

States of America would have been! Almost as wonderful as Cassini Land in Mars. But the European builds for himself, as the ancient American tried to fashion natural objects to his own uses; the European having conquered, the American ideal has never had a chance of being carried out on earth."

I saw many wonderful engineering works on Mars—huge canals and causeways, and coasts rounded of their promontories (blown away by explosives)—such as I should think the astronomers of earth, if they have not yet seen them, must surely observe before very long.

ALERIEL.

TYNESIDE FOLK.



COAL TRIMMERS WAITING THEIR TURN.

TYNESIDE is rich in interest, historic, industrial, and personal. From Wylam to the sea there is no dull mile in the prospect, and only few yards that have not associations that are picturesque. It was at Wylam that early locomotives were worked; at Throckley, George Stephenson was a "made man for life" when he earned twelve shillings a week; Bewick at Cherryburn; Robert Stephenson at Willington; and Collingwood, Eldon, and Stowell, are names associated in birth, adventure, and triumph with the Tyne. The work of the district, the dependence on mine and river and sea for bread, and the isolation of employment, have all induced in Tyneside folk strongly-marked individuality of character and dialect. The Tynesider is not so polished nor so ready-tongued as the southerner; he has had more to depend upon himself, more to

struggle upwards and against the tide; and he was rougher in exterior and in speech. Around his famous river the tide of battle had often rolled; the keep of the castle on the Tyne, the grand old wall of the Romans, and the little strongholds near it, told of ancient invaders and of former forays; and though the nations were united, long stretches of bleak moors and hills shut in the north and the west, and the Tynesider dug out his coal, rowed his keels, sailed his ships, and lived, as one of the poets of Pitland has phrased it, happy lives with "yel [ale] to cheer, and mirth to please."

To the coal trade Tyneside owes much of its greatness. Along its banks the earliest collieries were worked, and the villages and towns have names that



PORTER POKEMEN ON THE QUAYS, NEWCASTLE.

are historic. After the Norsemen and the warriors had passed away, it was to the miner, too, that Tyneside owed the development at once of the wealth and the characteristics of its folk. One of the proofs of this is to be seen in as fine a picture as can be seen—that from Stephenson's grand high level bridge. Far down below, the river surges seaward. From the Exchange, on the northern bank, for miles, there is a continuous picture of ships and stores, of works and wherries, of mines and manufactories, and of shipyards and shops. Below the bridge is the Love Lane, now more lovely in name than appearance, where Lord Eldon was born; and close thereto is Sandgate, the Wapping of Newcastle, associated with the lives, labours, and carousals of the men who rowed the keels coal-laden, and which is the scene of a song :

"As I cam' through Sandgate, through Sandgate,
I heard a lassie sing—
'Weel may the keel row, the keel row,
Weel may the keel row
That my laddie's in !'"

Hidden beyond cranes and chimneys are a few of the dwellings of old Newcastle that still linger; and away seaward Wallsend has classic repute; and Walker brings to mind that ejaculation which illustrates Tyneside character—that of the dweller in that straggling village who, after long travels in more world-known places, returned, and at sight of the smoky but dear spot, burst out in the Doric of the district: "*Thor's nee plaice like Waaker.*" On the southern bank, close to the bridge, a baronet of to-day,

known locally amongst his old associates in the mine still as "the canny pit-laddie," was born. But if the associations of the river were told—with the Crowleys of old and their patriarchal method of working; with the Cowens of Blaydon, who have impressed all England; with the Palmers and their early collieries; and with the Armstrongs and their guns—this paper might run to seed in a list of names.

In the upper reaches of the Tyne its folk are agricultural; but as we descend coal predominates, and ironworkers and shipbuilders, cement and chemical workers, have place on the banks of the river, and largely tincture the character of the people. Some of these have come from far centres of the trades, but in the course of years they have been in degree assimilated with the descendants of the ancient dwellers on the Tyne. It is not wholly, therefore, the collier and the keelman and their children who form the bulk of Tyneside folk; their type of character is that of the original, but it is modified in degree from that type pictured of old in the "Collier's Wedding," and later in the "Pitman's Pay," and altered slightly by the changes that improved locomotion and easier communication have brought about. The typical Tynesider is distant to strangers, familiar amongst his associates and kin; he is cool and cautious in the individual, but excitable and easily led in the aggregate; simple in manners, hospitable, partaking of the typical virtues of the Scots, who came so often to the Tyne, and yet having the outspokenness of the English character. His sense of humour is peculiar: he

attaches conventional meanings to words, and sees a joke in departures therefrom, and also in the odd phraseology that at times is thus evolved.

