

is safe to say of Blackpool that no other English watering-place, and probably no other English town can show such a record of progress and prosperity, achieved within a very brief period.

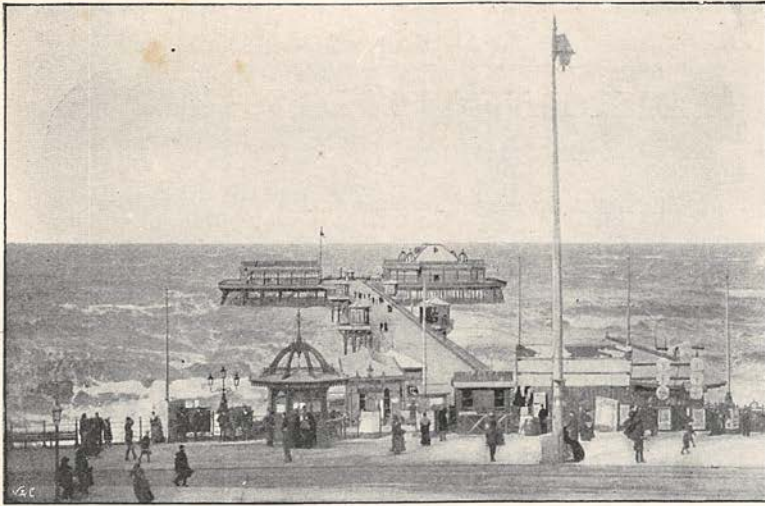
"Progress," the appropriate motto of the town, is visible everywhere, and the first thing that strikes the visitor on entering Blackpool is the unmistakable air of abounding prosperity worn alike by borough and burghers. Everywhere are handsome public buildings, handsome shops, and wide, well laid-out streets thronged with busy, bustling citizens and gay holiday-makers. If these holiday-makers were not gay it would be a wonder, for the busy, bustling Blackpool citizen has but one care—that his visitors shall thoroughly enjoy themselves. Both entertainer and entertained succeed to their heart's content. Blackpool caters for the million, and the million, having found the entertainment good, comes in its millions.

In 1801 Blackpool could boast a population of only 473. Even in 1831 the number was not above 1000; but in 1846, when railway communication was established with Lancashire and Yorkshire, the place began to progress by leaps and bounds. It is the last twenty years however that have seen the truly surprising development of this great seaside resort; and indeed the nearer one comes to the present time, one finds that the record of every succeeding year is crowded with an ever-lengthening list

of improvements, extensions and additions, each and all of these making for the growth, popularity and prosperity of the place. At the last census the population was estimated at 23,846; to-day it is estimated at over 35,000. More wonderful still perhaps is the extraordinary increase in the rateable value of the borough during the last twenty years. In 1876 the figures stood at £76,837; at the present moment the estimate is £260,252 in round numbers.

Dry these numerical facts may be, but they are the most practical and satisfactory means of setting forth the progress of the borough. The outward and visible achievement of this progressive people, as it exists to-day in all its varied attractiveness, cannot be described by mere numerical references, so the writer gladly passes to a detailed description of this great watering-place of the North.

Blackpool, lying as it does on the western verge of what is known as the Fylde district of Lancashire, possesses one of the finest sea-fronts in the kingdom. At the present time the length of that splendid parade is a good two and three-quarter miles, but very soon, on the completion of a great extension northward, the entire range of the promenade will be quite three miles and a half. On that handsome sea-commanding terrace the visitor may enjoy the sunshine and the invigorating breezes that blow across the Irish Sea. But if he would taste the invigorating and health-giving air of Blackpool at its best, if he would feel its energising and electric influence to full perfection, he must go out upon one or other of the piers. In piers Blackpool is very rich, possessing no less than three—the North, the Central or South Pier, and the Victoria Pier. The North Pier is considered the most



From a photo by]

THE NORTH PIER.

