Victorian Times

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* *The Girl's Own Paper* ***Cassell's Family Magazine*

The Servant Problem

As I mentioned in my March 2016 editorial, one of the aspects of Victorian life that we moderns find objectionable is the issue of "servants." Today, from the benefit of our egalitarian social view, there's just something wrong with a person who has "servants." We think of such a person as pampered, lazy, and quite probably arrogant—someone who considers himself "above" others. We suspect that person of thinking herself too "good" to get her hands dirty. From there it's an easy step to despise "masters" and "mistresses."

I have no doubt that there were lazy masters and idle mistresses. However, let's dispense with the notion of "laziness" as the reason for having servants. Imagine for a moment that you have found yourself in a world with... no washing machines. No dishwashers. No vacuum cleaners. No permanent-press clothing or sheets. No refrigerators to keep your perishables cold (and certainly no freezers!). No gas or electric stoves or ovens. No microwaves (even I can remember life without microwaves!).

Complicate matters further with no indoor plumbing! There may be a pump in the kitchen, but there's no hot water heater; if you want hot water, you fill a vessel with cold water and put it on the stove. If you want a hot bath, you carry the water from your stove to your tub. We won't even get into the "loo" question. And these are just a few of the indoor issues. To get around, you keep horses or you hire them. You don't have a handy automobile that doesn't need to be fed, groomed, or cleaned up after. So let's rule "laziness" out of the equation.

And yet... and yet... The idea still rankles. Perhaps the reason can be found in Emma Brewer's series on "Our Friends the Servants," which continues in this issue. In her introductory remarks [see the July issue] she uses a few choice words that help sum up our antipathy toward "the servant problem." She begins by pointing out that "The two classes are not only necessary the one to the other, but the one could have no existence but for the other," and adds "...very few of us are outsiders, but belong either to the class who serve or are served."

There it is... that word "class." For the modern reader, and especially the modern American reader, the notion that servants are a "class" rubs one the wrong way. In Victorian thinking, class and station are intertwined; you are of the servant class, so being a servant is your rightful "station" in life. You should not think of rising above it. A servant is a person whose role and station in life are to *serve* another.

At the end of her first installment, Mrs. Brewer ponders what seems to her the mystifying question of why so many young girls in the 1880's preferred to seek jobs in other trades and professions, such as shop-girls or machinists or teachers or typewriters, even though the wages were lower and life might be "wretched." She does recognize the issue of "loss of liberty" that accompanies a life of "service." But she does not, I think, catch on to the fact that a young woman who obtains a job as a poorly paid machinist or clerk is... an *employee.* Her station in life may be to work, but it is no longer to serve. She may work for a "boss," but she is no longer in the relationship of servant to mistress. She is no longer part of a class of people who were defined, by writers like Brewer and Victorians in general, as existing to "serve."

But before we close by smugly confirming that Victorians were class-obsessed and divided their world into the servants and the served, it's worth noting that servants and service weren't invented in the Victorian era. It is a class structure the Victorians inherited from centuries of history. We tend to associate it strongly with this period because so many manuals were written on the topic—both how to serve and how to manage one's servants. But by the time Mrs. Brewer writes her series, the world that is divided neatly between those who serve and those who are served is coming to an end. Three factors are coming together to break down this class structure: education, emigration, and economy. Free education is now available to all, providing the children of servants with the knowledge and tools to look for other trades. Emigration has opened doors to escape Britain's class-conscious society, and forge a new and independent life in the colonies or America. Granted, one might work far harder than one would have as a servant—but in the process one might come to own one's own home, or farm, or business. And finally, a shrinking economy means that fewer and fewer households can afford a staff of servants—and gentlewomen are even being told how they can make ends meet by *becoming* domestics!

Cooks, maids and housekeepers still exist. But thanks to changes like these—changes that have their roots in the Victorian era—they are no longer servants. They no longer belong to a special "class." They are employees.

—Moira Allen, Editor
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Peculiar Playing Cards.

By George Clulow.

