

*Swin, Swale and Swatchway*

*Also by H. Lewis Jones*  
*(as 'Leigh Ray')*

The Last Cruise of the Teal

# Swin, Swale and Swatchway

---

or

*Cruises down the Thames, the Medway  
and the Essex Rivers*



H. LEWIS JONES, M.A.

*assisted by*

C. B. LOCKWOOD



Lodestar Books  
71 Boveney Road  
London SE23 3NL  
United Kingdom

[www.lodestarbooks.com](http://www.lodestarbooks.com)

First published 1892 by Waterlow & Sons Limited, London

This edition published by Lodestar Books 2011  
Design copyright © Lodestar Books 2011

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publishers.

A catalogue record for this book  
is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-1-907206-02-3

Set in Adobe Jenson Pro

Printed in the UK by MPG Biddles, King's Lynn



DEDICATED  
*to*  
The Commodore, the Officers  
and the Members  
*of*  
THE CRUISING CLUB



## PREFACE



THIS LITTLE BOOK has been put together from recollections of various cruises in and about the Thames Estuary, most of them in the little *Teal* of 3½ tons, with my partner, Mr. C.B. Lockwood, who has contributed many of the “yarns” herein related, who led the way as pilot in many of the more distant trips, and whose help in the collection of materials for the book I take this opportunity of acknowledging. Dr. C.E. Shelly has also been so good as to assist by writing a Chapter on the River Deben and Woodbridge.

The amusement which our voyages have afforded to our friends as well as to ourselves, and the pleasure with which we recall all the incidents of our early experiences afloat, have led to the composition of this short record of our adventures.

I am indebted to the kindness of the Editor of the *National Observer* for the reference to Dr. Jessop’s *Lives of the Norths* which is given in Chapter I.

The illustrations are from photographs taken on the cruises. With three exceptions they were all done with the very convenient “Eclipse” Hand Camera made by Mr. Shew, of Newman Street, Oxford Street.

H. LEWIS JONES.

UPPER WIMPOLE STREET, W.



## CONTENTS

| Chapter | Page  |
|---------|---|
| I       | <i>Introductory</i> . . . . . II  |
| II      | <i>Leigh, The Ray, Benson</i> . . . . . 27  |
| III     | <i>Hole Haven, The Jenkin Swatchway,<br/>The North Yantlet.</i> . . . . 41  |
| IV      | <i>The Medway, Sheerness, Port Victoria,<br/>Stangate Creek, Colemouth Creek,<br/>Long Reach, Cockham Wood, Chatham,<br/>The Upper Medway.</i> . . . . 55 |
| V       | <i>Queenborough, The Swale,<br/>Faversham Creek, Warden Point.</i> . . . . 82   |
| VI      | <i>The Swin Channel, The Buxey,<br/>The River Blackwater, Maldon,<br/>The River Roach, Havengore Creek.</i> . . . . 99                                    |
| VII     | <i>Through Havengore to Mersea Creek</i> . . . . . 112  |
| VIII    | <i>A Night on the Maplin,<br/>The River Crouch, Burnham</i> . . . . . 120   |
| IX      | <i>To Burnham and Wivenhoe,<br/>through the Creeks.</i> . . . . 129   |
| X       | <i>The River Lea, Bow Creek, Stangate,<br/>Lower Halstow, Upnor.</i> . . . . 146  |
| XI      | <i>To Woodbridge, Bawdsey Haven,<br/>The River Deben</i> . . . . . 158  |

## PLATES (*following page 80*)

|    |   |
|----|---|
| 1  | The <i>Teal</i> ashore                                  |
| 2  | Off Upnor   |
| 3  | The Coastguard Station, Leigh                           |
| 4  | Hadleigh Ray  |
| 5  | Hole Haven: Evening                                     |
| 6  | Dutch House, Canvey Island ( <i>Mr H. M. Elder</i> )    |
| 7  | Aylesford Bridge  |
| 8  | A Huffer's Boat   |
| 9  | The Medway Valley ( <i>Dr. John Scott</i> )             |
| 10 | A Medway Barge  |
| 11 | Down the Swin Channel                                   |
| 12 | The Hythe, Maldon                                       |
| 13 | Burnham   |
| 14 | Barge Crossing the Maplin                               |
| 15 | West Shoebury Buoy                                      |
| 16 | Havengore Creek: The Entrance ( <i>Mr H. M. Elder</i> ) |
| 17 | Oyster Boat, Burnham                                    |
| 18 | Smack Leaving Brightlingsea                             |
| 19 | Brig at Anchor  |
| 20 | Above Bridge, Rochester                                 |
| 21 | Sunset  |
| 22 | The Nore Light Ship                                     |
| 23 | A Note on the Photographs                               |
| 24 | Map: The Mouth of the Thames                            |

