SCOTTISH CROFTERS IN THEIR HOMES.

They Earn but Little More Than Enough to Meet the Landlord's Demand.

DREARY, LONESOME BUSINESS.

There Is but Little Romance About the Crofter's Every-Day and Home Life—Girls Who Have to Join the Herring-Curer's Crew During the Summer Months—What a Crofter's Home Is Like.

Special to THE SUNDAY CALL.

LERWICK (Shetland), Oct. 2, 1890.—Whatever may be the average tourist's impressions from passing glimpses of crofters' communities, crofters' homes and the crofters themselves, I believe one who passes some time among them cannot turn from them to his own world of brightness and progress without a genuine sense of sadness for their permanent, hopeless condition. It is unquestionably true that the "Crofters' Act" of 1886 was a just and beneficent measure. "Fair rents" have been almost universally fixed; arrears impossible of liquidation have been either wholly canceled or largely reduced; and personal freedom as a man, subject and voter has been established. The Crofters' Commission has already righted countless wrongs to which the crofter had been subjected for nearly a century and a half; and it may be truthfully said that all has been done for this Highland groundling that ever can be done under the present land system of Great Britain. Individual owners are so few, such vast tracts, especially in the north and west of of Scotland, have been permanently transformed into game preserves, such insignificant and inadequate holdings are in the crofters' possession under the new order of things, and communities of these people are so few, and those so meager in numbers, that betterment to these Highlanders as a class seems impossible.

As stated in a previous article, the process of thinning them out of, or their actual extirpation from, tremendous areas had been so thorough by the owners of Highland estates, that few crofters were left to receive benefits. The tenacity with which, despite all sacrifice and terror, these few cling to their mountain homes, is a wonderful tribute to

LOVE OF HOME-LAND,

which, in a hardy race like the Highland crofters, could have been turned to infinitely better account by Scotland, and even Scottish landlords, than could the rentals from sportsmen tenants. This sentiment is so strong and deep a one to-day among Scottish people of all sections that here is a noticeable growing and stubborn demand for "land division," "land reform," and even in some quarters for "nationalization of the land." Many intelligent crofters seem confident that some form of legislation will some time give them adequately large holdings. An idea is certainly gaining ground that at least sportsmen will go out and sheep-raising return. Sentiment is not wholly responsible for this. The first experiment by the great highland land-holders, after the barbarous clearances of the highlanders, was in sheep-raising. This was successful, and, in consequence, the clearances were largely condoned by a most important class in Scotland; men who assist in making and unmaking Parliament. These were the Lowland farmers. Countless thousands of Highland sheep, reared in the north, were annually driven through the Grampian passes, and before reaching the shambles wintered by Lowland farmers, who thus secured profitable disposal of immense quantities of produce. Since the British sportsmen got possession of the northern and western glens, Highland sheep have become practically extinct. Therefore what the Highland estate owners have gained by game the Lowland farmers have immeasurably more than lost. The latter have no pity for the crofter on his own account, but they know in a direct, hard-headed way that he and his collie dog are the best shepherds in the world. So these and some other pressing economic forces are gradually blending the "crofter question" and the "land question" in Scotland, and providing an economic question which may at least reach that form of legislation which will break down the now invisible yet inflexible walls of these great Highland estates, and cause the repeopling of their grand mountain sides and glens. But that can hardly come to the grave, sad eyes of the crofter who now lives. And it is this man whose condition, environment and home-life I have set out to describe.

Whether he lives in the same cabin where his forefathers lived before him, or is one who has been "removed" from the old home to some new and worthless patch of ground for the larger liberty of deer, he is never the possessor, as tenant, of more than thirty acres of land, while nine-tenths of the entire class do not occupy more than five. In some instances he has an "outrun" or "common grazing" with others, where from twenty to thirty sheep and two or three cows may be grazed, and when this is so, he is considered very well off.

TO FIND HIM IN THIS CONDITION

Is the rarest exception; and ordinarily his miserable patch of soil, of from say two to six acres, scarcely affords him the barest means of livelihood. For this tiny croft he pays an average rental of £6 under the new "fair rent" system, and under the old "rack rent" regime he tried to pay, but never paid, from £10 to £15 and £20. With the certain uncertainties of Highland climate in mind, no one can for a moment believe it possible for a crofter to pay even the reduced rent and sustain himself and family from the results of his labor upon the soil alone. I believe it would be a truthful assertion that the croft in no single instance ever sustained the crofter. It will not sustain him under the "fair rent" system of to-day. The landlord now gets nearly the utmost limit of what the soil itself can produce. The salvation of the crofter can only be attained by providing him with larger crofts, so that the labor of himself and family may be concentrated where most profitable results can obtain; or rentals for the beggarly patch he is forced to exist upon must be reduced to almost a nominal sum. A prosperous peasantry is impossible where the energies of the family are dissipated in a half dozen different vocations to simply pay rent that a thatch may be kept over the heads of the two old and very young of the family.

