

Notes and Comments.

A recent London treatise on recreation as a science has given rise to a discussion as to the proper division of waking hours between labor and play. The attempt to draw a line between vocation and avocation is misleading, for work in a great many cases is the highest enjoyment. One fallacy to get rid of at the start is that regular, strenuous work, a full day's work as a habit, is injurious. It is idleness or half-hearted effort, not regular occupation, that is corrosive. The well-kept machine in motion outlasts any other. There is a tradition that people work themselves to death, but in such cases the trouble can be traced to irregularities, fretfulness, or neglect of fixed and perfectly well-known laws of health. The proper bodily balance must be maintained by sleep and nutrition, and spasmodic hurry and fluster must be avoided, but the capable workman may labor on from youth to age ten hours a day and be all the better for his steady going along the orbit of years. The deeper influences back of such a life are preservative, not destructive.

In former years, much more than at present, there was an idea that the goal of business was to obtain a competency and then "retire." The thought of dropping a regular pursuit and doing nothing thereafter, or as one pleases in the matter of recreation, may look attractive on the surface, but invariably leads to disappointment and, as a rule, to physical and other ills unknown before. A healthy man wakes up in the morning with a complete day's work stored up. There is no method of retirement from this provision of nature. The salt of life is the accomplishment of something useful, and this requires more or less of close effort and skillful knowledge. People are truly said to be as old as they feel. Among the busiest brains in the world to-day are those of the remarkable old President of the Boers and Lord Salisbury, both past 70 and both carrying on their shoulders, somewhat bent by age though they be, the cares of a nation. The rule of Queen Victoria's life has been state and social work promptly and thoroughly performed. Her trip to Ireland, with its round of functions, has been no light undertaking from one past 80, but her physicians do not conceive that it involved serious risk or, indeed, might not be beneficial.

Avoidance of labor by one capable of it leads inevitably to tedium and lack of interest. No one in the midst of his work, pushed with energy and fidelity, complains of ennui or has an acquaintance with brooding fits of despondency and morbid introspection. And such things rust out vitality much faster than occupation could wear it out, or even an exceptionally hard grind exhaust it. The adjustment of mankind to its serious work is a noble study and far more deserving of a place as a science than what is conventionally called recreation. Periods of rest are good, holidays have their place, a useful fad is a refreshing form of doing something out of the main business of humanity—a zealous, workmanlike, continuous labor as long as strength endures; and it lengthens life as well as sweetens it. If any one thinks to bring to her the man with the hoe let the earlier view of Carlyle be the answer: "Venerable to me is the hard-hand-crooked, coarse-whereon, notwithstanding, lies a winning virtue, indefeasibly royal, as of the scepter of this planet. Venerable, too, is the rugged face, all weather-tanned, bearded with its rude intelligence; for it is the face of a man living man-like."

WRITTEN BY A WOMAN.

The national anthem of the Boers was written by an old lady who is at present living a peaceful, obscure life in Holland. This lady, Miss Catherine Felicia Van Rees, was born in Holland, at Zutphen, in 1831. She is an excellent musician, and in her youth she composed several operettas which were performed by the Choral Society of Utrecht. At one of these performances she made the acquaintance of Mr. Burgers, a member of the society, who was at that time studying theology in the University of Utrecht. In 1875 Burgers, who in the meantime had become President of the South African Republic, went back to Europe and renewed the acquaintance of his old friend, Miss Van Rees. One day he begged her to write a national hymn for the Transvaal, and in a few hours the lady wrote both words and music for what is now the Boers' national hymn. The burgesses were so pleased with the composition that the Volksraad of Pretoria officially accepted the work and sent Miss Van Rees a letter of thanks and congratulations. The composition is very popular among the Boers, and it is said that the British soldiers in South Africa have heard it so often that many of them now sing and whistle it.

MASTER OF THE SITUATION.

How amiable your little boy seems to be! We never object to anything he wants to do.

MANY BEAUTIFUL GARDENS.

Rev. Dr. Talmage Discourses on the Springtime.

Many Beautiful Gardens in the World--The Church Compared to a Garden--The Different Kinds of Flowers--Men's Character Compared to the Flowers.

