

grey tower the hour of seven. Having determined to avoid as far as possible the beaten, dusty, highways, I soon betook myself to the green-winding lanes and field-paths which are so cool and delightful to the pedestrian traveller in England. A few miles of undulating country brought me to the now very small, but very ancient, village of Newenden, situated on the banks of the Rother, a small but tidal stream, which separates at this point the counties of Kent and Sussex. The valley of the Rother is mostly in permanent pasture, apparently of a very rich quality, well stocked with sheep and cattle. It everywhere presents, with its enclosing highlands, diversified by woods, corn fields, and hop gardens, scenery that is characteristically English. Soon again turning into a quiet, green land, and leaving the picturesque village of Northiam a little to the right, I reached the main road at Bickley, and soon after passing through the somewhat scattered village of Peasmarsh, arrived at the ancient town and port of Rye.—During this walk of some dozen miles, over a finely undulating country, the most pleasing and lovely landscapes, diversified by hill and dale, and the various productions of an advanced husbandry, frequently enraptured the senses. The green hop gardens, whose branches were now laden with ripened fruit, and gracefully entwining each other from pole to pole; the yellow harvest fields which had just yielded most luxuriant crops; the woods and hedges beginning to display their rich autumnal tints; and above these stately trees, and often embosomed within them, pointing up towards the bright blue heaven, was the venerable spire of some old country church, now sending forth its melodious chimes, the sounds of which die away in the neighboring valleys, still somewhat obscured by the morning mist; these were scenes that could not fail to impart a soothing influence to the imagination and the heart. Frequently was to be heard the sound of the sportsman's gun; for the season of partridge shooting had just commenced, and the sport appeared to be keenly relished. In field-sports and open-air exercises and pastimes, England still abounds, and they contribute largely to the physical health and social well-being of the people. It was delightful to witness the neatness of the cottages, often literally covered with the grape vine, which, in favorable seasons, produces abundance of very palatable fruit, or with roses, honeysuckles, &c. There seems to be in these rural districts quite a passion for flowers among the cottagers, and their vegetable gardens are in general productive and neatly kept.

The grain harvest, which had proved abundant, was generally secured, and although this was by no means among the most favored grain producing districts, many good farmers grew from 30 to 40 bushels and upwards, of wheat per acre. For arable land, the fields in many places are too small, and the hedges too wide and high; though I understand that great improvements have of late years been effected, in grubbing and straightening fences, draining, and superior cultivation generally. Hops are the distinguishing crop, and their culture gives a decided expression to the whole district.—Most farms have from five to ten per cent of their whole area in hop-culture, which for the last few years has been anything but remunerating. There is a peculiarity about this crop which seems to be anomalous and objectionable, that is, a liberal, general yield is the least remunerating, and two or three heavy crops in succession are sure to entail upon the planters a positive loss. This arises in great measure from the fact, that hops are subjected to a fixed excise duty on the amount produced, irrespective of price. The duty is about two pence per lb., which frequently amounts in productive years to a third or fourth of the market value. In consequence of heavy growths for the last three or four years, the hops of this district are now selling for about 6d., or a little more, per lb., which, with the fixed duty and other expenses, is an unremunerating price. Some planters have averaged of late from 15 cwt. to a ton per acre (long weight). The cost of cultivation,—exclusive of duty, picking, and curing,—is stated to vary from £20 to £30 per acre; and many planters have sustained a dead loss this and the preceding year, of from £5 to £10 per acre! A moderate, general crop, which brings a higher price, is the only one, under a high fixed duty, that can be profitable to the planters at large. There is a strong and general feeling against the duty, and very energetic measures are now being employed to obtain its total repeal. Some, however, would prefer a reduction to a total repeal, being apprehensive that, if the latter were to be effected, the import duty on foreign hops would be removed also. Hop-growing is an uncertain and expensive business, sometimes affording high profits, at others a corresponding loss. Requiring garden culture, it employs large numbers of people, at wages generally above the average price of farm labor, and the gathering of the crop is one of the most agreeable and picturesque scenes afforded by agricultural pursuits in any country, and from which both the painter and poet have drawn some of their most effective materials.