

breathing trouble left me and I began to gain strength and flesh. When I had taken three bottles I was as strong as ever, and could eat and enjoy even a dry crust. I have since had good health. You are at liberty to publish this letter and refer all inquirers to me. (Signed) Isaiah Lewis, 124, Walmgate, York, April 8th, 1894.

If the reader wonders how a man could suffer so much, become so emaciated and weak, and be pushed so near the grave's edge through what is sometimes flippantly called 'mere indigestion,' he has yet to learn that the digestion is the arbiter of life and death. The 'crust' (food), enjoyed and digested, means life and strength. Rejected it means the 'stick,' to supplement swift-coming weakness; and then the prone position, when help is vain. Mother Seigel's Syrup enabled Mr Lewis to substitute the crust for the stick. It cured his dyspepsia.

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TOPICS OF THE WEEK

ON BIRTHDAYS.

TO-MORROW Her Gracious Majesty celebrates her birthday, and we her loyal subjects celebrate it too. In fact, I fancy we do most of the celebrating. When mortals reach the age that the Queen has attained they are not as a rule apt to be demonstrative over the fact that they have passed another milestone on the journey of life; and in spite of all the glory and devotion that surrounds her, the ruler of this great Empire must feel very much as other mortals do in this matter. Most of us long before we get even into the sixties are quite content that others should keep our birthdays for us. If they wish to show their affection for us in that way it is all very pleasant, no doubt, for us, and we cannot but feel grateful, but what reason is there after all that we should join in a celebration that serves to remind us most strongly how we are nearing the final goal? 'Eheu! fugaces labuntur anni.' I know your birthday gifts and your birthday good wishes are well meant, my dear friend, but much as I treasure them as proofs



"pass yourself off as much younger than you really are."

of your regard for, or it may be devotion to me, they are unpleasant reminders, and I am not so sure that I would not rather be without them. That is how I feel, and if I do not greatly mistake others feel the same. They would willingly see the anniversary of their birth pass by unnoticed, for when it has done so for a few years consecutively the chances are that your friends begin to lose count of your age, and you can by imputation pass yourself off as much younger than you actually are; whereas if you encourage these celebrations you inevitably publish abroad the very fact that you wish to conceal. Here is one circumstance that should reconcile average men and women—especially women—to the comparative obscurity of their lives. They can with little difficulty keep their ages a profound secret. This persons in exalted positions can never hope to do. In vain would Her Majesty, for instance, seek to conceal the fact that she is now eighty years of age by making a wrong return in the census paper, as so many of her subjects have done. The office boy in the census office would discover the royal weakness. Or, to descend from these high places, how useless would it be for Lord Salisbury or Mr Chamberlain to keep their respective ages secret. The latter has a wonderful appearance of cheating time. He dresses and looks like a comparatively young man, they say, but all the world knows that Joe was born sixty-three years ago, and that according to the Psalmist's computation he has only some seven years before he touches the allotted span of life. We commonplace, obscure individuals are spared these revelations concerning ourselves, and if we can only keep a young face by help of cosmetics, and a light heart by means of stimulants, we may pass as giddy youngsters far into the fifties.

THE PEACE CONFERENCE.

THERE is good reason in the determination to keep secret the details of the proceedings of the Peace Conference, which is now sitting at the Hague, and to publish only the resolutions arrived at. However much these resolutions may assist the ultimate triumph of peace, it is very possible that the deliberations of the delegates, if made known, would not entirely tend in that direction. For, after all, the delegates are like men habitually used to go armed cap-a-pie, who have only laid aside their armour for the time, and are certain even while they are talking peace to be thinking war. I fancy, therefore, the Conference will not be all that its name would imply, and that there will be, metaphorically speaking, an instinctive tendency on the part of the delegates to clap their hands to their empty scabbards. This was no doubt the fear which was in the minds of those who expressed some apprehension lest the result of the Conference might have the very opposite effect to what was intended and hoped. The secrecy of the proceedings certainly lessens that risk very much; but it is still not inconceivable that the meeting will break up with the delegates in a much less amiable frame of mind. In the narrow circle of domestic life, conferences to ensure a more peaceful understanding among the members of the family are frequently the reverse of successful, and so I cannot help thinking that may be the case in regard to this international family gathering. At least, I would not be inclined to prophesy sanguinely concerning it. The probability is that the end of it will be a bundle of sounding resolutions worth practically nothing until translated into fact. Is this not about all one can expect from a gathering of men who have met to cry peace, peace, when there is no peace? Yet we may be mistaken, and it may come to pass that radiating from that little circle at the Hague there may be spread abroad in circles ever-widening, to the very ends of the earth, the more humane instincts and impulses of mankind till

Lie like a shaft of light across the land, And like a lane of beams athwart the sea.

