NOTES AND COMMENTS

We have referred heretofore to the novel feature of the British "prevention of crime" act, designed primarily to suppress or segregate the confirmed, hopeless criminal. The act has passed both houses of parilament, but not in its original form. It was found necessary to make concessions to those who objected to the "revolutionary" principle of punishing defendants not for specific crimes, but for "habitual criminality" and who, moreover, thought that it would prove class legislation, directed against the members of the poorest and most unfortunate section of the population.

In the original bill the court was given authority to impose on a person tried for the third time on a criminal charge not merely the ordinary sentence, but, in addition, "preventive detention" during the pleasure of the crown—meaning the home office. Under such a provision the incorrigibles would remain in the penitentiary to the end of their days. In the act as passed the additional sentence of preventive detention is expressly limited to a maximum of ten and a minimum of five years. Habitual criminality is for the first time definitely recognized by the British law as a distinct offense, but the maximum penalty for it is not permanent isolation from society, but detention for ten years. No doubt this penalty is likely to prove a deterrent in many cases, but it will not rid the community of the hardened and confirmed criminal. The government or its supporters lacked the courage of their reform and for the time being abandoned the idea of trying the effect of permanently segregating the human beasts of prey.

There are those who vigorously deny that there is such a species as the habitual criminal, who argue that freed convicts are driven back into the paths of violence and aggression by the inhumanity of society and the universal fear, distrust and hatred of "jail birds." But instances are notorious where freed convicts are given encouragement and opportunity and yet return to criminal careers. At any rate, the new English act contains provisions for the reformation of criminals before they fall into the "habitual" class.

DEVOTION TO SCIENCE.

Costs Another Scientist the Loss of Part of His Right Hand.

Another scientist, Harry W. Cox, of London, England, has paid the heavy price of amputation for experimenting with "x-rays."

Mr. Cox, who is one of the leading manufacturers of "x-rays" and high-frequency coils and apparatus, with premises in Gray's Inn Road, has undergone an operation at his home at Clapton for the dreaded "x-ray" dermatitis, and lost the larger portion of his right hand, including three fingers. The thumb and the little finger were saved.

Some years ago Mr. Cox lost one of the fingers on his left hand, and he has ytt to undergo another operation. He has contracted the disease in the chin.

The operation was apparently successful, and it is hoped that it will turn out as well as that in the left hand, which has given no trouble since.

Like Mr. Hall Edwards, who has lost both his hands and has been awarded a pension from the civil list, Mr. Cox has suffered from the early ignorance respecting the dangers of the then newly-discovered rays.

Now-a-days operators are elaborately safeguarded. Lead, being practically impervious to the "x-rays," the experimentalists use spectacles containing glass with a lead alloy, gloves made of rubber mixed with lead, and similar masks for the face and shoulders.

Mr. Cox, however, was one of the first manufacturers of "x-ray" apparatus in England. His work was the first to be brought into use during the Boer War, where it was of great value to the surgeons. He worked a great deal in conjunction with Mr. Hall-Edwards.

In testing the apparatus the hands, naturally, were the first to be effected. When the disease first appeared on his left hand in the form of a kind of chap—which often disappears if the "x-rays" are at once left alone—Mr. Cox disregarded it, and went on testing his work so that it might be sent out to the war.

The pain became so intense, however, that he had to undergo an operation. In recent years Mr. Cox has been a martyr to almost intolerable pain.

BURDENS THAT MAKE US

Could We Ever Dream of the Higher Tasks But for the Lower Duties?

"For we are his workmanship."—Eph., ii., 10.

Almost all the lives that reach any measure of right self-consciousness regard themselves as in a constant struggle between the things they fain would do. Seldom indeed does it happen that one can find his living in the things he loves most of all; happy are those who may. The rest, however, are not necessarily justified in regarding their unwelcome work as the foe of their highest welfare.

It is true that many lives are illy adjusted. Poets are working in brickyards and plowmen are trying to make poems for a living. We owe it to life and to our world not less than to ourselves to discover our own aptitudes, to cultivate our best powers in the tasks for which we are best suited. We have no right to drift; we ought to summon every power we have in order to select a work that we can do and do well.

