

THE RIVERS OF SUSSEX.

PART II.

BY MARK ANTONY LOWER, M.A., F.S.A.

IN my former paper on this subject,¹ I dealt with the rivers of East Sussex, their sources, courses, and debouchures, and with their associations—topographical, historical, and legendary. Before proceeding to the rivers of West Sussex proper, I must say a few words respecting a stream which has almost disappeared from the map of Sussex, but which is still worthy of a place in the enumeration of our rivers.

The town of Brighton lies in the hundred now known as the Hundred of Whalesbone, but formerly as *Wellsbourne*, a name much more intelligible, and signifying ‘the stream flowing from a well.’² The ‘well’ or source of this little current is at Patcham, about due north of Brighton, and it is only when the well overflows that the Wellsbourne exists, and then it occasionally assumes the proportions of a small river. Its course is through the parish of Preston by the side of the old London road towards Brighton. Near the ‘Amber Ale Brewery’ it disappears beneath the surface, and passes through a sewer to the sea. Its ancient bed crossed the ‘Stejne,’ and entered what is still called ‘Pool valley,’ to the southward of that well-known enclosure. The modern sea frontage of Brighton shows no trace of its former outlet, though in old times there was a small haven there. Indeed, Andrew Borde, writing in the time of Henry the Eighth, speaks of Bryght-Hempston among the “noble ports and havens of the realm.” Pool Valley is the lowest ground in

¹ Vol. xv., pp. 148—164.

² In Domesday, the hundred in which

Brighton is placed, is called *Welesmere*, a name of similar meaning.

modern Brighton, and even now (though the waters of the Wellsbourne are artificially drained by a subterraneous channel) in case of a sudden and heavy fall of rain this depressed spot is deluged by the surface-water to a very inconvenient extent. A drawing of the Pavilion of George IV., made in the early part of the present century,³ shows quite a pool across the Steyne.

Occasionally, as I have already intimated, nature reasserts herself, and scorning subterfuges, the Wellsbourne appears in its ancient bed above ground. A remarkable instance of this occurred during the heavy rains of December, 1852, when, for many hours, there was a perfect river from Patcham to the northern part of Brighton, where it disappeared at the spot above indicated. Some humorous lines, with the signature E., appeared in the "Brighton Herald," for Dec. 25th, a few of which, though not intended for posterity, are worthy of permanent record:

A TALE OF THE FLOOD.

Giles and Tummas walked abroad
 On Sunday, to the London Road,
 Which the postman did assever
 Is a highway turned to river :
 First to Patcham, where the waters
 Have ta'en up their winter quarters—
 'Tis a "meeting of the waters,"
 From the vaporous cloudy wreath,
 From rebellious springs beneath,
 From the village well o'erflowing—
 All unto a river growing.
 Saith Giles, "I doubt the well's bewitched ;
 Instead of waiting to be fetched,
 The water bids the sun good day,
 And, without carrying, goes away."
 Saith Tummas, "What I most admires
 Is this quandary of the Squire's—
 His garden's very like a moat,
 The great house is a leaky boat."
 "And," saith Giles, "the more's a wonder,
 It's drier *on* the roof than under."
 Thence to Withdean by the highway,
 Not speedily to be a dry way—
 For the new-born river scampered
 Faster than they walked, much hampered

³ Inf. W. Figg, F.S.A.

By the springy boggy ground
 Where alone they footing found ;
 On to Preston, where the river
 Did in twain its bulk deliver,
 Soon again to meet in one,
 Galloping and dancing on
 To the Town of Brighthelmstón,
 Where the torrent, broad and strong,
 Whilom coursing miles along,
 Suddenly doth disappear ; &c.

Proceeding westward, we next reach the *Adur*, a designation sufficiently Celtic,⁴ which gave name to the Roman station called *Portus Adurni*. This river resembles, on the Ordnance map, a well-proportioned tree, with many little branches, coming in about equal numbers from the east and the west.

Commencing with the longest stream westward, which rises near the lands of Lutwicke in Slynfold, we follow its course in a southerly direction, and pass about a mile eastward of Billingshurst, in a line almost parallel with the Roman road called Stanestreet. Lower down it receives a tributary rill rising some distance to the south of Itchingfield. It afterwards flows under Slaughter-Bridge;⁵ then a small rivulet comes in from Broadford Green, and the commingled waters flow south-east to Shipley.

Here the waters ramify remarkably, and flow from all points—north, east, and west. The high grounds to the south of Horsham form the *watershed*,⁶ which sends the streams of the *Adur* to the south and those of the *Arun* to the north, and Southwater, a hamlet of Horsham, seems to derive its name from the circumstance of its being near the source of one of the *Adur's* rivulets. This stream runs through the lake known as Knepp Pond, the largest piece of fresh water in Sussex, being upwards of a mile in length. It derives its name from its proximity to Knepp Castle, an

⁴ See vol. xv., page 153, *note*.

⁵ I search in vain for the etymon of the word *Slaughter*, so common in Sussex local nomenclature—Slaughters, Slaught-ferd, Slaughter's Common, &c. It has apparently nothing to do with 'killing and slaying.'

⁶ I stand corrected by the Saturday Reviewer, who so handsomely noticed my former paper on this subject, as to

the use of this term (*Sat. Rev.*, Sept. 12, 1863). The new and scarcely English word *watershed*, seems to imply not the slope down which waters flow, but the ridge which sends waters in opposite directions—"the dividing line between two basins." I have also adopted the suggestion of the Reviewer, by illustrating my notes with a skeleton map of the rivers.

old fortalice of the Lords of Bramber, of which a single fragment is standing—as its former mistress, Lady Burrell, sings—

“ — The poor remains
Of what in former times adorned the scene,
When there the sons of Braose lived renowned,
For martial deeds with wreaths of laurel crowned.”

