

EXPLANATIONS.

So you're jealous, sir, I find—oh, oh !
That's an awkward state of mind, you know ;
For when a man is jealous
Of all the other fellows
He isn't true himself—no, no.

You would like me to give in—oh, oh !
But it's early to begin, you know ;
And you'll understand, I pray you,
I'm not going to obey you,
Till I've promised to obey—no, no.

So you'll watch me like a cat—oh, oh !
You will not get much by that, you know ;
For when a maid's not trusted
She is very soon disgusted,
And Love can't thrive on that—no, no.

Will I make it up again?—oh, oh !
That's a much more humble strain, you know ;
It would serve you right to tease you,
Yet I'll make it up to please you,
But—don't try it on again—no, no.

J. T. BURTON WOLLASTON.

WHERE OUR FOOD AND CLOTHING COME FROM.



It is very curious how little we know about the origin of the things we use, the clothes we wear, the food we consume. The other day I called on a friend who is engaged in a very large business. He was out, but expected in shortly, and I was asked to wait in his room, which I did for five minutes. My appetite for reading, good, bad, or indifferent, is enormous. On his table lay a paper of the most uninviting kind, for it seemed to be made up of

columns of figures. I picked it up, and in those five minutes I discovered that even accounts, national accounts, trade returns, contain for the ordinary un-statistical creature a fund of information most useful.

The first thing that had arrested my notice was an indication of where we get our sugar from. I had fondly thought that it came from the sugar plantations of our West Indian cousins, aided by other cousins from the Continent of America, and to some extent from the East Indies. Oh, what a surprise! Nearly half of it comes from Germany. May I give you just a few figures?

	<i>Cwt.</i>	<i>Value.</i>
Germany—refined sugar	3,617,680	£2,922,791
„ unrefined	4,899,470	£2,953,419
British W. Indies—refined	nil	nil
„ unrefined	1,096,771	£828,892
„ E. Indies—unrefined	539,002	£278,225
And our total imports are { refined 7,245,640 ... £5,914,849		
{ unrefined 10,874,871 ... £0,811,354		

The figures are for a period of nine months, ending 30th of September, 1890. The other countries from which we get the sweet stuff in appreciable quantities are France, Holland, Java, Belgium, and Peru, from which countries we derive altogether five and a half million hundredweight.

It is well known that we have to buy a great deal of foreign butter, and most of us have fancied that Normandy and Brittany were the sources of our chief supplies. We have heard of Danish butter, too, but not a great deal, and I think many people will share my surprise at learning that we get much more butter from Denmark than from France, and if the figures for Denmark and Sweden are added together, they more than double the value and quantity that France sends us. We paid Denmark in nine months nearly three and a half millions of money for butter, and to France only just over two millions.

From butter to eggs is a natural transition. There is not much to astonish us in the revelation of eggs, except that whereas we get nearly as many from Germany as from France, we pay much less to the Teutons for them. It appears that French eggs are worth half as much again as German eggs. Belgium supplies us with fifty-six eggs for every hundred that we get from France, at about the same price as the Germans part with theirs. Altogether, we spent two and a half millions of pounds on foreign eggs in nine months.

Keeping to farm produce, I felt curious to learn something about corn, and especially bread-stuffs. Here are the figures of our importation of wheat.

	<i>Cwt.</i>	<i>Value.</i>
From Russia	13,927,010	£5,325,327
„ East Indies	7,112,577	£2,696,955
„ United States	14,438,336	£5,758,287

Brother Jonathan also grinds his corn, and sends us in the form of wheatmeal and flour 9,605,901 cwt., worth to us £5,331,489. One noteworthy fact which I find under the head of corn is that we are importing a prodigious quantity of maize—very nearly twice as much as we bought in the same time only two years ago, the present amount being over 37 million cwt., worth £8,346,274. From this I know of only one inference that can be drawn, and that is that distillers must be very busy converting it into spirit.

But, melancholy to relate, coffee is in a parlous state, and seems to be unequal to the contest for command of our tables. The quantities of tea, coffee, and cocoa that we imported for home consumption in nine months were :—Tea, 143 millions of pounds ; coffee, 21·8 millions of pounds ; and cocoa, 15½ millions of pounds. Two years ago those millions would have been : Tea 138½, coffee nearly 24, and cocoa nearly 14. Our own colonies have suffered most severely by the drop in coffee. On the other hand, John Chinaman has suffered badly as a tea planter. In 1888 (nine months) we brought from India and Ceylon 68½ million pounds, and from China nearly 79 millions. Last year's importation (for similar nine months was, from India and Ceylon 92¼ millions, and from China 47½ millions.

