

such information becoming easily attainable by the public at large. This briefly explains—what to many has been an inscrutable mystery—why so many Institutions should have poured out money like water, and undertaken endless trouble and work, to prevent an alphabetical list of Nurses' names and addresses being compiled and published.

CONCERNING ORGAN-GRINDERS.

IN dealing with legislative interference with street noises, especially organs and bands, we are brought into close contact with many questions exceedingly difficult to answer, and with problems hard of solution. Apart from the intolerable nuisance with which the poor Italian is so often associated in our cities and towns, it is impossible not to feel a profound pity for him, and all he means. Dirty, ignorant, squalid-looking as he is, there is often something in his face and voice infinitely superior to, and more interesting than, the Cockney 'Arry. Centuries of inherited music in language, the unconscious education of the sunnier south of its poorest children by means of radiant skies, brilliant sheen of water, and gaiety of colouring, and a gentleness of manner, more given to begging and pleading than bullying and commanding, all these have made more of the gentlemen *on the surface* of the Italian street arab, than of the English one. Why he so eagerly leaves the land of his birth to come and heed in the squalid, fog-laden slums of London, would be a mystery, no doubt, to the poetic traveller who views Italy from comfortable hotels and romantic drives. But to those who know what lies under the surface of the beautiful country, of how hopeless poverty and certain disease and want brood as dark and deep and unchanging as the silent lagoons, in the midst of gay weather and warm climes, it is no wonder that the Lombardy peasant takes eager advantage of the offers of the exploiter to come to a city where he is told there is never a famine, and people are fabulously rich. In 1891, the number of emigrants who set out from the Venetian provinces was 134,864, and making all allowances for the larger number of these bound for the United States, we can still see what a colony of Italians must have been started, and re-inforced from time to time, in London; also we can understand how universally they took to organ-grinding. If there is really such a thing as unskilled labour, the pushing along of an organ and turning its handle is about as unskilled as any that can be found. This and the fact of an open air and wandering life are the chief attractions that draw the Italian emigrant to his organ, and not, as the sentimental folk fancy, his native love for music. But it was not till recently the writer found out that London is frequently a health resort to the down-trodden peasant whose home is near the shore of the Adriatic. Pellagra, the Nemesis that waits on sleeping in damp, unventilated dwellings, and feeding on starchy or rotten polenta, or any decomposed or fungus-invaded food, can be escaped by coming over to the city of dreadful night, and its chain of heredity

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broken. "My grandfather, my father, and my sister all died of *la pellagronia*," said a miserable specimen of a Venetian peasant, whom I had coerced into abstinence from organ torture by a threat of police, and then won almost to tearful gratitude by a little speech in his native tongue, and a coin. "I thought if Mariana and I came away we might escape it." Apart from the physical signs of pellagra, the mental condition is a painful one, showing itself in homicidal or suicidal mania, and in extreme depression and melancholy, and one is often struck by the ingrained down-cast expression of some of the organ fiends. It is a very grave question, what to do with the human wretchedness pitched into our country to complicate the condition of our own; but the answer does not lie in allowing it to be exploited for the gain of those who make money out of street music; and it might be an object worthy of the head of the Salvation Army himself, to draw these poor folk into deserted agricultural districts, and give them a chance of the pleasant life to which they were born, under far better conditions of food, clothing, and outlook, than any that are possible in the over-crowded slums in which they herd in London, and from which they sally forth accompanied by instruments of torture, that are at once a real danger and an absolute disgrace to any civilized city. Parliament ought to put down all street music, except marching bands; but some appropriate industry should be provided at the same time for those who would be deprived of their very miserable living by such an enactment.

ANOTHER BATH TRAGEDY.

A SICK pauper was ordered a warm bath. The male attendant was drunk, and the poor victim was thrust by the inebriate into scalding water. The screams of the scalded man were silenced by a drunken hand being held down over his mouth till he was nearly suffocated. A coroner's jury, have returned a verdict of manslaughter. But who was responsible for such a possibility? Who gave the order for the bath? And why was the condition of the attendant allowed to pass unnoticed? Is it that in some of our Institutions being tipsy or fuddled is such a common condition that no one thinks anything about it, except its victims? There appears to be still a formidable amount of educating the public conscience to do before the enormity of getting drunk shall be realised. The universal taking of alcoholic liquor seems to deaden the perceptions of even the more sober drinkers who do not get drunk, or surely our Boards of Guardians would not, as some of them are, be lenient to the drunken Master, or any other official; nor would Local Government Boards in the past have failed to promptly order the dismissal of an official against whom the charge of intoxication could be proved. It is time alcohol was utterly banished from our Workhouses, except where ordered by the doctor in special cases of sickness and old age; but that this is far from being the case is shown by the fact that over £40,000 was spent last year on alcohol by the various Unions—two Unions in London spending one-sixth of the whole expenditure!

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