



PALERMO, THE CAPITAL OF SICILY.

Nicias; it was one of the grandest efforts ever made by Greece, and one of the most disastrous blunders ever committed. The Athenians were defeated, and with that defeat terminated the glory and empire of Attic Greece.

The siege of Syracuse by the Romans, under Marcellus, is another important event in the ancient history of Sicily, and is especially remarkable as having given employment to the extraordinary talents of Archimedes. He devoted his abilities to the defence of the city—set the enemy's fleet on fire by means of burning-glasses, and prolonged the siege for three years; but the city was at last taken, and Archimedes perished.

Palermo, as well as Syracuse, was founded at a very early date. Sicilian writers are not to be relied on in this matter, many of their statements being obviously apocryphal; Polybius and Thucydides, however, state that it was founded by a colony of Phœnicians, and called *Panormus* (a station for all ships), from the number of vessels accommodated in its harbour. It afterwards fell into the hands of the Carthaginians; was subsequently occupied by the Romans; still later fell into the possession of the Saracens; was conquered by the Normans in the eleventh century; and, as capital of the island, has shared the fate of Sicily; and from 1806 to 1815 it was the residence of the Court of Naples.

The city of Palermo presents a noble appearance from the sea. It is built on the shores of an extensive bay, in a plain surrounded, on three sides, by mountains, and called from its luxuriance the golden shell. Two handsome streets divide the city into four parts, by intersecting each other at right angles. These streets are closed by four gates, are well paved, and lined with buildings. To the south-west is the sea and *Porta Felice*; to the north-east is *Monreale* and *Porta Nuova*; to the north-west is *La Favorita* and *Porta Macqueda*; to the south-east the road to *Messina* and *Porta Termini*. The street which leads straight from the *Porta Nuova* to the *Porta Felice*—that is to say, to the sea—is called the street of *Toledo*, and in its lowest part, near the sea, the *Cassaro*. Outside the *Porta Nuova* a suburban

avenue stretches far to the north-east, adorned on both sides with magnificent villas, belonging to the Palermitan nobility. The principal place is in the centre of the town, and is octagonal in form, each of its eight sides consisting of a noble edifice of the Doric, Ionian, and Corinthian orders; fountains and statues add to the magnificence of the scene, and render the *Piazza Ottangoloza* one of the finest public places in Europe.

The manufacture of silk, introduced into Sicily as early as the eleventh century, is still one of the chief branches of industry at Palermo. The tunny fishery employs nearly 4,000 fishermen and about 1,000 boats. But a lengthened period of tyrannous exaction and cruel oppression have crippled the enterprise of the people, and almost extinguished their capacity for business; as a last mark of vengeance, the heavy bombardment which the town has suffered has converted all the quarters to the right and left of the royal palace into blackened ruins. These were chiefly inhabited by the poorer classes, and thickly crowded with monasteries. "As you can see," says an eye-witness, "by those which have hitherto escaped, they are in the style of those at *St. Giles's* or the *Seven Dials*, with the only exception that all the windows have balconies before them. In these small houses a dense population is crowded together even in ordinary times; the fear of the bombardment crowded them even more; a shell falling on one, and crushing and burying the inmates, was sufficient to make people abandon the neighbouring one and take refuge a little further on, shutting themselves up in the cellars. When the royalists retired they set fire to those of the houses which had escaped the shells, and numbers were thus burnt alive in their hiding-places.

But brighter days are coming, and scenes such as these are but the close of a long list of still greater atrocities inflicted on the oppressed people by the Neapolitan Government. Palermo is free. She has seen the last of the *störri*, and a happier day has dawned upon her—a day which shall witness her elevation to an important place in social, commercial, and political status. Enceladus the Titan is virtually slain; the liberator of Sicily has defied the Cyclopean thunders; Ulysses has de-

livered the captives in the cave of Polyphemus; all the ancient fables of Sicily are, as it were, rehearsed before us; *Minerva* returns to elevate and instruct; and agriculture flourishes again under the auspices of *Ceres*. Freed from the yoke of the Neapolitan Bourbon, a golden age revives for Sicily.

ENGLISH WATERING-PLACES.

LOWESTOFT.

LOWESTOFT, in the county of Suffolk, is a seaport and market town, and has recently become a favourite watering-place. There are few towns within the same distance from London which can rival it in point of situation; and, notwithstanding its apparently exposed position as the most easterly point of England, it is remarkable for the extreme salubrity of its climate. The town consists of a single street, directly facing the beach, running from north to south; several minor streets branch off to the west, and although they are narrow and irregular, they are paved and well lighted. The church is a handsome Gothic building, and there are several Dissenting places of worship in the town. The upper part of the market-house is used as an assembly-room, for meetings, concerts, exhibitions, &c., and there is also a small theatre. All the usual attractions of a watering-place are to be found in Lowestoft. Wide sands extend from the sea-shore almost to the pathways of the street; and the bathing on the shelving coast is safe and practicable at all times of the tide. There is a beautiful marine parade opposite the beach, and a couple of piers, each running about a quarter of a mile into the sea. The sea view from the Esplanade is very fine, and there is an endless variety of shipping offered to the eye. Now a gay yacht skims lightly over the waves; now the offing is crowded with French and Dutch craft, or a fleet of fishing-boats, on their way to the opposite coast, in search of cod and whiting for the London market; and again, light wherries shoot across the way of black, heavy-looking colliers, and row-boats full of merry holiday-makers glide over the waters in all the luxury of summer enjoyment.

