what-nots; the screw palm (Fig. 3), with its curious cork-screw method of growth and its rough-rinded fruit as big as a man's head; the Poinciana (Fig. 6), with its beautifully feathered foliage and great splashes of orange blossom, which win for it its name of "flame tree" in America and "gold-mohur tree" in India—these are only a very few of the beautiful trees that help to make Bermuda (the island of lilies, of onions and arrow-root—of pomegranate, calabash and mangrove) as lovely as it is. But they are enough to show that it is not a very bad place to which we have sent our prisoners.

H. P. R.

Wild Fowl and Game as Food in the Early Tudor Period

The Venetian Ambassador to the Court of Henry VII. was struck by the abundance of stock and game of all kinds in England, and the richness of the living. We always have had this reputation. Our merchants lived like princes, it was said, and our nobles like kings. The ambassador observed that an abundance of the best wines were imported, and he spoke favourably of English ale, which needed only a few trials before it recommended itself to the palate. We consumed, then, as we do now, immense quantities of beef, mutton, venison, goat's-flesh, salt fish and fresh fish, and last, but not least, wildfowl. The variety of fowl that appeared at table seems to have been the peculiarity of English diet, and it is worth while noting the more remarkable features of English diet in the earlier part of the Tudor period. The reader must understand that nets were used to collect this abundance of fowl and that many of them were fattened after being caught. Herons or hernsues, cranes, swans, and even bitterns, were taken young and fed in cages or rooms. "The room for the hernsues" occurs among the items of the extraordinary expenses of a Norfolk account. The breeding-grounds of these birds were approachable, but it is curious to find "knottes" being fed. In 1555, a certain G. St. Paul sends "Tooe dozen of fedd knottes with other fowl." A writer of 1540, Thos. Seyntaubyn, laments because a raven had killed the hernsues and also above a dozen "sygys" (cygnets probably). A few days later he sends a dozen puffins, to make up perhaps for hernsues which he could not send. The care and herding of these more or less tame fowl is often specified in grants, under the terms, "swannery," "keeper of the swans," "cranege," "heronry," alongside the familiar "warren of coneys." To be "keeper of the swans" sometimes constituted a grant in itself, worth perhaps 1*d.* to 2*d.* a day. We can realise the abundance of fowl in England when Capello, the ambassador whom we have quoted above, says he saw flocks of a thousand to two thousand swan on the Thames; and very beautiful they must have looked before the "London Particular" developed its peculiar dirtiness. All lakes, rivers, and moats had their herd of swan, remember, beside the wild-fowl, mallard, widgeon, and teal, &c., which resorted to them. Lord Leycester's fowl sanctuary at Holkham was a common enough sight then. Swans were expensive birds, and seem to have risen in price 3*s.* a piece in 1520; the statute fixing prices in 1572 places them at the head of the list with 8*s.* 4*d.* Peacocks and peachicks were not cheap, nor were storks and herons, according to the "Pulletria" accounts of the Household at the "Field of the Cloth of Gold" in 1520. The peacock was not often eaten; the "peacock in amber" was the kind of dish to head a king's or an archbishop's table with. In the second course of Henry VII.'s wedding-breakfast (1487) there is a "Pekok in hakell"; the tail was really the principal part of the bird. Other interesting dishes at this banquet were: "Crane with cretney," "Heronsewe with his signe," "Swan with chawdron," and "Egrets in beorwetye." The birds had their own carving terms. The heron, as affording sport for kings, was an honourable bird. You "displayed" a crane but you "dismembered" a heron: just as you would "dismember an empire," according to the late Mr. Gladstone. Carving is a lost art nowadays, and most of us would be likely to dismember a crane as well as a heron. The list of fowl in table use is too long to give, and we may wonder if some of them were worth eating. The puffins Seynt-

