

The Archdeacon insists that the supply of women be kept up, because, he says, "without lady helpers Missionary work is deprived of one of its most potent agencies for the conversion of China to Christianity." Lay authorities predict a plentiful supply of martyrs next year if the Archdeacon's policy be followed out. But in spite of dictates of common sense and reiterated warnings the Missionary Society is flooded with applications from women anxious to go out and "save the heathen."

Paris is the city where dressmaking flourishes as it does in no other city in the world. The number of working dressmakers in Paris is estimated at 65,000. In all France, according to M. Georges Michael, the industry of manufacturing the various articles of women's dress is in the hands of 81,406 male and 143,648 female owners of shops or factories. These furnish employment to 700,801 persons of whom over half a million are women. In addition to these, there are 925,855 persons who make their living from industries which are tributary to that of the manufacture of feminine apparel.

Musical stockings are among the latest American freaks of fashion. But, fortunately for over-strung nerves they are not audibly so. Their open-work bands are patterned in the notes and bars of the musical clef. And to make the absurdity greater, different tunes are used for different occasions. Stockings to be worn on Sunday are embellished with patterns indicating hymn tunes and sacred music. It has been suggested that Lohengrin's "Wedding March" should be transcribed on the stockings included in bridal trousseaus, and perhaps the absurdity will reach its climax by mourners at funerals appearing with the "Dead March" in *Saul*, or Handel's "Requiem," embroidered on their funeral hosiery.

A Book of the Week.

"LONDON CITY CHURCHES."*

PROBABLY very few Londoners know much, if anything, about the City Churches, unless it is St. Bartholomew the Great, which has come into notice lately, and is now regarded as one of the sights of London.

So Mr. Daniell has done real service in writing this book, and the pictures are well worthy of the letter-press. It is difficult at first to realise the City as it once was, not a place only for transacting business, but the centre of society and London life, where courtiers moved leisurely and powdered ladies were borne in Sedan chairs, and where the well-built houses were the homes of some of the noblest names in England.

Now, we associate the City with business and money-making, but years ago in St. Giles', Cripplegate, lived the great sailor and explorer, Sir Martin Frobisher, and in that Church he is buried. There, too, lies John Milton, a fact, perhaps, little known.

* "London City Churches," by A. E. Daniell, with numerous illustrations by Leonard Martin. (Archibald Constable & Co., Westminster.)

The City Churches are often hard to find, as they have been so much built in of late years, but one curious thing about them is that they mark more clearly than anything else the course of the Great Fire of 1666, when eighty-six parish churches were destroyed.

There are eight Churches now in the City which were there before the Fire, and Wren re-built forty-nine. "The destruction of Wren's Churches is a serious matter, and it makes one both sad and angry to observe the spirit of Vandalism in which they have been dealt with. Fifteen of these beautiful buildings have already been destroyed. First went St. Christopher-le-Stocks to enlarge the Bank of England in 1781; fifty years later St. Michael, Crooked Lane, was swallowed up in the formation of the new London Bridge; St. Bartholomew by the Exchange had to make way for the Sun Fire Office in 1841, and very shortly afterwards St. Benet Fink was demolished on the re-erection of the Royal Exchange. Eleven more of Wren's Churches have fallen victims to the Union of City Benefices Act, though happily the handsome tower of St. Mary Somerset has been hitherto suffered to remain. All Hallows, Upper Thames Street, which was shorn of its tower in 1876, is even now being pulled down, and the same fate apparently awaits St. Michael, Bassishaw. Several others have also been threatened."

The names of some of the City Churches carry us back to the time when the country was really "Merrie England." Thus, "St. Andrew Undershaf" refers to the custom of erecting the May-pole or shaft near the church on May-day, and as it was taller than the church, the title of 'St. Andrew Undershaf' arose."

I wonder when the City folk left off dancing round the May-pole and acting plays by the wells, and why it is that the solitary survival of all the ancient pomp and merriment is the Lord Mayor's Show? Nowadays on May-day each City man appears in a new top hat, but I doubt if his light-hearted ancestor would have deemed this respectable adornment a fitting tribute to the May-day frolic.

Well, we have grown solemn and the City is solemn too, and hidden away behind counting-houses and banks few ever find the City Churches, in which lurk so much that is interesting, quaint and beautiful. Some of the registers contain noteworthy entries, and among such is one in the church of St. Andrew, Holborn: "Baptized July 31, 1817, Benjamin, said to be about twelve years old, son of Isaac and Maria Disraeli, King's Road, gentleman. A clergyman named Thimbleby performed the ceremony." Many queer epitaphs can be found, and one to a man and his wife ends:—

"She first deceased. Hee for a little Tryd
To live without her, likd it not, and dyd."

Another, to the memory of Hobson Judkin, after chronicling the fact that he was "The Honest Solitor," adds:—

"Goe, Reader, and imitate Hobson Judkin."

It would be instructive, with this book in hand, to make a tour of the City Churches, but as this cannot be done by all, a clearer knowledge will be obtained of them by those who read the book than many now possess who spend six of the seven days of the week in the City.

A. M. G.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)