

Men and Women.

AN amusing letter has been received by the Fulham Guardians from a penniless but aspiring bachelor, who at present resides at Lord Rowton's Model Lodging House at Vauxhall. It is as follows:—'Gentlemen,—I take the liberty of writing to you, but the fact is I am trying to emigrate to the Chilly Island, where a good opening is offered for one willing to work; but you must be married. Have you in charge any woman from 20 to 35 years, or widow, who would marry me and go out there. Small family not objected to. Have good references, willing and strong, and thoroughly understand farming. The passage is free from Liverpool. I have no money now, been out of work these three months, since coming away from the country. Should like to call if you have anyone that would likely suit me. I am 35 years age, single, educated, and of a good family of farmers in the country. An early answer will oblige, as everything has to be done within three weeks or a month.'

An extremely romantic match came off lately at West Brompton, England, the bride being the Marquise Hery de St. Denys and the bridegroom M. Jacques de Warn, the Duc de Luyne coming over to see fair play. The Marquise, though no longer in the bloom of youth, is one of the most attractive women in Paris. She is the daughter of Baron Ward, whose career is an illustration of the adage that 'truth is stranger than fiction.' The Baron began life as a Yorkshire stable boy and ultimately became Prime Minister of the last reigning Duke of Parma. She married some years ago an amiable and erudite French Orientalist. The Comte de Warn strongly objected to her re-marriage with his son, and put into force all the terrible powers which the French law confers upon a father. The found couple therefore crossed the Channel, and were united under the British flag.

A Russian artel is an association of persons who agree to throw their lot together and stand by each other for better or for worse. If the artel is 'productive,' the members work together and divide equally what money they earn; if it is 'consumptive' they share equally in the expense incurred. The most marked characteristic of these associations is the perfect equality which prevails among their members. No matter what may be a man's personal gifts or deficiencies, from the moment he enters an artel he is simply on a par with his comrades. He must bear the burdens they bear, and he receives the same rewards. In his turn he will be the artelman, or chief of his artel; in his turn, too, he will be its hewer of wood and drawer of water. As the former he will be neither richer nor poorer than as the latter, for the only emolument attached to the office of artelman is shoe money—that is, a small sum granted as a compensation for the shoes worn out while tramping about transacting official business.

Ingenuous girls in the Old Country are adding greatly to their little means in a variety of ways. Many women make lampshades for their friends or to sell at shops. One girl makes fichus which she sells for a guinea, making on each a profit of five shillings. Another girl who is in great want of the money, makes it by manufacturing delicious desert sweeties which she sells among a friendly *cicentille* at two shillings a pound, which leaves a good profit. They are quite as good as and much cheaper than those supplied by the shops, and often she goes to dinner parties at the houses of friends to whom she has on the same day sold the sweets with which the table is decorated.

The Americans are very prompt and thorough in their methods of remedying public evils, and the Cincinnati Legislature was determined not to be left behind when the papers were crying out for some measure to suppress the 'matinee hat.' Afternoon performances are more frequent in the American theatres than in England, and the American woman's millinery is somewhat more extensive. The consequence is that a considerable proportion of the audience of a matinee in a theatre in the United States gets mere occasional and accidental glimpses of the stage. The Cincinnati legislators have passed an act by which any theatre manager who allows a lady's hat of more than a fixed size to be worn in his theatre will be liable to a fine of ten dollars for every such hat worn! London managers should take warning.

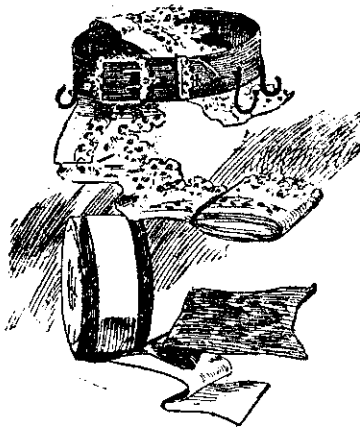
It would surprise you to find how many of the poorer classes have tastes of the highest culture. Go to such a classic place as the People's Palace when they are giving a oratorio like 'St. Paul' or 'Judas Maccabeus' and you will find dozens of shabbily-dressed East-enders, tailors, bootmakers, dockers even, who are following the music with the most intense appreciation and enjoyment. Some will be provided with well-thumbed copies of the score, and the whole audience will compare most favourably with any of the learned music-lovers of the Albert Hall or the Philharmonic. Some of the most enthusias-

