

"In the present instance the direct heir, a man of wealth, possessing the means to prosecute his claims, will appear *in propria persona*, still far from being an old man—in fact, by many years a younger man than you—able to give the history of his career from the moment he left England until his return. The testimony in his favour would be perfectly overwhelming.

"Why he has held himself aloof so long I cannot say; but to me the very fact seems indicative of some settled purpose; especially when I couple it with his secret visit to Fordham, so soon after his arrival.

"Now, by pursuing the course I advise, you would not only compel Mr. Henry Morton, whatever may be his feelings towards you, to deal generously with you, but you would also enlist the sympathies of the public in your favour—"

Here Mr. Foley interrupted the lawyer by speaking of the anonymous letter he had received, and expressing his opinion that the writer might be in possession of documents which might overthrow the claims of Mr. Aston, or the *soi-disant* Henry Morton.

Mr. Ferret, however, ridiculed this idea.

"I have," he said, "as I wrote you by letter, discovered who this fellow is. He is a mere mean scoundrel, who has robbed and would betray his master. He may possess some document which he, in his ignorance, believes to be of value, but which, be it what it may, can be of no avail against the claim of Henry Morton, openly and boldly set forth.

"I purpose, in fact, to serve you through this man's villainy. It will be necessary for you to show by what means you have become aware of the existence and the return to England of the direct heir to the property you have for so many years honestly believed to be your own. I suggest, therefore, that I return to Cornwall and seek an interview with Mr. Morton, when I will explain that, through the receipt of an anonymous letter—which I will, if you please, place in his hands—you came to the knowledge of his existence and his arrival in England, and that, assured of the justice of his claims, you have lost no time, since the receipt of the letter, in communicating with him through me."

The conversation was long continued. Mr. Ferret used every argument he could think of to induce the squire to listen to reason; and finally, though sorely against his will, Mr. Foley acceded to the lawyer's suggestions, and Mr. Ferret was left to act in the matter as he thought most advisable.

SOME HABITS AND CUSTOMS OF THE WORKING CLASSES.

UNDER the above quaint title a book was published last year, and I have it now before me. The question having frequently been debated whether the actual writer was what he professed himself to be, a working man or not, it may be worth while to state that quite recently I had the pleasure of an introduction to the author, who is a real *bonâ fide* working man, in the ordinary acceptation of the words.

Much talk there is about all being working men in our times, some by hand, and others by head. Thus Lord Brougham, in a famous address to working men, claimed to be as hard a worker as any of them; but in the plain use of the term, the working man is, he who, following some handicraft, wins his bread by the labour of his hands.

Even yet a limitation has to be imposed if we would understand by the working man, and in the aggregate

"the working classes," exactly what a journeyman engineer understands, and vividly represents in the interesting book now before me. He means a man who has learned some handicraft by apprenticeship, not a mere hod-man or carrier, or other unskilled labourer. This sort of working man has an importance in every industrial community, evident to all who reflect on the position in which he stands to the industrial arts. Money, mere capital, would make sorry ducks and drakes with the operation of any industrial art, but for the skilled workmen who operate. The working man, in this limited sense, is a very important individual; and being so, let us proceed to see what sort of a picture of him is drawn by the journeyman engineer.

"The typical working man," he writes, "has been done times innumerable by more or less eminent hands, and from very various points of view. Many of these word pictures of the working man, are, as word pictures, masterpieces, and are, considering that they are written by men outside of the classes of which they treat, surprisingly accurate; but still, to a working man, even the best of them plainly shows a want of that knowledge of the minutæ of the inner life of the working classes, which can only be thoroughly known to members of those classes. While some of the pictures of the working man that have been given to the world have been as impartial and accurate as it was possible for them to be made from an outside point of view, others have, as was naturally to be expected, gone to either extreme. The working man of actual life," the journeyman engineer goes on to say, "is like most other human beings, a compound of good and evil; he has virtues, but he also has his faults and weaknesses. He will maintain a battle for what he conceives to be his rights, and never count the cost. He will stand by his friend in cloud as well as sunshine, and he will often endure the woes of want, and the still more terrible grief of seeing his wife and children suffering those woes, while he is powerless to relieve them, with a degree of fortitude which, were it displayed on a more public stage, would be deemed heroic. Take him for all in all," writes my authority, "the working man is not a bad fellow;" yet (and now you will see, my friend, that the journeyman engineer is no thick-and-thin eulogist), what follows next proves the typical working man to have much that is improvable. "In him," says my authority, "human nature has not attained the maximum of perfectibility just yet. His character has its seamy as well as bright side. He is often drunken, and not always ashamed thereof; and sometimes his love of drink leads to his being guilty of conduct which, to put it mildly, is not all that may become a man. Moreover, he frequently, in a too literal sense, takes no heed for the morrow. Though endowed with a considerable amount of natural shrewdness, he is constantly allowing himself to be cajoled out of money, and used as a tool by gangs of idle, ignorant harpies. He is not, generally speaking, so well educated and well informed as he might be. His language is scarcely pure English undefiled, and is too habitually full of strange oaths. His ideas upon history, political economy, and the constitution of society are noticeable rather for their confusion, and their exceedingly pronounced tone, than for their extent or accuracy." Well, this at least is not flattery, and it comes from "one of themselves."