[Poulton.

bluffs that modern engineering skill and Blackpool enterprise are shearing down to extend still further a frontage already splendid. To right and left of the visitor lie the tawny stretches of sand, thronged with bathers and paddlers, that form one of Blackpool's chief attractions. There is provided every sort of minstrelsy, and all seaside pleasures — donkey, pony, and even camel riding may be indulged in. A

aristocratic. There morning, noon and evening congregates the best-dressed and gayest throng of Blackpool visitors, "glad to know the brine salt on their cheek and the large air again," charmed too with the music of the excellent orchestra which is in constant attendance. The North Pier pavilion is also famous for its classical concerts, for which all the best London talent is engaged. As the visitor strolls seaward along the pier from Talbot Square he should, when three-quarters of the way along, turn and look back towards the sea-front. Then he will enjoy a capital view of Blackpool from end to end of the parade, a view bounded on the south by the distant downs, that afford so excellent a golf links, and on the north by the handsome terraces of Claremont Park, beyond which rise the

little way to the southward the sands are again spanned by the graceful framework of the Central Pier, which is equally rich in attraction. The chief feature of the Central Pier however is its spacious platform for dancing, open to the sky but screened from the weather by a framework of wood and glass. Away beyond this again is the Victoria Pier, a resort equally spacious and equally pleasant, frequented by visitors who prefer quieter delights. The special feature of the Victoria Pier is its splendid concert pavilion. From each of the piers a striking prospect of Blackpool may be enjoyed, but the great feature of the view is always the structure of which Blackpool confesses herself proudest—the gigantic tower built on the Eiffel principle, the foundation-stone of which was laid in 1891 by Sir Matthew



From a photo by]

THE CENTRAL PIER, BLACKPOOL.

[Thompson, Blackpool.

White - Ridley, M.P. for the Blackpool Division and Home Secretary.

Everything that ingenuity and enterprise can do has been done to make the huge establishment known as "The Tower" a success, and those in charge may congratulate themselves on the attainment of their desire. The Tower itself is but one portion of this huge compendium of attractions.

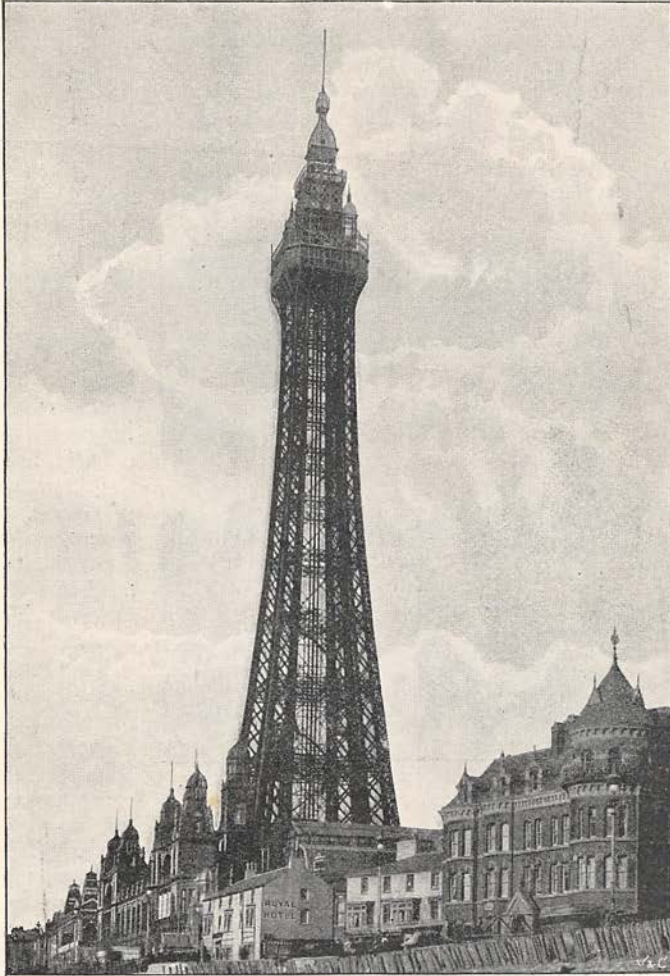
Around the base of the iron structure stands a handsome brick and terra - cotta block, fronting the sea. This block alone contains so many wonders for the sightseer that before one has well exhausted them the Tower itself, great as it is, seems to have fallen into a secondary place. Under the roof of the Tower building one has at command a seemingly endless variety of amusements. Beneath the four great limbs of the Tower proper is a large and thoroughly equipped

