

HAIR-DYE FOR WORKMEN.

Effort to Use It in Order to Keep Up in the Race with the Young.

There is now going on a mighty struggle which is almost essentially a question of age. Yet it is one which affects thousands and thousands of men and women who are toilers and bread-winners.

On all sides preference is given by employers to youth over more advanced years. Absalom, in the vigor of his juvenility, is content to receive twenty to thirty per cent less money than his more mature rival. In wholesale warehouses, in public companies, in retail establishments, in the street, on the road and the rail, men and women who are still hale and hearty in mind and body have been set adrift to make room for the younger—and cheaper—generation. They are willing to work for the same wage, but the masters will have none of them.

In their distress they turn to a comforter—not to the work-house, if they can avoid so doing; not to the charitable institutions, not the trades union, but to Figaro himself, the perquisite, the hairdresser, the barber. The amount of hair-dye used by artisans and laborers of all sorts is not only enormous, but increases day by day. It is not vanity which impels them to the practice, it is life, for which it is well worth dyeing.

The testimony on the subject is undeniable. A knight of the razor in the north of London testifies that he is doing a tremendous trade in hair-dye with working-men for the reasons given above. "They take it home," he said, "and get their wives to lay it on. In many cases it is an absolute necessity with female employes. Proprietors of big millinery establishments won't have women with gray hair on the premises.

"You've no idea what misery I've been aware of in families from gray hair. I knew a man, a father of six children. All of a sudden, from ill-luck I think his hair whitened, and he took the earliest opportunity of giving him the sack, and getting a younger man in his place. He couldn't obtain another situation anywhere, and the more trouble he had the older he looked. At last, when he was at his wife's end, some one told him to get his hair dyed, and, what's more, lent him the money to have it done. Well, he's got another place. It's less money; but you'd hardly know him again. I've seen scores like him. Your young folk may sneer at dye and crack jokes on the subject, but as true as I'm not a Dutchman it's been the salvation of many hard-working men and women." A lady dealing in human hair near St. Pancras, when sounded on the subject, admitted the practice, and allowed that she dealt very largely in dye, nearly all vended to those earning their living in large commercial establishments.

The same tale was repeated by one who did a good deal of traffic in this way with ladies of the theatrical persuasion. "Lor' bless you," he exclaimed, "without hair-dye some of those women would be nowhere. What would you say, if you was a manager, if a girl with gray locks came to you and wanted an engagement? I expect you'd show her the door pretty quickly. I'm not talking of those vain young females who turn black to gold or red to brown. I mean the character of thirty-five to forty, still good looking, but who is beginning to show the powder puff on her head. There isn't one, there isn't twenty, there isn't a hundred, but I'd like to bet there's a thousand or more in the United Kingdom. Their great-grandmothers had to wear wigs; their descendants are a deal more comfortable with a little harmless coloring matter on their own hair." And so the story runs ad infinitum.—London Telegraph.

"Old Hickory" Was Tough.

Traveler in a sparsely settled region in Tennessee (coming down with red eyes to breakfast)—You say, madam, General Jackson once slept in the bed I occupied last night?

Aged landlady of country tavern—He did, for a fact.

Traveler—Was it—or—the same bed in all respects it is now?

Aged landlady—Jes' the same.

Traveler—And he actually slept in it? Sure he slept?

Aged landlady—Sartin'. That's what I was sayin'. He slept in it.

Traveler (wonderingly)—What a side he must have had!—Chicago Tribune.

Happy by Comparison.

"Hello, McGlania, you look blue. What is the matter?"

"Matter enough. Boll on the back of my neck."

"By George, old fellow, I sympathize with you!"

"But you are not looking remarkably cheerful yourself. Whackster, why thing wrong with you?"

"My wife is cleaning house."

(Sorrowfully.) "Thank Heaven for my bed!"—Chicago Tribune.

SUICIDE BY HARA-KIRI.

Story of an Eye-Witness to the Ghastly Japanese Punishment.