Near at hand are the traces of iron-works, indicated by the name of Hammerpond farm, while Tenchford Bridge is one of the numerous instances in our southern streams in which the word *ford* is retained, although a bridge has long since done away with the necessity of wading the current. A little further eastward a trifurcated stream runs down and forms the western boundary of the beautiful domain of West Grinstead park. Then from the south-west we have three streams—the first from Dane Hill (a suggestive name), which passes by the manor-place of Apslee, the *cunabula* of the ancient race of Apsley, the second known as *Laybrook*, and the third called *Lancet Brook*, from the village of Thakeham: these unite nearly close to the south end of Knepp pond.

The topography of small and nameless streams, whatever those streams may add to the charms of natural scenery, to the fertility of the soil, and to the convenience of those who dwell on their banks, is not only difficult for the writer, but uninteresting for the reader. I must therefore pass with slight mention several of the rills which send their share of fair water to swell the current of Father Adur in this district, before we reach the main stream, some few miles southward. One of these rises near the north-west corner of West Grinstead park, a second at Wells-land, more to the east, and a third comes down from Joulfield Common. They are all to the east of the high stream, and I hope that the Naiads of these brooklets will forgive me if I have nothing to record concerning them.

Two or three miles southward of West Grinstead, the Adur receives from the south-west an affluent which is composed of three branches; one from Buncton, at the foot of the Downs, remarkable for its little chapel, built with Roman tiles, the remains of an ancient villa; a second from

Washington and Ashington; and a third from the farm called the Hook. Near the junction is a place called Ford "clappers." This provincial term, not uncommon on our Sussex streams, signifies a bridge of planks laid upon rude piles by the side of the highway considerably above the level of the horse-road, for the use of foot passengers during a flood. A small rill from Ashurst completes the western branches of the Adur.

Of the eastern branches, the most westerly one rises from two heads of water in the woods to the south of Plummer's Plain, and is reinforced by brooks rising at places called respectively Wolderingford, Homeland, Eastridge, and Highhurst. Thus fed it flows southward towards Shermanbury, and passes close by the picturesque ruins of Ewhurst, the ancient seat of the Peverells and the La Warrs, which conjointly with Wyndham gives name to the adjacent Hundred.

The next ramification includes waters from all points of the compass—from Collard Street—from Cuckfield park, where, and at time-honoured Bolney below, the clangour of iron forges formerly—

"And hammer's dreadful sound,
Even rent the hollow woods, and shook the queachy ground."

—from Ditchling Common, northward, past Wivelsfield, where it is known as the *Podstream*, and then by an abrupt turn to the west under the Brighton railway, near Vale bridge, and thence northwards to St. John's Common, and Twyneham, to Wyndham bridge—from Hammond's Place, south of St. John's Common—from Clayton and Keymer, northwards past Friar's Oak, and then north-westward, impelling in its course the machinery of many mills. At Goldbridge,⁷ a stream from Hurstpierpoint comes in, and finally all these waters flow under Wyndham bridge.

At Betley, two miles south-west of Shermanbury, another considerable stream of four forks joins the larger affluent. The first rises at Sawyer's Common, northwest of Hurst-

⁷ Several bridges in Sussex bear this name, but the etymon is not known. The Anglo-Saxons worshipped an idol called *Gold* (a cultus not yet extinct)

and it is possible that the Goldbridges, the Goldstones, and the localities Goldspur, Goldstrow, Guldeford, &c., may have been consecrated to his honour.

Pierpoint; the second at Wickham near Clayton: it passes Hurst and Albourne, and is called the *Washbrook*—the third at Newtimber—and the fourth in a pond near Wick farm, between Albourn and Woodmancote. The former of these two parishes probably derives its name “Ald-burne” from this rivulet.

The eastern and western waters of the Adur coalesce at a point about a mile and a half west of the town of Henfield, and from thence, having first assumed the proportions of a river, flow through a tract of alluvium which gives evidence of the stream having originally been much wider than at present. To the south-west of Henfield the alluvium expands in a remarkable manner, and forms a marsh almost a mile in breadth, with an elevated spot in the middle called the Rye, somewhat resembling the Hither and Farther Ryes in the alluvium of the plain of the Ouse below Lewes. There is also a farm called Brookside, which again justifies Verstegan’s statement quoted in my former paper.^a Near the southern skirt of this little marsh, at Streatham, an episcopal manor (noteworthy as the birth-place of Thomas Stapleton, one of the learnedest of England’s sons, and ablest of Rome’s defenders) comes in a little stream whose waters are derived from Fulking, Poynings, Perching, and other spots immediately below those grand Downs, whose yawning gulf, the Devil’s Dyke, is widely renowned. The following pretty verses, by the Rev. G. Richards, suggested by viewing the source of one of these streamlets, are in harmony with the subject of this paper, and therefore I do not hesitate to transcribe them:—

Inscription for a Spring at the bottom of the Dyke Hill, in the parish of Poynings.

“Stranger! as thou wanderest by,
 Pass not with incurious eye;
 What though an undistinguished rill,
 I issue from my native hill,
 The Thames, the Danube, and the Rhine,
 May flow from fountains small as mine;
 And though I silent glide along,
 Far from the world’s tumultuous throng,

^a Vol. xv., page 164.

Through vale obscure and lonely plain,
 Then nameless mingle with the main?
 Stranger! when thy course is o'er,
 Wilt thou have ought to boast of more?
 Unnoticed as I roam the mead,
 Many a rustic flower I feed;
 And the bee, with gilded wing,
 Sips my current, murmuring;
 And frequent o'er the grassy brink,
 Bends the thirsty lamb to drink:
 Where'er thy course, O Stranger! lies,
 Cherish the gentle charities."

Not far below Streatham is a farm called Scotland. It is worthy of a passing note that there are several lands in various parts of Sussex so named, and that the origin of the appellation seems to be that they were subject to a certain scot (*sceat*) or payment, just as low lands drained at a public or common charge are still said to be "scotted."