Now let us look at some articles of clothing. I feel some interest in silk, so I will begin with that ; and I find that two-thirds of our raw silk comes from China, which I confess I had not expected to learn. I wonder if, as an exporter of silk stuffs (other than ribbons), many people of ordinary information will expect to find Holland taking a very prominent place. In the first nine months of this year Holland sent us one-fourth in value of the silk we imported. Of course France was at the top of the list, but all other countries were, as racing-men say, "nowhere." That is the state of the race as regards what are called "broad stuffs." But the next thing I see is that ribbons of silk or satin do not come mostly from France, nor yet from Holland, but from Belgium, whose receipts in money from us for these articles are double what France gets, and other countries again are "nowhere." "Other manufactures" of silk find France heading the poll, with the East Indies and China jointly straggling in second, with just about an eighth of the value.

Next to silk, commend me to wool. We know pretty well where that comes from, though we may hardly realise the magnitude of the supply. Our importation of silk for nine months has been worth rather more than nine and a half millions of money. But Australasia sent us during the same period over sixteen million pounds' worth of wool, and we received from the Cape more than three million pounds' worth, and from the East Indies three-quarters of a million. Altogether, we imported over twenty-two million pounds' worth of raw wool. Of course we did not keep all this for ourselves ; France, Germany, Belgium, the United States, Holland, and other countries bought nearly half of it from us, France and Germany each taking nearly three million pounds' worth. But the French made up the raw wool into piece goods, which they sold back to us for over four and a quarter millions of money ; apparently the Germans wanted all we sold to them, for they sent none back.

As to linen : poor old Ireland still makes linen, and let us hope it will continue to do so for many a year ; the Scotch also are busy in the trade, but we have to import a great deal of flax from foreign countries, and two-thirds of the amount we import comes from Russia, while Belgium and Holland between them sell us nearly all the rest—Belgium twice as much as Holland.

Of hemp we import nearly as much as we do of flax, but we have to go much farther away to find it, and over one-third of it has to come from the Philippine Islands—farther away even than China—Germany, Italy, and Russia contributing amongst them nearly the same amount. On flax, hemp, and jute we pay away just over eight millions. But when we have made these products up, we export a considerable amount, for the United States buy from us over a million pounds' worth of jute goods, and nearly one and three-quarter millions' worth of linen goods. The West Indies and Australasia also buy nearly £630,000 worth.

No one needs to be told that raw cotton comes from the United States, but it is pleasant to know we are not now so exclusively dependent on America as we were when the cotton famine happened, nearly a quarter of a century ago, through the great war there. Still it is only about one-fourth of our supply that we derive from Egypt and the East Indies. In all, we have imported in nine months over twenty-five million pounds' worth of cotton, of which seventeen and a quarter came from the States, four and a quarter from the East Indies, and over two and a half from Egypt. And what do we do with all this raw cotton ? We make it into yarn, and of the yarn we make "piece goods," and we use a great quantity of these in the way of clothing, sheeting, &c., and then we export an enormous quantity—some in the yarn state, some made up, some printed. In the nine months our cotton exports were of the total value of nearly fifty-six millions of pounds. It was distributed to some of our chief customers in this way :—

Country.	Yarn.	Piece Goods.
East Indies	£1,950,000	£14,745,523
China	£452,000	£4,423,732
Japan	£779,000	£569,000
Germany	£1,315,000	£402,000
Holland... ..	£1,290,000	£524,000
Turkey	£845,000	£2,351,000
Brazil	£1,709,000
Egypt	£917,000
United States	£966,000
Australasia	£1,406,000

The only other articles of clothing that I need refer to are caoutchouc (or india-rubber), of which we use a constantly increasing quantity, and of which the amount already imported is worth nearly two and a quarter millions of pounds ; and hides, of which we import, in the rough state, nearly two millions of pounds' worth, the East Indies supplying nearly one-quarter of the amount. Besides these rough hides, we import others that are tanned or dressed in some way, so as to be ready for use, to the value of nearly five millions. The United States send us rather over one and a half millions, and the East Indies rather less, France coming next, with nearly three-quarters of a million. We do not use all this leather, for we re-export nearly two million pounds' worth in the rough and in the manufactured state.

Passing from articles of clothing to other imports, one is struck by the quantities of wood and timber we get from abroad, and the enormous consumption of petroleum. One-fourth of the import of wood comes from Sweden and Norway, to which countries we have

had to pay over four millions in nine months. Next to Sweden and Norway, we draw the largest quantity from Canada, the value being two and three-quarter millions. Russia is third in the list, with two and one-third millions, and the United States follow with over one and a quarter millions. The total value of wood imported in this period was over twelve millions of pounds. Petroleum is lumped together in the return at seventy-two and a half million gallons, worth £1,687,000, but how much comes from America and how much (if any) from Russia is not stated.