Briefly, that is the condition of the crofter, and it is all that is, or ever has been, the matter with him. To merely exist he has been forced into becoming fisher, kelp-gatherer, poacher; anything to live. His wife becomes fisher, "gutter," or dresser of herrings at the seaside, mussel-gatherer, or does any fortuous labor possible to add pound or shilling to the store for meeting the inexorable demand of the rent. The daughters are forced from home into service, and their altered condition and needs deprive them of both their love of the Highland home and the power to bestow more than a pittance upon its keeping. The sons become gillies to Highland sportsmen with a few weeks of demoralizing luxury and then months of idleness and unrest; or, better, though still bad, are crowded to the towns to further impoverish labor there; or perhaps in the end, best, reach Canada or the States, where for years the little saved beyond a bare living finds its way back to the crofter father and eventually to the landlord for rent. As a rule the oldest son marries and remains at home. He seldom has the inclination or the means to "hive off" and set up housekeeping on another croft, and besides it is the inflexible policy of Highland landlords to restrict, rather than increase croft holdings. This leads to a subdivision of the already inadequate home-croft and two families, instead of one, repeat an intensified struggle for existence,

INCREASING THE EVIL,

And giving warrant for the ever-recurring landlord cry of "congested crofter districts," while millions of acres of land, idle save for its use to sportsmen, are sweeping away into almost impenetrable wildernesses around them.

In all the crofter settlements, established at the different occasions of "clearances," there is little of interest save the unvarying desolation of environment and every-day life. This class of crofters are the most smileless, voiceless people that live. Fringing the entire northeastern, northern and northwestern coasts of Scotland may be found hamlets of this class. There is not the sound of mirth, the tone of content or the look of hope to be heard or seen in one. The land is barren, the sea-coast is grewsome and dreary, the habitations are wretched, fishing is precarious and the entire life of these people is a ceaseless, sunless effort to live. It is only in the glens, on the mountain-sides, within the straths, clustered in the upland corries or hollows, or here and there nestled by the side of mountain lochs and rivers, where the "removals" and "clearances," like some wild mountain tempest, swept over the old Highlanders without annihilating all their homes, that the crofter of old, the crofter of song and story and tourists' tales, may yet be found. He is grave and silent in his loneliness; but about this child of the mist lingers nearly all that remains of Highland tradition, folk-lore and picturesqueness of environment. The single, lonely, isolated croft is too dreary for winsomeness. But you will now and then come upon an old "clachan," where three or four, or perhaps half a dozen, crofts nestle in a corrie together, are huddled under the friendly protection of some precipitous crag, or are grouped like brown gypsy tents beneath the strong arms of primeval trees; and here life and customs are in many respects very primitive indeed.

The "auld clachan," aside from so universally being the hamlet-home of the crofter, it is worthy of attention on its own account. The word is occasionally a misnomer among Scottish people themselves, as applied to any ancient and picturesque hamlet of a half-score or so quaint old houses. Clachan has a more ancient and honorable signification. It is a pure Gaelic word meaning "a circle of stones." The clachan was the fane or place of worship of the pagan Caledonians. When Christianity was introduced the missionaries from Iona very wisely planted the cross within the sacred clachan. In time little chapels, and finally churches, followed. Houses grew up around these, and then the tiny church-place or hamlet itself took the name of the spot where the old pagan rites were once celebrated. It is interesting, too, to note how exactly identical is the Gaelic of the crofter Highlander of to-day with that of his heathen ancestors of 1500 or 2000 years ago. Instead of asking his neighbor in Gaelic, "Are you going to church to-day?" he will ask,

"ARE YOU GOING TO THE STONES?"

(Am bheil thu'dol do'n clachan)? The quaintest bits of primitive architecture in all Scotland are to be found in these quaint old nests. The pagan clachan is gone; the chapels and churches—for they were of the sort iconoclast Cromwell did not like—were long ago razed to the ground. But if you have the archæological instinct you can find bits of crosses, cinerary urns and sacrificial stones built into house-walls, just as you will find at Bowness-on-Solway, Roman altars and first-century Roman inscriptions ignobly set in pig-sties and byres. A vitrified fort will often be discovered near at hand. Huge cromlechs and menhirs, marking pagan burial-places, are never far away. And there is always within, or just without, that cleft of rock whence has trickled for centuries the crystal stream which in Columb's days was ever blessed and sacred. Because the clachan and croft have almost always been inseparably connected there is little wonder that the crofter clings lovingly to these weird old places; that his manner has become subdued and grave from endless feeding upon the Gaelic lyric of a mystic past; or that the forgivable superstitions and wraiths which cling about these eerie spots have wrought very many fantastic fancies within the warp and woof of his spiritual nature.

There is little romance about the crofter's every-day and home life. If he can make his rent partially from his land, he tills it in the hard old primitive way, with the rudest of tools; and in Skye, the Hebrides, in remote parts of the North and here in Shetland the crooked wooden spade, or earth-fork, is still to be seen. If he cannot he is forced to leave the croft to the care of his wife and children and turn fisherman. Often his wife and grown daughter leave the croft and join the herring-curers' crews on the coast for several months of the summer. His subsistence gained from the croft is always precarious; and were it not that his wants are few he could not live at all. His principal crops are oats and potatoes; but often the variable nature of the climate renders a steady return doubtful. Often the oats fail to ripen. Again, when they mature, the little crop is frequently destroyed by rain. Potatoes of late years occasionally blight or rot. When both the oats and potatoes fail, actual famine comes. By the greatest vigilance enough grass may be cured for the long winter supply for the few animals; but there is always peat to be had for the one bright spot in all the crofter's life, the great, open fire-place of his cabin. After the cows are milked in the morning, the younger children, accompanied by the collie dog, set out to herd them, for the crofts are seldom inclosed. Old coats or jackets are thrown over their shoulders, and they listlessly move about like a bevy of automatic scarecrows, keeping the cattle or sheep within bounds the whole day long.

