

WAIFS AND STRAYS.

ACTIVE LIVES.—The chief function of the queen bee in the hive is to lay eggs, from which the future population will spring. A healthy queen during her life is estimated to lay the enormous number of 800,000 eggs. Often in the heat of summer, for months together, she will lay 2,000 a day. Whether these eggs are all alike, or whether some are distinctly worker-eggs, and others are distinctly drone-eggs, is one of the numerous questions on which all the bee-keepers are as issue. The working-bees form the life and prosperity of the hive. To them belong industry, labor, patience, ingenuity—in short, all the virtues of the race; and while each knows his own duty, and does it, the efforts of all are directed towards the weal of the community. The working-bee never lives longer than nine months; they labor so incessantly that it is supposed they never sleep.

THE OLD BRIDEWELL.—The new city police station about to be constructed by the Corporation in Bride Lane, Fleet street, will be erected on a portion of one of the oldest historical sites of the city of London. The Saxon kings built a palace here before the Conquest on the remains of a building supposed to be of Roman origin, and Henry VIII. erected a stately and beautiful house, and called it Bridewell, from a celebrated well near Bride Church. King Edward VI. granted the site to the city for a workhouse for the poor and a house of correction for sturdy rogues. The proposed police station will only provide accommodation for a limited number of prisoners, certainly not so many as the old prison, which contained in 1842 1,324 persons, including 466 known thieves. The name of Bridewell police station will probably be adopted for the new building. The old prison, erected about 1850, and demolished in 1862, being the first of its kind, all other buildings erected on the same principal have been called Bridewells.

SOMETHING THAT IT IS WELL TO KNOW.—There is a story afloat that the lease under which the old Parliament House in College Green, Dublin, now the Bank of Ireland, was let, contains a clause to the effect that if at any time the building should be again needed for a Parliament House, it should be possible to have the bank available for that purpose at a moment's notice.

LONDON FIRES.—In the year 1840 there were 681 fires in London, being one to every 2800 people and to every 379 houses; and the population averaged 7.38 persons to each house. In 1850 the number of fires had increased to 868, being one to every 2673 people and to every 347 houses; and the population was 7.69 per house. In 1860 the fires had further increased to 1056, being one to every 2713 people and to every 3.35 houses; and the population was 7.80 per house. In 1870, a very bad year for fires in London, there were 1946 (the largest number recorded), being one to every 1649 persons and to every 226 houses; there were only 7.29 persons per house. In 1873 the fires were 1548, being one to every 2159 persons and to every 403 houses; and there were but 7.10 persons per house.

INCREASE OF THE WORLD'S POPULATION.—It seems that only for death there would be no living in this world of ours. These numbers strangely, but that it is quite as true as it is strange Dr. Letheby has proved conclusively enough. This distinguished authority has found that the annual excess of births over deaths is 12.8 per 1000 in England and Wales; but if it were 18 per 1000, as it is in 100 registration counties, the doctor observe that the population would be doubled every forty years; "so that the 22,712,266 of the census of 1871 would become rather more than 45,000,000 in forty years, and nearly 91,000,000 in eighty years. In 120 years, or about two generations, it would be nearly 182,000,000—which is the estimated population of India. In about 240 years the population of England and Wales, unless it was exported year by year in enormous masses, would reach to rather more than 1,150,000,000 persons. Just imagine all these people huddled up together within the prescribed limits of England and Wales! Positively shocking to contemplate!

A GREAT STEAMSHIP.—The Inman line have now in their new vessel, the City of Berlin, the largest steamship afloat, with the single exception of the Great Eastern. The Berlin is five hundred feet six inches long, and of 6000 tons. She is ship rigged, has four masts, two funnels, twelve boilers, and thirty-six furnaces. She has two new direct acting high and low pressure compound condensing engines, of 1000 horse power. She will have ample accommodation for 250 cabin passengers at 1500 steerage. The City of Berlin will sail for New York in April, 1875, in command of the Commodore of the Inman line.

HORACE GREELEY AS A CALIGRAPHIST.—A good story is told of Horace Greeley. Everyone connected with the New York press knew what a delectable hand he wrote. Having occasion to communicate with a brother editor, he wrote a note and despatched it by a messenger. His friend, not being able to decipher it, returned it for further explanation; upon receipt of which Horace, supposing it to be a reply to his own communication, looked over it and tried to read it; and not being able to fathom its contents, turned petulantly to the imp, and said, "What does the blessed fool mean? take it back again; I cannot make it out." "Please, sir," retorted the messenger, "that's just what he says."

THE SCISSORS EDITOR.—The scissors editor of a newspaper is commonly the butt for many jokes, but a contemporary comes boldly to the rescue of these undervalued students of literature. He says:—Some people estimate the ability of the newspaper and the talent by the editor by the quantity of original matter. It is comparatively an easy matter for a frothy writer to pour out daily a column of words—words upon any and all subjects. His ideas may flow in one weak, washy, everlasting flood, and the command of his language may enable him to string them together like bunches of onions, and yet his paper may be a meagre and poor concern. Indeed, the mere writing part of editing a paper is but a small portion of the work. The care, the time employed in selecting is far more important, and the tact of a good editor is better shown by his selections than anything else; and that, we know, is

half the battle. But, as we have said, an editor ought to be estimated, and his labor understood and appreciated, by the general conduct of his paper, its tone, its uniform, consistent course, its aims, its management, its dignity, and propriety. To preserve these as they should be preserved is enough to occupy fully the time and attention of any man. If to this be added the general supervision of the newspaper establishment, which most editors have to encounter, the wonder is how they find time to write at all.

