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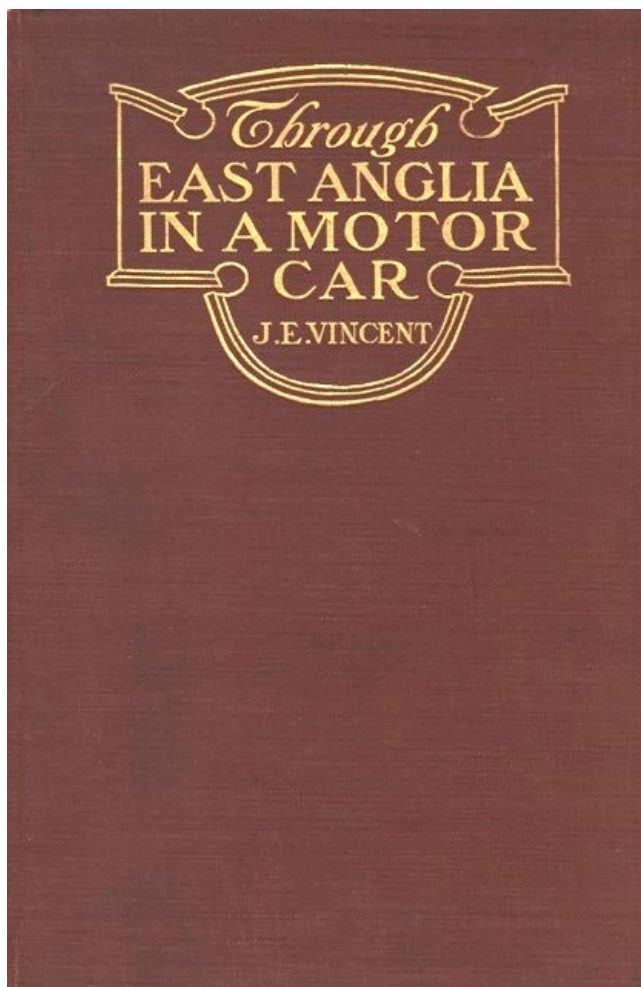
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ELY AT EVENTIDE

THROUGH EAST ANGLIA IN A MOTOR CAR

BY

J. E. VINCENT

WITH SIXTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS IN COLOUR BY

FRANK SOUTHGATE, R.B.A.

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PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

Few practical suggestions are needed by the motorist in East Anglia—a district not presenting many difficulties. Those which are deemed necessary are here prefixed to the whole body of the text.

ABBREVIATIONS

R. signifies that there is a garage capable of doing moderate repairs.

R. A. signifies that the facilities for repair are abundant.

P. signifies that petrol can be purchased, but it has not been considered needful to state this where the existence of a garage renders a supply of petrol certain.

CHAPTER I

CAMBRIDGE, NEWMARKET, BURY, AND IPSWICH

ROADS Cambridge to Newmarket, mostly flat—not good. Newmarket to Bury St. Edmunds, fair. Bury St. Edmunds to Ipswich, poor and very sinuous.

HILLS A sharp rise to Newmarket. Some small ups and downs between Newmarket and Bury St. Edmunds. Some small ups and downs between Ipswich and Stowmarket.

DISTANCES Cambridge (R.A.) to Newmarket (R.), 13-1/4. Newmarket to Bury St. Edmunds (R.), 14. Bury St. Edmunds viâ Stowmarket (R.), to Ipswich (R.A.), 25-1/2.

N.B.—Great care is necessary in driving through Ipswich, owing to narrow streets and fast tramcars.

CHAPTER II

IPSWICH TO NORWICH, VIA BECCLES, LOWESTOFT, AND YARMOUTH

ROADS Fair to Blythburgh, poor thence to Beccles, fair for rest of journey.

HILL A sharp ascent on leaving Ipswich.

DISTANCES Ipswich to Woodbridge (R.), 8. Woodbridge to Wickham Market (R.), 4-3/4. Wickham Market to Saxmundham (R.), 8.

Détour to Aldeburgh recommended. Turn to right at Farnham, 2 short of Saxmundham. To Aldeburgh (R.), 7. Rejoin Blythburgh road at Yoxford. Yoxford from Aldeburgh, 9. From Saxmundham, 3-1/2. Saxmundham to Yoxford, 3-1/2. Yoxford, viâ Darsham to Blythburgh, 3-3/4.

Détour to Southwold (R.), 6 advised. Return same route of going to Beccles, or by Reydon, Wangford and Blyford, and then to Beccles road, thus adding 4-1/4 in all.

Blythburgh to Beccles (R. A.), 9. Beccles to Lowestoft (R. A.), 10. Lowestoft to Great Yarmouth (R. A.), 10. Great Yarmouth to Norwich (R. A.), direct route 19-1/2.

CHAPTER III

NORWICH TO LONDON BY ROMAN ROAD

ROADS The surface is reasonably good, and the milestones are legible so long as the road is in Norfolk. On entering Suffolk the milestones are often found illegible, and the surface of the road becomes noticeably worse. The main road from Colchester to London, viâ the East End of London, is of fairly good quality, but traffic is very troublesome during the later part.

HILLS Between Norwich and Ipswich are no hills of at all a serious character on this route, except when surface is very soft. At Stratford St. Mary, on crossing the river towards Colchester, is a fairly stiff ascent, and the Colchester vicinity is hilly, but not difficult for cars of moderate power.

N.B.—Great care should always be observed in leaving Norwich, the streets being

narrow, crooked and full of risk, and the way difficult to find.

DISTANCES Norwich to London (Marble Arch), 114-3/4. Norwich to Long Stratton, 10-1/4. Long Stratton to Scole, 9-1/4. Scole to Thornton Parva, 4-3/4. Thornton Parva to Thwaite, 2-3/4. Thwaite to Claydon, 11-3/4. Claydon to Ipswich (R. A.), 4. Ipswich to Colchester (R. A.), 6-3/4. Colchester to Chelmsford (R. A.), 13-1/4. Chelmsford to Romford (R.), 14-3/4. Romford to Stratford, 8. Stratford to Marble Arch, 6-3/4.

CHAPTER IV

THROUGH THE HEART OF EAST ANGLIA

ROADS Main roads throughout. Good in surface, for the most part very straight and free from cross-roads, so that high speeds may be enjoyed with safety.

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HILLS None worthy of mention.

DISTANCES Royston to Newmarket (R.), 24. Newmarket to Thetford (R.), 20-1/4. Thetford to Attleborough (R.), 14. Attleborough to Wymondham (R.), 6. Wymondham to Norwich (R. A.), 9.

Note.—This was merely an afternoon drive in East Anglia, preceded by a morning spent in reaching it by car; but it is not the less likely to be suitable to other motorists for that reason.

CHAPTER V

NORWICH TO ELY AND CAMBRIDGE

ROADS Fair at outset. Worse on approaching Ely.

HILLS None of any moment, but no monotony of level until reaching Fordham.

DISTANCES Norwich to Watton (P.), 8. Watton to Brandon, 13. [N.B.—This is a by-way to find which turn sharply to left on reaching the Lynn and Thetford road. The distance is approximate.] Brandon to Mildenhall (P.), 9-1/4. Mildenhall to Fordham, 6-1/4. Fordham to Soham (R.), 3-1/4. Soham to Ely (R.), 5-1/4. Ely to Cambridge (R. A.), 16. Cambridge to Royston (R.), 13-1/2.

Caution.—Great care should be taken to ascertain the right exit from Norwich.

Note.—This is not a full day's drive, and in fact left me 70 miles to travel, but it is a convenient exit from East Anglia westwards. From Royston to London is 42-1/4.

CHAPTER VI

LONDON, FELIXSTOWE, AND DUNWICH

IMPORTANT NOTE. *The route out of London Eastwards given below under "Distances" is believed to be incomparably the best in that direction. It is therefore given with great particularity of instruction, the distances having been mechanically recorded. Without care it is easily missed on the inward journey.*

ROADS Vile, with crumbling surface of gravel, in Epping Forest. Good from Chelmsford to Felixstowe. Fair from Felixstowe to Saxmundham. Farm tracks were tried beyond Saxmundham. They were found soft, rough, but not injurious to tires.

HILLS Worthy of respect in Epping Forest, owing to bad surface, round Colchester, on leaving Ipswich, and on leaving Dunwich.

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DISTANCES AND SPECIAL DIRECTIONS. Oxford Circus to Epping, 22·7. Proceed viâ Regent Street, Langham Place, Portland Place, Park Crescent, to Euston Road; turn to the right and go straight on past King's Cross Station; turn to left into York Road, which follow to tramway lines in Camden Road; here turn to the right and follow tramway lines across Holloway Road into Seven Sisters Road; continue to follow tramway lines to "Manor House," and there, taking the right-hand fork of tram lines, go on to red brick structure in the centre of the road. Here incline to the left and follow tram lines through Tottenham High Road to Edmonton (9·9), and go straight on to Ponder's End. Here at "The Two Brewers" turn to the right, go over a level crossing at Ponder's End. Beyond the crossing the road passes through fields, but two gates less than 3/4 of a mile apart must be watched for. Go straight on to Chingford (13·8). Look out for Loughton and Epping sign-post, which points to Whitehall Lane, and at the end of Whitehall Lane (15·4), turn to the left and proceed to Buckhurst Hill. Then bear to the right at the next fork, where sign-post directs to Loughton (17·6), and Epping.

Epping to Felixstowe.—Epping (R.) to Ongar (R.), 7-1/2. Ongar to Chelmsford (R.), 11-3/4. Chelmsford to Colchester (R. A.), 23-1/4. Colchester to Ipswich (R. A.), 16-

3/4. Ipswich to Felixstowe (R.), 11-1/2.

Felixstowe to Dunwich and back.—(Distances approximate owing to use of byways and farm tracks.)

Felixstowe to Woodbridge (R.), 10. Woodbridge to Saxmundham (R.), 12-3/4. Saxmundham to Dunwich, 13-1/2. Dunwich to Felixstowe, 31.

CHAPTER VI—(continued)

FELIXSTOWE, BAWDSEY, WOODBRIDGE, IPSWICH, DUNMOW, AND LONDON

ROADS High-roads fair throughout. Byways between Bawdsey and Woodbridge very bad, rough, and soft. [N.B.—Bawdsey Ferry should not be attempted, especially at low tide, unless the car may be relied upon to climb from a standstill up a short but very sharp incline of quite loose gravel. The country beyond can hardly be called worth taking risks to see.]

HILLS Insignificant.

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DISTANCES Felixstowe to Woodbridge (R.), viâ Bawdsey Ferry and byways, approximately 15. Woodbridge to Ipswich (R. A.), 8. Ipswich to Braintree (R.), 35. Braintree to Great Dunmow (R.), 8. Great Dunmow to Takeley, 4. Takeley to Hatfield Broad Oak, 3. Hatfield Broad Oak to High Ongar, 4 (approximately). High Ongar to Epping (R.), 8. Epping to London, distances as before, reversing order of places.

CHAPTER VII

COLCHESTER AND EASTWARDS

ROADS Mostly of second- or third-rate quality, especially in wet weather. Frequently sinuous, narrow, and overshadowed by trees, and therefore sometimes greasy in reasonably dry weather.

HILLS Between Ardleigh and Manningtree, 1 in 13. Between Mistley and Bradfield (*en route* for Harwich), 1 in 13. Between Bradfield and Dovercourt, 1 in 15.

DISTANCES (1) Colchester (R. A.) to Clacton-on-Sea (R.), 16. Clacton to Great Holland, 4. Great Holland to St. Osyth, 8. St. Osyth to Colchester, 11-3/4.

(2) Colchester to Ardleigh, 5. Ardleigh to Manningtree (R.), 5-1/2.

Détour suggested to East Bergholt, viâ Dedham, 5; back to Manningtree, 5. Manningtree to Harwich (R. A.), viâ Mistley, Bradfield, and Dovercourt (R.), 11-1/2. Harwich to Colchester, viâ Dovercourt, Little Oakley, Great Oakley, Weeley, and Elmstead Market, 24.

CHAPTER VIII

COLCHESTER AND GAINSBOROUGH'S COUNTRY

ROADS Mostly of second or third class and very sinuous, so distances are approximate.

HILLS Stoke-by-Nayland, stiff, gradient unknown. Between Sudbury and Long Melford, 1 in 13.

DISTANCES Colchester to Lexden, 2. Lexden to Stoke-by-Nayland, 10. Stoke-by-Nayland to Sudbury, alternative routes (1) viâ Bures St. Mary, Marsh, and Great Cornard, 10. (2) viâ Lavenheath, Arrington, and Newton, 11. The former recommended as Gainsborough painted a picture of part of the Wood at Cornard. Sudbury to Long Melford, 3-1/4. Long Melford, viâ Cavendish and Clare to Stoke-by-Clare, 8. Stoke-by-Clare, viâ Ridgewell, Tilbury-juxta-Clare, to Great Yeldham, 4. Great Yeldham to Halstead (P.), viâ Castle Hedingham and Little Maplestead, 7. *Détour* of 3-1/2 out and 3-1/2 back advised to Little Maplestead. Halstead to Colchester, viâ Earl's Colne, Fordham, and Lexden, 12-1/2.

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CHAPTER IX

COLCHESTER AND WESTWARDS

ROADS Good to Marks Tey. Fair to Coggeshall, Braintree, and Witham. Good from Witham to Ingatestone. Second-rate from Margaretting to Tiptree. Bad from Tiptree to Heckford Bridge. Thence good into Colchester.

HILLS To Braintree, a steady rise of 100 feet in 2 miles. From Margaretting to

Galleywood Common, a small climb. From Sandon up to Danbury Hill, nearly 300 feet in 2 miles. From Maldon and Heybridge, 200 feet in 3 miles.

DISTANCES Colchester to Marks Tey, 6-1/4. Thence to Coggeshall, 4-1/2. Coggeshall to Braintree (R.), 8. Braintree to Witham (R.), 8. Witham to Ingatestone, 14-3/4. Ingatestone to Margaretting, 2. Margaretting to Galleywood Common, 2-1/2. Galleywood Common to Danbury Hill, 4-1/2. Danbury Hill to Maldon, 5-1/2. Maldon, viâ Heybridge, to Tiptree, 7. Tiptree, viâ Messing and Heckford Bridge, to Colchester, 9-1/4.

Alternative routes from Braintree to London, suggested for persons occupied in London, but preferring country residence—

(1) Viâ Bishop's Stortford (10-1/4) to Marble Arch (43), viâ Sawbridgeworth, Harlow, Epping, Loughton, and Woodford Green.

(2) Viâ Chelmsford, Chipping Ongar, Epping and so to London, exactly reversing route given fully at the head of Chapter VI.

CHAPTER IX—(continued)

COLCHESTER TO GRAYS

ROADS Good to Chelmsford; not bad to Billericay; very bad beyond.

HILLS Galleywood Common, a stiff rise; about 150 feet in 2 miles. Billericay Hill, 1 in 13. Langdon Hill, a stiff rise; 300 feet in 2-1/2 miles.

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DISTANCES Colchester to Chelmsford (R.A.), 23-1/4. Chelmsford to Great Baddow, 1-3/4. Great Baddow to Billericay (P.), 8. Billericay to Horndon, 8. Horndon to Chadwell, 4. Chadwell to Little Thurrock and Hangman's Wood, 1-3/4.

Suggestions.—(1) Return to Colchester by motor-boat from East Tilbury to Clacton-on-Sea, about 54 land miles. Thence by rail.

(2) To London, viâ Barking, 12; thence 7-1/4 to Whitechapel. The worst entry into London.

CHAPTER X

ROYSTON TO HARLESTON

ROADS All good high-roads.

HILLS None worthy of mention.

DISTANCES Royston (R.) to Newmarket (R.), 24. Newmarket to Bury St. Edmunds (R.), 14. Bury St. Edmunds to Scole, 21-1/2. Scole to Harleston (R.), 7.

CHAPTER XI

HARLESTON TO NORWICH

ROADS All fair, some good, especially Yarmouth to Norwich and Norwich to Cromer.

HILLS None of moment.

DISTANCES Harleston (R.) to Bungay (R.), 7-1/2. Bungay to Beccles (R. A.), 6. Beccles to Lowestoft (R. A.), 10. Lowestoft to Yarmouth (R. A.), 10. Yarmouth viâ Caister to Norwich (R. A.), 23. Norwich to Cromer (R.), 22-1/2.

CHAPTER XII

CROMER, WELLS, FAKENHAM, LYNN, ELY, CAMBRIDGE, AND ROYSTON

ROADS Fair from Cromer to Wells; good from Wells to Lynn and from Lynn to Cambridge.

HILLS None of moment, but no monotony of level except between Lynn and Cambridge.

DISTANCES Cromer (R.) to Wells-next-Sea (R.), 20-1/2. Wells to Fakenham (R.), 9-3/4. Fakenham to Lynn (R.), 21-3/4. Lynn to Ely (R.), 29. Ely to Cambridge (R. A.), 16. Cambridge to Royston (R.), 13-1/2.

N.B.—Royston is 42-1/4 from London, and a good point of exit for the Midlands.

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CHAPTER XIII

ROADS Mostly high-roads and good.

HILLS The early part of the projected drive is through undulating country not marked by very severe gradients. The later part, from Fakenham to Swaffham, is over ground higher in average elevation, but of similar character.

DISTANCES Lynn to Castle Rising, 4-1/4. Castle Rising to Wolferton, 2. Wolferton to Dersingham, 3. Dersingham to Hunstanton (R.), 8. Hunstanton to Brancaster, 8. Brancaster to Burnham Thorpe, 4-1/2. Burnham Thorpe to Fakenham (R.), 12. Fakenham to Swaffham (R.), 15-1/2. Swaffham to Lynn (R. A.), 15-1/2.

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INTRODUCTION

This book, the first volume it is hoped of a series, was undertaken because the existing Guide-books were, through no fault in their writers, by no means adequate to the needs of the traveller by motor-car. A new method of travel, in fact, brings in its train the need for a new species of guide-book, and the truth of this observation becomes clear when we consider an authoritative definition of the term "Guide-book." It is "a book of directions for travellers and tourists as to the best routes, etc., and giving information about the places to be visited." All which needs to be added to this definition by way of explanation is that the information given may justly be of almost any kind so long as it is not tedious.

Substantially, all the existing guide-books, some of them of admirable quality, were written before the motor-car had entered into our social system. Except a small number of accounts of tours by horse-drawn carriages, they were compiled by men who travelled by train from place to place, obtaining no view of the country often—for deep cuttings destroy all joy of the eye for the railway passenger—and at best only a partial view, for the use of men and women condemned to the like method of travel. In them it is vain to seek for any appreciation of the pleasure of the road, of the delight of travel itself. The motor-car has changed all that. The act of going from place to place is at least as essential a part of the enjoyment of a tour as the sojourn at the new place when it is reached, as the leisurely survey of its features of beauty or interest, or the inquiry into its history and its associations. Many matters, too, are of moment to the motorist which are of none to the traveller by rail. He desires to know something in advance of the nature of the roads to be traversed, of the gradients to be climbed, of the facilities for housing his car when his destination of the day is accomplished, and last, but certainly not least, where he can submit it to a skilled artificer for repair if occasion should unhappily arise.

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Does the motorist need, or desire, more than has been set forth in the preceding sentence? The anti-motorist will think not, will remain convinced that the motorist is a dust-raising, property-destroying, dog-killing, fowl-slaying, dangerous and ruthless speed maniac. But, of course, the anti-motorist is quite wrong. The rational motorist, who is in the overwhelming majority—but black sheep are sadly conspicuous amidst a white flock—passes through certain regular stages of evolution. At first he revels without thought, or without conscious thought, in the sheer ecstasy of motion. The road which seems to flow to meet him, white, tawny or grey as the case may be, and to open before him as if by magic, the pressure of the cool air on his face, even the tingling lash of the rain as he dashes against it, result in a feeling of undefinable, almost lyrical, exaltation. In the next stage he begins to take in broad impressions of great stretches of country, impressions similar in some respects to those obtained from a mountain top, but secured in rapid succession. Soon—for the faculties of man adapt themselves rapidly to his needs—the man in the car begins to observe more rapidly and more minutely than in the early days. The man at the steering-wheel finds that he can watch the road up to the farthest visible point in advance, manipulate his throttle, use accelerator or decelerator, and, most important of all, be in vigilant sympathy with his engine, subconsciously. At the same time he can take an intelligent interest in the scenes through which he is passing, can carry on a conversation with her or with him who sits by his side, can tell a good story or listen to one, can impart information or receive it, without in the slightest degree neglecting his primary duty of driving and humouring the car. In this is nothing of novelty. The same state of doing instructively and without reflection the right thing at the right time is reached by every proficient in many crafts, by the driver of horses for example, and by the steersman of a sailing vessel. The motorist, therefore, even if he be driving, can think of things outside the car, can remain a rational and intelligent man, can (and in my experience usually does) desire to know those associations of the country-side which, when known, appeal to his imagination, or to his memory, and make the day's journey something better and more interesting than a progress through the air and over the ground. How much more then, after the first bewilderment of motoring has worn off, shall the mere passenger be able and desirous to travel with seeing eye and thinking brain?

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There is no need to labour the point. Motorists are well aware, without argument, that they feel an intelligent interest in every part of "this amazing England," and that they would take that interest more fully if they were provided, so to speak, with the proper materials. Such materials ought to be found in guide-books, written in the motorist's mood, which is wider and often less microscopical than that of the traveller in railway carriages, and from the point of view of those

to whom county boundaries, which determine the scope of most guide-books, have no meaning, except that the roads are better, and the police are more sensible, in some counties than in others. It is the guide-book writer's business to give first practical facts and directions, and then to provide the information which, after sifting a vast mass of history, legend, folk-lore, literature, and gossip, appears to be most interesting and attractive.

East Anglia has been chosen as the first theme, and in many respects it lends itself exceptionally well to isolated treatment. The motorist, it is true, has no regard for county boundaries, but let him once venture in his car to the east of an imaginary line drawn from the Tower Bridge to the mouth of the Welland, and he will never come outside East Anglia on wheels, except to the westward. The Wash, the North Sea, and the Estuary of the Thames will block him effectually. Let him follow the history of this tract of land, to which the fens were an effectual bulwark on the north-west, and he will find that history to be one of isolation also. East Anglia has always gone on its own way, always worked out its own destinies, always indulged in self-satisfied but inspiring contempt for "the Sheres"; and so, perhaps, it has suffered less at troublous periods of the national history than other parts of the country. Its scenery is rarely, perhaps never, rugged, but it is marked in various parts by many kinds of peculiar characteristics not to be found elsewhere, some of them of quite exceptional charm. It has its ancient cities, its majestic cathedrals, time-worn edifices of many kinds. It is haunted by the ghosts of many great artists in colour and in words; and—a small matter this, but one adding greatly to the interest of a motoring tour—there is no other part of the country in which the lover of bird-life can see so much of bird-life from the passing car.

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One drawback, and one only, is there to East Anglia as a topic for a motoring guide-book, and that affects only the maker of the book, not the motoring potentialities, so to speak, of the country. Taken as a whole it is not at all a flat district, and it has enough ups and downs and variety of scenery to suit any taste, but it is practically barren of hills presenting any real difficulty to a car of moderate power. So, in this volume, it is not necessary or possible to indicate any very serious gradients to be encountered on this journey or on that. It remains only, after a word of thanks to the friends who have lent their company and their cars, to add that every chapter is a faithful narrative of tours undertaken or of journeys made, together with an account of the associations and memories appropriate to the places visited, and that, to save breaking the flow of the text, an analysis showing the route taken in each chapter, the distances from place to place, the points at which repairs may be effected, and the general character of the roads, appears at the very beginning of the volume. It must be understood, however, that these roads are judged by an East Anglian standard, for, even in Norfolk, where the road surface is far better as a rule than in any other East Anglian county, the roads cannot honestly be said to be of the highest order of merit. In the case of all hotels the presence of garage accommodation may be assumed, and all have been tried.

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THROUGH EAST ANGLIA IN A MOTOR-CAR

[Pg 1]

CHAPTER I

WINTER. [OXFORD] TO CAMBRIDGE, NEWMARKET, AND IPSWICH

Elections delay start—Rail to Oxford—A treasure gained—Rail to Cambridge—Bull Hotel—English hotels criticized—Motorists squeezed—Morning at Cambridge—King's Chapel—Trinity Library—The Panhard arrives—Battered at elections—A start—Load and equipment—Undergraduates as pilots—A street blocked—Dull road to Newmarket—Bottisham Church excepted—Delusions about Swaffham Prior and Bulbeck—The Devil's Dyke—Prosperous Newmarket—The Icenhilde Way—A delusion in East Anglia—Kentford to Bury St. Edmunds—A switchback run—Fine trees—Arthur Young quoted—Bury St. Edmunds—Leland, Dickens, Arthur Young—Legends of St. Edmund—Past greatness of Bury—Parliaments held at—The Abbey ruins—Study with Shakespeare—Pickwick at the "Angel"—At the boarding school—Bury viâ Bayton, Woolpit, and Stowmarket to Ipswich—Night travelling—A legend of Woolpit—Dull Stowmarket—Ipswich at last—Narrow streets and fast tramcars—The "Great White Horse"—Why did Dickens speak so ill of it?—*Quære* why the White Horse is an East Anglian sign—The "Crown and Anchor"—Ipswich oysters and gloves.

The year 1905 had almost run out when this volume was finally decided upon, and then a good many things happened, according to expectation and otherwise. Christmas came, surprising the railway companies as usual, but not the public, and the resignation of Mr. Balfour's Government. The resignation of Mr. Balfour, with its corollary of a General Election, involved some unavoidable delay in opening this campaign of pilgrimages in East Anglia. For during that General Election almost everybody who owned a motor-car and could drive it, or thought he could drive it, was stirred to lend his car and his energies to the service of his party by motives of

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double cogency. He desired, more or less keenly at the outset, but always vehemently, and even passionately after he had tasted the joy of battle, to lend his aid to the political party of his choice; and he knew further that the General Election of 1906 had provided motorists with a priceless opportunity of doing missionary work among the electorate at a critical moment in the history of Automobilmism. He felt that the Motor Act of 1903, of limited duration in any event, needed to be supplanted by a measure treating him as a reasoning and responsible being, rather than as a dangerous beast, and, having some hope that the Royal Commission then sitting would report in his favour (as, on the whole, it has reported), he recognized that enlightened self-interest made it desirable to educate public opinion into the frame of mind suitable for the reception of an enabling measure.

For these reasons, and some that are immaterial, it was not convenient to make the first raid into East Anglia until nearly the end of January, 1906, and that was a period calculated to try the reality of man's or woman's sincerity as a devotee of motoring by a somewhat severe test. How that test was applied it shall be my endeavour to tell in a narrative form, and to that form a preference will be given throughout the book, digressions being made, as occasion serves or fancy calls, to mention matters of practical utility or of intelligent interest.

Let me, therefore, "cut the cackle and come"—not to "the 'osses" by any means—but to the country and to the motor-cars. On Monday, January the 23rd, 1906, my daughter and I proceeded first to Oxford, and then to Cambridge by rail. Both journeys were an object lesson in the inferiority of the railway train, as it is arranged in England, to the motor-car, for purposes of cross-country travel. Our starting point being Abingdon, distant six miles only from Oxford, we were compelled to change trains at Radley *en route*. A long wait at Oxford would have been irritating if it had not been providential; as it was it furnished me with a private copy of Mr. F. J. Haverfield's *Romano-British Norfolk*, extracted from the "Victoria County History," and the dreadfully tedious journey to Cambridge allowed me to master that most accomplished and useful work. Cambridge we reached—not for the first time by any means—well after dusk, and there we lay, as they used to say in old times, at the Bull Hotel on King's Parade in reasonable comfort, an undergraduate kinsman of Trinity College having cheered us by his company at dinner.

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Here let me pause for a moment to speak of an all-important matter. It has been written that we were comfortably entertained at the "Bull"; it might be added that the hotel seemed much cleaner and brighter than when I had last entered it, and that the charges were, for an English hotel, not unreasonable. Unfortunately, it must be said also that the charges at the "Bull" and throughout the United Kingdom are far in excess of those for which at least equal accommodation and at least equally palatable fare can be obtained on most parts of the Continent frequented by tourists, and that this fact is at once the most serious obstacle to tours by motor-cars at home, and the principal cause why Englishmen go touring abroad to the neglect of their own country, the prejudice of British hotel-keepers, and the profit of the foreigner. They do not, I think, desire to ignore the beauties of their own country; they are even anxious to study it in detail; but the hotel-keepers of the provinces, without quite killing the goose that lays the golden eggs, have a suicidal habit of making nesting accommodation so expensive that the bird, being a wise bird really, becomes perforce migratory as the swallow. More unwise in relation to the motorist even than in relation to the ordinary traveller—it will be observed that there is no special reference to the "Bull," and that we did not go there as motorists openly—hotel-keepers frequently behave as if they thought the owner of a motor-car must needs possess an endless supply of ready money, whereas the legitimate inference from his ownership of an expensive vehicle is that he has none to spare. Motor-cars of real value—and no sensible man will have them of any other kind—cannot be obtained on credit, and hotel-keepers might have learned from experience that a banking account is reduced, unless it be an overdraft, not increased, by drawing a heavy cheque upon it.

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Some day, perhaps, there will be an improvement in this respect. In the meanwhile the path is not altogether clear before him who would fain play the part of guide to his fellow-men. So long ago as 1799 a correspondent of the *Norfolk Chronicle* wrote: "There is room for a most useful work in the form of an itinerary, which shall give an impartial account of the several inns of the kingdom under the heads of quality, cleanliness, beds," etc. There is still just as much room, but until the law of libel shall be changed the "most useful work" is not likely to be written. Certainly I am not going to write it—not that I lack the inclination nor the desire to be of service; not that I have not a nice taste for comfort, nor an experience of British and Irish hotels possessed by few men other than commercial travellers—simply because I cannot afford the time or the money to fight a series of actions, in which a verdict for the defendant would leave me still liable for the difference between my solicitor's bill of costs "as between solicitor and client," and the same bill taxed "as between party and party." The utmost that is possible, and at the same time prudent, is to point to examples of merit. Demerit, dearness, and dirt must go unchastised.



CAMBRIDGE—KING'S COLLEGE AND THE CAM

My arrangement with a friend, who had done as much electioneering as he and his car could endure, was that he should run down from London and pick us up at the "Bull" on Tuesday after luncheon. [Pg 5]

Tuesday morning, therefore—a frosty, windless, somewhat misty morning—was spent in what in our domestic circle is called "abroad" in Cambridge, that is to say, in visiting places of paramount interest. But let the reader take heart. Some little knowledge of Cambridge, the fruit of many sojourns and of considerable reading, is not going to be made an excuse for a topographical, archæological, and architectural chapter upon a subject worthy of a long book, already treated in many volumes, grave and gay. Even if such a chapter could be legitimate here it would be wrong for a mere Oxford man to write it, and I shall never forget how, when I was staying at Cambridge a year or two ago, a Cambridge friend who took me out sight-seeing closed my mouth before it was opened, so to speak, by saying, "You are absolutely forbidden to ask where our 'High' is." As matters stand, remembering always that this Cambridge friend is not at my elbow, and firmly believing, with Mr. Ruskin, that "the High" at Oxford is not to be matched in the world as a whole, I am inclined to think King's College, as seen from King's Parade, leaves nothing to be desired, and that King's College Chapel has a claim almost equal to that of St. George's Chapel, Windsor, to be recognized as the most exquisite example of Perpendicular architecture to be found in England. Of course, the best way to see all there is at Cambridge, and to understand it, is to live at Cambridge; and the next best is to go there often and to study it piecemeal. To try to absorb impressions of Cambridge in one visit, even one of many days, is to submit the human brain to too severe an ordeal. On former occasions I had seen the Backs in summer, had spent an hour or two in the Senate House on a State occasion, had looked into the University Library and had admired the delightfully free-and-easy way in which graduates are permitted to borrow its books, had seen cricket played and had played football on Parker's Piece, had stayed in college rooms at Caius; and yet impressions remained a little confused in memory. This time we went to King's College, and to the chapel especially, again. If it falls behind St. George's at all, it is in point of lightness, in which St. George's is perfect. So to Trinity College, where we admired unfeignedly the Great Court, Nevile's Court and the Library, and spoke politely of the chapel, where the Grinling Gibbons' carvings are really good. But it was in the library that one would gladly have spent hours. [Pg 6]

A lecture was in progress in the hall, so that was closed to us; but the library is perfect. Somewhere in the world there may be the equal of it, but, in a life of fairly extended wandering, I have not entered its match. One hundred and sixty feet long, forty feet wide, with its carved bookcases, its abundant busts of famous men, its portraits, its magnificent collection of coins, its rare books and manuscripts, its unbroken stillness, and, above all, its ample and all-pervading light, Trinity College Library is not merely a book-lover's paradise, but even a place to compel an air-loving man to be bookish. Hence to St. John's, many-courted, with walls of ancient brick and stone dressings, the most architecturally individual of Cambridge's colleges, and so, by the Bridge of Sighs, across the chilly, green, and exiguous Cam to the Backs. These, since there had been no white frost of the dainty kind that drapes a landscape in a fairy veil of silvered lace, were not at their best, but in summer they are of rare beauty. Still this was winter. So the small remaining part of the morning was devoted to a pilgrimage to Magdalene, the only college entirely situated on the left bank of the Cam, famous mainly for the Pepysian Library (everybody knows how the six volumes of shrewd gossip in shorthand were discovered and interpreted) and itself a quiet and sequestered retreat in appearance, although the undergraduates are not always in the mood appropriate to their environment. [Pg 7]

By two o'clock the charioteer had come, his face bearing traces of the black fog through which he had forced his way out of London; the 15 h.p. Panhard, with a short wheelbase, was in the yard. We must be tolerant, he said, of his Panhard's shortcomings, after a fortnight of hard

electioneering on the part of master, mechanic, and car; and he had come down from London on three cylinders. In due course the Panhard came round to the door, dented a little by the missiles of partisans, having lost some of the white paint of her rear number under the impact of voters' iron-shod toes, a little war-worn and dingy, in fact, to the eye. Her carrying capacity was, however, soon tested severely, and she bore the trial unflinchingly. First luggage: a suit-case for the daughter, the same for my friend the charioteer, a small kit-bag for me, nothing visible for the mechanic—a stalwart ex-soldier of six feet and 14 stone, if he was an ounce. Charioteer, in motor-coat, was about 13 stone. He and an undergraduate of some 9 stone sat in the front seats, the mechanic on the step. In the back seats were my daughter, say 10 stone, wraps included; myself, say 13 stone in the like condition; and on the back step a second undergraduate, say 11 stone 7 lb.—for the two young men were going to pilot us out of Cambridge. But the little Panhard made no account of these things, and started off as a greyhound from the slips.

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Practical considerations make it desirable to say what my daughter and I wore. My friend and his mechanic wore a lot, precisely in what detail I cannot say. My daughter wore a thick tweed dress, a short fur coat, a mackintosh with sleeves gathered in at the wrists over that, a red Connemara cloak sometimes—its colour proved to be of incidental advantage later in quite an unexpected way—a motor-cap and veil, fur-lined gloves, and a muff. I wore a vest, flannel shirt, lined corduroy waistcoat, ordinary tweed trousers, a rowing "sweater" over the waistcoat, thick Norfolk jacket, thick Ulster coat—without inner sleeves gathered, worse luck—and loose woollen gloves. I was never too warm, often much too cold, and the woollen gloves turned out a fraud. They were of no use as a protection against wind and cold combined, and a motor-car makes its own wind. In fact, there is nothing like leather, with or without fur or wool within.

The undergraduates were useful as pilots to Jesus Lane, where we turned to the right, which brought us in fact, although not in name, into the direct road for Newmarket; not that it is so difficult in Cambridge, as in many other towns of East Anglia, to solve correctly the all-important problem how to find the absolutely right exit having regard to the point sought in the distance. But the streets of the heart of Cambridge are of an exceptional narrowness, and we were not through them without becoming witnesses of an incident, almost worthy of the title accident, which delayed us a little and might have delayed us more but for the camaraderie of motorists. We were proceeding slowly up a narrow street behind a motor omnibus, the roadway being wide enough to allow two vehicles to pass, but no more. On the off-side of the omnibus, facing it, were a motor-car, attended as the law directs, at rest by the kerb, and a tradesman's cart and horse behind the car, cart and horse being unattended, as is not unusual, law or no law. The horse, perceiving the motor omnibus, and being probably unaccustomed to the sight, proceeded at once to give one of those convincing exhibitions in equine intelligence which must be the constant joy of the thick-and-thin champions of that traditionally "noble animal." Planting its forefeet on to the pavement, it backed the cart violently into the bonnet of the passing omnibus, of course blocking the route completely. Somebody, possibly the man who ought to have been in charge, came up and pulled the stupid brute into line, but not before it had also contrived to injure a wing of the resting and innocent motor-car. The omnibus was disabled for a time at any rate; traffic accumulated rapidly behind us; it seemed likely that we might have to spend the rest of the afternoon in this street that might justly be called Strait. But the injured motor-car was most courteously backed out of the way to make a passage for us, and we proceeded on our journey rejoicing and grateful.

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It would be a stretch of imagination—in fact, it would be what the late Sir William Harcourt once called "a good thumping lie"—to say that the exit from Cambridge to the eastward has any features of interest, or that the dead level of the Newmarket road for the first few miles is attractive on a cold and dull day, when Ely, dominating the low-lying plain in decent weather, is not visible to the naked eye. This Fen Country has its charm of appearance no less than of history. Its history, indeed, is an engineering epic, to which it will be possible to allude, hardly to do justice, at a later point. January 24, 1906, was not a day calculated to make the motorist feel in a romantic mood concerning the Fens. The road, straight, level, muddy where it was not metalled, metalled where it was not muddy, was lost in grey vapour to the front of us. The prospect on either side was of flat ploughed land, and of land on which the steaming plough-horses were even then at work; there was no distant view at all.

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Some five or six miles out of Cambridge the undergraduates alighted to walk home through the mud, and we left them behind with many shoutings of farewell, reflecting to ourselves the while that one of them, who, with the true carelessness of a twentieth-century undergraduate of Cambridge (or for that matter of Oxford), was wearing tennis shoes, would find walking in the mud to be one of those carnal pleasures whereof satiety cometh soon rather than late. Soon we passed a church close to the road on the left, a striking structure of brick and stone, and said to be the finest example of Decorated architecture in East Anglia. How that can be, having regard to the existence of Ely and the rhapsodies that are penned concerning its Decorated portion, it is not for me to say. At any rate Bottisham church, commanding the landscape as it can only be commanded in a plain, is a stately and beautiful structure, leaving an abiding impression on the memory. It is, in fact, essentially a motorist's church—that is to say, one of which a passing view gives sincere pleasure.

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The afternoon had advanced more than was desirable. I did not like to ask my kindly charioteer to make a detour for Swaffham, which I then believed to lie on our left. Instead of that I regaled him with memories of Swaffham, which have their proper place in another chapter. The conversation helped to pass the time; at any rate it did no harm, and it was only a month or two

later, in the "Maid's Head" at Norwich, that I learned where the real Swaffham was, and that this detour, if it had been made, would have shown us nothing but the relics of two churches at Swaffham Prior and another church at Swaffham Bulbeck.

Now there is an end of the dead level whereof the most eager of motorists is apt to grow weary, if only because it gives his good car nothing to do. At Bottisham, among the Fens, in fact, but not in their heart, the road is but forty-six feet above the sea-level at King's Lynn, but in the course of two miles to Street Way (surely Roman by its name) the road rises rapidly and the Panhard climbs cheerfully to a height of 170 feet, an upland having regard to its surroundings on the western side. The very air, eagerly as it bites the cheeks of those who are forced through it, seems more bracing, more exhilarating, more instinct with life than the stagnant atmosphere of the plain. Here are wide spaces, pines and Scotch firs; but the spaces are not wild, for innumerable white boards on posts, the marks of galloping grounds, tell us that we are on the confines of Newmarket Heath and near the metropolis of the turf. Such it has been since the days of Charles I, and such, having regard to the fact that it has been for upwards of a century and a half the head-quarters of the Jockey Club, it is likely to remain, even though the "going" be better at Newbury in Berks, which is a little nearer to London.

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But we are not at Newmarket yet. There is the Devil's Dyke—irreverently called the Ditch where it bisects the familiar course—to be crossed. Why his Satanic Majesty should be credited with so many dykes it is not easy to see. Devil's Punchbowls, of which there are scores, if not hundreds, in the kingdom, are more natural and rational, for a being of Satan's traditional environment might reasonably be credited with thirst upon a large scale and with a liking for cold punch equal to that which was all but the temporary ruin of Mr. Pickwick, and quite fatal for the time to his young friend upon another memorable drive to Ipswich, for that was our destination too. The devil did not make this dyke, running from Reach, north of the Great Eastern Railway, to Ditton Green, near Wood Ditton, that is certain; yet nobody knows exactly who the builders were. What is known is that it has a rampart on the west side, and that the Iceni, of whom all that is necessary will be told soon, held the land to the eastward, so far as land was held in those days. Probably, like their successors in the same territory in mediæval times, during the Stuart period, and now, they had a good conceit of themselves and a robust contempt for their western neighbours, and therefore, perhaps, they built them this rampart and digged this ditch, or made their captives dig it for them, as a bulwark against the outer world. It must be confessed, however, that thoughts and conversation ran not on the Iceni, not on the violent deaths which came to most of them eighteen centuries and a half ago, but on the death of one man of our time whom Newmarket Heath had known as a familiar visitor. Only a few days before Sir James Miller had died full of racing honours, but by no means of years. A tribute to the memory of this prince of racing men was surely due most appropriately at Newmarket.

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Of Newmarket the story needs no telling. It is not, perhaps, so long as that of Cambridge, but probably it is better known to a greater number of persons. Equally well known are the seats of the mighty in the immediate vicinity. But perhaps the traveller through Newmarket, and to it, by road, will not only notice the thoroughbreds, if there be any on view—we naturally saw none late on a winter's afternoon—but will not resent the fact that his attention is directed to an interesting feature of Newmarket, as of other racing and training centres. Newmarket may be, as Lord Chesterfield said in his will that it was, "an infamous seminary of iniquity and ill manners." Men may back horses at Newmarket, may gamble, may try every cunning device known to those who have to do with horses—not that some of those who are concerned with motors are much better—but Newmarket, in appearance at least, is free from that worst of all evils, poverty, which is rarely absent from agricultural Arcadia, and, as Dr. Jessopp has shown, very prevalent in East Anglia. Its houses are trim and weatherproof, the paint of doors and gates is clearly renewed often. The whole place has an air of prosperity which disarms curious investigation into the sources of its wealth. The children are rosy and plump, and that, at any rate, is a blessing; and, save perhaps for backing a horse with judgment now and again, which is a great deal less vicious than backing one without knowledge or judgment, I dare be sworn that their morality and their standard of life are much higher than those of the Arcadian peasant.

The weak light was growing quite dim as we passed through Newmarket and out of Cambridgeshire into Suffolk—out of "the Sheers" into East Anglia, in the narrowest sense of the term. Our course for Bury St. Edmunds lay along a road of astonishing straightness, having many fine oaks and other trees on either side; for the matter of levels it was, and of course is, a series of long ups and downs, of no very severe gradients, and the going on the newly-frozen road left nothing to be desired. At Kentford, according to the Ordnance map and the tradition of the antiquaries of yesterday, we crossed the Ickniel or Icenhilde Way. Unfortunately, from the point of view of one who would like to conjure up visions of ancient Britons, neatly painted with woad in summer, fur-clad in winter, sweeping down this road with scythe-chariots to meet an invader from the west, or to make a raid into the Midlands themselves, the Icenhilde Way has to be numbered among the pretty traditions which cannot be cherished any longer. It has been called the warpath of the Iceni, or a principal Roman road. Ickleton, in Cambridgeshire, Icklingham, in Suffolk, Ickleford, in Herts, have been imagined to represent points upon its route from Norwich to Berkshire and the west. But probabilities, philology, and charters are separately fatal to the theory, and they are irresistible in combination. Over philology I shall not delay longer than to say, on the best authority, that, according to well-known laws, if the places now known as Icklingham and so on had been called after the Iceni, they would have been written otherwise than they are. Again, if the way had been the warpath of the Iceni, it would certainly be more clearly traceable in the east, which was theirs, than in the west, which was not; whereas the

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contrary is the case. Charters are even far more deadly to this romance than philology and probability. Referring to the date of the Norman Conquest and to the Icenhilde Way, Mr. Haverfield says: "Not till three centuries later do we find its name applied to roads in Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire, while east of Newmarket we never find it at all." This is conclusive, for it is the considered judgment of a man exceptionally learned and acute upon the subject to which he has devoted most of the leisure of an academical life, and so this avenue of romance and to romance is definitely and permanently closed.

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From Kentford to Bury St. Edmunds was a fine, but cold, switchback run along a very straight road, just before lighting-up time, though it was not dark enough yet to prevent an impression of the landscape from being left on the mind. No very great houses were close to the road on either side, but the trees on the right were of remarkable stature, and on the left were many belts of Scotch firs, evenly planted, almost like shaws in Kent, which seemed, as did many similar belts seen on other tours, to indicate the existence of landowners, past or present, who had prepared the way for the continental method of driving partridges. For the first time, as our car coursed along with the subdued and yet lively melody of the true "Panhard hum," one began to realize how vast an influence has been exercised over the face of nature in Norfolk and Suffolk, how many new features have been grafted on to that face, by men who have made good shooting the principal object of estate management in the part of England better suited to that purpose than to any other. Arthur Young thought, it is true, of the land between Thetford and Bury, and probably of this land also, that it would repay cultivation. It "lies for some miles over a wild heath, overrun with bushes, whins, and fern, the wild luxuriance of whose growth displays evidently enough how greatly it would answer to break it up and convert it into arable farms; for a soil that has strength enough to throw up such vigorously growing weeds would, if cultivated, produce corn in plenty." But Arthur Young, as we shall see in a minute or two, had no eye for the picturesque; he certainly could not have foreseen the present low prices of various grains; and still more certainly he could have had no idea of the length to which game preservation would go, or of the amount of employment to which it would give rise. His advice was followed in a number of cases, but it may be suspected that some of the famous warrens of Norfolk and Suffolk pay better in rabbits for the London market in these days than they would pay under crops.

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Soon we glided "through the well-paved streets of a handsome little town," to quote the words of Charles Dickens, who was impressed, as Leland had been three centuries before him, by the cheerful brightness of Bury St. Edmunds. Arthur Young's editor of 1772, "the author of the *Farmer's Letters*"—I see I have done Young himself an injustice—tells us that "Bury is a tolerably well-built town, in a dry and healthy situation; many of the streets cut each other at right angles; but a parcel of dirty thatched houses are found in some of them not far from the centre of the town, which has a very bad effect." We should probably hold a different view of the thatched houses now, and the motorist who passes through Bury will certainly desire to know more of it than the author of the *Farmer's Letters* deigned to tell. I had been to Bury before January, 1906, and I have visited it since, though never in such discomfort as the Confessor, who made the last mile of his pilgrimage to St. Edmund's shrine unshod. Yet, interesting as Bury St. Edmunds is, it is not as a pilgrimage to St. Edmund's shrine that a visit to Bury and a fairly long halt there are recommended. St. Edmund is really rather a difficult saint concerning whom to walt rapturous, because our certain knowledge of him amounts to very little and yet gives him a date sufficiently modern to make the monkish legends about him even more completely absurd than such legends are wont to be. There is no doubt that he was a king of East Anglia who was defeated by the Danes in 870 A.D. Hume, one of the most matter-of-fact of our historians, and surely the most unimaginative man who ever took it upon himself to tell an historical tale, says this and no more: "They broke into East Anglia, defeated and took prisoner Edmund, the king of that country, whom they afterwards murdered in cool blood." (This is quoted from the edition of 1823, containing Adam Smith's "appreciation" of his friend, written in 1776, and the "author's last corrections and improvements.") The *Student's Hume* of my youth, mindful perhaps of the wisdom of appealing to the memory of the young through the imagination, gives the date of Edmund's defeat as 871, for the sake of variety perhaps, and adds that, Edmund having rejected with scorn and horror a proposal that he should abjure Christianity and rule under the Danish supremacy, "the Danes bound him naked to a tree, scourged and shot at him with arrows, and finally beheaded him." That is not unlikely. A live target was, as the Scandinavian mythology shows, quite to the taste of the northern barbarians. King Edmund's body may very likely have been, as Abbo says, "*velut asper hericius, aut spinis hirtus carduus, in passione similis Sebastiano egregio martyri*"; "like a rough hedgehog or a thistle bristling with thorns, etc." (There need be no apology for giving the translation which caused a classical schoolmaster some trouble, because *hericius* is not a word used in classical Latin.) That was a martyrdom sufficient to justify canonization, an abbey in honour of the martyred king, and pilgrimages to his shrine, which were undertaken by quite a number of distinguished persons to the great profit of the institution preserving of it. But the monkish chroniclers had an unhappy habit of spoiling their stories by excessive and impossible embroidery. The romantic inventions that, when Edmund's followers stole back to the scene of his torture, they heard a voice crying, "Here, here, here," in a wood, and there found a wolf guarding the saint's head between its paws, and that the head, being replaced upon the trunk by human hands, was miraculously reunited to it, only spoil the story for us of the modern world; for 870 A.D. is fairly late in the history of England really. They suggest the vision of crafty ecclesiastics plotting how most effectively to advertise the shrine, for the glory of God of course, but also for the profit of the abbey; and that, to our minds, is repellent. That the ecclesiastics knew their public is clear, however, from the results here, as at Walsingham. The wolf legend, palpably false as it was, passed into ecclesiastical heraldry throughout East Anglia as generally

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as the story, probably true, of the manner of the martyrdom, and East Anglian churches have many traces of it in stone and in painted glass. Hence came the illustrious pilgrims and their offerings, and hence, in some measure at any rate, the fact that this little inland city of East Anglia played in its time a very important part in the history of England.

How great that part was it is exceedingly difficult to realize as one stands in the centre of that essentially peaceful town. Yet it really has a genuine claim to its motto: *Sacrarium regis, cunabula legis*. Of the two great meetings of barons and clergy held before King John was forced to sign Magna Charta, one was held in London, at St. Paul's, the other in the Abbey Church of Bury St. Edmunds, of all places in England, as we should be inclined to add now. In truth, nothing could be more natural, for the venue illustrates not only the paramount influence of ecclesiasticism in those days, but also the characteristic tendencies of the East Anglian people. Other ecclesiastical centres, of course, there were equal in importance and wealth, and other mitred abbeys. Only in London, always jealous for its liberties, and in East Anglia, could such meetings have been held with confident assurance of the support of the mass of the inhabitants. Read the scattered history of Eastern England, reflect upon the many democratic risings that it witnessed; remember the Eastern Counties Association and the almost complete unanimity of East Anglia for the Parliament against Charles—then the selection of Bury St. Edmunds for this memorable assembly becomes easily intelligible. Parliaments were held there sometimes; royal visits were frequent. In fact, this quiet country town was one of the most influential places in the kingdom until the Dissolution. Then it suffered "a knock of a kynge," to quote Piers Plowman's prophecy concerning the abbey of Abingdon, and its glory departed for evermore. It remains a bright town, possessed of a famous old inn, "The Angel," and of the ruins of the abbey, still of uncommon interest, which were laid out as a botanical garden before Thomas Carlyle wrote *Past and Present*. They are a garden and a playground still.

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A good deal of imagination is called for before the architectural glories of the abbey can be reconstructed in a mental picture, and the best help to be obtained in such an exercise of the imagination comes from reading once again words spoken of the abbey, words purporting to have been uttered within what Carlyle called its "wide internal spaces," words conjuring up realities none the less for that they are themselves the product of an inspired imagination. Need it be said that the reference here is to the second part of Shakespeare's *King Henry VI*? Here Suffolk and the Queen dropped poison into the King's ears concerning absent Gloucester; here Gloucester pleaded his cause in vain in imperishable lines of despairing resignation and passionate patriotism:—

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I know their complot is to have my life;
And if my death might make this island happy,
And prove the period of their tyranny,
I would expend it with all willingness.

Here, in some dark recess of a dungeon, Suffolk's hireling villains "dispatched the Duke." Here was enacted the grim scene, very short, but infinitely pathetic, wherein Suffolk goes to summon his victim to trial, knowing him dead already, and the Queen, the very embodiment of cold-blooded hypocrisy, cries aloud to the King, the Cardinal, and Somerset:—

God forbid any malice should prevail,
That faultless may condemn a nobleman!
Pray God he may acquit him of suspicion!

Back came Suffolk, trembling and pale, for fear of consequences, to announce the news that was known to him, for he had made it all too certain before he left the "room of state" upon his futile errand. We can almost hear the dull sound of the swooning King's fall, and his agonized lament:—

For in the shade of death I shall find joy;
In life but double death now Gloucester's dead.

And what comes next? Surely it is essentially characteristic of the people of East Anglia:—

The Commons, like an angry hive of bees,
That want their leader, scatter up and down.

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Here, again, the substratum of authentic fact is, as in the case of St. Edmund, made the foundation of an imaginative structure; but see how vast is the difference between the effects produced by the paltry monkish embroiderer and the Poet, the maker, the creator. The first tale almost raises a smile of incredulity; the second, written in characters of blood and tears, stirs the heart to its depths.

Bury has its lighter memories and associations too. Many good Englishmen who would not step far out of their way to make a pilgrimage to what was once St. Edmund's shrine, who might even feel that the second part of *King Henry VI* was a little above their heads, may be relied upon to take a great deal of trouble for the sake of treading in the footsteps of the immortal Mr. Pickwick. It was at the "Angel" in Bury St. Edmunds, still "a large inn standing in a wide open street, and nearly facing the Old Abbey," that Mr. Pickwick enjoyed "a very satisfactory dinner." This was, as we shall have occasion to see at Ipswich, high praise indeed when uttered by the author of Mr. Pickwick's being, who, if displeased by the accommodation and fare offered to him, did not hesitate to express his opinion with remarkable force of language. In the tap-room of the said

"Angel," Mr. Weller, having been voted into the chair, cracked such jests and evoked such uproarious laughter that his master's rest was broken. The pump in the "Angel" yard cooled Sam's throbbing head next morning so effectually that, shortly afterwards, he was able to describe the stranger in the mulberry suit, stranger as he deemed him, as looking "as convivial as a live trout in a lime basket." In the adjoining tap, again, Sam, "the names of Veller and gammon" having "come into contract" for the one and only time in that voracious history, cemented his alliance with the deceitful Job Trotter over gin and cloves. He took the doubtless fragrant and pungent beverage as a pick-me-up in the morning; it might have served us, perhaps well, as a warmth-restorer in the afternoon; but candour compels the confession that, for the moment, we forgot the *Pickwick Papers*, drew up in front of the "Suffolk," not the "Angel," and did our best to restore heat to our chilled bodies by gargantuan consumption of crumpets, tea, and jam. Even this was mildly Pickwickian (who can forget the story of the gentleman who demonstrated by devoted self-slaughter the proposition that crumpets *is* wholesome?). But as we did not drink gin and cloves in honour of Sam Weller, so we did not blow out our brains to prove the wholesome character of crumpets.

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Yet one more Pickwickian association of Bury St. Edmunds must be set down. In a private room of the "Angel" the artful Mr. Trotter, having "gammoned" Sam, proceeded to "gammon" his innocent master also with the story of "the large, old, red-brick house just outside the town, sir," and the pretended revelation of his own master's nefarious intentions. Hence came kindly Mr. Pickwick's ludicrously pathetic vigil in the garden, alarm of maids, hysterics of Miss Smithers, drenching of Mr. Pickwick, doubts whether he was burglar or lunatic, imprisonment in the Clothes Closet, rescue and explanation by Mr. Wardle, rheumatics of Mr. Pickwick, and, last of all, the Parish Clerk's tale. These things are not history of course, "which there never war no sich a person" as Mr. Pickwick, but they are imperishable and essential truths none the less, and the *Pickwick Papers* are a possession of Bury St. Edmunds at least equal in commercial value to all the legends of St. Edmund, King and Martyr. So much for Bury on this occasion. We shall see it again, and foregather this time at the "Angel."

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We left the hotel, to find cold and windless darkness in full possession. It was my first experience of driving in a motor-car on a dark night for any considerable distance through an unknown country. The first few miles, through Bayton and Woolpit, were very difficult, the road sinuous as a corkscrew, the necessity for dismounting to study the sign-posts constantly occurring. In marked contrast, however, to experience in some of our southern counties, was the alert intelligence of the country-folk. From Stowmarket the road to Ipswich, our destination, was straight, but seemed endless. At first we tried to proceed with oil lamps only; then we were driven to acetylene; but, with air none too clear at any time and wreaths of denser mist now and again, even the acetylene rays did not penetrate very far. On the whole, cold apart, this kind of driving at night is not to be recommended. I remember nothing of that journey to Ipswich, except the cold and the mild excitement of trying to guess the species of the splendid trees passed by their shadowy forms and general character. Oaks I saw, and elms and beeches for certain—for the form of these may not easily be mistaken. In the matter of ashes I would not like to pledge my faith, for one might easily mix up an ash tree in winter, half seen by a light not thrown distinctly upon it, with some other tree. But the best thing I remember of that night, out of doors, was the sight of the lights of Ipswich and of the tall tramcars, which told us that we were there at last.

Neither fate nor inclination has taken me down this same road by daylight since then, but something may be said of the places passed in the darkness, with due acknowledgment of the aid afforded by Mr. W. A. Butt's *Suffolk*, in the "Little Guides Series" (Methuen). The acknowledgment is made the more gladly, and the aid is borrowed with the more confidence that it will not prove a broken reed, because "in another place" and at another time I have had the privilege of knowing Mr. Dutt in MS. as a careful and fascinating writer, equally learned in antiquities and in ornithology, and very much at home in East Anglia. Had it been light we might have seen at Tostock a fine church, Perpendicular in the main, but with an early Decorated chancel. As motorists, however, we should hardly have been induced to descend and explore the interior even by the hope of seeing carved oak benches, one of them showing "the fabulous cockatrice" and another the unicorn scratching himself with his horn. At Woolpit we might have seen a new tower to an old church, the tower built no later than 1854. But the tower is no outrage, for it had to be built to replace an older one destroyed by lightning. To Woolpit, too, belongs one of William of Newburgh's strange legends, thus summarized by Mr. Dutt: "One day, while some men were at work in a harvest field here, they saw a boy and a girl, whose bodies were green and their dresses of a strange material, appear out of the pits known as the 'Wolfpittes.' They said they had come from a Christian land, which had churches, but where there was no sun, 'only a faint twilight, but beyond a broad river there lay a land of light.' Their country was called the land of St. Martin; and, one day, while they were tending their father's sheep, they heard a noise like the ringing of the bells of Bury Abbey, 'and all at once they found themselves among the reapers in the harvest field at Woolpit.' The boy, we are told, soon died, but the girl lived to marry a man of Lynn." The name of the place in *Domesday* is "Wlfpeta," which is simply "Wolf-pit," but why this particular wolf-pit, out of the hundreds that there must have been, retained the name, there is nothing to show. At Haughley, moved to alight by some of the guide-books in the hope of finding ruins, we should have discovered a mound only, its origin quite uncertain; and at Stowmarket there would have been no temptation to halt. Chemicals and cordite combine to give the ancient market town some prosperity, some calamities, and no beauty. Here we began to follow the course of the railway and the River Gipping, the eponymous river of Ipswich until it is named anew. At Great Blakenham we passed a manor given by Henry VI to Eton College, and at Claydon an Elizabethan hall.

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But, sad truth to tell, we were in the mood of Gallio that evening, so far as these things were concerned, and the vision of the lights of Ipswich was unmixed pleasure. It was generally admitted that the last eight miles into the ancient city, from the point at which a native stated that they begun, must have been measured with a very elastic chain. Nor was entry into Ipswich easy. He who held the steering wheel was one who, for combined nicety, courage, and consideration in slipping through traffic, has few equals in this country; but his task was of more than common difficulty. The streets of Ipswich, or most of them, are of an exceeding narrowness; the electric tramcars glide through them, swift, monumental, irresistible, in their usual Juggernaut mood. Hardly anywhere is there room for a vehicle to be drawn up to the kerb on the inside of the tramway lines. We, indeed, were not suffered by the police to draw up in front of the "Great White Horse" at all, even for the purpose of dismounting, but were motioned to a side street. Moreover, although the immediately local election was over, the streets were grievously crowded for some reason or other—and surely there was never seen a population more serenely indifferent to the blast of a motor-horn! They were, perhaps, inured to peril by the tramcars, swifter in towns than any motor-car would dare to be, heavier by a long way, and exceptionally dangerous by reason of the length and height of the moving veil they draw across the view. At any rate they would not move out of the way.

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Arriving, we were in a far more appreciative mood than that of Mr. Charles Dickens when he became a guest at the "Great White Horse," and wrote the account of Mr. Pickwick's arrival on the coach of the elder Weller. We found no labyrinths of uncarpeted passages, no mouldy ill-lighted rooms, no small dens for sleeping in, but rather a kindly welcome and attention, distinctly good rooms, a dining-room having plenty of space, fire and abundant cheer, and a reasonably moderate bill to discharge at the end of our stay. Yet I doubt not that the edifice, built round a cobbled courtyard that is roofed over, the bar parlour on the far side of the yard from the door, where a good many of the citizens congregate of an evening, the office window at which mine hostess receives her guests, are precisely the same as when Boz visited Ipswich. In this view I differ from Mr. Dutt; but the probability is that the alterations to which he refers were made before, not after, Dickens saw the house. Dickens did not like the place at all, that is clear. If there be doubts whether Ipswich was the original of Eatanswill, as Mr. Percy Fitzgerald suggests, there are none about the "Great White Horse," which is, of course, mentioned, and abused from floor to garret, nay, from cellar to garret: for is not "the worst possible port" mentioned—by name? We found things otherwise, but then it was not the misfortune of any of us to look out of bed and see "a middle-aged lady, in yellow curl-papers, busily engaged in brushing what ladies call their back-hair." It would be easy enough to miss the way in the recesses of the "Great White Horse"; in fact, to be frank, I did so myself, although I neither entered the wrong room nor got into the wrong bed. But the censure of Dickens generally has no reference to the present state of affairs at this classic hostelry; nay, more, such is the irony of fate, the bad name given by Dickens to this house is now its chiefest recommendation: prints of Leech's pictures adorn every wall, and the telegraphic address of the hotel is "Pickwick," Ipswich. Thus has railing been converted into blessing; thus is it proved more profitable to be abused by a great writer than to remain uncensured and ignored. Perhaps Mr. Percy Fitzgerald could oblige, as the saying goes, by explaining what the real meaning of his hero's attitude was. It must have had some deeper source than a stuffy bedroom and a bad dinner, or else the essential kindness of the Dickensian attitude towards everything except cruelty and injustice must be cast aside as an exploded belief. Certainly no public writer would dare to write in 1906 of any hotel as Dickens wrote of the "Great White Horse" in the thirties of the last century; and perhaps that is not entirely to be regretted, for hotel-keepers really are our fellow-creatures, unwilling as some advocates of the Temperance Cause may be to admit the truth.

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By the way, why is the "Great White Horse" an hotel sign in East Anglia?—not that I can endorse the description of it as "a stone statue of some rampacious animal, with flowing mane and tail, distantly resembling an insane cart-horse." It seems to me quite reasonably like a Suffolk Punch, except in colour, and one finds Phidias never, although Apelles sometimes, over inn doors. But why a white horse? One expects such signs in the parts about Berks, where the classic Vale is named after the gigantic symbol on the northward side of the Downs, of which a simple explanation has become impossible, owing to the tiresome growth of knowledge. But why, despising all commonplace explanations, have we encountered a "White Horse" in Suffolk? Well, one of the many explanations of the White Horse *par excellence* is that it was taken from the horse delineated on Philip's stater, which was copied a good deal in Britain, and an explanation of the "White Horse"—I beg its pardon, the "Great White Horse"—of Ipswich may be that it had its origin in the horse figured on some of the Icenian coins that have been discovered in East Anglia. Or, again, it may be simply a survival of the ancient Saxon totem. Some such desultory speculation as this may serve to soothe the mind of an evening at Ipswich—not that after motoring all day the mind needs much soothing. But I would counsel all male motorists to burn their last incense of tobacco, as my friend and I did, in the warm bar-parlour on the side of the courtyard over against the main door, for thus shall they see the native of Ipswich in his natural state. The discovery of "this amazing England," as Mr. Kipling has said well, is the main joy of motoring; still in the evening one may do much worse things than pursue the proper study of mankind in easy-going mood, and a provincial bar-parlour is not a bad place in which to do it.

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To Ipswich I have been more than once since that night of freezing cold in January, and to Bury St. Edmunds also, and more features of both will find a place in later narratives; but of each there are a few practical things to be said which must not be delayed. On a second visit to Bury, made in the course of the most troubled and delightful tour of my existence so far, I lay at the ancient "Angel" with mighty satisfaction and to the remarkably small minishing of my store of

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sovereigns. On a second visit to Ipswich I was hospitably entertained by a local gentleman at the "Crown and Anchor," because he thought it was the best hotel in Ipswich, and behold the fare was very good! By the same gentleman I was introduced to oysters, in a little shop near the Butter Market, the best I ever ate, and to hand-made gloves in a little shop hard by which have motored many a merry mile since then. There need be no hesitation in advertising them. They are made by a widow and her daughter out of soft and strong Cape leather, and with them, it is to be feared, the industry will die, since apprentices will not come to them in these degenerate days. Since then I have exhibited these gloves, during the Scottish "Reliability" trials, to a casual acquaintance, and her criticism, although strictly irrelevant, was too witty to be omitted. "Mphm! they look as if you had made them yourself." Ipswich gloves, then, are not for the dandy, but for the motorist they are hard to beat.

CHAPTER II

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WINTER. IPSWICH TO NORWICH VIA WOODBRIDGE, BECCLES, LOWESTOFT, AND YARMOUTH

A walk in Ipswich—Sparrowe's House—With Pickwick and the Wellers—Start at noon—The glittering car—Another passenger—Infantine pilotage—A loose clutch—Mechanic's chagrin—A stitch in time—Nuts screwed home—Need to watch mechanics—Woodbridge—Edward Fitzgerald—Wickham Market and Saxmundham—Abyssinian luncheon—Détour to Aldeburgh—Aldeburgh described—The dilatory Alde—Birthplace of George Crabbe—His views of Aldeburgh—Saxmundham to Yoxford—Peasenhall adjacent—Yoxford to Blythburgh—A motorist's church—Détour to Southwold—Southwold described—Battle of Sole Bay—Did Isaac Newton hear guns at Cambridge?—Lord Ossory's ride from Euston—Blythburgh to Beccles—First view disappointing—Better next time—Unforeseen value of Connemara cloak—Beccles to Lowestoft—*Norfolk and Norwich Notes and Queries*—Their value—Origin of Lowestoft harbour—"Norwich a port"—Cubitt and Telford—Sir Samuel Peto—Meaning of "Lowestoft"—Lowestoft to Yarmouth—Direct route to Norwich—Darkness and frozen haze—Straining eyes—Norwich at last—The "Royal" formerly "Angel"—An ancient hostelry—Colossal window tax—Norfolk election memories—Corn Law riot—"Coke of Norfolk" sheltered—Always a Whig house—Stroll in Norwich—Multitude of churches—The walls and "murage" tax—A learned society's day—Fraction of Norwich only seen—Wat Tyler's Rebellion—Geoffrey Lister and Sir Robert Salle—St. Peter's Permounergate—Memories of Nelson—Fascination of Norwich—Its great men and women—George Borrow—"Old Crome"—The Norwich school.

Truth to tell, Ipswich on the Gipping, which becomes the Orwell and an estuary lower down, seemed to me then an ancient city showing, except in a few picturesque houses and the gateway of Wolsey's College, few signs of antiquity. If it cannot be called happy in having had no history, for it was plundered by the Danes in 991, it has had little cause for unhappiness of that kind since the Conquest; it has produced no really famous man except Wolsey, though Gainsborough lived in it for some years; and its churches, although not quite devoid of interest, are not striking enough to delay a motorist. Note, in passing, not the least advantage of an exploring tour by motor. You need neither spend time in examining that which is barely worth the process on the ground that there is nothing else to be done, nor hurry away from that which is interesting, in order to catch a train; but, staying so long as seems pleasant and no longer, you may be transported when you please, rapidly and pleasantly, to scenes you have reason to believe to be worthy of your regard.

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In these circumstances, after an admiring glance at the famous Sparrowe's House in the Butter Market, close to the hotel, I frankly betook myself to an effort to follow the Wellers, father and son, Mr. Pickwick and his followers, through an eventful day. This stable-yard round the corner to the left, where the Panhard was now being furbished up, was the same on which Mr. Weller, senior, looked when, "in a small room in the vicinity," he discussed a pot of ale and the "gammoning" of Sam, and drank to the toast, "May you soon vipe off the disgrace as you've inflicted on the family name." The office in the courtyard was doubtless that at which he got his "vaybill." Walking about these very streets Sam wormed himself into the confidence of the lachrymose Job Trotter. In this inn parlour Mr. Peter Magnus, *alias* Jingle, splendidly attired, made a hollow pretence of breakfasting with Mr. Pickwick; here the latter gave his simple hints on courtship and proposal, and here were seen "the joyous face of Mr. Tupman, the serene countenance of Mr. Winkle, and the intellectual lineaments of Mr. Snodgrass." In this room was enacted that memorable scene when Mr. Magnus presented Miss Witherfield to Mr. Pickwick and Miss Witherfield screamed, but neither she nor Mr. Pickwick was indelicate enough to mention the cause—his unwitting invasion of her chamber overnight. Rushing out of this room the lady, after bolting herself into her bedroom, went forth in search of Mr. Nupkins and apprised him of the forthcoming duel, which there was not really much reason to anticipate. Where exactly Miss Witherfield saw Mr. Nupkins I am unhappily not able to say, nor yet, and for the same reason, whither Grummer, with his myrmidon Dubbley and his "division," each with a short truncheon and a brass crown, conducted Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Tupman in the old sedan-chair; but for all that it is easy to picture the whole of the never-to-be-forgotten scene, all the more memorable in

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that it never was enacted. In fact, it is no mean regret to me that, on that cold January morning, I was not able to find "the house with the green gate," with the "house-door guarded on either side by an American aloe in a tub." It has eluded me since also. Perhaps it is gone, like a good deal of old Ipswich; possibly some miscreant has had his gate painted white instead of green; perhaps I looked in the wrong place, in the vicinity of St. Clement's Church. It is even within the bounds of possibility that the house with the green gate never had any more real and substantial existence than Mr. Pickwick himself. All I know is that I could not find it.

At noon or thereabouts—time does not worry one in a motor-car, unless one is seeking records—we boarded the Panhard, now "bright as a Birmingham button," and started off up a long and trying hill, in cold, dry, and windless weather, for a circuitous drive, its sinuosities determined by the desires of my friend. A new member was added to the party in the person of a resident at Norwich, desirous of reaching that ancient city in due course, who was supposed to know, and probably did know, every considerable turning of every high road in the two counties of Norfolk and Suffolk. He had not, however, enjoyed much experience as the pilot of an automobile, and he found, as I had in years gone by when I was new to the pastime, that eye and memory were not equal to moving together at a speed proportioned to that of the car. "Which road?" the charioteer would cry—the new passenger was riding astern—when we were from fifty to seventy yards from a fork or a turn, and hesitation would often be visible in the reply, so that it was necessary to slow down and sometimes, having invaded the wrong road, to back out again. This is not criticism, it is rather matter of observation and experience. Only recently have the minds of driving and driven men been called upon to exercise their judgment, to choose a line, as a fox-hunter might say, while they are being carried through space much more rapidly than of yore, and the pace puzzles them at first. You are past a familiar turning in a car in less time than is consumed over approaching it in a dog-cart or on horseback, and the aspect of the turning itself has something strange about it; but you grow accustomed to the new conditions with experience. In fact, motor-cars sharpen the perceptions and spur the intelligence. To venture an audacious travesty, and some even more hardy doggerel:—

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... *Urgendi didicisse fideliter artem*
Exacuit mentem, nee sinit esse pigrum.

He who has learned a car to drive
Sharpens his wits and looks alive.

Personally, I sat alongside the driver, a place of honour, if cold, and the mechanic sat at my feet. Pity is wasted on a mechanic so placed at any time, for he likes the position, and it is not so comfortless as it looks by a long way, *experto crede*. In any case our ex-soldier was a proud man that morning, for his car was a joy to the eye. The day before owner and mechanic were hustings-worn, the car looked battered and dissipated as well as fog-dimmed. Now the brass shone with a glow that would have satisfied the proud commander of a man-of-war, who is the most exacting person living. If that mechanic had read the Greek tragedians he would have known that Nemesis must needs come soon. Brass glittered, varnish shone, all four cylinders worked nobly, but the engine would race from time to time. It became all too clear to him who had the control of the machine, or desired to have it, that he had it not in entirety, since the clutch kept slipping. Hence came power wasted, miles per hour lost, and a definite feeling of discontent in the owner. So, after a hill or two had been climbed without satisfaction, a halt was called on the level. The mechanic did not like it a bit, and he had our sympathy. He had worked hard; he had turned out the car with a creditable appearance; it was crushing to be found out in a single fault. I knew his feelings from experience. To be blamed when you thoroughly deserve it is tolerable; to be blamed for no fault at all is to find consolation in private reflection upon the folly of him, or her, who administers reproof; to discover that one essential point has been forgotten when you have tried hard to remember everything is to be compelled to recognize that, after every willing effort, you only look a fool after all. The mechanic had our sympathy on another ground too. He vowed, of course, that the clutch could not be made tighter; he declared that, if it were, the consequences would be disastrous; for you shall note that your mechanic dearly loves "a bit o' play" in fittings, and abhors a nut screwed quite home. All these things were clear to us, but we were none the less inexorable. As, in starting on a heavy job in carpenter's work, minutes spent in putting a keen edge on to plane and chisel are hours saved in the end, so it is sheer idiocy to muddle on with a motor-car if, at the beginning of the journey, you are aware of something wrong that is capable of being set right on the road. It is, indeed, in detecting the first premonitory evidence of trouble, and in meeting difficulties more than half-way, that the genius of an inspired driver is shown. This little weakness of mechanics for a "bit o' play" is also worth remembering.

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So we were sorry for the mechanic, but the thing had got to be done whether he liked or no, and for half an hour he lay on his back under the car, straining, grunting, otherwise eloquently silent, while black and viscous oil made a little pool on the road alongside of his honest head, and while we, pacing up and down the frozen road, forbore even to remind him that, if the road had been muddy, his fate would have been worse. In cases where an angel would lose his temper under the gentlest persiflage it is only decent to leave a willing but disappointed man to himself. The half-hour ended; the job was done; overdone a little, as the mechanic well knew, yet not so much overdone but that a driver of rare skill could disappoint him by ignoring the inconvenience; and we took our seats again. The car sprang forward like a living creature, moving fast and smoothly. There was all the difference in the world between the motion as it was and the motion as it had been, and the chagrin of the mechanic yielded to time and to the proud feeling that all was right with "his car" through his handiwork.

