

renders it the more impressive. We think but little of those things that take place every day, however wonderful they may be.

Who ever dwells, in thought profound,  
On His almighty power;  
Who makes the mighty world turn round  
A thousand miles an hour?

And yet this is the case every hour of our existence; but I must proceed. We read of an earthquake in ancient times, by which thirteen cities in Asia Minor were destroyed.

Edmund.—Thirteen cities! What do you think of that, Gilbert?

Gilbert.—Why, I think that earthquakes are ten times worse than precipices.

Traveller.—The city of Antioch was once destroyed, with a great part of the surrounding country; and, about three hundred years after that, it was again overthrown, with the loss of forty thousand of its inhabitants.

Gilbert.—If earthquakes were to come often, all the people in the world would be swallowed up.

Traveller.—A third time the city of Antioch was visited; for, in sixty years after the former earthquake, it was once more overwhelmed, with sixty thousand people.

Gilbert.—I have heard of earthquakes, but I never thought that they were half so dreadful.

Traveller.—The celebrated colossal statue, at Rhodes, was thrown down by an earthquake; and, between six and seven hundred years ago, the principal cities of Syria were destroyed. South America has been, at all times, subject to earthquakes of great violence. In the year 1638, Father Kircher, who was on his way to visit Mount Etna, and who had landed in Calabria, heard a stunning sound, the noise resembled that of an infinite number of chariots driven furiously forward, and he was thrown to the ground. The tottering of towers, the crash of falling houses, and the cries and groans of the miserable sufferers almost terrified him out of his senses.

Edmund.—I do not at all wonder at that. It would have terrified the boldest man in the world.

Traveller.—He left the place, and landed the following day at Rochetta, but was obliged to fly, for in half an hour the greater part of the town was overthrown.

Gilbert.—What a narrow escape!

Traveller.—He afterwards landed at Lepizium, but the earthquake still continued, and so shook the ground, that he caught hold of the shrubs near to support him. He thought of going to Euphemia, which was at no great distance; but, turning his eyes towards the city, he saw nothing but a dark terrific cloud, which seemed to rest on the place. When the cloud passed, the city was totally sunk. All was a scene of desolation, and Euphemia was no more to be seen. This earthquake occasioned devastation for two hundred miles along the coast of Italy.

Edmund.—A whole city swallowed up at once!

Traveller.—The earthquake in Jamaica, in 1692, was of a dreadful description: in the space of two minutes the town of Port Royal was buried in a gulf forty fathoms deep. Lisbon, the capital of Portugal, has been visited with many earthquakes, but that which took place in 1755 was by far the most terrible. I had much rather tell you of events of a more cheerful character, and I wish you had asked me to speak on a livelier subject than that of earthquakes.

(To be Continued.)

## AGRICULTURE.

### Agricultural Facts and Testimonies.

We think our readers cannot fail to be deeply interested with the following Extracts from the "Reports of Special Assistant Poor-Law Commissioners, on the Employment of Women and Children in Agriculture," just "presented to both Houses of Parliament, by command of Her Majesty." Excellent evidence is here supplied as to the superiority of teetotalism in agricultural labour, and the numerous blessings attending the adoption of its principles. Mrs. Britton's evidence is peculiarly touching. Cider drinkers especially are invited to read the evidence.

The Report of ALFRED AUSTIN, Esq., one of the Assistant Commissioners, thus introduces the evidence.

"In Somersetshire, and I believe in some parts of Devonshire also, the practice prevails of paying boys' wages partly in Cider, from their first going out to work. From seven, eight, or nine years old, a child is accustomed to drink two or three cups, (a pint or a pint and a half) of strong, rough cider a day. I have already alluded to the cider truck, when speaking of women, but in the case of boys there is a mischief beyond the ordinary evils of this species of truck. The boy is taught to love drink from his earliest age, and a few years so confirm him in the taste that he rarely, if ever, gets rid of it in after life. The greatest and commonest vice of the agricultural labourers is drinking, to which may be ascribed much of the extreme poverty and wretchedness that is met with amongst them. Were it not for the money spent in drink, I believe that the majority of them could command more commodious dwellings and more animal food for themselves and families than they have at present. The effect of the habit of drinking is to counteract any benefits from increased earnings. The labourer whose family has the most limited means of subsistence, does not drink; he cannot afford it: but the frequenters of the beer-shops are the labourers the aggregate earnings of whose families, if properly spent, would not only secure them against want, but even place within their reach many comforts now nearly unknown to the labourer's cottage. Drunkenness practically renders higher wages of no avail, for the surplus of wages, above what is absolutely required for the lowest state of subsistence of the family, is spent at the beer-shop. The ordinary pretence, in support of this petty truck in cider, is, that the labourer cannot work without drinking several pints a-day. I doubt the truth of this assertion, from the statements I frequently heard in opposition to it. Upon this subject the testimony of Mr. Somers, the Vice-chairman of the Bridgwater Board of Guardians, and two of his labourers, is instructive."

Mr. SOMERS, of Othry, Somersetshire, Vice-chairman of the Bridgwater Union, examined.

"Women employed in the hay harvest generally work from 8 till 7; they like the work: it is not very laborious. Women of all ages are employed, and as many of them as men. They get during that time 4s. a-week, and two or three pints of cider a-day.

Boys are less employed on pasture than on arable farms. On pasture farms they do little odd jobs, but on arable lands they keep off birds, drive the plough, see after the cattle morning and evening, and plough, according to their ages. They are generally employed at nine years old; their hours are from six to six, except just in winter, and then from between seven and eight till four or five.

At first they get 3d. a-day and a pint of cider, then 8d. a-day with three half-pints of cider, and then the regular wages of men. Between these periods the wages go on increasing pretty regularly, but it depends upon the boy, and sometimes the master; a younger boy is sometimes worth more than an older. At first their work is always light, not at all calculated to do them any hurt.

A practice affecting the condition of the labourers, and which cannot be too much condemned, is the paying part of the wages of the men, women, and even boys, in cider. It is generally said by the farmers the work cannot be done without cider, but I can produce practical proofs to the contrary. I myself have totally abstained from cider, beer, and all other spirituous drink, for the last six years, and during that time have worked as hard in farm labour as any of the men I have employed. I have some labourers who have also abstained from such drinks for some time. They work quite as well as the men who drink, and in all respects are quite as well in health. They and their families are much better also. In consequence of such abstinence I give them the regular wages in money paid by other farmers, but instead of the cider I give them a potato-ground of about half an acre, from which are got about 120 bags of potatoes, of 120 lbs. each, per annum. I dress the land for them, and haul the potatoes when dug up; the labourers find and plant the seed, they keep the ground clean, and dig the potatoes. It is nearly all done, however, by their wives and children. Thus, instead of consuming a part of their wages in drink, as is generally the case, my labourers I am speaking of, at the end of the year find themselves with a large stock of potatoes on hand, which, in addition to contributing very much to the support of the family, enables them to keep and fat a pig, which again pays their rent. These are clear and