ANCIENT IRELAND.

Woolen and Linen Fabrics and Metal Work in the Good Old Days.

Poets and rhetoricians have in their usual free and easy way exaggerated the material prosperity of ancient Ireland, says Commissioner McCarthy in Harper's Magazine. Much of the splendor attributed to Celtic Kings and Bishops and bards fades under the cold light of historical research. But this very research has put beyond all doubt that beneath the exaggerations of rhetoric and song there lay a solid substratum of truth. Thus the publication by a parliamentary commission of the immense and previously almost unexplored mass of legal institutes known as the "Brehon Laws" has verified the fact that at a time when Britons were almost naked savages the Irish Kelts were clad in woolens and linens of their own manufacture. The Brehon laws abound with references not only to woolen and linen goods, but to carding, weaving, dyeing and the other processes of their manufacture. Again, in the remarkable metrical account of the rights of the monarchs of Ireland and the provincial Kings, attributed to a contemporary of St. Patrick, and known as the "Book of Rights," we find that tribute was paid to a large extent in cloaks, tunics, mantles and other articles of woolen and linen manufacture, some white, some brown, some trimmed with purple, some with fur, and some with gold. We can see for ourselves something of what was done in the more durable materials. Textile fabrics, except of the coarsest kind, perish in far less time than 1,200 years. But metal-work, if good in material and design, survives. Accordingly we have abundant specimens of such work come down to us from the Keltic period. Many of these are rough, but many are rich in material, good in design, and is exquisitely skillful in workmanship. Some were found deep below the surface of our bogs, where probably they were dropped in flight, and got gradually covered with peat in the slow lapse of centuries. Others were found in stone chambers made for their reception, and forgotten for more than 1,000 years. Vast quantities of the gold-work were consigned to the crucible. Some goldsmiths estimate that they purchased and melted down as much as £10,000 worth of ancient Keltic gold-work found from time to time in Ireland. But fortunately much also has been preserved. There is quite a magnificent collection of works in gold, silver and bronze in the museum of the Royal Irish Academy in Dublin. Besides these there are many fine specimens in Trinity College, Dublin, and in the British Museum, London.

A WOMAN'S REVENGE.

How a Lovely Creature Got Even with a Cross Counter-Jumper.

In one of the largest dry-goods stores in this city there is a particularly cross salesman, says the Chicago Tribune. He is altogether too superb a creature to be behind a dry-goods counter, and when he does condescend to wait upon a customer—so the women say—it is such a favor that it is really painful. Yesterday a young woman who had suffered at his hands got even with him in the highest style of the art. She had been selecting the material for a dress for an out-of-town friend and the disagreeable salesman had chosen to assume, when she asked for samples, that she had no intention of buying, and had loftily referred her to some one else, intimating as much. The young woman had bought at least half a dozen dresses at that counter, and she vowed vengeance.

Yesterday she walked up to this superb creature with her sweetest and most demure air. She had a sample of cashmere that she knew couldn't be matched in Chicago, and she sat down in front of him without a word.

If there is any thing that he hates—so the women say—it is to take down goods from the shelves; but when a sample is brought in to be matched he can't help himself. He was in a particularly lofty frame of mind yesterday and picked up the unoffending sample with the condescension of a Duke at the feast. After he had taken down three heavy bolts of cloth he grumbled:

"How many yards of cloth do you require?"

"Two," she answered, with her sweetest smile. After he had taken down two or three more he impatiently remarked to space:

"Rather an unusual shade?"

"Yes."

He took down several more and scowled.

"Is it necessary to have an exact match?" he finally asked.

"Yes; it must match perfectly," said the young woman, decidedly. The salesman knows his business, if he is disagreeable—so the women say—and, giving a disgusted kind of a sniff, he went to work again. Finally, after he had taken down at least a dozen pieces and gone over his entire stock, he brought her a piece.

"This is the best I can do," he said, spitefully; "are you sure your sample came from this store?"

"Oh, no," smiled the young woman, demurely, "I got it in New York, and I knew you couldn't match it."