A despatch from Washington says:—Dr. Talmage preached from the following text:—"I am come into my garden."—Solomon's Song, v. i. Christ said this to the Church, using a figure that seems very fresh and suggestive this morning, now as the blossoms begin to start, and the parks are alive with birds migrating northward, and our yards are being planted and trimmed. If you have been in the outskirts of the city this morning, as I have been, now that the veil of the darkness and the storm is taken away, you have seen Christ walking amid the hyacinths, and under the tree branches, and in the gardens, and you have heard His voice more distinctly than you hear my own saying: "I am come into My garden."

That would be a strange garden in which there were no flowers. If nowhere else they will be along the borders, or at the gateway. The homeliest taste will dictate something, if it be the old-fashioned hollyhock, or dahlia, or daffodil, or coropsis; but if there be larger means, then you will find the Mexican cactus and dark-veined arbution, and blazing azalia, and clustering oleander. Well, now Christ comes to His garden, and He plants there some of the brightest spirits that ever flowered upon the world. Some of them are violets, unobtrusive, but sweet in heaven. You have to search to find them. You do not see them very often, perhaps, but you find where they have been by the brightening face of the invalid, and the sprig of geranium on the stand, and the new window-curtains keeping out the glare of the sunlight. They are, perhaps, more like the ranunculus, creeping sweetly along amid the thorns and briars of life, giving kiss for sting, and many a man who has had in his way, some great black rock of trouble, has found that they have covered it all over with flowery jasmine running in and out amid the crevices. These Christians in Christ's garden are not like the sunflower, gaudy in the light; but whenever darkness hovers over a soul that needs to be comforted, there they stand night-blooming cereuses. But in Christ's garden there are plants that may be better compared to the Mexican cactus—thorns without, loveliness within—men with sharp points of character. They wound almost every one that touches them. They are hard to handle. Men pronounce them nothing but thorns.

BUT CHRIST LOVES THEM, notwithstanding all their sharpness. Many a man has had very hard ground to culture, and it has only been through severe toil he has raised even the smallest crop of grace. A very harsh minister was talking with a very placid elder, and the placid elder said to the harsh minister: "Doctor, I do wish you would control your temper." "Ah," said the minister to the elder, "I control more temper in five minutes than you do in five years." It is harder for some men to do right than for others to do right. The grace that would elevate you to the seventh heaven might not keep your brother from knocking a man down. I had a friend who came to me and said: "I dare not join the Church." I said: "Why?" "Oh," he said: "I have such a violent temper. Yesterday morning, I was crossing very early at the Jersey city ferry, and I saw a milkman pour a large amount of water into the milk can, and I said to him: 'I think that will do,' and he insulted me, and I knocked him down. Do you think I ought to join the Church?" Nevertheless, that very same man, who was so harsh in his behaviour, loved Christ, and could not speak of sacred things without tears of emotion and affection. Thorns without, but sweetness within—the best specimen of Mexican cactus I ever saw.

In this garden of the Church, which Christ has planted, I also find the snowdrops, beautiful but cold looking, seemingly another phase of the winter. I mean those Christians who are precise in their tastes, unimpassioned, pure as snowdrops, and as cold. They never shed any tears, they never get excited, they never say anything rashly, they never do anything precipitately. Their pulses never flutter, their nerves never twitch, their indignation never boils over. They live longer than most people; but their life is in a minor key. They never run up to "C" above the staff. In the music of their life they have no staccato passages. Christ planted them in the Church, and they must be of some service, or they would not be there; snowdrops, always snowdrops.

Again: The Church may be appropriately compared to a garden, because it is a place of select fruits. That would be a strange garden which had in it no berries, no plums, no peaches, or apricots. The coarser fruits are planted in the orchard, or they are set out on the sunny hillside; but the choicest fruits are kept in the garden. So in the world outside the Church, Christ has planted a great many beautiful things—patience, charity, generosity, integrity; but He intends the choicest fruits to

