

BRITISH BARMAIDS.

There are 120,000 barmaids in England, and at various times sundry folk have dreamed of having a law passed which should prevent the employment of girls as bartenders, says a London letter. But the efforts in this direction have had little public support, partly because an English institution is not easily set aside, and partly because of a general conviction that the girl behind the bar is not necessarily a bad lot. So an attempt in a new direction has been begun on behalf of the barmaid. Instead of being told that she is probably a sinner, or soon will be one, she is merely invited to come and take tea on Sunday afternoon with a woman who doesn't intend to preach to her and who would like to be a good friend, and, to quote her own words, would like "to give her a bit of blue sky to see."

Mrs. Cholmeley, the leader of this new work is wealthy, and one of the honorary workers in the Church Army, the organization with which the Church of England is unintentionally rivalling Gen. Booth's Salvation Army. She has received contributions from the Church Army and from other sources and engaged four or five girls who have been trained as mission workers to help her. The work, of course, makes it necessary that the barmaids should be visited at their places of business, for these girls work from 7 in the morning until half-past 12 at night, and, naturally, Mrs. Cholmeley has found it difficult to enlist women of her own social position to undertake making the rounds of such places. Another drawback is that there are really only about four hours in the day when this work can be attempted, for the girls are too busy with customers from 12 o'clock until 2 or 3 in the afternoon, and even busier all the evening. In spite of these difficulties, Mrs. Cholmeley and her assistants have succeeded in the last six months in visiting 4,000 barmaids and talking with them. They take with them a little letter, inclosed in an envelope, attractively printed and as little like a tract as possible, written simply yet calculated to interest the girl who receives it and to make her think.

Some of the larger public houses employ as many as twenty-five barmaids, and in others the girls are kept busy from morning until night, but in every case the workers try to have a few words with each of them, as well as to hand them the letters. Every letter is signed with Mrs. Cholmeley's name and bears her address, and the girls are told that she is at home every Sunday afternoon and will be pleased to have them take tea with her whenever they can. At these teas she sometimes has three or four girls, sometimes only one, more often none. Considering that the girls' only breathing time in the whole week comes on Sunday afternoon and then is only five hours long, it is not strange that Mrs. Cholmeley's little receptions are not better patronized.

Mrs. Cholmeley says that there are many more good barmaids than evil ones. The girls usually enter the business for the simple reason that almost all the other lines open to women are paid so wretchedly that the \$2.50 a week, with meals, that barmaids receive seems like a fortune. Then, there is nothing degrading about the work, for every barmaid is called

ed "Miss." In their visits, Mrs. Cholmeley and her girls have discovered four barmaids who were formerly teachers in Sunday schools, and several who keep a little box on the bar and make men who swear in their presence drop into it a penny whenever they offend. One girl collected \$4, and sent it to a charity fund.

As for the girls the great majority of them would leave in a moment if they could make as much money elsewhere in a more elevated calling. The hours are terribly long; they are obliged to stand all through them. There is dirty work to be done in the morning, sometimes insults to put up with, and always the temptation to drink. Mrs. Cholmeley says fewer of them yield to this temptation than would be expected. The girls are usually related to the proprietor or his friends and some of them enter the business as early as the age of 14. They find their husbands in the public houses. If they don't get married and retire they die young, the result of the hard work and long hours. At least, that was what the girls said when asked what became of the old barmaids.

What Mrs. Cholmeley hopes to accomplish eventually she hardly knows. Her ideal is, finally, to divide the city of London up into districts and enlist women workers enough to look after the girls rather carefully, in case any of them is ill or in trouble, then to find a woman of some prestige in each of those districts who would receive the girls on Sunday or whenever they could come and counsel them if they needed it. At present \$5,000 has been spent in the work.

Bits of Femininity.

In the transparent yokes of the newest gowns there is no apparent shoulder seam.

Buttons set with real gems are the correct thing if one can afford them.

Separate waists, and not "blouses," are what fashion dictates for spring.

Palm leaves bid fair to rival the ever-popular polka dot for foulards, India silks and challies.

Black and silver is a coming popular combination.

Separate belts are no longer good form, as everything now savors of the princesse effect.

Red tulle, spangled with red paillettes, is likely to become exceedingly popular for evening frocks.

A lattice work of jets, beads or jewels, which, unlined, is used to cover arms and shoulders, is a late novelty for waists for the theatre or semi-formal occasions.

"Mitten sleeves" done in fine shirred chiffon, will be used to the exclusion of gloves this coming season, it is promised.

Don't Throw Away Your Ribbons.

Clean colored ribbons that are only slightly soiled after this method: Fill a glass fruit jar about half full of gasoline and place the soiled ribbons in the jar. Screw the cover on tightly and leave it closed for about six hours, shaking occasionally. Take out the ribbons and hang them to dry in the air, until all odor has been removed. Be careful not to get the gasoline near a lighted stove or lamp, as it is explosive.

