

BANK HOLIDAY AT HASTINGS.

However much may have been left to be desired in regard to the present commercial state and prospects of the season, certainly neither lodging-house keepers, tradesmen, nor those engaged in catering for the necessities, luxuries, and amusements of the public, can complain of the patronage accorded them by the holiday-keeping visitors of this year's Bank Holiday. On Saturday there were the usual indications in and about the railway stations that some merry-making period had arrived, as from the early morning train after train brought in loads of excursionists, while, as the hours grew on into the afternoon and evening, the influx of visitors steadily increased. In some of the streets it was quite a sight to see the number of persons anxiously knocking at door after door where there seemed a possibility of their being taken in and accommodated during their short stay in the town. The weather on Saturday was beautifully fine till the evening, when, just at the time that the majority of the excursionists were hurrying from the stations and seeking apartments, a storm of thunder and lightning, accompanied by a heavy downpour of rain, burst over the town. The rain descended with little intermission throughout the evening, and many of the holiday-seekers, who had come to Hastings after months of weary toil to spend a few short hours, must have had anxious fears that they would be unable, owing to the wet, to enjoy themselves by visiting the numerous attractions in and around our town. But, fortunately, these gloomy anticipations were not realised, for Sunday morning dawned fine, and the sun shone genially throughout the day, thus enabling boatmen, cabmen, and waggonette proprietors to reap a good harvest. Of course the excursionists who had come for only a short holiday made the best use of their time, and if it may seem strange to the more decorous of us for the English Sabbath to be turned into a Continental Sunday, some allowance must, at the same time, be made for the great temptation it was to the many to avail themselves of the very few hours for pleasure they were enabled to spare from their toil during the year. On Monday the influx of visitors became still more perceptible, several heavily-laden trains arriving and bringing in those whose sojourn in the town would be more brief than that of those who arrived on the previous days. We have not the actual figures to support the opinion, but we would venture to say that on this occasion a larger number of excursionists paid a visit to the town than on any previous Bank Holiday. And right well the visitors seemed to enjoy themselves. The beach might have been said to be literally crowded with the pleasure-seekers, and from the Queen's Hotel to the East-parade it was a striking spectacle to notice the numbers of persons assembled. They occupied almost every available yard of space from the edge of the water to the parade wall, and likewise along the parades. While thousands were enjoying themselves on the sands or on the sea in boats, which were so numerous as to lend to the surface of the waters the appearance of an animated and gay panorama, others were riding about in cabs or llys, and others patronising the waggonettes which run to Fairlight, Lovers' Seat, etcetera. The buses plying along the front also had large numbers of passengers, and unless one made a rush when they were empty previous to starting it was almost impossible to find a seat in them. Nor did the townspeople of Hastings neglect to provide amusements for the visitors. While many were enjoying themselves elsewhere as we have stated, throngs were participating in the special arrangements which had been made for their pleasure. Of these the chief was the Annual Pedestrian Fête in the Cricket Ground, and the huge ring of persons—a large number of whom it may be mentioned were ladies—which surrounded the rope enclosure set apart for the competitors in the several events on the programme, standing two or three deep, and numbering not many short of 4,000, must not only have been gratifying to Mr. Watling and the gentlemen who acted with him in the management of the fête, but conveyed at the same time a proof of the popularity which pedestrianism possesses among English men and women. We present a detailed report of the different races elsewhere, but we may mention that with each succeeding fête these demonstrations have increased in favour both with visitors and residents; and we may add, for ourselves, that we are rejoiced to see a liking for sports of this character so manifest, since the appreciation indicates a love of healthy pleasure in those who assist in them as spectators, while they lend a healthy incentive to the competitors induced by the prizes offered to enter into the contests. While the Pedestrian Fête was being carried out there was a fête also at Kite's Nest, where, from some cause or other, the people were like Hotspur's spirits in the vasty deep, who were called, but when called did not come. At St. Leonards, too, our temperance friends were making the best of their time by mingling recreation with instruction, and while calling upon the people to participate in the pleasure which needs no intoxicating liquor to be brought to its aid to make it acceptable, were, at the same time, instructing the assembly in those precepts of temperance which find so much favour with their class, and which they hold to be of vast importance to the interests of the people at large. At Silverhill the members of the St. Paul's Working Men's Club held a fête. The Pier, St. Clement's Caves, the Music Hall, and other places of attraction were also accorded a large share of patronage. During the day the weather left little to be desired, but, unfortunately, the bright beginning must have had for not a few of the holiday-makers a sad termination, as just about the time when hundreds were thinking of making their way to the railway stations, and the promoters of the fête at Kite's Nest might have hoped for a considerable addition to the number of patrons, a storm of thunder and lightning broke over the town, and the rain fell in torrents, soaking, we fear, large numbers of those who were obliged to rush through it to catch the trains, and were thus compelled to make their journey in their wet clothes, to their mental and physical discomfort, though, we hope, not permanent injury. The rain continued till a late hour, and completely put a stop to all outdoor amusements, and at an early hour those who had assembled at the various fêtes dispersed, and hastily made their way homewards.

