



HASTINGS, SUSSEX.

ENGLISH WATERING-PLACES.

HASTINGS.

HASTINGS has for some years continued to attract a large number of visitors, and the noble residences which have been lately erected, and the fashionable character of its neighbour—St. Leonards—with which it is united, will probably extend and perpetuate its popularity.

Scarcely any one of our watering-places has been known as such for more than a century. In the old time—when people made their wills and set their houses in order before they ventured on a journey—nobody thought of running to the sea-coast in the summer time for a holiday; but so soon as this became the fashion, and was rendered practicable, fishing villages expanded into handsome towns, and hotels and lodging-houses took the place of cottages and huts. But though it is true that our watering-places are latter-day inventions, many of the localities themselves can boast an ancient pedigree, and have figured in history centuries ago.

Hastings, for example, was one of the earliest Saxon settlements, its navy was numerous and important under the Royal Confessor, and hither came the Norman Conqueror, encamping, according to tradition, towards the summit of the East Cliff—

“Over hauberk and helm,  
As the sun’s setting splendour was thrown,  
Hence they looked o’er a realm,  
And to-morrow beheld it their own!”

From the reign of Saxon Athelstan to that of the second Norman William, a royal mint was established in the town. After the battle of Hastings, the county of Sussex was divided into half-a-dozen districts, and the town fell to the share of the Conqueror’s uncle, Robert, Count D’Eu. Here a castle was erected in which King Rufus had regal lodgings, and swore his nobles to fealty before he sailed for Normandy. Here King John asserted his claim to the sovereignty of the seas; and here, at a later date, royal and baronial forces fell to fighting for supremacy; hither, on an autumn night in 1378, the Frenchmen came over the sea and set St. Clement’s church in a blaze; and the Dutchmen, at a sub-

sequent period, fired on the town, and left a *souvenir* of their visit in the shape of two balls imbedded in St. Clement’s tower.

Thus we find that Hastings has an eventful history, and that its modern importance is but a revival of its former greatness; and yet, how wonderful is the difference between Hastings past and present!

The claims of this town as a watering-place have been variously estimated. Lord Byron, writing from this place, said:—“I have been swimming and eating turbot, and smuggling neat brandies and silk handkerchiefs, and listening to my friend Hodgson’s raptures about a pretty wife elect of his, and walking on cliffs, and tumbling down hills, and making the most of the *dolce far niente* for the last fortnight.” Here it is that poor Charles Lamb described himself as “doing dreary penance.” Says he: “It is a place of fugitive resort: an heterogeneous assemblage of sea-mews and stock-brokers, amphitrites of the town, and misses that coquet with the ocean. If it were what it was in its primitive shape, it were something. I could abide to dwell here; to assist with fisher swains and smugglers,” &c. Here it was that Campbell wrote his address to the sea:—

“E’en gladly I exchange yon spring-green lanes,  
With all the darling field flowers in their prime;  
And gardens haunted by the nightingale’s  
Long trills and gushing ecstasies of song,  
For these wild headlands and the sea-mews’ clang.  
With thee beneath my windows, pleasant sea,  
I long not to o’erlook earth’s fairest glades  
And green savannahs.”

The cliffs and the sea are, indeed, the great attractions of Hastings; and in these it is not surpassed. Looking out on the blue expanse of water, or on the white cliffs and rocky steeps, the grandeur and beauty of the scene are unquestionable.

The old town, with its rude, irregular houses, its narrow and crooked streets, and labyrinths of timber-sheds, is exceedingly picturesque, and offers a very different aspect to the handsome range of buildings which have sprung up of late years and stretch away to St. Leonards, and the villas and

lodging-houses that have climbed the hill. The improvements that have taken place—improvements, that is, so far as convenience and accommodation are concerned—have attracted many distinguished visitors—the Emperor Louis Napoleon, Louis Philippe, the King of Hanover, Queen Adelaide, and her present Majesty, while Princess Victoria, among the number.