circus, with a remarkable arrangement by which the arena sinks down disclosing in a moment a miniature sea for the aquatic displays that nightly conclude the entertainment. In the surrounding buildings one finds a beautiful aquarium in grotto form, a complete zoo, with its large carnivora, its monkey-house and aviary, and a grand pavilion, considered one of the finest ball-

rooms in the country. Passing upwards one emerges upon the roof-gardens, where tropical plants and exquisite flowers charm the eye and lead it down delightful vistas of colour. Mention must be made too of the seal pond, the bear cage, and the marine promenades, which closely adjoin the roof-gardens.

But of course after all the sight of the Tower is the Tower. From the Elevator Hall, picturesquely fashioned to represent an old English village, one enters the lift and is swiftly borne aloft to the height of 510 feet. For smooth and pleasant running these elevators are unrivalled. Perfect safety too is ensured by a special check-action which is tested daily. The ascent occupies under one minute. Once on the airy platform of the Tower the visitor enjoys a remarkable panorama of sea and land, and well he

may, for he is standing on the loftiest building in the kingdom. Sunset is perhaps the most enjoyable time on the Tower. Right in the eye of the setting sun, if the month is mid-July, the Isle of Man can be descried on the dim sea-line, northward lies Barrow and the Cumberland hills, southward the Welsh mountains, and eastward, north-west and south-west, the eye



From a photo by]

THE TOWER, BLACKPOOL.

[Poulton.

rooms over the level green land of the Fylde, with its many towns and villages, all prosperous in their degree, but none so great or flourishing as the town that lies mapped out at our feet so far below.

The descent from the Tower is as swift and pleasant as the ascent had been, and the visitor, his appetite sharpened by the keen air of the upper regions, will no doubt be ready to patronise the excellent restaurant attached to the establishment. He may count on the best of entertainment, for at Blackpool they do nothing by halves. One great point to be noticed about the Tower is that sixpence is the "open sesame" to everything.

When the visitor has had his fill of the Tower he will, if he is wise, turn to the

ture, reflecting infinite credit on the architects, Messrs. Mangnall and Littlewoods, of Manchester. The dimensions of the ball-room will be 190 feet by 110 feet, the height 65 feet, and the span of the arched roof 80 feet. Around the hall runs a promenade, having perfect circulation, and enriched with Doulton panelling symbolical of the sea. The ceiling is panelled with exquisite plaster-work, also of symbolical design, suggesting Youth, Beauty, Pleasure, the Graces, and the Arts. The Oriental Lounge, close at hand, will contain everything suggestive of Eastern luxury, brilliant colour, and luxurious settees; in fact it will be an ideal sitting-out resort. Just adjoining the Lounge is a splendid café, where the attendant maids are dressed in picturesque oriental costume, and

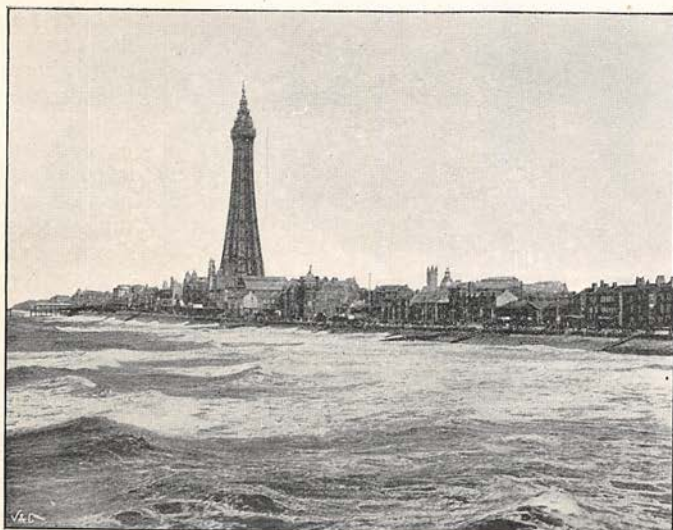
from this enchanted palace it is but a step to the Florentine Gardens, which are illuminated at night with millions of multicoloured lights.