Even then, with each man at the task he could do best, we would still have the conflict between the things we must do and those we would do. Perhaps you have heard it said that in the good time coming every man will have to do only the things he would most like to do. None would for long be satisfied with that arrangement. Even the people who believe they were born to wear wings and play on harps would soon be sighing for

LESS EXALTED DUTIES.

It would be an easy matter to say to all who feel the rasp and grind of each day's dull tasks, who realize keenly the seeming conflict between the duties that necessity lays on us and the high bidding of our aspirations: Be content; life is short; heaven awaits you; time's disparities will be adjusted in eternity. That leads people to take time as a dose for the sake of eternal health hereafter.

None of the problems of living are solved by a mechanical content, by an assumed apathetic indifference to the facts that fret us. An absolutely certain present will not be rightly lived until it is more than a probation for a problematic future. Folks will endure all kinds of discomfort and even wrong on the bleak threshold when they know the door to warmth and cheer will soon be opened.

The world needs those who are living a full life in the present, who are doing their share toward making conditions right here. Better the one who is wrong in his discontent than he who is content with wrong. If life seems wrong to you it is your duty to seek the way of righting it. It is better to make the mistake of thinking you must mold your times than to be but dull clay to be molded by your times.

How then can we learn to live our lives so that, with all this seeming conflict, they will be right? How can we reconcile all the opposing necessities and aspirations? May we find our way into the meaning of the necessity upon us to wear so much of ourselves away in the greedy wheels of the world's great machine?

Could we ever fit ourselves for any greater work but by

THE FAITHFUL DOING

of that which seems so little? Are we not learning the greater by means of the less? And, beside, can we be always quite sure which is the greater and which tne less?

It may be that the plowman is really doing a finer work than the poet, for what is the real measure of all our work? Is the chief executive of a railroad system necessarily doing that which is more sublime than the work of some father who, for the love of little ones, bears the yoke of servitude? Neither the wage nor the work itself is the measure, but the worker.

Often the burdens that seem to threaten to break us are the ones that make us. The discipline of the dull task is the refining pot where the gold of life itself is produced. But for their grinding necessities lives would all be only dull pebbles; the jewels are discovered by the lapidary called sometimes duty and sometimes adversity.

Only as we see life in the light of these higher values does the necessity for the conflict between duty and desire appear and the meaning of the toil and hardship become evident. Because man belongs to a nobler order which is in the making he learns not simply to endure but to delight in the toils of the present, to fight circumstance, to show himself master of his fate, and to find the life that strikes its roots so deep into eternity that neither parching drought nor rising flood affect is prosperity.

HENRY F. COPE.

THE S. S. LESSON

INTERNATIONAL LESSON, MAR. 21.

Review. Golden Text, Acts 8:4.

Three eras are considered in the lesson of the Quarter.

The First Era. The Two Great Powers producing Christianity, its fruits and successes (A.D. 30).

The Everliving Leader and Saviour Ascended to heaven, sitting on the right hand of God, but also ever present with his people, and doing among them the same kind of things he did on earth. Note among other things the kind of miracles which he wrought through the apostles. So the picture of the first church in Acts 2 is the outshining in actual life of the teachings of Jesus, the Beatitudes and Golden Rule.

Constantine's motto "In hoc signo vinces." "By this sign (of the cross) thou shalt conquer," is true of the church in all ages.

No church or body of men which denies the divinity and continued existence of Jesus has ever been largely successful in spreading the gospel, or building up the religious life.

The Holy Spirit coming with new power and abundance, because the coming of the Son of God has made the greatness of his work possible, is the other force by which Christianity has made its conquests.

His presence was made manifest to the senses so that people would realize the fact and the nature of the power which transformed the character of the people, and multiplied the number of the disciples.

Relate the stories of the Ascension, the Promise, the Prayer Meeting, the Day of Pentecost.

The Second Era. The Home Church at Jerusalem (A.D. 30-35 or 36).

Note the Growth of the church in four directions.

1. The transformation of character, seen in the apostles, notably in Peter; and point out the incidents which show what that change was. Seen also in the character of the first Christians. Seen also in their action under persecution.