## DRAWINGS

|      |     |                            |
|------|-----|----------------------------|
| Page | 39  | Chart of Entrance to Leigh |
|      | 117 | The Ray Beacon             |
|      | 152 | Our Lady of Canvey         |

CHAPTER I

*Introductory*



SWITZERLAND IS OFTEN called the playground of Europe, and of those who crowd thither every summer for their holiday not a few are dwellers in our modern Babylon; but there is another glorious playground close at home for Londoners which is not nearly so much used nor so well known as it deserves, and that is the lower Thames, from Gravesend to the Nore, with the Medway and its numerous creeks, the Swale, and those almost unknown Essex rivers, the Crouch, the Roach and the Blackwater, which in their tidal reaches offer such a fine sailing ground for small craft, as the few who have explored them very well know. The upper Thames is all very well in its way, with its house-boats, water-parties, gaudy-coloured blazers, banjo-accompaniments, and such soft delights, but it is all tame when compared with the stirring incidents of salt-water sailing; and those bolder spirits who can enjoy roughing it do find in and about Sea Reach an endless variety of adventure and of mimic hardship, and breezes ten times more invigorating than any to be had in the Thames valley.

At the Thames mouth the jaded Londoner can, if he pleases, spend his Saturday to Monday in a new world, breathing a keen sea-air, and can fancy himself another Columbus as he anchors for the night in some lonely creek

in an angle of the world well-nigh inaccessible except in a small boat, and, if the thought gives him any satisfaction, he can feel, as the Major-General's daughters did in the *Pirates of Penzance*, that he is in a spot where human foot has never trod before. Snugly berthed in the little two or three tonner, which he has learnt to trust, and which he knows will take him safe home when the time comes to catch his last train for London, he can serenely contemplate the sunset through a grateful cloud of tobacco smoke, and think cheerfully of his prospects on the morrow, even if he foresee a dusting while turning the little vessel to windward for home twenty or thirty miles away.

There are many men who love Sea Reach with that true love of salt water which is to be found lurking somewhere in the hearts of most Englishmen, and all through the summer these noble sportsmen are to be met with, spending their week ends on their little yachts, and picking up health and hardening their fibre for that struggle for existence which grows more and more deadly every year; but their numbers are as naught compared with those who might become good sailor-men if only they knew how to take the first step, and could be made aware of the fun to be had in pottering about in those nooks and corners of the Kent and Essex shores which are to be found by those who care to look for them; but, alas, it must be confessed that too often the yachtsman's ideas seem unable to soar above the same old cruises to Chatham or to Queenborough, to Holehaven or to Ramsgate, as though to do these were to exhaust the resources of the Thames mouth. And then, again, there is that mysterious desire to go ashore which seems to come on

after a man has been a few hours in a boat, which compels him to forsake his vessel as soon as ever his anchor is down and his sails stowed, in order that he may go and loaf on shore. This feeling naturally drives him to the seaports and towns, and stands in the way of that full knowledge of the rivers which is learnt by those who can enjoy the solitude of an anchorage "far from the madding crowd." Perhaps, after all, this is the fault of some old Viking instinct in the blood, which sees in each town some prospect of plunder or "diversion"! and additional support to this view is to be found in the manner in which these descents upon the coast are performed; for when your boat sailor has made his passage, regardless of appearances, he will go ashore in all the pride of his old jersey, sea-coat and thigh boots, carrying possibly the ship's bucket in his hand to carry off his plunder in. He seems to regard the town, or highly respectable cathedral city, no more than if it were a desert island, the shops are merely convenient stores of the needful victuals for the cruise, and what the natives think of him is as nothing in his eyes. I have known men who at home are most particular about their dress and appearance in public, to go about a town (that is, if they have reached it by small boat) in an old flannel shirt, open at the neck, and with no collar, or wearing sea-boots and a Cardigan jacket (which is like to level all ranks by making everyone look like a cabin steward), and in this garb to make their purchases. I have heard of a man, a Master of Arts, or an LL.D., or something of that kind, who went into Southend thus attired to buy strawberries, taking the boat's bucket along to carry them in, and he was such a sight that an indignant native on the pier couldn't

help asking him if he thought they were all savages there, that he went about in such a disreputable style; and when he called for letters at the post office, the good and kind postmistress handed him a post-card, saying, "Shall I read it to you, my man?"

