

**BETWEEN
TWO OPINIONS**

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Between two opinions by Mary E. Palgrave

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MARY E. PALGRAVE

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❀ ❀ TWO ❀ ❀
OPINIONS

BY MARY E. PALGRAVE
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DICK FOUND HIS SEA-LEGS' ETC

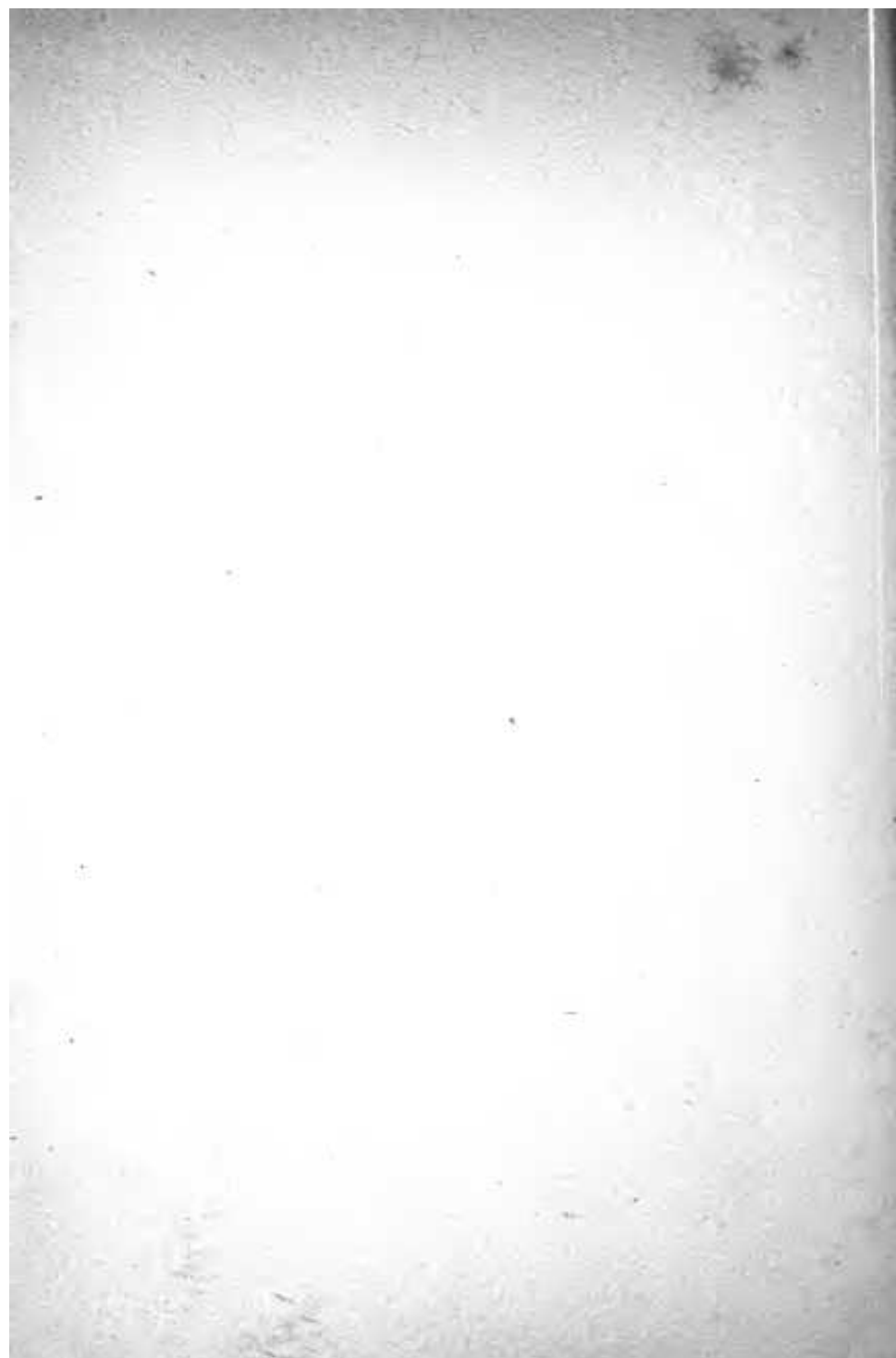


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BETWEEN TWO OPINIONS



CHAPTER I

A DAMP INTRODUCTION

ORLESTON is one of those places which has recently had the misfortune to be discovered, by the world of holiday-seekers, as a seaside resort. Formerly it was just a fishing village at the mouth of the 'Yarmouth river,' with a big flint church set on the sandy hill, and a straggling street of red-brick cottages, with here and there a more pretentious house among them, running down from the higher land to the sea. The charm of the place, over and above the perpetual charm of the salty, vigorous, pungent air, lies in its royal expanse of sands—sands stretching away southwards in a broad yellow band, made new every day by the racing in and

out over them of the strong tides of the North Sea—and in its river side, skirting the south bank of the Yare. The wharves there are strewn with boats, festooned with nets, and piled with lobster-pots, cork floats, and all the other delicious tarry lumber that pertaineth to a sea-going people; and the rippled breast of the river is continually alive with the passing up and down of steamers, fishing boats, small yachts, and other craft.

Gorleston Pier is one of the best places in England for breathing in the smell and taste of the sea. It is no hideous, spider-legged, spick-and-span erection at which you pay a penny to go on, and twopence when the band is going to play. It is, rather, a growth of generations, and looks as fitting and spontaneous a termination to the spit of sandy shore from which it springs as if Nature had fashioned it herself. We pass from the gravelly, grassy, net-strewn area of the wharves to the weather-beaten sippy planks of the pier, almost without noticing the difference, and—picking our steps between lumber of all sorts—make our way to the pier-head, where a miniature lighthouse carries aloft the light which marks the harbour's mouth, and a disused capstan witnesses to the day when vessels used to be dragged in over the bar by the sheer force of brawny arms, to the tune

of tramping feet and long-drawn cries of 'Yo-ho-o-o-o-o!'

It is a fine thing to stand at the pier-head, as near to the edge as one dare, and watch the meeting of river and sea — especially when the tide is high and when there has been rain over Norfolk and Suffolk, so that a big volume of water is pouring down the Yare, from Breydon Water and its other inland feeders. Then the conflict between the strong yellow river and the mighty green sea, as they meet upon the bar at the harbour's mouth, is something grand and terrible to see. The huge, grey-green billows, with their foaming, fizzling, snowy crests, come rolling majestically in, looking as if they must and would bear all before them; but, in the midst of their progress, they are met by the swaying, chopping, tawny waves of the river, which charge against them, hurling themselves up their imperturbable fronts, till the huge monsters curl over and break, and all is riot and confusion—an inextricable *mêlée*.

Gorleston still has its golden shore untouched, and its wharves and pier are much the same as they were a hundred years ago; but the 'visitor' (we say not the 'tripper'!) has descended upon the place, and for his accommodation a large new quarter of red-brick villas has sprung up on the