ETIQUETTE OF THE HAT.

Some Anecdotes About a Pleasing Custom of Society.

How a Gentleman Should Manipulate His Tile When Meeting Lady Acquaintances—The Difference Between a Well-Bred Man and a Boor.

A woman's role is to seem utterly oblivious of her bonnet after the parting look into the mirror establishes the pleasing truth that it is settled safely and becomingly, remarks a writer in Once a Week. The man who forgets what he has upon his head is a boor, incorrigibly absent-minded. The right manipulation of his hat is like spelling—it must be learned early and thoroughly, or it comes hard, and is always a skittish possession.

A mother habitually indulgent to her children, called her eldest born—a boy of ten—back when he had left her on a street corner. The lad cowered under the severity of eye and accent.

"Never dare leave me in the streets again without raising your hat!" she said. "It is a token of respect you owe to every woman, and never forget that your mother is a woman!"

The reproof was doubled-barbed. Association with mothers and sisters is excellent practice in an exercise that can not be abated without injury to him who takes the liberty. "The fellow who nods a cavalier welcome or farewell to his sister at the window, or in the street, will, with the most gallant intentions, some day, in a fit of abstraction, or when hurried by business into forgetfulness of his company manners, nod as carelessly to some other fellow's sister, and score a point in favor of the rival whose hand, from the force of early habit and long usage, moves involuntarily toward the cap brim at the approach of any woman whose face is familiar to him.

A nod is not a bow.

To nod to a woman is open disrespect.

The mother who carves the two sentences and the import thereof upon the mind of her boy builds so much better than she knows as to merit the gratitude of her sex. The bob or duck of the covered head which salutes a comrade of his gender is barely pardonable, even in America. Students in foreign universities would be sent to Coventry were they to practice it on meeting in corridor or thoroughfare. Equally general in the older lands, where external courtesies rank higher than with us, is the custom of doffing the hat on passing a lady—stranger or acquaintance—on the staircase or in the halls of hotel or other public building. In witnessing the effect of the neglect of the gracious little ceremony in the country that furnishes the best husbands in the world it is important to restrain the regretful sigh:

"These things ought ye to have done, and not leave the other undone!"

The undoing is carried to a disgraceful excess as we descend the social scale. The lower we go the more scanty is the observance of the etiquette and moralities of the hat, until we are forced to consider the important adjunct to the out-door toilet as an almost infallible barometer of breeding. Respect of the rules regulating its management in refined circles is the last sign of better days and better manners with which the decayed gentleman parts. When his hand forgets the way to the hat brim, he is very near the foot of the hill. What a slangy lad once called in my hearing "the hat trick" is likewise that which the self-made man of plebian extraction is slowest to learn. I have seen millionaires forget to remove their hats in superb drawing rooms.

One of the most mortifying experiences of my earlier married life was the visit to our country house of a distinguished man than whom the State held none abler of his profession. We had invited several friends to meet him, and the dinner given in his honor passed off smoothly. The lion roared in a perfectly satisfactory manner, winning universal admiration. Coffee was served on the veranda, and the evening being cool, the great man called for his hat. He might have asked permission from the women present to assume it, we thought, but orators must preserve their vocal cords from rust. As the chilliness increased, we adjourned to the library, where a fire had been kindled. There, in the assembled presence of our choicest neighbors, the great man wore his hat until the hour of separation! The recollection is an agony. The inference, borne out by subsequent discoveries, was inevitable. He was a commoner of the commonality and vulgar ingrain. It ought to have been impossible for him to commit such a breach of good manners in any circumstances. The varnish of surface—and unaccustomed—courtesy, like other cheap and patent dressing, requires frequent renewal and can not be warranted to wear.

As a grateful contrast, I offer another authentic incident. A true gentleman, driving through the country with his wife and children, stopped at small farm house to inquire the way. A child on the front seat of the carriage had a view of him as he knocked at the door.