"WHAT'S on the cards?" A question common enough when the actual knowledge of the moment does not afford a positive answer; a question, too, which has an origin taking us back to the earliest use of playing cards. But to how many of those to whom playing cards as a means of recreation are familiar is it known what *may* be found on the cards? Yet upon these "bits of painted cardboard" there has been expended a greater amount of ingenuity and of artistic effort than is to be found in any other form of popular amusement. Pope's charming epic, "The Rape of the Lock," gives us, in poetic form, a description of the faces of the cards as known to him and to the card-players of his time:—

> "Behold four kings in majesty revered,
> With hoary whiskers and a forky beard;
> And four fair queens, whose hands sustain a flower,
> Th' expressive emblem of their softer pow'r;
> Four knaves in garbs succinct, a trusty band,
> Caps on their heads and halberds in their hand."

It is not our purpose to historically trace the evolution of cards—this is a subject beyond the reach of the present article—but a look farther afield will give us evidence that during the last three centuries there has been a constant adaptation of cards to purposes which take them beyond their intention as the instruments for card playing only. The idea that playing cards had their origin in the later years of Charles VI. of France may be disposed of at once as a popular error, though it is true that the earliest

FIG. 1.

authentic examples which still exist are parts of the two packs of cards which were produced for the amusement of that King, by the hands of Jacques Gringonneur, and of which seventeen are preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris.

These are the most early forms of playing cards, and are known as "Tarots" (as distinguished from "Numerals," or cards which have the consecutively marked "suit" signs), and which had evidently a purpose outside the ordinary games of playing cards as known to us. The "Tarot" pack consists variously of seventy-two, seventy-seven, or seventy-eight cards, including the "Tarots," which give them their distinctive name. "Tarot" as a game was familiar three centuries ago in England, but is so no longer, although it has a limited use in other parts of Europe still. One of the "Tarot" cards, of the Bibliothèque Nationale, "La Mort," is shown as the first of our illustrations (Fig. 1).

FIG. 2.

Familiar to those who are conversant with the literature of playing cards will be the Knave of Clubs, shown in Fig. 2, which is one of the fragments of a pack of cards found, in 1841, by Mr. Chatto, in the waste-

FIG. 3.

paper used to form the pasteboard covers of a book. These cards are printed in outline from wood blocks and the colour filled in by stencilling, a method employed in the manufacture of cards down to a very few years ago. The date of these cards may safely be taken as not more recent than 1450, and they are most interesting as being coeval with, if not antecedent to, the most early form of printed book illustration as shown in the "Biblia Pauperum." * The archaic drawing of the features, with its disregard of facial perspective, and the wondrous cervical anatomy, do not lessen our admiration of the vigour and "go" shown in this early example of the art of the designer and wood engraver.

* A "block book," with its illustrations and text cut on a wood block, and which is regarded as the immediate precursor of the type-printed book.

FIG. 4.

It is in interesting relation to the knaves of a pack of cards to note the curious conservatism which has belonged to them during the last four centuries and a half. In a MS. in the British Museum, written in the year 1377, the monkish writer, in a moralization on the life of man, suggests its resemblance to a game of cards; and he gives us a description and the attributes of some of the cards. Of those which we now know as knaves, he says two of them hold their halberds or arms downwards and two of them upwards—a distinction which is retained on many of the playing cards still manufactured.

In Fig. 3 we have one of the cards from a series of "Tarots" of Italian origin, also preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale, and which may be dated about 1470. These are very beautiful in design, and indicate that they were thought worthy of the employment of the highest artistic talent.

We have an example of a somewhat more modern date in the Knave of Diamonds (Fig. 4), in which the costume and character point to the early part of the sixteenth century as the period of their production. This also is from a fragment discovered in the boards of an old book—a source which may be commended to the watchfulness of the bookbinder, as the bindings of old books are still likely to provide other interesting examples.

Before us are parts of two packs of cards which were discovered in Edinburgh, in 1821, pasted up in a book of household accounts, one of its leaves bearing the date of 1562; and it would be no great stretch of fancy to believe that they were taken to Edinburgh by some follower of Mary Queen of Scots on her return to Scotland a year before this date. These cards are of Flemish make; on one of them is the name "Jehan Henault," who was a card-maker in Antwerp in 1543, and in passing we may remark that at this period there was a considerable trade between London and France in playing cards of Flemish manufacture. Old playing cards may be looked for in most unlikely places; a few years ago two nearly complete packs were found wedged in an old cross-bow, for the purpose of securing the bow where it had worked loose in the head; they were of sixteenth century manufacture, and had doubtless been the means of relieving the

FIG. 5.

tedium of many a weary watch or waiting, in field or fortress, before they found their resting-place of a couple of centuries in the

obsolete missive weapon where they were discovered.