aubyn sent to Lady Lisle in June were almost certainly young ones. A young puffin is possible, but gulls and mews do not seem appetising. There does not seem to have been a close time. Pheasants and partridges were netted in July. Pheasants were rare. A pheasant breeder was a person of importance then—just as he is now. It was a favourite pastime to drive partridges into green nets with a stalking-horse. Partridges were much appreciated, and made an acceptable present. (Christmas-tide was the time for making presents of wild-fowl.) Lady Lisle, in October 1537 sent a partridge-pie to the family steward, and he wrote back: "I think the ladies liked the partridge-pie, though its fashion was marred by the ship which brought it lying almost a tide under water in the Thames." Two years later he writes to her that there are no quails to be had in London. These were sent alive, though they did not always stand the journey. At the Cloth of Gold celebrations 46½ dozen quails are among the items. The cage of joined wood for them cost 2*s.* 2*d.*, line and cord to hang it by, 14*d.*, and Margery Bennett had 14*d.* for fanning and washing a quarter of hempseed for them. Larks, of course, were eaten, and even sparrows. "Red schankkes" were eaten at the bridal feast in 1487. Our neighbours across the water eat them now, often out of season, as *Chevaliers aux pieds rouges*. Lapwings, or "wypes," were eaten —when they could be caught. One is surprised that the common wild duck, or mallard, is not oftener mentioned; probably it was too common.

M. C.

Dogs and other Pets in Henry VIII.'s Time

When one considers the adaptability of the English climate to the constitution of animals from all parts of the world, it is not surprising that our forefathers should have kept some strange pets. They had not the variety we have because they did not ransack the globe, but Londoners saw some queer creatures as far back as Plantagenet times. The menagerie at the Tower for lions and bears was for hundreds of years a familiar feature. The keeper of the lions held an official post. The Tudors perhaps were fond of animals and Henry VIII. was continually receiving gifts from abroad. In the Privy Purse expenses for 1532 "an almayn" is given £6 13*s.* 4*d.* for bringing a lion to the King, and in the same year is the item "To the master of the bears, 40*s.*" The water baily of London brought a "quick" seal to court receiving 26*s.* 8*d.* (1530) and in the same year the item, "for bringing a cele" 15*s.* occurs. Seals were eaten, though they may have been kept as a curiosity. One was presented to Cromwell, Wolsey's successor in Henry's favour, though it died before he could have derived much pleasure from it. Perhaps he ate it. At Henry VII.'s wedding-feast in 1487, one of the dishes was "Seyle in fenyn, entirely served richly," and very rich it must have been. In Cromwell's accounts for 1537 William Wodehouse's servant brings a porpoise, and porpoises we know were eaten. Three costing £4 figure in the Guisnes celebrations of 1520. But the most interesting creature that came into England about this time was doubtless the leopard. Sir J. Wilsher writes to Henry VIII. that the Duke of Ferrara is sending by a gentleman some horses and a "lebard," a marvellous dangerous beast to keep. "The keeper saith a will kill a buck or doe or roe and an hare which is marvellous thing if it be so." This must have been a cheetah or hunting leopard. It could not by any chance have been the same "lybart" which figures in Cromwell's accounts for February and April 1539. "Richard Purser for meat of the 'lybart' at 4*d.* a day, 15th February to 23rd April, 22*s.* 6*d.*" A less dangerous pet was a canary. A cage of these birds was once brought to Cromwell; perhaps they were for his little son, the young Lord. There was a dawkeeper belonging to the Royal Household so we suppose that there were tame jackdaws. Rats are not usually regarded as pets, but we may as well mention that the King's Rat-taker had 4*d.* a day. Dogs of course were a necessity for hunting and hawking. The spaniel was part of a falconer's equipment, and their bread and milk is sometimes specified in payments though generally "cost of keeping spaniels" is all we known about their food. An ordinance of Henry VIII. forbade the keep-

ing of dogs in the court except small spaniels belonging to the ladies. "Cutte" the King's spaniel seems to have been fond of hunting for rewards were paid to various people for "bringing Cutte again." "Ball" another of the King's dogs was lost in Waltham Forest and brought back. Nor was he the only dog lost in Waltham Forest it seems. Next to hawks, greyhounds, are the most frequently mentioned accessories of sport in household accounts and correspondence and the number used in hunting deer and coursing was enormous. A common courtesy of those days was the interchange of horses, hawks, greyhounds, and spaniels between monarchs and nobles. Henry had mastiffs and their collars and muzzles were an expensive item. They were used for baiting bears. Band dogs are mentioned too. There were also Beagles and Otterhounds. The keeper of the Beagles monthly wage was 5*s*. Were they anything like the modern beagle, or the "southern hound" the true strain of which is extinct? In 1539 two gentlemen were granted in survivorship the office of the King's Otter-hunters, from which grant we learn that the fees of the office were 3½*d*. a day, 4½*d*. day for the keep of six hounds, 1½*d*. a day for a page, and 9*d*. a day for the keep of twelve hounds, and other profits. There was a pack of Harriers in 1513, the mastership being worth 12*d*. a day, and then there were the Royal Buckhounds now alas no more, after an existence of eight hundred years. The poodle (barbet) was not unknown. Lady Lisle sends one to Mme. du Bours in 1540, "he is very good" says she, "in retrieving the head or bolt of a crossbow, both in water and on land, and will fetch a tennis ball or a glove put on the end of a stick, and other tricks." Parrots were well known. Writing to Lady Lisle from Tournehen in 1539, Thomas de Harchie says: "I send you by Peronne, a parrot. I wish it was much finer for your sake. It does not speak yet, but is young and can be taught, as you have one which talks already." Tame deer were probably common enough. Henry had to pay a woman a few shillings for shooting at a tame buck. As a fox was once brought to the court we may infer that some one tried to make a pet of it. M. C.

