

between Erzeroum and Trebizonde. Vast tracts also remain uncultivated from lack of hands and circulating capital. The country is not half peopled. The interior, offering no resources to civilized activity, is for the most part occupied only by miserable villagers and wild tribes of Arabs, Kurds, and Turcomans. The rest of the population flock to the great cities. The abundant harvests reaped from the rich plains of Koniah, Kaisaria, and Pergama, in the centre of Asia Minor, and from some other districts, are due to the fertility of the soil, and in no wise to any culture that is not of the rudest and hastiest kind. But this abandonment of the richest regions perhaps of the earth to wildness and to nomadic barbarism is, it is to be hoped, about to cease. The Sultan has lately granted the right of property within his dominions to European settlers, and there can be hardly a doubt that as soon as the grant—which cannot be carried into effect till some preliminary conventions with foreign states are settled—passes formally into law, multitudes of such emigrants as now seek new homes and fortunes in America, Canada, and Australia, will find their way to Turkey; where they will enjoy, in climate, in proximity to European civilization and to their native lands, in mercantile and agricultural pursuits, and in the sacred and classic associations with which they will be surrounded, advantages in all respects equal, and in some superior, to any they would meet with in the transatlantic and antipodal world. This edict opens a perspective of consequences which a farsighted politician cannot appreciate too highly, and may be considered as the most important reform in germ that has as yet issued from the Porte.

Hitherto without roads, Turkey has also been hitherto without banks. Its posts are Tartar couriers, and its financial operations are transacted by usurers. A national Ottoman bank was established shortly after the close of the late Crimean war. This event, should success attend the enterprise, of which there seems to be every probability, cannot fail to have effects which will give a wide and healthy circulation to the immense natural wealth and resources of the empire. Up to this time, capital has found no issue in works of public utility. The gradual opening of banks in the great central cities of the empire would encourage industry and commerce, checked heretofore by the usurious and fraudulent transactions of Armenian sarafs, the plundering tyranny of Turkish pachas, and the proverbially unscrupulous practices of Greek merchants.

Of the Turkish army we shall only say at present, that the employment of the rayahs, or Christian subjects of the Porte, in military service, is one of the most important of the recent innovations.

On the whole, it must be confessed that most of the Turkish reforms have been extorted under the pressure of national calamities and of foreign interference. The authorities are passive and unwilling, rather than active, instruments in the changes which are being brought about. Their apprehensions, therefore, of a result fatal to their own supremacy appear to be well founded. Hence it is that, so much being already done in the way of announcing

principles and of proclaiming new laws, so little has been done towards bringing any specific new law into effective operation. It is easy for the Porte to issue edicts; the difficulty is to get them executed. The "Tanzimat," and the "Hatti Sherif of Gulhane,"* remain to this day everywhere, where there are not European consuls to enforce their observance, all but a dead letter.

MONTHS, LONG AND SHORT.

In the days of our forefathers, when almanacs were scarce, and memory was not more retentive than at present, it was very convenient to have verses of easy remembrance, and mechanical processes discriminating the respective lengths of the different months of the year. We of course allude to the universally-known memorial rhymes, which stand in the modern editions as follows:—

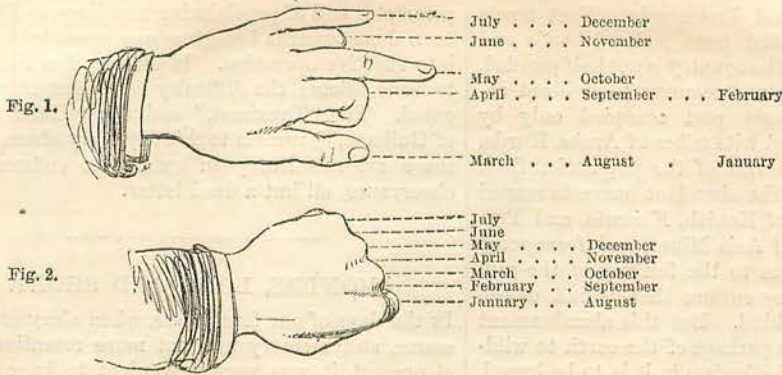
"Thirty days hath September,
April, June, and November;
February hath twenty-eight alone,
All the rest have thirty-one,
Except in Leap year, at which time
February's days are twenty-nine."

The name of the man to whom the world is indebted for this poetical gem has not transpired, nor the date when he flourished. But we have it before us in a Cambridge almanac of the year 1635; and it is but justice to him to give his text in as pure a state as possible. It will be seen that great liberties have been taken, and that he is not at all responsible for the false rhyme of the last lines above.

"April, June, and September,
Thirty days have as November;
Each month else doth never vary
From thirty-one, save February,
Which twenty-eight doth still confine,
Save in Leap year, then twenty-nine."

