

EDITOR'S TABLE.

EDITORIAL CHIT-CHAT.

TO MAKE AND MANAGE AN AQUARIUM.—As aquariums are becoming very fashionable, and as we have been solicited to describe how they are made and managed, we devote part of a page to the subject, this month. Heretofore, the directions for filling aquariums, published in various newspapers and magazines, have been copied, unaltered, from English periodicals; and have, therefore, been of little practical utility, because the fishes and plants, most suitable there, are not all to be found here.

To the uninitiated, we would say that an Aquarium is a self-supporting, self-renovating collection, in which the various influences of animal and vegetable life balance each other, and maintain, within the vessel, a correspondence of action, which preserves the whole. The water is not to be changed at all, or only at rare intervals, because growing plants always form a feature in the collection, and because such plants, in a state of healthy growth, exhale more oxygen than they absorb, and thus supply to the fishes, what the latter require, for maintaining healthy respiration; and the water thus remains unchanged. The bottom should be composed of coarse river sand or pebbles, which should be thoroughly washed before being placed in the tank—the plants should then be arranged and planted, before the water is introduced; and any common aquatic weeds will answer, if they are found growing *entirely under water*: a few of the most desirable for such a purpose are the Anacharis, Myriophyllum, Valisneria, Potamogeton, Ranunculus, and Canna Vulgaris. The plants should become well settled in the water for a day or two, before the fishes are admitted. The first thing to guard against is overstocking with animal life; taking large fish with small, two or three to every gallon of water, is the utmost that should be attempted; and if the tank is not large, the smaller fish will be found the most desirable. The minnow and banded dace, the roach and the carp, or gold fish, are probably the most desirable and most easily procured. The sun-fish is objectionable on account of his carnivorous nature, and there are other kinds which the aquarian soon learns to banish from his tank. Snails and mussels are necessary to complete the operations of the tank, they performing the duties of scavengers, the snails by eating off the objectionable growths, and the mussels by straining off of matters held in suspension in the water. There should be three to four snails to every gallon of water, and one mussel to every two or three gallons. It will be necessary to occasionally sponge the sides of the glass when they become coated with a green scum: but if this species of vegetable growth increases rapidly, try an additional supply of snails. Be careful to keep the tank free from decaying matter, animal or vegetable. The tank can be made in the shape of a square box, with sides of glass, and open at top; or it may be constructed in a more fanciful shape, if expense is no object.

ENGLISHMEN AND DINNERS.—Among the good things, which we find in that racy new book, "The Wit of Douglas Jerrold," is a hit at the English habit of celebrating everything with a dinner. "If an earthquake," said Jerrold, "were to engulf England to-morrow, they would manage to meet and dine somewhere among the rubbish, just to celebrate the event."

LOSS BY LOVE.—"Nobody ever lost anything by love," said a sage-looking person. "That's not true," said a lady, who heard the remark, "for I once lost three nights' sleep."

ACIDS IF TAKEN IN EXCESS FATAL.—It is a habit, with many persons, to take acids, especially vinegar, in excess. When used in moderation, acids are often beneficial; but in excess they impair the digestive organs. Experiments on artificial digestion show that if the quantity of acid be diminished, digestion is retarded; if increased beyond a certain point, it is arrested. There is reason, therefore, in the popular notion, that vinegar tends to avert corpulence. Young ladies, who dread to be considered "fat," can actually arrest the disappearance of those graceful curves, and preserve their sylph-like figures, by drinking freely of vinegar; but it will be at the expense of their health. The quantity of acid which will keep them thin, will destroy their digestive organs. A late medical writer gives a case which should be a warning. "A few years ago," he says, "a young lady in easy circumstances enjoyed good health; she was very plump, had a good appetite, and a complexion blooming with roses and lilies. She began to look upon her plumpness with suspicion; for her mother was very fat, and she was afraid of becoming like her. Accordingly, she consulted a woman, who advised her to drink a glass of vinegar daily: the young lady followed her advice, and her plumpness diminished. She was delighted with the success of the experiment, and continued it for more than a month. She began to have a cough; but it was dry at its commencement, and was considered as a slight cold, which would go off. Meantime, from dry it became moist; a slow fever came on, and a difficulty of breathing; her body became lean, and wasted away; night sweats, and swelling of the feet and of the legs succeeded." In short she died. We fear, too, that this was only one case out of many.

THE BRAIN IN CHILDHOOD.—Too many parents, in the United States especially, are given to forcing the intellectual development of their children. To have prodigies of learning in comparative infancy, they sacrifice the health, if not the lives of their victims. Sir Henry Holland, in his "Mental Physiology," has left his testimony against this practice. "It is a fact," he writes, "attested by experience, that the memory may be seriously injured by pressing upon it too hard and continuously in early life. Whatever theory we hold as to this great function of our nature, it is certain that its powers are only gradually developed; and that if forced into premature exercise, they are impaired by the effort. This is a maxim, indeed, of general import, applying to the condition and culture of every faculty of body and mind; but singularly to the one we are now considering, which forms in one sense the foundation of intellectual life. A regulated exercise, short of fatigue, is improving to it, but we are bound to refrain from goading it by constant and laborious efforts in early life, and before the instrument is strengthened to its work, or it decays under our hands."

WORK IS THE LAW OF NATURE.—The habits of children prove that occupation is congenial to our nature; for they delight in being busy: they are fond of employment for its own sake; being ignorant of the value of time, their instinct tells them that their happiness consists in doing something. Occupation mitigates a great part of earthly troubles. All have trials, griefs, and disappointments in a greater or lesser degree; but, whether afflicted in body or mind, occupation is the best prescription; it will blunt the edge of the sharpest grief, and enable us

"To brave the blast, and dare the storm,
In humble, calm serenity."