AN ENVIABLE CALLING.

CHILDHOOD is modest in its ambitions. In my early years I know I was quite content with two careers which I had sketched out for myself. The one was to be the proprietor of a lollie shop, or if that were impossible, an employee therein; the other was to be a bus driver, or, better still, the driver of a locomotive engine. Fate has decreed that up to the present at least neither of these early hopes should be fulfilled. I don't know what may be in store for me in the future; but with that strange 'hardening of the heart' that brings irrever-



"The life of a professional cricketer appears to be a particularly enviable one."

ence for the dreams of youth, I have really no ambitions in the old direction. If fame and fortune are to be won I shall seek it in other fields less alluring to the youthful imagination, no doubt, but as a rule much more

productive of solid advantage. And yet I confess that there are times when I feel attracted from the sober paths of everyday breadwinning. For example, at the present moment I own to a feeling of regret that I did not take up cricketing as a profession. The life of a professional cricketer appears to me to be a particularly enviable one, and by no means onerous. There is pleasure, fame and money in it. As compared with the average, nay, even the most successful novelist or poet, the crack cricketer has a glorious time of it. If it is a question of amusement the latter has certainly more fun handling his bat than the poor scribe has driving his quill. If it is a matter of money—well, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred—I fancy you will find the cricketer makes the better bargain with Mammon. And as for fame, what novelist could hope to have his latest achievements trumpeted in the ends of the earth by the cable man as the doing of the Australian men in England? Popularity! Why even Kipling is not in it with Iredale or Gregory and the rest of them. I happened on one occasion to be speaking with one of those demi-gods of the cricket field—an Australian who had been chosen to go to England with a crack team and went. I don't understand how he ever descended to speak with me at all, but I suppose great minds must occasionally unbend, and I had met him in a weak moment. Shall I ever forget the way in which he painted the privileges of a boss cricketer on tour. A royal progress was nothing to the receptions these lucky dogs enjoyed. My teeth positively water at the recital, and I vowed then and there that if ever I had a son and heir I would make him a professional cricketer; that from the cradle he should have no other plaything than a bat, and that his study and his playground should be a cricket pitch. I do not see why I might not in that way launch the boy in a profession where he would reap both fame and money combined to an extent he could look for in few other avenues, and I myself might also shine with his reflected glory and be pointed out by an admiring populace as the father of the great cricketer X.

THE SUNDAY NEWSPAPER.

THE Sunday newspaper, though a firmly established institution in the United States, is not likely yet awhile to get its standing in other Anglo-Saxon communities. Only the other day two of the most enterprising of English journals, the London 'Daily Telegraph' and the 'Daily Mail,' started a Sunday edition, but their action evoked such an outcry that the 'Mail' has seen fit to discontinue the practice. As a newspaper man, and not a newspaper proprietor who may hold very different opinions, I am very glad that the innovation received little encouragement. I sincerely trust that colonial newspapers will be slow to imitate the American journals in the matter of Sunday editions. At the same time I am afraid that the prejudice against a Sunday newspaper will never be so strong here as it is in the Old Country, where in many families the mere reading of a Saturday newspaper on Sunday was looked upon as a most sinful and reprehensible diversion. Among Presbyterians particularly this feeling was very life. In Scotland, for instance, the stronghold of Presbyterianism, the newspaper held an honoured place in the family circle during six days in the week; but on the Sabbath it was regarded with quite another eye. Had it been printed in the infernal regions and edited by the Prince of Darkness himself, it could scarcely have been treated with such scant courtesy. The flavour of secularism which cling to it was intolerable to the pious mind, and for it to be in evidence at all was looked on as something almost immoral. Consequently, it was always hidden away beneath the sofa, or somewhere out of view, and it was only by an oversight that always culled down a stern reprimand on the offender that you ever came across a newspaper in a Presbyterian household on Sunday. How fallen from that high standard are our colonial Presbyterians. Am I right when I say that the secular newspaper jostles the Bible and ousts a great deal of special religious literature from the table? I am not all certain that a Sunday newspaper would meet with the same opposition here that it has encountered at Home, and as a poor