We find on many cards some attempts at portraiture. Thus we have in Fig. 5 Clovis as the King of Clubs, but depicted in a costume of the time of Henry IV. of France,

FIG. 6.

the card itself being of that period. This, as well as Fig. 4, is from a pack of fifty-two "Numeral" cards, printed from wood-block and stencilled in colour.

Returning to "Tarots," we have in Fig. 6 (Le Fou) one of the cards designed by Mitelli about 1680, it is said to the order of a member of the Bentivoglio family (parts of whose armorial bearings are to be found on many of the cards), for the "Tarrocchini di Bologna," a special form of the game of Tarot, a series of spirited designs of vigorous and careful drawing, and the most artistically valuable of any of the Tarots with which we are acquainted. In them not only the Tarot series but the ordinary suits display a quaint conception and generally elegant design.

It is curious to note that in the eleven packs or parts of packs of these Bolognese cards which we have met with in various parts of Europe there is not any uniformity of manufacture, but while the designs are the same and evidently produced from the same copper plates, the making of them into cards for the purpose of play bears indication of what might be termed a "domestic" manufacture. For some time the game was interdicted in Bologna, and it is possible that this may have induced a surreptitious production and illicit sale of the cards. Fortunately, the interdict did not prevent the preservation to us of this interesting series.

At different periods between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries, but notably in the two earlier of them, card "suits" have been used other than the familiar ones of Hearts, Spades, Clubs, and Diamonds, and much ingenuity and imagination have been exercised upon them. Among the most beautiful of such cards we take the set designed and engraved by Virgil Solis, the celebrated Nuremberg artist and engraver, in which the suit signs are Lions, Peacocks, Monkeys, and Parroquets. In Fig. 7 we have the Ace of

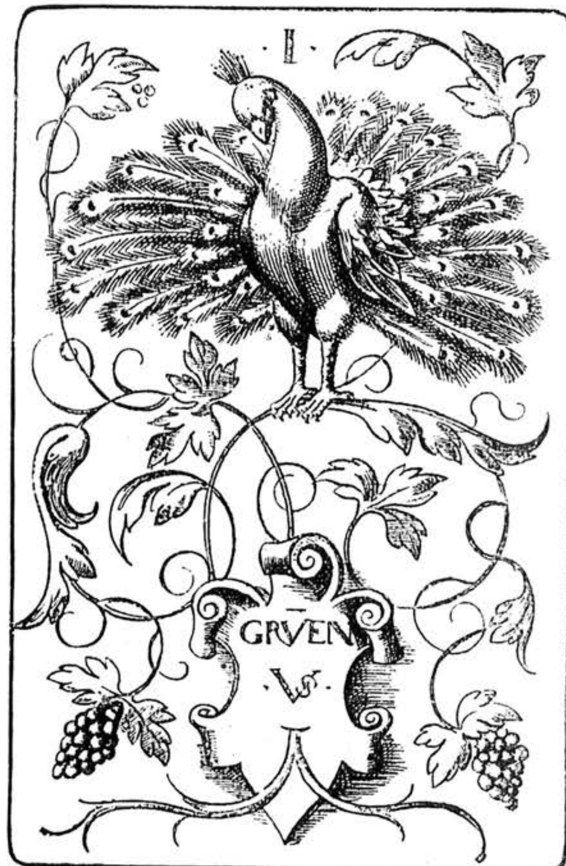


FIG. 7.

Peacocks. The aces are lettered with the distinctive suit-titles of the German cards, viz., "Grun," "Eicheln," "Schellen," and "Herzen." The pack consists of fifty-two, divided into four suits of thirteen cards each; the date of these cards is between 1535 and 1560, and they are an important and valuable item in the artistic history of playing cards.