2. Growth in numbers. Note the expressions which show this progress.

3. Growth in organization. Give the most marked instance.

4. Growth in extent of country reached by the gospel.

Difficulties and How They Were Overcome. State the obstacles in the way of this progress, and how they were overcome—from without, from within. Name the various incidents which illustrate and express both the difficulties and the way the early Christians overcame evil with good.

The Third Era. The Expansion of the Church (A D. 36-40).

The causes of this expansion.

The places to which the church was extended.

The value of this expansion to the progress of the church.

State the main incidents of this expansion.

WOMAN MAYOR'S DINNER.

Mayor of Aldeburgh, Eng., Gave Dinner to Councillors and Guests

Dr. Elizabeth Garret Anderson, Mayor of Aldeburgh, England, gave a dinner recently to 40 Councillors and other guests. She was the only woman present, and she wore a black dress, with a widow's cap, and diamonds. Replying to the toast, "Aldeburgh's Prosperity," she said that during her year of office she would try her best to prove a good motherly housekeeper to the town. She declared that nothing could be done by talking, but a great deal by the councilors agreeing to take action and work together for the good of the town. She hoped to better the roads and to make the town more attractive to visitors.

DESERVES THE NAME.

Askitt—Is your friend Yankem a painless dentist?

Noitt—Yes. He's so busy he hasn't time to take pains with his victims.

NECESSARY RELIEF.

George—Will your father permit you to take your piano away with you when you marry?

Phyllis—He says he will insist on it.

Griggs—"I say, old man, what's good for insomnia? I haven't closed my eyes for five nights." Colonel—"You want to have a boxing match. The first time I tried it, I remember, my eyes were closed for a fortnight."

SOMETHING ABOUT HANDSHAKE.

Different Ways in Grasping—Not Enough Vigor, Says Professor.

Recently a very learned professor elaborated his views on the handshake. He electrified his listeners by declaring that some people had hands like flippers—there was no vigor about the grasp.

"There are nearly as many kinds of handshakes as there are kinds of man," said the professor. "There is the hearty shake, the two-finger shake, and the thistledown shake at the height of the shoulder.

"There is the cold hand, and there is the hot hand, the hand that is moist and clammy, the hand that is more like a flipper than an organ of prehension. There is the tender pressure, the vigorous squeeze, and the frigir extension, as if one were submitting to a painful operation.

"A true handshake is like a quarrel or a marriage. It takes two to make it. Two hands meeting in a sympathetic grasp, with just enough pressure to suggest welcome without inflicting discomfort—that is the real handshake.

"A handshake is infinitely preferable as a greeting to the promiscuous kissing one sometimes sees. Apart altogether from the fact that specific disease may be conveyed by the contact of the lips, too much kissing is always to be discouraged. The mothers who will never allow anybody to kiss their babies have taken a wise and sound decision."

SENTENCE SERMONS.

Faith makes a fold; bigotry a fence.

The double minded are but half-witted.

Peace is the power gained through pain.

No pleasure comes from playing with life.

No good is any good unles it is soon outgrown.

You can usually tell a man's size by what he sees.

The surest, swiftest way of being damned is to do nothing.

Your imaginary wrongs cannot cover your real wrongdoing.

An ideal too heavy becomes a drag instead of an inspiration.

The man who does not have an uphill fight is going down hill.

The man who lies down on you never has any standing at all.

Living men cannot long be satisfied with dead men's prayers.

Being good is not much good unless your goodness makes good.

The trouble with many uplifters is that they are only onlookers.

Nothing will help you into heaven like helping others out of their hells.

Faith is something a good deal brighter and mightier than fear of the future.

It's no use talking about having faith in God unless yau keep faith with men.

The pessimist usually thinks he is a literary character because he weeps ink.

There are too many people trying to make the bible popular by using it as a club.

It is not wise to trust the judgment of the man who fears that his reputation is not equal to his character.

WOMEN IN MEXICO.

High Up in the Ranks of Professional and Educational Life.

