

Victorian Times

Vol. IV, No. 2

February 2017



*Unusual Bank Notes • Sparrows of the Storm • Valentine Lore • Candy-Making
The Pageantry of London's Lord Mayors' Shows • The Uses of Edwin's Razor
Character Seen from the Back • Countryside Walks in February • American Bread
Japanese Fans • How to Make Crazy China • Lore of the Diamond*

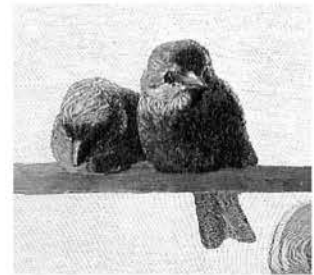
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A publication of VictorianVoices.net
Moira Allen, Editor - editors@victorianvoices.net
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The Girl's Own Paper* *Cassell's Family Magazine*

Seasonal Fare

Our new monthly series by M.G. Watkins (first appearing in *Cassell's Family Magazine* in 1875) gives you a charming month-by-month look at the Victorian garden and countryside. You'll get a glimpse of what you might have found if you strolled down a country lane, or what is needed to keep your country garden healthy.

So picture yourself for a moment, the proper Victorian country gentleman or lady, strolling down that lane. It's a bit bleak still, but the gorse and the butterbur are blooming, and you may soon glimpse a primrose or two. Birds twitter in the leafless trees, and you can almost hear the strains of that Rossini classic, "Call to the Dairy Cows" (immortalized in *Bambi Meets Godzilla* in 1969) in the background. Seeing a wood pigeon winging overhead—lovely sign of spring, that!—you naturally react like any proper Victorian country gentleman... and shoot it. You then take it home and have it for supper.

To the modern reader, this may seem a bit shocking. To the country person in the 1800's, it's food on the table and a way of life. Supplies are getting a bit low by this time, or at least a bit stale. You've been living out of the pantry and the cellar for months, and yearn for a bit of variety. Quite probably the hens haven't been laying during the cold weather, and fresh dairy may be hard to get. Of course, we could pop over to the supermarket... oh, wait, no, it won't be open until 1948! (Although there has been a Sainsbury's in London since 1869, it won't stock groceries until 1903.)

There *are* shops, of course. Every town and many villages would have a butcher shop, a greengrocer, a bakery, a dry-goods shop and many others. The option of one-stop food shopping, however, is so far in the future that your pigeon-shooting Victorian probably won't live to see it. (And of course today that one-stop shopping is causing many to bemoan the fact that the greengrocer and the butcher and the baker and many other "high street" shops are becoming as extinct as yet another bird that Victorian Americans liked to shoot: the passenger pigeon.)

Besides the convenience of one-stop shopping, another thing we take for granted today is the assumption that we can buy whatever we want *whenever* we want it. Seasons don't matter. While grocery stores still observe a certain seasonality when it comes to specialty items like pumpkins and cherries, most "staple" vegetables can be had year-round. No matter what you want, it's growing somewhere in the world, and being shipped to a market near you. (Or, quite often, it was grown somewhere in the world months ago and kept in cold storage before being offered to you as "fresh" produce.) And if you can't get it fresh, you can get it frozen.

As another of our new series, "Things in Season, in Market and Kitchen," points out, the Victorian housewife wasn't so lucky. This month, veggies are limited mostly to root crops: turnips, parsnips, carrots, onions, potatoes. These winter over nicely in a cool pantry or cellar—and they *have* wintered over. They were harvested months ago, and may be growing a bit tired and tiresome. Fresh cabbages (savoy), lettuce, and beans are available for a price; apples, pears and oranges are imported from Europe. Now is the time to stock up on Seville oranges, so that you can make up your annual supply of marmalade. As for meat, poultry is "dear" but hares and rabbits are plentiful. Small wonder that the cookbooks of the day focused on what to cook based on what was available at different times of the year!

Our Victorian pigeon-shooter would never have heard of concepts like "sustainability" or "local sourcing." Nor were Victorians, as a rule, noted for their environmental awareness. However, there's a good chance that much of the other fare on his table was locally grown—quite possibly in his own kitchen garden or hot-house. As for the rabbits and hares, well... let's just say they're local as well.

Now, I do like being able to buy broccoli or green beans or apples at any time of year, and if I *want* rabbit, I really don't want to have to bag it myself. At the same time, we're being told that the convenience of our supermarkets comes at a considerable cost. The carbon footprint of those mangoes I just bought is far greater than the ecological cost of shooting a passing pigeon. And there are times when I wish I could be more involved in my food choices—if you are what you eat, I'd like to have a bit more control over what goes into what goes into *me*.

Our modern sensibilities may cause us to frown upon the Victorian who goes for a stroll and shoots the local wildlife. But when our Victorian country gentleman shoots a pigeon, he kills... one pigeon. Today we're being told that our supermarkets and our food habits are, possibly, killing the planet.

Now, I'm not recommending that if you take that country stroll, you take your fowling piece with you. Enjoy the primroses, and leave the pigeons alone!

—Maira Allen, Editor
editors@victorianvoices.net

Bank of England Notes.

BY GILBERT GUERDON.



IN the good old times, if the Chancellor of the Exchequer wanted to borrow money of the general public—as he often did—the only acknowledgment he gave was “a tally.”

These tallies were pieces of stick notched to express value, and then split in two, one half being given to the lender, the other retained by the officers of the Exchequer. It was the burning of an accumulation of these old tallies in the vaults of the House of Commons which set fire to and helped to burn down the Houses of Parliament in 1834.

When bankers borrowed money they gave a “note” containing a promise to repay, and the earliest of these bank-notes were given for any amount which a customer liked to lend or deposit, and he could withdraw as much as he wished till the total had been received, and then the Bank claimed the note. Privileged visitors to the Bank of England are shown in a glazed frame the oldest known note, dated “19th Xber, 1699,” for £555, and an inspection of it shows that the bank-notes at that period were printed from engraved

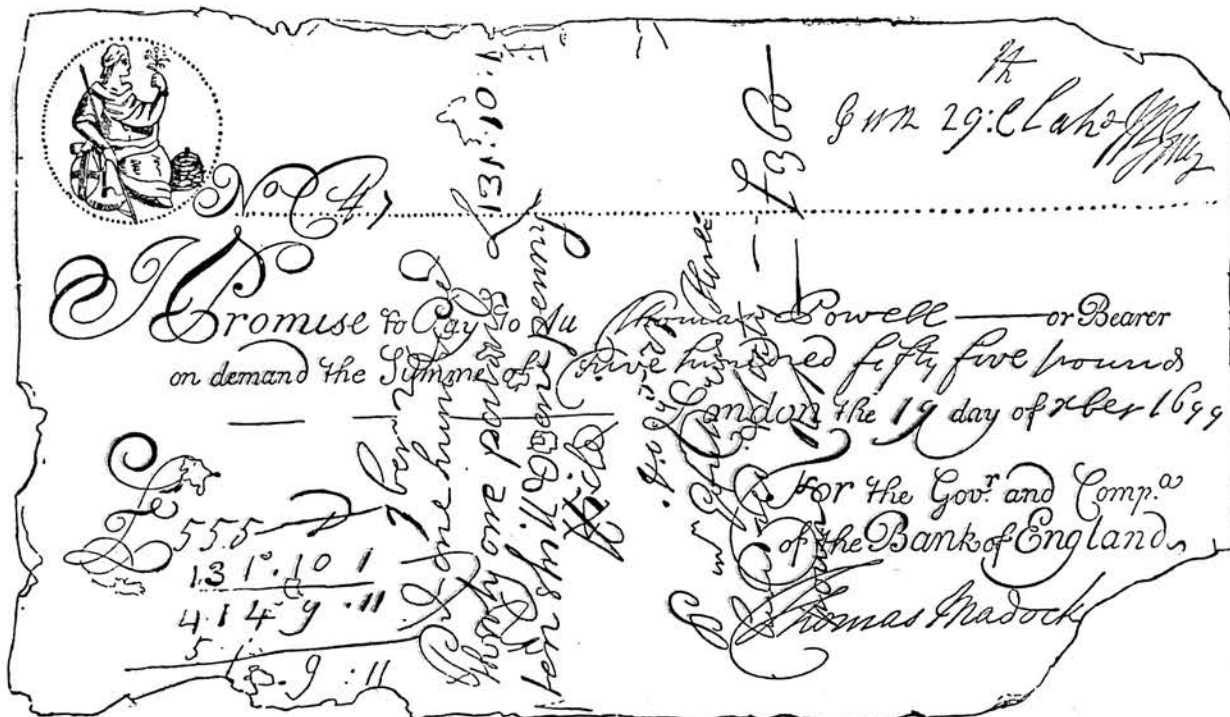
plates, with blanks for the amount, date, number, and signature. In texture and general appearance they were similar to those at present in use, and the water-mark can be distinctly seen. Across the note are written memoranda showing repayment by three instalments.

The signature at the foot of the note is that of the chief cashier. Fifty years ago there were different signatures, according to the values of the notes, but for many years there has been but one for all values, namely, that of the chief cashier, F. May, who has now retired. The signature is imprinted by authority of an Act of Parliament.

The new chief cashier is Mr. Horace G. Bowen, and all notes dated on and after 16th November, 1893, are signed by him with a special autograph. All the notes with the old signature were issued before the new ones were put in circulation.

Notes are cancelled by having the corner bearing the signature cut off. There are several sacks full of these corners in the Bank cellars, and they are periodically destroyed by burning.

Amongst other curiosities in the Bank



THE OLDEST BANK-NOTE KNOWN.

Library is a note for £25, which had slumbered unobserved for one hundred and eleven years and was then presented and paid. If compound interest had been payable by the Bank, the owner could have claimed over £60,000.

Another curiosity, believed to be unique, is a bank-note for £1,000,000, dated 1782. Tradition says that there have been but four such notes issued by the Bank. One is the note just referred to, Messrs. Rothschilds had one, Messrs. Coutts and Co. another, and Samuel Rogers, the poet, had the fourth, which, it is said, was framed and hung over his parlour mantelpiece.

But perhaps the greatest curiosity is the note for £1,000 representing the fine imposed on Lord Cochrane for his, erroneously supposed, connection with a fraud for artificially raising the price of the public funds. The note is indorsed as follows:—

“My health having suffered by long and close confinement, and my oppressors having resolved to deprive me of property or life, I submit to Robbery, to protect myself from Murder, in the hope that I shall live to bring the delinquents to justice.

“Grated Chamber, “COCHRANE.
“King’s Bench Prison, 3 July, 1815.”

A singular use was made of a £5 note now in the Bank archives, which bears the following indorsement:—

“If this note gets into the hands of John Dear, of Longhill, near Carlisle, his brother Andrew is a prisoner in Algiers.”

This notification was copied into a Carlisle newspaper, and John Dear thus became aware of the whereabouts of his long-lost brother.

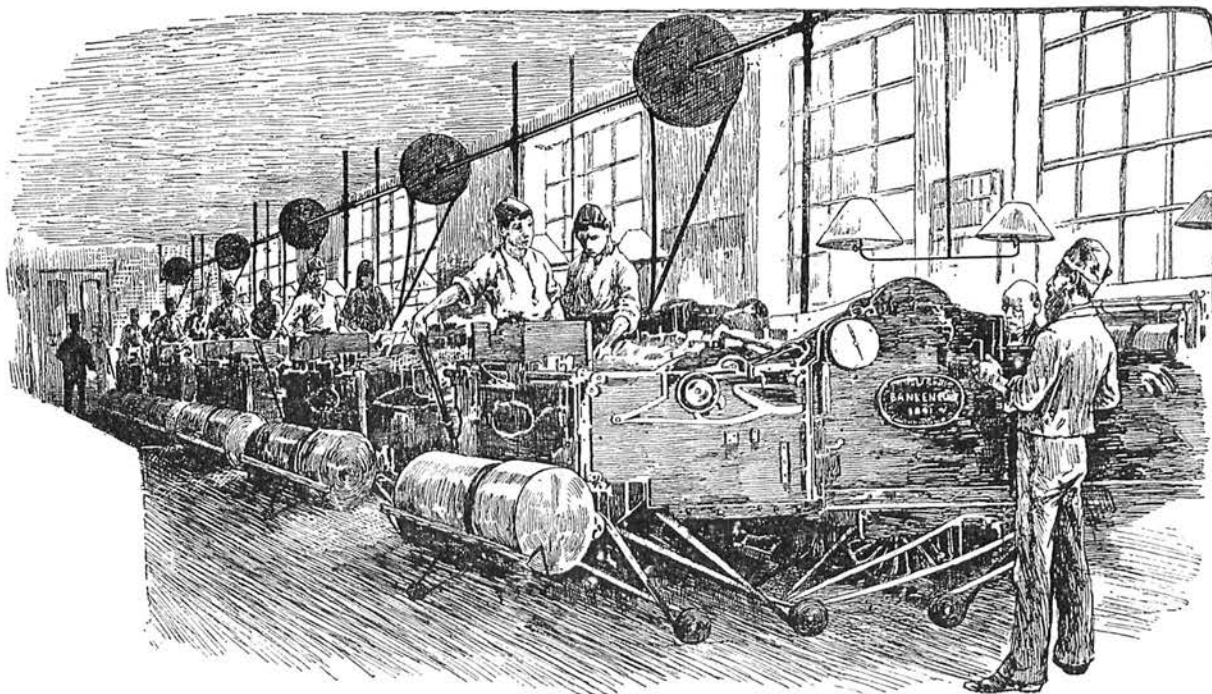
If bank-notes could only speak, what romantic tales of joy and misery they could tell!

A visit to the Bank is extremely interesting, and some information recently gleaned relating to bank-notes is well worth recording.

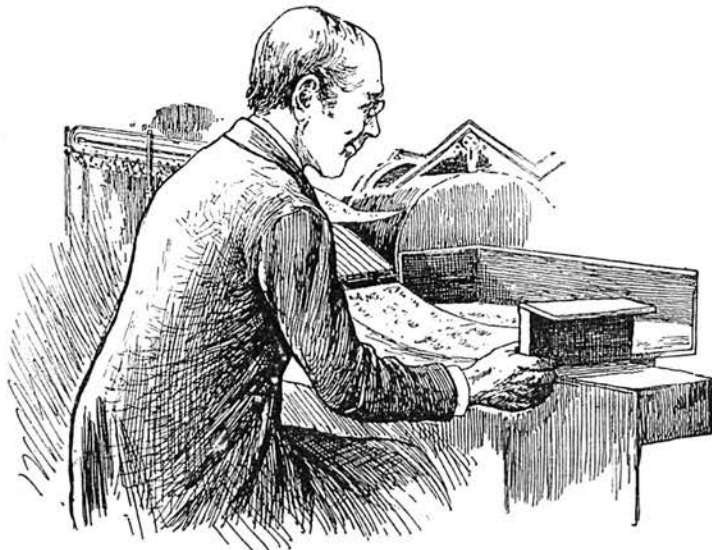
The component parts of a bank-note are the paper, the water-mark, the ink, the engraving, the printing, and the signature. Bank of England note-paper is made by Messrs. Portal, at their mills in Hampshire. The tray on which the pulp is lifted is the size of a pair of notes, and measures 5in. by 16½in. Thus there are, when issued, right-hand and left-hand notes, the inner side of each showing a clean cut edge, and the rest of the edges being rough, or as it is called “deckled.”

The top right-hand corner of a right-hand note looks as if a piece of the paper had been rubbed off, but this is done purposely, to enable the printer to know when the water-mark is right side up. The annual output is 14,000 reams. As recently as the year 1862 some thieves broke into the mills and stole some of the prepared paper, and forged notes were soon in circulation; but it was not long before the whole gang of forgers was caught, the paper recovered, and the thieves transported.

The water-mark is so much an integral part of the note that it was specially protected



PRINTING BANK-NOTES.



COUNTING BANK-NOTES.

by Act of Parliament in 1763, and any attempt to imitate it was made punishable with death—now the punishment is penal servitude.

The ink was formerly made from the charred remains of the skins and stones of Rhenish grapes; now it is made from naphtha smoke, and is remarkable for being absolutely black, hard, and dry. It is noticeable in old bank-notes that the printing in some is much darker than in others. This very objectionable lack of uniformity was due to the practice of printing two notes from one inking—the second impression being necessarily lighter than the first. Now, by a very simple but ingenious contrivance, the inking rollers only take up just enough ink for one impression.

All Bank of England notes are printed in the Bank, where there are six machines constantly at work. The notes are printed in pairs, and come off the machines pressed and dried. The number of notes printed is recorded on dials at the side of

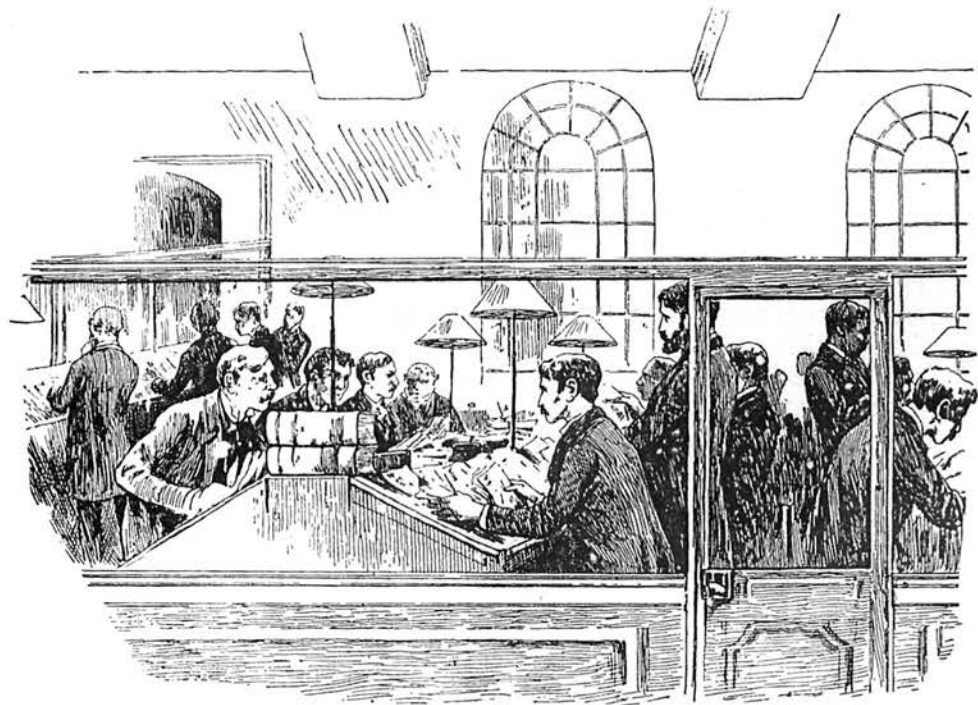
each machine, and, of course, corresponds with the numbers on the notes, as they are automatically delivered to the receiving clerk. It only remains for the twin notes to be cut asunder, and they are ready for issue.

The stock of notes of various values, from £5 to £1,000 each, is kept in iron safes in one large fireproof room, and the average value of the stock is from seventy to eighty million pounds.

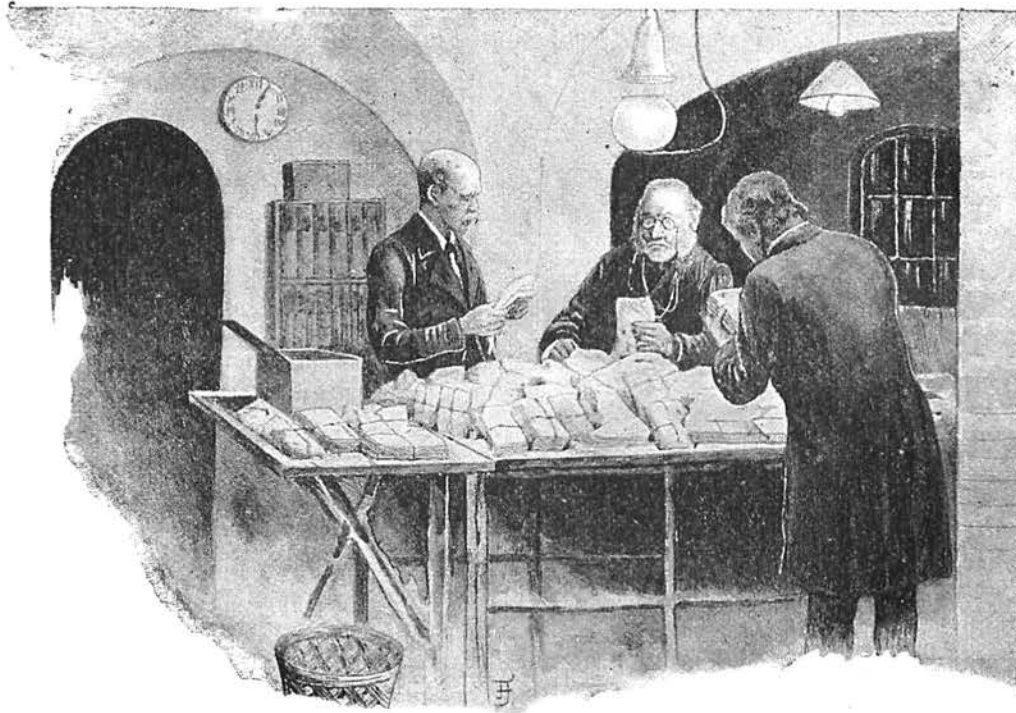
Nearly 50,000 notes of different values are paid into the Bank every day, and are immediately sorted, first into values, then into dates, and then into numbers; and as every note has a place of its own in the Bank registers, its return can

be instantly recorded, and anything unusual relating to it is duly noted there. Forged notes are instinctively detected by the examining clerks. The feel is usually enough.

There are very few forgeries now, but a hundred years ago they were rife. The first recorded instance of the forgery of a Bank of England note has a singular touch of romance about it. The forger was a linen-draper at Stafford, named Vaughan, who, in the year 1758, employed several workmen to engrave different parts of a £20 note, and when a dozen had been printed off he deposited them with a young lady to whom he was engaged to be married as a proof of



SORTING BANK-NOTES.



BANK-NOTES LIBRARY.

under greater precautions, was less often counterfeited. A Parliamentary report showed that in the eight years previous to 1797 there was not one prosecution for forgery of bank-notes, but in the eight years following there were 146 capital convictions. In the year 1817 alone there were thirty-two convictions

his wealth; but the imposition was discovered, and Vaughan was hanged.

"All is fair in love and war," says the proverb, but that would hardly excuse forgery, though used as "an instrument of war"; nevertheless, note forgeries were justified by the judges in the early part of the present century, and when the English found that the French had forged English bank-notes, they retaliated by forging French *assignats*. Anyhow, the number of forgeries was astounding, for between 1801 and 1810 the Bank clerks detected £101,661 worth of forged notes.

One of the cleverest imitations of a bank-note was the work of a poor schoolmaster, who forged an entire note with pen and ink, and, sad to say, was hanged.

John Mathieson, who was convicted for forging the water-mark, offered to show the Directors how it was done if he were pardoned, but they would not withdraw the prosecution.

Singularly enough, forgeries first began to be frequent soon after the introduction of the one-pound note, and in April, 1802, Mr. Addington told the House of Commons that the forgeries had increased so alarmingly that seventy extra clerks were required at the Bank merely to detect them.

In the year 1817 the nominal value of the forged paper presented at the Bank of England was £37,180, and the greater part of this large sum was in one-pound notes. Paper of higher value, which necessarily circulated

for forgery, and ninety-five for possession of forged notes. These prosecutions excited a strong feeling in the public mind against the Bank Directors, which was increased when it was found that the sad sacrifice of human life did not lessen the forgeries. Parliament, the Society of Arts, the Bank Directors, and a host of philanthropists turned their attention to the task of discovering, if possible, a means for preventing forgeries of bank-notes.

The report made in 1819 by the Royal Commissioners stated that 108 schemes had been submitted to them, but that every one of the specimen notes had been successfully imitated by the Bank engravers, and all the schemes were therefore condemned as useless. There were also submitted seventy varieties of bank-note paper, but only a few of the proposed improvements turned out to be practically useful.

The typographic note was a wonderful piece of ingenious industry, comprising as it did over 6,000 letters of diamond type. But the counterfeiting of it was, after all, only a question of money, and the so-called "private marks" were but typographical blunders purposely made, which would soon have been discovered, and, being known and imitated, would then have further facilitated deception. At the time that it was set up, in 1819, Mr. Hansard, the printer, estimated that, with specially made new founts of type, the first note would have cost more than

£15,000, and would have taken twelve months to complete.

The caricature bank-note by George Cruikshank, called "The Bank Restriction Note," speaks for itself. It was considered to be a very keen satire, and it no doubt helped in a small degree to put a stop to hanging for note forging.

Country one-pound notes were not so frequently forged, partly because they were usually more artistic in design, and therefore more difficult to counterfeit; and partly from their having imprinted on the back the revenue stamp in red and black, which was not easily imitated. This tax was first imposed in 1800, and was then only two-pence, but it was increased to threepence in 1805, to fourpence in 1808, and to fivepence in 1815. There is still a tax on Scotch and Irish bank-notes, but, being compounded for, the stamp is not impressed.