These blunt-mannered Tynesiders have a wonderful local patriotism, which a foremost orator, one of themselves, Mr. Joseph Cowen, has given voice to. A keen observer, who described the Tyne people a few years ago, said that "they lack that fine exterior polish you observe in Liverpool. They are blunt in manners; they rattle their 'r's'; their lower orders converse in an astonishing gibberish which they style 'New-cassel,' and which might have supplied Swift with hints for the language he invents in 'Gulliver;' but they are the warmest-hearted people in the world, hospitable and generous." And these people, with a wondrous faith in their district and themselves, have from the coal below them built up a district, industries, and trades, such as few in the South dream of. Every hour, day and night, for six days a week, a steamer leaves the Tyne with a cargo of 1,250 tons of that coal; and to every land that and other productions of Tyneside are sent. If Carlyle's dictum be true, that "genius is an infinite capacity for work," then the true and stern North is the abode of genius, for the Tyneside folk have that faculty fully developed;

and it is that perseverance in labour which has built up the Tyne and its trade, and moulded the character of its sturdy folk. The casual passenger, flying through the town, express due north, may see something of the special marks of centuries, may notice the old castle, the antique-gabled dwellings, and the red roofs near, as well as the works that continuously give forth volumes of smoke and flame, but he will have little knowledge of Newcastle till he has seen more of its stately streets and halls, something of its many parks and museums, and much of its factories; and though he may know a little of the Tyneside folk from their songs and their stories, from the specimens of the men who in distant parts retain the bluntness, directness, and industry of old, it will not be until he has mixed with them in their family life, seen something of their great meetings, heard some of their orators, and marked a little the manners of the people, alike in Sandgate and in Jesmond, amidst the orators who muster weekly on the Quayside, the merchants who meet on 'Change, and the magnates who represent at Council and Board the people—not until he has had that experience, will he be able fully to appreciate the mingled shades of character that unite in one prevailing tint to make up that of the Tyneside folk.

J. W. S.

THE GATHERER: AN ILLUSTRATED RECORD OF INVENTION AND DISCOVERY.

Correspondents are requested, when applying to the Editor for the names and addresses of the persons from whom further particulars respecting the articles in the GATHERER may be obtained, to forward a stamped and addressed envelope for reply, and in the case of inventors submitting specimens for notice, to prepay the carriage. The Editor cannot in any case guarantee absolute certainty of information, nor can he pledge himself to notice every article submitted.

A Gum-Damper.

A gum-damper for closing envelopes, and affixing stamps or labels, is shown in our illustration. The damper has the merit of neatness and simplicity, and is clean in action. It may also be used to wet the tips of



the fingers in counting notes or turning over papers.

Metal-Covered Thread.

Metal-covered wax-thread is now used for sewing leather belts and boot-soles. The thread is covered with brass by means of machines, which lay on the metal as the thread passes through die-holes. After being covered it is roughened externally by small rotating discs having fine teeth. The corrugation thus effected gives the thread a better hold of leather than the smooth metal surface would give. Machines of an ingenious kind have also been devised to sew leather belts, and to affix boot-soles in a few seconds, by means of the covered thread.

The North Sea Canal.

A canal to connect the Baltic with the North Sea is about to be cut by the German Government from Brunsbüttel at the mouth of the river Elbe, *via* Rendsborg and the existing Eider Canal, to the Baltic at Maltenau. Locks will only be used at the ends to avoid the tides, and the trench will be 25 feet deep and 185 feet wide at the water-level. German ironclads will thus be able to pass through it.

A Handy Fire-Escape.

A small fire-escape has recently been brought out, which should be very useful in country houses, and other places exposed to the danger of fire, and where the public appliances for rescue are not close at hand. The apparatus packs away so compactly in the case provided for it, that its continual presence in a room causes no inconvenience. The apparatus should be kept fixed, by means of the two metallic cords shown in Fig. 1, below the bottom

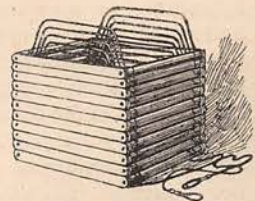


FIG. 1.