DREARY, LONESOME BUSINESS THIS,

In the old days or in these days, but of late some of the soddenness of this life is being relieved by the books good folk have put in the youthful herders' hands, and the winter school is gradually opening a new world to their eager, childish eyes.

It is customary where there are only one or two beasts to "tether" them with chain or rope. The horse or "sheltie," if the crofter has one, is also "hobbled." Sometimes half a dozen sheep will be tethered by day and put into the sheep-cot at night. Such croft sheep are universally called pets. The world has heard of the famous "pet-lamb case" between the great American deer-stalker W. L. Winans, who controls a game preserve of over 250,000 acres, and the shoemaker of Kintail. The shoemaker's only lamb strayed from the highway, trespassed on the great man's acres, was pounced upon and slaughtered by a game-keeper; and finally caused an action at law that agitated the whole of Great Britain and became the subject of many an eloquent outburst in and out of the House of Commons. The crofter's home is often a sod hut with a sod thatch. More frequently it consists of four low walls of apparently uncemented stones, with a thatch of straw or fir-branches and straw, held in its place by stones anchored from the eaves by straw ropes. The structure usually incloses but one room. There is a low, wide door, perhaps a window or two, but in some cases only a "boal," or square aperature for admitting light and air, will be found. A bunk answers for a bed for the old folks. The children are disposed of in the loft. A few rude benches or square blocks of stone near the fire-place answer for seats. A spinning-wheel, here and there a hand-loom, more or less fishing-gear, some iron pots, a little earthenware, and often the square wooden drinking-cups, or "methers" of the ancient Gaels will be found. A few of the more fortunate crofters may possess a "but and ben" house, that is, a house with two rooms, when "ganein' but" or "ben" is the aristocratic possibility. The crofter's food almost universally comprises porridge and milk, and perhaps bread and tea, for breakfast. At dinner he may have a bannock of rye with an egg. The supper will be the breakfast repeated without tea. Sometimes the dinner is varied by herrings and potatoes. He is a total stranger to fruit, as we know it, though there are sometimes a few wild mounta n berries to be got. He is utterly devoid of amusements. The old Highland games have entirely disappeared in the Highlands. In the old days the "ceilidh" (pronounced "kailey") or gossiping party, occupied the long winter evenings. It lingers still where the clergy's sharp eyes do not too often come; and in it are whispeningly preserved all the old tales of clan and tartan, witch and warlock, and the sweeter folk-lore of this tender-hearted, long-suffering, hospitable, homeless people.

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SAVED THE BOY'S LIFE.

Then, as Flagman McKigney Leaped, He Was Killed by the Locomotive.

Edward McKigney, a flagman at the Grove-street crossing of the Pennsylvania Railroad in Jersey City, was killed yesterday morning. Since the railroad company began to elevate the tracks in the city there have been no gates at the crossings, but the number of guards has been quadrupled to prevent accident. McKigney was one of the new men. He had been employed in a foundry for twenty-five years, and had accumulated sufficient property to live on for the remainder of his life. He had also raised a family, and their earnings made it possible for him to give up his employment in the foundry and take life easy. Thomas Tennant, the trackmaster on the Jersey City division of the road, an old friend of McKigney, suggested that he might take the place of flagman to occupy his time and add something to his income.

About 9:30 o'clock yesterday morning a west-bound express train approached the crossing at a moderate speed. McKigney and his fellow flag-men stood on either side of the crossing waving their flags. A boy darted behind McKigney, and was on the track before the latter saw him. A warning shout from the other flagman attracted the attention of both, and without a moment's hesitation McKigney jumped forward, seized the boy and hurled him out of the way of the approaching train. As he was in the act of leaping from the track himself the locomotive caught him. He was dashed to one side and killed almost instantly.

The boy escaped, and was probably so badly frightened that he did not return to learn either the name or the fate of his rescuer. It was said that he wore a messenger's uniform, but neither the Western Union nor the American District Company, the only concerns in Jersey City which employ uniformed messengers, has been able to learn that it was any of its employes. McKigney's body was taken to his home, 130 Railroad avenue.—N. Y. Sun.