But though the Bank lost considerably through forgeries, they recouped themselves in a great measure by the profit accruing on lost or accidentally destroyed notes. One of the earliest cases which raised the question of the liability of the Bank was that of a note which had been eaten by a goat. Thieves, to avoid detection, have often eaten bank-notes, drunken sailors have made sandwiches of them, many are lost by flood and fire, and all to the profit of the Bank. The Directors, however, are

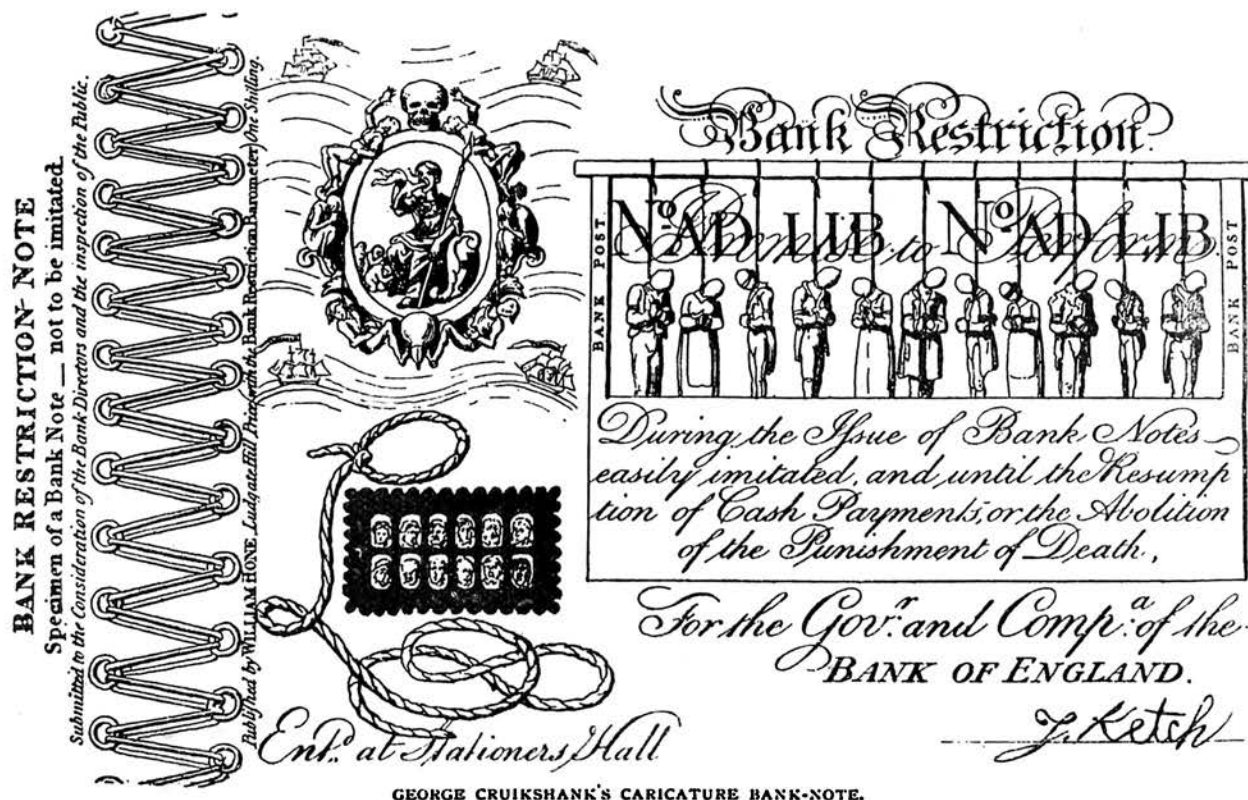
always ready to pay on good evidence of accidental destruction.

There are to be seen at the Bank the remains of a £50 note burned in the big fire at Chicago. The date and number and amount can be traced on the cinder, and that was sufficient for the Bank. A somewhat similar case is that of the Irishman who hid some bank-notes in a box in his back garden, but forgetting the spot, failed to find them for some months, and then when found they were so dilapidated with damp that they had no appearance of bank-notes. The Bank clerks, however, took the remains and deciphered enough printing to enable them to give Pat an equivalent value in new notes.

A mutilated note is paid if the owner gives an indemnity, but if the smallest part be missing an indemnity is always required.

The well-known case of *Gillet v. the Bank of England* demonstrates the risk of carrying bank-notes loose in the pocket. The Bank offered to pay the £1,000 claimed, if the applicants would give a proper indemnity, in case it should turn out that the note had been stolen and not destroyed, but there was too much uncertainty about the disappearance of the note to justify anyone risking an indemnity.

All mutilated notes, and notes for which indemnities have been taken, are permanently preserved; all other notes are



kept five years in the Bank cellars, and then destroyed by burning. In 1881, when the last return was made, the stock of paid notes for five years was about 77,745,000 in number, and they filled 13,400 boxes, which, if placed side by side, would reach $2\frac{1}{3}$ miles; if the notes were placed in a pile, they would reach to a height of $5\frac{2}{3}$ miles; or, if joined end to end, would form a ribbon 12,455 miles long; their superficial extent is rather less than that of Hyde Park; their original value was over £1,750,626,600, and their weight over $90\frac{2}{3}$ tons.

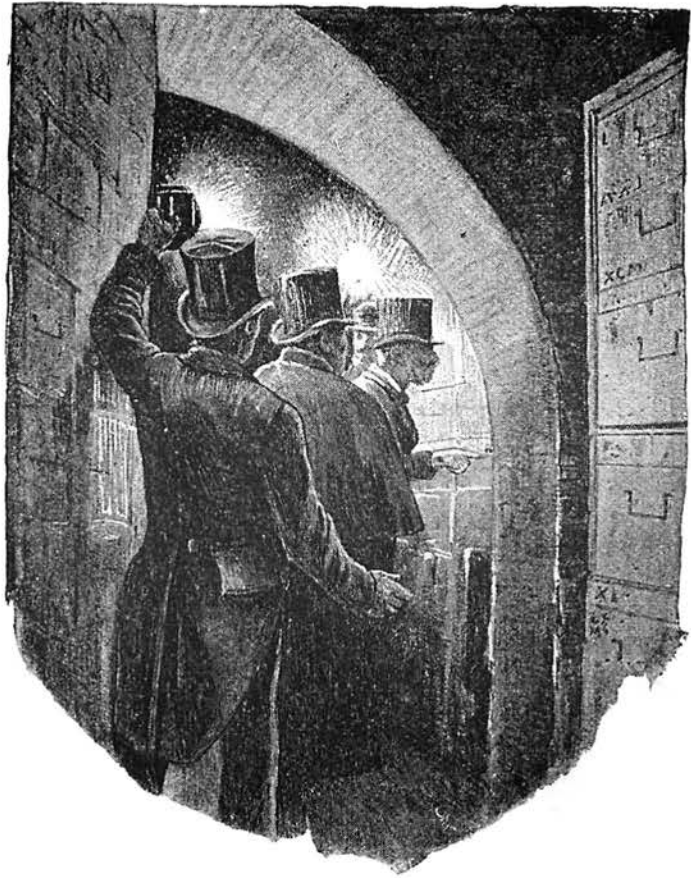
The boxes are all admirably arranged so that any note which is stored in the catacombs can be found in a few minutes.

In these vaults are also stored the registers of the birth, death, and burial of every note.

The first English bank-notes of less value than five pounds were issued by authority of a short Act of Parliament, which had been hastily prepared during a financial crisis, and was passed on the 3rd of March, 1797, to meet the pressing emergencies of the moment. The earliest of the new notes were dated a day before the Act was passed, and it was made retrospective in its operation so as to include them.

It is now penal to imitate a Bank of England note, even in the most innocent way. For example, it has been decided in an action at law that it is unlawful to copy, even in the large mural advertisements, the peculiar engraving of Old English letters in white upon a black ground, which is found on all Bank of England notes. The notes may not be photographed, and microscopic slides, and the well-known miniature toy lenses containing facsimile notes of the size of a pin's head, have been confiscated by the Bank authorities, and the vendors prosecuted. "The Bank of Elegance" notes, at one time so useful to the swell mobsmen, and many similar productions, have all been very properly suppressed.

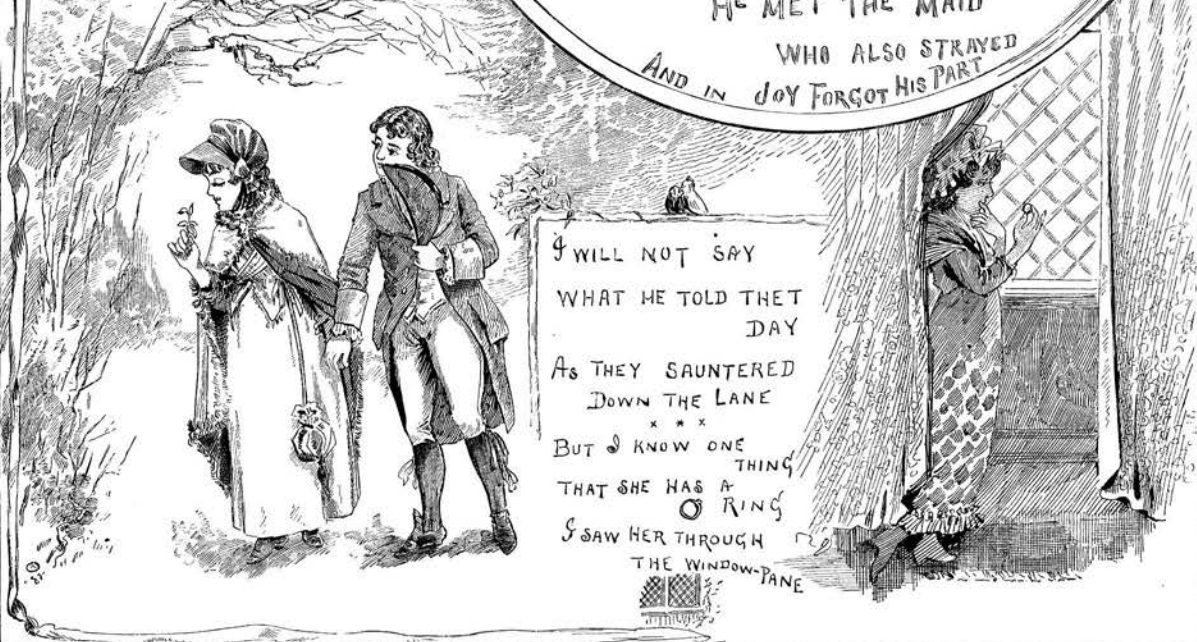
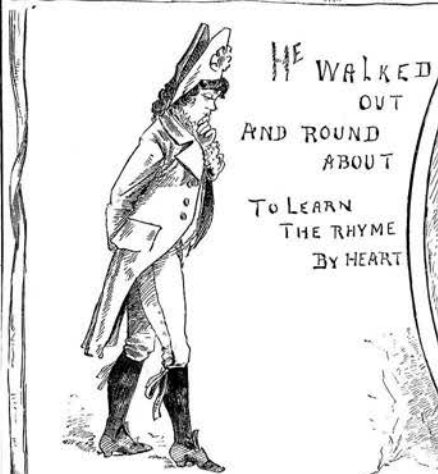
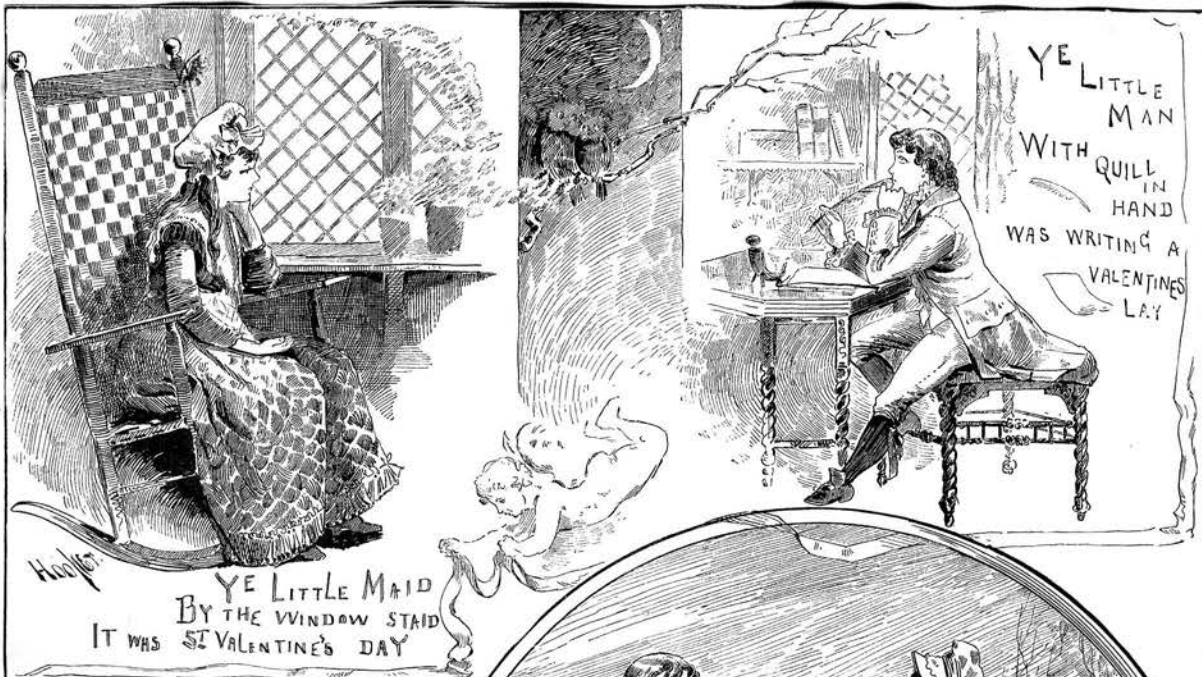
As to the question of durability, it was estimated that one-pound notes were worn out in three years. Now, a sovereign lasts about nineteen years, and is then worth



THE BANK CELLARS.

within a fraction of twenty shillings. A bank-note costs about threepence, which would be a heavy charge on a paper pound if only issued once. The proposal of Sir Henry Bessemer to issue twenty shilling tokens made of aluminium is not likely to commend itself to any Chancellor of the Exchequer, and, besides, it would not be popular.

On the score of portability, of course notes are much preferable to coin, as about 390 of them weigh only 1lb. We have before now heard of a young lady who was "worth her weight in gold," but it has probably only happened once that two sisters were actually worth their weight in paper pounds. A record of eccentric wills, however, tells us that a testator left his two daughters the money equivalent of their weight in one-pound notes. The elder, whose weight was 9st. 2lb., claimed £51,200, and the younger, who weighed a stone heavier, had for her *dot* £57,300. Notes were then a trifle heavier than those now in circulation, about 400 of them weighing 1lb.



From a Victorian Scrap Album, ca. 1890

STORM-BOUND SPARROWS.

BY W. LEWIS FRASER.

IT'S all very well for those who live in the country to speak ill of the English sparrow, and to tell us, as they do, that this saucy little ball of feathers and fluff, with short, hard bill, is, by its pugnacity, driving away the song-birds. I don't wonder that people harbor malice against the little foreigner if the charge be just. But I am not convinced that there is not some prejudice against the stranger on the part of those who make complaint. Of one thing I am sure, and that is that the sparrow does not drive away the brown thrush; for, last spring, two thrushes made their appearance in Union Square, New York, and remained there for a week or ten days; and I am a witness that they were more than a match for the sparrows. Many times, with a dozen or more passers-by, I have halted to watch them. Bankers and brokers, to whom the presence of these country songsters in the very heart of the city was so great a novelty that (forgetting their interest in those creatures so well known to their vocabulary, the "bulls" and "bears") they stood for a long time looking at the birds. They were absorbed in watching these two birds drive their long mandibles into the soft earth where earthworms live. Meanwhile a dozen or two of envious sparrows gathered around gazing with hungry eyes at the tempting morsels, yet without daring to enter the lists with the thrushes, although outnumbering them twelve to one. I am really sorry, if it be true, that the warblers and bobolinks are suffering from the vicious temper of the sparrows; still, being one who lives in the city and sees the country for only a few weeks in the summer, I wish long life to the plucky little strangers from over the seas. The thrush and the bobolink do not come to sing in my orchard, because I have no orchard for their accommodation, but only the ordinary city "yard," some twenty-five feet by twenty. The orioles never swing their nests from some inaccessible twig upon the topmost bough of the elm in my door-yard, because the best substitute I have for an elm-tree is an ugly telegraph-pole, scarred and torn with the stabs of many "climbing-irons" on the boots of the telegraph men.

But my friends the sparrows are a continual delight. They find some little cranny under the

cornice of the house, some angle, perhaps where the water conduit leaves the roof, and begin house-keeping. And how busily they work! Just across the street a wagon stops. It comes from the wholesale butcher's, and is laden with meat in enormous pieces. A good thick layer of straw covers the bottom of the wagon. Down swoops Mr. Sparrow. Here's material for his new home; and up he rises with a straw so long and large that it bears almost the same proportion to his size that a telegraph-pole would to mine. He fights and struggles with it. The weight is too great; he can not raise it high enough. Down drops Mrs. Sparrow, who has been looking on from the front door of the new home under the cornice; but in spite of her good will, she can not help him much, and they have to let it fall. Do you think he has abandoned it? Not at all. He takes a few seconds to rest and picks it up again. Up he goes,—has almost reached his house,—sinks ten or fifteen feet—rises again, five—a gust of wind comes around the corner of the street and tugs away at the loose end of the straw. For a moment Mr. Sparrow holds on, but the odds are too much for him. He is forced to let go, and away floats the straw to the ground, half a block distant. Now it's Mrs. Sparrow's turn,—for there is perfect concord between Mr. and Mrs. Sparrow when the house is to be made or furnished. She pursues the straw, picks it up, and waits a moment. Her feminine instinct teaches her that sometimes a thing can be done by coaxing, when all other methods fail. Winging her flight to the top of the porch, she rests there with her foot on the straw; then she takes another flight,—this time to the cap of a third-floor window. Another rest, another flight, the nest is reached, and a tier is added to their building.

Then for a soft, warm lining, the plastering and papering of their house. Every morning Jane carries out the Eastern rugs from the house, and shakes and beats those wonderful harmonies of color, woven at Bagdad or Ispahan a century or more ago, and perhaps walked on by sandaled feet or touched in prayer by cotton or velvet-covered knees when the *muezzin* called. The sparrows perch expectantly upon the fence, for (cunning little creatures that they are) they know that

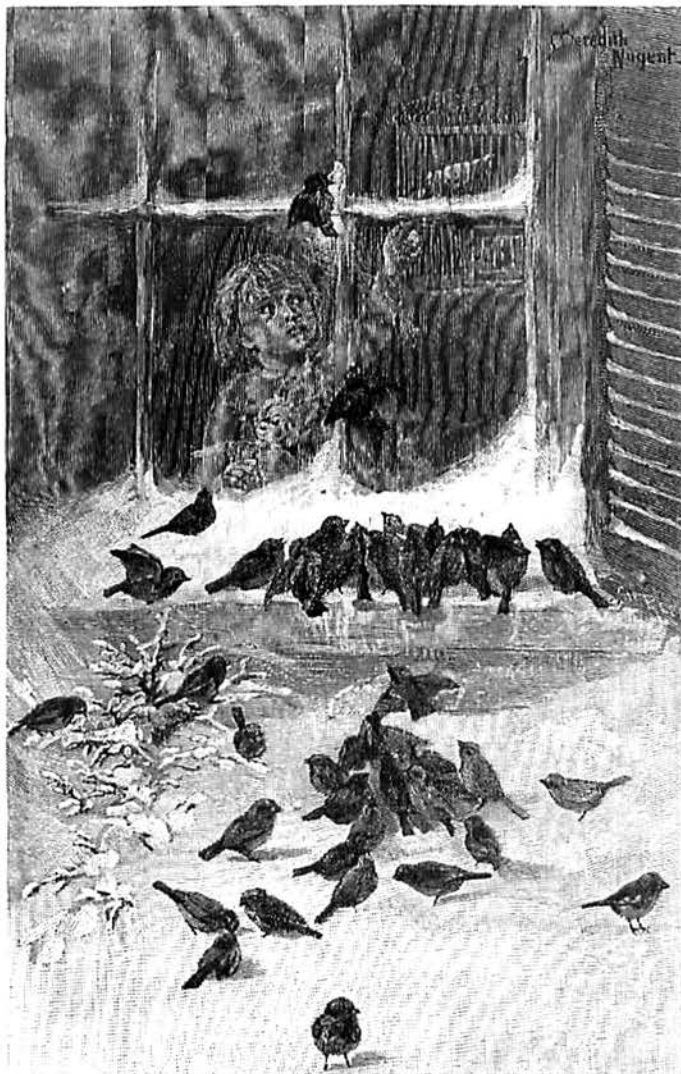
French-heeled slippers and thick-soled boots have the trick of wearing the wool from antique rugs, and that after Jane has taken the rugs into the house there will be downy little flakes of soft red and gold-colored wool—just the things for baby-sparrows to nestle into.

So these birds teach me something. The Bible says that God cares for the sparrows, and tells us we may judge, since he cares for these though their value is so slight that two of them are sold for a farthing, how much more He will care for us, boys and girls, men and women. We are assured, therefore, that little birds are not beyond the care of Providence. But how they have to scurry round and work for a living! They are at work all the time, from the first silver streak in the morning to the dusky mirk which closes a city day. A maid shakes out a table-cloth. Down swoop the sparrows—invisible before, they seem to come by magic. A truckman ties a nose-bag on his horse's nose for the noon meal of oats. The horse in his eagerness shakes the bag about; a few particles of grain fall from it. Presto! a cloud of sparrows are fighting and contending for the yellow tidbits. The ash-cart rattles along the street, and in a lazy, careless, slovenly way (as is his custom) the ash-man spills some of the contents of the barrels. Ah! there are crusts there, and the sparrows are at once at work.

Surely we may learn not to fold our hands believing that we shall be cared for without effort of our own, since these sparrows have been given to us as an illustration of creatures for whom Providence provides.

Brave, plucky, and industrious little fellows! Right under the noses and feet of the horses, between the wheels of the wagons, at the feet of the busy passers-by, in crowded Broadway or in the quiet of the city parks, always seeking a living; never idle, never lazy. Neither is life all sunshine for them. Alas, they too have their ups and downs! When the cold chill rains of autumn come, and when house-tops and telegraph wires glitter with the scintillations of the diamond-like hoar-frost, the tender little feet must be so cold! For our sparrows are not like rich city people. They never go to Florida. Nor are they like the country birds, children of warmth and summer, who migrate when the chill fall comes. The sparrows take "pot-luck" with us all winter, and very bad luck it is, sometimes; as when comes that most unwelcome thing, a snow-storm in New York. When, in the country, the downy flakes sift gently from a gray sky; and when country boys and girls bring

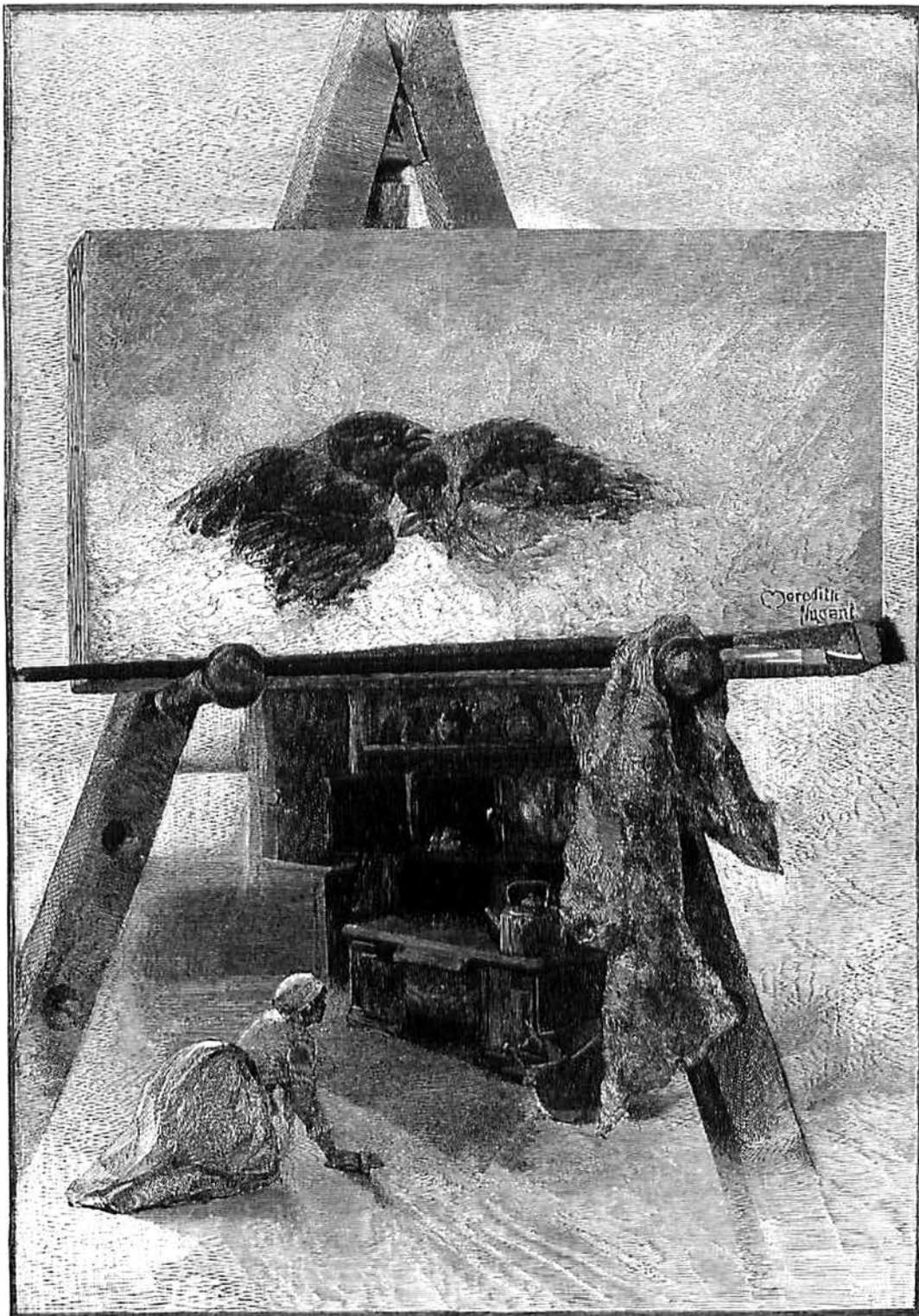
out the sleds or toboggans; and when the farmer thinks that soon he will be able to send teams into the woods, to haul the logs or the cord-wood: then we in the city wonder, when we leave the house for the office, how we shall get home again; whether we shall be able to squeeze into the overcrowded cars. Ah! then the sparrows have a sad time—a sad, cold, hungry time! For the white mantle which covers the earth covers also the cook's



BEGGING FOR BREAKFAST.

crumbs, and the oats, and the waste scraps. Then poor Mr. and Mrs. Sparrow may fly far and search long, and but for the kindness of a few thoughtful people, their little crops will be empty after all. Should the snow last many days, despite their cunning and industry, thousands of the little strangers must die of starvation or of cold.