Sooth to say, the scenery was not interesting on a frosty and somewhat misty day. The route was, to start with, viâ Woodbridge, Wickham Market, and Stratford St. Andrew to Saxmundham; that is to say, the road runs along the brow, the very much wrinkled brow, of the upland, which is high by comparison with the lowland, extending a long way in from the coast, running from Felixstowe to Aldeburgh and beyond. Of that lowland we could see nothing. Woodbridge, appearing to consist of one street, long, straggling, and narrow, was the first village of any consideration through which we passed. Its chief claim to fame is that Edward Fitzgerald wrote letters at it, remarking in one, dated 1855, that Woodbridge had not reached 1842 yet. But we shall see Woodbridge again. Next came Wickham Market, narrow, straggling, and long. It is quite commonplace. From Wickham Market we went on to Saxmundham, and there committed a grave error. "Hot dinner," it was stated, was due in three-quarters of an hour, but it could be hurried forward if we wished. We wished accordingly, and wished afterwards that we had not, for the meat, some forgotten joint half-boiled, was in a state in which, according to the traveller Bruce, the Abyssinians eat their meat from choice; and the accompanying parsnips, quite hard, may have been fit to place before sheep. As we were neither Abyssinians nor sheep, but English travellers, the error was felt the more acutely because we had ourselves only to blame. Given the same conditions another time, I should urge a detour to Aldeburgh, a detour of some six miles to be begun about two miles short of Saxmundham, for Aldeburgh is worth seeing and man can feed there.

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WOODBIDGE-STREET

Of Aldeburgh an observation or two may be made on the basis of a sojourn a few years since. It is certainly one of the most bracing places in this world. It has a tolerable hotel, good golf-links, and a fine view of the sea; and the ancient moot-house is picturesque. The abiding impression left by Aldeburgh is simply that it is the oddest place ever seen. The little River Alde, starting somewhere near Saxmundham, follows a more or less southerly course for a couple of miles; then an even smaller river joins it, and, flowing eastward for a mile or so, the combined streams seem to be heading for the sea, distant about six miles; but it takes them fifteen miles, even with the help of another so-called river, purposeless as themselves, to reach the sea; for first they are lost in a mecranking mere of sluggish water, which actually approaches within a hundred yards of the sea at Aldeburgh, where it is stopped by a stony bank. The mere continues, and the rivers are merged in it, parallel to high-water mark, divided from it sometimes by a hundred yards or so, sometimes by half a mile, for nine miles from the point of turning, and soon the water is dubbed River Ore in the map. By this time it is meandering, mainly under the influence of the tide most likely, behind and to the west of Orford Ness, and it is not until somewhere about the middle of Hollesley Bay that this utter absurdity of a river, this monstrous estuary for three trifling streams, finds its way into the sea.

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A year or two ago the good folks of Aldeburgh celebrated their native poet, George Crabbe, though why they chose the date, seeing that Crabbe was born in 1754 and died in 1832, it is not quite easy to see. The celebration, indeed, was, like the use made of Pickwick by the hotel at

Ipswich, an example of the truth that a community or an individual having a mind for advertisement will not be stopped by petty considerations of pride. George Crabbe was born at Aldeburgh, through no fault of his own. He left it in 1768, to be apprenticed to a surgeon at Bury St. Edmunds. He came back to it to practise as a surgeon, and failed miserably as a medical man, because his mind was on the making of verses all the time. Then he tried his fortune in London and beat despairingly on the doors of fame until Burke introduced him to Dodsley, who brought out *The Library* with some success in 1781. At about the same time Dr. Johnson expressed a high opinion of his verse. Next he was ordained and took up his residence as curate at Aldeburgh, but he left it soon to become domestic chaplain to the Duke of Rutland; and he does not seem to have had much, if anything, to do with his native place during his subsequent career as prosperous poet and comfortable clergyman. He was a distinctly sound poet, with a queer vein of humour, although his admirer, Edward Fitzgerald, whom we meet to-day, valued him perhaps too highly, and Byron, probably for his own purposes, overpraised him in the words:—

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Nature's sternest painter, but her best.

Crabbe hated Aldeburgh, or Aldeburgh scenery at any rate; or, if he did not hate them, he took the stern view of them.

Lo! where the heath, with withering brake grown o'er,
Lends the light turf that warms the neighbouring poor;
From thence a length of burning sand appears,
Where the thin harvest waves its withered ears;
Rank weeds, that every art and care defy,
Reign o'er the land and rob the blighted rye.

Thus does he describe the vicinity and thus the so-called river and its marge:—

Here samphire banks and saltworth bind the flood,
And stakes and seaweed withering in the mud;
And higher up a ridge of all things base,
Which some strong tide has rolled upon the place.

No, assuredly Crabbe had no liking for Aldeburgh, and to be perfectly candid, I agree with him that, save for golfers, it is a dreary and eye-afflicting place. In this view I confess to have believed myself to be singular and, for expressing it, have incurred scorn more than once. So Crabbe is quoted in confirmation, yet with the hope that those who visit Aldeburgh may agree with the general view and not with that of a minority of two, one of them something better than a minor poet. Be it added, in justice to Aldeburgh, that you can look for amber among the pebbles on the beach. So you can anywhere and find as much as I did.

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From Saxmundham we laid a course due north for Yoxford—Peasenhall of murderous fame lies some three miles to the west—and passed by way of Darsham to Blythburgh. Here, in a village named in *Domesday*, is a really striking fifteenth-century church, in good Perpendicular and with splendid clerestory, plainly visible from the road; and we are not far from Southwold, now known of many as a summer resort, whereas in days not long past it was visited by few persons save those who knew of the existence of St. Edmund's Church with its really majestic tower and rare rood-loft. Here, by the way, is buried Agnes Strickland, the historian. The very slight inward curve of the coastline here is dignified with the name of a bay, and as Sole Bay, which is simply Southwold Bay spoken short, it has a considerable place in history. On 28 May, 1672, "the combined fleets lay at Sole Bay in a very negligent posture." They were the fleets of England, under the command of the Duke of York, with Lord Sandwich under him, and of France; and here De Ruyter, the greatest sea-captain of his age, took his royal adversary quite by surprise. This was due not so much to the dashing merit of De Ruyter as to the crass carelessness of the Duke, for "Sandwich, being an experienced officer, had given the Duke warning of the danger; but received, they said, such an answer as intimated that there was more of caution than of courage in his apprehensions." What hasty words, I wonder, of the rude and haughty admiral were represented by this sonorous periphrasis? De Ruyter came, with ninety-one ships of war and forty-four fireships, sailing "in quest of the English," and Sandwich, after giving the warning in vain, saved the day by a display of gallantry to be ranked as extraordinary even in the annals of the English navy. Sailing out to meet the Dutchman, he engaged him at once and gave time to the Duke and the French admiral. "He killed Van Ghent, a Dutch admiral, and beat off his ship; he sunk another ship, which ventured to lay him aboard; he sunk three fireships, which endeavoured to grapple with him; and, though his vessel was torn to pieces with shot, and of a thousand men she contained near six hundred were laid dead upon the deck, he continued still to thunder with all his artillery in the midst of the enemy. But another fireship, more fortunate than the preceding, having laid hold of his vessel, her destruction was now inevitable. Warned by Sir Edward Haddock, his captain, he refused to make his escape, and bravely embraced death as a shelter from that ignominy which a rash expression of the Duke's, he thought, had thrown upon him." Admiral and flag-captain, in fact, perished when the fire reached the magazine, and this time at any rate the "price of Admiralty" was paid in full.

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SOUTHWOLD HARBOUR

The English claimed a victory and embalmed it in a ballad, although the truth was that the Duke's fleet was too much shattered for pursuit and the French fleet, under secret orders, perhaps, from Louis XIV, did next to nothing; the Dutch, probably, claimed one also, although the battle ended the hopes with which De Ruyter's expedition started. All that matters nothing now. The moment that heartens a man is that at which he stands on this low-lying shore, as spectators stood all the long day in May, 1672, and remembers the gallant fight and the glorious death of Sandwich. "Sir Isaac Newton is also said to have heard it [the firing] at Cambridge." So writes the accomplished author of Murray's Guide in 1875, and there is nothing incredible in the suggestion. The distance is but seventy miles, roughly; the cannon of old time with their black powder made a terrible sound; acoustics are full of mystery, and the noise of the big guns at Portsmouth is often heard in the heart of the Berkshire Downs. From Euston to the centre of Sole Bay is about half the distance over which sound is said to have reached Newton, and it is on record that Lord Ossory, then a guest of the Duke of Grafton, heard the guns and rode half-way across East Anglia to witness the battle. Surely it was a majestic and awe-inspiring spectacle for those on the shore, and surely it is worth while to reconstruct it now in imagination.

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From Blythburgh we went along a road of poor surface, and of no scenic attraction in winter save that the trees were fine, to Beccles, one of the three principal towns of Suffolk, possessed, I was content to believe, of a grand church, and boasting a view over the marshes of the Waveney, once navigable. But we saw little of Beccles, the name of which reminded Edward Fitzgerald of "hooks and eyes"; we were indeed quite glad to leave it after penetrating a quarter suggestive of a new and prosperous Midland town, for election fever was running high, and car and its occupants were cheered or hooted by eager crowds; cheered most, perhaps, for the crowds were mostly "Red," and the Connemara cloak seemed to express a sympathy which, in truth, was not felt. We had all had enough electioneering and to spare and were glad to turn our faces for Lowestoft. As will be seen later, Beccles made a far more pleasant impression on a subsequent visit. At Lowestoft too—it is a short and easy run—election fever was running high, and the political excitement of a seething mob does not make for an individual appreciation of the picturesque. But old Lowestoft is picturesque, hanging, as it were, over the sea, and South Lowestoft has a peculiar origin worth knowing.

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Among the pleasant enterprises incident to the writing of this book has been the making of notes from *Norfolk and Norwich Notes and Queries*, reprinted from the *Norfolk Chronicle*, to which I have added in my note-book *O si sic omnes!* Would indeed that all county papers laid themselves out, as this one does, to collect notes from those interested in the antiquities of their county. Here as to Lowestoft are found two notes, one entertaining and suggestive, the other distinctly taking. It appears that in 1558 one Thomas North published a fantastic explanation of the origin of herring curing, in which Lowestoft has always rivalled Yarmouth. Without giving it in detail, it may be stated that in essential spirit, if on a different topic, it exactly anticipates Charles Lamb's divine theory of roast pig; but Thomas North has none of that grace of expression which compels quotation when one encounters Lamb, and one only regrets that Lamb did not think of describing the origin of herring curing as well as of roast pork.

The second Lowestoft note deserves a paragraph to itself, for it is full of moral lessons, and a curious illustration of the way in which the overweening ambition of one community and the churlishness of a second has ended in loss to the first and in the profit of a third community to the prejudice of the second. In the records of St. Peter's Church, at Norwich (St. Peter's, Permounergate, if memory serves accurately, which is St. Peter's, Parmentersgate, or Tailors' Street), is an entry of 27 March, 1814: "Ringing the Bells for Norwich a Port. 10/6." Early in the last century, it appears, Norwich was a very important centre of the wool trade. Now Norwich thrives on mustard and boots, but let that pass; at the time in question wool was the staple trade, and it was exported by way of Yarmouth. In 1812 or thereabouts, like Manchester later, Norwich

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determined, if possible, to have direct communication with the sea. Enterprising men consulted William Cubitt, afterwards Sir William Cubitt, and a very distinguished engineer in matters relating to canals and docks. They probably consulted him mainly because he was a Norfolk man, for he was not yet thirty years old, and his fame, which was to be considerable, was yet to come. They sought the advice also of that consummate Scottish engineer, Thomas Telford, then well advanced in middle age and almost at the pinnacle of his fame. Alternative routes for the proposed canal were suggested, one by way of Yarmouth, the other by way of Lowestoft. Yarmouth, its safe trade threatened, opposed from the beginning, and eventually the Lowestoft route was adopted; the mouth of Lowestoft Harbour was cleared from the sands that blocked it, a cut was made connecting it with the Waveney through Oulton Broad, another cut from Haddiscoe to Reedham, and in 1814 the bells rang gaily to celebrate "Norwich a port." For Norwich it was a short-lived triumph, since the scheme did not pay its way, and in 1844 it was practically, possibly indeed formally, bankrupt. At any rate, the Lowestoft part of the works was bought outright by Sir Samuel Peto, who in that year—but whether before he acquired the harbour or not I cannot say—bought Somerleyton hard by, some time the seat of the Fitz-Osberts and the Jernigans, from Lord Sidney Godolphin Osborne. *Sic vos, non vobis*. The Norwich folk lost their money, or some of it; Sir Samuel Peto took Lowestoft in hand, "developed" it, as the saying goes, so that South Lowestoft became a flourishing seaside place; and finally Lowestoft as a port became a serious rival to Yarmouth. As a seaside place Lowestoft is pleasing to some tastes now, even as it was in the days when Edward Fitzgerald would betake himself thither from Woodbridge to spend his days in sailing and in writing letters which are a treasure to posterity; and his evenings in reading Shakespeare or *Don Quixote* with his close friends, Cowell and Aldis Wright, who often lodged at Lowestoft for a short time in summer. It would have been good to have their opinion upon the derivation of Lowestoft, appearing in *Domesday* as Lothu-wis-toft, which is said to be "the enclosure by the water of Loth," who in his turn is said to have been a Norse invader; but nothing is to be discovered of Loth, or Loo, save that Lake Lothing, now the inner harbour, is named after him, as was the hundred of Lothingland or Ludingland; and Edward Fitzgerald is really much more interesting than a nebulous Norse pirate.

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FISHING BOATS AT LOWESTOFT

Election fever and its ravings, a short glance at picturesque features, and the inestimable blessings of tea and warmth are the principal memories left by this particular visit to Lowestoft. Thence we ran along the easy coast road in the darkness to Great Yarmouth, which, on this occasion, left no vivid impression on the memory. No such language, however, can be employed with regard to the remainder of that evening's drive. Doubts had arisen whether it would be wiser to make for Norwich by the more circuitous route which fetches a compass round Caister Castle, or by the "new road" running in a direct line for Acle first, across a salt marsh, and from Acle fairly straight for Norwich. The new road was much the shorter and, being across a salt marsh, a dead-level, but our local pilot was doubtful as to the state of its surface. However, it was decided to make inquiry at the toll-gate, a mile or so out of Yarmouth, and to abide by the answer, which was satisfactory. So was the road, so far as its surface went. It ran first for five miles straight as an arrow; the straightness was apparent at the time, but the five miles seemed like twenty. A fine mist was frozen over the watery land, nothing was visible on one side except, at stated intervals, a towering telegraph pole, and on both sides, at shorter intervals, were puny and poor trees which may have been poplars or willows. It became my duty, seated beside the man at the wheel, to peer into the darkness, trying to distinguish any possible obstacle or turn, to make out the character of any light that might be seen, and to watch for the bend, which, after another straight run of some three miles, would take us to Acle. As a rule I could just see the outline of one telegraph post as we passed its predecessor; there was, in all probability, a deep dyke on either side, and it was an ideal night for running into a country vehicle travelling without a tail light; but happily we encountered none. Indeed, although motorists complain much, late years have seen a great improvement in this respect. Of lights on approaching vehicles we saw

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one or two, appearing at first to be distant and stationary as a planet on a clear night, and then to be close to us in an instant. It was, in short, a trying experience to the nerves and to the eyes, and we resolved to avoid night journeys as much as might be in the future. The resolution was renewed when we looked at our strained and bloodshot eyes the next morning, and broken performe the next evening; but night travelling by motor-car in winter is not to be recommended unless the moon is strong. It is a process to be resolved upon when circumstances suit, not to be planned in advance.

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From Acle to Norwich was ten miles more or less of up-and-down travelling, the hills not serious enough to try a good motor high, and it was an unfeigned relief to reach the shelter and food of the Royal Hotel. Here, practically, ends the account of the second day of this excursion, for the Royal Hotel is comfortable, not expensive as English hotels go, and new; but mere comfort is fortunately commonplace, its novelty is rather more of an outrage than usual in this case, and the novelty of the hotel's name is an offence not to be pardoned. Here, where the modern "Royal" stands, in the very centre of the city, stood the famous "Angel" from the fifteenth century at least to the middle of the nineteenth. Local antiquaries, many and eager, rejoice in tracing the history of this celebrated hostelry, finding frequent allusions to it in the records of the Master of the Revels, for here mountebanks performed, and theatrical performances were given, and strange monsters were shown. It had the glory of paying £115 tax for thirty windows in the eighteenth century—this makes one understand the blocked windows in old houses more sympathetically than a bare mention of window tax does—and it was the great Whig House in the days when Norfolk elections were, as Mr. Walter Rye tells us, half of the history of Norfolk, the other half being concerned with trade. It is true that Mr. Walter Rye, speaking of the election of 1675, says that Sir Nevill Cattyn's party "used the 'Royal,' (then the 'King's Head,') and the other side, using a stratagem—singularly enough repeated at the same house last election, two or three years ago—ordered a great dinner there on the pretence that they might 'friendly meet and dine' with the other party, and ultimately secured the whole house as their election quarters; Cattyn, who was brought into town by four thousand horsemen, having to put up with the 'White Swan' 'at the back side of the butchers' shambles'" (*A History of Norfolk*, by Walter Rye. Elliot Stock, 1885). I prefer to pin my faith to *Norfolk and Norwich Notes and Queries*, not only because its elaborate article on the topic is evidently based on careful research, but also because its statements are not contradicted in subsequent issues, and these bear eloquent testimony to the fact that the local antiquaries of East Anglia have at least one trait in common with the antiquaries of the wider world—they contradict with freedom and dispute with endless pertinacity. Here there is no contradiction (and Mr. Rye's accuracy is by no means equal to his industry or to his love of antiquity), so it may be taken as reasonably certain that the "Royal" is on the site of the "Angel," and that the "Angel" first appeared by that name in 1578, when it was leased to one Peterson; but the property has been traced back to Mistress Katharine Dysse in the rolls of the Mayoralty Court of Norwich, and she lived early in the fifteenth century. Here, in October, 1677, Joseph Argent had "fourteen days allowed to him to make show of such tricks as are mentioned in his patent at the 'Angel.'" In 1683 "Robert Austine at ye Angel hath leave given him for a week from ys Daie to make show of the storie of Edward the 4th and lane Shore, and noe longer." In several later years Peter Dolman clearly made a great success with Punchinello or Puntionella—both forms are used. There are a score of similar entries, also of displays at the "Angel," of freaks and monstrosities, waxworks and the like. Hither fled Mr. Thomas Coke, of Holkham, father of the agriculture of Norfolk, during a Corn Law riot of 1815, escaping through the back of the house with the then Earl of Albemarle; in the "Angel" in 1794 the Duke of York stayed when on his way to Yarmouth to meet the exiled family of the Prince of Orange, and here the Duke of Wellington changed horses on his way to Gunton in 1820, receiving a hearty welcome from the citizens. From the "Angel" the Whigs sallied forth during the election of 1832, and enjoyed a glorious fight in quite the old style with the Tories in the market-place. An inn-name of such antiquity and so many associations should not have been changed. Apparently, however, the house has not changed its political colour, for it is a curious coincidence that, on the evening of 24 January, Lord Kimberley was a guest at the "Royal," and next day his son, Lord Wodehouse, won the Mid-Norfolk election. Now the Wodehouses have been Whigs ever since Whigs were, and it need not be doubted that Sir Philip Wodehouse, M.P. for Castle Rising, who died in 1623, was of much the same political temper as those of the name who came after him.

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Next morning I walked about Norwich, and I have done the like many times, but, short of writing a book on the subject, which is certainly not necessary, it is by no means easy to decide how to treat it. Norfolk has more parishes and churches in proportion to its area than any other county (730 to 2024 square miles, whereas Yorkshire to 5836 square miles has but 613, according to Mr. Rye), and of these, besides a remarkably striking cathedral, there are no less than thirty-five in Norwich alone. Norwich has a castle, its history and nature far from free of doubt; some relics of walls built by the citizens for their own safety in the time of Edward I, when they were empowered to levy a "murage" tax; an ancient Guildhall of smooth, black flint (which interested me, although it is said to have "no regularity or beauty of architecture to recommend it"); St. Andrew's Hall; the nave of an ancient Dominican church; a school partially domiciled in what is left of a Dominican convent; a fine museum containing some rare treasures of antiquity; the curious part known as Tombland; and great store of ancient houses, each one of them possessed of a history. Also, in the "Maid's Head," to be described later, it has the most alluring old inn known to me anywhere. True it is that a mayor of Norwich, conducting a royal personage on a tour of inspection, is reported to have said "this was an ancient city, Your Royal Highness, before several of the old houses were pulled down," but, while there can never be too many old houses left to be an endless delight to the antiquary, there are far too many to be noticed in a work of

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this kind. One learns without surprise, but not without satisfaction, that a society of persons interested in antiquities meets periodically for "Walks in Norwich," and it is pleasant to follow their wanderings. Now they are studying the stately cathedral, with its three magnificent gateways, and its beautiful fourteenth-century spire, and listening to its story from the lips, it may be, of Dr. Jessopp. (All I need say at this moment is that I have never known the grand simplicity of the prevailing Norman style to strike the imagination so quickly and so completely as when I first entered it at a time, as it happened, when the exceptionally perfect organ was being played in the empty church.) At another time they are investigating the Butter Hills, and learning that they take their name from John le Boteler, who gave them to Carrow Abbey; at another finding traces in a malt-house of the house of that stout Sir Robert de Salle who opposed Wat Tyler's rebellion in these parts, and was celebrated by Froissart. Here the temptation to quote a little is overpowering. The insurgents, it should be said, were led by Sir Roger Bacon and Geoffrey Lister, a dyer.

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"The reason that they stopped near Norwich was that the Governor of the town was a knight called Sir Robert Salle: he was not a gentleman by birth, but having acquired great renown for his ability and courage King Edward had created him a knight: he was the handsomest and strongest man in England. Lister and his companions took it into their heads they would make this knight their commander and carry him with them in order to be the more feared. They sent orders to him to come out into the fields to speak with them, or they would attack and burn the city. The knight, considering that it was much better for him to go to them than that they should commit such outrages, mounted his horse and went out of the town alone to hear what they had to say. When they perceived him coming they showed him every mark of respect, and courteously entreated him to dismount and talk with them. He did dismount, and committed a great folly, for when he had so done, having surrounded him, they conversed at first in a friendly way, saying, 'Robert, you are a knight, and a man of great weight in this country, renowned for your valour; yet notwithstanding all this we know who you are; you are not a gentleman, but the son of a poor mason, just such as ourselves. Do you come with us as our commander, and we will make so great a lord of you that one-quarter of England shall be under your command.' The knight, on hearing them thus speak, was exceedingly angry; he would never have consented to such a proposal; and, eyeing them with inflamed looks, answered, 'Begone, wicked scoundrels and false traitors as you are; would you have me desert my natural lord for such blackguards as you are? I had rather you were all hanged, for that must be your end.' On saying this he attempted to mount his horse, but, his foot slipping from the stirrup, his horse took fright. They then shouted out and cried, 'Put him to death.' When he heard this he let his horse go, and drawing a handsome Bordeaux sword, he began to skirmish, and soon cleared the crowd from about him, that it was a pleasure to see. Some attempted to close with him; but with each stroke he gave he cut off heads, arms, feet or legs. There were none so bold but they were afraid, and Sir Robert performed that day marvellous feats of arms. These wretches were upwards of forty thousand; they shot and flung at him such things that, had he been clothed in steel instead of being unarmed, he must have been overpowered; however, he killed twelve of them, besides many whom he wounded. At last he was overthrown, when they cut off his legs and arms, and rent his body in piecemeal. Thus ended Sir Robert Salle, which was a great pity, and when the knights and squires in England heard of it they were much enraged."

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On the very same day the party of explorers—I find they were not the Norwich Society, but the Yarmouth branch of the Norfolk Archæological Society on a pilgrimage—had visited the old Foundry Bridge, heard the story of the loss of a Yarmouth packet hard by in 1817, learned that a neighbouring yard, once known as Spring Gardens, was a resort of fashion in the eighteenth century, seen the remains of the Austin Friars' Watergate, visited the Devil's Tower, heard the history of the city walls and St. Peter's, Southgate. Dr. Bensly had read a paper at Robert de Salle's house aforesaid. Then St. Etheldreda's Church was visited, the plate was examined, and Dr. Bensly read another paper in the crypt of the House of Isaac the Jew, a Norman domestic cellar, clearly to be traced from the days of William Rufus, to a house subsequently occupied by Sir John Paston and Lord Chief Justice Coke. Next at St. Peter's, Permoungate, attention was called to all manner of details—personal, historical, and architectural; St. Andrew's and Blackfriar's halls were visited and explained; a paper was read on sundry discoveries made in excavating under the Guildhall; King Edward VI's Middle School (the one in the ancient convent) was seen; a paper was read on St. Andrew's Church; and, after dinner at the "Maid's Head," the vicar of St. Peter's, Permoungate, read a paper on the parish records. Just a few of the entries it is impossible to resist, for they are of imperishable interest.

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"1798. October 19th. Form of Prayer on the victory obtained by Admiral Sir Horatio Nelson over the French fleet off the Nile, 1st August /6."

"Nov. 12th. Form of prayer for general thanksgiving on 29 November 1/".

"1805. December 5th. Paid for a form of Prayer and Proclamation on account of the late glorious victory over the combined fleets of France and Spain by Lord Viscount Nelson off Cape Trafalgar on 21st October, 1/".

No bells were rung in Norfolk that day, for the calamity of Nelson's heroic death saddened the heart of every man in his native county. But they were rung at St. Peter's, Permoungate, merrily enough, no doubt, in 1814, when there was the entry: "April 12. Putting flag upon the steeple on Buonaparte's overthrow; beer ditto 7/6."

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Does this multiplicity of topics take away the breath, as is intended? Not without set purpose has

this very full day in the life of an archæological association been set forth with some little of particularity. It is an illustration, deliberately chosen, of the truth that a learned party, or a party desirous of becoming learned, can spend a day comfortably in a single quarter of Norwich under expert guidance and without wasting any time, and yet leave a vast number of the most interesting places and remains altogether unvisited. We have no mention here of the city walls, of Tombland, the meaning of which is still in doubt, of the castle, of the Guildhall and its treasures, of the Strangers' Hall and a score of matters besides. This is not criticism, but a preliminary to an excuse in the nature of confession and avoidance. The Yarmouth archæologists were wise in their generation in contenting themselves with a single section of the city on a single day. They had come, perhaps, before; they could come, no doubt, again. What they saw and heard in a single day is an explanation, combined with cursory mention of some of the things not seen, at once of the extraordinary fascination Norwich must exercise over a man or woman of intelligence, of the immense variety of its attractions, and of the sheer absurdity of attempting to deal with them in a part of a book with any completeness. It is better, surely, to give something of detail, if not a tenth of what is due, to a part, than to attempt the vain task of stretching the complex whole in outline. To him or her who has time I would say, "Spend a great deal of it in Norwich, and you will find no hour hang heavily."

Also it is as well to know a little of Norwich as an historical city and of its associations, of which indeed the latter are so much the more interesting that the history may almost be cast on one side. First of all the idea that Norwich was Venta Icenorum may be dismissed, with Mr. Haverfield's authority, as untenable for lack of evidence. No considerable Roman remains of clear authenticity have been found to warrant the theory. The castle is a complete puzzle. The city was ravaged by the Danes, of course, under Sweyn in 1003, and it became a diocesan centre in 1094, and has remained such ever since. It was walled, as has been stated, by the citizens; it flourished in the wool trade early. "Worsted" owes its name to an adjacent village, and Sir John Paston wrote: "I would have my doublet all worsted for worship of Norfolk." It suffered grievously in the time of the Black Death. It had its share, as we have seen, of trouble from Wat Tyler's rebellion and from Kett's rebellion in the sixteenth century, Mousehold Heath being the place of encampment on both occasions. Elizabeth, also visited it in state in 1578, and it contributed its quota towards the repulse of the Armada. From the troubles of the Civil War it escaped almost scot free, mainly because East Anglia, the home of the Eastern Counties Association, was exclusively Parliamentary, except in the case of Lynn, whereof more later. After that it is true to write of Norwich, as Mr. Walter Rye has written of Norfolk, that the history of the last three centuries is really one of elections and of trade, neither of them very alluring from our present point of view.

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NORWICH MARKET PLACE

All these things, however, are but history in the primitive sense. There is far more pleasure, and perhaps as much profit, in remembering that the editor of the *Paston Letters*, a mine of information and of interest, was Sir John Fenn, a man of Norwich; that Dean Hook, Mrs. Opie, Hooker the botanist, and Harriet Martineau were born in Norwich. These names, except perhaps that of Fenn, do not stir the imagination much in these days. We are spared from study of Miss Martineau's *Political Economy*, or of her history; and Sir John Fenn was really, as his comments in the *Paston Letters* and his omissions from them prove, a dull dog; but what man or woman of literary taste can see, as I did the first day I was in Norwich, the name Rackham on a solicitor's brass plate without remembering that the wayward genius, George Borrow, was clerk to Messrs. Simpson and Rackham, solicitors, or perhaps they were attorneys then, of Norwich, or will omit a pilgrimage to the house, still unchanged, in which he lived in Willow Lane? Then, chiefest jewel of all in the crown of Norwich is the Norwich school of painting that rose in her midst, whereof "old Crome"—his portrait is in the Guildhall—was the father and the founder. His pictures you

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may study in the National Gallery, but only in Norwich, where he was born and apprenticed to a coach and sign-painter, can you realize his gradual progress, see him in imagination producing signs for the "Lamb" and the "Maid's Head," teaching the Gurney children at Earlham, having George Vincent and James Stark as apprentices, founding, with Ladbrooke, R. Dixon, C. Hodgson, and John Thirtle, the first provincial art society, holding in 1805, and subsequent years, considerable exhibitions, joined in 1807 by John Tell Cotman. Only here can one realize the depth and justice of the pride taken by Norwich and Norwich men in their most honourable school of painting, and the eagerness with which the merchant princes of Norwich collect the examples of the school. But there are some in the Guildhall, too, as is but right.

CHAPTER III

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WINTER. NORWICH TO LONDON BY ROMAN ROAD

Crooked streets of Norwich—An appropriate epitaph—To the county surveyor of Norfolk many thanks—The London Road (Roman)—Roman roads in East Anglia—Mr. Haverfield, the greatest authority on—Some history necessary to understand paucity of Roman remains in East Anglia—The country of the Iceni—Rebellion, brief triumph, and defeat of Iceni under Boadicea—The Iceni wiped out—Their territory minor part of an unimportant province—No military stations—Frontier far to the north—Caistor-by-Norwich not a Roman fortress—Roman roads of East Anglia enumerated—*En route*—Tempting declivities and annoying cross-roads—Long Stratton—The first round flint tower—Explanation—Scole and county boundary—The "White Hart"—Worse roads in Suffolk—A church with good parvise—Difficulty of identifying villages—Ipswich to Colchester and London—Towns and scenery of route postponed—Reasons—Puzzling darkness—Familiar villages not recognized—Futile demand for tea—Romford discovered—Lights to left front—Had we lost our way?—"Stratford Empire" a sign of hope—Ichthyophagous Whitechapel—Skill in traffic—Journey ended—Observations on winter motoring—On general character of East Anglian scenery.

Norwich was left behind in mingled sorrow and regret the next morning, for, on the one hand, it seemed a sin to leave so fascinating a city practically unexplored, and, on the other, frost had given place to rain, and the rain having abated, the air was mild and warm, so that motoring promised to be entirely pleasant. However, other visits to Norwich were a certainty in the future, so off we went gaily. But, Lord!—to copy Mr. Pepys—were ever streets so strait or so prodigal of angles as these where some folk were hastening to their business at the assizes, while others, on cars garlanded with significant ribbons, were clearly bound for election work in Mid-Norfolk, where it was the polling day. Of a surety a pilot was needed, and we had one; undoubtedly, although Tilney All Saints is far away in Marshland, the epitaph appearing there, and here quoted, must have been written by a Norwich man, and by no other.

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This world's a city, full of crooked streets,
Death is the market-place where all men meet;
If life was merchandise, then men could buy,
Rich men would always live, and poor men die.

So hey for Ipswich and London, for at last we are on a straight road, which hardly curves before Ipswich is reached. The air seems soft and balmy after the frost of the day before, and, crowning blessing of all, the surface is good and even. This fact completed and rounded off by plainly legible milestones, seeming to follow one another at intervals satisfactorily short, induce us to pass an informal vote of thanks to the county surveyor of Norfolk, and the heaps of repairing material at regular intervals along the roadside call for observation on more than one ground. They are alternate heaps of blue stone, granite probably, broken into commendably small pieces, and of some whitish matter, probably chalk, doubtless used for binding. This may not be ideal road-making—in fact, it is not, for the smaller the stones are broken, and the less the use of any kind of binding material, the better the road will be in all weathers—but it must be admitted that this road was remarkably good on a morning when fairly heavy rain—it turned out that there had been much more of it further south—had followed shrewdly sharp frost.

For the good surface we had to thank modern times; for a straightness of direction, having the double advantage of saving labour and sometimes rendering a really exhilarating speed prudent, we had to thank the Roman invasion of Britain. It was the first time on this tour when passage through the air gave one that almost undefinable feeling of thrusting through liquid and cool purity—for cold is horrid but coolness is bliss—which is one of the chief pleasures of automobilism. It was also, after we had passed Caistor-by-Norwich, the first time we had been on a road that was once undoubtedly Roman.

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Here, since in the course of our wanderings we shall be upon Roman roads fairly often, and upon reputed Roman roads much more often, I am going to take the bull frankly by the horns and to dispose at once of a problem which, taken in detail, might be tedious. Nor shall any apology be offered for saying here once and for all, on the authority of Mr. Haverfield, almost all that needs to be said concerning the Roman occupation of East Anglia and of its Roman roads in the course

of this volume. The digression shall be made as brief as may be. It can, of course, be omitted by those who know the subject and by those who do not desire to learn. Both will have the consolation of knowing that there is next to nothing of the same kind afterwards. Those who do desire to learn may be informed of that which is a commonplace to everybody who has given any attention to the story of the Romans in Britain, that Mr. Haverfield knows all that is ascertainable on the subject, and at least as much as any other living man. As for the dead, none of them, since the fifth century at any rate, have had the chances we have of ascertaining the truth, although posterity may learn more, for our sources of knowledge will be available for it, and there is, or may be, a vast amount of information to be obtained still by the intelligent use of the homely spade. The antiquary, no less than the politician, appeals for spade work, especially in East Anglia.

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One or two principal facts must be borne in mind. County divisions are, of course, long Post-Roman; they have no meaning in relation to Roman Britain, which was simply a remote and not very important province of the Empire. By the end of the year A.D. 46 the Romans had overrun the south and the Midlands of England, annexing part entirely, leaving the rest to "protected" native princes. Such were the princes of the Iceni, who occupied Norfolk, most of Suffolk, and part of Cambridgeshire, and, for inter-tribal reasons, took the side of the conquerors at the outset. The Iceni rebelled twice. The first effort was puny; they were defeated, and they returned to their native princes. Then, in A.D. 61, came the affair of Boudicca, better known as Boadicea, "the British warrior queen," and so forth. It is quite an interesting little story, of which our poetic dramatists might easily have made use, and it is told shortly because, judging from personal experience, the details may not be generally familiar. Besides they are essential to an understanding of East Anglia as a field for the "prospector," so to speak, on the look-out for Roman "finds," and to know of how little account East Anglia was under the Romans is to understand the more easily why many so-called Roman remains are really not Roman at all.

The Icenian "Prince Prasutagus, dying, had bequeathed his private wealth to his two daughters and the Emperor Nero. Such was the fashion of the time—to satiate a greedy Emperor with a heavy legacy lest he should confiscate the whole fortune. Prasutagus hoped thus to save his kingdom for his family as well as a part of his private wealth. He did not succeed: the Roman Government stepped in and annexed his kingdom, while its officials emphasized the loss of freedom by acts of avarice, bad faith, and brutality against Boudicca (Boadicea), the widow of Prasutagus, her daughters, and the Icenian nobles." All this happened when the Roman Governor was away fighting in North Wales, and his absence enabled the rebellion, which Boadicea immediately headed, to gain temporary and very substantial success. Her Icenian warriors destroyed a whole Roman army, three Roman towns, and seventy thousand lives. Then Suetonius came with his trained legionaries; a single great battle destroyed the Icenian power for ever, and their whole country was laid waste. We hear no more of the Iceni in history. Their sometime territory, of little agricultural value in those days, simply became a part of the province, thinly populated, having a few country towns and villas, centres of large estates. In it we have no reason to look for traces of large military stations of early Roman date for, as we have seen, the Iceni were wiped out of existence in A.D. 61; and, after Hadrian built his wall from Carlisle to Newcastle in A.D. 124, the frontier, on which Rome always kept her soldiery, was never to the south of that wall. Some military stations there are of later date, fourth century, which were erected for the specific purpose of beating off the Saxon pirates (hence, and hence only, the phrase "the Saxon Shore") who began to raid the southern and eastern coasts of England, running up the rivers in their vessels of shallow draft. Such were Brancaster, guarding the mouth of the Wash, and Burgh Castle defending the outlets of the Waveney and the Yare, and with them we shall deal later, in their place.

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As for the roads they all radiated from London, as indeed they do still in large measure. One passed direct from London to Colchester and thence, viâ Stratford St. Mary and Long Stratton and Scole, to Caistor-by-Norwich. Such names as Stratford and Stratton, unless shown to be of modern origin, are strong evidence of Roman occupation, and at Scole, where the road crosses the Waveney and enters Norfolk, have been found some Roman remains and, perhaps, traces of a paved ford. That is the road on which we are now travelling. Caistor-by-Norwich, where we should not have seen much if we had halted—that is the worst of these Roman remains—is in all human probability *Venta Icenorum*, concerning the situation of which debate used to be carried on vehemently. What we might have seen is a rectangular enclosure of earthen mounds covering massive walls, having bonding tiles and flint facing to a concrete core, the walls themselves being visible on the north and west, and a great fosse surrounding the whole. Its area is about thirty-four acres, and there were towers at each corner. A careful analysis of the evidence leads to the sure conclusion that this was a small country town and not a great military fortress.

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This particular road crossed the Ipswich river a few miles to the north-west of Ipswich, and a branch from it ran by way of Goodenham to Peasenhall. Thence it can be traced due east to Yoxford, where it ends, so far as our certain knowledge goes. From Peasenhall another direct road can be traced as far as the Waveney, near Weybread, and no further. Other roads there are of uncertain Roman origin, but the most important of them was the Peddar's (or Pedlar's) Way, which can be traced with certainty from Barningham, in Suffolk, to Fring, about seven miles from Brancaster, and perhaps even to Holme, which is nearer, and is, indeed, one of the supports for the theory concerning the nature and origin of Brancaster, but the modern roads seldom follow its course. A Roman road was supposed to run from Caistor viâ Downham Market, and across the Cambridgeshire Fens to Peterborough, but its existence is hardly proved in Norfolk, and its origin is hardly clear to demonstration in Cambridgeshire. These are all the Roman roads which

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need concern us, and the references to Roman roads in guide-books and on Ordnance and other maps may be disregarded. This is written not at all by way of disparaging the ordinary guide-books, some of which are monuments of learning and industry, and by no means in any mood of conscious superiority. There is no credit at all in knowing that which Mr. Haverfield has made easy, and, until he co-ordinated the facts and sifted the evidence, it was practically impossible for anybody but a specialist to know the truth. He is a specialist of the true scientific temperament, eager to acquire knowledge, cautious in inference, and it is to be feared that he and his like knock a good deal of romance out of travel in England. What they leave, however, is real; and it is worth stating once and for all.

At any rate, we were on a Roman road with a sound British surface on this genial January day, for genial it was by contrast with those which had gone before; and we sped along gaily, regretting not so much that a great deal of Norfolk is hilly, as that when there came a tempting downhill stretch there was generally a village or a cross-road at the bottom to counteract the temptation. Such were the circumstances as we passed down into Long Stratton, where our eyes were delighted by the first specimen on the roadside of the round church towers of flint for which East Anglia is famous. Many theories there have been as to the origin of this peculiar form of tower, but the best of them, because the most obvious and simple, is that of Mr. J. H. Parker: "They are built round to suit the material, and to save the expense of stone quoins for the corners, which are necessary for square towers, and which often may not have been easy to procure in districts where building stone has all to be imported." Now we bade leave to hills for a while, and at Dickleburgh the floods were out in some force. Scole came next, a pleasing many-gabled village with a fair share of Scotch firs, and once a great coaching centre. It also contains the White Hart Inn, of which Mr. Rye writes: "Of course the best known inn in the county was that at Scole, built by James Peck, a Norwich merchant, in 1655, the sign costing £1057, and being ornamented with twenty-five strange figures and devices, one of which was a movable one of an astronomer pointing to the quarter whence the rain was expected. There was also an enormous reproduction of the great 'bed of Ware,' which held thirty or forty people. The inn itself is a fine red-brick building, with walls twenty-seven inches thick, and with a good oak staircase." Scole, by the way, is only just in the county of Norfolk, and there is room for doubt whether the "White Hart" was ever so famous as the "Maid's Head" at Norwich. Mr. Rye, however, is entitled to be modest in this matter, even if modesty lead him into inaccuracy, for he saved the "Maid's Head" from being modernized by buying it out and out and restoring it in perfect taste. May the motor-car bring back prosperity to the "White Hart," and may the "White Hart" merit it. It is well situated at the crossing of two trunk roads, that on which we were travelling and the Bury and Yarmouth road. In our case it was not convenient to halt.

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Here we entered Suffolk, crossing the Waveney, and a country of road surfaces far worse than those traversed up to that point. The rain had apparently fallen more heavily than it had near Norwich; but it had not rained gravel, an infamous material for roadmaking, nor could it account for the weary attitude of the tumble-down and illegible milestones. As it was, when hills were encountered the Panhard was hard tried, and the driving wheels, although they wore antiskid gaiters, revolved many times more than the distance covered by them warranted. There was simply no hold for the wheels in the dirty, porridge-like mud, concealing a crumbling sub-surface, and, now and again, although no great height above the sea had to be climbed, the gradients were almost trying, owing to the bad surface.

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Shocking bad roads, luncheon sadly deferred in consequence, and the certainty of much travelling after dark if London were to be reached that evening, may be accountable for the fact that, between Scole and Ipswich, the only point that seemed worthy of a passing note was a church on the left-hand side, I think at Yaxley, clearly visible from the road and having a good parvise over the porch. It has been written, "I think at Yaxley," in all honesty, for it is not always possible to identify on a map the village through which the car is passing, nor always easy to consult the map even when travelling at moderate speed. Blessed be the villages that proclaim their titles, even by modest boards on the post-offices, as many do in East Anglia; for by such boards is the traveller saved from the scorn poured upon him who asks of the rustic the name of his native village. This is an almost universal phenomenon, so frequent in occurrence that one is tempted to speculate as to its origin; and that may be that the normal rustic, painfully conscious of the narrow limits of his own knowledge, feels that he has encountered a fool indeed when he meets anybody who is more ignorant than himself, although it be but as to a single and quite trivial point.

The one important thing about luncheon at the "Great White Horse," thrice welcome as it was to us, was the sad fact that it did not begin until three o'clock. Of the places passed through between Ipswich and London, or of their appearance and their story at any rate, little shall be said here for two reasons, or even three. The first is that having once stayed at Colchester for ten days and more, going out motoring every day, and studying Colchester itself, full of interest, at many odd times, I deal with Colchester and excursions from it in another chapter. The second is that, after it grew dark, that is to say not long after we left Colchester behind, our journey seemed to become exciting and mysterious in a degree hardly conceivable, of which it is hoped to reproduce an impression; and the third, last, and most cogent is that this chapter grows full long already for the small portion of road of which it really treats. We passed then to Colchester viâ Copdock, Capel St. Mary, and Stratford St. Mary—here we entered Essex, and the name of the village reminded us again of the antiquity of the road—and so passing, especially after Capel St. Mary, we encountered some hills which would not have seemed despicable to a weak car. Through Colchester, its outlines rendered picturesque by the fading light, we hastened, setting

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our course for Chelmsford; but we were hardly a mile outside Colchester before the lamps had to be lit, and the darkness came down upon us like a curtain.

Now it was my turn to fail as a pilot and a guide. It has been said that I had motored round Colchester every day for ten days at least, and that not long before. I had, in fact, followed the Essex manœuvres of 1904 in a Lanchester on business, and had stayed on for pleasure afterwards; but on that occasion, except in a futile effort to see a night attack on Colchester during pitch darkness, there had never been occasion to use the lamps, and it was astonishing to find how vast a difference the darkness made. We halted at Kelvedon to procure water; we would have taken tea there, at a roomy inn of old time, if the mere mention of tea had not seemed to paralyse those who were in charge of the house. I had been through Kelvedon at least a score of times before, yet I had to ask its title. In Witham, the long and straggling congregation of houses three miles beyond, I had been interrupted at luncheon in an inn by a sharp fight between the armies of Sir John French and General Wynne; yet I could not recognize the place at all in the gloom. Chelmsford revealed itself by process of inference; there was no other considerable community to be expected at this point, and Chelmsford it must be, and was. After this all was fresh and mysterious. Ingatestone I had visited before, and passing lovely some of its environment, which we shall see by daylight some day, had been found to be. To Brentwood there had never been occasion to go, so there was no shame in failing to recognize it. On we sped a dozen miles which, what with feeling our way in the darkness and the impossibility of calculating distance accomplished,—here was one of the cases in which a recording instrument would have been useful,—seemed to be at least a score. Surely we must be approaching the environs of London, for there was a glow of light ahead, and there were railway lights to the left, and beyond them more lights still. Not a bit of it; the lights ahead turned out to be merely Romford; those on the left beforehand must have been Hornchurch. Even Romford was at last detected only by virtue of a fortunate glance at some public office. Again we were out in the open country, as it seemed in the dark, although, no doubt, the rural illusion would have vanished by daylight. After that in a short time lamps began to appear regularly, but the mystery and ignorance of us who were travellers was not less than before. The pride-destroying fact must be admitted that a glimpse of Seven Kings Station only set me thinking of the two kings of Brentford, with whom the "seven" can have no reasonable connection, that Ilford was new to me save by name, and that I began half to think it possible that (like the Turkish Admiral who, having been sent on a voyage to Malta, came back to say that the island had disappeared) we might have missed our course by many miles, and might be skirting London to the north. Multitudinous lights stretching far away over the left front, aided the illusion. Then came a reassuring advertisement, that of the "Stratford Empire," a distinct presage of the East End of London, and before very long on our left was a row of houses quite respectably old among many that were horribly modern. The old houses were, at a guess, not earlier than Queen Anne, but the mind went back further to reflect that Stratford had been Stratford-attè-Bowe in Chaucer's time, and that there his prioress had learned to speak French "ful faire and fetisly" at the Benedictine Nunnery.

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To my friend, at any rate, the environment of the Mile End Road was familiar, for he and his car had been busy electioneering there; as for me, the pangs of hunger notwithstanding, I was fascinated by the deft way in which he slipped through the traffic. Truly the motor-car is capable of marvellous dirigibility in skilful hands. Eftsoons were we in Whitechapel, breathing a murky atmosphere of naptha and fried fish, so all-pervading that, at the moment, the very thought of food seemed nauseous. It is surely one of the standing mysteries of creation where all this multitude of fishes can have their origin. So, at precisely nine o'clock in the evening we passed up Holborn out of the City of London, and, for the purposes of this book, our subsequent proceedings were of no interest.

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Let us, before closing the chapter, see what had been gained by this tour in mid-winter. Well, first it was a conviction that, although motoring in winter is a cold occupation, productive of some absolute pain, for it hurts to be really cold, and of a compensating increase of appreciation for familiar comforts, it is distinctly better than not motoring at all. This conviction I should probably retain, in spite of a constitutional dislike to cold, in all circumstances except those of heavy snow when falling, which, I am content to believe, without trying it, is all but an absolute bar to motoring. If you have a screen the snow destroys its transparency; if you have not a screen it blocks your vision and covers up your eyes or your goggles. Moreover, on high and fenceless roads, where the motorist is most liable to be overtaken by snow, the white mantle obliterates the track and renders movement full of perils. But something more substantial than this conviction was gained during these three days. They were days, be it remembered, when the face of Nature, in what may be called a tamed country, is at its worst; they had been spent in traversing districts up to that time, for the most part, unknown to me; but there remained much of East Anglia, familiar to me in summer and in winter dress, which have been purposely omitted in this effort to gain a general impression of the country. I pictured to myself the breezy uplands of the Sandringham district, the pines, the heather, and the bracken, as I had seen them many a time in summer sunshine and in stormy winter; fancy filled the brown ploughland we had passed a sea of yellow corn; I remembered the beautifully umbrageous lanes and roads of Eastern Essex, where they rarely "shroud" the elms in the barbarous fashion prevailing in Berkshire and other counties; the strange crops, whole fields of dahlias for example, which I had seen in the seed-growing districts; the heavy-laden orchards upon which, it must be admitted, Mr. Thomas Atkins levied heavy toll in 1904. So remembering I concluded, there and then, that I should find ample satisfaction in my task. But at that time I had not seen a tithe of the characteristic scenery of East Anglia. Ely, rising majestic from the plain; the very singular and impressive run along the sandy coast from Cromer to Wells-next-Sea; the road on thence to Hunstanton and Lynn; the glorious

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expanses of heath in many parts of Norfolk and Suffolk; the extraordinary hedges of fir along the roadside near Elvedon and in many another place—all these things, and a score besides—were as a sealed book to me. The book has been opened now, and its prodigal variety of infinite charm appals me, even though a substantial part of my pleasant duty has been accomplished.

CHAPTER IV

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SPRING. THROUGH THE HEART OF EAST ANGLIA

Some books consulted—"Murray" useless to motorists: proceeds by rail and observes county boundaries—Arthur Young's *Six Weeks' Tour* dull—Leland's *Itinerary* a mass of undigested notes—*The Paston Letters* full of excellence—Start from Abingdon—The six-cylinder Rolls-Royce—Freedom from trouble—Hopes and Nemesis—Abingdon to Thame, a bad cross-country route—Thame to Royston direct—The gate of East Anglia—The "Cave"—Royston's broad hint to James I—To Newmarket—Straight road and abundant game—The mystery of the Hoodie Crow—Wild creatures and motor-cars—Weather Heath—Appropriate name—Value of tree "belts"—Scotch fir hedges—Elvedon Hall and its game—Best use for such land—Enter Norfolk—Warrens and heaths—Thetford—Its story—Its Mound—Mr. Rye's theory dissipated by the learned—Windmills in East Anglia—Thomas Paine a Thetford man—Euston unvisited—Attleborough—Wymondham's twin towers—Their origin—Religious houses and popular risings—Kett's Rebellion—Curious legend on a house—Stanfield Hall—Its grim tragedy—A monograph quoted—Wholesale murders and a famous trial—Extraordinary cunning of the criminal—To Norwich and the "Maid's Head."



IPSWICH PORT

During the interval between the first and second tours in East Anglia many books, more or less promising of material, were read. Of these books it will be prudent to say a little before recording an expedition in which East Anglia was attacked, so to speak, amidships. Many of them it is needless to mention, though some will come in for passing reference. The first was Murray's Handbook to Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, and Cambridgeshire, which is well-planned, having regard to the needs of its age, and well, no less than learnedly, written; but it was published more than thirty years ago, and is therefore rather out of date as to some of its facts, and for motorists absolutely obsolete in its method. It proceeds, for the most part, county by county; its routes are railway routes; it almost ignores roadside scenery, and it enlarges, very usefully sometimes, upon the internal details of churches and of other edifices, with which the motorist can rarely be concerned; for, as it is not intelligent to hurry through the country always, so it is not motoring to "potter" at every place. The good "Murray" is really rather embarrassing to the motorist. Let me illustrate. Scole, mentioned in the last chapter, is a little more than two miles from Yaxley, on the Roman road. A brief account of Scole is found on p. 183. If Yaxley were mentioned at all (and it is worth mentioning, for the sake of its church, in a guide-book pure and simple) it would find a place in some Suffolk route, for only very occasionally does the guide-book writer allow even a railway to transport him across a county boundary. Amongst other books studied were Leland's *Itinerary*, the *Paston Letters*, in five stately quarto volumes, and Arthur Young's *Six Weeks' Tour*. These studies were not quite in vain, for they will at least show a reader what to avoid. Young's *Six Weeks' Tour* is most consumedly dull, reeking of turnips, sticky with marl, and the accounts of

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"the seats of the nobility and gentry, and other objects worthy of notice, by the author of the *Farmers' Letters*," are very rarely interesting. Some of them which are to our purpose—for of course the tour was not confined to East Anglia—shall be quoted in due season. To reading Leland, stimulated by many quaint quotations in later works, I had looked forward for years, but the second edition in nine volumes of "The Itinerary of John Leland the Antiquary, Oxford; Printed at the Theatre, for James Fletcher, Bookseller in the Turl, and Joseph Pott, Bookseller at Eton. 1745," was a grievous disappointment. The plums seem all to have been picked out by guide-book writers; few of them, if any, relate to East Anglia. The only things worthy of note were an account, perfectly straightforward, and to be quoted in its place, of the Dunmow Flitch, and some doggerel concerning the "properties of the counties of England." The material ones for us are:—

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Essex, ful of good hoswyves,

......*...*

Northfolk, ful of wyles,
Southfolk, ful of styles,
Huntingdoneshyre corne ful goode,

......*...*

Cambridgeshire full of pykes.

Leland, in fact, cannot be commended, but that is only because he planned his *magnum opus*, like many a good man before him and after, without regard to the allotted span of human life, not to speak of its uncertainty. In his "Newe Yeare's Gyft to King Henry the viii in the xxxvii Yeare of his Raygne," Leland talks of his studies, of his six years of travel, and then sketches his plan. It is "to write an History, to the which I entende to adscribe this Title, *De Antiquitate Britannica* or els *Civilis Historia*. And this Worke I entende to divide yn to so many Bookes as there be Shires yn England and Sheres and greate Dominions in Wales. So that I esteme that this Volume will include a fiftie Bookes, wherof each one severally shaul conteyne the Beginninges Encreaces, and memorable Actes of the chief Tounes and Castelles of the Province allottid to hit." Leland died when he was forty-six, but if he had lived another century he could hardly have achieved his self-imposed task, even if he had been miraculously endowed with a Mercédès; and he cherished divers other projects. As it is, his so-called *Itinerary* is, at best, but a collection of rough notes, having frequently no sort of coherence, often corrected or added to later in a distant geographical connection. In spite of a taste for antiquity it may be put down as stiff and heavy to read, and not sufficiently abounding in quaintness to repay the trouble of the reader.

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The *Paston Letters* on the other hand, are the best of reading, giving a wonderfully vivid idea of life in East Anglia at a singularly troublous period, and there will be occasion to quote them more than once. The edition by the worthy Sir John Fenn, stately as it is, and a joy to handle, is far from being the best. Posterity owes to him a deep debt for rescuing the letters from oblivion, but he omitted as uninteresting precisely the little fragments upon private and domestic affairs which we value most now in later editions. His notes, too, prove him to have been a rather dull dog and lacking in a sense of humour. Sometimes he scents impropriety where there is clearly none, at others he misconstrues the most obvious badinage. Thus, where John Paston is addressed in the phrase, "Wishing you joy of all your ladies," Fenn suggests a reference to the Virgin Mary, Heaven knows why. Still, Fenn rescued the letters, and the latest edition—far more complete than his—is at once one of the most entertaining and valuable of historical documents and essential to the right understanding of life in old Norfolk. In fact, the *Paston Letters* is one of the few really old books which a man not too studiously inclined may not prudently be contented to take as read. It is vastly entertaining, but, it must be said, it is not for the young person. A spade was not called a horticultural implement in those days, and there are many spades, and some knaves of spades too, in the *Paston Letters*.

Fortified with this literary foundation, and a good deal more of minor importance, I left my Berkshire home near Abingdon on 9 March in a 30-h.p. Rolls-Royce car, six-cylindrical and equipped with every luxury in the shape of glass-screens and a cape hood, and driven by Mr. Claude Johnson. For companions we had my two daughters, and for assistance, if it were needed, a mechanic. As it happened there was not a particle of trouble with tires, engine, or apparatus of any kind during the 300 miles and more of this expedition, and we might have dispensed quite well with the mechanic, and with his weight. Indeed, at the end of the little tour, and for that matter after the next on another car, arose a feeling that the days of the uncertainty of motor-cars were over. Need it be said that Nemesis was in waiting for this sanguine feeling, and that, before my "travelling days were o'er" in East Anglia, one of those extraordinary runs of misfortune came, which, in motoring more than in any other pastime, justify the sayings that troubles never come singly, that it never rains but it pours? It is perhaps wise to make this statement now, for a record of motoring wherein all was plain sailing—the metaphor is hardly mixed, for there is kinship between the motion of a sailing craft running free and that of a car in good tune—might run the risk of being dull. How our troubles were turned into a positive pleasure, at the time as well as in retrospect, by the skill, patience, and good humour of this same Mr. Claude Johnson, shall be told in its proper place in another chapter.

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One thing, however, may be said by way of preliminary to the account of this particular tour. There was much controversy at the beginning of 1905 upon the question whether the movement of a six-cylinder petrol car is, or is not, more luxurious than that of a four-cylinder car of first-rate

design and construction. A prolonged match, not entirely free from flukes, the bane of motoring trials, has been held by way of attempt to decide the issue; and it has ended in favour of six cylinders, as illustrated by the identical car in which this tour was taken. The controversy will probably go on for ever, none the less, for it is the old case of *de gustibus* which can never be settled, and it is all but impossible to compare memories of kindred sensations felt at different times. Who can say, for example, which cigar, glass of old wine, sail on a strong breeze, gallop over the Downs, run in a first-rate motor-car, dive into cool water, which—almost what you will, so long as it be one of the pleasures classified by old Aristotle as coming into being through the touch—was absolutely the best of his life? Without scientific certainty, however, there may be strong conviction, and mine is that a good six-cylinder, whether Rolls-Royce or Napier, runs more smoothly than any four-cylinder car, and I have tried nearly all the best of them. In fact, there is very little to choose in point of smooth running, if indeed there be anything to choose at all, between it and a White steam car, used on another East Anglian tour. Tried by the, to me, infallible touchstone of my own spine, a six-cylinder is a very little, but still distinctly, more luxurious than the best four-cylinder car; but this is not to say that there are not a round dozen of four-cylinder cars on the market which make their passengers as comfortable as any man, or even delicate woman, can reasonably wish to be in this world.

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We started just after ten, on a windy and rainless morning, in an atmosphere giving beautifully clear views of distant objects, and thereby raising some reasonable apprehensions for the morrow among the weather-wise. Our route lay outside my present manor until Royston was reached, for it was through Dorchester, Thame, Aylesbury, Ivinghoe, Dunstable, Luton, Hitchin, and Baldock; and the temptation to describe some of it, especially the run along the Chilterns, is strong, but it must be resisted. One observation, however, must be made. From Thame onwards, in spite of the tendency of our road system to radiate from London obstinately as in Roman times, much as our railways do, and as if cross-country travelling were not a thing to be encouraged, there was little reason to complain of want of directness in the road. But to journey from Abingdon to Thame it is necessary to go round two sides of a rough but large triangle, whether the route chosen be through Oxford, distant six miles, or through Dorchester and Shillingford, which is rather longer. In either case the traveller has been compelled to go a long way out of his true course, and from the turning point to Thame is about the same distance in both cases. To Royston the distance is, as nearly as may be, seventy miles, and the last part of the run, where we followed the north-west edge of the Chilterns, cutting in and out of Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, and Cambridgeshire in bewildering succession, was very exhilarating. A pretty sight too were the Chilterns, with their swelling undulations of down turf, marked out near Royston for galloping grounds and showing here and there, in the form of a flag and a carefully tended green, that the golfer has found his way to Royston. Indeed, this close down turf, this "skin" of grass catching the full force of northerly and westerly gales, is suitable to the golfer's needs as any save that of seaside links.

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At Royston we found an ancient and interesting inn, actually bisected by the ancient boundary line of Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire, a kindly welcome, most benign bulldogs, and last, but by no means least, a glorious pie. The inn is there still no doubt; so probably are the bulldogs; so no doubt is the kindly welcome; but the pie vanished in a manner almost miraculous. It came in an ample dish, steaming, succulent, the crust browned to a nicety. In a surprisingly short time the dish went out, empty, almost clean as Jack Sprat's and his spouse's platter, and its exit was accomplished by a gurgle of suppressed laughter from without. Was there something of a rueful tone in that laughter? Perhaps there was. He who would feed after March motorists have eaten their fill had best send in to them a gigantic pasty, else will he go hungry.

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At Royston, the gate of East Anglia, we strolled about a little, finding it to be just a quiet town of the country—there is no sufficient reason to believe it to be really ancient according to the standard of antiquity in these islands—and the intersecting point of two great roads, that followed by us, which went on to the eastward, and the road between Hertford and Cambridge. Here, according to the antiquaries of yesterday, Icenhilde Way and Erming Street crossed one another. The antiquaries of to-day question the Icenhilde Way so far east as this, laugh at the philology which would make Ickleton evidence of its existence, and make nothing of the authority of the learned Dr. Guest. Perhaps they would treat with more respect Erming Street, said to have led from Royston to Huntingdon, and to cross the Ouse at Arrington, for there appears to be sound evidence that Edgar granted to the monks of Ely the Earningaford, or ford of the Earnings, or fenmen. Walking eastward along the spacious street we found first the turning for Newmarket, which was of present interest, and, quite by accident, a notice "To the cave," leading us into a back yard and to a locked gate, and provoking a little later research. We couldn't get in, of course. The custodian, if there be one, was at his sacred dinner, as everybody in Royston seemed to be; but Royston struck us as the kind of place in which an obsolete notice might hang unmoved so long as the fibre of wood would support its covering of paint. Investigation in books showed the "cave" to have been discovered by a fluke in 1472, but the "cave," like a good many others here and elsewhere, seems to have been merely an ancient boneshaft or rubbish pit, afterwards excavated sufficiently to be used as a subterranean chapel. Hence the sketches of saints carved on the chalk walls which, candidly, I should like to have seen close at hand.

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Royston is quiet enough in all conscience now, and it is doubtful whether the motor-car, rapidly as it increases in the land, will bring much prosperity to it, although it is placed at important cross-roads. Cambridge is but 12-1/2 miles distant, and Cambridge is a good deal more interesting than Royston, as well as a more certain find for refreshment, for pies may not always be to the fore. Being at the cross-roads, however, Royston is likely to see as much life passing

through its midst and to like it as little as it did in the days of James I. Nay, it may even like the bustle less, for more dust will go with it. James, who really was an ardent, if not a mighty, hunter, planted a hunting-box near Royston, his particular object being probably to course the Chiltern hares—for this is a first-rate coursing country, possessed, as is most down-land, of remarkably stout hares; and, when hares are stout, the open prospect of the downs makes coursing a very pretty sport. Deer, of course, there may have been; but the country does not look like them; and as for the fox, of whom the moderns have written and sung, "Although we would kill him we love him," he was vermin in the days of King James. To hunt the hare either with greyhound or harrier, on the other hand, was a sport much loved of our kings even in Saxon times, and in Downland of Berkshire, not dissimilar to the Chilterns, there are examples of manors held on the condition that the tenant should keep a pack of harriers for the king's hunting. Whether the Royston folk had to keep hounds for the king is not clear, but "Murray" has unearthed a lovely story of their catching his favourite hound and attaching to his collar a scroll bearing the words "Good Mr. Jowler, we pray you speak to the king, for he hears you every day and so doth he not us, that it will please his Majesty to go back to London, for else the country will be undone; all our provision is spent already, and we are not able to entertain him longer." Here was a new way of conveying a broad hint. "Baby Charles" visited Royston twice, immediately before his standard was raised at Nottingham, and later as a prisoner.

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The distinguishing feature of the road from Royston to Newmarket, which crosses over the south-eastern end of the Gog Magog Hills, is its undeviating straightness. It is plain from the map that it curves gently here and there, having indeed almost a sharp turn to the left before it ascends the Gog Magog Hills—which would be of little account as hills elsewhere than near a fenny country—but the general impression left was of wide prospects, Scotch firs, belts planted for partridge driving, and abundant game birds. The feeling that this is an ideal shooting country, and not half a bad one for motoring, was at its strongest when Six-Mile Bottom, famous in the history of sport with the gun, was reached. It was a day, as luck would have it, on which a bird-lover could take rapid observations of bird-life as he swept along, for there were no vehicles to distract him on the empty road, and there was no chance of his coming upon them unawares. Partridges we saw galore, cock-pheasants strutting on the ploughland, confident that they were safe from the gun by law till the next October, and probably knowing quite well—for there are few things a wily old cock-pheasant does not know—that there would be no serious danger, away from boundary hedges, until the leaf was clear in November. Less handsome than the cock-pheasants, but more interesting, because less familiar to my eyes, were the hooded crows, in their sober suits of drab-grey and glossy black, walking about in perfect amity with the pheasants. This bird is a grey mystery. In shape and dimensions he is identical with the carrion crow; carrion crows and hoodies (or Royston crows) will interbreed on occasion; their nests and eggs are of identical situation, structure, colour, and shape. Their common habits include a partiality for young birds and young rabbits as well as for carrion—I have heard a rabbit scream, looked in the direction of the noise, shot a carrion crow which rose, and found it lying within a couple of yards of a half-grown rabbit, quite warm, and with its skull split—and yet nobody knows for certain whether the two species are distinct or not. The black crows may be migrants; the grey crows certainly are. They come over to the East Coast in hordes in the autumn, mostly from Russia, where they also interbreed with the carrion crow. They come inland a little, and I have seen one or two in Berkshire, but west of Berkshire they are certainly very exceptional in England and Wales, though they are quite common and even breed in Scotland and Ireland. In fact, they are birds, of whom one would like to know more, attired in a Quakerish habit according ill with their disposition. Still, when you have no game coverts of your own in the vicinity, it is good to see them circling about over these wide spaces near Royston, and to remember that they used to be called Royston crows. The marshmen call them Danish crows also, and it is a great pity when ornithologists omit to specify these local names of birds. Hoodie, Danish crow, Royston crow are identical, and each of them at least as interesting as *Corone cornix*. They are all, as Mr. Rowdler Sharpe says, ravens in miniature, but it is open to doubt whether, as pets, they would be equally amusing in their tricks. We saw them in great numbers as we swept along, and, like many wild things, they took no notice of the car. It is strictly irrelevant, of course, but it may be interesting to say that, since these words were written, I have found that even a Highland stag is not afraid of a motor-car, which shows a Highland stag to have far more sense than some reasoning men.

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Newmarket we have seen before, and since this time also it was passed without a halt, whereas on a later visit we stopped for a while, it need not detain us now. Our road, which kept to the high ground to the south-east of Mildenhall Fen, took us first through characteristic environs of Newmarket not seen on the former tour, past endless training grounds, trim houses and carefully-built stables, and later through the wild heaths known as Icklingham and Weather Heath, the latter actually 182 feet above the sea-level. Right well, no doubt, that last-named heath has earned its name, for it is easy to imagine, and much more comfortable to imagine than to feel, how a gale from the north or west would have swept across the fens over that heath. For that matter there is not a single eminence of more than 200 feet between Weather Heath and the gales from the North Sea, so the east wind swept it too. Here the hand of man has wrought a great and beneficial alteration in the features of nature. Mention has been made before of the belts, clearly planted for partridge driving, to be seen in some parts of East Anglia, and they must be noticed more particularly a few miles farther on, when we pass Elvedon. The landowners who planted them, and the pheasant coverts, have improved the scenery and their own shooting at the same time. They cannot, perhaps, be credited with absolute and unalloyed altruism. And soon, on this naturally bleak upland, the road was sheltered on either side by close hedges of fir, trimmed

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to a height of ten feet or so, such as I never saw before, nor have seen since, out of Norfolk. They cannot be meant for screens to conceal the guns from the driven birds, for the British public has to stand a good deal of shooting in illegal proximity to high roads, but it would hardly tolerate permanent arrangements to that end, even in Norfolk or Suffolk, where game is sacrosanct. There can be nothing of this kind here, nor, if there were, would it have been necessary to plant both sides of the road. No—these hedges, charming because of their quaintness, can have been planted in no other spirit than that of humanity, in the widest sense of the word. They break the monotony of the landscape, and that is something; close and impervious, they must break also the force of the wind and must form an effectual barrier to the slashing rain that the wind sends with terrible force before its breath. They are an unmixed blessing, a wonderful improvement to the conditions of wayfaring, and it only remains to be hoped that there may arise no county surveyor who, using the arbitrary discretion given to him by law, shall decree that these merciful shelters be laid low in the season of the year when his word is law.

On we glided with supreme ease—the whole distance from Newmarket to Thetford being eighteen miles, but the "going so good," as foxhunters would say, that distance counts for little—and the evidence of the cult of St. Pheasant was more and more conspicuous. Were we not drawing near to Elvedon Hall—an Italian house built in 1876 for the Maharajah Dhuleep Singh, now the property of Lord Iveagh—and have not fabulous "bags" been long a tradition of Elvedon Hall estate? Let it not be supposed for a moment that this fact is mentioned by way of pandering to the prejudice of protesting Radicals, or of joining in the chorus of ignorant invective against game-preservation, now happily seldom heard in the land. Looking at this bleak upland, having regard to the recent and the probable future history of British agriculture, and, if a personal allusion be permissible, to the well-known character of the present owner of Elvedon Hall, it is plain that this ground could not be better employed than as a game preserve, that as such it probably produces more food and gives more employment than if it were in the hands of farmers, and that, if this were not so, Lord Iveagh would not be the man to preserve game. There is no East Anglian grievance here, and East Anglia certainly feels none. If there be any grievance at all it is that some of the money primarily made on the banks of the Liffey is spent in East Anglia; but, no doubt, much of it comes indirectly from East Anglia also, and there is no sort of doubt that Lord Iveagh does his duty, and much more than his duty, by Ireland as well as by England, more completely than most men.

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Leaving Elvedon behind we sped to Thetford, passing, a mile or so beyond the gates of Elvedon, across the county boundary and out of Suffolk into Norfolk. The character of the scenery remained unchanged. We were in a land of heaths, barren and pleasing, and of rabbit warrens, some of them very ancient and famed for the quality of the skins and fur of the rabbits reared among them. Arthur Young found this country from Northwold to Thetford, and again from Thetford to Ingham, "an uncultivated sheep-walk," and as he made no suggestion for its improvement generally (in spite of the success achieved in the neighbourhood by "one of the best farmers in England [Mr. Wright]," through the use of marl, which was not even "the fat soapy kind)," it may be taken that the case is a fairly hopeless one. The rabbits probably pay as well as anything else would, and we have to thank them, and the sterility of the soil, for the preservation of a fine tract of wild and open land, and for the sense of freedom in passing through it.

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As for Thetford, its motto certainly ought to be "Ichabod." There are few places in England, possessed in their time of a substantial reputation, whose glory has departed more completely. It was the scene of a fierce battle between Dane and Saxon; it was the second city in Norfolk in point of importance; it had a mint so late as the days of Henry II; its priory was founded by Roger Bigod, but is now an uninteresting ruin; it had twenty churches, five market-places, and twenty-four main streets in the time of Edward III; it was the diocesan centre of East Anglia for nineteen glorious years, from 1075 to 1094. Also it has always had its vast earthwork, commonly known as the "mound," commonly believed also to be of enormous antiquity, Roman at the latest, and by virtue of it Thetford has been identified with the Roman Sitomagus. It is a little hard that, when all the rest of the glory of Thetford is gone, even the Mound, which without excavation is totally devoid of interest, should have the glamour taken away from it and that investigators on scientific principles have exploded the Sitomagus bubble. Mr. Rye says:—

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"It has been guessed to be Sitomagus, and certainly many signs of Roman occupation have been found here. But the great 'Castle Mound,' steep and high, with its grass-grown sides, so difficult even in times of peace to climb up, is the chief object of interest in the town. There are no traces of buildings on it, and the platform at the top is so small that the generally received theory that it was thrown up as a refuge against the Danes is obviously untenable. The labour and energy necessary to create such a mound would have been enormous, and surely would have been expended in comparatively recent times, such as those in which the Pirate Danes harried our country, to more practical use. That the mound is mainly artificial I have little doubt; but whether it was a burial mound or not cannot now be discovered without deeper excavations than are likely to be allowed."

Considering that the earthwork is a hundred feet high and a thousand feet in compass it would certainly be rather a large-sized burial mound. Let us look at what Mr. Haverfield says. He relegates Thetford to an index of the "principal places where Roman remains have been found, or supposed, in Norfolk," but does not dignify it by a position in the text, which is confined to "places where vestiges of permanent occupation have been found." The "finds" at Thetford have been first Roman coins, according to Sir Thomas Browne and Blomefield. But coins alone do not carry us far.

"Hoards of coins have their own value for the students of Political Economy, since they often reveal secrets in the history of the Roman currency. But they do not so often illustrate the occupation or character of the districts in which they are found. Sometimes they occur in the vicinity of dwellings, buried—for instance—in a back garden, which the owner had constantly under his eye. But they occur no less often in places remote from any known Romano-British habitation; they have been lost or purposely hidden in a secluded and unfrequented spot."

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This is a general remark on the test applicable to "sporadic finds," such as those at Thetford, which are banished to the index. There another sporadic "find," which if it had been real would have conveyed more meaning, receives very short shrift. "A lamp is said by Dawson Turner to have been found at Thetford in 1827 under the Red Mound, and the lamp he figures is now in Norwich Museum." That sounds promising, does it not? Men might bury hoards of money in odd places and forget them, or meet their deaths before they unearthed them. They would hardly be likely so to conceal their household lamps. Alas for this pretty piece of foundation for an imaginative structure, "the curator tells me it was brought from Carthage, and presented by Edward Stanley, Bishop of Norwich, and it certainly has the look of a foreign object." Finally, "Thetford has been called Sitomagus by Camden and others, and also Iciani; but it does not seem to be a Roman site at all; its earthworks are post-Roman. Camden's 'river Sit or Thet' is a piece of characteristically bad etymologising."

The learned scholar deigns to write no more than this of Thetford, and, being concerned only with Romano-British Norfolk, sets up no positive theory. But why was the Mound built? Exit Mr. Rye's *à priori* view, that it could not have been built in such comparatively recent times as those of the Danish invasions, because the energy and labour would have been expended to better purpose in those times, for the Mound is post-Roman. It may have been raised between the date of the Roman "departure," in 410, and that at which the kingdom of East Anglia was established. This is one of the most delightful chapters of history, to a persistently boyish mind, because next to nothing is known about it. There is no reason to suppose that the Romanized Britons remaining in East Anglia, as it was to be, welcomed the Saxons with open arms, and every reason to believe that the Saxons were a thoroughly barbarous crew. The Britons may have raised it against them. Or again, it may have been raised by the Saxons against the Danes, as, in the opinion of Dr. Jessopp, were Castle Rising, Castle Acre, Mileham, Elmham, and the Norwich Mound. The works at some of these places are certainly post-Roman, and at none of them is there clear evidence of Roman occupation; in fact, the chances are that they were all of later date; and the chances are also that there was a great deal more fighting in these parts between 410 and 800 A.D. than the muse of history has chosen to reveal. But this problem is glanced at later. As for Mr. Rye's *à priori* view that the exertion would have been better employed in those days, why, bless the man, Offa's Dyke was made, from the mouth of the Dee to that of the Wye, late in the eighth century, and it is a Cyclopean work.

