

all that by instinct; and now I'll tell you how we acted upon it."

Piron sat with his eyes fixed upon the speaker, taking in every word as it fell from his lips, the teeth set close together, and the hand clenched which supported his head on the table. Paddy Burns and Tom Stewart, too, looked eagerly that way, as did Harry Darcantel; while Hardy sipped his wine and puffed his cigar leisurely, as if he knew the tale by heart.

"It had fallen nearly calm. A light air perhaps in the royals, though nothing down below. But as the sun set, the colours at sunset, which had been hoisted to let the fellow know who we were, down came his also! Then there we both lay looking at each other. He knew by instinctive experience that we were the American corvette *Scourge*, mounting eighteen twenty-four pounder carronades and two long eighteens in the bow ports; for the brigantine had once or twice determined their exact calibres, and that we were the fastest cruiser, with the wind a point or two free, that had been seen in the West Indies for twenty years.

"Yes, he knew all about us, but he was still a little in doubt whether we knew all about him. He lay—unfortunately, perhaps, for him—a little beyond the range of our long guns, or else he might have been spared a good deal of time and uneasiness, and we a long chase and considerable risk. Ah! as the night came, the very fires he had kindled in his den on shore prevented his escape; for while the calm lasted the bright flames shone upon him with the glare of hell! There they lay all that night without moving a muscle or a mile until day dawned; and such a day as did dawn!

"Meanwhile the barometer had fallen an inch and a half, until the master began to believe the bulb leaked and the mercury was dropping into the case. Then through the murky gloom of daylight, with the sea one flat greasy surface, with never the splash of a fish to disturb it, while the lowest whisper of the topmen aloft could be distinctly heard on deck—as if we were hung in the vacuum of an exhausted receiver where a feather would drop like a bullet—suddenly there came a sound from the direction of the quays. Suppose, Burns, you saw a forty-two pound shot coming toward you, and without you dodged quick your head would be flying off with it in the same direction!"

"Whist, mon!" said Stewart, with a groan; "dinna be calling up sic peccatures of the brain, Cleveland. Paddy there ne'er thinks of any meessals bigger than a peestol bullet."

"Well, my friends, we ran precisely a similar risk, though the cloudy embrasures over the island had not quite enough thunder to reach us. However, the brigantine knew what would follow as well as we did—better, perhaps—and before you could swallow that glass of wine, she was stripped as bare as a bone; and down came her yards, too, but keeping the sticks up and spreading a patch of a storm stay-sail forward, that you might apparently have put in your pocket. Her decks and rigging were crowded with men while she was doing all this; but the moment it was done, and well done too, they ran into their holes below like so many rats, and we could only see a man or two left on deck near the helm.

"All hands had been called on board the *Scourge* at four o'clock, and with the exception of securing the battery, everything was ready to make a skeleton of the ship the moment we saw the brigantine begin; for she was a wary fish, and we had no idea of letting her give us the slip the third time. I had the trumpet, however, and with the captain at my elbow, the instant he saw that the brigantine was once more rigged nearly in her old way he gave me the word, 'Now, Cleveland, work sharp!'

"With a hundred and twenty men aloft, jumping about like cats, the light sails, studding-sail booms, royal and top-gallant yards came down, the top-gallant masts after them, and the flying jib-boom rigged in. Then the topsails close reefed and furled with extra gaskets, and so with the courses; preventer braces clapped on, rolling tackles hooked, and the spare purchases set up by the lower penants. Meanwhile, the divisions on deck had got hawsers over the launch amidships, the chains unbent, the anchors lashed down on the fore-castle, and the quarter boats triced well inboard and secured with the davits. At the same time the light stuff from aloft was got below, the hammocks piped down, and the carpenters slapped the gratings on the hatch-sand stood ready with the tarpaulins to batten them down. I never beheld a smarter piece of work done afloat—not even, Hardy, in the *Monongahela*.

"As I turned round an instant a hoarse, howling bellow struck my ear from the island, and I just caught a glimpse of the tall cocoa-nut tree flying round and round in the air like an inverted umbrella with a broken stick; while at the same time the men from aloft had reached the deck, and jumping to the battery, the guns were run in and housed, spare breechings and extra lashings passed, and life-lines rove fore and aft. After that, gentlemen, there was no further need of a trumpet!

"You all know pretty well what sort of a thing a hurricane is, and the one I speak of must, I think, have given you a touch of its quality here in Jamaica."

"Ay, we remember it well, had luck to it! and so does Tom Stewart and Piron there; for it didn't lave a stick of sugar-cane standing from Montego Bay to Cape Antonio!"

"Yes," said Stewart, "and to show ye what a puff of wind can do, the whirl of it caught up an eighteen-foot Honduras plank and laid it crosswise, like an axe, full seven inches into an old Tamarind trunk standing in my garden, and then twisted off the ends like a heather broom! Hech, mon! ye may see it there now any day!"

Piron was thinking of the barks that were driving before that hurricane, with no thought of the damage done to his own plantations.

