ENGLISH PIT-BROW LASSES.

Wakeman Wandering Among the Mines of England.

Description of an Interesting and Worthy Class of Women—Their Leader, Struggles and Victory—Horrible and Revolting Scenes in the Mines.

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WIGAN, England, July 28, 1891.

The "Pit-Brow Lasses" of England and Wales are about 6,000 in number. They are the girls and women of all ages who are employed about the "brows" or mouths of British coal and iron mines. No other working women in England have received so much notoriety from the press, owing to various futile efforts in Parliament to enact laws prohibiting such form of labor, and among the lowly of England I have never come upon a more interesting or worthy class.

In former times women were employed "below grass" in the English mines, and it is scarcely fifty years since, in 1842, that all female labor in the underground collieries was put an end to, almost solely by the efforts of the late Lord Ashley. Wholesome restrictions upon juvenile labor in mines were also imposed a year later. But previous to that time, ever since English coal, iron and tin were first mined, the labor of women was utilized in a manner revolting and horrible beyond description. The prohibition of female labor in mines was therefore a wonderful revolution. In Lancashire, Yorkshire and Wales it was especially so. Here thousands of girls had found employment in the pits. Their chief labor was as drawers and "thrutchers" for the colliers who cut or dug the coal. They could never rise above this worse than slavish condition. Many could "pick" as well as any man, and at times "stood turns" with husbands or brothers in this extraordinary toil.

These female workers were chiefly girls from 12 to 20 years of age, and their work of drawing, or "hurrying," as it is called in Yorkshire, then consisted in dragging the coal in boxes on sledges, or in trucks on wheels, from the "stall" where the collier was at work, to the shaft of the pit. Often the miners would be cutting the coal, as is now frequently the case in a place not two feet in hight, and from one to two miles from the only outlet to the world above. Through pitch-black passages, too low to permit of their standing upright, and up and down steep inclines they were compelled to crawl, pulling the heavy loads after them, or "thrutching," that is, pushing them from behind. Frequently two or three children were harnessed together to thus pull one or more loaded trucks. Leather belts were put around their waists, and then the little ones were fastened together, by a chain passing between their legs from one belt to another, when the children clawed, scrambled and tugged along on their hands and toes after the manner of four-footed animals.

The distance these loaded trucks had to be hauled was, in most cases, frightful. Instances are authenticated where grown-up female drawers had to traverse over 5,000 yards of rugged galleries and inclines each journey, or in a day's work, were compelled to travel a distance of thirteen miles, always in a stooping, and, often, in a creeping posture. Then there were many sadder wrongs and outrages in those underground slave-pens, where the law was unknown and not even dreaded. One of the horrors proven before the House of Commons was the case of a tiny lad who was compelled to drag a truck along a mine passage scarcely two feet high, in which there was a foot of muck and water, so that his head could be scarcely kept above the noisome stream. The infamous treatment of women in these mines is only known to their Maker. The exposure of but the fainted part of all this wrong brought instant legal prohibition under the gravest penalties.

But there was a large number of women left in every colliery region who clutched at any manner of labor that would sustain life. A few were already working with men and lads at the pit-brow. Gradually nearly all of this work, such as dumping the trucks from the "cage" in which they are "brought to surface" from the bottom of the mine shaft, screening the coal and sorting out the slate and stone, loading the coal wagons with the coal ready for the market and carrying the coal dust to the ovens where it is transformed into coke—came to the lot of women. Theoretically the collier opposed it at the public house and in meetings of his union. Practically, he secretly supported it, for his brother might have been killed in an explosion, and the wife, or daughter, at the pit-brow, took up the fight for bread where death had checked it, and his own arm or leg might be picked off some day in the machinery, and his own mother or wife could spring to the spade or screen, and do a man's labor for half man's wage.

So for a name for them all, though many were lasses no longer, and I have seen women, of 50 and 60 years, working nimbly at the screens, they came to be known as "Pit-Brow Lasses," and in time got nearly all the pit mouth labor into their dextrous hands. But, a few years ago, mutterings were heard in those districts like Northumberland and Durham, where no women were employed, against the system. It meant, these fellows who had all the labor themselves, said the impoverishment of that many men and often of that many families. Then came a Miners' Conference at Birmingham, in January of 1885, and a resolution there passed that women should not be allowed to work about the mines was covertly inserted as a clause in the coal mines' regulation amendment bill, which came up for debate in the House of Commons in March, 1886. This was followed by broadsides against women's pit-brow labor in the *Miners' Journal* and other influential trades' papers, as well as in a horrifying leader in the London *Lancet*. Then a vast army of female reform champions, headed by Emily Faithful, who, afterwards, confessed her error in the matter, began writing to the press, writing to members of Parliament, and writing to anybody else who would assist in advertising their interest in the matter, much after the manner of our own noble phalanx of the shrieking sisterhood; and, for a time, it seemed that the poor pit-brow lasses, as the bill was to be acted on the following May, would be given short shift at the mines.

