

had broken a leg, and whom he evidently wished to introduce to him. The surgeon cured this second dog also, and mentioned the circumstance to the Countess du C., who repeated it to me.—*Miss Knight's Autobiography.*

WONDERS IN A SPIDER'S WEB—It was recently remarked by the *Builder* that a spider's web furnishes a better plan for the laying out of new cities than any which has yet been devised by surveyors and engineers. Anyone who can find a distinct and complete web unbroken will see how beautifully regular it is, and how perfectly adapted for the quickest passage from any one point to another. The concentric rings are not circles, but polygons, the radiating exquisitely regular and straight.

THE RIGHT OF GLEANERS IN FRANCE—Many of the French farmers imagine that it is an act of generosity on their part to allow gleaners to enter their fields after the crops have been cleared off; but the fact is that they cannot do otherwise, as the Court of Cassation has decided that a farmer has no right to turn sheep into his own field till two days after the crops have been carried, so that the gleaners may have time to exercise their rights. Nor can the farmer legally let the gleaner to a third party for a consideration. This same jurisprudence is equally applicable to gleaning in vineyards, and any municipal regulations to the contrary would not be held valid by the tribunals.

MERIT AND SUCCESS—Extreme popularity in this country and age appears a very arbitrary thing. I defy any person to predict *a priori* what book, or song, or play, or picture is to become the rage, to utterly transcend all competition. I believe, indeed, that there cannot be popularity, for even a short time, without some kind or degree of merit to deserve it; and in any case there is no other standard to which one can appeal, than the deliberate judgement of the mass of educated persons. If you are quite convinced that a thing is bad, which all such think good, why of course you are wrong. If you honestly think Shakspeare a fool, you are aware you must be mistaken. And so if a book, or a picture, or a play or a song, be really good, and it be brought before the public notice, you may as a general rule predict that it will attain a certain measure of success. But the inexplicable thing, the thing of which I am unable to trace the law, is extreme success. How is it that one thing shoots ahead of everything else of the same class, and without being materially better, or even materially different, leaves everything else out of sight behind. If twenty novels of nearly equal merit are published, it is not impossible that one shall dart ahead of the remaining nineteen, that it shall be found in every library, that Mr. Mudie shall announce that he has 3,550 copies of it, that it shall be the talk of every circle, its incidents set to music, its plot dramatized; that it shall

count readers by thousands, while others count readers by scores; while yet one cannot really see why any of the others might not have taken its place. The will of the sovereign people has decided that so it shall be. And as likings and dislikings in most cases are things strongly felt, but impossible to account for even by the person who feels them, so it is with the enormous admiration, regard and success which fall to the lot of many to whom popularity is success.—*Country Parson.*

PHYSICAL EDUCATION—The importance of a larger amount of physical education, and of less time devoted to purely mental training, is well emphasised by Mr. Edwin Chadwick, in papers contributed to the recent Blue Books on Education.

Mr. Chadwick states that the present practice of long hours of teaching is a wide cause of enervation predisposition to disease, and induces also habits of listlessness and dawdling. The half-time system is found to give nearly, if not quite as good education as the whole time; and common sense tells us that a boy who acquires the same amount of knowledge in half the time of another boy, must have obtained a proportionately superior habit of mental activity. It is his alertness, combined with the bodily aptitudes created by drill, that gives the comparatively stunted boys of the town a pre-eminence over the strong, robust boys from the coast. Good schoolmasters say that about three hours a day are as long as a bright, voluntary attention on the part of children can be secured, and that in that period may be taught as much as they can receive; all beyond the profitable limit is waste. Hence it is urged that part of the present long school hours be devoted to gymnastic exercises or drill, as part of the system of education, or that the half time system be more adopted. Drill is very strongly recommended by many eminent men, who give their testimony in these papers. It improves the health, the carriage, the manners, even the character; sharpens the attention, gives habits of obedience, promptness, regularity, and self-restraint. "I should consider a youth of double value," says Mr. Whitworth, "who has had training of the nature of a drill; he attends to commands; he keeps everything he has to do with in a high state of cleanliness; defects are corrected, and special qualifications brought out." "We find the drilled men very superior," says Mr. Fairbairn. "They are constantly in readiness for the protection of the country," writes Lieut. Gen. Shaw Kennedy. "Men are frequently required," says Mr. R. Rawlinson, C. E., "to use their strength in concert, for which they must have confidence in one another. I have frequently seen trained men weed out unskilled men where heavy lifting has been required, because they dare not risk the danger arising from unskilled strength."