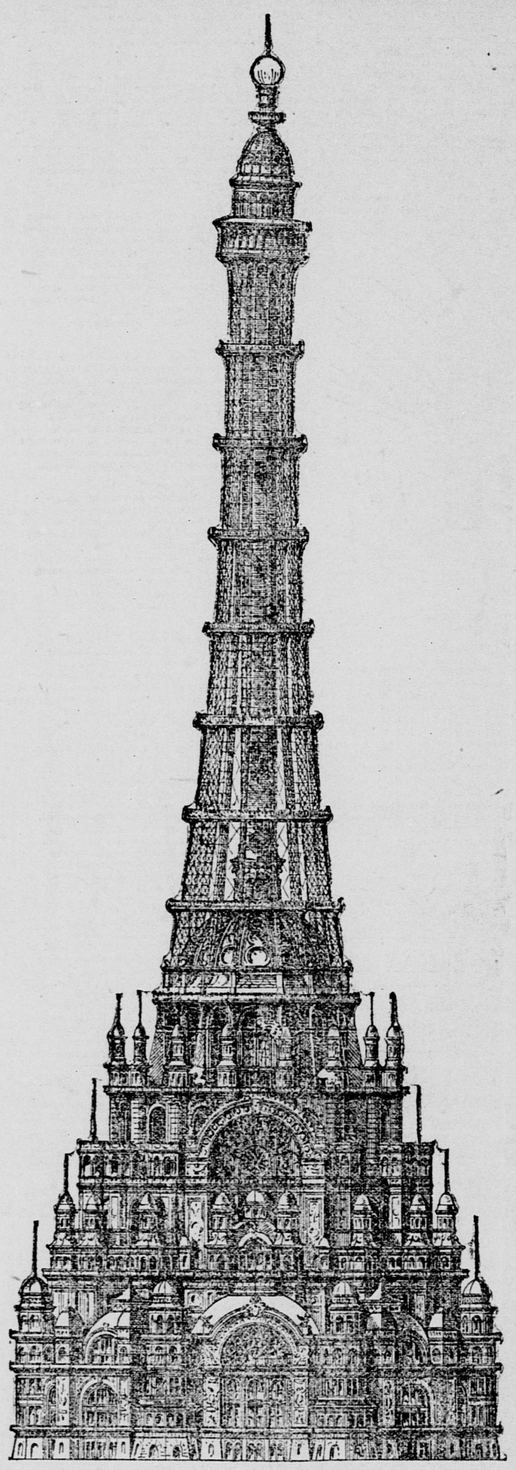
The Richard Wagner Monument Committee in Leipsic has accepted the design submitted by Professor Schafer of Berlin, and has received permission from the city authorities to erect the statue on the Old Theater place, a few step from Wagner's old home, "on the Bruhl." The figure will cost $13,000.

THE WORLD'S EXPOSITION.

The Chicago Columbus Tower to Be Finished in 1893.

Secretary Dickinson's Plan for a Military Display—The True Nature and Object of The Great Exposition.

CHICAGO, Nov. 27, 1890.—Although the past week has been a busy and exciting one, progress has not been rapid. The Directors are troubled at present with the apportionment of the buildings. The Lake Front is again the bone of contention. Why it is not once for all abandoned is hard for outsiders to learn. Why it was ever considered as part of the site is to many a great puzzle. Several of the National Commissioners are concerned about the buildings now mentioned for that place. However, no trouble should be borrowed on that account, as the fair proper will be placed at Jackson and Washington parks, and the agricultural and live-stock show will have all the advantage of being placed alongside of the greatest attractions.



CHICAGO'S COLUMBUS TOWER.

Herewith is presented a picture of the Chicago Columbus Tower, of which mention was made in a recent letter. It will be completed in 1893, and will be 1500 feet high by 480 feet at the base, constructed of steel and iron, and supported by sixteen great arched legs. The architecture is of modern Renaissance style, and it was designed by Messrs. Kinkel & Polk of Chicago. It will require over 7000 tons of steel and 6000 tons of iron. Its estimated cost is $2,000,000. In the center will be a large dome 200 feet wide and 200 feet high. This is calculated for concert and theatrical purposes, with a seating capacity of 25,000 people. The walls and canopy will be richly decorated in Oriental style. Eighteen elevators, with a capacity of fifty people each, will make twelve trips an hour. Only two elevators will run a distance of 1250 feet. Many will take advantage of the trip. Here money will secure passage for at least a short journey in the direction which all would like to travel. At the landing will be a large restaurant, where the travelers can rest and lunch before returning to earth again. At the apex will be a great globe of 33 feet in diameter, provided with 16 powerful electric lights, which will be observable fifty miles distant. Admission fee will be 25 cents, 50 cents to 400 feet and $1 to top. When completed it will be 500 feet higher than the Eiffel Tower in Paris, and the greatest architectural construction erected in the history of man. It will be the pride of the American continent and one of the most attractive features of the great exposition.

Lieutenant H. A. Reed of Leavenworth, Kans., is strongly in favor of Secretary Dickinson's plan for a military display at the opening, and would extend the time to about twenty days. He allots the time as follows:

Presuming that as much of the United States army as the President may permit, of foreigners who may come and all the National Guard who may desire are assembled, I should assign them to three distinct camps of cavalry, artillery and infantry respective of States or nationalities, and would arrange days and exercises somewhat as follows:

First and second—Devoted to encampment duties; all the duties incident to the establishment of an army in bivouac in the field, with guards, etc.

Third—Company drills, separate parades and guard mountings for each arm on its own ground.

Fourth—Battalion drills, grand parade and guard mounting, all arms invited on the encampment grounds; all will probably have arrived by this time.

Fifth—Street parade.

Sixth—Skirmish drills. This will fit the National Guard for what is to follow.

Seventh—Battle formations for attack and defense.

Eighth—Attack and defense of a position with infantry and artillery only. Not a sham battle as ordinarily conducted, but one on military principles.

Ninth—The same, of greater extent, and with all arms. The troops will be in good condition by this time.

Tenth—Grand review by the President or his representative.