(Photograph by J. J. Ward, Coventry)

A Curious Ice Formation

THE frost of last November was very severe at Coventry. A bucketful of rain-water, left out in the open one night, was found to be frozen in a curious manner the next morning. The bucket being needed, an attempt was made to break the ice in the ordinary way by giving it repeated blows; but the only result was that small fragments were chipped off. It was then sought to press one side down with the idea of raising the other side, as the sun had thawed the points of contact with the pail sufficiently to allow of a little play in this direction. But it was impossible to remove the ice thus.

Finally the bucket was overturned, when it was discovered that a thick mould of ice had been formed, the only opening being in the bottom, which had not quite frozen over. After being removed from the pail, the mould of ice still retained the water which had not frozen; and the depth of this may be seen by the dark line in the photograph.

against the solid array of mediocrity marshalled against her by Lady Wathen, her fascination by the somewhat prosaic Dacier and her final marriage with Tom Redworth, "the true friend of women," are all factors in the shaping of her career; but even when we leave her at the end we are not quite sure if she has yet reached security, because subtly as you have analysed her, there are depths in her nature which you indicate, but leave unplumbed. In this novel, "Diana of the Crossways," there is one point which I do not think you have sufficiently cleared. The reasons which prompted Diana to sell the secret told her by Dacier do not seem adequate when the severity of her views on paltry transactions is considered. Of your other characters space does not allow me to speak at length; I pick a few. Sir Willoughby Patterne you strip naked for us, while we shiver sometimes at the relentless exposure of the littleness and folly of the Egoist, blinded by his worship of and absorption in self. Vernon Whitford, I imagine, is half-brother to George Warrington, at least in his placid perception of events and fidelity to friends. In Adrian Harley the cynical, we fancy we can detect a little self-portraiture. Ottilia, the noble princess, Lucy, the untutored, Clara Middleton, the dainty "rogue in porcelain," and Letitia Dale, with her unquestioning devotion to her ideal, are women who, I fancy, will be studied and loved with Shakespeare's heroines in years to come. You have ignored the cloistral housewife and innocent miss, who have formed worthy types for the laudation of English novelists from Fielding onward, but have given us women impatient of their narrow surroundings and circumscribed outlook, and who seek a wider field for their gifts than has hitherto been assigned to them.

Your faults, as I have implied before, lie in an over-elaboration of trivial incidents, and in your bewildering metaphor. Sometimes in following up an idea we are dazzled and blinded by the brilliance of your digressions, and you taper off at the end into a cloudland of your own creation. We are told of one of your characters that she did not seek to please the public in writing a novel, but wrote her best in perverseness. We are often tempted to suspect you of the same design; though you write for the elect, you impose a test upon their intelligences, and I think you would be uncomfortable if you thought that your meaning was intelligible to the common man. From the first, critics have been loud in condemnation of the seemingly wilful prolixity of your narrative; but you have ignored the clamour, and in the later novels the idiosyncrasies that irritate are as common as in the earlier. It is certain that you go down to posterity as the legitimate descendant of Henry Fielding, but I think you will be considered more as a classic for scholars than a common heritage for all.

