

of, witches and warlocks. Three centuries have passed since this was done by the Ladies Buccleugh, Fowlis, and Kerr, the Countesses of Huntley, Athol, Angus, and Lothian, and many others, whose witcheries would now be esteemed of a very different nature; and the same distance of time divides us from that period when the punishment of death was first decreed to witches and those who were in league with them, and when the wretched victims of superstition were taken to the stake, there, as their dreadful sentence ran, "to be burned in ashes, quick, to the death."

Happily we live in a milder and more enlightened age; and although the spirit of credulity is not exorcised, yet we have freed ourselves from those grosser and more barbarous surroundings with which it was once evoked. Demonism has dwindled to divination, which, for the most part, is practised and believed in after a very stupid fashion. While mediums, spirit-rappers, magic crystals, and marvellous cabinets have been admitted, among other follies of the day, into west-end drawing-rooms, the witches and their witchcraft are doomed to rusticate among illiterate hinds. Except for specimens of that attractive class of humanity to which the name of "Lancashire witches" has been assigned, we must not now look for our witches and warlocks among the upper ten thousand of society, but we must search for them in country towns and sequestered villages, and there only among the homes of the poorest and least educated. In certain spots of social stagnation we may expect, here and there, to find people who, from superior cunning, have so twisted their ordinary lives as to appear, in the sight of their duller-minded neighbours, to be beings invested with supernatural powers; and, in such cases, these cunning people have probably traded upon the local credulity, and have voluntarily adopted the magical character of "wizard"—which is but another name for "wiseacre"—witch, or fortune-teller; and, for certain fees and rewards, are ready to divine dreams, discover stolen property, cure diseases in man and beast, and impose or remove charms. The month of August, 1863, produced at least two English specimens of the modern belief in witchcraft. There was the Somersetshire case of Ann Hogg, who, in order to obtain what she called "a blood cure," stuck a knife into the back of the reputed witch, and repeated the experiment on the body of the witch's daughter. And there was also the well-remembered Essex case, where "Dummy," the old and eccentric deaf-and-dumb Frenchman, was "swum" by the people of Sible Hedingham for being a wizard and refusing to take a charm from off the village publican's wife; when, being twice thrown into a mill-slucice and barbarously hustled by the mob, he received injuries which terminated, a month afterwards, in his death, and led to the two ringleaders of the mob being sentenced, at the Chelmsford Assizes, to six months imprisonment with hard labour. This was as true a case of "witchcraft" as, probably, ever occurred; for Dummy had, to all appearance, caused the woman's illness and kept her under the "spells" which he refused to take from her, spurning golden bribes and those malignant threats which were, unhappily, carried into execution. The ignorant woman was really bewitched by the fear that the supposed diabolical arts of the old French wizard were potent to produce the sickness into which her frenzied perturbation of mind soon threw her; and, to all intents and purposes, Dummy caused her illness by his self-assumed powers of witchcraft. The catastrophe of his own death was, doubtless, as unlooked-for as it was unintended by the ignorant mob who caused it, and to whom the swimming of a wizard would seem to be

the natural and pre-ordained way for the subjugation of his obstinacy. They thought that they should bring him to do what was required of him by making him a partaker in an experiment through which he would pass harmlessly; but however great the savage fun may have been to them, it proved to be nothing less than death to the supposed frog-eater and wizard.*

In the autumn of 1866, the credulity of the rustics of Bathampton, near Bath, was evidenced in their persistent belief that the ghost of their recently deceased pastor nightly walked in the village churchyard; nor could this ghost be duly laid until the county police had been summoned to perform the task; albeit, their harmless necromancy resulted in nothing more than the apprehension of—a large white owl. No sooner had this ghostly subject been settled in a common-sense, matter-of-fact way, than a case of witchcraft occurred in the little village of North Leverton, Nottinghamshire, where lived a farmer named Ellis, to whom two men, named Swallow and Bellamy, acted as horse-keepers. Something was amiss with the teams; and Bellamy not only accused Swallow of bewitching the horses but also threatened to bleed him for doing so, and, as a preparatory measure, beat him unmercifully over the head and face with his heavy whip-stock, in order to drive the witchcraft out of him. For this assault Bellamy was heavily fined by the Retford Bench, who declined to recognise his conduct as a vigorous effort to expel witchcraft; although Bellamy sought to justify his act by alleging that his fellow-servant had really bewitched the horses, and that he himself had tried to counteract the witchery by giving the horses dragon's blood and putting a charm in the corner of the stable. He produced two copies of the charm and a tin canister of the magical dragon's blood; the words of the former being these:—"Omnes Spiritus laudent Dominum Misericordiam habe Deus Desinetur Inimicus D. V." In parting from the magistrates, out of pocket but not out of heart, Bellamy delivered to them, as his *ultimatum*, the following decision:—"There's witching the same now as ever there was, only they durst not show it; and there's the same books as there always was;" the books referred to being the charm-books from which the fragment of blundered Latin had been copied "by a man at the railway-station," who had thus brought one of the greatest marvels of modern times into the closest juxtaposition with a degraded relic of mediæval superstition.