Hence the Adur flows in an almost direct southerly course towards the English Channel, receiving only one more stream worthy of notice. This comes from the higher grounds about Wiston—glorious of old from the adventures of that marvellous triad of brothers, the three Sherleys—and is known as the *Broadbourne*. At Steyning it receives two diminutive rivulets, which enclose the church originally built there of wood in Saxon days, and reputed as the resting place of the sainted Cuthman, and of Ethelwulf, the father of Alfred the Great. Between this tributary and the high stream is the farm called King's Barns, supposed with great probability to have been a *grange* or farm-stead of the West-Saxon kings, who certainly had a fortress, such as fortresses were in those days, on the frowning heights of Bramber close below. This place, better known subsequently as the feudal stronghold of the De Braoses, to whom the Conqueror awarded the whole rape of Bramber, is, I believe, the veritable site of the *Portus Adurni* of the Itineraries. Little remains of the Norman castle; nothing perhaps of the Saxon *palent*; and it is therefore not surprising that traces of Roman occupation should be non-apparent. Beyond a few coins, nothing, I believe, has been found; but whoever has studied the place with an eye to the strategic policy and arrangements of the Romans, must give to this spot the pre-

ference over every other near the Adur in its claim to be the Roman station.⁹ Its distance from the sea might be urged as an objection, but, as a considerable estuary must have extended thus far up sixteen hundred years ago—as we know that a spot slightly farther northwards was known as the *port* of St. Cuthman down to the fourteenth century—and as considerable traces of a Roman bridge over the river at Beeding, close by to the eastward, were visible in recent times—we may fairly conclude, I think, that Bramber is as much *Portus Adurni* as Pevensy is *Anderida*.

We must not omit among these historic memories the priory of Beeding,¹⁰ on the left bank of the Adur, founded upon the *Sele* or hall of some Saxon thane, by the potent De Braoses, and given in much later times to Magdalen College. Maudlin Farm, on the other side of the river—absurdly mistaken by Mr. J. M. Kemble for a settlement of the *Mædlingas*, an Anglo-Saxon family—simply points to the appropriation of good lands to that seat of learning, as several deservedly well-beneficed incumbents hereabouts, old Fellows of Magdalen, can tell you.

A little lower down, St. Botolph, a parish church (with pre-Norman features, as Mr. M. H. Bloxam informs me) recalls the times when our Anglo-Saxon forefathers invoked him who was supposed to preside over those who set sail in small craft, and who was in very name “the boat-helper.” From this point the Adur passes through a narrow valley between the chalk hills of the South Downs, which gradually rise to the east and west, to Old Shoreham, whose little cruciform Norman church is well known to ecclesiologists. Opposite to it is the timber bridge once considered a marvel of engineering at the cost of five thousand pounds. Since then, the Norfolk suspension bridge, lower down, has eclipsed its fame, and still more lately the bridge of the South-Coast Railway, lying intermediately, has put both out of joint.

A little more southward, to the south-west of New Shoreham—whose fine early church belongs to a period when the town was by far the most populous and most com-

⁹ In this view I am confirmed by the opinion of perhaps the highest authority on the subject, Mr. Roach Smith.

¹⁰ From the fact of the Adur passing Beeding, it was formerly known by the alias of ‘*Beeding Water*.’

mercial in Sussex—the Adur turns at almost a right angle to the east. It formerly debouched near that angle, but the constant set of the tides from the south-west, as mentioned in my former paper, has driven the mouth farther eastward, so that the actual haven is at Kingston-Buci, so named from its Norman proprietors, but now translated for the vulgar ear to Kingston-by-Sea. Time was when kings and priests were well endowed in Sussex, so that our various Kingstons and Prestons required in later times a suffix or surname, and hence the Buci, Bowsey, or By-Sea in the present instance. Were it not that Kingston harbour is strongly defended by piers and other means, the Adur would go still further eastward, almost to Hove; and even now a lagoon, of late years deepened and improved, has become a ship canal of great utility for the conveyance of merchandise towards Brighton.

With reference to what was just now said as to the Portus Adurni, it is fair to remark that hitherto Portslade, to the north-east, has generally been considered the representative of that station, apparently on the strength of its first syllable. It is quite true that at Southwick, and at West Blatchington, Roman remains have been discovered, but as the same thing may be affirmed of very many other places on this coast, no great argument can be based on such evidence.

I fear that I must have fatigued the reader with these details of an unimportant Sussex river; but as its ramifications are so numerous as to be quite without parallel on the south coast of England, the fault has been rather that of Nature herself, who has so curiously scooped out the little dells and valleys through which they run, than of him who has endeavoured to pursue their almost labyrinthine sinuosities.

Our next river westward is ‘the *Arun*,’ celebrated by Drayton as—

“*Arun*, which doth name the beauteous Arundel,”

far larger and longer, and far more picturesque and poetical—let me add, also, far less difficult to describe. Beginning from the east, this time, the following appear to be the principal streams:—

1. Two sets of forked rivulets rising in St. Leonard's Forest and running principally in a south-westerly direction, one through Hawkin's Pond, and the other through Hammer Pond, indicating the site of the iron-works there destroyed by order of Sir William Waller, during the Civil Wars of the seventeenth century.¹¹ These waters uniting, flow towards the west, receiving by the way a few inconsiderable brooklets (especially one from the north, not far from St. Leonard's Beacon) past the picturesque old town of Horsham.

2. A stream from Lyebridge, a little over the Surrey border, which runs to the eastward of the hamlet of Kingsfold, and of the village of Warnham, and so on, receiving a few small brooks by the way, to a point a short distance from Horsham, where it meets No. 1. Soon after this junction the stream takes a sudden turn at an acute angle to the north-west through the parish of Slynfold.

3. A stream rising at Shiremark, so called from some boundary stone between Sussex and Surrey, and which of old gave name to a yeoman stock called Atte Shiremarke, whence it flows about five miles to a point a little north of Slynfold village, where it unites with the waters previously mentioned; thence in a direction generally westward, and to the south of the village of Rudgwick to Drungewick.

4. A rivulet from Fisherland Wood, a few hundred yards over the Surrey border, south-east of Chiddingfold, which after a circuitous course enters Sussex near Loxwood, and thence flows to Drungewick to meet No. 3.

5. A more important stream of two forks: the first comes down from the north-west in the direction of Haslemere, and passes through the domain of Shillinglee, near which it feeds two ponds, originally made for iron-works; the other comes from Blackdown Common by North Chapel. It passes through a country of little historical interest by Kirdford and Wisborough Green, near which latter place we consider the high stream of the Arun to commence.

