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TO IMPROVE LONDON. What is Necessary—Seems a Long Way Off. If London is to be improved and beautified, the work must be begun on individuals, in their clear perception and their homely cultivation of abundant grace of form and dress, says the Quarterly Review. The sentiment of excellence in these respects must be continually exercised; since those who make themselves exhibits only for the milliner and tailor are not likely to be capable of public demonstrations of artistic beauty. For a people to become imbued with dignified aesthetic feeling they must be artificers in their own physical development and clothing. The Athenians made nobility and grace of form and dress a cult; and our old mediaeval masons were most careful to have handsome clothes of state in supplement to wages. Kings and hierarchies then made the workmen's garb a model for their own attire. But now the working class, to whom the modern fashions gradually descend, are totally demoralized; and so there is no check to demonstrations of depravity, no rational example for reform in dress and no desire for improvement. Individual culture of externals is the surest impulse and foundation for all national art, and yet there is a constant waste of money on the worthless whimsies of dull manufacturers, who prepare the patterns to be chosen by the buyers at large warehouses. These tradesmen having made some mere fortuitous selection then assert that this production of their folly is "the fashion"; and the sympathetically foolish, thus devoid of individuality, treating the matter seriously, adopt the fashion and become again absurd. What hope, therefore, can there be for national artistic culture when the whole nation have condemned themselves, with exultation, to a personal neglect of art in things that constantly concern them? Throughout Christendom there is now no popular condition fit for the development and growth of the vernacular in art. The spurious aestheticism that occasionally manifests itself in a sporadic way is but a canting form of fashion, to which those afflicted with the added weakness of conceit occasionally succumb. It leaves them in due time at once ridiculous and hopeless of improvement.

ATTACKED BY A 'POSSUM. Its Adventures with a Congregation in Front of a Church. A fat gray opossum, driven out of his lair in the cemetery in the Livingston Avenue Baptist church, darted into a crowd of worshippers just emerging from the front entrance of the church after the evening service, says a New Brunswick (N. J.) correspondent of the New York Journal. The opossum had lost its bearings somehow, and contrary to the instinct of its kind, ran right into a crowd of people instead of avoiding them. Feminine shrieks filled the air as the animal darted around the skirts. Those still in the church entrance, unable to find out what had happened, took up the cry and rushed back into the church. In another moment a dozen young men were striking furiously at the beast, but his mad charges among the women as he tried to escape only added to the excitement. Canes and umbrellas were soon swinging around so recklessly that one had to be alert to save his own head. The women ran across the church lawn into Livingston avenue, holding up their skirts and shrieking. People inside the church thought that some dreadful thing had happened. One woman climbed upon a fence on Welton street, which bounds the property on the east side. Several others ran across Livingston avenue to the portico of the high school. Meanwhile the 'possum was putting up the fight of his life against the whacks and kicks of a dozen excited men. One man attempted to jump on the beast, but the 'possum squirmed from under him with little effort. Every time the 'possum would attempt to escape through the legs of the crowd of men, who had formed a kicking, scuffling circle about him, he was kicked back into the center of the group by two or three booted feet on the outside. Maddened with pain and unable to escape, the little animal grew savage and sprang for John Fouratt. It fastened its teeth in the young man's leg, and, strive as he might to brush the beast off, it clung there, while he danced about in great pain and fright, imploring some one to take it off. Then the canes and umbrellas fell thick and fast upon the 'possum, and, finally beaten into insensibility, it relaxed its hold. Then a curious crowd watched the animal for a long time, with the idea that it was "playing sly" and would run off as soon as it saw its way clear. A negro ended the excitement by cutting the 'possum's throat. Then he picked it up and started for home, happy in the expectation of a good meal. It is believed that the 'possum was blind.

SARA'S MAKE-UP. She Calls Massage Abominable and Uses Only Rouge and Rice Powder. Dry rouge, rice powder and one or two pencils will give me all the effect I require, says Sara Bernhardt, in the Cosmopolitan. As with most artists, my first application is a liberal coat of cold cream. This is made under my own immediate care and consists of refined olive oil, rose water and blanc de baleine. I never use cocoa butter nor liquid preparations of any sort. Then the pencils, the rouge and the powder are applied and all blended in to produce the effect of smoothness. With us French artists quite as much attention is given to the ears, the nostrils and the lips as to the complexion itself. For the lips is used a simple preparation which carries nothing but the carmine coloring matter. This is a brilliant color, necessarily so to give the contrast to the exaggerated tints of the rest of the face. Depending upon the character of the emotion to be depicted in different plays and even in different acts of the same play, about the only changes I make are in the varying proportions of red to white. Of wax to alter the shape of the features, black court plaster to make missing teeth, of all such things I know nothing, because the roles I play require no make-up of that kind. As I never wear a wig the only way in which I make up my hair is to dress it appropriately to my costume and the period it represents. I do not believe in the steaming of the face or the facial massage so prevalent in America. To me it's horrible, abominable, because it spoils the skin and the face. I do not think any artist ever secured greatness by the use of make-up and the natural good looks of many actresses are spoiled, both on the stage and off, by employing cosmetics too freely.

SWORE AND SANG "TA-RA-RA." The Parrot Talked "The Language of a Bishop." It is interesting to learn that the conversation of a bishop consists chiefly of Spanish oaths, pleasantly diversified by the singing of "Ta-ra-ra Boom-de-ay," says the Pall Mall Gazette. The Episcopal apron must add quite a new charm to the dance proper to that song. But there can be no doubt about the fact, or Mr. William Foulger, ship's steward, when he sold his parrot for 30 shillings to Mr. Henry Lovegrove's solicitor's clerk, would never have guaranteed that it talked "the language of a bishop." Henry was rather particular, because he wanted it for his lady love and he knew that the sailor's remarks are somewhat like his heart, which, the song tells us, is like the sea—ever open, gay and free—and he suspected that the bird had listened admiringly to the sailors coming across from South Africa. But an episcopal parrot sounded well. Unfortunately, Miss Nelson had resided as a governess in a Spanish nobleman's family and, therefore, understood what the bird said. When you come to think of it, this is rather a reflection upon Spanish noblemen's families; for the bird's talk was "simply sulphurous." As Miss Nelson truly remarked, Spanish is a very effective language for swearing in. She could stand "Ta-ra-ra," (hardy Miss Nelson!), but not the "swears"; she had to leave the room every time. And so Henry wouldn't pay his 30 shillings and William sued him for it at Shoreditch. It was agreed that both should pay their own costs and that William should have his right-reverend parrot back. What a pity he knows no Spanish!

Hygiene of Light. A French scientist has been making experiments with the growth of plants under different conditions of colored light. Under the method of experiment the endeavor was made to keep the plants under similar conditions of temperature, moisture, soil, etc., so that it would be fairly reasonable to infer that any abnormal differences in growth would be due to the difference in light conditions. It is reported, as a result of this experiment, that the red light produced even more noteworthy results than white light in the way of forcing growth. While the plants were strong and vigorous under the influence of white light, those under the red panes of glass grew to a greater height and burst into bloom earlier. The plants under the frame of blue glass showed little if any growth, but the leaves grew decidedly darker.

Forms of Name "Smith" There are families—some of you may know them—named Tallifer, Tolliver, Tollifer, Telfair. Now, what would you say if I told you all these were only in good, plain English, Smith! It is a fact, nevertheless. Tallifer is derived from the French and the others are only contractions of that word or changes made by mispronunciation or custom. Tallifer means to shape or fashion iron, and who shapes iron but a smith? So a tallifer was, after all, but a smithy or smith.—St. Nicholas.

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