Perhaps a superstitious belief in witchcraft is not, at the present day, restricted to any special nooks and corners of our country, but may be as wide-spread as ignorance itself; for the instances here mentioned afford a clear proof that what we usually deem the developments of civilisation have only partially penetrated into rural districts; and that a combination of churches, schools, railways, and penny newspapers, is not yet sufficiently powerful everywhere to sink witchcraft to the bottom of oblivion.

MÜLLER'S ORPHANAGES.

THE largest orphanage in England is at Ashley Down, Bristol. It contains eleven hundred and fifty children,

* In the parochial records of Rushock, Worcestershire, it is mentioned, under date of 1660, that "One Joan Bibb was tyed and thrown ynto a poole as a witch, to see whether she could swim. And she did bringe her Act'n ag't Mr. Shaw, the Parson, and recov'rd 10 lb. Damadges and 10 lb. for costes." Here the witch had the best of it. But it was a very exceptional case; for while, if she sank and was drowned, she was considered to have thereby proved her innocence; if, on the contrary, she swam, she was usually tried for being a witch, and was burnt, stoned, or otherwise made end of.

and this number will soon be increased to two thousand. This remarkable institution has grown to its present proportions in about thirty years, and its vicissitudes during this period are well known to the readers of the "Leisure Hour." The founder of the orphanage is a

And, while this was going on, he often had not a shilling in the world for himself. For years the life of the young orphanage was a continual struggle, but all the while the orphans continued to increase in number, and, at last, Mr. Müller, seeing the advantage that would



(No. 2.)

ORPHAN HOUSES, ASHLEY DOWN, BRISTOL.

(No. 1.)

