

WHEN HEAT STRIKES LONDON.

Contrast Between Rich and Poor Aply Discribed.

BOTH ARE ROBBED OF REAL LIVING POWER.

The 'Amersmith' Bus and Its Luckless Inmates.

London, Aug. 2.—For almost a month the heat has been little short of what one might describe as tropical, that extraordinary humid atmosphere which blanches the faces of the people, and exhausts vitality as the dry heat of Canada seldom does. Wealthy mortals have every chance of enjoying the season to their heart's content, for every device known to man to counteract the effects of the great heat is theirs to try. But for the poor! Well, for the poor there is less terror in heat than in cold; it is the overfed "beetle" species that has to dread the torrid atmosphere, and that shiny, smooth, virtuous type of man, found most often in the business part of the city, or consuming enormous meals at the fashionable restaurants. It is men of this type who begin to have qualms when the veins between the neck and the head begin to rebel against the task of "refrigerating" sensation of fear, the "beetle-man" begins to find that his limbs are shaky; he cuts down his allowance of cigars by five per day; he dilutes the champagne which he has hitherto been content to take neat; he passes with something like resolution the hour of his beloved "cock-tail" and he discards the high starched collar for one of those turned down bits of linen which means relief to the rebellious veins.

One sees these shiny, black beetle men studying the menu at restaurants with much care and solicitude. The head waiter is called into consultation, his fat, unhappy victim pleads with him to suggest what is both appetizing and wholesome. His craving for good food is still with him, though his appetite is gone, no longer stimulated by the ever ready cock-tail of biting strength. You will often see in one of the best London restaurants scores of these men, and amongst them, scattered here and there, angular Anglo-Indians sallow and spare, wearing clothing which means the minimum of weight and warmth, and the maximum of comfort.

A STRANGE TYPE.

There are one or two of the famous eating houses where the beetle-man, with his great expanse of waistcoat, his spread of broadcloth, and his prodigality of cut, is most often seen. When night comes and the crowds pour out from music hall and theatre, you find him again, in all the glory of evening dress, accompanied by his womenkind, of a new and gorgeous species of insect. It is an extraordinary species, this "beetle man," not devoid of energy, or business ability, yet wholly unable to grasp the fact that they discount all their success in the world of business by their inability to realize the havoc they play with their physical powers by over indulgence in the good things that their business ability secures for them. How often one sees them scan with keen anxiety their countenances in the great mirrors which are merciless confessions.

All through this great city of London torrid and ceaseless heat has been sifting the chaff from wheat, has been warning and counselling men and women to lead lives of abstinence and self restraint. If only the very poor who are weak from the want of food might have but a tenth of that food and stimulant which are killing their richer brothers and sisters!

HOW THE POOR SUFFER.

If only they could—if the price of the three cigars which Croesus must "knock off" during the hot weather could go to the Fresh Air Fund for the poor of East End. If only this were possible both classes might be benefited. Among the very poor in many parts of London there is no change in clothing during the hot weather. You see the shadow of a man, clad in heavy corduroys, wearing a great coat, instead of a jacket, shambling along, the perspiration streaming from his poor, sunken cheeks, and you marvel that he can live in the merciless heat which beats down on the battered crown of the heavy felt hat which adorns his unkempt locks. But the chances are that he will live longer than the beetle man, with puffy cheeks and bloodshot eyes, who whirls along Piccadilly in his motor, or, one would say, "he will exist longer," for both are robbed of real "living" power that splendid wholesome vigor of the man who has a sufficiency of the good things of this world, without knowing either the depth of poverty or the excesses of the rich. There are thousands of such men in England, and in London one sees them during the cricket matches at Lord's when they come up from country districts by thousands, crowd the "buses," and swing down Piccadilly clad in their light tweeds and straw hats, looking the very picture of British manhood in its best form—not an ounce of superfluous flesh, keen eyes, long, swinging stride, broad shoulders and well poised heads. These are the men who have "lived," who have known the joy of life in the open, who are able at the age of sixty to take their place on the cricket ground, who can roar with laughter over the slightest farce put on the London stage, and who can yet discuss every leading article in recent periodicals, and who are keen as hawks about political affairs. They

are men whose ancestors have been small land owners for generations, whose families have given their bravest and best to the army, the navy, and the colonial service of the empire. Many of them are clerical; sporting clerics, who preach their sermon on Sunday, and play their cricket with the village team on Saturday.

STILL SOUND AT CORE.

When the great crowds come up to the annual cricket matches at Lord's cricket ground one realizes fully that the "degeneration" of the race is a farce; that only in the overcentralized portions of the British Isles is "degeneration" to be feared. Little these men care about the heat; they stride along, their hats tilted back, their flannel or light faced garments loose and cool. And often by their side you will see their women kind, wearing short trim linen skirts, well cut, loose coats over muslin blouses, broad brimmed hats simply trimmed with ribbon, or perhaps a wreath of roses which match the fresh pink of their cheeks. Again one is sensible that these women, as well as the men, assure England of a vigorous race.

MADAME WHO RIDES.

