



BRIGHTON, SUSSEX.

ENGLISH WATERING-PLACES.

BRIGHTON.

It is the custom with many of our watering-places to assume the appearance of the metropolis, and to give the visitor the impression of town out of town—of London by the sea-side. Of all such places, Brighton is the most strikingly metropolitan; its streets, squares, crescents, and terraces, are of the genuine build of occidental London, and the strings of handsome carriages—fresh from Long Acre—the brilliant crowd of promenaders, the gaily-decorated shops resplendent with marble and plate glass, all serve to strengthen the idea that London, as by the magic of Aladdin's lamp, has been wafted to the coast of Sussex.

Brighton is a place for which Londoners should be thankful. We sometimes call the Parks the lungs of our city, and when the city was younger than it now is, they served the purpose well enough. But London has grown, and requires respiratory organs of greater capacity, and Brighton offers excellent facilities for supplying this demand. It is so conveniently situated that the opulent may breakfast and dine by the sea-side, and yet every day transact business for the usual hours in London; and for those who can only obtain a day's holiday, excursion trains run fast and cheap, and "eight hours by the sea-side" blow off a little of the smoke and dust of town. "It is the fashion," says Thackeray, "to run down George IV.; but what myriads of Londoners ought to thank him for inventing Brighton! One of the best physicians our city has ever known is kind, cheerful, merry Dr. Brighton. Hail! thou purveyor of shrimps, and honest prescriber of South Down mutton; no fly so pleasant as Brighton flies, nor any cliffs so pleasant to ride on; no shops so beautiful to look at as the Brighton gimerack shops, and the fruit shops and the market." From Hove on one side to Kemp Town on the other, Brighton presents a street frontage to the sea unequalled in the world. Three miles of terraces and shops, without a leaf of green or crimson flower to break the architectural grandeur, is that something which renders Brighton unique, and has

given it a world-wide celebrity. The climate is good, and accommodation for bathing is provided on a most extensive scale; therefore thousands and tens of thousands flock to this charming watering-place, and are loyally devoted to its interests.

And why not? What sea-side town can exhibit such a scene as that which the Brighton parade offers every afternoon in the season? Carriages and troops of horsewomen whirling and cantering over the elastic sward; throngs of pedestrians; parterres of parasols; surely it is one of the most animated spectacles to be seen out of London! What though the old town be none of the most picturesque, and the pinnacles and bulbous roots of the Pavilion fail to excite admiration? the noble expanse towards the sea; the great extent of the noble buildings, stretching along in one unbroken line; the pier, that runs out for nearly 1,200 feet into the sea, and affords an excellent promenade for visitors, make ample amends for the old town's shortcomings. And then what pleasant excursions are there in Brighton neighbourhood—over the green undulating South Downs, to the singular elevation of the Dyke, or Poor Man's Wall; to Shoreham, with its modern architecture; and Preston with its interesting antiquities; to Wick, with its mineral spring; and Hollingbury Hill, with its castle. And though it is truly said that Brighton has not only a sea without a ship, but a coast without a tree, there is a pastoral country about it which successfully rivals some parts of Devonshire.

Brighton, like most other watering-places, was, once upon a time, a famous fishing town, which fell into decay and poverty, and lost heart and character, until it was revived by the Prince Regent, and suddenly assumed an importance and attained popularity as a first-class watering-place. It is said that the town derived its name from an old Saxon bishop, Brithelm; that in the days of William the Conqueror, a company of Flemish fishermen established themselves on this part of our coast; that during the wars with the French the town suffered from their piratical invasions; and that in the time of Henry VIII. a notorious ruffian came down upon the town at midnight, and set it in a blaze. The

French made another descent some years later, but were scared by the valour of the Brighton men, and were glad enough to re-embark. These raids necessitated the adoption of some preventive measures. It is not pleasant to wake up with your head off, and to find your house in flames; so the Brighton men erected a wall with massive gate-houses of stone, and constructed "a blockhouse, armoury, and store of ammunition" on the cliffs. When the Spanish Armada threatened our coasts, the "six pieces of great iron ordnance and ten calivers" of Brighton were made ready, and the garrison stood to their arms. In those days the town stood on the present site of the chain pier; but Brighton, ready and willing to withstand the French, found it a still harder matter to withstand the waves. In Charles the Second's time, the sea swept away twenty houses; in the reign of William III., it carried off no less than 130 dwellings, and thus gradually encroaching, overwhelmed the town, the fortifications, and inclosures, and was only prevented from undermining the cliffs by a double row of trusty piles, which have quite enough to do to withstand the charge of the waves and their volleys of shingle.