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The Mound is "wrop in mystery," that is all about it, and a heap of earth whereof the meaning is not known to the learned is a precious dull spectacle. So, to tell the plain truth, is Thetford. To us the most interesting facts it provided were a substantial tea at the "Bell," itself quite old enough to please. While tea was in preparation we saw quite as much of Thetford as any reasonable man could wish to see; when tea came it was marked by the appearance of weird things in the nature of tea-cakes, combining something of the toughness of the muffin and the texture of dry toast, not very new dry toast, with the shape of the crumpet. The other memory of Thetford is of a strange old man, having toy windmills for sale and attached to every part of his person, after the fashion of those street musicians who, by dint of ingenious contrivances in string, can play, or at any rate make a noise with, some half-dozen rude instruments at the same time. This wandering toy seller was a blessing in disguise. He was, and is, a providential reminder that windmills, here, there, and everywhere, are striking objects in the East Anglian landscape. Travelling eastward from the Midlands one sees them as far west as Buckinghamshire, and there not in the Chilterns only, and in East Anglia proper their name is legion. In or out of working order—and in a country of much wind travelling fast, of water moving, as a rule, very slowly, they are mostly in working order—they add picturesque character to the landscape. Moreover, in beauty they have a distinct advantage over the watermill. The latter may be, often is, exquisite at close quarters; its foaming stream, its dripping and moss covered wheel, its gleaming pond with willow-shadowed or elder-girt bank, are among the loveliest objects in England when seen at close quarters. Your windmill, on the other hand, must in the nature of things be placed either on an eminence or in a wide and open space. Not so beautiful, perhaps, only perhaps, at close quarters, as the watermill, it is still more than pleasing, and it can be seen for miles. It is as a beacon on the coast which the mariner can see for many leagues before he passes it, as the motor-car passes the windmill, at a safe distance. Constable, it is worth while to remember, learned some of his skill in an East Anglian watermill.

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It was only afterwards that, consulting the faithful "Murray," I learned that Thetford had been the birthplace of Thomas Paine, "the infamous author of *The Age of Reason*," and that the house in which he was born was standing thirty years ago. It would not, perhaps, have been very interesting to discover whether it was still standing; but it was decidedly quaint to learn that Tom Paine was the son of a Quaker staymaker. Could there be anything more incongruous? That a Quaker should be the father of Thomas Paine was bad enough; that a Quaker should make stays—let us hope he never measured his fair customers for them, but made them in stock sizes—was monstrous. Yet on investigation in other books it turned out to be a true story, and from the investigation came an awakened memory, which others may need also, that Thomas Paine was a really influential personage among the founders of American Independence.

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During tea and the consumption of the strange tea-cakes (which may, after all, have been slices of the traditional Norfolk dumpling, more or less toasted) rose a suggestion that we might turn southward for three or four miles, cross the Waveney, enter Suffolk again, and take a motorist's view of Euston Park. It would be the same Euston Park, planted with many of the same trees, grown bigger, which surrounded the house, when Lord Ossory heard the thunder of guns from the east and rode off, as has been recounted before this, to be a spectator of the great sea-fight in Sole Bay. It would be the same house, too, for it was acquired by the first Duke of Grafton, with the property, by marrying Lord Arlington's daughter in the days of Charles II, and the Dukes of Grafton from time to time hold it still. The decision not to make a detour was reached partly because, as we meant to make Norwich by way of Attleborough and Wymondham, it would have involved a return by the same road as that taken on the outward journey, and partly because the descriptions were unpromising. The reference here is distinctly not to the description in "Murray." "It is a large, good, red-brick house, with stone quoins, built by Lord Arlington in the reign of Charles II, and without any pretensions to beauty, except from its position in a well-timbered and well-watered park." That description, such is the perversity of human nature, raised a suspicion that the house might, if it were visible from the road, turn out to be a very satisfying structure, conveying that idea of spacious comfort and substance which is completely lacking in many a more imposing "mansion." Nor was I moved by the fact that Walpole wrote "the house is large and bad," for it might have been possible to disagree with Walpole, of Strawberry Hill, on a question of taste. But Walpole went beyond matters of mere opinion. "It was built by Lord Arlington, and stands, as all old houses do, for convenience of water and shelter in a hole; so it neither sees nor is seen." That settled the question. Euston might, or might not, be one of the stately homes of England, whose owners permit them to be inspected by strangers on stated days; this March day might have been such a day; but not even the prospect of seeing "Euston's watered vale and sloping plains," or some fairly interesting portraits, or Verrio's frescoes, would have induced me to avail myself of the privilege, if indeed it had existed. I know what the legitimate inmates of a great house feel on those occasions. Besides, motorists are unpopular in ducal parks, and with good reason. It is absolutely true that a duke, riding a bicycle in his own park, has been abused, coarsely, violently, and recently, by a motorist who was enjoying that park by the duke's grace. That park is now closed to motorists, and no wonder; and the case is not exceptional in character.

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So we glided onward—gliding is the true word for the onward movement of a good car—over the open ground of Croxton Heath first, then past sundry villages, not lying close up to the high road, between the houses of Attleborough, and noticed, without halting, Attleborough's fine church. After this, for quite a long while, there were no more villages, and then, in front of us and dominating the view, rose a huge church, having two towers, one at the west end. It stirred memory of pleasant browsings in *Norfolk and Norwich Notes and Queries*. This could be, and in fact was, none other than Wymondham, pronounced Windham, where the Benedictine monks and the parishioners quarrelled over the parish church, which had been appropriated to the abbey. So bitterly did they quarrel that the east end, transepts, and part of the nave were walled off for the monks—they certainly took the lion's share—in 1410, the parishioners being relegated to a portion of the nave; and there, at the west end, they built them a tower and hung bells in 1476.

A mighty religious house was this of Wymondham, entitled to all wrecks between Eccles, Happsburgh, and Tunstead, and to a tribute of two thousand eels every year from Elingley. This tribute, we may be sure, was paid in Lent, for it is pretty clear from the *Paston Letters* that, while herrings were the stock food of the days of fasting, eels were the luxury that made them tolerable. Mistress Agnes Paston writes to her husband in London that she has secured the herrings—from Yarmouth, no doubt, as she lived hard by at Caister-by-Yarmouth—but that the eels are delayed, which appears to be accounted very sad. Just because this was a mighty religious house at Wymondham it is not surprising to find that Kett, of the famous rebellion, was a Wymondham man. Here, unfortunately, it is necessary to be at partial variance with Mr. Walter Rye. He writes: "Lingard, as of late Professor Rogers, has said that Kett's Rebellion had a religious origin; the former so writing from religious bias, the latter from ignorance." That is rather a brusque way of putting things, for, although Lingard, as a Roman Catholic, was a little apt to think too ill of the effects of Henry VIII's policy towards the religious houses, Professor Rogers deserved to be spoken of with more respect. Enclosures were, of course, the main cause for Kett's Rebellion in 1549, and Kett had a private grudge to avenge against one Sergeant Flowerdew at the outset. But, as a Wiltshire labourer once said to me, "where there's stoans there's carn," so, where there have been great religious houses in England, the rebellious spirit manifests itself in the pages of history before and after those houses came to an end. At Abingdon and at Bury St. Edmunds—I quote the two places of which the story happens to be fresh in my memory—conflicts were incessant, and there is no reason to doubt that the state of things was the same at Wymondham. The religious houses had become, with exceptions of course, corrupt within and extortionate without the gates. They were oppressors of the poor, whose best friends they had once been; there was no limit to the variety of the tolls they demanded. They were by far the largest landowners in the country. All this had ceased but a very few years before Kett's Rebellion, but the spirit which it had created, the very men in whom that spirit had been raised by extortion and injustice, were very much alive. If Kett's Rebellion had not such a directly religious origin as Lingard supposed, it is more than likely that it was indirectly due to the spirit of unrest and discontent which always arose in the vicinities of religious houses. Indeed, the very success of Henry VIII's stern treatment of the monasteries is proof positive that he was supported by popular opinion. As for the enclosures, some may have been made by the new lords of manors; others, and probably the vast majority, had been made by the grasping "religious." Moreover, the

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petition sent up to the king when the rebellion was at its height contained express allusions to religious grievances. It asked "that parsons shall be resident, and all having a benefice worth more than £10 a year shall, by himself or deputy, teach the poor parish children the catechism and the primer." Not a very outrageous demand surely; and if we scan the material grievances complained against—establishment of numerous dovecots, and claims to exclusive rights of fishing, for example—we see that they are essentially the grievances which the religious houses had originated. How Kett and his men marched in due course to Mousehold Heath, on the outskirts of Norwich, the grievous fighting which followed in and about Norwich, how they killed Lord Sheffield by the Palace Gates at a spot marked to this day by a stone with an S on it, how Warwick, after many reverses, finally defeated Kett, who was hanged, drawn, and quartered, shall not be told at length in this volume. These things are an essential part of the history of England; they are far and away the most exciting events in the history of Norwich, and, since they cannot be dealt with fully here, they are best passed over with this slight mention.

At Wymondham is, or was, an old house having a very curious inscription, "*Nec mihi glis servus, nec hospes hirudo*," which is not quite free from difficulty even as it stands, for a verb is left to be understood, and it may be "*sit*" or "*est*." In the one case the guest hopes, in the other the house boasts, the servant to be no dormouse and the host no leech. Things were worse when somebody read *hirudo* as *hirundo*, though one might make attractive translations of that too. But we cannot linger over that when we are close to the scene of a tragedy far more recent, and therefore a good deal more affecting, than that of Kett's Rebellion. Stanfield Hall is close to Wymondham. It is the reputed birthplace of Amy Robsart, who may or may not have been murdered at Cumner—Lady Warwick says she was not—and Stanfield Hall was certainly the scene of a series of remarkably cold-blooded murders in times which may still be counted recent. Prefacing a frank confession that my personal interest in murders is small, which seems to be a misfortune judging by the enraptured attention they attract from many intelligent and cultivated persons, I endeavour to give some account of these murders partly because I desire to please, partly because a very old friend, now dead, devoted a vast amount of attention to them. His meticulous care in studying the *locus in quo* may serve to compensate for my lukewarmness as a student of homicide; nay more, his interest in the subject seems to have been infectious, for, having read his monograph of some five-and-twenty octavo pages on the subject since the foregoing sentence was penned, I am now distinctly conscious of being keen on the subject and of finding interest in it.

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Truth to tell, it was not the first time of reading. The late Sir Llewelyn Turner, of Carnarvon, was one of those rare men who, inhabiting remote corners of the provinces, escape provincialism and retain intelligent appreciation of public affairs and a sympathetic interest in all sorts of events. In the year 1902, having committed to paper his memories and opinions upon a large number of subjects, and being all but eighty years old, he entrusted me with the task of preparing his MS. for the printers; and he had the satisfaction of seeing himself in print, to the extent of some five hundred pages with illustrations, before he died. Among the miscellaneous chapters of the book is one entitled "Stanfield Hall and its Terrible Tragedies." It is, of course, far too long for quotation, but it is also a treasure-house of nice points, some of them perhaps new even to precise students of the history of crime.

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"In the year 18— I accepted an invitation from my valued friend, connection, and old schoolfellow, Colonel Boileau, to pay him a visit in this interesting old moated house, the scene of fearful murders and bloodshed, viz., the murders of Mr. Isaac Jermy, the Recorder of Norwich, of his son Mr. Isaac Jermy Jermy, and the shooting of Mrs. Jermy Jermy, the son's wife, and her maid, by probably one of the greatest scoundrels that ever disgraced humanity, James Bloomfield Rush." The quotation will serve to show that my old friend's literary method is too leisurely and minute to justify the repetition of the story in his own words. Truth to tell he rambled somewhat and was not unduly particular about the sequence of events. Still it may be possible after study of his monograph, to produce a narrative of this crime having something more of freshness than would follow from reference to the text-books of crime; for these murders, it must be remembered, were on a colossal scale, and the case, although simple enough in its legal aspect, has a place among the celebrated crimes by virtue of its wholesale character, its beginnings in long-planned roguery, and its culmination in thorough-paced brutality. The foundations of the programme of crime which was finished on the 28th of November, 1848, were laid many years before, and it is a curious study in the wickedness of which human nature is capable to trace the evolution of the scheme.

In the second half of the eighteenth century the then head of the Jermy family held Stanfield Hall and its estate as, probably, his predecessors of the same name had held it for centuries. Jermy is one of the Norfolk names of early date for which Mr. Walter Rye claims a Danish origin, and he was probably a Jermy (or letters to that effect) who, in Tudor times, built Stanfield Hall, and moated it round and about. At any rate a Jermy held it when our story opens. A poor relation of the name sold his reversionary interest in the estate to a Mr. Preston, and Mr. Preston came into the estate, "in the shoes of" the poor relation, and was able to settle down in Stanfield Hall. Outside the lodge gates lay the Home Farm, having James Rush for its tenant, a plausible fellow, it would seem, but a whole-souled rascal at heart. Ascertaining that his landlord was going to London by coach on a given day, Rush engaged the three remaining inside places for himself, and so agreeable did he contrive to make himself to the old man on the journey that he returned to Stanfield not merely as tenant of the Home Farm, but also as accredited agent of the estate. As such he had access to Mr. Preston's title-deeds, which he stole before Mr. Preston died.

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So Mr. Preston the elder slept with his fathers, if he had any, and Mr. Isaac Preston his son reigned in his stead, Rush remaining agent and tenant of the Home Farm; and, as Mr. Isaac Preston was Recorder of Norwich, the beautiful old house within easy access of the great town suited his needs admirably. He settled down in it at once, and later, as we shall see, he began to think of adding to the estate. When exactly the Recorder discovered that the title-deeds were missing my authority does not relate, but probabilities seem to point to an early discovery, coupled with a suspicion, which was perhaps difficult to bring home, that Rush had annexed them. That would give Rush a hold over the Recorder, and it is only on that hypothesis that the Recorder's subsequent conduct in relation to Rush can be explained. At one and the same time we find Rush practically bankrupt, and the heirs of the original Jermys egged on by Rush into an attempt to recover the family estate in the Court of Chancery. The Recorder really was in rather a tight place, for the simple reason that he could not have proved his title without the deeds, and that he could not bring the theft of them home to Rush. Still he was Recorder of Norwich and a person of consideration, and when the claimants, weary of the delays of the Court of Chancery, organized a small army of emergency men in Norwich, took possession of the house by force and held it, barricading the windows and the bridge over the moat, the dragoons then quartered in Norwich soon restored the peace. In so acting the claimants were but following an ancient precedent of the county of Norfolk, for, early in the fifteenth century, the Duke of Norfolk besieged Caister Castle, built by "that renowned knight and valiant soldier" Sir John Falstolf, then deceased, and occupied, on what ground does not appear clearly from the *Paston Letters*, by Sir John Paston's family. There were, however, material differences between the two cases: the first of them being that the Duke had apparently at least a show of title to Caister Castle through the Courts, while in this case the claimants were anticipating the judgment of the Court, and the next being a trifle of four centuries, for it was so recently as April, 1839, that John Lerner, Daniel Wingfield, and eighty others, the emergency army in fact, were indicted for riot at Stanfield Hall. Still it is not easy to understand how, after so lawless a proceeding at so recent a date, the presiding judge could have passed, as he did, a series of sentences of from three months' to one week's imprisonment. True it is that the Recorder recommended them to mercy as ignorant persons "actuated by a mistaken notion of property"; but the sentences are still hard to understand. So, for that matter, are many sentences in these days.

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At about the same time the Recorder brought a suit (*Preston v. Rush*) against Rush for breach of covenant, no doubt in relation to the Home Farm, and it was clearly after this that the Recorder went through the process, expensive in those days, of taking the name of Jermy because he "found that it was necessary by the old settlements of the estate that the owner should bear the name of Jermy."

A year earlier than the riot, so far as I can make out the dates, some land called the Potash Farm came into the market, and it is clear from the Recorder's conduct over this matter that he felt himself to be very much at the mercy of Rush. He must have known Rush to be practically insolvent, he knew that the title-deeds were missing, and he probably suspected Rush; yet he sent out Rush as his agent to bid for the Potash Farm, which adjoined Stanfield Park. Rush came back from the auction, having bought the farm, not for his master, but for himself, at a price greater than that to which his master had limited him; and the Recorder actually lent him £5000, repayable in ten years and secured by mortgage, wherewith to complete the purchase. Of course the price may have been considerably more than £5000, and the bargain may have seemed on the face of it as promising as that which the original Preston made with the "poor relation"; but it all sounds as if Rush had a stronger hold of the Recorder than even the possession of the title-deeds would give him, or as if the Recorder were a strangely nervous and foolish man.

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Eight years passed away, one knows not how so far as these persons are concerned, and the end of them found Rush a widower, with several children, occupying the Potash Farm and holding another at Felmingham, fourteen miles off, also from the Recorder, now Mr. Isaac Jermy, by due form of law. At the end of those eight years Rush advertised for a governess, engaged one Emily Sandford, who replied to the advertisement, and betrayed her; but she continued to live with him. Then came November of 1848, on the last day of which the £5000 was payable, and the Recorder, often entreated, would not give Rush time. It does not appear that the Chancery suit had failed utterly and hopelessly, but it is clear from the sequel that the original Jermys had fallen very low in the world, and the Recorder, recognizing that they were no longer dangerous, may have found courage. If so, it cost him his life. The day of fate and blood was the 28th of November. On the evening of that day Mr. Jermy, according to his usual custom, one no doubt familiar to Rush, went to the hall door at half-past eight to look at the prospects of the weather; and the night was fine for the time of year, for five persons, servant girls and their sweethearts, were, as the evidence at the trial showed, gossiping by the gate beyond the moat, only thirty-five yards from the hall door. No sooner did Mr. Jermy come out than Rush, who was disguised, shot him dead with a pistol, the muzzle of which must almost have touched his body. "The fourth, fifth, and sixth ribs were shattered, the entire body of the heart was carried away." The loiterers on the bridge ran away in terror. Mr. Jermy the younger, rushing from the drawing-room to see what was the matter, was met, and shot dead on the spot, by Rush in the corridor. Mrs. Jermy the younger, hurrying into the hall, saw her husband's body, ran to call the butler, Watson, and was met by her maid Eliza Chastney. Rush encountered them both in a passage, shot Mrs. Jermy in the arm and the maid in the thigh and groin. Mrs. Jermy's daughter and the cook ran out by the back door and took refuge in the coach-house; the coachman jumped into the moat, swam across, and rode to Wymondham for help. As for the butler, he heard the first shot, went into the passage, "saw an armed man with a cloak and mask who motioned him to keep off," and—well, he kept off.

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Rush was arrested at Potash Farm before three o'clock the next morning; his trial, at which Emily Sandford was a most valuable witness for the Crown and a most deadly one to him, attracted immense attention. Sir Llewelyn says: "The excitement throughout the nation exceeded anything of the kind ever known, and *The Times* actually sent down a printing press to Norwich to report daily the incidents of the magisterial and coroner's inquiries."

Perhaps it need hardly be said that inquiry has shown the statement about *The Times* and the printing press to be entirely without foundation: for, since *The Times* as a whole has always been printed in London, and London has always been its place of publication, nothing could have been gained by sending a printing press to Norwich. It would have been just as wise to send a piano, a plough, or a pump. But it does not follow that Sir Llewelyn Turner is to be distrusted in other matters because he knew nothing of the mechanical technicalities of journalism. What happened, no doubt, was that *The Times* secured and published a very full report, and good folks, wondering how the miracle was performed, hit upon the idea of a special dispatch of a printing press, and were satisfied because an explanation which they could not understand had been set up. Suggestions quite as impossible are made in these days. A correspondent, who very likely cannot write shorthand, is frequently asked whether he hands his shorthand notes directly to the printers or to the telegraphists, neither of whom would be able to cope with the notes if he were capable of making them. Huge crowds attended the funeral of the victims at Wymondham. Immense excitement also was caused by the trial of Rush at Norwich Assizes, although the issue cannot have been in doubt for a moment after the evidence of Emily Sandford. Indeed, the report of the trial is only interesting now as showing, by comparison with discoveries made later, how little the police had found out, and as bearing, especially with reference to the violence of Rush at the trial, upon the kinship of homicidal crime and madness. The attraction of the case consisted then, and consists now, in its sheer brutality and prodigality of bloodshed and in the long series of cunning plots, to be outlined shortly, by which it was preceded. Within the space of a very few minutes Rush had murdered two persons and had grievously wounded two others; he had shown himself to be quite an exceptional paragon of villainy, and public curiosity to see so hardened a ruffian was natural. Nor need it be matter for surprise that the public execution of Rush at Norwich, where the remains of the Norman castle on the Mound in the heart of the city were then the gaol and the place of execution, was attended by a vast concourse of people. If ever there was a good excuse for gloating over a wretch ignominiously done to death it was present in the case of James Rush the wholesale murderer.

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In all these thoughts stirred by the sight of Stanfield Hall there is, it may be, little of novelty to students of crimes and criminals, even though many of the details may have been forgotten. But my old friend's monograph has a peculiar interest and value because, although he wrote with the failing memory of one well-stricken in years, it is possible to follow in it an elaborate development of criminal cunning almost, if not quite, without parallel in the history of crime. Also it enables one to see a long string of earlier crimes, probably committed by Rush, which, while they could not have been mentioned at his trial, would have well qualified him for admission to the roll of "unmitigated miscreants," disgracefully distinguished by "pre-eminence in ill-doing," whom Mr. Thomas Seccombe and his associates gibbeted in *Twelve Bad Men* (Fisher Unwin, 1894). His preparations for the crime were of the most elaborate character; his plans for taking the most complete advantage of it when it had been committed, and for so perpetrating it that suspicion might fall upon others, were of an absolutely diabolical ingenuity. Let some of the details of those plans be enumerated. He had provided numerous disguises, some of which were not discovered until long after he had been hanged. He had covered with straw, as if for cattle, his most convenient path to the Hall, and his footsteps could not be traced on the straw. He had made Emily Stanford drive with him towards the Hall, so that she might be seen with him by a turnpike-keeper and the lodge-keeper, on the 10th of October, 1848, and the 21st of November, 1848. He had forged documents of both those dates, which were afterwards found under the floor of a cupboard in Potash Farm. The first was an agreement between the Recorder and himself whereby the Recorder gave him three more years for the payment of the £5000; the next was an agreement between the same parties that, if Rush gave up the missing title-deeds, the Recorder would burn the mortgage deed of Potash Farm and give Rush a lease of the Felmingham estate. It was further agreed that Rush should do all he could to assist the Recorder in retaining possession. There was also a forged lease of Felmingham to Rush. To all these Emily Sandford had signed her name as witness without knowing the contents. To the efficacy of them all the death of the Recorder was indispensable, for of course he would have denounced the forgery at once, and the death of Mr. Jermy the younger, who knew his father's affairs intimately, would be a decided help. But Rush, although he had no scruples at all about taking life, as he proved very conclusively, had a very considerable regard for the skin of his own neck. The new Jermys were to be ruthlessly exterminated; the old Jermys, or some of them (he did not care how many), were to be hanged, and Rush was to become a rich man. He inveigled some of the old Jermys into the vicinity of Stanfield Hall on the day of the murders; he left on the floor of one of the passages in the Hall a warning in printed letters:—

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"There are seven of us here, three of us outside and four inside the hall, all armed as you see us here. If any of you servants offer to leave the premises or to folloo (*sic*) you will be shot dead. Therefore all of you keep in the servants' hall, and you nor anybody else will take any arme (*sic*), for we are only come to take possession of the Stanfield Hall property.

"THOMAS JERMY, the Owner."

The very illiteracy of this document may have been designed, for the original Jermys, having come down in the world, had, as Rush well knew, come down with a run to the very bottom. Indeed, one of them, probably this Thomas, swore at the trial that he did not know how to write. If he had been in the dock, instead of in the witness-box, as Rush had planned, his mouth would have been closed and, with the Recorder and his son dead, with the memory of the riot of 1839 fresh in the minds of the jury, things might have been very awkward for Thomas and others of the true Jermy family. They had been seen about the Hall on the day of the murders; the murderer had disguised himself, most likely so that he might be taken for one of the true Jermys; he had not been careful to go unseen, though he had avoided observation in leaving Potash Farm; the rude warning, printed on the cover of a book, was just the kind of missive an illiterate person might be expected to produce; and Thomas Jermy would have stood in quite measurable peril of that last interview with Calcraft which Rush went through with callous effrontery. Of the penmanship of the other forged documents it is not possible to speak, but their phraseology is sufficiently clear, and they might have passed muster. The question whether they would have done so or not has, however, no bearing on the character of Rush. He had laid his plan with devilish ingenuity; he had made all things ready in such fashion as to satisfy his knowledge of what legal documents ought to be. It was a plan as complete, cunning, and merciless as it was possible for man to devise.

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Sir Llewelyn Turner had little doubt that, if Rush had escaped scot-free, and the forged documents, or either of them, had been effectual, Rush would have murdered Emily Sandford also; and, in the circumstances, the view can hardly be stigmatized as uncharitable. She would have had Rush at her mercy; she would have been in his way; and Rush had no scruples in dealing with those who were in his way. It was believed locally that he got rid of his mother and forged a codicil in his own favour to her will. That forgery at any rate succeeded, for he obtained £1500 by it; and the circumstantial story of his stepfather's death, by which the money came to the mother, raises a strong suspicion that Rush murdered his stepfather also. It shall be told in Sir Llewelyn Turner's words:—

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"His stepfather was shot in 1844. He had gone to sleep after dinner, which, I believe, was his custom, and from that sleep he was not allowed to wake. His mother was ill upstairs, and Rush's account was that he (Rush) had gone upstairs, leaving his gun on a table; that, hearing a shot, he went downstairs and found the gun and his stepfather on the floor, the gun having exploded and killed the latter."

Rush himself gave the intelligence to the coroner, and he was the only witness. His story was believed and a verdict of accidental death was returned, but the subsequent career of Rush leaves little doubt that the guilt of this murder also lay upon so much of conscience as he possessed.

Stanfield Hall, then, a very beautiful building still, although full of tragic memories, may justly claim to have been the scene of crimes as brutal, planned by a brain as devilish and ruthless, as ever were committed in England or found in man.

From Wymondham we swung on to Norwich easily, and without difficulty or incident of any kind, and at half-past six or thereabouts passed under an archway into the Court of the "Maid's Head"; and the "Maid's Head" is an absolute reason for ending one chapter and beginning another.

CHAPTER V

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SPRING. [IN NORWICH] AND TO ELY AND CAMBRIDGE

The entry into Norwich—The "Maid's Head"—Preserved from modernity by Mr. Walter Rye—A car in the yard quite incongruous—Queen Elizabeth's chamber—The Duke of Norfolk—Macaulay's description of his predecessors in the seventeenth century—Their pomp and hospitality—The contrast—Norwich trade, past and present—The Pastons and the "Maid's Head"—A cavalier house—Surprised Freemasons—Meaning of "Maid's Head"—The Cathedral at night—Blocked by houses—Cathedral society—Trollope—A vision of the east end of the cathedral—The cattle market—Local breeds prevail—A wise practice—But Jerseys best for private houses—Cleanliness of the general market—In the cathedral—Start—Make sure of exits—The Earlham Road—The Gurneys of Earlham—Norfolk dialect—The breath of spring—Chaucer and Norfolk—Lynn's idle claim—Kimberley Hall—The Wodehouse crest—Hingham Church—Hingham, Massachusetts—Scoulton Mere—Black-headed gulls—Gastronomic advice—A land of heaths—Fast running—Another car overtaken—Dust realized—Watton and Wayland Wood—not "the Babes'" wood—Brandon—Gunflints and rabbits—Mildenhall—Fordham—Soham—First view of Ely—Glorious but delayed—Better from railway—Later view less satisfying—Beauty of Bishop's Palace—Distressing verger causes retreat from cathedral—Home viâ Cambridge and Royston—A thorough wetting.

We had crawled through the narrow and crooked streets of Norwich to its central Market Place under the Castle Mound; swinging to the left on entering it. Turning to the left again we were soon in Tombland, a wide and open space opposite the west end of the cathedral, the meaning of

the name of which is uncertain. We had seen the cathedral spire rising against the clear sky, had glanced through two great archways leading to the Cathedral Church itself, had passed on our left the "Stranger's House" already mentioned, though the quaint fact that the faces of the figures of Hercules and Samson supporting the arch of its door are adorned with "Imperial" beardlets was forgotten then. At the end of Tombland we were in Wensum Street, and the "Maid's Head" was the first house on the right. We entered it by an archway some way down the street, and forthwith, in the covered courtyard, there was such a contrast between the old and the new as has never been matched in my experience. The surroundings, thanks to Mr. Walter Rye, who bought the ancient house and saved it from destruction, and thereby won the gratitude of every traveller of taste, were as nearly identical with those of the fifteenth century (when the Pastons used the "Mayde's Hedde" and spoke well of its accommodation) as was possible consistently with some modernisms which are indispensable. The bar parlour on the left, from which an attentive hostess issued to take our commands—one felt she ought to have a chatelaine and a wimple—seemed to be, and was, of almost immemorial age. So did the surroundings generally. Yet in the centre was the most modern thing in this world, the very incarnation of novelty, a motor-car, and a six-cylinder motor-car at that, and staring us in the face was a notice requesting motorists, in effect, to make no unnecessary noise, but to deposit their passengers or pick them up, as the case might be, rapidly as possible and then depart. In such surroundings, surely, no motorist possessed of even decent feeling could stand in need of this request; but, since it was there, it must be assumed that it came into existence because misconduct had shown it to be needed. For ourselves, we almost felt inclined to push the car, instead of compelling it to propel itself, onwards through the covered court and into the carriage yard and garage beyond. It was, and it is, a beautiful car—for cars can be beautiful, and half the assertions that they are ugly are due to the fact that the generation has not been sufficiently educated in relation to cars, has not grown familiar enough with them, to know what the lines of beauty in them are. Still, in the court of the "Maid's Head," the car was an anachronism, a jarring note, not in the picture, and the sooner it was moved out of sight the better. So moved it was and the original picture remained. The white cap of a *chef*, having a countenance that might pass for French beneath it, did not spoil the picture in the least. It was easy, and very likely correct, to imagine that the costume of male cooks and scullions has changed little with the progress of time, and the material reflections called up by that white cap were comforting. The man or woman who will not confess to enjoying a good dinner is usually either a hypocrite or one who, exiled from a real and innocent pleasure of life by a contemptible digestion, assumes airs of superiority on the ground of an abstinence due to fear and not to asceticism.

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Meanwhile the daughters had gone up a very ancient and charming staircase, of real oak, really black, with real age, not through the application of quick lime and water, and had been shown into "Queen Elizabeth's Chamber"; but a message that I must visit them there met me in the Jacobean bar parlour, and the visit was more than worth paying. It was a spacious room, if its floor area alone was considered; but of course the ceiling was very low, and the dark beams supporting it were still lower. It would have suited Hannah More, who loved ceilings you could touch as you stood, but it lacked the bishops she required as an accompaniment. At least it lacked them then. One great bed was of carved oak, relieved with gilding; another made no impression on my memory. But the long and low windows, the shining planks of the ancient floor, which boasted its own hills and valleys, slopes and hollows, and the cleanliness and brightness of everything made a very vivid and pleasant impression. Queen Elizabeth may not have slept in that chamber or in the "Maid's Head" at all when she visited Norwich in 1578 and weird pageants were displayed in her honour; I can find no evidence that she did, which is not to say that there is none; but the "Maid's Head" was an old inn even then, and it is reasonably certain that the chamber called after Queen Elizabeth was there also. It is an ideal room for those who hanker after the old world, but do not yearn for that dirt which, the more we think of it, seems to have been an all-pervading characteristic of the lives of our forefathers. The "Maid's Head" is spotlessly clean.

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I prepared to saunter forth into the city for half an hour before dinner; but at the foot of the stairs was a person, almost, perhaps, quite a personage, whose presence was a happy coincidence. It has been noted earlier that on a first visit to the "Royal," the ancient "Whig House" of Norwich, Lord Kimberley was found to be a guest; and, by all that was wonderful, here, at the foot of the stairs of the "Maid's Head," was none other than the Duke of Norfolk with the Duchess, and both were about to become guests of the ancient hotel. Heavens! what a contrast was this to the scene which would have been presented on a similar visit some two centuries ago! In that wonderful chapter on the State of England in 1685, Macaulay has a passage which must needs be quoted, although it has been cited very often before, and although it has the incidental disadvantage, which I feel rather acutely, of showing the grand style side by side with mine:—

"Norwich was the capital of a large and fruitful province. It was the residence of a Bishop and of a Chapter. It was the chief seat of the chief manufacture of the realm" (clothing, of course). "Some men distinguished by learning and science had recently dwelt there; and no place in the kingdom, except the capital and the Universities, had more attractions for the curious. The library, the museum, the aviary, and the botanical garden of Sir Thomas Browne, were thought by Fellows of the Royal Society well worthy of a long pilgrimage. Norwich had also a court in miniature. In the heart of the city stood an old palace of the Dukes of Norfolk, said to be the largest town house in the kingdom out of London. In this mansion, to which were annexed a tennis court, a bowling-green and a wilderness, stretching along the banks of the Wensum, the noble family of Howard frequently resided, and kept a state resembling that of petty sovereigns. Drink was served to guests in goblets of pure gold. The very tongs and shovels were of silver.

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Pictures by Italian masters adorned the walls. The cabinets were filled with a fine collection of gems purchased by that Earl of Arundel whose marbles are now among the ornaments of Oxford. Here, in the year 1671, Charles and his court were sumptuously entertained. Here, too, all comers were annually welcomed, from Christmas to Twelfth Night. Ale flowed in oceans for the populace. Three coaches, one of which had been built at a cost of five hundred pounds to contain fourteen persons, were sent every afternoon to bring ladies to the festivities; and the dances were always followed by a luxurious banquet. When the Duke of Norfolk came to Norwich he was greeted like a king returning to his capital. The bells of the Cathedral and of St. Peter Mancroft were rung; the guns of the Castle were fired; and the Mayor and Aldermen waited on their illustrious fellow citizen with complimentary addresses. In the year 1693 the population of Norwich was found, by actual enumeration, to be between twenty-eight and twenty-nine thousand souls."

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What a contrast! On the 9th of March, 1906, the Duke of Norfolk entered a city of between one hundred and twelve and one hundred and thirteen thousand souls; the bells of the cathedral and St. Peter's Mancroft were not rung. (The latter, by the way, is the crowning ecclesiastical glory of Norwich apart from the cathedral, and not to be confounded with St. Peter's Permouthergate, often quoted because its records are curious.) No guns were fired. No mayor and aldermen waited upon the Duke in his palace, because there was no palace any more. All that happened was that a quiet, bearded English gentleman walked, limping slightly (the reward of service to his country in South Africa), with a lady into the courtyard of the Maid's Head Hotel and, after a parley with the hostess, vanished up the stairs and was no more seen. It was mere luck that I saw him, and that I happened to be able to recognize, in this unostentatious figure, the Premier Duke and Earl, the Hereditary Earl Marshal and Chief Butler of England. He was received with precisely the same courtesy of attention that had been shown to us, but without servility, received in fact as he desired, and in a manner which really did credit to him, for it was what he wished, and to the quiet dignity of the old hostelry; and the city of Norwich at large knew not who was within its gates. No more was left of the pomp and dignity of the seventeenth-century palace and reception than of the clothing trade. The Duke of Norfolk had become, in the interval, an Englishman first and a great power in Sussex next, and the clothing trade had vanished. The city of 112,000 souls odd subsisted, as I had been told, on the proceeds of boots and mustard, the latter industry founded by one of whom a correspondent of the *Norfolk and Norwich Notes and Queries* wrote: "The original Colman [the name means "free man"] was a jolly old fellow who used to give me sixpence and direct me to the house for refreshment"; it subsisted also, as I learned for myself next morning, and I venture to say it prospered also, as one of the largest agricultural and pastoral centres it has ever been my good fortune to witness. Times were indeed changed; but he would be a rash man who should say that they were changed for the worse in all respects.

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Dinner in the coffee-room at the "Maid's Head" was pleasant by virtue of its surroundings, for the room has an air of antiquity, and its deep fireplace charmed the eye, because the cookery was distinctly good, and the attendance was quiet and prompt as that in a well-ordered private house. The final bill next morning too, to introduce a most important consideration at the earliest possible moment, was quite moderate—for England. Dinner was the time also for gentle allusion to some of the famous associations of the inn. The Pastons had used and commended it. That their words of praise should be blazoned on the outer door seemed right and proper; but it was a pity to have placed near them the raptures of modern and not very prominent newspapers. Sitting in this same inn on the morning of his last fight with Kett and his rebels, Warwick had breakfasted, and had then led his men, who were camped on the market-place, to victory. Here, in the time of the rebellion, the Royalists resorted, says Mr. Rye, and it is certain that Dame Paston's horses were seized here; but it is to be feared that mine host of the time had but a scantily-filled till, for Royalists were scarce in the eastern counties. Freemasons held their lodges in the "Maid's Head" so early as 1724, and it is stated that on one occasion a Mrs. Beatson hid behind the wainscot of the lodge-room and heard all the mysteries. Whether such there be, myself innocent of masonry but closely attached to friends who would certainly have advised me to take steps to enter the brotherhood if it were likely to be to my advantage, I have often doubted and still doubt.

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My pleasure was decidedly enhanced by the fact that I knew these things in advance, and perhaps a little increased by being able to mention them. It was a pride to be able to say that the house was built on the site of an ancient palace of the bishops of Norwich; that it stood on Gothic arches; that the assembly room had a minstrel's gallery; that a carving in the smoking-room represented a fish, possibly a ray, and that, if so, it probably accounted for the title of the house; for the house was once undoubtedly called either the "Myrtle Fish" or the "Molde Fish"—readings vary—and, if either of them be a ray, a difficulty vanishes, for the sea-fishermen of Norfolk call, or called, the ray "old maid." Certainly the house did not take its new title on the occasion of Queen Elizabeth's visit, for it was the "Mayde's Hedde" in 1472, and it is mentioned in a curious petition to Wolsey, unearthed by Mr. Rye. Bless him again for having bought and saved the inn!

After dinner, and the necessary interval for rest and burnt sacrifice, two facts became manifest. It was a glorious moonlight night, mild for the time of year, and through all the long day we had hardly walked so many yards as we had traversed miles. So we started forth, and soon came to the firm conclusion that the "pale moonlight" is every whit as conducive to a soul-satisfying view of Norwich Cathedral as of "fair Melrose." Our first view of the west end, after passing under the great archway giving on Tombland, pleased not a little; but we had read something of the glories of the cathedral, of the apse and the apsidal chapels, of Jesus and St. Luke, abutting on the apse

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at either side of the east end, and the desire to see them was strong. It was not, however, very easily satisfied; for Norwich Cathedral, like far too many of the stateliest and best-proportioned edifices in our congested islands, is so hedged around with houses that it is difficult to look upon it as a whole from a sufficient distance. They are interesting houses in their way, venerable some of them, suggestive of peaceful lives spent in scholarly research; but they exasperate by impeding the view, and exasperations provoke memories of Trollope's studies of cathedral society, studies suggesting that its tone is not invariably peaceful nor high-minded; that petty jealousies and scandal can invade the most outwardly tranquil precincts and closes. Nay, more, we all know—there is no direct reference here to Norwich, and I cannot remember to have met or to have heard any evil of any inhabitant, male or female, of its ecclesiastical dwellings—that of some cathedral society Trollope's studies are still essentially true. On this occasion it is the plain and unvarnished truth that the houses blocked the view, and this not too kindly thought came to mind. The chances are that it would not have thrust itself forward if the houses had not done likewise; and that, in point of narrowness of view or breadth of it, nothing distinguishes dwellers in deaneries and canons' houses, huddled round the walls of a cathedral, from those in others which, having been placed at a respectful distance, allow the outline of the majestic structure to be seen in its pure beauty. At Norwich, too, there is more excuse for the huddling than in many a cathedral city, for space was valuable in Norwich from very early times. Citizens who taxed themselves, as those of Norwich did, to protect their city by walls, were not likely to encourage open spaces, "lungs," as it is the fashion to call them now, within the walled space, and the crowding of the precincts of the cathedral by buildings mean and insignificant compared to it—the reference is to inhabited houses only—is explained by the same cause as the narrow streets of the city itself, streets wherein the tramcars render life full of peril.

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By fetching a compass, however, to the south, and without asking directions of any man, we contrived to penetrate to a narrow walk beyond the east end of the cathedral and past the cloisters, where, after finding a point of view giving the eye shelter from the glare of incandescent lamps, we looked upon a spectacle of indescribable beauty. At the bottom were the swelling curves of the apse and the chapels, above them, in orderly succession, the sloping roof and the wondrously graceful and lofty spire, outlined—for the moon was behind it—with strange clearness and yet softened in the most mysterious fashion, for in the borrowed light of the moon is no suspicion of glare to dazzle the eyes. How long we gazed, spellbound and silent, cannot be said; time passed out of our thoughts; but as we looked, I remember, a gossamer wreath of detached cloud, lying all alone and at quite a low elevation, drifted slowly across the face of the heaven and behind the steeple that pointed towards it. That was all. To describe the scene is utterly beyond my power, and, probably, to convey a complete impression of it is not within the compass of human words; for they must proceed step by step, idea by idea; but the vision was seen long, yet the first upward glance revealed the whole of it, and the last lingering look showed as much, and no more. It reduced us to silence then, to that silence which is always the unconscious tribute to unspeakable beauty. Even now no more can be said than that the memory of the vision remains, clear and pure, as of the most perfect combination of man's work and Nature's background it has ever been my privilege to behold in any part of the world.

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"What meaneth this bleating of the sheep in mine ears and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" Such was the familiar question that occurred to me when, early the next morning, I woke to find the light streaming in at my window in the "Maid's Head." Then I remembered that this was Saturday morning, and probably market-day, and I went forth quickly, and, unlike Samuel of old, gladly, for of all beasts which minister to men's needs the patient kine are to me the most interesting (except dogs); and, besides that, if one desires to know something of people, as well as of places, there are few more profitable fields for easy-going study than a large market. For there the inhabitants of the country-side are assembled from far and near, with the products of their farms, and one may study both man and beast at leisure. It was fully quarter to eight before I left the "Maid's Head," and five minutes more had passed before I was in the heart of the market. Already droves of cattle were being driven away—to the station probably—but hundreds, yes literally hundreds and hundreds, remained behind, and among them circulated drovers, dealers, and butchers, feeling their backs and loins with intelligent hands, and less rough in their usage of the beasts, it was a pleasure to see, than is usual in some other counties. Sheep there were also, and pigs doubtless, perhaps in another market. It seemed to me, not by any means innocent of cattle markets, that by some unforeseen piece of luck I must have happened on the occasion of a customary fair. Inquiry proved that this was not so; that, as a matter of fact, this was but such a gathering of cattle as is customary at the season of the year, and that I had not reached the scene until the bulk of the business had been transacted. It was clear at once that boots and mustard—in the former I gathered that cut-throat competition had reduced profits to a *minimum* and almost to a *minus* quantity—were not by any means the only industries by which Norwich stood. It was, and is, an immense cattle market; and the stock, the general average of quality in which was distinctly high, was worth a tremendous lot of money. Yet, as I saw it first, it was a market which had more than begun to dwindle away, a colossal and altogether gratifying sight notwithstanding.

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It was pleasing to observe that, although here and there a black beast or a mongrel might be seen, and a considerable number of Shorthorns, the Norfolk farmers as a body cling to the old East Anglian breed of Red Polls. They could not do better. The Red Polls mature early, make a lot of beef, and are hardy; the cows of the breed are admirable milkers, and celebrated for remaining long in profit; and the absence of horns is a distinct gain when it comes to a matter of transport by train. Far be it from me to compare the merits of breeds of cattle apart from environment, for that is often rather a foolish thing to do. Environment matters a great deal and,

nobly as Shorthorns thrive in many parts of the country, and at Sandringham in Norfolk particularly, there remains in me a strong conviction that the local breeds, Red Polls in East Anglia, Herefords in the Marches and Borderland of Wales, Devons in the county from which they take their name, Castle Martins in South Wales, and Welsh black cattle in North Wales, thrive best in their appointed districts under the conditions to which the normal farmer is more or less bound to expose them. They fill in the picture better, too, than do cattle of a "foreign" stamp. Your white-faced Hereford seems out of place in Berkshire, a Kerry looks like a toy in Hertfordshire; only for the gentle Jersey cattle—Mr. Cobbold has a herd of them at Felixstowe, but that is a story to come later—would I make an exception. They, however, are not farmers' cattle, for they are worth little to kill, and their rich milk, sold at ordinary prices, as it must be, is too small in quantity to be profitable. They are for private owners and butter-makers only, and, as such, they cannot be surpassed.

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Let this headstrong hobby be curbed; but let it be added that these burly, fair-complexioned farmers of Norfolk, whose very faces, seen in considerable numbers, convinced one more than much reading of the presence of abundant Danish blood in the county, looked and acted as if they understood their business thoroughly. If they go on breeding gentle Red Polls—the Red Polls are really quiet of disposition, perhaps because inherited instinct tells them it is poor sport to fight without horns—it is because the process pays. Let me add, in opposition to a statement seen elsewhere, that I saw nothing of that brutal treatment of the animals which is far too usual an accompaniment of the cattle trade. So to the general market near the Guildhall, a grateful sight because more flowers were for sale on the stalls than is usual in provincial markets, and the wares, particularly the butter and the fowls, the latter neatly trussed and wrapped in coarse muslin of spotless cleanliness, were so nicely exposed for sale. Leland observed that "Northfolk" were said to be "ful of wyles"; a barber, from Hants, told me that morning, when I said I found the people very intelligent, that he thought they knew far too much. My own view is that of the "wyles" which consist in cleanly neatness in exposing food for sale it is not possible to find too much, and not often easy to find enough, in this England of ours.

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Of the Guildhall, really a very interesting example, dating from the beginning of the fifteenth century, of ingenious work in flint, and its contents, some mention has been made before, and of the interior of the cathedral also. But we entered the cathedral once more, walking on tiptoes in the grand and empty nave, and certainly not disturbing the worshippers in the chancel, for service was going on. The organ, as on a former visit, was remarkably impressive, and, as quite a minor detail, I noted part of an almost illegible inscription to one Ingloit on the south pillar of the chancel arch. "In descant most, in voluntary all, he past." What was, or is, "descant"? None of us knew. The necessary if rather humiliating process of reference to a dictionary, which it is more honest to confess than it would be to profess to have understood the legend at first sight, showed that descant was the first stage in the development of counterpoint. So, mounting once more to the Norman tower on the Castle Mound, to look at the entrance to the Museum, but not entering, for time pressed and our enterprise lay in the open air, we repaired to the "Maid's Head," discharged the reckoning, and were off again to the westward, on a windless and rainless day; but that wisp of cloud no bigger than a man's hand, which we had seen behind the cathedral spire against the pure blue overnight, had been the precursor of a grey veil of cloud which overspread the whole face of the sky.

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Always to make sure of your exits is one of the golden rules of successful motoring. Entrances do not matter so much. If, having followed unknown roads over strange country for many miles, you eventually strike the town of your desires, that is enough for all practical purposes. You are sure to be as near your actual destination as makes no difference to a motor-car worthy of mention in almost any town or city in England except London. But a wrong exit is fatal. Our instructions from John Ostler of the "Maid's Head," who took to a motor kindly as if he had never seen curry-comb or dandy-brush, were elaborate; but the leading feature of them was that, when we reached the market-place near the Guildhall, we should ask for what, on its spelling, we called "Earlham Road." "Ask for the 'Arlam' Road," said John Ostler; and forthwith sprang into memory the fact that at Norwich we were in the heart of that part of East Anglia in which the Gurneys and their kin were never weary of well-doing and, as is the custom of Quakers, thrive amazingly in their business. Of them, of their good deeds, of their family life, a full account may be found in one of the very best books of what, for lack of a better description, may be called earnest family gossip. Need it be added that the book is *The Gurneys of Earlham*, by Augustus J. C. Hare (London: George Allen)? Well, perhaps it is necessary to give the information, for the two volumes contain little or nothing which is sensational, they saw the light of day in 1895, and all but the very best of books, to say nothing of a good many of them also, pass out of the mind of a hurrying generation in less than that time, and in much less. Of the Gurneys, of their manifold relatives and connections, of their abundant and honourable commerce, of their share in the making of Norwich, of their sober and intimate family life, it would be a sheer delight to write at length; but this is hardly the place in which to attempt again that which has been done remarkably well already. Suffice it therefore to commend the book, and to quote an unrivalled description of it by a masterly hand. That it happens to be found in the first three pages of the first volume is mere coincidence. Those who are so disposed may, if it pleases them, imagine that they are quoted simply because they come first, and refuse to believe that the volumes are among the familiar acquaintance of one who finds a wholesome and hearty appreciation of the joys of the open air to be entirely consistent with a rational pleasure in books.

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"After leaving the hollow where the beautiful crocheted spire of Norwich Cathedral and the square masses of its castle rise above the dingy red roofs and blue smoke of the town, the road to

Lynn ascends what, generally called an incline, is in Norfolk a long hill. After passing its brow, at about three miles from the city, the horizon is fringed by woods—grey in winter, radiant with many tints in summer—which belong to Earlham. This delightful old place has for centuries been the property of the Bacon family, and they have never consented to sell it; but since 1786 it has been rented by the Gurneys, a period of a hundred and nine years—perhaps one of the oldest tenancies known for a mansion of the size, though very frequent in the case of farmhouses. Thus, to the Gurney family, it has become the beloved home of five generations; to them its old chambers are filled with the very odour of holiness; its ancient gardens and green glades and sparkling river bring thoughts of domestic peace and happiness, which cannot be given in words; its very name is a refrain of family unity and love.

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"The little park of Earlham is scarcely more than a paddock, with its fine groups of trees and remains of avenues, in one of which a Bacon of old time is still supposed to wander, with the hatchet in his hand which he was using on the day of his death. Where the trees thicken beyond the green slopes, above an oval drive familiarly called 'The World,' stands the house, white-washed towards the road by the colour-hating Quaker, second wife of Joseph John Gurney, but infinitely beautiful towards the garden in the pink hues of its brick with grey stone ornaments, and the masses of vine and rose which festoon its two large projecting windows and white central porch. Hence the wide lawn, to which the place owes its chief dignity, spreads away on either side to belts of pine trees, fringed by terraces, where masses of snowdrops and aconites gleam amongst the mossy grass in early spring. The west side of the house is perhaps the oldest part, and bears a date of James First's time on its two narrow gables. Hence the river is seen gleaming and glancing in the hollows, where it is crossed by the single arch of a bridge. From the low hall, with its old-fashioned furniture and pictures, a very short staircase leads to an ante-room opening on the drawing-room, where Richmond's striking full-length portrait of Mrs. Fry, now occupies a prominent place among the likenesses of her brothers and sisters. Another sitting-room leads to what was the sitting-room of the seven Gurney sisters of the beginning of the nineteenth century, with an old Bacon portrait let into the panelling over the fireplace. The dining-room is downstairs, and was the latest addition to the house, a handsome, long and lofty room, built by Mr. Edward Bacon, long M.P. for Norwich, that he might entertain his constituents. Close by is the humble little study occupied by the father of the numerous Gurney family of three generations ago. But the pleasantest room at Earlham is 'Mrs. Catherine's Chamber,' always occupied by the eldest daughter, mother and sister in one, and in which in her old age, with her beautiful intonation and delicate sense of fitting emphasis, she would assemble the young Norwich clergy to teach them how the Scriptures should be read in church."

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Surely Mr. Hare, who wrote many a vivid description, was often entertaining, and sometimes a little spiteful, never penned a passage better calculated than this to bring home the characters of a home and of the dwellers in it. The single trace of the old Adam, or the old Augustus, is the gently sarcastic antithesis of Richmond's "portrait" and the "likenesses." Earlham's peace and goodwill bewitched Augustus Hare, and those who had been entertained by his bitterness, no less than those who have writhed under it, will recognize the strength of Earlham's tranquil witchery. Somewhere I have read of late that the Gurneys are of Earlham no more. That is sad indeed.

"Ask for the Arlham Road when you are near the Guildhall," was what John Ostler said, and we, full of map and guide-book pride, translated it into Earlham; but we were reduced to Arlham at last. Even in England it is wise to adopt local pronunciations of place-names when you know them, unless you have plenty of leisure; and it is easy to do so. (In Wales it is equally wise, indeed wiser, for collocations of apparently English characters have totally distinct values in Welsh words, but English lips have, I am given to understand, some difficulty in expressing those values.) Apart from place-names it seemed to me, talking often and freely with the natives, that the spread of education has banished not a little of the Norfolk dialect, and that the country folk of Norfolk pronounce in a more clean-cut fashion, use more ordinary English words, and are easier to understand, than their contemporaries in Berks, Sussex, Devon, Cornwall, or, infinitely most difficult of all, Durham. Among sundry quaint books lent to me by way of preparation for this are several containing terrific examples of Norfolk dialect, which it would be a real pleasure to transcribe, but it must be confessed frankly that, at the moment of writing, I have no more excuse in experience for copying them out than for introducing a sentence or two of Welsh, Gaelic, or Erse. Yet I am, in the matter of tours to be described, many hundreds of miles ahead of the point which my lagging pen has reached. Suffice it to say that the Norfolk dialect may survive, that I have heard it from the lips of cultivated folk of Norfolk, whose normal talk is the same as that of any educated English folk, but that it has not come my way as an every day phenomenon. Is that matter for regret? Sentimentally, perhaps, it is; but practically it is a decided convenience and, combined with the exceptional intelligence of the East Anglian people, it seems to argue that the schoolmaster has been abroad among them to good purpose. Dialects may be picturesque; the words in them may have philological interest, especially when they are good and old words like "largesse" (much used in East Anglia, but by no means peculiar to it), but persistence in sheer mispronunciation, which is the main ingredient of most dialects, is really a sign of ignorance or of affectation, and neither is to be encouraged. For example, I can talk, and can approach fairly near to writing, English "as she is spoke" by the more ignorant Welsh, without any difficulty; and that is as much a dialect, really, as that of Devon or of Yorkshire; but it would be a very foolish and inconvenient thing to do.

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Nothing could have been more delightful, for the time of year, than the travelling, for the air was not too cold, hedges had the unmistakable air of verdure on the point of coming, tree-twigs seemed to have thickened as the buds upon them swelled, spring was in the air, and the steaming

horses we passed now and again in adjacent fields, straining at plough or harrow, added to the pleasing effect of a landscape undulating a little, but rich in tall trees. Looking on them from time to time I remembered the lines in the Freer's Tale—

The Carter smote and cried as he were wode
Heit Scot! Heit Brock.

This may sound like affectation, but it is nothing of the kind. Although most travellers in spring are apt to quote, more or less correctly, the first few lines of the *Canterbury Tales*, because they are familiar and because, for simplicity, sweetness, and truth, they are not to be surpassed in the English language, one does not, at least the ordinary man does not, go about the country with all Chaucer on the tip of his tongue; and that, on the whole, is a blessing. On this occasion, however, there was an express reason for having these lines in mind—there were even two reasons—and for looking for a farm horse as an excuse for letting them fly. The first reason was that East Anglian antiquaries have long cherished the tradition that Chaucer was born in Norfolk. There is even a jingling rhyme—

Lynn had the honour to present the world
With Geoffrey Chaucer and the curled
Pate Alanus de Lenna.

The rhyme may be true of Alanus de Lenna; it does not matter much whether it be true or false; but it is undoubtedly false about Chaucer, who was the son of a London vintner and was born at Charing Cross, and at Charing Cross, London, not Charing Cross in Norwich, as the learned have now discovered for certain. Still it is a peculiar fact that it is, or is reported to be, the custom of Norfolk farms to apply the name Scot to a very large proportion of their farm horses, and it is true that Chaucer's poetry shows a very intimate knowledge of rural life in Norfolk. The explanation may be found on family tradition, for Dr. Skeat says "It is probable that the Chaucer family came originally from Norfolk."

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The second reason was soon to come on the left-hand side of the road in the form of a park, boasting superb trees and ensconcing Kimberley Hall, the seat of the Wodehouse family, who are of far more ancient standing in Norfolk than is the present hall. It was built on Italian lines in the reign of good Queen Anne, but the Wodehouses, of whom Lord Kimberley is the head, had been in the land long before Philip Wodehouse, Member of Parliament for Castle Rising, was created a baronet by James I. Not that the honour attached the family to the Stuart cause, for Sir Thomas, the second baronet, sat in the Long Parliament and, I think, fought for it against Charles. Clearly they were a fighting family. "Agincourt" is inscribed under their coat of arms; their crest is "a dexter arm couped below the elbow, vested argent, and grasping a club or, and over it the motto *Frappe fort*." The quotation comes appositely, or at any rate one striking word in it does, because the "supporters" are "Two wild (wode) men, wreathed about the loins, and holding in the exterior hand a club, raised in the attitude of striking, sable." Yet with this explanation always before them, staring them hard in the face whensoever a head of the house of Kimberley has been summoned to sleep with his fathers, some good folk of Norfolk have, as the *Notes and Queries* show, been content to puzzle their brains and to seek far for an explanation of the Wild Man as a tavern sign. They have even gone so far as to drag in the historic Peter the Wild Man, quite unnecessarily, for he is modern by comparison with the "wode" men who support the Wodehouse crest now, as they supported it no doubt in the spacious days of Queen Elizabeth, when she visited in 1571 a Kimberley Hall which modern taste would probably prefer to the present Italian edifice.

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Almost immediately after passing Kimberley Hall we came into full view of Hingham Church, which is exactly what a church should be, and stands exactly as a church ought to stand, for the purposes of the motorist. That is to say, it is a very commanding edifice, which has the appearance, at any rate, of standing with its length at right angles to the road, and both tower and clerestory—surely there are more clerestories as well as more churches to be found in Norfolk than in any county—are visible, and very imposing, from a great distance. It was built for the most part by Remigius of Hethersett, who was rector for forty years from 1319, and is of most remarkable height. Inside, most motorists will be content to believe, are some interesting tombs and much stained glass of admirable quality, presented by Lord Wodehouse in 1813. In fact, Hingham is emphatically one of the places at which a halt ought to be made, for old stained glass of high merit is, unhappily, very rare in this England of ours. This secluded village of Hingham ought to be—perhaps is—one of the places in England to which Americans make pilgrimages, for far away in Massachusetts is another Hingham owing its origin to an emigration, early in the seventeenth century, of one Robert Peck, vicar of Hingham, and many of his parishioners. Apparently, parson and parishioners were Puritans of the violent order, who pulled down the altar rails and lowered the altar, insomuch that they incurred the wrath of the reigning bishop. Parson Peck deemed it wise to flee from the wrath to come, and many of his parishioners went with him. Settling down in Massachusetts, they gave the name of the old village in Norfolk to the new home, and although the parson returned to his cure when Puritanism got the upper hand, parishioners stayed in the new world. At any rate, Hingham, Massachusetts, exists to this day, not, indeed, as one of America's mammoth cities, but with a population (in 1900) of 5059, of whom oddly enough more than 900 were foreigners. In fact, in its minor way, it is as much more important than Hingham in Norfolk, as Boston, Massachusetts, is greater than Boston, Lincolnshire. But it is not likely to be more pleasing to the eye, and it is very safe to conjecture that, in fact, it is not a tenth so pleasing as the Norfolk village.

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Before long we reach Scoulton Mere, a silent sheet of gleaming grey, with not a bird to be seen on or over it, a fine expanse of sedge-girt water. "Here," says "Murray," "the black-headed gull breeds in enormous numbers, and their eggs are collected, to be sold as plovers' eggs, by thousands for the London market." This may readily be believed, for the eggs of *Larus Ridibundus*, although they vary a good deal in marking, are often practically indistinguishable from those of the green plover, or grey plover, except that they are not so sharply pointed at the small end. The imposture does not matter a straw so long as the two kinds of eggs remain, as they are at present, identical in point of flavour. Indeed, the subject prompts a digression, flagrantly irrelevant, but certainly pardonable for its practical value. Ten or twelve years ago the owner of Hanmer Mere, which is situate at about the point where Shropshire and Flintshire are

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so inextricably mixed that an ordinary atlas will not tell you which is which, desiring to reduce the number of the coots, spent an afternoon with a friend in taking some two hundred eggs. It seemed a pity to destroy them without trying them cold, and hardboiled, like plovers' eggs. They were every whit as good to eat, and they were distinctly the *clou* of luncheon at Chester races next day. This is certainly worth knowing, for, if plovers be more numerous than coots, there are enough coots and to spare, and their nests are as easy to find as those of plovers are difficult.

But "Murray" proceeds: "There are only three breeding places of this gull in Britain." This must be quite wrong. The late Mr. Henry Seebohm, whose *Eggs of British Birds* (Paunson & Brailsford, Sheffield) is both admirably produced and of the highest authority, wrote, and Dr. Bowdler Sharpe left the passage in editing the book after Mr. Seebohm's death: "The Black-headed Gull is one of our commonest species. Its colonies are not so large as those of the Kittiwake, but they are much more numerous. It is a resident in the British Isles, frequenting the coasts during winter, but retiring inland in summer to breed in colonies in swamps." Now Mr. Henry Seebohm was a mighty ornithologist, and the most indefatigable birds-nester at home and abroad who ever lived, and, having read often before, and now again, all he has to say of the nesting places of all kinds of gulls claimable by Great Britain, I am convinced that this claim set up by "Murray," perhaps on the word of some local fowler, cannot be maintained either in relation to the Black-headed Gull or any other kind of gull or tern that breeds in England.

Leaving Scoulton Mere behind we were again in a land of flat heaths of wide extent, and of sheltering hedges of dense Scotch fir. It was a country of the most pleasing face but, apart from that, no use for any purposes save those of the motorist and the rabbit-breeder. That it had been well used by the latter evidence was soon apparent on the roadside in the form of a gang of men, with nets, dogs, and ferrets, pursuing their operations on such a scale, and so completely in the open, that they must surely have been authorized rabbit-catchers and not poachers. Still the thought occurred to me that, in bygone days and in far-distant North Wales, we always found from the advertisements that ferrets, who are the poachers' best friends, were to be obtained more easily from Norfolk than from any other part of the country, and that they knew their work very well when they arrived. In fact, there is a huge head of game in Norfolk, and where that state of things exists, there poachers will be. Theirs is a lawless pursuit of course, but Lord! as Mr. Pepys would have said, what good sport it must be "on a shiny night in the season of the year," and what a vast and intimate knowledge of animal and bird life these poachers must possess.

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If it was a rabbit-catcher's paradise it was a motorist's paradise also. There was no possible danger to human beings, for, after the rabbit-catchers, there were none; after the fir hedges had been passed the road became an unfenced ribbon of tawny grey running through the bare heath, with no other roads debouching into it, and no cover of any sort for a police trap. There was no reason in life against a good spin at top speed except that superstitious regard for the letter of the law which not one man in a thousand really has. The car simply flew forward; the speed indicator marked 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, and even 50 miles an hour; the road seemed to open wide to our advent, to stretch out its arms, so to speak, to embrace us; the motion, smooth, swifter and swifter still, even as the flight of the albatross that stirreth not his wings, and absolutely free from vibration, was, in a single word, divine. Suddenly, a few miles in front of us, a dusty cloud hove in sight over the road. "There," said my friend, half in jest, but only half—for a motorist's paradise is at its best when solitary—"is one of those beastly motor-cars. What a foul dust it is raising!" So it turned out, on rising and looking back over the cape hood, were we; not that it mattered, for no wayfarers had been passed or, therefore, powdered, for many a short mile—I had written "a long mile" from force of habit, but it would have been inappropriate. Was the other car meeting us or going in the same direction? In the same direction surely, for though the cloud of dust was coming nearer to us, it was not approaching very fast. So we determined to pass as soon as might be, and "giving her a little more gas," we were very soon "on terms," as a racing man would say, with a two-seated car going along the middle of the road at a fair pace. Once, twice, thrice our horn sounded, but the occupants of that car never heard us. At last, keeping well to the off-side of the road, and when our bonnet was level with their rear off-wheel, Mr. Johnson and I gave a simultaneous and stentorian yell; and the two pairs of goggles that were turned upon us, who were then, as nearly always, un-goggled, clearly covered four eyes starting with surprise. It was a lesson to them and to us of the very poor penetrative power of a motor-horn in relation to motor-cars in front, and of the necessity of looking behind you now and again, especially if you be in a noisy car. So that two-seated car was passed as if it had been standing still, and the lot of the dust-recipient, which one or other must needs endure for a while, was transferred from us to them; but they were not called upon to endure it, nor could they have kept it if they had so desired, for any length of time.

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So hey for Watton, near which lies Weyland Wood, fondly famous in local story as being the

identical wood in which the ill-fated babes in the wood were lost. That is a tradition as to the origin and true locality of which, so far as I know, even the most ardent folk-lorists have not concerned themselves very seriously, and certainly the likeness of sound between "Weyland" and "Wailing" may have caused it to be localized here. As it happens, however, there is a very much simpler explanation of the name of the wood and of the Hundred in which it is situated. Weyland is simply the modern representation of the "Wanelunt" of *Domesday*, and that again is simply descriptive, like Blacklands in Berks, and the names of scores of Hundreds besides. For "Wanelunt" is just "wan land," and a more wan land than this, from the agricultural point of view, it would be hard to find. Islington in Norfolk may be, in all probability was, the place in which the Bailiff's daughter lived and was beloved by the squire's son, but Weyland Wood cannot detain us. It has no more claim to this particular honour than a hundred other woods in other parts of the kingdom have, except upon an etymological basis, and that has the trifling disadvantage of being quite wrong.

Nor did Watton detain us, any more than it need detain anybody else. Brandon, the next place passed, was renowned in ancient times for its rabbits and its quarries of gunflints, and the "Grime's graves" in the vicinity are said to be interesting earthworks. The glory of the rabbits remains, but the gunflint trade was, of course, vanished. "Murray," it is true, says that flints "are still (1875) exported to Arab tribes round the Mediterranean," but that was more than thirty years ago, and Mr. Rye is, no doubt, correct in saying that the old industry has, naturally enough, died out of late years. But those desert tribes on the African coast of the Mediterranean still use some charmingly antique pieces, and it may be that Brandon flints are still fitted to some of them. They were the same kind of flints which the ancient Briton, or perhaps Neolithic man, used to dig out at Brandon, for excavations some time since revealed a stag's antler, says "Murray," in what was clearly a "working" of a prehistoric flint quarry. Thus much the writer tells us and no more. It would really have been much more interesting to know something of the nature of the antler; but on that point he is silent.

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If one were in a hurry, and a train happened to be convenient, it would, for once, be simpler to reach Ely from Brandon by train than by car: for the railway follows the course of the Brandon River across Mow Fen and then cuts straight across Burnt Fen and Middle Fen to Ely. On the other hand the road, dating very likely to a period long before the reclamation of the fens, and keeping to the high ground, turns south-west by south to Mildenhall and then, skirting Mildenhall Fen, nearly due west to Fordham and Soham, and from Soham north-west to Ely: and this is a long way round. Here there would be a first rate opportunity for saying something of the romantic history of the Fens, for it is truly romantic, and of the real glamour which they exercise upon a traveller through their midst. The opportunity is deliberately reserved to a later point for three reasons. First, there is much to be said on other matters; secondly, you really do not see very much of the Fens by this line of route; thirdly, it was found later that the drive from Lynn to Ely is *par excellence* the occasion upon which the peculiar character of the Fens, their limitless extent, their rich and black soil, and the reflection that all this wealth has been reclaimed from the wasting waters by the industry and the enterprise of man, the very spirit of the Fens in fact, enter into the traveller's soul.

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Fordham and even Soham, with its remarkable church and its legends of Canute's passage over the long-vanished mere upon the ice, were passed almost unnoticed, for our eyes were fixed upon the horizon in front in longing for the vision, often seen from a train, of Ely Cathedral rising in beautiful majesty from the centre of the plain-girt isle, once fen-girt, in which the Saxon made almost his last heroic stand against the all-conquering Norman. Truth to tell, for this once only, the train has the advantage of the motor-car in providing a splendid and memorable spectacle. Approaching Ely from Cambridge by rail one sees the cathedral, and the cathedral is the only object that catches the eye, for miles, and miles, and then miles. It is a divine sight, stirring up memories of Canute and of Emma his Queen, of ravaging William the Conqueror (concerning whom the Saxon chroniclers probably wrote without exaggerated regard for truth) and of the heroic figure of Hereward the Wake. Memories of this vision, often seen, never to be forgotten, had prepared us for something really great and for prolonged enjoyment of it. As a fact, and it was one which intelligent study of a contour map might have prepared us for, the vision did not break upon our eyes until we were through Soham, and speeding along the causeway built by Hervé le Breton early in the twelfth century across the mere which stood where the golden corn is reaped and tied and carried every autumn now. When it came it was, be it stated with the more warmth now in that what is to be written shortly is not entirely the conventional view, supremely lovely. The air was of that pellucid transparency which is the sure prelude of rain. At a distance of four miles or thereabouts the eye could distinguish shades of colour, could follow all the delicate tracery of the central octagon and of the huge western tower; and it was natural, remembering that Ely is one of the largest cathedrals in Europe, to observe that, so excellent are its proportions, it does not impress the spectator from a distance by its length. This very excellent effect is due doubtless to Alan of Walsingham's fourteenth-century design for a grandly broad basis to the octagon tower under which he lies.

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And here rhapsody must cease at the command of candour. I had visited Ely before as quite a young man; I had read much of the history of the cathedral, much concerning its architecture. Yet this time it failed to please as a whole, within or without, when viewed at close quarters. The octagon, regarded from a distance of not many hundred feet, looked to be wanting in substance rather than possessed of airy grace. Somehow or other, in the perverse fashion which is at once irresistible and fatal to cordial admiration, it suggested to my mind a ludicrous comparison. Resist as I might, I continued to think of wedding cakes. The western tower, so far as it was built

by Bishop Riddell in the twelfth century, that is to say up to the level of the clerestory of the nave, seemed, and was, and is, proud, substantial, massive, impressive; but the Decorated superstructure, an octagon with turrets alongside, did not satisfy at all; nor do I believe that it would have been more satisfying even if the slender spire of wood, long vanished from its top, had survived. On me it produced, and I found that it has produced on other and more highly cultivated men, an impression of flimsy and jarring incongruity. Far other was the effect of looking at the honest red brick of the Bishop's Palace near the west door, for the gently warm tone of the bricks builded as our forefathers loved in the reign of the first Tudor king, was a joy and a rest to the eye.

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Before entering the cathedral itself we took luncheon at the "Lamb," for a hungry man is an impatient sight-seer. But even after that, to one returning in contented mood, the outside of the western tower satisfied only up to the level of the clerestory. In fact, the original impression, whether it argued crass ineptitude or no, remained; and it is better to write oneself down a boor than to invent raptures which would be untrue. Inside our experiences were unfortunate. The ladies had gone before, had seen and enjoyed a good deal. My friend and I entered with due reverence. The vastness of the nave took seisin of us at once; but the charm was rudely broken. To us approached a verger of immemorial age—he had informed the ladies that he had been attached to the cathedral for half a century—wearing a velvet skull-cap and saying in strident tones, "It is a fine cathedral, gentlemen; have you seen it before?" "Yes," said I, shortly, and hoping to be rid of him, for to have a babbling guide at one's elbow on occasions of this kind is fatal to intelligent enjoyment. But the hope was vain. He joined himself to us and went on talking. In despair we divided forces, and walked briskly away in opposite directions. Nothing daunted he stood in the middle and talked louder than ever. So, after admiring the inside of the octagon, which is very fine, and failing to admire the roof of the nave, we left in despair without having studied the architecture in detail, without seeing the hammer beams of the transept roofs, without lingering over the original Norman work in the transepts. To us it was a loss and a bitter disappointment; but there are some inflictions that are beyond bearing, and this doubtless worthy old gentleman was one of them. Still, there are compensations in things, and nothing is made quite in vain. One of the objects for which this verger was created was that of saving the reader from the infliction of an essay on the architecture of Ely Cathedral by one who has, by his unashamed candour, demonstrated himself unworthy to indite such an essay.

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The rest of this expedition may be condensed into a paragraph, and that not unduly long. Leaving Ely we reached Cambridge easily by a flat, straight, excellent, and perfectly uninteresting road, marked in the maps as Roman; but the wise man, for reasons already given, calls no road Roman until he knows for certain that it is such. There is, however, some evidence for this "Roman" road. Passing quickly through Cambridge and over the Gog Magog Hills without noticing them, we were soon at Royston, and from that point—to Oxford as it happened—we were beyond my manor. Two things happened, though, which may occur any day or night. It began to rain hard just after Royston, and went on raining, and we had trouble in lighting the acetylene lamps after Aylesbury. Neither mattered. It was something to have an opportunity of testing the cape hood, and the acetylene lamps were, after all, only a reminder that everything does not always go absolutely smoothly even in the best-regulated motor-cars. We got wet, of course, on the driving seat; but that was of no moment, for we were homeward bound; and as for the appetite that was carried home, the face glowing with clean rain, the feeling of overflowing health, and the dreamless sleep of that night, they were well worth a king's ransom.

CHAPTER VI

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LONDON, FELIXSTOWE—DUNWICH, FELIXSTOWE

In an 18 White steam car—Best exit from London eastwards—General ignorance of the White steam cars—Some interested prejudice against them—An account of them—Independent testimony to them—Woodford and Chingford—Popularity of Epping Forest—Pepys on the roads—Little improvement—A haunting cyclist—Impression of the Forest—"Seeing's believing"—True woodland unkempt—Thorn trees as evidence of antiquity—Motor-cyclist's rivalry—Epping—Ongar—Chelmsford—Rich country—Colchester—The "Red Lion"—Memories of the Civil War—Deaths of Lucas and Lisle—Through Ipswich—Trimley's two churches—Felixstowe—A hotel half awake—Felix the Burgundian—Rainy morning—Glance at Felixstowe—Mr. Felix Cobbold, M.P.—His perfect home—Rock-gardens and pergolas—The walled garden—A Jersey herd—An afternoon drive—Nature's garden of Suffolk—The motorist's independence—Machine feels no pain—A circuit to Woodbridge—Wickham Market and Saxmundham—Hey for Dunwich!—Course laid over farm tracks—Desolate Dunwich—Irresistible coast erosion—Skeletons "all awash"—The lost forest—Dunwich in the past—Steady loss of land—Back to Felixstowe through byways and by road.

At precisely ten minutes past three in the afternoon of the 17th of March an 18-h.p. White steam car glided out of Kingly Street, Regent Street. At ten minutes to four, without any undue haste in driving, it was out in the open country at Ponder's End, the route taken being by way of York

Road (hard by King's Cross Station) and Seven Sisters Road. This route, which involves but three turns, if the right ones be chosen, is at once the quickest way out of London to the eastward; far less unpleasant to eye, nostrils, and ears than the drive through Whitechapel; far less difficult in the matter of traffic; and it has the further advantage of leading the traveller almost at once into scenes of sylvan beauty more often raved about to the sceptical than seen by the eyes of the wise. For these reasons it is given with pharmaceutical detail in the "Practical Observations." The occupants of the car were Mr. Frederick Coleman, London manager of the White Steam Car Company of the United States; Mrs. Coleman, a lady possessing the rare gift of a remarkably exact topographical memory; their child, my wife and myself, and a mechanic who sat contentedly, after the manner of his kind, at my feet. The car was fitted with cape hood for use if necessary, and, in the way of luggage, it carried two fair-sized suit-cases upon a platform astern, containing all the impedimenta which could reasonably be required by folks who intended to travel by day and to rest comfortably at hotels in the evening. It may be added that we had no absolutely fixed plan, for we meant to drift whither we pleased, allowing fancy or inclination to dictate to us the time for halting and the resting-place for the night.