58 Alvey Street, Surrey Square, S.E. JOHN O'CONNOR.

Household Expenses

HOUSEHOLD expenses in any age are interesting, and we know how puzzling those of our neighbours of to-day are when we come to analyse the items. No two households spend alike. One thing is certain, that England rarely suffered from famine in later mediæval times, and food was plentiful—so plentiful that for two or three hundred years, till the great rise in prices in the latter part of Henry VIII.'s reign, workmen were fed as well as paid by their well-to-do employers. Prices were fixed by statute, remember, nor did this matter in time of plenty. The great nobles could well keep open house in the fifteenth century, when a sheep cost a shilling, beef and mutton ¼*d.* a pound, bread ½*d.* the one pound loaf, and ale 2*d.* and beer at 1*d.* a gallon. What ruined these people was expensive dress and gambling, dice and "shofful-a-borde." Luxuries were not existent. Scarcely a week passes to-day in some well-to-do middle-class household, I mean a household whose income is perhaps under a thousand a year, that some new luxury, some new contrivance does not take its place permanently. Putting aside gambling, I think one is pretty safe in saying that till the eighteenth century there was no scope for extravagance except in dress, and the sumptuary laws protected those below gentle rank from indulging in this. For the labourers and artisans, the end of the Mediæval Period was emphatically a halcyon

period. Board was for a very long time, well into the sixteenth century, 1½*d.* to 2*d.* a week, yet artisans had 6*d.*, field labourers 4*d.* a day, 6*d.* in harvest time. Women could get as much as men in unskilled labour, and they only got 2*d.* a day; but it was more than their board was reckoned at. They often took the place of boys or an inferior or assistant, and went out "charing," making tallow candles, gathering rushes, stuffing mattresses, and washing. Both men and women had livery given them if they worked for a master of position. Their clothes were cheap. An ell of the very best linen at 20*d.* would make a pair of hose. A doublet such as a retainer in a big house would wear was worth 5*s.*, and in the sixteenth century his coat, hose and shoes would come to 20*s.* Shoes were from 6*d.* upwards, and gloves, of which there were a great variety in the fifteenth century, could be got for a penny a pair. Shirts, the coarsest coming from Holland, were cheap, nor were you expected to change them often. The henchmen on embarking for Guisnes (1520) had two a piece. A shirt embroidered with silks and lace might cost a pound. Bedding was not expensive, as we have seen, and you burnt rush lights if you could not afford tallow candles, which in the early part of Henry VIII.'s reign are valued at 1*s.* 8*d.* the dozen pounds. This, a high price, was in a nobleman's house. They were 1*s.* 6*d.* and 1*s.* 9*d.* in 1400, and fell gradually to 1*s.* 3*d.* in 1500. Fuel was abundant, and coal, if dear in Henry VI.'s time—7*s.* a chaldron—was less than 2*s.* a chaldron in Henry VIII.'s reign. Faggots were 2*s.* a hundred, and turves 3*s.* a thousand, taking a low average. Soap was rather dear. Here are the boarding expenses of, let us say four distinct classes: a countess, 6*s.* 8*d.* a week, two ladies 20*d.* and 16*d.* a week, and a yeoman 18*d.* a week. Rushes were a shilling a load, but in those days you had probably not far to go before finding rushes. You could have your napkins at 1*d.* apiece, and a man who earned 6*d.* a day could almost afford napkins. Of course there were taxes, but even in the Middle Ages these were graduated, and the poor man who did not earn much more than his board got off with from 4*d.* to 6*d.* When your income was £20 the pull began, and as a matter of fact a man who could dispend £20 a year could afford to pay even a 10 per cent. income tax. There was the occasional poll tax, to which all contributed. The yeoman was indeed very well off, for he had his bow, and that essentially poaching weapon, the crossbow, and could, and did, take toll of the deer. Travelling expenses, when the great religious foundations did duty for the caravanserais of the East, were not ruinous, and all classes availed themselves of this form of hospitality. Horse-keep varied from 3*d.* to 6*d.*, and 7*d.* for "great horses" such as carried men in armour. There were two drawbacks to this golden age—the scarcity of vegetables and the winter. Salt fish is sustaining, but you can have too much of it, and 20*s.* and more the hundred (sixteenth century) is not cheap. Herrings at 5*s.* the code (500) were the great stand by. Eggs 4*d.* the 100 in 1400 rose gradually in price till they were quoted at 1*s.* in the sixteenth century. They were generally cheap at Easter. Butter is mentioned at from 2*d.* a pound, milk must have been scarce, and cheese was 1½*d.* a pound. M. C.