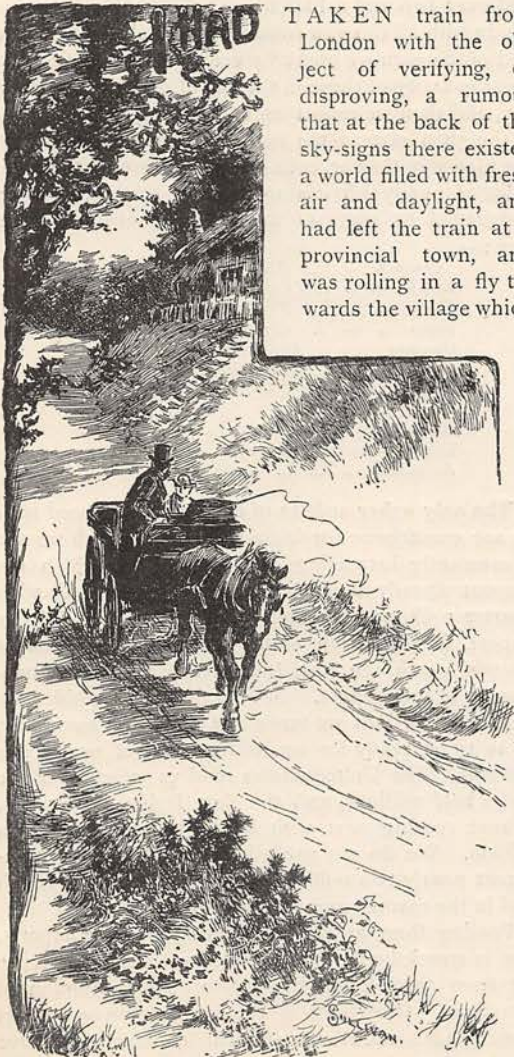
Lastly, we look at miscellaneous articles, and first amongst them come horses. We were buying half as many horses again last year as we did in 1889, and nearly twice as many as the year before. The total,

however, is only 16,336, worth a quarter of a million, and Germany sends us 10,715 of them, said to be worth £116,368. To make up for this, we export British and Irish horses to the number of 9,492, worth half a million, so we may pride ourselves on the superiority of our breed of these. The only other thing I notice is that we pay the East Indies over one and one-third millions for linseed, and Russia nearly a million. May I mention in passing that linseed is the seed of the flax plant from which linen is made? We are so used to thinking of it as material for poultices, that we lose the other association.

Some day I hope I may be allowed to put some other Government figures into a little article which may be of some interest.

C. P. D.

“FULL-LENGTHS AND THUMB-NAILS”—THE REMORSELESS ABLETT.



TAKEN train from London with the object of verifying, or disproving, a rumour that at the back of the sky-signs there existed a world filled with fresh air and daylight, and had left the train at a provincial town, and was rolling in a fly towards the village which

was to be the scene of my investigations. I asked the flyman whether he knew of any apartments in the village.

“Well,” he said, “there’s Mrs. Biffens, the grocer, but she’s full; and then there’s another set o’ rooms I know of, only *they’re* down with the measles.”

Then he paused and held a consultation with himself, in which there appeared to be considerable difference of opinion; then he nudged the horse on the side with the end of the furred whip as if to call *his* attention to the matter, and the horse shook his head doubtfully.

“There’s Mr. Ablett, the shoemaker, in a manner o’ speakin’,” said the flyman. “He *do* let; but there’s some o’ the gentry as don’t seem to kind of ‘it it off with Ablett, as you might say, and goes off in a ‘uff. You see, Ablett he kind of offends ‘em, he do; and one ole lady with a Maltese terrier as was that upset at his goin’s-on as she ran right out of the ‘ouse, and went away in the market ‘bus, and left all her things. You see, he do go it that violent as upsets ‘em, specially visitors, which of course they’re delicate nurtured, as the sayin’ is, is visitors, and easy shook in their feelin’s. And then it’s that there gelatine as tells on ‘em, you see. But maybe *you* mightn’t care, sir, ‘cos there’s some as ain’t the same as others.”

There appeared to be something very strange and unsettling about Ablett the shoemaker, but all I could clearly elicit from the flyman was that no physical violence was to be anticipated from Ablett, and that he was not in the habit of murdering his lodgers in their beds.

When we reached the village, my friend, drawing up, beckoned to an acquaintance, and consulted him in low and doubtful tones; then another man came out from the little saddler’s shop and joined in, and the blacksmith strolled in from a little distance; and Mrs. May, the greengrocer, leaned out of her shop-door, three feet off; and a Skye-terrier, with a fox-terrier’s head and tail, straggled up and listened.