De Foe says that in his time there were but six good streets in Brighton; that the women made nets, and the boatmen went to Yarmouth at the time of the fishery fair, and engaged in the herring fishery. In the middle of the last century Dr. Russell, of Lewes, published some works on sea-bathing, and strongly recommended Brighton. Dr. Johnson, Mrs. Thrale, and Miss Burney, visited the town in 1770, and Dr. Johnson declared that he hated the Downs, because they made "a country so desolate, that if one had a mind to hang oneself for desperation at being obliged to live there, it would be difficult to find a tree on which to fasten a rope." Twelve years later came George, Prince of Wales, and so charmed was he with the place that he shortly afterwards began the erection of that building which has, perhaps, excited more adverse criticism than any other edifice in England. "Will you do me a favour?" writes Sir Walter Scott to his friend Mr. Moritt; "set fire to the Chinese stables, and if it embrace the whole of the Pavilion, it will

rid me of a great eyesore." Moore alludes to it as

"That palace or china shop, Brighton, which is it? With lanterns, and dragons, and things round the dome."

Nash was the nominal architect, but the general conception—a cross between the Russian Kremlin and a Moorish palace, with some likeness to a Chinese tower and a Turkish mosque—was entirely due to the prince! Finally, abandoned as a royal residence, the Pavilion was sold ten years ago for £53,000, and its apartments are now used for miscellaneous public entertainments.

The Chain Pier, Brighton, was opened in 1823, and cost about £30,000. It is supported on four oaken piers, resting on piles driven ten feet into the solid chalk. "On each side, the main suspending chains of wrought iron rods, four deep, two inches in diameter, are carried over pyramidal cast-iron towers twenty-five feet high, the interiors being employed as shops." Since its completion the pier has sustained two severe accidents, but is at present in very good condition.

The chief public buildings of the town are the Town-hall, in which the town transacts business and indulges in pleasure; there is an excellent market behind this building. The two best churches are St. Peter's, built in 1827 by the late Sir Charles Barry, at a cost of about £20,000; St. Paul's, built by Mr. Carpenter, in 1847; there are, besides, several other churches and chapels. The old Church of St. Nicholas, the chief relic of ancient Brighton, stands on a cliff 150 feet above the sea. The town contains several well-regulated charities; chief amongst them, is the Sussex County Hospital.

The *Steysne*, formerly the rock or stone on which the fishers dried their nets, is a fashionable promenade; it is decorated with a fountain, a statue of George IV., and two Russian cannons taken in the Crimea. The *sea-wall*, erected at a cost of £100,000, is one of the most important works at Brighton; and along its side stretches the most aristocratic part of the town. *Kemp Town*, built on the estate of the late T. R. Kemp, Esq., M.P., forms the east termination of Brighton, and is fronted by a magnificent esplanade.

It is unnecessary to enter into further detail concerning a place so well known as Brighton—of all places on the coast the most accessible by excursionists. It rose into popularity under royal patronage, but has lost nothing of that popularity by the withdrawal of the Court. Its attractions draw large numbers of visitors every season, and the improvements are continued every year; but it is not the place for those who seek retirement, and who yearn for green trees and sweet-smelling flowers.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AN HEIRESS;

OR,
The Old Fend.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "FRENCH HAY," ETC.

CHAPTER L.

Not all the pomp and pride of state
Can make men truly wise or great.—ANON.

For a little time Miss Huntingdon was quite overcome, but, at last, as I had foreseen, the paroxysm abated, and then raising her head from my shoulder, she looked into my face with such a gaze of hopeless agony, as wrung my heart sadly, saying—
"What shall I do? Oh, Isabel! What shall I do?"

"Go at once to the hospital; let me send for a coach for you, and go at once."