A Composite Nest

THOUGH robbers of eggs and young are not rare among the many species of birds, there are few that are so impudent as to steal the nests of other birds. Where this occurs it is mostly among the hawks, who are not distinguished in any case by their architectural skill or industry. The sparrow-hawk, for example, commonly utilises an old or a new crow's nest as a cradle for her own family; and others are content with holes in trees or rocks in preference to building elaborate structures. Our two photos, then, may be regarded as quite out of the common, and as exhibiting the turtle-dove in a new light. Everybody knows how the poets have utilised the soft, gentle cooing of this bird to garnish their poems of love and peace; they would probably regard as an atrocious libel the suggestion that the turtle could do so ungentle an act as to rob another bird of the nest it has so patiently constructed.

A pair of song-thrushes had fixed upon a

stuff that Lamia must have written in the schoolroom, and we are rather overdone with that kind of poetry nowadays. However, as you will justly say, nobody need read it who does not like, and for those that do there are little autobiographical touches that will well repay their pains. Who would have expected, for instance, to find these revolutionary sentiments in your usually placid muse?

> I would not sing of sceptred kings,
> The tyrant and his thrall.

Won't that be a little inconvenient when you sit down to pen your coronation ode? Are you, too, to be numbered among our "Lost Leaders"

> Just for a handful of silver he left us,
> Just for a riband to stick in his coat.
> Shakespeare was of us, Milton was for us,
> Burns, Shelley were with us; they watch from their graves.
> He alone breaks from the van and the freemen,
> He alone sinks to the rear and the slaves!

But we will not be downhearted utterly. You have told us yourself that "ambition is not the last, but the first infirmity of noble minds, of which they purge themselves when they grow more mature." We may once more "live in your mild and magnificent eye," once more

> fondly claim
> The rightful share of kith and kin
> In Alfred's glory, Shakespeare's fame.

Were it only for that last line and its prophetic reference, you deserve the proud pre-eminence which Providence and a prosaic Premier have allotted to you.

Ah, I wish I were a poet. It must be so nice to spend one's life sauntering in gardens, strolling about parks, or leaning over brawling brooks, and suddenly to find you have written something about which people exclaim: "How charming! how beautiful!" and so to become a much flattered and possibly an immortal person, at the smallest expenditure of labour I have ever heard of.

"Possibly immortal" do I say? We have your own word for it:

> While one lives and works at a lofty height
> One may change, but one does not die.

In the sure hope then (for you) of at least a temporary immortality, allow me, my dear Mr. Alfred Austin, to subscribe myself,

Your obedient well-wisher,

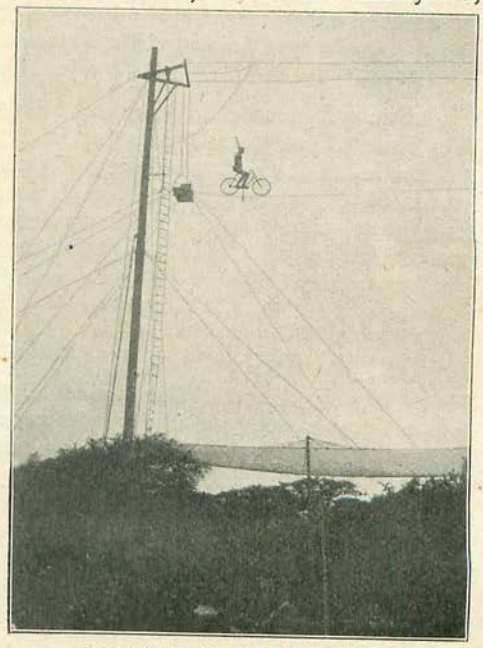
"THE MAN IN THE STREET."

H. R. HEATLEY,
Milveston House,
Leamington.

Bedroom Furniture

THE most casual glimpse at inventories of effects and lists of household apparel even in what was a very wealthy period at the end of the Wars of the Roses, would convince the housewife of to-day that if our forefathers had adequate bedroom furniture they had a scanty allowance of bedding. They had "bedsteads of joined work," "trundel beds," "standing beds," and "plain bedsteads" (that is, without any sort of canopy), and cupboards, wooden chests, leather chests and ships' coffers to keep their clothes in; stools, chairs, settles and forms; jug and basin—often mentioned together by careful testators in the fourteenth century. Nay they had a "lether hatte boxe"! but this was late in the sixteenth century; and in one inventory we read "the image of a 'fole,' to hold a towel, painted." For if in many fair-sized houses there was only one living room, the bedrooms were fitted for the accommodation of visitors. We know from the description of the somewhat peculiar manners of the Middle Ages that people of all ranks received in their bedrooms, even in bed. But the bedding seems often to lack one indispensable requisite, the flannel blanket. Some people had flannel blankets, a few woollen blankets. A well-provided house in 1579, that of a gentleman farmer in the Eastern Counties (him of the "lether hatte boxe"), had only one pair of flannel blankets, though he had hangings of tapestry, painted cloths, window curtains, expensive bed curtains of red and green silk, and a "vallans of greene and redd cruell fringe," coverlets of tapestry, good sheets (10*s.* a pair), fine and coarse pillow covers and fine and coarse towels, and of course feather and flock beds to each bedstead. A sergeant-at-arms with 12*d.* a day—he was Norrey Herald as well—could run to that (1517), and a monk had