It is true that collars do not keep well if kicked about a small boat, or stowed under the mattress for a day or two at a time; and it is also very difficult, according to Charles Kingsley, for anyone to look like a gentleman when he has no collar on; but one way out of the difficulty is to wear a blue jersey with a high neck to it, for this provides at least a kind of covering or collar for the throat, and looks better than a muffler, the latter being at least a little out of place on a broiling hot day.

I should like to see an essay written by some learned professor of moral science upon the peculiar state of mind which is produced by living much at sea. That there is such a peculiarity is acknowledged by the manners and customs which we recognise as the attributes of the stage sailor, and most of us have had opportunities of recognising their free and independent spirit, be they men-of-war's men, enjoying a day's leave on shore, and knocking one another down for the pure fun of the thing, or be they merchant-men or fishermen, but especially does it show itself among fishermen, whose tendencies can develop uncontrolled by the strict discipline which is found on big ships.

Fishermen everywhere assume to themselves as a matter of course a superiority over the landmen of their own neighbourhood, whom they somewhat contemptuously call "countrymen;" and, in addition to the smartness and

self-reliance which is brought out by the risks and chances of their calling, they seem to preserve a large amount of the old predatory instinct, due perhaps to the fact that they hunt for their daily bread in a more primitive and direct way than most other folks; possibly, too, there is something in their temporary escape from police and other supervision while at sea which may at times seduce them into a belief that force is a sufficient remedy, and that everybody must protect himself or go to the wall. Once when cross-tacking, in company with another little boat, I asked the fisherman who was with us whether he meant to stand on or to give way, and his reply was significant enough: "We are bigger than what they are – we may as well stand on." Nevertheless I think that sailors, and fishermen, and bargemen, look with a kindly eye upon the amateur boat sailor, who is their swallow, the harbinger of summer weather, and no more a competitor of theirs in the struggle for existence than the swallow is of the sea-gull, and they are generally ready enough to give way to a small boat when she and they are working to windward together, provided, of course, that the little one be on the starboard tack. We have always made it a rule in meeting another vessel to let them see what we mean to do. If a boat means to bear away, let her do so in good time; or if she means to luff up and stand on, let her make it plain from the first. Nothing is more annoying than to see an approaching boat bear up one minute and come to the next, as though not knowing her own mind.

It has been our good fortune to sail a boat for the past five years, part of the time about Chatham and the Medway in a little two-ton cutter, *The Wild Rose*, and afterwards in *The*

*Teal*, a four tonner, yawl-rigged, in Sea Reach and round about the Thames Estuary, and we have been surprised that men do not seem to know or care about knowing the creeks and anchorages in out-of-the-way spots. One rarely sees little vessels except in a few of the best known places. How many of the owners of small craft, I would ask, know the ins and outs of Colemouth Creek, of Stangate, or the Yantlet to the south of Long Reach in the Medway, or can get in or out of Havengore Creek, or have been to Paglesham or Mersea Island, all these places being retreats, at once picturesque, novel and delightful? When questioned, they have heard of them, but have never been there; or say they would like to go if they knew the channel, and were not afraid of getting stuck up on shore.

Nowadays, improvements in hull and rig make it possible to put to sea safely in smaller and less costly craft than formerly, and many of the keenest members of the yachting world are to be found among the men who can enjoy the mimic (?) hardships of a little eighteen or twenty foot boat, and can feel at home in the short seas and yeasty popple generally found about the Nore.

Give us the man who can greet with laughter the spray as it comes smashing aft over the weather bow, and thinks it a good joke to find his sea-boots full of water, which has reached them down the back of his neck, and can think of the well-earned pipe of peace which he will enjoy when he has found his way into some little harbour, and has changed his wet things and is demolishing his supper in comfort. He will chuckle when he thinks of the time when he had to be content, from lack of knowledge, to spend the night an-

chored outside rolling heavily, as one may see little craft roll many a time off Southend Pier, off Port Victoria, or on the edge of the Bligh Sand.

