

“Why, I do believe you will positively make a sensation, when you have got a little more style. Good gracious, mamma! you must bring her often to see me. I know heaps of eligible young bachelors this season, and I am not going to be selfish and keep them all to myself. But you and I are going to be great friends; and you must tell me all your love-affairs—won't you, Dulce? You will have to call me Aunt Rose, you know. Well, how are all the family down at that extraordinary Cornish place with the queer name? and how do you like London after having been buried alive? Do you feel like an ex-

cavated skeleton at Pompeii? Well, I have no time to hear anything now, as I am off to Mrs. Curzon's crush—so good-bye till to-morrow.”

And without waiting for Dulce's answer to any of her questions—and only throwing a careless remark to her mother—Lady Mason rustled off again.

Dulce recovered from her surprise in time to see, before it faded, the expression of adoring love with which Lady Spenshouse looked after her brilliant daughter—till the door closed, and the room was left in silence once more.

END OF CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

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### THE QUEEN OF THE ICE.

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THE air is keen; the magic mere  
Is all one diamond, flawless, clear,  
Without a wrinkle.

It hums beneath the skate and sings,  
And girlish laughter chimes and rings,  
With silvern tinkle.

Whither do sprites of roses go—  
Of happy roses?—Ah, I know!  
In lone dejection  
Their leaves bestrew their garden tomb;  
Their souls on cheeks of maidens bloom  
In resurrection.

Oh! forms are here of perfect mould,  
Bright eyes, and locks of burnished gold,  
Or dead-gold dimness;

And dainty feet that see no hurt  
In peeping from a brodered skirt  
To show their trimness.

But she—that one!—oh, April grace!  
Oh, lovely little oval face!  
Oh, tendril tresses!  
Too happy he who wakes your smile,  
Whose hand for just a little while  
Your light foot blesses!

Unconscious of his golden hap,  
A soulless clod adjusts the strap—  
His great hand fumbles;  
Across the mere I watch her glide;  
Sir Dull-face hastes to gain her side;  
Oh, joy!—he tumbles.

FREDERICK LANGBRIDGE.

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### THE COMING CENSUS.

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BEFORE long the entire country will again be in the throes of another census. Meanwhile, it may be interesting to look into the working of the machinery employed for the purpose of gathering together the vast collection of figures which appears decennially, and to see how the various results are arrived at. The actual volumes, which are laid before Parliament, are, of course, only the outcome of tedious and, in some cases, intricate calculation, and do not represent a tithe of the multitude of figures which are written down and cast

up, and cross-cast, and checked and re-checked almost *ad nauseam*.

The compilation is entrusted, in the first instance, to the Registrar-General, who calls to his aid two of his chief subordinates. Then a secretary is appointed, and three superintendents, all from the staff of the General Registry Office at Somerset House. These seven persons form the nucleus of the machine—the Census Office, as it is called—and with the assistance of two or three clerks, also from Somerset House, and a few outsiders, the preliminaries are arranged.

The whole country is already divided, for registration purposes, into registration districts, under super-

intendent registrars; and these districts are divided into registration sub-districts, under the Registrars of Births and Deaths. For the purposes of the census, the registration sub-districts are again split up into enumeration districts.

Each registrar makes a requisition for a certain number of census forms, corresponding with the number of houses or separate tenements in his district, and the Office issues them. The registrars entrust to certain men, duly appointed, and called Enumerators, a sufficient number of these forms, together with a list of the various streets, roads, and houses at which the papers are to be left, with notice that they are to be filled in, in accordance with printed instructions, by a certain date. The forms and the information required to be given thereon are well known to most people of middle age. When the forms are properly filled in, they contain the names of all persons who slept in the particular house or tenement on a certain night, with ages, conditions (whether male or female, whether married or single, widower or widow), occupations, and also a statement of the relation borne by each person to the head of the household—such as son, daughter, servant, visitor, &c. In Ireland a further declaration is required relative to religion, language, and education.

