

## Miscellaneous.

### DRESS IN ENGLAND.

A London correspondent of the *Chicago Tribune*, under date of May 26, writes as follows:

There has never been a time during the present reign in England, when so much money has been spent as at the present period upon dresses. Our fair ones are running a race of extravagance. In many families the cost per person for dress averages £1,000 a year—this, of course, exclusive of jewelry. For a single person, prices varying from £40 to £150 are frequently paid. It is in the rareness of material and its amount that the excess usually consists, not in the skill or art of the design.

During this week I have been present at the opening of what is termed an International Horticultural Exhibition, in the fashionable part of London—an occasion on which the tickets of admission were one guinea, and there I saw the prevalent wastefulness displayed in the morning dress. Trains of satin, some yards long, were seen dragging over gravel walks and collecting all foreign matter from the grass. Lace was there in shawls and cloaks, which used to be worn only in very small quantities by our grandmothers. As to our bonnets, very soon will they disappear, if they continue to diminish at the rate they have followed for the last two or three seasons. They have dwindled into something of the size of a broad piece of ribbon, but the shapes that are chosen are scarcely to be numbered.

Watching the fine figures of many of our English girls, surrounded by an immense breadth of some exquisite "precious stuff," and wearing on their heads some odd jumble of ribbons and flowers, we are frequently forced to admire; but if, in the midst of our ruminations, the form arises in our minds of the chaste and natural style of a few years back, with its simple adornment and harmony with the native grace—or of a classical drapery, such as *Mdlle. Rachel* used to wear in her tragedies—these walking bales of goods, these drapers' and dress-makers' models cease to charm. Can any kind of dress be suited to us which prevents the exercise of muscles and limbs? The countesses and duchesses whom I saw on Tuesday at Kensington were exposed to a hundred mishaps. To walk with such trappings is a difficulty, but to walk, and to stop, and to turn round, is a danger.

You may take your hat off to a lady, these days, but if you advance to shake her little hand, you fluster her, for you may tread upon her dress. If she is alarmed, her admirer is still more so. Some men have acquired the greatest dexterity in avoiding an unfortunate step, for there are men who can stand on anything, on the spire of St. Paul's, but to the average, the modern garb of our ladies is a snare and a vexation.

### SOME OF ENGLAND'S CHILDREN.

A correspondent of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, who has visited some of the iron furnaces in the "black country" of Staffordshire and Worcestershire, tells these sad stories:

In the mills and forges boys of all ages, from eight and upward, may be found, amid the labyrinth of machinery and the coils of heated iron, engaged by day and night in tugging long, red-hot seething bars. Their activity is great, owing to the nature of their work, which requires rapidity of movement, and contrasts strangely with their otherwise faded and worn appearance. In addition to the labor of dragging along the iron, each of these little fellows has to run, in short stages, a distance of more than eleven miles every day, in an oppressive atmosphere, thick with dust and steam. Owing to the quick and uncertain movements of the hot iron bars in their passage through successive rolls before having time to cool, the occupation of these boys is attended with some danger, a serious burn being an almost every day occurrence.

The lives of these boys are almost entirely spent in their forges, except the hours allotted to sleep. They have their meals there, and in the snatches of leisure it is their playground. In most of the works is the arm or basin of a canal, the water of which is kept in a state of chronic fever, and in which, despite its inky color, they delight to bathe, both in winter and summer. So constant are they in their ablutions, that they often come out parboiled, like a washerwoman's thumb. Some of the proprietors of these works have provided night schools for the instruction of the children in their employ; but, as a rule,

they are in mind and body alike neglected, and the densest ignorance prevails. They have no home training, most of their houses being locked up all day, the parents and all the children being out at work; and, returning home fatigued at night, nothing but bed or a carousal in the Fox and Dragon is acceptable.

Returning home late, one evening, I saw two little children, a boy and girl, lying asleep upon a door-step, which proved to be that of their home. On awaking them, they told me they were waiting for their mother to come out of the neighboring tavern, and open the door. They had no father, and had been hard at work all day. The boy worked in a forge, the girl in a foundry, and the mother in a japanning factory; and, though thus separated all day, there seemed no bond of affection to bind them when they met together.

West of Dudley is a strange, wild region, known as the "nailing district," composed of scattered hamlets, to all the houses of which is attached what appears to the stranger a blacksmith's shop. The manufacture of wrought nails is, and has been for a century or more, the great staple industry of the district. It is carried on by the nailers in their own houses.

In few trades of the district does the employment of women and young children assume a more objectionable form than this. The women seem to have lost all traces of the modesty of their sex, and from childhood are addicted to swearing, smoking—resembling as far as possible the other sex in their habits and deportment, even to the wearing of their coarse flannel jackets. They mostly marry very young—often at fourteen, and seldom later than eighteen or twenty. With such women for mothers, it is not difficult to judge of their children. From tenderest ages—often from five or six years, they are trained to that round of labor in which their lives are doomed to be spent. The first stage is blowing the bellows, and next they are taught to forge the smaller kinds of nails.