The churches of Hastings offer no particular interest to antiquaries or artists, and the castle is but a ruin, with its area laid out as a pleasure-ground; but the neighbourhood abounds in charming walks, amid scenery picturesque and variable. Fairlight Glen, with its moss-carpeted forest paths; and the Dripping Well, lightly plashing its cool waters into a rocky chalice; and the ledge of rock known as the *Lover’s Seat*—the trysting-place of the rich heiress and her sailor lover; and the waterfall known as Old Roar, though not now deserving of the name; and Crowhurst, with its green lanes and church embowered in a brotherhood of trees; and Pevensey’s ruined castle; and Battle Abbey, erected by the Conqueror for the repose of the souls of those who were slain at Hastings,—all these places are of interest, and are easily accessible.

Apart from any other consideration, the climate of Hastings is one of its chief recommendations; and, with the exception of Torquay, no better winter residence can be found for an invalid. “The most sheltered spots,” according to a recent writer, “are to be found in Old Hastings Valley, where scarcely any wind from a cold quarter penetrates. George-street, the Parade, Pelham-crescent, Breed’s-place, Wellington-square, and the houses close beneath the castle hill, are all sheltered from the prevailing winter winds. The same advantages are also enjoyed by the Under-cliff and Maze-hill, and the ascents in St. Leonards. Invalids who are able to take more vigorous exercise and to brave the south-westerly winds, may find a more congenial abode in those situations facing the sea which are defended from the northerly winds. The sea line of St. Leonards and Hastings, as far as Breed’s-place, offers admirable residences for the bronchitic and dyspeptic invalid, and the proximity to the parades pre-



sents great facilities for exercise; whilst those persons who require a more bracing air may find it at High Wickham, St. Mary's-terrace, St. Michael's, in Hastings; or at the West-hill, or Uplands, in St. Leonards."

## THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AN HEIRESS; OR, The Old Feud.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "FRENCH HAY," ETC.

### CHAPTER XLVIII.

But our words are bold and free,  
We judge, decide, condemn—  
Ah! God forgive us, what are we,  
That we should sentence them?—S. M.  
Alas! that deadly feud should be,  
Between two hearts so brave and free;  
Alas! that long ancestral hate  
Such kindred souls should separate.—Imb.

AND she knew me.

Meeting thus by chance, without a word to guide either to the discovery, we knew each other, and that the recognition was mutual.

Still, the question was repeated in such sad, almost fond accents, as touched me strangely.

"Who are you?"

"Isabel Neville!"

"Ah!" and she gasped heavily, "I knew it. His child! and—oh! how like!"

Then, after a pause, during which visible traces of the fiercest passions, and softest emotions, swept like clouds over her brow, she said—

"Do you know who I am?"

"I guess—my aunt, Miss Aylmer."

"You are right; but how came you here? Where is your—Are you alone?"

"Yes."

"For how long? for how long?" and she bent forward, eagerly.

"Only until my errand is done. I am not at home, and have been sent hither upon a message by my employer."

"Not at home!—sent!—employer! What do you mean? You cannot be at school?"

"No; I am a governess."

"A what?"

"A governess, in a family where even for this loitered time an account will be expected."

"Impossible! and yet—come here, come here!" she repeated, imperiously.

I went, and with trembling hands she untied the strings of my bonnet, and taking it off, let down the curls which had been fastened back, to fall around my face, looking into it with such yearning eyes as brought tears fast crowding into mine. She saw them, and her own bright orbs dimmed, until, unable longer to control her feelings, she covered her face with her hands, and wept.

Memories of the past, long-buried thoughts came back, awakened from their sleep by the sight of features so nearly resembling those which would never be forgotten, and looking up after a time, I saw they had done their work, and that all was tenderness and affection now, where so lately resentment and grief had held at least a divided sway.

"Sit down, Isabel, here, beside me," she said, motioning to a place upon the couch, "and let me look at you. Do you know whom you are like? Have you ever been told?"

"Yes; but, alas! I never saw him."

"I know it, I know it, and—there are others now; at least so the papers say. You have a brother?"

"Yes, the dearest, noblest being upon earth; but he is not my father's son, my mother married again."