Are the working classes as well educated as they might be? asks my authority, and presently answers, they are not. True, a large proportion can now read and write—and, thanks to cheap educational literature, there are not a few men among them who are, even in a scholarly sense, well educated; but the ignorance, the

want of anything like real or beneficial education that still prevails among them as a class, and which is seen most remarkably in those who have received all the benefits of the educational machinery at present applied to their benefit, is unpleasantly astonishing. Farther on, our author explains what, according to his view, is the cause of the working artisan's defective education. How comes it, he inquires, that, educational and general literature being so cheap and abundant, educational facilities so wide-spread and easy of access, and artisans endowed with a considerable share of natural intelligence, they should, as a class, be ignorant and ill-informed? The answer is, that the system of education applied to the working classes is a thoroughly unsound one. It attempts too much—attempts to make scholars of children, instead of merely trying to pave the way to their becoming intelligent men. It is a sort of Jack-of-all-trades and master-of-none system, touching in a dry and elementary manner upon a great many branches of education, without going far enough into any one of them to make it sufficiently interesting to the pupils that they should pursue it for the sake of the pleasure it gives after they have left school. In his further remarks on the education of the working classes, our author lays great stress on what, since his book was written, has grown into one of the leading questions of the day, viz., technical instruction. That he is not unmindful of the spiritual interests of his dawning pupil mind, will be gathered from the following. "I leave it to be taken for granted," states he, "that a knowledge of the Scriptures would form part of this, or any other system of English education; but a much higher knowledge of them would be conveyed to the pupil if, instead of setting him to learn chapters of the Bible by way of punishment, or cramming him with genealogies of the Patriarchs and Apostles, just previous to examinations, he was shown the geographical positions of the various countries mentioned in Holy Writ, and told the changes they have undergone, and their present social position among the nations of the earth, and had pointed out to him the glorious poetry and wisdom of such parts as the Psalms, the Proverbs, and Christ's parables and sermon on the mount, and the applicability of many of the lessons contained in them to the affairs of everyday life at the present time."

I pass over the several chapters "On Working Men's Friends"; "A prosperous Trade Union"; "Trades' Societies and Strikes," etc., to arrive at "The Inner Life of Workshops." In all phases of life our author fancies, and he is right, there is a sort of inner life—a life behind the scenes—and only known to the initiated. The working man, who should enter a workshop with no other end than work in view, would, according to our journeyman engineer, soon find the workshop too hot for him—so hot that, as a rule, he would have to leave it, and might thank his planets if he was fortunate enough to escape personal violence. When an apprentice enters a shop, his first education is learning how to "keep nix." What keeping nix means we shall learn presently. "Keeping nix" is really an important job. If the apprentice do it well he is raised in the estimation of those who are to bring him up in the way he should go. It consists in watching for the approach of managers or foremen, so that prompt and timely notice may be given to skulkers, to reading or smoking individuals—to men engaged in "corporation work," to wit, work of their own done in time paid for by the master. The boy who can "keep nix" well—who can detect the approach of those in authority while they are yet afar off, and give warning to those over whose safety he has been watching, without

betraying any agitation, or making any movement that might excite the suspicion of the enemy, will win the respect of all his mates—will be regarded by them as a treasure—a youth of promise. But should he be so slow or so unfortunate as to allow his mates to be "dropped on" while he is upon guard, then woe to him. Curses loud and deep will be heaped upon his thick head; a stout stick and his back will probably be made acquainted; and from that time forth, until he has redeemed his tarnished reputation by doing something specially meritorious in the nix-keeping way, he will be regarded as one concerning whose capacity to learn his trade there are grave doubts.