blankets (1519). All had blankets. But the sergeant's blankets were only worth 21*d.* the pair, and his sheets 12*d.* This and an old coverlet (1*s.*) agrees with the valuation (3*s.*) of a coverlet and two blankets, part of the goods of a Scotchman seized in Kent, and seven sheets valued at 4*s.* I expect the coverlet gave more warmth, being sometimes a piece of tapestry, or at least some thickish material—say fustian. Flannel blankets were not uncommon, but they must have been woefully thin. It is remarkable that a fourteenth-century householder appears to be as well provided with blankets as a sixteenth-century one. Why is this? Now a Yorkshire vicar's idea of a bed (1360) was a canvas (presumably stretched on a frame), two blankets, two sheets, a coverlet and a curtain. The price of wool had just been doubled by order, and it rose to 8*s.* a tod in the next century, fell again to 5*s.*, and in the sixteenth century (Henry VIII.) it trebled and reached finally 20*s.* a tod! No wonder then that blankets did not become commoner. We happen to know, too, that linen and bedding were often stolen. Two yards of flannel are priced at 14*d.* in 1535. Princess Mary had woollen blankets which measured 2 yards by $3\frac{1}{2}$ yards and were worth 3*s.* 4*d.* the yard. This was obviously the real thing when a tod (28 lbs.) of wool was worth 5*s.* Her sheets were 3 breadths and $4\frac{1}{2}$ yards long, and she had "fustians" of five breadths and the same length. This fustian stuff lined the "counterpoint" too. Her pillows were an ell long (45 inches) and $1\frac{1}{2}$ breadths. As pillows in old drawings appear as square, a breadth was perhaps 30 inches, so this would correspond fairly well with the size of the sheets. Her "pillow-beres" (pillow-covers) were not very expensive. The East Anglian gentleman had covers costing three times as much. Covers with black seams were fashionable in the sixteenth century. A very general colour for the counterpoint was green, whatever material it was made of. A good feather bed was worth at least 10*s.* and a flock bed 2*s.* in 1520. A mattress or a pallet stuffed with straw was not worth much. The basis of most peoples' beds for hundreds of years was straw. From the terms of a "corrody" in the twelfth century, we learn that a bundle of straw was allowed quarterly for the mattress, and in Henry VIII.'s reign the item "straw for my lord's bed" occurs in a nobleman's accounts. We are not now concerned with the ornamental trappings of a bedstead—the curtains, the canopy "celure" perhaps studded with stars, the vallance, the fringe, the bells which some people hung to the curtains. Let us see what a bed could be hired for. In Elizabeth's reign she makes a contract for some workmen to lodge two in a bed, a feather bed at 2*d.* a week, a penny less than men doing the same work, paid fifty years earlier. She had to provide the sheets and pay for the washing. A bolster went with a bed as a matter of course. A decent outfit for a gentleman in the early half of the sixteenth century was a feather bed, a bolster, a pair of blankets, two pillows and a coverlet. This, as we have already said,



A bicycle-ride in mid-air—the start

was none too much, for he went to bed then, as in the Middle Ages, as naked as the day he was born. Stop! He wore a night-cap, a custom which still obtains. Only in the modern period did he take to wearing a shirt in bed.

M. C.

driven into the ground a few feet apart. A similar arrangement having been fitted up at the other end signals can be sent backwards and forwards from one station to the other, and audible speech can be exchanged

£2. The key to the new invention lies in the receiver, which has been devised by Messrs. Orling and Armstrong, the details of which are of too technical a nature for description here. The new system of wire-

Receiving a wireless message sent through the earth from a distance by means of a telephone

over a distance as great as twenty miles. The inventors claim that their apparatus is simple and portable, infallible under the most adverse conditions, cheap and easy to manipulate. The currents employed are of very low potential, a current of eight volts being more than sufficient to transmit a message a distance of twenty miles, while the feat has actually been accomplished by a current of four volts only.