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The expedition had been anticipated with considerably more than ordinary interest, because, although it had been my lot to be much in motors since motors invaded England, it had not been my fortune ever before to take a long drive in a White steam car. A very large number of motorists must be—as in fact I know that they are—without personal experience of a White steam car, although it may well be that they are familiar with reports to its prejudice, or silent shrugging of the shoulders and raising of the eyebrows when it is mentioned, which are perfectly natural and excusable. I can readily imagine that if I had a pecuniary interest in any of the leading types of petrol-driven cars, between which there is next to no room for choice, I might show no headlong desire to testify in favour of a car moving more smoothly than any petrol-car, free from the nuisance of a starting-handle (it is a danger too sometimes, as the broken arm of a friend's careless chauffeur has shown recently), absolved from the necessity of change-speed gear, capable of an astonishing turn of speed, singularly strong in hill-climbing and—considerably less expensive than any petrol-driven car of equal power—by power I do not mean horse-power. The best plan, perhaps, of avoiding the temptation to give such testimony would be to avoid the preliminary experience, and not to try a White steam car at all. Having no financial interest in any kind of car, being well aware that even among motorists crass ignorance on the subject of this type of car prevails, having heard from private friends, complete strangers to the motor-car industry, that White cars have given them complete satisfaction, and that, in their opinion, the public needs enlightenment on the subject, I deem it right to give some account of the 1906 model of the White steam cars.

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Now this is an age of advertisement and, therefore, of necessity, an age given to suspect latent advertisement. It is therefore prudent to state that no consideration of any kind has passed or will pass from the White Steam Car Company or anybody connected with it to me, or to the publishers, that nobody connected with the company has even a suspicion that I am going to attempt to describe the car, that anybody connected with the company could do it more accurately, and that there is no other motive in writing than a desire to make known a good thing to those who may be fortunate enough to be able to obtain it. Every motorist, and many a man and woman not fairly to be described as such, is familiar with the general principles underlying every petrol-driven car; and the distinctions between types of petrol cars are due entirely to little differences of detail in the application of those principles. That is why no description of a petrol-driven car is necessary in these pages or could be tolerated in them. Very few motorists really know anything about White steam cars, and that is why they are described in short and popular language.

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Perhaps the best justification for it is to be found in a personal explanation. A week or so after this expedition ended I met in Piccadilly a friend, high in the service of the Crown and of large private means, whose name it would be a breach of faith to publish; but, as a guarantee of good faith, I here state that, in the margin of the manuscript, I have written the name for the private information of the publishers. It is one which would carry a great deal of weight if it were printed. I had left my friend's house in May, 1905, after trying with him a French and English car, both of well-known makes, of which he was very proud. After our first greeting in March, 1906, I remarked that I had been trying a White steam car exhaustively, and that I was simply astonished by its capabilities. It turned out that, in the interval, he had acquired one, and he was entirely at one with me. "I am delighted with it; so is my man; the public ought to know about it." Those were the *ipsisima verba* of an absolutely independent man, whose mechanical and engineering knowledge is far above the average, whom, as an exacting judge of sheer comfort, his friends believe to have no superior in this world. After that, let him who pleases suspect latent advertisement. In fact, *Honi soit qui mal y pense*, and let the truth be told.

A White steam car is, in general outline and appearance, very like a petrol-driven car, and the cautious Mr. Worley Beaumont, who is honorary consulting engineer to the Automobile Club and consulting engineer to the Commissioner of Metropolitan Police, has written thus: "The makers of these cars are to be congratulated upon the possession and development of a type of steam generator which, in combination with a cleverly designed engine and well devised and constructed auxiliary gear and parts, has made it possible to produce a car capable of continuing to compare favourably with those propelled by the petrol engine." The essential points are the steam generator, which it is simpler to call the boiler, and the burner, or fire. The generator is an ingenious arrangement of coiled tubes, fed with water from the top, always containing, when the fire has been kindled, some water as well as a sufficient supply of superheated steam. The burner

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is, to quote Mr. Beaumont, "in form a shallow drum, the upper face of which is annularly ridged. The ridges are sawn or slit through at close intervals, and provide openings through which the combustible gas and air mixture combines with additional air flowing upwards through the numerous openings in the tubes." In other words the fuel, petrol, or benzolene ingeniously vaporized, is forced into the annular ridges, there mixes with air, and the mixture burns fiercely. The steam temperature is most cleverly controlled by the "thermostat," which may be described sufficiently for popular purposes by stating that it regulates the force of the fire automatically by the temperature of the steam, the automatic regulation being founded on the different expansions of brass and steel under varying degrees of heat. There are great opportunities, too, for humouring the engine, through the burner and generator of course, by the adroit use of the throttle.

These are the essentials. The drawbacks, if such they be, to this kind of steam car are that it needs to have its burner lighted for a period varying from three to five minutes in the morning before starting, and that it requires a fresh supply of water for every 150 miles or so. The second requirement is really of no moment in this country; the first, it has been argued with all appearance of seriousness, renders this steam car inferior to a petrol car in "efficiency." Now this, unless "efficiency" has merely technical signification, is absurd. Substantially, even if the hour of setting forth has not been fixed beforehand, one can always afford to wait three minutes before starting on a drive; if it comes to that so much time is usually occupied in wrapping oneself up and in bestowing passengers; and, in any ordinary acceptation of the word, the starting-handle, which must be applied after every substantial halt, is the most inefficient device conceivable. Other drawbacks, candidly, I found none, except that, on our first day, some new asbestos packing made itself perceptible to the nostrils; and there was no question that the absence of change-speed gear, and the absolute smoothness with which more power could be applied when necessary on hills, were a genuine pleasure.

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That, however, was the lesson learned in the course of several days. So far as the narrative went we had only passed out of London to Ponder's End, which was of no interest. Then we were at Chingford, on an absolutely lovely day, and the beauty of the Forest of Epping, its popularity among Londoners, and the villainous quality of its roads became simultaneously apparent. Concerning the roads, "Murray" says "the Forest Roads are no longer as in Pepys's days—when he complained that riding in the main way was like 'riding in a kennel.'" On verifying the quotation it appears possible that Mr. Pepys has been misunderstood, but not too clear what he really meant. He had reached Epping overnight, after a visit to Audley End House, "where we drank a most admirable drink," and his entry of 28 February runs: "Up in the morning. Then to London through the forest, where we found the way good, but only in one path, which we kept as though we had rode through a kennel all the way." The meaning of the last clause is perhaps a little obscure; but it is at least clear that Mr. Pepys, following the road by which we travelled in 1906 in all probability, found it tolerable when all the rest were bad. He was more fortunate than we were, for all the way from Chingford past Buckhurst Hill to Epping the road was atrocious. It was the sort of road, too, which promised to remain scandalously bad, until such time as it should be taken thoroughly in hand on some new principle, since it appeared to be made of gravel and dirt, fairly firm in the middle, but shockingly ploughed up at the sides. On this fine day it was crowded with holiday traffic, with persons walking on the footpath by the side, with bicyclists innumerable struggling over the broken surface, with hired carriages carrying family parties for a drive in the sun through the heart of the Forest. If popularity of resort be a reason why a road should be good rather than bad, as surely it ought to be, then some authority has a good deal to answer for.

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This was, shameful to relate, my first visit to Epping Forest, but, before giving a first impression of it, there is a ghost to be exorcised. So often as my mind recurs to this passage through the heart of the Forest it is haunted by the memory of one particular cyclist. He was thin, pale to the point of haggardness, anything than robust to look at. He crouched forward over his handle bars, in the manner beloved of the "scorcher" and depriving the exercise of any health-giving effects it might produce, until his back was parallel to the road. We were travelling, designedly as a test of the car, and accurately as the speedometer bore witness, at a steady and unvarying pace of twenty miles an hour, on the level, on downward gradients, and up hills which, while they offered no sort of trouble to a powerful car, would have made me grunt and grumble and go slowly if I had been on a bicycle. Yet this apparent weakling clung to us, being in fact never more than twenty yards behind us for many miles, without showing any signs of severe effort save in the tense features of his pallid face. It was really a great achievement, greater probably than the bicyclist was aware; it exemplified the effect of an air-shield and the value of a pace-maker in races; but it was a relief when, at last, the pale-faced bicyclist relinquished the pursuit.

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Is it wrong to give an impression of Epping Forest in early spring, an impression resulting from a single passage through it? Surely not. Did not James Anthony Froude say, or did not somebody say in defence of James Anthony Froude—it really does not matter which—something to the effect that a man may write a tolerable description of a country from a single visit, or a thorough account of it after prolonged study, but that in the intervening period he cannot describe it at all? Whosoever said it, or even if it was never said until now, it is a true saying, for in the period between first impression and thorough knowledge the mind is so much hampered with details that it cannot survey the whole in proportion. It cannot see the wood for the trees. Of this Epping Forest I knew, as most men do, something from hearsay and from desultory reading. I had read of the ancient rights, apparently rather problematical as a matter of history, of the City in the Forest, of the Epping Hunt, of the saving of seven thousand wild acres, lying cheek by jowl with

London, by the Epping Forest Act of 1871; had read also countless articles, wherein the sylvan beauties of Epping Forest, its ornithological and entomological treasures, were proclaimed with emphatic sincerity. Yet the place itself was a revelation.

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Segnius irritant animos demissa per aurem
Quam quæ sunt oculis submissa fidelibus.

So wrote Horace long ago, and "seeing's believing," is a blunt but adequate translation of his verses. Epping Forest was and is a sheer delight. Apart from the roads that traverse it, it is as distinctly genuine and unkempt a piece of English woodland as is to be found on these islands. The reference here is not to fine timber or to monumental trees, but to the tangled thickets of ancient hawthorn, rising from beds of bracken—they were the brown relics of the last year's glory as we saw them—with here and there a natural alley through their midst, which stretched far on either side. Nothing of the tree kind gives such convincing testimony of antiquity as obviously old hawthorns, which have been left to the care of nature. Your huge and venerable oak may be, and very often is, historic; its story may be, and often is, traced back over several centuries. Men mourned over the Fairlop Oak, in Hainault Forest hard by, when it was blown down in 1820, because it had been forty-five feet in girth "and its boughs shadowed an area of 300 ft."—the passage is quoted because its meaning is not too clear—and it is said that the pulpit and lectern of St. Pancras Church were made of the timber. Your historic oaks are the aristocracy of trees; their annals are chronicled by the Debretts and Burkes of forestry. But as there are ancient families of English peasants, their simple pedigrees never kept because they seemed to be of no moment, which are probably far older in the land than any noble family, so there are, in all human probability, thorn trees more ancient by far than the oldest oak. They have survived, or at any rate they give the impression that they have survived, which is what really matters, longer than the oaks for the same reasons which have led to the survival of the rustic families of men. As peasants were left alone when peers went to Tower Hill, so thorn trees have been passed unscathed by storms which have torn off the limbs of oaks or laid them prostrate on the ground, have been spared by the woodcutter in search of his raw material for England's wooden walls. They were insignificant, very tough, of no particular value as timber. They have lived on, unnoticed, growing into impenetrable thickets, bearded with time-honoured lichen, garlanded with fragrant blossom in the season of the year, haunted by nightingales which find in them nesting places defying even the most hardy boy. A few of them have been famous in story, the Glastonbury thorn, for example, and the *unica spinosa arbor*, round which the battle of Saxon and Dane raged fiercest at Ashdown; but most of the old thorns in the country are, like most of the old peasant families, simply of immemorial antiquity and, when once they have attained maturity, particularly in an exposed spot, they seem to change little from year to year, or in ten years, or twenty, or thirty. That is why, to my mind, a thicket of gnarled and lichened hawthorns, such as you may see by the acre in Epping Forest, and to a greater extent there than in any other forest known to me, is the strongest testimony of genuine antiquity; and it is the thorn brakes, therefore, which charm me more than any other feature of the famous Forest of Epping. They embody the very spirit of wild and untended woodland.

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So we passed on through the long and rather pleasing street of Epping, and here the cyclist elected to remain behind, being succeeded by a motor-cyclist, a cheerful wretch who, since the road to Ongar is one of many angles, had us somewhat at his mercy. His pace was nearly equal to the best speed it was prudent for us to achieve; he could catch us and go ahead at severe gradients, especially if there were a corner in front, and he never failed to do so with a triumphant grin on his face. When he was behind he knew that the way by which we passed would be clear to him; when he was in front of us we could entertain no such confidence for ourselves in relation to him. Barring accidents he could probably have clung to us all day—that is to say, unless he had jolted his heart out through his mouth. Motor-cyclists say, of course, that they feel no jolting. They may say the thing which is true, but motor-cycling looks so vibratory that their assertion produces no sort of effect on my mind. However, this particular motor-cyclist grew weary of haunting us before we reached Ongar, and he was not regretted.

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Ongar, though it owns a mound and an entrenchment, made no deep impression on us, and we passed on quickly to Chelmsford, trim, neat, ancient, and modern, for the county town of Essex bulks fairly large in far-away history, and, as for the modern appearance of its environs, especially those through which we passed *en route* for Colchester, it has been written: "The Colchester road, through the northern suburb of Springfield, is enlivened by an avenue of villas and gardens." Comment, as the newspapers used to say, would be superfluous.

This Colchester road, through the northern suburb of Springfield, was the old Roman road of our first tour, through Boreham and Witham and so far as Marks Tey, at any rate; but we travelled it in more genial conditions this time, and could see all there was to be seen. The villages and towns—for Witham is quite a town, and an ancient one at that—did not seduce us into a halt, although those of more leisurely mind may make one for the sake of examining Witham Church, in the walls of which are many Roman bricks. But the country, which pleased Arthur Young by its fertility and by virtue of the intelligent pains with which it was treated by the Essex farmers, is, in its peaceful way, one of the most fascinating and characteristic to be found in all England. I shall not attempt to do justice to it at this point, partly because our journey was taken too early in the spring for a landscape, of which the trees are the chief glory to be seen at its best, but principally because, as I think has been explained before, some account of the scenic beauties of Essex can be given more suitably in an attempt, to be made later, to record some of the experiences acquired, during a more than commonly golden September, in the course of ten days spent in

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motoring about Essex from Colchester as a centre. Let no more be said here than that the Essex elms, or most of them, are not "shrouded," as is the custom of many southern counties—that is to say, their side branches are not lopped off periodically, to supply fuel and pea-stocks, a mere tuft being left at the top—and the result of leaving the trees in their natural state is to make the roads shady and delightful, although road surveyors might take a different view of them.

Reaching Colchester, whereof any description is postponed for the reason already given, in the late afternoon of a market-day, we betook ourselves to my old head-quarters, the "Red Lion," for afternoon tea. It is a delightfully old-fashioned house, having much oak timber, carved and black, on the front, and the motor enters under an overhanging archway into a courtyard shaded by an immemorial creeper. Here, usually, are military officers to be found, and the house has military traditions, for it is at least said that in the "Old Red Lion" were gathered together the ill-fated Sir Charles Lucas and Sir George Lisle and their officers, after the surrender of the city to Fairfax and Ireton had become inevitable, and, if tradition be true, as there is no reason to believe that it is not, it was from the "Red Lion" that they went forth gallantly and cheerfully to meet their deaths. It was a fine episode, and a sad one. "Lucas was first shot, and he himself gave the orders to fire, with the same alacrity as if he had commanded a platoon of his own soldiers. Lisle instantly ran and kissed the dead body, then cheerfully presented himself to a like fate. Thinking that the soldiers, destined for his execution, stood at too great a distance, he called to them to come nearer. One of them replied, 'I'll warrant you, Sir, we'll hit you'; he answered smiling, 'Friends, I have been nearer you when you have missed me.' Thus perished this generous spirit."

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Darkness was beginning to threaten before we left Colchester for Ipswich, and it had fallen before Ipswich was reached by the same road used in leaving it heretofore. So we passed through the streets of Ipswich, still crooked, of course, still infested with giant tramcars, and still crowded, into the open country beyond, the light of the acetylene lamps piercing the gloom for fully a quarter of a mile ahead. We pushed on partly because our minds had been half made up to spend the night at Felixstowe, partly because, on the whole, it seemed that Felixstowe would be a more pleasant resting-place than Ipswich. The drawback was that we saw nothing more of the country than that, apparently, we crossed a good deal of heathland, and that at Trimley the towers of two churches appeared in quick succession. They were in fact in the same churchyard, as was seen another day, and one was and is Trimley St. Mary and the other Trimley St. Martin. Why they stand cheek by jowl in this wasteful fashion I am unhappily not able to say, not for lack of inquiry or curiosity, but because inquiry has not been addressed to the right authorities and curiosity has therefore been vain. Of Felixstowe that night we saw nothing much. We gathered an impression of streets of new villas, detached and semi-detached, leading at last to a large hotel which, albeit in a state of semi-hibernation, was welcome. Semi-hibernation means that the dining-room proper was not in use, and that only the first floor bedrooms were ready for the reception of visitors. Still, there was dinner ready, and its readiness quite made up for cramped quarters. Need it be added that the hotel is named after Felix the Burgundian, as is the town? Felix, every schoolboy knows, but a good many grown men and women may have forgotten, was the first Bishop of East Anglia, imported by King Sigeberht in 630 A.D., and had his see at Dunwich, perhaps the most weirdly forlorn place in all England, which we visited next day.

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That next day opened ill, with abundance of warm rain which, at first at any rate, showed no signs of abating. That rain was really a blessing in disguise, for when it abated sullenly, Mr. Coleman proposed a morning call on Mr. Felix Cobbold, M.P., whom in fact he had been helping in the election, which ought to be known for all time as the motor-car election, and Mr. Cobbold was hospitality personified. He kept us willing prisoners, taking us with him as hostages while he went in search of the ladies, and hence comes it that, without stepping outside my rule never to inspect another man's house save as his guest, I can at least attempt to describe a very perfect gem of an earthly paradise. You must know first that Felixstowe is fitly, one must not write "happily," named, in that, being situate on the east coast of England, where the air has been known to exceed its duties in the way of bracing the constitution of man, it has a little aspect of its own nearly due south. Along the front of this for some distance runs a parade, esplanade, promenade, or whatsoever they may choose to call it, and from this, unless memory is playing a trick, the usual pier of the modern watering-place runs into the sea in the usual way. It would appear then that Felixstowe itself made no abiding impression, exercised no strong fascination, on my mind. That is so. It is just a seaside town, with lots of new houses, which lays itself out to attract sojourning visitors in summer, and such places differ little. Some, Clacton-on-Sea for example, which is also within my manor, are a little worse than others by reason of the multitudes and quality of the company; some are a little better, and have golf-links. Felixstowe is of the latter kind, and the golf-links, which we saw next day, look distinctly good. But for seaside places, as such, I have frankly no use, and it is the rarest thing in the world for them to be possessed of any architectural interest.

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Such were the feelings with which I walked with Mr. Coleman, having first seen that the car was feeling well, to the end of the sea-walk, whatsoever its proper title may be. Edward Fitzgerald, I felt, would not visit Felixstowe now if he were still in the flesh, and the author of "Murray" would not recognize "the pleasant village of Felixstowe, frequented in summer by a few visitors for sea-bathing," and apparently accessible only by coach from Ipswich even in 1875. At the east end of the walk we reached a barrier of oak palings, delightfully weathered, and in the palings in due course a gate, which led us to the haven where we would be. Imagine a long escarpment of land, facing the midday sun and the sea, and raised above the sea some forty or fifty feet. On it stands a long, many-windowed house with spacious verandas, from which, as from the windows, man may look down on the vast highway of the sea, sometimes smooth, sometimes grandly rough, and

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at the wayfarers upon it. He may enjoy all the advantages of being at sea without what some regard as its disadvantages, may look at the regular sailings of the Harwich boats, may speculate upon the destination of this or that "tramp" of the ocean. Between him and the sea are terraced walks, wonders in the way of rock and wall-gardens, glorious with plants which revel in the soft sea air and will live in no other. Away to the right, on the slope towards Felixstowe, is a sheltered yet sunny rose-garden, and above it a glorious pergola of the substantial kind beloved of Miss Jekyll. Off to the left, past tamarisks and fuchsias, is a cunning mixture of trees and grass and flower-borders, of sheltered rock-gardens and ingenious intricacies of light and shade, with glasshouses far away, not obtruding themselves on the eye, but glorious when entered. To a garden lover there could be no more unalloyed pleasure than a tour round the outside of this house, especially under the guidance of the owner and maker of the garden, who possesses not merely learning, but also that sympathy with plants which is of more value than all the horticultural books ever written by man or woman.

Of the inside of the house it is not fitting to speak in detail. Suffice it to say that it is, in every respect, the fitting environment of a man of advanced middle age, sometime scholar of Eton, still a Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, much travelled, able to indulge a refined and catholic taste in literature and art, of whose inner life books, pictures and plants are the most familiar friends. But surely something may be written of the great walled garden, behind all this and across the public road. It is emphatically the most perfect "kitchen" garden I have ever seen, and on this particular I may almost venture to claim to speak with some authority—the authority, that is to say, which belongs to one who is a natural lover of gardens, even of those which are useful, and who has had the good fortune to see many of the finest gardens in England. How great the space is 'tis hard to guess; it is ample. It is girt on all sides by high brick walls, and these walls, although by no means ancient, have already taken a glorious colour. Against them is trained all manner of wall-fruit, the best aspects being chosen, of course, for the apricots, the peaches and the nectarines, which delight to "drink the splendour of the sun." The spacious area within the walls is divided into four parts by pergolas converging upon a central circle of green turf. Those pergolas, covering a wide avenue, are delightfully solid, their pillars united at the top by stout timbers of cambered oak, sound enough to stand for centuries. The life they support is that of cordon apples and pears, set close together, and trained to absolute perfection. Both when the blossom is out, especially when the pink of apple-blossom is at its best in May, and when the fruit, ruddy, russet and golden, has taken its colour from the sun, these pergolas must be a sight simply lovely. The central oasis of green has, if memory serves accurately, a fountain in its midst, and round it certainly are pillars clad with rambling roses, their tops united not, as is customary, by drooping chains, but by stout hawsers, two inches or more in diameter, for which it is claimed that they suit the roses as supports better than metal, which is subject to rapid changes of temperature and also to electrical influence. This last consideration was new to me, but doubtless it rests on substantial ground, and the whole idea is an illustration of what may be achieved in gardening by sympathy, which we can all try to give—and by an expenditure which men of moderate means may well shudder to contemplate.

To round off the picture of this ideal home by the sea, be it added that Mr. Cobbold farms, and that his dairy cattle are of the gentle Channel Islands breeds, some Jerseys, all of ascertained pedigree, to which a little Guernsey blood has been added. At Norwich, seeing the Red Polls in great numbers, I ventured an expression of opinion that, on the whole, the native breed of a district is usually "most in the picture" and most profitable in that district, and the opinion remains unshaken, so far as wayside pastures and the ordinary stock on farms are concerned. But for the home farm no cattle are so pleasing to the eye, none are so gentle in their manners, and none give such eminently satisfactory milk as the Channel Islands cattle; and Mr. Cobbold's herd is most decidedly a thing in place. In answer to a leading question, based on personal experience, he writes: "One of the bulls (imported) was a Guernsey one; and his progeny are in some instances still to be distinguished by their whitish noses and lighter-coloured shins. This, of course, would make the cows larger; but apart from this, I have noticed a decided tendency in all the pure bred Jerseys to grow larger on our pastures and subject to the conditions they find here." As a matter of fact the same tendency is visible on pastures less favoured than those of Felixstowe.

It may be said that this is not motoring; but it was a glorious episode on a motor tour, and those who pass these modest oak palings on the way to Bawdsey, as we did next day, may like to know how complete is the paradise that is close to them. Still we did go a-motoring that afternoon, on the principle, perhaps, that although true hospitality may have no limits, nature has supplied one, a fairly high one it is true, to the absorbent capacities of the sponge. Our expedition of the afternoon, by this time soft and rainless, was merely half a Sabbath day's journey, from the point of view of the motorist, for there is no revolutionary pursuit of our age to which the Greek author's saying concerning the mutability of the meaning of words is more applicable than it is to motoring. The saying, by the way, is that in revolutionary times the signification of words as applied to things is always changed. A Sabbath day's journey, for example, was to the Hebrew of old seven miles. In the course of that afternoon, merely *pour passer le temps*, without overstraining ourselves or the car, we travelled at least eighty miles, starting well after three o'clock, taking our afternoon tea at a supremely interesting spot, and returning to the pleasing shelter of the hotel more or less in time for a rather late dinner.

Our policy, after the first few miles, which were to take us through nature's wild garden of Suffolk, was a policy of drifting, determined by circumstances. There is a Greek word *αυταρκεια*, which exactly describes one of the chief fascinations of the motor-car for those who have the

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strength of mind—for it is really strength and not weakness—to allow happy chance to determine their course in some measure. It means "sufficiency in oneself," or "independence," and I am emboldened to refer to it because it is much beloved by Plato, and because Plato, I am given to understand, is quite a popular author among the ladies of our day. Here let a suggestion be offered to the learned gentleman who delivers lectures to note-taking ladies on Plato in the sympathetic atmosphere of one of our huge modern hotels. There is nothing like a concrete example for bringing home to the modern mind the truth of these expressions used by the wise men of the old world, and two illustrations of ἀνταρκεία are offered freely. "Good horse between my knees" was the very embodiment of the feeling of independence before motor-cars were in the land. Subject to sundry risks, not numerous or probable enough to stop a man of courage from setting forth, the mounted man can go pretty much whither his fancy leads him and change his mind as often as he pleases, within certain obvious limits. The motorist is even more happily situated. For the horseman the risks and the limits remain practically unchanged throughout the ages; for the motorist the risks, save those of tire trouble, are always being reduced and the limits are always being extended. There is now practically no limit, save that of his personal choice and his physical endurance, to the distance he may go, and he need never be troubled, as the horseman must be from time to time, by doubts whether his pleasure may not be causing pain to the organism which carries him willingly from place to place. It is of course just conceivable that the metals may feel, but it is not in the least likely that they do. Everybody has heard of mysterious movements inside apparently solid steel—did not Mr. Ruskin speak beautifully of the "anarchy of steel"?—and it is a frequent experience that an engine will seem to grow tired and to require to be driven with consideration for a while, for no apparent reason. But at any rate, even the wildest fancy can hardly picture steel in pain in the same sense as the overdriven horse or the patient ricksha coolie whose short cough is a reminder that the race is short-lived. No, in motoring, so far as the use of the machine is concerned, there can be no inhumanity.

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It was in this spirit that we set forth on that soft afternoon, with a half-formed intention of taking tea with friends near Saxmundham and of going no farther on our outward journey. As it happened we went a great deal farther, taking a predetermined course at first along roads clearly marked on every map, and then, having found a new objective, and having ascertained the direction in which it lay, we made for it by such roads as seemed, on the face of them, and without any regard to their quality or surface, most likely to lead towards it. It took a little longer perhaps, but it was interesting; it gave some exercise to the topographical intelligence, and it led us out of the beaten track. The first part of the route was simplicity itself. We simply retraced our tracks from Felixstowe to Trimley of the twin churches along the Ipswich road, and a mile or two beyond. Then we turned at an obtuse angle to the right and found ourselves in what has been called the wild garden of Suffolk, not in any classical work perhaps, but by word of mouth. A wide stretch it was of gorse and heather, with trees here and there, singly and in groups, the greater part of it some eighty or ninety feet above the level of the adjoining North Sea and, roughly speaking, forty feet above that of the plain, ten miles in width or thereabouts, following the coast northwards for ever so many miles from the left bank of the demure and rather dull river Deben. The "garden" was hardly at its best for, whether kissing was out of fashion or not, the gorse was very certainly and completely out of blossom; and of course there was no glory of bracken; but no strong effort of imagination was called for, no very intimate knowledge of wild nature, to perceive that, later in the year, this must be a divinely attractive run. As it was, the memory left is of clear air and wide prospect, of russets and sombre greens, of two villages—their names turn out to be Brightwell and Martlesham—of no particular note, and of a nameless brook, a tributary of the Deben, forded near the former. The surface of the roads, perhaps, left something to be desired by the fastidious, but that is a matter to which experience and intelligent curiosity lead one to pay less and ever less attention. Through such a country, growing a little more disciplined as our route, nearly due north, took us away from the sea and on to higher ground, we passed to Woodbridge, whereof enough has been said before, and through Wickham Market to our old acquaintance Saxmundham, the original objective of this easy-going drive. But, as it happened, my charioteer's friends at whose house we called had also been tempted abroad that afternoon, and it appeared to be considered probable that they had gone to Dunwich. In came ἀνταρκεία, independence, and the happy thought, Why not go to Dunwich too? A hasty glance at a map showed that if we pushed on along the high road not quite so far as Yoxford, and then began to think of turning eastward, we must in due course find a road leading us to Dunwich. This was really hardly a case of "taking chances," as our American friends have it, for on that desolate coast the dreary remains of Dunwich are the only point between Southwold and Aldeburgh at which roads converge. Towards Yoxford was some three or four miles through eminently English scenery, undulations of land, which the auctioneer's catalogue would describe not ineptly as "park-like," showing a remarkable succession of well-grown oaks. So "park-like," indeed, was it that, no doubt, much of it was the real thing. As it turned out a general sense of direction suggested the wisdom of bearing to the right, not much more than half-way to Yoxford, and the suggestion was obeyed. It led us by roads no better than farm tracks, and probably never intended to be any better, through Middleton and Westleton, neither of them a village of any note, to a winding road adorned by a sign-post with the legend, "To Dunwich and the Sea." The latter piece of information was not necessary to anybody who had learned to note, by the evidence of the trees, the effects of salt-bearing winds. Wheresoever near any of our coasts you see single trees all sloping in one direction, or coverts almost penthouse-shaped, rising gradually from a puny height of a few feet on one side, to a wall of respectable elevation on the other, there you may be sure that you are quite near to the sea, and that the salt-bearing winds have beaten first on the low side of the covert. So the sign-post was hardly needed on this narrow road of many rectangles, at one of which my charioteer's friends were happily met. A few more turns, a

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sharp descent under the almost overhanging walls of a long deserted priory, and we were in Dunwich.



DUNWICH AND DESOLATION

This same Dunwich is without exception the most depressing scene on which the eye could rest. Down the hill we swept into a bleak hamlet of some twenty houses and to an inn, where tea was ordered. What time the ladies thawed themselves over a new-lit fire it seemed good to the men to restore circulation, and perhaps stimulate the mind a little, by a tour of inspection, and to ask for guidance beforehand. It was given in grim language. "If you want only to see the ruins you can go by the road; if you want to see the bones you must follow the cliff." So desiring to see everything as quickly as might be, we took the path to the cliff, through a sandy cutting, and soon were close to the evidence of a recent fall into the sea of land, rising perhaps a hundred feet above high-water mark, of which the most reckless speculator would hardly buy the fee simple for any tangible sum. It has been falling—sometimes in large pieces, sometimes in small—since the reign of Edward III; it is falling still, and it will continue to fall. It is of the kind of substance that has no more cohesion, or very little more, than a child's castle of sand, which, having been a broad-based cone in the beginning, has been cut till it opposes a sheer and perpendicular and crumbling obstacle to the advancing tides. Waves and rains—the latter far more destructive than is commonly imagined—are destroying this part of England, even while others are being added to, with remarkable celerity, nor is it easy to see how any protecting works could, even if the enterprise were worth undertaking, be constructed with any reasonable hope of success. The last fall—of part of the churchyard of the derelict All Saint's—was clearly quite recent. The bones, mixed with crumbling débris of the rotten cliff, were being washed by muddy wavelets a hundred feet below the perilous verge of the cliff, a grisly and a saddening sight. The church itself—its west end still standing—hung on the edge of the cliff; it cannot last long. "Murray" writes in 1875: "It might have served till the present day, but was abandoned in the middle of the last century that the townsfolk might sell the bells and lead." He would be a bold man who should say now that the townsfolk were not justly prudent, for it is as plain as a pikestaff that All Saint's is liable at any moment, hurtling down into the insatiable sea, to join St. Peter's and the other five churches, once the glory of Dunwich; it has already sent down half its burial ground, and the rest, although burials continued after the church was abandoned, is sure to follow soon. Opposite my seat of a Sunday in Winchester Cathedral when I was a boy, was a sepulchral chest on top of a screen bearing the legend "In hâc et alterâ e regione cistâ reliquiæ sunt ossium," and then a handful of kings beginning with Canute were mentioned. It used to seem reasonably grim. But this shallow and relentless sea round the last relics of Dunwich, with its bottom strewn by the contents of six churchyards and a half, is to the chest at Winchester as the earthquakes at San Francisco and Valparaiso are to the slipping of an Irish bog. The scene is depressing, unspeakably sad; but it is necessary to visit it in order to realize that Dunwich was once great and to understand its fall, for it is falling still, and it will go on falling; and you cannot help seeing how it all happened.

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Hardly anywhere else, perhaps nowhere, is it possible at once to localize and to realize so long and unvarying a story of progressive ruin. Felix, whom we have met before on these wanderings, landed at Dunwich (another legend lands him shipwrecked at Hunstanton) in the seventh century, on his evangelizing mission; doubtless because King Sigeberht of East Anglia prescribed a landing at the principal port of his kingdom. He found there a flourishing community, a port which, for the seventh century, was large, and, says "Murray," remains of a considerable Roman settlement. (But, for reasons already given and of universal application in East Anglia, I am shy of accepting Roman remains unless they be supported by definite and satisfactory evidence.) At any rate the King built himself a palace, and the saint built a church, the cathedral church of the new diocese of East Anglia; and whether both or either used the Roman ruins no man may tell with certainty, for the sea has devoured palace and cathedral church alike. Perhaps, after all, it does not much matter now of what material they were constructed, or what its origin was. Fifteen

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successive bishops, at any rate, ruled East Anglia ecclesiastically from Dunwich. So early as *Domesday* there are records of falls; there is even a legend of an extensive forest, flourishing east of the town that way, covering miles of land over which now the "waves wap and the waters wan." Still Dunwich found forty ships for Henry III, and though "rage and surgies of the sea" ravaged it in the time of Edward III, it occurs in a quaint list of East Anglia's contribution to the fleet raised against the Armada, a list which may be given here once and for all:

Colchester, 1 shippe.

Ipswich and Harwich, 2 shippes, 1 pinnace.

Alborough, Orforth, and Dunwich, 1 shippe.

Yearmouth and Leistocke (Lowestoft), 1 shippe, 1 pinnace.

Lynne and Blackney, 2 shippes, 1 pinnace.

In the time of Leland the bitter cry of the people of Dunwich was heard in the land and the legend of the submerged forest of Eastwood is found on his pages: "*George Ferras* told me that the men of Dunewich desiring Sucour for their Town againe Rages of the Se, adfirme that a great Peace of a Foreste sumtyme therby ys devourid up and turnid to the use of the Se." Who *George Ferras* was, this deponent knoweth not, but by way of exemplifying the difficulty of reading Leland, it may be mentioned that other places named on the same folio are New-Windelesore (Windsor), Saresbyri (Salisbury), Dovar, to say nothing of Edward III, Egidius, Walterus de la Ville, Nicholas de S. Quintius, and "Mr. Balthazar," all in the space of twenty-five lines of print. Leland's volumes, through no fault of his, as has been pointed out before, are like conglomerate or puddingstone, with here and there a gem, which takes a great deal of finding. Indeed that this particular gem was found may be attributed to fortune. It shows us Dunwich, before the untiring sea had reduced the inhabitants to absolute despair, crying out for help, and crying to deaf ears. Its destruction, in truth, was very gradual, very certain; and, while the nation would not help, it was not worth while for the people to show the indomitable spirit of those in San Francisco today, or to set about the task of rebuilding, for in destroying Dunwich the sea wiped out its excuse for existence, making the land that was left unapproachable by reason of its girdle of shallow water. So there is nothing left but memories, a handful of mean houses of no interest by the sea, the ruins of the Grey Friars monastery on the hill, and the church of All Saints tottering on the crumbling verge of the disappearing cliff. How any man or woman can consent to live in this environment of desolation is a thing difficult to understand; but there they are, apparently quite cheerful, a living testimony to the elasticity of human spirits. A stranger, having seen the sights, having mused a little as his eyes wander over that dreary expanse of monotonous sea, leaves Dunwich gladly, without the slightest intention of returning, and convinced that a not very prolonged residence there would assuredly produce melancholia in one not to the manner born.

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The opinion has been expressed already that it is not worth while at this time of day, and it would probably be hopeless to endeavour, to cope against the untiring sea in its work of demolishing the glacial cliffs south of Dunwich. As they are demolished they go, by virtue of the southerly drift given to the débris, to alter the coastline southward. Attention has been called, for example, to the childish course pursued by the River Alde. The fault does not lie with the river but with the crumbling cliffs of the north, and they are responsible for closing up the natural mouth it once had at Slaugden, barely half a mile from Aldeburgh. At Southwold and Lowestoft defensive works are praiseworthy, because they are feasible and the land is worth protecting, and this is even more true of the vicinity of Felixstowe. Here much land was lost early in the last century, owing to the fact that huge quantities of stones, forming a natural protection, were removed for manufacture into cement, with the result that the shore was denuded, and the loose pebbles were heaped up by the drift into a totally undesirable shingle bank at Landguard Fort. This bank in its turn threatened Harwich Harbour, and a groyne of concrete had to be set up to arrest its progress. These facts, in detail, came to my knowledge through the *Engineer* in 1906, together with the somewhat appalling estimate of land lost in East Anglia to the extent of 160 square miles in ten centuries. Land has been gained elsewhere, at Bawdsey, where we shall find ourselves very shortly, for example. At Bawdsey it has been gained through human agency to the advantage of humanity, but on the whole the sea, left to its own devices, works destruction at both ends of its operation. It removes the earth from places where it is needed, as at Dunwich for example, and so wipes one flourishing port out of existence: it does its best to deposit that which it has taken away where it is not needed, and to block up one port with the ruins of another. At Harwich it has, we all hope, been stopped, but all the world knows the mischief which has been wrought south of the estuary of the Thames by the gradual process of accretion converting thriving ports into meaningless inland places. What all the world does not realize, and what our most practised engineers in this kind apprehend, without pretending to comprehend fully, is the unforetellable character of the results that will follow from every attempt to interfere with these mysterious processes of nature which takes the form of opposing an obstacle to the sweep of the tide. Thus to build a groyne or a sea wall, to say to the sea in effect, "Thou hast taken so much, but thou shalt take no more," is hardly likely to produce any injurious result. On the other hand, to stretch a solid pier across the drift, and to divert a current, may be to affect the coast line for hundreds of miles along the coast affected by the drift. As an engineer versed in these matters once said to me, "When you interfere with the tides you must wait for the effect; you cannot predict it."

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So back to Felixstowe, varying the cross-country route to the main road a little by following the sense of direction without consulting any maps, and seeing nothing worthy of notice except a belated heron, its long legs stretched behind its slow-flapping wings, making its way from the sea to some distant heronry and croaking sadly as it went, as though to say, "The moon will give no light to-night, so I must perforce go fasting." That is a Welsh version of the heron's melancholy

call—please note that the heron always wears half mourning—but the marsh men doubtless express the same thought in some way, for it is sound ornithology, and they know their birds passing well.

CHAPTER VI—(continued)

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FELIXSTOWE, BAWDSEY, WOODBRIDGE, IPSWICH, DUNMOW AND LONDON

A stormy morning—Past golf-links to Bawdsey Ferry—Sir Cuthbert Quilter's work of reclamation—A short climb but very stiff—Some remote byways to Woodbridge—Heavy rain—Value of cape hood—Drawbacks of transparent screens—Ipswich again—More Cobbolds, more hospitality—Ipswich oysters and gloves—The "Crown and Anchor"—An architect and antiquary—Jingling prophecy—An abbot's bones and "extra dry"—Another car arrives for us—Off for Dunmow—A frightened horse and an awkward rider—Rules of conduct in such cases—Through Braintree (remarks postponed) to Great Dunmow—Little Dunmow the true *locus classicus*—Leland and the Flitch—Far-fetched theories and an obvious explanation—The heart of the forest country—The old forest included Epping, Hainault, and Hatfield Forests—Hainault restored—Hardships of old forest law—Dunmow to Takeley—Hatfield Broad Oak and Heath—A view of hounds—High Ongar, Epping, and London, reversing original order—The drive reviewed.

Next morning, in a tearing wind, full of the promise of rain, we took a road running as nearly N.N.E. as might be, making for the steam ferry which crosses the mouth of the river Deben, a river whose banks are rich in memories of the late Mr. C. J. Cornish, one of the brightest open-air writers of our generation. Golf-links we passed, having plenty of natural bunkers and hazards, having also that close turf, whereon the ball "carries" well, which appears to be in better harmony than any inland turf with the spirit of the royal and ancient game. Martello towers there were too, on the flat and lonely beach, towers probably more useful now as affording shelter and concealment to the wild fowler than for any purpose of defence; and beyond them the shallow sea whipped by the wind into angry little wavelets. Then the ferry hove in sight, the boat, or floating bridge, being on the far side of a fretting strath from a quarter to half a mile in width. On the far side also was the curious house of Sir Cuthbert Quilter, and around it a considerable area of cultivated land, doing infinite credit to the enterprise of that most ardent agriculturist; for has he not converted a wilderness into fairly fruitful land, and is not the man who does that a benefactor of humanity? Crossing seemed at first likely to be no easy matter. The boat was on the far side, out of hearing in such a wind as was blowing; a witless boy of the district, himself desirous of crossing apparently, thought it came at fixed times, and had no idea when those times were. It seemed that we might wait for hours; but prowling round I found a signal post, and thereon directions how to raise the signal for the ferry, and soon the boat was making for us. Entering it with the car was no trouble; Avernus has always been easy of descent; but when the craft had creaked to the far side we were faced with the stiffest task I have ever seen offered to any motor-car in the shape of a sharply sloping bank of soft gravel to be ascended without any preliminary run of any kind. The steam car, however, ploughed slowly through the gravel and up the hill, and I look back upon those ten or twelve yards of hill-climbing as the finest exhibition of sheer strength in a motor-car it has ever been my fortune to witness. So we went by devious and very bad roads, through Alderton and Hollesley to Woodbridge, through a country not particularly interesting, I imagine, at the best of times, and rendered less interesting than ever by the angry curtain of clouds which hung over our path. Rain had been an open question when we started; it was certainly coming now with a will; and it was a case of up cape hood and down with the front screen, in which a large piece of transparent talc, or celluloid, gave something of a view to him who drove. It was better than getting wet through, that is all that can be said. The rain for a short time was simply torrential, and as it poured in waving streams down the transparent surface, one could see as much as, but not very much more than, one can see with eyes opened six or eight feet down in fairly clear river water. Outlines of objects were blurred in the same fashion as they are to the diver (without a diving dress of course), and one felt as doubtful of the distance of this or that as one has often felt under water when catching sight of the saucer, the white stone, or what you will, thrown in beforehand that it might be searched for afterwards. So there is nothing to be said of this run from Woodbridge to Ipswich, along the road followed in my first journey but in the opposite direction, save that it was taken in "demmed, moist, unpleasant weather," to quote Mr. Mantalini.

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However, the rain abated before we reached Ipswich and halted, by previous arrangement, at Mr. Cobbold's Bank, as a preliminary to receiving open-handed hospitality from yet another member of that most hospitable of Suffolk families. It is not suggested that all motorists should do likewise, although, upon my word, judging by Mr. Cobbold's kindness to a party upon two of whom he had never set eyes until that day, it seems probable that a call at the Bank would be a promising venture for any strangers. But into the secrets of comfort in Ipswich which he revealed to us others may be admitted without his personal guidance. He showed the old-world glove shop already mentioned. The oyster shop he showed us also, almost next door to the glovers, both in a narrow street running parallel to the main street on the far side from the "Crown and Anchor,"

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and the "Great White Horse," and better oysters were never eaten by man or woman. Then he took us to luncheon at the "Crown and Anchor" which, sooth to say, was more to my taste than the "Great White Horse"—of its charges it is manifestly impossible for me to speak, but its fare was of the simplest and best. Last, but not least of the kindnesses shown to me by Mr. Cobbold was to invite to meet me Mr. Corder, architect and antiquarian—would that the combination were universal—profoundly versed in the old-time legends of the district. Mr. Corder it was who gave me a most fascinating print of the back of the "Crown and Anchor" when it was the "Rampant Horse," and quoted a jingled prophecy of days gone by, concerning the fate of the various inns of Ipswich, which appears to have come true—

The Rampant Horse shall kick the Bear,
And make the Griffin fly,
And turn the Bell upside down,
And drink the Three Tuns dry.

Again, as our talk wandered over matters ancient and men of the past, the name of the famous Abbot Sampson, much noted in his day as a preacher, was mentioned, and Mr. Corder had a humorous story of his disinterment in modern times. With the bones of the clarion-voiced preacher, in the same coffin, was found the skull of a woman, a grim jest perhaps of those who were left behind him in this world. The bones, pending reinterment in decent form, were placed in the first convenient receptacle and, only some time later was it observed, the relics of the preacher had, by the irony of fate, been placed in a champagne case labelled "extra dry." Chance, very likely, supplied an epitaph more truthful than is usual.

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At Ipswich too my host and friend had prepared a surprise. Not entirely satisfied with the behaviour of the car which had covered us, as well as carried us, hitherto, he had telegraphed to London for another, and it awaited us in the inn yard. It was uncovered, but the sky was now clear, so we sped in it merrily along the already familiar route to Colchester, entering Essex, "ful of good hoswyves," as Leland quotes, as we crossed the river at Stratford St. Mary. Had we turned to the right a little before this point we should have made ourselves familiar with the beautiful and very characteristic scenery of those Stour-side places Stoke-by-Nayland, Sudbury, and Long Melford—all interesting places concerning which something is said later. But all these matters and places come more fittingly into the chapter describing a series of short day's drives from Colchester as head-quarters. So do Marks Tey and Braintree through which, as a matter of fact, we passed that day to Dunmow. In fact the only fact about this little run which can be mentioned without impoverishing the mine to be dug from later is an incident. We had the misfortune to meet a man who was no horseman mounted on a half-broken colt which had the strongest apparent objection to a motor-car. The man held up his hand. We stopped. The horse, more frightened than ever, turned and bolted in the other direction; but then the rider turning on to the grass beside the road, dismounted hurriedly and we passed on. It was almost a solitary instance in which, during much motoring of late, I have seen a horse thoroughly frightened by a car, all the more alarmed probably because, by that curious intuition which horses possess, it knew its rider to be incompetent. The incident exemplified the folly of the existing law requiring a car to be stopped completely whenever a person in charge of a horse, or with a horse in charge of him, holds up his hand. Almost every petrol-car brought suddenly to a stop makes far more noise and is far more alarming to a horse than when it moves at a reasonable pace, and the car-driver, in a voice at once audible and soothing, cries "Woa, my lad," or something of that kind, thus convincing the animal that motor-cars are connected with human beings, with whom he is familiar. In nine cases out of ten, however, the man is more frightened than the horse, so that, tugging suddenly at the reins, after being half asleep before, he compels the animal to start. In any event the complete stopping is an error from the point of view of horseman and motorist. It annoys the latter without being of the slightest use to the former. Moreover, it gives irascible squires an opportunity of exasperating the motorist, whom they detest. "My horses don't mind a car at all," said one such to me not long since, "but I always hold up my hand when I meet the beastly things; I hear they hate stopping." These are the *ipsissima verba* of one who, in every other relation of life, is exceptionally kind and genial.

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Passing through pleasant Braintree, and going at a spanking pace along an open road, we left Little Dunmow, which is the real Dunmow of story, unnoticed on the left through sheer ignorance, and went on to Great Dunmow. Our ignorance was in some measure to be excused, because the custom of Dunmow, although in old times it was established in connection with the Priory of Little Dunmow, was revived in connection with Great Dunmow. And, after all, in this case it would probably have been folly to be wise. We should have found little, if anything, remaining of the Priory of Little Dunmow, and we were quite happy, in our ignorance, over our tea in a picturesque inn at Great Dunmow, believing all the time that we were at the classic spot itself. Of the various accounts of a quaint custom, mentioned in *Piers Plowman* and by Chaucer, I prefer that given by Leland, for its brevity. Writing of "the bacon at Dunmow," and referring to "Robert Fitzwalter, Lord of Woodham and famous in the time of King Henry the Thyrd," he continues, "In which Priory arose a custome, begun or instituted either by him or some of his successors, that he that repenteth him not of his marriage sleeping or waking in a yeere and a day may lawfully goe to Dunmow and fetch a Gammon of Bacon." The quotations from Chaucer and *Piers Plowman* have been used too often in "seasonable articles" to be repeated here. It is easy to agree with the curiously learned Dr. Samuel Brewer that "the attempt to revive this 'premium for humbug' is a mere get up for the benefit of the town"; but his quotation from Prior is distinctly apt and unfamiliar:

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Ah, madam! cease to be mistaken;
Few married fowl peck Dunmow bacon.

Also we may hope that the eight successful pairs of claimants from 1445 to 1772, Essex folk all, took the matter more seriously than those of later time. One pair, Thomas Shakeshaft, Woolcomber of Weathersfield, and his wife, are said to have made their successful claim in 1751 in the presence of Hogarth. The most recent fame of Dunmow arises from its violent resistance to uninvited Socialist propagandists. It is just the sort of quiet place in which one would expect a rustic to describe the Socialist ranters as "a passel o' fools"; and this is precisely what occurred.

Perhaps after all it is well to repeat the oath in verse as preserved by Fuller, since to do so may save the trouble of reference for the curious:

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You shall swear by the custom of our confession
That you never made any nuptial transgression,
Since you were married man and wife,
By household brawls or contentious strife;
Or otherwise, in bed or at board
Offended each other in deed or word;
Or, since the parish clerk said Amen,
Wished yourselves unmarried again;
Or, in a twelvemonth and a day,
Repented not in thought any way;
But continued true and in desire,
As when you joined hands in holy quire.
If to these conditions, without all fear,
Of your own accord you will freely swear,
A gammon of bacon you shall receive,
And bear it hence with love and good leave;
For this is our custom at Dunmow well known,
Though the sport be ours the bacon's your own.

There is a like custom of Wicknor in Staffordshire, but the ultra-learned seem to me to have overstrained their fancies in imagining a common origin for these flitches of bacon, and the "sow and pigs" which, according to "Murray," are frequently seen on the carved bosses of church roofs in Devonshire, and in suggesting a connection between the Dunmow flitch, which after all was but a gammon, and the flitch which according to Dion Halicarnassus, was kept at the Temple of Alba Longa until the time of Augustus, because Æneas found there the white sow and pigs. It may be true that it was the custom of the Prussians of old time to offer a flitch of bacon to the thunder-god whenever a thunderstorm came. As for the sow and pigs on the roofs of Devonshire churches, they seem to me to have no more direct connection with the Dunmow flitch than "the sow and pigs" as an inn sign (which may be seen in Oxfordshire and perhaps elsewhere), or than the Gadarene swine. Surely, when there is an obvious and historical explanation there is no sort of need for plunging into the troubled waters of comparative folk-lore. Robert Fitz-Walter desired to establish a reward for conjugal fidelity. That is plain, and there was nothing out of the way about such a desire in times when foundations similar in character, rewards for constancy in servants and the like, were by no means uncommon. It probably never occurred to him that the claimants would be other than peasants. The recorded claimants in fact were in 1445, a labourer and his wife; in 1510, a fuller; in 1701, a butcher; in 1751, a woolcomber; the three last with their wives of course; and in the other cases the callings of the claimants are not recorded.

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Fitz-Walter's domain was situate in the heart of the forest country, a land of innumerable oak trees, whereon herds of swine were fed upon the acorns in autumn, under the care of the successors in title of Gurth the Swineherd. To the peasantry the pig was, economically speaking, everything; for that matter he is a great deal to them still since, take him for all in all, he is the most profitable of domestic animals. What could be more natural than that the great landowner should establish as the reward of fidelity among peasants a part of the familiar beast whom they knew best, and whom, to this day, they like best on the table. Those who have seen the excitement of pig-killing at a cottage home, who know how it spells plenty of fresh meat for a while, and how large a part fat bacon plays in the meals which the agricultural labourer eats under the lee of a hedge, will not desire to go to Alba Longa for an explanation of the Dunmow flitch; nor, in a country where "chaw-bacon" was once synonymous with farm labourer—unhappily they now consume tinned meat instead—need we think in their connection of the sacrifices of the ancient Prussians. Robert Fitz-Walter could not have devised a benefaction more to the taste of the intended recipients.

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Yes, we were some way from the spot truly sacred to the custom at Great Dunmow; but we were uncommonly near to relics of the ancient forest, in which the swine, the Dunmow flitches in process of formation, grew fat upon the abundant acorns.

We were, indeed, in the very heart of the forest land, its principal products timber, game, which was sacred to the king, and swine growing fat, as obesity of pigs was reckoned in early days, on the acorns of autumn. Hard by in Hertfordshire the country folk to this day collect acorns in great quantity, feeding thereon the swine which, cribbed, cabined, and confined, no doubt grow fatter than their predecessors roaming in the woods. A perambulation was made in the twelfth year of Henry III (1228 and Fitz-Walter's time), which showed nearly the whole of the county to be part of a Royal Forest. From the Thames on the south to Stane Street, the road between Colchester

and Bishop Stortford, to the north, was a great forest running right up to the walls of London. It was known as the Forest of Waltham; it included Epping Forest, part of which has happily been preserved, to the enduring credit of the City of London, Hainault Forest, the relics of which have been reafforested of late, and Hatfield Forest, along the margin of which we were shortly to pass on our way to London. Hainault Forest once lay, and now again lies, south of Epping Forest, being to the south of the river Roding. It once consisted of four thousand acres, but was disafforested by Act of Parliament in 1851, the Crown receiving an allotment of two thousand acres which, at an expenditure of more than £40,000, were converted into arable farms. Of the whole six thousand acres only a small tract retained its character of primitive woodland. This, through the exertions of the Commons Preservation Society and of Mr. E. N. Buxton, has now again been dedicated to the public, being vested in the London County Council. In addition, thanks to Mr. Buxton and also to the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, five hundred acres of tilled land, formerly known as the "King's Woods" and later as Fox Burrows Farm, have been reafforested after being forty years under the plough. For three years Mr. Buxton, with the aid of the County Council, has been engaged in the effort to make the tame land wild again. Grass has been sown, acorn and beechmast have been inserted, seeds of bramble, briar, holly, blackthorn and whitethorn have been introduced, and some saplings have been planted. Bracken, perhaps the most essential feature of wild woodland, has come of itself. So the tame is on its way to become wild and natural again. It will be a long process which few living men can hope to see fully accomplished; but that the experiment was well worth trying cannot be doubted.

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Nothing, perhaps, illustrates more forcibly the difference between the conditions of modern life and those of the thirteenth or even the seventeenth century than our present attitude towards forests by comparison with that of our forefathers. When, in the time of Charles I, an attempt was made to declare the boundaries of the Forest of Waltham to be identical with those prescribed in the perambulation of Henry III, it was regarded as, and in fact it was, an outrage. It meant the effort to revive the harsh Forest Law and to expropriate private owners who had acquired rights by a prescription more than adequate from our modern standpoint. It meant a determination to extend the rights of the Crown, to deny the rights of the public. In the days of Edward VII all men rejoice over the patches of forest which have been preserved, all England congratulates itself when that which has been disafforested, as Hainault was in 1851, becomes forest again. This is because the meaning of words as applied to things is changed when the country passes from an unsettled to a settled state, just as, according to one of the Greeks, it is changed in revolutionary times. "Forest" in old times denoted a district and, in respect of that district, connoted a wicked restriction of public rights, or of rights which, to our mind, ought to have been public. "Forest" now means a district in which the public have abundant liberty, limited only by consideration for the rights of all, and the rights of the Crown in relation to it hardly come into account. Every remaining forest, whatsoever its governance may be, is a treasure-house for the naturalist, a sanctuary for wild birds and beasts, a place to be prized above measure since, in it, the dwellers in our congested islands may walk face to face with wild nature in pure air.

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Of the relics of such a forest we were soon to have a pleasing view. From Dunmow to Bishop Stortford, as one of the guide-books has it, there is nothing of interest. We followed this high road along the railway, which did not make for beauty, for some four miles until, climbing a slight acclivity, we were at Takeley, where the church is said to possess a very fine Perpendicular font-cover. Such minutiae, however, are not for the motorist. There we turned sharply to the left and, passing along the brow of a gentle hill for three miles, we were at Hatfield Broad Oak, amid true forest scenery of wide stretches of turf bordered by wild woodland. Whether the storied oak, carefully fenced around, still stands, this deponent is not absolutely prepared to avouch; but his eye was arrested by a tree which would certainly serve well to represent it. It was good going hence, among charming sylvan scenery, through Hatfield Heath to Harlow, for five miles, and at Harlow, as at Hatfield Heath or at Takeley for that matter, we might have run to the right a little and so have struck the most eastern of the two main roads from Cambridge to London. But we were out to see the country; so we stuck to the byways, well worthy of following for their own sakes and for ours, and we had our reward in a pretty picture. Passing along an unfenced road, having broad stretches of turf backed by woodlands on either side, we saw in the distance the pink coats of three or four riders, and soon we were going slowly and gingerly past a staunch pack of hounds returning to kennel under the charge of huntsman and whips after their day's sport. They were good horses, workmanlike hounds, a thoroughly characteristic English sight and one which, somehow or other, one never sees from a train, partly perhaps because masters of hounds are prone, for obvious reasons, to avoid the vicinity of railways as much as possible. This little spectacle was secured by making a detour from Harlow almost to Chipping Ongar, and High Ongar and thence back to Epping, from which we returned to London as nearly as might be by the route taken on our outward journey. This involved a few more miles of travelling than by the main road, but it produced a very good general impression of the character of the forest country. It is an impression well worth treasuring in remembrance. It also produced an abiding respect for Mrs. Coleman's topographical memory. Not once or twice but many times was this lady able to point out the right turning and to save us from going astray. Once only did she fail, and that was after we had entered the continuous houses of London. The failure was but the exception proving the rule; indeed it may not even have been that; for the din of the streets may have drowned her warning voice. Be that as it may the return to London was not quite so artistic in point of route as the exit had been.

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How far had we travelled that day? An estimate is given in the practical observations earlier, but in truth distance really hardly counts within limits which grow wider every year, when one is motoring for pleasure. The essential things were that we took breakfast at a reasonable time and

at leisure in Felixstowe, went by characteristic cross-country routes to Woodbridge and to Ipswich, strolled through Ipswich and shopped and lingered over luncheon, took tea at ease in Great Dunmow, explored many pleasant byways between it and London, and were back in London in plenty of time to dine and to go to a first night at the theatre, and not in the least too tired to do both with enjoyment. That is the new kind of pleasure which the motor-car has rendered possible, and it is a very real and genuine one.

CHAPTER VII

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LATE SUMMER. COLCHESTER AND EASTWARDS

Modern motoring and lack of sensational events—Colchester and district seen during Military manoeuvres—Farcical operations and abundant leisure—Study of Colchester—Interesting back streets—The Roman walls—Cæsar comes, sees, conquers, and departs—King Cunobelin—Claudius at Colchester—Was his victory a "put up thing"?—The Roman colony—Boadicea—The building of the walls—Abundant Roman remains—Legend of King Cole—Not necessarily all false—A playful theory—Was the Empress Helena a Colchester inn-keeper's daughter?—The Civil War—Siege of Colchester—Ireton's cruel revenge—Grief of Charles I—Concerning oysters—Colchester to Clacton-on-Sea—Sharp hillocks and shady elms—Chasing a balloon—Wivenhoe to Clacton—A wonderful society seen from a veranda—Great Holland—Walton-le-Soken, meaning of—St. Osyth—Between estuaries of Colne and Stour—Some hills and many windings—A Lanchester as hill-climber—Ardleigh and seed grounds—A dialogue—Manningtree—"Manningtree Ox" and Thomas Tusser—Matthew Hopkins the witchfinder—East Bergholt—Constable's birthplace—His struggles and career—To Dovercourt and Harwich—Fascinations of seaports—Old-time stories of Harwich Regatta—Landguard Fort—Lord Avebury on coast erosion and accretion—Site of Yarmouth—Back to Colchester.

This little book has been absolutely candid and truthful so far, if it had not been it might have been more fertile in accidents and incidents; but the truth of the matter is that the modern motor-car in good hands goes so well that accidents and incidents are rare. One reads of accidents in the papers of course, because it is unnecessary to chronicle safe journeys; but it would be a libel on the motor-car to invent mishaps for the sake of literary variety. After motoring some tens of thousands of miles, I can lay my hand on my heart, metaphorically, and say that of the many cars in which I have driven none has ever touched a human being on the road, or a horse, or a carriage, or vehicle of any kind. My entire butcher's bill, extending over a good many years, amounts to one cat (which jumped from a wall in front of the car), three fowls, and ten sparrows. Therefore, since I am devotedly attached to Automobilmism, and at the same time convinced that, for many years to come, it will be the pastime of the minority and will only exist on sufferance, fancy and imagination are ridden strictly on the curb, throttled down, if the phrase pleases better, and truth is encouraged to prevail.

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In this chapter, and those which follow next, I am going to describe a number of journeys taken by motor-car from Colchester as a centre, and one which might have been made from Colchester by car, but was in fact made from London by train for the sake of its destination. That destination was very well worth reaching, even by train; how to reach it by car from Colchester, and what there is to be seen when it is reached shall be told in due course. This particular chapter involves very little travelling, and has been written because it is felt that the motorists, liking to take a holiday on occasion, will like to hear of the antiquities of Colchester, the social peculiarities of Clacton, some old-time stories of Harwich, and something from Lord Avebury about coast changes.

Three or four years ago, it will be remembered, an expeditionary force of horse and foot and artillery, representing imaginary invaders of this country, embarked in transports at Southampton, under Sir John French, with orders to carry out the operation of invading the east coast of England, the point of dis-embarkation being Clacton-on-Sea, supposed to have been left unwatched. In the course of the business of a special correspondent, I saw the tall ships—they were not a bit tall really, but the old phrase clings—steam out of Southampton, and then hurried across country to Colchester to await events. At Colchester, I found myself a welcome passenger on an official motor-car, a Lanchester, driven by an Army Service Corps driver, and I found myself also, by happy chance, in the company of many soldier friends at the "Old Red Lion," concerning the antiquities and traditions of which it has been found impossible not to make some observations at an earlier stage. There could have been no more delightful task for a conscientious correspondent, for it was his duty to see all he could, and it was sheer pleasure to scour the country to that end; and on the other hand, if he were also an honourable man, his task of writing was of the easiest. There was no censor; but the special correspondents were placed on their honour not to publish anything which could, by any chance, help the other side. Theoretically, I was attached to Sir John French's invading army; in fact, I perambulated the ground occupied by both armies with perfect freedom; and, since it soon became plain that my illuminating remarks would be capable of reaching General Wynne, who was defending England,

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at the same time as "the rolls and Bohea"—to quote the old *Spectator*—it became manifest at the same time that the less said about military matters the better. Recognition of this fact and of its consequences gave me much leisure, and the farcical character of the manœuvres on land—for farcical they were universally allowed to be by competent military observers—gave me more. For example, General French, unopposed by previous arrangement, spent some hours of an afternoon in landing his troops, but not much of his stores and baggage, at Clacton, amidst a crowd of trippers and bathers. After resting them for a brief space, and as darkness began to fall, he began a march upon the fat city of Colchester, over ground not too flat, the distance being some

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seventeen miles. I, not anticipating anything of the sort, since there was no moon, had gone back to Colchester and dinner. Enter, about ten o'clock at night, a breathless comrade to announce that sharp fighting was in progress. Out started a car, not the Lanchester, carrying us both; and within a few miles, but Heaven only knew where, we were in the thick of it. We could see flashes; we could hear the explosion of cordite in all directions; we could hear the tramp of men and horses, and many voices. But, speaking as no warrior at all, I am absolutely convinced that during this engagement, which was one of many, it was beyond the capacity of any man to distinguish friend from foe, to aim his rifle at anything, or even to set his sights. So I went back to bed at the "Red Lion."

With the dawn I was back again, to find the invaders, or some of them, lying close to the city of Colchester, their guns in positions from which they commanded the city and from which, in the meanwhile, they poured imaginary death and destruction upon the flying defenders. Theoretically, General French had captured the rich city of Colchester. If our mimic war had been real, the main difficulty of Sir John French and his officers would have been to check their fierce and hungry soldiery from sacking the town, looting the provision shops, gorging themselves with Colchester "natives"—for it was September and the oysters were very good—and drinking enormous quantities of liquor. But mimic war is sometimes a stern business, for the conquerors. The theoretical victors had to rest, as best they could, in an open field in the rain and, for a long time, without tents. Provisions, sufficient but not sumptuous, were supplied to them by the Army Service Corps, and the high authorities, whosoever they were, agreed that an armistice of thirty-six hours was called for by the exhausted condition of both sides. During those thirty-six hours, which begun about two o'clock in the afternoon, if memory serves accurately, a correspondent had no duties to perform.

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So, keeping the "Red Lion" for head-quarters, I was free to ramble over one of the most interesting cities in England, architecturally and historically. The "Cups," a hotel more celebrated, was not available, being occupied by the umpiring staff, military grandes generally, and military and naval attachés of many nations. But there was no cause to regret the necessity for abiding at the ancient "Red Lion"; and it was an admirable centre from which to study the city and its characteristic features. To the front, in the High Street, there is much that is distressingly modern. The Town Hall, for example, is the kind of building men accounted "handsome" in 1841, when it took the place of a Moot Hall which had been standing since the Conquest. Most of the buildings near it on the far side of the road from the "Red Lion," including the "Cups," are modern and the epithet "handsome" has doubtless been applied to them also a hundred times and more. No doubt they serve their purposes adequately, but in the full light of day they offend the eye of him who deems himself cultivated. Only when the light grows dim above and a red sunset lends enchantment to the outlines of buildings seen against it, casting details and crude colouring into shade, does the High Street of Colchester look really picturesque; and that effect is the more impressive if one enters the town by the easternmost of the three bridges across the Colne. Then as the car climbs the sharp hill, the picture is unfolded gradually, and one great block of buildings at the end of the street (it is really, I fancy, something connected with the waterworks, but that is of no moment if it be pleasing) looks distinctly romantic and imposing. In full sun the principal street of Colchester fails to please any eye save that which is satisfied by the evidence of an abundant prosperity.

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Once inside the "Red Lion," however, the traveller is in an atmosphere of the old world and, if he pleases to humour his fancy, he may preserve that fancy for quite a long time and over quite a considerable distance. The hotel has a courtyard, as of course. The coffee-room and the bar-parlour, wherein an interesting and characteristic gathering may be found on market days, are on the left hand as one enters from the High Street, and so is the principal entrance. It follows that to reach the main street on emerging from the hotel door, to find commerce, shops, bustle, and activity, a man must turn to the right. If he have no immediate inclination for these things, necessary and valuable as they are in themselves, let him turn to the left instead and pass through the long stable-yard, threading his way among a series of vehicles, ancient and modern, until he reaches the back gate of the yard. Once through that he will soon find himself in old Colchester, among quiet rows of modest houses, in alleys whose names speak of the Middle Ages, face to face with walls which are manifestly and essentially of Roman construction. Such will inevitably be his environment. In such an environment, if in any, will he be willing to hear something of the story of Colchester, that most ancient city standing on the hill that is girt to the north, the north-east, and the east by the sluggish waters of the Colne. If he be unwilling, he had better skip the few pages following.

A little of that story has been told before what time it became necessary, or so seemed, to define early in this volume our sceptical attitude towards so-called Roman remains and Roman roads. These are very often of doubtful authenticity, and this very scepticism, this proved scarcity of Roman remains in East Anglia, render the certain truth concerning Colchester the more valuable. The situation, the commanding hill, half-girt by the river, renders it more than probable that our

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rude forefathers (who really knew a good deal more than the world gave them credit for having known) had a settlement in pre-Roman times on the spot now known as Colchester. No time has been spent in research into that matter for the purposes of this book, for the simple reason that at least enough must needs be said concerning the place after the Romans first knew it. Cæsar came, saw, and conquered as usual; and having conquered he went away. For nearly a century after that the Romans were too much engaged over those troubles at home, about which every schoolboy really knows a good deal, to concern themselves over an outlying and unimportant province, and almost everything is uncertain concerning the British history of the period. This is really a pity, because it is clear that King Cunobelin, who then ruled at Colchester, already apparently named as Camulodunum, was a progressive prince, and the coins of his period show positively that the Britons under him were by no means ignorant of the peaceful arts. That, very likely, was why they became poor warriors.

In A.D. 43 came the second and most effectual Roman invasion. That extraordinary person the Emperor Claudius, persuaded by a British exile named Berre, who had got the worst of one of the petty quarrels in which the Britons then, like the Welsh later, were constantly engaged, dispatched Aulus Plautius with four legions and some Gallic auxiliaries to reconquer Britain. So much is certain, and there is no doubt that a year sufficed to quell the resistance of south-eastern Britain, although Caradoc, Cunobelin's son, held out in the west for a long time. In the next year Claudius himself crossed the Channel—one authority says he brought elephants in his train—and joined Plautius on the north of the Thames. Shortly afterwards he entered Camulodunum, or Colchester. Did he enter it as having himself conquered, or as an Emperor taking the credit of his general's victories? It is really almost impossible to say. Merivale, having previously mentioned the elephants, says, "At Gessoriacum he embarked for the opposite shores of Cantium (Kent), and speedily reached the legions in their encampment beyond the Thames. The soldiers, long held in leash in expectation of his arrival, were eager to spring upon the foe. With the Emperor himself at their head, a spectacle not beheld since the days of the valiant Julius, they traversed the level plains of the Trinobantes, which afforded no defensible position, till the natives were compelled to stand at bay before the stockades which encircled their capital, Camulodunum. It is not perhaps too bold a conjecture that the lines which can still be traced from the Colne to a little wooded stream called the Roman river, drawn across the approach to a tract of twenty or thirty square miles, surrounded on every other side by water, indicate the ramparts of this British *oppidum*. Within this enclosed space there was ample room, not only for the palace of the chief and the cabins of her people, but for the grazing ground of their flocks and herds in seasons of foreign attack; while, resting on the sea in its rear, it commanded the means of reinforcement and, if necessary, of flight. But the fate of the capital was decided by the issue of the encounter which took place before it. The Trinobantes were routed. They surrendered their city and, with it, their national freedom and independence. The victory was complete; the subjection of the enemy assured. Within sixteen days from his landing in Britain, Claudius had broken a powerful kingdom and accomplished a substantial conquest."

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Exactly so, but is not the story a little too complete to gain absolute credit? Is not the historian, justly indignant at the injustice done by Suetonius and others to Claudius, inclined to press down the balance too heavily in his favour? After all, Suetonius says there was no resistance or bloodshed, and that really is much the more probable story. We all know that Claudius, the deformed child who was regarded as an imbecile, the coward who hardly dared to accept power when it was thrust upon him by the Prætorians, showed a remarkable genius for administration, and had the ambition to imitate Augustus. He might easily have been a great general in spite of his gluttony, his vice, and his cruelty. For all that, this rapid entry into Colchester, combined with what we know of his delight in shows, and with the suspicious fact that he brought his elephants with him, gives the whole affair an air of pre-arrangement. The chances are that Aulus Plautius did the work and that Claudius took the credit. Certainly he returned to Rome and celebrated a triumph in great style; and on his arch of triumph is an inscription (largely conjectural now) which, says Merivale, shows the estimation in which his exploits were held. It is much more likely to show the view which Claudius wished to be taken, for the incestuous, gluttonous, cowardly, and yet politically sagacious Emperor, had a pretty style in prose. Of course it is just possible that Plautius was doing but ill over his campaign, and that the Emperor with his elephants—tradition says that the Britons were very much afraid of them—turned the scale; but the probability is that the whole affair was what they call a "put-up thing" on the far side of the Atlantic, and that the elephants were brought over simply for the sake of pomp and circumstance.

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Now comes a confusing passage in the usually sinless "Murray," wherein the author is himself quoting in part from the *Quarterly Review*, No. 108: "Sixteen years later, 'to overawe the disaffected, and to show to the more submissive an image of Roman civilization,' a Roman Colony was founded in the capital of the conquered Trinobantes. 'It was dignified with the name of Claudian, from the Emperor himself, or Victricensis, from the conquest of which it was the symbol, which was also typified by a statue of Victory, erected in its principal place.' The place received indiscriminately the name of Colonia, Camulodunum,—or sometimes Colonia Camulodunum. It was the first Roman Colony founded in Britain. 'Claudius determined to inform the minds of his remotest subjects on the article of his own divinity—and accordingly directed the Colonists of Camulodunum to consecrate to him a temple, and appoint from among themselves an order of priests to minister therein.'" Nothing could be more in this picture, nothing more thoroughly in harmony with the character of Claudius; but the words "sixteen years later" give pause. Sixteen years would bring us to A.D. 60, when Nero wore the purple and misbehaved himself generally; and six years before that Agrippina, who was already more than wife to Claudius, since she was his niece also, became his murderess by the aid of the physician

Xenophon. But it is only the date that is wrong. It was in the year 50, six years later, not sixteen, that the successor of Plautius, having been many times worsted by the hard-fighting Silures of South Wales, was ordered to found a colony at Camulodunum.

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If Claudius had a political hobby it was the foundation of colonies, which he usually permitted to be known as *Colonia*, "the Colony," simply. Such was Colchester; such was Cologne, founded by him a year later at the asking of Agrippina, who had been born there. But the English *Colonia* did not quite come up to expectations, for the image of Roman civilization shown by it was not attractive, and its military organization was non-existent. The worn-out veterans, who were the colonists, did not build for themselves a concentrated city, a sort of stationary camp. On the contrary, they settled themselves in the scattered houses of the Britons. "The houses even of the Britons," says Merivale, "were to the rude inmates of the Tent not inconvenient." The Dean of Ely, as he afterwards became, wrote these words somewhere between 1850 and 1860, and had not the chances open to us of knowing that the families of the Britons of this epoch, the period of Cunobelin's coinage be it remarked, most likely enjoyed quite comfortable houses. A theatre, too, these colonists constructed, for their own amusement. To the question of defences they gave no heed. Caradoc and his fighting Welshmen were far away in South Wales. The Trinobantes around them were quite subdued. The Iceni, to the eastward, owed and paid tribute to Rome through their Prince Prasutagus. The luxury of Neronian Rome was repeated no doubt, on a small scale, in the distant and careless colony.

In A.D. 61 came the ill-treatment of Boadicea, the widow of Prasutagus, already recorded, and the revolt of the Iceni under her leadership. Then, the moment being well chosen, for the Governor was away as before stated, the colonists had bitter cause to rue their previous indolence, for the colony was quite defenceless. As we have seen before, Boadicea and her Britons enjoyed a short-lived but very complete revenge. Dion, indeed, goes into details, making out the Britons to have been, if possible, rather worse than Bashi Bazouks, as painted by the atrocity-monger. The ultimate result, of course, was that the Iceni were wiped out of existence, and the chances are that the Trinobantes also felt the strong wrath of Suetonius. The steed having been stolen and recaptured, the stable door was locked, so to speak, once and for ever. That is to say, the walls of Colchester were built with such strength that no rising of the kind was likely to succeed again; and that is why in Colchester we have the finest and most complete Roman walls to be found in the kingdom.