Last winter, when the city of New York experienced the sensation of a genuine blizzard, when the snow fell in those hard, frozen particles which sting the face like tiny sharp instruments, and when in a few hours drifts had obstructed the

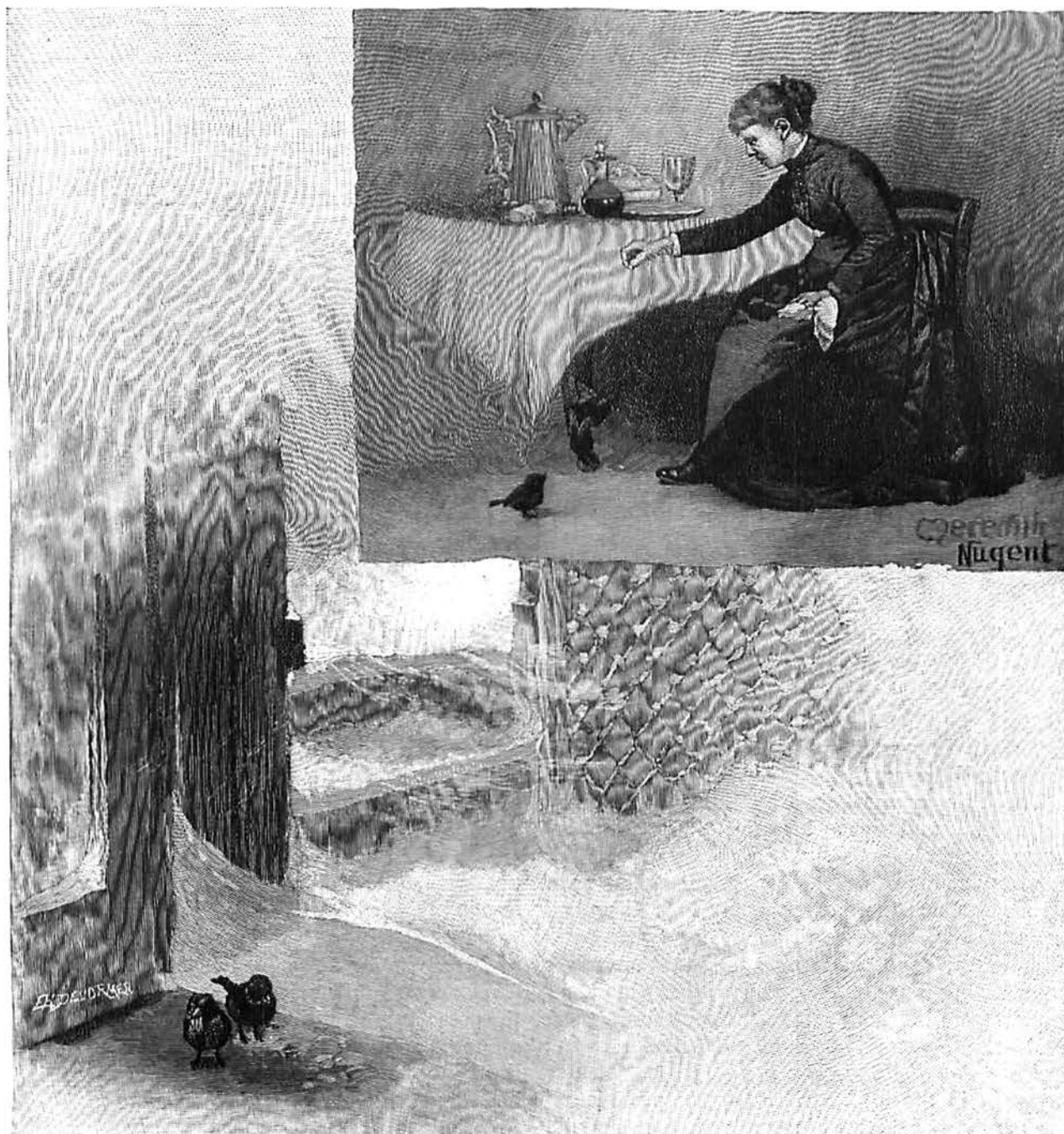


"SUDDENLY AND WITHOUT ANY WARNING, OUT FROM THE OVEN FLEW THE APPARENTLY DEAD BIRD."

streets so that all traffic was at a standstill; when people almost lost their lives traveling but a few blocks; when street-cars were left in the streets and half hidden by the drifts; when at one time it seemed even as if the inhabitants of the great city might be in danger of starving,—the blizzard having blockaded all railroads and ferries, so that no provisions could arrive,—what became

of the sparrows? Thousands and thousands perished; and after the snow had thawed, their poor little frozen bodies were collected by bushels in the parks and squares.

On the second day of the blizzard, when the drifts before our house were so high that from the sidewalk it was impossible to see even the hat of a passer-by across the street, the boy



DRIVEN IN BY THE BLIZZARD.

from the grocery, who had come to our rescue with milk and eggs and other necessaries, rang the bell. When Maria, our kitchen-maid, opened the basement door, she saw two sparrows huddled together in a corner under the stoop where they had taken refuge from the storm. Their feathers were sticking from their little bodies almost at right angles. Their heads were buried deep in their feathers, their eyes were closed, and their bodies had the swaying movement of a tipsy man. The coming of the boy had not frightened nor disturbed them; but when the warm air which rushed through the open doorway reached them they opened their eyes and lifted their heads and

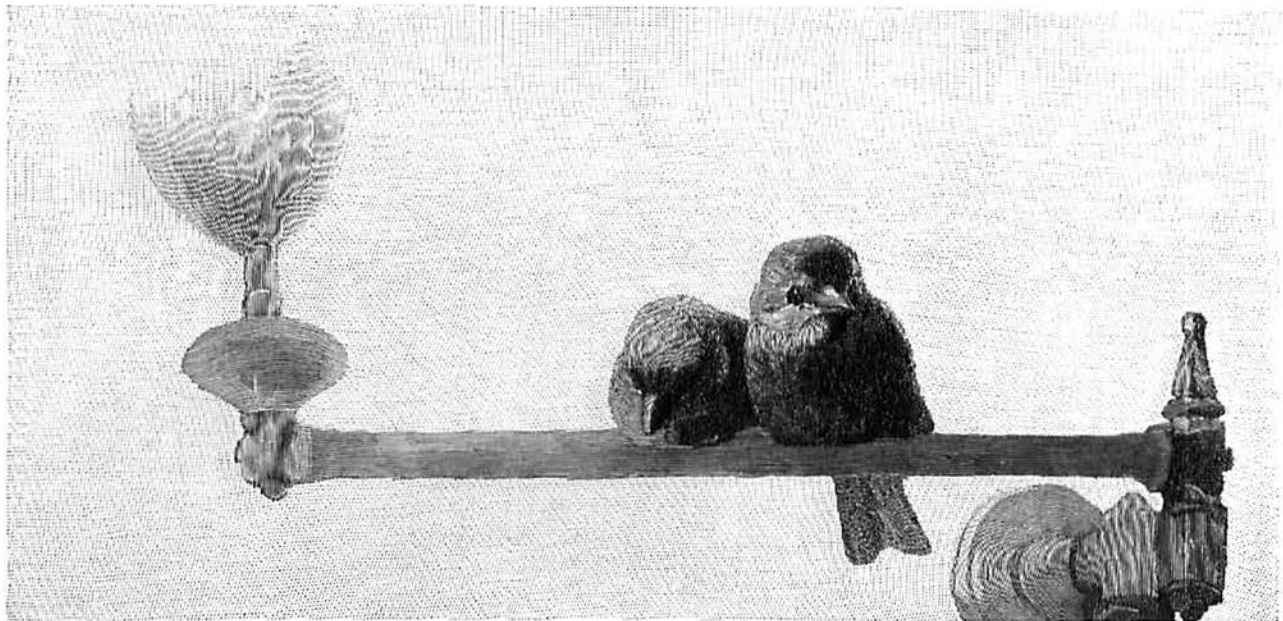
seemed to look in an inquiring way, as if wondering what had happened, and whether summer had come again. Maria's heart was touched — she also is from across the sea, and perhaps a fellow-feeling made her kind. However that may be, she was in no hurry to close the door, despite the bitter cold.

“Well, well,” said Maria, “poor little birdies, I wonder if you are hungry. You're very cold; I'll go and get you something to eat.”

Now, I don't think the birds understood what she said, but there was that in her voice which they comprehended; for one of them fluttered his wings, shook himself together, and without wait-

ing for an invitation, or even saying "by your leave," hopped past Maria and into the passageway. His mate seemed for a moment astonished at this boldness, and then seeing that no harm had befallen the intruder, followed.

dows, alight on the cross-bars of the sashes, and twitter to each other,—perhaps conversing about the severe weather and pitying such of their kind as had not had the good fortune to reach the semi-tropical warmth of a furnace-heated house. But



A WARM PERCH.

"Well, I never!" said Maria, and closing the door she followed them.

The birds hopped about the dark hall two or three times and thence into the dining-room, attracted probably by the light, or by the faint odor of good things to eat, which always hangs about such a room. Once there, they acted as if they had come to stay, and hopped about and twittered to each other, doubtless congratulating themselves upon having found comfortable quarters, and ungratefully cast a silent reproach upon the neatness of Maria, by pecking crumbs from the carpet beneath the table. When meal-time came, they were not in the least put out by the presence of the family, nor disturbed; but went hopping and chirping around the table and under it, picking up crumbs dropped as the reapers dropped the wheat for Ruth. When night fell they took up their quarters lovingly side by side on the gas-bracket and, warm and well fed, prepared for a quiet night's rest. When the gas was lighted they did exhibit some agitation—evidenced by their flying once or twice around the room, but they seemed to find it an agreeable surprise when another meal was served. By that hour they were so tame that they dared even to feast from the fingers of the people seated around the table.

They remained with us three days, during which time they never once made an attempt to leave the room, but would occasionally fly to the win-

on the fourth day, when the sidewalks had been shoveled clear, and huge bonfires were lighted in the snow-drifts to melt them,—when carts and wagons and street-cars were moving,—their instincts told them that it was again safe to venture forth, and the desire for liberty once more awoke in their breasts. For Mr. Sparrow is a true vagrant. They did not remember the way they had come in, for although the basement-door was often opened, they made no attempt to fly through the passage and out-of-doors, but circled and circled around the room and dashed themselves against the windows, having evidently quite lost their heads. When at last a window was opened, out they flew, without so much as twittering a good-bye or a "thank you" to Maria.

Our next-door neighbors were a young couple who had one child, a girl, one of the sweetest and dearest little tots whose loving ways ever won the susceptible heart of an Irish nurse. Of course she was the pet, not of the nurse only, but of the housemaid and the cook also,—in fact, of the whole household. On the same day that our unbidden guests left us in their ill-mannered fashion, Annie, our neighbor's housemaid, on going into the yard, saw lying on a spot from which the snow had thawed, the wet, stiff body of a sparrow. There it lay on its back in a pool of water, with eyes closed and legs cramped to its body, hard, stark, and cold. "Poor thing," thought Annie,

"I must bring you in and show you to Missy Ruby." Suiting the action to the word, she picked up the dead bird and carried it into the kitchen. But it was wet and cold, and in that condition not fit for Princess Ruby's fingers. "Sure it will dry if I put it into the oven for a few minutes, and when Mary, the nurse, comes down it will be nice and warrum," said Annie to Jane the cook.

"Do you think the mistress will let Missy Ruby touch a dead bird?" responded the cook.

"And why not?"

"Oh, because it's horrid — a cold, dead thing."

"But it won't be cold, sure; and it may please the little Missy."

"Well, we'll just see what Mary says."

So the bird was put in the oven of the range and the door left ajar. The cook and the housemaid resumed their work, the one preparing the lunch, the other on her knees scrubbing the floor. Some moments passed thus, when, lo! suddenly and without any warning, out from the oven flew the apparently dead bird, brought back to life by the warmth.

"The Saints defend us!" exclaimed Annie, as the bird flew past her and dashed at the window-panes. "Quick, open the door, cook, and a good riddance to it! Faith, when a dead bird flies it means no good luck to anybody!"

THINGS IN SEASON, IN MARKET AND KITCHEN.

FEBRUARY.

By LA MÉNAGÈRE.

IT might seem a superfluity to be at the trouble of compiling and writing a menu for the small home dinner-table. If anyone thinks this, let them first give the experiment a trial before pronouncing upon it; they will, I venture to think, be gratified by the result.

In every household the dinner, be it early or late, is the important meal of the day, and it merits whatever dignity can be given to it by such accessories as service, care in laying the table, decoration, etc., and not the least of these will be found the menu written for every day. Especially if there be a guest at table is this little mark of attention appreciated.

We must remember that imagination plays a very important part in the human organisation; a good name goes a long way towards bringing a dish into favour, and I have found that the very fact of a name being given to a dish has its influence with the cook, who feels in a way bound to see that its character is "lived up to." Then again it is a help to the caterer if the menus are kept, and those which have been particularly liked marked for future repetition. Much racking of brains is spared, and precious minutes are saved that else would have been spent in answering the puzzling question, "What shall we have for dinner to-day?"

Our market list in February varies little if at all from the previous month in the main things, but as the game season is practically drawing to an end, we find our resources fewer than they were. Guinea-fowl however are excellent, so are woodcock and snipe, also ptarmigan. Turkeys are still to be had, but they are very dear, as all poultry is. Hares and rabbits are very good.

Our supply of vegetables will be apt to run short if the weather is at all severe; savoy will not have suffered so much, and about this time we usually receive large consignments of cauliflowers from Italy. The South sends us also fresh lettuce, chicory, forced beans, and other "primeurs," but their price is often beyond what a slender purse can afford. Anyone with a garden may at this time have corn-salad growing therein, which will be getting tender and eatable. Celery should still be good, and we ought to have an abundance of Jerusalem artichokes, Swede turnips, parsnips, carrots, onions and suchlike root vegetables.

In fruits we have imported apples and pears, oranges — getting to their best — lemons, citrons, and all dried fruits.

This month, by the way, is the time for making our yearly supply of orange marmalade; if we delay any longer the true Seville oranges will be gone, although bitter oranges are procurable up to April. After we have studied our menu we will consider the subject of marmalade making, for that toothsome sweet has now become one of our necessities of life.

MENU FOR FEBRUARY.

Purée of Haricot Beans.

Fried Smelts.

Boiled Beef, with a "Plat de Carottes."

Roast Ptarmigan. Bread Sauce.

Apple Fritters.

Cheese. Biscuits. Coffee.

Purée of Haricot Beans.—A pint of beans will make a large quantity, say two quarts, of soup, therefore half-a-pint would suffice for one dish of soup for an ordinary family. These beans should always be soaked overnight in cold water; they will dissolve so much more readily. Place them in a stewpan with rather more than sufficient water to cover them, let them simmer for three hours, then rub through a tamis. While the rubbing goes on, cook a finely-minced onion in a little butter, add the bean purée to this, some salt and pepper, and then sufficient hot milk and water to make up the requisite quantity. This might simmer a while longer, and then just before serving a spoonful of cornflour wet with a little milk should be stirred in, and all brought up to the boiling point once more.

Smelts should be wiped with a clean cloth, coated with beaten egg, rolled in bread raspings, and fried in butter. Serve fresh lemon cut in slices and thin brown bread and butter with them.

A dish of carrots for eating with boiled beef is nice done in the Flemish mode:

Pare the carrots and cut them in strips lengthwise, and then cut them up precisely as you would kidney beans; put them in a stewpan with well-fitting lid, add to them a good spoonful of beef dripping and a little pepper and salt. Cover closely and let them

cook in their own steam for an hour or more, seeing that they do not catch on the bottom. Pour the fat off and add a few drops of vinegar just before dishing up.

Ptarmigan are rather dry birds and they require a thin piece of bacon wrapping round them before roasting, also to be frequently basted. Let them do rather quickly, so as to be nicely browned, but they will take rather less than an hour. Serve good gravy and bread sauce with them.

Apple Fritters.—For frying these a good depth of boiling lard is necessary if they are to be done successfully. Take the cores out of large apples, and pare them thinly. Cut across in slices not too thin. Dip each slice in batter made from the whisked whites of two eggs, a spoonful of flour, a pinch of salt, and enough salad oil to make it like thick cream. When fried drain each ring on kitchen paper and sprinkle with castor sugar. Pile high on a paper doyley.

And now as to the directions for the making of orange marmalade. The following plan is one I have pursued for several years and it has always produced excellent marmalade:

To every twelve Seville oranges allow two lemons; slice them across, rind and pulp, as thinly as ever it is possible to do with the sharpest of knives. Pick out the pips as you go along, but put these in a basin instead of throwing them away, for it is surprising what amount of gluten clings to the pips, which is lost if they are not saved. When all the fruit has been cut up into lined earthenware pans, cover it with water until the vessels have as much as they will hold. Set these aside out of the way of dust, and let them stand so for twenty-four hours. After this boil fruit and water together for perhaps two hours, but gently so that it does not burn; then turn it back again into the vessels and let it stand for another twenty-four hours. After this it should be stirred up and weighed, and to every pound of fruit and liquor allow a pound of lump sugar; when the pulp has boiled for about an hour the second time, the sugar may be put in, and then constant stirring will be necessary and faster boiling. From the time the sugar is added half-an-hour's boiling ought to suffice. Put it into hot jars, but do not tie down until it is cold.

VALENTINES.

By ARDERN HOLT.

THERE are more ways of making valentines than by a happy combination of hearts and darts, embossed paper, pretty lines, and pretty pictures; the term applies alike to people. Lydgate, the poet of Bury, has bequeathed to us a memorable valentine in verse, written in 1440, to Katherine, wife of Henry V., wherein he points to a prevalent mode in early days of making valentines—viz., by casting lots:—

“ Saint Valentine, of custom year by year
Men have an usance, in this region,
To look and search Cupid’s calandere,
And choose their choice by great affection;
Such as be prick’d with Cupid’s motion
Taking their choice as their lot doth fall,
But I love one which excelleth all.”

It is said to have originated in the ceremonials attached to the celebration of the Roman Lupercalia, when the names of young women were put into a box, whence they were drawn by men, as chance directed.

The pastors of the early English Church, opposed to Pagan superstition, substituted the names of saints for those of women, and chose St. Valentine’s Day for the feast, as it occurred about the same time. At all events, this is one of many ways in which it is attempted to explain how a martyred bishop, who suffered at Rome about 362, came to be the special patron of lovers and love missives. But, two saints named Valentine are on record, the other a Christian priest, martyred in the reign of Claudius Gothicus, A.D. 270.

As time went on, ladies also chose their knights for the year, during the carnival, by lot, and though a valentine was not necessarily an affianced lover, that any individual was so chosen was considered a good omen of a future marriage.

Pepys, in his quaint, selfish diary, shows how the plan of drawing for valentines held good

in his day. On February 14, 1667, he writes:—“I find that Mrs. Pierce’s little girl is my valentine, she having drawn me, which I was not sorry for, it easing me of something more that I must have given to others. But here I do first observe the drawing of mottos as well as names; so that Pierce, who drew my wife, did draw also a motto, and this girl drew another for me. What mine was I forget, but my wife’s was ‘Most courteous and most fair.’”

Like John Gilpin, you see, the diarist, when on pleasure bent had still a frugal mind, as is further proved by another entry of the same date. “This morning came up to my wife’s bedside, I being up dressing myself, little Will Mercer to be her valentine, and brought her name writ upon blue paper in gold letters done by himself, very pretty; and we were both well pleased with it. But I am also this year my wife’s valentine, and it will cost me £5, but that I must have laid out if we had not been valentines.”

In Scotland the young men still write the names of their sweethearts and throw them in a bag, the one drawn by each being considered their special valentine for a year. The fair sex beyond the Tweed decide the question of valentines in other fashions. With a bay leaf at each corner of the bed, and another on their breast, they hope he will appear in their dreams, and to make the test more sure they boil an egg hard, fill it with salt, and eat it, shell and all, as they go to bed, without speaking or drinking afterwards before they fall asleep. Scott, in the “Fair Maid of Perth,” dwells with some length on the making of valentines, when the valentines of the year were not only permitted but enjoined to begin their connection with a kiss of affection—a permission of which his heroine, Catherine Glover, is seen to take advantage.

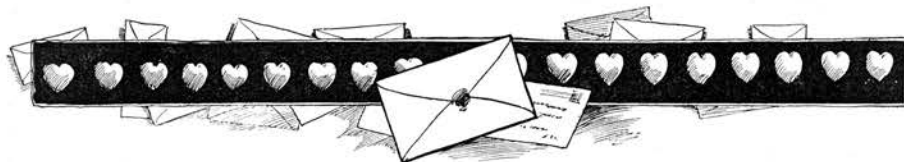
The first recorded maker of poetical valentines was the ill-fated troubadour, Prince Charles of Orleans, grandson of Charles V., father of Louis XII., who was a prisoner in the Tower of London for twenty-five years. These are preserved in the Royal Book of Verse in the British Museum; gracious and graceful lines worthy of this most romantic of historic personages.

An Elizabethan valentine, date 1583, breathes much delicate tenderness. It begins by showing how waking, slumbering, praying, singing, and throughout the duties of life, one idea pervades the writer’s mind—

“ In short, one only wish I have,
To live for thee!
Or gladly if one pang ’t would save,
I’d die for thee!”

Modern poetry has not improved greatly on this, even in the now famous valentine which Macaulay addressed to the late Countess of Beauchamp when only seven years old. It has been recently republished in the memoirs of the poet and historian, but is too lengthy to give here.

In course of time the term “valentine” came to be more generally applied to the missive sent than to the sender or recipient. The poetical legends were returned and were accompanied often by gifts. In Norfolk now, as for generations past, valentines are presents and presents solely. The plan held good elsewhere in the seventeenth century. For we read, “The Duke of York being once Mrs. Stuart’s valentine, did give her a jewel of about £800, and my Lord Mandeville, her valentine this year, a ring of about £300.” Pepys gossips on, “This evening my wife did with great pleasure show me her stock of jewels, increased by the ring she hath made



lately as my valentine gift this year, a Turkey stone set with diamonds. With this and what she had, she reckons that she hath above £150 worth of jewels, of one kind or other, and I am glad of it, for it is fit the wretch should have something to content herself with.”

In Norwich the gifts are presented on the eve of the saint’s day, when they are placed on the doorstep, the giver running off as soon as he has rung. The children of that fine old cathedral city have as great a belief in the bishop and his sack of toys as in St. Nicholas, Santa Claus, and any other beneficent personage of that ilk. Weeks before the 14th February the local papers team with advertisements of valentines for the young and old, rich and poor, from £100 to a halfpenny. But the real worshippers at the saint’s shrine are the toy shops. What rocking-horses, bows, fishing-rods are prepared for leaving mysteriously on the eve of St. Valentine, when the little ones believe the bishop makes his rounds, his lawn sleeves stuffed with sweets. It is absolutely forbidden that the sender should put his name on the gift or in any way discover himself.

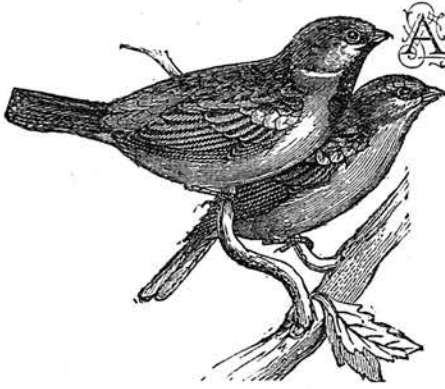
For the last six months in England nimble fingers have been busy preparing valentines.

As long ago as the early autumn, artists were reproducing æsthetic maidens and other glimpses of feminine loveliness borrowed from classic sources or from our progenitors, and a wealth of flowers in harmony with the first glimpse of spring. They please the eye and the educated taste, but few realise the time, thought, and trouble expended on them. Not only each colour, but each shade of colour, requires separate printing. When this is completed the pictures are rolled, pressed, and cut with one chop of the huge knife to the size required. Machinery, of course, plays an important part in the manufacture; much manual labour is also needed, and this mostly falls to women. Men carry out the steel-die embossing; each flower so embossed requiring a distinct die, which placed in the press, with the flowers beneath it, gives buds and petals in relief, like paper stamping. The fine paper lace-work that surrounds so many valentines is produced by means of steel dies of the most elaborate description.