RELICS OF ANCIENT GREATNESS.—The prominent part Sweden once played in European history has been brought home to her present rulers by the discovery in the war office at Stockholm of a totally forgotten work, prepared expressly by order of Charles XI., to commemorate her triumphs. This book is an illustrated manuscript, divided into twenty volumes, and containing upward of 200 pages of drawings, with copies of the numerous flags and standards of various patterns captured by the Swedish army in battle or siege down to the year 1697. It is described as the handiwork of one Olof Hofman, who received the sum of 640 rix dollars for its execution. A great part of the original trophies depicted in it still actually exist in the well-known Rittterholms Church of the city, which does duty as the metropolitan cathedral on great occasions, and the present King, who was honorably distinguished before he came to the throne, has ordered an investigation to be made of the vast stores of such relics laid up there, which were vaguely reported to number 6000, and have been found to number actually over 4000. Of these the most remarkable are to be restored on the same principles that have been applied to trophies of a similar order, until recently neglected in Germany and Switzerland, neither of which countries, however, can pretend to rival the Swedish collection. Nothing could more forcibly show the changed political condition of Europe during the last two centuries than that such a mass of these relics should be in the possession of a nation which is earnestly debating whether her decayed military power can be so renewed as to face even a mere fraction of that Russian army which, down to Pultown's fatal day, kings affected to despise as a foe hardly worth beating.

JOURNALISM AS A BUSINESS.—In commenting upon the failure of a newspaper editor, the 'St. Louis Globe' tells a plain truth in the following words:—The business of journalism will continue to be an inviting field for experiments for those who have a large amount of money and a large amount of egotism. A man who, having edited a paper until he was forty, should suddenly announce himself a lawyer, would be regarded as a fool by the legal profession; and yet we often hear of lawyers of forty making sudden pretensions to journalism. There is an idea that the business requires no apprenticeship; that the editors come forth from law-offices and colleges fully armed for the profession, like Pallas from the brow of Jove. It is a mistake; there is not to-day a single journalist of national reputation who has not devoted more time and more hard work to his profession than, with equal fitness and application, would have made him a great lawyer or a good doctor. And yet ninety out of every hundred men you meet on the street will hesitate about carrying a hod or making a pair of shoes, whereas there will probably not be one in the hundred who can't, according to his own judgment, edit any newspaper in the country better than it is edited, no matter in what manner or by whom.

HOW THE PIES ARE MADE.—The 'Pall Mall Gazette' given an account of the way in which the *pate de foie gras* is obtained in what is called the "foie gras factories" at Strasburg. The geese to be operated upon are collared and marched away to a cellar half under-ground, where wide and sloping stone tables are arranged in tiers. In the murky light thrown in by some twenty air-holes, one at first can distinguish nothing; but by and bye it becomes apparent that hundreds of geese are already lying strapped on their backs to the upper tiers. Six girls take each their goose, lay him gently but firmly on the stone, and then tie down his wings, body, and legs tight with plaited whipcord. The bird's neck is left free, and there the poor thing has to lie still for seven weeks. The birds are fed by Alsatian girls with large wooden bowls. Each of these bowls is filled with a thick paste, made of parboiled maize, chestnuts, and buckwheat. The girl catches the bird by the neck, opens his bill with a little squeeze, and then rams three or four balls of the paste down its throat with her middle finger. The goose having been thus refreshed, resumes his slanting position and digests till the next time for feeding, which arrives about two hours after, the meals being about six a day. And so matters go on till the time for killing; but we cannot find space for the further repulsive details. No wonder that a member of the Society for the Suppression of Cruelty to Animals once arrived in Strasburg and endeavored to cope with the pie factors; but was worsted. Who, after this would enjoy Strasburg pies?

THE MAN WITH THE CAPITAL.—The man who knows his business is never without capital. At a meeting in London a few months ago, Archbishop Manning said he did not look upon working men either as great capitalists or as men of no capital at all; "for every working man with a strong arm, a steady eye, good will, and skill in his trade or calling, even if only a laborer, possessed the truest and best of capital, which could not be lost unless he was struck down by the hand of God, or unless he squandered it by his own fault." No matter what your business is, know it thoroughly, and you win independence and the respect of your fellows. The best man is the man who knows his tools and whose tools know him. Master your trade and stick to it, and bring your children up with respect for the capital of skill and industry, and you will be a happy and good citizen.

AN APT SCHOLAR.—The Christchurch 'Press' is of opinion that Mr. Bowen has learnt one part of a Minister's business. He is already an adept in the art of speaking without saying anything, and knows how to address an audience on public affairs without giving them a particle of information.