

## Our English Letter.

XXI.

As the hour draws near for me to leave this most interesting county, it finds me with many regrets that I have not been able to make a still fuller use of my time, for there will remain still unvisited many a spot, in which is kept green, by means of its natural or man-made landmarks, the history of the past.

With the picturesquely-situated pier at Swanage as a point of departure (an illustration of which I am sending), I have been within reach of many such, but could not always avail myself of my opportunities. For instance, I should like to have gone to Lulworth, not only for its natural surroundings, its rocky precipices, which, like an impregnable wall, protect its sweep of coast; its romantic cove; its smugglers' caves; its proximity to the old Celtic camp of Flowers Barrow, with its well-defined line of ramparts and ditches, from which have been dug up urns and implements of old-time warfare, relics in bronze and stone, but because of its castle, which has, I believe, a link with Canada through the founders and present proprietors of our own "Farmer's Advocate," for, as the records of the early part of the 17th century have it, "A Weld built it," to which is added a memorandum in 1906, "and Welds live in it still." The writer, from whom I will again quote, says, with reference to the remains of the still more ancient Celtic castle of the place, called "Lulworde," in Domesday Book, and the Lulworth Castle of the present day, "Between the old stronghold and the new is interposed nothing less than the history of the world," a pronouncement which makes it all the more humiliating for me to offer my very prosaic reason for not visiting Lulworth. I was told that, as no pier had been built at Lulworth Cove (the center of attraction to the thousand and one "trippers" of early holiday season), I should have to descend, and again ascend "by a perilous-looking construction dignified by the name of a landing stage." This method of transit might very possibly be a source of huge delight to the Dicks and Toms, with their Ethelindas and Julianas, who, with many little shrieks and clutches, could avail themselves of the helping hands of their gallant escorts, but to the old lady of over three-score and ten, travelling alone, and alive to the well-known fact that "old bones are more easily broken than mended," this gangway-passage did not commend itself. The same sense of my physical limitations has also kept me content with only looking downwards over the cliff, instead of trying to crawl through the dark tunnel or up the giddy path from the rocks below, to visit the Cavern of Tilly Whim, near Swanage. These and similar places, the access to which require strong limbs and a steady brain, I am content to leave to the holiday people who are still enjoying their heritage of youth and vigorous health, and who, as the "steamer folks" of the ports, and the "trippers" of the inland places of interest, are to be met with throughout the length and breadth of the land.

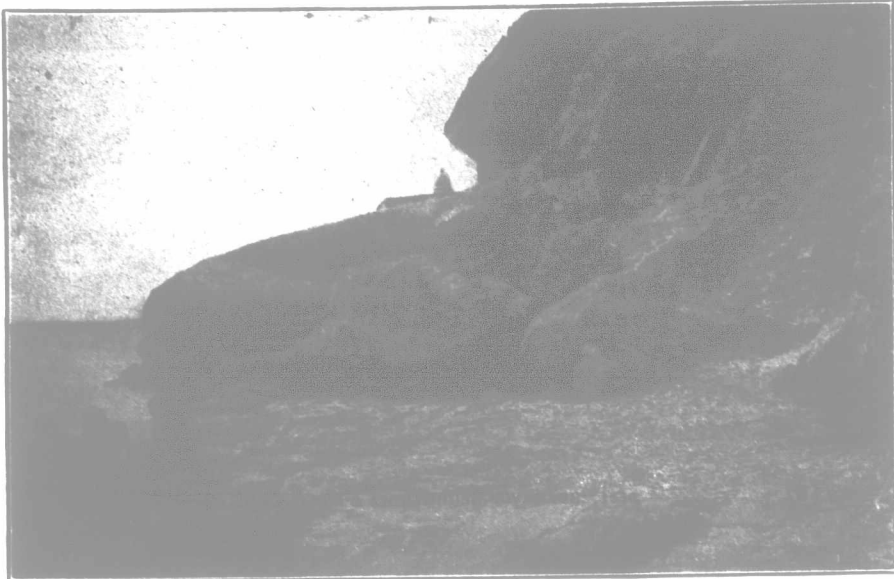
## POOLE HARBOR

One of my pleasant short excursions was along the coast, from Swanage to and around Poole Harbor, passing the rocks dubbed "Old Harry and His Wife," both of which, the latter especially, having been shorn of much of their original height by the buffeting to which, in the course of time, they had been exposed. From the point of view of my picture, they appear to be standing back to back, as though they had had, some centuries ago, a matrimonial squabble too serious for reconciliation. Probably, when the blows fell which removed a third of her stature, and with it what had stood for her head and shoulders, Mrs. Harry, not knowing better, blamed her husband, and turned her back upon him forever. But this is not even circumstantial evidence, and would

not stand in any divorce court to-day.

At high tide, the Harbor of Poole, dotted about with its several islands, its little forest of masts, its maze of waterways, of capes and creeks, with silvery waves breaking upon its several patches of sand, is a beautiful sight, and it was in that guise I saw it; but, at low tide, when the receding waters have laid bare its less

coast of Brittany, into "oure little harbour of Poole." There is, of course, a modern Poole, with its park and tramway and spick-and-span villas; but it is the old quay, with its arcade of pillars, its harbor office, and sundial, its town-cellar, King's hall or wool-house, etc., each with its story of the past, which makes a visit to this old sea-town of more than ordinary interest. H. A. B.



Tilly Whim and Lighthouse, Swanage.