The three theatres in the town are the Grand, which is one of the finest in the kingdom, and is visited by all the leading companies, the Royal, and the Prince of Wales, which are likewise popular resorts. The Empire Theatre of Varieties ministers to the growing taste for clever performances by music-hall artistes.

Another pleasure-resort which has done good service for Blackpool is the Royal Palace Gardens. Distance from the more recent centre of amusement has to some extent robbed these gardens

of their old popularity, but the concern is still valuable to the company by whom it is owned. This will be seen when it is stated that the gardens were last July disposed of at a sum which gave the original shareholders exactly cent. per cent. on their money. The reason of this success is of course the tremendous value of land in Blackpool. In some instances it is selling at £20 the square yard. The Prince of Wales' Baths are used for aquatic shows, always appreciated in this district.

The mere mention of these endless attractions must suggest to everyone how admirably Blackpool is suited, not only for a summer, but for a winter resort. So many amusements can be had under cover in places where the temperature is always delightfully



From a photo by]

A SEA VIEW OF THE TOWER.

[Poulton.

Winter Gardens, where again the modest sixpence will open the door to an unlimited range of entertainments. The buildings of the Winter Gardens cover six acres, the block consisting of one vast square with a street on each of the four sides. Within are: the Grand Pavilion; Her Majesty's Opera House, seated for 2500 persons; the Floral Hall, the Fernery and Palm House, picture galleries, and extensive billiard and refreshment rooms. New additions are in rapid progress, and by the time this article is in print will have been opened the gigantic Wheel, the new Italian Gardens, the Oriental Lounge, and last and greatest, the new ball-room. The two last call for special mention, for the ball-room is a triumph of architec-

equable, that even were the weather unpropitious a pleasant time is a foregone conclusion. It is not to be supposed however that even in winter the climate of Blackpool is forbidding. Far from it. All the year round crisp bright weather is the rule, and fog in its worst sense is absolutely unknown, the only approach to such a thing being rare visits from gray sea-mist, which may obscure the view but is at any rate not poisonous, as smoke-charged fogs most certainly are.

How healthy a place Blackpool is may be gathered from the report of the medical officer for the borough. Dr. Jasper Anderson certifies that the death-rate is exceptionally low. This he attributes in great measure to the health-giving and invigorating westerly sea-breezes, which in 1895 prevailed during 197 days, on 94 of which the wind was due west. Other causes of course there are for Blackpool's admirable climate. The effect of proximity to the sea is that the climate is cooler in summer and warmer in winter. Fine dry warm weather prevails in the months of March, April, May and June, and meteorological returns prove that Blackpool occupies a very high position, in comparison with other health-resorts, for dryness of atmosphere, clearness of sky, the amount of direct sunshine, and uniformity of temperature. Sunless days indeed are the exception in July and August. Convalescents whose cases demand a bracing air, and sufferers from certain chest complaints which necessitate the patient's enjoying pure sea breezes, will find at Blackpool just such a climate as will work a cure. Eminent physicians join in praising the place, and some most heartily recommend a lengthening of the Blackpool season

on account of the early spring and late autumn temperatures, which are much higher than would be expected from the comparative coolness of the place during summer months. The natural advantages of the locality are enhanced by the vigilant care and unceasing attention of the sanitary authorities, who spare no effort to promote perfect hygiene and to keep the town free from infectious disease. The water supply is most excellent, and the milk supply, as an eminent medical man has testified, is "placed above suspicion by the constant investigation to which it is subjected." Nor must the sea-water baths be omitted as one of the important factors in the health of the town. Sea-water also is supplied by an enterprising company through the mains for private use.