be in the garden, and if they are not there. THEN SHAME ON THE CHURCH. Religion is not a mere flowering sentimentality. It is a practical, life-giving healthfulness. It is not a pose, but a power. "Oh," says somebody, "I don't see what your garden of the Church has yielded." Where did your asylums come from? and your hospitals? and your institutions of mercy? Christ planted every one of them; He planted them in His garden. When Christ gave sight to Bartimeus, He laid the corner-stone of every blind asylum that has ever been built. When Christ soothed the demoniac of Gaillee, He laid the corner-stone of every lunatic asylum that has ever been established. When Christ said to the sick man: "Take up thy bed and walk," He laid the corner-stone of every hospital the world has ever seen. When Christ said: "I was in prison, and ye visited Me," He laid the corner-stone of every prison reform association that has ever been formed. The Church of Christ is glorious because it is full of fruit. I know there are some poor fruit in it. I know there are some weeds that ought to have been thrown over the fence. I know there are some crabapple-trees that ought to be cut down. I know there are some wild grapes that ought to be uprooted; but are you going to get into the whole garden because of a little gnarled fruit? You will find worm-eaten leaves in Fontainebleau, and insects that sting in the fairy groves of the Champs Elysees. You do not tear down and destroy the whole garden because there are a few specimens of gnarled fruit. I admit there are men and women in the Church who ought not to be there; but let us be just as frank, and admit the fact that there are hundreds and thousands and tens of thousands of glorious Christian men and women—holy, blessed, useful, consecrated, and triumphant. There is no greater collection of Christians in the world than the collection of Christians. There are Christian men in this house, whose religion is not a matter of psalm-singing and church-going. To-morrow morning, that religion will keep them just as consistent and consecrated on "exchange" as it has kept them at the communion-table. There are women here this morning of a higher type of character than Mary of Bethany. They not only sit at the feet of Christ, but they go out into the kitchen to help Martha in her work, that she may sit there too. There is a woman who has

A DRUNKEN HUSBAND, who has exhibited more faith, and patience, and courage than Hugh Hastings in the fire. He was married in twenty minutes. Her's has been a twenty years' martyrdom. Yonder is a man who has lain fifteen years on his back, unable even to feed himself, yet calm and peaceful as though he lay on one of the green banks of heaven, watching the osprems dip their talons in the crystal river! Why, it seems to me this moment, as if St. Paul threw to us a pomologist's catalogue of the fruits growing in this great garden of Christ—love, joy, peace, patience, charity, brotherly kindness, gentleness, mercy—glorious fruit, enough to fill all the baskets of earth and heaven.

Again: The Church, in my text, is appropriately called a garden, because it is thoroughly irrigated. No garden could prosper long without plenty of water. I have seen a garden in the midst of a desert, yet blooming and luxuriant. All around was dearth and barrenness; but there were pipes, aqueducts reaching from this garden up to the mountains, and through those aqueducts the water came streaming down and tossing up into beautiful fountains, until every root, and leaf and flower were saturated. That is like the Church. The Church is a garden in the midst of a great desert of sin and suffering; it is well irrigated, for "our eyes are unto the hills from whence cometh our help." From the mountains of God's strength there flow down rivers of gladness. There is a river, the stream whereof shall make glad the city of our God. Preaching the Gospel is one of these aqueducts. The Bible is another. Baptism and the Lord's Supper are aqueducts. Water to slake the thirst water to restore the faint, water to wash the unclean, water tossed high up in the light of the Sun of righteousness, showing us the rainbow around the throne. Oh! was there ever a garden so thoroughly irrigated? You know that the beauty of Versailles and Chatsworth depends very much upon the great supply of water. I came to the latter place, Chatsworth, one day when rangers are not to be admitted; but by an inducement, which always seemed applicable to an Englishman as an American, I got in, and then the gardener went far up above the stairs of stone and

TURNED ON THE WATER.

I saw it gleaming on the dry pavement, coming down from step to step until it came so near I could hear the muffled rust, and all over the high, broad stairs it came foaming, flashing, roaring down, until sunlight and wave in gleesome wrestle tumbled at my feet. So it is with the Church of God. Everything come from above, pardon from above, joy from above, adoption from above, sanctification from above. Oh! that now God would turn on the waters of salvation, that they might flow down through this heritage, and that to-day we might find this very place to be "Elm" with twelve wells of water, and three score and ten palm-trees. I notice that the fine gardens sometimes have high fences around them, and I cannot get in. It is so with