Another accomplishment which the apprentice is expected to learn, is that of smuggling drink into the shop in a bold and scientific manner. Drunkenness, however, the journeyman engineer testifies, has been giving way to moderation in workshops for many years past; hence the apprentice smuggler's art is less esteemed than formerly. "There are now many working-men, writes my authority, who are not only guiltless of drunkenness and liquor smuggling, but so totally opposed to their being practised by others, that they would if they could save the apprentices from their demoralisation. Very demoralising it is, for not only does a boy run the risk of being disgraced and punished if he is detected in bringing in the drink, but the "sups" with which he is rewarded on these occasions often lay the foundation of drunken habits. Nominally a boy might refuse to be a surreptitious liquor carrier, but virtually compulsion is laid upon him. He cannot afford to deny a favour to a man upon whose good will depends the question whether he be a good or a bad workman. Nominally it is to the master that a boy is bound, yet it is on the goodwill of the skilled workman of the establishment that he really has to depend for initiation into those little "wrinkles" and specialities, the knowledge of which makes the difference between the bad or only ordinary workman.

Nor must the apprentice, however desirous of mastering the technicalities of his calling, dream of quietly devoting himself to the pursuit of that kind of knowledge until he has undergone a further initiation into the nature of workshop life by having a number of stock tricks played off upon him by the older apprentices. These tricks vary, as described by my authority; they comprehend a mixture of rough practical jokes, with some little fine metal of wit and refinement. The new apprentice will be, perhaps, sent to the most ill-tempered man in the shop for the loan of a round square, or to address him by some offensive nick-name. His reception by the ill-tempered man will be both astonishing and disagreeable. The older apprentices will express contrition, and as a makepeace will volunteer to instruct the tyro in the use of his tools. When they have got him fairly to work they will jerk the elbow of his hammer arm, thus causing him to hit his chisel hand. He probably knocks a piece of skin off, when, making a wry face and wringing his hands, he is informed that the hammer could not have hurt him much, *because* it was not upon his hand a minute. At length, the gauntlet having been run, the young apprentice will settle down unmolested to learn the use of the simpler tools. The next two or three years go on more smoothly. The apprentice grows into the workman, and, as a rule, getting disenchanted as he becomes familiar with the intricacies of the trade. The persecution exercised by some workmen over apprentices is, according to the journeyman engineer, so exacerbating, that many boys of spirit vow to have revenge so soon as their indentures are out. These vows are rarely fulfilled; but my autho-

rity knew one occasion when a threat of this sort was carried out. "I once," he writes, "did see a young man fulfil a vow of this kind. As soon as the clock struck twelve on the day on which his indentures expired, he threw down his tools and immediately pitched into a workman who had habitually ill-used him during the first three years of apprenticeship. Having given the man a sound thrashing, he deigned to explain his reasons for so doing thus:—'I always told you, when you used to knock me about when I first came to the trade, that I would pay you off for it when out of my time, and now, if I send any one to you for my character you can say that I kept my word.'"

With this outline of apprentice life in an engineer's workshop I shall conclude the sketch of a very interesting book, which up to a certain point we have thus analysed. The chapters on Saint Monday, Teetotalism, Penny Readings, Working Men's Saturdays and Sundays, touch upon matters of great interest indeed, but open to more discussion, and which have been more fully talked and written about than the matters which constitute the first half of the journeyman engineer's very thoughtful and well executed and every way interesting volume.

TWO MONTHS IN SPAIN.

IV.—SEVILLE.