The wily trade unionists who were cannily using the various sentimentalists of England in order to merely give 6,000 men the places to be made vacant by 6,000 women, very shrewdly put forward the unanswerable proposition, where the pit-brow lasses were unknown and had no one to speak for them; that their occupation was "unsexing;" that it was so laborious as to greatly shorten human life; that it led to immorality in its sodden, machine-like mixing of men and women; that the dress of trousers and short petticoat was indelicate and improper; and that idle and vicious habits were engendered in the husbands of women so employed. The whole country was astonished and horrified at the discovery of this new blot on English civilization. It accordingly arose unanimously with the sponge, as it were, of Government interference in its hand to wipe it out.

Then one lone woman also arose. This one lone woman, almost unaided, defeated the entire efforts of the entire trades unions of England, conquered the opposition or indifference of two Home Secretaries, Childers and Matthews, in succession, molded public opinion to the cause of the pit-brow lasses, and achieved one of the most remarkable social and labor victories won in Great Britain.

It is a pleasure to make such a woman better known to Americans. Her name is Mrs. Margaret Park, late Mayoress of Wigan. Her husband, deceased in November, 1890, was a leading iron merchant there, and, perhaps, the most popular individual in Lancashire—the one exception being his wife. He was elected to the Mayoralty for five successive terms, between 1882 and 1888, the same being counted an extraordinary honor, as Wigan is the oldest borough in Lancashire, having a municipal history dating from the days of chivalry and the crusades. The city is the center of the Lancashire coal and iron trade. It is a district of collieries and colliers. Mrs. Park is a Lancashire lady by birth, and had all her life striven for the betterment of the lowly. She is a shining example of a thoroughly cultured woman of wealth, making use of her gifts and means, in her own neighborhood, without requiring a "mission" or the recognition of the Sunday papers in order to reach the highest fruition of her genius for good. She consequently knew these Lancashire folk in their everyday toil and in their homes. Naturally she was beloved and almost idolized. And she knew, too, possibly because a woman, and because of intelligent studies and practical ministrations, the merits of the pit-brow woman question perhaps better than any other living man or woman.

These 6,000 helpless women had no defender. She instantly became one. By clear and truthful presentations of their morality, their healthfulness, their need and that of those dependent upon them, and the injustice of the proposed deprivation of their only means of subsistence, with her ringing urgency upon the influential women of England of the principle that all avenues for voluntary labor by women should be expanded rather than restricted, such noted women as Emily Faithful, Lady Latham and Lydia Becker, of woman's rights fame, gave the pit-brow woman's cause their support instead of opposition. Intelligently presented facts, and clear, cogent logic on the subject, were at once supplied to Home Secretary Childers and to members of Parliament. With the enthusiastic co-operation of Vicar Mitchell of Pemberton, an important colliery town near Wigan, where a large number of women work at the pit-brow, great meetings of the pit-brow women themselves were held, and these were followed by like great gatherings in Yorkshire and Wales. This class of women are noted for their integrity and bluntness. "They are *jannock* right through," as they say in Lancashire. They not only have ready tongues, but there was a, to them, terrible conviction and necessity behind their rude speech. Petition after petition was dispatched to London. These extraordinary gatherings of extraordinary women, with an extraordinary woman as their leader, interpreter and deliverer, had an electrical effect throughout Britain. A complete revulsion of feeling and conviction was the result.

Not content with this, Mrs. Park insisted that now as the pit-brow lasses had been heard at home they should also be heard in London—within the awful silences of the Home Secretary's office, if needs be. But Mr. Childers had heard such tales of the "Amazons" in the press, read such tragedies of them in the shilling shockers, and seen such hideous representations of them in the illustrated prints, that this was too much. No Brobdignagian, sooty heroines, armed with shovels, spades, screens, clogs and, perhaps, picks, for him! The hint of their readiness to swoop down upon him, with what had already been done, and the press of England now being unanimous against the measure, were seemingly sufficient. The prohibitory clause was withdrawn, and the pit-brow lasses of England and Wales were destined to remain a permanent British institution.

But their first victory was a temporary one. The trades unions, appearing to graciously accept defeat, were only awaiting better opportunity. Just a year later, early in the spring of 1887, word came to Mrs. Park from London that the clause against pit-brow women's work was again being pressed, secretly but powerfully, by trades unions and other political influence, and that there was great danger of the Government recommending the measure, through the then new Home Secretary, Mr. Matthews.

Mrs. Park at once determined that the pit-brow women should go in person before Parliament and the Home Secretary. She wrote and telegraphed mine owners, employing women, to call meetings, explain the threatened danger, and ask the women at the mines to elect by ballot two of their number from each mine to join the deputation. This was done, the lasses bearing their own expenses by subscription, so that no taint of mine owners' interest could be charged. A special train was secured, and away sped the unique deputation to the great city.