In this connection it is interesting to mention the admirable Blackpool hospital, a model of its kind, which reflects the greatest credit on the town and on all concerned with it. Were it nothing else this admirable institution would be a lasting monument to the liberality of the great watering-place, for the hospital was founded with the proceeds of a bazaar, which in one week's time realised the handsome sum of £5700. It stands on the road to Marton, the route of a favourite drive. Driving is a very popular amusement with Blackpool visitors ;



From a photo by]

THE SEA FRONT ON A BREEZY DAY.

[Thompson, Blackpool.

and well it may, for in this too every facility is offered by that enterprising town. Not only are there electric tramcars running for miles along the sea-front, but countless open landaus are ready for a modest sum to take the holiday-maker whithersoever he will. A favourite drive is to Singleton; another, as already mentioned, is to Marton, where those who are interested in social questions will be delighted to visit one of the handsomest, best equipped and best organised working men's clubs in the kingdom.

While upon the subject of Blackpool's public institutions, it is appropriate to mention the flourishing public library. The library contains over twenty thousand volumes, and has an excellent provision whereby not only townspeople but visitors may benefit by it. Householders may become responsible for their lodgers, and so visitors for even a brief period may take advantage of the

library, just as if they were regular residents. Another centre of light is the centre of light *par excellence*—the Corporation electric light station, where the huge dynamos produce the daily and nightly supply of electricity for the borough. Large as the plant is, within a year the Corporation expect to see the great, airy, cheerful looking machine-house exactly doubled to cope with the ever-growing needs of the place. These works, it is interesting to remember, were opened on October 13, 1893, by Lord Kelvin.

It is an endless work adequately to catalogue all Blackpool's thousand-and-one attractions. One however must not be for-

gotten—the wonderful facility afforded for pleasure sailing. Of all the many splendid steamers none eclipses the most recent—the *Greyhound* and the *Queen of the North*. The principal sea routes that radiate from Blackpool as centre are ten in number, and all the trips can be made within a single day. Frequent short runs are made to Lytham and Southport, and every day there are more extended pleasure-sailings to Liverpool, a distance of thirty miles; to Llandudno, forty miles; to Beaumaris, sixty miles, and to Holy-

head, seventy miles. These are the trips to south and south-west. In a northerly and north-westerly direction the shortest run is to Fleetwood, fifteen miles, while the more extended trips are to Glasson Dock, eighteen miles; to Morecambe, twenty miles; to Barrow, for Furness Abbey, nineteen miles, and to the Isle of Man, sixty miles. In connection with the Barrow trip there is an excellent train

arrangement by which tourists can proceed from Barrow to Windermere, to the head of which lake they can at once take steamer, so that Blackpool is within easy reach of the chief beauties of Lake district. For comfort, elegance and splendid equipment generally, the steamers that ply between Blackpool and the places above mentioned are certainly without rival on our coasts.

In addition to the long steam cruises, small sailing and rowing boats, all under the charge of a certificated seaman, constantly ply in shore for the delectation of visitors. Boating accidents are happily unknown, thanks to the precautions of the authorities,



From a photo by]

A BUSY DAY ON THE SOUTH BEACH.

[Thompson, Blackpool.]

