" again and again to be beaten back by the irresistible power of winds and waves, sometimes indeed to be even capsized and her crew thrown out, but somehow or other, thanks to

their cork-jackets and life-lines, to manage to scramble on board again, whilst the boat immediately rights herself, and as quickly discharges the water she has shipped through her relieving valves, by which admirable invention the boat is kept clear of water without the tedious operation of baling. Thus, in the terrible battle with two of the mightiest elements, will these "storm warriors"—as they have been so aptly called by Mr. Gilmore—carry on the unequal strife, never leaving the suffering crew until they have rescued all, or haply—as sometimes happens—the wreck suddenly breaks up, and the whole are instantly buried beneath the angry sea. And even then, when hope itself has fled, the lifeboat men, instead of at once steering homewards, will keep about the spot for a time, and may at last, perhaps, succeed in rescuing some exhausted sailor clinging to a broken spar, or even may pick up a lifeless corpse, which, when recovered, is carefully laid down in the boat and reverently covered over with a sail, and when brought ashore is accorded the rites of Christian burial.

And thus the seeker after health and repose, if he cares to select this picturesque spot for his annual holiday, and if he has the industry to seek, and the mind to comprehend, will find much that is very attractive, not only to the artist, but especially to the archæologist, and deeply interesting to the man of general intelligence as well. And besides all this—if he chooses so to do—he may find a never-ending source of amusement, and possibly instruction combined, if he has any feeling for heroism, or admiration for noble disinterested bravery, which he will meet with in the stories of rescue from the Goodwin Sands, not only by lifeboat crews, but by hovellers' boats as well, so that in the end he may possibly find that the time was neither lost nor altogether unprofitable which he may have passed in this corner of Kent, when taking his ease, and enjoying his rest and relaxation "on the beach."

G. G.



ADULTERATION, AND HOW TO DETECT IT.

BY AN ANALYST.



WE are apt to think our own times worse than any that have gone before, and to fancy that in our forefathers' days men dealt fairly with each other, and conducted their business in an honest and upright fashion. A perusal of the old laws of our land will put us right on that score; for if we are to infer that the existence of laws indicates the co-existence of forms of evil against which these laws are directed, we find that adulteration is no birth of yesterday, but that so long ago as the reign of

Henry III. it occupied the attention of our law-makers. At that time wine was the general alcoholic drink, and thus early some money-making wine merchant had discovered how to sophisticate his liquors with various coloured decoctions. The practice soon spread to such an extent as to necessitate an enactment forbidding the sale to His Majesty's subjects of any such wine; and this law also forbade the sale of unwholesome meat, which then appears to have been prevalent.

We find the adulteration of wine again cropping up in the reign of Charles II., in whose time its use was almost universal, for we find that claret was largely consumed at fairs, where now malt liquors, beer, and