"Well, then, I shall spare you all prolix description of it; and you need only fancy a ship blown everywhere and every how except out of water—now with the lower yard arms cutting deep into the sea, like rakes, the lee hammock nettings under water, the stern boat torn away into splinters, the main-top-sail picked, bolt by bolt, from the yard until there was not a thread left, and the lee anchor twisted bodily out of its lashings and swept over-board!

"Then a lull, while the sea got up and the ship dashed down on the other side on her bow; then staggering back and making a stern-board till the water was plunged up in a deluge over the poop. Recovering herself again, and almost quivering on her beam ends, the guns groaning and creaking as the terrible strain came upon the breechings, with the shot from the racks bounding about the decks, dinting holes in the solid oak waterways big enough to wash your face in, and then hopping out of the smashed half-ports to leeward. The spar-deck up to your arm-pits in water, and every man of us holding on to the life-lines or standing rigging like grim death, while all the time the roaring, thundering yell of the hurricane taught us how powerless we were, by hand or voice, to cope with the winds when they were let loose in all their might and fury!"

"Nor need I relate to you the scene presented below; mess-chests, bags, tables, crockery, flying from deck and beam to stanchion, smashing about in the most dangerous way, pell-mell, while the worst of the tempest lasted. But, gentlemen, the *Scourge* had a frame of live-oak, to say nothing of two or three acres of tough yellow pine timber in her, a good deal of fibrous hemp to hold the masts up; and, moreover, she was well manned, and, though I say it myself, she had a skilful captain and thorough-bred officers, in whose sagacity the crew could rely, to manage that old *Scourge*."

"That she had," exclaimed Hardy; "and the most skilful and the coolest of them all was the first lieutenant!" The *Monongahela's* executive officer here bounced off his chair as if he was prepared to fight any man breathing who did not subscribe to that opinion.

(To be continued.)

PATENT CORN FLOUR.

It is now universally known that the geographical distribution of plants over the surface of the globe is regulated by certain general laws, which give to each country a distinct and peculiar aspect. The nature of the soil and the character of the climate are the physical conditions which apparently regulate this distribution. That more subtle agencies operate upon vegetation; that electricity, for instance, exercises a most powerful influence, no doubt can remain; but it is sufficient for our purpose here to admit the general effects of soil and climate on the fruits of the earth.

In tracing the general distribution of food plants, we observe that maize is the only one of all the grains or cereal grasses that is not universal in the Old as well as in the New World. But careful attention to the natural condition in which any one of the cerealia is found, usually renders its

cultivation practicable in other latitudes. Maize, which grows wild on the Rocky Mountains and in Northern Mexico, and which is cultivated in North and South America, is now also produced in Central Germany and some parts of France. In England also it is grown to some extent,



INDIAN CORN PLANT.

but with no certain result, as the heat and moisture necessary to its successful cultivation are rarely experienced in this country. In intertropical regions it shoots up luxuriantly, and yields an abundant produce, rivaling its brother food plants—rice and wheat.

In Great Britain maize was very little employed—although its virtues had been recommended to the British farmer by the sagacious Cobbett—until Scarcity, and that stern teacher, Necessity, compelled us to look abroad for something to make good the deficiency caused by scanty crops and diseased potatoes. It was then that maize, or Indian corn, became generally known, was regarded with suspicion, and hastily condemned by those whose ignorance of how to prepare it as an article of diet was the real cause of failure. But as maize came to be better known, it was better appreciated, and from that time to this we have annually imported about 1,800,000 quarters.

The maize plant, or zea mays (from the Greek *zao*, I live, and the Indian *mays*, or maize), attains a height of seven or eight feet, and bears two sorts of flowers. Those which produce the grain are on the side of the plant, and when ripe are ranged round a common axis in five or six rows, and are called "cobs;" some of these cobs contain between seven and eight hundred grains. They vary both in size and colour, some being of a pale yellow, others of a reddish purple, some not bigger than a grain of wheat, and others as large as a kidney bean. When ripe the grain is dried before a fire, and ground into meal, called hominy, a favourite article of diet in America. Mixed with wheat flour it makes good bread, and in any form is a healthy and substantial food.

The constituent parts of a pound of maize show the extraordinary preponderance of amylaceous matter, which may be estimated at that of sixty per cent. The importance of this constituent, as an article of vegetable food, is now very generally known. None other of the cereals yield it so abundantly as the Indian corn. The substance exists in the form of minute grains, distinguishable only by the microscope, but which are easily dispersible through water, and are thereby separated from the other matter with which they are combined. But, easy as the process appears, it is only recently that it has been applied successfully to Indian corn, and



BROWN AND POLSON'S PATENT CORN FLOUR MANUFACTORY, PAISLEY.—WASHING PROCESS.

only lately that Corn Flour—now so universally well known, and so thoroughly appreciated—has been brought under public notice; and even now, although its excellence is admitted, very little is generally known of the process to which the maize is subjected before the corn flour is produced.