THE PEDESTRIAN FÊTE.

The annual grand Pedestrian Fête was held in the Central Cricket and Recreation Ground, and was witnessed by between 3,000 and 4,000 spectators. The programme comprised three handicaps, also a two miles handicap bicycle race, and in most of the heats of the several events there were some exciting contests. Mr. S. Watling, formerly of Hastings, but now of Brighton, was manager, and was ably assisted by Mr. Shaw, who officiated as starter, Mr. G. F. Finn, of Canterbury, handicapper, Mr. H. Cheal, referee, Mr. Develin, and a committee composed of local gentlemen. Besides the large number of persons who were in the ground, the sports were watched from the windows of the houses overlooking the field, and from Portland-place, where a considerable number assembled during the day. The band of the 7th Cinque Ports (St. Leonards) Artillery Volunteers was engaged, and played a capital programme of music. The weather, while the races were going on, was delightfully fine, but about seven o'clock, when the amusements had terminated in the Cricket Ground, a storm of thunder and lightning, accompanied by heavy falls of rain, passed over the town, and continued till a late hour. The results of the different races are appended:—

180 YARDS RACE.—First prize, £7; 2nd, £2; 3rd, £1; and 10s. for each man winning a heat and not gaining a prize. In this race there were 79 entries, and it was run in thirteen heats, the winners of these being as follows:—J. Tyler, London, 77 yards start; F. Anderson, Woolwich, 76 yards; A. Sprue, Chatham, 75 yards; F. Green, Deptford, 83 yards; W. Whittingtall, Folkestone, 84 yards; B. Oboe, Ramsgate, 84 yards; W. Hunt, Hammarsmith, 74 yards; R. Grounds, Headcorn, 84 yards; J. Fenton, Brixton, 77 yards; J. Newland, London, 77 yards; A. Bowra, Hastings, 77 yards; W. Thomas, Woolwich, 77 yards; G. Moulder, Ramsgate, 81 yards. The winners of the first four heats then ran, the winner being F. Green, Deptford, 83 yards; the second three ran next, the winner being W. Whittingtall, Folkestone, 84 yards; of the next three, R. Grounds, Headcorn, 84 yards, won; and of the remaining three A. Bowra, Hastings, 77 yards, and W. Thomas, Woolwich, 77 yards, ran a dead heat. The final heat was won by W. Whittingtall, Folkestone; F. Green, Deptford, being second, and A. Bowra, Hastings, third.

880 YARDS RACE.—First prize, £3; second, £2; third, £1, and 10s. for winning a heat and not gaining a prize. This race was run in six heats, the winners of these being E. Stanford, Chatham, 65 yards start; J. Hatchman, Bow, 25 yards; W. Marley, Willesborough, 35 yards; C. James, Bembridge, 35 yards; H. Steadman, Leham, 25 yards; J. F. Filmer, Lynsted, 75 yards. Final heat: J. F. Filmer, 2nd; W. Marley; 3rd, J. Hatchman. Filmer had the race in hand throughout, but there was a splendid struggle for second place between Marley and Hatchman, the former winning by a few feet only.