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Colchester is rich in Roman relics also, to be found stored in museums, and in the form of Roman bricks and tiles built into the walls of the Norman keep to the north of the High Street, and into the ruined walls of St. Botolph's Priory Church, to the south-east of the town. This same keep, the largest in England, was probably built by Eudo, high steward to William the Conqueror, possibly on the site of the temple of Claudius, but as to that there can be no assurance. What is certain is that much Roman material was incorporated in the rubble of which the very solid walls are made; and this is natural enough when we reflect that Colchester was a real Roman colony for nearly 350 years. The most interesting objects in the Museum, which is housed in the ancient chapel of the castle, are a curious sphinx, two feet high, with the wings of a bird, the breasts of a bitch, the head of a woman, and the paws of a lion, squatting over the lacerated carcass of its human prey; the famous Colchester vase and a bust of Caligula, and there have been a number of smaller "finds." Colchester is no doubt derived from *Colonia* and *castrum*, but it has a legendary connection with King Cole of happy memory, and the principal bastion in Balcon Lane is still known as Colking's Castle. The theory of the Britons, to summarize first and to quote later a *Quarterly Reviewer*, was that the descendants of Cunobelin continued in Colchester under the Romans, and that one of them was Coilus, *alias* Cole, the same music and liquor-loving potentate who called for his pipe a good many centuries before the uses of the soothing herb were known in this country; of course, his pipe may have been an instrument of so-called music. After the usurpation of Carausius and his successor, Cole or Coel, Duke of Kaer-Coloin (Colchester), surrendered the island to the Romans, "in return for which service he was allowed to retain the nominal sovereignty in Britain, and has become renowned as the 'Old King Cole' of popular song. On his dying soon afterwards, the British legends went on to declare that Constantius the Senator, the representative of the Roman power on the island, received the crown of Coel, but only in virtue of marriage with his daughter Helena; and Colchester has hence enjoyed the reputation of giving birth to Constantine, the first Christian Emperor. There is no trace, however, of Constantius having been in Britain at all before the year 296, at which time his son was twenty-four years old; and the most credible writers assert that his consort was not a Briton, but a Bithynian. We leave the good citizens of Colchester in possession of their arms 'a cross intangled between four crowns,' in token of Helena's invention of the Cross of Christ; but we cannot allow that they have any historical title to them."

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How others may feel in a matter of this kind it is not for me to say, but in me the serene air of superiority with which the ultra-learned brush away a tradition usually excites a suspicion, not wholly dissociated from a desire, that they may be wrong. "The most credible writers" of the *Quarterly Reviewer* produce no impression on me. It is the kind of expression one would expect of a writer who did not feel inclined to be at the pains of research. Equally, when a presumably learned writer in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* says, under the heading "Constantine," "a later tradition, adopted with characteristic credulity by Geoffrey of Monmouth, that Helena was the daughter of a British king, is a pure invention," I reflect that assertion is not argument, although it often passes for such. After all, this same contemptuous writer can but tell us that Constantine was born in 274 to Constantius and Helena, "the wife of obscure origin (daughter of a *stabularia*, or innkeeper, according to St. Ambrose), whom her husband was compelled to repudiate on

attaining the dignity of Cæsar." And when "Helena" is referred to, we find another learned author saying that of her nationality nothing certain is known. Again, the statement that there is no trace of Constantius ever having been in Britain before 296 (at which time, by the way, Constantine was twenty-two, not twenty-four), does not satisfy the court. In 273, the year in which the wanderings of the father of Constantine would be material, Constantius Flavius Valerius was but a young soldier, of Dalmatian origin, in whom nobody yet recognized the future Emperor. He was twenty-three years of age, or thereabouts, for so little is known of his early life that the exact year even of his birth is unknown. It was not until nearly twenty years later that, having distinguished himself in Dalmatia, he was adopted and appointed Cæsar by Maximian. There was no reason in life why he should not have gone to Britain without attracting notice at the age of twenty-three, every reason why, if he did so, he should visit the flourishing, comfortable, and very accessible colony on the banks of the Colne. There he certainly did not find Coel, or Cole, a reigning sovereign, but he might very possibly have found a "merry old soul" of an innkeeper, who vowed that he was descended from Cunobelin, and possessed a charming daughter.

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It is not suggested that these things actually happened, but it is most distinctly suggested that, unless the learned can trace the wanderings of the father of Constantine all through 273 and show that he was not in Britain, to say there is no trace of his having been in Britain before 296 is entirely beside the question. Here we have an example of a frequent kind of historical incapacity, that of failing to realize the life of the past. The dashing young officer might, in fact, have been in Colchester very easily, and if he succumbed to the charms of the inn-keeper's daughter, the event was not of a kind contrary to human experience. It is for the sceptic to prove an alibi if he desires to upset tradition. Helena may, then, have been the daughter of a Colchester innkeeper, she was certainly the mother of Constantine. Equally certainly, when her son became Emperor, she took a great interest in Britain, which tends to show that she may have been British by birth. It is true that cities in Syria and Bithynia were named Helenopolis after her, and this might be cited in favour of her Bithynian origin, only it could not be more in favour of one than the other, since she could not have been born in two places.

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Here let a little confession and explanation be made. The *Quarterly Reviewer's* statement that the arms of Colchester might be left to it "in token of Helena's invention of the cross of Christ," left me quite in the dark; and the darkness was dispelled in the most commonplace way by reference to books. Helena did not invent the cross of Christ, in one sense of the word, because the Romans had done so before her time. But, according to tradition, she made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and found there the Holy Sepulchre and the true cross of Christ. That is a tradition which I do not attempt to justify, or to criticize beyond saying that the pilgrimage would really be an easy one for the mother of a powerful Emperor who was absolute in Jerusalem, and that the fabric might easily have been sound in Helena's time.

Of the siege of Colchester during the Rebellion, and of the cruel vengeance exacted by Fairfax, under the relentless influence of Ireton, on Lucas and Lisle, mention has been made at an earlier point, but at the moment of mention I was not aware that the populace of Colchester, like that of most of East Anglia, was essentially in sympathy with the Parliament, and had helped its cause over and over again. It was the necessity of war that drove the Royalists—"undaunted Capel" was of their number too—into Colchester, and it may well be that through familiarity with the place Lucas was enabled to make exceptionally capable use of the outlines of the town for purposes of defence. For the Lucases were tenants in fee of the Abbey of St. John, the gate of which still remains, restored it is true. "The last abbot," says Murray, "was hanged at his own gate for contumacy in refusing to acknowledge the Royal Supremacy." The last owner, whose ancestors had come in by purchase and not by force, faced death hard by with equal resolution and cheerfulness for the cause which he held dear. The defence had been a gallant but a hopeless enterprise. Reduced to the last extremity for lack of provisions, "after feeding on the vilest aliment," worn out by hunger and desperate sallies, surrounded by a hostile population, the leaders must indeed have been weary of life. How they lost it we know; but Ireton was not satisfied with the blood of the leaders. The common soldiers were dispatched to the American plantations, were in fact converted into white slaves by the champions of freedom and of religion; and the unhappy townfolk, who certainly had no wish to take the Royalist side, although it is probable that many of them felt personal regard for Lucas and his family, were mulcted in the sum of £12,000, a very large sum in those days. "Soon after, a gentleman appearing in the King's presence, clothed in mourning for Sir Charles Lucas; that humane Prince, suddenly recollecting the hard fate of his friends, paid them a tribute, which none of his own unparalleled misfortunes ever extorted from him; He dissolved into a flood of tears." These words, with their peculiar punctuation and their copious capitals, are those not of the stately and partisan Clarendon but of David Hume, whom Adam Smith considered "as approaching as nearly to the idea of a perfectly wise and virtuous man as perhaps the nature of human frailty will permit."

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Leviore plectro. No wise man will go to Colchester without sampling the oysters, for which Colchester has been famous since it was Camulodunum. They are traditionally the best in the world, although perhaps something may be urged in favour of the Marennes of France (but the green colour is somewhat against them), or of the giant oysters of New Zealand, which were unknown, as New Zealand was, when the tradition of Colchester natives was already ancient.

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Our Ipswich oysters most likely came from the celebrated layings in the Colne, so there was no heresy in singing their praises. Many another place, and Whitstable above all others, is famous for its oysters, but only at Colchester are the layings the property of the Corporate body, only on

the Colne is the development of our old friend the "succulent bivalve" officially watched from the time when it is no bigger than "a drop from a tallow candle" to that at which it conforms to the dimensions of the municipal model in silver. Only at Colchester is it eaten, or are they eaten, with a just combination of civic ceremony and appreciative abandon. Colchester oysters, indeed, have but one drawback. They are not, in these days of rapid transport, so cheap as some epicures of scanty purse might desire. For that matter good oysters are seldom to be found at a moderate price in the old world. Australia is the oyster-lover's paradise. There, in any little bay, rock-oysters may be broken off in blocks, opened, and eaten out of hand; and one orders them not by the dozen, but by the plate, which holds eighteen or twenty, at the modest price of one shilling.

Oysters were a distinct consolation during these manœuvres—be it hoped the military character of the starting point has not passed out of mind—to those officers who mourned the futility and the cost of the operations by land: they were a sheer joy to those who were indifferent to the military question. But there were manœuvres all the same, and they involved many journeys by motor-car and by bicycle to all parts of the surrounding district. The first journey I took by bicycle, fairly early in the morning, to Clacton. A broiling sun poured down upon roads of yielding surface, soaked by a night's rain, and one gained a respect for the little hills which was completely lost in the Lanchester later. They are hills, though, without doubt, and a car of low power would feel them. The descent from the centre of Colchester is sharp, the ascent in returning necessarily the same, and the termination of Wivenhoe spells hill as plainly as Plymouth "Hoe" does, and for the same etymological reason. It is, in fact, a country of pretty little hills, abundantly wooded, until the flat land by the sea-coast is reached. It is to be feared that no halt was made on this or any other occasion to notice the Roman tiles built into the wall of the church at Wivenhoe. In the roadside scenery, however, an eye fresh from Berkshire observed one pleasing characteristic appearing to be singular. The hedgerow trees were, for the most part, elms, not very tall, for no tree grows to a stately height near the sea in our islands, but very much more beautiful than the loftier elms of Berkshire, save those planted for ornament, in Windsor Park for example. These low elms spread their welcome shade—true, it keeps the surface damp and renders road-preservation difficult—well over the way from either side. There was no doubt they looked better than the ordinary Berkshire elm that, newly mutilated, is bare as a ship's mast for thirty or forty or fifty feet, and has a mere tuft at the top like birch broom, or, clipped a year or two ago, supports the same birch broom upon an apparently solid and most disproportionately thick column of opaque green. The patulous elms, too, exercised their little influence on the manœuvres, but before explaining it, let the word "patulous," suggested by memory of the first line of Virgil, and incontinently looked for in a dictionary, be justified. It is not merely a botanical term, nor of my coinage. No less a poet than P. Robinson, in no less famous a poem than "Under the Sun," wrote, "The patulous teak, with its great leathern leaves." Perhaps P. Robinson was not famous; it may be noticed that courage is wanting to dub him Peter, Paul, or even Percival; and "Under the Sun" may have been a very minor poem by a quite insignificant writer; but P. Robinson at least knew where to go for a word expressing his exact meaning, and mine, better than any other in the English language. The patulous elms, then, exercised their influence on the manœuvres. How? Some days later, when General French, not having burned his ships, was in full retreat for them his enemy, General Wynne, sent up a balloon to spy out his movements and those of his troops. Espying that balloon at a distance of some ten miles, we gave chase in the Lanchester and came up to it, just after it had been brought down to earth in the centre of one of the strange crops to be found in this part of Essex. (It was a crop, as it turned out, of bird-seed, and marked as out of bounds, but balloons as they descend know no law.) The officer of Royal Engineers had been up 1000 feet or more in the balloon; he had scanned the whole country with field-glasses from a bird's-eye point of view. The country between him and the sea, Laver de la Haye, Laver Breton and the vicinity—he was at Tiptree of jam fame—was full of French's soldiery. They were marching in column of route within half a mile of him. Yet, by reason of the patulous elms, he had seen nothing of them. We had; but we were non-combatants and neutral, and therefore silent.

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After Wivenhoe, the route to Clacton-on-Sea chosen that day, through Thorrington and Great Clacton, seemed dull and was very flat. But Clacton-on-Sea was a remarkable sight then, and is always, during the season, a sight quite *sui generis*. Some of the things witnessed that day will probably never be seen again. The long line of transports and cruisers lying a couple of miles out and extending from Great Holland to Clacton, the horse-boats being towed ashore, were both quite exceptional. Indeed, the horse-boats will certainly never reappear at Clacton or anywhere else, for a storm broke most of them up a day or two later, and the wreckage was sold by auction on the spot. Nor again, most likely, shall we see the Duke of Connaught and his General Staff, and a brilliant group of foreign attachés, naval and military, standing on Clacton beach amidst a seething crowd of East End trippers, and mountebanks, and nigger minstrels, and shell-fish vendors. But Clacton-on-Sea and its casual visitors were true to themselves none the less, and between them they made a quite wonderful spectacle, needing to be seen by the uninitiated before it could be realized, and certainly worth realizing by any easy-going student of human nature.

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My expeditions to Clacton-on-Sea were not taken by me in the capacity of motorist simply; indeed, the first of them was made on a bicycle, and the others, for there were several more to follow, in a car, when my knowledge of motoring was embryonic. Yet I found in Clacton-on-Sea one of that peculiar class of places which he who follows what may be called public motoring learns to know through the motor-car, and would certainly not have learned to know in any other way. Blackpool is another such place, visited because in several successive years it has broken out into "speed trials," and Douglas in the Isle of Man is another, to which motorists go by reason

of the Tourist Trophy Race. Blackpool and Douglas are grander in their kind than Clacton. They have more Winter Gardens—I am not sure that Clacton boasts any at all—huge dancing-rooms, constructed and conducted by municipal enterprise, in which the dancing is marked by a punctilious decorum and, it may be added, by an excellence of execution, which would put the most famous ball-rooms in London to shame. But all three have two points in common. Every prospect, except that of the houses and public buildings, pleases. At each the sea gleams in the sun or crashes on the beach as the case may be. Each has its parade, esplanade, promenade, call it what you will; and this is crowded, as the beach is also, in the season of the year. At Clacton-on-Sea a few of the buildings are tolerable to the eye, and there is one hotel, not the most pretentious of them, which is more than endurable to look at, and quite reasonably comfortable. It stands facing the sea, and its broad veranda is screened by a dense fig-tree carefully trained. A better vantage ground for a weary wayfarer need not be desired.

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From that cool veranda, reflecting that it is every whit as comfortable to sit under somebody else's fig-tree as under one's own, I looked on the passing and re-passing crowd on the parade, like Dido gazing from her watch-tower at the departing ships of Æneas, but in a very different mood. In truth the spectacle was both amusing and perplexing. At first sight it seemed for all the world as if hundreds, and even thousands, of smart ladies, of the kind one sees at Ascot or even at Goodwood, had cast aside all prejudices of position, and were consorting with men whom the conventions of society assign to a lower rank. Dresses and sunshades and hats were all spotlessly clean, colours were subdued and delicate. Closer inspection would no doubt have revealed to the trained eye of a woman that the frocks were ill-made and badly "hung," that the materials were cheap, which is bad, and that they looked cheap, which is worse. To a man it revealed nothing of this, nothing more at first than a vast number of girls, walking well, and some of them quite pretty, in the company of young fellows who, worthy representatives of an excellent class as they may have been, were clearly not gentlemen. Their dress alone betrayed that, not by dint of shabbiness, but rather by its excessive and ill-judged smartness. Then voices became clear; the twang of the male and female Cockney filled the air as the so-called music of a Jew's-harp, or of an orchestra of Jew's-harps; and finally a closer view revealed the gruesome fact that these dainty creatures were consuming periwinkles, with the aid of a pin, as they walked, were crunching shrimps between their pearly teeth, and getting rid of the superfluous integument by—well, by the usual process of the East End of London, without any help from the hand; in fact, by pure propulsion from pouting lips. Half of the mystery was solved. The elegant nymphs of Clacton-on-Sea were simply East End girls who had made the cheap trip by sea. But the mystery of their attire remained, was indeed doubled. Where were the "fevvers," the flowing ostrich plumes of many hues, without which the traditional girl of the East End reckons herself disgraced? Whence had the far more pleasing dresses come? Inquiry made, not of those who wore them, since their powers of repartee are proverbial, elicited the suggestion that all this pretty finery was hired for the day from one or other of the many big drapers at the East End. If so, it can only be said that the taste shown was, on the whole, excellent, and the general effect very good and pleasing. So really was the spectacle. Laughing and talking, eating endless shell-fish, and consuming really very little alcoholic liquor, these young folks strutted and preened themselves in the sun all the livelong day. They even found pennies, hard earned no doubt, to bestow upon the Pierrots and the nigger-minstrels who assaulted the ear on all sides. Of noise and jesting there was no end, of disorder no beginning. Even when, on a later occasion, I slept at Clacton for a night or two to watch the work of re-embarkation, which was as interesting as the manoeuvres were silly, the sounds of revelry by night were few and far between. In fact, Clacton serves its patrons well, and they conduct themselves merrily and yet decently in it. It is a sight well worth seeing, as Blackpool and Douglas are also, once in a while. It might even serve to soothe some of the sympathetic anguish of those who mourn over the monotonous lives of the poor. But this is not to say that, for quiet folk who do not wish to take their pleasure in the East End way, Clacton-on-Sea is a desirable place in which to spend a summer holiday. It is worth while to drive there from Colchester for luncheon, and that is all.

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Fortune and the good nature of a newly made friend favoured me. The transports were discharging horse and foot simultaneously in a long line extending from Clacton, indeed almost from St. Osyth, to a point beyond Great Holland to the north-east. The very idea of a bicycle was repugnant to me when, as luck would have it, I encountered another correspondent who had a Napier at his disposal. Off we whirred, along conventional seaside roads, and up, from the flat ground whereon Clacton-on-Sea stands, climbing a sensible but not difficult acclivity until we had almost reached Great Holland. A little farther on, but unvisited, was Walton-on-the-Naze, another of those parts of the east coast which have suffered from the relentless greed of the sea. Nay, in times past, the sea had gone very near to sacrilege, for it has devoured the lands with which a prebend of St. Paul's was endowed. But save for him who desires fossils, and coprolites especially, the most uninteresting of all fossils, which may be found in abundance in the cliff, a visit to Walton is not recommended. Walton may be styled Walton-le-Soken, and Kirkby and Thorpe hard by are also finished off by "le-Soken." The expression has its legal and historical interest, for it shows that the lords of each possessed the power of "sac and soc," and, in fact, a power of holding special courts. But this does not serve to make the places themselves at all interesting and, to put it bluntly, this country by the sea in these parts is not attractive. The rest of our day's drive, before we returned to Colchester—the bicycle, I may say, remained at Clacton unmourned until the time came for leaving the district—took us near to a series of bivouacs, of no permanent interest, and as far as St. Osyth, which lies on the opposite side to Brightlingsea of a little tributary of the Colne, crossed by a ferry. Time was abundant, and it has been matter for frequent regret since that, merely through ignorance of that which was close at hand, I missed

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seeing the obviously interesting remains of the Priory, in its restored form, and the church, said to date back to St. Osyth herself, who was the wife of Suthred, King of the East Angles. When Suthred flourished I know no more than I do any reason why others should miss that which I, having then no project of this kind formed, omitted. Brightlingsea over the ferry is, by all accounts, not worth a visit, although it was one of the Cinque Ports.

So, as a matter of strict narrative, back I fared that evening to the temporary home at the "Red Lion" and, as has been stated previously, I saw something of the country in the immediate vicinity of Colchester to the south-east by east, and of our soldiery, early the next morning. Later in the day—for a day beginning at 4 a.m. is not short—there was abundant opportunity for making preliminary study of Colchester, and during my stay an immense number of places were seen and many routes were traversed at one time or another. The places were seen and the routes were taken as the tide of battle rolled, or as it was expected to roll, which did not always come to the same thing; but that was an order of visitation dictated by outside circumstances, and not to be recommended to those who are quite at liberty to follow their own fancy. So, during a leisurely drive of a morning and an afternoon, we will go in the spirit to a number of places, every one of which has been inspected from a motor-car, although not necessarily in the order named.

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Between the estuaries of the Colne and the Stour lies a peninsula, part of which has already been treated, and the rest of it is now our subject. It is by no means a mountainous tract. According to a coloured contour map lying before me no single eminence in it is more than two hundred and fifty feet above the sea-level; but it would be a grave mistake to put down this part of Essex as a flat country. It is, in fact, undulating, and if, to carry on the metaphor, none of the waves are Atlantic rollers, a good many of them are in the nature of short and choppy seas. The Lanchester, which there need be the less hesitation in praising in that the makers in all probability would not construct or deliver its sister machine now, made merry with most of these hills, but of the other cars, of which the name was legion in those days of sham-fighting, we passed many crawling up steep little ascents and many others at a standstill. One such hill, at least, we encounter in this drive, between Ardleigh and Manningtree, where the gradient is 1 in 13; hardly a mere nothing even from the standpoint of 1906, but not long since quite worthy to be regarded as a serious obstacle. Moreover the trees are abundant, the hedges thick and well kept, the land highly cultivated, and the whole is entertaining and restful to the eye, although the curvatures of the roads and the screening hedges call for the exercise of exact care in driving.

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We start then from Colchester at such time in the morning as may seem good, and ask for the Ardleigh road. Five miles take us to Ardleigh, and here we come at once upon the industry which has the indirect effect of giving to the scenery of Essex peculiar characteristics of detail. Between Ardleigh and Dedham—Constable's Dedham—lies the ground cultivated for special purposes by Messrs. Carter, of Holborn, of whom it is but plain truth to say that they are among the most prominent seed-growers of this country. Many of my little tours in Essex were made in company with an officer whose duty it had been to mark with flags fields which the foot of the soldier must not trample upon, whose duty it would be afterwards to assess the compensation to be given to farmers for damage done. One of our early conversations ran somewhat to this effect:

Author. "It seems to me you might save a lot of expense next time by placing flags where the troops may go, not in the forbidden ground. You would not need nearly so many flags. How on earth are troops marching along this road to learn anything? No sooner have they thrown out men to feel their way for them and to protect them from being taken in flank, than the men must come back to the road to avoid a patch of common swedes or mangels."

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Compensation Officer. "Yes, it looks like that; but you must remember these are not ordinary swedes or mangels."

Author. "What do you mean? They look pretty commonplace. We should think nothing of walking through roots as good, or better, after partridges at home."

Compensation Officer. "Of course we should; but I tell you these are not ordinary roots. They are all being grown for seed; they may be choice kinds produced, for all I know, as the result of years of experiment. You never know what you may come upon next in this seed-growing country. You will find whole fields of Delphinium, Dahlia, Penstemon, Lupin, almost any flowering plant, to say nothing of crops of strange plants, whose very appearance is unknown to you."

Author. "Did the great men of the War Office know all this when they decided to hold manœuvres here? If so, it seems to me, they made a foolish choice of their ground, because, while the value of the training is reduced by the necessary cramping of movement, the compensation payable is sure to be out of all reason."

And the Compensation Officer answered never a word, for the purposes of this book, but probably he thought the more. His description of the country was justified abundantly. The very grass might be, very likely was, being grown for special lawn seed, and, over and over again, one passed acres of early autumnal flowers in full bloom, which set an eager gardener (for man may be gardener and motorist) thinking of additions to be made to his own distant plot. On we fared, breasting that hill of 1 in 13, and in 2-3/4 miles we are at Manningtree. Now, Manningtree is ancient, and it has a history.

"Why dost thou converse with that trunk of humours, that bolting-hutch of beastliness, that swollen parcel of dropsies, that huge bombard of sack, that stuffed cloak-bag of guts, that roasted *Manningtree* ox with the pudding in his belly, that reverend vice, that grey iniquity, that father

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ruffian, that vanity in years?"

Thus, in the first part of *King Henry IV* (Act ii. scene 4), does Harry of Monmouth, speaking of Falstaff, but himself in the character of his own father, address himself. Argal, the cattle sold at Manningtree Fair had a great name even in Shakespeare's day. Manningtree also was, as may be seen from a memorial slab in the church, connected with Thomas Tusser, the agricultural poet of the sixteenth century, who, after being educated at King's College and Trinity Hall, Cambridge, rejected music, for which he had been trained, for farming on the banks of the Stour. This was "an employment," says a superior person, "which he seems to have regarded as combining the chief essentials of human felicity." Well, there are worse occupations than farming, and the production of indifferent music is one of them. It is pleasant to muse over Tusser's tablet at Manningtree, to reflect that he probably was a practical and improving farmer, else a tablet would hardly have been erected at Manningtree in memory of a man who was buried at St. Paul's, and to hope that to him, at least in part, was due that fame of the Manningtree oxen which made Shakespeare select them as typical. That Shakespeare and Tusser ever met in the flesh is unlikely, for Tusser died in 1580, and even that strange tribe the Baconians admit that Shakespeare was born in 1564 and remained at Stratford Grammar School until he was fifteen. Less creditably connected with Manningtree was Matthew Hopkins, the "witchfinder," appointed as such by Parliament in 1644—by the Parliament of Westminster presumably, not by that of Oxford, for Charles held a Parliament at Oxford in that year—and celebrated in *Hudibras*. His was the fate of Phalaris, for at last, having "hanged three-score of them in a shire," he was tried in the same brutal fashion which he had applied to others, and perished in like fashion. We have no right, after quite modern experience in Ireland, to be very contemptuous towards our forefathers in respect of their belief in witches; but still it is a little startling to be compelled to realize that they set Hopkins and his fellow-commissioners to their task in a year so full of grim realities as that of Marston Moor, of Cropredy Bridge, and of the Duke of Newcastle's departure in despair from the kingdom.

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It has been well to reach Manningtree by the fairly good road from Colchester; but we must go to the westward a little, and cross the Stour, leaving Essex and our peninsula for a while if we would not miss perhaps the most precious association of the valley of the Stour. It is East Bergholt, the birthplace of John Constable, the miller's son, and here we are in the country which he once had the pleasure of hearing described in his presence by a complete stranger as "Constable's country." This was the more strange in that, like many another artist before him and since his day—the word "artist" is used in its widest sense—he was not appreciated at his full worth while he lived among men. A few days or a week spent in Constable's country, by painters or by those who aspire to know something of the spirit of landscape painting, are now to be regarded as time spent pleasantly, profitably, and naturally by men and women of cultivated taste; but the stranger on the Ipswich coach who said in his hearing, "This is Constable's country," was in advance of the average taste of his generation, for, although Constable was appreciated in France before those of his own race were awake to his merits, it is one of the cruel ironies of fate that, when the great landscape painter died, his studio was full of unsold pictures. His case, unlike that of Thomas Gainsborough, whom we shall meet soon, was one in which a stolid parent did his best to choke the spring of artistic spirit in its efforts to express itself in form and colour. It was also one compelling the quotation, "God fulfils Himself in many ways." He showed his leanings in early boy-hood, doubtless in the usual manner, when he was a pupil in the grammar school at Dedham, in Essex and close by—the tower of Dedham Church is a prominent object in many of his landscapes. Again, what country-bred man does not remember how, when the plumber was called in (he was usually painter and glazier too), undiluted joy was to be obtained from watching him at work, from working his divine putty into fantastic shapes, from unlicensed meddling with his brushes and paints? John Constable, too, watched his father's plumber, one Dunthune, to some purpose, and Dunthune was no ordinary plumber. He knew something of landscape painting, and is said to have inspired the boy to that habit of studying in the open air which, in all probability, stood in little need of inspiration. In this is nothing of unnatural novelty. Was not John Crome, of Norwich, apprenticed to a coach and sign-painter, or, as some have it, to a house-painter? The wonder is rather that more house-painters do not develop some measure of artistic proficiency.

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Constable's father, however, had no sympathy for his son's budding genius. The boy, leaving school early, as we reckon now, was set to the task of watching a windmill, and here was one of the many ways in which God fulfilled Himself. Compelled to study the face of the sky with minutest care, the boy acquired that intimate familiarity with it, that joy "in gleaming showers, and breezy sunshine after rain, and grey mists of summer showers" (to quote Mr. H. W. Nevinson's words in an article he has most likely forgotten), which was the basis of his fame. Fuseli might sneer at the painter of "great-coat weather," but Fuseli had the reputation of a cynical wit to keep up. Englishmen will hail Constable for all time now as the faithful translator and revealer of the inner spirit of landscape. Still excuses may be made for the father. Parents have a pardonable habit of considering ways and means, of preferring the certain to the problematic, in planning careers for their sons. The apprehensions of Constable the elder were so far justified by results that Constable the younger was by no means immediately successful. He went to London in 1795, being then not twenty years of age. He came back, beaten, to the windmill and the counting house in 1797. From 1799 to 1816, married, struggling, unappreciated, he fought the desperate battle against poverty in London once more. Only in the latter year, when he was forty years of age, and his father died leaving him £4000, was he able to live in any approach to comfortable circumstances. Perhaps the deliverance from *res angusta domi* helped him to paint better. Few men are so cheerfully constituted that, like Mr. Shandon in

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the Fleet and in *Pendennis*—in a novel, of course, but Mr. Shandon is a living reality—can produce good imaginative work amid squalid surroundings and domestic anxieties—perhaps he was really late in development. Certain it is that, except *A Lock on the Stour* and *Dedham Vale*, few of Constable's better known pictures were painted before he was forty; and it is equally certain that, to the very end, he was never properly valued by his generation.

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For us he is the inspired revealer of the tranquil beauties of a district beloved and studied by him dearly and closely as the most ardent of Scots ever loved and studied Caledonia stern and wild, or the "banks and braes o' bonny Doon," and he has expressed his affection for his birthplace in words, not perhaps of fire, but of placid truth, which exactly express the character of the scenery. Of East Bergholt he writes: "The beauty of the surrounding scenery, its gentle declivities, its luxuriant meadow flats sprinkled with flocks and herds, its well-cultivated uplands, its woods and rivers, with numerous scattered villages and churches, farms and picturesque cottages, all impart to this particular spot an amenity and elegance hardly anywhere else to be found." Reflecting thus we return to Manningtree and our peninsula.

Manningtree lies at the very easternmost part of the estuary of the Stour—all these estuaries would be fjord-like if they had but higher banks—and is really quite close to our pretty Stratford St. Mary, on the Roman road between Ipswich and Colchester, as well as to Dedham and East Bergholt. From it we turn due east, and, the road following the estuary, proceed through Lawford, Mistley, and Bradfield, seven miles to Dovercourt and Harwich. There is a fairly sharp hill of 1 in 13 between Mistley and Bradfield, and another of 1 in 15 between Bradfield and Dovercourt. Mistley is part of the port of Manningtree, and its park, praised by Walpole, still survives sufficiently for the district to be most pleasantly clothed with trees. Dovercourt bulks large in the history of superstition, its church having possessed a peculiarly holy rood, to which pilgrimages used to be made. Now it is a suburb of Harwich, and Harwich, after many ups and downs, and in spite of the inroads of the sea, is doing fairly well. It was certainly a Roman station, it is, like Sole Bay, one of the few places on land from which naval battles of importance have been seen—one between Alfred and the Danes, and another against De Ruyter; it was the starting point of Frobisher on his voyage to find the North West Passage, and of Dr. Johnson for Leyden. All this, to render unto Cæsar the things which are his, I learn from "Murray." From the same source, too, it is gathered that the introduction of steamboats lost the port much of its trade, and that railways revived it. But this particular "Murray" is old (1875). Its views of commerce need bringing up to date; its views of the aspect of a seaport are not mine. One does not expect "sweetness and light," concerning the absence of which complaint is made, in a seaport devoted to fishing-boats and passenger traffic. I can see more of the picturesque in the narrow and struggling streets, in spite of some dirt, than the writer of 1875; but on me a port or a dock exercises a special and peculiar fascination, and that all the more when, as in the case of Harwich, its waters are the head-quarters of a Yacht Club.

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To the annals of this Yacht Club (the Royal Harwich) I am able to contribute some little crumbs, probably not generally known, from the *Memories of Sir Llewelyn Turner*, a book already mentioned in another connection. Would that he were alive to give permission, as he would have given it with eager kindness, to reproduce a passage out of his genial work which gives a vivid impression of a Harwich Regatta of 1846, throws in one or two useful observations, and recalls some valuable associations, and leaves a very vivid impression of the manner in which the yachtsmen of those days enjoyed themselves when the day's sport was over. For preliminary, it need only be said that the owner of the *Ranger*, a fast racing yacht, had asked Mr. Turner (as he was then), a resident in North Wales, and Mr. Parker Smith, an Irish barrister, to race the *Ranger* for him at Harwich during his illness. The rest may be told in Sir Llewelyn's own words, only, beforehand, it must be noted that the yachtsman from Wales, new to the water as he was, taught the east coast men a useful lesson. Sir Llewelyn Turner's remarks concerning ignorant interference with tidal action, too, deserve serious attention.

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"We joined the yacht at Gravesend late in the evening, and at once set sail for Harwich, where we arrived next morning after a rapid run. A more agreeable and satisfactory companion than Smith I could not have desired, and we both agreed that we felt as if we had known each other for years. Soon after our arrival we took up our quarters at the Three Cups Hotel, as the cabin would be required for the spare top-sails and jibs to be ready for shifting canvas in the race.

"There was a fine display of racing yachts and others whose owners came to enjoy the sport. Several of them had come over from the Ostend Regatta, one of them bringing an enormous silver cup, by far the largest I ever saw in the numerous regattas in which I was a participator. Most of the yachts' cabins were given up for the sails to be ready for shifting, and the Three Cups Hotel was crammed with yachtsmen. Taking it all together, it was one of the pleasantest yachting proceedings I ever enjoyed. Like too many harbours on our coast, Harwich had been a terrible sufferer by the lamentable interference with tidal laws by men entirely ignorant of the science, and interested workers. The harbour is, or rather was, entered in a straight line, and then diverges inside up the bed of the River Stour to the left, and to the right of that river the tide ascends the River Orwell to Ipswich. Above the right bank of the Orwell is the residence of the man whose memory every lover of his country should adore—*Philip Bowes Vere Broke*—the gallant captain of the *Shannon*, who, in less than fifteen minutes captured by boarding a frigate of superior force. There were on the Orwell two schooner yachts belonging to Sir Hyde Parker, whose ancestor commanded the *Tenedos* frigate which was sent away by Broke that he might fight the *Chesapeake* on equal terms.

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"Dredging for personal gain was permitted to the westward outside the harbour, with the result

that the deep-water channel was diverted no less than two thousand feet from the east to the west side, a large sand-bank forming on the east side below Landguard Fort, and a corresponding destruction of Beacon's Cliff ensued on the opposite side.

"Four yachts in our class started from a point on the harbour between the town and Walton Marsh. We had a soldier's wind (side). A brand new yacht, the name of which I forget, was on our weather-side, and the two others to leeward; and we three leeward-most vessels headed rather towards the projecting bank before Landguard Point, the weathermost yacht pressing us to leeward as much as possible; I kept my eye most of the time on the weather yacht, the master of which kept his eye on us, taking advantage of every opportunity of pressing us to leeward. So near was he that I could see his eyes most distinctly, but he outwitted himself, as he got the whole four yachts so far to leeward that unless we could cross the bank a tack would be inevitable.

"I asked the pilot if we could venture to cross the bank, the limits of which were plainly seen by the broken water. He replied, 'If you don't mind two or three bumps I will guarantee her crossing,' and Smith agreeing to my proposal, I said, 'We are an iron vessel, let her go.' We passed safely over with about three bumps, and our weather companion having gone too far to leeward in pressing us down, and drawing more water, had to tack. The two others to leeward funked the bank, and tacked also; we were then safe out of the harbour into the 'rolling ground' outside, and spanking before a very strong wind towards the Cork lightships some miles dead to leeward. My plan of crossing the bank, which we were not prohibited from doing, gave us an enormous advantage, as in tacking with a side wind the three yachts had a smooth dead beat to get to windward of the bank. When we rounded the Cork lightships the other three were, I fancy, about a mile or more astern of us. We had then to beat up to windward, passed the mouth of Harwich Harbour, and up to a flag-vessel under the lee of Walton-on-the-Naze, a long low promontory which gave us the full force of the wind, but lessened what would have been, I fancy, too heavy a sea for us. When we had got about half a mile to windward of the Cork lightships, some one called out 'Look at the——' (name forgotten). And there, far astern of us, was our weathermost competitor (at starting) dismasted, with the water rolling in and out of her scuppers. The lower mast had broken about ten or twelve feet above the decks, as far as we could judge, and we had the satisfaction of seeing her taken in tow of a large sailing-yacht that was not racing. In a few minutes we saw another of our competitors in the same state, her lower mast having gone apparently about the same distance from the deck. This left us with only one to compete with in the dead beat up against a very strong breeze, but, as stated, the sea was mitigated by the Walton projection, and the more so as we approached it. We rounded that mark, and after a long run before the wind round the flagship in the harbour whence we had started, and as our single competitor was good four miles astern, the Rear-Commodore hailed that he would not trouble us any further, and he stopped the race; the course was twice round, with power to shorten, which we were glad was done. I was less surprised to see the first yacht dismantled, as, being a new vessel, her rigging probably stretched, and left the strain of the sails upon the mast, but in the other case it was rather odd. I have been at vast numbers of regattas and have seen many topmasts carried away in races, and in one case a lower mast *head* with the topmast, but two lower masts out of four in a class was a unique experience."

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As to the next extract some doubts are felt, on the ground of relevancy only, but still the "Battle of Harwich," as my old friend liked to call it, was fought there, and the manner of fighting was eminently characteristic of the age, after all only sixty years ago; and, if relevance be granted, the little yarn is, at any rate, entertaining.

"THE BATTLE OF HARWICH.

"There was a fine show of yachts at Harwich at this time, and there was a great assemblage of yachtsmen in the prime of life, many, like myself, young fellows of about twenty-three. As there was time before the next port we were to visit, Yarmouth, we had an idle day at Harwich, and, as Dr. Watts says, 'Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do.' As the yachts' cabins had the sails, etc., in them ready for changing jibs, top-sails, etc., we were almost all living ashore at the Three Cups Hotel, and there this memorable battle was fought under these circumstances. My pleasant companion, Michael Parker Smith, and I went for a long walk up country, and on our return were met in front of the hotel by some of our brother yachtsmen, who said they had been in search of us to see if we would join and make a party of eleven, and they had ordered dinner for that number, calculating that we would join, which we gladly did. Another lot of nine had just sat down to dinner in an adjoining room, and the windows of both rooms, which were upstairs, looked over a lower part of the hotel, so that any one going out of the window of one room could go along the roof of the lower building to the window of the other room. It was somewhat curious that not only were we numerically superior, but we were all the biggest men. While we were at dinner, one of the nine going out of their window crept under ours, and threw a squib right along our table. He was a man with a curious head of hair, and was known amongst us as 'Old Frizzlewig,' *alias* 'Door-mat.' Frizzlewig beat a retreat after delivering his shot, two of us lay in wait for him on each side of our window, and while he was launching another squib we got hold of him; a detachment of the other army got out on the lower roof, and it was soon a case of 'pull devil, pull baker.' We had his upper half inside the room, and his party the lower end outside. As the other side were being reinforced, the cry on our side was, 'Shut the window,' the result being that to avoid the guillotining of poor Frizzlewig in the centre, the other side had to let go his legs. We took him prisoner, and fastened the window, and the other army going back through their

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room came to the rescue through our door. Then arose the din of this memorable engagement, recorded in humorous lines soon after, but now lost by me. My chum Smith was very neatly dressed, so much so that I had a light suit made afterwards like it for myself. When the battle commenced the puddings and pies were on the table. The blood was apparently pouring down the neat shirt front, pretty waistcoat and white trousers with the blue stripes of Smith, the ball with which he was struck in the chest and which called the scarlet overflow being nothing less in size than a thirty-two pounder. This ball had a minute before graced the head of our table in the form of a fine red-currant pudding, which one of the attacking force had seized with both hands, and hurled it into Smith's bosom, and the red-currant juice gave Smith the bloody look that crimsoned his attire. In a few minutes the crockeryware and glass had all left the table for the floor, or been smashed, excepting one big jug. Not to harrow the minds of the readers by a further account of so sanguinary an engagement, I conclude by saying that the mortality was *nil*, and the whole of the enemy had to surrender, the eleven being too much for the nine. Our principal prisoner was Rear-Commodore Knight, who was not very big, one of the smallest of his army. We treated our captives with all consideration and humanity, and did not hang any of them. We then rang the bell for the landlord, and told him to estimate the damage, and as luckily the crockery, etc., was not of a costly kind, the whole cost of this great battle only came to 3s. 8d. or 3s. 10d. per head. As far as I saw, the whole thing was conducted with the greatest good humour, and I heard not a cross word; but my friend Smith told me afterwards, when I spoke of everybody's good humour, that he and a namesake of his very nearly got to blows. Those were days when rough jokes were practised more, I fancy, than now. Every one of us had squibs and crackers *ad lib.*; but a better-humoured lot I never met, the great battle notwithstanding. After the racing the yachtsmen all dined pleasantly together at the Three Cups, after a hard day's racing, and some one said there was a ball to which we could go, and off we went, finding to our amazement that we had got into a low-class place, where there were a lot of most disreputable men and women, and on our attempting to beat a retreat we found the door we had entered by was barricaded. We then burst open another, and going down stairs found the bottom of that barricaded. Sir Richard Marion Wilson, who was with his yacht at Harwich, but not racing, vaulted over the banisters into the middle of a lot of fellows who vowed we should not go out without paying our footing as they called it. I immediately vaulted over, and stood by Sir Richard Wilson, and was followed by the adjutant of the Flintshire Militia. Sir R. Wilson ordered the ruffians to open the door, saying, 'Any man who touches me will have reason to repent it.' There was little room for reinforcements from our side as the place we had jumped into was small, but as there were a lot more yachtsmen on the stairs, the bargees showed some desire for a compromise, and said if we would order some liquor the door should be opened. Sir R. Wilson said, 'Not one drop of anything will we give you, or do anything else, excepting on our own terms. Bring a flat wash tub, if there is one at hand,' and they at once found a large shallow wooden one, the place being, it seems, used for washing. He then told them to bring him a gallon of beer, which they quickly did. 'Now,' he said, 'pour it into the tub.' He paid for the ale, and the door was opened, and he said, 'Now let the pigs drink'; and while they were all struggling for the liquor we all walked into the street, having been completely sold by whoever gave out that there was a ball. I never was in such another blackguard assembly in my life."

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I am tempted to proceed because Sir Llewelyn gives us a new view of the Suffolk coast.

"We sailed from Harwich to Yarmouth in company with two of the fastest 25-tonners afloat, viz., the *Ino*, and the *Prima Donna*; the third, the *Seiont*, though she went to Yarmouth, did not sail in our company. I have seen every one of the three beat the others at East Coast regattas, and I fancy yachting men will appreciate the following curious statement.

"The *Seiont* and *Ino* were singularly well matched in beating to windward, and up to the turning-point of a race they were always close together, but the *Seiont* had an ugly trick in running before a strong breeze of cocking up her stern, and the *Ino* would pass and leave her far behind in a long run.

"The *Prima Donna* was not nearly equal on the wind to either of the two others, but if (which is not often the case) she had a long run without being close-hauled she beat both, and thus I saw each of the three successful over the others.

"Our trip from Harwich to Yarmouth was delightful; the land is so low that farm-carts in the fields looked as if we were higher than they, the gentle wind was on the land, and the sea was as smooth as a pond with only the gentlest ripple. We laid a plot to seize the *Ino* and navigate her into Yarmouth, we being the largest party; and we thought if we could get aboard when they were at lunch, and the bulk of the crew at dinner, we could do it. The wind fell to a dead calm two or three times; but luckily for us—as will be seen—before we could get our boat ready to board a gentle breeze arose, and we were all soon doing seven or eight knots. I often think our beating up the narrow entrance of the river at Yarmouth at low water against a dead head wind was a masterpiece in sailing, the space being exceedingly confined to tack in. All the yachtsmen had agreed at Harwich to dine together at the Star Hotel at Yarmouth, where dinner had been ordered by letter beforehand, and a most pleasant evening we had. Now my readers will learn why it was lucky for us that we could not board the *Ino*. I told them at dinner of our piratical design at sea that day, and they soon had the laugh against us: they had a powerful machine for wetting the sails at regattas, that would send water up to the topsail; and the owner said, 'Do you think after the experience we had of you fellows at Harwich that we would have let a lot of you aboard of us? We had a careful watch kept upon you, and whenever you were seen to be getting a boat ready the machine was ready for you, and we would have filled your boat with water in a

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short time.' What a pickle we should have been in! We were again successful at Yarmouth, coming in first and winning a cup.

"It was painful to witness the large number of people in deep mourning at this curious old town, with its quaint narrow lanes the names of which I forget ('wynds,' I think). The cause of all this mourning was a most extraordinary one. A short time previous to our advent some large travelling show had visited the town, and the clown gave out that at a particular hour on a day named he would go down the River Yare (a fresh-water river running from Norwich) in a tub drawn by two geese. A very large concourse of people assembled on both banks of the river, which is very narrow, and was spanned by a light iron suspension bridge. The bridge collapsed, and more than seventy lives were lost. I looked at the place in absolute amazement, and wondered had anything like a tithe of the loss have taken place; one lot must have suffocated the others."

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No apology is offered for having conveyed some information concerning Harwich and its yachting memories of the past in the words of a pleasant gossip who has passed away. But my old friend was not terse, and he had a rooted objection while he lived, which shall be respected still, to curtailment by another hand, and so, if we want to proceed with our little cruise upon wheels of a single day and to finish it, let us take luncheon at Harwich, without throwing raspberry tarts at one another, and go on our way. Luncheon over, not being of the type of motorists who cannot endure to stand on their own feet or to be at rest for a moment, let us look across the estuary to Landguard Point and, with the aid of the books, think a little over the astonishing metamorphosis brought about, partly by the sweep of the tides, partly perhaps by the hand of man, not thoughtless so much as too confident of knowledge, in the outlines of this part of the coast during historical times.

"Murray" sets one thinking and no more. "Landguard Fort (mounting 36 guns), on a spit of land now joined to the Suffolk coast (it is said that the Stour once passed on the north side of it), was built in the reign of James I." To say thus much and no more is merely to excite curiosity without sating it. To consult Lord Avebury (*The Scenery of England*) is to obtain satisfaction on the general problem and to learn that details are of quite minor significance. He who has once realized the character, the untiring and irresistible, but in some respects irregular force, of the influences at work, will soon see how the outline of the coast may vary from year to year, even from day to day, in the future as in the past. "One of the finest spreads of shingle in the United Kingdom is on the left side of the Ore or Alde in Suffolk, reaching north-eastward to Aldeburgh, and which is still increasing by the deposit of shingle at its south-western end. A chart of the time of Henry VIII shows distinctly that the mouth of Orford Haven was then opposite Orford Castle, whilst a chart of the time of Elizabeth shows a considerable south-westerly progression. When the Ordnance map was made (published 1838), North Weir Point, as the end of the spit is called, was about east of Hollesley. It" (the spread of shingle, of course) "consists of a series of curved concentric ridges, or 'fulls,' sweeping round and forming a projecting cape or 'Ness' in advance of the general coastline." Seen in diagram, from a bird's-eye point of view, these "fulls" closely resemble a vastly long and narrow field ridged up for the reception of Cyclopean potatoes. (In passing, the bird's-eye view, involving an effort of the imagination, is out of date, and there is every prospect that very soon not one man or woman in a thousand, but a large percentage, will be in a position to speak without affectation of tracts of country as seen from a balloon.) This particular bird's-eye prospect, however, is that of a bird perched on the high lighthouse and looking south-west over Hollesley Bay and the adjacent land to the Naze, and it gives a very vivid idea of the struggles of the sluggish Suffolk streams before they reach the sea.

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"The triangular projection encloses salt marshes, and extends from Aldeburgh to Landguard Point. Successive ridges or waves of shingle are, indeed, a marked characteristic of such headlands. Under ordinary circumstances, and when the shore line is stationary, each succeeding tide obliterates the ridge made by the last; but when the shore is encroaching on the sea, some great storm will throw up the shingle in the form of a ridge, after which another accumulation commences, and eventually forms another ridge. The development of this beach, however, has not been invariably progressive, breaches made by storms having sometimes given a temporary exit for the waters of the Ore and of the Butley River at the Upper Narrows, where the part of the channel to the south would be partially closed. The Ordnance map of 1831 shows separate knolls of shingle for a mile southwards from North Weir Point. The point no longer exists as there shown, the knolls having been united into a continuous bank, as marked on the Geological Survey map, which has been corrected from a later survey."

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One more short passage is quoted here, as tending to round off the subject under discussion, although, perhaps, it might have been quoted when we were at Yarmouth. Still, the shifting shore did not thrust itself upon our attention then, and now it is pushing itself forward as steadily as North Weir Point has made its progress on the maps. "The sands of Yarmouth, like those of Lowestoft, have, in recent years, been comparatively stationary. The town of Yarmouth stands on a spot of sea-driven sand, thrown up in 1008 A.D."—it is no use therefore to look for Roman remains at Yarmouth itself—"and which crosses the outfalls of the Waveney and the Yare, enclosing a large mere—Breydon Water—the outlet of which, like that of other Suffolk rivers, is being constantly forced southwards by the accumulating sand from the north." All this is due to the steady trend of the beach from the north to the south, tending to form a barrier across all harbours and estuaries, to denude outlying capes, to fill up hollows in the coastline; and less calculable than the influence of the tide is the spasmodic influence of storms. What, then, is the moral? Of a truth there are many morals. He who buys a promontory may become a landless

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man. His neighbour in a hollow of the coast to the south may find himself endowed with salt marshes, whereon the sheep of his posterity will attain a flavour of supreme excellence. A port may become an inland community. River beds, the boundary of many an inland county and of many an estate out of reach of the sea, because they are accepted as eternal and immutable, are the most unstable of metes and bounds in the low ground by the side of the North Sea. Lastly, when we find the old maps failing to tally with the configuration of the land to-day, we shall only be exposing ourselves to ridicule if we laugh at those who made them.

So we have mused, looking at Landguard Point; and the indulgence has been taken without hesitation, since travel without thought is mere waste of time and of the opportunities of amusement. The motorist is not an infatuated adjunct of a hurtling machine; rather is he one who, passing through scenes rapidly, learns to observe and to think more quickly than others, storing, as on a photographic film, memories to be unfolded and developed later, and by no means averse to linger in here and there a spot promoting easy reflection. Only he is a motorist still, and, until the rudimentary device of the starting handle has been improved upon, he will make his long halts for looking round at leisure simultaneously with luncheon or tea, or some other reason for stopping the engine.

Home then to Colchester we will go through Dovercourt again, Little Oakley, Great Oakley, Weeley, and Elmstead. It is no great distance, and there is no reason why we should not pause for tea on the way in a village inn; for the inns of these parts are not half bad, the silvan scenery and the hedges are delightful, and there is no occasion to hurry. Besides, the roads are exceeding curly, apt to be greasy under the trees also, and altogether the peninsula between the Stour and the Colne is no place for fast travelling. It cannot honestly be said that, apart from the tranquil scenery of the country, combining abundant leafage with plenty of little ups and downs and a freshness of atmosphere due to the adjacent sea, which is in view frequently, this drive of the afternoon is worth taking for the sake of any antiquities or associations which may be taken into account. That is not to say that there are none such. Personally, perhaps, I should never have explored this peninsula but for the soldiery, who, I remember, had a great camp at one time in a park near Great Bentley, and a fierce battle at another time in the same district. It was rather an interesting battle, since it exhibited the difficulties of hedgerow fighting, and, still more, those of umpires compelled to adjudicate upon its results when cartridges were blank. But to me the most amusing part of it was to come at one point upon scouts of both armies, theoretically foes to the death, stealing green apples in brotherly amity from the same orchard. Still, I think, if the opportunity came without much trouble, I would explore that peninsula again in early autumn, for, apart from associations in literature or history, apart from architecture, about which it is far easier to rhapsodize in print sometimes than it is to spend many interested minutes over it in practice, there is an undying charm in these green lanes, in the oaks and elms, in the heavy laden orchards, and in the luxuriant blackberries of the wayside. They are just England, or one of the features of England, at its best; and those who have travelled most of this world of ours will agree that any feature of England, at its best, takes a very great deal of beating.

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CHAPTER VIII

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COLCHESTER AND GAINSBOROUGH'S COUNTRY

An afternoon's drive—Lexden—Close to Colchester—Earlier visit assumed—Probable site of Cunobelin's city—Position described by the *Quarterly*—Boadicea's revenge—Stoke by Nayland—A commanding hill—The church—Constable's praise—Gainsborough at Sudbury—"Damn your nose, madam!"—Gainsborough at school—"Tom Peartree"—Gainsborough's Suffolk landscapes—Long Melford—A halt for an exceptional church—Seventeenth-century monograph on—Inscriptions in flint—Long Melford a centre of the cloth trade—The Martins, or Martyns, and the church—Its past glories—Its splendid treasures—Ancient customs—The Cordells—Cavendish, the home of the Cavendish family—Clare and "the illustrious family of Clare"—Strongbow—The Valley of the Colne—The De Veres and Castle Hedingham—Macaulay on their fame—Their end—Little Maplestead—A round church—Back to Colchester.

A nice little drive, with a pause for tea and antiquarianism, of forty or fifty miles may be taken from Colchester any fine summer's afternoon by following something like the route here laid down. Thirty years ago this sentence would have been held to be proof positive of lunacy in the writer; now it is a conspicuous illustration of his willingness to be contented with moderately long journeys. It is a willingness, save the mark, which grows on the motorist with experience and familiarity with the new locomotion.

We will start by way of Lexden, but we will not halt there, full of interest as it is; for Lexden is but two miles from the heart of Colchester, and it shall be assumed that, at some time or other, the motorist will walk these two miles for the sake of his health and of his figure, and spend a little time in examining a spot of real interest. Still he shall be told its story now. Not many pages back there was occasion to mention the colony planted near Colchester, as it now is, by Claudius, and of the lethargy of the veterans who were the first colonists. They ought to have settled themselves as a community ready for defence at once. Historians agree that, instead of doing

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this, they found the dwellings hitherto occupied by the British sufficiently comfortable for their purpose, and never troubled themselves upon the question of defensive position. Those ancient British dwellings, due to Cunobelin's migration from St. Albans (which is historical, whereas much concerning Cunobelin is mystery), probably stood where Lexden stands now. Such, at any rate, was the opinion of a *Quarterly Reviewer*, who thought the surroundings fitted in well with his theory, as in fact they do. "To the north of it flows the Colne in a deep, and what must have been in those days a marshy valley, while on the south it is flanked by a smaller stream still called the Roman River, which probably made its way through dense forests. These two streams, meeting in the estuary of the Colne, enclose on three sides the peninsula on which Lexden stands, and across this neck of land, or such part of it as was not occupied by marsh or wood, two or perhaps three parallel lines of ramparts may now be traced for two or more miles, supposed to be British, from the flint celts which have been found about them." (This last sentence would certainly not be permitted in the *Quarterly Review* of these days, but its meaning is quite clear.) "... Near the centre of these lines a conspicuous mound still exists, which we would gladly believe to be the sepulchre of the great Cunobelin. A small Roman camp, or more properly a *castellum*, is still well preserved at no great distance from the south-west angle of this British fortification." The comment of "Murray," probably in this instance the late Mr. Augustus Hare, is "Whatever may be thought of these arguments, the suggestion is interesting and gives a certain importance to Lexden." As to Cunobelin, obviously there is no attempt at argument, nothing more than a pious aspiration; the rest of the argument is, on the whole, rather better than the English in which it is expressed, and perhaps as little of it rests on mere supposition as we have a right to expect in a case of this kind. The only weak part of the hypothesis appears to be that the august *Quarterly Reviewer* assumes marsh or forest where he does not find the lines of the ancient rampart. It would be safer, it is suggested, to assume marsh only or, where the elevation of the ground is against marsh and there is no rampart, vanished rampart, rather than vanished forest. The "celts," to one who does not profess to have made a profound study of British antiquities, seem to be neither here nor there in the argument. South-eastern Britons had some civilization even before Cæsar came. They were tillers of the soil and, apparently, had commerce with the Continent, even in metals. They resisted Cæsar by force, and their scythe-chariots (afterwards the model for the Roman travelling carriages) were not without their effect upon the legions. A people who could make these scythe-chariots, who severed the mistletoe with a golden sickle, were hardly likely to use flint knives in daily life. It follows, or at any rate seems to follow, that the "celts," if they are evidence of any period at all, as of course they must be, are evidence of men who lived near Lexden long before Cunobelin.

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Still, on the whole, the argument that Lexden represents the Camulodunum of the Britons (I wonder what they really called it, for Camulodunum is about as unBritish as it well can be) is fairly strong. It is strong enough at any rate to warrant the belief that here "the British warrior Queen," letting her barbarian troops loose on the panic-stricken and defenceless colonists, avenged her wrongs ruthlessly and in a wild abandon of cruelty. Sluggish Colne and the Roman river really did, we may take it for almost certain, run with the blood of Romans; and this is no figure of speech, as it usually is when battles are so described. Camulodunum was not a battle but a massacre; Boadicea was *furens femina* with a vengeance, and with good cause. She really had bled from the Roman rods, her daughters had been outraged, her just possessions had been stolen; the Icenii were, clearly, in a wild ecstasy of murderous madness. If ever there was slaughter grim and great in this world, Lexden saw it in the year of grace 61. Another place, some say Messing, not far off and near Kelvedon, saw the tables turned a little later. Then, said the Romans, eighty thousand British fell, and Boadicea anticipated the vengeance of her foes by taking poison before they reached her. Still, if she in any way resembled her sisters of to-day, she had enjoyed at least some measure of satisfaction.

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From Lexden, a Roman road runs all the way to Haverhill, at the south-west corner of Suffolk; but Haverhill is just beyond our route of to-day, and is certainly not worth a detour. We are going now almost due north, through Wake's Colne and Bures St. Mary to Stoke by Nayland, in Suffolk and across the Stour. Wake's Colne is reserved for the return journey to which, since that journey follows the downward course of the Colne for some considerable distance, it belongs more properly. Bures St. Mary appears to be far more probably than Bury St. Edmunds the place of the coronation of King Edmund of East Anglia; but that and his canonization, as we noted in connection with Bury St. Edmunds, were long ago, so long indeed, that if Bures St. Mary fails to attract otherwise, the legend does not matter. For us, at any rate, Bures St. Mary is but a place passed on one side in entering the valley of the Stour and Gainsborough's country. Whether any of the views "near Sudbury" included the remarkably striking hill on which Stoke by Nayland stands ignorance prevents me from stating, but certainly, that house-crowned hill, rising as it does from the very flat land below and the leisurely Stour, makes, as a valued picture in my possession proves to demonstration, an ideal subject for a modern artist. Its value is due to abruptness of contrast. At Bridgnorth from the Severn, and at Durham, the hills with their clusters of old roofs, rise more abruptly and to a greater height, are more rugged, not necessarily therefore more truly picturesque. At Durham, however, and at Bridgnorth, we are in country where hills are many; at Stoke by Nayland a commanding hill seems all the more commanding in that it is unlike anything in the neighbourhood. No wonder artists love this quiet riverside scene. Of that scene, apart from the hill and the ancient houses, the grand Perpendicular church is the conspicuous glory. It "ranks with the great churches of the Eastern Counties." These are Constable's words, and they may be trusted the more in that he was not merely a mighty artist in landscape, a native of these parts, and devotedly attached to his native county (which, indeed, might make for prejudice), but also, as his "Salisbury Cathedral" shows, thoroughly and

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appreciatively versed in ecclesiastical architecture.

To me, however, Gainsborough has greater charm than Constable, partly, perhaps, because of the extraordinary fascination of his portraits of persons. The reference here is not to the fashionable portrait painter of Bath, but to the later days wherein he limned the features of Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire (Heaven forbid that I should enter into the obvious pitfall of discussion which yawns for the unwary here), of Maria Linley and her brother (it is at Knole and a proud possession of Lord Sackville), of Mrs. Sheridan, of Mrs. Siddons, and of the Blue Boy. The model for the Blue Boy, I learn from Mr. Walter Armstrong's monograph, was the son of a wholesale ironmonger named Buttall in Greek Street, Soho. An excellent reproduction of the Mrs. Siddons, in the same monograph (Seeley 1894), lies under my eye now, and as I look at those wonderfully clean-cut and strong features, I can almost hear the painter saying, in his comic wrath, "Damn your nose, madam, there is no end to it." The story, retailed by Mr. Armstrong, makes one feel that Thomas Gainsborough was a man and a brother, and here at Sudbury it is a delight to follow the story of his early days. "He was the youngest of a family of nine, all brought up respectably and well by his father, a thrifty tradesman variously described as a milliner, a crape manufacturer and a shroud maker, who, no doubt, combined all these avocations and, said scandal, occasionally helped them out with a little quiet smuggling." The shroud-making industry was introduced by Gainsborough the elder, from Coventry, and he seems to have enjoyed a monopoly of it; "crape manufacture," as Mr. Armstrong explains, simply meant dealer in the woollen trade introduced with the Flemish weavers by Edward III into Sudbury. The house of Gainsborough's birth, once the "Black Horse," is gone. Stories of his odd but clever brothers and of his pranksome youth survive and give delight. John was an inventor in many kinds, all but a genius, never practical. Humphrey began as an inventor, but degenerated or rose to be a dissenting minister. Still, he invented a novel sundial, preserved in the British Museum, and a tide-mill for which the Society of Arts awarded him a prize of £50.

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Thomas, England's Gainsborough, went to the Sudbury Grammar School, cut his name in the woodwork like other boys, covered his books with sketches. Art was bubbling in him and would not be denied. His holidays were all spent in sketching, and it is related that he once took in his schoolmaster, who was also his uncle, with an exact imitation of his father's familiar request "Give Tom a holiday." At Sudbury it was, too, that he drew a lightning portrait, afterwards known as "Tom Peartree," of a peasant whom he saw gazing wistfully at his father's pear trees, which had been sadly lightened of their burden in the preceding days, and that portrait led at once to the identification of the thief who, confronted with it, confessed.

Thomas Gainsborough was not a thwarted genius. He was sent to London at fourteen to study under Hayman, an indifferent artist and a hard liver. From fourteen to eighteen he was loose about London, under a bad influence to start with, and that he sowed a fine lot of wild oats was no wonder. But at eighteen he returned to Sudbury and to landscape, and worked very hard at it. Here again let Mr. Armstrong be quoted, because his authority is real: "In his early years Gainsborough painted landscape with the minutest care. I know pictures dating probably from about 1748 which excel any Dutchman in the elaboration with which such things as the ruts in a country road, and the grasses beside it, or the gnarled trunk and rough bark of some ancient willow, are made out. In the National Gallery of Ireland we have one such picture. It represents just such a characteristic bit of Suffolk scenery as Wynants would have chosen had he carried his Batavian patience over the North Sea. Across a sand-pit in the foreground a deep country road winds away into the distance, where the roofs of a village suggest its objective. An old horse, a silvery sky with a fine *arabesque* of windy clouds, and a few old weather-stunted trees complete the picture. The execution is so elaborate that the surface is fused into one unbroken breadth of enamel. The *Great Cornard Wood*," (Suffolk of course) "in the National Gallery, cannot have been painted very much later than this. Its colour has the same gray coolness, its tone is as high, and its execution almost as elaborate." Gainsborough may or may not have been, as Reynolds said, the greatest living landscape painter. Reynolds probably said it to annoy Wilson, who was present. But Horace Walpole pronounced one of his pictures to be "in the style of Rubens, and by far the best landscape ever painted in England, and equal to the great masters." For us the truly interesting point is that this was said of Sudbury's greatest man, and that the valley of the Stour gave to this man, Thomas Gainsborough, all his early inspiration, all his early subjects in landscape. By the way, in stating that Thomas Gainsborough was Sudbury's greatest man I had forgotten Simon of Sudbury, who probably never uttered a coarse oath, nor drank too much wine, nor was, to quote Gainsborough of himself, "deeply read in petticoats." But let any reader who has persevered thus far lay his hand on his heart and reflect honestly whether he can say offhand who Simon of Sudbury was. Well, he was an archbishop of Canterbury who was hanged during Wat Tyler's rebellion. His fate leaves me, and probably the reader also, quite unmoved.

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Now let us hie, climbing a hill of 1 in 14, to Long Melford, and tea, and really fine architecture, for Long Melford is grand and, when one halts for any long time a-motoring, a good cause must needs be offered.

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Assuredly after the 3-1/4 miles to Long Melford, so called from the length of its street, have been accomplished the excuse needs no making. The village on one side of the green, the spreading trees of Melford Hall, itself a typical Elizabethan mansion, the exceptionally stately church and, last of all, the hill which lends dignity and variety to the whole, combined to make an ideal halting-place. By all means order tea at one of the village inns and, after it, make a thorough inspection of the church, for the interesting particulars concerning which acknowledgment is due to a monograph, undated and probably published for private circulation, apparently by the Rev.

R. Francis, some time rector. The author, whosoever he may have been, transcribes much from certain MSS. of 1688 onwards concerning the former state of the church, and from this we may borrow a little. "Much about the middle of the Parish of Melford, al's Long Melford, in Suffolk, upon an hill, most pleasant for air and prospect, there standeth a large and beautiful Church called Trinity Church, because dedicated to the Holy and undivided Trinity.... Part of it was an old erection, viz. the whole North Ile, the Steeple, a great part of the Porch and p'haps the East End of the South Ile. All the other parts are of a much later erection, as by the different sort of building, and the several inscriptions still extant round and about the said Church may most evidently appear.... The Middle Ile, from the Steeple, exclusive, to the East End of the Chancell, hath one entire advanced roof, in length 152 ft. and 6 inches, distant from the pavement beneath 41 feet and 6 inches, supported on each side with ten arched Pillars, separating the said Middle Ile from the 2 other Iles, which are in height 24 feet, and in length 135 feet and 4 inches.... The pious Benefactors concerned in the building the advanced Ile may be known, and let their memories never perish, by the inscriptions under the Battlements, without the Church, and by like inscriptions in the windows, undemolished, within the Church." Of this last sentence an antiquary no doubt could give an exact translation into modern English, but I must be content to follow the general sense, which is indeed pretty clear. The reference is to very curious inscriptions, in flints let into the walls, which, notwithstanding restoration and because it has been carried out with taste and reverence, still remain in part. The names of the benefactors follow, amongst them being many Martins, or Martyns, who are here mentioned to the exclusion of others partly because, when the church was restored in 1869, the Rev. C. J. Martyn, their patron, bore much of the expense and their clothmark, a token of the former greatness of Long Melford and its cause, is frequently mentioned; but most of all because the monograph, like many another treasure, has been lent to me out of sheer goodwill by Mr. Paulin Martin, of Abingdon, my neighbour, antiquary and healer of men. Long Melford "stood by clothing," as the saying went in the fifteenth century. So did its people, and this majestic Perpendicular church, built of flint and stone, is an abiding monument of their wealth and of their piety.

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The beautiful church suffered during the Reformation. Roger Martin, of that date, speaks of many ornaments in the past tense. "There was a goodly mount, made of one great Tree, and set up at the foot of the window there" (behind the High Altar), "carved very artificially, with *The Story of Christ's Passion*.... There was also in my Ile, called Jesus Ile, at the back of the Altar, a table with a crucifix on it, with the two thieves hanging, on every side one, which is in my house decayed, and the same I hope my heires will repaire, and restore again, one day." Other vanished ornaments good Roger enumerates, and then sundry ceremonies in the church and customary celebrations of the village, whereof some examples may be given.

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"Upon Palm Sunday, the Blessed Sacrament was carried in procession about the Church-yard, under a fair Canopy, borne by four Yeomen; the Procession coming to the Church Gate, went westward, and they with the Blessed Sacrament, went Eastward; and when the procession came against the door of Mr. Clopton's Ile" (the Cloptons were large benefactors), "they, with the Blessed Sacrament, and with a little bell and singing, approached at the East end of our Ladie's Chappell, at which time a Boy, with a thing in his hand, pointed to it, signifying a Prophet, as I think, sang, standing upon the Tyrret that is on the said Mr. Clopton's Ile doore, *Ecce Rex tuus venit*, &c.; and then all did kneel down, and then, rising up, went and met the Sacrament, and so then, went singing together, into the Church, and coming near the Porch, a Boy, or one of the Clerks, did cast over among the Boys flowers, and singing cakes, &c."

Some there be, doubtless, whose gorge will rise at this account of ancient usage in and about the church, but surely none can object to the next extract, pointing as it does to a feeling of real friendship between rich and poor.

"*Memorand.* On St. James's Even, there was bonfire, and a tub of ale, and bread then given to the poor, and, before my doore, there were made, three other bonfires, viz. on Midsummer Even, on the Even of St. Peter and St. Paul, when they had the like drinkings, and on St. Thomas's Even, on which, if it fell not on the fish day, they had some long pyes of mutton, and peasecods, set out upon boards, with the aforesaid quantity of bread, and ale; and, in all these bonfires, some of the friends and more civil poor neighbours were called in, and sat at the board, with my Grandfather, who had, at the lighting of the bonfires, wax tapers, with balls of wax, red and green, set up, all the breadth of the Hall, lighted then, and burning there, before the image of *St. John the Baptist*; and after they were put out, a watch candle was lighted, and set in the midst of the said Hall, upon the pavement, burning all night."

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A list of utensils, furniture, jewels, ornaments and relics follows that would make a collector's mouth water, but it may not all be quoted. Thirteen chalices there were, "the best Chalice, gilt," weighing 133-1/2 ounces. Amongst other objects were "a relique of the Pillar that our Saviour Christ was bound to," several examples of the Pax (a piece of metal with the picture of Christ on it, to be kissed by all after Mass, typical of the Kiss of Peace), several silver ships, many rings and jewels, gorgeous coats for "Our Lady," copes and vestments belonging to the Church and like articles in great number, but the list is of immense length. Celebrated in the church were many Cloptons and Martins, and "Sir William Cordell, Knt. of Melford Hall, Speaker of the House of Commons and Master of the Rolls, in the time of Philip and Mary, and Queen Elizabeth," who married Mary, the daughter of Richard Clopton, Esq., of Fore Hall. His epitaph contained the lines—

*Pauperibus largus, victum, vestemque ministrans
Insuper Hospitii condidit ille domum.*

Here, to avoid insult to those who have Latin, and to afford them an opportunity of laughing at me, while at the same time the unlearned may follow the meaning, let me attempt the rare venture of a translation into English Elegiacs:

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Good to the poor was Sir William, a giver of food and of raiment,
And of his own good will founded an Hospital home.

Of the foundation referred to a full account may be found in Sir William Cordell's will (A.D. 1580) recorded in extracts from the *Visitation of Suffolk*, edited by Joseph Jackson Howard, LL.D. (printed by S. Tymms, Lowestoft, 1867). It included a building, a warden, and twelve almsmen, and it was to be continued—for it had been founded in good Sir William's lifetime—after his death. It was, in effect, the kind of foundation which Anthony Trollope took and gave pleasure in describing; nor, as the long will shows plainly enough, was the benefaction made at his expense of leaving the testator's relations at all pinched for money. In fact, his widow, Dame Mary Cordell, in 1584, "being sikelye in body, and nevertheless of good and p'fecte remembrance," made a will in which she disposed of much property, devoting some of it to this very hospital, and some, almost as a matter of course, to Long Melford Church. Dame Mary was prescient. The will made in 1584 was proved in October 1585.

So thoroughly comfortable were the people of Long Melford in the days of old that the temptation to mention the fact that a "Long Melford" was once a name for a purse is irresistible, because the conjunction is so appropriate. The temptation ought, perhaps, to be resisted because, although the fact has been read and remembered, it appears to be unfamiliar to Suffolk natives, and the source of information cannot be traced. It has eluded fairly diligent search; but the fact has certainly been noticed since this book was undertaken. I can remember no more than that it was a purse of some peculiar make; and it would seem fairly safe to imply that it was of capacious dimensions. Still, as the inscriptions already mentioned show, those long purses were always laid under contribution for the adornment of the church which was Long Melford's pride, and among the most prosperous and the most generous benefactors of it were the Martins or Martyns. The first of them came from Dorsetshire to Melford and was buried there in 1438. How the family made its money the "clothmark" proves; and the *Visitation* shows how they spread over the county and made their mark in the country. Roger, who died in 1543, was a Bencher of Lincoln's Inn; Sir Roger, who died in 1573, had been Lord Mayor of London; Roger, born 1639, was created a baronet; daughters married into good families all over East Anglia. But it was a tradition of the family that all should be brought back to Long Melford for burial; and it was also a tradition to do something for the church. It was a tradition which lasted till 1851 at any rate, and it may very likely still be held in honour; for we read in "Murray" that there was, at that time, very large expenditure on the chantries chancel by Sir William Parker and the Rev. C. J. Martyn, the patron of the living. Sir William Parker, it may be added, was the owner of Melford Hall, which formerly belonged to the Cordells and, being Elizabethan, was no doubt built by the Sir William Cordell already named, who flourished in the reign of Elizabeth.

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At Cavendish, a few miles to the westward, we are at the original home of a family better known than the Cordells or the Martins, and of real note in history. "In the chancel of the Church was buried Chief Justice Sir John Cavendish, beheaded by Wat Tyler's mob. His younger son, John, and Esquire to Richard II is said to have slain this sturdy rebel." So "Murray," but the last statement, standing alone, is merely irritating. What is the sense of saying this, and no more, to a generation taught by painstaking historians to believe that Walworth, the Lord Mayor, struck Wat Tyler to the ground "where he was instantly dispatched by others of the King's attendants"? Of course young John Cavendish may have been one of these attendants; but in any case Walworth was the protagonist, and should have been mentioned at least. According to the just custom of Indian sport the credit belongs to him who gets in the first spear, and in the Highlands the sportsman who lays the stag low, not the gillie who grallochs him, possesses the honour of the day.