Eleventh (Oct. 12th)—The formal dedication of buildings and grand military ball.

Twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth—Knights of Pythias and zouave drills, electric light drills, etc.

The forenoon, except on the first, second, fifth, tenth and eleventh days, when all day is devoted to the special exercise, should be occupied by competitive drills.

The committee appointed by the National Congress to investigate the condition of World's Fair matters are at present in the city performing their task. As yet they refuse to express any opinion, but apparently are very well satisfied.

At present the city is full of strangers gaining information to enable them to at once begin preparations for the fair. The officials are constantly interviewed. The decisions of the present week are anxiously awaited.

For the first time since the proposal of the Columbian Exposition the true character and object of the enterprise is beginning to be fully understood. From its first conception the promulgators of the scheme meant it to be in the broadest sense of the term a world's exposition, in which all nations of the earth should equally participate, and as far as possible become equally interested. It is the celebration of the greatest discovery in the history of the human family, and one which has proven more or less beneficial to all people. In view of that fact it was proposed that the exposition should be commensurate with the occasion it commemorates. Aside from that feature it affords for the first time an opportunity for the nations to amicably assemble, each to bring forth and place for comparison the productions of their skill and handiwork, showing the point to which their people have advanced, while the centuries have come and gone. In a sense the Columbian Exposition will be a vast Cosmopolitan University, where the nations will become voluntary pupils and the work of their handicraft serve as object lessons for the study and benefit of all. It will form a universal society and reception, to which all the human family are invited, regardless of caste, creed or color. The children from the East can meet those from the North, South and West, and each can learn of the advancement and progress which his fellow man has made on his respective portion of the globe.

Here will be achieved a peace conquest, more potent in its influence, more beneficial and far-reaching in its results, than all the victories gained in the history of wars. The occasion is opportune and will be a mighty factor in bringing about that feeling of universal brotherhood, which in time will result in the betterment of man, the federation of the world." It properly is an international institution, in which all should participate. Its coming will be an intellectual banquet, from which all will depart to their distant homes feeling it was good for them to have been there. All national strife and sectional lines should for the while at least vanish, and that littleness of soul give place to the more generous disposition of human interest in human kind. J. B. CAMPBELL.

Destroying the Pyramids.

The Bosphore Egyptien announces a new act of astounding vandalism, which that amiable journal does not hesitate to insinuate is connived at by the Egyptian Government. Three gangs of workmen, under two local sheiks, are daily extracting blocks from the lower courses of the two largest pyramids of Gizeh. These are broken up on the spot and carried away on camel-back for building purposes. The sheiks allege that they are doing this work of destruction by permission of the Government; whereas they have, it is said, obtained only a permit authorizing them to remove scattered blocks. That these Arabs should exceed their license is not surprising; but it is surely, to say the least of it, extraordinary that a Government partly administered by Europeans should have granted such powers to native overseers, unchecked by the presence of one of their own officials. The pyramids do not belong to the Khedive nor to his Government; they do not even belong to the Egyptians. They are the inheritance of the world.—London Times.

The Knights of Pythias are so well drilled that they could put an army of 50,000 men into the field at two weeks' notice.

Caroline Herschel.

The life of Caroline Herschel, one would imagine, was anything but favorable to long-lasting. Insufficient sleep, irregular and hasty meals, long fasts, excessive toil, both bodily and mental, were the conditions of her life—at least during the fifteen years she was her brother's housekeeper and astronomical assistant. A lady who devoted herself to hard work, one of the necessities of which was that she had to spend the whole of every starry night, covered with dew or hoar frost, on a grass plat in the garden, would not, one would think, be likely to make old bones. At the age of 82, however, according to her nephew's account, she skipped up two flights of stairs and ran about like a girl of 20. She died at the age of 98.—All the Year Round.

Suffering From Brown Gaiters.

In the county of Surry, or at least in a certain part of it, we have two remarkable diseases, to wit: "St. Vipers, his dance," and the "brown gaiters." The terms needs no explanation, but I may casually observe that the "brown gaiters" are known to ordinary persons as "bronchitis.—Notes and Queries.

THE DANCING BEAUTY.

A Sage Disquisition on What Becomes of the Ballet-Girls.

They Have Been Known to Die—Vivacious Talk of One Who Knows Lights and Shadows. Glimpses Behind Stage Tinsel.

WHAT becomes of the ballet-girls? There is a superstition prevalent among a certain class of old-timers having a maximum of cheek and a minimum of hair that the ballet-girl never dies, never ceases to be a "girl," and never quits dancing. They are led to this conclusion from the close observation of years in the front rows at the physical drama. But then this is a biased judgment. Certain it is that nobody ever saw a dead ballet girl. But who, except those who have been in the army, where mules were sometimes killed, ever saw a dead mule? What becomes of mules? Do they gradually grow old and wither away at a breath?

It is true there is no parallel between a ballet-dancer and a mule beyond the fact that both are well known as eccentric kickers and as tough as Joey B. If the inducement of assured perennial youth were not sufficient this fact of never ceasing to exist in the garish atmosphere of the footlights is enough to attract the rising female generation. It is the fate of womanhood in the ordinary walks of life to marry and become old. If they do not marry they are soon old anyhow, and are a neglected, if not a despised, lot.

SHE'S ALWAYS ADMIRED.