A room full of girls, with a good supply of these figures, flowers, hearts, darts, lace paper, crape tubing, wadding, scent, powder, and small gifts, will make up in a few hours a large selection of sachets and valentines, their deftness and delicacy of touch being of much

value in the work. A bottle of gum arabic and a brush appear to be all the tools required. The worker sits with the several boxes before her, and, with a mere touch of the gum brush and the firm nervous fingers, produces the desired combinations. Brazilian feather flowers, hand-painted silk, cashmere, and other woollen materials interwoven with gold thread, are all employed for sachets, and the Cape silver leaves, placed so as to form a lozenge-shaped frame to a bunch of hand-painted flowers, enclose “constancy,” “affection,” “sincerity,” and words of similar import. Personal ornaments in spa wood, gold, and silver; fans, lace ties, artificial bouquets, bows, and other gifts repose in the centre of the satin cushions. The foundation is a sheet of lace-edged paper, a circle of white wadding in the centre, with a spoonful of scented powder; over this again a piece of satin just gummed at the edge, then another lace-edged frame. Occasionally paper springs, folded at each corner, enable the upper framework to be raised as desired.

I will not attempt to give any of the many lines with which Cupid declares himself; possibly on Valentine’s Day you will be able to supply them for yourselves, when the post-man comes.



COUNTRY walk, if people learn to despise wet feet, has its own charms in this as in every month. Nor is the landscape altogether unlovely. Every here and there a faint tinge of white and green colours bush

or brake, while the celandine or the Lent lily blazes under its shelter, to say nothing of the kindling fires of the gorse which edge the sandy lane, or light up the waste corners of fields. The butter-bur is another flower of the month, which may be found along most brooks; while from overhead the songs of lark and thrush fall upon the ear as pleasant preludes of spring. Many complain that there is nothing worth looking at in the district where their lot is cast, when the fault is their own. They will not previously prepare themselves for observing nature, and the eye only sees that which it is trained to see. Every country house, and every one fond of natural history, ought to possess some of the admirable standard works on English birds, beasts, fishes, and plants, which can now be so easily procured. Then a man both knows what to look for and can recognise it when found. Indeed, it is surprising what prizes occasionally come before the notice of those who learn to observe. Thus a friend had the good fortune, when one day rambling in Kent, to find the only recorded British nest of the American cuckoo. It contained four eggs, three of which were accidentally broken. A little further on he lighted upon a nest of the larger shrike, with young birds in it. Its discovery enabled him to confirm a fact stated in the books, but concerning which considerable doubt has existed, for every thorn near it bore the dead bodies of flies, spiders, worms, &c., like a larder carefully stocked by the old birds for their progeny. Still continuing his walk, it was his privilege to behold one of the rarest of British birds, the bee-eater, sitting in its splendid plumage on a rail between two fly-catchers.

Wood-pigeons are now very destructive to winter greens, and sometimes a capital dish may be taken from their crops after shooting them, as they only swallow the tenderest shoots. These birds have increased largely of late years, and the system of gun licences operates greatly in their favour. In severe winter they do much harm to the farmer's turnips; indeed, their flesh then becomes so rank as to be almost uneatable. It is extremely difficult to approach them, but the gunners keep a decoy bird for the purpose, which is tethered in a turnip-field, while its owner lies in wait with his gun. In this manner numbers

are often shot. The wood-pigeon is very long-lived. One of these men informs us he has kept one such decoy bird for eleven years, while he has known of a friend possessing another for nineteen years, which then escaped to the woods. The murmuring of the "aërial wood-pigeons" (as Virgil beautifully calls them) is one of the most peaceful associations of the country. Year by year a magpie tenants an old nest in our garden, and gets off her young, when the vacant nest is immediately taken possession of by a pair of wood-pigeons. During the breeding season, by extending a little protection to them, they become very tame, and greatly enhance the charms of home. In January, 1869, on a neighbouring farm, three acres of cabbages were utterly destroyed by wood-pigeons, nothing but the mid-ribs and largest side-ribs of the leaves being left. In severe weather field-fares and larks are often compelled to follow their example. In February, 1870, a field of swede turnips was thus attacked. Curiously enough, it was found on shooting some of them that the field-fares confined their attention to the pulp of the swedes, while in the case of three larks which were examined their crops were filled with the green leaves, and a few small stones.

Early in the month the starling's spring note may be heard, though they do not pair until March, when their low love-tweeting is inexpressibly pleasant after the silence of most birds during winter. Then too they may be noticed huddling together by threes or fours, like love-birds, in a very comical manner. The starling was Waterton's favourite bird, just as the swallow family is for ever associated with Gilbert White. It is an indefatigable insect-hunter, and always seems too busy to condescend to any kind of frivolity. We once saw a pair of them feeding a young brood on the lawn. The latter would not look for anything for themselves, and victimised their parents in a most amusing way, depriving them of every dainty which they found. Although one of our most harmless and useful birds, and one to be especially encouraged by farmers, many starlings are annually shot in Lincolnshire, under an ignorant belief that they drive pigeons out of their cotes. During this month they fly in companies, which are sometimes of vast size, occasionally darkening the air like a cloud. Thus in 1865 one such flock was seen on the Grimsby coast, which was estimated to contain 18,000 starlings. Many of these birds would be immigrants, spending the winter here, and returning to the Continent with mild weather. A little flock of thirty or forty birds is no uncommon sight on our lawn upon a February morning, and their proceedings inculcate in a very practical way the lesson of ceaseless activity.

Some other sights and sounds in the country afford unerring foretastes of spring during this month. About the second week the sorrowful spring note of the golden plover may be heard in their haunts on the open meadows, and by the first week of March they

have commenced moulting and changing their winter dress. This transformation is very remarkable. The golden yellow of the winter months disappears, and the bird is clad in deep black plumage on its breast, so that an uninitiated eye might regard it during summer as a different species. The gulls (which are now very numerous on ploughed land, especially the herring gulls) show wonderful diversities of plumage at different seasons, and when young or in maturity. A man must have made some progress in ornithology to be able to distinguish these variations. In rough weather on the open seaboard of the northern counties, flocks of the snow-bunting, often containing thousands of these pretty little birds, may be seen. They are locally known as "Norway sparrows." But the characteristic black and white plumage of the male bird is seldom seen in these flocks, as they leave before it is fully attained. The green plover (or lapwing) also occurs in such localities at this time in enormous flocks. Of one such flock, seen in 1873, it was calculated, by counting up to 100, and taking the rest in sections, that it contained about 4,000 birds.

A walk in an inland county during this month may lead, in cold weather, to our flushing from any secluded pond a couple of that pretty and diminutive duck, the teal. Like most of its congeners, when wounded it endeavours to escape by diving. A friend shot one, which fell into a muddy ditch. He was surprised, on walking up, to find no trace of the bird. So certain, however, was he of the spot, that he stirred up the bottom with his ramrod, when the winged bird emerged, and was captured. True to its instincts, when the water was too shallow to admit of diving, it had tried to conceal itself in the mud. Game birds are now pairing, and thinking of the great work of the year. As we pass the tufts of brown fern in one of these pleasant woods, the birds are so tame that they scarcely deign to hurry off into the thicket; and on raising the ruddy fronds with a walking-stick, a fine pheasant, with maybe a well-marked white ring round its neck, merely hops a couple of yards further in, so confiding has it become with the 1st of February.

As a natural consequence of February weather, the statistics of rain-fall and the state of the glass are eagerly studied in every country house. Indeed, February is a charming month for those whose hobby is the rain-gauge; and the manner in which an old gentleman fond of meteorology rubs his hands and chuckles, as he stands at a window watching the steady rain-fall which is so depressing to younger men, is very provoking. A man with such a hobby is often as great a nuisance to a household as is he who prides himself on early rising. Yet the rain-measurer may tell us something worth knowing of our apparently capricious climate—as, for instance, that the driest part of England is the West Riding of Yorkshire. On descending the coast, the rain-fall slightly but regularly rises. Travelling westward, especially on the coast, it is copious, attaining, as might be expected, a high figure in Cornwall. In Wales it is higher still, and is enormous at the Lakes—150 or 160 inches per annum, compared with 27·46, the average

of North Lincolnshire in seven years up to 1872. On the west coast of Scotland, and especially in the Hebrides, the natives must always live in a Scotch mist through winter. A careful observer even in such a climate as this can always find beauty, of a faint and shadowy kind it is true, by watching the winter landscape lose its sharp outlines as the mist-wreaths drift over it. In one of his finest poems, Collins notices this:—

"Be mine the hut,
That from the mountain's side
Views wilds, and swelling floods,
And hamlets brown, and dim-discovered spires;
And hears their simple bell, and marks o'er all
Eve's dewy fingers draw
The gradual dusky veil."

While the beauty of snow, whether obliterating all the season's ravages amongst the flower-garden, or when lying in gracefully heaped drifts sparkling in the noon-tide sun, need hardly be mentioned. Such pleasures as these are some compensation to the dweller in the country for the social life and intellectual activity of the city, and demand a carefully cultivated taste, an artistic power of perception, and a contented disposition, if they are to be enjoyed to the full.

Amongst the blossoms of February, should be noticed the retiring blue petals of the germander and Buxbaum's speedwell; towards the end of the month, marsh marigolds blaze under the alders by the stream, which are themselves covered with catkins. The "boatman" and "whirligig" beetles now begin their skating season on the streams which these trees overhang. The yellow avens, and especially the primrose, will be seen in their usual localities, towards the end of the month unfolding their flowers. In the garden the apricot will be in full blossom, and the gooseberries putting out perceptibly green buds. Altogether, the month is the precursor of spring, and natural phenomena are in a transitional state. From the elder and hawthorn bushes, which are also breaking into buds, may be heard the spring notes of the tits—the greater, blue, and cole tits—and very diligently do these little birds explore the drooping foliage of the spruce fir, as they cheer each other with their good news of more genial weather.

Garden operations this month are necessarily dependent upon the weather. All creepers on walls must now be neatly pruned and tied in. Lawns must be rolled and mown, and new edgings of box, daisies, &c., may be planted. This is the last opportunity for transplanting trees and shrubs. Ranunculuses are to be planted, choosing mild weather and a rich loamy soil, five inches apart. In the kitchen-garden, raspberries must be pruned and tied, and the crowns of rhubarb plants well mulched and sheltered with boxes or the like, in order to obtain an early crop. Beans, peas, carrots, turnips, and lettuces are to be sown also for early crops. Salading must be attended to, and towards the end of the month early potatoes may be planted, but they must first have been well sprouted in a warm dark room. Such tubers come up much earlier and stronger than those put in without this preliminary attention.

M. G. WATKINS.



WINTER

— ♦ —

LIKE a blushing maiden
Nature hides her face,
But by what she loses
Gains an added grace.
While the snowflakes thickly
Flutter through the gloom,
Let the dancing fire flames
Cheer our cosy room.
And though it be winter
We'll not think of sorrow,
For from friendship's hearthstone
Summer warmth we'll borrow.

FRED. MILLER.

HOW AMERICAN BREAD IS MADE.



WE cannot help feeling that bread has first claim on our space. As a rule, there is so little variety on an ordinary table, be the meal what it may, and as the various kinds of flour can now be bought of grocers and at the vegetarian depôts in most large towns, there is but little excuse for the non-appearance of many kinds, at once cheap and nourishing. On a New York breakfast-table bread in every form, size, and colour, either hot or cold, is obtainable, as well as many other dainties which we hope to include in future articles. American housewives are skilful judges of flour, but it will suffice here—without entering into detail as to the various tests of quality—to advise our readers always to buy the best only, whether brown or white, and for whatever purpose it may be required. Equally important is the goodness of the yeast; a nice batch of bread is an impossibility if stale, sour yeast is used; and many Americans make their own, even when it is quite easy to obtain good brewers' yeast. Without recommending home-made in preference to brewers' (for, when really good, none is better), we give one or two recipes that may be useful, and are certainly reliable.

Newhaven Yeast.—Boil a handful of hops in a bag in a couple of quarts of water, with eight ounces of pared potatoes, until the latter break; then mash them up with an ounce of flour, three ounces of salt, and the same of brown sugar. Pour the boiling hop-water on this, and when lukewarm, add enough German or French yeast to ferment it well. Bottle when cold, and keep in a cool place.

Potato Yeast is made by mashing a dozen large boiled potatoes with a tea-cupful of flour and a tea-spoonful of salt, then mixing with dissolved German yeast to make a batter; this is best for immediate use, but may be bottled if kept very cool.

A good yeast, "self-working"—that is, without the addition of any other to excite fermentation—can be got by boiling two ounces of hops in a gallon of water for one hour; then, when lukewarm, remove the hops (which should be tied in muslin), and add the hop-liquor gradually to a pound of flour; beat in a table-spoonful of salt and half a pound of white sugar, and set away for a couple of days in a bowl covered with a cloth in a warm place. On the third day add the hop liquor to six or eight potatoes, boiled and mashed. Let it stand for twelve hours longer in a warm kitchen, then store in jars; cork well. This will keep three or four months in a cool cellar.

A very excellent and nutritious bread, which we recommend for general family use, is made with two-thirds Graham flour (what is called in England whole meal or brown flour) and one-third fine white.

To each quart a good tea-spoonful of salt should be added. As the English are not so fond of sweets as their American cousins, they will reduce the quantity of sugar and molasses sufficiently to suit their palates; therefore, instead of recommending a tea-cupful of treacle, mixed with the yeast, for each loaf of the bread, we think that quantity to *four* loaves will be more to their mind. This dough requires good yeast, and must be well kneaded, mixed soft, and thoroughly baked. A fierce oven will spoil it.

Boston Brown Bread.—Make this by substituting two parts Indian meal and one part rice flour for wheaten flour, adding, as well as yeast, a small quantity of soda or saleratus. It requires well kneading, and must rise for five hours at least, and after it is made into loaves they should rise an hour longer. Bake a four-pound loaf quite three hours; the oven *must* be slow.

Ordinary family bread from white flour is generally mixed with "sponge" made over-night. A very good recipe is as under:—Half a dozen potatoes boiled and mashed while hot, a quarter-pint of brewers' yeast, two ounces of white sugar, two ounces of lard, one tea-spoonful of soda, three cupfuls of flour (say a pint), one quart of warm water—that in which the potatoes were boiled. In mixing, add the soda last of all. Cover lightly in warm weather and tightly in winter. This quantity will make up from two to three quarts of flour—sufficient to bake at a time for a small family. The inexperienced in bread-making from sponge in place of yeast must remember that it requires to be twice kneaded: first when the sponge and flour are well amalgamated, then the most thorough kneading is necessary, and again after the dough has risen. When ten minutes or so will suffice. Then after putting into greased tins, or making into rolls and laying them in one large tin, again leave the dough near the fire for an hour previous to baking.

We must now mention a few kinds of fancy bread; they will perhaps be more welcome to the majority.

Rice Bread, very light and delicate for invalids, and a pleasant change from that usually made, requires that a tea-cupful of well-boiled rice be added to each quart of wheaten flour. When making the bread, put in with the yeast a little sugar and dissolved lard or butter. *Hominy Bread* is made the same way; take care that the hominy is well boiled. In each case put salt as usual.

Buttermilk Bread is a great delicacy, popular all through the United States. It is very easy to make, and particularly wholesome. Into each pint of buttermilk, made hot, stir flour to form a thick batter, add a couple of spoonfuls of yeast, and let it stand a few hours. Then stir in a tea-spoonful of soda, the same of salt, and a couple of ounces of dissolved butter, and work in enough flour to make a nice dough. Knead well, make into loaves, and let it rise until light.

Buttermilk Muffins have but to be tried to become a standing winter dish. Beat hard two eggs into a

quart of buttermilk, stir in flour to make a thick batter, about a quart, and lastly, a tea-spoonful of salt and the same of soda. Bake in a hot oven in well-greased tins. Muffins of all kinds should only be cut just round the edge, then pulled open with the fingers.

Graham Muffins are more substantial and easy of digestion than those made with white flour. Mix into a smooth batter three cupfuls of Graham flour, one cupful of white ditto, one quart of milk, half-cupful of yeast, one tea-spoonful of salt, one ounce of sugar, and the same of lard dissolved in the milk. Set to rise over-night, and in the morning beat in an egg, and bake in a good oven for twenty minutes.

Cream Muffins are delicious; perhaps only those who keep cows will feel inclined to be extravagant enough to indulge in them. Beat six eggs, a pint of cream, and a pint of milk well together; add an ounce of lard and an ounce of butter, a tea-spoonful of salt, and a quart of flour *stirred in lightly*. Half fill the rings, and bake in a sound oven.

Rice Muffins.—Beat hard into a batter a cupful of rice—boiled—a pint of flour, two eggs, a little salt, an ounce of butter, and nearly a quart of milk. The harder you beat and the more quickly you bake, the better they will be.

French Rolls made thus are worth trying:—Set a sponge, by mixing a quart of flour, a cupful of yeast, and a quart of warm milk; when light, work in an egg, a tea-spoonful of salt, half as much soda dissolved in hot water, an ounce of sugar, and flour to make a soft dough. In two or three hours, shape into balls, and set them in a greased baking-tin. In half an hour's time, gash each one across with a knife. Brush over with milk, and bake in a good oven nearly half an hour.

Potato Scones are very good. Mash eight or ten boiled potatoes, mix with two ounces of sugar, half a pint of warm milk, a couple of table-spoonfuls of yeast, and enough flour to make a batter. Let this rise, then beat in enough flour to make it sufficiently stiff to roll out; again let it rise, then roll out half an inch thick; cut into rounds or squares, and bake. Butter the tops liberally.

Dough Crumpets are Boston favourites, and easily made. A pound of ordinary bread dough, white or brown, needs a half-cupful of white sugar, three ounces of butter, and three eggs, to be beaten hard into it. Bake in muffin-rings well buttered.

Lincoln Shortcake ought to become popular at high teas. Beat four ounces of lard and butter into cream, stir in a salt-spoonful of salt, and a good pinch of soda dissolved in just enough vinegar to cover it; then put in a pound of fine flour, dried and sifted. Mix with water or milk to a stiff paste, and roll out half an inch thick. Prick all over, and bake until brown. Split while hot, and butter plentifully.

We must not omit a couple of recipes for "hot biscuits," taking care to impress upon those who make note of them that in America the word "biscuit" is

applied to what, in Great Britain, would perhaps be called buns, tea-cakes, or fancy rolls; and what *here* are called biscuits are known *there* as "crackers." Try, then, either of the following when you want to initiate yourself into the good graces of any one who has come to take tea.

Yeast Biscuits require a pint of milk, a half-cupful of lard and butter mixed, a half-quarter of yeast, a table-spoonful of sugar, a salt-spoonful of salt, and flour to make a soft dough. Mix all together six hours before tea-time, adding *half* the flour only—just enough to make a leaven; cover with a cloth, and leave to rise. Make up with the remainder of the flour, roll out half an inch thick into round cakes, leave to rise in the baking-tin for twenty minutes near the fire, and lastly, bake in a hot oven for twenty minutes, or rather less. These will be beautifully light and sweet if properly mixed, and the oven really hot.

Soda Biscuits are equally good. Mix together a quart of *dry* white flour, a tea-spoonful of carbonate of soda, and two of cream of tartar; pass through a sieve to lighten, then rub in two ounces of lard and a little salt. Mix with milk quite soft, only stiff enough to handle without sticking to the fingers; roll it out on a floured board, then double it over and roll out again: this makes thin flakes. Cut and bake as for "yeast biscuits." Either may be eaten with or without butter, and brown flour used in place of white makes *Graham Biscuits*. Buttermilk, or sour milk, may take the place of sweet, in recipes where soda and cream of tartar are used, provided the tartar is *left out*, buttermilk or sour milk being sufficiently acid, only soda is necessary.

Our bread paper would be sadly incomplete, if we failed to mention "corn-meal bread," a staple article of diet in some parts of the States, among the poorer classes chiefly, though any one would find a meal of it very satisfying during cold weather, and nearly all children like it. Indian meal should be bought in small quantities; the lighter in colour makes the best bread.

Risen Corn Bread may be made in the ordinary way with yeast, using two-thirds corn and one-third wheaten flour, except that a little sugar improves it, and two ounces of lard or butter should be added to every quart of meal used. An easy way for a "test-loaf" without yeast is to beat three eggs hard with three cupfuls of milk, in which a piece of lard the size of an egg has been dissolved, then put in three cupfuls of Indian meal, one cupful of flour, one tea-spoonful of salt, six of sugar, one of soda, two of cream of tartar. Beat hard again, and bake in a well-buttered mould very steadily. Muffins or crumpets may be made as above, but a little thinner, more milk being required. Bake in rings or patty-pans.

The numerous family of griddle-cakes, as well as jumbles, crullers, dough-nuts, and the various kinds of richer cakes, are reserved for treatment in a future chapter.



THE IMPRESSIONS OF A NOTICING EYE.

CHARACTERS IN BACKS.

THE THOUGHTFUL



BACK

“WILL you introduce me to that lady? *I like her back.*” Many years ago, in Scotland, this was asked of a hostess one night, when the evening circle were scattered about a drawing-room, and the man who spoke had not yet seen the lady’s face. An introduction followed—a friendship—a marriage. No doubt he was a most discriminating man, and knew that there is a character in backs.

For that matter, our character comes out all over us, willing or unwilling, and even in our handwriting. Lavater, who was so wondrous wise in the looks of humankind, said that from a single finger we ought to be able to guess a whole individual; perhaps we ought, but we seldom do, except in noticing the difference between the finger of refinement and a nutmeg-grater like the fore-finger of the faithful Peggotty. But the back—ah! there is the whole individual, an easy study—the whole of him, his figure and walk, his shoulders moulded by the habits of his life, the carriage of the head, the wearing of the clothing. Face to face we see the man as he desires to be seen by us; but behind his back we take him by surprise, and catch sight of his character.

Follow the thoughtful man, as he wanders through the streets, seeing nothing. He has polished his hat and tightened his umbrella to the last degree, not because he cared for the polish and the tightness, but because his mind was elsewhere while he risked brushing the nap off the hat and splitting the umbrella. While he walks, his head and shoulders bend; one knows that his eyes seek the ground, just as one sees his feet linger upon it. In this manner it must have been that Macaulay walked in his famous night wanderings, when he traversed the London streets and saw nothing—a contrast to those other night walks of Charles Dickens, who trod the same streets, and saw everything, with head characteristically held back and slightly to one side—an energetic observer, rather than a deep thinker.

Very different from what we may call the refined and intellectual back, is the back of the broad and vulgar figure who struts past us as if he owned the street, or, at least, the foot-walk, where he takes up half the

space between his striding feet and his self-assertive umbrella. His glory is not in his mind or heart—but in his pocket. He would be always conscious of his purse, even if he had not his hand bulging out the pocket where it lives—of course, one knows by his back that the pocket *is* bulging with the proud possession of a fat purse, and the knowledge of the banking account, and of all he might, could, would and should do in the world. He holds the impecunious crowd in contempt, like the dust that he kicks before him. He has a habit of sticking up for his rights; even his collar sticks up, and his hair, to correspond with his inner self, is bristling up, but that does not matter, for he can afford to wear a crooked hat. He thinks he can buy anything—from a picture, of which he knows nothing, to an elector, who knows nothing of him. At the front he might take us in—a hearty-looking glad-to-see-you sort of man. But look at his back; he struts like a barn-door cock—and the cock is a more estimable biped.

The purse-proud man will never hand money out of that pocket for charity, unless he is pretty sure that there shall be a printed list of subscribers. Not so the wealthy man who has a heart above gold. Look at

THE PURSE-PROUD.



him—a back view—as he stands at a public meeting, called together at some time of calamity or need. He is sure to be there. If the hall is overcrowded, you can see him standing, never complaining of the lack of seats; he is there for the comfort of others; he forgets his own. He is a large-hearted man; and everything

about him is large. The big hands are only waiting behind him to give freely. The broad back can bear a goodly share of others' burdens. The coat sits loosely, but not more loosely than fortune sits upon



him—he would slip it off for another's need. His grey locks are unshorn; closeness of any kind is not in his nature; and his head bends to give plenty of time and plenty of thought to all whom he could benefit. Such a man as this was once told that he had been giving to a rogue; and the answer was, "If he was a rogue, that was his own look-out—not mine." In one sense, very true!

As for the back of the rogue himself, it is of infinite variety. If there were only one sort, we might all make what soldiers would call a reconnaissance to the rear, and detect and outwit him; but his name is Legion. There is the sharp dealer of the business world, who is remarkably spruce at the back: and the adventurer of society, who can bow like the first gentleman in Europe; and ten thousand more varieties, from the welsher on the turf up to the gentleman who ought to be a baronet, and who has lived for the last thirty years upon that statement, and upon charitably collecting for the savages of Borrioboola. He could straighten his body if he liked, but his mind is fixed in curves of cunning. He and his principles are as crooked as wriggling eels; he can press others to his will too, as he presses his cane to a curve like himself.

His spare form is not the thin bent back of the student. The back of a book-worm is another kind of bend—a curve to be respected. Nor is it the stoop of old age. And this reminds us that the back is an index of age as well as of character. The small child stands, a square, upright, sturdy atom of humanity. The man grows straight to his full height; then his shadow broadens; then his shoulders come forward,

and his head goes down. He is the dried and shrivelled leaf that bends towards itself, and curls to diminished size, before it mingles with the dust of a vanished summer.