"Papa's talking to a lady," chirped the little one. "I can't see her, but I know because he took off his hat when the door opened, and is standing with his hat in his hand."

The "lady" followed him to the steps as he returned to the carriage. Her sleeves were rolled up to her shoulders; she wore a shabby calico gown without a collar. Her hair was unkempt, her arms and hands dripped with suds. Her parting directions were shrilly nasal and ungrammatical. The man who appeared beside her as a prince beside a serf, stood with his noble head bared as in a royal presence.

"How could you?" queried the quick-eyed occupant of the front seat. "She wasn't a bit of a lady."

"She was a woman, my boy; and a gentleman is always a gentleman for his own sake."

"Men can do no end of pretty things with their hats," sighed a belle to me. "The tactics of that useful article (masculine) are a science—one of the arts. Yet two-thirds of them don't half appreciate their privileges in that line, or suspect their possibilities."

I saw a man who calls himself a gentleman kiss his betrothed the other day, with his hat set as immovably on his head as if it had grown there with his growth and strengthened with his strength!

Fancy a condition of mind and body that could make such a thing practicable in a Christian land, and in the nineteenth century.

A correspondent of the Scotsman, writing from Bombay, describes a Hindoo wedding at which he was present as being interesting not only as a ceremony, but as a spectacle. The branches of the trees in the garden were outlined with little lamps, and a large pond in front of the house was hung round very high up with flags, between which more lamps were suspended.

From the balcony of the house I saw the bridegroom arrive on a led horse, accompanied by many friends. He was dressed in cloth of gold, and wore a splendid hat, and his richly caparisoned horse had wreaths of yellow flowers placed at equal short distances across its back, and hanging down to the ground.

He dismounted at the entrance, where his little bride met him, and threw rice over her own and his head, as a symbol that she would care for the wants of the household. They went together into the house, where the wedding guests were assembled, and sat down on two red cushions facing each other. A white cloth was held up in front of his face, and she covered her face with her sari, while a cord of yellow and white worsted was put up around their necks, joining them together.

A large piece of muslin was then put around his neck, and held up close to her, and under this they joined hands. On leaving the house, a bouquet, on which attar of roses had been poured, was presented to every guest, and wreaths of flowers were hung round our necks by our hosts.

A pot of red paint seems to have been one of the "properties" necessary at the wedding, and the veneration in which the red paint was held was exemplified by a fact narrated by the correspondent. When telegraph posts were first set up in some remote parts of India, the gentle Hindoo was wont to cut the same down for firewood. A young engineer, who had studied the aboriginal character, painted the posts red, whereupon the natives worshiped the posts, and ceased to carry them away as burnt-offerings.

WATERSIDE CHARACTERS.

The Work Done by 'Longshoremen and Stevedores in New York Harbor.

The jolly jack tar of the British and American ship is a hard worker at sea. In these days merchant vessels, as an old salt in the United States Shipping Office remarked to a New York Graphic man, "carry no more cats than can catch rats." Ships go to sea with just enough of a crew to enable them to manage the vessel and in bad weather they have a rough time of it. When the ship is weathering Cape Stiff, as the boys term the Horn, Jack does not spare himself, but pulls out the weather earring with frozen and benumbed hands, as he glances into the vast concavity of blue and icy water below him. He does not object to trim cargo when it shifts, or to go aloft to secure a main top royal when the wind is singing a death rattle through the standing rigging, when the foot-rope is running slack through the stirrups and the reef points are stiff as iron rods. But he most decidedly objects to receive or discharge cargo in port. That he considers the duty of 'longshoremen employed by the stevedores. 'Longshoremen are many here in New York. Two years ago they were very prominent in the Knights of Labor, but since they inaugurated a strike against the Dominion line a few years ago they have not been the objects of much newspaper attention. They are fine, manly, able fellows, and if they do hang around the saloons on the "slips" and all over South street it is because their work is of an intermittent nature, and not because of any desire to idle away their time.

