

larger Orphanage was laid in 1860, and for eight years the founder personally superintended its erection, expending £60,000 upon the immense building. By a deed executed in August, 1868, he transferred the building, together with an endowment in land, &c., valued at £200,000, to seven trustees, to whom seven others will now have to be added by the Town Council of Birmingham. The Orphanage, which has been enlarged since its opening, is now capable of receiving 300 girls, 150 boys, and 50 infants; and admission is limited by no restriction of locality, class, or creed. The College, which occupies a prominent site near the Birmingham Town Hall, was founded by deed executed in 1870, property valued at £100,000 being vested in the trustees. The actual work of erection was not commenced till 1875, when Sir Josiah Mason (for he had received the honour of knighthood several years previously) laid the first stone on his eightieth birthday (February 23rd). On the founder's eighty-

fifth birthday, February 23rd, 1880, the building was opened by an address by Professor Huxley. The cost of the building, in addition to the endowment of £100,000, was £60,000; and to obviate the necessity of trenching upon the foundation, the founder furnished the College throughout before handing it over to the trustees. Like the Orphanage, the College is without restriction of class or creed. The first intention had been to limit the instruction to scientific subjects—mathematics, chemistry, physics, and biology; but to these have since been added physiology, geology, engineering, classics, English language and literature, German and French, with discretionary powers to the trustees in regard to other subjects.

A long life of honourable industry has thus been crowned by permanent endowments, that will carry down to posterity a name that for full half a century has been "familiar as a household word" throughout the Midlands.

## THE WAR OFFICE.



VERY high authority has declared that "the Horse Guards is, without flattery, the ugliest building in the metropolis." Ugly as it is, it is probably the best-known building in the metropolis. If there were nothing else to draw attention to it, the mounted Dragoons

in the boxes at the gateway would do so. All day long, in all weathers, groups of people stand gazing at these colossal sentinels, and watching the tall figures of the Guards marching up and down within the courtyard. The sight is familiar to every youthful Londoner; and it is one of which country visitors, both young and old, retain most vivid and delighted recollections.

Time was when those mighty men-in-armour were really "guards" of one of the chief Departments of State. They kept watch and ward over the persons and records of the War Minister, the Commander-in-Chief, and all the great officials charged with the control of the British Army. But they discharge no such important functions now; the building, though still called the Horse Guards, is really little more than a Guards' barracks, all the great military officials having long since migrated to the War Office in Pall Mall and premises elsewhere, selected for the different branches of Administration. Down to the year 1854 there were a Secretary *for* War, and a Secretary *at* War, these two officials dividing between them the political, financial, and administrative concerns of the country in reference to the army. Then there was a Commander-in-Chief, who was entrusted with the control of the Cavalry and the Infantry only; for the management of the Artillery and Engineers there was another authority, called the Board of Ordnance.

Another "Board" regulated the clothing of the army, another Department was responsible for the Commissariat, still another for the medical requirements of the forces; and, finally, there was a Department specially charged with the duty of supplying the army with chaplains. All these various Departments were independent of each other: communication between them was conducted through the office of the Secretary of State; and it was only through his office that any one Department could possibly obtain from another Department what was required for carrying out any great military measure. The War Department at that time was rightly named the "Circumlocution Office." The disasters of the Crimean campaign put an end to this state of things. The office of Secretary *at* War was abolished; the Secretary *for* War ceased to be also Secretary for the Colonies (as he had hitherto been), and was charged with the administration of the army as a whole. Numerous other alterations in names of offices and the duties connected with them followed very shortly; and in the year 1870, by Act of Parliament, and by Orders in Council, the work of unification was completed—the direct and immediate control of the army in all its branches being thereby vested in the Secretary of State for War.

It was a curious coincidence that two of the chief military offices were held just before these changes were made by noblemen who had each suffered the loss of a limb in battle. Lord Raglan, who was Secretary at War, and Lord Hardinge, who was Commander-in-Chief, were both one-armed men.

