



OUR SLIP-SHOD WAY OF LIVING

HAVE you ever taken notice in what slip-shod fashion we moderns live and move and have our being? We do few things perfectly or on time or with a conscientious effort to live up to our agreements. If you order a set of tools sent to your house, I would be willing to wager that a fair proportion of them will not "work." A house-wife buys a dozen jars for "preserving," and several of them have defective covers. You leave an order in an office or shop for a certain article to be delivered at your house at a fixed time. Does it arrive? Sometimes. Very frequently some one forgets; or the organization of the business does not permit the delivery agreed to; or a wrong address is used; or something happens to prevent the delivery, no matter how important it may be to you. You buy anything from "sample"; and, in nine cases out of ten, the goods do not all measure up to the sample. This is seldom intentional dishonesty; only carelessness.

WHAT is the matter? "It was not like that in the olden time." When Adam Bede worked in his airy carpenter shop, with the sweet country air blowing in through the window and the notes of birds mingling with the "hiss" of his plane, he did not turn out defective work. He would not have permitted it to go out of his shop, unless the attention of the purchaser was specifically called to it as a "failure." He took a personal pride in the perfection of whatever passed from under his hand. He was an artist; and would no more have done a careless or slip-shod piece of work than any other artist. The shoe-maker of his day made every part of the shoes he sold; and he was very sensitive touching their excellence. He could genuinely guarantee each pair; for he knew just what had gone into every one of them. To-day, the only man who really suffers when defective shoes are turned out, never puts a hand to the making of a shoe-lace. The workers are all mechanical attendants upon machines, and are inclined to become very like machines themselves, so far as their day's labour

goes. How could they have a personal pride in the perfection of a pair of shoes when they themselves never see them except to insert eyelets in a part of the "uppers"?

THAT is the trouble with us moderns. We live in a wholesale, impersonal, machine-made, industrial world. We have crushed out the carpenter and the cooper and the cobbler and the man with his little shop of which he was sinfully proud; and we have substituted the sash-and-blind factory, and the barrel-making industry, and the immense shoe factory, and the departmental store. The human beings who do the actual work no longer see the whole product grow to perfection under their careful hands. The individual who takes your order in the store is not the proprietor or anything near him; he is only a clerk on a salary and a percentage. How can we expect him to take the interest that the old-time shop-keeper did who served his customers himself and knew that every man sent away pleased put money in his pocket? We are a big people and we do things in a big way, and we are full of contemptuous pity for our "rude forefathers" who did things in a small way; but, with all our bigness, we have no time now to round off the corners and pick up the dropped stitches and lend to life those little courtesies and to our creations those little touches of personal care which meant so much in an earlier day.

WE get lots of things; but sometimes it seems to me that we get nothing. You go into a first-class, high-priced, special-man-with-the-wine-list restaurant; and you pick up a menu card so cumbered with the names of things you can (not) have that the waiter goes away to let you read it. If you are unsophisticated, the very array of familiar titles, which are associated in your mind with "good things to eat," sharpens your appetite and lifts your anticipation on tiptoe. Now what will I have, you mutter. The world has combined to spread me a feast. The tropics—the sea—the farm—the garden—the orchard—the game-bag, have all been laid under tribute for me. Well, I can begin on some

oysters on a half-shell anyway; and think what next while he is gone for them. But—wait a bit! Oysters spell typhoid these days. They do not keep the "beds" clean; and then, if by any chance they are not grown in a stream of sewage, the purveyors swell them in city water, which is just about as bad. Oh, where are the oysters that father used to dig out of a can?