A continuous ovation greeted them all the way to London. Mrs. Park had meantime secured permission from Secretary Matthews to present the deputation. The women were lodged at the Girls' Club and Home, Soho Square. Their arrival created the greatest interest and excitement. Royalty itself never attracted greater crowds. They were taken to Parliament House, and were also granted a peep at the House of Lords. The lawmakers of Great Britain were won over in a body.

The next morning the entire London press rang with their praises, pathetically told the story of their toil, and denounced those who had threatened the prohibition of their arduous and honest labor. Then came the memorable parade, or demonstration, through Regent street, Oxford street, along Pall Mall, and on to Westminster Hotel, where four of the girls were robed in their odd pit-brow costumes. Then the procession moved on the Home office, a million Englishmen cheering them as they went. Here Mrs. Park laid their claims before Mr. Matthews in a few ringing sentences, which literary critics have asserted comprised the briefest yet most splendidly logical and powerful address ever pronounced by Englishwoman in any cause. Nor were the lasses themselves slow of speech. Their ignorance of the sedate formalities of the place led to innumerable vociferous and pointed interruptions. They "Cam oop to Lunnun to speak oot, 'n' speak oot, tha wud!"

The Home Secretary listened and questioned, finally dismissing the unique deputation after assurance that they should not be interfered with, and the hope that their representations "would so influence public opinion that they would hear no more in many years of an attempt to interfere with an honest and praiseworthy industry." And so the pit-brow lasses won. But I have often thought it a pity that some great painter could not have caught this splendid scene, where the hopes of the 6,000 women—whose work and home life I shall describe in a succeeding article—were entered. The Home Secretary of a mighty Government, with all the austerity and insignia of State surrounding him, reserved, puzzled, yet thoroughly kindly; one woman, accompanied by famous women lords and commoners, standing before him as petitioner, her face—the prototype of that noble one the artist has given us in Isabella before whom Columbus is urging his cause—beaming with infinite kindness and subduing glances upon her irrepressible charges, yet half turned in grave respect and apprehension to the one who could grant or defeat their aims, and, to complete the picture, a crowd of rosy-cheeked, buxom pit-brow lasses, with heads craned eagerly forward, their sparkling eyes wide with wonder and alert attention, lips half parted as if to "speak oot" on the slightest pretext, and every one of the sturdy wenches with muscles tense with anxiety, and the whole figure, in posing and attitude, unconsciously the embodiment of defiance and defense.

EDGAR L. WAKEMAN.

The Champion Boxer.

Scholasticus Hardup—I am a college student and I want a place to work in your hotel this summer.

Hotel Proprietor—What experience or qualifications have you?

Scholasticus Hardup—I am the champion boxer and wrestler of my class.

Hotel Proprietor—Ah, then you will do very well to whip cream.—Boston Courier.

Fifty years ago a dress suit of black broadcloth was the every-day attire of every gentleman and most clergymen in New York, and it was worn in the street as well as at home. Fashions for men changed, but Hannibal Hamlin did not, and in time his dress coat became remarkable. Some old-fashioned clergymen cleave to the clawhammer in the pulpit and make it in their case a clerical robe.

IN OLD BODEGA.

The Land Where the Potato Reigns Supreme.

One of the "Backwood's Belles" Selects a Strange Place for Summering—People Who Freeze Out Campers and Have No Love for Tourists or Summer Boarders.

[Special correspondence of RECORD-UNION.]

Bodega. Let me impress upon you at the outset the importance of the pronunciation of the name. The "o" has the sound of "a" in potato, and its relation to this popular fruit we will discuss later. I did not embrace the idea of summering at Bodega ecstatically, but nevertheless found myself winding my way there as fast as mud and drizzle would permit. The fact of the matter was, I had heard such hair-standing reports from that region that I feared to venture in, even well armed, not being at all times a good shot. Whether it was because the name suggested "The Bad Man from Bodie" I don't just know, but my impression of the place was that every citizen who had any self-respect carried a bowie-knife in his boot and had a small graveyard of his own. One item that lent color to my fanciful picture was that every semi-occasionally a few of the suburban residents get into a little discussion over a game of cards, or the location of a line fence, and emphasize the argument by carving stakes off each other's persons with pruning knives or anything handy. Once in a while they run in a crazy man from there, and while he roots around in the branches of trees in the corporate limits of the county seat the excitement of the populace is boundless. So, what with crazy Swissmen and red-handed Indians my approach to that section was made with marked hesitation. I put it in the balance with other resorts, but Bodega won the day.

To start out summering with several few inches of mud under foot and more falling was a portion of happiness that was mine—all mine. Fortune was my companion and guide, and when I hesitated and questioned she drew her arms closer round me, pressed me onward through the adobe mire, to rosy scenes that were not discernible to me through the mist of doubt and drizzle. Overshoes and palm-leaf fans do not form a desirable combination, and linen dusters and gum coats seem gruesome companions, and we had 'em all.

But Bodega proved to be a pretty little town with a fine schoolhouse and two neat church-houses. There is nothing formidable in its aspect—it is quiet and peaceful as if free fights were an unknown quantity. A few men and boys pitched horseshoes as calmly and silently as Rip Van Winkle's entertainers, who played at nine-pins in jerkins and doublets and indulged in the contents of the flagon.