It may not be uninteresting to glance at this process, which we find in full operation at an establishment in Paisley, where Messrs. Brown and Polson conduct the manufacture of their Corn Flour by a process patented for the United Kingdom and France.

First of all, it is imported from the Black Sea, as on the shores of the Euxine it grows in very fine condition; some of the very best cargoes are received from the south of France, where it is now grown in considerable quantity. On its arrival at the manufactory it is steeped in water, and is thus cleansed from all outward impurities, and softened and prepared for the subsequent separation of the amylaceous matter. Still moist, it is then placed in large hoppers, and conducted to the grindstones, which are worked by steam power, and rapidly reduce the grain to a thick pulp—husk, gluten, and amylaceous matter mingled together in a semi-liquid mass. The next process separates the amylaceous matter from the other portions of the maize, and is effected by placing the pulpy matter on an inclined plane, arranged along the upper part of the building, and during its slow descent the liquid portion of the pulp, containing gluten, &c., is carried off through long pipes into cisterns below, while the amylaceous matter—or pure farina—settles at the bottom of the inclined plane. It is subsequently washed and re-washed in pure water, being deposited in vats for that purpose; and finally, freed from every impurity, is placed in frames, dried at a low temperature, and is duly made up into marketable packages.

The remaining portions of the maize, after the extraction of the amylaceous matter, is dried and ground, and sold as gluten.

The peculiar advantages offered to the public by Brown and Polson's preparation of Indian corn, are of a nature to recommend it to general use. The pure farina, free from all other matter, is readily prepared as food, and is easily digested

We have thus, in the patent corn flour, a better adaptation of Cobbett's suggestion than he himself suggested. Here, in Great Britain, maize will not flourish. Agricultural science has not yet overcome the difficulty of dealing with distinctive characteristics of foreign vegetation; we may do that in time, but the problem is not yet solved. Still, the maize becomes a favourite article of diet; not in its rough, crude form—in which state it is not very inviting—but prepared by a process which has proved eminently successful, which utilises even the refuse, and gives an excellent article of light diet, preferred to the very best arrowroot used in puddings, blanch-mange, &c., and of such delicacy as to make it in daily request for children and invalids.

ENGLISH WATERING-PLACES.

RYDE, ISLE OF WIGHT.

AMONG the most attractive places to the English tourist the Isle of Wight occupies a foremost position. The extreme beauty and amazing variety of its scenery, the mild and salubrious character of its climate, and the facilities for reaching it afforded by rail and boat, annually induce crowds of pleasure seekers to visit it during the season, and to return home with a firm resolve of renewing the intimacy at the earliest opportunity. The range of chalk cliffs—extending across the island—clothed with grass, and dotted with sheep; the precipitous cliffs on the coast, where the sea-fowl resort, and Nature has formed deep caverns and frightful chasms; the bold and rugged front offered by the rocks to the waves breaking in yeasty foam at their base; the woods, and hills, and dales of the interior of the country, so singularly diversified, and so rich in all that contributes to the charm of pastoral scenery; indeed, the whole of the island presents so many features of interest, and so much that is calculated to delight the occasional visitor and to satisfy the permanent resident, that it is fully entitled to all the praise bestowed on it, since it was first called *Vectis* by the Romans.

The Isle of Wight has for some years past en-

joyed the patronage of royalty, and in these days of cheap excursions there are few who have not seen the national standard waving from the turret of Osborne House. This favourite residence of Her Majesty is beautifully situated in the neighbourhood of East Cowes. The park which surrounds the mansion is well timbered, and adjoins eastward the grounds of Norris Castle, where her Majesty, before her accession to the throne, resided for some time with the Duchess of Kent. The views from Osborne are extensive and of varied beauty; the house is built in the Italian style, and is surrounded by magnificent terrace walks. The property was purchased for her Majesty in 1844. Since then the place has been considerably altered and enlarged.

Another point of interest in the Isle of Wight is Carisbrooke Castle.* Within its walls King Charles I. was confined for thirteen months previous to his being delivered up to the Parliamentary forces; here, also, some of his children were detained as prisoners, and his eldest daughter died here at the age of fifteen. A melancholy interest is thus associated with this ancient fortress, which still continues to be the residence and head-quarters of the Governor of the Isle of Wight.

Very interesting also to a large class of visitors to the island are the scenes of Legh Richmond's labours at Yaverland and Brading. The name of this excellent man is associated in the minds of all with the tracts named the "Dairyman's Daughter," "The Negro Servant," and "The Young Cottager." The narratives are true, and took place in the island. The cottage of the dairyman is situated on Hale Common, and the grave of his daughter is in Arretton churchyard. Little Jane's cottage is still to be seen in the town of Brading, and a tombstone marks her grave in the churchyard of that place.

Ryde, the town and seaport represented in our illustration, is on the north side of the island, and from the sea offers a peculiarly handsome appearance. A steep acclivity rising from the sea, backed by bold hills, is covered with gar-

* For a description of this castle, see FAMILY PAPER, Vol. I., N. S., p. 221.