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The story of the Cavendish family shall not be told here, for it is long, and not free from controversial points, and, of course, they are still in the land and of far greater consequence now than they ever were when Cavendish was their chief home. The glory of the village has waned and theirs has waxed. Of both the next village, Clare, and of the family who gave it their name or took theirs from it, Ichabod may be written without reserve. The Earls of Clare flourished from the days of the Conquest to those of Bannockburn, where the last of the race lost his life, and during that period of nearly two hundred and fifty years they clearly held high sway in these parts of East Anglia. Their great seat was at Clare, in a castle long desecrated by a railway station, the castle itself being built in connection with one of those great and mysterious mounds, like that of Thetford, concerning which the ancients were far more willing than the moderns are to write with assurance. The names of several adjacent places, Stoke by Clare, for example, serve at once to show how wide was the area of the Clare influence and to raise the suspicion that the place was named after them and not they after the place. Not, perhaps, the greatest of them, but certainly the one whose memory has lasted longest, was "Richard, surnamed Strongbow, Earl of Strigul," who came to the assistance of Dermot Macmorrogh, King of Leinster, in 1172. Dermot, it may be remembered, had carried off the wife of a brother Prince, named Ororic of Breffny, who, with the assistance of the King of Connaught, Roderic, had invaded Leinster and had expelled Dermot. Dermot then laid his case before our Henry II, offering to hold his kingdom in vassalage for Henry, if help to recover it were forthcoming, and Henry, being busy in Guienne, but having an eye for the main chance, gave him letters patent authorizing subjects of the Crown of England to assist him in his efforts. At Bristol Dermot met Strongbow, and Hume, citing the

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not unduly truthful Giraldus Cambrensis as his authority, proceeds: "This nobleman, who was of the illustrious house of Clare, had impaired his fortune by expensive pleasures, and being ready for any desperate undertaking, he promised assistance to Dermot, on condition that he should espouse Eva, daughter of that Prince, and be declared heir to all his dominions." How Strongbow eventually conquered the Irish princes in one great battle, how Henry, jealous of Strongbow's power, crossed to Ireland and made a Royal progress, and how the island was not fully subdued until Elizabeth's time, are more or less matters of history, so far as the history of those days in Ireland can really be ascertained. But the most striking part of the passage quoted is, in these days, the simple confidence with which the historian speaks of "the illustrious family of Clare." How little that confidence would be justified now is plain to me from inquiries addressed in apparently artless curiosity to more than one highly cultivated man and woman about the time of writing. Macaulay's schoolboy, the omnipresent paragon of marvellous memory, would no doubt have known all about this famous family; but it flourished, and perished, so long ago that the "man on the road" is not likely to be hurt by a reminder of the associations properly belonging to that valley of the Stour which was beloved of Gainsborough and of Constable.

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On we go through Stoke by Clare, Ridgewell, and Tilbury-juxta-Clare (how these old place-names serve to stimulate historical curiosity!) to another valley, that of the Colne, full of memories of another family, bulking fully as large in the annals of England as the Clares, and lasting far longer. The valley of the Colne, which we follow on our return journey to Colchester, was the De Vere country. They were the Earls of Oxford of course, and in this case there is no affectation of confidence in the standard of average knowledge in the use of the words "of course." Rather are they employed in regret, for a good long stretch of my course might be accomplished at a comfortable canter (or "on my highest gear" over the open road, if this metaphor be preferred), by mentioning only a few of the great occasions between the Conquest and the eighteenth century in which this magnificent House played its part in shaping the destinies of England. Still, by way of kindly relief to the reader, Macaulay's sonorous passage summarizing the grandeur of the De Veres must needs be quoted. It was written by him as the first comment on the list of Lords Lieutenant, who "peremptorily refused to stoop to the odious service which was required of them" by James II, that is to say, the service of revising the Commission of the Peace with the view to retaining upon it only those gentlemen who were prepared to support the King's policy of packing a Parliament in 1687.

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"The noblest subject in England, and indeed, as Englishmen loved to say, the noblest subject in Europe, was Aubrey de Vere, twentieth and last of the old Earls of Oxford. He derived his title through an uninterrupted male descent, from a time when the families of Howard and Seymour were still obscure, when the Nevilles and the Percies enjoyed only a provincial celebrity, and when even the great name of Plantagenet had not yet been heard in England. One chief of the house of De Vere had held high command at Hastings; another had marched, with Godfrey and Tancred, over heaps of slaughtered Moslem, to the sepulchre of Christ. The first Earl of Oxford had been minister of Henry Beauclerc. The third Earl had been conspicuous among the Lords who extorted the Great Charter from John. The seventh Earl had fought bravely at Cressy and Poitiers. The thirteenth Earl had, through many vicissitudes of fortune, been chief of the party of the Red Rose, and had led the van on the decisive day of Bosworth. The seventeenth Earl had shone at the Court of Elizabeth, and had won for himself an honourable place among the early masters of English poetry. The nineteenth Earl had fallen in arms for the Protestant religion and for the liberties of Europe under the walls of Maestricht. His son Aubrey, in whom closed the longest and most illustrious line of nobles that England has seen, a man of loose morals, but of inoffensive temper and of courtly manners, was Lord Lieutenant of Essex and Colonel of the Blues. His nature was not factious; and his interest inclined him to avoid a rupture with the Court; for his estate was encumbered, and his military command lucrative. He was summoned to the Royal Closet; and an explicit declaration of his intentions was demanded from him. 'Sir,' answered the Earl of Oxford, 'I will stand by Your Majesty against all enemies to the last drop of my blood. But this is a matter of conscience and I cannot comply.' He was instantly deprived of his Lieutenancy and of his regiment."

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A parenthesis forces itself forward here. The line of the true De Veres, of the house that earned the motto, *Verò nil Verius*, from the Virgin Queen in recognition of its steadfast loyalty, of the family concerning whom it was said, "Let the name and dignity of De Vere stand so long as it pleaseth God," came to an absolute end in 1703. Yet the last century saw an Aubrey de Vere of distinguished family and of no mean distinction as a poet. It will probably occur to others, as it has occurred to me, to wonder whether the nineteenth-century poet De Vere was a descendant or a kinsman of the Elizabethan peer and poet. A rapid reference would seem to show that he may have been—the cautious phrase is used by one who does not aspire to be a genealogist. The first of the Irish De Veres was, it is true, the son of the first Sir Vere Hunt, baronet, and assumed the name of De Vere by Royal License in 1832. But the Irish De Veres have the same motto—*Verò nil Verius*—as the Essex De Veres of old; their crest is the boar of the Essex De Veres; the mullet of the Essex De Veres appears in their arms. Heaven forbid that I should venture into the thickets of genealogy, that I should attempt to conceal an absolute ignorance of heraldry. But surely, after all this, it may be assumed to be probably more than a happy coincidence that Aubrey Thomas De Vere, bearing the Christian name of him who came with the Conqueror and the surname of the Elizabethan poet, was a poet of exceptional sincerity and sweetness, albeit little known to "the general reader." No doubt the whole truth is known to genealogists and to students of heraldry; but a stranger to their mysteries is too well aware of the disputatious quality of their temper, and of the existence of doubts concerning the title to arms of this or that family, to assume that because crest and motto and arms are described and illustrated in Burke or in Debrett there is

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therefore any historical connection between the arms and those who bear them.

What the De Veres of Essex did for England and for Europe we have seen in some measure, and this penultimate part of our afternoon's drive takes us through the country in which they were really at home. Castle Hedingham, passed on the left a few miles south of Great Yeldham of the famous oak, was their principal seat. It had been the seat of a Saxon magnate before the Conqueror granted it and wide lands to his follower, Alberic De Vere. It was built on "an high hill," which, like most of the knolls in East Anglia, had probably felt the tramp of martial feet long before the beginning of authentic history. It was moated, and the moat was crossed by a bridge, still visible; the Norman keep, of extraordinary solidity and strength, still looks out, to use the words of White, the topographer of Eastern England, on "rural beauty of the quiet order, a beauty produced by centuries of planting and tillage." In many a neighbouring church, at Earl's Colne and Cole Eugaine, for example, but only for example, the mullet of the De Veres may be found shaped in enduring stone.

South of Castle Hedingham the wise man will turn some three or four miles out of his direct route, which runs through Halstead, to see the church of Little Maplestead, and will even make a halt when he is there, for good reason. The motorist will, perhaps almost must, be content with a passing glance at many a church rich in ancient brasses or in the carved bench heads for which the churches of East Anglia are celebrated; but he can hardly play the part of the Levite towards one of the very small number of Round Churches, similar in design and origin to the Temple Church, to be found in all the length and breadth of England. After this he will probably be best advised to wend his way to Colchester viâ Halstead, Earl's Colne, Fordham and Lexden. His road will follow the course of the Colne pretty closely all the way, and between Fordham and Lexden he will pass quite close to West Bergholt, which he saw as he went forth for his afternoon's drive. If, after travelling by road through so much of these two valleys of the Stour and the Colne he is not satisfied with this restful beauty of smiling and undulating country, if he does not feel some measure of interest when he knows that he has traversed the places which were familiar to Strongbow and Gainsborough, to Constable and to a splendid series of Earls of Oxford, then is he no true motorist, but rather the "road hog" before whom it is futile to cast pearls of any kind. Such "road hogs" are, in truth, few and far between. It is in the belief, based upon very wide experience, that the average motorist is interested in antiquities no less than in ascents, in scenery more than in sprockets, in castles at least equally with carburettors, that these attempts are made to save him from the labour of research.

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CHAPTER IX

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FROM COLCHESTER WESTWARDS—COGGESHALL, BRAINTREE, WITHAM, INGATESTONE, MARGARETTING, DANBURY HILL, MALDON, TIPTREE, MESSING, AND COLCHESTER

Coggeshall—Pleasant site occupied by Romans first and Cistercians later—Braintree—General Wynne as Cunctator—Braintree for motorists having daily work in London—The plan discussed—Middleton Hub makes journeys certain—Routes considered—Witham—Ingatestone—Scene of desolation in 1897—Ingatestone Hall the grange of a Nunnery—How it came to the Petre family—"Murray" shows malice—Courageous farmers—Margaretting—A church tower of wood—Danbury Hill and Camp—Theories concerning—The wolf hypothesis—Edward the Elder "puts a bridle on East Anglia"—Maldon fortified—Battle at Maldon—Tiptree and its jams—Strange crops—Mr. Mechi of *Profitable Farming*—Messing—*Quære* whether site of Boadicea's defeat—Mr. Jenkins describes position—Compare Jenkins, Merivale and Tacitus—Merivale fanciful—Tacitus merely a literary gentleman at Rome—Battle may have been anywhere, but amusing to localize here—The fight described—Heckford Bridge—Lovely country and bad roads—Good run to Colchester.

It has, be it hoped, been made sufficiently clear that Colchester and its immediate environs, Lexden and the Roman river for example, will amply repay many mornings or afternoons spent away from the car, or with the car used as an auxiliary only; and so the next drive suggested is one of some sixty miles only, leaving a morning free. It is a circuitous drive like the last, beginning and ending at the inn yard at Colchester. Our first objective is Coggeshall, by way of Marks Tey, which we reach by taking the left fork at Lexden. It is a straight road and good, but Marks Tey, said to mean Mark's enclosure, does not tempt a halt by its appearance. It is, in fact, a commonplace village, noteworthy only for fine timber in the vicinity. Coggeshall would be a prettier village if it were less prosperous, but it possesses ancient interest as well as some modern prosperity, and it has not lacked its *vates sacer* in the shape of the Rev. E. L. Cutts, who once discoursed upon it to the Essex Archæological Society. Here, where a farmhouse now stands, was a Cistercian Abbey reached, as the farmhouse is now, by a thirteenth-century brick bridge across the Blackwater. At the top of a hill is a little and very ancient chapel, once desecrated as a barn, but restored during the last century to sacred uses. Nor were the monks the first men possessing discernment enough to see the amenities of Coggeshall as a place of settlement. Situate as it was on the high road between Camulodunum and Verulamium, otherwise

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Colchester and St. Albans, it was the settlement of Romans, *post* Claudian Romans no doubt, of whom the customary traces have been found in sufficient abundance to leave no doubt of permanent occupation. In truth, with its river, its grove and its hill, Coggeshall is still so pleasant a place that its early occupation occasions no surprise.

On we go to Braintree, accomplishing a rise of all but a hundred feet in a couple of miles, a considerable ascent for Essex. I climbed this hill, or rather my car did, at least a dozen times during my stay at Colchester, for it happened that General Wynne, upon whom, it may be remembered, the duty of resisting the invader fell, made the vicinity of Braintree his headquarters. Indeed, following the classical example of Fabius, the gentleman who *cunctando restituit rem*, he abode so long in the neighbourhood of Braintree that he was laughingly described as the Marquis of Braintree. His tactics were no doubt correct, for his army held a strong line in the face of a superior force, and, if his inaction made the manoeuvres somewhat dull and sterile of incident, he might perhaps be heard to plead that manoeuvres are not carried on solely for purposes of entertainment. Be that as it may, I went to Braintree very often, and found it always wearing an appearance of respectable and middle-aged prosperity. No building in it made any very definite impression on the memory, but the air of place and people seemed to me to be one of vigorous contentment, a result due very likely to the considerable elevation at which the town stands, relatively to the surrounding country. It is a very old town, indeed it is the Raines of Domesday, and it is not too densely populated. It has a fair provision of apparently comfortable houses, well provided with gardens and the like appurtenances; it is fairly accessible from London by rail, and there are several good routes from it to London by road. On the whole it is somewhat strange that, in days of travelling facilities increased beyond the wildest dreams of our forefathers, more persons have not followed the example of those bygone Bishops of London who had in Braintree a palace which has long vanished.

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Let us pause for a minute or two to follow the roads by which one living in Braintree might travel by car to London, every day if need be, remembering that this mode of living and travelling up and down to business is working a gradual revolution in the social habits of Englishmen. That revolution will cease to be gradual and will become rapid when the danger of a burst or punctured tire becomes, as it surely will become soon, a thing of the past. It has become more rapid of quite recent years owing to the marked increase of the trustworthiness of cars. And here, even at the risk of giving a free advertisement, nothing shall deter me from specific recommendation of a device which unquestionably has solved the tire problem, if the users of motor-cars for ordinary purposes, that is to say the persons who are content with thirty miles an hour or so, had but the sense to adopt it generally. That device is the Middleton Pneumatic Hub, in which I have no interest direct or indirect, the owners of which are merely acquaintances, no more. I have tried it, and sundry other mechanical devices over very rough roads. Of it alone among substitutes is the statement possible that, if one had not known beforehand, the absence of pneumatic tires would not have been noticed. It passed through a four-thousand-mile club trial at an expense of ten shillings and sixpence in repairs. The judges made also sundry observations, more or less critical, of no interest to me because I had made my own trial on the question of comfort, and my impressions were clear. Finally I write thus boldly because I know the difficulties which the Middleton Hub has to fight to be entirely distinct from its structure or from any defects which it may possess. So long as persons who sell motor-cars are interested in pneumatic tires, or persons who sell the latter are possessed of substantial influence over those who sell or make the former, it is simply idle to hope that the seller of a car will always give disinterested advice to the buyer who, in these still infant days of motoring, is more often than not a mere novice, if even that. Again let me say, *Honi soit qui mal y pense*; the advice to adopt the Middleton Hub and to acquire a mind free from apprehension of puncture or burst, without any loss of personal comfort, is given because it is needed. An alternative is the Stepney wheel, which is capable of being adjusted in a very short time in case of tire trouble. Of this I cannot speak from personal trial, but amateur friends testify that it adds immensely to the traveller's peace of mind. One thing, at least, is certain. He who trusts to pneumatic tires when he is on an important journey must always allow a margin of time unless he is to be liable to sudden disappointment and, perhaps, to grave inconvenience and loss of time.

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Let us look then for the routes open to our hypothetical slave of London in the day who hates trains and would fain breathe country air at night. Ten miles and a quarter will take him to Bishop's Stortford and to the easternmost of the great trunk roads out of London, cutting through part of Herts, of which the Chief Constable of Hertfordshire spoke with so much feeling in his evidence before the Royal Commission. There he will be 3-3/4 miles from Marble Arch via Sawbridgeworth, Harlow, Epping, Loughton, and Woodford Green, and 4-1/2 miles less from Shoreditch, and he will have but a few miles to travel in Herts. That, in the present state of the law, is a consideration, for the account given by Colonel Daniell of his picketed zone is rather alarming. It goes a long way indeed to explain that apparent instinct of motorists which leads them to avoid Hertfordshire and its magnificent roads as much as possible, even when they are northward bound. Another, and the more obvious route is along the great high-road through Chelmsford, which is about the same distance; but it has the disadvantage of entering London through Romford, Ilford, Stratford, and Whitechapel, and the last ten miles from Ilford to Marble Arch, or 3-1/2 miles less if the City be the destination, are unpleasant and difficult. It would be a better plan to turn off at Shenfield, ten miles nearer to London than Chelmsford, to the right and to proceed via Bentley and Chigwell, or even to turn off at Chelmsford and go on via Chipping Ongar and Epping. Both routes are a little longer, but both are through exquisite scenery, and both involve an easier access to the heart of London.

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From Braintree on our present expedition we proceed to Witham, a long and straggling place, half village and half town, which was fortified, and perhaps saw fighting, in the days of Edward the Elder, that is to say early in the tenth century, and heard the crackling of musketry during the last Essex manœuvres. Witham, however, strikes me as a place of no special interest, but the drive should most certainly be extended to Ingatestone. Nearly ten years have passed since my first visit to Ingatestone, which needless to say was not made in a motor-car, and I have traversed its high-road many a time since. It charmed me the first time I saw it, its charm still survives for me, and, never having seen it in pre-railway days, I am totally at a loss to understand what the author of "Murray" can mean by the sentence "The town is small, and has been much injured by the railway." Improved, in the sense of beautified, by a railway no town could ever be expected to be. Still Ingatestone and its surrounding district made a very favourable impression on me, and that in circumstances which produced a very high opinion of the English courage of the inhabitants of the district.

The occasion was, I venture to think, really interesting, even pathetic, and for that reason, as well as because it gave me an opportunity of seeing more than the traveller can see in the ordinary way, the experience gained in a day shall be narrated. After all, to arouse healthy interest should be the first aim of every sensible writer, since only thus can he hope to secure attention, and people are, or may be, quite as interesting as places. It may be remembered generally, it is certainly not likely to be forgotten at Ingatestone for many a long year, that a day or two after the Diamond Jubilee celebrations of 1897 a veritable tornado swept across Essex, working havoc to which this happy country is usually a complete stranger. In my capacity of correspondent to a great newspaper I was sent to describe the path of the storm, in the centre of which Ingatestone lay, with such fidelity as I might be able to compass. Sheer good fortune caused me to travel in the same carriage with Lord Petre on the Great Eastern Railway, and the kindly nature of this landowner, who was himself travelling to Ingatestone, with the object of surveying the details of a disaster affecting him personally in a serious manner, enabled me to see Ingatestone and its surroundings in a very intimate way without any preliminary trouble. First we went to the agent's house. It was a dream of ancient architecture and of splendid trees. One could almost have guessed from the high walls, the fish-ponds, and a cool green walk shaded by dense green trees, limes unless memory plays a trick, that this had been once the home of an ecclesiastical community. To learn that the walk under the close limes, if limes they indeed were, was known as the Nun's Walk, was no surprise. The sequestered character of the whole quite prepared the mind for the intelligence that Ingatestone Hall occupied the site of a subsidiary establishment attached to the greater nunnery of Barking, and it was clear that much of its original environment remained. This manor, with many others, was acquired at the Dissolution by Sir William Petre, the father of the first Lord Petre, and the old grange of the nuns, with very slight changes to all appearance, remained the seat of the great Roman Catholic family until they migrated to Thorndon Hall, near Brentwood, which, apart from its view and its contents, does not sound nearly so attractive as Ingatestone. "Murray," by the way, has a passage in this connection which, by dint of its tone, raises more than a suspicion of the Roman hand of the late Mr. Augustus Hare. In reference to the church we read: "Between the chancel and the south chapel is the monument of the well-known Sir William Petre (the father of the first Lord Petre) who, 'made of the willow and not of the oak,' managed to accommodate his loyalty and his religion to the various changes under Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary and Elizabeth." This, it is suggested, was a needlessly spiteful reference to the direct ancestor of the Roman Catholic peer who at that time (1875) was Domestic Prelate at the Vatican; and it may well be that uncalled-for malice of this kind has had the effect of making owners of historic houses less willing than they might have been to receive and to aid those upon whom the duty of writing about places is cast in these later days.

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There was work to be done on the day of my visit more melancholy than that of inspecting beautiful houses, more serious than that of speculating upon the identity and lamenting the ill-nature of a bygone writer of guide-books. Forth we fared—drawn by a cob whose nose had been scarred to a depth of half an inch by a hailstone during the tornado—to inspect the desolation. Here I am going for the first time in my life to quote some of my own words, words which I am proud to believe were not without influence in bringing some substantial measure of aid to a stricken country-side. "All down the street at Ingatestone the windows on one side were smashed to atoms, and the only cheerful men were the glaziers. The backs of the houses on the other side were in like condition. An odour, familiar enough later in the year, when the hedges are clipped, pervaded the air. It was the scent of green leaves of elm and hawthorn shrivelling in the sun. Soon we reached a great elm uprooted, and another broken off sharp in the middle. The elms, with their surface roots, had suffered most. But they were not alone, for oaks and ash trees had fallen also. From the trees that were not overthrown hung here, there, and everywhere, great boughs with their tough fibres twisted like straw ropes at the point of fracture, and repeatedly one came across cases in which immemorial elms had been hurled across the road and had blocked it until it was cleared. Others that had survived were often stripped of leaves by the hail as if it had been mid-winter and the scorching sun of June had not been beating on our heads. It was a sickening sight to those who love woodland beauties. But soon the wreck of trees became of no account, for we were nearing the centre of the storm area. Hitherto broken windows and chipped tiles had saluted the eye, though it was noticeable that slates had, for the most part, escaped damage. Now we reached the house of Mr. Milbank, or what was once his house ... the tiled roof looked as if it were that of a house which had been subjected to a heavy fire of musketry for several hours; and this was the story all along our long drive." So, I remember, we went on noting shattered roofs, and chimneys collapsed, seeing bare earth where the oats had

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waved in green promise, fields which had contained crops of mangels, turnips, and potatoes, converted into an expanse of sun-baked mud. We fared from farm to farm, meeting farmer after farmer who had lost his all, after years of patient struggling against depression, and was settling down with true English pluck to make the best of the situation and to begin life again.

All that country smiles again now, although that terrible storm has left an indelible scar on its fair face, or rather a scar which will not be quite healed over for a hundred years to come. But, without claiming to be more full of sympathy than any other man, I protest that the memory of that sad day makes me eager now to pass through Ingatestone as often as may be, that because of it the beautifully timbered country seems to me perhaps more attractive than it really is, and that I never see it without an eager hope that the farmers encountered in June, 1897, saddened by disaster but dauntless in the resolve to go on fighting against fate, have had, so many of them as survive, the reward of renewed prosperity.

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We ought to have stopped at Margaretting on our way to Ingatestone, with the special object of inspecting the church, with its tower and spire composed entirely of timber, the kind of structure which can be seen in East Anglia only; but after all our next objective after Ingatestone is Maldon, and the best way of reaching it is to go back on our own wheelmarks so far as Margaretting, halt there for a few minutes, and then turn to the right for Galleywood Common and Maldon. On this piece of road the motorist will find a variation of levels and a frequent stiffness of gradients which will disabuse his mind for ever of the notion that Essex is a flat county. Entering Galleywood Common he is just over the 200 feet contour; towering above him to the right will be West Manningfield, which actually over-tops the 300 feet contour. Between Sandon and Danbury he will be down as low as 75 feet, and at Danbury he will be up again almost as high as 350 feet. The hill itself is 380 feet, and has a camp at the top, commonly called Danish. Danish in one sense it probably was. That is to say the Danes, who had a sagacious eye for military positions and a particular predilection for heights from which the sea was visible, in all probability made use of it. They came by sea, they might have to flee by their boats, and in some other parts of our islands, in Carnarvonshire for example, one can identify cases where they had and used one inland camp on an eminence commanding a wide prospect and much coastline, and another close to the coast. Danbury commands such a prospect eastward, westward and northward, and it is no less pleasing to the peaceful pilgrim than it may have been valuable to the fierce freebooter.

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Who made these camps on eminences all over the country, or made the eminences themselves when nature had not provided them, is a question men grow more and more shy in answering. Time was when, drawing inferences from outline only, they said confidently this or that camp was British, Roman, Saxon, or Danish. Now the tendency is to go farther back still into prehistoric times, and even to doubt whether the origin of these camps is military at all. Learned men, who somehow or other contrive to excite respect and admiration without compelling conviction, argue that many, perhaps most, of the huge earthworks with which the face of England and Wales is studded, were piled up by primeval man as a defence against the wild beasts, and most of all against the ravening wolves which overran the land and threatened his flocks and herds. To the unlearned it appears that a mound without a crowning palisade would have been quite ineffectual against the nimble wolves, and that a palisade without the mound would have been quite as effectual as mound and palisade. These are amusing speculations, but they cannot reach a certain conclusion. What is beyond doubt is that, if an invading foe, Roman, Saxon, or Dane, found these works ready to his hand, he would use them for military purposes. If the compilers of *Domesday Book* called Danbury Hill Danengeberia it was because the natives, as they doubtless called them, used this title, having in mind the last warriors who had availed themselves of the commanding position. Native memory, indeed, had not to tax itself severely in this case, nor to go back very far. The average man, not the historian steeped in the study of a period, is apt to allow his memories of histories read to settle down on broad and accurate lines. For him, as for me, until this book suggested refreshment of memory, Alfred was the man who conquered the Danes and secured the freedom of Saxon England. The fact that they made head again in the time of his son Edward the Elder, that they were indeed never expelled from East Anglia by Alfred, had passed out of memory. Edward succeeded to the throne, such as it was, in 901 only—dates are repellent to eye and mind, but it is worth while to remember how shortly before the Conquest this was—and Edward spent a good deal of his time in "bridling" the Danes of East Anglia, who had made common cause with his rival Ethelwald. Edward, indeed, "conducted his forces into East Anglia and retaliated the injuries which the inhabitants had committed by spreading the like devastation among them. Satiated with revenge and loaded with booty, he gave the order to retire." In fact his orders were disobeyed by his Kentish followers, who settled themselves at Bury and were attacked and defeated by the Danes. But in this battle Ethelwald, Edward's Saxon cousin and rival, was killed, so the Danish victory was Pyrrhic, for Ethelwald's cause was theirs. For all the rest of his reign of twenty-four years Edward continued to fight the Danes. It was not a long period, then, over which the "natives" had to look back, when in 1080 or thereabouts, they gave evidence before the Royal Commissioners, so to speak, who compiled *Domesday Book*, and probably most of those "natives" were Danes themselves.

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Our next point is Maldon, situate at the inmost end of the estuary of the Blackwater, and itself standing on a hill. It is a sleepy little place now, but it has played no small part in the story of England. It has been stated that Edward the Elder merely made it his head-quarters while he superintended the fortification of Witham, but it is much more likely, as stated by Hume, that it was one of the towns which he fortified with a view to making the country secure. Seven of the others—Hume takes the list from the Saxon Chronicle—were outside our purview; Maldon and

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Colchester were selected for putting a bridle on East Anglia. And Maldon was well chosen. It was the place where Edward himself fought and won a signal battle. It was also the place where the Northmen landed again, in the days of Ethelred the Unready, "and having defeated and slain at Maldon Brithnot, Duke of that county, (Essex), who ventured with a small force to attack them, they spread their devastations over all the neighbouring province." In fact it was precisely the place open to raiders from over sea, and therefore the right place to fortify against them also.

Here, crossing at Heybridge, we may say good-bye to history for a while and devote ourselves to things more mundane. At Heybridge we are about as near the sea-level as we can be. In two miles and a half we climb two hundred feet or more, and then we follow the top of a ridge for four miles to Tiptree. For me, before the Essex manoeuvres, Tiptree simply spelled "jam" in seven letters, none of them appearing in that familiar word. To be plain, Tiptree jam is far better than any "home-made" comestible of the kind it has been my fortune to encounter, because it has all the purity of the domestic product, while it is made with all care and knowledge that science and experience can furnish. A cook or a careful housewife has many distractions of puddings, entrées, sauces, savouries, and what you will. Tiptree devotes all its energy and intelligence to jam, and the result is a divine confection, pure ambrosia. Tiptree will not thank me for this advertisement because the name of Tiptree is established. To many it will appear as superfluous to praise the jams of Tiptree as it would be to state that two and two make four, or that '47 port is excellently good. Still, experience has shown the existence of a benighted but considerable minority who will infallibly be grateful for the knowledge, if they use it. If they do not, so much the worse for them. Without doubt the fame of the Tiptree jams must involve prosperity also, and the district, with its trim orchards, a sea of bloom in late spring and loaded with rosy fruit in the autumn, is full of encouragement to one who believes that where land is not made to pay something is rotten in the state. It is a pretty sight too, and one recalling sundry speeches of the late Mr. Gladstone which were not taken very seriously when they were uttered. Other crops you will find hereabouts—it was at Tiptree, as told elsewhere, that the military balloon came down in the middle of a crop of bird-seed—and the whole district gives one the impression of being in the hands of persons, courageous and competent, who refuse to meet the difficulties of farming with mere lamentation but, like the farmers of Ingatestone at the time of the 1897 disaster, are resolved to make the best of things.

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That spirit is traditional at Tiptree. Was it not there that the great Mr. Mechi, who flourished in the middle of the last century, produced wondrous results by plentiful use of liquid manure, and proved the profitable quality of beans in such fashion as to astonish his contemporaries? To men of his quality, who made two blades of grass grow where but one grew before, I for one insist upon giving all praise and honour, and, when one thinks upon their good work, there is a disposition to feel that, in its proper place, a trim hedge is not without its attraction, what though it be not nearly so beautiful as one that is a straggling thicket of hawthorn, honeysuckle and wild rose. But a doubting afterthought rises. Mr. Mechi farmed from 1840 to 1870, perhaps longer. His *Profitable Farming*, with its striking figures, was published during that period, and those were piping times for agriculture. Could he have shown accounts even half or a quarter as good for the thirty years from 1875 to 1905?

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We have reached Tiptree in imagination from Maldon, and there is no difficulty in doing so by road from the same place. As a matter of fact, my first visit to Tiptree was made from Braintree, whither a morning expedition had been taken to see if General Wynne was at his accustomed post, and the *ignis fatuus* which lured me and a companion in that direction was the balloon, seen in the air from a long distance, which we found afterwards in the bird-seed field. (In passing, as the officer in the car of the balloon had seen nothing at all of the troops shrouded from his view, the inference that balloons are of precious little use in a wooded country would seem to be fairly obvious.) Leaving the balloon to its fate—although the officer would have liked to commandeer our car for the transport of his mass of collapsed silk—we proceeded by way of Messing to Heckford Bridge. Of these the first-named has been suggested by a learned antiquary, the Reverend H. Jenkins, as a possible site for the stark battle in which Suetonius wiped the army of Boadicea out of existence and avenged the massacre of Camulodunum: "Whoever visits the camp at Haynes Green, near the village of Messing, will be struck with the resemblance it bears to the position taken up by Suetonius. Two large woods, Pod's Wood and Layer Marney Wood, seem to form the narrow gorge in front of the camp which Tacitus mentions." Merivale, who says that the speculations of Mr. Jenkins were useful to him, although he could not go all the way with them, describes the position of Suetonius thus: "In a valley between undulating hills, with woods in the rear, and the ramparts of the British oppidum" (Lexden) "not far perhaps on his right, he had every advantage for marshalling his slender forces.... Ten thousand resolute men drew their swords for the Roman Empire in Britain. The natives, many times their number, spread far and wide over the plain; but they could assault the narrow front of the Romans with only few battalions at once, and their wagons, which conveyed their accumulated booty and bore their wives and children, thronged the rear, and cut off almost the possibility of retreat."

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Now there is no doubt that places become manifold more interesting if one can fill the scene, so to speak, with action and actors of long ago. Westminster Hall would be majestic if it had no associations, but few men enter it for the first time without recalling the trial of Charles the First. A well-known tract near Brussels would attract no pilgrims if the freedom of Europe had not been won on its fields. The case is the same with Messing. If there be cause for saluting it as the place where Briton and Roman met in a conflict to the death every fold in the ground stirs the imagination. But when an antiquary talks of two large woods as seeming to form a narrow gorge, and a clerical historian writes of a "valley between undulating hills," of a wood in the rear, of a

plain in front over which the natives "spread far and wide," and locates the wagons in the rear, only one course is open to me. It is to forget the six and twenty years which have passed since last I faced the "small but well-armed tribe" of the examiners, during which there has been neither occasion nor desire to read Latin prose works, to ignore the terrors of the historic present and of what I believe used to be called *oratio obliqua*, and to refer to Tacitus, upon whom both these clerical gentlemen relied for information. One sentence disposes of the question of position. Tacitus tells us that Suetonius had ten thousand armed men when he made up his mind to give battle, "and he picks a place with narrow jaws and closed in by a wood at the rear, well assured that there was no part of the enemy save in the front, and that the plain was open, without fear of ambushes." There is nothing to suggest that the sides of the defile were wooded, as Mr. Jenkins thought they might have been, or that there was any wood at all except in the rear. Indeed, the probability is the other way. Still less is there any word to explain why Dean Merivale invented "a valley between undulating hills." Indeed, the description of the defile by the word *fauces* (which has been translated literally) conveys a sharper and more rugged idea than our word "valley," which, of course, comes directly from *vallis* and carries the same meaning. In fact, the "gorge" of Mr. Jenkins is the better translation, and undulating hills would have given Boadicea a chance of taking Suetonius in flank. The wagons apparently were drawn up in a crescent behind the British so that their occupants might see the fight.

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That is all concerning the position, and it is really mere guess-work on the part of Dean Merivale to suggest that the great battle was fought anywhere near Colchester. All we know is that Suetonius determined to leave London to its fate, and St. Albans also, and that Merivale thought "the situation of Camulodunum, enclosed in its old British lines, and backed by the sea, would offer him a secure retreat where he might defy attack and await reinforcements; and the insurgents, after their recent triumphs, had abandoned their first conquests to wreak their fury on other seats of Roman civilization. While, therefore, the Iceni sacked and burnt first Verulamium (St. Albans) and then London Suetonius made, as I conceive, a flank march toward Camulodunum, and kept ahead of their pursuit, till he could choose his own position to await their attack." All this is pure fancy. All we know for certain is that Suetonius left London, then not a *colonia* but already a great centre of commerce and business, and St. Albans to their fate. There is not a particle of evidence whither he went; and there was less reason to go to Camulodunum than to any place; for it had recently been sacked by the Iceni under Boadicea, and resistance had been hopeless because the colonists had taken no steps in the way of preparing defences. The "old British lines" of Camulodunum had seemed to the veteran colonists of so little use when they were attacked that they made their only stand, and that to no avail, in the Temple of Claudius. In fact there is no evidence to show which way Suetonius marched, or where the defile was, with the wood in rear, in which he induced Boadicea to attack him. Tacitus most likely did not know himself. He was not present. He was merely a Roman gentleman and an ex-official, of literary proclivities, writing a picturesque military history, partly from hearsay, partly from official records. He probably knew very little of the geography of Britain—not a very important province, be it remembered—and his desire, presumably, was to interest Roman readers and to give gratification to great men whom he liked, or from whom he might look for favour. He described the military position and showed Suetonius in the character of a capable general. To have done more, to have gone into geographical detail, would have puzzled his readers as English readers might be puzzled to-day by detailed allusions to unheard-of places in an unfamiliar part of the globe.

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So there is no limit to the number of places—a gorge, with a wood behind and an open plain in front—capable of being accepted as the field of this particular battle. It may have been anywhere in southern England. Still if, like the Trojans when they were hoodwinked by the Greeks into opening the gates of Troy too soon, men would like to localize the field of battle somewhere, so that they may conjure up the scene anew, there is no reason in life why they should not amuse themselves thus at Messing. They can look at the camp at Haynes Green and conjure up in imagination the fourteenth legion in close ranks in the centre, with the cavalry massed on either flank. They can think they hear the general heartening them for the combat and telling them not to mind the yells of the savages—for that is what a high-sounding Latin paragraph comes to in effect. They can see in fancy Boadicea making the circuit of her warriors in a chariot, her outraged daughters in front of her, inciting her hearers to frenzy. They can gaze in imagination on the Neronian legionaries when, having exhausted their javelins on the attacking mobs ("battalions," which Merivale uses, is far too orderly a word), they charged the Britons *en masse*, and the cavalry joining them at the gallop with out-stretched lances. They can imagine the tangle of wagons, warriors, women and children into which the Roman soldiers plunged, sparing no living thing. *Clara et antiquis victoriis par eâ die laus parta*, says Tacitus. "The glory of that day was quite like the old victories. Men say that rather less than eighty thousand Britons fell as against four hundred soldiers killed and not many more wounded." They can believe that boast of a military historian who was away at Rome, if they like; and there is really no harm in their fancying that all this happened at Messing if they please. To do so will make Messing interesting, and nobody will ever be able to locate the battle anywhere else with any more certainty.

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During the mimic warfare of a few years ago, as has been stated, I travelled from Tiptree to Messing on a Lanchester, and from Messing to Heckford Bridge. My recollection is of a pretty country, with many little ups and downs, of rich orchards, of oaks overshadowing the roads, and of green acorns which the soldiery seemed to enjoy, of abundant orchards and, last but not least, of abominable roads. But let me not be too hard on the roads. They were equal, no doubt, as byways go, to "the ordinary traffic of the district"; they were subjected to an extraordinary strain by long trains of transport wagons, which encumbered my course in such a manner as to make

me full of sympathy now for the Britons who fell among their own wagons under Roman sword and spear. Even among those endless vehicles one could not fail to observe the beauty of spreading trees and innumerable variations of level, especially at Heckford Bridge. Somewhere thereabouts it was, I remember, that a privileged motor-car came upon companies of invaders and of defenders, within two hundred yards of one another, and each totally ignorant of the propinquity of the other. Bored as the manœuvring troops were—for men and officers will be bored by continuous marching during which they have not the slightest idea what is going on—this ignorance was not their fault. Most of the fields were out of bounds, and although military imagination might go so far as to imagine scouts—it imagined one hundred thousand men in support of General Wynne that day—it can hardly supply the warnings which those imaginary scouts would give if they were real. But the most cogent reason of this blind manœuvring was to be found in the rapid variations of contour, the patulous trees, and the abundant leafage. This gave to the scenery singular charm, even while it made the roads such as the merely rushing motorist would eschew. Not only were they narrow and exceeding crooked, they were also very wet and greasy, so that a moderate pace would have been compulsory in any circumstances. Still, if any rational motorists will take this little drive in a leisurely way, they will agree, as they bowl along the few miles of good high-road between Heckford Bridge and Colchester, that it is exceeding pleasant and well worthy to be taken.

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CHAPTER IX—(*continued*)

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COLCHESTER TO THE EXTRAORDINARY "DENE-HOLES" AT GRAYS, ESSEX

Early rising a mistake—Fine weather and misty mornings—Bound for Grays, near Tilbury—To Chelmsford—Great Baddow and Clare College, Cambridge—Galleywood Common—A wide prospect—Billericay—Origin of name an enigma—Arthur Young on the country and roads—Same roads to-day—Effect of heavy motors—A plea for overhanging trees—Horndon on the Hill—Langdon Hill a fine view—Arthur Young rhapsodizes—Defoe at Chadwell—Little Thurrock—Hangman's Wood or Hairyman's Wood?—If the latter, possible connection with Peter the Wild Man—His story—Defoe's interest in him—The "Dene-holes"—An antiquary who gave no help—Enigmas not solved by designatory titles—The shafts—The groups of chambers—Dimensions—Uniformity of shape—Groups all separate—Absence of Orientation—Known to Camden—Neglected till 1884 and 1887, then again—No suggestive remains found—Cannot be chalk wells—Hardly flint mines as at Brandon—Legend of "King Cunobelin's Gold Mines"—Conceivably granaries—Not very likely—Why not refuges from the Danes, small at first and enlarged later?—Harmless speculation at any rate—Suggestion for return to Colchester—To Clacton by motor-boat, thence by train—Take glance at Burnham on Crouch—Quaint and hospitable.

Now doubts arise, and I hover between two opinions. Dinner and rest are supposed to have intervened before we carry on our little tour or series of tours. That is a small thing to demand. A playwright thinks nothing of an interval of years between two acts. The difficulty is that our imaginary tour of to-day is one of fully one hundred miles, and is much more likely to stretch out into one hundred and twenty, for few motorists will take the advice, honestly given, to retrace their wheelmarks for some fifty miles. That, really, is not half so bad as it sounds, for the eye of the most practised motorist does not observe so quickly while passing in one direction that nothing remains to be noticed about the same objects when passed from another direction. Still there are at least a hundred miles to go, some of them over familiar roads about which no further observations are necessary, to see a sight of mysterious interest which has, to all appearances, not obtained a tenth of the notice it richly deserves. Shall we, then, rise early in the morning, so that we may have leisure to proceed quietly and to enjoy "the clear morning air"? The suggestion is declined without thanks by the wise woman or man. The pleasures of early-rising and of the cool morning air are a fond delusion of the ancients; just as the idea that it is virtuous to get up early belongs to a state of opinion in which actions were believed to be virtuous if they were decidedly unpleasant. Now that this state of opinion has vanished the one consolation of rising early has disappeared also. Early-rising, especially in hotels, is a hollow fraud. It means reluctant relinquishment of the comfort of bed, futile attempts to eat breakfast served by sulky and half-awakened waiters, at a time when the body is not ready for that breakfast. Men quarry their food and crush it at these ghastly hours, but they do not really feed, and they are none the better for their effort so to do. Motoring loses half its joy when it is done at the cost of sleep, for it certainly may be held truth with a nameless poet, who sung that he had tried all the pleasures of this world,

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And Love it was the best of them,
But Sleep worth all the rest of them.

Besides, even when the glass is set fair, and the day proper is going to be all that the heart can desire, the cool, clear, and beautiful air of the morning by no means always comes up to expectation. The prelude to a really fine day is very often a dense mist, sure forerunner of heat,

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from dawn until seven or eight o'clock; and in a dense mist no man can travel at a reasonable pace or with any pleasure at all. Moreover, the days when one gets up early for pleasure, especially in August, September, and October, are precisely the days on which the tricky spirit of the mist chooses to make herself manifest.

Our destination is Grays, a squalid little town near Tilbury, on the estuary of the Thames, to which no sane person would think of going on pleasure for its own sake. There is a ferry from Tilbury across the Thames estuary, forgotten when I wrote earlier of the isolation of East Anglia, but little used by motorists. Grays is about fifty miles off by our route, which seems the best, and it will be time enough to explain why Grays has been chosen when we foregather round the luncheon table there. Better still, for although I secured a good luncheon in a house of public entertainment at Grays once the circumstances were exceptional, will it be to take a well-stocked luncheon basket and to lunch, not at Grays, but at Hangman's Wood, a mile or two to the east of Grays. We will not start before 9.30 a.m. and it will be bad luck indeed if we cannot reach it by 1.30 p.m. It is to be feared, however, that there may be some difficulty in inducing intelligent members of the party to leave Hangman's Wood so early as 3.30. So, having roused curiosity in the manner familiar to writers of serial stories, that is to say by breaking off at a critical moment, let us proceed in a leisurely way.

And first we spin along the familiar Roman road to Chelmsford, enjoying, be it hoped, the kind of weather invoked for "poor Tom Bowline," and making the most of good and straight going. The chances are that before the day ends we shall have to "put up with" something worse in the way of surface, and it is certain that we shall not have to lament monotonous straightness later on. In the heart of Chelmsford we ask for the Great Baddow road, and a short couple of miles takes us to a big Essex village, attractive to the eye, but not calling imperatively for a halt. The fact that this village was the birthplace of Richard de Badow, Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, in the time of Edward II, may be assimilated *en voyage*. University Hall, Cambridge, was founded by de Badow and the University conjointly. The Hall exists no longer, had indeed a very brief existence, for it was one thing to found it, and quite another to keep it going; and some time before 1360, when Elizabeth de Clare (who was granddaughter to Edward I) died after founding Clare College, University Hall had been merged in the college founded by this wealthy heiress of that "illustrious family of Clare" which has come to the fore in an earlier drive from Colchester. Great Baddow, therefore, has a connection, and that a distinct connection, with the college which was nursing mother to Latimer, whose most celebrated sermon is still part of the literary groundwork of every cultivated Englishman's style; to Cudworth, whose words used to be read by aspirants for honours in Greats at Oxford, and may still be so read; to Tillotson, whose sermons are familiar by name in the literature of the past; and lastly, if one among the moderns may be named, to Mr. Owen Seaman, editor of *Punch* and genial castigator of the weaknesses of all sorts and conditions of men.

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At Great Baddow we turn to the right and then climb to the upland known as Galleywood Common, and already seen; and after that we climb again, a hundred feet as nearly as may be in a mile, to a nameless point of the road two miles west of West Manningfield. The air grows fresher, more invigorating, and if there be a suspicion of easterly direction in the breeze the breath of the sea will be recognized. Prospect, to use the expressive word beloved of the ancient topographer, is wider and more comprehensive than that to which we have been accustomed of late, for most of the country between us and the estuary of the Thames is very flat indeed, and in such a country a hill of 314 feet gives a very wide survey. Nine miles or thereabouts, mostly on a downward gradient, takes us to Billericay, but this ancient town itself stands on a hill. Why Billericay? Of a truth it is not possible to say, for the etymologies suggested are purely conjectural and not at all convincing, and all we know is that it was known as Billerica in the latter part of the fourteenth century. This is rather annoying, for most place-names are either susceptible of some explanation or of such a simple character that there seems to be no particular reason why they should not exist. "Billericay," on the other hand, is an etymological puzzle, and, at the same time, much too odd a title to have come into existence casually.

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Billericay was one of the places visited by Arthur Young on his Six Weeks' Tour, and his description of the country is quoted both for the sake of variety and because it contains a useful reference to our destination of the day. He had been to Chelmsford, which he considered a pretty, neat, and well-built town, and he had remarked that all the cart-horses he saw from Sudbury to Chelmsford were of a remarkably large size. "From the latter town I proceeded to *Billericay*; the country very rich, woody, and pleasant, with abundance of exceeding fine landscapes over extensive valleys. The husbandry, I apprehend, not equal to that in use about Chelmsford; for their principal course is fallowing for wheat, then sowing oats and laying down with clover and ray-grass, which is a very faulty custom on land which, like this, lets in general from 15s. to 20s. an acre; nor did I see many good crops. The principal manure they use about *Billericay* is chalk, which they fetch in waggons from *Grays*, and costs them generally by the time they get it home 5-1/2d. or 6d. a bushel. They seldom use it alone, but mix it with turf, fresh dug, and farmyard dung, and then lay it on for wheat, now and then for turnips, which are however seldom sown in this neighbourhood. All this manure is sometimes spread at the expense of £10 an acre."

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From Billericay to Tilbury, pretty much our route, Arthur Young was principally interested by the "prodigious size of the farms," a matter of no present concern. But he has something to say later which is very much to our purpose. "Of all the roads that ever disgraced our kingdom, in the very ages of barbarism, none ever equalled that from *Billericay* to the *King's Head* at *Tilbury*. It is for

near twelve miles so narrow that a mouse may not pass by any carriage. I saw a fellow creep under his waggon to assist me to lift, if possible, my chaise over a hedge. The ruts are of an incredible depth, and a pavement of diamonds might as well be fought for as a quarter" [*sic*, meaning?]. "The trees everywhere overgrow the road, so that it is totally impervious to the sun, except at a few places. And to add to all the infamous circumstances which concur to plague a traveller, I must not forget eternally meeting with chalk-waggons; themselves frequently stuck fast, till a collection of them are in the same situation, that twenty or thirty horses may be tacked to each, to draw them out one by one. After this description, will you—can you believe me when I tell you, that a turnpike was much solicited by some gentlemen to lead from *Chelmsford* to the ferry at Tilbury Fort, but opposed by the bruins of this country—whose horses are worried to death while bringing chalk through these vile roads? I do not imagine that the kingdom produces such an instance of vile stupidity; and yet in this district are found numbers of farmers who cultivate above £1000 a year. Besides those already mentioned we find a *Skinner* and a *Tower*, who each rent near £1500 a year, and a *Read* almost equal; but who are all perfectly well contented with their roads."

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Essex byways—and yet the road from Chelmsford to Tilbury ferry was hardly a byway in those days—are not quite so bad as this to-day, but emphatically they are not good, and in this particular district they are clearly not likely to improve. Arthur Young's long series of chalk-laden wagons, stuck fast in the mire and clay until such time as the combined teams were strong enough to extricate them one by one, are a thing of the past. But the joint evidence of Mr. Sidney Stallard and of Mr. Seymour Williams, who were chosen to represent the Rural District Councils Association before the recent Royal Commission, contains an interesting piece of information on this point, and on one general point of great importance. These gentlemen, engineers of considerable experience and officially familiar with the road question, do not think that light motors cause any considerable damage to roads, but they hold a very different opinion as to heavy motors. "At Billericay, which is an agricultural district, steam motors are used, and they cause damage there to the extent of £700." Obviously this is a very large annual expense for a district like that of Billericay, where the great farms of Arthur Young's day do not, in modern conditions and with modern prices, produce anything approaching to the profits of days gone by. It seems to follow that, at present at any rate, it would be unreasonable to hope for any great improvement in the byways of Essex, and more prudent to expect deterioration.

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One word I would fain say of Arthur Young's complaint, because it is one often made now and, receiving a great deal of attention, is a menace to one of the most precious and characteristic beauties of England. He complains of the trees that overshadow the road, "so that it is totally impervious to the sun, except at a few places." So do County Surveyors complain and, since they have certain legal rights in this matter, they insist from time to time that trees overshadowing the road and hedges by the side of the road shall be cut down. To this process, within reasonable limits, those who value the silvan greenery of England would be unreasonable to object. High hedges near cross roads or at sharp turns of the road are a source of danger; the surface of roads much overshadowed by trees is far more difficult to preserve than that of roads in the open, because the shaded surfaces are seldom thoroughly dried. The drip and the shade combined are too much for the sun and the wind. On the other hand such stretches of road are rarely dusty, and that is assuredly something gained. It would be easy, if somewhat invidious, to point out instances in which County Surveyors, without exceeding their authority, have caused roadside trees to be hewn down and roadside hedges to be levelled to the ground, without sufficient justification, from the standpoint of a regard for the public safety, and with no justification at all, if the value of beautiful landscapes is to be taken into account. Let us beware lest, in making travel over the face of our England easy, we deprive it of half its charm.

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After Billericay our next point is Horndon on the Hill, concerning the view from which "over the rich land of Essex and along the Thames" "Murray" speaks. The view from Horndon is not, however, to be compared with that from Langdon Hill, climbed six miles to the south of Billericay, which is 385 ft. high against the 128 of Horndon. It was of this hill, doubtless, that Arthur Young raved in the annexed passage: "I forgot to tell you," he wrote from the "King's Head," Tilbury, on 24 June, 1767, "that near *Horndon*, on the summit of a vast hill, one of the most astonishing prospects to be beheld, breaks almost at once upon one of the dark lanes. Such a prodigious valley, everywhere painted with the finest verdure, and intersected with numberless hedges and woods, appears beneath you, that it is past description; the *Thames* winding through it, full of ships, and bounded by the hills of *Kent*. Nothing can exceed it, unless that which *Hannibal* exhibited to his disconsolate troops, when he bade them behold the glories of the *Italian* plains! If ever a turnpike should lead through this country, I beg you will go and view this enchanting scene, though a journey of forty miles is necessary first. I never beheld anything equal to it in the West of *England*, that region of landscape."

Some hyperbole there is here, perhaps, but not much of it, for the view of land and sea is very fine and, best of all, it is hardly necessary to have the car in order to secure it. The difference between the aspect of the river, as it presents itself to us, and that which it presented to Arthur Young is all to our disadvantage. For him an out-going ship was always a sailing vessel; for us the sailing vessels are few and far between, and those of large size which still use the Thames must needs rely on a fussy, black-smoked tug to tow them down the tortuous channel. Our many steamers are not so picturesque in themselves as the tall ships making for the open sea of his day were, when the wind was favourable. Our steamers, too, belch forth clouds of smoke, befouling the air and obscuring the landscape. Still, as J. M. W. Turner and others, but Turner most of all, have proved to us, there is a weird beauty of smoke if we will but open our eyes to see it, and the

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Rochester barges, floating low on the water and carrying their delicious brown sails, were of Young's days no less than they are of ours. Father Thames from a height is still a sight for appreciative eyes.

Two ways to Grays are open from Horndon. By the first, turning to the right at Horndon, Orsett is reached, and then a left turn brings one to Chadwell. For the second, one keeps on straight through Horndon and, turning to the right just before reaching Stanford-le-Hope, and then turning to left a couple of miles on, one also reaches Chadwell. There is nothing to choose between the routes. One is dreary as the other. We go to Chadwell simply in order to attain Little Thurrock, a mile or so from Grays to the eastward, and just behind Tilbury Docks. In either case we pass through Chadwell, which has a certain interest in connection with the past, if none in the present, for here Daniel Defoe lived for some years, as secretary of brick and pantile works, became prosperous a second time, kept his coach, and even launched out into a pleasure boat. During this period, too, he lived at Tilbury, in "a house near the water's edge," but house and brickworks are alike gone.

We are now close to the object of our quest, "Hangman's Wood" or "Hairy Man's" Wood. "Murray" says the latter; the local gentlemen who called my attention to its strange contents certainly said the former. If the former be the correct name the explanation is obvious. Our ancestors used the noose freely, for all kinds of offenders, and displayed a partiality for hanging offenders, especially highwaymen, in a conspicuous place, which was often called in accordance with its gruesome use. Many examples might be found; the first that comes to mind is Gallows Point on the Menai Straits, about a mile on the Menai Bridge side of Beaumari. This wood, clothing a gentle eminence between Grays and Tilbury, having a road on either side of it, would have suited admirably the accomplishment of the highwayman's designs on the public in the first place, and the public's punishment of the highwayman later. He would be hanged, like a rook over sprouting wheat, conspicuously at the place of his misdeeds, to serve as an example to evildoers.

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Still, information obtained by word of mouth may always be misheard, and it seemed worth while to think who could the Hairy Man be? Surely none other than "Peter the Wild Boy," who afterwards became "Peter the Wild Man," for he was, to all appearances, twelve or thirteen when he was found in 1724, and he lived until 1785. Peter was found in a field near Hamelin, the Pied Piper's Hamelin, naked, brownish, and very hairy, in the act of sucking a cow; and quite unable to speak. He was brought to England—as the time was that of our first Hanoverian King this was quite in the natural course of things—and the Princess of Wales, afterwards Queen Caroline, took an interest in him. He was placed in a hospital, very possibly in the neighbourhood of Tilbury, for safety; the name Peter was given to him, and after the efforts of many teachers had proved futile, he was handed over to the care of a farmer living near Berkhamsted, where, wearing a collar with an inscription to the effect that any person bringing him back would be rewarded, he lived to the end of his life. That he was of a roaming disposition the inscription on his collar proves, but I have no evidence to suggest that he ever wandered into this particular wood. On the other hand there is a faint suspicion that he may have done so, for Defoe, who doubtless knew the wood intimately, was interested in Peter, visited him, and made him the peg upon which to hang a pamphlet on education, including much satire on the men and manners of his time, and a savage attack on his old enemy Swift.

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Hangman's Wood, or Hairy Man's Wood, call it which you will, contains something very much more interesting than Peter the Wild Man is to us now, in the shape of what are called locally the "Dene Holes," or sometimes "King Cunobelin's Gold Mines"; for Peter is dead long since, his enigma perished with him, and when all is said and done the chances are that he was neither more nor less than an idiot boy, who grew into an idiot man. On the other hand, these Dene Holes are with us still, and nobody has succeeded in reading their enigma. I obtained an entry to them two or three years ago, having journeyed to Grays for the purpose, simply because the proprietor of the principal hotel in Grays was anxious that some writing person should see and describe these very peculiar excavations, which certainly have not secured anything approaching to adequate notice in recent years from the learned. The hotel-keeper's motives may not have been purely altruistic; altruism, indeed, is not the most conspicuous quality of the average hotel-keeper. He may have suspected that, if the existence of this curiosity were more generally known, visitors would come to Grays, and to his hotel, requiring refreshment and conveyance to Hangman's Wood, both of which he might provide to his profit. To the philosophical mind that makes no difference. The things are either worth seeing, at the expense of some trouble, or they are not. My firm conviction is that they are very well worth seeing indeed, and an attempt shall be made to justify it by describing that which I saw and that which, no doubt, anybody else may see upon applying at this hotel, the name of which has escaped memory. That again does not matter, for once at Grays, there will be no difficulty in finding the hotel that is interested in the Dene Holes.

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Let a word of preliminary warning be given. Not long after this expedition to Grays, and before its results had appeared in print, it was my fortune to meet as a fellow-guest an eminent member of the Society of Antiquaries, an official, I fancy, of that august body, to whom it seemed right that I should mention these holes in the ground of Hangman's Wood (of which, indeed, my mind was very full) and describe them to the best of my ability. He listened patiently, with an appearance of interest, and then observed that the holes were "dene-holes," and that there were similar cavities in many other parts of England. The answer was really rather disappointing, not because it seemed to prick my little bubble of interest, but because it was what I had found in a

good many books, written by persons who were in no way to blame, because the chance of seeing these particular holes had not been open to them, and because, judging by descriptions, the other dene-holes were not in the least identical with those of Hangman's Wood. I felt very much in the position of the questioner who, on asking what the duties of an archdeacon might be, received the sterile and stereotyped reply that an archdeacon performs archidiaconal functions. An enigma is not explained by giving a name to it. It is worth while to read an account at first hand of the dene-holes of Hangman's Wood, even though you are under the impression that you know all about dene-holes, unless indeed you have seen these particular holes. If so you cannot have failed to be deeply interested in them.

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On the occasion under notice we drove about a mile or a mile and a half from Grays to the nearest corner of this wood, where the road forks to Orsett and to Chadwell. From an article written when the scene was fresh in memory it appears that this wood left the impression on me that it was not a recent and artificial plantation, that it might even be primeval. In this wood are some fifty shafts, some of which had been opened at the time of my visit, while others remained overgrown with brushwood but easily traceable. Attention had, indeed, been directed towards these shafts not long before by the horrid discovery of the decaying body of a man at the bottom of one of them. It was, indeed, a singular thing that traces of more such catastrophes were not discovered when examination was made of the holes. It was a consequence, perhaps, of the very unpleasant way upon which the holes had forced themselves upon public attention that a windlass and cage had been rigged up over the mouth of one of them—the apparatus was clearly meant to be permanent—for the purposes of descent and ascent. The cage was but small—big enough to accommodate one passenger only—for though the mouths of the shafts are funnel-shaped, because if they were not the gravel sides would fall in, the shafts become cylindrical so soon as they enter the coherent Thanet sand, and are of such a width that a man of middle height may place his back against one side and ascend, or descend, without much difficulty by the aid of footholes cut on the other side. After the gravel the shaft passes through the Thanet sand for some twenty feet more and for a very short space, after the Thanet sand ends, through the chalk. Then at last the cage feels the bottom of the shaft. The passenger emerges, and can see dimly that he is in a vaulted chamber of chalk.

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The ascending cage, entering the cylinder of the shaft, leaves him in total darkness, but soon, as one passenger comes down after another, a sufficient exploring party is formed, lanterns are lit, and examination begins. It reveals the fact that each shaft communicates with a group of chambers, all similar in design, all originally distinct from one another. Imagine an ash leaf pressed between the pages of a book, but having its middle rib cut off short at the base of the lowest leaflets, and that middle rib seven or eight times broader, in proportion to the leaflets, than in nature. In that you have the ground plan of the chambers, in principle at least, but no object in nature, so far as I am aware, corresponds exactly with the design. So far we have ground plan only. Let us proceed to dimensions. The extreme length of each group of chambers is about 80 ft. Each chamber is vaulted, about 20 ft. high, from 10 to 15 ft. wide, and somewhat wider a few feet above the floor than at the floor level. The whole is beautifully and symmetrically hewn out, the marks of the implements used for the purpose are plainly visible. Of such groups of chambers, all originally distinct, all hewn with the same exact precision, but directed to all sorts of points of the compass, so that there is no suspicion of orientation, there are a large number. If it be asked why learned writers have been so sparing of allusion to subterranean works of such manifest interest, the answer is that until the years 1884 and 1887, when the Essex Field Club made a fairly thorough examination, the materials for learned discussion were not available. Camden knew the "Dane holes," or knew of their existence, and figured one of them with tolerable accuracy in his *Britannia*. Dr. Plot (*History of Oxfordshire, 1705*) talks of "King Cunobeline's Gold Mines in Essex," and a Cambrian Register of "Gold Mines at Orsett." For a long time before 1884 the matter does not seem to have attracted the serious attention of the learned, and it has been neglected since.

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Of the writers who dealt with it at all before 1884 the writer of Murray's Guide, using for basis Mr. Roach Smith's *Collectanea Antiqua*, Vol. VI, gives perhaps as clear an account as any other; and it is quoted for purposes of criticism. "Excavations called *Dane-pits* are numerous in the chalk near East Tilbury. A passage is said to have led from these caverns to others resembling them at Chadwell near Little Thurrock." (Note in passing that no passage could possibly have led to these pits as a whole, because each group is entirely separate and distinct, except where the ancient divisions have been broken through by explorers.) "The entrances are from above, by narrow circular passages, which widen below and communicate with numerous apartments, all of regular forms." (Our passages, or shafts, are wide at the top, narrow as soon as they reach the Thanet sand, an important factor which "Murray" does not seem to have observed, and never grow any wider while they remain shafts.) "The size and depth vary. It is uncertain for what purpose these pits (which occur in various localities throughout the chalk districts on either side of the Thames) were originally excavated, although it is now generally believed that they were made for the sake of the chalk itself which was largely exported at an early period."

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Let us dispose of this hypothesis at once. It is impossible. Chalk wells, of course, have been known since the time of Pliny, who explains in his *Natural History* (XVII 8) that the fine white chalk used by silversmiths is won out of "pits sunk like wells, with narrow mouths, to a depth of 100 ft. where they branch out like the veins of mines." He adds "*Hoc maxime Britannia utitur*" (Murray). That may have been, and it still is, the custom, because the deep-lying chalk is found to be closer and finer in texture. But the value of the depth of a chalk well is that it reaches the deep-lying chalk, whereas in Hangman's Wood the shaft ceases and the excavated chambers

begin practically so soon as the chalk has been penetrated far enough to leave room for the chambers under an adequate roof. What our unknown ancestors dug out here was surface chalk, not deep-lying chalk at all, and if surface chalk was good enough to export there was plenty of it available without being at the pains to dig through a mass of gravel and Thanet sand. No unprejudiced man, and I was assuredly such a one when I descended into these holes, can possibly explore the excavations in Hangman's Wood and go away capable of believing that they were originally chalk wells. Apart from the question of quality of chalk, the neatness of the chambers, their precise symmetry, and above all the fact that they were a distinct and separate group belonging to each shaft, although the partitions, when broken through by explorers were often only a foot or two thick, disposes of the theory absolutely.

The explorers of 1884 and 1887 did their work in a most praiseworthy manner. At the bottoms of shafts that had remained open there was naturally a good deal of débris, by sifting which they secured sundry bones and pieces of pottery. But the potsherds, examined by experts, told no story, and the bones, submitted to naturalists of high authority, were shown to be such that they might have belonged to animals of the last century. There are no marks of fire. There are no niches to point to a use for storing sepulchral urns; the chalk is singularly sterile of flints, so there is no likelihood that here, as at Brandon, the shafts were sunk for flints. In any case the symmetrical shape and the unity of design would negative that theory. The case is one for pure, but not therefore of necessity unprofitable, speculation. King Cunobelin's Gold Mines, as gold mines, may be discarded. Neither he or anybody else has yet found, in chalk and placed there by the process of nature, gold, or anything more like gold than pyrites, although a Press-man, greatly daring, "interviewed" Sir William Ramsay not long since on the presence of gold in sea-water. The putative ancestor of "Old King Cole" may have stored some of his gold there, for our rude forefathers had considerable store of gold; and the tradition may have crystallized into the phrase "King Cunobelin's Gold Mines." It is not likely that any men in the twentieth century will spend money in searching for gold in chalk. Still, in the days of the South Sea Bubble they were foolish enough for that, and the legend of King Cunobelin induced them to try these very excavations. The suggestion has also been made that these were granaries, similar to some used on the Continent in days gone by; but again the elaborate shape is a difficulty although the separation of the groups is not.

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We are therefore, as before stated, reduced to pure conjecture, and the expression "dene-holes" helps us not at all; for *denn* is simply Anglo-Saxon for a cave, and a dene-hole is a "cave-hole," bilingual tautology and nothing more. Ruminating over the known facts on many occasions during recent years, for it is impossible to see these strange burrowings and to banish them from the mind, it has occurred to me, often enough to have become almost a firm theory, that the traditional name of "Dane holes" may supply the complete explanation. In the absence of evidence to the contrary tradition is entitled to more respect than it commonly gains from the antiquary; and here there is no evidence at all against tradition. "Murray" speaks of British coins found in dene-holes; certainly none such have been found in the holes in Hangman's Wood. The terror of the Danes was frequent and very real; and the men who lived on the banks of the estuary of the Thames were more exposed to Danish raids, more familiar with their ruthless mood, than most of the inhabitants of our island. It is not difficult to imagine that the heads of families in these parts selected Hangman's Wood as a suitable spot in which to dig out hiding places, separate ones for each family. From its eminence, like rabbits sitting over their burrow, they could strain their eyes down the estuary of the Thames to watch for the incoming fleet of warrior-bearing keels; and, when they saw it, they could scuttle into their holes at once. Fires, of course, they dare not kindle within, while the invaders were at hand, for the smoke would have betrayed them; and when the invaders were gone away they could come above ground again and live their ordinary lives. They did not, according to this theory, begin by making these groups of chambers in their full and careful detail. They began by digging a shaft, the mouth of which they masked with brushwood, and a hole at the bottom in which they could cower with their families until the tyranny was overpast. But the danger came again and again for years and hundreds of years. The refuge of the pits was used many times; quarters were crowded; it was not easy to pass the weary hours of captivity. The refugees wiled away the time, and added to their own comfort by gradually quarrying away more and more rooms round the original hole, some for storage of food, some for sleeping, and so on; and they showed their true national spirit by keeping all the groups of chambers absolutely separate. The fancy is at least harmless.

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These speculations, it is to be feared, will be apt to weary some of those who do not see the Dane-pits of Grays, but if they induce any persons to visit them, those persons will assuredly be rewarded, for the burrowings are of mysterious and compelling interest. But we are at Grays, where none except a native would dream of spending the night, so we must go. Colchester is our imaginary home, and the best way of returning to it by car is by the roads which brought us here. An alternative is to send the car back with the man and, if we have prudently made arrangements beforehand, and the sea be smooth, to run from Tilbury to Clacton by motor-launch, and at Clacton to take the train for Colchester. Except Rayleigh there is nothing left of Essex to the eastward worth visiting by land, and the whole of the peninsula between the estuaries of the Blackwater and the Thames, permeated as it is by the estuaries of the Crouch and the Roach, is almost impassable by land, and of a most dreary flatness into the bargain. It is this part of the county which gives Essex so undeservedly bad a name. Still it looks well enough from the water, and the distance by sea to Clacton, for a motor-boat of light draught, cannot be much more than forty-five or fifty miles. In the estuary of the Crouch, too, if the tide be full, may be seen a very charming congregation of white-winged yachts. Moreover, motor-boats congregate there on occasion—they had a regatta there in 1906. The yacht clubs are very hospitable, and there is one

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capital inn. In fact, if the little journey be made in a motor-boat, it will be quite a wise thing to put in at Burnham, which is a place not wanting in picturesque quality and as completely *sui generis* as may be imagined. But by no means choose the sea unless it be fairly smooth. A staunch motor-yacht will stand a lot of weather without suffering much herself, but for her passengers, no matter how hardy seamen or seamen they may be, rough water in a motor-yacht spells sheer misery. She is worse than a torpedo-boat destroyer, and that is very bad indeed.

CHAPTER X

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IN SPRING. TROUBLES MADE EASY

Paucity of incidents so far—They often mean bad driving—Good driving and bad—The Grey Ghost in Berks—A burst tire—A warning—A puncture at Thame—Treasure trove—Meet mechanic at Aylesbury—Unready Hitchin—Royston—Advancing vegetation—Partridges paired—Tire blown off rim—An ancient dyke discovered—Plans changed by delays, but the motorist needs no plans—To Newmarket—Exit mechanic—To Bury St. Edmunds—A race with a train—Bury St. Edmunds and the "Angel"—Moderate charges—Spacious rooms—Memories of Pickwick—Mr. Weller's pump gone—Two hotel bills compared—Morning in Bury—The Abbey Garden—Norman tower—St. Mary's Church—The Square—Defoe at Bury—Start at noon—To Wortham—Fourth tire trouble—Pleasant children and a bye-election—Scole—Harleston—Fifth tire trouble—End of tire troubles and chapter.

Hitherto it may have been some cause for dissatisfaction to others, it has certainly been none to me, that with regard to the portion of this book which may be considered strictly narrative, there has been a monotonous immunity from accident of any kind. Yet so it was, and although, unlike George Washington, I do not profess that I cannot tell a lie, there would have been no point in telling one, and it would have been unfair. To touch a human being, another vehicle, or even a dog, with a motor-car, even in circumstances involving no culpability or legal responsibility in the driver of the motor-car, is in the vast majority of cases still not to his credit. The best drivers know it to be their duty never to expect that any other user of the road except a motorist has himself or his vehicle under absolute control. The good driver looks out for the signs of alarm in horses, realizes that cyclists, especially those of the female sex, "wobble" in their course when they hear the horn, knows that dogs will try to commit hari-kari, is aware that some men are blind, some deaf, some obstinate, and some drunk, feels that it is always best and safest to take stupidity for granted, and to give as wide a berth as possible to every living object on the high road. It is wiser to miss a horseless cart by half an inch than to try to pass a carriage and pair with a yard to spare. If these principles be borne in mind it is astonishing, at least it would be to the anti-motorist, to see how many thousands of miles may be travelled without harm done. How many thousands of miles I have travelled in motors of many kinds in England alone, to say nothing of Scotland and Ireland, I do not know; certainly a good many. In England, although I have sat beside some inconsiderate drivers, have I ever been at all near to hurting a human being; but I have sat beside considerate drivers in circumstances which, if one of the inconsiderate though skilful ones had been at the wheel, would have made it worse than a near thing for careless or frightened wayfarers.

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Up to this time in the narrative, although at no period was any superstitious regard paid to the speed limit, I had not been caught in a police ambuscade (not that "ambuscade," except for its length, is a word in the least degree more dignified than "trap") during my travels in East Anglia; nor need I hesitate to write thus, for, in the first place, I am touching wood in the shape of a cork penholder, and, in the next, the narrative being but part accomplished, the travelling days which were its preliminary are, as the hymn says, o'er. In the journeys by motor-car from Colchester, which have been pressed into service during the preceding chapter, I was exempt from the speed limit. Again, so far as the narrative has gone, I can lay my hand on my heart and say that never, save once during the Essex manœuvres, through a burst tire, and then not in the Lanchester car, did I meet with tire trouble or suffer an involuntary stop through any failing of machinery.

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On the expedition now to be recorded, in itself one of the most interesting and delightful ever taken by me, we had a whole series of troubles of different kinds—misfortunes of this kind never occur singly. But I hope to be able to show that these troubles were, some of them, providential, in other ways than that of supplying me with topics, which were abundant in any case, and that skill of hand and knowledge, combined with perfect imperturbability of temper in a gentleman who drives, and has all the trouble on his own hands, may convert trouble into sheer pleasure for the other persons delayed on the road.

Early in the morning of 6 April, a sunny morning worthy of the spring, Mr. Claude Johnson arrived at my Berkshire cottage with the Rolls-Royce owning the *sobriquet* of the Grey Ghost. I had ridden in the car first in Paris, outside the *salon* during the exhibition of 1904, and had been fascinated by its silence and controllability as Mr. Rolls at the wheel threaded the traffic in the Champs Élysées. Mr. Johnson had been expected overnight; the chamber in the wall had been prepared; but "he came not, for the ships were broken in Ezion-Geber." In other words, the back

near tire came to grief on the Oxford Road. Taking it off with his own hands and substituting another, he had elected to sleep at a favourite inn and to come on to my house in the morning. This particular burst was simply the act of giving up the ghost accomplished by canvas which had reached the end of its natural life; and this, since the term of the natural life of canvas varies, is the kind of mishap which may occur at any time. Knowing that the tendency of troubles to come in groups is not mere matter of proverbial superstition, or, perhaps, being not entirely free from superstition, Mr. Johnson said, "You must be prepared for plenty more of these pleasant little interruptions. But, however, I have wired for a mechanic to meet us at Aylesbury, with more inner tubes and covers, and with luck we may last till then."

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So at 9.35 we started in one of the first Rolls-Royces ever made, four cylinder and, I think, a 20-h.p. (but horse-power is a mere figure of speech, and the folks who prattle of it as a basis of taxation talk more nonsense than they realize). It had a cape hood, glass screens in front of the driving-seat and between it and the tonneau, and it carried my wife and younger daughter, with two suit-cases of fair size, in the tonneau, Mr. Johnson being at the wheel, and I by his side. We did not last so far as Aylesbury without trouble. On the contrary, just as we were leaving Thame a sharp whistle of escaping air gave notice that something was amiss, and the back off-side tire was found to be flabby. So we crawled back to a garage in that ancient town and wandered in the sun through its empty streets what time the defect was being made good. The process took the best part of an hour, and the delay proved to be providential in a small way for, in an old curiosity shop, we discovered an ancient "Bible box," of oak, curiously carved, and reputed to have belonged to the great Duke of Marlborough. It was acquired at no great price, and, whether it belonged to the great Duke of Marlborough or no, it was in the nature of a treasure, for these Bible boxes, made to contain family Bibles of large size, are rare, and little known because they are rare, and likely to become expensive when they are known because, besides rarity, they can boast substantial beauty.

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From Thame we bowled on to Aylesbury without incident, and the scenery must not be touched upon now. At Aylesbury we had to wait again some time for the mechanic, whose train had not arrived; however, it came at last, and, with him on the step, and tire covers strapped on to all sorts of places, we fared onwards. But our arrangements for luncheon were marred. Mindful of the pie that vanished at Royston (*ubi supra* as the pedants would say), we had planned to take our luncheon there. At Hitchin Nature vowed that she would no longer be denied. Still Nature was very nearly compelled to take denial, for the hotel—it looked the best—professed itself destitute of cold meat; time did not permit of waiting for hot meat; and only after pressure did the waitress consent to produce some hacked fragments of discarded joints from which, with bread and butter and cheese, hungry motorists made a sufficient meal. True the process of finding the fragments that went to make it called to memory the supper in *Tom Brown's School-days*, and the wonderful deeds wrought by East with his pocket-knife. That was no matter. *Fames est optimum condimentum*, as the old Latin Grammar used to say, and no doubt it was good of the unready hotel-keeper to give us anything. But why, O why, are hotel-keepers so often found unready?