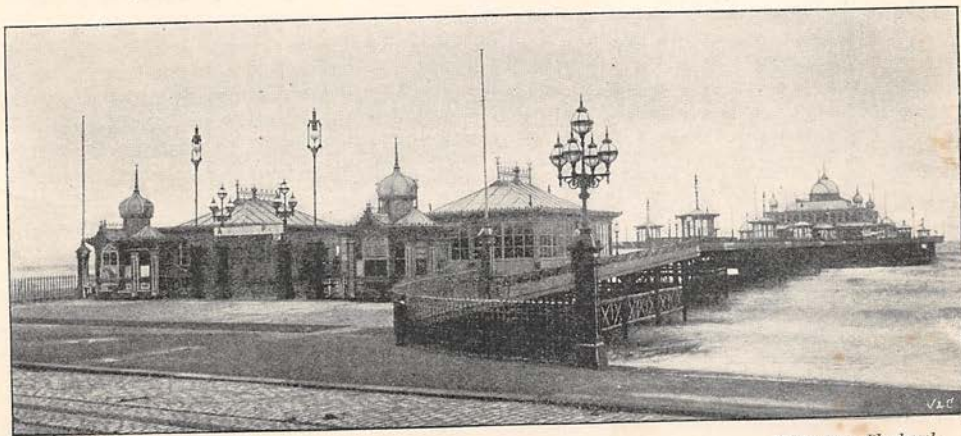
who permit no one to put to sea without the authorised sailing-master.

As great stars have their satellites which revolve at a respectful distance about the greater luminary, so Blackpool, the chief of the Fylde watering-places, "the northern metropolis of pleasure," as it has been called, possesses its galaxy of smaller pleasure-resorts. About these a word will not be out of place, for they are all so close at hand, and so easily accessible by rail, that little trips from Blackpool can easily be arranged. Although the great centre is complete in itself, yet there are many holiday-makers who find pleasure in choosing some central spot as headquarters from which they can explore a large and interesting district. This relation Blackpool bears to Fairhaven, Fleetwood, Lytham and St. Anne's-on-the-Sea. The attractions of the first named and the two last are of a quieter order, and these places will be chiefly sought after by those who wish for a brief return to nature and quiet beauty. Fleetwood again is rather gayer and more up-to-date, that is, its attractions are more of the Blackpool order than the others.

Lytham is one of the historic towns of the Fylde, and has been known since the Conquest. Those whose inclinations are antiquarian will be sure to run from Blackpool to visit the numerous towns and villages of the Fylde, where a flavour of the olden time still lingers pleasantly. Poulton, the former metropolis of the Fylde, is still very interesting, for in its quaint market-place are still to be seen several old relics: the market-cross—which by the way really bears a cross, a somewhat unusual appendage to such crosses as remain; and more curious still,

the stocks and whipping-post. These stocks are in far better preservation than the equally famous instrument at Moncken-Hadley.

Lytham, situated at the mouth of the Ribble, has been a seaside resort for upwards of two hundred years. It is eminently a quiet place, less so perhaps than St. Anne's or Fairhaven, but compared with the hurrying life of Blackpool it is quiet indeed. The railway station of Lytham is a sight in itself, and indeed resembles a well-kept conservatory or palm-house rather than a bustling centre for the arrival and departure of prosaic matter-of-fact railway trains. In the station and its surrounding plantations, shrubs and flowers are displayed in endless profusion, and everything that careful gardening and attention can do is done to make the place attractive. The railway officials spare no trouble to make their establishment the prettiest in the district. May and June are the best months for pretty continental-looking Lytham. St. Anne's and Fairhaven are rising resorts well worth a visit. Fleetwood again, which lies north of Blackpool, is another example of rapid growth. Seventy years ago there was nothing of Fleetwood; all was bare sand hill and rabbit warren. To-day its docks are a sight in themselves, and its railway station is in summer a perfect floral hall. Apart from its large commercial enterprise, Fleetwood, following the fashion of the Fylde, is rising into repute as a watering-place. Within walking distance of the town is the now famous Rossall school, which has been called "the Winchester of the North." Perhaps Rossall resents this name as bitterly as the Blackpudlians resent the title frequently bestowed on their borough,



From a photo by]

VICTORIA PIER.

[Thompson, Blackpool.

the "Brighton of the North." One has a suspicion that they would consider it more just if Brighton were called the Blackpool of the South.