the King's garden. The only glimpses you ever get of such a garden is when the king rides out in his splendid carriage. It is not so with this garden, King's garden. I throw wide open the gate, and tell you all to come in. No monopoly in religion. Whoever will, may. Choose now between a desert and a garden. Many of you have tried the garden of this world's delight. You have found it has been Hooker's made all the world laugh. He makes us laugh now when we read his poems; but he could not make his own heart laugh. While in the midst of his festivities, he confronted a looking-glass, and he saw himself, and said: "There, that is true. I look just as I am, done up in body, mind, and purse." So it was with Shenstone, of whose garden I told you at the beginning of my sermon. He sat down amid those bowers, and said: "I have lost my road to happiness. I am angry, and envious, and frantic, and I despise everything that surrounds me, just as it becomes a madman to do." Oh, ye weary souls, come into Christ's garden to-day, and pluck a little heart's-ease.

CHRIST IS THE ONLY REST and the only pardon for a perturbed spirit. Do you not think your chance had almost come! You men and women who have been waiting year after year for some good opportunity in which to accept Christ but have postponed it, do you not feel as if your hour of deliverance, and pardon, and salvation, had come? Oh, man, what grudge hast thou against thy poor soul, that thou wilt not let it be saved? I feel as if salvation must come this morning in some of your hearts. Some years ago, a vessel struck on the rocks. The boat came and the passengers and crew were getting ashore. The vessel had foundered, and was sinking deeper and deeper, and that one boat could not take the passengers very swiftly. A little girl stood on the deck, waiting for her turn to get into the boat. The boat came and went—came and went—but her turn did not seem to come. After awhile she could wait no longer, and she leaped on the taffrail, and then sprang into the sea, crying to the boatman: "Save me next! Save me next!" Oh, how many have gone ashore into God's mercy, and yet you are clinging to the wreck of sin. Others have accepted the pardon of Christ, but you are in peril. Why not, this morning, make a rush for your immortal rescue, crying until Jesus shall hear you, and heaven and earth ring with the cry, "Save me next! Save me next!" Now it is the day of salvation. Now! Now!

This Sabbath is the last for some of you. It is about to sail away for ever. Her bell tolls. The planks thunder back in the gangway. She shoves off. She floats out towards the great ocean of eternity. Wave farewell to your last chariot, whether on. Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem! how often would I have gathered thee as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings, and ye would not. Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. Invited to revel in a garden, you die in a desert. May God Almighty, who it is too late, break that infatuation.

MEET HUSBAND WITH A SMILE.

"I do wish some one would write a few rules for men," said a young married woman recently. "I am awfully tired of reading in magazines and newspapers that I must meet my husband when he comes home from his office 'pleasantly and cheerfully.' That the house must be like a new pin. I must be prettily gowned, the dinner must be daintily cooked and served and that he mustn't be worried with a recital of the troubles of the day, no matter if delirium supervenes for me."

"These precepts are all right theoretically, and under ordinary circumstances are practical. Every woman follows them instinctively who wishes to retain her husband's admiration, but why aren't there a few laws of this sort laid down for men to follow?" "Why isn't there some one to tell them to look cheerful when they come in, and to forbear to grumble if dinner is a trifle late for any good reason. Now, poor, unrighteous soul, he has an idea that my side of the partnership has its own worries and he tries to help me straighten them out, but who knows how he would change if he ever discovered that he is really made of china and has to be handled with care to keep from being broken."

INTRICACIES OF ENGLISH. Three-year-old Ethel cut her finger one day. "See, mamma," she said, holding up the tiny digit for inspection, "my finger bleeds." "No, dear," corrected mamma, "it bleeds." Ethel regarded the wound meditatively; it was only a mere scratch, and directly she announced; "My finger bled, but now it has stopped." "You mean, your finger bled," said mamma. "Well, see the bleed on my finger," cried the baby triumphantly, exhibiting a crimson spot on the injured finger. Mamma gave it up.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

INTERNATIONAL LESSON, MAY 20.

"Parable of the Sower." Matt. 13. 1-9, 18-23. Golden Text, Luke 8. 11. PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verse 1. The same day. After the call of his mother and brothers, related at the close of chapter 12. Out of the house. The house in Capernaum which he made his home, perhaps that of Simon Peter. He went to the seaside so that a larger number might listen to his teachings. All the landscape gave him texts, in the farmer sowing his field and the fisher drawing his net. He sat, because that was the position customary for a teacher.