From this point the river flows southward to Stopham,

¹¹ See Suss. Arch. Coll., vol. ii., p. 216. Mr. Kemble, in his wild generalizing way, deduces the name of the *Hammer-*

ponds from the cultus of Thor! See "Saxons in England."

where it is crossed by a bridge of seven arches originally built in the reign of Edward the Second, on the site of Estover Ferry, which belonged to John atte Ford de Stopham, whose grand-daughter endowed the Barttelots with the lordship of Stopham, which they have ever since held—the most ancient commoners in West Sussex, as their long series of ancestral memorials in the church hard by will show. It then takes a capricious turn to the east, and passes Pulborough, where it receives two rivulets, one from the north-west, called the *Nutbourne*, past West Chilmington, and the other from the south-west from Sullington, Storrington, &c. At Pulborough also comes in that large tributary, the “Rother,” which, from its length and importance, may be considered a distinct river, and as such I shall accordingly treat it, after having pursued the course of the Arun to its mouth.

At Hardham, close by, there is a modern bridge of three arches. Hardham, which is almost peninsulated by the circuitous flow of the river, is noticeable for the remains of its ancient Priory, the offspring of the piety of the Dawtreys (De Alta Ripa) and for its Roman camp and cemetery, described elsewhere in this volume.¹² We next pass under Greatham bridge, another benefaction to the public made by Sir Henry Tregoz, ages ago—when it was nearly as pious to build a good bridge as to found a church—and soon encounter the Amberley Wild-brooks, a marsh of considerable extent. From this place the scenery of the banks of the Arun becomes in a high degree romantic and beautiful, especially to the poetical mind which associates it with the memories of three of the ablest but most unfortunate of Sussex poets, Otway, Collins, and Charlotte Smith. The last-mentioned thus apostrophizes the river:—

“ Be the proud Thames of trade the busy mart!
 Arun ! to thee will other praise belong ;
 Dear to the lover's, and the mourner's heart,
 And ever sacred to the sons of song !
 Thy banks romantic hopeless love shall seek,
 Where o'er the rocks the mantling bindwith flaunts ;
 And Sorrow's drooping form and faded cheek
 Choose on thy willow'd shore her lonely haunts !

¹² The tythe-map of the parish of Hardham, dignifies a small stream there as “the river *Widney*.”

Banks ! which inspired thy Otway's plaintive strain !
 Wilds ! whose lorn echoes learn'd their deeper tone
 Of Collins' powerful shell ! Yet once again
 Another poet—Hayley—is thine own !
 Thy classic stream anew shall hear a lay.
 Bright as its waves, and various as its way ! ”

The residence of the father of the unhappy poetess was at Bignor, on our right, famous for its Roman pavement. A little stream runs down from Farm-Hill wood, close by, which she has immortalized by another sonnet.

Leaving the village of Bury on the right, and the crumbling towers of episcopal Amberley on the left, the Arun flows on to Houghton Bridge. This bridge, which consists of several arches, is of high antiquity. Essential to the convenience of the Bishops of Chichester, as on the highway to their castle of Amberley, it was partly rebuilt by Bishop Praty in 1440, and the other part became so ruinous that in 1478 Bishop Storey, not being able himself to supply the requisite funds for its restoration, granted to all who should contribute to the pious work forty days of indulgence from the pains of purgatory.¹³ The Arun of that date seems, on account of the importance of this bridge, to have been known as *Houghton Water*.

Below Houghton Bridge the river winds past North and South Stoke, Burpham, Offham, and Arundel Park, where the scenery becomes very striking, especially on the right. The precipitous chalk banks, partly overgrown with ivy, present features totally unlike anything known to me in the south-east of England. Next it passes the ducal towers of Arundel—history-hallowed and grand. Arundel is of course nothing else than the *dale* of the Arun, although medieval romance asserts a claim for Arundel, the fleet courser of the giant Bevis, faintly adumbrated by the *swallow* in the coat-armorial of the borough. From Arundel the river flows sluggishly through a marshy country between Tortington and Leominster, ancient seats of monastic piety, to Ford. There it receives a western and an eastern tributary; the former from Avisford near Binstead, giving name to a hundred, and called by the peasants “Hare’s-foot;” the latter from Patching pond close by Clapham, where the Shelleys

¹³ Dallaway's Rape of Arundel, p. 219.

lie buried, past Angmering and Poling. From Ford the river passes through a flat alluvial soil to its outlet at Littlehampton.

The Arun is connected by canals with the Wey in Surrey, and so with the Thames, and westward from Ford ferry with Chichester harbour.

The *Western Rother* which though only a tributary of the Arun is in reality an important river, draining a very large and beautiful district, and giving name to the Hundred of Rotherbridge, which comprises the parishes of Barlavington, Woollavington, Burton, Duncton, Egdean, Petworth, Kirdford, Lurgashall, North-Chapel, Tillington, Stopham, and Sutton. The late Earl of Egremont made the Rother navigable from a place called the Lower Plat near Midhurst to its junction with the Arun near Stopham. It rises a few miles beyond the western boundary of the county, a little to the south-east of Selborne, rendered classical by Gilbert White; and the banks of its upper streams were often investigated by him. One branch passes the village of Empshot, another that of Greatham, and a third that of Prior's Dean; and all these conjoin at Lyss, whence the united waters run down southwardly near Petersfield Heath, where they take a sudden turn to the east, and, on the immediate border of Sussex, receive the Nursted stream, and so flow under Durford bridge. Thence in a pellucid current they pass the villages of Rogate, Terwick, and Chithurst, onward to Trotton, where Otway—second only to Shakspeare in mighty force of tragic passion—saw the light, and under a bridge erected by the piety of the grand old Sussex race of Camoys in the fourteenth century. Near there its pebbly bed receives a purling stream from the romantic "combe" of Harting; and between Stedham and Woolbeding, a forked rivulet from Treyford and Bepton, on the northern escarpment of the Downs. Onward it goes, eastward, but with an occasional tendency to the south, past the priory of Easebourne, the picturesque old town of Midhurst, and Cowdray, historical for its royal visits, and lamentable for its destruction by fire almost at the very instant when its luckless proprietor, the noble Montagu, fell a sacrifice to another of nature's mightiest elements, at the falls of Schaffhausen.