But we must not grow melancholy, though we can never see a smile at the back. Who is this individual that comes shuffling by, knocking his knees, and dragging his shoes, and losing his property from sheer inability to remember that he has got it? There is an old saying, a significant one, to describe a man of weak character—that he has "no backbone in him." We are afraid there is not much backbone in the man who walks as if not quite sure where he is going to, who drops his letters, and never cares to straighten his shoulders. Follow him, and note how his hat points backward; and you know from the angles to which he has set his hat and his whiskers that, seen front-face, his aspect is (to use the mildest word) not wise, and that, as a fashion-book once said, "the mouth is worn slightly open." Still, he is a good-natured fellow, and by some instinct we read on his back that he has an ambition to be amusing. One is perfectly certain that the man with such a back sings comic songs; equally certain that he never knows when people cease to laugh at the song and begin to laugh at himself. One is glad for his own sake that there is some mirth in the possessor of those whisker-points and that hat set backward; but it is weak spirit, of the Micawber order, and soon dissolves in tears. The poor fellow would not be half bad, but he has "no backbone," and a sprightly, good-natured mollusc has a poor time of it up on the land among the vertebrate animals.



But there is such a thing as having too much backbone; and that is rather worse than having too little. When a man has too much backbone, his heart is not, as people say, "in the right place;" sometimes there

is no room in him for a heart at all. Now, there are some men in whom force of character is carried into the extreme, and becomes hardness and habitual severity. They are the

THE WEAK BACK



ogres of the real world, and their homes are dens. A severe back is a pleasanter sight to see than a severe face. One does not care to be round at the other side. It is not what we would call the just and righteously indignant back, which is straight and noble, a fine thing and a venerable. It is the bulldog - shouldered back that denotes the domestic ogre. His bald head shines; one knows that in the front the veins are bursting. His moustache has been twisted to sharpness by angry fingers.

His hands are clenched or pushing mightily against his hard-set knee; he could strike, but he has too much pride for violence, and his orders are harder than blows. The huge muscles of his back are to him what the big sinews and heavy make are to a bull-dog. He has a habit of getting his arm crookedly bent to his knee in self-restrained wrath, and it reminds us of the bulldog's crooked legs. Oddly enough, in the pictures of "David Copperfield," that the exact and observant

author approved, the tyrant schoolmaster Creakle invariably got into this position, with the crooked arm weighing heavily on the knee, and the other hand

THE SEVERE BACK



clenched. Great is the rejoicing at the sight of this severe back, for the luckless folks who have been obliged to look upon the other side of him! There are, indeed, many backs that are more gladly seen than the corresponding faces. The back of the bore is a goodly sight; while, on the other hand, when good-bye is grievous, how much precious regard is wasted on the dear, characteristic, well-known back, that never knows what loving looks went after it!



HOUSEHOLD HINTS.

A CORRESPONDENT of the *News* gives the following recipe for teetotal hop beer, which he says he obtained from a ship's cook years ago out in the Pacific. He describes it as "the cheapest, healthiest, and most satisfactory substitute for beer I ever drank." It is also very easily made. Take half a pound of hops; half a pound of tapioca; and five gallons of water. Soak the tapioca all night in a basin of water, next morning when it is swollen, put it into a thin muslin bag, and boil it and the hops together in five gallons of water, for three quarters of an hour. When cool, strain and bottle at once, or put in a cask, which must be tightly bunged. It is ready to drink at once. It is non-intoxicating, most palatable, and if bottled will keep well. Cost, under one shilling, and the quantity given will fill six and a half dozen ordinary penny ginger beer bottles, and sell for six shillings and sixpence.

NEVER let meat or fish remain in the moonlight unless you wish it to go bad, and do not let the moonlight rest on a sleeping person.

Do not exclude the sun from your rooms by pulling down the blinds unless you prefer a doctor's bill to a faded carpet. In choosing a house choose a sunny aspect. There is always most illness in a sunless, shady house.

NEVER allow a housemaid to put her fire ashes box into a cupboard; in one case the staircase of a house was well alight in the middle of the night through this being done. The ashes were supposed to be cold but were not.

TRY the use of rather thick curtains instead of window-blinds. You can darken the room so much better, and keep the sun off an invalid's or sleeping child's face. Sleep is far more resting in a properly darkened room.

WHENEVER you see orange-peel or even cabbage-leaf on the pavement, kick it off into the road (but not on to a crossing). Children taught to do this when out walking, think it a great amusement, and probably save many broken legs.

WHEN sending newspapers—especially abroad—it is safest not to use wrappers, but to direct the paper or magazine on itself. Tie a string through it and then twice across with rather fine string. If you only tie it once across, letters and post-cards are apt to get slipped into the folds and be taken across the Atlantic or round the world—as has happened before now. Coarse string is apt to come untied.

If any one chokes over food, they should at once hold the breath and look upwards. This stops the spasm, and should be taught to all little children. It would save them from many a painful choke.

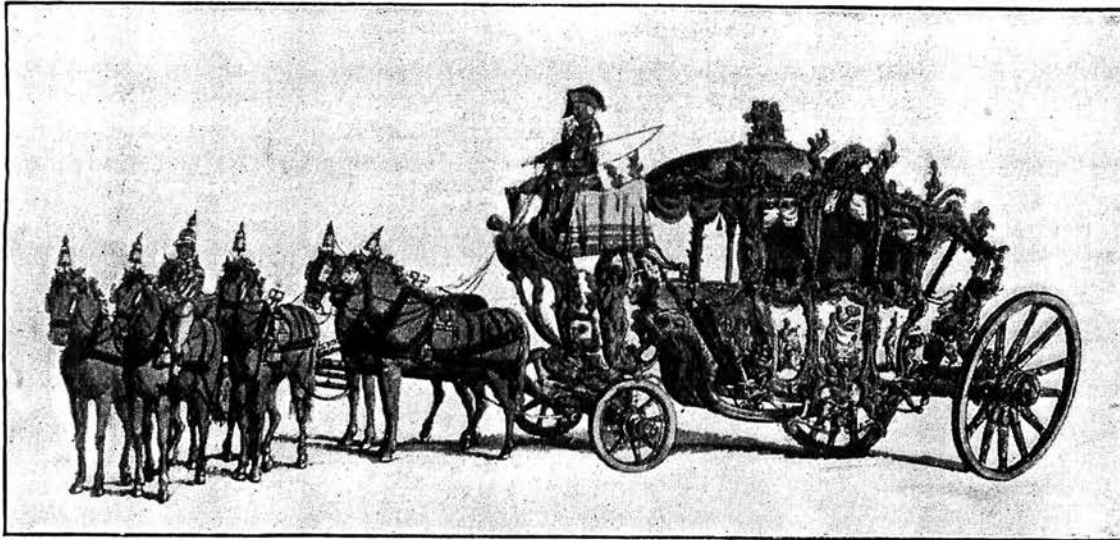
NEVER spare the use of damp tea leaves when sweeping your room if you wish to preserve your furniture; they also improve the colour of the carpets.

A GOOD furniture polish is made of linseed oil, vinegar, and turpentine in equal parts.

MILK puddings without any egg are much wholesomer and nicer than with an egg.

Lord Mayors' Shows—Past and Present.

BY HARRY HOW.



THE LORD MAYOR'S STATE COACH.



Y the time these lines appear in print another Lord Mayor's Show will have been added to a long line of civic pageants, for from the days when Henry Fitz-Alwyn was first appointed by the Crown, in 1189, and continued in office for twenty-four years, London has had no fewer than 516 different Lord Mayors. With but few exceptions, all of these have kept up the time-honoured custom, and presented an appreciative and admiring public with a "Show," or, at any rate, something resembling one.

The Corporation of London has always been famous for its great love of show, and as far back as 1453 the annual civic pageant has been held with unmistakable ceremony and *éclat*. This was Sir John Norman's year, when he proceeded in a barge, with considerable state, to be sworn in at Westminster. Previous to this year it was customary to do the journey on foot by road, or in a boat by the river without any great following, or much attempt at display; but it is due to the memory of Sir John to record the fact that he it was who introduced the ceremony which is not likely to die out, in spite of an annual agitation of which the war-cry is, "Down with the Lord Mayor's Show."

It appears that the first public account of a Lord Mayor's Show was that written by George Peele, on the occasion of the inauguration of Sir Wolstane Dixie, on October 29th, 1585. This little pamphlet consists of only four leaves and cost £20, and it is preserved in the Guildhall Library.

Successive Lord Mayors' Shows sought to vie, the one with the other, as to who could make "the annual" grander and more impressive than that which went before; and amongst these may be mentioned that of Sir Thomas Middleton, in 1613, in particular. It is recorded as being unparalleled in its splendour and artistic aspirations.

In 1616 Sir John Leman, of the Fishmongers' Company, also produced a very striking show; and especially remarkable were the pageants, which were placed on huge trollies, the wheels of which were hidden by drapery and drawn along the streets. Sir John Leman being a member of the Fishmongers' Company, particular prominence was given to the inhabitants of the sea.

In 1698, a magnificent chariot of justice was introduced into the procession. Beneath a canopy, on the top of which were two angels, sat the goddess of all things good and just. The chariot was drawn by two horses got up to represent unicorns, and ridden by negroes.

It was for a long time the custom for the Lord Mayor to ride on horseback in the procession, the last of the equestrian Lord Mayors being, according to one authority, Sir Gilbert Heathcote, in the time of Queen Anne. There has always been considerable speculation as to why the Lord Mayor ceased to accompany the civic procession on horseback. Some chroniclers are of the opinion that it was owing to the fact that a certain Lord Mayor on one occasion lost his equilibrium and was thrown into the mud.

One can hardly imagine a more undignified position than that of a Lord Mayor in the gutter, and it is said that steps were at once taken to prevent the recurrence of such a deplorable accident. At any rate, in the year 1712 a coach was provided for the use of the first magistrate, and the present magnificent conveyance was built in 1757 at a cost of £10,065.

The small column illustrations reproduced in these pages formed a portion of either a programme, menu, or invitation card to the Lord Mayor's Show of 1742. It is a curiosity in its way, and really a very clever bit of engraving, and tends to show that, even after a State carriage had been placed at the disposal of the yearly tenant of the Mansion House, one at least preferred to make the official journey on horseback. Arranged round the four sides of the card is the Lord Mayor's procession, showing his lordship astride a good-looking mare, with his attendant aldermen. The different companies are well to the front with their warders and clerks, the leather-sellers, coopers, salters, etc., all of which are depicted, together with men in armour, the military, to say nothing of the King's trumpeter, with a drummer beating drums, which were carried on a man's back.

The illustration of the view in Cheapside, after J. June, published in 1761, will give a

very good idea of what the shows were like a year or two after the great coach was built. Balconies ran alongside the houses, and a remarkable-looking orchestra occupied a position evidently outside a tavern. The coach is in the centre of the picture. It is followed by a noisy crowd, one of whom has upset the wares of an old apple-woman under the very nose of an individual who is evidently—to judge by his stern expression and easy way of taking things—a custodian of the law. Apart from the fact of its being a picture depicting a Lord Mayor's Show of this period, a very excellent idea may be obtained of the various wigs which were in wearing at that time, whilst the reproduction of the fine picture, by W. Millar, of swearing in Alderman Newnham at the Guildhall, in 1782, conveys an admirable impression of civic costume in the 18th century.

No less interesting are the contemporary illustrations, published as reminiscences of the Show of 1784, depicting the procession by water and the cavalcade by land. It is not possible to judge what particular part of the river the procession is at this moment passing, or from which wharf or disused piece of land the salvos of artillery are booming forth to greet the new Lord Mayor; but the spot at which the Show is passing by land can easily be localized as Ludgate Hill. There are no

crowds, save at the windows. Mr. Blades, Messrs. Richardson and Goodridge, Mr. Rich, the pastry-cook, and Mr. Griffin, the colourman, have shut up their shops, and turned the windows of the first floor into admirable private boxes, in order that the Lord Mayor and his retinue may be the more easily viewed by their respective admiring families.

Hogarth has left on record probably one of the best notions of the annual civic pageant of a by-gone period. The



THE CHARIOT OF JUSTICE, 1698.



illustration given is one of the series of "The Industrious and Idle Apprentice," a picture too well known to call for any detailed account; but it is worthy of note that the locality chosen by this very faithful, though grotesque, painter is the west end of Cheapside, and that the balcony projecting from the house at the end of Paternoster Row provides accommodation for Frederick Prince of Wales and the Princess Augusta.

Coming down to the present century, the Lord Mayor's Show of 1827 had in it two colossal figures, representing the well-known statues of Gog and Magog. These giants were constructed of wicker-work, gaily attired in the costume of their prototypes, and

similarly armed. A man was placed inside each giant, bearing the wicker-work upon him as he struggled along. The giants were 14ft. high, and their heads were level with the first-floor windows throughout the line of route, and doubtless they came in for the customary amount of chaff and chucking under the chins on the part of the delighted spectators. The *Times* of the following day, in its account of the Show, remarks: "They were extremely well contrived, and appeared to call forth more admiration and applause than fell to the share of any of the other personages who formed part of the procession. Whatever some fastidious critics may say as to taste and refinement in the present day, we think the appearance of these figures argues well for the future conduct of the new Lord Mayor, and some of his other brother magistrates would, we make no doubt, be well content if, in the whole course, or at the close of their official career, they could come in for a little of the plaudits which were yesterday bestowed on the two representatives of Gog and Magog."

The illustrations showing the Lord Mayor's Shows of 1847, by T. H. Nicholson, and 1844, by David Robert, R.A., together with the companion picture by the same artist of the State barge at Westminster, are sufficiently graphic without any descriptive account.

It will be noticed, however, in many of the pictures reproduced, that men in armour occupy a prominent position. These somewhat heavily, not to say uncomfortably, clothed individuals appear to have been in high favour with the corporation, and it must certainly be admitted that they always present an air of originality, notwithstanding the fact that they have taken part in the Show for some centuries back. The



THE LORD MAYOR'S SHOW OF 1742.



THE LORD MAYOR'S SHOW.
From the "Industrious and Idle Apprentice," after Hogarth.

allegorical cars also have always been found in the civic procession, and as a rule have been depictive of the particular companies of which the Lord Mayor for the time being is a member. They are frequently very beautiful in design, though it is to be feared that the human figures which assist in decorating the cars by their personal

presence along the whole line of route often suffer severely if the 9th of November prove to be a wet, or even a foggy, day.

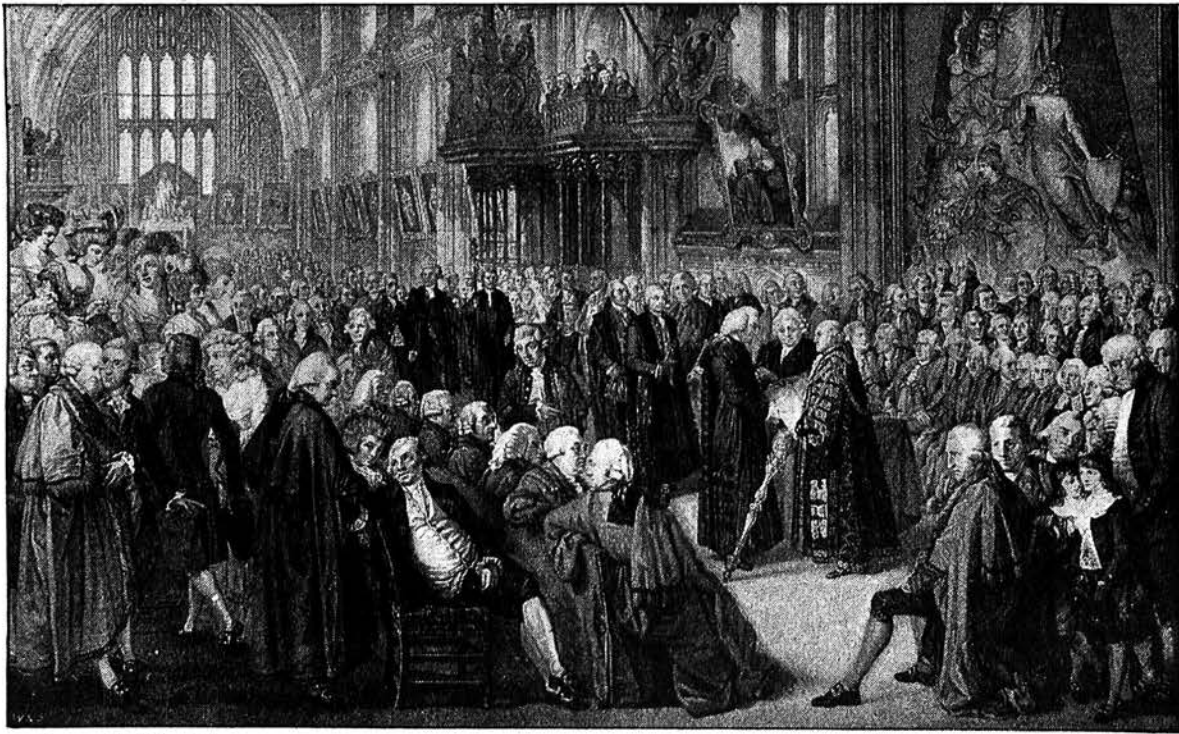
Some twenty years ago elephants were introduced into the procession, and it must be chronicled that, although their attendants had black faces, their dusky appearance was even less than skin deep. The writer



From a Painting by]

THE LORD MAYOR'S SHOW, 1761.

[J. Juna.



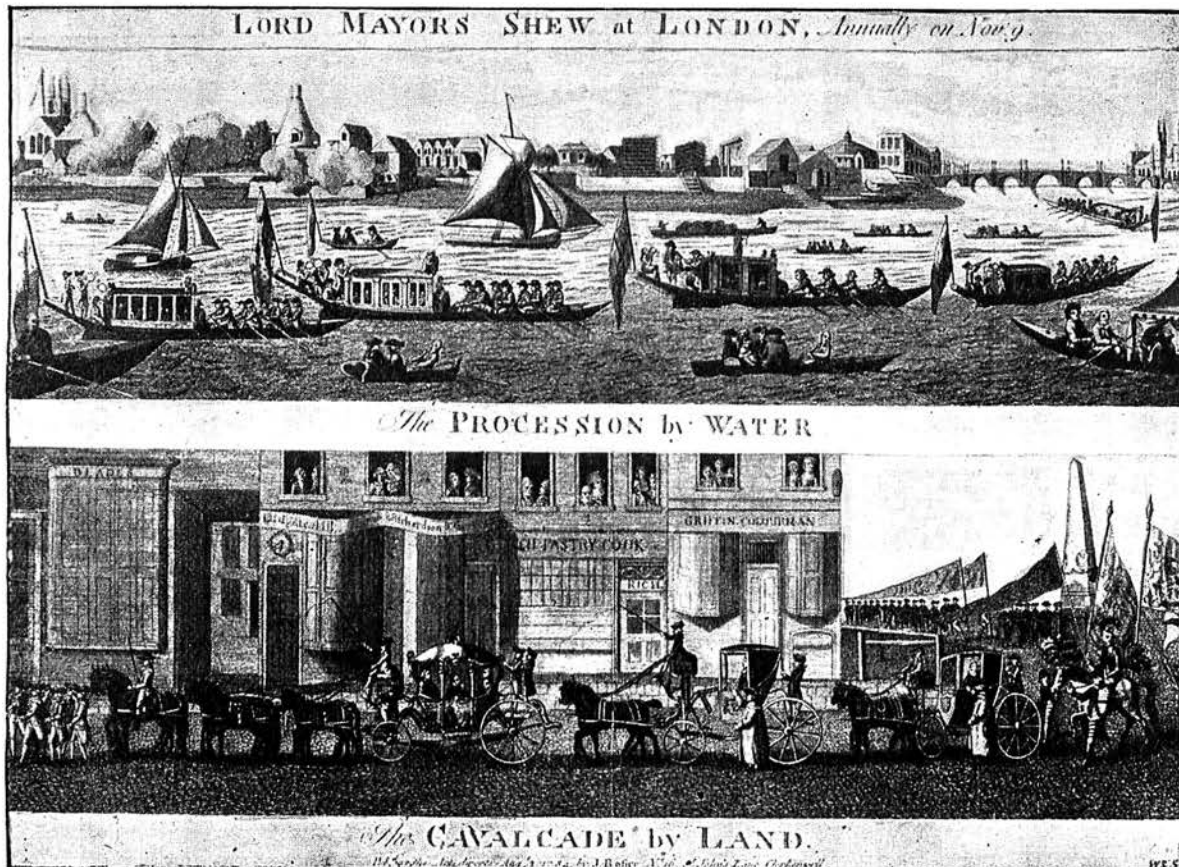
From a Painting by]

SWEARING IN ALDERMAN NEWNHAM AT THE GUILDHALL, 1782.

[W. Millar.

remembers one poor little fellow perched on an elephant. His face was blackened, and he was very nervous, and held on to the great animal with both hands. It was a bitterly cold day, and the little boy had a

very bad cold. His nose gave him considerable trouble—he was unable to give it the attention it demanded, for fear of tumbling off. The result was that all the black from the lower part of his face was obliterated.



THE LORD MAYOR'S SHOW, 1784.



From a Painting by]

THE LORD MAYOR'S SHOW OF 1844.

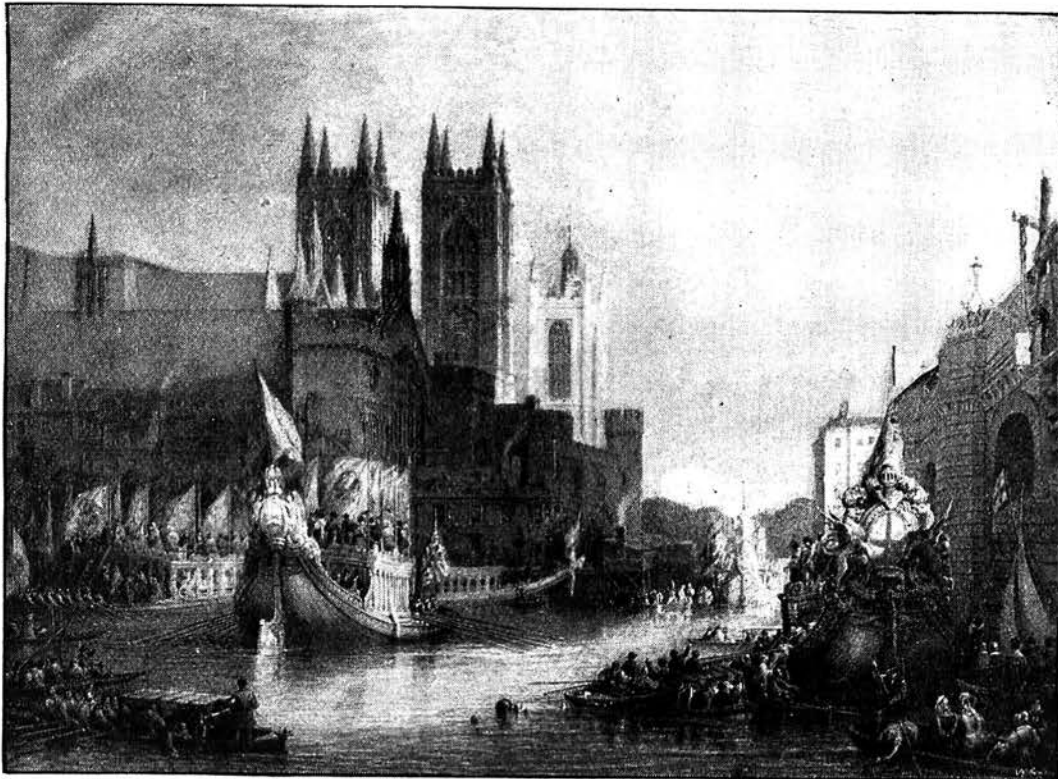
[David Robert, R.A.

This caused the lad to appear as miserable as he unquestionably looked ridiculous.

The cost of the present-day Lord Mayor's Show is about £2,000, whilst the banquet, which, after all, is the great event of "the 9th," must cost at least between £2,000 and £3,000, one half of the amount being con-

tributed by the Lord Mayor, and the other half divided between the two sheriffs.

Originally the Lord Mayors' feasts were kept at the Merchant Taylors' and the Grocers' Halls; but when the kitchens and other offices were added to the Guildhall, they were utilized for the purpose of these



From a Painting by]

THE LORD MAYOR'S SHOW OF 1844.