The 'longshoremen whose business it is to load and unload ships must be within the reach of the stevedore from daylight to dark, and so down on South street near the ferry and on Burling and Coenties slips, where boss stevedores congregate, rooms are fitted up for the men in rough sailor fashion, where they can sleep, drink and play cards in their off hours.

About 20,000 men, all told, handle the freight that comes into and leaves the port of New York, and the wages paid them yearly is estimated at over $10,000,000. Every race is represented except the Chinese among these workers along shore.

In New York harbor there are, all told, 300 stevedores, and many have amassed great wealth. They are in effect the agents of the consignees to whom cargoes are brought, and like agents for the "charter party," the legal maritime term for any person or company chartering a vessel to convey a cargo of goods from one port to another. To illustrate: A vessel has been chartered to convey a cargo from New York to Liverpool. She is ready for her cargo and her cargo ready for her. The "charter party" calls for his stevedore, as all large shippers usually continuously employ the same man, and contract with him to put their cargo aboard. This does not mean that it shall merely be put on the vessel's deck. It must be stowed away in the hold and between decks in a proper manner for an ocean voyage. These contracts are based either on weight or measurement, and often on both; and the cost of loading a cargo of a 1,000-ton bark or a great ocean steamer will vary from $1,500 to $6,000. While the vessel is being loaded he is practically its master. For while a ship's captain may suggest regarding stowage, he must after all yield to the arbitrary ruling of the stevedore, who thus becomes the responsible party for the good condition of the cargo on delivery at its foreign port.

The stevedore usually has several foremen in his employ. These are 'longshoremen who work either by the hour, week or month, at an advance of about one-third over the ordinary workmen. When vessels are to be loaded or unloaded these foremen start out on the street and select with almost unvarying impartiality their "gangs" among the 'longshoremen always waiting about the approaches to the docks, frequently in most picturesque groups, and then the liveliest of commotion begins. The 'longshoremen working force comprises a foreman at each vessel, who has entire charge of the work and who keeps the time of the men, assistant foremen in number proportionate to the magnitude of the task, "headers" and regular laborers. "Headers" and assistant foremen receive five cents per hour extra.

If a vessel is loading and the stevedore is able to secure the cargo rapidly, a large number of gangs are worked. Usually one gang is employed at each hatch and side-port, but frequently, if hurried, two are used. Then there is the dock gang, who handle the freight to the ship's side and see that it is started right in its ascent by the "whip" to above the hatch for lowering, and the gangs below who are loading the cargo. These usually consist of two men and a "header" on either side of the vessel. The header practically represents the stevedore in the proper stowing of the freight, and the "headers" must be bright men, for on their directions and care rests the possible good condition of the cargo. The spots where heavy and light materials must be placed; arranging so that freights likely to injure each other are kept separate; stowing so that the cargo shall be borne at the vessel's center of gravity, and that she shall not roll and strain from great dead weights in improper places; and then that the craft's utmost carrying capacity shall be utilized; all must be considered and met and adjusted; for a badly-placed cargo may "shift" at any moment in a storm and send a vessel to the bottom. The raising and lowering of the "whip's" tackle is signaled by the shrill call of an assistant foreman's whistle by the hatch, where this man stands at the port side and receives the packages coming in or going out of the vessel and attends to their being lowered properly and in safety, for hundreds of 'longshoremen's lives have paid the penalty of careless handling of ocean freight along these very wharves.

The stevedore business of the port of New York is now crowded into narrow limits. For want of dock room some of the big steamship companies have been forced to the Jersey side, while those on the New York shore are crowded. Along the North river on the east and north along the East river shore the sailing craft of the world mainly clusters, while the Brooklyn shore for a little distance above the bridge is covered with docks and basins extending for miles.

The 'longshoremen differ much from sailors in one essential respect. They are provident, and many of them have quite a little pile in the savings banks. Their work is hard, and the pay not large, but quite a number of 'longshoremen, especially the Irish, manage to marry and support a family in moderate comfort. They are a peaceable set, seldom figure in the police courts, and not half as rough as their rough calling would cause one to imagine.