

sion for planting is common to the English everywhere, and especially does it manifest itself where all the conditions are so favourable as on the upper Thames. Trees are the natural fringe of rivers in all countries. The watercourses of our great North-western plains are mapped out by the only arboreal efforts Nature there seems capable of making. The streams of England, naturally a forest country, must always have been peculiarly rich in this decoration; and had they not been the people would have made them so. The long stone quay is backed by its bordering grove, and towns and houses that throng down to the water are content, or rather prefer, to view it through such peepholes as the leaves may vouchsafe them. And then the turf, the glory of Britain, that shower and shears, Heaven and man, vie in cherishing!

The basin of the Thames is nearly as flat as the bottom of the ancient sea through which the chalk and clay that underlie it were slowly sifted down. Neither rocky cliff, breezy down, nor soaring mount has part in its scenery. What variety of outline the horizon seen from the river possesses is due to grove or façade. But all the variety these can give is there. The stream itself, so barren in some of the ingredients of the picturesque, is as agreeably astonishing in the use it makes of what it has. The tide running to Teddington, twelve miles above London, and lock and dam navigation taking possession above that village, there is little current but that caused by the tide. The Thames, in other words, where not an estuary is a canal—we had almost said moat. It has neither rapids nor rocky islets. It labours under the fearful depoeitizing drawback of a towpath. Racing shells, miraculously slim and crank, traverse with safety its roughest bends. From Putney, where we now are, to Mortlake, four miles above, is the aquatic Newmarket of England, where the young thoroughbreds of Oxford and Cambridge yearly measure their mettle.

Tufted islet—or “aits,” as the local vernacular has it—varied in size and shape, divide the stream. Long reaches, with spire or palace faint and pearly in the distance, alternate with sweeping curves scalloped with billowy masses of foliage that bastion broad re-entering angles of tessellated lawn and meadow. Willow and elm, the most graceful of trees, luxuriant as such a habitat can make them, sends streaks and masses of richest shadow beneath and beyond them. “Schools” of water-lillies star the clumps of reflected shade or blend with catches of sunlight brighter than themselves. Vistas of water among the aits, and of velvet-green among the meadows, lead off here and there. Now we thread a bridge, modern and smart, or mediæval and mossy, with a jumble of peaked arches diverse each from the other in shape and proportion. The cumbrous piers of these veterans repeat themselves in reflection, substance and shadow cut apart by multiform ripples and