

structures showing through a wealth of trees; but where are curious old homes, and always a bawling moorland stream turning the gray, huge wheel of some trembling old mill.

Here, miles perhaps from their "pairedner" work "below grass" in the mines on the moors, live swarthy "Coden (cousin) Jack" with scores of cotter laborers upon the farms. Wherever these village cottages are their walls are of everlasting stone, embowered in brilliant Cornish creepers and roses, with cement floors, and thatched roofs subject to interminable repairs from onslaughts of scores of busy sparrows, tiny miners themselves, endlessly sinking shafts and drilling "cross-cuts" and "levels" in the soft and yielding straw. There is one room below; sometimes two; and a half-story garret beneath the thatch. There is only a front door. A window is at either side of this, and sometimes directly above these, tiny panes to light the garret. Each cottage is provided at the end or back with an open fire place in the center, a sort of range at one side, covered with brass ornaments which the housewife is endlessly polishing with growder; while at the other side is the "ungconer" with "heps" or upper and under doors, for storing faggots or furze for fuel.

The furniture though scant is honest and useful. At the fire place are the "brandes," a triangular iron on legs on which, over the coals, the kettles boil, the circular cast-iron "baker" is set, and the fish or meat, when they can be luckily had, are "scrowled" or grilled. There are perhaps four chairs, singularly enough with solid mahogany frames, but the seats are of painted pine and are waxed weekly. These are for "best," and all the best. For every-day use one or two "firms" or rude benches are provided. The single table is of pine, and unpainted side for daily use, and scrubbed daily, and a painted side for Sunday. The table ware is something startling in cheap goods, for the Gipsy hawkers frequent Cornwall, and each member of the family is provided with a real "chany" cup and saucer with a gorgeous gilt band.

For his class the Cornish villager is a generous liver. The young folk have an unusual fund of games distinctive of Cornwall; marriages provide extraordinary festivals; the dead are "watched" from decease to burial and funerals provide subdued diversions with heroic feasts; leaping, wrestling, running, cricket and "putting the stone," are the principal amusements of youths and men, in which they excel; and their countless endeared hobgoblins and "buccaboos," which Wesley and Whitefield along with the railways and telegraph were never able to "lay," draw these sturdy Cornish villagers closer together around the flashing village smithy forge, the Cornishman's chief place of evening resort, or within the home-glow of their blazing ingle-nooks, during the long winter nights when the cruel fogs pound in over the moors from the seething Channel, or the tempests howl across the dreary, shuddering moors.

Practically all English village folk are laborers, whether operatives, shepherds, wagoners, thatchers, drainers, or common field laborers, just as they have been for hundreds of years. There may be a publican or innkeeper, a shopkeeper who is postmaster or postmis-

stress, a carpenter, who is often a painter, undertaker, verger and gravedigger in one, a baker, a tailor, a blacksmith and a poacher, for the latter is in every hamlet in Britain, all great oracles in their way. But three families of quality, and frequently not that many, are known—those of the lord of the manor or the Squire, the rector or the curate and the schoolmaster; for the doctor is always summoned from a near city or town.

English village life is therefore found to lie within a wonderfully close horizon. I have been much with these folk in their labor, their diversions and their homes. After looking at them long and earnestly with my own eyes, I have tried to get, as nearly as possible, into their personal environment and then look out of the windows of their minds and their habitations upon the everyday world about them. In this way a good deal that is not hopeless and much that is gratifying can be discerned. It is certainly true that an infinitely higher standard of life and living is enjoyed than in the "good old days" whose departure the wise writers so bitterly deplore.

Universal education has certainly caused universal discontent. But I do not think it carries from youth to old age. By the time these folk are twenty or twenty-five years of age the fermentation period is passed. Some go away to the cities, as with us, or to America or Australia; but those who remain, are better laborers, villagers and citizens. The English peasant class has thus almost entirely disappeared. You will not see very much knee-crooking, head-ducking and tuft pulling to superiors, while there is no less genuine kind-heartedness and respect. Smock-frocks and corduroys and guzzlings. But these villagers are less gross. They are of better stuff. They have more wholesome food to eat, and a great variety. They know something about hygiene. They insist on good drainage. In humble fashion they beautify their habitations without and within. What has been lost in the rough and often brutal amusements of the olden time has been more than gained in and for the home. There are books and newspapers and prints in it. The fireside is even a grander place than the parson's lawn or the brawling street. In a word, without having lost a jot of their value as laborers and servants they have emerged from the condition of sodden male and female hinds to that of self-respecting men and women.

With this has come an individual love for the village home and the home village. The thrilling history of many a place, its antiquarian marvels, its ancient legends, folk-lore and even superstitions, are no longer the exclusive possession of London savants. A deep and steadfast interest of this sort is flaming up among them. It bodes ill to the ale-house. Along with it surely comes an ethical development. They are beginning to share with the historian the artist, the novelist, the vagrant wanderer like you and I, a perception of the matchless beauty of their environment. That alone is proving a mighty factor in preserving all that is tender, sweet and sacred about them for the exquisite delight of alien eyes.

EDGAR L. WAKEMAN.

"COME, BALMY spring, ethereal mildness, come!"

THE WORLD'S FAIR.

It is a little more than half a year past the four hundredth mile-post on the Highway of time since the famed Genoese navigator disembarked at San Salvador and threw open the gates of a new world. Previous to that the Azores were the limit of voyaging westward and the ships had gone no further south than to round the first great projection into the Atlantic from the African coast. With all this and the meagerness of the capacity of sailing craft at that time considered, together with the primitive and inefficient scientific apparatus available, the voyage across the waste of waters was like plunging into the depths of space in quest of a new star. It was rendered all the more irksome, difficult and questionable by reason of everything resting on faith in one man through whose persistence and the providential interventions which came, ships were obtained and manned, followed by a series of reverses and discouragements, each tending to diminish the confidence so long in forming and to increase the reluctance then so prevalent to rendering aid. It was a herculean task to obtain anything, for the masses were ignorant and poor, the others were haughty and self-satisfied. Lisbon contained the only scientific society and Portugal would do nothing. How many men in this day of last things, perfected instruments, willing crews, and societies and governments ready to aid, presuming there to be an undiscovered continent in some unknown and distant quarter, could be found that, in the face of rebuff after rebuff, discouragements at every turn, poverty almost beyond expression and the first attempt on which everything seemed to hang proving a failure, would not have abandoned the enterprise in despair and let the world's grand conception perish where it was born? Is it not plain that here a superhuman and apparently impossible task is to be performed, there arises at the proper time and in the proper place the proper man to do it—one without whom it could not or would not be done at all?

Christopher Columbus was an inspired man; he had a work to perform and the melting away of all barriers erected by unyielding nature and unfriendly man between him and it must have been as plain to him when petitioning courts and begging for bread as when with his mortal vision he beheld it. Little by little incredulity gave way to thinking and reasoning, and eventually beheld upon the broad, billowy breast of the Atlantic a little fleet with a gallant crew bidding adieu to the Old World and banded for—no one knew where, no one but Columbus, and he could not tell!

That was the beginning of the grandest consummation by man relating to old Mother Earth. Today, amid all the pomp, pride and circumstance which the cultivated mind could devise or the trained hand execute, the pinnacle of that consummation was reached and crowned. In the presence of vast multitudes from beyond the seas and from all parts of Columbia, representing every clime from the equator to the poles, every condition from the prince to the peasant, every