That Blackpool is proud of its enterprise is not to be wondered at. One has only to visit the town, bearing in mind its exceedingly recent growth, to be convinced that it must have been created by no little sagacity and longheadedness. Everywhere are evidences of the fearless investment of huge capital, but so judiciously and with such foresight is this gone about that, so far from involving the town in burdens, every fresh undertaking goes only to advance the wealth

which Mr. T. Sergenson, manager of the Grand Theatre, is chairman. The committee's orders are carried out with unique ability by the genial Inspector Noden, the man to show you Blackpool, if you are so fortunate as to enjoy his acquaintance. That excellent official, by the way, is responsible for an epigram which is believed to contain the secret of Blackpool's success. "We cater for quantity," he once remarked to an interviewer, "and we give them quality."

This briefly is the policy of the borough, but of course there are other planks in its platform. In the great work of attracting visitors the authorities observe three leading



From a photo by]

A STORM ON THE SOUTH BEACH.

[Thompson, Blackpool.

and well-being of the community. This was strikingly borne out by what was shown and told to the WINDSOR MAGAZINE representative, who, under the kind and courteous guidance of the deputy town-clerk, saw the endless resources and attractions of the town. One strikingly excellent piece of policy is the right secured by Act of Parliament to spend a certain fixed percentage of the rates on advertising the town. A glance at the notice boards of any railway station in the three kingdoms will show how ably and efficiently this is done. This important department of the borough organisation is under control of a committee, of

principles: they strive to keep the town perfectly clean and sanitary; to keep the visitors free from obstruction on the streets; and to let holidayers have as much of their own way as possible. The last principle, so far from making Blackpool a scene of misrule, seems rather to promote the order and good-humour of the vast crowds that flock thither in summer, and which will shortly, it is hoped, be flocking thither all the year round, when Blackpool's exceptional winter attractions become, as they are sure to do, better and better known. Very often a single Saturday afternoon will bring 50,000 visitors to the place, and at the height of



From a photo by]

ANOTHER VIEW OF THE NORTH PIER.

[Thompson, Blackpool.

the season the population verges on 150,000. Yet the streets, thronged as they cannot fail to be, are always bright and orderly. Signs of excess are entirely absent, and even after an exceptionally crowded week-end the police-court roll is found to be no heavier than the usual light average. Blackpool for many years past, has not been a year out of Parliament, so assiduous have the authorities been to promote private Bills for the good of the borough and for the comfort and convenience of visitors. One of the most recent regulations was for the prohibition of betting in the streets, and the measure has been most effective in clearing away what was a decided barrier to proper enjoyment. Touting of every sort, for hotels, lodging-houses, and all entertainments, has also been put down by the strong hand of the law. The extension of the town goes on apace. Last year over 500 new houses were added, and it is calculated that at present houses are being built and occupied at the rate of two a day. The greatest demand upon the resources of the town is made

at Easter. This is a very popular season, and indeed, on the testimony of one well qualified to judge, it is asserted that each succeeding Easter is better than another. The time is no doubt within measurable distance when Blackpool will have extended as far as Fleetwood on the north and Lytham on the south. In the latter direction indeed there are houses on the sea-front for a great part of the way. The northern extension is already begun, for the Blackpool and Fleetwood Tramways Company are at work on an electric tramway to extend north from the borough boundary so as to connect with the tramway from Fleetwood. By this line



From a photo by]

A SAILING-BOAT OFF BLACKPOOL.

[R. Banks.



From a photo by [Gregson, Blackpool.]

ALDERMAN W. H. COCKER.
(Six times Mayor of Blackpool.)



From a photo by [Gregson, Blackpool.]

ALDERMAN JAMES CARDWELL.
(Mayor of Blackpool.)



From a photo by [Russell.]

SIR MATTHEW WHITE-RIDLEY, BART.
(M.P. for Blackpool.)

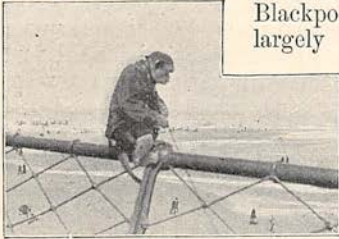


From a photo by [Wiggins, Blackpool.]