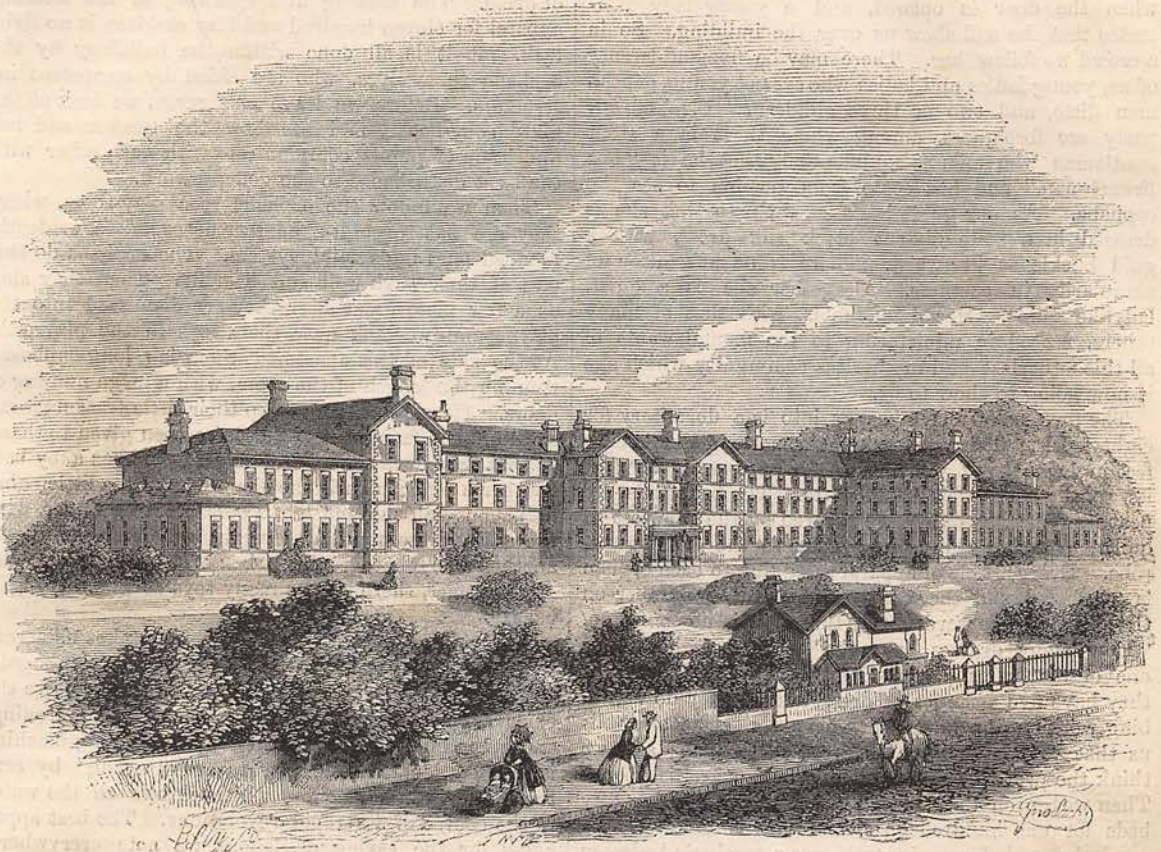
Prussian, named George Müller, a minister among the Brethren in Bristol. When he went to Bristol first, he stipulated with the congregation among whom he ministered that he should have no fixed salary—a very singular arrangement considering that he had no means of his own—and it was while he was in a condition of comparative poverty that he projected and commenced his orphanage. From that day to this he has never had a fixed salary, and he has never published any more than the initials of the donors who have supplied him with the means of carrying on the orphanage work. At first he took a few orphans into his own house, No. 6, Wilson Street, Bristol; and people in the neighbourhood, seeing that he was a poor man engaged in a humane work, began to help him; but, as he never had a regular list of subscribers, his means were very fluctuating, and occasionally the funds from which he supplied the orphans with food were completely exhausted. In this, its first stage, the institution was regarded as the work of an enthusiast, who would be sure to break down in the end; and certainly the straits into which he was driven seemed to justify the opinion. But, just as Mr. Müller ought, according to ordinary calculations, to have shut up his institution, he opened a second house, and took in more orphans, although there were no visible means of supporting them. Then he opened a third and a fourth.

arise from having a building properly constructed for the training of orphans, built a house to accommodate three hundred. This was followed by a second and a third still larger; and to these a fourth and a fifth have now been added, making a total accommodation for two thousand one hundred orphans. This work has cost over a quarter of a million sterling, every farthing of which has been supplied to Mr. Müller without solicitation; and the donations, which have varied from one penny to thousands of pounds in one sum, have never been published in connection with the names of the donors, so that there is no *éclat* to be obtained by giving. It will be seen from this that Mr. Müller is an extraordinary man, engaged in an extraordinary work. He has around him every day at the present time eleven hundred and fifty children, and these, as we have said, will very soon be increased to two thousand. Such an institution must be interesting not only to the philanthropist, but to all who are interested in the difficult question as to what is to be done with the destitute orphan poor.

Mr. Müller is a man of business and system, as well as of faith; and he would require to be systematic in the management of such a vast number of children. He opens each of his three great houses one afternoon in each week, and, taking advantage of this arrangement, we propose to have a peep at the orphanage as it is seen by a visitor.

The houses are called respectively Number One, Number Two, and Number Three—the order in which they were built. Number One contains boys and girls (300); Number Two contains girls only (400); and Number Three contains girls only (450). If we want to see

well-kept flower gardens. At the top of the hill we obtain extensive views over the county of Gloucester, and at no great distance we see the steam and hear the whistle of the locomotives on the South Wales Union Railway, which runs from Bristol to the Channel.



ORPHAN HOUSE, NUMBER THREE.

Number One—in which there are some special features, such as the bakery, which supplies the eleven hundred and fifty children with bread—we must go on Wednesday afternoon. If we want to see Number Two, which contains a nursery, with cots and cradles for the youngest infants, we must go on Tuesday. If we prefer to see the house most recently built, Number Three, we must go on Thursday. No exceptions are made to this order. The educational and other work is disturbed by the presence of the public, and, therefore, only one afternoon can be given up for their admission. If Cræsus himself were to apply for admission on any other day he would be politely informed that “no exceptions are made;” and King Cræsus need not stay to argue the matter, for no respect is paid to persons. So as this is Thursday afternoon, and as Number Three is open on Thursdays, let us take the legitimate opportunity of seeing this part of the home of the orphans.