"I know it, I know it," she repeated passionately, and once more the dark frown gathered upon her brow, and her eyes flashed, as, springing from her seat, she paced the room hurriedly: "a wretched adventurer, a man without honour, principle, birth, or one single recommendation save his face and his flattery. Pah—it maddens me to think of it. And has he brought you up? Have you lived all your life with him, under his roof, your father's most worthless successor?"

"Yes. Where should a child live but with her parents? I had no choice."

"It was not of your own free will, then," she cried, seizing my hand vehemently; "the blood you inherit has saved you from that shame! You hated him as a Neville and an Aylmer should, and left his house, the very air of which should have been as poison to you? Speak, say, was not that it?"

"Mr. Cunningham liked me no better than I liked him, and therefore we parted."

"In peace? Answer me—in peace, or with the words which best befit a child of his, whose very name and honour have been outraged by her having such a guardian?"

"Neither in peace nor war. I left Ellerslie quietly, at my own desire; but of the circumstances which obliged me to do so, I pray you do not ask."

"I must. I have a right to do so, and you must reply. You were ill-treated, coerced. You were not happy?"

"No; but ask no more, I cannot answer."

"Pshaw! the whole welfare of your future life depends upon it; you must answer,—not that it greatly needs. In some cases silence speaks more eloquently than words—and this is one. You were miserable. I know it, I read it in your countenance, and therefore spare you the confession. But tell me, what part had your mother in the treatment that made you quit her roof? Is she so lost, so degenerated from the loyal race of which she came, as to suffer the happiness of her first-born child—the only tie left between herself and him for whom she became an outcast—to be trifled with, destroyed by the characterless wretch whom she dared to marry, and in choosing whom, she shut herself for ever from all hope of pardon. Could she—?"

"Stay, Miss Aylmer," I said, rising also; "in your displeasure at the acts of bygone years, of which I, of course, am not competent to judge, you forget, I think, to whom you are speaking now. Whatever may have been my mother's errors, she has bitterly expiated them; and I, her child, cannot, ought not to listen to aught which savours of reproach. I know little, and wish to hear no more of the past; but when I remember my mother's utter desolation and loneliness, her cruel abandonment by friends, parent, and sister, I cannot but wonder if the marriage of which they complain, lies not upon their own consciences, and whether, if they had but rallied round her to forgive that which, however unwise, could not be recalled, and encourage her for the future, she, whom they now upbraid, might not have been rescued from the misery into which the natural craving of a helpless girl for protection led her, and restored to the home which one fatal step had cost her."

"Restored to home! My home! That which her degeneracy made a living tomb—never! In mercy to her mother's prayers, and under the solemn promise that in no form or shape, or under no pretence or subterfuge, she should ever be obtruded on his sight again, my father forbore to curse her; but were it possible for him to relent, and on his death-bed to suffer her return, but only for so long as would suffice to receive his pardon, I tell you, Isabel Neville, that I, with my own hands, would keep her back, and save our house from such contamination."

"May God forgive and pity you, madam! My mother, with all her sorrows, is less an object of compassion than you. Farewell! It were best for both of us, and the future thoughts each will have of the other, that this most painful interview should end."

"Not yet. You carry it boldly, and talk well; but my will is not easily gainsayed. I wait an answer to my question. How great a part has she, who cast her own home away so lightly, had in the treatment which has driven you from yours?"

"None! My mother has ever been to me, so far as it was in her power, most kind and patient. Whatever I have suffered has not been at her instance."

"You love her, then? Are satisfied with her conduct? Would you go back?"

"No!"

"Why? Do not trifle with me, girl, nor give such brief and unsatisfactory replies. Speak honestly, frankly, as a true Aylmer should."

"In everything connected with myself, my own feelings, I am ready to do so; but in all that has happened in my mother's house, especially if to the disadvantage of any resident there, I must be silent."

"Hum!" And she looked steadily upon me; at first, angrily—as one who had dared to oppose and set her at defiance, then, as if my answer approved itself to her sense of honour, continuing, "You are an alien; but if the obstinacy of the two races is reproduced with added strength in you, their last descendant, the truth and faith which one at least has boasted unsullied for ages, is not extinct. You hate the man, but will not betray him to his foe. Good!"