The Marconi apparatus is costly, bulky, unwieldy, and a high mast has to be used for long distance work or the signals can be read and intercepted by those for whom they are not intended. The Armorl system is simple in the extreme. There are no induction coils, coherers or high masts and the whole apparatus can be compressed within the compass of a box 7 inches by 4 inches by 8 inches, weighs 5 or 6 pounds, the cost of which is under

less telephony promises to be of great value for communication between ship and ship, and between ship and shore for military and naval signalling, and for sending messages in districts remote from civilisation.

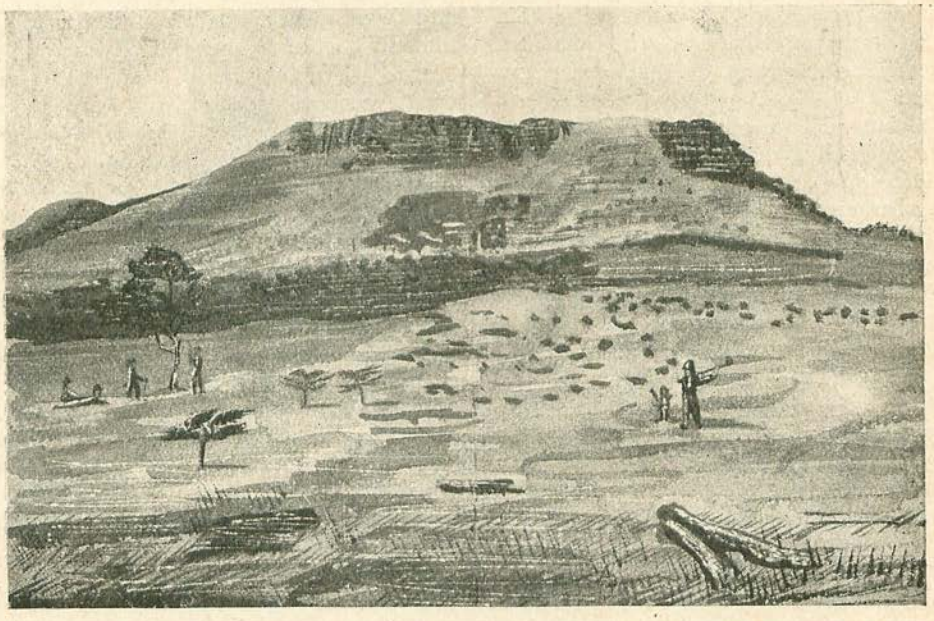
H. H.

Perfumes, Fragrant Herbs and Spices in the Early Modern Period

It may well be doubted if we use scent now more than they did at the end of the mediæval period, for the successive plagues in the last quarter of the fifteenth century, and especially during the sixteenth century when the "Sweating Sickness" added a new terror to life, led to their general use. We certainly do not carry them about our persons to the same extent. The first Tudor entered a plague-stricken London after Bosworth Field (it was the first appearance of the "Sweat"); and several times in Henry

