

I feel I may be of use to poor Lady Arden just at present.'

'Of course you will be of use; of the greatest comfort to her, and to the girls also. Evy has often said what a comfort you are, when there is real trouble anywhere.'

'Has she?' exclaimed Dyneley, eagerly. Then hastily added with a deprecatory smile. 'Well, you know, we clergy are still believed in by the ladies: our experience among the poor is of use to us, for when there is real sorrow, human nature is the same everywhere, and the same sources of comfort——.' Here he stopped, for it was plain that his companion was not attending to him; 'What are you looking for, my dear Gresham?'

'Your *Bradshaw*: I've got it now; but, dear me, Salton Point is not in it.'

'I dare say not; there is probably no station there. I don't think I ever heard of the place. See here in the map—you must go to Saltonburg, and then drive over—it looks about six miles. You have just time to sit down and get your breakfast; and be in Mirton to catch the mid-day coach. I will send round the dog-cart from the stables to pick you up here.'

'Then you are going to the Hall at once—well, it is best to get these things over. I am awfully obliged to you for taking the matter off my shoulders. I say—you'll make it clear to *all* of them—I mean the girls of course (he was thinking of Elise, but dared not mention her) how it was that I went off without saying good-bye, won't you? Thanks. God bless you, old fellow.'

Then as he sat down to his meal alone, he murmured. 'What a capital fellow a *good* parson is. I wish Dyneley could have come with me down to Salton Point. Poor old Sir Robert—he was a kind friend in me, in life, whatever happens, I shall never forget that. How wretched it will be down there; and with that infernal scoundrel in the house—Well, well; I must go through with it.'

CHAPTER XXXIX.

SALTON POINT.

THAT Mr. Dyneley 'did not know Salton Point' only proved, not indeed that it was unknown, but that he was of stay-at-home habits, or, at all events, had not travelled much upon the railways of the south coast. To every one that did so, Salton Point has long been a household word, and the place itself perfectly familiar, so far as the art of the painter can make it so. The locality in question had never, it is true, been made the subject of any picture in the Academy, or even in Suffolk Street, or Pall Mall; but the pictorial advertisement of it displayed at all the stations in the summer months was such as, once having seen, no eye could easily forget. The scene was at once so brilliant, picturesque, and fashionable.

On a beautiful heath that contrasted strongly with the broad, bright border of garden flowers that Art had placed on it, stood 'The Point Hotel, Salton,' a palatial edifice, 'replete,' said the letter press beneath the picture, 'with every modern convenience, and supplied with every luxury of the season.' One carriage and four, it was true was departing from its principal entrance, but then two were driving up to it full of expectant guests; those who were already its happy tenants were taking equestrian exercise upon the specious parade in front of it; or playing croquet on its 'unrivalled' lawn; or endeavouring (in vain) to exhaust the resources of the establishment in the articles of open flies, garden seats, or arbours 'so happily situated as to views both on land and sea.' A considerable portion of the British Navy was stationed immediately opposite this abode of bliss, and the rest of it appeared to be coming up full sail to join it. The extreme proximity of the numerous bathing machines (each with 'Point Hotel' upon them) to these