After receiving a small stream from Cocking, it rushes on to Selham, where stands a picturesque mill on a Domesday site, and near which it receives a bifurcated stream from Fernhurst, and Lurgashall on the north, and another from Graffham on the south. Two or three miles east of Selham is Rotherbridge, which gives name to the Hundred, and is close to the Petworth railway station. Near this bridge there grew, about the beginning of the present century, a large willow which overhung the river. Smuggling was then rife, and a Welshman, named Warren who held the office of supervisor of excise in the district made himself particularly obnoxious to the illicit traders. One night a party of them caught him at this spot, and suspended him by the hair of his head with a cord, attached to a branch of the willow, in such a way that his body was dangling in the river. After he had thus remained hanging for a time, his piercing cries brought to the spot some persons who happened to be in the then lonely neighbourhood, and who released him from his perilous and painful position. Warren survived this hanging for many years, and was, I believe, a farmer near Petworth.¹⁴

About a mile and a half south of Petworth the Rother receives a small tributary which rises near Gunter's Bridge, and flows past that "Percy-honoured" town to a spot near Rotherbridge. Near this point, too, the ornamental waters of Burton park send a stream northwardly; and a few miles further on, at Pulborough, the Rother meets the Arun.

A little nameless river from Flansham brooks, rising between Barnham and Yapton, and three or four miles long, falls into the sea at Bognor.

Pagham harbour looks important on the map, but the fresh water which feeds it is inconsiderable. At high tide the estuary is quite a lake, which at low water dwindles to a mere streamlet. The rivulets come down from Shopwyke and Rumboldswyke, and from Hunston. Some sluggish streams from Earnley marshes, from Highley, and from Siddlesham tide-mill pond, contribute their quota of fresh water. The remarkable promontory of Selsea, bounded on two sides of a triangle by the sea, becomes a peninsula by

¹⁴ Inf. Robert Elliott, Esq., F.S.A.

the course of these streams on the north. The church built by Saint Wilfred of York in the seventh century, and its successor, the Cathedral of the diocese of the South Saxons, with the palace of the bishops, have long disappeared under the encroachments of the ocean, the recognizable site of both being far out at sea, and still known as *the Park*. This conquest is more probably the result of a gradual process still active than of any violent geological change, when—

“Piscium et summa genus hæsit ulmo,
Nota quæ sedes fuerat columbis,
Et superjecto pavidæ natârunt
Æquore damæ.”

Our next stream—river we can scarcely call it—is the *Lavant*—a southern word commonly applied to any land-spring of capricious and intermitting character. Drayton describes it as—

“Clear Lavant that doth keep the Southamptonian side,
Dividing it well near from the Sussexian lands,
That Selsey doth survey, and Solent’s troubled sands.”

This rises near Singleton, and passes Binderton, and the villages of East, West, and Mid-Lavant, for which it appropriately officiates as godfather. Thence its limpid waters pass round the east and south walls of Chichester, the Regnum of Roman days, which it helped erewhile to fortify as a moat, when the Claudia and Pudens, whom St. Paul in his second letter to Timothy salutes, and whom Martial commemorates, were alive, and when (according to historical probability) Pudens, not yet a christian, gave the site for a Chichester temple to Neptune and Minerva.¹⁵ Camden, under Chichester, says that city would have “flourished apace had not the haven been a little too far off, and less commodious; but now the citizens are about making it more convenient by a new channel. It is wall’d about in a circular form, and is washed on every side except the north by the little river Lavant.”¹⁶ To this Bishop Gibson adds—“the course of this stream is very unaccountable, being sometimes dry, but at other times—and that very often in the midst of summer, so full as to run with some

¹⁵ See Suss. Arch. Coll., vol. vii., p. 61. ¹⁶ Britannia, edit. 1722, vol. i., p. 198.

violence." I am not aware that this peculiarity still exists; indeed its bed is usually dry in summer, as a Sussex poet¹⁷ writes—

“ You ask me why in summer time
Lavant owns no classic Nymph :
Alack ! at Summer’s golden prime,
Naiads there would find no lymph !”

He also puns on the river’s name :

“ Unde suum, quæras, duxit Cicestria nomen :
En Cissæ-castra—hæc parca fluenta *lavânt.*”

“ Whence Chichester her name derived you crave :
Lo ! Cissa’s Camp these scanty streamlets lave.”

But in winter the Lavant asserts his right, and according to his own poet sometimes becomes furious, and claims more than his due :

“ I’ve seen thy waters with a torrent’s force
Resistless, and with loud and rushing sound,
Dash forward in their wild impetuous course,
As if they scorned thy channel’s narrow bound ;
While Winter on the naked landscape frowned
In sullen majesty, and, with a blast
Terrific, called his gathering storms around :
Black Ruin followed quick where’er they passed,
And o’er Creation’s face thick gloom and horror cast.”¹⁸

From Chichester the Lavant takes its course westward, past the village of Fishbourne, where it is fed by a *bourne* which at certain seasons abounds in trout and other fish, *unde nomen*. Thence it takes a south-westerly turn by Dell-Quay and to what is called Chichester harbour, eastward of Thorney Island.

In the early part of the fifteenth century, Chichester harbour must have been of some commercial importance, since Sir John Pelham was constituted by King Henry the Fourth, in the ninth year of his reign, Chief Butler of the port of Chichester.

A little stream rising near Funtington and East Ashling

¹⁷ The Rev. T. A. Holland, in *Dryburgh Abbey and other poems*, 1845, pp. 100, 101.