Another example of this variation in the suit signs, as well as of a variation from the ordinary rectangular form, is to be found in the round card (Fig. 8), of a somewhat earlier date than the preceding, where the suits are Hares, Parrots, Pinks, and Columbines, and which when complete make also a pack of fifty-two, the value of the cards following the sequence of King, Queen, and Knave being indicated by the Arabic numeral at the base of and the Roman figure at the top of each, the card shown being the Six of Hares.

FIG. 9.

FIG. 8.

In both of them there is a great decorative facility and clever adaptation to the form of the card. To indicate the coincidence of idea, in the next (Fig. 9) we have a round card from India—one of the "Coate" cards of a pack, or more properly series, of 120 cards. The material used in their manufacture is matted vegetable fibre coated with lacquer and painted by hand. Most of the playing cards of Persia are also round, and are similarly decorated by the same means. About a dozen years ago round playing cards were patented in America as a novelty, in ignorance of the fact that cards of that shape had probably been in common use in the East, centuries before the discovery of that great and inventive country!

As an illustration (Fig. 10) of the suit signs of Southern Europe, we take a card from a Portuguese pack of 1610, the "Cavalier de Bâtons" (Clubs); the other suit signs are Swords, Coins, and Cups. The anatomy of the charger and the self-satisfied aspect of the Cavalier are striking; and as to the former, we are reminded of the bizarre examples of hippic adornment which,

FIG. 10.

on a summer Bank Holiday, may be seen on the road to Epping Forest.

Among the secondary uses to which playing cards have been applied, we find them as political weapons. Among such cards are those which were produced to commemorate what is historically known as the "Titus Oates Plot" in 1678, one of the most prominent incidents being the murder of Sir Edmondbury Godfrey, who is here shown (Fig. 11), carried on a horse, the day after his murder, to Primrose Hill, where the body was put into a ditch, the carrying on the horse and the discovery in the ditch being shown as coincident. They were

FIG. 11.

produced, probably, as one of the means of inflaming the public mind against the Roman Catholics, which led to the execution, among others, of the Viscount Stafford in 1680. As illustration of costume and of stirring incident, these cards are, apart from their intention, an admirable and interesting series, and are worth study from their historic and artistic aspects.

We come now to playing cards designed as methods of education, of which a considerable number have been produced — and which cover the widest possible range--from cookery to astrology! In the middle and latter half of the seventeenth century, England, France and Germany abounded in

FIG. 12.

examples, the most attractive being the series of "Jeux Historiques," invented by Desmarests, a member of the French Academy—acting under the instructions of

FIG. 13.

FIG. 14.

FIG. 15.

Cardinal Mazarin—as aids to the education of the boy King, Louis XIV. In Figs. 12, 13, 14, and 15 are given examples from the four packs so designed, and they afford a good instance of the primary use of cards being subordinated to the educational. The first of these is the "Jeu de Fables," with representations and short notices of the heroes and heroines of classic history, the four Kings being Jupiter, Neptune, Pluto, and Saturn. The second is the "Jeu de Géographie," the four suits being formed by the division of the world into four quarters, each having its distinctive group of thirteen designs, with brief geographical descriptions; Great Britain being shown as the Eight of Hearts. If designed by an Englishman, it would surely have been as Queen of that suit that our country would have appeared. We have then the "Jeu de Rois de France," intended to teach the history and succession of the Kings of France, whom we find depicted in their numeric order, from Pharamond to Louis XIV., with the length of their reigns and short biographies.

The third and fourth of these packs are singular in consisting in the one case of all Kings, and the other of all Queens, in the "Jeu de Reynes Renommées," the famous Queens of history, from the Queen of Sheba downward, furnishing the design, and who are classified under the descriptions of Good, Wise, Holy, Clever, Brave, Happy, Cruel, Licentious, Capricious, and Unfortunate; our Queen Elizabeth being placed as "clever," and Mary Stuart as "unfortunate." They are beautiful examples of design and workmanship, and are the work of the Florentine artist-engraver, Stefano de la Bella.

(To be continued.)

Song of the Brook.

I COME from haunts of coot and hern;
I make a sudden sally,
And sparkle out among the fern,
To bicker down the valley.

By thirty hills I hurry down,
Or slip between the ridges,
By twenty thorps, a little town,
And half a hundred bridges;

Till last by Philip's farm I flow,
To join the brimming river;
For men may come, and men may go,
But I go on forever.