Not so the ballet-girl. She may be married or not—and she frequently is the mother of a family of young kickers—she may be 15 or 50, or anywhere along between those interesting extremes—she always has her share of admirers. If fairly good looking she has many of them. Why men will sacrifice restful nights, money, sweethearts, wives, at the shrine of the ballet-girls is one of those mysterious things to be decided after this life. But it is a fact that they will, and do, and a fact quite well known to the ballet-girl herself. Who has not, for that matter, at some period of his life lingered wistfully in the shadow of the stage door?

The ballet-girl may be said to remind us of a mule in another respect—she is born and not made. No woman born was ever molded over into a ballet-girl. She may become a famous actress—she may be made into a lay figure for the spectacular, get a job as a chorus-girl, or have a thinking part in a modern farce comedy—become a ballet-girl, never! You might as well talk of taking a brakesman off the railroad and turning him into a contortionist.

ONE BEAUTY'S STORY.

"My mother was a dancer before me," said one charming young ballet-girl the other evening. She referred to the fact with a sigh. She had done a matinee and evening turn at Palmer's in the "Red Hussar" and was polishing off a lunch of broiled chicken and beer. Her appetite is enough to throw a sickly shade of green over the worn-out men-of-the-world who can scarcely eat a single square meal a day.

"I began dancing when I was a mere child. My mother was dancing with the grown-up ballet as I am now. I danced in children's parts. You might say I was a born dancer, for my mother had been filling an engagement, which she resumed as soon as possible.

"Yes, mother is living now, but not dancing," she laughingly retorted in answer to the stereotyped joke. "No that disposes of at least one branch of the popular superstition. She is too stout. One of the evils of the many we have to contend with is the early tendency to stoutness. When you first saw me I was a slender slip of 17; now look at me!"

She has undeniably broadened and thickened during these six years, though the change improves her personal appearance.

STOPS AT TWENTY-THREE.

"If I keep on growing stouter I shall have to diet myself, and that will break my heart. I'm now 23—don't give it away. I wish to remain 23, see?"

"What becomes of the girls? Oh, some are with the Kiralfys. Emma's with some show in the West; Kate is married, so is Sophy, and—"

"No, no: what becomes of them finally?"

"Why, dear me! how do I know? Die and go to heaven? Not if there's dancing there, I hope. It is quite enough to be a ballet-girl here all your life! Nearly all of the girls I know when a child dancer are still alive and kicking. In fact, I don't actually know if any of them are dead. They are about all in the business, too."

"Yes, they have a good many offers of marriage. Some marry, but they nearly all get back to the stage. The girls can't stand the yoke very well, you see. The quietude of married life would soon kill most of them. We get awful tired of this, but from the experiences of those who have quit the stage to marry, I should say there are worse things. If marriage is the thing it's cracked up to be, why do they all come back? Answer me that!"

MATRIMONIAL PHILOSOPHY.

Her black eyes fairly snapped. She had evidently been considering the matrimonial problem on her own account. The next observation of this philosophical maiden made that certain.

"The trouble is that the kind of a man I would have is the kind who will probably never ask me to marry him, and the kind who does ask I wouldn't have. That's it—up to date! Having been born and bred to this business, I scarcely know how I would manage to live any other way. But, dear me! There are two sides to this matter. Look at the kind of men we meet! What sort of a husband is a man likely to make who gets wild over the ballet? Why not give us credit for some womanhood; with some tastes, good desires, feelings, ambition, the same as is accorded other girls who must work for a living? These same girls, who are spoken of contemptuously as only ballet-girls, are made of better stuff than most women of good society. Now, I do wish you would say a good word for us," pleadingly. "There is rarely anything printed about us except slurs, insinuations and contemptuous sneers about our calling. Not that it really makes any difference, because it doesn't. Only it would be refreshing to read something different."

THE SALARY PART OF IT.

"The ballet business with the 'Red Hussar' is easy for us," went on the ballet girl; "I mean compared with our work with the Kiralfys. There is no danger of growing over stout with the Kiralfys. When the brothers were at outs and fighting each other they used to bid for us to keep us away from one another. But they made us work hard, for the ballet was always the principal feature. Good dancers in any considerable number are hard to get in this country, and two big spectacular shows like the ballet at the Madison-square Garden and 'Nero' use up nearly all the material. That is the reason you see in the front nearly all of the same girls.

"We have only two short dances here, and it is considered a good engagement. We get $20 a week. The chorus-girls get $15. Any kind of a pretty girl can be put in a chorus. We never have anything to do with them, on or off the stage! (This with some show of pride.) They are probably very nice girls, though. The managers know all of us, and they make arrangements with us the same as are made with actors and actresses for the presentation of the regular drama."

But what a life! To those who must live it the thing is a matter of course. To nine-tenths of the mothers and fathers of the great world of quiet homes the spectacle of these young girls amid bitter daily and nightly associations would carry with it the sentiments of profound sorrow and commiseration.—Charles T. Murray, in Pittsburg Dispatch.

HENRY CLAY'S PICTURE.

A Painter Who Did Justice to the Great Orator's Mouth.