tic botanists and naturalists in London are men who would be glad to be earning their regular pound a week, and one often comes across ardent microscopists, amateur astronomers, geologists, etc., in the most unexpected districts in the slums. Students of political economy are quite common, and on any Sunday morning you may hear on Mile-end Waste arguments as cogent as were ever given forth by an Adam Smith or a Ricardo. Classical literature has its votaries, too, among the very poor, as any East End librarian can tell you. Many of the most assiduous readers of Latin and Greek authors in the original are men who (after perhaps a University education) have failed in the battle of life, and who find in these works, the friends of their youth, a solace and companionship elsewhere denied them.

'Don't believe all you read in English papers about the gaiety of the opera balls in Paris,' writes a correspondent in *To-day*. 'I went there on Saturday night, or, to be precise, Sunday morning, for the first time after a lapse of a dozen years. You have often said, my dear Major, that things were changing for the worse in Paris. You are right. Saturday's ball was miles behind Covent Garden, and even that God-forsaken, police-ridden place, Brussels, can do the thing as well. There were a few Pierrots and clowns and soldiers, and certainly many of the women wore pretty costumes. But the women simply asked for champagne after every dance, and when I stood outside in a sleety morning, searching in vain for a cab, where I might bury away the shame of being in some ridiculous and impossible costume. I reflected on what England would say if it saw me. I am writing you these reflections on Sunday afternoon with a splitting headache.'

INGENUITY OF SHOPLIFTERS.

MANY shoplifters have been able to ply their nefarious trade for years, successfully escaping detection and arrest. Most of them are workmen, and ordinarily they are clothed with garments provided with pockets ample enough to take in a whole bolt of silk without betraying its presence. A common device is a belt around the waist provided with hooks, on which



HOOKED GARTER OF A SHOPLIFTER.

the stolen merchandise may be hung under the folds of the skirt of the dress. The other day a shoplifter was arrested by a detective in a New York dry goods store on suspicion, and when searched fine lace and ribbons by the yard were found hanging on hooks cleverly fastened to her garter.

ILLUMINATION.

ABOUT eighteen years ago Edison produced the electric light as known to-day from a dynamo machine, and people stared in wonder at the sight. Now electric lights are among the commonest things in use, and little village streets all over the country are brightened by them. Humphrey Davy, however, produced a carbon electric light in 1802.

Before the electric lights came into general use, gas was supreme, and yet gas is a modern invention. Coal-gas for illuminating purposes celebrates its centenary this year, but it was not introduced into London until 1807, and it was many years later before it was widely adopted. Moscow was not lighted with gas until the latter part of 1866. Previous to gas people went about at night with lanterns and torches. In 1415 suspended lanterns were placed in the streets of London, in order to relieve the darkness. These lanterns had glass sides; but the first lantern, as they were called, was invented by Alfred of England, and scraped horn was used instead of glass.

Lamps are very old, and were originally manufactured of earthenware. Epictetus, the philosopher, had such a lamp, which sold after his death for three thousand drachmas.

Oil was burned in lamps during the time of Abraham, and the olden nations used them extensively. They were very curious affairs, though, and would not be of much use to day, or rather to-night; but those old-time folks used to go to bed so early that they never minded such things.

The Romans used candles, which were made of a string dipped in wax or pitch, while splinters of wood with fat were used by the lower classes in England in 1300. Wax candles were very expensive, and people a century or so ago used to make their own candles or 'dips' from tallow. The Chinese have candles of wax made from the berry of a tree.

Plays and Players.

IT is stated that at the time of the opening of the 'Tribby' Company in Sydney most of the American members had played their parts 390 times.

The Myra Kemble complimentary matinee, at Sydney Lyceum, was crowded to the top steps everywhere.

