

the yellow blankness of the Babylonian plains and the swamps of Siam or the Isle of Dogs.

So the excursionizing visitor in London, having performed the melancholy duty of groping through the cobwebs and fungi of the great wine-vaults and other wonders of the dock-region—Doré's illustrations of which are scarce surpassed in unearthly gloom by those of his *Wandering Jew*—is not apt to do



BATTERSEA RED HOUSE.

more in that direction than take a hasty glance at Greenwich, where the pensioners used to be, and the telescopes and the white-bait still are. Beyond and below that all is blank; for, though a jaunt to Margate is a thing of joy to thousands of Londoners, "nobody" lives there or ever did. Our know-

ledge of, or interest in, the place we owe almost exclusively to the Rev. Sydney Smith's account of the "religious hoy that sets off every week for Margate," and Elia's more sympathizing sketch of a trip thither by a more rapid and less saintly conveyance. The estuary of the Thames is almost as poor a cover for the explorer to draw as the estuary of Delaware. So he gives the wind to the herring country over the way, and turns his nose up stream. Above Westminster Bridge, starting from the House of Parliament, he looks for the haunts of the hard fighters and hard thinkers, past and present, of England, and for her most characteristic charms of landscape, natural and artificial.

Our starting-point, though above the limits of the city proper, is five, six or seven—no one can tell exactly how many—miles below the western edge of the metropolis. The ancient city, with three hundred thousand inhabitants more than two centuries ago, and hardly a hundred thousand to-day, is but the dingy nucleus of a vast nebula of brick, that differs from a comet in constantly expanding and never contracting. As a sample of its progress, the opening, in the ten years from 1861 to 1871, of six hundred and thirty-five miles of new streets will serve. Nine or ten thousand houses are annually erected—ten times as many as are in the same time added to the most rapidly growing Canadian city. About four millions of souls occupy an area of one hundred and thirty-one square miles, this being still but a corner of the space—five hundred and seventy-six—included within the beats of the metropolitan police. London has thus gathered to itself not only home provinces, but out-