The Secretary of State for War stands, in relation to the army, next the Sovereign; and, by delegation from the Crown, holds the supreme authority and command of all the military forces of the realm. The building in which he exercises these august functions



can hardly be considered worthy of a service which costs the State upwards of £15,000,000 per annum. Standing, as it does, in the very midst of Club-land, the War Office presents a most sorry appearance to the wanderer in Pall Mall. The statue of Sidney Herbert stands in front of the entrance to the principal building, which is placed a little back from the road, and is occupied by the Secretary of State and his staff. The head-quarters of the Commander-in-Chief and his staff are at the eastern extremity of the block—the building once known as Buckingham House. On entering the vestibule the visitor is questioned by a porter as to what Department he is in search of. A bell is rung, and the visitor, passing forward, is met on the stairs by an attendant, who directs him to the proper office, where he is received with the utmost possible courtesy.

With the exception of a quaint old hall, and what was doubtless once considered a noble staircase, there is absolutely no architectural feature worth noting in the entire building. One soon discovers, however, that the amount of work which is done in the War Office is prodigious, and that the manner in which it is done is marvellously interesting. It will probably surprise some of our readers to learn that the most enormous pile of letters daily delivered at the Government Offices is that which is received by the Secretary of State for War. Three great sacks arrive by the "morning post;" and as every delivery during the day brings further despatches, the number of communications received in ordinary times reaches about a thousand, while in seasons of "war and rumours of war" this number is greatly exceeded.

All letters arriving, whether by post or by messenger, are received at the "Registry"—a Department which is so perfectly organised that it has become a model to all other Government Offices, not only at home, but also in India and some of the Colonies. The "alphabetical" principle of classification is discarded at this office, and that of "subjects" is adopted all through the establishment. The letters are therefore, in the first place, roughly sorted, and placed in boxes duly labelled according to the different subjects to which the communications may refer. They are then placed on the desk of the chief of the "Registry" Department, who, with his assistant, goes through each pile, and marks every single document with such signs as will indicate to his subordinates whither that particular document is to be sent for attention or consideration. Every letter is then registered, the record giving the date, name, and subject of the letter, and also the Department to which it will first be sent. The letter is then enclosed within a printed form, on the outside of which a clear "reference" to the "register" is given. If the letter be urgent, it is enclosed in a green form, specially signifying to all whom it may concern that it is to have immediate attention. The letters are then passed on to the "Transit" room, where all the papers for certain Departments are collected in pigeon-holes, to be forwarded in due course. There are three despatches daily from the "Transit" room to the various branches

and Departments, so that every letter received at the War Office finds its way, with the least possible delay, into the hands of the official whose duty it may be to deal with it and prepare the necessary reply.

On inquiring what becomes of all the multitudinous letters and papers which thus daily accumulate at the War Office, we are conducted to the Press Room, where all correspondence when "closed" is deposited. Every inch of space in this room not required for the clerks' desks is occupied with tiers of numbered shelves, every one of which holds a box or case plainly labelled in front. This and other similar rooms contain all the documents that have been received by the War Department for the greater part of the present century; and one of these cases will become the final "resting-place" of every letter delivered at the War Office to-day. When a letter has been replied to, it is attached to a copy of the reply, and, together with the various papers supplied in connection with the matter by the different officials, it is encircled by a band, so as to make one packet: this packet is duly registered, marked with the register number and other memoranda, and then placed in the case or "press" specified for it. All this is so carefully done, and the registers is so precisely kept, that should any particular document be asked for fifty years hence, it will be producible in a few minutes.

An interesting feature of this Department is the system of registration adopted with regard to the officers. Every officer in the army, whatever his rank, has a number at the War Office; every letter or paper received from him, or in connection with him, is marked with that number, and all these documents are kept in one "press." When, therefore, any information is required in relation to any officer, the clerk in charge has simply to turn to the officer's number in the register, and he learns at a glance where he will find the "press" which contains every detail of that officer's career, from his entering the army down to the very day on which the inquiry is made.

The room occupied by the Secretary of State for War is a handsome apartment, situated about the centre of the building on the side looking towards St. James's Park. His private secretaries are located in rooms adjoining that of their chief; in fact, separating his *sanctum* from that *sanctum sanctorum* in which H.R.H. "the Duke" discharges the duties belonging to the office of "Field-Marshal Commanding-in-Chief."