To wash white ribbons prepare a suds of soft water and white soap, wash the ribbons in this and allow them partially to dry. Take each ribbon while still damp and roll it smoothly over a card or piece of pasteboard, rolling a strip of muslin with it. Wrap the muslin around it last, so that the ribbon will be covered and place the whole under a heavy weight. Leave until dry.

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To Clean Old Portraits.

If people knew what an easy task it is to clean portraits and oil paintings, they would never let them hang black and colorless on their walls. In nine cases out of ten pictures painted by the last generation of artists, owned by private collectors or individuals, have almost entirely lost their beauty by being coated with dirt and smoke. Either of the following methods can be used by any careful person without fear of injury to the picture, and in many cases can restore its surface to its original freshness and brilliancy of color.

As this is the simplest method, it is well to try it first. Take the picture from its frame and lay it on a large table, face upward. Have a bowl of tepid water and a good-sized sponge in readiness. Peel a large white potato and cut it in half. Then, with the sponge and water go carefully over the entire surface of the picture. In case it is badly cracked, as so many old paintings are, let the sponge be fairly dry, for, if the water should ooze under the paint it might crack more. Now, take the potato, and with the smooth side go over the entire surface while it is wet. Do not scrub hard, as that is apt to stretch the canvas and necessitates its being taken off the stretcher. The potato should move in a circular motion, which should be kept up until the canvas is in a lather. The dirt will soon begin to soften and make the lather quite black. Keep rubbing until all the spots and stains disappear, and then wash carefully and very thoroughly with tepid water and the sponge.

Unless the dust has been varnished in, a picture will usually readily respond to this treatment, but in case it will not, the following method is almost sure to give the desired result:

Double a heavy blanket twice and sprinkle it freely with alcohol; then turn the picture in its frame face downward over it. The fumes of the alcohol will soon begin to rise and loosen the dirt; it will also clarify the varnish and give it the appearance of having been just applied. The picture should be kept over the alcohol until all the spots have disappeared from its surface and left it fresh and bright in color. The portrait should then be sponged with tepid water and placed where it will dry slowly. Never use any soap on an oil painting. It may remove the dirt, but the chemicals in it are sure to do damage, though the immediate result may be very pleasing. Many a good picture has been ruined by soap and a scrubbing brush.

After a picture has been cleaned it should be varnished with picture varnish. This should be applied with a bristle brush. Pour a little varnish on the picture and spread it quickly, being careful not to go over the same place twice. Sometimes the varnish will "creep," but by breathing on the canvas and then following quickly with the brush, it can be made to adhere. The picture should be left flat on a table until the varnish is dry.

In case the canvas has become loose on the stretcher it should be restricted by a person who understands the handling of canvas, as this requires a professional hand.

The care of pictures is a thing that

few people understand. Hot rooms, gas, dust, smoke and steam heat are all the enemies of pictures. More often than not they attack them from the back. A picture will often have the appearance of being in perfect condition from the front side, when the back has been almost entirely destroyed by moths or some form of decay. This may be prevented by coating the back of the canvas with a thin wash of white lead.

Little Language Slips.

A teacher in a famous eastern college for women has prepared for the benefit of her students the following list of "words, phrases and expressions to be avoided."

Set a watch on your lips, and if you are accustomed to making these "slips" try to substitute the correct expression. But don't be content with that alone.

Learn why the preferred expression is correct, and this of itself will so fix it in your mind that you will soon use it unconsciously.

"Guess" for "suppose" and "think."

"Fix" for "arrange" or "prepare."

"Ride" for "drive" interchangeably.

"Real" as an adverb, in expressions such as "real" good for "really" good.

"Some" or "any" in adverbial sense; for example, "I have studied some" for "somewhat," "I have not studied any" for "at all."

"Some" ten days for "about" ten days.

Not "as" I know for "that" I know.

"Try" an experiment for "make" an experiment.

Singular subjects with contracted plural verb; for example: "She don't skate well" for "she doesn't skate well."

"Expect" for "suspect."

"First rate" as an adverb.

"Right away" for "immediately."

"Party" for "person."

"Promise" for "assure."

"Posted" for "informed."

Just "as soon" for just "as lief."

Proper Age to Marry.

At what age a girl should marry has been the theme for innumerable discussions. Many contend that she should never think of taking the all-important step until she has reached the more or less mature age of twenty-five, while others insist that the earlier she is settled the better.

When it is all averaged it will be found that a girl is happiest when she marries at the right time, and the right time is when she has found the right man.

Of course the custom of hurrying little girls into matrimony when they have reached the age of sixteen or seventeen is out of the question. Still there are many girls at twenty more fit to be married than some at twenty-five.

The rule does not always work well in one direction, and the modern, well-educated, self-reliant maid does well to marry when she finds the right man. A good husband will help even a very young girl, to make a success of marriage, but a girl of the old-fashioned type runs a great risk of making a mistake, both in her choice of a husband and in the matter of marrying at all, if she marries before twenty-five.