To our minds, there is nothing more conducive to mental repose than the sight of a harbour or navigable river with its ever-changing views of coasters, barges and other small craft, each one a study in itself; and we know a man eminent in his profession who is satisfied that no one can tread the "serener heights" of surgery unless he sails a small boat, and he says that he has often left London feeling as cross as a lady post-office clerk, but that after loitering an hour by the waterside at Gravesend, Sheerness or Chatham, he finds himself calming down, so that a child might play with him.

Fielding, in the account of his Voyage to Lisbon, seems to have felt this influence of the Thames and shipping, for he breaks out into philosophical reflections on the subject, as for instance – "I cannot pass by another observation on the deplorable want of taste in our enjoyments, which we show by almost totally neglecting the pursuit of what seems to me the highest degree of amusement, this is the sailing ourselves in little vessels of our own, contrived only for our ease and accommodation . . . This amusement I confess, if enjoyed in any perfection, would be of the expensive kind; but such expense would not exceed the reach of a moderate fortune, and would fall very short of the prices which are daily paid for pleasures of a far inferior rate. The truth, I believe, is that sailing in the manner I have just mentioned is a pleasure rather unknown or unthought of than rejected by those who have experienced it." Then in another place he says: "For my own part I confess myself so entirely fond

of a sea prospect that I think nothing on land can equal it; and, if it be set off with shipping, I desire to borrow no ornament from the terra firma." And he describes the pleasure he enjoyed "in viewing a succession of ships with all their sails expanded to the winds bounding over the waves before us." See, too, in the book, which can now be bought for sixpence, the amusing story of a collision with a cod-smack at Gravesend, and the observations of the shrewd old Bow Street police magistrate upon the manners and customs of sailors and waterside folk.<sup>1</sup>

The Hon. Roger North (time 1685) has a very interesting account of his little yacht, which he kept in London, and used for making passages down Swin, and so forth. He says: "I was extremely fond of being master of anything that would sail; and Mr. John Windham encouraged me with a present of a yacht, which I kept four years on the Thames, and received great delight in her. This yacht was small, but had a cabin and a bedroom athwart ships aft the mast and a large locker at the helm; the cookroom, with a cabin for a servant, was forward on, with a small chimney at the very prow. Her ordinary sail was a boom mainsail, a stay foresail and a jib; all wrought aft, so we could sail without a hand ahead, which was very troublesome because of the spray that was not (sailing to windward) to be endured. She was no good sea-boat, because she was open aft, and might ship a sea to sink her, especially before the wind in a storm, but in the river she would sail tolerably and work extraordinarily well. She was ballasted with cast lead. It was a constant

---

1 Fielding, *A Voyage to Lisbon*, Cassell's National Library.

entertainment to sail against smacks and hoys, of which the river was always full. At stretch they were too hard for me, but by I had the better, for I commonly did in two what they could scarce get in three boards."

He further tells us that when he went for a long trip he laid in cold meats in tin cases, bottles of beer, ale, and for the seamen brandy, adding, "and though our meat was coarse (beef for the most part), yet no epicure enjoyed it so much as we did."

With a good gale they "got down in one tide as low as the Ooze Edge, where is a buoy," and there lay for the next tide. "In the evening the wind slackened and the surge yet wrought, which was a most uneasy condition to lie, stamping and tossing without a breath of wind to pay our sail, which flapped about most uneasily. There was wind aloft, though I was too humble to enjoy it, for empty colliers came down with topsails out, full bunted, and bows rustling, which did not a little provoke me; but patience is a seaman's capital and necessary virtue." Next morning they weighed anchor and proceeded, and with a fresh wind stemmed the tide, and, "it being high water at the spits, we ran over all past the Gunfleet" and reached Harwich.

