# BEAUTIFUL THAMES.

## IT IS BY FAR THE MOST ELEGANT WATER PARK IN THE WORLD.

**A Pleasure Stream on Which to Be Seen There Is Always a Crowd and Yet Plenty of Room—The Trip From Oxford to Richmond a Delightful Experience.**

The river Thames is the most important as it is the most beautiful water park in the world. It is to London and the adjacent counties what the Charles river should and can by the diligence of public spirit be to Boston and the adjacent towns. With the hope of stirring this public spirit and showing what the English do with their beautiful river, and how they manage it, how they pay for its maintenance as a water park, I present what follows:

The Thames, running all its windings and repetings and not measuring by a direct line, runs something like 200 miles from its source to the sea. On its banks are 19 counties, including London, having a population of 8,500,000 people and a taxable valuation of about $900,000,000. Its stakes, with its tributaries, an area of more than 3,000 square miles. Until it enters the county of London it is distinctly a river of pleasure. From the western border of the county of London to its mouth, a distance of nearly sixty miles, it is a highway of commerce. For its sill London has become the greatest port in the world.

It is of the Thames as a pleasure stream that I propose to write, but it is well to understand at the outset that the river from start to finish is a water park and as a commercial highway is under the control of a single authority called "The Thames conservancy." For purposes of administration the river is unanimously divided into two parts—the upper and the lower. The upper portion is practically what I have already indicated as the water park or pleasure section, and with that portion only am I now concerned.

One can use the upper Thames at its best from the middle of May to the end of September. Between those dates the trip down stream, say from Oxford to Richmond, a journey of 160 miles, is one of the most delightful experiences that can come to a lover of outdoor pastime. The best way to see the stream is to row or paddle down the river, stopping overnight at any pleasant inn you may come to and making the journey in easy stages of about 30 miles a day. In this way you see some of the loveliest portions of the English country to the best advantage and under ideal conditions. This journey is a favorite one with thousands of people, and the facilities for undertaking it in comfort are abundant. In fact, the Thames abounds in facilities for outdoor pleasure. At every few miles there are boathouses and inns, and above anywhere you can put up on the banks for a day's picnic. From end to end of the course, now on one side of the stream and now on the other, there is a towing path for the free use of the public. Wherever the path shifts from one side of the stream to the other there is a ferry station.

Thanks—we owe it to locks on the Thames. At each lock there are keepers always on duty, and they reside in pretty cottages on the banks. Most of the locks are provided with inclined roller ways, over which small boats can be easily taken if you prefer not to wait for a passage through the lock.

Many of the Thamesside towns have an annual rowing regatta, each of which makes for its district the great fete day of the year. The chief of these regattas is that at Henley, whose fame is known to amateur oarsmen the world over. A Thames fete day affords one of the most delightful spectacles that can be imagined. The course is literally covered with small boats. The bright costumes of the occupants give a sprinkling of welcome color to the scene. The festivity is raised a water carnival. The houseboats, which make an important part of the fleet, line the banks and are decked with flowers and bunting, and at night every craft is gaily illuminated.

On these occasions the old saying that "the English take their pleasures sadly" is again disproved. For a jollier and more delightful fete is nowhere to be found in Europe. Besides, no matter how great the crowd or how high the spirits of it, the order of the day is perfectly kept. Perhaps the rough element of the community does not race for these water sports. Perhaps the upper river is too far from the haunts of the turbulent, but whatever the cause the fact remains that gale days on the Thames are as notable for good manners as for good fun, and no matter how large the throng there may be a seemingly solid mass of small craft packed across the river from bank to bank yet the whole business is so well managed that after the time comes to cease the course for racing the water is easily made by the regatta committee and the city police of the Thames conservancy.—Dennis Kurzak.

### Pell Mell Training.

One of Uncle Sam's most faithful servants is Maine, but one that draws no salary. Even at the Portland Head lighthouse. This is a large gray parrot, brought from Africa some time ago and presented to the keeper of the light. The bird was settled that where the fog horns to blow in from the ocean some body would cry out, "Fog coming in! blow the horn!" One day the fog actually began to come in thick, and no one noticed it, so they were all hard well astonished and crushed out "Fog coming in! Blow the horn!" And now whenever fog is perceptible Poll goes calls to give warning.—Lewiston Journal.

### Dollies Are Too Good To Focus.

In the nature of things it can not be supposed that such as—Queen of painting could come out of Italy, says Mr. John C. Van Dyke, in writing of the display of painting at the World's fair in The Century.

As well expect fine marbles from modern Greece or fine wines from Massachusetts. The flower is known, and even the stalk is in a dry rot. The art genius of Italy typified itself in monastic forms during the renaissance. It spoke in frescos, rubbing-along with Titian and dying with Tiepolo. It was yet peculiar to its age and people. The present age can not repeat the triumphs of the past, but have they the versatility or strength to produce a new art in keeping with new tastes.

The attempts of most of the moderns are painful in their coldness. Pictures of the Roman Campagna, with radiant atmosphere, pictures of the pyramids, St. Peter's, the Forum, Pompeiian floors, glass at Venetian scenes, fruit sellers, beggars—how much better are they than the tourist pictures of smelled Chinese or the Zouaves, with an Alpine glow softer among the top! Penelope's suitors with the bow of Ulysses and the modern Italians with the palette of Titian! What could they do that would not seem pretty by comparison? That which is Italian is mellowness in quality, and that which is very good is not Italian.


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