It really possesses a haunted house! A little maid told me, with eyes distended, and in awesome tones, that she had heard it herself. It is one of the low, long old ramshackle buildings that has gone into the age of moss and decay as the town grew. On certain nights in the week, from 12 o'clock to 1, in the low-ceilinged room below a host of silent visitors play at ten-pins. The balls roll the length of the room and down an offset of two steps into the next. All is quiet a minute and another ball starts. At precisely 1 o'clock the ghostly revelry ceases, the spectres fade into thin air, and the snores of the worldly listeners resume their solid proportions. There are tappings and moanings, groanings and flapping of unhinged doors, the midnight promenade of some departed dyspeptic. In fact every detail is present to pronounce it a bona fide h'ant.

Looking you straight in the eye as you enter the town is the sign of the leading hostelry. The figure of what has been a beautiful woman leans from the balcony with gentle smile. To appreciate this freak of fancy you must know that it is the figure-head of the English ship Lammermoor, which was wrecked at the entrance of Bodega Bay in June, 1882. Many people possess souvenirs of the unfortunate vessel, which was strewn along the beach for miles. One of the rich crimson velvet cushions of her cabin now does duty of making comfortable the seat of a farmer's cart.

The charms of the lady in question have been hightened by some local painter evidently, and the rouge not having been applied scientifically, she looks best when seen afar off. We feel reassured at her welcoming smile, presumably the fac simile of that of the "Bride of Lammermoor," and entering, listen involuntarily for the quavering voices of Caleb and Mysie in bitter dispute over the scant larder. There was no rattle of crockery and pewter, and "thunner down the chimney to spoil the gude dinner"; neither did faithful old Caleb fly forth to scout for the fat "capon and whim-whams" for our gastronomic entertainment, but in good time a bonny meal was served, and under the beams of the painted beauty's smile we watched the regular boarder perform the sword-swallowing act with every knife full of potatoes, and spear peas with a three-tined fork.

Those potatoes. After a ride through to the coast you will see potatoes in your walking hours, and be haunted by them in your dreams, for they are on each side of you, behind and before you. Your host will sing their praises to you while you grace his groaning board with your presence. If you find one house that is an exception chalk a cross on the gate-post, so that others may enter in.

Bodega is older than the hills. But though boasting of antiquities, it is quite modern in its habits, even to possessing the regulation number of saloons to a block. It is known to Uncle Sam as Smith's Ranch, gleaming from a post-mark as big as a cowboy's hat. It has always been a source of wonderment to me that the smaller a town is the larger is its post-mark. When you receive a letter which is two-thirds post-mark you can set the population of its source at two figures.

A few hundred yards from the city proper on a hillock stands the flagstaff erected by Captain John Smith in July, 1846. It held at its top the figure of a bear and lone star. It leans a little wearily, as who would not after exposure to the ravages of time all these many years. The members of Fern Leaf Parlor, Native Sons of the Golden West, have wisely taken measures to preserve this important relic. A portion from the top will be sent to the World's Fair. Captain Smith's adobe house is situated near the spot that holds the notorious staff. You pass through a wide gate, down through a "swag," and ascending the slight elevation the house greets you. It is smothered in trees, and its two quaint upper windows have peered out over the passing populace for half a century.

There is one piece of architecture I found in my ramblings that I sat me down to admire. It is a structure with fluted columns and a flat roof, made after the Corinthian, antediluvian style, and is a gem. On its summit are bronze figures of frolicking cherubs and slim-bodied hounds, and the color is a soft brownish gray. I dropped into a bench on a hospitable-looking veranda, where a fine, big tree threw a shade over a pump and a watering trough. A party was giving me snatches of history about the place, and in the course of his remarks drifted on to the alleged lawlessness of a certain class of coasters.

"There were thirteen fights at one saloon here on the night of July 3d," he said, as he clasped his hands tighter around his knees and gazed farther into vacancy, and my horrified silence becoming audible, he pointed into the open doorway. "Yes, and there's the very spots of blood yet on the floor—" Yes, and there was the green blind that characterizes the ubiquitous saloon! I rested no longer 'neath its portals, but struck out speedily, and, had I not been headed off, most likely would have been going yet. But offsetting this statement was the fact that the night before a party of campers had been rained in—their camp paraphernalia was a sodden wreck. A commodious barn was donated for their use, and the entire community assuaged their grief by turning out and giving a jolly dance in their honor.

For the benefit of those who indulge in summer resorts it is my duty to offer my experience as a warning. It is always well to have a haven in view when you leave the shelter of home, because it is an unpleasant and unprofitable employment to ride thirty miles and try at every dairy ranch to establish yourself in the bosom of a private family. After you are refused the dozenth time you begin to feel like you are a wanderer on the face of the fair earth. You wonder if you look like a bandit, if you have the appearance of a dog-poisoner, or if they saw the Henry rifle and railroad spike you had innocently provided yourself with to brave the dangers of Bodega. You pull yourself up by the roots and take an inventory of your faults and shortcomings, and move on with an effervescing think tank.

