

## WOMEN IN INDIA.

The women of the upper classes in India, though enjoying high social positions, have few pleasures to compensate for the life of drudgery and seclusion which they are obliged to undergo. In the average Indian family, writes Capt. Richard Carnac Temple in a recent paper, the strictest domestic economy is the rule of life, and the household work is done by the women of the household, not, as with us, by paid servants. Servants there are, of course, in all Indian families, but they are, as a rule, on a totally different footing from that of the European domestic, being for the most part independent persons with a *chentelle*, for whom they perform certain customary services for a customary wage. The distribution of the daily work, down to the most menial kind, lies with the *matrifamilias*, who may be best described as the oldest married woman in the family proper, for widows can have no authority. The cooking, as the work of honor, she keeps to herself, but the house cleaning, the washing, the care of the children, the drawing of water, the making of the beds, and so on, is done by less dignified members of the household, as she directs; and whatever is most menial, most disagreeable, and the hardest work, is thrust upon the bride.

Not only is our bride thus turned into a drudge, often unmercifully overworked, but from the day she gives up her childhood to the day of her death—it may be for 60 years—she is secluded, and sees nothing of the world outside the walls of the family inclosure. She is also, by custom, isolated as far as practicable from all the male members of that little inner world to whom she is confined. Free intercourse, even with her own husband, is not permitted her while yet her youthful capabilities for joyousness exist.

Every person belonging to the European races well knows how much common meals tend to social sympathy; how powerful a factor they are in promoting pleasurable family existence, and in educating the young to good manners. There is nothing of this sort in Indian upper-class society. There the men and women dine strictly apart, the women greatly on the leavings of the men, and that, too, in messes of degree, very like those in a royal naval ship. *Patrifamilias* dines by himself; then the other men in groups, according to standing, waited on by the women under fixed rules; and lastly the women, when the men have done, our poor young bride coming last of all, obliged often to be content, it need hardly be said, with the roughest of fare.

## GERMANY AND FRANCE.

The Germans maintain an immense army, and every industry in the country is taxed in order that German pre-eminence in this respect may be kept up to the proper standard. Many well-informed writers believe that Prince Bismarck's military policy is prompted by a desire to annex to the German Confederation a portion of the Austrian Empire, and there is good reason for believing that their views are not without foundation; but the constant state of preparation for war, in which Germany is kept, is probably due to the bellicose action of France, the latter country having never forgiven the occupation by Germany of the Provinces of Alsace and Lorraine. The following extract from the *North German Gazette* places the question in its true light. "If certain English journals look for the cause of the uncertainty and apprehension that fill the world in the condition of Bulgaria, this only proves that their judgment of the state of Europe is entirely wrong. We have no interest in Bulgaria, whose condition does not at all affect us; and on her behalf we would not keep a single soldier under arms.

The necessity for all our armaments lies with France, to which country the English Press must turn in its search for the causes of the stagnation of trade and the uncertainty of the future. The French continue incessantly to raise their fighting power; and from every French newspaper it may be seen how rapidly the combative strength of France is being increased, and what financial sacrifices are made to perfect the efficiency of the army. In England they know very well that Germany must have her eye constantly fixed on the West; and therefore they also ought to be in no doubt that it is simply France who is responsible for the situation in Central Europe."

## THE SCOTTISH PROBLEM.

The agrarian difficulties which have arisen among the crofters dwelling in the Western Islands and Highlands of Scotland, are the result of governmental mistakes made in bygone years, through which the rights of the Scotch peasantry were greatly curtailed. Previous to 1745 the Scottish clans held their lands on the communal system, reserving in common to all large and extensive tracts of pasture land. But since that time the chieftains and their descendants have held the land in fee simple, and while these newly-created landlords have recognized the rights of the crofters to occupy the holdings upon which they were located, they have appropriated for other uses the pasture land which had previously been used as common. It is stated on good authority that at least 2,000,000 acres, part of which is cultivable, and the remainder good pasture land, have been turned into sheep farms and deer parks, and the crofters deprived from privileges which they regarded as ancient rights. For the landlords it may be said that the rents collected from the crofters were small, in fact so small that it was found impossible to improve estates from the money derived from this source, and that having by Act of Parliament become owners of the soil, they sought to improve their position by utilizing the extensive commons, which they turned into large sheep farms. For a time sheep farming paid, but for the past few years it has proved unremunerative, and the landlords in many cases have established deer parks, from which they derive a certain income. Viewing