As an evidence of the progressiveness of their country the Mexicans point to its treatment of women, especially in the matter of education. All its national colleges and professional schools, including those of music and art, give free tuition and are open alike to men and women. Some twenty years ago, when the first woman was graduated from the medical school, the Minister of Education made her a present of a carriage and enough money to set her up in her profession. There are now in Mexico City alone at least ten well known women physicians, all having large and lucrative practices. The National Bureau of Education is composed of fifteen members, four of whom are women.

BELGIAN CHILDREN

This delight in the family life is characteristic of all Belgians. One sees in Brussels and Antwerp Monsieur promenading in the boulevard or the bois with a cigar in his mouth, Madame leaning on his arm, and the children, hand in hand, walking sedately under the proud eyes of their parents. One finds children in the restaurants and children in the music halls. The pleasures of father and mother are shared always with the nursery. To go junketing without the children would appear to the Belgian not only selfish but dull. His happiness is the happiness of his children. He sees the circus half with his own eyes and half with theirs. The toyshops and bookshops in Brussels tell of the paramount part played by the child. The happiness of this people is the pleasure of domesticity.

THE BLARNEY STONE.

Romance and Superstition Cluster Round It.

Among the old castles of Ireland none is more famous than Blarney, in County Cork. It is in the walls of this building that the Blarney stone is set, a stone that has given to English speech a name for what is otherwise sometimes known as "taffy." The castle itself dates from the year 1446. It stands in a region which abounds in legend, tradition, and old-time belief in fairies. The author of "Shamrock Land," Mr. P. F. Jones, visited the castle and its neighborhood a short time ago, and writes entertainingly on the subject.

Blarney Castle obtained its present fame from a famous stone, still in the walls, round which clusters much of romance and superstition. Tradition says that after Cormac MacCarthy had built the castle he chanced one day to save an old woman from drowning, who, to show her gratitude, offered Cormac a golden tongue which should have the power of fluent persuasiveness—a tongue that could influence men and women, friends and foes, as he willed. To get this power, however, Cormac must climb to the keep of the castle, let himself down in some difficult way, and kiss a certain stone in the walls situated about five feet below the gallery running round the top. It is said that he followed the old woman's directions with great minuteness, kissed the stone, and at once obtained all the persuasive eloquence which had been promised him.

Soon the story was told throughout Ireland. It went also to other countries, and made Blarney one of the best-known castles in the world.

Walking round the top of the castle walls in the warm sunshine, I began to look for the noted stone, and at last found it held in place by two iron bands suspended from the very top of the stone battlements. A row of iron spikes has been placed on the top of the battlements above the stone to prevent foolhardy adventurers from attempting to kiss the stone by being let down over the walls by the heels, as was the custom at one time.

Now the pilgrim to this shrine of eloquence must get down on his knees, or lie flat down on the stones, bend his body at the waist and thrust his head and shoulders down about three feet through a square opening in the stones opposite the cornice, and in this position turn his neck and kiss the stone from the under side. An attendant with good muscles must be at hand to hold the heels of the one who attempts to kiss the stone, else by the law of gravitation he will topple over and go through the hole to the ground, a hundred and twenty feet below.

ODD CAUSES OF FIRE.

Will Catch in the Most Unaccountable Ways.

It seems almost a wonder that the world is not burned up, when one realizes what strange circumstances may cause a disastrous fire. In one case, according to a well known insurance man, the peaceful crawling of an insect set a building on fire.

Some cotton watse had been used with mineral oil and then thrown away. An unlucky insect crawled through that oil-saturated waste, and then came out with some of the oily fibres adhering to its body Subsequently it perambulated round the building, coming at last to the gas jet to meet its fate. The cotton fibres, still adhering to its body, caught fire, and the unfortunate insect dropped blazing to the floor, setting the place on fire.

Cotton waste was also partly responsible for another curious fire. This time an electric spark did the mischief, passing from a belt to some conducting substance near it and communicating with the cotton.

Two instances may be cited of fire being caused by water. In the first case a flood caused the water to rise inside a factory until it reached a pile of iron filings. When they came into contact with the water they oxidized so rapidly that they became intensely hot, and at last set fire to the woodwork near them, and so the building was destroyed.

In the other case the water from the engines during a fire found its way into a shed containing quicklime. The heat caused by the slacking of the lime set fire to the shed, and this to the other buildings.