THE LATE ALDERMAN F. PARKINSON.
(Mayor of Blackpool, 1894-6; died February 15, 1896.)

visitors will enjoy a delightful breezy drive by the sea along the cliff-heads for a good fourteen miles. The August Bank Holiday

is the time when Blackpool is most largely patronised.



From a photo by]

[R. Banks.

ON THE OUTLOOK.

It is usual on that day to have as many as 150,000 visitors in the town. On such an occasion the railway

arrangements are very extensive, and as many as 150 special trains will reach Blackpool in the course of the day. At Talbot Road station and at the Central thirty-two trains can be put in position for simultaneous loading with passengers, and there is a growing demand for platform accommodation.

Ample provision has been made for the athletic tastes of the town in the fine grounds, which are always thronged on the occasion of any sports. For visitors to the neighbourhood many excellent hotels cater efficiently.

A novel feature among the Blackpool attractions is the organisation of railway excursions to the high tides, which at this point of the coast are very remarkable. The advertising committee of the borough publish a tide-table in their list of attractions, and the railway companies, taking the hint, now run excursion trains to the best tides. The storms too have a marvellous attraction for many who love the sea in its angrier moods, and not a few who live at a distance from Blackpool are in treaty with Mr. Noden to receive a telegram whenever a particularly magnificent storm is raging. The papers at Liverpool, Manchester, Preston, and other great towns of the North, very often announce that "the storm cone is hoisted at

Blackpool," a piece of news that is certain to bring an influx of visitors to the great watering-place of North-Western England.

Any account of Blackpool would be sadly incomplete without a mention of the man who has been the pioneer of the town's prosperity, Mr. William Henry Cocker. Mr. Cocker's distinguished services to the town led to his election in April 1876 as first mayor of Blackpool, an office to which he was re-elected during three successive years. Then again in the Jubilee year the choice of his fellow-citizens fell once more upon Mr. Cocker, who again was called upon to assume the chief magistracy of the borough he has done so much to advance. Another of Blackpool's honoured mayors is Mr. James Cardwell, who held office from 1892 to 1894. Mr. Cardwell enjoys the reputation of being one of the farthest sighted citizens of a far-sighted place. He has indeed, in everything he has undertaken, seen fifteen years ahead. In his mayoralty all the larger public buildings, including the Tower, were completed. He succeeded last February the late Mr. Frederick Henry Parkinson, who, like all Blackpool's mayors, adorned his office and laboured for the advancement of the town.

The Corporation is thoroughly alive to the importance of advance, and the construction of the new promenade is evidence of their wise enterprise. When this work is completed Blackpool will have one of the most stalwart defences against the sea, and in addition, charming terraces provided with picturesque shelters will make the promenade still more attractive. The huge crowds which gather on the sands owing to the narrowness of the present promenade have induced the municipal body to draw up an elaborate scheme for widening the promenade.

It scarcely requires a prophet to predict a



From a photo by]

THE PROMENADE.

[Poulton.

great future for Blackpool. The slightest exercise of observation and common-sense is sufficient to prove that if Blackpool has done great things in the past she will do yet greater things in the future, for the ability, the enterprise, and the capital are there, and what is more, the men are there who can use these to the best possible advantage. It is true, of course, that in natural beauties, except the beautiful sands and the wide prospect of ever-changing sea, Blackpool has not been so liberally endowed as other places, but what the place misses in natural attraction art supplies. It is safe to say that in no other watering-place is so much done for so great a variety of tastes and inclinations as at Blackpool, or at so small a cost to the

visitor. It is the number and the excellence of the amusements that have made the place what it is to-day. The "second season" will certainly soon be as popular as the season now in progress, for as a winter resort Blackpool, that can put 150,000 people under cover and can keep them amused, need fear no enemy, not even Shakspeare's great exceptions, "winter and rough weather." If you would drink in pure sea-breezes that string the nerves and brace the muscles, and at the same time enjoy the best of everything for eye, ear, and the humbler but yet necessary palate, and live in a continual round of pleasure or as quietly as you please, you cannot do better than try a holiday at Blackpool.