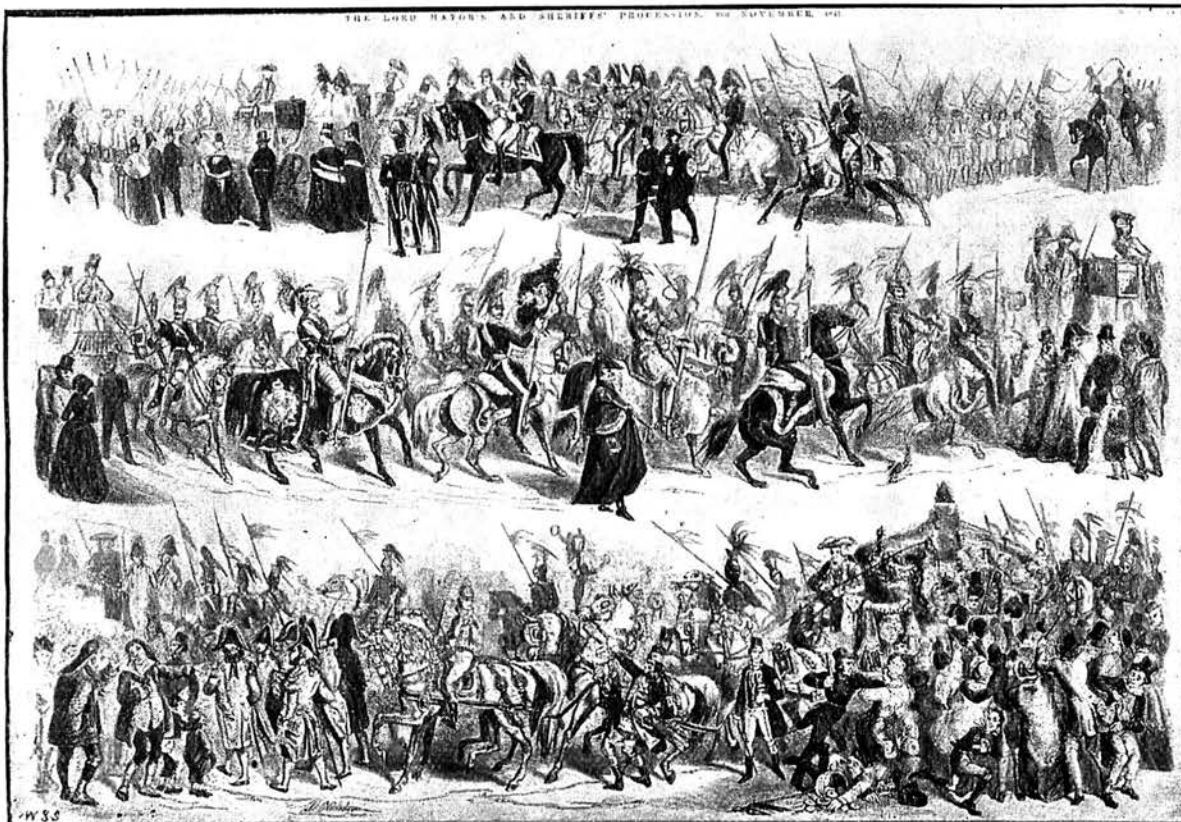
[David Robert, R.A.



VIEW OF LORD MAYOR'S SHOW FROM ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.

annual sumptuous "spreads." Sir John Shaw's mayoralty banquet was held there in 1501, and it is on record that he was the first who kept his feast there.

On Lord Mayor's Day something like 800 to 1,000 people sit down at the heavily-laden tables at the principal seat of the Corporation of London. For days before the feast and for days afterwards the odour of cooking permeates the atmosphere, and no wonder, for something like 400 quarts of turtle soup, 140 dishes of game, 85 turkeys, 36 hams, 160 lobster salads, 400 chickens and capons, 600 meat pies, 120 quart jellies, and 200 dishes of pastry will have been prepared; whilst the strength of the side-board will be tested to its utmost capacity by two great barons of beef, each weighing over 150lb. It is a pleasure to record the fact that all that remains of this magnificent banquet is distributed the next morning amongst the poor who may be the fortunate possessors of tickets entitling them to partake of their share of the Lord Mayor's banquet.



From a Drawing by]

THE LORD MAYOR'S SHOW, 1847.

[T. H. Nicholson.

JAPANESE FANS.



IT was a very matter-of-fact and incomplete description which Dr. Johnson gave when he said the fan was "an instrument used by ladies to move the air and cool themselves." A French poet was nearer the truth when he wrote, "The fan of a belle is the sceptre of the world."

According to Addison, "Women are armed with fans as men with swords, and sometimes do more execution with them." In

a paper in the *Spectator* this writer gives an account of an academy in which the use of the fan is taught, ladies being there shown the way to handle, discharge, ground, and flutter their fans in the most effective style. "In the flutter of a fan," he observes, "there is the angry flutter, the modest flutter, the timorous flutter, the confused flutter, the merry flutter, and the amorous flutter." As for angry fans, "I have seen," he adds, "a fan so very angry, that it would have been dangerous for the absent lover who provoked it to have come within the wind of it."

We may not be so skilful as our great-grandmothers of the days of Queen Anne, but much may yet be accomplished by careful study combined with frequent practice. In the hands of an adept, the fan, by peculiar movements, can undoubtedly be made to express love, disdain, modesty, hope, fear, and countless other emotions. If any one wishes to see fan-firtation and fan-telegraphy elaborated into a system, let him reside for awhile in Spain, or in one of the Spanish colonies of South America. Watch some dark-eyed beauty; why, she is, at one and the same time, by the gracious movements of her fan, calming the heat of summer and telegraphing to a friend at the far-away end of the room, "I shall be very glad to see you at such-and-such an hour to-morrow forenoon."

A history of fans—if an historian could be found worthy of the subject—would be curious reading. The first page would take us back to the early ages of the world, when a primitive race kept off insects, and produced a cooling breeze, by means of a few lotus or palm leaves. Upwards of 3,000 years ago the artists of ancient Egypt painted the fan on the walls of the tombs at Thebes.

The folding fan was an early invention of the Japanese, who have always been famed for their skill in its manufacture. Adopted in China, it was brought from that country into Portugal during the fifteenth century; in the next century it was in general use in Portugal, Spain, and Italy. From Spain it found its way, in the sixteenth century, into France, with the Italian perfumers in the suite of Catherine de Medici. Soon it became fashionable at court, and no toilet was

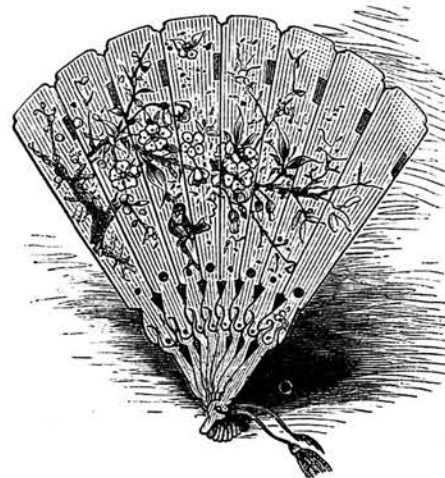
thought complete without a fan. Fans often cost in those days from £12 to £15 sterling. France took kindly to fans, and devoted much artistic skill to their manufacture. The dress-fan of a high class is now exclusively made in Paris, and in no other city does a modern fan command a price of £100.

In England fans were used by the ladies in the reign of Henry VIII., and are said to have been introduced in the preceding reign. Queen Elizabeth, when in all the glory of full dress, wore a fan as part of her sumptuous attire.

The fan, it will have been seen, comes to us from the East, the home of wonders; and the folding-fan, we have told, is a Japanese invention. Even to this day the fan forms an integral portion of the national costume of Japan, and plays a large part in the everyday life of that country. When two Europeans meet, they lift their hats by way of salutation; the Japanese content themselves with agitating their fans. It is on his fan that the rich man lays the alms he gives to the poor, and on his fan that he receives the dainties with which he regales himself. The Japanese youngster knows to his cost that the schoolmaster often uses his fan—a good stout one—as an instrument of punishment. The beauty hides her smiles behind her fan, and to see a troupe of Japanese girls dance the fandance is something worth remembering.

An almost fabulous number of fans are exported from Japan to all parts of the world; no fewer than 3,000,000 fans, valued at 90,000 dollars, were, according to Consul Annesley's commercial report on Hiogo and Osaka issued lately, shipped from these ports in 1875.

Osaka is the principal city for the manufacture of the "ogi," or folding fans, which are almost exclusively those exported, all descriptions of the bamboo kind being made there,



the figures, writing, &c., being executed in Kiyôto. The principle of division of labour is carried out a long way in this branch of industry. The bamboo ribs of the fans are made by private people in their own houses, and combinations of the various notches cut in the lower part are left to one of the finishing



workmen, who forms the various patterns of the handles according to plans prepared by the designer. In like manner the designer gives out to the engravers the patterns which he thinks will be saleable; and, when the blocks have been cut, decides what colours are to be used for each part of the design, and what different sheets are to be used for the opposite sides of each fan.



When these sheets, with the sets of bamboo slips which are to form the ribs, have been handed over to the workman, he, in the first instance, folds them so that they will retain the crease. This is done by putting them between two pieces of heavily-oiled paper, which are properly creased. The

fans are then folded up together, and placed under pressure.

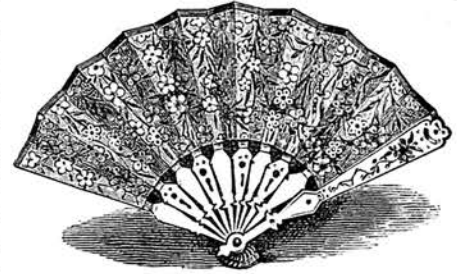
When sufficient time has elapsed the sheets are taken out, and the moulds used again; the released sheets having been packed up for at least twenty-four hours in their folds. The ribs, which are temporarily arranged in order on a wire, are then taken and set in their places on one of the sheets, after it has been spread out on a block and pasted. A dash of paste then gives the woodwork adhesive powers, and that part of the process is finished by affixing the remaining piece of paper. The fan is folded up and opened three or four times before the folds get into proper shape, and by the time it is put by to dry it has received an amount of handling which Japanese paper alone would endure. When the insides are dry the riveting of the pieces together—including the outer covering—is rapidly done, and a dash of varnish quickly finishes the fan.

The sale of fans in the olden time in Japan seldom exceeded 10,000 for the whole country; times have changed, however, for the foreigner has set foot there, and the old days of seclusion and limited trade are over. The number of fans ordered for the Philadelphia Exhibition alone amounted to over 800,000, at a cost of about 50,000 dollars.

The designs for the mounts of Japanese fans are sometimes of a very interesting description, and always strikingly unlike the productions of European art. One peculiarity of the art of Japan has been pointed out by a recent critic. If a Japanese artist has any space to adorn, he does not seek out the centre and place his ornament there, for although that would be the obvious means of securing proportion, it would not satisfy a taste directly derived from a study of nature, where proportion is rather suggested than actually expressed. We find, therefore, that the Japanese artist, imitating the ways of nature, throws his design a little out of the precise balance, and trusts



to the spectator to judge of the result by an association of impressions similarly derived. The firm touch and accuracy of Japanese artistic work are remarkable, and no one can overlook the spirit of fun indulged in by the artist whenever he has the chance. The fun is the expression of the genius of the people. They are always laughing, and always ready to take a joke or to make one. But Japanese art, it must be confessed, is not what it once was. The intruding foreigner has made of late a deep impression, and since the world began there has probably never been such a thorough turning upside down of everything as that which is still going on in Japan. The worst of it is that



foreigners do not always bring civilisation and culture; it is often the very reverse. To speak only of fans, instead of encouraging native designs, they have had their fans ornamented with advertisements of patent shoe-brushes and cork-screws, and left nothing to the Japanese designer but the choice of colours.

Japanese damsels, we may remark, are not at all unattractive young ladies. Here is a portrait of one of them, just sixteen years old, described in a tale by Mr. A. B. Mitford:—"She was neither too fat nor too thin, neither too tall nor too short; her face was oval like a melon-seed, and her complexion fair and white; her eyes were narrow and bright; her teeth small and even; her nose was aquiline; and her mouth delicately

formed, with lovely lips; her eye-brows were long and fine; she had a profusion of long black hair; she spoke modestly with a soft sweet voice; and when she smiled two lovely dimples appeared in her cheeks: in all her movements she was gentle and refined." Deck this beauty out in brave array, and give her a fan in her hand, dashingly tinted in white, blue, and red, and covered with enigmatical ornaments: now, who would not fall in love with the narrow eyes and melon-seed-shaped-face?

In China the rôle of the fan is as important as it is in Japan. It is in general use among all conditions of both men and women; the rich and the poor, priests, men of letters, and soldiers have it always in hand.

During very hot weather, the head of a Chinese household takes his fan after tea is drunk, and holding it with both hands makes a bow to the company, saying, "Thsing-chen" (I invite you to make use of your fans). Every one then picks up his fan and employs it with much modesty and decorum.

JAMES MASON.



“CRAZY CHINA,” WHAT IT IS, AND HOW TO MAKE IT.

By DORA DE BLAQUIÈRE.



COLUMN OF CRAZY CHINA.

THE fancy for sticking broken bits of china on drain-pipes, flower-pots, or even large dishes has been one of the most prevalent of our crazes of late in England; nor was the fancy unknown in America, though nobody was so keen upon it, apparently, as here. The materials sound both cheap and easily obtainable; only some putty—quantities of it—and any amount of broken scraps of china, coloured and white, to arrange in a kaleidoscopic vision of rainbow hues on the surface of the drain-pipe. The last example I have seen was, I suppose, an excellent one, as it was made by an artist in the business, who had been taught by the experience of some months of work. It was an odd-looking production, yet not at all ugly, and my hostess told me it was considered quite “Renaissance.” The worker was an invalid lady, and there was no doubt that she had brought great taste to bear on her work, but its appearance to me at least was more that of an Eastern idea, or perhaps Moorish; and I am told that the conception of the work does really originate with the last-named people. My artist friend has illustrated the pillar-like stand for my readers to see and judge of for themselves, as one really needs to have an idea how to reproduce the work.

The materials consist, as before said, of broken bits of crockery and china, much putty, gold paint, and, if not a drain-pipe, anything else you like to ornament. Besides these, you

will need a mallet, or a small hammer, to break the already broken pieces, if they prove too big, and a proper putty, or even a palette knife, to spread the putty, and prepare it for the mosaic of china. It is fortunate, for this purpose, that our servants are generally great destroyers of the material chiefly needed, and any household can furnish only too much from its own breakages. The unfortunate mistress and master probably look at it from another point of view, and would not hail the production of “crazy china,” as in any way supplying the place of the “fair pieces” they lament. The “crazy china” maniac takes a small basket with her on her walks, and hunts over all kinds of rubbish, in order to procure materials for her occupation, and every one will guess that she is at times very successful, especially if it be in the neighbourhood of a large house in the country, where the rubbish is made into a heap in the garden.

While we were talking over the “crazy china” mania, the other evening, I came upon the following funny paragraph in *The Globe*, and, as prophecy is quite the fashion now, if we may judge from its indulgence in our daily papers, I subjoin the quotation, which is taken from some published statistics, with a comment at the end of it, which is both witty and comical:—

“In England the amount of breakage per head is twenty-three bushels of fragments per annum. . . . It has been calculated that on the steamer *Etruria* a little more than 3000 articles of glass and china are broken during the voyage. . . . It may be briefly asserted that at the present rate of breakage, the entire civilised part of the earth will be covered, at the end of about two and a-half million of years hence with broken crockery to a uniform depth of 74 feet.”

On which *The Globe* comments:

“In the neighbourhood of summer hotels, where the amount of broken crockery charged in the bill is always abnormal, the deposit will probably be five or six hundred feet thick. And yet men of science, overlooking this imminent danger, try to alarm us with prospects of the return of a glacial

epoch. The broken-glassial epoch is what we have to fear.”

Walking through the streets of a Canadian city one day last year, I saw the subject, in a shop window, of my second illustration, which is quite a different form of the crazy scrap mania; and one, it seems to me, with perhaps more justification, and certainly the materials would be more come-at-able; for they are so various and peculiar, and range from bottles, to old keys, and from half a walnut-shell to old thimbles, and corkscrews that are no longer useful.

I subjoin a list of the articles used for a jug:

Round-top pins, bit of brass chain, half thimbles, half a sleeve link, buckle (dress), half a small pair of scissors, old knife blade, small glove-hook, pen, beads, screws, bit of corkscrew, hairpins, penny jewelry, buttons of all kinds, black hooks and eyes, bits of tin to join same to make a design, bits of scissors, watch-key.

The material of the jug is earthenware, and if the top of it be small, an addition is made by means of either very stiff millboard or tin. The weight of the model that I saw was very great, about nine pounds, I was told. The



NOVELTY JUG.

articles are embedded in putty, and then the whole is gilded over. The effect is odd, and unless carefully looked at, no one could imagine what it was made of, for the shape had been made very elegant by the addition of the long and slender neck, and the brightness of the gilding made the beautiful jug look like a mass of gold.

Now some one may say that such things as "crazy china" and novelty jugs are rubbish, and that people who make them waste their time. Perhaps, in cases, where there really is another occupation which ought to be followed, or some duty which ought to be performed, such a thing may be true. But there are other people—those who are delicate,

invalids, and many advancing in life for whom amusing occupation must be found; and all these things prove a blessing to them, diverting their thoughts, and giving an element of interest and amusement, and adding the chief pleasure of all as well, *i.e.*, the feeling of creating a thing that did not exist before.



PRECIOUS STONES; THEIR HOMES, HISTORIES, AND INFLUENCE.

By EMMA BREWER.

CHAPTER II.

DIAMONDS.—*Hardness*, 10; *specific gravity*, 3.52-3.53.

"Those sparkling blossoms of the rock."

"What creatures here on earth have we that are endued with so much sincerity, purity, transparency, and splendour that are so fit to resemble heavenly things by as these?"

—*Tho. Nicols, A.D. 1652.*



HAVE already remarked that the most wonderful thing about precious stones is the commonness and universality of the materials of which they are formed; and in no gem is this more noticeable than in the diamond, which is simply crys-

tallised carbon, or carbon in a state of absolute purity.

It is a material found everywhere and in everything—in the bread we eat, in the coal and wood we burn, in plants and trees and flowers.

Uncrystallised it is brittle and opaque and worth but little; in its crystallised state, however, it takes to itself new qualities and becomes the hardest of all known substances, as well as the purest and most brilliant, and is often above price.

Another interesting circumstance is that the materials of which precious stones are made seem to have their doubles in inferior varieties, which are so like the true, that only the keen and critical observer can detect the difference, thus bringing to our minds the parable of the "Wheat and the tares."

For example, there is carbon and carbonate; the latter is of the same composition as the former, even possessing the same hardness; but it is black and lustreless, and will never have a chance of becoming a precious stone; but its existence is not useless seeing that its office is to enhance the value and brilliancy of its higher class sisters by cutting and polishing them. It seems to be the connecting link between uncrystallised carbon and the diamond.

Before a stone can be admitted into the magic circle of precious it must be proved to possess certain qualities born and bred in it.

Crystallisation is one of these characteristics, and when one thinks of the marvellous combination of circumstances required for the

formation of these beautiful crystals, we know that only Mother Nature herself could be the author, only she, in her mysterious and patient method of working, could produce the exact amount and tint of colour, the necessary transparency, brilliancy, and lustre, together with the absolute freedom from defect and flaw which mark the precious stone.

Another quality inseparable from a precious stone is hardness; not as we understand it in common talk, but rather a power within it which prevents its being scratched or impressed by other stones. The diamond possesses this in the highest degree, and the two which come next are the ruby and the sapphire, which are simply crystallised clay. If a stone refuses to be scratched by these you may be quite sure it is a diamond. In a conflict between crystallised carbon and crystallised clay the former is always victorious because it is the hardest of all. Its hardness is represented by *x*, while that of the ruby and sapphire is stated at nine.

Hardness is the quality which allows the proper polish and lustre, and is, therefore, of great importance.

A circumstance which characterises the diamond is that neither solvents nor acids have the slightest power to dissolve or decompose it, while very great heat will entirely consume it, if applied in a special manner. A test of precious stones, well known to the ancients and practised in India many centuries ago, is what is called the "specific gravity" of a stone. It enables us to detect the class of stone without injuring it in the least.

To make it clear—two equal volumes of different substances very rarely have the same weight; a piece of lead, for instance, is heavier than a piece of wood equal in size. Bearing this in mind, it will be easy to understand that the specific gravity of a stone is the proportion its weight bears to an equal volume of water, and the way to arrive at this is first to weigh it in air and then in water, and to divide the weight in air by the difference between the weight in water. For example, suppose the weight in air to be 17 carats and the weight in water 12 carats, the difference between the two would be 5 carats. Divide the 17 by the 5 and you would have $3\frac{2}{5}$ as the specific gravity.

Many qualities for which the diamond is valued, such as its lustre, transparency, refraction, and dispersion of light are only seen in a slight degree in the rough; in order to bring out these to the full extent they must be submitted to cleaving, grinding, and polishing.

An old writer, speaking of the diamond, says: "The true diamond is the hardest of all stones, without colour, like unto pure water, transparent. This property it hath that it will snatch colour and apply it and unite it to itself; and thus will it cast forth at a great distance its lively shining rays, for that no other jewel can sparkle as it will."

Before starting to see the diamonds in their homes it would be well to explain the carat by which precious stones and gold are weighed. Carat is the name of a bean, the fruit of a pod-bearing plant growing on the Gold Coast of Africa. When dried it is nearly always of the same weight, equal to four grains avoirdupois or 3.174 grains troy. In very remote times the carat was used in the chief market of Africa as a standard of weight, and it was subsequently introduced into India for weighing diamonds.

Diamonds are found in all parts of the world, but the best* and most valuable have their homes in the oldest mountains, which are composed chiefly of granite, porphyry, and mica slate; but even here they do not court attention. The rocks must be broken up into small fragments and the *débris* reduced to sand before the diamonds appear.

Many of the finest diamonds are, however, found far away from their original homes in alluvial soils: that is to say, in soil deposited by water, and in the gravels and sands of river-beds, having been swept away from their original moorings by heavy rains and rushing torrents; and in their passage from one bed to another they are often exposed to rough usage which would ruin them but for their natural attributes of hardness and density. Job seems to have been familiar with the habitats of precious stones, for we read, "He putteth forth His hand upon the rock; He overturneth the mountains by the roots; He cutteth out rivers among the rocks, and His eye seeth every precious thing. He bindeth the floods from overflowing, and the thing that is hid bringeth He forth to light."

The rocks, and the diamonds they contain, are of extreme antiquity, and probably had their place in the world long before the plants and animals had their existence in it.

* Oriental and Occidental originally were applied to precious stones in their literal sense, but at the present time they are retained, not to indicate the regions from which precious stones are brought, but rather to establish between stones of the same name a comparative value. The most precious variety of any precious stone is called Oriental, and the inferior variety Occidental, whatever may be the countries in which they are found.

"They are," says a French scientist, "an inheritance to man from an age when there was no foreshadowing of his existence in the world."

The ancients valued and preserved precious stones thousands of years ago, investing them with an importance far above that they obtain in the present day. They attributed to them a spiritual and material power—a power to cure diseases, to avert calamity, and to drive away demons. "This alliance of religion with science is one of the distinguishing characteristics of antiquity,"* and helps to explain many things. The vesture of the high priest, which was made "for glory and for beauty," was adorned with symbolic gems: he carried on his breast the emblems of purity, of glory, of light, of perfection, of truth, of justice.† The twelve stones were set in the form of a double square, the adamant, or diamond, being the third in the second row. During the Middle Ages the habitat of the diamond was quite as much a mystery as its composition, and many vague stories concerning it were formerly believed; one current was that when Alexander the Great approached the inaccessible valley of diamonds in India he directed pieces of meat to be thrown in, as the only means of procuring the gems. Vultures, it is said, picked them up with the precious stones attached, and dropped them in their flight.

The valley of diamonds was an article of belief to the Eastern world, and Marco Polo, who travelled in India in the thirteenth century, tells the same story of the manner of getting the diamonds, viz., by means of pieces of meat thrown into the crevices of the rocks. As to the composition of diamonds, there were many theories. One was, that precious stones were engendered by juices distilled from precious minerals in the cavities of rocks, the diamond being derived from gold;‡ another was that precious stones were living beings, one authority stating that "not only do precious stones live, but they suffer illness, old age, and death." The two opinions accepted at the present time are, first, that diamonds are formed from carbon by the action of heat; the second, that they are formed from the very gradual decomposition of vegetable matter with or without heat. The chemical composition of the diamond was not made clear, nor the history of its discovery completed till about forty-four years after Sir Isaac Newton's death.

The diamonds earliest known to the Romans were furnished by Ethiopia; but when Pliny wrote in the beginning of the Christian era they had already been brought from India, and thenceforth, until the eighteenth century, no diamond mines were known but those of the East Indies, in the empire of the Great Mogul, and of Borneo.

The first reliable accounts we obtained of the diamonds in India were from travelling merchant-jewellers, the most noted of whom was Tavernier. He was born in Paris in 1605, and spent forty years of his life travelling in the East, where he made a large fortune by trading in precious stones. He was the first to give a detailed account of the diamond mines, the manner in which they were worked, and the trade carried on in them.

Up to the beginning of the eighteenth century had the question been asked, "Where is the home of the diamond?" the answer would certainly have been "Asia;" and if for "the best home in Asia?" the reply

would surely have been "Golconda." But now, with increased knowledge and experience, we should acknowledge that the localities of the diamond are not confined to India, but include Sumatra, Borneo, Brazil, South Africa, parts of North America, and Australia. It is true that the first diamonds known to European trade were brought from Golconda. The discovery of these mines is attributed to a poor shepherd, who, while tending his flock, stumbled upon what appeared to be a pretty pebble. It must be remembered that there is nothing very attractive about the diamond in its rough state; there is neither brilliancy nor play of light to be seen. It has been thought that mines of precious stones emit light like stars; but this is not so, as the qualities of brilliancy and light are only brought out after man has removed the covering.