At the top of Stoke's Croft, which verges on the old road from Bristol to Gloucester, there is a convenient cab-stand. We hail Jehu, and stepping into the cab we give the brief instruction—“Müller's—Number Three.” The next moment we are on our way to Ashley Down, for cabby, who has plenty of customers of the same sort, knows exactly where we want to be set down. After a drive of about a mile we ascend a rather long and steep hill, studded on either side with handsome villas and

Farther on we come in sight of the building we are about to visit—Number Three—and a very large and handsome stone building it is, without a single touch of eleemosynary repulsiveness about it. Number Three is on the right side of the road as we have approached it; on the left are Number One and Number Two; while a large scaffolding points out to us the sites of Number Four and Number Five, now nearly completed. We tell cabby to wait for us (he will have to wait rather more than an hour and a half, as it requires that time to walk through the building), and we ring the bell of the lodge. A pleasant-looking dame admits us and directs us to ring at the centre door. As we pass around the circular lawn we observe that the ground on our left is cultivated and has on it a good crop of potatoes; on the right are other kitchen herbs. We ring as directed, and a lady opens the door, and shows us up a fire-proof staircase to the waiting-room. Before we have arrived a large number of persons, on the same errand as ourselves, have set out with an attendant guide to look over the building, and we must wait a few minutes till a second party is made up. We soon find ourselves surrounded in the waiting-room by a number of people from different parts of the country. One lady has brought with her a large parcel of toys for the orphans, and another has brought presents to a particular orphan. The room we are sitting in is neatly carpeted and has a corniced

ceiling, and at one of the two large tables which are in the apartment there sits a lady who answers very affably such questions about the institution as the curiosity of visitors prompts them to put. We are just getting into a reverie on "individuality," as exemplified in the founder of this beautiful home for orphans, when the door is opened, and a young lady intimates that she will show us over the building. So in a crowd we follow her. There may be five-and-twenty of us, young ladies and ladies who are not young, gentlemen ditto, and two or three children. Five of our party are foreigners, among whom there is a stout gentleman who tells us confidentially that he is "one Frenchman," and has come from London to see the orphans. As our guide leads us, we note that she is dressed in a tastefully-cut black silk dress, with a gold buckle at her waist. There is no affectation of singularity in costume. Altogether she is a quiet, ladylike guide. Her daily life is, with that of many others, passed in ministering to the mental wants of all this fatherless and motherless community which she is now going to show to us.

The first room she takes us into is a dormitory for eighty girls. This room must be something like twenty feet in height, and you feel by the pure sweet air that its ventilation is well attended to. The bedsteads are neat iron ones, and they are covered by the snowiest of quilts. Passing through we come to the girls' wardrobe. Every article of apparel belonging to each orphan is numbered, and there is a corresponding number on the shelves in the wardrobe, so that there is no confusion. "How many dresses have the orphans each?" asks one of the ladies present, and our guide informs us they have five changes of dress, and if they do scrubbing work in the house they have six. She also tells us that they have three pairs of shoes each; and we think the provision as regards wearing apparel is liberal. Then we go on to a second dormitory containing fifty beds for one hundred girls, and this is followed by a wardrobe as before. In each case a teacher's bedroom overlooks the dormitories of the orphans. Then we pass on to a teacher's sitting-room, of which we afterwards see several very neatly furnished, with a few of the freshest of flowers on a table partially covered with books. The place, we begin to recognise, has an air of refinement, and the arrangements all point to health and comfort. Next we advance to smaller dormitories, first for twenty-four girls, then for twenty girls, and the latter has in it servants' boxes containing dresses, etc.; for these twenty are being prepared to be sent out to service. We advance again with our guide, and enter a dormitory for ninety girls, followed by the usual wardrobe, and then come to another for one hundred girls. We have not seen the orphans themselves yet, and as it is only three in the afternoon we do not expect to find them in the dormitories; but we wonder where they are, and as we do so there comes up through the open windows the sound of a vast number of young voices singing a cheery song, with a "tra-la-la" refrain. We advance to the window, and find that it looks out on one of the playgrounds—there are two playgrounds, one for each wing of the building—and that the children having joined hands form two vast circles, and are tripping round the centre swinging pole, to the merry music of their own voices. We listen to their "tra-la-la" for a short time, and then follow our guide down-stairs to the working and educational regions.