Each enumerator, when he has duly collected the forms which he previously distributed, transcribes their contents, together with a full description of all the houses in his enumeration district, into a book, provided for the purpose by the Office. The forms and books are then handed in to the registrar, who compares them and checks them. This process is again gone through by the superintendent registrar, and three separate statements, which appear in each enumeration book, to the effect that the work has been properly carried out and checked, are signed by the enumerator, the registrar, and the superintendent registrar respectively. Each registrar further sends in to his superintendent what is called a "summary" of his district, containing the totals for each enumeration district, properly arranged and cast. All these documents, the census forms, the enumeration books, and the registrars' summaries, are then transmitted to the Office, and the actual work of the compilation really begins. A fresh supply of clerks is required, and, accordingly, notice is sent to the Civil Service Commissioners. The latter proceed at once to examine a number of such persons as have already obtained a nomination from some Member of Parliament, have submitted their names, with testimonials, to the Commission, and have undergone a medical examination. The test examination by the Commissioners embraces writing English from dictation, copying from manuscript, and arithmetic, including accuracy and rapidity of addition. The number of applicants is generally largely in excess of the requirements of the Census Office, so there is no difficulty in supplying the number of clerks required. The extravagant stipend of these individuals is six shillings per diem at the outset, with the prospect of gradual increase, if all things are satisfactory, to ten shillings.

The hours of attendance are from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., with an interval of three-quarters of an hour for refreshing the inner man. Many of the census clerks are or have been *writers* at the various public offices; others "are poor men what's willin' to work and got no work to do"—verily a motley crew.

Work of a partially destructive character now begins, and the paper bindings and all blank sheets are torn from the enumeration books. A busy hive of binders then set to work and reconstruct the remainder into volumes, arranged in districts and sub-districts, each volume being about one inch in thickness. This done, the first thing is to make out a rough "Preliminary Report," taking for granted that the registrars' summaries are accurate in all respects. Merely the numbers are taken, divided into male and female, with total, of each district and sub-district, and from these are obtained the population of the towns and counties (Registration) and of the kingdom. This preliminary report is presented to Parliament with all due speed, and with a sigh of relief from all concerned; and then comes a new influx of clerks.

The whole subordinate staff is now divided into piece-workers—*tickers* they are technically called—and time-workers. The latter are employed on what is known as "tabling," and on checking the piece-workers. This tabling is of various kinds, according as the results acquired affect registration counties, geographical counties, or counties proper, and parishes, or ecclesiastical parishes, &c., or ages and conditions, or occupations. The general principles in each case are the same though, of course, the details differ according to circumstances. I will confine myself to registration counties, as sufficiently explanatory of the method adopted.

A "tabling sheet" for this purpose is about two feet square, and is headed with the name and number of the superintendent registrar's district, and also with the name and number of the registration sub-district. The sheet is divided into ten columns. In the first are placed the numbers of the enumeration districts, as they occur in the enumeration books, from which all the particulars are extracted. In the second column is placed the name of the civil parish in which each such enumeration district is situated; in the third comes the name of the Parliamentary district; in the fourth the urban sanitary district, or municipal borough; in the fifth the ward, should the locality in question be divided into wards; and in the sixth the ecclesiastical parish to which the enumeration district belongs. The seventh, eighth, and ninth columns are reserved for figures. In the seventh is placed the number of separate occupiers: *i.e.*, the number of families. The eighth is set apart for houses, and is sub-divided into three columns for inhabited houses, uninhabited houses, and those in course of construction respectively. The ninth column is also sub-divided into three, and has reference to population, the first sub-division being for the number of males, the second for females, whilst the total is placed in the third. The tenth column, which is the broadest, occupying about one-third of the sheet, is set apart