350 YARDS RACE.—First prize, £3; second, £2; and 10s. for each one winning a heat and not gaining a prize. There were 48 entries for this race, which was run in heats, the winners being E. Stanford, Chatham, 86 yards start; A. Bowra, Hastings, 84 yards; H. Steadman, Leham, 87 yards; W. Arthur, Harlemer, 86 yards; J. Fenton, Brixton, 80 yards; W. Nedley, Hastings, 88 yards. Final heat: Fenton, 1st; Nedley, 2nd; Bowra, 3rd.

TWO MILES BICYCLE RACE.—First prize, a silver cup value seven guineas; 2nd, a silver cup value three guineas; 3rd, a silver medal with gold centre; 4th, a silver medal. This was rode in two heats. In the first, J. T. East, Surrey B.C., who started at scratch, won after a splendid race; H. Hart, Eastbourne, 200 yards start, being second; and H. Croucher, East-Kent Invicta B.C., 320 yards, third. In the second heat, H. Joy, St. Leonards, 250 yards, was first; T. A. Denne, East-Kent Invicta B.C., 400 yards, second; and T. C. Harrington, Dulwich, 250 yards, third. The first two in each heat rode in the final, Joy being the winner, with East second, Hart third, and Denne fourth. Denne, a young lad, was loudly cheered during the race for the plucky way in which he rode, and Mr. Develin on handing him the fourth prize complimented him on his riding.

KITE'S NEW FÊTE.

A fête, which had been advertised as "The fête of the season," was arranged to take place at Kite's Nest, under the direction of Mr. Percy Williams, special caterer for the Crystal Palace, but the grounds were almost devoid of patrons, notwithstanding the numerous attractions which had been provided. Doubtless large numbers would have assembled in the evening after the Cricket Ground fête had terminated, as a grand display of fireworks had been prepared, in addition to several other amusements; but, unfortunately, the torrents of rain, accompanied by vivid flashes of lightning and loud peals of thunder, prevented the anticipated increase of visitors, and the fête must have consequently resulted in a great loss to the promoters.

RURAL FÊTE AT SILVERHILL.

Bank Holiday was a red-letter day for the pleasure-seekers of Bohemia, Silverhill, and the neighbourhood. A successful rural fête, the first of the kind in the locality, was carried out in a field near St. Leonards Mill, kindly lent by Mr. Draper, under the management of the Committee of St. Paul's Working Men's Club, who spared no pains to render it a success. Early on Monday morning their energy was shown by goods and chattels being brought to the field, flags and banners flying, and the spacious marquee, swings, refreshment stalls, &c., erected. Shortly after two o'clock the band engaged marched through Bohemia to the ground, and during the afternoon played a selection of dance music. Mr. H. Buller made an efficient M.C., under whose management dancing went on right merrily. A large company, about 600, assembled, and the various sports were heartily entered into. About 4.30 tea was commenced in the marquee, but its dimensions were only sufficient to accommodate the company in three sittings, 300 partaking of the tea. The refreshments were supplied by Mr. A. Eldridge, confectioner, and Mr. Cruttenden, grocer, Bohemia. The unfortunate storm in the evening drove the assembly to the shelter of the marquee, where the band again proved a source of enjoyment, and an amateur concert was carried out by the following members and friends of the Club:—Messrs. H. Buller, J. Wetherseed, W. U. Frederick, A. Martin, J. Harris, and Sellman, the performances being highly applauded. The affair, on the whole, was a great success, and will leave a goodly balance to the funds of the Club. The arrangements were carried out in a very complete manner. Mr. and Mrs. Hastings and Mr. and Mrs. Frederick undertook the duties of the refreshment stalls; Messrs. A. Eldridge, H. Buller, C. Baber, Cruttenden, D. Russell, W. J. Syrus, Mrs. Syrus, Mrs. A. Eldridge, Mrs. Perry, Miss Crouch, and Miss Baber catered at the tea; Messrs. H. Chatfield (Fête Sec.), N. W. Buchanan, H. Harvey, and J. W. Syrus were gate-keepers; and the field sports were carried out by Messrs. F. D. Russell, W. Catt, C. Eldridge, H. Wilmshurst, and T. Mitchell. The National Anthem by the band at dusk brought an orderly and thoroughly-enjoyed holiday to a close.

THE PIER.