I chatter over stony ways
In little sharps and trebles;
I bubble into eddying bays,
I babble on the pebbles.

With many a curve my banks I fret,
By many a field and fallow,
And many a fairy foreland set
With willow-weed and mallow.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow,
To join the brimming river;
For men may come, and men may go,
But I go on forever.

I wind about, and in and out,
With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
And here and there a grayling;

And here and there a foamy flake
Upon me as I travel,
With many a silver water break
Above the golden gravel.

I steal by lawns and plots of ground;
I slide by hazel covers;
I move the sweet forget-me-nots
That grow for happy lovers;

And draw them all along, and flow
To join the brimming river;
For men may come, and men may go,
But I go on forever.

I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance
Among my skimming swallows;
I make the netted sunbeams dance
Against my sandy shallows;

I murmur under moon and stars,
In brambly wildernesses;
I linger by my shingly bars;
I loiter round my cresses;

And out again I curve and flow,
To join the brimming river;
For men may come, and men may go,
But I go on forever.

TENNYSON.

AUGUST.

WHO can think of this month without connecting it with grouse? And what pleasant visions does not that word at once conjure up? Rambles over the lonely Welsh hills where, in many a valley, rise the trout-streams so soon to be polluted by coal-pits and iron-foundries—on the bleak Yorkshire fells, from which some monster factory, with its myriad windows, is dimly descried—best of all, on the purple-waved moors of dear Scotland, with all the freedom and picturesqueness of their wild life! Marvellously as the red grouse has enriched and civilised Scotland, it is only in the last sixty years that its pursuit has become fashionable.

Should a quieter amusement be sought this month, it may easily be found in a trip on a yacht. Few things, for instance, are more pleasurable than lying becalmed in the long mellow evenings of this month off, say, Spurn Head (or any other headland will do as well), and watching the habits of the sea-fowl. They are unsuspicious, and approach man, as yet, with fearlessness, not having realised that the term of their legal protection ended on August 1st. So the cormorants fly swiftly by, in a line, over the oily surface to their fishing grounds further out at sea; a greater black-backed gull, that chartered robber, hovers round, sure that something will turn up for his omnivorous maw; the guillemots dive, near our craft, after the young whiting, and can be traced in their subaqueous course, so calm is it, by the ripples above; the terns hawk around, veritable sea-swallows, dive and bring up, by its middle, a young whiting, glittering like a bar of silver. This they throw up in the air in order to catch it head-foremost, then drop themselves, and if they miss, fling it up again until they succeed and swallow the dainty morsel. Meanwhile, the porpoises roll in wheel-like gambols up the estuary; grateful whiffs of country air and faint echoes of rural life float seawards, as the song and blithe laughter of the forecastle breaks upon a dream of home; far to leeward the eye passes

> ———"up the beach, by the sandy down
> Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the white-wall'd town,"

and rests upon a windmill, or a grey church-spire, or some familiar object of every-day life.

It is too hot at present to enter into statistics of oyster-fishing and farming. It is better worth while to point out the curious collection of objects to which oysters have attached themselves, and which Mr. Buckland has on view at the Museum of Economic Fish Culture, South Kensington. There may be seen examples of oysters adhering to those singularly-formed small pipes known to smokers as "plague-pipes," which are often dredged up off the Whitstable grounds. One specimen is also shown (and that a unique one) which is attached to a piece of coal; others have chosen still more odd locations, as fishermen's boots, whelks, crabs, a flat-iron, a spoon, an old tin box, an iron boot-heel, &c.