VIII.'s reign the Court was driven from London by the Plague or the Sweating Sickness. Our forefathers, indeed, were great people for scents and perfumes, fragrant herbs and spices, and the astonishing amount of seasoning they put with the simplest dishes prepares one for almost any combination. When to make a cherry tart they found it necessary to make a syrup of cinnamon, ginger and "sawnders," and to add rosewater to the icing, one can imagine how they set to work to cook a cormorant. Perhaps if we remind our readers that many chambers were provided with "draughts" which occasionally required cleansing, and that rushes took the place of carpets, they will realise one of the reasons for the use of perfumes. "Sweet waters" were occasionally sprinkled under the rushes in great houses, or for revels, or on the mattresses and bedding. The state the floor got into can be imagined, and charwomen well earned their 2*d.* or 2½*d.* a day, which was a fair woman's wage then. Wealthy people perhaps had their "sweet sedges" from Norfolk, but others used the soft rush. The pith of these, the common rushes, was extensively used for wicks, so one can well understand that when dry they would ignite easily and raise a most suffocating smoke. At the dissolution of the monasteries one of Cromwell's visitors was nearly burnt in his bed from this cause. But to the perfumes. People carried their perfumes about with them slung from neck chains, in the shape of "pomanders," perforated balls or lantern-shaped baskets or boxes of metal, often beautiful specimens of artistic work, containing in an inner case perfumed gums, benzoin, storax, with ambergris, musk, civet, cinnamon and rosewater. From one recipe we learn that garden mould steeped in "motherless rosewater" was a good basis to start upon. There are pomanders in the South Kensington Museum, and there is an interesting article on them in the *Portfolio* of 1881 by Professor A. H. Church. As is the way of the world, "pomanders" are being revived as "scent baskets," just as Milanese bonnets have come into fashion again. Then there was the "pouncet box," with a perforated lid for sprinkling "pounce," *i.e.*, powdered cuttle-fish bone or gum sandarac on ink, which was also used for holding perfumed powders. The strong meats, the scarcity of vegetables, and the coarseness of the clothing, especially the shirts, and the even coarser habits, must have made "pomanders" almost a personal necessity. Pomanders and pouncet boxes reached their greatest vogue in Elizabeth's reign. Gloves too, being an essential part of costume for all, except those performing work actually hindered by gloves, were the commonest present to persons of distinction, distinguished visitors or patrons. Therefore what could be more natural or more sensible than perfumed gloves, a gift which was generally handsomely acknowledged. They were strongly and lastingly scented, probably with musk, civet, or ambergris, else we should not read of "swete glovys" in inventories. Another reason that made the use of "swete glovys" not altogether a fancy was the absence of forks. You washed your hands after a meal, at least in any decent house, in rosewater; for it stood to reason that you could not keep your left hand clean by continually wiping it on a napkin. The use of frankincense in churches and private chapels accustomed people to strong scents. Wood was burnt in courtyards and cloisters in time of plague, and birch would be a good wood for the purpose. Sweet herbs were laid in chamber windows—bay and rosemary probably. Locally other fragrant herbs would come in and flowers camomile, and various orchises. Lavender was not known till rather later. One hears a great deal about bay and rosemary grafts, rosemary being used at funerals, as symbolical of remembrance. Few gardens are properly supplied with even pot-herbs nowadays, and many who started to "roste a swanne" after a Tudor recipe would go a-begging for their winter savory, sweet marjoram, pennyroyal, rosemary, striped thyme, poly and others. Probably many people have forgotten that the "good King Henry" goosefoot makes a capital spinach; it was a great pot-herb once upon a time. Cinnamon seems a strong spice to flavour spinach with, and it may seem unnecessary to introduce sandal wood into a cherry tart. Wild fowl required cooking with strong herbs, and forced meat and

stuffing is part and parcel of them; you went out and "gathered the sweetest herbs you could find" for a very good reason. Fruit, one thinks, would not require cinnamon, mace and cloves, yet cinnamon pervades a large number of these old recipes. A mere matter of habit, we suppose—and habits which were filthy to a degree then—and one could always drown the taste in "jolly good ale and old," so highly recommended by a bishop of that time. M. C.



Doornberg, from a drawing made on the spot by an officer during the Zulu War of 1880

V.C.'s chopping wood

DOORNBERG and Doornkop are both names that have appeared in telegrams from South Africa, and though held now against the Boers were held twenty years ago against the Zulus. The sketch we publish, by an officer of our army in 1880, is not exactly a finished landscape, a Millais, a Constable or a Vicat Cole, but it suffices to show us how the berg, with its apparently innocent sloping sides and dangerous approach of close mimosa-bush running right up the deep ravine-like kloof, makes an ideal trap for any party who, signalling or scouting, should ride up to the summit without the utmost caution. In the picture we see a party of soldiers cutting fuel for the camp, their rifles (not easily distinguishable in the gallant artist's sketch) stacked close by, and a note scribbled on the back says the heroes of Rorke's Drift were utilised by Chelmsford as hewers of wood, and seeing a handful of them hacking away in the sun I mistook them for men on defaulters' work. "Oh no," said ——, "those are some of Broomhead's chaps, and they're most of them V.C.s!" P. R.

Wonderful Letters

A FEW weeks ago one of the most wonderful letters that has ever reached a European was handed to the Emperor of Germany. This letter, comprising the apology offered by the Emperor of China for the murder of the German Minister at Pekin, with its wonderful embroidery, will be fresh in the memory of our readers; it will, therefore, suffice to say that it was painted on yellow silk, and its length of over four yards presents a striking contrast to that of an epistle which