THE OLD ENGLISH INN.

The typical old English inn was at its very best when "Pickwick" burst upon a delighted world. It had come gradually into existence as a byword for comfort and generous hospitality, during a period of about 130 years, and by about 1832 had attained full perfection. The reason for the growth of inns during that period, you ask. The growth was due to the rise of the coaching era. Soon after 1700 the age of coaching may be said to have begun, and travelling by stage coach, and afterwards by mail, by degrees brought life upon many a road once lonely, necessitating in turn accommodation for weary travellers. In 1825 opened the golden age of coaching, and great was the prosperity which attended it until the 'forties, when railways quenched road travel and ruined many a fine old inn. Travellers in those days still merited their name, which, deriving as it does from "travailleur," indicates something of the difficulties and perils of getting about in what some people still style the "good old times," and when they came to their inns they not only sought ease, but expected that good and extensive feeding of which they stood in need after many hours' exposure to the open air and possibly to the rigours of severe weather. For these and other reasons our ancesters were the valiant trenchermen we read of in "Pickwick," and, indeed, in the literature of the age in general. We could not, if we tried, compete with them in their feats at table; but we do not make the attempt—we, in fact, think them not a little gross. I do not know where, in these very different days, you would find such monumental sideboards, such stupendous sirloins of beer, or such monstrous cheeses as used to decorate the dining rooms of those old inns; while as for the punch, the rum-and-milk, the port, and the ale which flowed so abundantly, they have dwindled away to very small proportions in the estimates of modern hotel life. What would Mr Pickwick say if he could see the position occupied by mineral and other waters at the modern festive board? Imagination halts aghast at the thought of it.—Mr. C. G. Harper in the "Autocar."

PAT AND THE MONKS.

A gentleman, travelling through one of the country parts of Irelaid, said to his "jarvey":—"Pull up at the next inn Pat; we'll have some refreshment." In the parlour, when asked what he would take to drink, Pat replied:—

"Sure, I'll have the same as yer honor does."

"Well, I'm going to have a glass of chartreuse," said his fare.

"Then I'll have the same, sor," said Pat.

During the waiter's absence the traveller explained to Pat how the liqueur they had ordered was made by the famous monks of Chartreuse. Two tiny liqueur glasses were then placed before them, and Pat disposed of the contents of his in one gulp.

Traveller: "Well, Pat, what do you think of it?"

Pat: "And was that stuff made by the monks?"

Traveller: "Yes, Pat, by the good monks of Chartreuse."

Pat (smacking his lips): "Well, good luck to them monks, says I; but as to the man that made that glass —to h—— wid him."

BISHOP CROSSLEY AND THE DRINK TRAFFIC.

The drink traffic was touched on by Bishop Crossley in the course of a "civic sermon" at St. Mary's Cathedral on Sunday. "The morality of the people of New Zealand," he said, "does not depend on gaols, but upon principles." Illustrating his point, he said that no one could deny that there was urgent need for reform in the drink traffic. He had drawn attention to the need for such reform, and he would continue to do so, although he felt something like the voice crying in the wilderness. There were those who would make the selling of liquor a crime. "I do not believe in the gaol method," said the Bishop. "I acknowledge it is a cure, but I also believe it would be a creator of untold evil on the national principles of our people. Let me point out a better way." His Lordship then once more advocated the open bar, so as to make hotels houses of refreshment, where men could stand at the counters openly in the sight of their fellow-men.

"If all public-houses," he continued, were sheathed in light, many of the evils in connection with the traffic would be reduced. You and I must bear the cost of the alterations that the proprietors would have to make to their buildings to carry out this reform."

The preacher also said he would be favour of some system like the Gothenburg system, under the control of the State. The Gothenburg system provided that food should be sold as well as drink. The manager, under the system, got a heavy percentage on the food and non-alcoholic drinks sold, but received no percentage upon the sale of the alcoholic beverages. This system had been tried with admirable success in England by the Public-house Company.

NOISELESS HOTELS

Dr. Siegmund Auerbach, of Frankfort-on-the-Main, a famous nerve specialist, who recently visited the United States, has been giving American hotel proprietors some advice based on his expert knowledge. He says that there is too much noise in American hotels, and adds that he has written a pamphlet, the title of which he translates as "More Quietness in Hotels—Especially American." "Every hotel in America," says Dr. Auerbach, "claiming to be first-rate should contain a general reading-room in which conversation is strictly forbidden. It must be well separated from any music; in fact, music-rooms as well as concert-halls must be so situated as not to let any sound penetrate to other parts of the house. Care should be taken to avoid, or at least to mitigate, the noise of banging doors by some mechanism similar to pneumatic door shutting. We find a good many people without manners in the most renowned hotels. Such guests as prove a nuisance to everyone else, chiefly during the night by being very noisy, and who won't listen to civil entreaties, should be given notice. All good houses ought to have a black list of those pace-breakers, which would have to be circulated regularly. All such people would thus be excluded from first-class hotels, and would perhaps take the hint and correct their bad manners." Dr. Auerbach goes to extremes in his suggestions. Probably such a hotel as he has in mind would be ideal, but from a practical point of view it would be impossible. For instance, he suggests that guests should be woke by softly ringing bells, and that all windows should be provided with several differently coloured shutters, so as to enable the occupant of a room to darken or lighten same at will. The distinguished doctor puts his finger on the weakest point of American hotels, however, when he says that every one is overheated. As a result of this defect he declares the people of this country are afflicted with all manner of respiratory troubles, as well as nervous ailments and rheumatism. He makes particular note of the apparent lack of ventilation in even the best hotels, and declares that the average American hostelry is a hot-bed of noise and disease.