"But Mrs. Elliot—will she allow it? you know how strictly she has forbidden; but I *must* go, Isabel, I *must* go."

"Of course, there can be no question about it; with leave, if you can get it; without it, if you cannot. Do you fear to ask? Shall I do so for you?"

"Oh! if you would; but you know what she has threatened—to dismiss me instantly if she finds that I go home; and if she were to do so, and I was unable to provide any little thing for mamma—"

A burst of hysterical tears, as with the words the sudden fear returned that her mother might even then be beyond the want of earthly comfort, interrupted the poor girl's speech; and I, scarcely able to restrain my own emotion, yet fearfully increasing hers, compelled myself to speak cheerfully, saying—

"Never mind threats, Nelly. Let her send you away if she likes. I will find you a home with a dear, kind friend of mine, who, although poor, has a heart that an empress might be proud of; and as for anything your mother desires, believe me, all will be provided liberally by those in whose care she is

now. When you have seen her, you will be sure of it. But now cheer up, and get ready to go. I will find Mrs. Elliot."

I did so, and, as I expected, met a positive refusal to my request.

"In the hospital! My governess's mother in the hospital! and such wages as I pay! Infamous, disgraceful! I wonder you are not ashamed to mention it."

"I see no reason why I should, madam. If, indeed, I were Miss Huntingdon's employer, and paid her so ill and irregularly, as to necessitate her mother seeking shelter and aid from public charity, I might be ashamed; but as it is, assuredly I am not."

"Insolent! how dare you speak thus to me? You strangely forget yourself."

"I hope not, although I certainly run some risk of doing so, and doubting my own identity by remaining here, where I am beginning to think all tolerably human feelings have long since perished, and died of starvation."

"This is intolerable! Leave my presence instantly!"

"With pleasure; although, if I do, I leave the house also, taking Miss Huntingdon with me."

"Do so at your peril; you are both my hired servants, and are compelled to give me proper notice, or take the consequences."

"That we are ready to do, for we can only be bound to give you proper notice, while we receive proper treatment. The law which can enforce the one, must judge of its power to do so, after hearing the other."

"You defy me!"

"No, I only defend myself and my friend. I came to ask a favour, so reasonable and just, that, had its concession been taken for granted, and, without waiting for permission, Miss Huntingdon had acted as if she had received it, no living being, not utterly heartless, could have blamed her; and yet it has been denied, cruelly, ruthlessly, with hard and insulting words, which chills one's very soul to hear."

"You sought the chill yourself. If your friend" (with a sneer) "felt her demand to be so reasonable and just, why did she not bring it herself?"

"Because she is ill and unhappy, bowed down by affliction, and therefore in no fit state of mind or body to encounter the reception which experience taught us both her request would meet."

"Oh! you knew, then, that I should refuse it? Common sense taught you that?"

"No, madam, not common sense, but a residence of many months under your roof."

"Indeed! it is a pity that, having learned so much, the knowledge did not profit you sufficiently to prevent your troubling me, and chilling yourself by asking what you already knew the answer to would be."

"It is a pity. We shall be wiser in future. It is difficult, all at once, to get rid of feelings and ideas which one has been all one's life imbibing, however erroneous, in certain cases, daily experience shows them to be. But I am wasting time; Mr. Arundel's note is urgent, and even the delay occasioned by this conversation is dangerous. Suffer me to take Miss Huntingdon your permission for her visit; it will be a real comfort to her in her grief, and, indeed, she needs it."

"Oh! you can entreat now! Finding that insolence and defiance do not answer, you condescend to beg; although it is too late for the amendment to benefit you. Either way, my reply now will be the same. If, at the first, you had approached me with becoming deference and respect, the result might have been different, I might for once have broken through my rule; but as it is, nothing can induce me to grant a petition which, wrong and disgraceful in itself, has been made doubly so by the impertinent language and manner with which it has been urged."

"Oh, do not say so; for the style and language of the suit I am alone responsible, and if they were objectionable, should alone be rebuked, not poor Miss Huntingdon, whose agent I am, and who ought not to be punished for my fault. For anything I may have said to offend and displease you, I am ready to apologise, to—"

"*May have said!* Upon my word, Miss Bell, your daring exceeds belief! *May have said!* Do you presume to cast a doubt upon my word, or attempt to excuse what you are now evidently afraid to remember?"