¹⁸ Crocker’s *Poems*—The Lavant, page 61. This is very Virgil-like, and, *me judice*, good poetry ; but on the occasion

of my visit, a calm day in early spring, to the bed of the Lavant, I was unable to realize the possibility of any such violence on the part of this charming little rivulet.

flows past Bosham into the estuary called Bosham Creek, and so makes its way between Thorney Island and the peninsula of Selsey into Chichester Harbour. So far as I can learn this streamlet bears no particular name. It laves the oldest site of Christianity in Sussex, where the Irish monk Dicul with a few brethren "lived poorly and served God," in the seventh century, and was the scene of several events in our earlier annals. It was the burial-place of a daughter of Canute; the residence of Godwin, whose moated mansion was fortified by it; and the place from which Harold went on his insincere embassy to William's court, as you may read in the Chronicles, and see depicted upon that wonderful record in worsted—the Bayeux Tapestry. Though this little stream is nameless, it is nevertheless more historical than many a river of a thousandfold its proportions, and bearing some time-honoured and euphonious name.

The next and westernmost of the Sussex rivers is that which meets the English Channel below Emsworth. So far as I know this stream has not until quite lately been known as the *Ems*, and I venture to think that *Ems-worth* takes its name, not from it, but from some Saxon proprietor called Eam or Emm, a name still surviving in our family nomenclature. It lies at the extreme west of the county, and is, as an able Quarterly Reviewer has remarked, "so wayward a streamlet—we have to cross and re-cross it so often, that we forget at last which county we are in."¹⁹

As I have not been able to make a personal survey of the Ems—I accept the name for the sake of convenience—I gladly avail myself of the aid of two gentlemen who know and love it well. My friend, the veteran antiquary and historian of Rye, Mr. William Holloway, who had read my former paper on Sussex rivers, wrote to me thus:—"I am induced to request that you will bestow your patronage on my little native stream, which is endeared to me by the recollections of all my earliest days. In my youth it was only known by the simple name of 'the Brook,' though Horsfield has dignified it as 'the Ems.' The original name of the stream was very probably the *West Bourne*,

¹⁹ Quarterly Review, July, 1862.

from its being the most westerly rivulet in the county of Sussex, the lower part of it dividing this county from Hampshire.. . . Many a warm summer evening have I strolled on its banks and watched the trout gently gliding underneath, but now and then leaping to catch a fly hovering on its lovely surface, while the thread-like leaves of the *ranunculus aquatilis* gently waved to and fro on the surface as the slightest breath of the zephyr played over it. These bright waters form a striking contrast to those in East Sussex, the muddy streams of the Brede, the Tillingham, and the Rother."

The Ems has its special historian in Mr. Longcroft, to whose elegant pamphlet on the subject I am indebted for the particulars which follow.²⁰

This little river has its rise about a mile north of the village of Stoughton, near the foot of the Downs, which are here marked by numerous earthworks and the tumuli of the mighty dead. "The Vikings and the daring Northmen are lying there; the killed in the fearful struggle when Edelwalch, King of the South Saxons, and Cædwalla, the exiled noble of Wessex, met in terrible conflict; and tradition says that in the southern barrow, King Edelwalch, the vanquished, lies entombed, with his arms and his chieftains around him."

From Stoughton this little river winds on to an ancient farm-house, a reputed manor called by a Saxon name, Michelmere—the great marsh—an appellation hardly justified by existing geographical features, and thence to Walderton bridge. Not far from this spot stood, some sixty years ago, the cottage of a remarkable highway-robber, known as "Jack Pitt, the gun-man," whose adventures are graphically told by Mr. Longcroft. He was the son of a decent labourer at Forest Side, and was brought up as a carpenter and jobber in the woods on the Stansted estate. He was a man of great strength and activity, and stood six feet one. All his attacks on the safety and purses of his neighbours were made with a gun; and he remained undetected through a long career of crime. Everybody knew him, but nobody recognized him

²⁰ The Valley of the Ems, by Charles John Longcroft, 1863.

It has seen very much in its time. It saw the conflict between Edelwalch and Cædwalla; it heard the shouts of the battle; the shock of the host when they met in their mortal strife; the rout of the vanquished; the cry of the victors; and its waters administered to the parched lips of the wounded and the dying. It heard the preaching of the Cross by the sainted Wilfred; it saw, long time ago, the building of the churches of Racton, of Stoughton, of Bourne, and of Lordington, and heard the Bishops consecrate them to the service of the living God. The lords of Stanstead—Montgomery, Fitzalan, Maltravers, of noble blood—have crossed it with hound and with horn. The moor has echoed, again and again, from the woods which shadow its tide. The buck and the wild boar of the forest have drunk of its pleasant streams. Often have the Poles, and often has Margaret of Salisbury, the last of the Plantagenets, enjoyed the prospect of that streamlet fair from the terrace of Lordington House; often have they wandered by the side of its sparkling waters; and often have they gathered the water-soldier and the blue forget-me-not from its grassy marge; and often has Sir Geoffery Pole, the approver, mused sadly by its hurrying tide, when remorse for the past came heavy upon his memory, and told him the bitter truth that existence with tainted honour and betrayed affection is the bitterest curse that man can bear upon earth!

“It saw the building of Racton House. It laved the feet of the charger of old Roger Gounter, when he rode from his pleasant home, in armour of Milan steel, for the wars of the Marches. It saw the wave of his gauntleted hand as he turned from his parting adieu, and heard the prayer of her whom he loved so fondly and so well, that he might again be spared, and again return to the heart of his early choice. It saw the Gounters in long succession, father and son, mother and daughter, all carried home to their resting place in the yard of Racton Church; and it murmured a dirge for the good and the great as they passed to another and a better world. It heard the tramp of hurrying horsemen in the dawn, when Charles, a fugitive, came secretly to Racton, flying for his life, and that he had once more escaped from the hands of his enemies. It heard long years ago the

proclamations for the fairs of Roger de Montgomery at his ancient manors of Walderton, of Lordington, and of Bourne. It saw the Gascon, the Norman, the Fleming, and the Lombard, with their motley wares exhibited for sale; the mummings, with their interludes; and all the country flocking to the fair as the only place where, in the days of which we speak, could articles of foreign make or merchandise be procured. It heard the wonderful stories propounded by the Hermit of Bourne and was party to the indulgences vended by the holy man in return for the charity of the travellers. And hearing this, and much more besides, which may not be told, like the life of a man it has poured out its treasures on all who came in its way, as part of its mission on earth.