Hara-kiri as a legal form of punishment has been abolished in Japan for about twenty-five years. Prior to that time a class of political offenders of high rank or title were allowed the choice of the headsman's sword or suicide. This was a concession to caste that was meant to remove the disgrace of an execution at the hands of the law. "Hara-kiri" signifies "cut-belly" or, if the words are arranged as in the Japanese term, "belly-cut." The usual method of self-murder contemplated by hara-kiri was for the victim to drive a long, broad and very sharp blade into his abdomen and draw it across his body in a manner that would disembowel him. Instant death was usually the result.

An officer in the army of one of the feudal princes was the last person to commit an official hara-kiri. He hated all foreigners with a patriotic bitterness, and in a hot-headed outburst of temper one day ordered his soldiers to fire on some Europeans who were crossing the street. The British Ambassador, Sir Harry Parkes, was on the scene and had a narrow escape, while some were killed. The representatives of the foreign powers demanded the summary punishment of the young officer. The Prince yielded to the demand and the offender was condemned to death. He chose the alternative of hara-kiri. Mr. J. A. R. Walters, a mining engineer of Chicago, then living in Japan, thus tells the story of the execution:

"Representatives of the foreign powers were invited to be present," said Mr. Walters, "and witness the execution. Through the courtesy of a member of the British legation I was one of the witnesses. The execution took place in a large, gloomy, half-lighted Buddhist temple. The ceremony was conducted with the rigid formality and decorum of a religious rite. On one side was the foreigners, pale as ghosts, breathing in gasps and trembling with excitement. The dim light and dank air gave a supernatural, uncanny thrill to the scene. Opposite were the Japanese officials, unflinching as stoics, as unmoved as statues. In front on a low dais was the condemned man. He sat tailor-fashion, bare to the waste, a brawny fellow with muscular arms, and deep-chested as an ox. On a low table near him was a Japanese short-sword with a blade nine or ten inches long and keen as a razor. Behind him stood his best friend—the condemned being allowed to select some one to strike off his head in the event he failed to kill himself and was liable to suffer a prolonged agony before death came. The man was apparently the only agitated native in the temple. The muscles of his face twitched. He clutched the broad sword nervously with both hands, waiting for the moment that should demand his services. "The condemned was the coolest man present. Through an interpreter he said he was not sorry for what he had done for his beloved country. He was proud to give his life for her. He would show the coward foreigners how a Japanese gentleman could die. As he finished his speech he picked up the knife. A moment later he plunged it to the hilt in the left side of his abdomen. He paused an instant, but it seemed an hour to us white-faced, shivering Englishmen, as we held our breaths. Then, with a powerful effort, he pulled the blade across his body, the blood gushing from the long gash in a torrent. Either from pain or purposely, he leaned his head slightly forward. A swish of the sword behind him and his head leaped from the body to the floor in front of him.

"The Japanese had not apparently moved a muscle through all this ghastly scene. A pleasant-voiced dignitary arose and said he hoped he had proved that Japanese justice would be vindicated and asked if the foreign representatives were satisfied. The British Ambassador simply nodded an affirmative and the shuddering witnesses of the hara-kiri hurried with bloodless features into the open air.

"I was long haunted by that dread scene, and ever and anon it would rise before me—the dark and gloomy temple, the impassive Japanese, the awe-stricken foreigners, and, above all, the faces of the principal actors, the condemned man and his closest friend; the one calmly content, even proud to give up his life, the other crouching behind him, watching with a deadly intensity, pale and anxious, fearful, perhaps, of bungling at the supreme moment. It looms up clearly before me yet, although years have gone by."—Chicago News.

PERSONAL AND IMPERSONAL.

—Lewis Minthort of Shawano, Wis., is the father of twelve children. He has the distinction of being the father of a family composed entirely of triplets.

—There is a man in Warren's who has a mania for whistling all the latest tunes. He has whistled so much that he has blown the center of his mustache away, and it only grows at the corners of his mouth.—Waikanae (Mass.) Free Press.