We find the schoolroom to be a large apartment hung round with maps and other educational appliances. The girls have been called in from the playground, where

they have been enjoying a short recess, and we find them at their work; for work and education alternate here. There is work at one part of the day, and school at another part, so as to give as much variety as possible. Some of the girls are making shirts for the boys, others are knitting, others are engaged on other useful articles of dress. The making and repairing of the wearing apparel for eleven hundred and fifty children is no light task, but it is all done within the buildings by the orphans themselves, who are aided by competent instructors. Before we leave this room, we look at the girls' copy-books, and see how the teacher and her multitude of pupils communicate with each other with the least disturbance to the general work.

Then we follow the orphans to a play-room, where they are put through a number of exercises, evidently founded on Ling's mild system. The orphans do this part of their work well and heartily. Then they sing us a few pieces, and after they are dismissed into the playground we look over their toys in the playroom. At the side of this apartment there is a long cupboard running the length of the room, with a large number of doors. Here the orphans keep their little treasures—all sorts of little fancy things that have been given to them, or that they have made themselves. One has a toy bed, another a pincushion in the shape of a boot, a little china doll about half the length of a person's little finger, with the satin dress standing straight out from the waist; another has photographs, a box of wooden bricks, etc. Here, in fact, there are as many toys as would set up a bazaar.

But we pass on with our guide, who takes us across the playground, fitted up with swings and springboards, and through the laundry into the washhouse. Here the elder orphans, with hired servants, are washing, ironing, and mangling. An American "ball" washing-machine is in operation, and the clothes are "wrung" by centripetal force in a machine which throws off the water in the course of its rapid revolutions. The best appliances for the saving of labour we note everywhere. Then we go on to the lavatory and bathroom—a large apartment with basins for washing on three sides, a large bath on the fourth side. A numbered bag containing combs and brushes, and a smaller bag containing a tooth-brush, hang over each basin. Next we come to the workroom for girls who are being prepared to go out to service, and you can here choose a servant, if you can satisfy Mr. Müller, who is very particular in selecting places for his orphans, that you are a person likely to give reasonable protection to a girl taken into your service from his institution. We next go on to the kitchen, where tea, which consists of a cup of milk and water and plenty of bread and butter, is being prepared. In this house there are 450 children to sit down, and the preparation of the meal is a matter of considerable labour. One fire, however, cooks the food for the whole of the orphans, and the same fire boils the four huge kettles for tea. From the kitchen we pass on to a second schoolroom, for we are in another wing of the building now, and we again see the orphans put through a variety of exercises. Then we go on to a second playroom with another bazaar of toys. From this we proceed to the storerooms and the cloakroom, the latter containing the winter cloaks of the orphans. We next enter the room in which the orphans are about to sit down to tea. There is a tablecloth on each table, and the elder orphans are preparing for the reception of the 450 who will shortly be here with good appetites. From this room we pass into a corridor in which we see the servants bringing forward from the

kitchen the supplies for tea, and then we take leave of our guide, and quit the building by the same door as we entered it, mentally acknowledging that we have seen a wonderful sight. Every one of the orphans we have seen was taken into the institution absolutely destitute, for no others are admitted; every one is well clothed, well educated for the position she is expected to fill; every one receives a liberal diet, and has her toys just as if she were at home. Nothing can possibly compensate for the loss of father and mother, and no "system" can make a real "home" for an orphan, in the sense in which home is understood by the children of well-to-do parents; but in the Orphan Houses at Ashley Down there is as near an approach to the domesticity of home life as it is possible to obtain in an institution in which there are a large number of children. Once a week the friends of the orphans may visit them, and the children are often taken out for a stroll into the country.