The author of these lines, whoever he was, clerk or layman, has strong claims to respect. If the reader does not perceive them, we may remind him that the long defunct bard was creditably content to remain himself unknown to fame, however famous his work might become. He was plainly a public benefactor in his own day, supplying his countrymen with a ready index to the months, long and short. He has also served, in a similar way, succeeding generations in all parts of the globe, for the words of this old national ode have gained as wide a diffusion, and been more frequently repeated mentally, than those of any other secular lyric. Wherever England's sons have gone, towards either pole, into African, Australian, or Trans-atlantic wilds, there these stanzas have gone with them, firmly imprinted upon the tablet of the mind, ready for use. Then again, our author must have been a man of firm purpose and great self-command. Having set himself to a specific and useful object, that of constructing a metrical direction to an important part of the calendar,

* The whole body of new laws is called the "Tanzimat." The "Hatti Sherif of Gulhane," which has been called the Magna Charta of Turkey, announces the principles upon which the entire new administration of the empire, promised by the present sultan on his accession to the throne, is based.



of the most serviceable kind—in other words, packing it up in the smallest possible compass—he strictly confined himself to it. How carefully have those sports of fancy and bursts of feeling been restrained, which would have interfered with the due execution of his project.

There are memorial rhymes referring to the signs of the zodiac. Well is it remembered with what exemplary industry, at the bidding of a sapient preceptor, they were deposited in memory's storehouse, as treasures of the mind, grains of useful knowledge, from which a harvest of practical advantage might afterwards be gathered.

"The Ram, the Bull, the heavenly Twins,
 And next the Crab, the Lion shines,
 The Virgin, and the Scales;
 The Scorpion, Archer, and Sea-Goat,
 The man that holds the Water-pot,
 And Fish, with glittering tails."

Very innocently and naturally, it was supposed, on being able glibly to repeat this ditty, that a prize had been caught. But through forty long years, not the slightest utility has been extracted from it; and whether it will ever fructify is now to be *despaired of*. Never on a single occasion, buying or selling, paying or receiving, invoice making or letter writing, marrying or giving in marriage, lying down or rising up, did circumstances lead us to recite mentally, as a serviceable strain, "The Ram, the Bull, the heavenly Twins," or quote "The man that holds the Water-pot." But hundreds of times in former days we have recurred with instant advantage to the epic on the months, by the Great Unknown.

Reference has been made to mechanical processes having the same end in view as the rhythmical effusion. Little more than a century has elapsed since the year in England did not legally and generally commence till March. We popularly speak of "the Revolution of 1688." That great event happened in February of the year 1688—its last month, according to the then mode of computation. But if the year had been reckoned to begin, as now, in January instead of March, the event would be "the Revolution of 1689." Now, let the hand be stretched out; bend or close the first and third fingers; apply the name of March to the thumb; the names of the other months in succession to the bent and outstretched fingers; and return to the thumb at the sixth month, or August, proceeding as before. The result is, that all the

long extremities correspond to the long months, of thirty-one days; and all the short or bent fingers correspond to the short months, of thirty days, and to February, which has twenty-eight or twenty-nine. But the following process is still more convenient. Close the hand, or convert it into a fist. The roots of the four fingers then form protuberant parts, knuckles, or hills, between which there are three depressions or valleys. If we now put January to the lowermost knuckle, February to the hollow above, and so on through the entire series, we find that all the long months correspond to the hills, and all the short ones to the valleys. Thanks to penny almanacs, there is less occasion now than formerly to have recourse to rhymes or fists to discriminate between the long months and the short.

SUMMER.

"Now swarms the village o'er the jovial mead:
 The rustic youth, brown with meridian toil,
 Healthful and strong; full as the summer rose
 Blown by prevailing suns, the ruddy maid;
 Even stooping age is here; and infant hands
 Trail the long rake, or, with the fragrant load
 O'ercharged, amid the kind oppression roll.
 Wide flies the tedded grain; all in a row
 Advancing broad, or wheeling round the field,
 They spread the breathing harvest to the sun,
 That throws refreshful round a rural smell;
 Or as they rake the green-appearing ground,
 And drive the dusky wave along the mead,
 The russet hay-cock rises thick behind,
 In order gay: while heard from dale to dale,
 Waking the breeze, resounds the blended voice
 Of happy labour, love, and social glee."

THOMSON'S "SEASONS."

SELDOM has this season been poetically celebrated with such grace and spirit as by Davydd ab Gwilym, archer, minstrel, and bard, in an "Address requesting it to visit Glamorganshire with its choicest blessings," his native county. He lived about the middle of the thirteenth century, and was a retainer of Ivor, surnamed Hael, or the "generous," who resided at Basaleg in Monmouthshire.

"Thou summer! father of delight,
 With thy dease spray and thickets deep;
 Gemmed monarch, with thy rapt'rous light,
 Rousing thy subject glens from sleep!
 Proud has thy march of triumph been,
 Thou prophet, prince of forest green!
 Artificer of wood and tree,
 Thou painter of unrivalled skill,
 Who ever scattered gems like thee,
 And gorgeous webs on park and hill;