Well, the shepherd, knowing nothing of its value, exchanged it with a friend, as ignorant as himself, for a little rice. It subsequently fell into the hands of a merchant, who recognised its worth and eagerly sought for the home whence it had come. He found it and other mines as well, not in Golconda itself, but five or six days' journey from it, at the foot of the mountains near to the Kistna and Pomar rivers. When the diamonds were found in these mines, they were taken in the rough to Golconda, there to be cut, polished, and stored, and therefore called Golconda diamonds. The ground in which they were found was sandy, and full of rocks which contained many veins and fissures; the miners probed these with little iron rods crooked at the end, dislodging the sandy earth. Unfortunately, they were not always content with this, but gave the rocks such hard blows with levers of iron that they frequently produced flaws in the diamonds embedded within them. The next process was to well wash and carefully search the material, to see if it had any diamonds.

In 1669, there were as many as sixty thousand people at work in these special diamond mines. The number and size of the diamonds discovered were remarkable, but they were not, as a rule, of the finest water; to fulfil this condition "a diamond should be like a dew-drop hanging from a damask rose-leaf."

Tavernier asserted that the Great Mogul Diamond was found in one of these mines; if so, it was quite sufficient to distinguish these so-called Golconda mines, for few diamonds have had such a career. Indeed, the adventures and incidents belonging to it are startling. The time of its first appearance in the world (1630 to 1651) was one of trouble and conflict both in England and in India, and, like all other great diamonds, it seemed to bring ill-luck to its possessor.

Tavernier, who was the first European to see it, spoke of it as the heaviest of which he had any knowledge, and weighed in the rough 793½ carats. At the time he saw it it was in the Palace of Agra, which was for the time turned into the prison of the dethroned and stricken Mogul. "Brought to light in the midst of tumults and wars, the Great Mogul Diamond, after an existence of two hundred years, went out with the expiring flames of a great rebellion known in history as the Indian Mutiny."* It was probably stolen either at the sack of Delhi or at the death of Nadir Shah, and in order to avoid detection the thieves most likely had it broken by cleavage into two or more stones.

It will be a surprise to many that the chief negotiators in the sale of Golconda diamonds were boys under sixteen years of age. Tavernier gives a very pretty description of the

way they conducted their business:—"It is pleasant to see the children of merchants and other people of the country, between the age of ten and fifteen, coming every morning and seating themselves under a large tree in the market-place of the town. Each has his diamond-weights in a little pouch hanging on one side, and at the other a purse attached to his girdle. There they sit and wait until someone comes from the neighbourhood or from the mines to sell them diamonds. The new comer places the gem in the hands of the eldest of the boys, who is, as it were, the chief of the band. He looks at it, and hands it to the one next him, and so it passes from hand to hand in perfect silence till it returns to the first, who asks the price, in order, if possible, to make a bargain; and if the little man happens to buy it too dear, he has to take it on his own account. As soon as evening comes, the boys bring together all the stones they have bought during the day, examine them, and arrange them according to their beauty, their weight, and their clearness; then they put upon each its price at which they intend to sell to the merchants, and by the latter price they see how much profit they will have. They now carry them to the large merchants, and all the profit is divided among the boys, the one who acts as chief receiving one-fourth per cent. more than the others. Young as they are, they know the price of every stone."

It seems as though the diamond, from the first moment in which it is seen, sharpens the wits and arouses ambition for gain. Even the poor slaves in the days long gone by managed, as now, to elude the sleepless vigilance of the overseers. In one of these so-called Golconda mines Tavernier saw a poor creature, who desired to keep a large diamond for himself, force it in the corner of his eye so as completely to conceal it. That things are no better to-day, one has only to state what occurred a few months ago at the Cape. A known diamond thief was seen to leave Kimberley on horseback for the Transvaal; the police felt certain of the object of the man's journey, and seized him on the border and thoroughly searched him, and as nothing was found on him, they had to let him go. When well across the border and under the eyes of the detective, he shot and cut open his horse, extracting a large parcel of diamonds from its intestines, which, before starting on his journey, he had given to the horse in the shape of a ball.

Many of the mines round about Golconda, which were once so prolific, seem now to be quite exhausted. But in their place Brazil came to the front in a curious manner. In 1730, some singular pebbles were found by miners while searching for gold; these they carried home to their masters as curiosities. These in their turn regarded them as pretty baubles merely, and they either gave them to their children as playthings, or used them as counters.

At length they attracted the attention of an officer who had spent some years in India. Struck with their form and weight, he weighed one of them against a common pebble of equal size, and found that used as a counter much heavier; then he rubbed the counter on a stone with water, but could make no impression on it, while on the common pebble, which he treated in the same way, a flat surface was easily produced. He sent a few of the counters to a friend in Lisbon, begging him to have them examined; but the lapidaries of Lisbon, who had probably never seen rough diamonds, replied that their instruments could make no impression on them. The Dutch Consul, chancing to see them, thought they were diamonds, and begged to send one or two of them to Holland; here they were cut and polished, and declared to be equal to the very finest Golconda diamonds. The astonishing

* Dieulfait.

† Mr. Streeter is forming a model of this breast-plate of real stones; it is most interesting and most beautiful.

‡ Pliny says, "The diamond is engendered in the finest gold . . . only a god could have communicated such a valuable secret to mankind."

* Streeter's *Great Diamonds of the World*.

news soon reached Brazil, and all that were scattered about as counters or playthings were at once bought up by a few individuals, and search was instituted in right good earnest.

The discovery acted like a curse upon the inhabitants, for as soon as the Government found out the value of these treasures, it took forcible possession of the land, expelled the original inhabitants and declared itself sole proprietor.

Trouble came in abundance to these poor people, for the year of the discovery was marked by drought and earthquake in which

numbers perished. "It seemed," says Emanuel, "as if the genii, guardians of the treasure, were indignant at the presumption of man, and tried by every means to prevent the dispersion of the buried treasure. As the news spread across the world the first effect was a panic in the diamond trade. No one would believe in the existence of a rival to the diamonds of India, but of course the Brazil diamonds could not be ignored. The two great mines were Minas-Gerães and Bahia. In the former 144,000 carats were found annually for the space of twenty years, and during

the first fifty years it is supposed that twelve millions of money's worth were exported. When once the search began, the riches were found to be almost without limit. The crops of all fowls killed were carefully examined, for it was found that in picking up their food they often swallowed diamonds, and it is recorded, that a negro once found a diamond of five carats adhering to the roots of a cabbage he had plucked for his dinner; they seemed to be about in all directions.

(To be continued.)



"CANDIES."

By the Author of "We Wives," etc.



EVER since an enterprising brother, intent on scientific research, found that a lump of sugar applied to the flame of a candle resulted in beads of crimson colour, candy-making has been a favourite

pastime of ours. "Candle-beads," pretty as they look, are apt to taste of tallow and smoke. Sugared candies of other sorts are, or ought to be, free from such drawbacks.

Our "popped-corn parties" (*vide THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER* for April, 1896) could assemble all the year round if approved of. But our "candy club" only met at stated seasons. It was as a law of the Medes and Persians that butter-scotch (for instance) should only be made when the first blizzard powdered our wide prairie land with soft fleeces of snow. That raspberry-rock should be baked only when bluff and shoulder-ridge were pink with the wild cane. That "cream-toffee" and "honey-ball" should only make their appearance when a cow came into the dairy for the first time, or a hive of wild bees were rifled of their store.

If any reader of *THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER* is inclined to follow our family pattern and start a candy club, I would advise some such rules to be made. Sweets are apt to cloy when too often indulged in, and cookies are sometimes cross (at least they are in America). Of course the club should always provide sugar, fruit, and tins. Mothers, generally, do not grudge other flavourings and fire.

Most likely when this paper appears, every garden in "Eū-rope" will be rich in raspberries, or have just laid by a store of the seedy jam or crimson syrup. So I will begin by telling you how our candy club made

Raspberry Rock.—To every pound of lump sugar or refined molasses we allowed three-quarters of a teacupful of cold water. We boiled it until the syrup thickened, and "beads" of heat broke out on the surface. Very careful we were to keep stirring all the

time, especially when the candy began to "crack."

We tried if it was done enough by dropping a little into a cup of cold water. When a "snap" followed and the droppings looked crisp and crinkly, we removed the pan from the fire and stirred in one of two things, either three dessertspoonfuls of jam boiled, with a little water, and run through a sieve, or as much raspberry acid. I will tell, at the end of this paper, how to make this acid. But, as our candy is popping and cracking, we must finish it up first. On the deal-table we always had some well-buttered plates. After stirring in the flavouring (and adding a few drops of cochineal, if needed, to improve the colour), we filled each with the hot syrup. It cooled slowly, and after a few minutes its face had to be scored with a knife, in diamonds or squares. The rock is too hard to break when cold, except with a sledge-hammer, unless this is done.

Some of the candy we used to "pull" into twists and true lovers'-knots. This is fascinating work, the feel of the soft, yielding, smooth stuff between one's fingers being especially delightful to a child, whilst well-boiled candy can take such pretty shapes!

The syrup or acid for this rock is made as follows:—It can be used as a delightful summer drink mixed with plain cold water. But it is (a brother's expression comes in here) "scrumptious," if added to a tumbler of "fizz," either soda-water or lemonade.

Take twelve pounds of raspberries. Put them into a pan, and pour over them two quarts of cold water, previously acidulated with five ounces of tartaric acid. Let all remain undisturbed for twenty-four hours, then strain through a flannel jelly-bag or piece of fine muslin, taking care not to bruise the fruit.

To each pint of this clear crimson liquid, add one pound and a half of finely-powdered sugar. Stir frequently. When quite dissolved, and after removing any scum that may have risen, bottle the syrup and store in a dry place.

This acid requires no boiling and will keep for a couple of years if required. It can be made from ripe strawberries in the same way, but, to my taste, the latter fruit is too luscious and the syrup lacks just the *souppçon* of tartness necessary.

Cream Toffee.—This is just a variation of the ordinary butter-scotch. To every pound of brown sugar, or molasses, we allowed a pint of thick cream. When the sugar boiled

we stirred in the yellow, leathery stuff, instead of using mother's freshly-churned butter.

It was all boiled together until it "snapped," then turned into fanciful buttered tins and left till cold. Cream toffee is crisper and "shorter" than the ordinary stuff, but not quite as rich.

Butter Candy, heralded in, as it was, by the first snowstorm, was perhaps our favourite sweetmeat. It meant the beginning of stoves and hickory fires and winter sleighing. It meant the approach of long evenings spent in the pine-panelled kitchen busy with book or brush or plane. It meant earlier to bed and later to rise. It meant home lessons instead of school marms. So it was altogether suggestive of cosiness and cuddling and crooning and a great many other "C's"!

To make this, we always took half and half of butter and sugar. The browner the sugar the better the candy. It had to be boiled until clear and transparent, then poured into buttered paper. Some roughly chopped almonds sprinkled on it turned butter-scotch into almond candy. Or desiccated cocoanut strewn on its face masked it into cocoanut candy.

It was always stored in wide-mouthed bottles with tin tops. How long it lasted depended on how much we made, and on how many of the young fry were at home.

For "honey balls" we took half as much honey as butter and of course no sugar. We boiled until the "beads" appeared as in raspberry rock. When nearly cold, instead of "pulling" the honey candy, we rolled it into balls and set it aside to dry.

I think our candy club had one advantage many readers of this paper may fail to appreciate. Of course we had failures. Sugar "catches" easily, and burnt molasses is an abomination. But to our door sometimes came alarming looking squaws robed in buffalo and fringed with beads. On their backs always—we never saw a squaw unaccompanied in this manner—were one or two brown-faced, black-eyed, soft-skinned "papooses." What better way of hiding our failures (at the same time of propitiating the brave) than presenting a potful of "candy" to the dear things. They do not mind smoke, or tallow, or burn! A papoose with a cold potato in one hand and a bunch of burnt cream toffee in the other, is a sight to remember. And are there no wild Red Indians on the London streets? Whenever you fail in your candies call in the next little *gamin* that passes and see!

Old Valentines.

FOR a long time past it has seemed that the festival of that immortal go-between, St. Valentine, has been elbowed to the rear among our social observances, his perennially smiling visage turned to the wall, as it were, like a first wife's portrait, while a hundred little loves-in-waiting stand by with torches all unlit. One must rest content to rank among persons of a certain age in recalling the sweet stir once produced in a household by the anniversary of this legendary saint. Ah! then, from dawn till evening, what a flutter in the dovecote! what sickness of hope deferred until the mail disgorged its treasures! what radiance of blushing triumph when it did! Then pretty Dorothy stole away to her bedroom, clasping close the contents of her apron-pocket, and Sally and Betty took refuge among the pickle-jars in the store-closet, to exchange their dimpling confidences unobserved.

Woful works of art were those love-tokens in which Sally and Betty took delight! Within their gilt-edged borders sat die-away maids and bachelors, clasping hands under the chaperonage of an apoplectic Cupid, who held aloft a pair of hearts skewered upon his shaft. Beneath were amatory stanzas of the skim-milk school. Or else, when the envelope was removed, there was revealed a sort of golden bird-cage, which, on being pulled like a door bell, brought to view an altar where Hymen stood expectant. Again there was a screen of tinsel and lace-paper inscribed with this delicious mystery, "Within you will find my love." Needless to say that on lifting this, the maiden saw—a mirror! Over such sweet and transparent devices were showered rhymes like those still to be found nestling in the colored papers of mottoes distributed at juvenile parties, and composed off-hand, presumably, by the confectioner's young men.

A better period in the annals of valentine lore was that in which original stanzas, both strong and sweet, were the vehicles by which love was declared. Such a time we should like to see return. A fair sheet of paper, bearing in honest characters the expression of genuine sentiment, whether poetical or otherwise, would outweigh, in the balance of a sensible girl's opinion, a ream or two of printed prettiness. For an example, we may look far back upon the calendar of the merry saint, and there find attributed to an immortal pen the daintiest of old valentines, which, it is supposed, was addressed to Anne Hathaway:

"Is there inne heavenne aught more rare
Than thou sweete nymphe of Avon fayre,
Is there onne earthe a manne more trewe
Than Willy Shakespeare is toe you?"

"Though fickle fortune prove unkynde,
Still doth she leave herre wealth behynde
She ne'ere the heart canne forme anew,
Nor make thy Willy's love unnetrewe.

"Though age with withered hand do stryke
The form most fayre, the face most bryghte,
Still doth she leave unnetouched ande trewe
Thy Willy's love and freynshyppe too.

"Though death with neverre faylinge blowe
Doth manne and babe alyke brynge love,
Yette doth he take naughte but his due,
And strykes notte Willy's heart still trewe.

"Synce thenne not fortune, death nor age
Canne faythfulle Willy's love asswage,
Thenne doe I live and dye forre you,
Thy Willy syncere and most trewe."

To cast lots for one's valentine, who was, by the same token, to remain chained to the chariot-wheel of his enslaver for the ensuing year, was a custom of the seventeenth century, observed both in France and England. That this fashion was not altogether popular, we gather from more than one chronicler of the day,—were, indeed, one's knowledge of human nature in all ages to leave a doubt on the subject! Another custom demanded of a young lady practicing it on St. Valentine's eve a variety of occult devices, among them that of eating a hard-boiled egg, shell and all, with salt in place of the yolk, just before going to bed. Then, without quenching her thirst, the maiden sought her pillow on which was pinned four bay-leaves. Of course she was to dream of her valentines, and an artless votary has thus recorded her success, in a letter to her friend: "Would you think it, Mr. Blossom was the man? I lay abed and shut my eyes all the morning till he came to our house; for I would not have seen another man before him for the world!" Pepys, who is nothing if not practical, confides to his journal for February 14, 1667, the following prudent comment on his fortune for the day: "I am this year my wife's valentine, and it will cost me five pounds. I find that Mrs. Pierce's little girl is my valentine, she having drawn me, which I was not sorry for, it easing me of something more which I must have given to others." Elsewhere, Mr. Pepys refers to the fact that one of Miss Stuart's valentines (the Duke of York) "did give her a jewel of about eight hundred pounds." Touching old valentines of a later date, we copy one from a paper yellow with age and crackling at the touch. It was found in the lacquer dressing-box of a belle of by-gone days, wrapped in a bit of saffron lace, and faintly scented with vanilla bean. The lady to whom the lines were penned had lived and died single:

HER VALENTINE.

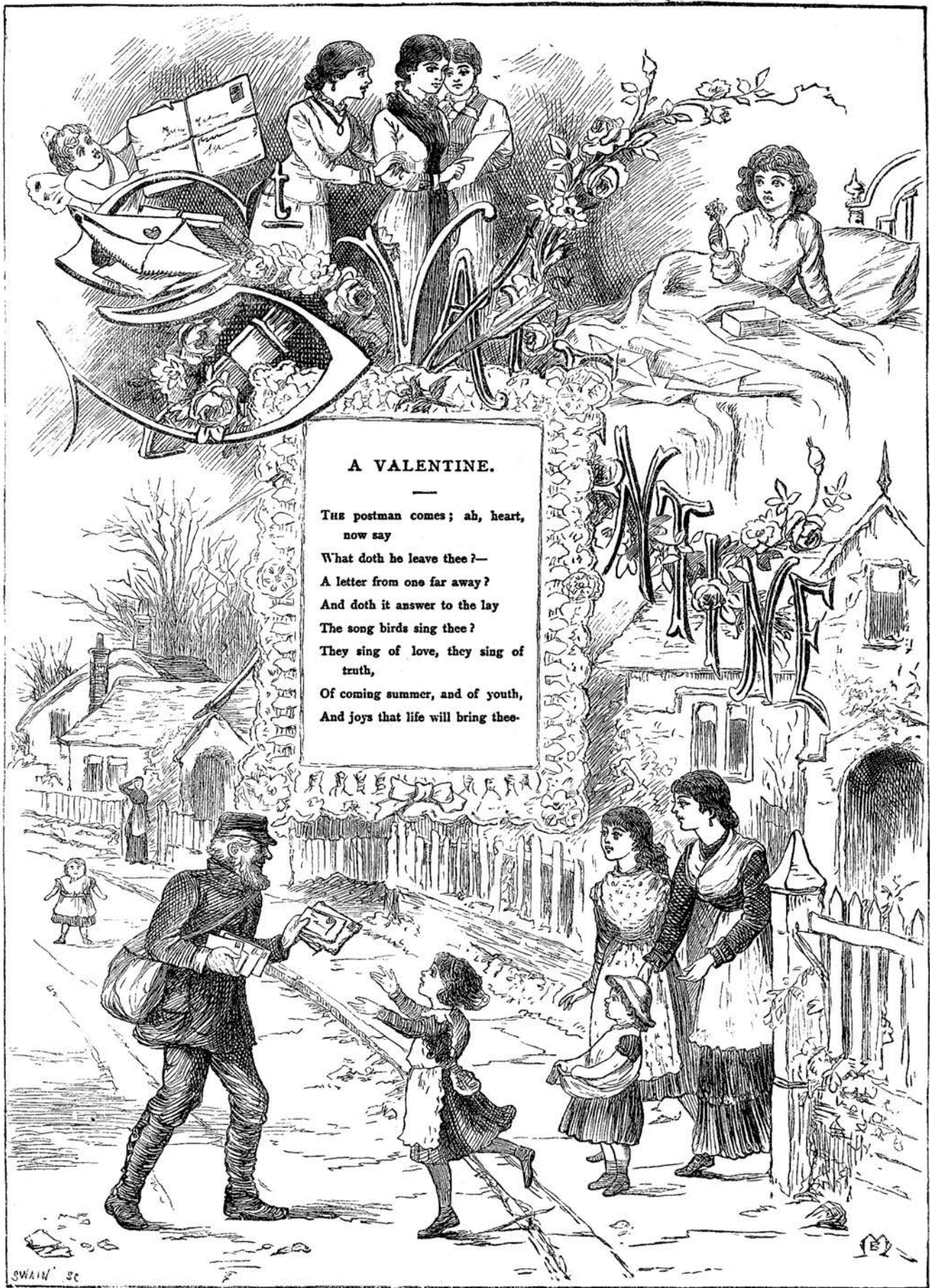
"This merry maiden, radiant, rare,
With winsome ways and debonair,
When sweet she smiles on me, I swear
That Eden's light is resting there
Upon those lips so ripe, so fair!
To look upon her face, old Care
Would cease to carp and court Despair,
Would give up dole, his trade forswear,
Don sunny looks, make Joy his heir.
What wonder, then, that I should dare
Her praise to sing, her colors wear,
Her valentine myself declare?
This merry maiden, radiant, rare!"

Constance Cary Harrison.









A VALENTINE.

—
 THE postman comes; ah, heart,
 now say
 What doth he leave thee?—
 A letter from one far away?
 And doth it answer to the lay
 The song birds sing thee?
 They sing of love, they sing of
 truth,
 Of coming summer, and of youth,
 And joys that life will bring thee.

SWAIN sc

Edwin's Razor.

BY ANGELINA BROWN.

WHEN Edwin went away from home a few weeks ago, leaving what he calls his "pet"

razor behind him, I for the first time grasped the beneficent wisdom of Nature in growing whiskers on men's faces.

For me, a young wife, that razor smoothed the way out of many difficulties, and helped me to realize that the family cutlery - case is stale, flat, and unprofitable when certain little household duties requiring a really sharp instrument are to be successfully carried out.

It was by the merest accident that I discovered the virtues of a razor. I wanted to cut some buttons off one of baby's garments. The razor was lying upon the dressing-table, and there was nothing else handy, so I used it for the purpose named, and with such success that I determined in future to use it whenever I could in preference to a pair of scissors or an ordinary penknife. I was simply charmed with it. The buttons seemed to fall off as if by magic when I put the least pressure on the razor.

Next day I was



"THE BUTTONS SEEMED TO FALL OFF AS IF BY MAGIC"



"THE TIME SAVED IN SLICING THE ORANGES AND LEMONS WAS WONDERFUL."

busy preparing to make some marmalade, when the thought struck me: "Why not use Eddie's razor to slice the fruit?" I can never feel thankful enough for the inspiration. The time saved in the slicing of the oranges and lemons was wonderful. Hours at least! I strongly advise every wife who would make

satisfactory marmalade, with the fruit in nice, thin shavings, to use her husband's razor for the purpose. The marmalade is always ever so much nicer than when an ordinary table-knife is used.

The same afternoon I happened to be in the box-room. For a long time I had been hoping to spare the necessary hour or two in which to scrape off the dirty old Continental labels which had remained on Eddie's and my own boxes since our happy, happy honeymoon. You know how these nasty labels disfigure nice and otherwise unsoiled travelling chests and portmanteaus? Which was the best way of removing them? Like a message from Heaven came the idea to my brain: "Eddie's razor!"

Soon the paper shavings were flying in all directions

about the room. It was so nice and pleasant just to place the sharp edge of the razor beneath the side of each label, and then with a brisk whisk to, as it were, shave the label from the box. Some of those labels, I confess, were so tightly fixed to the canvas and leather that I had in a few cases to use a good deal of force in cutting them away, but Eddie's razor robbed the job of half its tiresomeness, and presently our beautiful boxes and portmanteaus were quite free from the ugly, dirty bits of coloured paper, which were always an eyesore to me when I entered our little box-room.

Another thing which I should advise young and old wives to do. When you want a pencil sharpened, don't use your penknife



"WHEN YOU WANT A PENCIL SHARPENED, DON'T USE YOUR PENKNIFE."

—that is nearly always blunt, and one can't sharpen a pencil properly with a blunt knife. During Eddie's absence from home I never used anything else but his razor when I wanted a pencil very sharp and smoothly pointed. It was quite a pleasure to use that pencil, I assure you. Mrs. Williams, my neighbour, was so charmed with my pencil on an occasion which arose when we were enjoying afternoon tea in my drawing-room, that I insisted on sharpening her own pencil with Eddie's razor, and she was ever so grateful.

As for cutting geranium-slips! You might



"SOON THE PAPER SHAVINGS WERE FLYING IN ALL DIRECTIONS."

search the wide world over and you could not possibly have a better thing for cutting geranium-slips than your husband's razor! It was quite a pleasure, I assure you, to get hold of a big geranium in my left hand, and with Eddie's "pet" razor in my right hand lop off cutting after cutting. Not the slightest exertion seemed necessary, the blade of the razor went through the stalks just as though they were warm butter. And in the same way I found the razor a most admirable



"I FOUND THE RAZOR A MOST ADMIRABLE THING FOR CHOPPING UP THE MOULD"

thing for chopping up the mould to make it nice and fine before transplanting the slips into it. I feel positive that, owing to being so cleanly slipped and with the mould so beautifully fine, our geraniums next year will be bound to surpass anything ever seen before in this neighbourhood.

How I got hold of the excellent idea of chopping up the mould with Eddie's pet razor was this: A few



"I MADE SHORT WORK OF THE SUET."

razor immediately, and, getting hold of that, I made short work of the suet. I was most careful, when it had done what I required of it, to wipe the grease from it and give it a rub on the knife-board.

For cutting up old clothes, or re-making a skirt, I find nothing can beat Eddie's razor. You simply take the skirt in one hand, with the seams running in a line from between the finger and thumb. Take the razor and place its edge on the seam to be divided. The cloth will almost seem to separate

of its own accord, and you will be saved an immense amount of time and trouble.

One day I was out shopping and, the rain coming on unexpectedly, my patent leather shoes became caked with mud. Could I trust such a delicate operation as the removal of caked mud from my beautiful patent leather shoes to Mary Anne? Certainly not! Eddie's razor acted superbly in saving my shoes from disaster, and I was enabled, through its aid, to preserve the polish intact. I am persuaded that nothing can beat a razor as a remover of mud from boots. Its sharpness, no matter how caked the mud may be, enables one to shave the stuff cleanly away, especially from the soles and heels.