On one occasion he said to me: "Mr. Healy, you are a capital portrait painter and you are the first who has ever done justice to my mouth, and it is well pleased to express its gratitude." Clay's mouth was a very peculiar one—thin-lipped and extending from ear to ear. "But," he added, "you are an indifferent courtier; though you come to us from the French King's presence, you have not once spoken to me of my live stock. Don't you know that I am prouder of my cows and sheep than of my best speeches?"

I confessed my want of knowledge on the subject, but I willingly accompanied him around the grounds and admired the superb creatures, saying they would do very well in a picture. I fear that that was not the sort of appreciation he expected, and that I sank very low in his esteem from that moment.

But on another occasion I proved a worse courtier still. His jealousy of Jackson is still known, and the two men formed a very striking contrast. During a long sitting he spoke of his old rival, and, knowing that I had just painted the dying man's portrait, he said:

"You, who have lived so long abroad, far from our political contests and quarrels, ought to be an impartial judge. Jackson, during his lifetime, was held up as a sort of hero; now that he is dead his admirers want to make him out a saint. Do you think he was sincere?"

"I have just come from his death-bed," I answered, "and if General Jackson was not sincere, then I do not know the meaning of the word."

I shall never forget the keen look shot at me from under Mr. Clay's eyebrows; but he merely observed:

"I see that you, like all who approach that man, were fascinated by him."

Another time a friend of Mr. Clay, Mr. Davis, speaking of Jackson's proverbial obstinacy, said that one day, looking at a horse, Jackson remarked: "That horse is seventeen feet high." "Seventeen hands you mean, General." "What did I say?" "You said seventeen feet." "Then, by the eternal, he is seventeen feet high."

Clay would never have sworn to the seventeen feet. He knew how to make himself loved as well as admired. After his defeat by Polk he refused to see any one. It was with great difficulty that his friends obtained his presence at a banquet given in his honor. When he entered the dining-hall, where 200 guests were assembled, no one present was able to restrain his tears, so popular was Mr. Clay and so great was the disappointment at not having him for President.—G. P. A. Healy, in the North American Review.

THE SOUTH SEA BARBERS.

They Fill Their Customers' Hair With Lime and Slack It.

Savage Heads Fairly Sizzle—Then the Locks Are Done Up to Resemble Spiral Steel Shavings—Shaved in Spots.

BEARDS and mustaches are rare in the Pacific Islands. There is but a scanty growth of hair upon the face, and though the straggling hairs are rarely pulled out they grow so slowly that shaving is not resorted to more than three or four times a year. The barber's chief occupation is in the dressing of the hair, and in this branch of the business he finds enough to do and ample scope for the exercise of his ingenuity in ways that would never occur to his civilized rival.

One custom holds good throughout the island realm wherever hair is worn at all, and that is the lime shampoo, based upon motives of comfort and convenience generally, the same as led to the whitewashing of coops and roosts on a hen-ranch. These things abound in the tropics, and must be accepted as a distinctive feature of the life, to be dealt with in the readiest fashion. A long and irritated experience finds its best solution in lime, and lime, therefore, is used by all.

A HEAD SIZZLING HOT.

Having lime the savage combs all the kinks out of the three, four or even six inches to which he allows his hair to grow, sifts the fine lime in among the hair, selects a comfortable place in which to lie, gets the barber to sprinkle water on the lime and shuts his eyes, while admiring friends stand about to watch him sizzle. The water slakes the lime with much blowing of bubbles and the evolution of thick clouds of carbonic acid gas, the subject submits cheerfully to turn his head into a mortar-bed until the heat becomes too much for him to bear, when a dash of water washes away the steaming lime, and the first step has been taken toward dressing his hair.

Many are content to simply comb the hair after the lime application is over and so leave it for a month to conie, yet even this simple operation is a work of time and patience, for a man would be disgraced who should appear with the hair lying flat and smooth upon the head. The comb consists of ten or a dozen wooden skewers about four inches long, run down fine and smooth and secured by cords and gum side by side at the end of a long and light piece of carved wood, which served as a head ornament. With this comb the hair is carefully raked out, so that each hair will stand on end, and together they will appear like a light mop.

WOMEN'S HAIR THE SHORTER.

Between men and women the only distinction observed is that the men often wear the hair six inches long all about the head, the women seldom more than two inches, standing out even on all sides, while men train the hair below the crown upward, so that it, too, will grow parallel with the hair on the top of the head. This involves much combing and much use of bandages before it will answer all the requirements of fashion and satisfy the wearer that he will look sufficiently grim to his enemies when they meet in battle.

Others prefer spiky ringlets which are either trained to stand erect or to fall away from the crown in all directions. These ringlets are made after the hair has been limed and combed out stiff. Beginning with the forehead, the barber grasps not more than ten or a dozen hairs growing close together, wraps them tightly around a single spear of grass and covers the whole with a layer of bread-fruit gum. In the end the ornamented islander will present much the appearance of a blushing porcupine. For fully a week the hair must remain in its curl grasses, which are carefully bundled in a cloth saturated with oil.

LIKE SPIRAL STEEL SHAVINGS.

At last the barber decides that his work will do him credit, wipes off from each wisp of hair its abundance of gum, draws out the grass and leaves the ringlet standing erect and about as graceful as the fine spiral shavings which one finds in a machine shop where they have been planing steel. The man who elects to wear his hair in a mop or ringlets must conduct himself with a single eye to preserving for fully a month the simple beauty of his coiffure. He may not swim nor bathe, lying his hair in oiled cloth, and the pattering of the rain warns him to bundle up his head. At night he may not sleep with his head upon the soft mats, but must rest his cheek upon a wooden pillow. The simplest form of these pillows is a joint of bamboo supported on crutches at each end and three or four inches long.