Glass globes, which act as lenses, often cause fire, and it has been said that the convex glasses used in pavement lights are dangerous, and should be abandoned in favor of lights with flat tops.

One of the curious facts about fire is its contradictoriness. It seems to be animated by a kind of human obstinacy, or the contrariety of a malevolent spirit. Every man has had the experience of being bothered to set fire to a stoveful of kindlings, yet, left to itself, fire will catch in the most unaccountable ways.

MEAL TIME IN SWEDEN

HOURS FOR SERVING THEM IN THAT COUNTRY.

Breakfast at 11.30, Dinner at 4.30 or 5—Schools Open Daily at 8.30 or Earlier.

"The Swedish maid is a very different person from the neatly dressed, capped and aproned maid so familiar at home. In Stockholm no costume in particular seems to be expected of the servant," writes the correspondent of an English paper.

"She appears to be usually dressed in a different colored skirt and blouse, without cap, and often without a collar. In times of stress she arranges a handkerchief upon her head, and if cold wears a little scarlet coat, which is more suggestive to the English mind of the golf course than of housework. She is, however, usually a capable cook, and having dished up her dinner waits at table, too.

BREAKFAST 11.30.

"In Stockholm breakfast is usually taken about 11.30 and dinner at 4.30 or 5. It requires a little time for English people to accommodate themselves to these hours, but there are consolations. Either coffee or porridge, or both, can be obtained early in the morning, and the long, dark evenings after the early dinner pass very pleasantly. Many of the schools in Stockholm begin work at 8.30 a.m., or even earlier; but there is a long break about 11 o'clock, when the children come home, hungry, cheerful and expectant of breakfast.

"As to the nature of the meal, it is difficult to prophesy. It may consist of beefsteak and onions or of eggs and pancakes. Potatoes and sausage in some form or other are usually provided, and the beverage is always milk and sometimes tea as well. In most households coffee is served between 1 and 2, and this meal is often the occasion of a pleasant little gathering of intimate friends.

PREAMBLE TO DINNER.

"Between 2 and 4 in the afternoon is the usual time for formal calls, and people then return for 4.30 or 5. The preamble to a Swedish dinner is often rather confusing to the uninitiated. There is usually a small table laid with different kinds of cheese, savories, butter and hard bread. We all help ourselves, and eat either standing or walking about the room. This done, we return to the big table and the real meal begins

"Well-to-do Swedes usually content themselves with two courses, either meat and a sweet or soup and a sweet, as the case may be. Different varieties of stewed fruit are more frequently served with meat than with us, and I remember a dish which consisted of bacon, boiled paste and French plums, which seemed to one a strange mixture at first.

"At 9 o'clock tea is usually served with bread and butter, cheese and cold meats. Of the tea it must be said that it is quite harmless, but it is difficult to speak enthusiastically about it. It is not likely to keep awake even the lightest sleeper."

ENERGY FROM WASTE HEAT

Surplus Power Being Economized in England.

A generating station which produces 3,000 h.p. of electrical energy entirely from waste heat has just been started to work at Crook, County Durham, England.

The total amount of power annually wasted in the form of heat in Great Britain is enormous. Apart from the waste in factories, the blast furnaces and coke ovens of the United Kingdom alone produce waste heat equivalent to about half a million horsepower. On the northeast coast alone, according to a recent paper read before the Iron and Steel Institute, they emit waste heat equal to 200,000 horsepower night and day.

Of course all of the power produced in this way is not wasted. Some is used in heating the blast or in raising steam for blowing engines or other purposes. But there is still a large surplus of power available. The difficulty has been to find a market for it.

On the northeast coast a solution has been found. The district is covered by a network of mains belonging to the great electrical power companies there established. Their mains supply electric power to the railways, shipyards, colleries, etc., throughout the district. This enables the waste heat owner to dispose of his power. All he has to do is to convert it into electric power on the spot where his oven or furnace is situate, and then turn that power into the mains, by which it is carried ten, twenty, or thirty miles to where there is a demand for power. As no extra coal is burned to produce this waste heat the power is obviously much cheaper than that produced in the ordinary way.