Historical Illustrations of the Influence of Man's Initiative Faculty.

Within ten days after the suicide of a man in a full-dress suit in this city three similar cases were reported in other parts of the country, and doubtless others will follow as a result of these. The influence of morbid imitation in causing what seem to be epidemics of crime against the person or property of others is equally potent in determining not only the number but the character or method of suicidal crime.

The murderous criminal, whether suicidal or homicidal, is invariably one in whom appetite and instinct—the essentially animal qualities—predominate over the will; in whom reason and judgment are subordinate to imagination and impulse. He is the result of an imperfect human development which favors and fosters an abnormal development of the mimetic faculty, shared in common with the monkey by uncultivated, uneducated man. Students of this class of crime have accumulated multitudes of illustrations of the influence of the mimetic faculty. In his "Anatomy of Suicide" Dr. Winslow furnishes a curious collection—among them the following:

"Some years ago a man hanged himself on the threshold of one of the doors of the corridor at the Hotel des Invalides. No suicide had occurred in the establishment for two years previously, but in the succeeding fortnight five invalids hanged themselves on the same corridor, and the governor was obliged to shut up the passage."

Lecky, in his history of European Morals, recounts among the epidemics of purely insane suicides that strange mania which raged in the Neapolitan districts from the end of the fifteenth to the end of the seventeenth century, the victims of which "thronged in multitudes toward the sea, and often, as the blue waters opened to their view, they chanted a wild hymn of welcome and rushed with passion into the waves." An epidemic of mimetic suicide occurred among the women of Miletus, who killed themselves in great numbers because their husbands and lovers were detained by the wars. This epidemic, like a similar one among the women of Lyons, was only checked by an order that the bodies of all suicides should be dragged naked through the streets and exposed in the public market-places.

If the dress-suit suicide continues to grow in popularity it may be necessary to check it by threatening to expose the bodies of its victims in unfashionable and badly-fitting garments. This seems to be about the only kind of argument that will appeal to intellects of the dress-coat type.—Chicago News.

MR. JARDINE'S PATIENCE.

A Man's Experience in a Modern Dry-Goods Establishment.

"My dear," said young Mrs. Jardine to her husband the other morning, "would you mind running into Plush and Sattin and getting me a half yard more of chenille cord like this sample? It won't take but a moment, and I'm so anxious to finish this cushion to-night."

So Jardine, giving himself five minutes extra time to catch his homeward train, "runs in" to the two-and-half-acre establishment of Plush and Sattin's that evening, and asks the first sales-duchess he meets—

"Have you chenille cord like this?"

"Fourth-counter—to—the—left," she replies, without interrupting for an instant her gum diet.

"Have you cord like this?" asks Jardine, at the fourth counter.

"Next counter."

"I would like half a yard of chenille cord like this," he says at the "next counter."

"You'll find it on the floor above, in the upholstery department; take elevator to the left."

He doesn't wait for the elevator, but goes galloping up the stairs, and blunders wildly around until he finds the upholstery department.

"Half a yard of fringe like this, as quick as you can, please."

"You'll find it down stairs in the fancy goods department."

Down-stairs goes Jardine, with set teeth, his breath coming in short, quick gasps.

"Where's the fancy goods department?" he asks in deep bass tones of a floor-walker.

"Four counters to the left—wall counter."

"I want half a yard of fringe like—"

"You'll have to go to the worsteds counter for it—third counter to left from main entrance."

Pale and panting, with a steely, murderous gleam in his usually laughing eyes, Jardine appears at the worsteds counter.

"Half a yard of cord like that," he says, fiercely.

"Have we cord like this, Miss Miggs?" asks the saleslady, indignantly, of a partner in iniquity, who draws out:

"Naw, I sold the last of it just this minute. He might find it down-stairs, in the—"

But Jardine is tearing through the streets, gnashing his teeth as he runs, hoping to catch a train that is already half a mile from the station; and the next one doesn't go for forty-five minutes.—Puck.

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