for remarks, and is headed by "Instructions for Tabling," in these words:—"Totals of civil parishes required for publication in the census volume must be in red ink. All other figures and names to be in black ink. When the enumeration district is wholly or partly in an ecclesiastical parish, urban sanitary district, or borough ward, such part must be properly indicated. Every place clearly set out in the enumeration book as a hamlet, &c., should be shown, although not set out in the tables of 18—. The names of villages, &c., are also to be inserted here. Persons in boats, barges, caravans, &c., to be shown in this column. The numbers of strangers—as workmen or otherwise—temporarily present, as well as the cause thereof when stated: and any notes explanatory of increase or decrease of the population made by the enumerators or the registrars to be entered here. In institutions (workhouses, hospitals, cottage hospitals, nunneries, convents, lunatic asylums, prisons, barracks, &c.) the number of special inmates must be distinguished from the officers." At the back of each tabling sheet a small tabular form is provided for the special purpose of these last particulars. No more than one registration sub-district is tabled on one sheet; in many cases, however, a single sub-district will cover several sheets. As I have said before, all the facts noted on these sheets are obtained directly from the enumeration books.

When a tabling sheet has been completed by one clerk, it is then compared with the enumeration books and registrar's summary, and checked throughout by another, and the names of both are entered on the sheet. Should discrepancies occur, unless the error is palpable and rectifiable in the office, correspondence ensues, and in many cases the enumeration books will be sent to the registrar for correction.

A form is also sent to the clergyman of each ecclesiastical parish, to be filled in by him with the numbers of the houses, and of the male and female persons in such parish; and frequently the clergy render great assistance in solving local difficulties, which require special local knowledge. In some cases, however, though of course few, the correspondence with these gentlemen becomes somewhat voluminous. I heard of a case in which one parson stoutly maintained that a certain row of houses was in his parish, the number of the inhabitants of which would have helped to bring the total of his parish just up to another thousand (say from four thousand to five thousand). Under these circumstances he would have been entitled to an extra grant from the Ecclesiastical Commission. The houses in question were, however, disallowed him by the authorities; whereupon he immediately disclaimed not only these, but a whole street in addition, evidently seeking thereby to

run down his total as low as possible, so that his average school attendance might gain him an educational grant.

From the tabling sheets are extracted the totals required for the volume, which are again written out and sent off to the printer. The sheets themselves are consigned to the cellars of Somerset House, to be unearthed in ten years for the guidance and assistance of those engaged on the next compilation. On the return of the proofs from the printers, the whole mass of figures is read over by clerks in pairs, one reading, and the other checking. This last remark applies, of course, to all the matter which goes to the press.

The piece-workers, or tickers, have a terrible task to perform. Huge sheets, twice as broad as those used for tabling, are placed before them, arranged in columns and rows for ages and conditions, so that, looking under a column and along a row, the proper place for each individual whose name appears in the enumeration books is found; and then a short stroke or *tick* is made on the sheet. The enumeration book is placed on the left-hand side, and a coloured pencil held in the left hand and a pen in the right. Each person in the book is then consecutively ticked off on the left with the left hand, and entered or ticked with the right on the large sheet, which rests, at an angle of about 120°, on a desk in front of the ticker. "Occupations" are done on the same system. The clerks are paid so much per thousand ticks, every third (say) sheet being thoroughly checked by a time-worker, and deductions made for errors at the rate at which they occur in the corrected sheet. Corrections also are made on the same scale. A canny Scot was once known, after having worked off a couple of sheets of ages and conditions, to have struck averages for himself, and filled his next sheet with marvellous rapidity. He was, however, promptly detected and dismissed.

When the work is finally in hand and understood by those who have to perform it, those clerks who so wish may work overtime, up to 7 p.m., at the rate of about two shillings an hour (for time-workers). Most of the time-workers work overtime, and all the piece-workers.

A good ticker will earn as much as fourteen and fifteen shillings in a day. But imagine the state of mind to which such a one must be reduced after eight or nine months of such work. I have heard of a case where a man, otherwise healthy, went quite out of his mind from this incessant ticking. The superintendents receive as much as £1 per diem for overtime, over and above the amount of their ordinary salaries, and in addition, they generally get a bonus on the completion of the compilation, which occupies in all about two years.

ALEXANDER KNOX.