In conjunction with the sportive potato they also raise cream and butter, and though the land glows with plenty, the dogs bark at strangers. There is one thing that the coasters are to be especially commended upon, and that is their positiveness. They have been so bored with campers that a party looming up on the road is a small edition of the black plague. They do not want you, and there is no shilly-shallying. Their answers are stereotyped, and used all along the route. At Mr. Giovanni Banjonini Mandolini's we received the same negation as at his uncle's, Mr. Vermicelli Bizzini Hiccuppi, also Mr. Giuseppi Frangipanni Tomatocanni:

"How do you do, sir."

"No."

"Do you want some summer boarders?"

"No."

"Can't you take one?"

"No."

"Can't you take two?"

"No."

"How far on does the next man live?"

"No."

"What's his name?"

"Giachromo Cantelopi Macaroni."

"Is he good-natured?"

"No."

"Good day, mister. He's my man."

The party upon whom the task of advance agent devolved grew limp and dejected, and all the rest of his natural lifetime he will involuntarily put the rising inflection on every sentence that he utters. His manly form took on the exact shape of an interrogation point, and strangers cast queer glances at the six feet of living questioning. But we who know him will carry the secret to our graves that it was that day among the Swissmen that wrecked a useful life.

The bitterest sorrow to me was the fact that I had expended 65 cents, cash money, in a bathing suit, and not to christen that in the surging billows wrung wails of woe from my inmost heart. I felt the stinging drops of rain mingle with my tears, and I imagined myself floundering about in the curling breakers, holding an umbrella over me meanwhile to ward off the moisture from the skies. The picture was a tiny bit absurd, I will admit, but it was my sole hope of getting the worth of my 65 cents. In wanton extravagance such an outlay would compare well with the "billion dollar Congress." Perhaps you have noted that the Democratic press still chews on the mutilated remains.

The mighty Pacific spread before us did not soften the ragged edge of our disappointment, and the battle between the frowning fog and tumbling billows waxed fiercer. The breakers threw themselves higher and higher in its forbidding scowl, but it only settled more densely and sullenly down like the shadow of an evil dream.

It is an original idea to have the pigsty at the end of the carriage drive and in close proximity to the entrance. The odor will persist in outsmelling the sweet lavender and clove pinks, and it becomes tangled up in one's draughts of cream. There is a place in the bay where the waters wash at its sloping edge and where the odor asserts itself to such an extent that boats in the bay are arrested in their progress, and not until a passageway is hacked through it with hatchets can they proceed.

In passing the charmed spot the occupants of a boat bow their heads as if in deep grief, and suspend breathing until, to an on-looker, it would be inferred that it was a funeral cortege in transit. If bells were tolled in passing the charmed spot 'twould highten the illusion. An ex-sea captain told me he could tell exactly where his good ship was as soon as he rounded Point Reyes, and set his sails accordingly, for the brave and jolly smell struck them there forcibly. He said, also, that he was going to petition the Board of Trade of Bodega to whitewash the sand-hills in the immediate vicinity with a view to giving it a stronger and more fitting back-ground.

It was through the intervention and tender sympathy of woman (bless every one of their gentle hearts) that I was permitted to linger through sunny days at a little castle by the sea, on an eminence overlooking the placid waters of the bay and the shimmering blue and green of the ocean. Everybody envies everybody who starts with heavily-laden camp wagon for the coast. It is a popular resort. Go to good old misrepresented Bodega when ye seek rest, recreation, fun and frolic, and—yes, potatoes.

A. R. L.

OLD FOLKS HEAR THE CITY CHOIR.

The following poem by Mrs. Grace Duffie Roe of Battle Creek, appeared recently in the Chicago *Inter-Ocean*:

Father an' me are gettin' old;
We ain't used to the way,
Of goin' to hear the singin', stead
Of preachin', Sabbath day.

So when we was with Andrews' folks,
An' Sunday mornin' come
We s'posed we'd hear the word and jine
In the sweet hymns they sung.

An' when we stood in that dim aisle,
'Neath arched an' fluted stone,
A ray of light touched father's hair
An' his worn features shone.

The organ's grand and solemn tone
Jest sounded like a prayer.
An' when it stopped I seemed to feel
Wings beatin' through the air.

"The prodigal," the preacher said,
"Of sinnin' weary grown,
Has left the swine an' now has turned
His face toward his home."

When all at once the choir riz;
It most made me laugh
To hear that young soprano sing
"Bring in the fatted calf."

"Bring in the fatted calf, the calf,"
Implored the alto low,
An' all the rest joined in as if
They couldn't let it go.

The tenor's pleadin' touched my heart,
A critter'd been a stone
Not to hev come a friskin' in
In answer to that tune.

Waal, pa, he sot with eyebrows bent,
Like bushes touched with snow
A growin' round some sheeny lake,
Half hidin' its blue glow.