“Above all things, it should teach us obedience. From day to day, from year to year, from century to century, has it flowed in its narrow bed, and fulfilled the destiny for which it was called into existence. It has turned, as it does to the present day, the mills which man’s device has placed upon its waters; and where the hand of man has found for it a channel, there has it passed to carry moisture and fertility to the thirsty soil. It has become obedient to his wishes; it has become his willing and faithful servant. It has woven his wool, ground his corn, and cheered him with the bright and beautiful flowers which summer strews along its pleasant banks. It reminds him at this time of the years which have passed away; of hopes, of joys, of feelings, once vital and warm as his own, now resting in the silent grave; and it tells him, in language which cannot be mistaken, that life, like the tide of its own bright waters, is hurrying onward to the ocean of eternity. It urges him to cease the fret and turmoil of the busy world; to look more closely to the works of his Creator for instruction on every side; to draw his pleasures from a purer source than the vanities, follies, and delusions of the world; to look at everything with the eye of an inquirer for the principles of truth, eternal and immutable; to become simple as a child, teachable, strong in the faith of a sustaining Providence; and so, and in that way only, in the words of our greatest Poet—

“ ‘ Find tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything.’ ”

as the dreaded highwayman. At length he removed to Portsmouth, gave up his dishonest practices, and, full of remorse for past misconduct, began life as an honest man. For more than two years he earned his bread by fair means, but some circumstance led to a detection of the culprit. At the Lent Assizes at Lewes in 1808 he pleaded guilty to a specific charge, and after a full confession of his numerous crimes, received sentence of death with an equanimity worthy of a better fate. He was only twenty-seven at the time of his execution, and there were gentle spirits who mourned over the lamentable end of one who had "brought forth fruits meet for repentance"—but too late.

At Walderton bridge the little stream travels southwards, until it becomes tripartite, and runs down past the remains of what was once Lordington House, rich in wainscot, gilded carving, and regal badges, where, at the close of the fifteenth century, dwelt Sir Richard Pole, a Knight of the Garter, and cousin of Henry the Eighth. Whether his kinsman the historical Cardinal was born there is not proven. Leland and Camden are opposed to that view, while Mr. Longcroft, naturally desirous of aggrandizing the reputation of his native stream, makes out a pretty good case in favour of Lordington as the birth-place of him whom Macaulay characterizes as "the gentle Reginald Pole, last and best of the Roman Catholic Archbishops of Canterbury."

A very short distance southward of Lordington there are some small remains of what was once the manor-house of Racton, close to the stream. In a low irregular mansion of remote antiquity, with its ample hall, wainscoted withdrawing rooms, and heraldically-decorated walls, dwelt the family of Gounter, whose punning coat of three golden gauntlets—*gaunts d'or*—gave rise to traditions of feats of prowess never performed; although for one act of loyalty—succour to a dethroned monarch—they became historical in later times. In his circuitous and dangerous route from the battle-field of Worcester, Charles the Second was harboured for a night by Colonel Gounter, who next day found means to ship him in Tattersal's coal-brig from Brighthelmston to Fécamp. Further on, the Ems passes through part of the noble estate of Stanstead

where of old Fitz-Alans, Maltravers, and Lumleys kept house bravely, and were mighty hunters in the forest hard by. Stanstead House received royalty on three occasions in the persons of Queen Elizabeth, and Kings Georges the First and Second. It also received a hostile visit during the civil wars, when Sir William Waller, with two thousand horse and foot and two "drakes," besieged and took it. The stream enters Westbourne at the northern end and forms its western boundary, and so by the straggling village to which apparently it gives name. In Domesday Westbourne is mentioned as possessing four mills, and four mills after a lapse of eight centuries still stand on the same sites. The Ems is for a short distance the boundary between Sussex and Hampshire, and, at the little border town of Emsworth, loses itself in the estuary between the isles of Thorney and Hayling, the former in Sussex, the latter in Hampshire.

Mr. Longcroft records the interesting fact that before the formation of the causeway and bridge which now span the stream and connect the two counties, there dwelt at the spot still called 'the Hermitage' one of those benevolent persons who, in the middle ages, made it a duty and a pleasure to provide for the safety of wayfarers at dangerous fords. It was a misnomer to call them Hermits, their only claim to that title being the circumstance that they lived a life of chastity in a little cell with a sacellum attached, in a kind of semi-monastic fashion. The hermit of the ford of the Ems is identified as one Simon Coles, who just before the Reformation devised to William, Earl of Arundel, the Hermitage above-mentioned, which he had built upon his own land, in terms almost amounting to a gift in fee, "that the hermits to succeed himself might dwell thereafter in the Hermitage" —the Earl possessing the benefice and patronage. But in the new order of things both the patronage and the incumbency of this little foundation ceased and determined, and no trace remains of any successor of that comparatively modern St. Christopher, Simon Coles of Westbourne.

Mr. Longcroft concludes his very able pamphlet, "The Valley of the Ems," with a passage so eloquent and so poetical, that I venture to transcribe it entire.

"There is a moral in the Ems, if we would read it aright.

Having thus reached the end of our survey of Sussex rivers proper, it now only remains to mention those which have their sources in our county, on the northern side of the Forest-Ridge, and which, after a brief course through Sussex ground, enter the counties of Surrey and Kent, become tributary to either the Thames or the Medway, and so ultimately lose themselves in the German Ocean. I shall begin with the westernmost.

