

QUAINT CLOCKS.—Ever since man first began to contrive machines to answer the momentous question, "What's o'clock?" he seems to have delighted in taxing his ingenuity to make the poor instruments complicate the answer. Not content with having the hour indicated on a dial, or sounded by a bell, he must needs have it manifested to his vision by dancing dolls, or announced to his ear by trumpet-blowing cherubim or gong-sounding monsters. Two thousand years ago, when the only known means of measuring time was by the trickling of water from one vessel to another, the clepsydra-maker indulged his fancy, and made his simple wares elaborate by the employment of fantastic contrivances for showing the time through the agency of automaton figures. The clepsydra of Ctesibius, for instance, consisted outwardly of a lachrymose mannikin whose falling tears supplied the water that impelled the instrument, while his jubilant brother, buoyed up on a floating pedestal, boldly pointed with a wand to the hours marked on an adjacent column. Coming to times a little less remote, we find the Persian King Haroun-al-Raschid sending the Emperor Charlemagne a water-clock, whereof Giffard, in his "History of France," gives this description: "The dial was composed of twelve small doors, which represented the division of the hours: each door opened at the hour it was intended to represent, and out of it came the same number of little balls, which fell one by one, at equal distances of time, on a brass drum. It might be told by the eye what hour it was by the number of doors that were open; and by the ear by the number of balls that fell. When it was twelve o'clock, twelve horsemen in miniature issued forth at the same time, and marching around the dial, shut all the doors." Old St. Paul's was not without a curiosity of this character: for, according to Dugdale's history of the cathedral, there was a dial ordered in the reign of the third Edward, "to be made with all splendor imaginable. Which was accordingly done; having the image of an angel pointing to the hour both of the day and night." The bell, too, of this clock, or of its successor, was struck by the wooden ancestors of the monstrosities that are at present to be seen in front of Mr. Bennett's shop in Cheapside; they were a more numerous family in those days than they are now, for it seems to have been a common thing for churches and market-houses to have their "Jacks o' th' clock," as the automaton bell-strickers were termed. Decker who wrote his "Gull's Hornbook" in 1699, calls the St. Paul's figures "Paul's Jacks:" he says, "The great dial is your last monument: where bestow one-half of the three-score minutes to observe the sanctness of the Jacks that are above the man in the moon there; the strangeness of their motion will quit your labor." He further adds, "But howsoever, if Paul's Jacks be once up with their elbows and quarrelling to strike eleven, as soon as ever the clock has parted them, and ended the fray with the hammer, let not the duke's gallery contain you any longer."

The Rev. J. Wesley tells in his journal of a clock which he saw at Lurgan, in Ireland, in 1762, which was not merely musical, but vocal. A figure of an old man, in a case with a curtain drawn before it, stood over against a clock. Every time the clock struck he opened the door with one hand, drew back the curtain with the other, turned his head as if looking around on the company, and then said, with a clear, loud, articulate voice, "past one," or two, or three, as the case might be. The maker, a Mr. Miller, wanted to sell the wonder; but, although so many came to see it that he was in danger of being ruined by his loss of time in showing it, no one seemed inclined to purchase it, or even reward his ingenuity—so he wisely took the whole thing to pieces.

Christopher Pinchbeck, who gave his name to the famous alloy of which our forefathers were content to have their watch-cases made, was a noted constructor of musical timekeepers. He called his house by the sign of the "Astronomic-Musical Clock." There was another eminent mechanical genius who made wonderful clocks in the last century; his name was James Cox, and he was not merely a mechanic, but had some ideas of the importance of art in beautifying mechanisms, for he employed Nettekens, the sculptor, and Zoffany, the painter, to make designs for his works. He made a host of curious and costly toys with the hope of selling them to Indian princes, but the Indian war frustrated his designs, and he was obliged to turn his curiosities to account by exhibiting them. This expedient failed, and at last he obtained a private act of Parliament empowering him to dispose of his museum by lot-

tery. The collection must have included some really wonderful specimens of ingenuity and exquisite workmanship. Precious stones and metals were the chief materials employed in their manufacture; but the most curious of them hardly come within the limits of our subject, and we are here obliged to pass them by without description. Mason, a contemporary poet, said, in allusion to the display:—

"Great Cox, at his mechanical,
Bids orion pearls from golden dragons fall;
Each little dragonet, with brazen grin,
Gapes for the precious prize, and gulps it in.
Yer, when we peep behind the scene,
One master wheels direct the whole machine;
The self-same pearls, in nice gradation, all
Around one common centre rise and fall."

After all, a musical-clock resolves itself into little more than a musical-box, set going at certain times by a timekeeper, just as an alarm is let off. The connection between the clock and the music is not more intimate than was the music and steam which constituted an exhibition entitled "Music by Steam," offered to the curiosity-mongers in London a few years ago, and the realization of which consisted in a barrel organ turned by a little steam engine.

The mention of alarms leads us to notice one or two of these useful clock-accessories that come within range of the curious. A very active member of this family of mechanical watchmen was erected in the nursery of Dublin workhouse a century ago, the inscription on which sufficiently describes it—
"For the benefit of infants protected by this hospital, Lady Arabella Denny presents this clock, to mark, that as children reared by the spoon must have but a small quantity of food at a time, it must be offered frequently; for which purpose, this clock strikes every twenty minutes, at which notice all the infants not asleep must be discreetly fed." Alarm clocks have been made that, besides rousing the sleeper, would ignite a match and light a candle for him to get up by; and we lately saw one that, in addition to these functions, boiled a cup of coffee for the early riser's breakfast. The wonderful couch shown at the 1851 Exhibition, which tilted its occupant out at any desired hour, is probably in the memory of many a reader of these remarks. But perhaps the prettiest and most agreeable of these contrivances was the bed made by a Bohemian mechanic in 1858, which set off with one of Auber's gentle airs when it was pressed by a tired body, and thundered forth a clashing march at the time the sleeper desired to be awakened.

A SAD case of depravity in horseflesh is reported by the Paris *Pigaro*. The favorite horse of a certain baron fell seriously ill, and, though every care was taken of the animal, it rapidly grew worse, and began to show signs of sinking. As a last resource, the coachman, an American, suggested that two glasses of brandy with ginger should be administered every morning. The cure was most speedy; but ever since, the horse, having been accustomed to stand at the door of a wine-shop to receive its matutinal beverage, now stops at every similar establishment it passes, and last week, angry at not being attended to, forced itself right through the window of a *marchand de liqueurs*.

ENGAGING MANNERS.—There are a thousand engaging ways, which every person may put on, without running the risk of being deemed either affected or foppish. The sweet smile; the quiet, cordial bow; the earnest movement in addressing a friend, or, more especially a stranger, who may be recommended to us; the graceful attention which is so captivating, when united with self-possession, these will insure us the good regards of all. There is a certain softness of manner which should be cultivated, and which, in either man or woman, adds a charm that is even more irresistible than beauty.

A POSITIVE PIECE OF VANITY.—A Brooklyn, N. Y., preacher has had a reporter's desk put up in his church, so that his sermons may be reported for the people. We call this vanity, because it argues that his sermons are worth reporting.