But when the bass had started in
A callin' for that calf,
He jist reached fur his han'kerchief
To cover up a laugh.

"Bring in the fatted, fatted calf,"
Bellow'd the bass; an' stars!
Our grandson John called half asleep:
"Grand-pa, let down the bars."

Was Hospitable.

A man was speaking in a country hotel about the hospitality of people whom he had met, and told of a family in Virginia that had kept him and his horse two days and would not charge a cent.

"That was very kind," said a fellow who had been listening, "but I struck a man in Alabama some time ago that was strikingly hospitable. I stopped at his house and he came forward and said that everything I saw was mine."

"Well," said some one after a few moments' silence, "what did you do?"

"I simply took his word and suffered for it."

"How so?"

"I took a horse during the night and he had me arrested and sent to the penitentiary."—Arkansaw Traveler.

The corset is a paradox. It has come to stay, and yet goes to waist.

IN RELIGION'S REALM.

Expressions from the Various Religious Newspapers.

The Religious Thought of the Day as Expressed in the Sectarian Press—Some Matters of Interest to Both Ministers and Laymen.

The *Missionary Review of the World* says: "It seems that there are various sects in North Africa which are almost or quite purely Unitarian, paying little or no attention to any historical claims of Mohammed, hardly as much as our Unitarians of the left pay to the claims of Christ. They will probably be found the least hopeful objects of Christian missions."

Of the Bishops' consent to the consecration of Dr. Phillips Brooks, the *Living Church* (P. E.) says: "We trust that the result thus reached will be accepted by all churchmen in a spirit of profound loyalty to the church. We earnestly hope that there are good grounds for the assurance, which the Bishop-elect's friends have repeatedly made, that Dr. Brooks will, as Bishop of Massachusetts, be more conservative than he has been as rector of Trinity Church, and as tender to the feelings and convictions of churchmen as he has been heretofore to those who love not the church."

On the subject of episcopal elections the *Churchman* says: "The reference of the matter to the House of Deputies is sheer surplusage and to refer it to the standing committees is much worse. It invites meddling. It encourages slanderous busybodies of all orders in the church, whose motto seems to be, 'Whenever you see a chance to make mischief, seize it!' Hence, from time to time, it plunges the church into one of those occasional crises in which a silly and sometimes simulated panic drowns the voice of reason and turns the very church into a Babel. Thus far, the damage of this sort of business has been rather annoying than injurious, though we suppose that no one now feels very proud at the remembrance of the rejection of James De Koven; but serious results might easily follow some unfortunate exercise of the canonical power of meddlesome oppression by which a minority of less than one-fifth may interfere in the domestic affairs of another minority, possibly more than one-tenth, and that in spite of the unanimous expostulation and remonstrance of a majority of seven-tenths.

"It is the easier to discuss the subject of the functions of standing committees in connection with episcopal elections because, anomalous as it is, and serious as are the consequences which might follow an abuse of the powers which it confers, it has never yet, except in the unfortunate case of Dr. De Koven, been actually oppressive in its results. Its chief present evils are the unseemly behavior for which it affords so enticing an opportunity and the undue excitement which it sometimes occasions. At the present time, when no diocese is vacant, and when the subject, which is of equal interest to each and every diocese, can be considered apart from all personal and local references, we trust it may be weighed by the Church with the gravity which its importance deserves."

M. Boegner, Director of the Paris *Maison des Missions*, sums up the difficulties of Northwestern Africa in words which seem to reflect the condition of things among the negroes of the South in this country. He says: "These African churches give you the impression of vast caldrons in ebullition; everything there is in fermentation, in conflict, good, evil, the influences of race, of environment, and, above all, of Christianity. We have to believe, to hope that this last will carry the day and bring forth noble fruits in the moral life, as it already does in the domain of religious feeling. The former are not lacking, but are behindhand. This is the characteristic trait of these churches—a retardation of character compared with sentiment and the manifestations of this sentiment."

The *Congregationalist* says: "However much the Roman Catholic ecclesiastics in this country may dislike and deny the intimations from Europe that the foreign populations in this country are not adequately cared for, the recent agitation of the subject will doubtless spur them on to a more faithful and thorough ministration to these heterogeneous peoples. That a great deal of attention is already paid to them is vouched for by no less an authority than Cardinal Gibbons, who declares that almost every Sunday witnesses the dedication of some church to the use of Poles, Lithuanians, Bohemians, Germans, or Italians. Could a representative of the combined Protestant Church Extension Societies of the country make anything like a similar claim? In view of such an assertion the work carried on among the foreign populations by our Home Missionary Society assumes a tremendous importance."

The *Christian Inquirer* (Bapt.) says: "Some six months since there was published, without note or comment, in the *Christian Inquirer* a report of a dedication service of children in a London Baptist Church. Ever since paragraphs have been going in Presbyterian and Congregational papers on the subject. The *Herald and Presbyter* lately had this paragraph:

"'A recent article in the *Christian Inquirer* (Baptist) speaks of the growing custom among Baptist churches of consecrating infants in a ceremony similar to that usually employed in infant baptism, except that no water is used. We are not surprised at this. There is something in infant baptism so fit and helpful, and so satisfying to the parental instinct of Christian people, that we wonder that Baptists have not long ago found some substitute for it.'

