

## FANCY BAZAARS AND SALES OF WORK.



I HAVE from time to time been present at a variety of fancy bazaars and sales of work, both in and out of London.

In the metropolis there are several chosen spots, where, as a matter of course, one or two are held in the year. The Hanover Square Rooms are no longer available, but the large suite at Willis's are

often in request. A refreshment buffet in the anteroom, flags and flowers wherever they can be placed, and a bevy of titled dames presiding at the stalls, bring an influx of visitors; for English people show an amiable weakness in the matter of aristocratic patronage, and like to be solicited to buy by "My Lady," to say nothing of royalty. I remember well how Princess Christian and Princess Mary of Teck acted as saleswomen for the Royal Cambridge Society, when a bazaar was held at Hampton Court Palace, giving the change for purchases with the rapidity and *aplomb* of experienced shopkeepers. It is needless to say that everybody was anxious to buy of a real princess, and the society benefited accordingly. This, like many such sales near London, developed into a fashionable garden party; refreshments were to be bought, the band was good, and the grounds peculiarly inviting. So when, three or four years ago, the Duchess of Sutherland lent Cliefden for a bazaar in aid of the restoration of Beaconsfield Church, where Edmund Burke was buried, fashionable London poured down to enjoy this charming spot on the banks of the Thames: the chestnuts and pink thorn all one glow of colour, and the famous flower-beds also; glee-singing and conjuring adding to the day's enjoyment.

Royalty often honours with its presence the many fancy sales at both the Riding School belonging to the Duke of Wellington and that attached to the Knightsbridge Barracks, near at hand, as well as those held in many great houses which are only thrown open to the public on such occasions.

Nearly every year the French Embassy at Albert Gate is the *venue* of a sale for French charities, where Frenchwomen of high rank, in perfect toilettes, sell with persevering industry. Many Parisian tradesmen send over pictures, china, enamels, *bijouterie*, and other elegant luxuries, which prove most profitable; and few bazaars are so well managed.

Grosvenor House and Dudley House have been lent for other good objects, the fame of the one and the celebrated pictures in the other proving irresistible attractions. Bazaars in aid of hospitals, and held on

the premises, enable those who patronise them to judge for themselves how much aid is needed. I can call to mind many an afternoon spent beneath the shade of pleasant trees in the grounds of the Incurable Hospital, the patients teaching silent lessons of cheerful patience; and scarcely less interesting have been bazaars at children's hospitals and *crèches*. I am inclined to think many a little sufferer has been helped by visitors, touched by the sorrowful sight of infant suffering and want.

Yet notwithstanding this varied experience, it was not altogether without a momentary misgiving that I found myself in a country-house with the chief management of a bazaar, in aid of a local charity, on my hands.

It is all very well in London to engage a first-rate military band; though nothing, perhaps, would have delighted the neighbourhood more—neither the means nor the money were at hand.

Fine pictures and Parisian articles of *vertu* were equally out of our reach, but we did send to town for some ten shillings' worth of penny toys, which proved a mine of wealth; and induced some tradesmen to send us their wares on the chance of selling, paying only trade price for those we kept. In these we were most successful with new and pretty knickknacks in china, photographs and frames, kitchen wood and tin wares, fancy stationery, and imitation jewellery. We charged a little over the shop prices; and experience proved that trifles which were pretty-looking, and could be turned to some useful purpose, were twice as saleable as any kind of needlework.

The bazaar was to be open two summer afternoons in the park and grounds adjoining the house. Within an enclosure marked out by hurdles, admission to which was charged one shilling, we had three tents—one for refreshments, one for amusements, and one for the actual sale.

In the refreshment tent we sold tea and coffee and iced coffee, ices—which sold out very quickly, for they are not easily to be had in the country—an abundance of fruit and cream and cakes, and bread and butter; but besides these we provided for substantial teas, to which the farmers and their families, who stayed late and made a picnic of it, did full justice. There were plates of fowl and salad, and mayonnaise, meat patties, aspic jellies, and such *recherché* fare as only a good cook can make; and these proved a perfect El Dorado.

The amusement tent was a very large one, in three divisions. One contained an exhibition of fine arts, admission sixpence, including the printed programme, with a very telling list of things—"The Lay of the Last Minstrel," by Scott, R.A.; "The Pillars of Greece," by T. Allows; "Meeting of Wellington and Blucher" (after Waterloo), and some twenty others. On entering, the visitor found a curious collection of articles, carefully numbered—the lay of the last minstrel being an egg, the pillars of Greece tallow candles, and Wellington and Blucher boots represented the two generals.

Next to this was a Richardson's Show, admission

sixpence. It consisted of an amateur conjurer, and a menagerie, with a sheep, a donkey, a dog, and a pig, each described as something wonderful; and in the last division of the tent we had a post-office, a gipsy fortune-teller, a bran-pie, a wheel-of-fortune, and a wedding-cake. The post-office displayed an overhanging drapery of red velvet, with the words "Post Office" in gold paper letters, red curtains from this falling on either side of a table, on which was one of Colman's large-sized mustard-boxes set on end, and also covered with velvet, with a slit in front, through which the letters were passed. The postmistress never left her post, and on the receipt of one shilling and the name of the applicant, all who came received a letter, which, of course, had been written beforehand, wanting only the superscription. They contained many witticisms, much amatory poetry, practical advice to both sexes, and a few were so contrived that the recipient applied for a second, and paid another shilling. The vivacity and *aplomb* of the postmistress had much to do with the success of the post-office, the same qualities standing our gipsy in good stead—an amateur actor of many parts.