2. Great multitudes. It was near to the close of the popular period of the Saviour's ministry; but not many weeks later he was left alone with the twelve. A crowd is not always the token of a successful ministry. Into a ship. This was probably the boat which was kept for his service in passing from place to place along the shore, Mark 3. 9. And sat. This was the customary posture of the rabbis while giving instruction. Multitude stood. On the northern end of the lake are several small inlets, where a boat may ride at anchor only a few feet from the shores, which slope gently up on each side, forming a natural amphitheater.

3. He spake many things. This appears to have been the beginning of his practice of teaching in parables. Of those given at this time Matthew has recorded seven, and Mark an additional one. Doubtless there were many others which were not written. But we are not to suppose that the preaching is lost which remains unpublished. In parables. A good definition of a parable is that of Lyman Abbott: "A fictitious narrative, true to nature, yet unaccepting, veiling a spiritual truth under a symbol, for the purpose of conveying it to minds reluctant or indifferent." It taught some things to the indifferent, drove the truth home to the thoughtful and inquiring. Behold. Perhaps emphasizing his words by pointing to a farmer at work on the terraced hillside. A sower. The sower is, first of all, Christ himself, who is present whenever truth is taught; next, his apostles, or immediate disciples; but also who labor in Christ's cause, whether preachers or lay workers. Went forth. In the East the farmer never lives upon his farm, but always in the village, from which he goes forth to his fields, which are often at a distance.

4. Some seeds. The seed is not all truth, but Gospel truth, that which brings salvation to those who receive it by the wayside. There are no fences in the East, but the fields are separated by beaten paths, upon which some of the seed will be sure to fall. Such are the hearts beaten into hardness by the rush of worldly and sensual thoughts, so that they are not open to the truth, which falls upon them, but does not enter them. The birds. Revised Version, "the birds." Just as the birds pick up the seeds on the hard ground, so do the light thoughts and frivolous utterances drive away the impression of the truth from the careless hearer. Beware of the wandering thoughts, which are Satan's messengers. See verse 19.

5. Strong places. Revised Version, "rocky places"; not places where stones and soil intermingled, but where the rock beneath is thinly covered with earth—an emblem of the shallow natures which seem to be converted when only the surface of the emotions is stirred, while the heart below remains unyielding. Forthwith they sprung up. Because the rock beneath was warmer than the soil, and started a premature but transient growth. So the weak, emotional nature is often the soonest to be aroused in time of revival. Let us not suppose that mere excitement is true conviction.

6. When the sun was up. In the late spring rains the seed quickly germinates, only to be as quickly burned out by the hot summer sun. Because they had no root. During the long drought of summer the surface soil becomes very dry, and only those plants live whose roots reach down to moisture below. They withered away. Every revival will furnish instances of this class, people of emotional nature, but weak will, easily influenced by circumstances. When they drop back to their former state they are called backsliders, when in reality they were never genuinely converted. The Christian character that cannot stand trial is not real, but only seeming.

7. Some fell among the thorns. These are very abundant in Palestine, as in all countries, where they are permitted to find a place. In the parable, the care of the world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the pleasures of this life. Thorns will grow for themselves, but good seed must be planted and cared for. Choked them. They do not always kill the seed, but they prevent it from full development, so that it brings no fruit to perfection. Luke 8. 14. How many stave their souls that they may supply their bodies! Better poor here than poor hereafter.

8. But others. Notice that in no instance is the seed different. Truth is the same wherever it falls upon the heart. Good ground. Representing the hearts which are receptive, tender, and ready to make good use of the Gospel. What kind of soil is your heart? Brought forth fruit. This is the purpose of all the toil, fruit which will repay the farmer for his toil. In the application it represents the renewed character wrought by the Gospel, and the ennobling influence which such a character exerts. Some a hundredfold some sixtyfold. A single kernel of wheat has been known to produce 12 hundred grains; but in the East the

usual harvest is from twenty to sixty times the amount of the seed. So there are natures from which great effects come from the Gospel seed. It fell in the heart of Saul of Tarsus, and unnumbered have been the results. It quickened the soul of John Wesley, and the harvest is worldwide. Some thirty-fold. Some disciple may say, "No results have come from my salvation." Doubtless there might be a larger harvest from many, but no one knows how many are insensibly influenced by a single godly life lived in their presence.

18. Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower. Listen to its explanation. 19. The word of the kingdom is the Gospel, the teachings that would hallow God's name, bring about his control of forces, and do his will on earth as it is in heaven. But Gospel teaching is sometimes not understood because all human hearts are not teachable. The seed is good, but the soil is unfruitful. It is like the trampled earth of the wayside. Worries, pleasures, and a thousand earthly interests have passed over the heart, as the camel and burdened donkeys, and numbers of men pass over Eastern roads, until it is all hard and dusty. It is no longer improvable. It needs the Gospel plow, like the preaching of another John the Baptist, to break its solid surface, so that the showers of heaven and the rising of the Sun of righteousness may turn it again into arable soil.

20. 21. Stony places. Ready emotion is not a sure sign of either shallowness or depth of nature; but superficial people are easily moved. Just as the sun dries up surface soil quickly, just as the rain moistens the surface first, so every slight movement affects some people. But they lack "root," they have no deep apprehension of divine truth. Tribulation in this world, we are assured elsewhere by our Lord, we shall have; persecution is sure to come where the spirit of Satan is strong enough to venture on it; and it requires a person of some depth and substance to stand up against persecution and tribulation. The thoughtless, superficial character is offended. "It is a thought very full of comfort, however, that the fertility of our hearts, unlike that of the soil, is under the control of our own wills."

22. The care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, the anxieties of the poor and the ease of mind of the rich are both alike thorns. They are weeds, which, while they do not always prevent the seed of the kingdom from germinating in the heart, "strangle" it, and make the life unfruitful. No one can be a sincere Christian, a useful child of God, who is care-stricken, constantly worried by his troubles and responsibilities. Christ leads us through no darker rooms than he went through before. We have the repeated promises of God that his blessings will abundantly meet our needs, and if we cannot repose on those promises, we forfeit a large share of our usefulness. On the other hand, the comfort that comes from wealth is even more hostile to the growth of the Gospel spirit. If a man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. Remember that these things grow unattended, and the better the soil the more apt they are to grow, if the soil has not already been pre-empted for the planting of the good seed.

23. Astonishing stories are told of wheat and barley harvesting in the East. He that heareth the word, and understandeth it, who seeks to know God's will, accepts what he understands, and seeks to live it, beareth fruit. If seed and soil are good, the fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. All these spring from the good ground in which has been planted the Gospel. The graces of the Beatitudes heighten it. Some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. All good soils are fruitful, but not all are equally productive. Talents and opportunities greatly vary.

HER CONFESSION.

Perhaps no lady was ever better reconciled to positive ugliness in her own person than the Duchess of Orleans, the mother of the Regent D'Orleans, who governed France during the minority of Louis XV. Thus she speaks of her own appearance and manners:

"From my earliest years I was aware how ordinary my appearance was, and did not like that people should look at me attentively. I never paid any attention to dress, because diamonds and dress were sure to attract attention. On great days my husband used to make me rouge, which I did greatly against my will, as I hate everything that incumodes me. One day I made the Countess Soissons laugh heartily. She asked me why I never turned my head whenever I passed before a mirror, and everybody else did. I answered because I had too much self-love to bear the sight of my own ugliness. I must have been very ugly in my youth. I had no sort of features; with little twinkling eyes, a short snub nose, and long thick lips, the whole of my physiognomy was far from attractive.

"My face was large, with fat cheeks, and a figure was short and stumpy in short. I was a very homely sort of person. Except for the goodness of my disposition, no one would have endured me. It was impossible to discover anything like intelligence in my eyes, except with a microscope. Perhaps there was not one of the face of the countess, and a pair of ugly hands, as mine. The King often told me so, and set me laughing about it; for as I was quite sure of being very ugly I made up my mind to be always the first to laugh at it. This succeeded very well, though I must confess it furnished me with a good stock of materials for laughter."

NIGHTMARE IN THE JUNGLE.

Gracious! How you roared in your sleep last night! said Mrs. Lion. Had a bad night, replied the king of beasts. I dreamed I was on the road again with a circus, growing to order.

FROM ENGLAND.

WHAT JOHN BULL AND HIS PEOPLE ARE DOING.

Record of Occurrences in the Land That Reigns Supreme in the Commercial World.