Carriages and motors roll down Piccadilly. The sunlight is fierce, and makes the pavement a sheet of reflected, dazzling whiteness. In the motors are women wearing the most wonderful of garments, a mass of filmy fineness. Great tulle ruffles, which reach almost to the top of the ear, look cooler than they feel. Hats of some transparent fabric are perched on piled up coiffures, and masses of feathers wave above these erections. The parolists are costly arrangements of lace, chiffon and embroidered silk. If you know anything about London shops and London prices you will know that "Madame" seated in that magnificent motor wears garments which will total up to a sum of a hundred and fifty pounds. Thirty guineas for that dress of mousseline chiffon, of delicate pink and green and white. The underskirt alone is worth ten guineas. It is in a measure more elaborate than the frock. The shoes have cost three guineas in Bond Street, the hat six guineas from a famous milliner in Dover Street, and the etceteras are even more costly than what are called the "essentials." But does Madame cavil at the heat? Not much. She moves only when it is necessary. In her superb home in Mayfair there are electric fans agitating the stagnant air in every direction. Her dainty luncheon awaits her at a beautiful mansion in Belgrave Square, and will represent the genius of a French chef. Everything will be iced and cool. The fruit and flowers will have arrived from the country seat of her host by the morning train. There will be cool shaded rooms to lounge in, the lazy prattle of intimate friends to while away the time; so for her, at least, the heat has no terrors.

AND THE OTHERS.

Not ten paces away from this vision of up-to-date luxury and comfort the "Amersmith" bus bumps and rattles along in the sweltering heat. "There's someone wants to get in," calls one of the passengers to the half grilled conductor, and the "someone" tumbles into the already half moving chariot of the lower middle classes of London. The "someone" appears at first sight to consist mainly of a huge cardboard box, but from behind its terrifying dimensions appears a very small morsel of humanity, a sunken bit of a girl, with thick, drooping skin clinging about the poor little limbs. The shoes are miles too big, and the one time clean blouse of some woolen fabric has been made for an older sister. The inevitable straw hat of shiny black heaviness and discomfort presses hard on the hair, which, lank and sodden from the heat, straggles into the anxious eyes of the "parcel girl." How the little shoulders are rounded and the little chest cramped and contracted! How the poor little face flushes and pales, and the breath comes in fitful pants and sighs! That box bears the name of a swell establishment in West End, where most beautiful garments are made and designed. A bit of brown paper is folded around the cord by which the little sprig of humanity appears to have attached herself to the box. This prevents the string cutting into the gloveless hand, which clutches with anxious terror the precious burden. She evidently owns no handkerchief with which to mop her streaming brow, she is faint and giddy, the poor wee mite, and her lids droop over her eyelids and her teeth close over her lips in her effort to pull herself together.

THE HOPELESS DRUDGE.

One can read the whole story; that truck is wanted for a swell luncheon party, and the only "free hand" was the little drudge who gets seven shillings a week for work that often means ten hours per day. The conductor grows at the size of the box, which inconveniences the passengers. A prayerful terrified look is the answer to his grumbling; she dare not part for a moment with the precious box, with its brown exterior, and its glory within. Poor little girl! One laughingly tells the conductor that if he puts the box on the end of the bus the child attached to it must go with it.



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The little young old face looks too weary for a battle, so some one must fight it for the child. The weapons are used to gain her end which have been found invincible from the earliest period in human history. Everyone is too hot in that lumbering bus to care whether the child is put out or not, so one fights single handed, and, thanks perhaps to the exhausting heat of the day, comes out conqueror. We seem to stop so often, but the horses have to be watered at short intervals. Men hold buckets of oatmeal and water ready for the dripping horses, and one can see that many of the men who pass these buckets would fain stop and have a pull at the tempting mixture. The hand ambulance is drawn up by the side of the road, two stalwart policemen lift a hopeless figure out of a shop, where one of the July sales are in progress. It is one of the shop walkers, if one can judge from his appearance, evidently overcome by the heat, and being taken to the nearest hospital. Hotter and hotter grows the air in the bus; every seat on the top has been filled from the time that we left Piccadilly. The heat haze is "spinning" up from the pavement; the air is full of heavy odors; fortunately the tar in the asphalt overcomes the more noxious smells. Men are selling damaged fruit to unwary customers from the trucks by the roadside. Ice cream vendors do a roaring trade. Wherever there is a drinking fountain people surge about it in crowds, men dashing the contents of the cup over their heads and necks.

The wide open doors of the bar-rooms show them filled with men and women consuming beer, which will only add to the torture of thirst. In one is a woman giving her babe in arms alternate sips out of her glass. One sees it all, for the old "Amersmith" bus lurches along, the horses too spent to do more than amble, the driver too hot and exhausted to even crack his whip. Everyone is drowsy, but the little girl with the huge box wears a strained, anxious expression. The time is going; if she is late heaven help her! At last we reach her destination, and out she struggles, fearfully questioning the conductor as to the turning she must take. In another moment the crowd has engulfed her.

The heat is fiercer than ever, and one dashes for the shady side of the street, cannons into one of the "beetle-men" who is mopping his livid lips, and the little drama of the hottest day in London is at an end.

BACKED THEIR OPINION.

One of the interesting results of the Recent Musical Season—"The Production of a Perfect Ensemble."

One of the prime essentials in all chamber music is to have all the instruments blending to produce a rich and luscious tonal ensemble. Particularly in this necessary in string quartette work, for one harsh instrument would seriously mar the general result. In trios or piano quintettes, where a piano is one of the instruments, there is always considerable difficulty in securing an instrument which can combine brilliancy with that sympathetic singing quality which will set forth the beauty of the strings without itself being suppressed to nothingness. During the past season there were several chamber music concerts held when the "Gourlay" was the piano used. The immediate result was that the artists were delighted and the subsequent result, that most of them procured Gourlay pianos. Among violinists and cellists who have thus set their seal of approval on the "Gourlay" are Mrs. Dreschler Adamson, Mr. Frank E. Blachford, Miss Lena M. Hayes, Miss Lois Winlow and Mr. H. S. Saunders, Toronto. All of these ladies and gentlemen have been charmed with the peculiar quality of the "Gourlay" tone, which supports admirably the violin or "cello," either in solo work or in chamber music. It may be said also that a piano which has such characteristics is more than ordinarily suited to support the voice.

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