

doubt his poetic emotions first took shape in juvenile verse. As I walked down the narrow stone-paved alley adjoining Westgate Place, and stood on the bridge crossing the tiny river Lud, and looked to the church just over the way, I thought of the noble-featured lad who had many a time end oft stood on that very spot, his young heart throbbing with glorious dreams of literary fame.

MABLETHORPE.

Where is Mablethorpe? And what gives it fame? It is a seaside hamlet east of Louth, but as regards fame its star has not yet risen. It is a place scarcely known out of Lincolnshire, and even the inhabitants of the little village, with a few exceptions, do not dream that within fifty years pilgrimages will be made to this sequestered spot by students of literature from every land. It was at Mablethorpe that young Tennyson obtained his first view of the sea. Here are "the sandy tracts, and the hollow ocean-ridges roaring into cataracts" that we read of in "Locksley Hall." Here about the beach the poet wandered "nourishing a youth sublime with the fairy tales of science, and the long result of Time." In Mablethorpe sixty years ago the Tennyson family were accustomed to spend the summer months, and all the sea-pictures that abound in the early poems of Tennyson take their form and color from this Lincolnshire coast.

I reached Mablethorpe, by train from Louth, at seven o'clock on Saturday night, and found quarters for the Sunday at an inn bearing the odd name of "Book-in-Hand." Perhaps the name was given in anticipation of my visit, for whenever I left the hotel I carried in my hand the white-and-gilt manual already mentioned. After supper I roamed on the beautiful and spacious beach for over two hours. As far as the eye could see in both directions stretched the wide belt of sand. The tide was going out and a few children were toying with the receding waters and picking up the pale pink shells and rushing in glad abandon hither and thither, the evening breezes playing with their dishevelled hair. How Tennyson loved to wander along this free strand in the rare days of youth's sweet dreams! How many varying aspects of these Norland waters, in calm and in storm, under the

bright flash of day or beneath the shimmering moonlight, has he seen with the clear eyes of the rapt worshipper of Nature and drawn with the delicate pencil of unrivalled genius.

Sunday, August 10th, was a day of cloud and wind and rain, but I was glad to have it so, as there had been a monotony of fair weather for three full weeks. Although the sky lowered ominously I set out after breakfast to walk along the beach to Sutton-on-the-Sea,—a summer resort about three miles south of Mablethorpe. An hour brought me to my destination, but as the tide had turned and a thick mist was sweeping up, I thought it prudent to retrace my steps. My prudence proved to be imprudence. I had not gone a mile before the situation became alarmingly interesting. The North-easter roared among the sea-caves. The sea-foam flew far landward over dune and wold. The tide plunged and roared in its shoreward march. I was driven for shelter behind "the heaped hills that mound the sea." The thick grey mist turned imperceptibly to rain. My umbrella was of no service in the fierce wind. I fled for refuge into one of Nature's inns until the sudden tempest had spent its fury. Shortly after noon I reached my hotel, not much the worse for my exhilarating adventure. I shall hereafter appreciate Tennyson's numerous references to such storms,

"When to land
Bluster the winds and tides the self-same way,
Crisp foam-flakes scud along the level sand,
Torn from the fringe of spray."

On Sunday afternoon from the window of my room I saw in the distance a pretty white house which seemed to be the very one that shone in gilt on the cover of my Tennyson manual. After making my way to the quaint old cottage and questioning a ruddy Lincolnshire lass who stood at the door, I found that my identification was correct. I saw before me the "lowly cottage" referred to by the poet in his "Ode to Memory"—

"Whence we see
Stretched wide and wild the waste enormous
marsh,
Where from the frequent bridge,
Like emblems of infinity,
The trenched waters run from sky to sky."

Leaving the curious, long, low-roofed house where were composed many of the Poet Laureate's finest verses of sea and