The bran-pie was an oblong washing-tub covered

with pink calico and filled with bran, in which were hidden a number of small articles well wrapped up. These included apples, oranges, and sweets, and such among our wares as were not as fresh as they might have been. We charged sixpence a dip, as we did for one into the wedding-cake—a round box covered with silver paper, and surmounted by a white vase and flowers. A slice had apparently been cut out of this, large enough to insert the hand and draw whatever could be found. The wheel-of-fortune was made from a fig-barrel covered with pink calico, and set on a wooden stand so that it could rotate. A piece had been removed on one side, and converted into a lid with hinges. In this barrel were slips of paper, some blanks, some with one shilling to five shillings marked on them, entitling the holder to obtain articles to that amount on the stalls.

Three or four times in the afternoon there was a performance of a short piece, with two characters, in an open-air theatre away from the tents. A shilling was charged for seeing this, but we should have obtained twice the sum had we asked it, everybody wished to see it so much.

The arrangement of the tent where the sale went on



A VICTIM AT OUR FANCY BAZAAR.

gave us most trouble. It was decorated with garlands of evergreens all round, and we kept the sides as open as possible, the heat was so great. The stalls were planks on trussles ranged round the tent, leaving space for the visitors in the middle. There were many suggestions how to decorate. Some thought that the stalls should have substantial canopies, with a valance round of plain colour, or lace, or holland bound with braid; while others preferred white muslin drapery caught up here and there with ribbon and flowers. We finally decided on pink and white tarlatan, a breadth of each supported on a central pole, on the point of which was a wreath of evergreens, and below either a placard or coloured banner with the name of the stall-holder.

In arranging the things on the stalls, we found it a good plan to have a line of red braid above the head in front of each, for suspending drawings, illuminations, braces, children's things, antimacassars, &c. Nothing should be pinned on the calico with which the planks and trussles are covered all round. The effect may be good in an empty room, but the visitors hide the things in passing to and fro, and they are apt to be trodden down and lost. Everything should be marked in clear figures, and we found it best to classify the articles as much as we could as to price, having a due regard to their showing to advantage. We contrived to have a couple of shelves at the back of each stall, the lower one narrower than the upper: these showed the things to advantage. I found much order and method was necessary; that it was best to keep the back of the stall clear, to have a reserve of goods, and plenty of pins, paper and string, and change. I placed my money in a pretty bibbed muslin apron bordered with lace, the hem turned upwards a quarter of a yard deep, forming an ample pocket, supplemented by small ones above.

Stall-holders should certainly aim at being effectively dressed. In lieu of hats or bonnets, caps are sometimes adopted, all appearing alike, much as brides-

maids might. At a fashionable bazaar last season the young ladies adopted a sort of fancy fishwife's dress—high cap, muslin chemisette, short skirts, and corselet bodice; and there is every probability that this plan may gain ground.

I fear I have not left myself much space to enter upon the question of what work sells best at bazaars; and I must supplement it by saying that it is most necessary to have a good supply of articles for gentlemen, who are generally the most liberal purchasers. Cigars, button-hole bouquets, pin-cushions, warm knitted stockings, muffatees, and mittens, together with sets of muslin neck-ties, they are sure to buy. Moreover, their aid will be found invaluable. I have seen trays fitted up like a pedlar's, and filled with things, which, slung over the shoulders, were carried about, and generally sold both by gentlemen and children—the former greatly assisting in getting up raffles, for which papers should be previously drawn out, headed by the article to be raffled for, and the number of chances—a space left by each for the name.

I am quite sure the more useful the wares the better. Trimmings in crewel work for dresses, dessert d'oyleys, well-made wearable caps, breakfast stands, five o'clock tea tables, borders for brackets and chimney-pieces, and dolls of all kinds are of some practical utility. Children's things, both for poor and rich, together with useful comforts for the poor of all ages, find purchasers; for all know some one to whom such gifts are acceptable. Flower stalls may be made more attractive by the blooms being sold in Valerie, Doulton, or other fashionable vases, or in pretty-shaped baskets. Home-made butter, vegetables, and fruit bring grist to the mill also.

The last few hours of the bazaar, a great deal may be advantageously sold by auction, with a reserved price on most of the things. Our bazaar, albeit in a rural district, realised three times as much as we expected, so I hope my experience is one of practical utility.

### THE BUGLE-CALL.

**H**ARK! 'tis the bugle—the bugle of War!  
 Banners are flying, and sabres unsheath;  
 Rifles and bayonets gleam from afar;  
 Cannon drive lumbering over the heath;  
 Bustle and stir from the east to the west;  
 Marching of troops from the north to the south;  
 Spectacled grandams, and babes at the breast,  
 Press for the last time the warrior's mouth;  
 Wives from mute husbands are torn with a wench,  
 Men steel their hearts 'mid the clangour of arms;  
 Spades turn from tillage to dig and entrench,  
 And beauty to glory surrenders its charms,  
 At the blast of the bugle—the bugle of War!

Hark! 'tis the bugle—the bugle of Peace!  
 Sounds o'er the battle-field—over the slain,  
 Hushes the strife, bids artillery cease,  
 Thrills through the dying stretched out on the plain;  
 Hark! how the call rings o'er valley and hill;  
 "Light bivouac fires—weary warriors, rest!  
 Up, tender-eyed Pity, to save—not to kill,  
 Go forth on thy errand, the blessing and blest!"  
 Softly, white snow weaves a shroud for the dead,  
 A mantle to hide the red deed War has done;  
 Stern foemen shake hands where their fellows have bled,  
 And Mercy can breathe, now the battle is done,  
 In the notes of the bugle—the bugle of Peace!

I. BANKS.