

for music, a few hotels, and a switchback railway are all that are necessary to equip an embryo seaside resort. A company is started with capital sufficient to set the place afloat. One or two hotels are erected facing the sea, and a plan is prepared and largely advertised by perspective views highly coloured, showing rows of neat villas, single and semi-detached; a church, of course, with a lofty spire; a marine parade, tennis-grounds, and pavilions interspersed with ample gardens and foliage, and surrounded by a landscape of unequalled attractiveness. We can point to a very admirable and naturally favoured place not far from Southsea, in which all these attractions were shown by the early promoters, but which to this day is still half-finished, if it is ever destined to attain the popularity its salubrity deserves. On the Kentish coast more success has attended the starters of at least one new resort. We may name Westgate-on-Sea as a select suburb of Margate. A capital being subscribed, it has not been difficult to make a beginning by an enterprising company by the aid and patronage of a great landowner. Eastbourne, we know, has thriven from the local and moneyed interests which one great landlord has thrown into the scale. Other places do not appear—although possessing like natural advantages—to have gained the same popularity. It is from no lack of energy that they are comparatively little resorted to by the general public. They have been pushed, well advertised, and a fair stock of attractions have been provided. Why is it we find one resort declining and another not far distant rising in public estimation? The natural advantages and facilities of both are about equal as regards their distance from great commercial centres, and the means of communication to each are good. The answer must be looked for in the manner the new town has been laid out—in the general scheme of building, engineering, and architectural treatment. In several new watering-places we know the natural peculiarities have been entirely neglected; the physical features have scarcely been considered in the general laying out of the roads, terraces, and esplanades; they have been allowed to break out here and there with abruptness, and natural scenery and building have been brought into strange and violent contrasts. Skegness, on the coast of Lincolnshire, is one of those places where the modern builder has unmistakably set his stamp on the locality. Flatness is the prevailing character of Lincolnshire scenery, as all know who have visited the Fens. Nature has divested the country of all the features most favourable to a resort, save the fine seaboard that skirts the land to the eastward. The straight rows of houses which form the lines of the streets and terraces only partially erected add to the monotony and intensify the flatness and level lines. It did not occur to the designers that there was one way to produce a little diversity to the scene by avoiding straight lines on plan, and building the houses in curved lines and in crescents. The curves would have broken the straightness by varying the ground and sky lines. Yet, not only in the plan of the streets has the straight line been introduced, but in the level roof-lines and continuous ridges, and so the evil has been rendered still more objectionable and disagreeable to the eye of the visitor. Nowhere do we observe the gabled or broken roof, which is the construction best suited to flat, plain-like localities. The parallel span roof abruptly terminates with gable ends. Then, in Skegness, all the buildings are of red brick, and of a hackneyed kind of architecture. There are very few houses in which any attempt is seen to give variety to the windows or the dressings. The balcony and bay window are inadequately treated. All is of the most commonplace character. The abrupt rows of houses leave unsightly gaps in the streets, rendering it impossible to

follow out any plan of arrangement. The sea-front is thus patchy and disjointed; but there are some compensations for the dullness of the town, with its flat lands behind, where there are neither hedgerows nor trees, chimneys nor smoke, to break the horizon. There is the splendid pier constructed by a company in 1881, with its fine pavilion on the spacious head, rivalling in length even that of Brighton, and there is a magnificent sandy beach extending for miles along the sea. To the visitor these advantages do not altogether make up for the want of good planning and lack of rural surroundings which are so conspicuously noticed here. The building has spoiled the town irretrievably. The conclusion to be drawn is that the plan and conditions of building in new seaside towns have much to do with their success. Architectural conditions ought to have far more consideration than they usually have. We do not mean that it is necessary to have high class or even good architecture, that the houses should be either in this or that style; but only that the physical features and conformation of the locality should be studied with reference to the plan of the streets, and that in the design of the rows and terraces such features as roofs, and the materials to be used in the building, ought to be decided with special relation to the natural surroundings. Skegness might have been made more pleasing if the builders had been required to gable and hip their roofs, and if there had been a regulation that long, straight-eaved roofs of slate would not be tolerated, and that red brick must be varied by stone, white brickwork, or half timbering and stucco. Other towns take their example from what has already been done near them. Thus it is to be feared that the neighbouring watering-places of Sutton-on-Sea and Mablethorpe will be sacrificed to the intolerable cheap speculative builder style of straight-slatted roofs and red brick, if some one does not show that even a flat and uninteresting country can be made agreeable by its buildings.

Bournemouth has been spoiled by the red brick craze; but its undulations have happily prevented anything like uniformity in the buildings. Brighton has been marred in the newer western parts; but its undulating downs have compelled the builder to follow them. So with Clevedon. Westgate-on-Sea and Birchington indicate what can be done by tasteful villa building, and the avoidance of the straight, continuous line of buildings, a tendency which has spoiled nearly half our new seaside places, except where nature has made it impossible to be followed.—*Building News*.

#### A CHEAP ELEVATOR.

A Berlin inventor has devised a simple and inexpensive elevator for private dwellings, in place of the ordinary staircase, which may suggest to some inventor a better means of accomplishing the same object. The Berlin invention is on the principle of the inclined railway, and the motive power is furnished by the city water, which is applied in the cellar; each flight has its separate chair, so that, for example, one person can ascend from the first to the second story while another is on his way from the second to the third, or still another is descending from the fifth to the fourth. The chair, being only of the width of the human body, leaves a free passage for any who wish to walk up or down instead of riding. It is set in motion by a simple pressure of one of its arms, and after it has been used it slides back to the bottom step, its descent being regulated in such a manner that the passenger is carried with entire safety. The motive power is, of course, more or less expensive, according to the cost of water, this being, it is stated, at Berlin, at the rate of a little more than one-tenth of a cent only for each trip.