

[FOR THE CRITIC.]

UPWARD.

How long those years of bondage
That struggled to be free;
But oh! at length they sang them,
Those songs of liberty.

How rude that fetich worship,
Those gods of wood and stone;
How grand the praise now wafted,
To Truth's eternal home!

Thro' pain and thro' privation,
Thro' turmoil, and thro' strife,
To day man slowly climbeth
Toward a nobler life.

Windsor, N. S.

AVONIAN.

"IMPERIAL LONDON."

Smirched with soot, splashed with mud, choked with fog, depressed with miles on miles of sombre streets, dwellers in London do not think much of their city. They have hardly spirit to defend it against the contempt of bilious Frenchmen: they growl at it themselves. Not very often, it must be confessed, do we hear a good word spoken of it by the many visitors who, nevertheless, seem to find it an attraction. Perhaps it may do us good to discover that here and there somebody can grow enthusiastic about it. In the *Cultivator and Country Gentleman*, of New York, there has been a series of letters from an American lady who apparently has gone to Germany for the sake of cheap and good education for her family. She likes that country and its simple and homely life, though she has some criticisms to pass on its narrowness of ideas and its subjection to Counts and to police. At last she comes to London, and she heads her letter with the words we have quoted in the title of this article. It is only the beginning of a rhapsody of admiration:—"The fact is, we seldom stop to wonder at really great things. Who thinks, as he walks, of the immensity of the sun or the heavens? So with London; her influence is so quietly potent over the whole world, that few stop to compare her with other cities. But let one be for a year or so moving around the 'two-and-six-penny' big towns of the Continent, and then come to London! She so dazzles you by her magnificence, and awes you by her grandeur, that for a while it is almost breathless astonishment."

The astonishment is so great that the writer even admires our street statues. The British Museum, occupied her for a week; and she felt at the close of it, "What is the use of trying? If I am to see anything else of London I must stop going there!" So she finds her way to South Kensington, and tells us that "all the typical and industrial and artistic collections of the Continent do not give you what is lavished here." Next she goes to Kew Gardens, and says, "We are in the land of the lotus-eater; let us never mix with care again;" and after three hours of steady walking through beds of flowers, hot-houses of orchids and rare exotics, palms and ferns, she consults her plan and finds she has not gone over one-eighth of the ground! Next to Hampton Court and up the river to Kingston. "Here was another scene taken from some fairy-book." But still more wonderful are the parks. "In the centre of London are parks whose immensity absolutely staggers one's belief. I will only refer to two, Hyde Park and Regent's Park—one a little over 400 acres, the other a little under. In these I did not see a single notice, 'Keep off the Grass,' all free as air to the poorest."

One evening, after feasting my eyes on the equipages and evidences of boundless wealth in Hyde Park's 'Rotten Row,' I strolled on a few hundred feet along the banks of the charming 'Serpentine' Lake, when I found myself in a crowd of the variegated street Arabs one could imagine—hardly a pair of whole suspenders in two thousand ragged trowsers. As I walked, wondering where this crowd came from, a little urchin asked me the time, and I told him half-past seven. 'Hurrah!' he shouted, throwing up his cap, and in less time than I write a thousand or more of these waifs were splashing in the water as naked as when they were born. Two jolly policemen walked, laughing, among the crowd as they scampered in, and boats stationed outside a certain line protected the bathers. A delightful sight it was! Where, in America, have the poor such liberty? I think I see in Central Park the savage police chasing the little Arab if he steps on the grass; what would we think to have the choicest part of the 'lake' devoted morning and evening, one hour, for the off-scouring of the city to bathe?

Then in Regent's Park is an avenue nearly a mile long, one succession of flower-beds whose beauty words cannot describe, not only open to all, but with comfortable arm-chairs and seats for any number. The police, indeed, in their contrast to those of New York and even of the Continent, seem to have impressed her very much. "Only an imperial city could form such a homogeneous army. They actually seem pressed in one mould—calm, attentive, answering in monosyllables directly to the point, then away attending to some other inquirer. It was at all times a real delight to watch them governing with kindness the crowds under their care—a contrast indeed to the brutal type of ruffians that too often act as policemen in New York."