"Praise me no more. Think no better of me than I deserve. Ellerslie is FULKE'S home; and what I would not say to pain him in his presence, I

could never say when he was absent. He would scorn one who could act so meanly; and, although we may be separated for life, I will never willingly do anything, that, if he knew it, might embitter his thoughts, or give him a right to despise me."

"Very sublime!" she answered, with a curling lip; "but, if the son resembles his father, you need be under no very grave apprehension of shocking his delicacy or honour. The loyal blood which, in such miserable society, has saved you from ruin and taint, has not been his protection against the evil influence of precept and example."

"Nay, madam, the charm must be equally potent in both cases. My brother's claim to it is as strong as mine, for your sister, the Aylmer through whom alone we inherit the blood of which we are so justly proud, is our mother—Fulke's no less than mine."

"Audacious! By my word, Isabel Neville, but you are over bold. Have a care, or you will lose the favour you might gain."

"I trust not. Your love and friendship would be very precious to me; but I would not gain them, dear as they would be, at my brother's cost. Whatever regard or protection you extend to me, bestow likewise upon him; for, besides that he is as near a relative, he is infinitely—oh! a million times—more worthy."

"That may well be, for as yet I know not whether you are worthy; and certainly, if your present dutiful obedience, and respect to myself, are to be taken as specimens of your other good qualities, the child you talk of may easily surpass you, nor even then have much ground to boast of his perfections."

"I am sorry—I grieve you should think I have failed in—"

"Pshaw! I seek no apologies; submission is better than excuses."

"Assuredly, and although we have hitherto been strangers, I am both willing and anxious to pay my whole arrears of duty now, and obey you in all things, so far as I can do so with propriety."

"A safe promise, seeing that you elect yourself into the judge of what is right or wrong to do, and how far obedience to your seniors is, or is not, consistent with your own dignity!—a safe promise!"

"I hope so. I would not knowingly make any other; and when you reflect that I, like every one else, must bear alone the responsibility of my own words and deeds, you will not surely think it wrong or unreasonable, that I should be allowed to decide upon them."

"A casuist?"

"No, but one whose path has been, and most probably ever will be, so thorny, that, so far as it is in her power, she would avoid, by acting honourably, the adding of another briar to those which already harass and encumber her so miserably."

"You are miserable then! I know it—how could it be otherwise? And yet you will not return; there is some hope then. What are you doing now?"

"Living as musical governess with a Mrs. Elliot, in Grosvenor Place."

"For hire? his child! This passes all."

"Why! there is no disgrace in honest labour; the hardest crust self-earned, is better than the most luxurious dependence."

"Cant, cant!" she cried, impatiently, her beautiful features working sharply; "talk not such idle rhapsody to me! And he has driven you to this?—while she—good Heaven! has your mother no shame, no sense of honour—anything left, to prevent her suffering you to incur such degradation?"

"I hoped I had explained that, having found it better to leave Ellerslie, I was acting upon my own responsibility—my mother is in no way accountable for my proceedings."

"You have thrown her off—cast off the hateful trammels? Come, then, to me, back to the house she spurned, and take the place which she abandoned. Come!"

And rising suddenly, her face lighted with the fire of many feelings—triumph in the thought that she was preferred before her sister by the child, although scorned by the parent—sudden affection for the new-found relative, and stern resolve to bear down all the opposition she was prepared to meet—she stood before me almost terrible in her strange and exceeding beauty.

"But Mr. Aylmer—oh, Aunt Eleanor!" (how her eye kindled at the word, as, springing forward, my voice trembling, I uttered the unwonted name)—"how shall I meet him, so stern, so implacable? how shall I stand before him, who is deaf to the pleadings of his own child?"

"Boldly, fearlessly, as you have stood before me, the more implacable, so men say, of the two. Nay, Isabel, there is no cause for fear; all that may be said I shall know how to answer; and she whom I