"We certainly knew nothing of this 'dry baptism' as a 'growing custom among Baptist churches.' It would surprise us to know that it is practised in any half dozen Baptist churches in America."

The *Central West* (Pres.) says "Every one admits that a Methodist minister is the best chap in the world to get money out of anything. It is said that there was once a boy who tried to swallow a silver quarter. He got it down a reasonable distance, but was unable to get it further. In that emergency his fond parents conceived the original idea that it might be well to induce the piece of money to come up rather than go down, to save the boy from choking to death. The family doctor was sent for, but his skill was unequal to the task. He summoned a council of physicians, but the quarter still remained in statu quo. At that important moment a Methodist minister happened—or rather was fore-ordained—to come along the street. He was called in. By the force of long habit the quarter in the boy's throat immediately arose and dropped into his hand."

The April number of the *Presbyterian Messenger* of the Presbyterian Church in England has a letter from a Chinese graduate addressed to W. Faber, which is interesting, as showing the enormous over-valuation of mere literature which is characteristic of China. The writer says: "Good medicine is that which cures disease, but good medicine is, for the most part, not palatable, and people are apt to loathe it. If you can by any means make medicine smell fragrant and taste sweet, your use of it in the curing of the disease will be marvelously facilitating and quickened. The doctrine of Jesus is indeed beautiful and is indeed good; but much of the translations of it are inelegant and crabbed, and scholars despise it. If you could by any means impart to the translations a just amount of grammar, there would be a rush of believers, and no holding of them back. I would, therefore, advise that the Old Testament be translated on the model of the earliest literature of China (that of the Three Dynasties), that the New Testament be translated on the model of the Han Wei and Tsin writings, that hymns be translated in imitation of our elegant praise songs and ceremonial chants, and that Christian literature generally be rendered in the style of the best masters of Pang (A. D. 600-900)."

The *Evangelist* (Pres.) prints the following portions of a letter from Dr. Robert W. Paterson of Chicago: "I am distressed about our seminaries. The plan of allowing to the General Assembly a veto on appointments is, I am persuaded, unwise. I question with many as to the fitness of Dr. Briggs for the place to which he was elected by the Union directors, but I think it very unsafe for the assembly to veto the action of such a board, especially when a trial of the Professor-elect is pending. It must necessarily be in a great measure a prejudgment of the judicial case. And in most instances of veto a judicial case will be likely to follow, or to be actually pending.

"Besides, it is not clear that in ordinary cases the assembly is as competent a judge as a well-selected board. Moreover, if the assemby were the more competent body, it could not fail to awaken dangerous antagonism for it to exercise such an authority. It is not like a veto of a nomination; it is a veto of an appointment, so far as the board can make one, and it is therefore an injurious judgment against the Professor-elect, and also against the board electing.

"And still further, it is liable to create a wide sympathy for the injured parties, and give currency to the very errors which it was designed to prevent. This is evidently so in the present case, in which grossly partisan action has been taken. The proper check upon unwise appointments is the discipline of the Church, if serious errors are taught by the appointee. The New School Church never lodged any veto power in the Assembly. Such power ought not now to be continued; it is virtually the trial of a man without process and without forms of law. Not one quotation from Dr. Briggs was made in the debate at Detroit, so far as I heard, and no reasons were given in the final judgment. This was monstrous."

Dr. Theodore L. Cuyler says, in the *Evangelist* (Pres.): "In some other denominations than our own the exhortation of the Apostle about rash speech might well be heeded. For example, our eloquent Baptist brother, Rev. Thomas Dixon of New York, who is both a brilliant and courageous man, lately set his tongue agoing against Dr. Shedd's 'Theology,' and then went off and left it to run in the following reckless style. He said; 'If I believed such stuff, I would lay down my ministry to-morrow, and join hands with Ingersoll.' He also said that 'heresy-hunting is born of hell'! All very popular clap-trap. But suppose that my brother Dixon should begin to denounce from his pulpit the 'traditionalists' of his own denomination, and declare the right of immersion to be unscriptural and indecorous. He would very soon be called to order by his Baptist brethren, and given to understand that he was out of place in a Baptist pulpit. What is cheaply stigmatized as 'heresy-hunting' is commonly a simple demand that no minister shall betray his own colors and be false to the standards of doctrine which he has solemnly sworn to defend. Freedom of thought and of speech are very excellent things within certain just limitations. But no soldier has a right to wear the uniform and draw the pay of his regiment, and then draw his musket against his own comrades, or cut down the regimental flag-staff. When a Christian minister sincerely dissents from the vital tenets of his own church, the honest place for him is outside of its communion. If his fellow-ministers ask him to retract, or to withdraw from the church whose creed he rejects, they are not 'heresy-hunters,' but honest men demanding honest dealing. I am quite sure that my eloquent friend Dixon did not think twice before he spoke once, or he would not have given utterance to sentiments which make scoffers laugh and sober men grieve."