The actual administrative work of the War Department is divided between three great officers, any or all of whom may be, and usually are, in Parliament. The Secretary of State is, of course, supreme controller of the Department, then under him there are (1) The Officer Commanding-in-Chief, who is in charge of the *personnel* of all the "regular" and "irregular" forces forming the army; (2) the Surveyor-General of Ordnance, under whom are all the civil administrative duties, with the charge of the *matériel*; and (3) the Financial Secretary, who is responsible to the Secretary of State for the "Estimates" presented to Parliament, for the appropriation of all funds, and the



proper auditing of all accounts; the "Army Pay" Department is also under his control. What is called the "Central Department" forms the province of the Under-Secretaries of State for War, whose functions are limited to the conduct of such constitutional or other matters as do not specifically pertain to either of the three great offices just named.

The Secretary of State is assisted by a "Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State," who holds office only so long as his chief retains the seals; also by a "Permanent Under-Secretary of State," whose tenure of office is not affected by the political changes which may "pull down" one chief ruler and "set up" another.

The staff of the War Office numbers nearly 500 actually "on the establishment," *i.e.*, permanently engaged; but besides these there are many *employés*,

writers (paid by the hour), and others, whose services are secured as the exigencies of the Department vary.

In the basement of the War Office there is a large printing establishment, in which some fifty persons are employed producing such official documents as are required day by day. All "private and confidential" papers are printed here. To insure the necessary secrecy in such matters, the "copy" is cut up by the foreman into small portions, and is thus "set up" by different compositors, so that until the whole of the portions are brought together on the press, no workman can form any idea of the actual contents of the paper itself. The copies are then struck off under the immediate supervision of a thoroughly trustworthy inspector, and by him are taken charge of on behalf of the high official who may have ordered them to be prepared.

J. T. G.

## WHAT TO WEAR.

CHIT-CHAT ON DRESS. BY OUR PARIS CORRESPONDENT.



WITH the advent of August weather it becomes necessary to think of suitable materials. There is an abundant supply to meet the demand, and I will enumerate a few amongst the many which are appropriate, beginning with those intended for morning gowns. Neutral-tinted summer

bèges in stripes, checks, and basket patterns are popular, as are vicunas and foulés in all shades. Then there is a fine make of serge called "Casimir" which is seen in various qualities, also the "Umrizurs," and Indian cashmeres of light texture. A new colour is "Crushed Strawberry," a bright variety of terra-cotta.

"Nun's-cloth," which after all much resembles the Carmelite or mousseline de laine of our youthful days, is very cool and light, and is principally worn in delicate tints. "Satin Châlé" is another new fabric so called, but in truth old friends greet us everywhere under a fresh guise. Amongst the later introductions is the "Moire Français," which is softer than the old-fashioned moire antique of our grandmothers' days, and probably not so lasting as in those good old times, when the goring of skirts was unknown, and silks "stood alone" in their stiffness—often indeed

passed on to the next generation with their glory untarnished. Instead of the large running pattern, we now have stripes of different widths, occasionally divided by one of narrower dimensions. Moires look handsome combined with Satin Merveilleux, especially in black, but it is probable that the fancy for them will be evanescent, as is the case with the many-tinted ombrés which have been so quickly copied in common silks and ribbons. A novelty is the "Printed Satin Merveilleux," and one well adapted for summer wear. It is seen in many tints—such, for example, as a terra-cotta ground with pattern of broken leaves or daisies. Another new fabric is "Lace Muslin" for quite warm weather. Surahs, fancy *mat* stripes in washing-silks, and Neapolitan stripes in foulards, come next in order. Bayadere silks, again, are stylish for trimming cashmere. Stripes are considered much better taste in Paris than ombré or shaded mixtures. For instance, a handsome costume had kiltings of old-gold and cardinal striped silk, with bodice and drapery of grenat Satin Merveilleux. Another effective combination of colouring is of sapphire and bleu ciel.

A very useful and a very fashionable garment is the Louis Quinze coat, which can be worn over any skirt. It is made of black brocatelle, Oriental broché, striped Satin de Lyons, and plain velvet, and is either perfectly tight-fitting, with pockets on the hips, or the back drapery falls in plaited paniers.

I must now say a few words about the sateens, many of which are exquisite this season. The best ones are generally block patterns, so that only a certain number of each design can be printed. Among the newest are the bordered sateens, and ombré stripes with tiny sprays of flowers in contrasting shades; also the Tussore cotton in Japanese designs, such as broken squares in soft tints of china blue, pink, and olive. Oriental and Egyptian patterns are very original, and a quaint idea is that of dull green leaves on a sapphire