The natural black color of the hair is seldom seen even in the children, and so almost universal is the practice of liming the head that the colors, ranging between straw and brick red, which result from the use of the lime, may also be taken to stand in place of the natural color. Some leave their hair of the color to which it has been burned, but many others elect to dye it either of a single bright color, uniformly light on or in bars or blocks of gaudy hues. A favorite device is to color the hair in two contrasting hues along the line of the middle, blue on one side and red on the other, red and green or yellow and black.

LIKE A PAINTED TARGET.

Others indulge in irregular patches of dye, giving a marbled effect, and on one island they have reached the artistic height of concentric rings of bright colors, giving to each head the appearance of an animated target for the skill of opposing archers. Among such as shave the head of all but a portion of the hair there is a multitude of fashions, and each consults his own taste or the riper judgment of his barber. The varied results are striking in the extreme. Some make hair is combed forward to the front of the head, leaving all behind the crowns as smooth as a ball; and yet others reverse the process, extend their foreheads to the crown and carry all their locks behind. Heads bare on one side are as common as in a Siberian convict train, and one never gives such an oddity a second glance.

The warrior delight above all others, the regular fighting clip, is a cleanly shaven head with a crest about two inches wide extending from the forehead clear back to the nape of the neck, and trimmed to such a length as will best insure its standing erect.

The savage islander must know what becomes of every particle of hair which is clipped from his head. He takes the bunch home, burns it, mixes the ashes with water and drinks it. He believes that if any one could get possession of a lock of his hair, burn it and swallow the ashes that person could draw all his strength away, and he would weaken and die just in proportion as the other would be heavy. Therefore, he takes the dose himself.—William Churchill in Pittsburg Dispatch.

The Child of an Evil Parent.

Malvolio says in Shakespeare's comedy of Twelfth Night, "Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them." So it is with nervousness. Some are born nervous, some achieve nervousness by their own imprudence and neglect, and some have nervousness thrust upon them by disease. The basic starting point of this ailment, which grows rapidly and assumes alarming proportions when it reaches the stage of hypochondria and chronic sleeplessness, is weakness, the child of indigestion, parent of many evils. For the incapacity of the stomach to digest food, and of the system to assimilate it after digestion, Hostetter's Stomach Bitters has ever proved a sovereign remedy. Sleep becomes tranquil, appetite improves, abnormal sensitiveness of the nerves is succeeded by steadiness and vigor in those delicate tissues, bodily substance increases when that signal restorative of digestion is systematically used. Conquer also with it malaria, rheumatism, kidney inactivity, liver complaint and constipation. 48

DECORATIVE FANCIES.

A Central-Arm Sofa That Will Never Become Popular.

Portieres of Long Silken Cords—A Handsome Railroad Car—The Craze for the Antique Is Dead—A Clever Scheme.

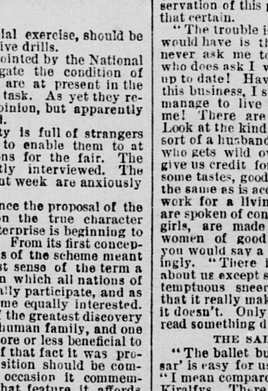
[From the Upholsterer for November.]

A dear, sweet soul, whose folks have brought her up admirably, sends us a hump-backed sketch, showing a sofa which is divided by a tall, central arm. The scheme will never be popular. It prevents a sit-closer tendency, and has a prim and proper look about it, in deep and dismal contrast with that old back-parlor lounge which most of us helped to wear out on one end, for in every well-regulated family of girls there is always a back-parlor lounge, which seems perpetually kept affluent and well dressed on one half, and badly abused on the other.

The central-arm sofa seems eloquent of a refined and iceberg conversation, while our back-parlor friend has a purring appearance, and seems everlastingly to threaten to call ma. The propriety sketch is all right, young lady; we are glad you sent it, for it is very handsome, and this book wants to look just as pretty as the "after" cut in a complexion ad., but it will never expedite a match.

We have had portieres of beads and bamboo, and portieres of stringed rice. We now have portieres made by using plenty of long silken cords, hanging over a back-ground of any solid-colored fabric. The cord may be knotted at different points or caught into strands, or it may be in fish-net form, like an over-dress. At the top of the fabric, where it is attached, the cord is worked into loops, fringe-like, so as to make a kind of frieze. The color harmonies are of course left to one's own judgment, but the scheme is an admirable one, and open to many pleasing varieties.

The handsomest railroad car in this country is undoubtedly the one just finished by the Pullman Car Company for Austin Corban. All the fittings and furnishings are gorgeous with brass—brass bedsteads, brass chairs and brass tables. It is quite probable that in the future no private or excursion car will be completed without its brass bedsteads. The rage is started at all events.



Prettily Festooned.

Said one of the best-known furniture-dealers the other day, a man who does only the very highest class of trade: "The craze for the antique is dead. Of course there are people who are judges and admire old work for its intrinsic value, but the average woman who buys old stuff merely to give her house an air of age