

be presented to every Government in the civilized world.

The occasion will be observed as a "Field day" by the women in the Capital; Miss Willard and Lady Henry Somerset are announced to hold an all-day meeting previous to the presentation of the petition at night.

Miss Willard's endeavour to bring about the co-operation of the Populist and Prohibition parties in the States is indicative of social progress. Should the endeavour succeed and a Home Protection Union be the result, an irresistible force in the interest of public morals will be brought to bear upon the Government of the United States which it will find difficult to ignore.

Science Notes.

COMPENSATION FOR DISTURBANCE.

The unpleasant sensations resulting from an undue supply of blood to the head must be, in some degree, familiar even to those who have never practised acrobatic feats in which the usual positions of the head and lower extremities are interchanged. It is easy to understand that when a person stands on his head, or hangs from a bar head downwards, the force of gravity tends to produce an accumulation of blood in the head. But why does not the same force cause an equal amount of discomfort in the usual erect attitude, by producing an accumulation of blood in the lower portions of the body and depriving the head of its due share?

In order to answer this question, a number of experiments on different animals have been made, and the conclusions communicated to the Royal Society. The experiments tend to show that there is a nervous mechanism controlling the muscular walls of the blood-vessels, and having the important function of compensating for the effects of gravity when the position of the body is altered. It has also been found that the compensating mechanism is far more complete in erect animals, such as man and the monkey, than in cats, dogs, or rabbits. We suppose it would also be very complete in the case of bats, which rest and sleep hanging head downwards from a branch; but the case of bats does not appear to have been investigated.

The effect on a person of a change of position is a delicate test of the condition of the vaso-motor compensating mechanism. If the action of the mechanism is for any reason temporarily suspended, the position of the body is of great importance—it may be a matter of life or death. It is probable that emotional syncope is brought about by paralysis of the nervous mechanism. The shock causing syncope arrests the action of the nerves which should regulate the blood-supply in relation to position, just as a slight shock may arrest the action of the nerves regulating the diameters of the arteries supplying the skin, and so cause a blush or momentary pallor.

The Link Shell Truss Co., 171, Wardour Street, London, W., have a new truss, it is claimed that by this method of manufacture a truss is provided which will be more comfortable than the one in ordinary use and better able to adapt itself to the various movements of the body, especially if these are of a sudden character. The truss is fitted with a hip-joint regulator by means of which the pressure is increased or diminished as required and with a soft hollow shell pad perforated for ventilation. The Truss as thus completed is an efficient one.—*Lancet*, August 4th, 1894.

It is said that the injurious effects of chloroform are due to the fact that it rapidly paralyses the compensatory vaso-motor mechanism, and so interferes with the circulation. Ether, on the contrary, paralyses the mechanism very slowly, and only when administered in very large quantities. Thus, death from chloroform may rapidly ensue in an animal if the position of the abdomen is lower than that of the heart, because the blood is gradually drained away from the heart and its action becomes more and more feeble. Death from chloroform or from emotional syncope, may, in many cases, be averted by keeping the heart lower than the abdomen.

Dramatic Notes.

"KING ARTHUR."

In Sir Thomas Malory's "Morte d'Arthur," that wonderful collection of legends concerning the valour and ardour and religious fervour of King Arthur and his Knights, there is a rich store of material for the poet or poet dramatist. Milton might have made this the subject of his great work instead of "Paradise Lost." Tennyson recognised its value, and has revived the story in undying verse. But whether the subject, incognate as it is, was capable of being treated effectually on the stage, from the histrionic and spectacular point of view, is a question which might well have daunted, single-handed, any one of the distinguished group of persons who have co-operated together to produce "King Arthur" at the Lyceum. Mr. Comyns Carr has contributed the words in blank verse, and shows throughout real artistic sympathy with the spirit of the character he has undertaken to portray. But his efforts would have fallen to the ground were it not for the further interpretation of the actors and actresses,—Mr. Irving as King Arthur, Miss Terry as Guinevere, Mr. Forbes Robertson as Sir Lancelot, and Miss Lena Ashwell as Elaine, Miss Genevieve Ward as Morgan le Fay, Mr. Frank Cooper as Mordred, and Mr. Sydney Valentine as Merlin. And the result would have been crude and harsh without the beautiful glamour thrown over all by the richly embroidered robes of the ladies and the knights; and by the landscapes, now mystic, now gay, for which we are indebted to Sir Edward Burne Jones. And even so, much of the mystery and far-off-ness necessary to the representation would have been absent but for Sir Arthur Sullivan's appropriate and subdued chorals and settings.

In the Prologue, Merlin is seen on the rocks, uttering prophecies in rhyming verse as to Arthur's fate, bound up, as it is, with Excalibur, the wondrous sword which, all glittering, is held up from the water by a goddess' hand. King Arthur stretches out for it instead of rowing across in a boat. Then, in the background appears a faint vision of Arthur's future Queen Guinevere. The rest of the play centres round Guinevere, and the fatal reciprocal passion she entertained for Sir Lancelot. In spite of the Prologue, the Excalibur takes only a secondary place in the development of the drama as set forth by Mr.

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