I. *The Mole*—

“The sullen Mole, that runneth underneath—”

has its principal sources on the north side of the Forest-Ridge, at and near Rusper on the confines of Surrey, on the northern slopes of the forests of St. Leonard, Tilgate, and Worth. These several streams pass into the county of Surrey—the first near Lowfield Heath, by Charlwood; the second near the “County-Oak,” north of Crawley; the third and most beautiful by the picturesque mill of Hazelwick, with its fine ponds, and thence northward to the ‘Forge,’ indicating an ancient iron-work; and the fourth near the spot known as Copthorne Brow. Several of these streams congregate near Gatwick House, just south of Horley. Thence the united waters pass Betchworth, and pursue a meandering course around the base of Box-hill; afterwards, through the beautiful vale of Mickleham, to Letherhed, Stoke, Cobham, Claremont, Esher, Moulsey, and so into the Thames opposite Hampton-Court. It is no part of my undertaking to say more of this river than what appertains to its source in the county of Sussex; but I may just remark that, though unimportant in length and magnitude, the Mole has been singularly fortunate in attracting the poetic muse. Our greatest poets have celebrated him, principally on account of the remarkable disappearance of his current underground in several spots, and his return to daylight at, sometimes, considerable intervals. There is throughout the course of the Mole where this very singular phenomenon occurs, a bed like that of any other river, but in dry seasons the surface water ceases to flow and the stream is sucked into cavities called *swallows* and pur-

sues its subterraneous course for long distances.²¹ It is between Box-hill and Leatherhed that these swallows occur.

Of the Mole—which obviously derives its name from this peculiarity—Spenser thus speaks:—

“And Mole that, like a nousling Mole, doth make
His way still underground, till Thamës he o’ertake.”

Drayton—

“Mole digs herself a path, by working day and night,
According to her name to show her nature right;
And underneath the earth for three miles space doth creep,
Till gotten out of sight quite from her mother’s keep,
Her fore-intended course the wanton nymph doth run,
As longing to embrace old Tame and Isis’ son.”

Milton—

“The sullen Mole that runneth underneath.”

Pope—

“The sullen Mole, that hides his diving flood.”

Thomson—

“The soft windings of the silent Mole.”

The river has also a special poetess in Miss M. D. Bethune, of Thorncroft, who sang his praises about five and twenty years ago in a blank-verse poem of considerable ability.²²

II. *The Medway* originates from a number of unimportant little streams in the north-eastern part of Sussex, which a reference to the map will best explain. Turner’s

²¹ Kent possesses a small river which in a manner similar to that of the Mole, disappears from view in a certain portion of its course. “There ariseth,” says Lambarde, the Kentish Perambulator, “near to the Parke and Hothe of Langley, a small spring, which at Brishyng (about one mile off) falleth into the ground, and hideth itselfe, being conveighed under the earth near to Cocks-hothe, by the space of half a mile, and then, at a great pitte of the quarrey, discovereth itsefe againe, and runneth above grounde to Loose (I wot not whether so called of this Losse) between which place and the mouth thereof

(which poureth into Medway at Tovel, between Maidstone and Eastfarley, and exceedeth not two miles in lengthe) it beareth thirteene Fulling Milles and one for Corne, which are reputed to earne so many hundreds of pounds by the yeere. This thing I was the rather occasioned to note, by viewing the course of this water in a mappe, where you may see it broken off, as if it were crossed with a bridge of land, and that purposely to shew the secretes of this chanell.” *Perambulation of Kent*, page 199.

²² See an able account of this remarkable river in Brayley’s *Surrey*, vol. i., pages 171—185.

Hill claims to be the true source; but there are rivulets each fed by miniature tributaries from the large parishes of Worth and East Grinstead. One of these moated the old Domesday manor-house of Brambletye, and ornamented with its waters the Jacobean mansion of the Comptons, whose crumbling fragments suggested to Horace Smith one of the best of modern novels. The general tendency of these waters is easterly, past Hartfield, the birthplace of Archbishop Bradwardine, and Withyham, where, at Buckhurst, Thomas Sackville, Poet and Lord-Treasurer, first saw the light. In the last-mentioned parish there meet the main stream two brooklets—one from the north, running down from Black-well a little north of East Grinstead, and passing places whose names recall the days of forges and furnaces hereabouts, such as Hammerwood, Cause-iron, &c., and by Bolebrook (perhaps the name of this stream) the curious old fortified manor-place of the De la Lyndes, Dalyngruges, and Sackvilles. The second comes from Ashdown Forest, the "Great Park" of "time-honoured Lancaster," every undulation of which furnishes its tiny contingent of water, gurgling over its gravelly bed amidst the ancient haunts of moorcocks and of fallow deer.

About two miles north-east of Withyham, on the very border of Sussex and Kent, there comes from several sources in the parish of Rotherfield a stream which unites with that just mentioned at the very spot where the Tunbridge Wells rivulet—nameless I presume—but fed by two rills, *Sprats Brook*, and *the Broadwater* from Waterdown Forest. The commingled streams flow under Groombridge, close by the seat of the Wallers, one of whom, Sire Richard by name, took captive at Agincourt Charles Duke of Orleans and held him here in 'honourable restraint' for the long period of twenty-four years.

The Medway then pursues a northward course and becomes the boundary between the two counties. At the very point where it finally leaves Sussex it receives a tributary about six miles long, which also forms a boundary in the opposite direction, and is known as the Cowden stream, from its passing that village. From a point near Ashurst the river wends its way past poetical Penshurst, baronial Tunbridge, com-

mercial Maidstone, and episcopal Rochester, to the German Ocean.

III. Our last river, the *Tyse* or *Tees*, with its tributary the *Bewle*, is thus quaintly described by Lambarde, the Kentish historian. It "ariseth in Waterdowne forest at Frant, in Sussex (the verie place is called Hockenbury panne)²³ not much more than one mile from Eredge House: hence cometh it down to Beyham, to Lamberhyrst streete, and to a place in Scotney ground called Litle Sussex, where it meeteth with the borne *Beaul* (which nameth Beaulbridge) and with *Theise* which breaketh out of the ground at Tyseherst, named of it."²⁴ He omits to mention some rivulets from the parishes of Wadhurst and its neighbourhood. The Tyse is for several miles the boundary stream between Kent and Sussex, but at length takes its course across the Weald of Kent, and finally loses itself in the Medway at Maidstone.

Note. The River Rother, described in my former paper, rises in the cellar of the mansion called Rother House in the parish of Rotherfield.

²³ Qu: *Saxonbury*? Lambarde treats this stream as a tributary of the Medway, which is correct, but I should (subordinately) reckon all the waters of this basin as tributaries of the Tyse. A de-

scription of them would be very difficult, but the map will explain all.

²⁴ Perambulation of Kent, edit. 1826, page 198.