The Rev. Dr. A. J. Gordon, writing on "The Preacher's Use of Illustration" in the *Homiletic Review*, says: "Dr. Holmes's illustration is a brilliant one. 'The mind of the bigot is like the pupil of the eye; the more light you pour upon it the more it contracts.' Capital; but what if some shrewd hearer were to answer: 'Yes, and what is the harm if it does contract? This is its way of adjusting itself to its work of clear seeing, even as a blacksmith's arm contracts its muscles to deal a heavier blow.' Look out for a relaxed liberalism which dilates its pupils at every new and wonderful discovery of the higher criticism and meantime is able to direct only a vacant and dubious stare at those sublime wonders of redemption, the resurrection, the reign, and the kingly glory of our Emmanuel. What if we were boldly to avow that the pressing demand of our times is for bigots? For if Mr. Emerson, in his last days, had to confess that 'our generation appears to a thoughtful mind ungirt and frivolous compared with the last, or Calvinistic age,' what can those who agree with him recommend but that the girdle of our spiritual loins be taken in by two or three tugs at the buckle. It is not popular, indeed, to urge theological stringency, either external or internal, of creed or of conscience; but it may be needful. Rigid convictions make robust workers. On the contrary, a lax creed, like an uncoiled watch-spring, never makes the hands go. As for this contraction of the iris under increased light, a scientific authority says that it effects 'sharpness of definition of the retinal image.' Is not that just what is needed—sharpness of definition? Have not we heard sermons scores of times in which an evangelical doctrine was presented only to be hopelessly obscured in brilliant generalizations, leaving no well-defined image of truth upon the spiritual retina?"

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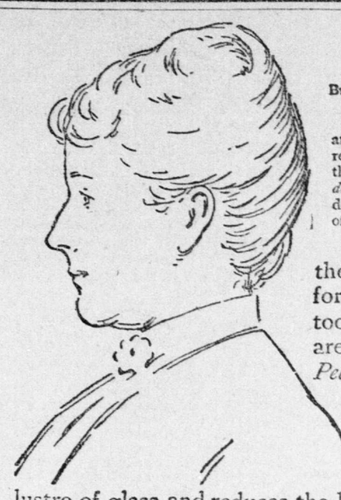

Girls.

BY HELEN EKIN STARRETT, IN *The Forum*.

"Thousands who are now in shops and other organized industries would really prefer work in homes, if only the heavy, grimy, malodorous, *clothes-destroying* work of cooking and laundering were not required and expected of them."

Well—if this is true there's a good time coming for girls and the mistress too; for women (by millions) are coming to know, that *Pearline* saves the clothes on your back as well as the clothes in the wash; the paint on your walls—the sheen of silver—the lustre of glass and reduces the labor—drudgery—health breaking—temper and comfort wearing work of washing and cleaning to almost nothing.

Besides—the girl—the mistress—or both—are better satisfied with the results. It cleanses—restores original colors—but hurts nothing, not even delicate skin—luxurious for bathing—be among the bright ones and use *Pearline*.

Beware Peddlers and some unscrupulous grocers will tell you "this is as good as" or "the same as Pearline." IT'S FALSE—Pearline is never peddled, and if your grocer sends you something in place of Pearline, do the honest thing—*send it back*.

192 JAMES PYLE, New York.

CURRENT NEWSPAPER WIT.

After a man has made a certain amount of money his neighbors begin to hear he has had ancestors.

Jawkins—You must be crazy! Dawkins—Perhaps I am. I've been talking with you for nearly an hour, you see.

First Gent (seeking place in street car)—Is the ark full? Second Gent—Yes, with the exception of the ass. Come in!—Pick Me Up.

A baby in New York has been born without eyes. He will probably be a bank examiner when he grows up.—Harrisburg Patriot.

"That chimney is smoking all the time," said Dodkins. "Yes," said his grandmother, "but it isn't such a fool as to smoke cigarettes."—Puck.

Mamma (tearfully)—It pains me, Tommy, just as much it does you to have to whip you. Tommy (also tearfully)—Mebbe it does, but not in the same place.

Judge—I understand that you prefer charges against this man? Grocer—No, sir; I prefer cash, and that's what I had him brought here for.—Yonkers Statesman.

"I don't think much of Mrs. Bronson," said Mrs. Smiffles. "I spent the afternoon with her, and such a woman for listening to scandal I never knew."—New York Herald.

Guest—How is this? My bill this time is $4 a day, and last December I had the same room and it was only $3 a day. Clerk—Yes, I know; but the days are much longer now.—Boston Courier.

Sappy—Miss Clara, do me a favor. Tell me honestly just what you think of me. Clara Candid—I would, Mr. Sappy, but the fact is I really never think of you at all.—Chicago Saturday Ev