"I WAS MOST CAREFUL TO GIVE IT A RUB ON THE KNIFE-BOARD."

days previously I was rather hurried in preparing the pudding for dinner. I always make the sweets myself, as servants are not always to be trusted at such work; and I found the knife I was using in cutting up the suet, etc., rather blunt. Of course, I thought of Eddie's



"FOR CUTTING UP OLD CLOTHES I FIND NOTHING CAN BEAT EDDIE'S RAZOR."

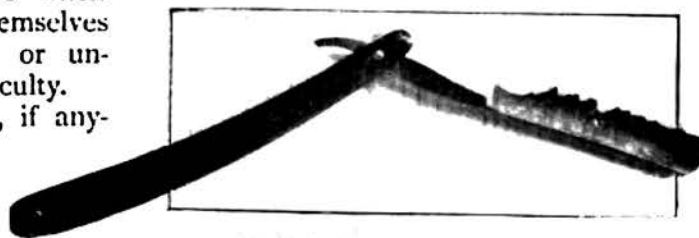


"NOTHING CAN BEAT A RAZOR AS A REMOVER OF MUD FROM BOOTS."

On the evening preceding the day on which my dearest Edwin returned home we had tinned peaches and, amongst other things, sardines, for supper. What do you think happened? Mary Anne, the stupid girl, had mislaid the can-opener; nor could it be found, although a thorough search was instituted immediately; it looked as if our supper would have to be postponed indefinitely when—I thought of Eddie's razor!

It saved the situation! Running upstairs, I carried it, the most useful of all household chattels, back to the dining-room in triumph, and found not the slightest difficulty in opening both the peach-can and the sardine-tin. I assure you, I enjoyed my supper all the more in consequence of my success. As for Mary Anne, the poor, stupid creature seemed positively delighted, and did not cease to grin during the remainder of the evening. The lower classes have really very little resource when they find themselves in a sudden or unexpected difficulty.

Being tidy, if any-



thing, I always took pains to replace dear Edwin's razor in its case on the dressing-table.

The morning following his return I noticed him examining the razor, with a rather strange expression on his face. I was so glad, for it gave me an opportunity of explaining to him how useful I had found it whilst he was away.

He seemed astounded. I suppose the silly boy thought that a razor was only fit for one thing—shaving his whiskers, and was so surprised at my proving the opposite that he



"I FOUND NOT THE SLIGHTEST DIFFICULTY IN OPENING BOTH THE PEACH-CAN AND THE SARDINE-TIN."

could find no words to express his thoughts.

But afterwards, when I had left the room, I thought I heard him utter quite a torrent of words. Since he returned I have not been able to continue the use of the razor. I rather fancy he locks his dressing-case every morning now.

A PRETTY PIANOFORTE BACK.

It is a problem often taxing the ingenuity of the "angel of the house" what to do with the piano back, when the piano stands out in the room instead of being against the wall. I am going to give the readers of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER a suggestion, and that is to paint a piece of canvas or similar material with liquid dyes or transparent colours so as to have the appearance of tapestry. In a former volume of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER I wrote an article on tapestry painting, and it has often been a surprise to me that this painting of a textile with dyes and transparent colours has not been more practised, seeing that the effect is very pleasing, and the time taken in doing it brief in comparison with the effect produced. Stencilled ornamental

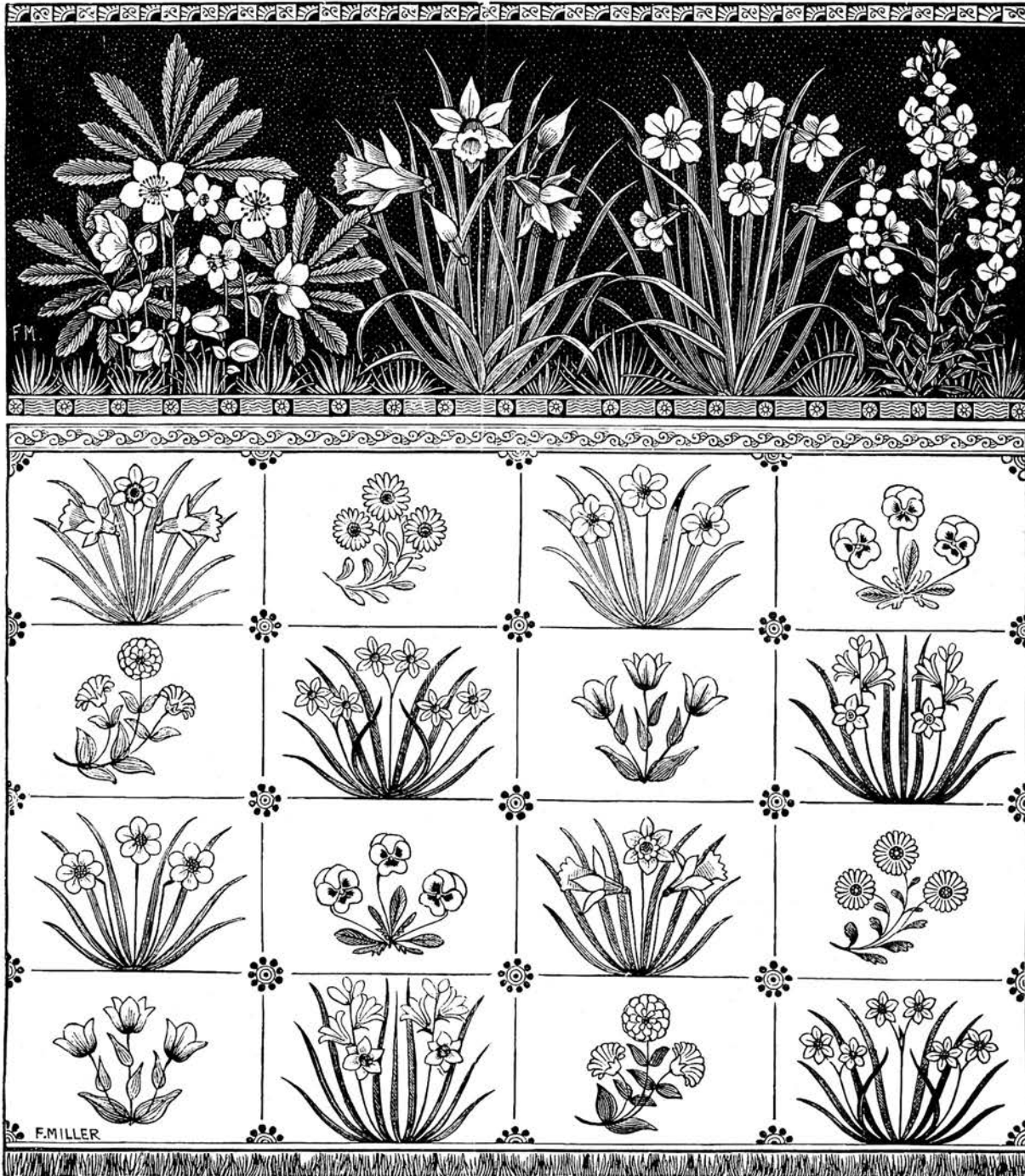
friezes on coarse white canvas or sacking are largely used now in the decoration of rooms, and very charming are they as the dyes sinking into the fabric give a softness of colouring which is wanting in painted decoration.

Ordinary oil colours thinned with spirits of turpentine can be used, and here is the list of those which are most transparent and which therefore can be used like dyes.

Prussian blue, indigo, blueblack, burnt umber; raw sienna, burnt sienna, gamboge, lemon chrome; crimson lake, vermilion, cobalt green, viridian; aureolin, Indian yellow, cobnet.

In the design accompanying these hints the lower portion, which is divided into compartments, is occupied by conventional renderings

of well-known flowers such as the daffodil, narcissus, pansy, zinnia and tulip, and it would be as well to draw these out the size they are to be painted. They should be then traced on tracing paper, and as they are repeated two or three times you might prick the designs with a coarse needle, having a piece of flannel under the tracing paper and make what are termed by decorators "pounces." In transferring a design, all you have to do is to place the pricked tracing on to the canvas and rub over it some broken up charcoal tied up in a piece of muslin. The charcoal will pass through the holes in the tracing and leave an impression on the canvas. This must be followed with a little thin colour, say, burnt sienna, using a red sable rigger, partly to



PAINTED CANVAS OR PAINTED SACKING HANGING FOR BACK OF PIANO.

preserve the designs, but also to help the effect, for a certain decorative character, which the outline imparts, is pleasant in such work.

Of course you will first of all divide up the canvas into the panels, and you might put in the lines with indigo, and the ornamental bosses at the corners could be stencilled in the same colour. It would take very little time to cut such a simple stencil as this. The outlines of the "sprig" might be in indigo instead of burnt sienna; possibly better in blue than red brown. The white flowers you can faintly shade in Prussian blue used thinly toned with burnt Roman ochre to make a grey or cobalt toned with yellow ochre. The daffodil in lemon chrome for outside petals and gamboge and Indian yellow for the centres. The pansies can be varied in colour as can the tulips and zinnias. The leaves can be made of greens produced by mixing the blues with the yellows in varying proportions, a grey green having more blue and a little yellow ochre, and warm greens of raw sienna helped with a touch of burnt Roman ochre or burnt sienna while bright greens of Prussian blue and gamboge and aureolin. Always have plenty of colour mixed up and well thinned with turpentine, and to save time it would be as well to have small jars or Liebig pots containing various tints; then

with hog-hair brushes well filled with colour you apply the appropriate tints, well rubbing them into the canvas. The outlines, I may mention, should be done a few days before the colours are applied, so that in putting these on you do not disturb the outline and cause it to run. As the colours will all sink into the canvas, little or none remaining on the surface, there is no fear of the colours chipping off. Liquid dyes are, I believe, still to be purchased, and these could be used in lieu of the oil colours. The canvas itself can be purchased of certain decorative and furniture firms by the yard of various widths and at a moderate price. If you were going to decorate the hangings for the lower part of a room it would be worth while cutting stencils of the sprigs—the leaves on one plate and the flowers on another, and when these parts are stencilled put in the outlines by hand. This would save a lot of time and would have a very good effect. Stencilling has been very fully treated in former volumes of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER, and I must refer the reader to them if fuller information on stencil cutting is required.

A word or two as to the frieze which has a dark background. As this is a little more freehand in style my readers might dispense with drawing it out on paper, and instead they

might sketch it in lightly in charcoal, but remember that if you make a mistake and use your charcoal heavily you will soil the canvas. The background would have to be put in evenly with Prussian blue or whatever colour you decide to have. It should be dark enough to throw up the flowers, which, as you will see, begin with the Christmas rose, then follows the daffodil, narcissus and wallflower.

Another way to treat this frieze would be to use a dark material and paint the flowers on in ordinary oil colours, using white to make the colour solid, thinning down with turpentine as before. You use the colours only as thickly as covers up the colour of the textile, but not lumped on as you would if you were painting in the ordinary way, for you should not hide the grain of the canvas.

Even where you employ your colours as dyes it is quite possible to use a little opaque colour in places, but you must not overdo this, and on the whole it would be better to treat both frieze and lower part transparently, for it would not be a great labour to put in the background. If blue be used for this, then outline the flowers and leaves in brown.

This design could, of course, be carried out in outline crewel work on some soft material, light for the lower portion and dark for the frieze.



INEXPENSIVE JERSEY WONDERS.—To be eaten hot, never later than three days old. 1 lb. butter, 4 lb. flour, quarter pound of sugar, 1 egg, well beaten, with sufficient water to make all the ingredients (with a large teaspoonful of baking powder) into a paste. Knead it well, and roll out as you would for pastry, cut into portions three inches long and two broad, make two slits lengthways in each, and plait the three pieces down in a plait of three, so as to make a shape like a small French roll. Lay them when done on a flat dish ready for boiling. *Boiling.*—Put into a deep stewpan 1 lb. of fresh lard; when it boils drop into it four wonders; they will almost immediately rise to the surface. Turn them about with a steel fork until they are of a rich brown colour, take them out with a strainer on to dishes to dry. Be sure the

lard boils again before you put in others, as if it bubbles at all it is a sign the lard does not boil, and the wonders will be spoilt.

CRYSTALLISED FRUIT.—To every pound of fruit allow 1 lb. of loaf sugar and a quarter pint of water. For this purpose the fruit must be used before it is quite ripe, and part of the stalk must be left on. Weigh the fruit, rejecting all that is in the least degree blemished, and put it into a lined saucepan with the sugar and water, which should have been previously boiled together to a rich syrup. Boil the fruit in this for ten minutes, remove it from the fire, and drain the fruit. The next day boil up the syrup and put in the fruit again, and let it simmer for three minutes, and drain the syrup away. Continue this process for five or six days, and the last time place the fruit, when drained, on a hair sieve, and put them in an oven or warm spot to dry. Keep them in a box, with paper between each layer, in a place free from damp.

QUICKLY-MADE AND SIMPLE PUFF PASTE:

—Take 1 lb. of dry flour, rub into it 8 or 10 oz. of butter and lard, in thin flakes, placing them on a plate, until nearly all the shortening has been absorbed; mix a little water with the remaining flour, until it is a stiff paste; roll this out as thin as possible, arrange the flakes of butter and lard over it evenly, fold it up and roll it out; fold and roll till the pastry is thoroughly mixed; line your tins, put in mince, or preserve, cover, place in a quick oven, and in about ten minutes they will be of a delicate brown, and will rise to the twenty flakes, which is the ambition of most cooks to attain. The whole affair will be over in half-an-hour, if the artiste has a quick light hand.

RASPBERRY SANDWICHES.—Take one breakfast cup of flour, three-quarters of a breakfast cup of castor sugar, 3 large eggs, a pinch of salt, 1 teaspoonful of cream of tartar, half a teaspoonful of carbonate of soda. Mix the flour, sugar, salt, and cream of tartar

together, beat the eggs up well and mix them in, pour a dessertspoonful of boiling water upon the soda, and add that to the mixture; after beating it all well together, spread thinly on well-buttered tins, and bake in a moderate oven. Cut up in slices and put layers of jam in between; sprinkle a little powdered sugar over the top.

MUD STAINS FROM FRENCH MERINO, TO REMOVE.—Dissolve a little carbonate of soda in water, and wipe the stains with it.

PAINT OR TAR FROM HANDS, TO REMOVE.—Rub the hands with a little butter or grease, and then wash with soap and water.

TO KEEP MOTHS FROM CLOTHES.—A few clippings of Russian leather laid in the drawers and boxes where the clothes are kept.

SPOONS FOR BOILED EGGS.—Cheap bone spoons are the best with which to eat eggs. Silver spoons become discoloured, owing to the sulphurous matter contained in the eggs. The quickest method of removing these stains from silver spoons is to rub them with salt between the thumb and finger.

HOW TO KEEP YOURSELF WARM.—Should there be insufficient clothing upon the bed, lay a sheet of brown paper, or newspaper, under the quilt. This will answer all the purposes of a good blanket, and without a heavy weight. A sheet of paper wrapped round the body under the jacket or mantle is a great comfort during a cold winter walk.

APPLE TANSY.—Pare some apples, cut into thin round slices, and fry in butter. Beat up half a dozen eggs in a quart of cream, and pour them upon the apples.

GINGER WINE.—Six gallons of water, and eighteen pounds of lump-sugar. Thin rinds of seven lemons and eight oranges, and eight ounces of ginger. Boil the whole for an hour, and cool. When lukewarm, add the juice of the oranges and lemons, and three pounds of raisins. Work with yeast, and put into the cask with half an ounce of isinglass. Bottle in six or eight weeks.

Odds and Ends.

AN excellent institution has been started in Paris, which works with the happiest results. This is a bicycle exchange. It is situated in the Boulevard de l'Hôpital, and here crowd both buyers and sellers. The bicycles are of every variety, from those only suitable for beginners, to others that are the most perfect of their kind. The would-be seller of a bicycle brings his machine to the market and puts his own price upon it, paying a small commission to the municipal authorities on the sum it fetches. Naturally there is much bargaining and much trying of iron steeds in the place specially set apart for the showing off of the capabilities of the goods offered for sale. The whole thing is brilliantly successful, and might be imitated in England, especially in the large bicycling centres.

Pâté de foie gras owes its existence to a cook who was attached to the household of the Marshal de Contades, the Governor of Alsace, the general who lost the famous battle of Rossbach against Frederick II. of Prussia. This cook, named Claus, tried goose-liver as an experiment in a dish of pastry, and at once achieved a great success. Such was the demand for his *pâtés*, that when the Marshal de Contades left Strasburg in 1790, Claus remained in that city, and marrying the widow of a baker, started in business as a *fabricant de pâtés*. A competitor, however, soon appeared on the scene, named Duzen, who had the idea of adding Perigord truffles to the liver tarts. This combination has never been improved upon, and for a hundred years Strasburg has been the centre of the *pâté de foie gras* industry, exporting, it is said, no less than 100,000 *pâtés* in the well-known tureens every year. Fortunes have been made by several families from the industry, which, however, entails great suffering upon the birds whose livers are destined for the palates of *gourmets*. The canning begins late in October and lasts until April, it being said that the most delicate livers come from geese that have never laid an egg.

A VALUABLE and historical stone has recently found its way into the archaeological collection of the Canadian Institute in New York. It came from Scotland, and is known as "The Plighting Stone o' Lairg." Where it originally came from is not known, but as far back as tradition goes it has been in Sutherlandshire, and is believed to be a Druidical remain. The stone is a disc in shape, a hole being worn through in the centre, and through this hole—doubtless caused by the action of water—persons wishing to make an agreement, either of business or love, shook hands, solemnly promising at the same time to carry out the contract. This was considered as binding as an oath. The stone was built into a wall extending from the church at Lairg, but some years ago this wall was pulled down to make room for a modern church, and from that time the stone has been in private hands until it came into the possession of the Canadian Institute.

"GAIETY and a light heart, in all virtue and decorum, are the best medicine for the young, or rather for all. Solitude and melancholy are poison: they are deadly to all, and above all to the young"—*Talfourd*.

THE name of the heliotrope is derived from two Greek words, which mean "turning toward the sun." It is generally believed that the flower of the heliotrope follows the course of the sun during the day, so that it may always face it, and in some species of the plant this attraction by sunlight really does occur.

COMPLAINTS are often made that it is impossible to dust plaster casts, as the plaster rubs away. But if they are given a bath in the following manner, casts will take the appearance of marble. Put two quarts of water into a kettle or pan, with one ounce of pure curd soap and one ounce of white beeswax cut into small pieces. Let these dissolve together over a slow fire, and, when all the ingredients are thoroughly mixed, tie a piece of fine twine round the cast and dip it into the liquid. Then take the cast out, and after holding it in the air for five minutes, dip it again into the liquid. Let the cast dry for a few days, and then rub it with a soft flannel, a brilliant gloss, which will successfully defy dust, will be the result.

"REPENTANCE is a work carried on at diverse times, and but gradually and with many reverses perfected. It is a work never complete, never entire, unfinished both in its inherent imperfections, and on account of the fresh occasions of exercising it. We are ever sinning, we must ever be renewing our sorrow and our purpose of obedience, repeating our confessions and our prayers for pardon."

THE "Almanach de Gotha" is one of the most interesting and curious of the reference books and almanacks that are published every year. It is published in Germany, under the title of "Der Gothaische Genealogische Hofkalender," and contains nothing but information regarding the nations of the earth and their sovereigns. Here the facts relating to every crowned head, great or small, his family, ancestors, and children, as well as all the collateral branches and ramifications of his family, may be found. The statements made in the "Almanach de Gotha" are absolutely correct, as every year the editor sends proof-sheets of the pages concerning ruling families to their heads, who themselves make all the necessary alterations, and supply any information that may be lacking.

THE latest "Almanach" shows that the oldest reigning prince in Europe is the Grand Duke of Luxembourg, who is eighty years old. The King of Denmark is seventy-eight, the Grand Duke of Saxe-Weimar seventy-eight, whilst Queen Victoria and the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz are both seventy-seven. It also shows that three ruling princes have attained the age of seventy last year, the Duke of Saxe-Altenburg, the Grand Duke of Baden, and the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen. Nine European sovereigns are between sixty and seventy, seven of them being over sixty-five. Eight sovereigns are in the fifties, six in the forties, three in the thirties, and three in the twenties. Queen Wilhelmina of Holland and King Alfonso of Spain are the youngest sovereigns. Queen Victoria heads the list according to length of reign, being

followed by the Emperor of Austria. There are forty sovereigns in Europe, and of these seventeen have reigned more than twenty-five years, and thirteen less than ten years. It is also curious to note that out of thirty-eight reigning houses only twenty-three have heirs in the direct line of succession, and that of the heirs to thrones the Prince of Wales is the eldest, being fifty-five years old; after him comes the Crown Prince of Denmark, who is fifty-three years old. Out of all the heirs to European thrones only twelve are married, and of these six have grandchildren.

THE largest railway bridge in the world crosses the River Danube at Czernavoda. It has recently been opened, and spans the river as well as the land on either side, which is under water during certain portions of the year. The largest spans are over the main current of the river, there being one of 620 feet and four of 455 feet each; the total length of the bridge, without its approaches, being 13,325 feet. The other largest railroad bridges of the world are as follows:—Tay Bridge, 10,725 feet; Mississippi Bridge, 10,600 feet; the Forth Bridge, 7800 feet; Invrody Bridge in Galicia, 4800 feet; and the bridge over the Volga, near Syzran, 4700 feet. The Danube bridge rises over the main channel of the river at such a height that the largest sailing-vessels may pass beneath it even at high-water.

"AMONGST the many advantages of experience, one of the most valuable is that we come to know the range of our own powers, and if we are wise we keep contentedly within them. This relieves us from the malady of eagerness; we know pretty accurately beforehand what our work will be when it is done, and therefore we are not in a hurry to see it accomplished. The coolness of old hands in all departments of labour is due in part to the cooling of the temperament by age, but it is due even more to the fullness of acquired experience."

STEEL pens are now made entirely by machinery. The steel is first cut into ribbons as wide as the length of one pen, and these are passed to machines which cut out the blanks, then shape, stamp, split the points, and place the maker's name on the backs. The pens now have only to be annealed, and this operation being performed they are counted and placed in boxes, these last two stages also being carried out by a machine especially invented for the purpose. Screws, too, are also made entirely by machinery. The thin steel rods from which the screws are made are placed in a machine, which stamps the head, cuts the groove in the top, and then makes the spiral by cutting out the material in a gradually decreasing cone, until finally the point is reached. Watch-screws are made of a size so minute that to the unaided eye they seem like grains of sand, but when viewed through a microscope they are seen to be perfect in every way, even to the groove on the top.

"GOOD humour garnishes, good will beautifies, and good feeling gladdens more effectively than flowers, handsome china, and expensive silver."



Belford's Chatterbox, 1885

FEBRUARY.

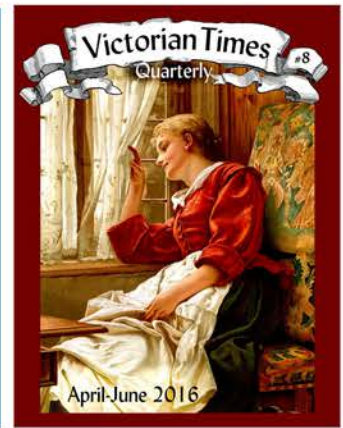
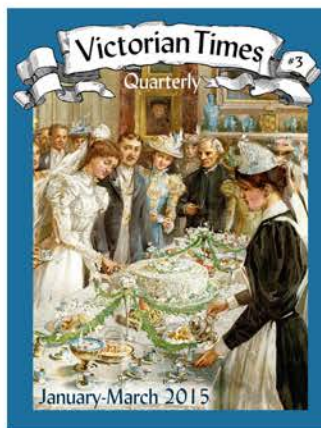
THE days are growing longer, and often something in their sunnier light and warmer breath reminds us of the friends in the garden, who are sleeping in their winter graves, still deep under the snow; but we know the time of resurrection is coming, when in robes new and rainbow-hued, they will rise from the earth into beautiful life. E. P. Roe.

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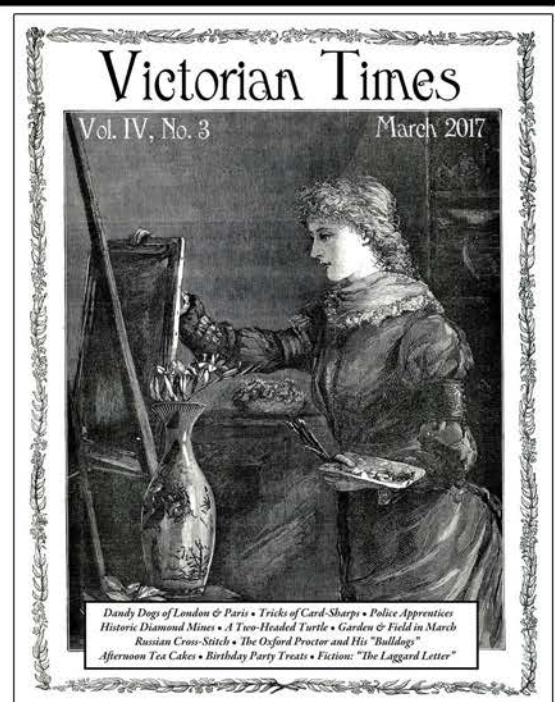
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