Then she turns to the buildings. She spends hours in taking in from different parts the beauties of St. Paul's Cathedral: "Even from a distance, say Waterloo bridge, the dome rests so lightly that one would not be surprised to see it float in the air. Yet who mentions it, or hears a Londoner praise it? So of the 'Royal Thames Embankment—a boulevard three miles long; cost 15,000,000 dols.;" and endless other things, "any one of which in another city would be considered sufficient to call it great; but here they are unnoticed or even criticised, because the city itself is so grand that no special attribute seems great." Thanks, kindly and gentle unknown

admirer! You have looked on us with friendly eyes, and have found out in us more merits than we have perhaps; but still some in which we may—when we think of it—honestly take pleasure and pride. You have done us good in recalling to us that in our huge capital we have a city that has no equal and that is worth all our efforts to make it still more magnificent. And may such a friendly spirit of appreciating what is good and great on each side of the Atlantic inspire all who from Great Britain or from America visit their sister-lands.—*St. James' Gazette*.

OUR COSY CORNER.

The taste for crowding rooms with all sorts of ornaments, bric-a-brac and knick-knacks is on the wane.

To prevent dresses being creased in packing them, place paper between the folds.

Ribbon is the rage for decoration. A place for a bow is found upon nearly all articles of furniture.

To mend china or broken earthenware take a very thick solution of gum arabic in water and stir into it plaster of Paris until the mixture becomes of the consistency of cream, apply with a brush to the broken edges of the ware and join together. In three days the article cannot be broken in the same place.

To take rust out of steel, rub the steel with sweet oil, in a day or two rub with finely powdered unslacked lime until the rust all disappears, then oil again, roll in woollen and put in a dry place, especially if it be table cutlery.

A fabric has been patented which is made insect proof by steeping in a solution of tobacco and cascarilla bark incased in benzine, then drying and steeping in tobacco, cascarilla bark and hot water, the fabric to be used in trunk linings, etc., as a protection from moths or other insects.

KITCHEN WALLS.—The walls of a kitchen should always be painted, and a light color is to be preferred. They will need washing twice a year, or at the most every three months. If they are plastered or kalsomined, it is a good plan to tack clean newspapers just back of the tubs and table, to protect the wall as much as possible.

WASHING KNITTED SILK.—The following is recommended as a good method of washing knitted silk articles. Dissolve a moderate quantity of white Castile soap in warm water. Squeeze the articles through water; never rub until they look clean, rinse in clear, cold water and lay in a coarse towel. Roll the towel up with the articles inside and twist until they are nearly dry. Stretch in shape and leave in a dark room until nearly dry. Take a soft piece of flannel, and rub in one direction until perfectly dry. Never use an iron.

A SOFT QUILT.—If coarse hen and turkey feathers are stripped up the two side plumes from the stem, and thrown into a bag, and the bag is rubbed hard between the hands, or on a wash-board, the plume massed together into a delicate downy substance, much of which can be used in lining comforters that will be found warm and light. A writer in "*Harper's Bazaar*" says that such comforters are equal to eider down coverlets.

FROSTED PEACHES.—Twelve large, ripe peaches, free stones, whites of three eggs whisked to a standing froth, two spoonful water, one cup powdered sugar. Put water and beaten eggs together, dip in each peach, when you have rubbed off the fur and rolled in powdered sugar. Set carefully upon the stem end upon white paper laid on a waiter in a sunny window. When half dry roll again in sugar. Expose to the sun and breeze until dry, then put in a cold, dry place until ready to arrange in a glass dish for table.

A BIG THIMBLE.

As a rule the vast number of articles invented for feminine use and ornament undergo an illimitable change in form and style, according as that wonderful dame fashion—or rather her prime ministers—dictates, but the career of the thimble has been less erratic than that of any other article. The thimble was a Dutch invention of a very early date, and came into general use there in those days when Holland was a mighty nation. Its first introduction into England was made in the year 1695 by cunning craftsman named John Lofting, who seized on the idea and set up what was then considered a 'large manufactory—a small store-room and an open shed—at Islington, London. The invention speedily caught the public taste, and for some time everybody bought thimbles for ornament, not for use. Therein John Lofting gained exceeding profit. But when its advantage as an article of assistance in needle work came to be recognized, honor and profit combined to make John Lofting wealthy, and, of course, other and improved manufactories speedily followed.

It was first known as a thumble, from the words thumb and bell, and all records say that it was originally conceivable that it could have been of much use there. Then they were made only of brass and iron; now we have seen them composed of steel, silver, gold, horn, ivory, pearl, and even glass.

But it has remained for the King of Siam to outstrip all competitors. Having seen the English and American ladies at his court using thimbles,