"There was little remarkable," he informs us, in this day's voyage, "only that I, with my friend Mr. Chute, sat before the mast in the hatchway, with prospectives and books, the magazine of provisions, and a boy to make a fire and help broil, make tea, chocolate, etc.; and thus, passing alternately from one entertainment to another, we sat out eight whole hours and scarce knew what time was past. For the day proved cool, the gale brisk, air clear and no inconvenience to

molest us, nor wants to trouble our thoughts, neither business to importune nor formalities to tease us, so that we came nearer to a perfection of life there than I was ever sensible of otherwise." Good old Roger North; what an example he sets for the "top practices in Chancery" of the present day. And the rest of his acts and of his cruise, and all that he did, must be sought for in his own autobiography; and very entertaining it is.<sup>1</sup>

His remarks are all as fresh and as suitable to the present time as though written yesterday, instead of over two hundred years ago. He comments upon the "ugly shelf at the point of the country between the Thames and Maldon waters," the Whitaker and Buxey, and says that there were several wrecks upon it. There are some now, and doubtless there have been others; keeping up a sort of apostolic succession of wrecks all through the two hundred years which have elapsed, and tells us that there is a great mast set down at the point which they call the Shoe Beacon. From an old map this seems to have stood about where the Maplin lighthouse now is.

In the early days of the *Teal* she possessed a petroleum stove for cooking, and for two years did her crew groan and suffer under that incubus. One of our friends declares that he never smells petroleum to this day without thinking of the *Teal*. It infected the whole boat, and, what is more, it took about an hour to boil the kettle over the thing. At last we revolted, threw it overboard, and tried another. But that soon followed the first one; and we bought a good and very

---

1 Dr. Jessop, *The Lives of the Norths*, Geo. Bell and Sons.

powerful spirit apparatus. What a comfort the change was! How we ever endured the petroleum horror is a mystery!

The boat is a great source of amusement to some of our friends; and they never seem tired of asking us the same questions, the following being samples: "Do you sleep on board? What do you do at night; you don't sail all the time, I suppose? What do you do when you want to anchor? I suppose you take a man to sail the boat for you." Once I was asked by a friend, to whom I showed a photograph of a Thames barge, whether that was the ship I went to Australia in; and, on another occasion, a lady refused to take the slightest interest in a pretty picture of a yacht under sail, because it did not belong to anyone that she knew. The continual repetition of the same questions about the boat reminds one of the questions people invariably address to amateur photographers. "I suppose you use those new dry plates." (N.B. Ninety-nine amateurs out of a hundred have never seen any other sort, and it is rather a stretch of the imagination to call dry plates new in these days.) "Do you use the instantaneous process? Do you think they will ever be able to photograph in colours?" That is the regular broadside; and I ask my photographic friends how often they have been called upon to face it?

The first problem to be seriously considered is the kind of boat best suited for cruising at the mouth of the Thames. In the first place, those who have big vessels or small deep racing craft are shut out of a great deal of the amusement of exploring the creeks and odd corners of the river; to them it is a serious matter to get "ketch'd up on a bit of a spit," so they are not likely to look upon such a state of things as fun,

nor to run even the smallest risk of it: not that it is at all necessary for the explorer of creeks to run aground whenever he goes for a cruise – please don't think that, critical reader. Although to be hard and fast ashore must not be thought to be a constant practice of ours, yet it is important that if such a contingency should arise, even once in a season, it is very different when the result is merely a certain degree of discomfort than when it is a matter of serious anxiety whether she will float again when the tide returns. We have been well brought up to “follow the sea” by the trusty Benson, and to use the lead line and the sounding pole in a proper manner, and when there is a passage to be made, or when the tide is ebbing, we can manage to keep clear of the points, for to lie aground on the mud for several hours at a time plays no part in the cruises of the *Teal*, though on a flowing tide and in fine weather we may sometimes allow ourselves to cut it a little fine round the tail of a spit.

The advantages of a three-foot draught are that the man with a slender purse can explore the vasty deeps (and shallows) of the Thames estuary and enjoy himself quite as much as his deep-keeled brethren, for he can go into the very places which they avoid like poison; and further, he picks up any amount of local knowledge of the river, from the careful study of the channels with chart and lead line, and soon grows into an accomplished mud pilot, able to take the boat clear through devious channels, and by so doing to cut off long stretches of turning to windward, and to save many a valuable half-hour when time is short.

Give us a boat drawing from three feet to three feet six, with six or seven feet beam, and twenty feet on the water

line, strongly built, a full model and fairly high topsides; not too much keel, but what there is carried well fore and aft to hold her well up to windward in a rough sea, with a ton of lead ballast and a snug sail plan, yawl or cutter, the former for choice, because by stowing the mizen and putting on a smaller jib, the craft can be so rapidly snugged down for a stiff peck to windward, without the bother of reefing the mainsail, and because it is a real advantage to be able to sail under jib and mizen when proceeding with caution in unknown waters, or when about to bring up in a crowded harbour. Such a boat as this is big enough to stand a lot of weather, and is not too heavy to be helped round with an oar or shoved off should she get ashore even on a falling tide, if the crew go aft or forward as need be, to alter the vessel's trim. Once or twice, at critical times, our crew has even tumbled overboard *en masse* to help her off the sands.