HOWEVER, soup is safe. We'll have some soup. Away goes the waiter. Why didn't you tell him a bit of mountain trout before he went? That would save time. However, he is soon back with a shining silver tureen, dainty and diminutive, with soup in it just for you. He uncovers it, wipes your hot plate on his by-no-means virgin serviette, and hands you the ladle. "Mountain trout," you murmur to him as a next order; and dip into the soup. See!—what sort of soup did you order? You can always tell by looking on the menu card. Is it the soup that "mother used to make"? Well, not exactly. Here comes the "brook trout," however. And it looks quite like it—quite like it looks in the pan at camp. But taste it. What's this? Why this "druggy" flavour? Has it been preserved in salt peter? Only the cook knows. As for the rest, "flat, stale and unprofitable." Still, cheer up. Here comes a bit of lamb, some potatoes with their jackets on, some new corn on the cob, and a plate of salad. Lamb! You know that at home. Crisp, brown, juicy, fat, tender, oozing with richness. Try this. Flabby, soaked in water, stringy, smothered in a disguising sauce. The potatoes are soggy and discoloured; the new corn is too new. There is lots of everything—such as it is; but, with all our abundance, the wholesale methods of a successful restaurant which feeds people in swift relays of several hundreds, have resulted in "denaturing" the food. Compare this with the cooking in the diminutive "cafes" abroad, where the proprietor is the "chef," and where one bad meal would cut his clientele in two.

SO with all our getting, what do we get? When we want to buy real good furniture, we search the second-hand stores for the old. When the real estate man tries to sell us a home, he knows that the best thing he can say is that it is an old house built in the days of honour and thoroughness. We have more—far more—than our forefathers ever had; and we have infinitely less. Better one slice of the green apple pie which an artist in home cookery can still create than all the tough pastry and syrupy "fruit" which a restaurant "wholesaler" will take a "quarter" for and never blush.

THE MONOCLE MAN.

A Canal That Germany Would Use in War Time

MUCH as Great Britain is interested in the Panama Canal, she is even more interested, in a sense, in the Kiel Canal in Germany.

The Kiel Canal—also known as the Kaiser Wilhelm and the Baltic Canal—would, especially when the process of deepening it is finished, put Germany in a splendid position to strike a blow at Great Britain quickly. This canal also will admit of Germany constructing Dreadnoughts far within her borders and keeping the matter a secret from the other powers if she so desired.

Construction of the Kiel Canal was commenced in 1887, and finished in 1895. Sixty-one miles in length, it connects the Baltic Sea and the North Sea. It starts at Holtenau, near Kiel, on the Baltic side, and debouches on the Elbe at Brunsbittel. Thus it saves a great part of the sea trip of 237 miles around the Danish peninsula of Jutland, and it has the great advantage of being a sea-level canal.

Originally, this canal had a bottom breadth of 72 feet, a surface breadth of 213 feet, and a depth of 29 feet 6 inches. But in 1908 work was begun for doubling the bottom breadth and increasing the depth to 36 feet.

THE attention of the people of Great Britain was directed to the Kiel Canal recently on account of the arrest of five English yachtsmen who were let go later. The five cruised in a 27-ton yacht, the



German Battleship in Kiel Canal—Photographed by an Englishman.

"Silver Crescent," from Dover, through the North Sea and into the canal. One of the party, Dr. Dudley Stone, took several photographs, including the one shown on this page. In general, the photographs are such as any people on a pleasure cruise would take, but the German authorities at first appeared to regard the affair seriously.

Dr. Alan Moore, the sixth member of the little boat's crew, left the vessel before the authorities interfered, and on his return to England he gave particulars of the trip. Telling of the passage through part of the canal, he said: "We were flying our ensign in the proper way as coming from an English port to a foreign, and saluted three German men of war, who answered us. We were surprised on entering the canal not to be boarded by the Customs, but at Kiel they told us that it was not usual to worry yachts in that way. The harbour service boat at Kiel came alongside and wanted to know the name of the yacht, which we gave.

"The last thing I saw," declared Dr. Moore, "was Stone taking photographs of the yacht from the collapsible boat she carried. We had been photographing quite freely all the way, but only the sort of things you see on picture postcards. I had a little snapshot camera, and Stone, who is a skilful photographer, but hardly knows one end of a battleship from the other, had brought some larger apparatus."