Reaching Royston without further mishap we entered our manor, for the purposes of this book, and glided on at a fine speed along the road, already traversed, towards Newmarket. Vegetation was more alive, hedges were growing green, partridges, a heavy stock of them, were paired; that was all the difference, or seemed to be all. But two miles short of Six Mile Bottom, or thereabouts, there was not merely a whistle from below but a loud report. The front off-side Dunlop tire had been blown out of the rim, the cause being that it was a "retreaded" tire which had stretched until it was no longer held in its place. This burst also turned out to be providential. While the mechanic, who was a blessing, was engaged in attending to the off front wheel, I wandered up and down the road, thinking at first that this was a dull piece of country. Then my eye was caught by a bank running from the road on the more southerly side up a gentle slope until it was lost on the horizon. The bank was several feet above the level of the ground to the eastward; on the western side was a deep ditch. Both were clearly visible, were indeed large and unmistakable on the southern side of the road, which seemed to be old pasture. On the north side they were traceable, and no more, having been obscured on the east side by trees and brushwood, and having yielded on the western side to the plough. If trouble we were to have it was surely lucky to meet it here for, beyond question, we were at one of those ancient ramparts piled up in the days of long ago to enable the warriors of Eastern Britain to keep out their foes of the West. In all probability it was Haydon Ditch, which runs from Melbourn to Haydon. It really does not matter what its particular name was, or is. To give it a name teaches one no more than my friend the antiquary taught me by calling the excavations at Grays "dene-holes." Some race, at some time long ago, piled up this vast mound with immense labour. It was an Eastern race, that is certain from the relation of mound and ditch, making provision against enemies from the West, whom they might harry with stones and javelins as they strove to climb from the ditch, whose shock heads they might hammer, with stone axes or clubs perhaps, from above, as they swarmed up from below. So much is certain inference; the rest is absolute mystery, and to delay at the rampart for a day would not solve the outermost wrapper of it. Indeed, so much as a halt is not advised, unless an involuntary one should occur conveniently, or an excuse for prudent adjustment to avoid future trouble be desired. Slow down to five miles an hour, or even to ten, and look towards the off-side when you are approaching Six Mile Bottom. Then shall you see as much as is necessary, or indeed possible, of this ancient rampart and its fosse, and understand all that can be understood about it, to wit that is there, and has been there since prehistoric times.

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Those who worked over the substitution of a new tire and cover were skilful and expeditious; but

it is a task which even in the most competent hands is tiresome and must not be hurried over unduly. At the best it means dirt and perspiration; before it reaches the worst it is very likely to involve broken nails and barked knuckles; and the least excess of haste is likely to bring in its train a subsequent nip as Nemesis, when all the dusty labour becomes vain. So, by this time, our plans as to a resting-place for the night were receding into the distance, or rather our place of abode was coming nearer to us, if we were not getting appreciably nearer to it. That is to say the plans of other people in the like circumstances would have been suffering thus, but ours were not quite definite. We had debated in an easy-going way the question whether we should dine and sleep at Lowestoft or at Yarmouth; whether perhaps we might not even push on to Norwich whither the memories of the "Maid's Head" beckoned us. This was out of the question now, but the beauty of motoring is that, unless one has made a definite arrangement to meet friends, nothing of this kind matters. As a matter of fact we took our tea at Newmarket—we have travelled the intervening piece of road in print before—and, then deciding where to sleep, went no farther than Bury St. Edmunds that night and, greatly daring, having regard to our run of ill-luck up to that time, we shed the mechanic, as a snake sheds his skin, instructing him to telegraph for yet another tire and cover to be sent to Bury that night if possible, but at any rate by the earliest train in the morning.

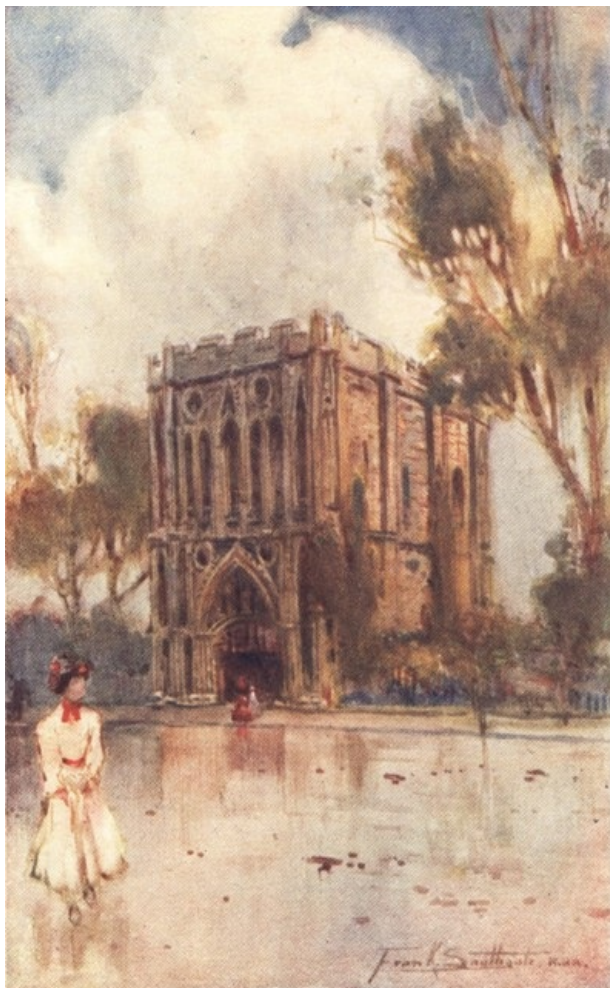
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So on to Bury by the same road as we had followed on the Panhard in January; but Phœbus! how marked was the difference between the late afternoon of a mild day in April and the fading light of a frosty evening in January! Few of the trees were yet showing much green, but the buds were swelling and we could enjoy the stateliness of the trunks. "Joy runs high, between English earth and sky" on such afternoons as this. The road was clear and good, it invited speed, and for a space we raced a train which, it must be admitted, beat us in the long run pretty handsomely. So a second time we entered Bury, and this time made no mistake in the selection of our inn. Let there be no misunderstanding here. Lord Montagu's Road Book, which is good as any other, and strongly bound to stand the hardships of travelling (with a flap to fold over the front edges of the pages, which reminds one of Archbold's *Criminal Pleadings* armed against the rough usage of circuit), specifies the "Suffolk"; and the "Suffolk" may be a very good hotel, but to the pilgrim who has a spark of sentiment in his composition, the "Angel" addresses a more compelling invitation. One line of German poetry do I know—no more—and the luxury of quoting it (candidly confessing that it was got by heart by way of punishment for inattention, with some others now passed out of mind), shall not be denied to me—

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Es lächelt der see, er ladet züm Bade.

As the sea laughed and said, "Bathe in my sun-warmed waters," so the "Angel" smiles, broadly and hospitably, saying, "If you are spending the night in Bury, spend it in the house full of the cheerful memories of Pickwick and the faithful Weller." That invitation was assumed, for the "Angel" is most decorously modest, but it was also accepted and never regretted for a moment, least of all when the time came for discharging the reckoning. We reached the "Angel" sufficiently early to be able to order dinner and to stroll about in the darkening town while it was in preparation. They set our feet in large rooms. Bedrooms, coffee-room, and sitting-room were spacious and comfortable. Dinner was plain but excellent in the old-fashioned coffee-room, and I will almost, but not quite, pledge my word that the wall-paper was of that mellow and ruby red beloved of our forefathers, probably because it suggested port wine. A pilgrimage through the hotel, and the yard too, showed that it had altered little, if at all, since it was described by Dickens, except that the pump was gone. Assuredly there ought to be a pump, for the sake of appearances, if for no other reason, although a tap, fed from the Corporation Waterworks, may serve equally well to cool heads throbbing of a morning from overnight unwisdom in the still-existing tap-room. The "Angel," in fact, is a thoroughly good hotel of the old-fashioned type, which it is a rare pleasure to enter and to praise. More than that, and to complete the well-earned panegyric, one leaves the "Angel" in a satisfied mood. It is plain truth that we dined there, slept, had tea in our bedrooms, breakfasted well, and paid for the car's lodging in a coach-house, and that the bill for three of us was precisely one shilling less than was paid one day later for the same accommodation less dinner, and less the storage of the car for the night. That is why praise is gladly given and those who have suffered from heavy charges elsewhere will be the first to protest that it ought to be given out of a grateful heart.



ABBEY GATEWAY, BURY ST. EDMUNDS

In the morning there was more delay. The same wheel which had given trouble by the mysterious dyke on the preceding afternoon was found to be standing on a flat tire again. Messages to the station brought back no substantial answer in the form of a cover. A local garage had none that fitted in stock, and had to send a special messenger to fetch one from a distance of ten or twelve miles on a motor-cycle. As a matter of fact, we found later, the tire-cover had been at the station all the time, but it had been addressed to the mechanic, and our messenger had made inquiries for one addressed to his master. The delay was really welcome. Who could desire a better fate than to spend a perfect spring morning in sauntering through a town which was historic not only in fact but also in appearance? My own case was the more happy in that, during the interval, I had not only refreshed my memory of Bury and of its associations, but had also learned a good many things in connection with it which were new to me. Of course, we entered the Abbey Gateway, to find the Botanical Garden, noted by Carlyle, less conspicuous than we had feared it might be. In fact, there was no demonstration of labels, helpful to the student but distressing to the idle eye, and it may be that the garden is no longer botanical, except in the sense in which every garden is such. It is a garden in any case, a garden with such broad stretches of close green turf as England alone can show; and on this turf little boys were playing games in the morning. A notice at the gate implied that the ground was not absolutely open to the public for games; if it were the turf would soon perish; but the price of play seemed to be very moderate; and perhaps the ground within those ancient walls serves as useful a purpose by encouraging the young men and maidens of Bury to take healthy exercise in the open air as it did when it permitted the student to realize that *cheiranthus* is another way of saying "wallflower," or that the weed best beloved of canaries may be called *Jacobeia*. Of the Shakesperian associations of the Abbey we spoke last time we were at Bury; they came to mind none the less pleasantly for the fact that sturdy little boys were kicking a football about on the ground often trodden by kings and abbots. Of course, too, we went to see the Norman Tower, to the southward of the Abbey Gate and close to it, and St. Mary's Church. Most pleasant of all, however, was it to linger in the sun about the spacious square, having the "Angel" on one side and the Abbey Gate on the other, to rejoice in the abundance of old-world houses, to reflect that the square, and most of the houses, if not all, looked much the same as they did when "in order to avoid the public gaze, and also to recuperate, Defoe repaired in August, 1704, to Bury St. Edmunds, where he took up his abode in a handsome residence called Cupola House." Defoe was then fresh from eighteen months in "that horrid place," as Moll Flanders called it, Newgate Prison. He had stood in the pillory more than once, but, as his biographer of 1894, Mr. Thomas Wright, observes, we must not pity him too much. He suffered, after all, as others did in a brutal age. Moreover, Newgate was not all misery. He was allowed to exercise his pen freely while in prison, and he published one of the products of his incarceration, "An Elegy on the Author of the True-born Englishman," while he was living at Bury. That he did not come out penniless will be very plain to every pilgrim who is at the pains to look at Cupola House, which is still standing and, from the outside at any rate, very inviting.

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Such are some of the memories of Bury, "the Montpelier of Suffolk, and perhaps of England," as Defoe called it, and we were not in any hurry to leave it or them. Still the sun shone, the roads were in good order, and when the car was ready about midday, we also were ready for the pleasures of the road. Our road, good and fairly flat, through what may best be described as comfortable and rich country, lay by Farnham St. Mary, Ixworth, where Euston Park was five miles to the north along the Ipswich and Thetford Road, Stanton, Wattisfield, and Richinghall to Wortham. That is only seven miles in all, and we bowled along merrily, in no mood to stop if we could avoid it, observing the spacious area of many village greens, thwarting to the best of our ability the efforts of the geese (which accounted for the close shorn turf of those greens) to immolate themselves under our wheels. A fussy turkey-hen, too, courted the same fate, but so far as our chariot was concerned, the geese and their offspring may have been eaten with apple-sauce at Michaelmas, and the turkey-hen's poults may have been hatched and reared, and fattened in the fashion best understood in East Anglia for the London market.

At Wortham came more trouble. Once more there was the ominous shriek. The rear off-side inner tube had been blown into a rent in the inner canvas of the outer cover; it was clean gone, and so, unfortunately, was the mechanic. Cheerfully philosophical as ever, Mr. Johnson, with such help as the bystanders and I could give him, addressed himself to the task of fitting the wheel for the road again and, apart from the trouble and inconvenience to him, of which he made light for our sake, the experience was even positively pleasant in its incidents. Bystanders were many. Our little disaster had come to us half-way on the road passing through a village green, very spacious, fringed on the left with stray cottages, of which one turned out to be the post office. Village children thronged round the disabled car in great numbers, light-haired and rosy-faced children, all of them wearing the yellow favours of the Liberal candidate. Were we not in the middle of the Eye constituency, the bye-election in which, coming shortly after the General Election, was regarded with exceptional interest by the public? Was not this the election of elections in which, to judge from the public press, the issue lay not between two mere men, but between Lady Mary Hamilton and another lady. And the result was due that day. The district was at least warmly interested as the general public—it is not always so—and the children were in a fever of childish excitement. They were "yellow" down to the very babies in arms; they hooted in shrill and childish derision whenever a carriage passed with blue favours, as some did, the occupants themselves looking blue in another sense. The most hardened Tory found it as impossible to be annoyed at their enthusiasm as to regard their opinions seriously. They were too eager, too delightful, too healthy. Nobody could have been angry with them. Further than that, they struck us all as being exceptionally bright and intelligent, and the keen interest with which they listened to a boy in his shirt-sleeves, not much older than some of them, but emancipated from school and now a wage-earning creature, who had attended some village meeting, was entirely charming. A man or two came up and proffered help, which was accepted. A Suffolk constable arrived on a bicycle and, seeming to have plenty of time to spare, remained to talk and to help me in expelling the air from the discarded tube, and in packing it into its bag for future treatment; and the children were round us all the time. Suddenly there was a shout, "The talleygram's come!" and a stampede across the green to the post office. In a minute or two they were all back, yelling in glee, "Pearson's in!" and at least one stubborn Tory was not half so sorry as he ought to have been. The Tory cause in the then Parliament was past praying for in any event; a Liberal vote more or less really seemed hardly to matter; the disappointment of those children at the failure of the Liberal candidate, if it had been announced, would have been far more distressing to me than was the defeat of him for whom I should have voted if a vote in the Eye division had been mine.

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On at last we went, merrily enough at first, and in 3-1/4 miles crossed the Waveney and the boundary of Norfolk and Suffolk simultaneously at Scole; Scole of the true Roman road, Scole of the ancient hostelry, of both of which full notice has been taken in an earlier chapter. Four miles more we carried on gaily, 4-1/4 miles perhaps, for we were almost free from the long townlet of Harleston when more trouble came. It was precisely the same trouble in the same tire and cover that had been met with at Wortham. This time there was a garage, where the rent in the canvas was effectually repaired, while we took a hearty luncheon at the "Maggie"; and that was the end of tire-trouble for this expedition. We had certainly had at least enough of it. And here, since the road immediately in front of us positively teems with wayside subjects, let a pause be made and a short chapter ended.

CHAPTER XI

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GREAT AMBITIONS CHEERFULLY RELINQUISHED. HARLESTON TO CROMER viA BUNGAY, BECCLES, LOWESTOFT, GREAT YARMOUTH, CAISTER-BY-YARMOUTH, AND NORWICH

Harleston—The "Maggie"—Typical East Anglian village—Flixton Park—Bungay—Mr. Rider Haggard as *vates sacer*—Antiquities of Bungay—Spa projected in eighteenth century—The vineyard—Derivations of Bungay—Chateaubriand at Bungay—A thatched church?—Beccles from the west—A vision—Towards Lowestoft—Glance at Oulton Broad—Lowestoft fails to please—Towards Yarmouth—Ambitious plans—Moonlight drive projected—Yarmouth pleases—Honest sea-

faring industry—An acrostic and some ancient verse—Caister-by-Yarmouth—Sir John Falstolf—A precocious fifteenth-century Etonian—To Norwich and onwards—A moonlight drive—A sudden check—Grit in the petrol tank—An insoluble problem at night—Cheerful philosophy—To Cromer for refuge—The Links Hotel—Poppyland—Cromer no place for strangers—The haunt of a famous circle—Quotation from the Gurneys of Earlham—Seaside places are one-sided motoring centres—Scenery to westward strange rather than charming—A start in the morning—The grit still present—Labour of locating and removing—A stroll and survey of the country—Commonplace Runton—A taste of petrol—I break into jingle—Moral.

The "Magpie" at Harleston—you can hardly miss it, for the sign hangs well out—entertained us quite abundantly, if humbly, and it was agreed on all hands that this inconsiderable village of Norfolk responded better to a surprise visit than had the town of Hitchin. Harleston is not in itself an attractive village. Indeed candour compels the admission that few East Anglian villages can fairly be described as attractive by comparison with those of the southern Midlands. Berks, Bucks, Gloucestershire, and Oxfordshire certainly can each show half a dozen delightful villages where East Anglia can show but one. In them the pretty village is normal, the plain hamlet exceptional; in East Anglia the contrary rule prevails. The typical East Anglian village, or collection of houses somewhere between a town and a village in point of size, is a long and double line of unpretentious dwellings running along either side of a main road for a mile or more. Harleston is just such a gathering of houses and little shops, and there are dozens of Harlestons under other names scattered about East Anglia. This may be the reason why some of the best of gossiping writers about this part of the country, Dr. Jessopp and Mr. Rider Haggard for example (and, may I add, the little-known Miss Wilson, author of the *Friends of Yesterday*, who is now working with her brother in the Orange River Colony?), tell us more of the ways of the people, and of the conditions of their lives, than they do of the aspects of the hamlets. When they talk to us of places it is, as a rule, either of great houses, or of towns, such as Bungay, possessed of a curious history.

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From Harleston, then, we started nothing loth, having accomplished so far only some thirty miles in 3-1/2 hours, of which, however, only 1-1/2 had been spent in travelling. Plans we gave up for a bad job; we determined simply to go on as long as we could and, if trouble came, to grin and bear it. The first scene noted after Harleston was Flixton Park, a very noble deer park over which the eye can range from the car, for it is divided from the road only by thin but very high iron railings. The Hall was built by Sir Nicholas de Tasburgh in the time of bluff King Hal, and the church tower is said to be Saxon. But we were all for travel. Such was the mood in which we passed through Bungay, leaving Ditchingham a mile or two to the left. The reader, it is hoped, will not travel through Bungay quite so quickly, will not, be it hoped also, have suffered quite so many punctures and bursts, and will be in the mood to hear something of it and of Ditchingham. This district has its *vates sacer* in Mr. Rider Haggard, whose book, *A Farmer's Year* (Longmans, 1899), is, in its rare passages of topography and of old-time talk, exquisitely attractive to man or woman of taste. It appeals also, in its agricultural record, with infinite sadness and with much force to all who have been brought face to face with the realities of life in rural England. Let there be no shiver of apprehension here. There is no intention of raising here that question of the unnatural war between the cities and the country as part of the propaganda relating to which this book was written. Mr. Haggard, indeed, avows openly his desire to convert as many persons as possible to his way of thinking, and this, to put it shortly, is that to permit the cities to starve out rural England is a hideously mistaken policy. The subject is fertile; but it is not for me. What is of enthralling interest to all is that in Mr. Rider Haggard we have a gentleman of estate who, after much travel, after serving his country in diplomacy and in other ways in South Africa, and after being called to the Bar (which after all happens to a good many men without making much difference to them), retired to farm his own acres of heavy land, and some others in Norfolk, during the very worst period of agricultural depression. He had done, and he did, much more than this. When he settled down at Ditchingham to farm, and to do his duty as a country gentleman, he had written a round score of books of which the graphic power was, and is, universally admitted. Men have laughed at the impossibilities of *She* and of *King Solomon's Mines*, but very few have laid them down unfinished; they have spoiled many a hundred beauty sleeps; their absorbing interest and their skill of words is beyond question. All that power of words Mr. Haggard devoted to his propaganda and, perhaps, by way of make-weight for passages on "blown" cattle, bush drains, and the preparation of land for barley—things which interest me deeply, but are not alluring to those not to the manner born—he goes off from time to time into talk about places. It is talk which cannot be improved upon, certainly not by me.

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First Mr. Haggard quotes a curious tract of 1738 by one John King, an apothecary of Bungay, and a letter by way of appendix, saying: "Those lovely hills which include the flowery Plain are variegated with all that can ravish the astonish'd Sight; they arise from the winding Mazes of the River Waveney, enrich'd with the utmost variety the wat'ry Element is capable of producing. Upon the Neck of this Peninsula the Castle and Town of Bungay (now startled at its approaching Grandeur) is situated on a pleasing Ascent to view the Pride of Nature on the other Side, which the Goddesses have chose for their earthly Paradise, where the Sun at its first Appearance makes a kindly Visit to a steep and fertile Vineyard, richly stored with the choicest Plants from *Burgundy*, *Champaigne*, *Provence* and whatever the East can furnish us with. Near the Bottom of this is placed the Grotto or Bath itself, beautified on one side with Oziers, Groves and Meadows, on the other with Gardens, Fruits, shady Walks and all the Decorations of a rural Innocence.

"The Building is designedly plain and neat, because the least attempt of artful Magnificence would by alluring the Eyes of Strangers, deprive them of those profuse Pleasures which Nature has already provided.

"As to the Bathing there is a Mixture of all that *England, Paris* or *Rome* could ever boast of; no one's refused a kind Reception, Honour and Generosity reign throughout the whole, the Trophies of the Poor invite the Rich, and their more dazzling Assemblies compel the Former." [Pg 310]

Since the spring was found by Mr. King, the apothecary, on his own land, the tract, although Mr. Haggard also suggests a more romantic alternative, was probably merely an advertisement. Mr. Haggard, who states that the spring still exists and is peculiarly delicious to drink (in which quality it is unlike any other medicinal water known to me), says also, "Was this vineyard, furnished with the fruits of the 'East,' an effort of the imagination suggested by the original name of the place (now oddly enough superseded by a new name taken from the tradition of Mr. King's bath), or did it, as the picture suggests, really exist in the year 1738? *Quien sabe?* as they say in Mexico. There have, in my time, been several old men in Ditchingham whose grandfathers may have been living in 1738, yet I never heard from them any tale of a vineyard on the Bath Hills. But this proves nothing."

Of course it proves nothing. Rural tradition commemorates the oddest things and omits the oddest things. It is past all calculation. The picture, a very quaint print, may suggest the vines. I should be sorry to say for certain to which part of it Mr. Haggard refers; it suggests swans and a wherry on the Waveney, a sportsman shooting at four-footed game, presumably stags (or perhaps it is a shepherd with a crook), a coach-and-four, and, I think, a quintain in the foreground; but Mr. Haggard says, "Pray observe the double gallows," as to which I say that there are riders close by, one of whom looks as if he had just run a course, and that the artist, if he desired to suggest double gallows, would probably have supplied them with their appropriate pendants. A little earlier Mr. Haggard cites clear evidence that a vineyard existed in Bungay in the time of the Bigods, who dominated Bungay, and continues: "Often have I wondered what kind of wine they made at this vineyard and who was bold enough to drink it; but since I have heard that some enterprising person has taken to the cultivation of the grape in Wales with such success that—so says the wondrous tale—he sells his home-made champagne at 84s. the dozen, it has occurred to me that the Bigods knew more than we imagine about the possibilities of viticulture in England. Or it may chance that the climate was more genial in those days, although this is very doubtful." [Pg 311]

Is Mr. Haggard poking fun, or is it possible that he does not know the facts? The "enterprising person in Wales" was the late Marquess of Bute. The vineyard was, and is, at Castell Coch in South Wales, and, although the price was hardly a market price, and the position of the grower was not without its influence upon it, the wine was, and I expect still is, sound wine. Grapes good enough to make fair wine can be grown in the open in England, were grown, certainly until quite recently, in Swan Walk, Chelsea, and doubtless would grow, quite well, on a slope in Southern Norfolk, having such an aspect as the good Mr. King described. There is no reason to assume a deteriorated climate, no reason to doubt (in the absence of evidence to the contrary in individual cases) that all the "vineyards" to be found in Southern England, for the most part, as at Abingdon, in the vicinity of bygone abbeys, once grew grapes good enough to be trodden in the wine-press. This, however, is not to say that vine-growing, albeit possible, would be profitable in England to-day. It is a great deal cheaper and easier to grow rhubarb, and the wits who are sarcastic at the expense of "gooseberry champagne" would be a great deal nearer to the mark if they followed to their ultimate destination some of the huge crops of rhubarb grown a little further north than East Anglia. [Pg 312]

"Bungay has bygone glories of its own. Its name has been supposed to be derived from Bon Gué or Good Ford, but as the town was called Bungay before ever a Norman set foot in England, this interpretation will not hold. More probable is that suggested to me by the Rev. J. Denny Gedge, that the origin of the name may be Bourne-gay or Boundary Ford. Or the prefix 'Bun' may, as he hazards, have been translated from 'placenta,' 'a sacred cake,' indicating, perhaps—but this is my suggestion—that in old times Bungay was the town that pre-eminently 'took the cake.' Mayhap, for in philology anything might chance; but if so, alas! it takes it no longer." For my part, if the reason against Bon Gué be conclusive, it seems to me equally conclusive against Bun (*placenta*) Gué; and Bun Gué is not merely an anachronism, but very far-fetched at that. If we are to come to funning, the derivation "Bung-ay" may be timidly submitted. "Ay" is just a termination, Danish if you will, as in Billericay, perhaps, and it seems from Mr. Haggard's own showing that "Mr. Bung the Brewer" rules in Bungay. He records (p. 110) that on a certain day in February, 1898, the last two "free houses" in the town were put up to auction, and he records elsewhere that there is a liquor-shop for every hundred of the population.

Bungay Castle, the castle of the Bigods, is quite gone; so is the Benedictine nunnery; so is the industry of giving copper sheathing to the bottoms of ships. But the Bath Hills are still there, and behind them, protected by barbed wire and the natural kindness of Mr. Haggard's heart, is a sanctuary for all wild things. He records also that Chateaubriand, a refugee from the Terror, drifted down to Bungay, where he taught French, was known as M. Shatterbrain, and made love to a sentimental young lady, to whose mother, when she took pity on him and offered to look over his poverty, he was compelled to reply, "Hélas! Madame, je suis désolé; mais je suis marié." In fact, Bungay is really a very interesting place to linger at in the spirit; but here we must go on to Barsham and Beccles, as, in the flesh, we did immediately and agreeably. [Pg 313]

Spirits rose as we drew near to Beccles, noting on the way a curiously attractive church and

parsonage on the left, and that, seen by the light of a strong sun sinking low in the west, the church seemed to have a thatched roof. That light, however, is exceeding deceptive. So, since thatched churches are unusual, to say the least of it, and I can find no allusion to thatched churches in Norfolk, I am content to believe this was a case of optical illusion. The two structures were of a rare charm in that golden glow, notwithstanding, and the probability is that they were at Barsham. Is this word "probability" too audacious? At least, it is candid and prudent. Motorists know full well that too many halts—and goodness knows we had stopped often enough that day—are a weariness of the flesh; that it is not practicable to consult a large scale map *en voyage*; that one must often be contented to think and to say, "That is a sweetly pretty place" (or a fine hall, or a striking church, as the case may be); "I wonder what it is," and to try to locate it afterwards. One must often be in the position of a visitor to a garden of roses, yet uncertain, rosarian although he may be, as to the exact name of this or that rose. It does not really matter. The rose is beautiful. The fatal error is to give it a name when one is in doubt. In the same way it would be suicidal to say that this pretty place was Barsham, because it may not have been, though Barsham is quite close in any case; and it has a round tower to its church, which seems to be imprinted on my memory in this instance. If Barsham it was, then the parsonage is a rectory, and it was the birthplace of Nelson's mother, Caroline Suckling, a daughter of a very famous Norfolk House.

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Now the wide valley of the Waveney came again into full view on the left, a glorious prospect, and Beccles faced us. Approached from the westward on a glorious April afternoon, Beccles produced an impression absolutely and completely opposite to that which it left in January when we came to it from the southward in dull and chilly air. Shall an apology be tendered for the first mention of Beccles in these pages? Shall it be made needless by ruthless excision? Of a surety neither is the right course to take. The first impression was faithful, and it has been found impossible to convince those who shared it that a good word can be said truthfully for Beccles. The second is faithful also, and both are true. Fortunately it is possible to quote the opinion and the words of one who is a master of descriptive English. First of the view from the Bungay vineyard Mr. Rider Haggard says: "I have travelled a great way about the world in my time and studied much scenery, but I do not remember anything more quietly and consistently beautiful than this view over Bungay Common seen from the Earl's vineyard, or, indeed, from any point of vantage on its encircling hills. For the most part of the year the plain below is golden with gorse, but it is not on this alone that the sight depends for beauty, or on the green of the meadows and the winding river edged with lush marshes that in spring are spotted with yellow marigolds and purple with myriads of cuckoo flowers. They all contribute to it, as do the grazing cattle, the gabled distant roofs, and the church spires, but I think that the prospect owes its peculiar charm to the constant changes of light which sweep across its depths. At every season of the year, at every hour of the day, it is beautiful, but always with a different beauty. Of that view I do not think that any lover of Nature could tire, because it is never quite the same."



BECCLES FROM THE WAVENEY

Mr. Haggard, therefore, is clearly not afraid to match Norfolk scenery against any of the restful kind on the face of the globe; but we see soon that even this view of Bungay Common and Waveney is not to his mind the best. "Had the builders of this house where I write (Ditchingham House), for instance, chosen to place it four hundred yards further back, as they might very easily have done, it would have commanded what I believe to be the finest view in Norfolk, since from that spot the eye travels not only over the expanse of Bungay Common and its opposing slopes, but down the valley of the Waveney to Beccles town and tower. But it would seem that in the time of the Georges the people who troubled their heads about beautiful prospects were not many. The country was lonely then, and the neighbourhood of the Norwich road had more attractions than any view. Along that road passed the coaches, bringing a breath of the outer world into the quiet village, and the last news of the wars; also, did any member of the household propose to travel by them, it was easy for the men-servants to wheel his luggage in a barrow to

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the gate."

For my own part I deprecate comparisons of scenery, for which there appears to be no true basis, believing that the real secret of its enjoyment is to possess a catholic taste and a receptive mind in these matters. It is enough to say, and to feel, that the scenery of these parts is exceeding lovely, that the distant view of Beccles and its church, on that proud brow dominating the placid plain of marsh and meadow and river is, in a single word, divine, and that Mr. Haggard has analysed the charms of all this landscape with Pre-Raphaelite accuracy. To admire, to be compelled to understand why one admires, are pleasant and profitable. To institute comparisons is unsatisfying and unnecessary.

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From Beccles to Lowestoft is any easy run which we have taken before. This time we saw the eastern end of Oulton Broad more plainly than the last. It seemed tripper-haunted and bar-tainted, and it had the effect of rather setting us against the Broads. The preliminary prejudice was strengthened somewhat by reference to Mr. Walter Rye. "It is painful for one who has known and loved the Broads as long as I have, in common honesty, to say that their charms have been grossly exaggerated of late. To read some of the word-painting about them you would think that you had only to leave Yarmouth and sail up the North River to get at once into a paradise of ferns, flowers and fish, where you could not fail to fill your basket or bag; or to see, at all events, myriads of wild birds of the rarest sorts in the air, shoals of fishes in the water, and any quantity of rare water plants on the bank. The first few miles will effectually disillusionize any stranger who has been taking in the *Swiss Family Robinson* sort of rubbish referred to above, for he will be disgusted with the very muddy flint walls of a tediously winding river dragging itself along through a flat uninteresting marshy country, varied only by drainage mills in various stages of dilapidation, and by telegraph poles. Even when at last Yarmouth Church finally disappears, after having come into view about a dozen times through the windings, and the river wall with its rats and dirt changes into the regular river scenery, he will see nothing particularly pretty." Now Mr. Rye is a Norfolk man *pur sang*. The name has been known in East Anglia since Eudo de Rye came over with the Conqueror—he was the same Eudo Dapifer, or high steward, whom we met at Colchester. Mr. Rye has Norfolk lore and antiquities at his fingers' ends; he is most clearly and unquestionably a true lover of his native county. This douche of cold water coming so unexpectedly from him, quenched effectually for the moment the flickering flame of a desire to stretch a point by including a run or two on the Broads in a motor-boat among the little adventures legitimately within the scope of my title. But the flame of desire rose again later, especially when the car hove in sight of a better Broad than at Oulton, and with the view of that sheet of water came the thought that, luckily, the tastes of men are not identical—else every pleasure would be so crowded as to be deprived of most of its joy, and that many men have waxed exceeding rapturous over the very Broads of which Mr. Rye has not a good word to say. So later a little—not so much as I could wish—is said about this strange and peculiar district.

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Now we were in Lowestoft a second time, in beautiful weather too, and we went slowly up all sorts of streets and a parade, and even on to some sand hills in order to see Lowestoft from a good many points of view. The result, it must be confessed, was the very opposite to a desire to revisit Lowestoft, especially South Lowestoft. True it was before the season, and Lowestoft, which lives on herrings and holiday-keepers, exporting the first and importing the second, doubtless presents a scene more gay when the esplanade is crowded with girls in pretty frocks and men in clean flannels, when the really splendid sands are thronged with happy children. Still most of the houses are so painfully modern and, so to speak, raw, most of them also built for so manifest a purpose that the legends "Furnished Lodgings," or "Apartments," or "Board and Residence," are surely superfluous, that it fails to attract a person of only moderately fastidious taste.

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There were scores of houses there recalling my one and only experience of a boarding-house. In each of these houses I could conjure up the replica of that terrible evening meal of many years ago; could see the housewife, obese but anxious, cringing to the guests, but with the eye of a dragon for the delinquencies of the harassed handmaid; the daughters, in crushed white frocks and cheap bangles, pertly and persistently garrulous; the all too affable and white-bearded father of the family, assuming the airs of an open-handed host when all the time his wife was wondering secretly whether the flabby fish would "go round," and I, equally secretly, was trying to guess whether the white-bearded old loafer with the generous air, but the niggardly carving-knife, had ever tried to do any honest work in his life.

Leaving Lowestoft for Yarmouth by the same road as before, we felt a sense of relief and with it a glorious consciousness of well-being. An hour or two of daylight still remained; we had been so long without stopping, otherwise than by our own will, that we felt as if we could go on for ever; the sky was clear, and we had not had enough, nor half enough, of travelling. A moon was due early that evening. It was even visible in the sky already, giving faint white promise of silvern glory to come. We had not ordered beds for the night anywhere. How would it be to skip afternoon tea, push on through Yarmouth for Norwich, dine there at the "Maid's Head," and consult our inclination as to proceeding by moonlight, perhaps to Wells, perhaps even to Lynn? It would, indeed, be very well, and in this mood we glided easily on to Yarmouth. This ancient capital of the herring-trade pleased us more, as we poked our noses and the bonnet of our car into various byways, than we had been pleased at Lowestoft. (These "we's," by the way, represent no editorial assumption, no false modesty about speaking in the first person, but simply a fourfold consensus of opinion.) Yarmouth pleased the more because it was and is manifestly a port. The smell of the herring is there, of course; the serried rows of steam-trawlers along the quay suggest

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that this herring fishery is a long way from being so picturesque a business as it was. Still Yarmouth strikes one as an honest, workaday place doing a good trade, and not at all ashamed of it. Yarmouth combined with "Leistocke"—Lowestoft probably—to contribute "1 shippe and one pinnace" to the fleet which defeated the Armada; and surely there is something of an Elizabethan ring about an early acrostic of unknown date, addressed by somebody—the Nymph of Yarmouth, perhaps—to its people:

Y-ou, the inhabitants of Mee, [faire towne]
A-dorned with riches both from sea and land,
R-eason you have on knees for to fall downe
M-agnifying God, for all comes from his hand,
O-ver you all his works and mercies are,
U-nto his children doth he give to eate
T-he fyshe in sea, whatever the land doth beare,
H-ym therefore do yee praise as is right meete.

This is culled from the invaluable *Norfolk and Norwich Notes and Queries*, as is the following string of verses by Taylor, "the Water Poet"—the description is given just shortly like this, as one might say "Shakespeare, the dramatist"—who visited the town in 1622 and found it:

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A towne well fortifide
Well-governed, with all nature's wants supplied;
The situation in a wholesome ayre,
The building (for the most part) sumptuous and fayre,
The people content, and industrious, and
With labour makes the sea enrich the land.

A sound account of Yarmouth this is, and, by the quality of the versification, an ample justification for those persons who hear now for the first time of "Taylor, the Water Poet," and feel no inclination to ransack the British Museum for further examples of his poesy.

Hard by is Caister-by-Yarmouth, formerly supposed to have been a Roman fortress, but on quite insufficient evidence. At best, according to Mr. Haverfield, it was never more than a Roman village; and Mr. Haverfield knows. That red-brick tower of Caister Castle, however, reminds us of the *Paston Letters*, already mentioned and one of the most ancient collections of private letters ever given to the public to be a mirror of life in the days of long ago. The castle was built by "that renowned knight and valiant soldier" Sir John Falstolf, who died in 1459. Sir John was not only a hard fighter, but also clearly a man of extended property. He had land so far off as Dedham, close to the Suffolk boundary of Essex, the Dedham that Constable painted, and we find him complaining once, "*Item*, Sir John Buck parson of Stratford fished my stanks at Dedham and helped to break my dam, destroyed my new mill and was always against me at Dedham." This complaint was made to John Paston, afterwards Sir John Paston, then Sir John Falstolf's steward, agent as we should say now, and residing in his employer's castle. The employer died; the agent, upon what title the letters do not make it quite clear, continued to hold the castle, on which his wife Dame Paston lived while he followed the practice of the law in London even to the judicial bench. Something has been said of these letters before, but there are points to be added.



YARMOUTH FROM BREYDON

The early-printed volumes, stately and calf-bound, are a luxury to read, and in spite of Sir John Fenn's omissions they contain all manner of curiosities, the best of them perhaps being a letter written by one of the young Pastons in 1467, from Eton, where he was at school. In it he shows anxiety about a consignment of figs and raisins, promised but not arrived, discusses the fortune of a young lady recently met whom he thinks of marrying, and says to his brother: "And as for hyr

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bewte juge you that when ye see hyr yf so be that ye take y^e laubore and specialy beolde hyr handys for and if it be as is tolde me sche is dysposyd to be thyke." (Here, by the way, is an example of Sir John Fenn's weakness as an editor, since, the original sentence being innocent of stops save at the end, he places a comma after "hands," and after "be" and another after "me," thus making his own unnecessary translation far more obscure than the original.) It is worth while to remember that Eton College had at this time been open for twenty-five years only, was in fact quite a new school, and that the headmaster was William Barber.

It was during this run by a circuitous route from Caister-by-Yarmouth to Acle and Norwich, and when the wide sheet of Filby Broad smiled on either hand, that the feeling of opposition to Mr. Rye's view of the Broads grew strong. That magnificent stretch of water appealed with a strength almost irresistible to one for whom sailing was, before motoring came into existence, the most perfect of pleasures; and although circumstances, and circumstances only, tendered resistance possible, it seems but right to glance at the Broads, to say what they and the country around them are like, and how, in the opinion of one fairly well versed in watermanship, they might best be enjoyed. There is a stock delimitation of the Broad District. Draw a line from Happisburgh to Norwich, another line from Lowestoft to Norwich, and the rough triangle formed by those lines and the sea shall be the Broads District. Really the southern side of the triangle is drawn much too low on the map. Except Oulton Broad and Lake Lothing, which are close to Lowestoft, and also a long way from the other Broads, all the Broads, including Breydon Water, would be included in a triangle having a line from Norwich to Gorleston for its southern boundary. They are Filby, Ormsby, Burgh, and Rollesby, all connected and covering no less than six hundred acres between them; Hickling, Heigham, Horsey, and Marlham Broads, Hickling the finest of them all; and Irstead and Barton; and each group is approached by its own river. Now, travel by motor-car is not recommended in this district, for it is much too flat to be enjoyable. Since that is not recommended, nothing is said about the churches, although they are of some interest; for so long as men and women remain what they are, they will not stop to study relics of antiquity, unless they are very exceptional indeed, when travelling by boat. Nor are they in the least more likely to linger in this way when voyaging by motor-boat than when using a sailing-boat. But shall we, voyaging in the spirit, use either sailing-boat or motor-boat, in the ordinary acceptation of the latter term. In truth, neither is suggested, but rather a compromise. Candour compels the admission that, knowing by sight, and in some cases from personal experience, most of the types of motor-boat built in Great Britain, I cannot recall one of them which, being roomy enough for comfort, would not draw too much water to be serviceable. In fact, if one could rely on the wind, a sailing vessel of one of the types which have been evolved in the district to meet its needs would really be preferable. Elsewhere than in these pages I should certainly take it, and enjoy it vastly. But what I might take in these pages, and what would be much better than either, would be one of those big flat-bottomed sailing craft with auxiliary motor-engines, of which one may see some at English exhibitions, but many more at the annual exhibition in Paris. With them you can really sail, when there is a wind; and, without a breeze, you are independent. As for the joy of it, so long as there is wind to fill the sails, the mere act of dashing through the water and gliding over it, the very sound of the water, the sense of absolute control that comes to him who holds the tiller and trims the sails to meet every need, are enough, without worrying over scenery. Moreover, the wide flatness of the Broads District, the rare buildings rising as from a lake, have a special charm of their own. As for the sport, from all that I can learn it is largely a thing of the past so far as duck and wildfowl are concerned. All the same, it is a bad mistake to omit the Broads, and one which, *experto crede*, the tourist in East Anglia regrets deeply when it is irretrievable. However, there is no doubt I made it, but happily hardly less doubt that, if I had not made it, the results could hardly have been relevant.

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On, then, we went to Norwich by way of Caister, not as before through Acle, and dined at the "Maid's Head," as on our last visit, and admired the ancient hotel and the red waistcoat of the head waiter as much as ever; but afterwards, instead of seeing something of the famous city by night, we pushed on towards Cromer on the high road by moonlight. That is not the best way to see the country of course, and it would be sheer hypocrisy (which happens to be unnecessary) to say anything in detail of the normal aspect of the places passed, or of their associations if they had any. Still, of all kinds of travelling yet tried by me, it was emphatically the most delightful. The air was very transparent and not too cool, the moon bathed the landscape, which was fairly free from hills, there was little traffic on the roads save here and there a farmer jogging home in his dog-cart from Norwich market, the acetylene lamps were doing their duty nobly (which is by no means always their custom), we felt as if we should like to go on all night. At Cromer certainly we would not stop. We would make the coast there and skirt the sea by moonlight, certainly so far as Wells-next-Sea, possibly so far as Hunstanton. All things went merrily as marriage bells, the car sped smoothly as a soaring albatross, silently as death itself. But stay, what was that? A sharp little report, like the crack of a miniature rifle, was heard from below. It was not a tire again; that was sure; we knew by heart every noise that a failing tire could make. A little farther the car went quite well—Cromer was now some five miles distant—and then the noises began again in quick and *staccato* succession. In another environment they might have reminded us of a *feu de joie*; to our present predicament no words could have been more completely inappropriate. What was the trouble? Was it something wrong with the ignition? "No," said our philosophic friend at the wheel, "it is not ignition. There is one of the blessings of experience. A little time ago I should have wasted time in fiddling with the ignition; now I know it is not that; and I know there is nothing to be done to-night. There is no strainer fixed to the tank in this car; the good man who refilled for us at Norwich used no strainer; and some grit has got into the petrol. To find it I must first put out all lights and then go right back, piece by piece, from the carburettor

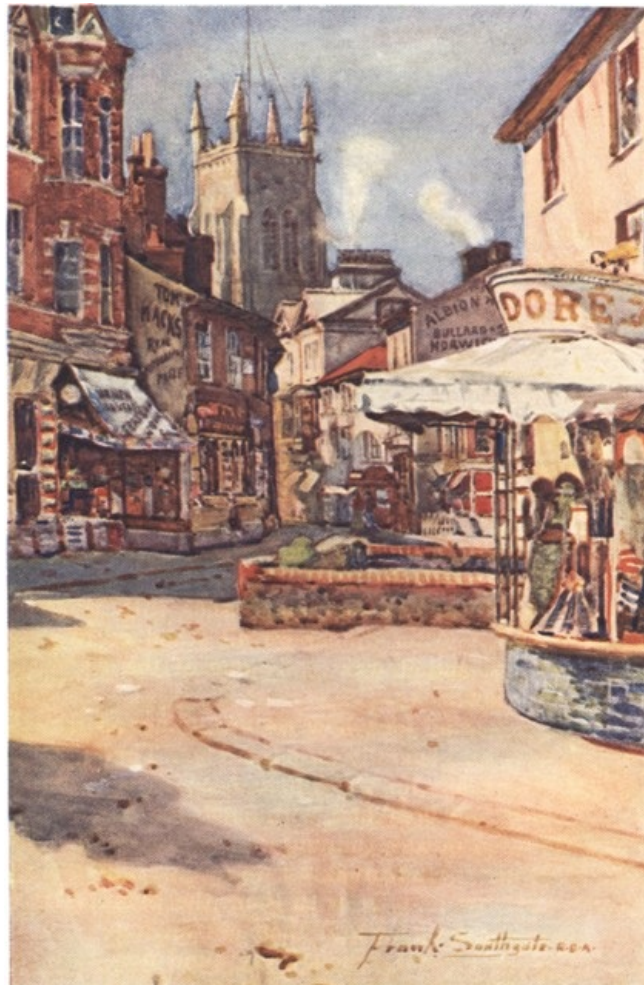
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backwards, until I can discover the obstacle. That is impossible in the dark. We must bear the noise and push on, if we can, to the hotel at Cromer. Possibly the foreign matter, whatever it is, may have dissolved by the morning." So, seeing from excellent example, that misfortune faced with a smile loses three-quarters of its annoyance, we went on, at quite a good pace too, sometimes silently for a hundred yards, sometimes with loud reports as of a gun at the covert side, sometimes with spluttering as of boys' crackers on the 5th of November. But we laughed at them all and won our way to Cromer, won our way too up the steep and sinuous hill that leads to the Links Hotel. There we had good fortune indeed. The hotel had been opened that day only after the winter of sleep and desolation; a huge fire roared in the ample hall; belated guests were none the less welcome in that, so far as we could see, there were but two other guests, golfers both, in that vast hotel. Had we come a night earlier our fate had been bad indeed. The hotel, judged by bed and breakfast, seemed to me of the first order of merit. The charges, compared with those of the "Angel" at Bury, seemed high. Still, it was more "replete with every modern luxury" than the "Angel"; it possessed bathrooms, for example, which are indispensable to the motorist, and it was a very present help in trouble. Such was our view the next morning, when the inevitable bill, not a very big one after all, having regard to the class of the hotel, was presented.

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Other things also came to mind that following morning, a morning of gauzy mist not obscuring the view, even lending enchantment to some of it, and promising a fine day. Some of them were obvious. The position of the hotel, looking down from a commanding height on town and sea, was perfect for prospect and for bracing air; the golf-links, close by, were an undeniable attraction to the large army of men and women who have yielded to the seductions of that most fascinating game. It would have been unreasonable to expect low charges; but all the same, the contrast between this bill and that paid at Bury was a little stronger than it ought to be in a well-regulated country. Other things were not so immediately obvious, since for some it was the wrong season, and others were hidden in pleasant and well-remembered books. We were in the heart of Poppyland, concerning which Mr. Clement Scott and others raved, but it was too soon for the poppies—poor Dan Leno's "Red, Red, Poppies," now to be heard only on the gramophone—to be on view. It was, however, not difficult to conjure them up in imagination, having seen them before all over those sandy uplands in the Runton direction. They are very pretty beyond doubt; they add glorious lakes of colour to a rather monotonous landscape, but they mean poor and sandy land, and that (although it does not matter to the motorist, unless he happens to own some of it, and to be unable to let it for building) spells dust in dry weather, and lots of it too.



CHURCH STREET, CROMER

Is Cromer a choiceworthy place in which to spend a summer holiday? The answer, not perhaps the answer which appears at first to be given, lies in or under this extract from *The Gurneys of Earlham*. Mr. Hare began by saying, "A picture of the summer family life at Cromer, much like that of the present day, is given in the following letter." It is one from Richenda Gurney to Elizabeth Fry—the Elizabeth Fry, good angel of gloomy Newgate Prison, of course.

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"Cromer, September 8, 1803.—Our party is now complete, as John continues with us, and the Buxtons arrived yesterday; it was extremely pleasant to us, seeing them both again, particularly Fowell; their being here will add very much to our pleasure, as there is a suitability between us and the Buxtons which always makes it pleasant for us to be together. Our time here is spent in a way that exactly suits the place and the people. All are left in perfect liberty to do as they like all day, or to form any engagement. Yet the party is so connected that hardly a day passes but some plan is fixed for us all to meet. When all are met it is an uncommonly pretty sight, such a number of young women, and so many, if not pretty, very nice-looking. I wish thee could have seen us the other afternoon. Sally gave a grand entertainment at the Hall, where everybody met—the ladies almost all dressed in white gowns and blue sashes, with nothing on their heads. After dinner we all stood on a wall, eighteen of us, and it was really one of the prettiest sights I ever saw.

"To give thee an idea how we are going on, I will tell thee how we generally pass the day. The weather since we came has on the whole been very fine; so imagine us before breakfast, with our troutbecks [hats] on and coloured gowns, running in all directions on the sands, jetty, etc. After breakfast we receive callers from the other houses, and fix with them the plans for the day; after this, we now and then get an hour's quiet for reading and writing, though my mind has been so much taken up with other things, that I have found it almost impossible to apply to anything seriously. At eleven we go down in numbers to bathe and enjoy the sands, which about that time look beautiful: most of our party and the rest of the Cromer party come down, and bring a number of different carriages, which have a very pretty effect. After bathing, we either ride on horseback or take some pleasant excursion or other. I never remember enjoying the sea so much, and never liked Cromer a quarter so well. Some of us continually dine out, whilst the others receive company at home.... John has been a great addition to our party. I hope he has enjoyed himself; we have had two or three most merry days since he came. The day before yesterday we spent at Sherringham, wandering about the woods and sketching all the morning. Every one met at a beautiful spot for dinner, with three knives and forks and two or three plates between twenty-six people. All manner of games took place after dinner, which John completely entered into and seemed to enjoy as much as any of the party. We completed our day by a delightful musical evening. Miss Gordon, our old Cromer friend, came to tea: she played and sang to us all the evening in a wonderful style. John goes away on Sunday; he stays over to-night to be at a dance which some very agreeable people who are at Cromer—Mr. and Mrs. Windham—are going to give, and which, I think, must be very pleasant."

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"Could anything be more simply delightful? What can the man mean by hinting that the answer to the question whether Cromer is a choiceworthy place for a summer holiday is not plainly to be read on the face of this artless letter?" Such, it is easy to imagine, would be the question asked if the early Victorian practice continued, if somebody read these pages aloud, with pauses for comment and criticism, while ladies of various ages embroidered or contrived trousers for unwilling heathens to wear as a cover for their natural nakedness and as a testimony of recently acquired Christianity. My dear Madam, as Thackeray might have said, pause for a moment and reflect. Are you a Gurney, a Fry, a Buxton? Do you bear any of the other names, perfectly well known, which are a password to this most admirable and worthy society? Read also what Mr. Walter Rye has to say on the same topic. Pray note that the letter is of 1803, but that Mr. Hare's book, published in 1895, says that the picture of 1803 would serve very well for a picture of the present day. Have you ever tried, as a stranger, a summer holiday at a seaside place which has been frequented by the same families for a few years, let alone a place to which the same families have resorted for generations, as is the case at Cromer and in its vicinity? Or, again, have you ever, being a member of such a society, known what it is to see new families discover the oasis which seemed your very own, and what have been your feelings towards those new families? Have you not in the first case felt uncomfortable, a goat among sheep, in the second case perceived at once that the new-comers were of goat-like nature? In all this vivid letter there are but two allusions to persons outside the charmed circle, Miss Gordon and the Windhams. Miss Gordon was clearly a Cromer institution, and it is probable to the verge of certainty, if only from the name, that the Windhams were a Norfolk family. Less than ten years before "William Windham, the statesman and darling of the county" had distinguished himself, when stoned during an election at Norwich, by jumping out of his carriage and collaring his assailant. He was the same William Windham who quelled a mutiny in the local militia by "seizing the leader and thrashing two of his followers." Such conduct was not, perhaps, entirely to the mind of the Gurneys and their friends, but, for all that, the chances are that this Mr. and Mrs. Windham were kinsfolk of one who was no man of peace at any price.

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Cromer seems to me on a priori grounds and, if the truth may be told, "from information received" also, to be entirely the place for the members of a justly respected circle, whose title to it is clear and not to be begrudged, but a place in which a stranger to that circle is, as the common saying goes, "out of it." It is emphatically a good place for a golfer; but otherwise, all along this piece of the coast, there is precious little for the ordinary man or woman to do. There is the sea of course, but the coastline is too regular and the sea too open to provide that variety of scenery which gives to little pleasure cruises their chief pleasure. Also, of course, there are the roads, upon which the motorist may take his pleasure, and some of them pass through or near places attractive in the present as they were in the past, nay, even more attractive, since to see them stir up the memories of the past. But two things must be said. A seaside place, as a centre for motoring, walking or bicycling, is by its very essence one-sided or even less. Lay a pen across the map horizontally at Cromer, and it is plain that there is no way for the motorist towards more than half the points of the compass. As for the coast scenery, of which we shall shortly take a considerable sample, it is full of individual character, the kind of scenery one may visit with

pleasure once or twice or even three times, but, to a man not of Norfolk blood, it seems no more than that. Such, certainly, is the final impression left by the coast drive to the west of Cromer, and in Cromer itself are far too many new houses. To the eastward, especially if the coast be left behind, the scenery is better, possessed of, if it may be so put, more abiding charm. To the westward it is more strange, weird and individual than beautiful, and its weirdness is of the kind inspiring to melancholy, not to awe. This summary of opinion, however, is in the nature of an anticipation. It shall be justified piecemeal so soon as we are fairly under way so that a new chapter can be begun.

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Let this chapter close with the last unhappy episode in a supremely happy tour, with which episode it would be discordant to mix the undiluted pleasure of the next chapter. We started, for us, rather early; that is to say we breakfasted at half-past seven and left the hotel door slightly after eight. All down the zigzag hill into the town the machinery said nothing at all. There was no reason why it should make any demonstration, since it had no work to do. Once called upon to work, however, the car soon began to crackle and to splutter again. There was no room for doubt what was the matter. Foreign matter had found its way into the petrol tank and beyond; and it was hard stuff, genuine grit, undissolved by a night's soaking. Whether the ostler at the "Maid's Head" or he of Bury St. Edmunds was to blame, and in justice to the former it must be said that it might have been either, the nuisance was beyond question. It was Sunday morning, too; it was hardly likely that the repair shops would be of any assistance, at any rate so early in the morning, and, empty as the streets were then, it would not have been seemly to begin in them, at about the hour of the earliest service, an operation which might very likely consume an hour or more. So up the hill on the far side of the town we crawled—for Cromer lies in the hollow of a cup—snorting and grunting not a little, in sickly fashion and with much trouble, as the Latin exercises used to put it, and out on to the sandy road, leading between sandy and wind-swept fields, towards Runton.

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There, thanking our stars that few wayfarers were astir, we stopped, and Mr. Johnson, cheerfully remarking that those who could be of no help, because there is only room for one big man face upwards under a car, had better go for a little walk and see some of the country, addressed himself with a smile and a half-groan to his odious task with its infinite possibilities in the way of black and viscous lubricant dropping into his hair or on to his face. In this posture I left him, his legs alone visible, for a little tour of inspection; but there was no temptation to prolong it.

A walk of a hundred yards or two along a bank, covered sparsely with harsh and wiry grass, and dividing two fields, both equally poverty-stricken, brought me to the crumbling edge of a sandy cliff, not high enough to impose by its grandeur, not rugged enough to please by its outline. Below was a beach of sand, beyond that the smooth, grey, hazy sea with not a vessel of any kind visible on its sluggish surface. To the westward was Runton, a conglomeration of commonplace brick houses, glaringly new, obviously intended for lodgings. A windmill and its house were the only buildings in any way calculated to give satisfaction to the eye. From there it roved on to undulating hills, probably of sand, as indeed was everything else except the raw houses of Runton. Rambling, in this Poppy Land *sans* poppies, seemed weary, flat, stale and unprofitable. A return to the car revealed Mr. Johnson still in the back position, as riflemen say, and sundry stray bits of the car and tools lying on the road by his side. A glance at him, obtained by crouching, showed him to be much hotter, much dirtier than before, more smilingly determined than ever, if possible, to make nothing of his personal trouble. He was not so much a good man fighting against adversity as a master of science wrestling with a problem he knew that he could solve in time: and solve it with triumph he did. A few minutes more and he half wriggled half rolled into the open road, dusty, but jubilant, holding a little piece of pipe some five inches long and of infinitesimal bore in his hand. "Here is the little brute," he said, with a gentle smile—and then made his one mistake of the day, and it cost him dear. Just touching one end of the pipe with his lips, and holding his hollowed palm by the other end, he blew one breath. Out came the obstruction, hardly bigger than a snapdragon seed, surely the tiniest little imp of a particle that ever hampered the circulation of a mighty machine. The mechanical trouble was over for ever, or at any rate for that expedition. A very few minutes sufficed to prepare the car for the road again, and she accomplished over two hundred miles more that day without, so to speak, turning a hair. So did the man who cured her, because he knew her complaint to a nicety; but he was in my company all that day until seven or eight in the evening and the thoroughly abominable taste of petrol was in his mouth to the end. In fact

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You may rinse with raw brandy your mouth if you will,
But the reek of the petrol will cling to it still.

Such is a valuable little piece of experience gained by proxy. The morals are three and obvious. First, every tank or funnel should be fitted with an irremovable strainer. Secondly, if this be not so, superintend refilling yourself and see that a temporary strainer is used. Thirdly, if grit does get into the petrol through omission of these precautions, and blowing a pipe becomes necessary, wrap up the mouth of that pipe with care, or preferably get somebody else, and best of all an idle bystander, to do the blowing for you. For this service, if rendered by a boy, a shilling is a sufficient recompense, and you may depart at your leisure; but if it be done by a man, especially if he be large and rough, give him half a crown, and stand not on the order of your going.

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BLAKENEY—A CHARACTERISTIC LANDSCAPE

CHAPTER XII

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A PRIORY—GREAT HOUSES AND THE FENS

Troubles over—Road viâ Lower Sheringham, Salthouse, Cley-next-Sea, Blakeney, Stiffkey and Wells-next-Sea—Impressive desolation—Wells—Binham—The building and making of Holkham—"Coke of Norfolk"—The Cokes—Walsingham—Remains and history—The Shrine—Ecclesiastical trickery and temporal gain—Froude quoted—Ceremonial at the shrine—Its miraculous transportation—Houghton—The Walpoles—Sir Robert's pictures—Horace Walpole and Strawberry Hill—The mad Lord Orford—His ruling passion—Stag "four-in-hand"—The hounds pursue—Motor-cars many in these parts—Fakenham—Lynn—Glanced at in the rain—The Fens—Kinship of the Useful and the Romantic—The beauty of the Fens actually, and enhanced by imagination—The great reclaimers—Resistance of the old Fenmen—Charles Kingsley quoted—"The inspiration of God"—To Ely and Cambridge—The "Bull" unready—Homeward bound and a narrow escape—Motor-cyclist towing a girl on a bicycle—A wicked practice—Value of care in motorist.

From this point we never looked back, as the saying goes, mechanically. Our troubles were over, and we looked forward to our drive along the north coast of Norfolk with intense eagerness. It is a pleasure in retrospect now, but it was not quite the same sort of pleasure as had been anticipated in previous topographical innocence. The road we had taken designedly on leaving Cromer, when it was determined to follow the sea as closely as possible, left Felbrigg and Sheringham, justly beloved of artists, on one side, passed through Lower Sheringham, Weybourne, Salthouse, Cley-next-Sea, Blakeney, and Stiffkey to Wells-next-Sea. They were not in themselves particularly interesting villages, although I remember that at one of them—I think it was Weybourne—to which the road winds inwards from the sea a little, and where there is some shelter of a hill from the salt winds, there were fine trees about the church, and another little church, on the left-hand side of the road at Blakeney, had one full-sized tower at the west end and another funny little tower at the east end. The prevailing impression left by the whole drive is of impressive desolation. The road, dead flat for the most part, but not half bad in point of surface, runs as close to the sea as its makers dared to lay it. On the right, as one journeys westward, are wide stretches, half sea and half marsh; on the left is a range of low hills. Sometimes it is close at hand, at others it recedes a little, and the space between the road and the hills is again a species of half marsh. The streams, running parallel to the road often, have a look of being partly tidal. The sides of the road are guarded by a fence, the bottom part of which clearly shows that at spring tides, especially if they be aggravated by the wind, the sea must flow over the road also; else whence came that fringe of withered seaweed hanging round the bottom of the fence? Small wonder that the folk in these parts have preserved, in Cley-next-Sea and in Wells-next-Sea, the reminder that the sea is close at hand. It is with them always, threatening them, devouring their land, strewing their flat shore with wreckage. From Cley for some miles to the westward extends a bill of sandy land, not very high, enclosing a long lagoon, apparently very shallow, and the outlook over this lagoon, with the dreary ridge of land broken, if memory serves correctly, only by a lighthouse, is intensely and absolutely characteristic. One feels no sort of desire to see it again unless indeed it is, as by its appearance it well might be, a haunt of wildfowl worth shooting; but at the same time it is good to have seen it once in order to know what this scenery of the most remote and northerly district of Norfolk is like, and to realize the kind of life which its scanty population must lead. They live face to face with Nature in her sourest mood,

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Nature never majestic, except when the storms come from the northward, smiling but a hard smile when the sun shines. In fact, this is a stretch of land, when it is worthy of the name, dismal as the mind of man can conceive.

When you get to Wells-next-Sea, where the houses are plain but of some age, and there is a little port on a winding creek, the aspect of the country changes for the better; or rather it so changed for us, because we determined to give the coast up and to take the inland road viâ Fakenham and Flitcham for King's Lynn. For this route there was ample reason close at hand, in Holkham Hall, Walsingham, Binham Abbey, and Houghton, about all of which a good deal must needs be said with as little tedium, be it hoped, as possible. Before saying it, however, it may be as well to state that in another chapter, and that the last, King's Lynn will be treated as an imaginary centre for many little drives. Imagination, since it has happened to me often to stay at Lynn for many days together and to explore the surrounding country and roads, will not be severely taxed, and the method is adopted for the convenience of writer and reader. In this chapter we have before us the historic houses just named and, after them, the Fens from Lynn to Cambridge. These last we drive through in the early afternoon, taking in the character of them better than on any previous occasion. So the material for this chapter is at least ample. If we added to it Castle Rising, the birthplace of Nelson, the Sandringham country, divine in its kind, Hunstanton, Brancaster, and King's Lynn last of all, the chapter must run to unwieldy and intolerable length.

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At Binham we have part of the Benedictine abbey, enveloped in ivy and part still used as a church, a very fine piece of unspoiled Norman work. For Holkham, *Abbeys, Castles and Ancient Halls*, by Mr. John Timbs and Mr. Alexander Gunn, is a treasure-house of information. Holkham is Hœligham, "Holy Home," and it was the work of the famous Kent under the direction of Thomas Coke, Lord Leicester, who himself spent many years in Italy studying the works of Palladio. "Coke of Norfolk," as the Lord Leicester of George II's time was called, was emphatically a landowner who deserved to be magnificently housed. An inscription over the entrance to the Great Hall records the fact that "this seat, on an open, barren estate, was planned, planted, built, decorated and inhabited in the middle of the eighteenth century by Thomas Coke, Earl of Leicester." It naturally does not record the fact that the barren estate, for such it was, is now, mainly by virtue of Coke of Norfolk's sagacity in planting, one of the most nobly timbered to be found anywhere in the kingdom and a perfect paradise for game first and for those who shoot game later. In one respect the great Lord Coke's plans were changed, one might almost write providentially. It had been intended to build the outside of the Hall of Bath stone, but an earth was found in a neighbouring parish which produced bricks of much the same colour as Bath stone, but heavier and closer in texture. That was as it should be. Coke of Norfolk had bought much of the land and, by enclosing, cultivating and planting, had practically made it. It was part of the fitness of things that a "mansion of almost peerless magnificence, as far as its noble proportions, its gorgeous decorations, and its art and literary treasures" were concerned, should be built out of bricks baked out of Norfolk earth. The Hall stands in a spacious but level park, and a glimpse of it may be had from the road. In the middle is a great quadrangular block having, at each angle, a wing, 70 ft. by 60 ft., connected with the central block by a corridor. The wings are: the stranger's wing, the family wing, the chapel wing, and the kitchen wing. The library and the MSS. rooms are in the family wing; the gallery of statues and the state apartments are in the central block. This is 114 ft. by 62 ft., its most noble feature being the hall, suggested to Lord Leicester by Palladio's plan for a Court of Justice, and having a gallery round three sides of it. Of the pictures the most notable are Claude's Apollo and Marsyas in a landscape, and other landscapes, Vandykes, Poussins, a Raphael, and a Rubens. There is also a group of nineteen figures by Michael Angelo. The manuscripts are of great value and curiosity, and contain, amongst other things, the papers of the great Chief Justice. In fact, Holkham is, in itself, for its contents, and for the story of its creation, one of the most wonderful places in this marvellous England of ours; and that is why so much is here written concerning it in a book whose author is not at all eager to pry into the houses of other and greater men.

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Who were these Cokes who attained so much magnificence? That is a natural question. The name is first traceable in a deed of 1206, referring to a Coke of Didlington. From him descended Edward Coke, the commentator on Littleton, who was Attorney-General, Speaker of the House of Commons, and Chief Justice of the King's Bench in 1613. Oddly enough, from our modern point of view, it was after this that he was elected member for Buckinghamshire, and drafted and moved the Petition of Rights. No doubt he made a great deal of money himself; he acquired more by marrying first one of the Pastons, and after her death, the Lady Elizabeth Cecil, daughter of the first Earl of Exeter. Such was the real founder of the family, who bought, or acquired by inheritance, much of the existing Holkham estate. His grandson died unmarried, and the estate fell to a kinsman, Henry Coke, of Thorington. From him sprung Sir Thomas Coke, the first Earl of Leicester, whose son died in 1739, when the peerage became extinct. But the estate went to Sir Thomas Coke's nephew, Wenham Roberts, who naturally took the name of Coke, and also naturally called his son Thomas; and this son was "Coke of Norfolk," "the handsome Englishman," as he was called at Rome, in whose favour the peerage was most justly revived. It was due not so much to his magnificence as to his service to agriculture. "All the country from *Holkham* to *Houghton* was a wild sheep-walk," writes Arthur Young, "before the spirit of improvement seized the inhabitants; and this spirit has wrought amazing effects; for instead of boundless wilds and uncultivated wastes, inhabited by scarcely anything but sheep, the country is all cut up into enclosures, cultivated in a most husbandlike manner, richly manured, well-peopled, and yielding an hundred times the produce that it did in its former state. What has wrought these great works is the marling; for under the whole country run veins of a very rich kind, which they dig up, and spread upon the old sheep-walks, and then by means of inclosing they throw their farms into a

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regular course of crops, and gain immensely by the improvement." For this Coke of Norfolk was principally responsible, and for this his name deserves all honour.

At Walsingham the remains of the Priory are interesting: a magnificent door, a gateway, the walls, windows and arches of the refectory, a Norman arch with zigzag mouldings—the rest of the remains are later, Decorated and Perpendicular. But the record of the foundation and of the pilgrimages to the shrine, which was second only to Canterbury in importance, is much more entertaining. First the Chapel of the Virgin was founded by the widow of Richoldie, the mother of Geoffrey de Favraches. (Of course everybody knows all about them!) Then Geoffrey himself started on a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre, having previously executed a deed in which granted "to God and St. Mary, and to Edwy, his clerk," the chapel which his mother Richoldie had built at Walsingham, and other real property, to the intent that Edwy should establish a priory there. The supreme treasure was a relic, the alleged milk of the Virgin, purchased, as an inscription seen by Erasmus high upon a wall stated, from an old woman at Constantinople with an assurance that it was far superior to any other relic of the same kind, as it alone had been taken from the breast, the other having fallen to the ground first. It was enclosed in crystal and set in a crucifix. This, says the matter-of-fact Erasmus, occasionally looked like chalk, mixed with the white of eggs, and was quite solid. That the more pilgrims, the richer the better, might be attracted to visit this relic and to lay down their offerings, often very costly, it was stated by the monks that the Milky Way in the firmament pointed to Walsingham. So it did no doubt, so it does on occasion now, and to a lot of other places besides. "The Virgin and her Son, as they made their salute, also appeared to Erasmus and his friend, to give them a nod of approbation."

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The sentence last quoted, wherein the meaning is a great deal clearer than the construction, comes from Messrs. Timbs and Gunn. Let me place side by side with it another quotation from Froude's lecture on "Times of Erasmus and Luther." "The rule of the Church was, nothing for nothing. At a chapel in Saxony there was an image of a Virgin and Child. If a worshipper came in with a good handsome offering, the child bowed and was gracious; if the present was unsatisfactory it turned away its head, and withheld its favours till the purse-strings were untied again. There was a great rood or crucifix of the same kind at Boxley, in Kent, where the pilgrims went in thousands. This figure used to bow, too, when it was pleased; and a good sum of money was sure to secure its good will. When the Reformation came, and the police looked into the matter, the images were found to be worked with wires and pulleys. The German lady was kept as a curiosity in the cabinet of the Elector of Saxony. Our Boxley Rood was brought up and exhibited in Cheapside, and was afterwards torn to pieces by the people." No sort of disrespect towards the Roman Catholic religion is involved in recording this absolutely true statement of historical fact. The trick described was undoubtedly played upon pilgrims in Saxony and in Kent; whether it was justifiable from some points of view matters not at all. The Roman Catholic religion is a great truth, may conceivably be the most exact and precise truth, behind all this kind of thing. It is considerably more than likely that similar devices were employed at Walsingham. They may even have been employed by ecclesiastics otherwise blameless, for the rules of professional practice still occasionally justify strange conduct, or seem to justify it. But the evidence, if there was any, was destroyed at the Dissolution, when Thomas Cromwell took the sacred image away to Chelsea, and burned it. Henry VIII on this occasion, by the way, got some of his own back. He, too, like other kings and queens, native and foreign, had made the pilgrimage to Walsingham before his quarrel with Rome, and had walked the last four miles or so, from Barsham, barefooted. *Quære*, whether, when a king was on pilgrimage bent, the roads were spread with soft sand as they are now, with sand and gravel, when King Edward is going to make a progress in London. Henry gave an offering in the shape of a priceless necklace; but he secured it again in later life, and may even have given it to one of the wives, of whom, it may be remembered, he had several.

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WALSINGHAM PRIORY

An account of the ceremonies used, quoted again from Messrs. Timbs and Gunn, is not without interest. "The pilgrim who arrived at Walsingham entered the sacred precinct by a narrow wicket. It was purposely made difficult to pass, as a precaution against the robberies which were frequently committed at the shrine. On the gate in which the wicket opened was nailed a copper image of a knight on horseback, whose miraculous preservation by the Virgin formed the subject of one of the numerous legendary stories with which the place abounded. To the east of the gate, within, stood a small chapel, where the pilgrim was allowed, for money, to kiss a gigantic bone, said to have been the finger-bone of St. Peter. After this he was conducted to a building thatched with reeds and straw, inclosing two wells in high repute for indigestion and headaches; and also for the rare virtue of ensuring to the votary, within certain limits, whatever he might wish for at the time of drinking their water. The building itself was said to have been transported through the air many centuries before, in a deep snow; and as a proof of it, the visitor's attention was gravely pointed to an old bearskin attached to one of the beams. The 'Tweyne Wells,' called also 'the Wishing Wells,' an anonymous ballad speaks of:—

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A chappel of Saynt Laurence standeth now there
 Fast by, tweyne wallys, experience do thus and lore;
 There she (the widow) thought to have sette this chappel,
 Which was begun by our Ladie's Counsel.
 All night the wedowe permayning in this prayer,
 Our blessed Ladie with blessed minystrys,
 Herself being her chief artificer,
 Arrered this sayde house with Angells handys,
 And not only rered it but sette in there it is,
 That is twyne hundred feet more in distance
 From the first place folk make remembrance."

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Of a very truth, as Froude said, "The world is so changed that we can hardly recognize it as the same." Imagination retires baffled from the effort to picture kings and queens walking barefoot over primitive Norfolk roads, passing through a wild waste too, for Coke of Norfolk was not yet born, to go through these ceremonies and to present their gifts. Erasmus, with his tongue in his cheek, is easily conjured up; so are the robbers whom the shrine attracted. But why were there not any number of pilgrims in the sceptical mood of Erasmus? There seem to have been plenty of robbers.

We pass (the roads hereabout are flat as the sands of the sea, the land about them richly timbered, and there is nothing else to be said of them) from the ruins of a religious house to one indissolubly associated with the names of two men, each exceptionally worldly, each in his own singular way, and with that of one remarkably eccentric. Houghton Hall was built by Sir Robert Walpole from the designs of Colin Campbell, while the former was Prime Minister, and Ripley,

Heaven visits with a taste the wealthy fool,
And needs no rod but Ripley with a rule.

......*...*

So Ripley, till his destined space is filled,
Heaps bricks on bricks and fancies 'tis to build.

Pope, always bitter and not a little of a snob, was hardly likely to have a good word to say for an architect who had been a working carpenter. It is true, too, that Lady Hervey wrote in 1765: "I saw Houghton, which is the most triste, melancholy, fine place I ever beheld. 'Tis a heavy, ugly, black building, with an ugly black stone. The Hall, saloon, and gallery very fine; the rest not in the least so." Time, it may be, has given the stone mellowness; certain it is that Houghton now, in spite of a certain pretentiousness of Ionic columns, is really pleasing.

Of Houghton's most noted masters, the Walpoles, a few words must be said, but of two of them not many, for they are well known to all. The first Lord Orford was Sir Robert Walpole, the great Prime Minister who believed in letting well alone, in corruption as a method of Government, in the venality of all men, and in the collection of pictures. It is curious, but true, that this most sagacious statesman was, in a scholarly age, no scholar, and that this fastidious connoisseur of Art was, in a coarse age, exceptionally plain spoken and free-living. When the then Lord Townshend heard that Lord Orford was at Houghton he made a rule of leaving Rainham and Norfolk himself. The second Lord Orford was of no account. Of the third I shall write a little more here than of the fourth, because the eccentricities of the third are not so well known as are many of the details, whimsical rather than eccentric, of Horace Walpole, the fourth and last Lord Orford. [Pg 346]

Sir Robert Walpole collected pictures by Guido, Vandyke, Claude, Rubens, Rembrandt, Salvator Rosa, Teniers, Paul Veronese, Wouvermans, Titian, Poussin, Snyders—in a word, by most of the best of the old masters, and housed them in his majestic Norfolk home, girt by a park whose trees testify to this day to his skill in planting. Horace Walpole, who had loved Houghton in his youth, himself wrote in after life a catalogue of these pictures and a description of the apartments in which they hung. The first Lord Orford slept with his fathers—they had been Walpoles of Walpole in Marshland since the time of Richard I—and his son reigned in his stead. Meanwhile his youngest son Horace, of whom it has been suspected on good grounds that he was not truly the son of the Prime Minister, lived that curious life in that curious house, Strawberry Hill, details of which are known to many because they have passed into English literature. He was the best letter-writer of modern times, or of nearly modern times, and his eccentricities are easily forgiven. He could afford them by virtue of two sinecures for life which his all-powerful father had secured for him; and he appears to have been perfectly happy building and altering his toy palace, collecting all sorts of curios, writing the most charming letters to his lady friends, writing for the press also (and childishly vain of his work), and hardly dreaming that he might succeed to the estate and the title. Even when, after the death of the second earl, the property fell to his eccentric son, Horace Walpole hardly seems to me to have realized that he might some day succeed to the title and the estate. He was growing to be an old man. His grief over the sale of the celebrated gallery was not that of an expectant heir.

