The description of the distress of the cattle is true enough; but their tormentor is solitary, not social, in its habits. The fly appears singly, not in a flight or swarm; and it is not anger, but instinct, that leads the creature to trouble the herd.

On October mornings, fine gossamer threads are seen overlying the grass, the hedges, and sometimes hanging high in air, to which Quarles thus refers:—

"And now autumnal dews were seen
To cobweb every green."

It was the old idea that gossamer, the web of the field-spider, was formed of dew evaporated by the sun's heat into threads.

In Milton, we have the working bee represented as the female:—

"Swarming next,
The *female* bee, that feeds her husband drone,
Deliciously, and builds her waxen cells
With honey stored."

The working bees which form the mass of the population are *mules* or neuters; the drones are the males; and of the queens, or females, there is usually but one in a hive.

Southey, in the "Curse of Kehama," mentions

"The *footless* fowl of heaven, that never
Rest upon the earth, but on the wing for ever,
Hovering o'er flowers, their fragrance food inhale,
Drink the descending dew upon its way,
And sleep aloft while floating on the gale."

This is a reference to the gorgeous birds of paradise, which are limited to the little-known regions of New Guinea, and the adjoining Papuan archipelago, periodically migrating to the Moluccas when the spice plants are in bloom. In preparing and drying the skins, the natives were in the habit of removing the feet. In this state they were sold to the Malays, conveyed to India, and thence to Europe. Hence arose the idea that the birds had really no feet, and consequently never rested on the ground, but perpetually floated in the air. Linnæus styled one of the best-known species "footless," *Paradisea apoda*.

NEEDLEWORK IN GERMANY.

Those of our readers who were interested by a recent paper (No. 454), entitled "Four Generations of Samplers; or, How our Grandmothers spent their Time," will be gratified in reading the following notes from a correspondent, on the Needle and its work in Germany in our own times.

With the German ladies, knitting, netting, and crochet reign triumphant, such innovations as "broderie à la minute" and "point de poste" being only known to the very young. Curtains are knitted and netted, crochet covers are put on the tables to save the ordinary ones, of which one only gets a glimpse at the corners; the same as regards chairs and sofas. This monotonous work goes on unceasingly, and, we are sorry to say, on Sundays as well as week days, in many parts of Germany. In this work almost all German housewives are alike: there is no repose for them; they realize to the letter the saying, that "women's work is never done." The battle of the needle goes on without any respite, with (in case of renewed speed) a sort of bagpipe movement of the right elbow, most curious to watch. In the north they knit with the left hand.

The domestic needle-workers meet at four or five o'clock for coffee, the elders in one room and the younger ones in another; or, if only one room is used, they remain entirely apart. From these enlivening réunions gentlemen are generally excluded; and if they had ever been acquainted with the delights of them, we question whether they would feel tempted to renew the trial.

Few complicated patterns are attempted at these parties, as the mysteries of "two in one" and "purl" would interfere with the conversation. A noble countess, or Mrs. Doctor This or Mrs. Rector That does not think it the least beneath her dignity to knit little queer-looking *pieces*, which, when finished, disappear in the pocket of her dress. If some ignorant being asks what they are intended for, the answer is "a counterpane;" and the gratuitous information is perhaps given that, if the lady is very "industrious," she can make one in four days!

Stockings are, however, the most in favour, as they can be continued during the most animated conversations. Some are so choice in their manner of making them, that they work gold beads in for their initials; and many boast of having more than fifty pairs lying by in their drawers. In the meanwhile, they buy all their cuffs and collars—a rather false economy, when stockings can be had in Saxony quite equal to ours, and nearly as cheap; although, before our Exhibition in 1851, they were almost unattainable.

The young ladies are beginning to abandon these industrious habits. Knitting schools will soon be among the things that were, and collars and sleeves are rapidly appearing at sociable parties, although the old people shake their heads, and think the present generation "too Frenchified."

It seems droll to a stranger to see a dashing-looking officer sitting before a table, in a public garden, sipping his coffee, while his wife sits by his side knitting stockings, sometimes for him, sometimes for herself; but, spite of all their practice, they never seem to attain the dexterity of the Scotch and Welsh peasants. One can't help grieving, too, at the thought, that all the money thus economized by the lady will be unpityingly whiffed away by the head of the family in tobacco smoke.

In one thing we certainly think that the German ladies show good taste, and that is, in their general undisguised admiration of all that is English. This fact would not strike any one so much who goes there direct from England, for we have all a tolerably good opinion of ourselves, feeling that we belong to "the first nation in the world;" but after a long residence in France, and constantly hearing ourselves classed with other nations as "poor benighted beings," at least thirty years behind the French in civilization, it is very agreeable to feel on the top step of the ladder again. Few can have lived even a short time among the Germans without bringing away a grateful recollection of their kindly, disinterested hospitality, and often wishing to see their beautiful country and their friendly faces again.