The hours of labor are dreadfully prolonged, often exceeding sixteen hours per day; the rate of remuneration is very low, and the homes are consequently wretchedly poor. Entering one of them lately, I saw the father, mother, and eight sons and daughters, all toiling in a small, ill-ventilated, dirty hovel. It was growing late in the evening, and I inquired: Is it not time to cease your day's work? Oh, no, maister, rejoined the mother; we've a noit's work afore us yet, or there'll be no bread o' the loaf o' Sunday. It was Friday night, and it was, as I learned, a practice to work from Friday morning until Saturday afternoon, without having more than short snatches of rest for meals. While I lingered, a little fellow, who could not have been more than eight, fell from his work apparently exhausted, but his father, on observing it, threw at him a hammer-handle, telling him, with an oath, to recommence his work. He took no part in our conversation, having, like his two eldest daughters, a short pipe in his mouth, which seemed to him and them the calumet of peace.

This is by no means a solitary case. Hundreds of such instances are to be found of little boys and girls, just emerged from babyhood, ill-fed, ill-clothed and overworked, trained amid vulgarity and vice, and in the densest gloom of ignorance. Were it not for Sunday schools, I shudder to think of the future of these hapless children. Their lives could only be compared with those of the "heathen in his blindness," on whose behalf Exeter Hall is pleading so eloquently during this month of May. I visited a Sunday-school in the nailing district a few Sundays ago, and found there a multitude of these little "Christian savages." They were lustily singing a hymn as I entered which is very popular in the district, rather, I suspect, because it goes to a lively tune than because many of the children can heartily appreciate the sentiment of the words:

I thank the goodness and the grace  
Which on my birth have smiled,  
And made me in these Christian days  
A happy English child.

I was not born a little slave  
To labor in the sun,  
And wish I were but in the grave  
And all my labor done.

A feeling came over me as I looked upon the crowd of wan, pale faces and worn frames, and compared that scene to the burden of the song of praise, and I could not help wishing from my heart that the contrast was somewhat more striking between "a little slave" and these "happy English children."

In other branches of the hardware and metal trades the evils of child labor equally abound, especially in the foundries, japan works and tin-plate factor-

ies; but, as a rule, they are less aggravated in the large establishments than in the smaller workshops.

### RESOURCES OF FARM MANURE.

This subject is always in order among farmers whose soil has been long under cultivation, and its fertility partially exhausted. Western farmers occupying a virgin soil, who a few years since thought there was no use for it, and moved their barns to get out of the way of its accumulation, begin to see the utility of saving and applying it; they find that better crops are raised with it. I shall not attempt to suggest anything new, for it would seem impossible after all that has been said and written on the subject, but a frequent reiteration of similar precepts may induce some one to adopt a better system of saving and applying his manure. Does the reader make the most of his resources? Is there nothing left that can be converted into fertilizing material? When every resource is exhausted, then it is time to resort to commercial fertilizers. How is it with the hog-pen? Is that well supplied with good material to absorb the liquid as well as ammonia? A free supply will tend to keep the hogs clean and furnish a quantity of rich manure.

Then there is the privy, which is too frequently allowed to waste its ammonia, instead of having absorbents to fix it. A tight vault, into which dry muck, plaster, loam, &c., may be introduced and mixed, will supply several loads of good poudrette, superior to what the market affords, with little labor. The hen-roost will supply several barrels of good guano of the quality of which there is no question, when home-manufactured, by supplying dry loam, plaster, &c., with frequent overhauling. A pit so constructed that it may receive all the slops and wash from the house without waste; will, by filling in loam, muck, fine coal dust, &c., give several loads of rich material suitable to be applied to any garden or field crop. Wood ashes, composted with dry muck or loam, bones broken and mixed in a cask with fine loam and kept constantly wet with urine will dissolve and make good bone phosphate. Then oftentimes animals die from accident or disease, which may be converted into manure by being cut up and composted with some of the various absorbents to be found on every farm. Urine of all kinds is the most valuable of manure, and should be saved by having absorbents applied as bedding, when it is convenient: stables should be so arranged as to be drained into pits or tanks. Were every farmer to save what is at present wasted, the inquiry "Where shall I get fertilizers for my ground, that I may have the wherewith to grow good crops?" would be less frequently heard.—[*Boston Cultivator*.]