One peculiarity regarding these Ashley Down Orphan Houses is their expansiveness. Under the direction of their founder, George Müller, they have grown into their present dimensions; and, if they continue to expand as they have done, they must in the end include a large proportion of the destitute orphans in England.* In this aspect they assume a national importance, and make the question of orphanages exceedingly interesting. One great testimony to the efficiency of Mr. Müller's system is the healthfulness of orphans under his care. It is well known that, in foundling hospitals, the mortality caused by the separation of the child from the natural parent is enormous. The mortality in the Ashley Down Institution is exceedingly light. The rate of mortality in healthy towns is seventeen per year for every thousand. In many places this rate is greatly exceeded; but in some of the healthiest towns in England the rate is as low as thirteen. In Mr. Müller's institution the rate of mortality last year was only about ten per thousand, and this very low rate is remarkable, when it is remembered that a large number of orphans are the children of consumptive parents. This is very strong proof indeed that the system pursued at Ashley Down is in its physical results an admirable one, and well worthy of the attention of those philanthropists and humanitarians who interest themselves in the protection and training of the young in all kinds of benevolent institutions.

No influence or interest whatever is required to get a child into Müller's Orphanage. The only conditions are, that the child shall have been born in wedlock; that it is bereaved of both parents; and that it is in needy circumstances. When these conditions are fulfilled, the children are received in the order in which application is made for them, without any sectarian distinction whatever, and without partiality or favour. The annual cost of an orphan is about £12 8s., and the total amount Mr. Müller has received on behalf of his cosmopolitan institution is £259,089 0s. 11½d., an enormous sum, when it is remembered that not a penny has been asked for, and that the names of the donors are not made public. In all its aspects, the institution is extraordinary, and it is especially extraordinary as the work of a humble-minded foreigner who, thirty-six years ago, came to England a stranger, and who remains now, as he was then, a comparatively poor man.†

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

II.

WHEN, at the age of twenty-three, Abraham Lincoln returned from the Black Hawk war, it was with new aspirations and resolutions. Henceforth he would bid farewell to the toils of the backwoodsman and a life of manual labour, and prepare himself, by reading and study, for taking a part in public affairs. What it was that had brought about this change in his purposes it is of course impossible to say. Whether, like a certain sage of an older time, he had seen "with how little wisdom the world is governed," and had discovered in himself some aptitude for the calling of a senator; or whether the accident of the war, which had brought him into contact with other aspiring and adventurous spirits, had aroused an ambition hitherto dormant in his breast, certain it is that from this time he marked out for himself a new course of life, and set himself to the attainment of objects far different from those which had hitherto engaged his attention. On returning home he suffered himself to be nominated as a candidate for representative in the State Legislature, the election of which was close at hand. He could not hope to be elected, as he was all but unknown beyond his own district; but he probably reckoned on the fact of his being a candidate securing him effectually at some future period. So thoroughly, however, was he appreciated in his own precinct, that of the whole two hundred and eighty-four votes given, all but seven were in his favour. This unequivocal testimony to his worth made him in a manner a political celebrity at once; and in future elections it became a point with candidates to seek to combine his strength on their behalf and secure his battalion of voters.

He now commenced the study of the law, with a determination to qualify himself for practice at the bar. He had no funds wherewith to support himself during the years it would take him to acquire the necessary knowledge; but he had gained some practical skill in land-surveying, and was fortunately enabled to turn that skill to good account. About this time it was that the mania set in, which proved eventually so ruinous to many, for speculation in Western lands; and although Lincoln had neither money nor inclination to embark in such a speculation himself, it was the means of furnishing him profitable employment with the chain and compass. The mania for new settlements spread like a contagion through the State; towns and cities without number were laid out in all directions, and innumerable fortunes were made in anticipation, by the purchase of imaginary properties whose value existed only in the brain of the projector. For nearly five years this delusion lasted, under the fostering care of the rogues who profited by it; and then came the crisis and crash of 1837, which tumbled the whole fabric into dust. But Lincoln had made good use of his time, and when his surveying was brought to an abrupt conclusion, the change served only to excite him to renewed energy in the prosecution of his law studies.

Meanwhile, during his practice as a surveyor, he was elected, in 1834, to the State Legislature, being the youngest member in the assembly, with one exception. His election, which was carried by a large majority, was solely due to character. He had as yet acquired no position—was known only for his straightforwardness and integrity, and in all other respects had his reputation to make. At this time he was very plain in his costume, and rather uncourtly in his address and general appearance. His dress was of homely Kentucky jean, and the

* There are about 12,000 orphans in the workhouses in the United Kingdom.

† Previous accounts of the Bristol Orphanages will be found in "The Leisure Hour" for January 1862, and in "The Sunday at Home" for July 1859.