The sail area a boat can safely carry depends so much upon the skill of her crew that they must be the best judges of what they are prepared to tackle, merely bearing in mind that perpetual reefing is intolerable, and that in Sea Reach and the Swin Channel there is usually as much wind as a twenty-foot boat wants; and that after all the whole object of the business is to enjoy oneself and have the benefit of salt-water holidays, and not merely to go in for sailing and thrashing her through it. The man who talks most of the delights of heavy weather is usually the one who has not had much of it, for when he has he is usually well able to appreciate the comfort of fine weather. Still a fast boat is useful at times, but speed is not safe if it be got from over-sparring.

The decks and cabin top must be strong and good and water-tight, and though too much of a cabin top looks lubberly, and rather spoils the smartness of a craft, yet when a small boat has to serve a double purpose, namely, to be first a boat, and secondly a floating house, one must have shelter and live with some approach to comfort while away on the cruise, therefore cabin room and good sleeping accommodation, dry and warm, are essential. No one can enjoy small boat sailing unless he can keep himself warm and dry at night, so as to sleep well and awake in the morning refreshed, and with a cheerful countenance, at any hour by the clock. Rain, spray and cold wind can be disregarded by day if there is the certainty of a dry, warm cabin for the evening and night.

An useful part of one's outfit in these days is a camera, especially one of the modern detective or hand cameras, for to snatch the visions of the fleeting hours, and preserve them in the form of negatives for future use on winter evenings with the magic lantern.

The actual size of a boat is less important than its handiness, as is well seen in the way a Thames barge of eighty tons can be managed by its crew of two men, and on a small boat everything should be planned with that object steadily in view. The jib should traverse clear of the forestay, or, at any rate, it should work without any need to go forward to clear it every time the boat is in stays; and the jibsheets, too, should run freely without the necessity of overhauling them; the working of a boat cannot be too easy; there are plenty of opportunities for sailorising in the handiest of boats, and any extra labour, however slight, soon becomes

troublesome, and swallows up the energy which can be better applied in making the passage.

Problem number two – What is the best place for a Londoner to make his head-quarters, and to keep his boat in? This is an awful problem. There is no best place, although there are several good ones, but each has some drawback. Either there is too much traffic, and a consequent risk of being run into at anchor, or there is no room for a comfortable berth, or there is a bad train service, or no one to take care of her when the owners are away, or she takes the ground for too long at low water. These are the chief difficulties, though not the only ones, and perfect head-quarters have yet to be discovered. Among the possible places are Erith, Purfleet, Greenhithe, Gravesend, Tilbury, Holehaven, Leigh, Southend, Sheerness, Queenborough, Port Victoria, Upnor, Chatham, Rochester Bridge – all with some advantages and all with drawbacks.

We have kept our little vessel at Leigh for three or four seasons; and, although we grumble regularly in true British fashion at the disadvantages of the place, and constantly threaten that we will stand them no longer, but go elsewhere, yet we don't go. The place has good points as well as disadvantages, and these, helped by force of habit, have combined to keep us there year after year. All places where men keep their boats have some fault; so we prefer to bear the ills we have, and put up with the one great drawback to Leigh, namely, the lack of water.

The *Teal* floats at her mooring for about three hours each high water time, lying aground for the remainder of the tide; and this has to be met by suiting the time of departure

to the tides, or by having the boat laid off in deep water, so that we can then row out or walk out over the mud in sea-boots to her on our arrival. All this, of course, is a nuisance; but, on the other hand, we have at Leigh a good and cheap train service, especially now that most fast trains for South-end stop at Leigh to take tickets. The boat lies close to the railway station. We have the most excellent of boat-keepers, with a convenient shed, and we are free from all risks of collision; and, as she dries out each tide, her bottom keeps free from weed. Moreover, there is no time lost in getting to sea, no journey up and down a horrible river swarming with steamers to use up half one's time before the open water of Sea Reach can be gained.