"No, madam, I excuse nothing, fear nothing. As I said, I am only an agent, and, if, thinking of myself, my own feelings and opinions, I have forgotten or injured the cause I came to plead, I am deeply and truly sorry. If you would have me say more, dictate

the words, and I will repeat them, only do not let Miss Huntingdon suffer for my sin. Reprimand, punish me as you will, but be generous and let her go."

"I have answered you before—No. I know nothing of the place or people she wants to go to—how should I? The whole tale may be a fabrication."

"I pledge myself for its truth; I know the gentleman who wrote this note, and that he is incapable of inventing or assisting a falsehood."

"Oh! you do, do you? A pretty respectable acquaintance, I must say! I shall find out rather more in this business than I expected, I think. And pray may I ask where you picked this gentleman up?"

"In the hospital," I answered as calmly as I could, determined, if possible, for Ellen's sake, to control the indignation which was boiling like lava in my veins; "in the hospital, where I went to see a friend, who, having met with an accident, was taken there to have the broken limb set."

"Well, really! And so you, whom I have permitted to be about my niece in daily and intimate communication with her, have been a frequenter of such low, disgraceful places! Upon my word, I know not what to do. But this comes of charity—taking people in without characters. I really know not what to do."

"Permit me to resolve the difficulty, madam. Dismiss me; I am perfectly ready to leave your house at once."

"No doubt of it; but hard-hearted as you think me, I am not so hard, unfortunately, as to be able to reconcile it to my conscience to turn so young a girl suddenly out of my house, to follow the bent of her own undisciplined fancies, and go no one knows where."

"And yet you have threatened Miss Huntingdon with instant dismissal if she presume to go home."

"Of course! I will never pardon disobedience to my commands. If, without my permission, she went where I forbade, my doors would never open to her again. But," she said, becoming suddenly aware of her glaring inconsistency, "she has a mother, and therefore a refuge."

"She *had*; but one is gone, and the other, alas! going quickly. Oh! Mrs. Elliot, let us end this most unworthy bickering, unbecoming at any time, but especially so now. Accept my apology for all that I may have done to offend you; pardon my hasty words, and suffer me to atone for them by fulfilling, during her absence, all the duties of both. For your own parent's sake, let Miss Huntingdon go to her mother's death-bed. If you doubt the truth of the story, and the integrity of the gentleman, whose note I have given you, send your own maid, whom you trust more than any of us, to see if what we have said is a fact, and act accordingly."

"Impossible! I cannot spare Bernard upon any account, nor think of sending her to such a place. I am sorry you have thrown so much zeal and eloquence away; but although I accept your apology, I repeat again that I cannot allow Miss Huntingdon to go. Now pray let the subject drop. Nothing that you can say will induce me to change my determination, and I am too much engaged at present to be able to waste any more time on the matter. Let Miss Gurney be dressed immediately to go out with me; and, John," she said, addressing a footman, who entered with a message, "tell Morris that I shall dine early, at six o'clock to-day, and may probably bring home two or three friends. You need not wait, Miss Bell; I have no more to say."

"But I have, madam, when you are at leisure to attend;" and so, regardless of her evident displeasure and wish to dismiss me, I stood aside till the servant left the room, and then, in the firmest and most dispassionate tones I could command, said, "As I should despise myself if, under any inducement or provocation, I was guilty of deliberate deception, or waited your absence to do anything which I believed to be just and right, so I now tell you, that, if my words have any power with Miss Huntingdon, and she does not despise them as you do, she will, having failed to gain your permission, act without it, and go at once to her dying mother. If for this you choose to discharge her, and bring upon yourself the odium of the world, you can do so. Under her present heavy sorrows, the poor girl will scarcely feel it. For my interference, you know how to punish and resent that. Mrs. de Visme, as you are aware, is ready to relieve you from my services at any time." And bowing formally, I retired from the room, leaving my employer to ponder over the last words, which would, I know, disarm her fury so far as I was concerned.