

hung Hazel-nuts, Beech-nuts, or acorns, and ferns, hart's tongue, and others.

In the garden, too, appear some plants that are indigenous, as the Snowdrop (*Galanthus nivalis*), and others that are imported, as the yellow Jessamine, with its golden blossoms in advance of its pale green leaves; the Laurustinus, with its white, crimson-tinted clusters; and the Christmas Rose (*Helleborus niger*). Beautiful as it is when it pierces through the snow, it has dangerous properties. It is an irritant poison, though it used sometimes to be prescribed in small quantities for apoplexy, epilepsy, dropsy, hypochondria, and cutaneous diseases. Gerard says it "ought never to be given to delicate bodies without great correction, and to none without the advice of a skilful physician."

Hothouses and greenhouses yield many treasures, chiefly chrysanthemums, while from over the sea the spring is already heralded by narcissus and anemone.

C. CARMICHAEL STOPES.

WOMEN.

In her very entertaining book, "Recollections of a Royal Parish," Mrs. Lindsay says:—Among the visitors to Balmoral Castle was Lord Palmerston, who was rather troublesome to his Sovereign, and sometimes inclined to show his temper. Mrs. Lindsay recalls an instance of this. When there was no guest of Royal or other exalted rank the seat on Her Majesty's left at dinner was reserved for the Minister in attendance. On the occasion referred to Lord Palmerston was resolved not to sit next the Queen, and as the party assembled for dinner he slipped into Dr. Robertson's usual place, leaving him without a vacant chair except that next Her Majesty, which, of course, he was not at liberty to take except by Her Majesty's command. After a very uncomfortable minute or two, the maid-in-waiting observed his position, and with quick and ready tact moved next the Queen herself and motioned Dr. Robertson to take her place. Lord Palmerston calmly ate his dinner without apology or explanation.

At a conference of clergy and laity of the Church of England held in Sydney last month a general opinion was expressed that it was desirable to obtain experienced helpers from London, preferably the East End, to engage in mission work in the lower parts of Sydney.

Those who are following the evidence given before the Alien Immigration Commission will not be surprised to find the East of London recognised all over the Empire as Slumland supreme.

In reference to the genus sweater and his methods, Mr. Herbert Evans, an East-End Factory Inspector, described him as an unprincipled, loathsome individual, whose tyrannical methods and disposition were only equalled by his complete ignorance and open defiance of everything that was moral and human. He was usually found in a basement or garret concealed from the outside world altogether. The witness continued:

His workshop reeks with foul smells, the atmosphere is loaded with human vitiation. The combustion from burning refuse and the emission of sticky fumes by cheap oil lamps and other implements of work and from processes of manufacture, together with an absence of natural light, make this particular class of work-places a positive danger to the community. Here the alien is imprisoned night and day, and kept at work in a semi-

nude state for starvation allowance. Family and all sleep in the same room. A few women are engaged. The effect of this is found in the anæmic and lifeless state of the workers.

"The sweater is oblivious to all demands for decency, and honesty is not the best trait of these helots of industry."

Mr. Evans proceeded to say that the sweaters were mainly out-workers; nothing was too low for this class, and their depredations bespoke approaching ruin to the lives of the helpless victims and their dependants:—

He sweats his hands—real sweating. His disposition is exemplified by the hideous way in which he shrieks at his workers. He works seven days every week and two or three intervening nights as well. Frequently, when visiting in the early morning, I have found numbers asleep—apparently from sheer exhaustion. He knows and keeps no Sabbath, and the helpless mortals who come under his baneful influence are denied the right of knowing a Sabbath either.

Mr. Evans went on to say that the sweater usually found refuge in bankruptcy.

"East is East and West is West," indeed!

In "Some Nineteenth Century Scotsmen" Professor Knight tells a number of most amusing anecdotes. Of Professor Aytoun's courtship of his first wife, Emily Wilson, he relates:—

He called one day, found her in the drawing-room, and proposed to her. "But I must ask papa," she said; and tripped downstairs to the library, where the mighty Christopher was writing against time, "chased by the printer" for the next month's "Maga," nearly overdue. Emily told him what his young friend Aytoun has asked of her. Old Kit, having not a moment to spare, tore off the fly-leaf of a letter, wrote upon it "With the compliments of the author," and pinned it on Emily's breast; whereupon the blushing Emily tripped back to her expectant husband!

Whether Aytoun there and then made due acknowledgments to the "author" has never been recorded.

It is reported that oakum picking by female prisoners in His Majesty's prisons has now practically ceased, needlework, by making their own garments and those of the male prisoners, being adopted instead. In this connection it is satisfactory to note the steady and striking progress of prison reform, as shown by a few "Prison Dates" from a recent "Quarterly Paper of the Guild of SS. Paul and Silas," drawn up chiefly by the Rev. J. W. Horsley, the last chaplain of Clerkenwell Prison:—

- 1772. Prisoners refusing to plead treated as guilty and pressing abolished.
 - 1778. Last woman burned for husband murder.
 - 1789. Last woman burned, after being hung at the Old Bailey, for uttering.
 - 1810. Romilly abolished hanging for stealing calico from bleaching grounds.
 - 1812. Romilly abolished hanging soldiers and sailors for being without passes.
 - 1827. Prisoners refusing to plead treated as having pleaded "Not guilty."
 - 1829. Last execution for forgery.
 - 1831. Last execution in Newgate for sheep-stealing.
 - 1832. Last execution for stealing letters.
 - 1833. Capital punishment for housebreaking abolished.
- In this year a child nine years old was sentenced to be hanged for poking a stick through a window and stealing paint worth 2½d.; reprieved by "the gracious mercy of the sovereign."

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