The Pier has also been well patronised during the past week, the audience at each performance being large and fashionable. Madame and Signor Odouardo Barri have both been very successful in their songs and ballads, receiving accolades nightly. The band increases in efficiency, under the able conductorship of Dr. Abram.—Number of persons passed the turnstiles during the week ending last (Friday) night, 25,727.

THE MUSIC HALL.

On Monday evening Van Biene's English Opera Company commenced a six nights' engagement at the above place of amusement. The company is a strong one, and entitled to front place among the opera companies which we have had the pleasure of hearing in this town. The audiences on each occasion have been large and select. On Monday the curtain rose upon Wallace's celebrated opera, *Mari-tana*, and the manner in which it was rendered gave the greatest satisfaction to the auditory. On Tuesday *Lucia de Lammermoor* was presented. On Wednesday Gounod's grand opera, *Faust*, was placed upon the boards, with the following cast:—

Faust	Mr. Henri Nordblom.
Mephistopheles	Mr. Hogarth.
Valentine	Mr. Conrad King.
Wagner	Mr. Harrington.
Siebel	Miss Joyce Maas.
Martha	Miss Resian.
Marguerite	Miss Matilda Scott.

Chorus of Soldiers, Citizens, &c.

The argument of this piece is so well known that it needs no explanation from us. The character of Faust was sustained by Mr. Henri Nordblom exceedingly well. This gentleman possesses a rich, powerful tenor voice, and his singing was well received by the audience, as was shown by the frequent bursts of applause with which he was greeted. The manner in which Mr. Hogarth portrayed the character of Mephistopheles was most praiseworthy. Mr. Conrad King, as Valentine, was very good, as was also Mr. Harrington, as Wagner. Miss Joyce Maas creditably depicted the character of Siebel. This is not the first time that this lady has appeared before a Hastings audience, and therefore her merits are well known to our readers, and do not require to be commented upon by us. Miss Resian, as Martha, was well received. The character of Marguerite was taken by Miss Matilda Scott, and was sustained in a manner which was apparently greatly appreciated by the audience. On Thursday the curtain rose on *Il Trovatore*, and on Friday evening *Faust* was repeated, by special desire, in the place of Mozart's opera, *The Marriage of Figaro*. On Thursday evening Mr. Henri Nordblom, who took the character of Marico, was suffering from a cold, and in consequence solicited the indulgence of the assembly. Notwithstanding his cold, however, he was loudly applauded on several occasions, as were also most of the company. There will be a morning performance of *Faust* today (Saturday), and this evening *La Sonnambula* will be produced.

RAILWAY ARRANGEMENTS.

Besides the regular trains, there were seven extra ones on the South-Eastern, and two on the South Coast lines on Saturday; two extra on the South-Eastern on Sunday; six extra on the South-Eastern (four from London, one from Ashford, and one from Tunbridge), and two on the South Coast (one from Victoria and one from London Bridge) on Monday. On Saturday the traffic was very large, and the percentage of luggage heavy. At St. Leonards Station Mr. Keitnnett and his staff were busy, but the greater portion of the passengers came on to Hastings. On Monday morning no less than 350 passengers booked for Dover from Hastings, whilst many others took tickets for Eastbourne, Brighton, and other places. We are pleased to be able to state that Mr. Malpas, the Hastings station-master, and his well-organised staff managed to make things comparatively easy. The burden of the traffic was over before noon on Monday, without any casualty having occurred to mar the interest and pleasure of the visitors.

MISCELLANEOUS ATTRACTIONS.

In addition to the fêtes and amusements enumerated above, the swimming baths were largely patronised, over 500 persons having visited them during the day; while the St. Clement's Caves were also in great request; and the old Castle and the St. Andrew's Gardens were not devoid of visitors. The waggonettes plying to and from Fairlight Glen, Lovers' Seat, Dripping Well, and the vicinity, were loaded throughout the day, and Ecclesbourne Valley and the surroundings of the borough attracted large numbers. The boatmen must have reaped a rich harvest, as the sea was studded with small boats, whilst the owners of the large yachts certainly had no reason to complain, the handy and commodious Livonia and Albertine being loaded with passengers at each trip to sea. The Esplanade was lined with human beings, and the front part of the borough about noon was literally packed with people moving in different directions.