the question from the crofters' standpoint, it appears that they are unable to obtain by law security of tenure, fixed rents, or compensation for improvements; and believing as they do that the Crown had no right to deprive them of their privilege to use of common land, by vesting the title in the chieftains, they naturally feel incensed at its being transformed into what they regard as useless pleasure grounds. Although the grievances of the crofters have attracted the attention of the British public, it is not by any means clear that they can be satisfactorily settled by Act of Parliament. The landlords are themselves, with a few exceptions, in needy circumstances, and having held the title to the estates for the past 140 years, they object to an interference with these rights from any source. The crofters are in fact too numerous for the cultivable land available, and as the price of agricultural products has greatly reduced, they find it quite impossible to earn a subsistence upon their small holdings. These holdings have moreover been cut and recut into still smaller holdings for the accommodation of the younger branches of families, and this state of things is yearly growing from bad to worse. To the minds of most men, the claims of the Crofters to the use of the common pasture lands appears fair enough, but how this is to be met, without interfering with the vested rights of the landlords, is the knotty problem now vexing the soul of broad minded British statesmen.

## AN AGE OF PROGRESS.

The natural aversion which nine readers out of ten have to perusing long and dry articles upon scientific subjects, may be readily accounted for, but there are probably few who realize how far the comforts, and even pleasures of modern life, are dependent upon the studies, researches, and discoveries of the small army of scientists engaged in promoting the welfare of their fellow-men. The busy housewife, the industrious farmer, the skilled mechanic, the manufacturer and the merchant, owe a deep debt of gratitude to the quiet but determined plodders, who, in the laboratory, the factory and the machine shop, are working out scientific problems, and adding their quota to the discoveries and inventions of the age which have so marked his nineteenth century of ours. In this connection it is satisfactory to note that the "British Association," one of the oldest and most useful scientific organizations in the world, is still continuing to attract the interest of our fellow-subjects in all parts of the Empire. Two years ago, the Association met in Montreal, that being the first occasion upon which a meeting of the Society had taken place outside of the British Isles. This year, it met in Birmingham, the industrial centre of Great Britain, under the Presidency of that distinguished Nova Scotian, Sir William Dawson. In his opening speech, the President briefly reviewed the onward march of science during the past twenty years; and while he recognized the difficulties which still had to be met and overcome, he believed that evidences were to be seen on every hand of the steadily increasing interest taken by the public in scientific matters. This he regarded as a healthy sign of the times, and one that bore promise for the future. Not only in England and the United States, but also in Canada and the Australian Colonies, were there evidences of the public awakening to the advantages of scientific research. No Canadian city of any pretensions is now without its public museum, and in many of them were to be found well equipped laboratories. Sir William drew attention to the lack of schools for the technical training of our youth, and cited the action of Germany in establishing such schools as being worthy of imitation. As the first Canadian President of the Association, Sir William Dawson reflected credit on the land of his nativity, discharging the arduous duties in a manner worthy a savant of such distinction. Two years hence the Association is invited to meet in Australia, and there can be no doubt, from the cordial manner in which the invitation was received, that a large number of the members will avail themselves of the opportunity thus afforded for visiting our fellow-colonists in the island continent.

## THE INDEPENDENT PRESS.

We have in this country too little independent journalism; but we have some. Fortunately for us there are a few papers which are not bound to support any party, but are free to commend or to condemn. But it is one thing to be independent, and quite another thing to seem so. Most men have a strong political bias. To them the policy of their own party is either wholly or mainly right, while that of their opponents is either wholly or mainly wrong. The journal which is perfectly impartial, if any can arrive at that ideal stage, is sure to be considered by most men of either party as favoring their opponents. If a journal which purports to be independent refuses to express an opinion on a matter of great public importance, it is justly condemned by all as a guide who withholds his guidance when it is most needed. If it is true to its principles, it is accused by one party of taking sides against it.

But the vast majority of our papers are pitiable examples of blind and unscrupulous partizanship. Often setting out with the best intentions, they become the mouth-piece of an individual or a clique, and from that day they deal out mis-statement and captious argument, in their fanatical zeal for party. The press, as it exists in many cities of England and the Continent, is really a great educative agency, and a guide to the intelligent discharge of the duties of citizenship. But the party press, as we have it so commonly on this continent, is a noxious weed, spreading the seeds of error among its readers. Were the organs of the Government or the Opposition the only journals published, political morality would be vastly lower than it is even now; for unthinking attack and unhesitating defense of political measures, are alike productive of evil. It is, then, the province of the independent, non-partizan journal to counteract the effects of an unscrupulous party press; and there can be no doubt that it is accomplishing its noble mission.