THE distance from Cordova to Seville by rail is about seventy miles, through the valley of the Guadalquivir; and here we first began to see the semi-tropical character of the country, with increased vegetation. Extensive fields of olives stretch up the face of the low range of hills on each side of the valley, with gardens and orchards of orange and lemon trees, bordered with the cactus and aloe. The weather still continued delightful, and the air clear and buoyant, and just sufficiently cool to be agreeable. This was one of the most pleasurable of the many pleasant days I spent in Spain. My only companion in the carriage was a Spanish gentleman of an old Seville family of some note, who was himself born in one of the Spanish South American colonies. It is not always easy to get information in Spain. The consuls and attachés are proverbially close, and the Anglo-Spanish merchants are afraid to commit themselves by too free an expression of opinions. I had on several occasions the advantage of meeting with well-educated and travelled Spaniards, whose opinions I considered of more value than those of foreigners, who are liable to see things through the prejudices of their own country. My companion was one of the best type of the Spanish gentleman, with all the *suaviter in modo* of the old Don, and the frank intelligence of the English and American gentleman. He brought some pomegranates and melons into the carriage with him; and as no Spaniard partakes of anything without asking his neighbours to share with him, this brought about an introduction; and when he heard that I was familiar with these fruits, and had seen something of the world, he was at once frank, friendly, and communicative. I learned that he had travelled as a student of botany and natural history, and was an author, as I afterwards heard, of no mean repute. He told me of his travels in India, from Ceylon to the Himalayas, and spoke with true-hearted affection and gratitude of the kindness and friendship he had received from Lord Auckland and the Honourable Misses Eden, and the disinterested hospitality of the officials and "merchant princes of India." He was a great enemy to slavery in every form; and this led to some reference

to the career of the late Marshal O'Donnell in Cuba. "The general," he said, "was not a friend to England, or any of its plans, and retained much of the old Milesian hatred of the Saxon race. Nor for that matter was he any great friend to Spain. It was reported that he brought more money home from Cuba than the whole of his salary and allowance would have amounted to while there, and left a large and questionable fortune, in which Spain has no interest. I grieve very much," said my companion, "that this country, which I claim by blood and religion, should be governed by men of this class, and for their interest; but no others have a chance under our present system. The great body of the people have been so cowed and kept down by the combined efforts of Church and State, that no sentiment of true liberty is allowed to approach them. I often tell my countrymen who have never been out of Spain, that they make a great mistake in fancying that they can keep either the religion or the morals of the nation more pure by excluding all light from without, and locking up their religion, as it were, in a dark chamber. My own opinion of Catholicism is, that the more it comes in contact with light, and rubs shoulders with the intelligent labours and opinions of other bodies of Christians, the more bright and beautiful will it appear; and if this doctrine had been earlier understood by the Church, there would have been no need of an exaggerated reformation." This is a view of the case on which we might have differed, but we had no time to discuss the question further. My new friend's kindness followed me to my hotel. He gave me an introduction to the landlord of the *Fonda de Europa*, where I got the best room in the hotel, with board and attendance for thirty-five reals a day, and had more comfort and attention than some of my travelling acquaintances had for double this sum at the more fashionable *Fonda de Madrid*, *Hôtel de Paris*, and *Hôtel de Londres*. But to return to our journey.

The fine land between these two cities seems poorly cultivated, and at long intervals you see a half savage shepherd tending a flock of rough-looking sheep, reminding one somewhat of the *Campagna* at Rome, where there seems scarcely a blade of grass for the cattle to feed upon. There is neither labour nor manure bestowed on the land; and the small wooden plough, drawn by four oxen, is as primitive as that of Egypt or Hindustan. As you approach Seville the scene begins to improve, and the large orange and lemon gardens, laden at this season with their golden fruits, give a novelty and charm to the landscape. On arriving at the station, outside the town, one would think he had come on a colony of Irish. A crowd of half beggars and half idlers thronged around, with the same distinct characteristics: not a coat or covering alike, felt hats in every stage of decay, and ragged coats of many colours; the same wide mouth, thin lips, deep careworn lines on the face, low forehead and sharp eyes, half mendicant and half defiant. Here I found the same mendicant system prevailing as in Bohemia, South Italy, and in the South of Ireland. Is this the result of races, or may it be the peculiar training of their "friends, philosophers, and guides?" But this I must leave for moralists and physiologists to decide—it is altogether beyond my comprehension.

An English poet speaks of Seville as

"A city famous for oranges and women;
He who has not seen it will be much to pity;
So says the proverb," etc.

If he meant the beauty of the women, I think he took a poetical licence, or borrowed from some of their own poets. I did not see anything approaching to our idea