* A representation of this gate is given on page 44.



LOWESTOFT, COUNTY OF SUFFOLK.

At the southern extremity of the town there is a battery, mounting thirteen cannon, and some other defences at the northern end; there are also two lighthouses, the one standing on a high point of land, the other on the beach below the cliff. The fish market presents a very picturesque effect, and still retains much of its old importance. The quantity of fish annually taken and cured at Lowestoft is very large; their quality is generally considered superior to those sent from Yarmouth, and they fetch higher prices in the London market.

Various opinions prevail as to the derivation of the word Lowestoft. By some it is supposed to be derived from Lodbrog, a Danish king, who, it is said, having jumped into a boat to save a favourite hawk which had fallen into the sea, was carried across by a storm up the mouth of the Yare, to Reedham, in Suffolk. Here he was kindly received by the inhabitants, and conducted to the Saxon king, who then held his court at Caistor. After residing with this monarch for some time, he was slain by his own falconer, through jealousy of his success in hawking. Another derivation of the name is, that it comes from Lothar Wistoft, a *loft*, or cluster of houses, by *loth*, or slow river—a description peculiarly applicable to the Waveney, which flows with a languid stream, strongly contrasting with the rapidity of the *Gor*, or *rapid*, near Gorleston. The extraordinary rapidity which has marked the progress of Lowestoft is one of its most important features. To the enterprising spirit and indomitable perseverance of several leading capitalists the increased importance of the place is chiefly due. A company was formed, and an Act procured in 1845, for the construction of a railway from Lowestoft to Reedham, and for improving the harbour of the town. These works were commenced and finished with a rapidity only equalled by their excellence. The rail and harbour offer peculiar advantages of communication with Northern Europe; so materially is the distance shortened that the journey from Hamburg to London—usually occupying sixty-two hours—is easily accomplished in thirty-six. Perhaps there is no more striking instance of great public works being so admirably carried out by private enterprise.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AN HEIRESS;

OR,

The Old Feud.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "FRENCH HAY," ETC.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

I call, but no one hears;
And in the dim and sullen darkness
I gaze with wistful eyes,
But see no face.
I am alone!

Go! thou melancholy gloom,
That my brain so long has nursed;
Let my soul new hopes resume,
For my ills are at their worst.

Whispers, friendless as thou art,
There's a bright hour near. A. A.

My enemy gone, the first use I made of solitude was to examine my prison, and strive to gain some knowledge of the place I was in. The chamber was large and square, with plain papered walls, a fireplace, no closets or recesses, and two lofty sash windows, which looked out upon a wild, overgrown shrubbery, bounded by a high wall.

More as a form, and because I would leave nothing untried, than with any hope from the experiment, I endeavoured to raise the windows and open the doors, but, as might have been expected, all were fastened; and, the fact of my helplessness thus ascertained, I sat down to wait, as it seemed, for what would happen next.

That I was most thoroughly and completely in the power of my foe was evident, as also, that, except by a miracle, I should never be discovered, for I had brought away the letter appointing the interview in my pocket; and even if poor Mary remembered the address, which it was very unlikely that she would do, and went to Regent Villa, the cunning way in which I had been removed from thence would utterly baffle her.

Where I was, and who had been the agents of my capture, I could not even guess, although it appeared plain that some one, on the alert to watch for every movement, had seen my adver-

tisement, suspected (from the street named therein) that it was mine, and had lured me to Regent Villa, enticing me to sing where Mr. Meredith could listen, in order to identify me, and so prevent the possibility of a mistake. To hope for escape, therefore, by favour of any flaw in this well-laid plan, was idle. Whatever relief came, must come from myself; and all that I, alas! could do to help myself was to be calm and patient, waiting silently for any opening that might offer.

Thus occupied, evening fell, and, just as it grew too dark to distinguish objects, the door was noiselessly opened, and a servant appeared with candles. These arranged, she brought tea, and then advancing towards me, civilly offered to assist me in removing my bonnet and mantle.

"Or perhaps you would prefer going to your room at once?" she said, throwing open the door.

"I shall return here?"

"Oh, certainly! unless you choose to have the tray carried up, which I shall be happy to do; for you will find it very lonely in this large, dull room by yourself, I am afraid."

The manner as well as the words were courteous; and looking into the speaker's countenance earnestly, to learn if she meant them, I observed that she grew uneasy under the scrutiny, and impatiently preparing to leave the room, said, in an altered tone—

"Will you go forward, or shall I lead the way?"

"I will follow you."

"Very well; this way."

And taking a light from the sideboard, the woman passed before me, and went up-stairs into a large, comfortable bed-chamber, where all necessaries for the night's toilette were laid out.

"I hope you will find everything you want," said my conductress, lighting the tapers upon the dressing-table. "When you ring, I will return to show you down-stairs again. The room is well-aired. It has been in constant use."

"Yes, but it is very warm. Cannot you open the window?" I exclaimed inadvertently, forgetting for a moment the position in which I stood; but recalled instantly to my senses by the peculiar smile of the woman; and saying, "Ah! I forgot; you cannot, lest I should escape!" went forward without any farther