This also shows how Ethelinda was helped through the Tunnel to the Tilly Whim Cave.

comely parts, its beauties are less apparent. The whole estuary of Poole extends inland for seven miles, wending its course through tortuous paths of moorland and strands of stones and fir trees, all of which had its part in the happenings of the past. "Go back ten centuries," says the writer of Dorset Highways and Byways, "and this Wessex Estuary is still the same, the same as when up the fairway came, with thud of rowlocks, the long boats of the Danes, lined with glistening shields, while on the shore were burning huts and folk fleeing across the heath." It seems to have been the fate of Poole to be pillaged and burnt times without number, for if any marauders thought fit to visit the South of England, they seldom left Poole out of their programme; therefore, had it not been for the hiding places accessible only to those who knew the secret of the shallows which guarded them, there would not have been a man or woman left to tell the tale.

## Hope's Quiet Hour.

## Ugly Corners Made Beautiful.

The desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.—Isa. xxxv. 1.

J. R. Miller says that a certain florist's signboard bore the inscription: "Ugly corners made beautiful." That is one of the outward visible signs that Christ—the Divine Gardener—is being permitted to plant good seeds in the heart of a man. The beautiful chapter of Isaiah, from which our text is taken, is a promise that the coming Messiah should make ugly places beautiful. The desolate desert, sandy, and barren, should become a lovely rose garden; streams should break out in it, and the parched and thirsty land should be refreshed with springs of living water.

Now, there is no doubt about the fact that real Christianity—a true following



Tilly Whim Caves, Swanage.

The people of Poole must have been made of pretty stern material, for throughout the centuries they seem to have had a hand in nearly every bit of warfare which has happened in England's history, to say nothing of smuggling and piracy, also, for was it not a Poole man, Harry Page, whom the French called "Arripay," as being the easiest way to pronounce it, who was the terror of the Channel, and who was credited with having on one occasion brought no less than 120 prizes, picked up off the

in the footsteps of Christ—does transform ugliness into beauty. It is the sham article that men speak about contemptuously. When they see a man or a woman with a soul of absolute purity, living a life of unselfish service, they can't help wanting to be better themselves—and imitation is the best proof of admiration.

It is easy to talk as though St. Peter's advice to wives were out-of-date, when he says that they may win their husbands to the faith they profess, if their adornment is not "that outward

adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel," but is the beauty of soul-purity, "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great price." This inner beauty can never be out-of-date, can never be valueless in the sight of anyone. It is often true that a man will joke and laugh with a woman whose conversation is far from being—as St. Peter advises—"chaste, coupled with fear." But he is influenced infinitely more by a woman in whose presence he could not tell a "risky" story—it would shrink ashamed before the whiteness of her thoughts, and he would shrink from her clear-eyed astonishment. True meekness is as priceless as it is rare. One who is never "touchy" when a slight is offered to his personal vanity, who goes through life not seeking his own gain, but ready to shoulder the unpleasant duty that other people shirk, is able to make any ugly corner a delightful spot for his relatives or neighbors.

One person may travel about and another may be tied to a narrow, apparently sordid existence. One may be called to do "interesting" work, while another may have the same round of commonplace "chores" to do day after day for many years. But the real difference between beauty and ugliness in any life is always its inner spirit. A temper that can be trusted not to get out of order, a gladness of heart which is wonderfully infectious, a love which is considerate and thoughtful in trifles—these are the great beautifiers.

If you want to make ugly corners beautiful, then don't grumble or worry because you can't do exactly the kind of noble work that especially attracts you, but go right to work where you are to be good and happy yourself, and help those within reach to be good and happy too.

The most beautiful life is the one that is most nearly like the Life of Christ. The Master knows the kind of discipline that each soul needs, and if He has given you the most common kind—the discipline of the ordinary cares and pleasures of home—then that is the best opportunity you could possibly have of climbing daily higher, nearer to the King Himself. Of one it was said:

"For her there had not needed dark heart-throes

Of agony; simple words sufficed,

And griefs that come to all, to bring her close,

And closer still to Christ."

We are fired by the story of some brave martyr's witness for Christ—in the past or in the present—and we long to be able to live or die gloriously. Then, perhaps, we lower the standard committed to our trust by speaking crossly to someone, or by passing on an unkind bit of gossip, or by doing our best to get some advantage for ourselves at the expense of another. So we are making our corner ugly instead of beautiful, and how disappointed our watching King must be. He loves beauty, even the beauty that lasts only a moment. Look at a spider's web, which is like a coronet of diamonds in the early sunshine; look at a glorious sunset, which changes as you watch it and dies out in a few minutes. I think the most glorious one I ever saw was when I was steaming over the sea from Ireland to Scotland one evening last August. It looked like a vision of the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, for it seemed all one blaze of precious stones and "pure gold, like unto clear glass." Then I saw another glorious sunset in Switzerland, a few weeks later. The great hills of God, crowned with eternal snow, were flushed with delicate tints of wonderful color, changing moment by moment until they died out into pearly grey as the sun went down. If God takes pleasure in such swiftly-vanishing beauty, how much more must He care for the beauty that is eternal—the beauty of character.

Beauty is a difficult thing to define. We look back two thousand years to that home in Bethany where three people lived whose Jesus especially loved, and we can understand why Mary's earnest fellowship was more attractive to Him than the fawning attentions of Martha. And yet there are plenty of people still who dare to think that the Searcher of hearts