Few men who write plays have any eloquence in oratory, and most of the men who write plays are entirely destitute of commanding presence. Henry Arthur Jones is a little man, with a red beard, who looks like a green-grocer. Arthur W. Pinero has the appearance of a bad actor in a cheap company. Victorien Sardou is a small, grotesque man, the personification of aches, pains and dyspepsia. The author of 'Tribby' looks like a priest in a good parish. Henry Guy Carleton is a stocky, square-built fellow who stutters. Augustus Thomas seems like a cross between a prize-fighter and a stage villain. Sydney Rosenfield is an eccentric-looking person who wears eye-glasses and never combs his hair. Clyde Fitch is a 'naucyified' fellow, and Sir Augustus Harris is cocky and intolerable.

An enterprising New York theatre manager, by the way, recently hit on a clever device for filling the boxes from a 'free list.' He provided himself with several arms, some of bare wax with a long white glove encircled at the wrist with a brilliant imitation diamond bracelet, and others clad in a black cloth sleeve with shirt cuff, with diamond links and white-gloved hand. These were placed in position, protruding on to the cushioned ledge of the boxes nearest the stage from behind a corner curtain to suggest the existence of a well dressed lady or a man in evening dress sitting in the corner of the box facing the stage. An attendant has to withdraw the arms when the curtain falls and the light is turned on in the auditorium and replace them in a different position directly the next Act begins, when the light is turned down and the illusion is again complete.

Madame Sarah Bernhardt (says an American contemporary) returns to us as attractive and no older than ever before. One of her country-women, who has lately been drawing large audiences to a music-hall, has attempted to cast reflections on Madame Sarah by giving a mathematical computation of how old she must really be; but in a case like Madame Sarah's mathematics are at least misleading. She is no older than her art makes her, and to-day, so far as the audience is concerned, she convinces of her youth as well as, and perhaps better, than she did twenty-five years ago. To be sure, she has the advantage of a slight figure. Age has added no perceptible substantiality to Madame Sarah's proverbial thinness, therefore, when as Izezy, she clings, fondles, and entwines with the affectionate ardour of youth, there is no mark, no suspicion of age to spoil the picture. The grace of youth is still hers, the fire of genius is in her blood, and no matter what her history nor what her eccentricities, Madame Sarah Bernhardt must always remain in our recollections of things artistic, a genius. Of the play in which she first appeared, the least said perhaps the better. It is a tale of Christ and the Magdalene put back in scene and time to the realms of Buddha.

Rev. Charles Clarke (says the *Bulletin*), who has put on a little flesh and added to the fullness of his beautiful voice since his last visit, will give the last of four lectures at Melbourne Town Hall next Saturday (16th). It was hard for the eloquent discourses to appear better than ever, yet he achieved that feat the other evening. Mr Clarke has brought a couple of new lectures for this flying trip through Australia, and the new yarns are about equal to the old ones, which age cannot wither, nor custom stale.

The 'Johnnie' school of theatrical entertainment in which New York indulges so copiously and for which it pays its English importations so generously, has its latest exemplar in 'An Artist's Model,' at the Broadway Theatre. This is a piece in which singing, dancing, and attractive British femininity figure more than brains or art. In this case the elimination of the two latter elements is carried to a point which makes the whole affair deadly stupid.

Some of the Christchurch leading theatrical amateurs are very busy rehearsing Sardou's Comedy, 'A Scrap of Paper,' which they intend to put on at the Theatre Royal in June in aid of St. Mary's Home, Addington. Mrs H. E. Marsh (*nee* Miss Rose Seager) takes a leading part, which of course means success, and Mrs J. Gibbs, Miss Henry, Messrs Marsh, Alpers, Guise Brittan and some others whose names I have forgotten. Mrs Gibbs is taking a great interest in it, many of the rehearsals being held in her house.

The Wellington Dramatic Students give their services again in the cause of charity, and their performance on Monday evening is in aid of the Society for the Prevention of cruelty to animals. The programme is certainly attractive, and should draw a good house. 'The Chimney Corner' and 'Chisselling' being the double-timed play bill. The latter farce is quite new to a Wellington stage, and therefore will not be familiar to any of those likely to be included in the audience. I hear that the Students contemplate the obtaining and producing of 'Walker London,' which has been such a success in London, and would certainly be warmly patronised here by reason of the fame which has come before it.