In materials khaki is being employed more than any other fabric, not only for our soldiers' uniforms, but for ladies' dress. The street railways of the United Kingdom increased their total gross receipts last year \$1,597,800. The pantaloons of King William IV. are exposed for sale in a London curiosity shop! Together with his garter, ribbon, and star, this historic lot is being given away for the bagatelle of six guineas. Bellister Castle, near Haltwhistle, the residence of Dr. Jackson, was recently completely destroyed by fire. It is supposed the mice had got among matches in a cupboard, thus causing the outbreak.

The Wakefield Cathedral Extension Committee has accepted the tender of a Leeds firm for the enlargement of Wakefield Cathedral as a memorial of the late Dr. Walsham How, first bishop of the diocese. The amount of the contract is over £24,000. Mr. Alfred L. Jones, the head of the firm of Elder, Dempster & Co., has been elected chairman of the Liverpool Steamship Owners' Association for the current year, in succession to Mr. James H. Ismay, of the White Star Line; and Mr. Edmund Johnston, of the Johnston Line, has been appointed vice-chairman.

The head constable of Liverpool has issued his annual report concerning crime and police, and in it he reviews the improvement effected during the last six years. Indictable crime, that is, all serious crime, has decreased, in proportion to the population, by at least four-fifths during that period, while the reduction in the cases of drunkenness has been remarkable.

A shocking discovery was made at Hertford recently. A married woman, named Sach, aged 35, and her infant child were found in their bedroom dead, with their throats cut. It is supposed the woman first murdered the baby and then committed suicide. Her husband, who was a horse-breeder, died only ten days previously, and she is stated to have given way to drink.

The Crewe police recently reported to the Cheshire coroner the particulars of an extraordinary death. The deceased is Mary Foulks, widow, aged 85, and it transpired that she went upstairs to bed, but was next morning found at the back door, bleeding from terrible injuries. The only explanation she was able to give was that she got through the bedroom window, thinking she was getting to bed.

Influenza has claimed a victim in the person of the oldest inhabitant of the Wancovy Valley district, Mrs. Charlotte Draper, of Mettingham. Mrs. Draper was born in 1801, and married in 1827, subsequently living at the Valley Farm, Mettingham, till the time of her death—a period of about 73 years. She was remarkably vigorous and genial, and conducted her own business as a farmer for something like 40 years. Up till the last she could read the newspapers without the aid of glasses.

The Rev. Clifford Rickards is about to retire from the chaplaincy of the Dartmoor convict establishment. Mr. Rickards has been chaplain at Dartmoor for nearly a quarter of a century, and he has had a remarkable experience. A discharged convict was once caught by Mr. Rickards trying to break into the chaplain's house. There was a severe struggle, and the burglar attempted to murder the chaplain with a large knife. Mr. Rickards whipped out a revolver and shot the man. The effect was fatal, and the chaplain proceeded to administer in his spiritual capacity to the dying man.

It has been said that certain members of the Cabinet are too old for their work. Now, the average age of members is about sixty-one years, Viscount Cross, who will be seventy-seven in May, is the oldest, and the Right Hon. W. H. Long, who was only forty-five last July, is the youngest. But the ages of President McKinley and his Cabinet vary from sixty-four and a half to fifty and a half, while the average is just sixty years and one month. Thus, in the United States, the land of young men, the average age is only eleven months less than in our own Cabinet, though it will be noted that of really old men in the American Cabinet there are none. As to the Canadian Government, the average for the whole Cabinet is about fifty-six years and ten months.

AFTER THE HONEYMOON.

You argue like an idiot, angrily exclaimed the husband. I know it, my dear, calmly replied his better half. You see, I don't want to take an unfair advantage of you.

LOOKING FORWARD.

Little Sister, angrily—Now, you do what I say. Little Brother—I won't. Little Sister—You won't, eh? Oh, don't I wish we was grown up, and you was my husband.

WORTH KEEPING.

Lady—I want you to take this dog back. He is handsome, I admit, but he can't be taught anything at all, and is of no earthly use. Dealer, slowly—Ye-s-s, mum, I know, mum, but just think what a fine rug he'll make when he's dead.

A FIXED OPINION.

Irate Citizen—I am going to kill you, sir, for calling me a liar. Western Editor, calmly—That won't change my opinion at all.