**A ZOOLOGICAL CURIOSITY.**—The Jardin d'Acclimation in Paris has recently been enriched by a species of guinea-hen from Australia, called the Weelat by the natives. It bears a strong resemblance to the vulture, and procures the hatching of its eggs by what may be called artificial heat in a curious way. In the beginning of spring it collects all the vegetable refuse it can get into a heap, for the site of which it generally selects the shady side of a hill. Round this heap it lays its eggs, each five or six inches apart from its neighbor, with the big extremity turning upwards; it then buries them under the refuse three feet deep, and lets the heat generated by the putrefaction of the vegetable matter hatch them. It has never been ascertained how the little ones got out of their strange prison, but when they do they are ready fledged and able to fly.

**FAMILY TRAGEDIES.**—It seems that murders of entire families are becoming frightfully numerous in the United States. First we had the Deering tragedy near Philadelphia, and the Deerfield murder in Tennessee, the perpetrators of which had a remarkable resemblance to each other—the shuffling gait, the light hair, the boyish countenance, and even the absence of the thumb of the right hand. Then was announced the tragedy in York county; and the murder of a father and a son in Arkansas; and now we have in West Baden, Orange county, Indiana, the murder of a family of four persons; killed to prevent their testifying against their murderer, who was soon to be tried for arson. In this latter case the murderer has been arrested, but even arrests and convictions and executions do not seem to prevent the occurrence of these terrible family butcheries, the mere description of which is almost too horrible for belief.

### A SIGN OF THE TIMES.—EDWARD I. AND THE JEWS.

Now that the Oath's Amendment Bill has become law of the land, and the last vestige of intolerance has been wiped out from the statute book, a glance at the legislation in reference to the Jews, as it was in the second half of the 13th century, may not be uninteresting. The penal laws passed under Edward I., are as characteristic of his age, as the Act of Parliament equalizing all Parliamentary oaths is of that of Queen Victoria. Just contrast the two codes. Under Edward I. it was enacted:—

1. No Jew shall come for or depart from England without license on pain of death.
2. No Jew shall walk or ride without a yellow badge upon his or her outward or upper garment, on pain of death.
3. No Jew shall condemn Jesus Christ, nor blaspheme his divinity, on pain of being burnt.
4. No Jew shall stir out of his house or lodging on Good Friday.
5. No Jew shall strike a Christian, on pain of having his right arm cut off.
6. No Jew shall kill a Christian, on pain that he be hanged alive on a gibbet, and be fed daily with bread and water till he dies on the same gibbet.
7. If any Jew shall cheat a Christian and escape, all the rest of the Jews shall make satisfaction to the Christian so cheated.
8. All the Synagogues of the Jews shall be suppressed, and if any of their Rabbis or Jewish priests shall teach or preach against the Christian religion hereafter in England, all such preachers and teachers shall be burnt.
9. No Jew, on pain of hanging, shall transport any bullion or coin beyond the seas, nor deface or melt down any Christian coin.
10. The King's judges shall not hear the testimony of a Jew against a Christian.
11. No Jew shall be sworn upon the Evangelist.
12. The Jews shall have four judges, two whereof Christians, and the other Jews, who shall try and determine all causes between Jews and Christians.
13. All the children of the Jews, as soon as born, the Rector or Vicar of the Parish shall take from them, put such to nurses, and breed them up in the Christian religion, for which all the Jews must pay all the charges.
14. In the Exchequer appointed for the Jews, there shall be half Christians and half Jews; and both shall have equal power and different locks and keys to prevent fraud.
15. The Jews shall account for all the money they lay out and for the profits, and return before the justiciaries over the Jews as often as they shall be required.
16. If any Jew shall be converted to the Christian faith, all his usurious acquisition to be converted to pious and charitable uses, but all his goods, estate and moveables, shall be his own, and not the king's, as formerly accustomed.
17. The Jews shall go to hear Christian doctrine once a week, and as many English Jews as turn Christians, shall be as free of England as if they were born of Christian parents.
18. No Jew shall cohabit with a Christian woman.
19. No Jew shall be buried in any consecrated ground.
20. No Jew shall correspond with any of the enemies of England.
21. No Jew's widow shall have any right of administration; but after the decease of her husband, all the Jew's effects and moveables shall be vested in the king, and the king shall be executor and administrator to all the Jews in England.
22. No Jew shall sue for his own debts but in the name of the king, and with the king's license; and if any Jew defrauds the king of his customs or other rights, he shall forfeit his all to the king.

Cruel as these laws were, yet they were not more so than those enacted in other countries referring to Jews. How can we thank God sufficiently for having cast our lot in England of the 19th, and not of the 13th century! and how marvellous is the change of sentiment which the diffusion of knowledge and spread of enlightenment have gradually worked!—[*Jewish Chronicle*.]

**VALUE OF REAL ESTATE IN LONDON.**—The Wesleyan Methodists, some time ago, built a hall in Bishopsgate street, London, a freehold, which cost them £35,000. They have been recently offered £157,000 for the property. In the course of evidence given recently before the Deputy-Recorder of London, it was stated that land near St. Paul's Churchyard was worth £1,000,000 per acre.