What of the third earl, who died without issue, and so left Horace Walpole to be the fourth and last Lord Orford? The world at large knows him as the madman who sold the first Lord Orford's unparalleled collection of pictures to Catherine of Russia. But he did many madder things than that for, commercially speaking, he did not make a bad bargain over the sale of the pictures, for which he received more than his father had given. In him the English love of sport ran to insane excess. Indeed it even brought him to his death. At a time when he was under restraint the date came when his greyhound Czarina was matched to run a course. Devoted to coursing as he had always been, he determined to be present and, with the cunning of a madman, he jumped out of a window while his attendant was out of the room, ran to the stable, saddled his favourite pony, a piebald, galloped to the scene of the match, refused to go home in spite of all entreaties, saw Czarina win, fell from his saddle, and died there and then. George, third earl, could not have died more appropriately, nor, from his own point of view, more happily. He was mad, of course, very mad indeed; but he was a thorough sportsman. Perhaps the maddest and at the same time most sporting thing he did was to train four stags to go four-in-hand. "He had reduced the deer to perfect discipline and, as he sat in his phaeton and drove the handsome animals, he, no doubt, fancied he was performing no inconsiderable achievement." If the writer of that pompous sentence tried to break four stags, or even a pair, to harness with his own hands, he would not have much doubt of the quality of the achievement; that is assuming he survived the effort. But the stag four-in-hand almost brought Lord Orford to a sporting death before his time. He was driving his strange team to Newmarket, where he was a familiar figure, when a pack of hounds came across the scent and gave chase in full cry. The sequel, except for Lord Orford, must have been simply paralytically funny. Picture it for a moment. Think of the stags, thoroughly panic-stricken, no longer trotting, but tearing along the road with huge bounds; of Lord Orford helpless on the box as the phaeton leapt and swayed; of the hounds racing behind and of the savage music of their cry. It was, it must have been, a sight for gods and men; and many men saw it; for the run ended in the yard of the "Ram" at Newmarket, where phaeton, stags, and noble driver [Pg 348]

disappeared into a barn and the doors were shut in the face of the clamouring pack. Surely this is the maddest, funniest true story that ever was told, and the oddest part about it is that Lord Orford was not then and there clapped into a madhouse. Yet one cannot help feeling a lurking regard for this mad sportsman. His foibles are more to the taste of some of us than the affectations of Horace Walpole.

By the road over which the mad Earl of Orford used to career with his extraordinary team, over which Horace Walpole doubtless drove when he left his beloved London and "Strawberry"—for so he called it "all short"—to fight an election at Lynn, we also drove in a chariot which, to the eighteenth-century Norfolkian, would have seemed just as strange as the phaeton and four stags would appear to us in the twentieth. The motor-car, however, attracts less attention in north-western Norfolk, perhaps, than in any other part of the kingdom; for at Sandringham are many motor-cars of many makes, and some there are at the Cottage also. This part of the country learned before others did the elementary truth that there is no essential connection between speed and peril, and it was good for automobilism that an object-lesson should have been given in this respect by the magnificent cars, Daimlers for the most part, of him whom the law regards as incapable of offence, because he is the spring and source of the law itself. Of this country of heather, bracken, fir and oak, of glorious gorse and of glowing rhododendrons, of the numerous acclivities and declivities, sufficient to give variety to the scene without trying the powers of any competent car, of its air, an incomparably sweet mixture of the breaths of the sea and of the moorland, little will be said at this moment, for the simple reason that, in the next and final chapter, I hope to be able to give an impression of its beauties at many times of the year, from the point of view of a frequent eye-witness.

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The whole distance from Wells to King's Lynn, by way of Fakenham, which was our way, is a generous thirty miles; but the going was so good and the roads were so clear that we entered the great square of the old-fashioned Lynn a little too early for luncheon, having regard to the fact that engagements in the world which we had put out of sight began to bulk rather large in the near future. The single town of any interest we passed through before reaching Lynn was Fakenham; and we agreed with Mr. Rye that it is "a particularly clean and pleasant market town, with several good old-fashioned inns, especially the 'Crown.'" That is to say the first statement is endorsed from experience; as to the second the responsibility rests with Mr. Rye. Here also, for those who care to halt, is a singularly fine church showing many a crowned "L" in stone to testify that Fakenham was once the head-quarters in Norfolk of the Duchy of Lancaster. As for Lynn, some of us had visited it before, one had sojourned in it long (but his tale is postponed), and time, as has been mentioned, began to press a little. Drifting on the roads, careless of where you shall eat or where sleep, is delightful, but for most of us it cannot go on indefinitely, and therein, probably, consists its chief charm. It is of the essence of a "treat," to use the good old word of childhood, that it should be more or less exceptional. So, at King's Lynn, we did but halt for a space at the "Globe" in the corner of the wide and cobbled square and, although a little rain began to fall, compel the new-comers to walk about a little, and look at the narrow streets, the estuary of the Ouse, and the Custom-house. The compulsion had better have been omitted, for Lynn with its streets empty of people, with the rain falling, and with the tide out, assuredly does not allure, and that was the state of things on this Sunday morning in April. In other circumstances, as it is hoped to prove ere long, Lynn and its people are much more attractive.

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So the halt was not prolonged and, the rain abating, we started on the drive of forty-five miles roughly for Ely and Cambridge. It took us through the heart of the East Anglian Fens, and the day was one in which the spirit of them entered into me, or perhaps I, having set my mind thereto, entered into their spirit. Of a truth the task was one presenting little difficulty, so far as the general mood was concerned. For me, at any rate, there has never been any real gulf between the useful and the romantic. To one nurtured at the foot of the mighty amphitheatre of the Penrhyn Slate Quarries, scooped out from the heart of a mountain, rising in purple tiers of Cyclopean scale, the work of man, so long as it be grand in outline and in purpose, has always seemed to possess an entrancing beauty of its own. Men live who find the Fens flat and uninteresting. They demand our compassion, by no means our censure or our scorn. One does not despise a blind man because he cannot see; and these men simply suffer from partial blindness, physical and mental. There is, beyond all question, a beauty of the Fens as they are, appealing to the eye alone; they had another beauty for the eye in their original state, original that is to say so far as human history reaches, and of the nature of that original beauty a miniature presentment may be seen still at Wicken Fen, which lies between the Isle of Ely and Newmarket Heath. Happy is the man or woman who can rejoice in both of these aspects of the Fenland. Happier still, because more intelligently charmed, are those who, while they travel through the rich cornland, following the banks of rivers whose waters run at a level higher than those of the surrounding fields, can picture to themselves the scene as it was before the skill and the courage of man made the good wheat grow where the reeds once waved, made firm pasture for sleek cattle out of the quagmire, caused domestic fowls to thrive in the sometime domain of the bittern and the heron. Men never tire of singing the praises of the Dutch who, by dogged courage and centuries of unrelaxing effort, made a country for themselves, a country to which they cling with a love passing the love of women. The conquest of the Fens, begun, so far as we know, by the Romans, was, in its way, an enterprise of equal nobility and courage, and Vermuyden, Francis, Duke of Bedford, and Rennie deserve credit great as any given to any Dutch engineer. The details are perhaps dull; they would certainly be out of place here; the result is grand, a colossal gain for humanity which can best be realized and valued, be admired most cordially and warmly, as one rolls along solid roads where the Fenman of old stalked gingerly on stilts.

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"Let us send over to Normandy for a fair white stone of Caen, and let us carve a tomb worthy of thy grand-parents."

"And what shall we write thereon?"

"What but that which is there already? 'Here lies the last of the English.'"

"Not so. We will write, 'Here lies the last of the old English.' But upon thy tomb, when thy time comes, the monks of Crowland shall write, 'Here lies the first of the new English; who, by the inspiration of God, began to drain the Fens.'"

Here is absolute truth of sentiment, and to say this is by no means to deny sympathetic appreciation of the dogged resistance offered by the Fenmen of many generations to those who rescued the Fens from the condition of a watery wilderness. Of course the Fenmen hated the very idea of the subjugation of the Marshland. Their feeling towards those who began the long and arduous work differed only in degree from that with which the savage inhabitants of a new country—new to us, that is to say—regard the advance of civilization. They were not savages, but they were hard men and hardy, for only the fittest survived the agues and the fevers, accustomed to a free out-door life, having its pleasures no less than its trials. Let me quote Kingsley:—

"Overhead the arch of heaven spread more ample than elsewhere, as over the open sea; and that vastness gave, and still gives, such cloudlands, such sunrises, such sunsets, as can be seen nowhere else within these isles. They might well have been star worshippers, those Gervii, had their sky been clear as that of the East; but they were like to have worshipped the clouds rather than the stars, according to the too universal law, that mankind worship the powers which do them harm, rather than the powers which do them good. Their priestly teachers, too, had darkened still further their notion of the world around, as accursed by sin and swarming with evil spirits. The gods and fairies of their old mythology had been transformed by the Church into fiends, alluring or loathsome, but all alike destructive to man, against whom the soldier of God, the celibate monk, fought day and night with relics, Agnus Dei, and sign of Holy Cross. And therefore the Danelagh men, who feared not mortal sword or axe, feared witches, ghosts, Pucks, Wills-o'-the-Wisp, Werewolves, spirits of the wells and the trees, and all dark, capricious and harmful beings whom their fancy called up out of the wild, wet, and unwholesome marshes, or the dark, wolf-haunted woods. For that fair land, like all things on earth, had its dark aspect. The foul exhalations of the autumn called up fever and ague, crippling and enervating, and tempting, almost compelling, to that wild and desperate drinking which was the Scandinavian's special sin. Dark and sad were those short autumn days, when all the distances were shut off, and the air reeked with foul brown fog and drenching rains from the eastern sea; and pleasant the bursting forth of the keen north-east wind, with all its whirling snowstorms. For though it sent men hurrying into the storm, to drive the cattle in from the fen, and lift the sheep out of the snow-wreaths, and now and then never to return, lost in mist and mire, in ice and snow; yet all knew that after the snow would come the keen frost and bright sun and cloudless blue sky, and the Fenman's yearly holiday, when, work being impossible, all gave themselves up to play, and swarmed upon the ice on skates and sledges, to run races, township against township, or visit old friends forty miles away; and met everywhere faces as bright and ruddy as their own, cheered by the keen wind of that dry and bracing frost."

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Tumultuously eloquent Kingsley gives here an impression which, as an overture to the stirring story of *Hereward the Wake* may not have been guiltless of anachronism; but it suits our purpose the better. He is too severe, in this case as in others, on the Roman Catholic clergy. Most likely the Gervii were not immigrants from oversea, not historical immigrants at any rate. Their traditions, it may well be, were of that Druidism which the Romans understood so little. Outlaws and desperate men, Saxon and Dane, naturally drifted to the Fens, bringing in their own traditions, and became one people with them. Sledges the denizens of the Fens doubtless used, and snowshoes perhaps, in the days of Hereward, when the Fens were indeed the last stronghold of the English; but one would like to see some kind of evidence for skates. As for the merrymaking on the ice, the friendly visits and the like, the chances are that they were as much the products of a happy imagination as the ancient Fenman's joy in the wild north-easter. Life really was hard and lonely for him. He probably cursed the north-easter as heartily as a rheumatic man does now, and if he welcomed the frost it was because it enabled him to approach and kill the more easily the wild birds with which the Fens teemed. In the main he was hunter, fisher, fowler, and that was why he resisted civilization. Junketings on the ice belonged to a later period altogether. Oliver Cromwell resisted the reclamation of the Fens because he thought he saw in it a subtle device of the great to enrich themselves. The Fenman resisted it because he was a fowler and a fisher, and the draining reduced the area of his happy hunting grounds and of the waters of which he was free and out of which he could make a scanty living. Men might call him "slodger," "yellow-belly"—the first word sounds like the very quintessence of churned mud, the second is eloquent of sickness—and he might grumble at the hardships of his lot. Still he knew no other way of living. He could snare the myriad wildfowl, many of them no longer known in England, which haunted the fastnesses of the reeds as no other man could. He knew the flight of each kind at every hour of the day and at every season of the year. No man so cunningly as he could capture the mighty luce or pike, noosing him sometimes, at others, and especially in winter, catching him with baits, craftily let down through a hole in the ice, or could so artfully trap the fat eels wherewith the clergy of Ely or of Crowland might turn a fast in the letter into a feast in the spirit. With his stilts and his leaping pole he could travel over the marshes with the

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most astonishing celerity; but that he enjoyed his life so keenly as Kingsley would have us believe is in the last degree unlikely.

Still the Fenman knew the life, and he knew his powers. He had no ambition to drive the slow oxen, to turn the fertile furrow, to garner the golden grain. Indifferent to questions of national welfare he was, as of course. The rustic of to-day is absolutely indifferent to considerations of the kind. He likes to see the straw so heavy that it cannot be cut by machines, laid by storms so that the sickle must needs be employed, because that means more work for men. Time was, and that not so very long ago, when, following the example of the artisans and weavers of manufacturing England, Hodge rioted and broke up the thrashing machines and the like, which did the work of twenty men and more. "It stands to reason," he used to say, "that such newfangled notions are bad for the likes of us." It stood to reason, from the Fenman's point of view, that to drain the Fens would be to leave him without the only occupation for which he was fit; it probably never occurred to him that he might adapt himself to altered circumstances and become a regular worker, tied to fixed hours, instead of an amphibious wanderer, fowling and fishing when he pleased, or when necessity drove him to exertion. Who shall blame him? Certainly not the sportsman, the naturalist, or the botanist, who have felt a pang of regret as they have watched, elsewhere than in the Fens it may be, the marsh that always held snipe, from which the bittern has been known to rise, in the recesses of which some almost extinct herb survived, converted into a fruitful field. Yet what man familiar with the life of the country has not felt these regrets, even while he knew all the time that the change was for the public good and that his own livelihood would not be directly affected? Is it possible, then, not to sympathize with the resistance of the Fenmen, who knew nothing of "the public good" and saw their livelihood, or the chance of obtaining it, destroyed before their helpless eyes. It was the old story. One man's meat is another man's poison all the world over and for all time; and there can be no progress, no wholesale and beneficial change in the ways of life, without much incidental tribulation. Nevertheless, when all things are weighed in the balance, not a scintilla of doubt remains that the draining of the Fens was begun and continued, as the old knight in *Hereward the Wake* said, "by the inspiration of God." It banished a few birds; but we could better spare a few kinds of birds than preserve them with the fevers and the agues which were the inseparable accident of their haunts. It was the end of the "slodgers" and the "yellow-bellies," who were but a handful of men; but in their place are thousands of human beings who, in spite of agricultural troubles which the drainers of the Fens could not by any means have foreseen, are at least sufficiently clad and fed, and decently housed.

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It is not always, it is not indeed often, that the reflections appropriate to a scene throng into one's mind when that scene is visited. Sometimes, at the foot of Niagara, for example, thoughts refuse to come into the mind at all; it is only afterwards that with Dickens one reflects, it was surely only afterwards he reflected, that the one abiding impression left by Niagara is the remembrance from time to time that a like mass of water is still falling, and falling, and falling, yesterday to-day and for ever. But, in relation to the Fens, I can truthfully say that most of these thoughts ran through my mind as we rolled along the road. Details of course did not. I had forgotten about Sir Cornelius Vermuyden and Rennie, but I remembered the great deeds of the House of Bedford and boyhood's delight in *Hereward*. As the road followed the sinuous bank of cabined Ouse, as I looked at the flat fields of rich black soil in which the corn showed green or of pasture springing into life, I felt to realize that on these very places the reeds had whispered and, as Sir Bedivere said to King Arthur, so man might have reported, to *Hereward* if you will, "Nought heard I, save the waves wap and the waters wan." Each church with its hamlet rose a little above the general level of the plain, making it the easier to understand that each stood on firm ground, once an island among the marshes, upon which the church had set her beacon light. If Downham Church, which we passed, might be taken as a sample—and it may be with safety—then the more leisurely topographers who have gone before are abundantly justified in saying that the churches of the Fen country are of an uncommon stateliness and beauty. This place, by the way, shares with North Walsham the honour of having taken a share in the education of Nelson.

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With such thoughts flooding into the mind we were quickly, or seemed to be quickly, at Ely, of which something has been written before, and no more shall be written. The road thence to Cambridge needs no fresh description, and at Cambridge, for our purposes, the account of this expedition might end but for one small incident of a doubly instructive character. First, however, let it be said, since the "Bull" has been praised before, that on this occasion it turned out to have been unhappily chosen as a place at which to take luncheon. Appetites were ravenous, but the meal was not a success. Perhaps because it was vacation time, the house was not prepared for guests. At any rate, the stair-carpets were "up"; but Cambridge is a big place, on an important highway, and, in fact, the guests were many and the mutton was tough. So, somewhat dissatisfied, to Royston and home, quite a long way but, so far as Royston, familiar already, and beyond that outside the present manor. Still, an incident occurring in the next manor must be recorded, because it was an incident, because it was germane to the motor-car and its little brother the motor-cycle, and because it had a double moral. It so fell out that somewhere, between Luton and Dunstable, if memory serves accurately, we were proceeding at a fittingly careful pace, and keeping scrupulously to the proper side of a not too wide and very meandering road. Suddenly, round the corner in front of us, appeared a motor-cycle, on its proper side of the road too, but proceeding at a good pace, the motor-cyclist having a young woman on a bicycle in tow. If she had kept her head all would have been well. As it was she lost it, fell head over heels into the ditch on her near side of the road, and suffered nothing worse than a shaking, which, indeed, she deserved. In due course she was picked up, placed in the tonneau, and taken back to her mother, while I held her bicycle as it rested on our near foot-board. It appeared to be the first

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time this very penitent damsel had tried this suicidal method of progression; let us hope it was also the last; for that it is suicidal, potentially at any rate, there is no kind of doubt. She was really in some danger, for she was just as likely to tumble into the road as into the ditch. Mr. Johnson could have stopped in time to avoid her if she had, because he was going carefully, and with a due regard to the potential dangers of the road. But I know a good many other drivers with regard to whom I should be sorry to say confidently that they could be relied upon to have been driving with equal care in the same circumstances. It was the kind of incident which made one think.

CHAPTER XIII

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FROM KING'S LYNN AS CENTRE

PART I

King's Lynn—The Globe Hotel—English hotels—Reform necessary but difficult—Centre of exploration in adjacent country—Early history of Lynn—Little known—Not Roman—Important in the eleventh century—Formerly Lynn Episcopi—Lynn Regis since Henry VIII—Chapel of Red Mount—Stopping-place for pilgrims—"King John's" cup and sword—Possibly that of King John of France—Early prosperity of Lynn—Contribution against the Armada—Lynn during the Civil War—Sir Hamon le Strange—Cromwell at siege of Lynn—Custom-house and Guildhall—A city of merchants—Lynn and Eugene Aram—Bulwer's novel and the facts—Was Aram guilty?—The theatre—Sea-faring men—To Peterborough via Wisbech—Its association with the Fens—The cathedral—Cathedrals as books in stone—Crowland.

PART II

To Castle Rising—Once a port—Once a borough—The keep and surroundings—The mystery of the earthworks—Not Roman probably—A suggestion—Robert de Montault's feud with Lynn—Rising and the She Wolf of France—Not so harshly imprisoned after all—Wolferton—Sandringham—Always beautiful country—The house—Sports and pastimes of royalty—Dersingham—Snettisham—The Hunstantons and the Le Stranges—"Twthill"—A suggested derivation—Brancaster—The Peddars way—The Saxon pirates—Brancaster described by Mr. Haverfield—Excavation needed—Burnham Deepdale—Burnham Thorpe—The birthplace of Nelson—To Fakenham—Rainham Hall—The early Townshends—Elmham—Once seat of bishopric—Earthworks—East Dereham and George Borrow—His description—Cowper—Swaffham—The first Coursing Club—Castle Acre—The Castle's story clear—That of the earthworks all darkness.

For the purposes of this chapter we will sleep, if it please you, and take our meals occasionally, at the Globe Hotel, standing in the south-west corner of the spacious square at King's Lynn, where, in fact, I have often stayed for many days together. That is why the "Globe" is recommended, not with any extremity of warmth, but just as an ordinary and rather old-fashioned hotel, such as one may expect to find—sometimes the expectation is vain—in a really old-fashioned town like Lynn. It is no sumptuous palace, but it provides plain and wholesome food, fair liquor, and clean bedrooms at about the normal English price. That is much too high, of course, judged by the Continental standard, and some day one may hope that the mysterious reason why English hotel-keepers, having to pay less than the generality of their contemporaries abroad for that raw material of dinners, of which they too often forget to change the original condition, charge more highly for the results and certainly, to all appearance, do not thrive so consistently. They would answer, most likely, that the hotel-keepers of provincial France and of parts of Switzerland can afford to charge their very modest prices because they can safely rely on a regular influx of travellers, principally English, German, and American. "I can never tell," says Boniface, "how many will want dinner on any day. Whether five come or fifty, all expect dinner; I must always be prepared for them"—very often he is sadly unprepared—"and my prices do not do much more than cover my expenses. Many a beautiful joint have I provided, for I never buy anything but the very best, that has had to be thrown away." Quote to him hotels abroad, such as we all know, where guests are taken in *en pension*, and fed fairly well, at from six to nine francs a day, or put it at 5s. to 7s. 6d. to simplify matters, and, while it is plain that he does not really believe you, he will bring up again the same old argument. Nor can you persuade him that a large part of the annual exodus to the Continent is due to knowledge that touring in England is, so far as food and accommodation go, so very dear, and often so remarkably nasty by comparison with touring on the Continent that men are driven abroad. Individually, however, Boniface is in rather a difficult position. Our beautiful islands, for they are very lovely in many kinds of loveliness, and our roads (which, if not equal to those of France, seem to an American to have attained an almost ideal perfection) will never attract their due share of voluntary travellers until the general average of hotels shall be improved, and the general average of charges shall be reduced. Even then some years must elapse before the reform would be realized as well as known, and the set habits of the

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travelling public, the public which travels of its own free-will and for its own pleasure, might be slow to change. They also, like the hotel-keepers, are English men and English women, Scots and Irish of both sexes, not easy to move out of a fixed groove. In any case the pioneer, the paragon among hotel-keepers, who should attempt to gain custom by setting an example of prices really moderate, not moderate according to English standards, would almost certainly court bankruptcy. One swallow does not make a summer; the certainty of finding one cheap and comfortable hotel on a tour would not suffice to turn the stream of tourists into the route on which that hotel lay.

So, perhaps, the complaints of motorists and others concerning the charges of English hotels (and Irish and Scotch hotels too) may be regarded as being rather in the nature of letting off steam than in that of using it in the hope of effecting any real result. The fault lies in the system; the system cannot be reformed without concerted action of hotel-keepers, of which there is no present evidence; and, if reform came, the actual reformers would probably be losers, although the next generation of hotel-keepers would reap a rich harvest. The process of reform would be, indeed, something like making pasture out of arable land, a costly enterprise, the profits of which are so long in coming that it is rarely undertaken by tenants for a short term. Since that is so we must take our hotels as we find them, praising some as being a little better than others when all might be vastly improved. On these principles the "Globe" at Lynn is recommended, although the "Crown" or the "Duke's Head" may, for all I know, be equally good. It may be added, too, that it used to be, perhaps still is, the hotel used by Mr. Thomas Gibson Bowles, whose Parliamentary connection with King's Lynn was long. His presence in it, however, argued nothing. It may have been the Conservative or Unionist hotel traditionally, as the "Royal" at Norwich is the Liberal House; or again, Mr. Bowles may have been no less independent in the choice of a hotel, even in his own constituency, than he was in selecting his lobby on a division in the House of Commons.

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At any rate the "Globe" will serve as a resting-place. From it we will examine King's Lynn, thinking a little of its history and associations, and take a drive of a single day in the first part of the chapter; and in the second we will take, for purposes of writing, a considerably longer drive which, for those who desire to see a great number of interesting places at leisure, would be much better divided into two parts, or even three, than taken in a single piece. Only, having visited all the places named, by road too, but not expressly for the purpose of this book, I am disposed to recommend a return to Lynn for the night, if a day seems to be growing too long, rather than a sojourn at some outlying place in which the inn or hotel, where there is one, has not been tested on my vile body. For example, in this second drive, if my advice be taken, the traveller may find himself at Brancaster at about the time of afternoon tea. Even on a summer's day he will hardly be disposed to complete the programme suggested. He can easily run back to Lynn, in time to dress for dinner comfortably, along a different road from that which he took in coming, and if he likes to start again at the next point in the drive on the following morning, he can reach that again by a new series of roads. He is never likely to regret his return to Lynn, because it is really an exceedingly interesting and characteristic place.

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"It was an old wild fancy that Catus Decianus," Boadicea's Roman contemporary in this country, "founded Lynn," says Mr. Haverfield; on the other hand, according to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, it is supposed to have been a British settlement. Its origin is, in fact, "wrop up in mystery" rather more completely than is usual with old English towns. We know that the earliest entry in the Red Book of Lynn is 1309, and the last East Anglian bishop who occupied Thetford as his diocesan capital is believed to have built a church where St. Margaret's now stands. Presumably, therefore, Lynn was a place of some importance in his day, which was at the end of the eleventh and the beginning of the twelfth centuries. There is an odd tradition concerning the original church, of which not much is left, for in the eighteenth century the spire collapsed on to the nave in a gale of wind. The tradition, mentioned by Mr. Rye, is that the foundation was laid on woolpacks; "but I fancy this only came from some donation of wool, or of a wool subsidy, in aid of a partial rebuilding. Whatever it was built on its foundations certainly settled very much directly, for the tower leans over in such a Pisa-like way that it makes a nervous spectator quite uncomfortable to go inside it and look up, though the protecting piers have been there in their present places a trifle over seven hundred years or so." How to reconcile this with the fact that the spire was blown down on to the nave in 1741 is Mr. Rye's business, not mine. Besides that, the fragments of history connected with Lynn are so interesting that they will leave little, if any, space for those discourses on ecclesiastical architecture which are the principal parts of the generality of guide-books.

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Of the early history, the really early history of Lynn, little is known. It had strong walls, relics of which remain, of uncertain date, save that they were not Roman. It belonged to the East Anglian bishops, or at any rate was in their temporal jurisdiction, until Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries, when it became Lynn Regis, no longer Lynn Episcopi. It was a stopping place for pilgrims on the way to the shrine of our Lady of Walsingham, who were encouraged to lay their offerings in the Chapel of the Red Mount, to which chapel, very small and very beautiful within, an ancient avenue still leads. Observe the distinct entrance and exit, testifying alike to the business aptitude of those who were in charge, and to the popularity of the shrine of our Lady of Walsingham. Lynn has a charter of 1216, given by King John, and preserves a sword and a cup alleged to have been given by him. Here "Murray" is "too clever by half," and himself supplies, if it had but occurred to him, a key which it was left to a local antiquary to apply to this historical problem. "The cup itself, in elegance of shape, might have come from the hand of Cellini. The figures in enamel of men and women hunting and hawking are extremely curious. Judging, however, from the costume and workmanship this cup cannot be older than the period of Edward

III—the period of the greatest prosperity of Lynn. The sword also, although an inscription on one side of the hilt records that John took it from his side and gave it to the town, is really no older than the sixteenth century. Both articles seem to be substitutes for the original donations." That is not so certain. On the opposite page the same writer mentions a brass in St. Margaret's commemorating a Mayor of Edward III's time, and a representation below of the "Peacock's Feast" given by this same mayor to Edward III, who is represented at table, having before him a cup very like the one in question. Now Edward III not only visited Lynn, but also kept King John of France as an honoured prisoner for many years. He was as likely as not to take John with him to Lynn, and the chances are that the cup, as a local antiquary has suggested to Mr. Rye, was the gift of a king of France. As for the inscription on the sword, it is nothing. It was in the nature of things that whosoever gave the sword, the inscription should be placed upon it afterwards, and, as to a date suggested by workmanship, it would be very unsafe to rely upon it.

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"Probably it was in the time of Edward III that, speaking relatively, Lynn was most prosperous." It is assumed that the statement was not made without evidence of some kind. Otherwise probabilities would seem to point in the opposite direction, and it would be natural to expect that, as the Fens were gradually subjugated, producing some things worth exporting and supporting men capable of buying things imported, the port provided for them by nature would grow in respect of trade. Still there is abundant evidence of its importance later than Edward III and long before the great and good work of reclaiming the Fens had been taken seriously in hand. In the time of Elizabeth, Lynn and Blakeney (!), the latter now no longer worthy of mention as a port, furnished "2 shippes and 1 pinnace," a contribution equal to that of Ipswich and Harwich, to resist the Armada. Then, as we have seen, Oliver Cromwell resisted the first scheme of Fen-reclamation formed by the illustrious house of Bedford—the Protector of later years was then a resident at Ely and member for Cambridge in the House of Commons. Yet the value of Lynn was quickly made manifest during the Rebellion. Moved thereto by stout Sir Hamon le Strange of Hunstanton, Lynn showed itself to be veritably Lynn Regis, almost the only part of East Anglia that adhered to Charles. It was a matter of no small moment. Even afterwards, when the Restoration was being planned the projected seizure of Lynn was regarded by the planners and by Clarendon as an enterprise of exceptional value because Lynn was "a Maritime Town, of great importance in respect of the Situation, and likewise of the Good Affection of the Gentlemen of the Parts adjacent." To the first Charles it would have been of priceless value could he but have held it, for through it he could have secured from the Continent that supply of ammunition of which, almost from the beginning of the war, he was in sore need. With Sir Hamon le Strange for governor, 50 pieces of ordnance, 1200 muskets, and 500 barrels of powder, Lynn was held in a manner plainly showing how much value the King set upon it. The Parliamentary generals, however, were equally alive to the use that might be made of Lynn as a port from which to obtain supplies. First Manchester, and later Cromwell, took part in the siege; it is even said the "Virgin Troop" of Norwich, Puritan Amazons, took the field on this occasion. At any rate, in 1643 Lynn surrendered, to the grievous loss of Charles and the corresponding gain of the Parliament.

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Lynn's commercial history may be described roughly as the dogged and not entirely fruitless struggle of a town once really great and prosperous to fight the new conditions of modern trade, conditions tending to make remote and out of the way a port which was once accessible and almost central. The glory has not all departed, but a great deal of it has gone, leaving its traces plainly to be seen in architecture. The Custom-house, Dutch in appearance (for the trade with Holland was considerable), and the Guildhall speak of the days gone by; the central market square is far too spacious for the present needs of the place. The main streets are narrow, but that was the way of old cities, and their lights, carried on elegant iron arches across the streets, give it a distinctly foreign air. Drive away from the main street towards the Custom-house, and you will find another, running parallel to it, of substantial Queen Anne houses compelling reflection. They speak of a bygone prosperity. I have found no trace that Lynn ever was, as Ipswich and Norwich were in the pre-railway days, and as for that matter nearly every county town in England was, a centre of county society, in which the county families kept their town houses, occupying them for a gay season in each year. These houses seem to speak rather of rich Lynn merchants of the past, trading with the Low Countries on a scale very large for those days. Again, with the sea to the northward, after a few miles of navigable river, and the Fens on every side nearly, living on its trade by sea, Lynn seems to have been placed in a species of natural isolation, which perhaps goes some way to account for the fact that it is not quite like any other town in England.

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Probably the Lynn "character" of the past most of us would best like to meet, not for very long perhaps, was Miss Mary Breeze, who died, aged seventy-eight, in 1789. It is recorded of her that "she took out her shooting license, kept as good greyhounds, and was as sure a shot as any in the county." But a corporation minute beginning, "Guildhall, Lynn. At a congregation there holden on the 14th day of February, 1758," points to a contemporary of Miss Mary Breeze, in whom the wider world was once keenly interested. On that day Eugene Aram was approved as usher to the Grammar School, on the appointment of Mr. Knox, in the place of John Birkes, "dismissed." Like, probably, most middle-aged men, I remember reading *Eugene Aram* with eager interest as a boy; in these later years the task has been achieved only after heroic efforts and in obedience to a sense of duty. The noble author, who could describe a chair in front of a public-house as "cathedrarian accommodation," is not for this age. By the help, however, of a paper read by Mr. E. M. Beloe to a county society, and preserved in *Norfolk and Norwich Notes and Queries*, I am able to see something of this celebrated case, once much discussed, as it must have appeared to the inhabitants of Lynn.

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Aram was appointed usher of the ancient Grammar School, now vanished (but Lynn has recently acquired a far more important Grammar School, named after King Edward VII), in February, 1758. He lived in the headmaster's house, spent his holidays with the Vicar of Heacham, and most of his Sundays with Archdeacon Steadman, who was Rector of Gaywood. He was gloomy of aspect, given to solitary walks, in the habit of looking back over his shoulder, as if some one were following him; but he was also obviously a man of remarkable attainments. Bulwer gives him all these traits, except (I think) that of looking over his shoulder, which is local tradition. Bulwer also makes Aram the impassioned suitor of a local lady; but Mr. Beloe says nothing on that head. If Aram was such, then his intentions must have been dishonourable and may have been bigamous: on that point, however, Lynn could have known nothing. Imagine, then, the surprise of the good people of Lynn when, in August or September of the year 1758, after Aram had been among them seven months only, two Knaresborough constables came to Sir John Turner, the most important magistrate of Lynn, and one of those who had sanctioned the appointment of Aram, with a warrant against the usher. The warrant, being issued in Yorkshire, required to be backed. Sir John Turner backed it, accompanied the constables to the Grammar School, and was present while Aram, having been summoned to an inner room, was duly arrested. Next, according to Hood's *Dream of Eugene Aram*—

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Two stern-faced men set out from Lynn,
Through the cold and heavy mist,
And Eugene Aram walked between,
With gyves upon his wrist.

This was poetic licence; as a matter of fact, Aram started for Knaresborough in a post-chaise. That was all the people of Lynn saw or knew of Eugene Aram, save that they learned, through the meagre channels of information then existing, that he was eventually convicted at Knaresborough, after lying untried for nearly a year in York gaol, on a charge of murder fourteen years old. Small wonder, then, that Mr. Beloe wrote and read aloud "His name has been, from my youth upwards, a kind of fascination for me"; small wonder that Lynn was and remained deeply interested to find it had harboured a criminal, whose guilt was doubted by some, whose career was the theme of a stirring poem, nobly recited by Sir Henry Irving, and of a novel which was at one time much to the taste of the age.

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Eugene Aram's story is really so full of interest that it is worth summarizing, very briefly and without introduction of the "love interest" (as his literary agents have it) with which Bulwer strove to give it human reality. Of quite humble parentage and meagre education, he early showed a passion for learning. Born in 1704, he was a married schoolmaster at Netherdale long before he was thirty, and when he migrated to Knaresborough, still as a schoolmaster, in 1734, he had acquired considerable knowledge of Latin and Greek. At Knaresborough he remained ten years. Then his intimate Daniel Clarke disappeared, having previously been supplied with a large quantity of goods on credit. Nothing worse than a common swindle seems to have been suspected at the time. Suspicion of having been concerned in it fell upon Aram; proceedings were taken against him; his garden was searched; but no evidence was forthcoming and he was discharged. However, he left Knaresborough shortly afterwards, deserting his wife at the same time, and for the next ten years he appears to have wandered about England, acting as usher in all sorts of schools, and studying comparative philology. The definite story finds him next an usher at Lynn, peculiar in manner but, by reason of his attainments probably, an acceptable associate to the cultivated gentlemen of the district.

It would have been well for Aram if, when he left Knaresborough, he had taken away his wife also. The deserted woman, whom the noble novelist found it convenient to forget, had doubtless a feeling of resentment against her husband, and had certainly a long tongue. Talking over her grievances, which really were quite considerable, she had been heard to suggest that her husband and Houseman, "the scoundrel Houseman" of Bulwer, were jointly responsible for the disappearance of Clarke, but her talk was clearly regarded as the scurrilous spite of an angry woman. Then a skeleton was found near Knaresborough, in a place where no recent skeleton had a right to be, and folks began to say that there was some method in Mrs. Aram's madness. There was an inquest, at which she gave evidence; Houseman was arrested and "confronted with the bones." He vowed that they were not the bones of "Dan Clarke," confessed that he had been present while Aram and another man murdered Clarke, and that Clarke's bones had been buried in a well-known cave hard by. In that cave bones were found. Where was Aram? A clue (this is from Mr. Beloe and does not appear in most accounts) was supplied by a Yorkshire horse-dealer, who had seen Aram at Lynn during his travels. So Aram was arrested, as we have seen, tried, convicted and executed, making full confession after conviction, and suggesting, by way of motive, that Clarke had made too successful love to his wife.

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Was Eugene Aram guilty or not? To his confession, probably, no serious attention need be paid. The man was highly strung clearly, he had been a penniless prisoner for nearly a year at a time when our prisons were hells upon earth, he had conducted his own defence during an arduous and, from our modern point of view, very unfairly conducted trial, he attempted suicide by opening a vein on the night before his execution, he was desperate, probably not master of himself, and last, perhaps not least, confessions were the custom of the criminals of the age. It has been urged on his behalf that the trial was unfair, from our point of view, since counsel might not be retained for the defence of prisoners in those days nor wives called in defence of their husbands. As to the wife's evidence, if it had been admissible, the story makes it plain that it would have been more likely to be damning than favourable. She had been deserted, she had

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been left to shift for herself for many years, she had said that Aram knew all about the disappearance of Clarke. It was a distinct advantage to Aram that she could not be called. That he suffered from having to defend himself is in the last degree unlikely. Paley, who travelled all the way from Cambridge to hear his defence, said he had secured his conviction by his own cleverness. The original defence, preserved by Bulwer, is indeed marked by singular ability; but it is not in the very least convincing. I can imagine the jury saying to one another: "If this obviously clever man can think of nothing better than this to say, he is guilty sure enough." Houseman, it might very fairly be said, was not a credible witness. He was, indeed, on his own showing, a most mean and despicable villain; but the strength of the circumstantial evidence, the fact that Aram ran away, that he did not cross-examine Houseman or attempt to overthrow his evidence, and that his defence really amounted to an essay on the fallibility of circumstantial evidence, were quite enough to secure his conviction then, or now. The sympathy felt for Eugene Aram has sprung from the fact that the villain Houseman escaped, and that Aram was an able and a brilliantly learned man. Hume, I believe, said he was a century ahead of his age in Celtic research; but neither the one fact nor the other is inconsistent with a belief that Clarke was murdered, and that Aram was present at the murder.

Such are the reflections one may carry about the narrow streets of Lynn, and sometimes, of an evening, one may go to the theatre, but my one experience of that was not inviting. The maxim *ne coram populo* was more flagrantly trodden underfoot surely than ever before, when, in a play called (I think) *Slaves of the Harem*, a full-blooded and genuine African went through with a bowstring the gestures of executing an erring lady on the stage (who in her turn made appropriate grimaces) to the uproarious delight of an audience which insisted on encoring the scene. On the other hand, time spent in talking with the people in warm bar-parlours of an evening, or among the mariners who idle on the quay by day, as mariners always have and always will, is apt to be rewarded by no means ill. Among the sea-faring men, at any rate, hardy fishermen for the most part, the feeling that one may be talking to lineal descendants of Vikings soon deepens into conviction. They are fine seamen, too, these men of the east coast, and the Navy depends upon them not a little; but very prudently, and without saying anything about it, it is arranged that the same ship's company shall never be part east and part west countrymen.

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It was fore-ordained that this portion of a chapter should end with a drive. It is a drive to be taken very shortly in print, and quite easily by road over Fen country, not needing to be described anew, to a cathedral city situate geographically in the Midlands—that is to say, to Peterborough. Now Peterborough is in Northamptonshire, and Northamptonshire sounds Midland as Midland can be. On what pretext is Peterborough introduced? Really none is needed; our brief detour is but an illustration of the truth that county boundaries, apart from the matters of police and road-making, have no more meaning for the motorist than they had for the Romans. Peterborough is easily accessible from Lynn, viâ Wisbech, by thirty-five miles of flat road. Its cathedral dominates the Fens from the west as Ely dominates their southern and central parts; it has been intimately associated with their troubled history in the past. The cathedral too, although by no means to be reckoned amongst the most majestic to be found in England, is very fine in itself, and exceptionally interesting and suggestive. I had written "instructive," but that is usually a word raising expectation of tedious discourse. As a matter of fact, little shall be written about Peterborough Cathedral, although many personal impressions might be moulded into one. Go to see Peterborough Cathedral. Remember that it is one of the three Norman cathedrals of England; that the first church on this site was built in the closing years of the seventh century, and rased to the ground by the Danes; that the second was burned in the twelfth century; that the greater part of the present structure was 120 years in the building before it was consecrated in the thirteenth century; that the central tower was rebuilt in the fourteenth century, and that the nineteenth century saw a great deal of necessary work done. Remembering this, you will surely depart reluctantly, convinced that of all our English books in stone none contains more chapters than that entitled Peterborough Cathedral, that in no edifice can the student of architecture who inspects with the advantage of special knowledge, or the fairly cultivated man who lacks that special knowledge, find more details of genuine charm and interest. Here you can trace developments, early Norman vaulting in the aisles, exquisite fan-vaulting—it is peculiar to England—in the choir, clustered piers to columns. Here you may follow the differences in character and arrangement between a monastic cathedral, such as Peterborough was, served by regular clergy and monks, and one of the old foundation, like St. Paul's, which, being served by secular clergy, was not affected by the reforms of Henry VIII. You may see, too, traces of the iconoclastic zeal of Cromwell's followers, often credited with the misdeeds of others. In spite of them, too, you may realize, not more forcibly than elsewhere perhaps, but still in full force, that which has been remarkably well put by Professor Banister Fletcher and Mr. Banister F. Fletcher in their *Comparative Architecture*. "The place in the national life which the mediæval cathedrals occupied was an important one, and must be realized if we would understand how they were regarded. In the absence of books, and of people able to read them, cathedrals were erected and decorated partly as a means of popular education, the sculpture and the painted glass reflecting the incidents of Bible history from the Creation to the redemption of mankind, the sculptured forms and brilliant colouring rendering them easily understood by the people. The virtues and vices, with their symbols, were also displayed, either in glass or statuary, along with their reward or punishment. Saints and angels told of the better life, and the various handicrafts, both of peace and war, were mirrored in imperishable stone or coloured glass. They, to a large extent, took the place in our social state since occupied by such modern institutions as the Board School, Free Library, Museum, Picture Gallery, and Concert Hall. They were the history books of the period. Architecture then as now was also the grand chronicle of secular history, past and

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present, in which Kings, Nobles, and Knights were represented."

Nothing conduces more to appreciation of the full meaning of a passage than the laborious process of copying, and having now performed that process I am moved to protest that these few lines, while they leave to the understanding the purely ecclesiastical significance of mediæval architecture, and are absolutely free from rhetorical artifice, are more pregnant with meaning than many pages of moving eloquence. So we leave Peterborough and, if the mood seizes us, make a detour of eight miles to Crowland before returning to Peterborough. This, personally I cannot speak for; but there are some remains of the historic abbey.

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PART II

The end of these wanderings is now close in sight, and the thought fills him who writes with feelings in which regret predominates over relief. He would be a cold-blooded person indeed who, after much travel in East Anglia had revealed to him many beauties new to him, besides refreshing acquaintance with those seen before, after steeping himself, to the best of his ability and opportunities, in the history and legends of the district, should not have developed a very warm appreciation of the variety and character of both. But it is needless to say this over and over again, in various forms of words, in vain imitation of Matthew Arnold's method of compelling attention, and there is the less excuse for anything of the kind in that our last drive, or drives, take us through an exceptionally large number of storied places, and through some of the most breezy and fascinating of Norfolk scenery.

We will begin, if you please, by going to Castle Rising, lying 3-1/2 miles N.N.E. of Lynn, and there we must stop for quite a long time. Despite the local saying "Rising was a seaport town when Lynn was but a marsh," there is a good deal of doubt about its early history. Concerning its later history there is none at all. The sand just silted up the harbour, the port became a mere memory, and of all the "rotten boroughs" disfranchised by the Reform Act of 1832 none perished more deservedly than Castle Rising, where the voters were reduced to two. Was it of Castle Rising (it was certainly of some "rotten borough" in East Anglia) that I read how the nobleman who kept it in his pocket mockingly caused a waiter to represent it in Parliament? It was in days at any rate when a waiter, as a member of the "best club in the world," would have seemed a great deal more out of place than he would in these days of sectional representation. Let us consider first what there is to see. Over a bridge and through a Norman gate-house one enters an almost circular space surrounded by a very high earth bank and a deep ditch. Inside the commanding object is the keep, its Norman windows full of character, its walls nine feet thick; the chapel and part of the constable's lodgings also remain. The hall and gallery remain in part; everything else is utterly perished. Still, Rising is an impressive monument of the olden time. How long have the earthworks occupied their present position? At one period antiquaries of repute placed a Roman "camp" here, calling some of the earthworks Roman. "But," writes Mr. Haverfield, "this is most unlikely and no Roman remains have ever been found here." It is true a coin of Constantine the Great was once dug up in the neighbourhood; but this would be vague at best, and one coin goes no further as an argument of a Roman camp than a sixpence dropped by an explorer does to prove a British settlement in the heart of Thibet. Mound and ditch may have been British, but there is no suggestion of evidence to prove it. They are not in the least likely to have been Roman; for the Romans had little, if any, fighting in these parts, and the defence of this portion of the "Saxon shore" was, as we shall see shortly, provided for by the fortification of Brancaster. After all, why should not William d'Albini, first Earl of Arundel, who at any rate began the building of the castle, have caused the mound to be heaped up and the ditch scooped out in the closing years of the twelfth century? It was a period when Norman nobles were not unduly particular as to the manner in which they extorted work, and it may well have seemed to him desirable to make a position, naturally strong, all but impregnable.

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The most interesting of the early Lords was Robert de Montalt, who had a feud and a lawsuit with the people of Lynn. Lynn, it is pretty clear, had ceased to be a marsh by that time, and the two communities were far too adjacent to one another for friendly feeling to subsist. De Montalt, too, claimed certain rights in connection with the tolbooth and tolls of Lynn, which were not to the taste of the free and independent burghers of Lynn. It so fell out that one day de Montalt and his followers were in Lynn when they were espied by the burghers. Thereupon Nicholas de Northampton and others raised the town against them, chased them to "his dwelling-house"—surely hardly Castle Rising—besieged it, broke open the doors, beat him and his men, stripped them of weapons, money and jewels to the value of £40, kept him in durance for two days, and released him only upon his solemn promise in the market-place to relinquish all actions against the Mayor and all claims against the Corporation. De Montalt made his promise and departed; but he certainly did not keep the spirit of the compact extorted from him by duress, for he had the law of the Corporation of Lynn, secured judgment for £6000, a huge sum in those days, and, more than that, he actually got £4000, for which he compromised, and Lynn was taxed for years to pay the money by instalments. Of a surety Robert de Montalt laughed best over that quarrel.

In the case of the next, and for our purposes, the last inmate of Castle Rising, we have an illustration of the troublesome manner in which industrious diggers after facts destroy established and easily assimilated statements by historians. In the case of Isabella, the She-wolf of France, whose paramour Mortimer had caused her husband, Edward II, to be murdered with unexampled barbarity in Berkeley Castle, it was nice and easy to learn that, after the accession of Edward III and the fall and execution of Mortimer, "the Queen Mother was deprived of her enormous jointure, and shut up in the Castle of Rising, where she spent the remaining twenty-

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seven years of her life in obscurity." If ever there was a thoroughly bad woman, that woman was Isabella; and to dispose of her in a single sentence was nice and simple. Unhappily it seems, like the story of Alfred's cakes and other cherished traditions, to be entirely wrong. While Isabella was at Rising Edward allowed her £3000 a year first, and £4000 a year later; letters patent under her hand were issued from her "Castle of Hertford" in the twentieth year of Edward III; Edward III visited her often at Castle Rising; she was allowed to make a pilgrimage to Walsingham (which after all was quite near); she visited Norwich with Edward III and his Queen in 1344; and she died at Hertford Castle, having been there since 1357. In fact neither the sufferings nor the obscurity of the She-wolf of France were of a striking character.

Inland from Castle Rising you may see a ridge of upland, pine and heather-clad, with here and there some woodland and some agricultural land, following the line of the coast, but three or four miles from it. Your best route will be to travel some three miles to Wolferton, along a level and excellent road. The roads of Norfolk are, indeed, good throughout in my experience. At Wolferton you can hardly fail to notice the peculiar stone, of a dark reddish-brown colour, of which the church is built. It is called "Carr" stone locally, a great deal of it is used in cottages, houses and churches, and if it seems a trifle redder to you at Wolferton than elsewhere—it never so struck me—the redness is attributable to a fire of 1486, after which a licence to collect alms for rebuilding was issued! If such licences were a condition precedent to similar collections now the Post Office would be much the poorer, and some of us might be richer. What must also strike the spectator from the road is the very stately tower, and, by entering, you will see a fine specimen of the not too common hammer-beam roof. From Wolferton to Sandringham, or to its gates, I have walked and driven at almost every season of the year, always to find fresh beauties in that gentle slope. In winter, with snow upon the ground, when the fresh green is on the larches in spring, when bracken is pushing out its fronds in embryo knots, when the heather is in its glory, and, best of all, when the rhododendrons are in bloom, it is as beautiful a sight as any upon which the eye of man need desire to rest. Moreover, this stretch of the heath-lands of East Anglia looks the very place for any roving bird to haunt, and it is a real bond of union between me and the artist, who gives to these pages more than half their brightness, to learn from him that the sheldrake nests here habitually.

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At the top of the hill on the right you obtain a glimpse of the parish church of Sandringham, modern, and regularly attended by the King and Queen, and of the park across which the King walks to service, for all the world like any other country gentleman. A hundred yards or so farther on you are opposite the principal gates. These are of exquisite ironwork, and were presented to the then Prince of Wales in 1864 by the County of Norfolk, justly proud of its newly acquired landowner, and entitled to be proud too of the workmanship which turned these gates out at Norwich. Now Sandringham is not a place that is shown on stated days, as many houses are. It is too small for that; it is indeed one of the few places where the King and Queen can enjoy real privacy, but, as luck will have it, I have seen Sandringham inside, and a brief impression of it is given, partly, perhaps, because it may be welcome from a careful witness, but mainly because Mr. Walter Rye has done it injustice. "Sandringham itself," he wrote in 1885, "is nothing much to see. It was bought vastly dear, and has had a tremendous lot of money spent on it. Gunton or Blickling would have been much more suited to him, and with the same amount of money spent on them would by this time have been little palaces." Very likely, but the Prince of Wales, as he was then, desired not a palace but a home, in which he could live during his all too rare holidays from public duty the life of a country gentleman with his family; in which he could interest himself in farming, and could enjoy really good shooting; in which his Princess could indulge her taste for gardening, and for keeping dogs of many kinds; in which, last and best of all, his children could lead simple lives and be much in the open air. All that he found in Sandringham. The situation is pretty and remarkably healthy, the shooting is of the best and full of variety, the gardens reveal the taste of their Royal mistress, the house is full of dear memories and of rare possessions. It may not be very beautiful architecturally, but it is essentially a house to be lived in, and it is something in its favour that, in an age which believes in the health-giving power of the sun, it is absolutely suffused with all the light there is. Of a truth Mr. Rye's sympathy is quite uncalled for, and even rather needlessly offensive. By the way, as you pass you may chance to hear a Sandringham clock strike twelve and find that your impeccable watch only admits half-past eleven; and you may remember to have seen in some of the papers at various times that it is the King's hobby to have all his clocks half an hour fast so that he may never be late. It is his hobby, but its object is not to secure punctuality so much as to cheat the morning out of an extra half-hour. The evening hours can be prolonged at pleasure, but to start shooting at 9.30 instead of ten on a winter's day is a great gain.

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HEATH NEAR SANDRINGHAM

Blickling, it should be added, is near Aylsham. It was owned once by Harold, then by the Bishops of Norwich, and then by Sir Thomas Boleyn, father of Anne Boleyn. "A sheet of water about a mile long, in the middle of a beautiful and well-wooded park, is a fitting adjunct to the noble red house, built in the reign of James I, with its fine ceiled galleries and carvings, and its grand staircase." So Mr. Rye, and then he passes off to heraldry. Gunton is, or was, in the same neighbourhood. "Murray" says that the house "of white brick, enlarged by Wyatt 1785,"—neither statement sounds alluring—"is without interest." Mr. Rye says elsewhere "the hall was burnt out not long ago" (he writes in 1885) "and is not yet rebuilt, and very picturesque it looks with its great gaunt shell pierced by rows of empty windows. It would make a capital ruin, and might just as well be left as it is, and a smaller house, more suitable to the fortunes of the Harbords, built elsewhere in the park."

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Shooting and motoring are the great out-door occupations of Sandringham. If the King be at home the chances of seeing a royal car on these roads are many, and in late November you may often hear the guns popping like a *feu de joie*. Nay, on the road, which turns sharply to the left for Dersingham by the gate, proceeding through fine trees on both sides, and on the level for a while, and then down a steep hill, I have had the good fortune to see the Prince of Wales and the German Emperor bringing pheasants down in a manner more than workmanlike. So to Dersingham, a sunny village lying in a cup of the modest little hills. Here again you will be struck by the all-pervading use of the local carr stone, very neatly dressed in minute blocks, apparently impervious to weather and incapable of taking any tone from rain and wind and sun. Picturesque to the eye of a stranger it certainly is not; but the walls and houses built of it are trim to a Dutch point of neatness, and, to accustomed eyes, it no doubt seems to be part of the established order of things. It is no harm suggesting again that in relation to the appearance of things, the product of man's hand, of the operations of nature, or of the two combined, first impressions are not to be trusted in all cases. Custom makes a world of difference. A Chinaman, or a Hottentot, has, for example, ideas completely opposite to ours concerning female beauty. Without yielding to either in the matter of opinion, even in these extreme instances, we may possibly concede that standards of beauty are not to be defined with scientific precision. "Carr" stone buildings to some of us may look a trifle grim and formal, although their ferruginous tone is not cold; at worst they represent the resolve to use local material, which is usually consonant with art and sense, and no doubt their appearance excites no feeling of distaste in the people of Norfolk who, after all, are the persons principally concerned. Of this same stone the church is built. Here the passers by will be struck by the stately proportions of the lofty tower, and, if he enters, he will notice the orderly condition of all things, as well as a piscina and a hagioscope. To the neat condition of things, which should be normal, attention is called in this case because, apparently, it is the complete opposite of the state of things prevailing in the early seventies, when everything capable of suffering from neglect had so suffered. Dersingham is a pleasantly tidy village, but not "model" in the artificial sense. It boasts a hotel, "The Feathers," where I stayed for a week a good many years ago. It was then one of the worst in England, but, in new hands, it is understood to be better. On the whole, however, Dersingham is not recommended for a sojourn, nor has it, in all probability, been encouraged to lay itself out to attract visitors.

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BLICKLING HALL

From Dersingham to the Hunstantons is a pleasant drive of some six miles, calling for no particular comment at any point save Snettisham, where the position of the church, embowered in trees, fascinates the eye. "The Hunstantons" has been written because there are two communities, the old and the new, whereof the latter, according to Mr. Rye, peremptorily refuses to be dubbed St. Edmund's, in spite of the tradition that a ruined chapel near the lighthouse on the cliff commemorates the landing-place of St. Edmund. It is rather an even question whether the Hunstantons owe most to the cliff, which is their chief glory, or to the Le Stranges, who have done all that was possible for their prosperity. How long they have been in the land, being no genealogist, I do not profess to say. They are not included in Mr. Rye's list of grantees from William the Conqueror, but the monument of Henry Le Strange and his wife, dated 1485, to be found in the church, is ancient enough to be at least respectable, and his epitaph is worth quoting at once, although we shall soon refer to earlier members of the race.

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In heaven at home, O blessed change,
Who, while I was on earth, was Strange.

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Never were a country-side and a great family connected more consistently to the benefit of the first and to the honour of the second.

Hard by the church is the ancient "twthill," according to one of the authorities, "the place of assembly." Since the survival of this expression is by no means frequent, it may perhaps be permissible to remark that, if the eye will travel across the map of England, due west from Hunstanton and as far as it can go, it will come to another "twthill" at Carnarvon. The spelling looks British, and the ancient British borrowed a good many words direct from the Latin, *ffenstr* for example, from *fenestra*, for window, doubtless a new idea to them. So, being expert neither in philology nor Anglo-Saxon, but well aware that the Saxons never penetrated to Carnarvon, and that both "twthills" are remarkably good places of observation, I hazard the suggestion that "twt" is a British equivalent of *tuitus*, from *tueor*, of which the proper meaning is "to gaze"; that they were, in fact, "look-outs." A coincidence in the history of the church of St. Mary, probably unique, is that it was built by Sir Hamon Le Strange and his son early in the fourteenth century, and restored in good taste by a Le Strange of the twentieth century. Whether the places owe most to the family or the family to the places is not easy to decide, but certainly no family ever did its duty more consistently by any country-side. On the other hand, but for the curious cliff, itself remarkably attractive for its outlines and colouring, the Hunstantons could not have existed to be cherished by the Le Stranges, for there is still abundant evidence of a submerged forest between Old Hunstanton and Brancaster. The cliff it was to the sea, "thus far shalt thou go and no further." The cliff it is that allows the Le Stranges to live in the ancient hall, fifteenth-century and moated, and to play the part of a human providence in this most remote corner of Norfolk. Of the part they played for Charles I mention has been made before.

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Eight miles along the coast take us to Brancaster and to history, lately made far less obscure than it used to be. Here it is clearly the best course to quote Mr. Haverfield's description, because it is far and away the best, having first summarized a little of the information leading up to it. Mention has been made of the Peddar's or Pedlar's Way, traceable, not very distinctly for the first six miles, but quite plainly afterwards, from Holme, midway between Brancaster and old Hunstanton, through Fring, Castle Acre, Swaffham and other places to the boundary of Suffolk and beyond. The difficulty that it did not lead to Brancaster, further complicated by the fact that there was no obvious reason why it should not, was the origin of a theory that it might have led to a ferry from Holme to Skegness; but the passage would involve some twenty miles of nasty navigation. "Even an antiquary, when it came to the test of trial, would shrink from such a *trajectus*." There must have been a road to Brancaster, there is no trace of any other. It was certainly Roman, it was probably military: that is Mr. Haverfield's conclusion; and as a slayer of mere fancies he is so just and relentless that, when at all positive, he is the more convincing.

Garrisons in Roman times were on the north and west, beyond the Severn and Humber, where they were needed; but by about 300 A.D. "Saxon" pirates began to harry the eastern and southern coasts, as they continued to do almost up to the Norman Conquest. So a series of nine forts, of which Branodunum (Brancaster) was one, was constructed to defend the threatened coast from this point to Pevensey, in far Sussex. At Brancaster lay the Dalmatian cavalry, keeping an eye on the Wash and the little harbours and creeks to the westward.

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"The site of Branodunum is at the 'Wreck' or 'Rack' Hill, a short distance to the east of Brancaster village, between the high road and the creek which forms the Western Arm of Brancaster harbour. It is still distinguishable by the fragments of brick and pottery which lie about it, and by the slight but perceptible elevation of its area; but its walls and buildings have long ago vanished, and little of them seems to have been visible even in Camden's days. In size and outline the fort is stated to have been a square of 570 feet, that is 7-1/2 acres, with gateways on the eastern and western sides; but no precise measurements have ever been secured, and I am inclined to consider these figures as somewhat too small. Excavations made in 1846 showed that the north-east angle of the fort was rounded, and had within it a small rectangular guard-chamber or turret, and presumably the three other angles were similar. At the same time it was found that the walls were 11 feet thick, constructed of concrete, and built with facing and bonding-courses of a local white sandstone. At the eastern gate, which apparently had flanking bastions, a road 33 feet wide was found to enter the fort and run 360 feet across it westwards. Some slight indications of structures within the fort were also noted, *but much yet remains to be explored.*"

This is Mr. Haverfield's constant plea in relation to East Anglian remains, and there is much to be said in favour of it. There is neither sense nor reason in standing outside earth mounds, or in trying to guess their contents, when the spade would reveal them if they existed, and a nation which expends so much as ours does in digging up ruins abroad, might very well do much more work of the same kind at home. The spade, for example, might resolve the question whether Caister-by-Yarmouth and Reedham were forts or not, but at present their character is quite uncertain, and the nearest fort to Brancaster we know is Burgh Castle by Yarmouth. So much, at least, we know definitely of Brancaster, and it can hardly fail to grasp the imagination. Here, at this extreme north-east point of Norfolk, the Dalmatian cavalry, men of the same blood as Constantine the Great, watched the sea against the enemies of Rome. Taking the comparative conditions of travel into account, it was almost as it would be if we placed a regiment of Sikhs in New Zealand to guard it against possible raids from the islands of the Pacific.

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Beyond Brancaster we follow the coast as far as Burnham Deepdale—the brook in these parts is responsible for many a place-name and for one of undying fame—and then leave the coast willingly enough, for the sandy waste of the "meols" soon ceases, if indeed it ever begins, to attract. Then the aspect of the country soon loses its bleak and wind-swept character; we are in a peaceful land of little hills and many woods, of brooks and verdure. At Burnham Thorpe in particular we are in the village to one of whose sons England and the world owe at least as much as they do to any other hero of history. Here Nelson was born. Those four words imply volumes, but they are volumes which positively must not be so much as begun, because they would never end, and they would be familiar from the first page to the last. Here, son of a father who was but a country clergyman, and of a mother of the pure and ancient blood of Norfolk, lived the boy who grew into the man whose every virtue and every failing are known of all men. He did not live here long. He was at school at North Walsham and at Downham, and he joined the *Raisonnable* at Chatham when he was but twelve and a half years of age. But he never forgot his birthplace, and it was named conjointly with the Nile when he was most justly raised to the peerage. One of the most tranquil spots in the world, and very lovely, is Burnham Thorpe—and it is holy ground. Not long since, on a pleasure voyage round the extreme north of Scotland, a perfervid Scot was heard to proclaim the glorious deeds done for the Empire by Scotland's sons. A west-countryman retorted, "But for Devon you would all have been Spaniards." An East Anglian might have chimed in with Burnham Thorpe; an Irishman with the birthplace of the Duke of Wellington; and it would all go simply to show how futile it is to institute comparisons.

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Possibly at Brancaster, possibly at Burnham Thorpe, the suggestion of a return to Lynn for the night may have been taken. In that case it is advised that the return journey of the morning be made to Fakenham only, taking Rainham Park by the way. Here, in print, we merely drive to Fakenham through pleasantly undulating and well-wooded country, on the west side of Walsingham and Houghton which we know. Of Fakenham, too, something has been said before; but a remark, worth making in passing because it happens to be true, is that "Fakenham, Norfolk," was an address often used by me as a boy desirous of acquiring ferrets or spaniels of miraculous quality, according to the advertisement. The explanation is plain on the face of the land to him who travels this country. It is very largely and successfully devoted to game; but whether the vendors of these animals, all paragons in their kind, were entitled to use the ground on and under which they had trained them may be an open question.

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My recollections of Rainham Hall are so ancient, the circumstances in which they were acquired were so peculiar, and my ignorance is so complete upon the questions whether the famous pictures are still there and whether the Hall is ever open to visitors, that I am not in a position to say whether it is worth while to go 3-1/4 miles out of the way to it. It may be taken that it is, if it be possible only to see the park and the outside of the house; for the latter is by Inigo Jones, and vastly fine; and the park, containing a magnificent sheet of water famous for its pike, is delightful. Of the modern representatives of this ancient and once distinguished family it were unkind to speak. Some of the earlier stock were distinguished. One took a prominent part for the

King in the Rebellion and in the Restoration. To another the famous Belisarius was given by Frederick the Great. A third introduced the turnip into Norfolk and was jested at by Pope; but Pope is not so quotable as a more enthusiastic and less known verse-maker of Norfolk:—

Thus Townshend gave the Master-Key
T' unlock the store of Husbandry;
Who, like Triptolemus of old,
From clods made rustics gather gold.
Friend patriarchal to our county!
Still, as we taste, we own thy bounty.

One of the great main roads of Norfolk starts from Cromer and runs through Sheringham and several other places to Elmham and East Dereham. Whether you start from Fakenham or Rainham you join it by a cross-road just north of Twyford, and a Norfolk main road is always worth joining, because it is so good to travel upon. To Elmham it is positively necessary to go. It was, in all probability, the seat of East Anglian bishops before they deserted it for Thetford, and then for Norwich; certainly they had their palace there, and the earthworks are the more rather than the less interesting in that they are, according to the authority more than once quoted, probably post-Roman. It is worth while to enter the church too, not merely to see the carved bench-heads, which are quite common in Norfolk, but because one of them, of a Roman in a helmet, is said to represent Pontius Pilate.

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A short five miles takes us to East Dereham, and it has been described by a master's hand.

"I have already said that it was a beautiful little town—at least it was at the time of which I am speaking—what it is at present I know not, for thirty years and more have elapsed since I last trod its streets." (Of a truth it seems to have changed very little.) "It will scarcely have improved, for how would it be better than it then was? I love to think on thee, pretty quiet D—, thou pattern of an English country town, with thy clean but narrow streets branching out from thy modest market-place, with thine old-fashioned houses, with here and there a roof of venerable thatch, with thy one half-aristocratic mansion, where resided Lady Bountiful—she, the generous and kind, who loved to visit the sick, leaning on her gold-headed cane, whilst the sleek old footman walked at a respectful distance behind. Pretty quiet D—, with thy venerable church in which moulder the remains of England's sweetest and most pious bard."

The bard of course was Cowper, who lived at East Dereham in his affliction, died and was buried there. To be perfectly candid, it is in the nature of a relief to one who has found the works of Cowper, always excepting *John Gilpin*, sweet and pious, but also a trifle tiresome, to convert to his own use—the usual word for taking a loan is clearly barred—some panegyric of Cowper from George Borrow, who was unlike to Cowper as one man can be to another, and not from some more modern writer making a business of admiration. Borrow indeed proceeds in a tone of heartfelt sympathy which none of the professional eulogists can touch. "It was within thee that the long-oppressed bosom heaved its last sigh, and the crushed and gentle spirit escaped from a world in which it had known nought but sorrow. Sorrow! do I say? How faint a word to express the misery of that bruised reed; misery so dark that a blind worm like myself is occasionally tempted to exclaim, Better had the world never been created than that one so kind, so harmless, and so mild, should have undergone such intolerable woe! But it is over now, for, as there is an end of joy, so has affliction its termination. Doubtless the All-wise did not afflict him without a cause! Who knows but within that unhappy frame lurked vicious seeds which the sunbeams of joy and prosperity might have called into life and vigour? Perhaps the withering blasts of misery nipped that which otherwise might have terminated in fruit noxious and lamentable. But peace to the unhappy one, he is gone to his rest; the death-like face is no longer occasionally seen timidly and mournfully looking for a moment through the window-pane upon thy market-place, quiet and pretty D—; the hind in thy neighbourhood no longer at evening-fall views, and starts as he views, the dark lathy figure moving beneath the hazels and the elders of shadowy lanes, or by the side of murmuring trout-streams, and no longer at early dawn does the sexton of the old church reverently doff his hat, as, supported by some kind friend, the death-stricken creature totters along the church-path to that mouldering edifice with the low roof, enclosing a spring of sanatory waters, built and devoted to some saint, if the legend over the door be true, by the daughter of an East Anglian king."

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Well, the daughter of the East Anglian king was Withburga, and the name of her father, who reigned in the seventh century, appears to have been Anna [*sic*]. She was a sister of St. Ethelreda too. But the pilgrimage to East Dereham is better worth taking for the love of George Borrow than for the sake of any saint, female or male, seventh or seventeenth century. George Borrow was assuredly no saint; but a wanderer, an adventurer, a wayward genius, a very human and fallible man, with "a true English heart," to quote Mr. Augustine Birrell. At East Dereham he was born, from East Dereham he drew Philo the clerk to the life, on the East Anglian heaths he met and studied the gipsies whom he knew as no other Englishman amongst us has ever known them. He belongs to East Dereham, he is its veritable *vates sacer*.

East Dereham is the intersecting point of two great roads, the one we came by, which goes on to Thetford and Bury, and the road crossing the county from Norwich to Lynn. That will give us a straight run home, for Lynn is home for the nonce, by way of Swaffham, where we must make a detour for Castle Acre. Swaffham itself is of little apparent interest, although its church is worth more than a passing glance, since it is a good type of Norfolk church, and can boast a double hammer-beam roof. But Swaffham interests me, and is likely to interest a good many other

persons, in a connection with matters more mundane. So early as the first chapter, when we were passing near to another Swaffham—multiplicity of identical place-names exceeds the limits of convenience in East Anglia—a casual observation was made to another Swaffham, the one at which we now are, where George, Earl of Orford, founded the first coursing club ever started in England, and I thought as I wrote of an ancient MS. commonplace book in which a young Welsh parson, breeder of greyhounds and runner of them, commemorated the mighty achievements of greyhounds in East Anglia. Since then we have encountered George, Earl of Orford, have felt, perhaps, a little more sympathy with him than the world which knows him only as a seller of priceless pictures. Since then, too, I have laid my hand on the book, and in it is a long note headed, "October 1792. Swaffham Coursing Society. A cup value 25 guineas subscribed for in honour to the memory of the founder George, Earl of Orford, to be run for in November annually upon the following terms and conditions." To give these in full might try patience too hard, but the foundation of the cup in itself shows that the eccentric peer was not ill-liked in his county, and some of the rules are so quaint that the whole may be condensed. If entries are more than sixteen, or less than sixteen in number, they are to be reduced to sixteen or eight as the case may be, by lot. If "any of the matched dogs should be so disabled as to pay forfeit to his antagonist, that antagonist shall be deemed the winner of the heat in question, but the person paying forfeit shall produce another dog to run a course against him, which substituted dog shall have no chance for the cup even if he wins his heat. It is provided also that no owner may enter more than one dog, that entries shall be a guinea, and that each owner shall back his dog for a guinea in each heat." Venues are then laid down, Westacre for the first dog, Smeefield for the second, Narborough for the third, and Westacre for the final. The club, a later note informs us, was limited to the number of letters in the alphabet, applicants for vacancies as they occurred to be balloted for. It is interesting to think of the scenes on Westacre and the other manors, some certainly retaining their ancient names still, in 1792, when coursing, now fallen on evil days, was fashionable. To recall the names of those who were present is not possible, for 1792 was the date of the birth of the writer of the commonplace book, and his copy of the rules was apparently made in a mood of research into the antiquities of his favourite sport. But I find a list of "Coursers at Swaffham 1825," clearly showing by the letters appended to the names that the old limitation to the letters of the alphabet survived, and the names themselves may stir East Anglian memories. They are, "Mr. Keppel, K, Mr. Tysser (?) F, Mr. H. Hammond, Q, Mr. Gurney, A, Mr. Denn, D, Mr. Redhead, L, Mr. Ayton, P, Mr. Carter, G, Lord Dunwich, M, Lord Stradbroke, E, Mr. Buckworth, B, Mr. Young, V, Mr. Gurdon, S." Members of the Yorkshire, Wiltshire and Berkshire Coursing Clubs were also at liberty to enter for the Orford Cup.

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From Swaffham we make a detour of 4-1/2 miles to Castleacre and to the mystery of earthworks. It is the last place we visit in East Anglia, and, having visited it, it will be just as well to return to the good high road for our return journey to Lynn. What one sees, after a drive across a gorse-clad common, is simple, what it means is another matter. One sees the ruins of the Priory, a great mound, and beyond it a village showing what has become of the ruins of the castle and the Priory. The story of the castle is easily traced with the help of Messrs. Timbs and Gunn. The site was granted by the Conqueror to William de Warrenne; he or his son built a castle, and it remained the property of the family until the fifteenth century. Edward I went there several times as a visitor, but early in the fourteenth century the castle was a ruin. Now we can see only two earthworks, one horseshoe-shaped, the other circular, a faint remnant of the great gateway, and bare traces of foundations of inner parts of the castle. "There is no doubt of the fortress having been erected by the Warrennes, but did they construct the enormous earthworks? Mr. Harrod considers they are not Norman, but Roman, the occupation of the site by the Romans being established, and Roman pottery and coins of Vespasian, Constantine, etc., having been found there. Evidence is then quoted to show that the walls and earthworks were the works of different people, and that the Normans availed themselves of these sites in consequence of their strength. 'And here,' says Mr. Harrod, 'we see the variety of interest afforded by the study of archæology. Here is a castle, of which all interesting architectural features have been destroyed. But probably from that very cause our attention is drawn to the remarkable character of the earthworks, and a view of this subject is presented to our notice, which may hereafter be of great use in the investigation of other remains of a similar kind.'"

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"Murray," again, supports Mr. Harrod, adding on his own behalf "the position of Castle Acre, on the line of a very ancient road, known as the 'Peddar's Way,' must always have been one of very great importance." Of this argument we may dispose at once. It has been seen that, if the Peddar's Way was a military road, its importance was due only to the fact that it led to Brancaster, or towards Brancaster; Brancaster was a fortress and watch-tower, seawards against the Saxon pirates, and nothing more. Now let us apply the cold learning and scientific tests of Mr. Haverfield. "The imperfect rectangular earthwork between the church and the ruins of the Saxon and Norman castle has generally been taken to represent a Roman earthen camp of 10 or 12 or (according to others) 22 acres in size, and various finds of Roman objects have been adduced to support the idea. But the camp, so far as I can judge without excavation, is not definitely Roman in character, and hardly any of the objects seem to have been found in or near it." He then goes through the "finds" systematically, and concludes: "I cannot regard this meagre and scattered evidence as adequate to prove the camp Roman, still less to prove it Roman of the first century, as Mr. Fox suggests. It indicates at the utmost a cottage or two, standing perhaps by the Peddar's Way (which runs through Castleacre parish, and earthworks) somewhere about A.D. 300. This may very likely have been to the north of the parish and not in the vicinity of the 'camp.' In truth the best and best authenticated 'find,' an intaglio with an emperor's head, was made two miles north of the 'camp.'"

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Where are we then? Merely in a state of knowing that, according to the best authority, there is no adequate evidence for believing the earthworks to be Roman. The problem presented by these earthworks and others is a legitimate subject for conjecture. Dr. Jessopp, in a paper on "The Saxon Burghs of Norfolk," appears to think that Castle Rising, Castleacre, Mileham, Elmham, and Norwich represent a line of Saxon fortresses, some of them occupying sites which were Roman before, erected to resist the Danes in the ninth century. The Roman hypothesis he would probably drop in the light of present knowledge, and, looking at the positions of these places on the map, it is not quite apparent, to say the least of it, why they should have been chosen for points of resistance to invaders from the sea. Were they, then, pre-Roman? That is possible; and it is quite consistent with the absence of Roman remains, for until the Saxon shore became a reality, the Romans had no occasion to fight in East Anglia after they had wiped the Iceni off the face of the earth, and so they had no need for fortresses in it. Or is it just conceivable that here, as has been suggested in the case of Castle Rising, the haughty Norman grandees compelled the subjugated country-folk, by scourge and every brutal method, to pile up these huge mounds?

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We can never tell for certain unless the spade be set to work in earnest, perhaps not then even; but in the meanwhile, as we make the run of some twenty miles to Lynn, it is amusing, if somewhat unscientific, to speculate, nor is speculation any the less entertaining in that much of the basis upon which previous theories have rested has been proved to be unsound. Let us, then, think of these mysterious works as we roll home to Lynn; and, having reached it, we have also reached the end.

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