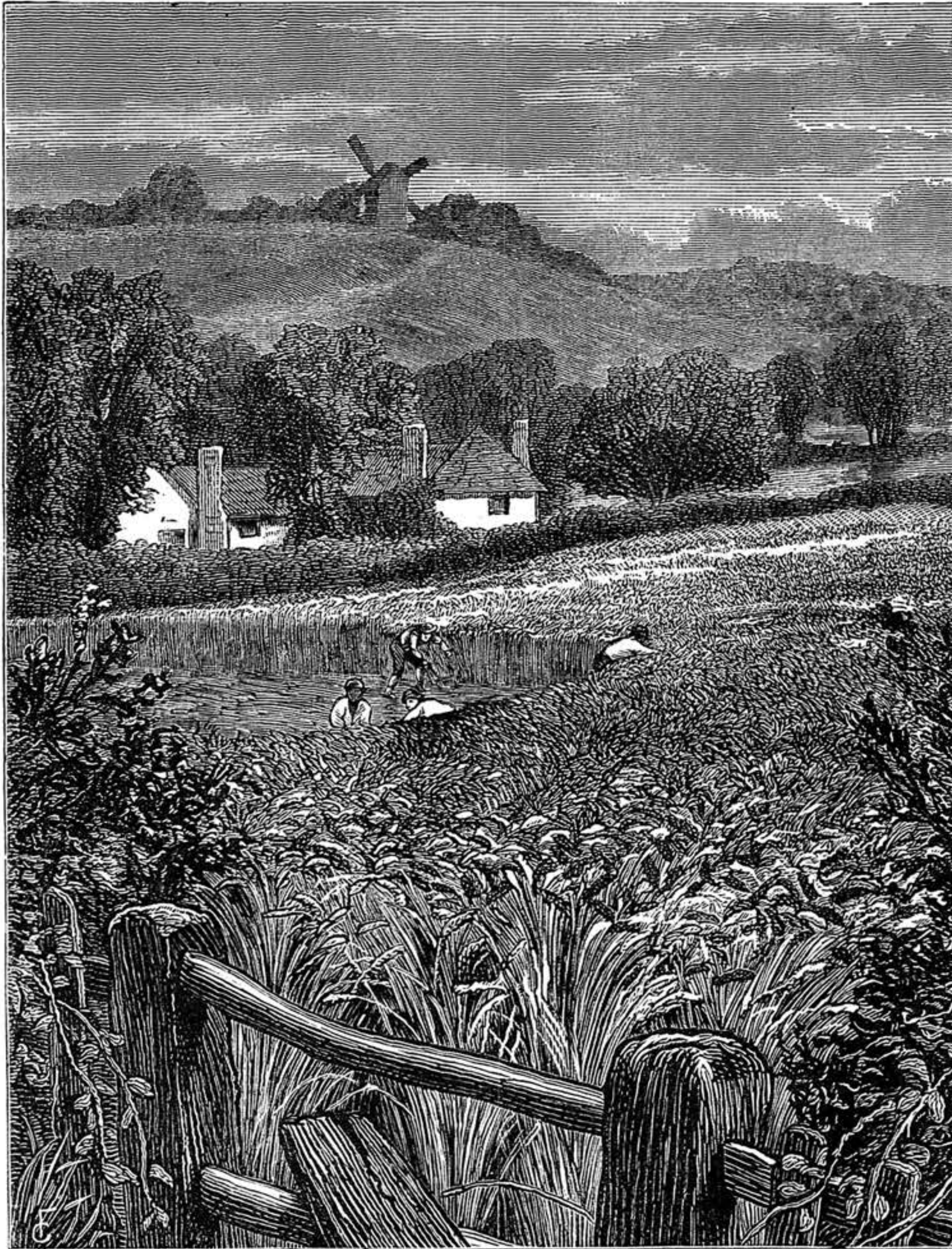
Towards the end of August, if the summer has been fine, harvest will be in full activity. Reaping-machines whirr on all sides, and fling out their sprawling arms over the golden corn as if never tired of clutching its treasures. The tender little hare-bell, which is emphatically autumn's flower on a chalky soil, waves its flowers on every bank. Apples and plums are fast ripening in the laden orchards. The nights are dark at eight p.m., and sometimes at sunset the "night rack comes rolling up ragged and brown," like the pall of summer. Still, the deeper beauty of autumn, and the hectic flush which passes over woodland scenery, and robes the country in glory, has yet to come. The sylvan year, whose lovelier features we have pointed out month after month lately, still awaits its apotheosis, and then we may draw the curtains and thrust logs on the fire, for Nature, like so many of her creatures, will have begun to hibernate.

If wet weather has lately prevailed, multitudes of mushrooms may be looked for in the meadows. From possessing many of the qualities of meat, mushrooms are exceedingly nutritious, to say nothing of their value in an epicure's eyes; 1874 was a year most prolific in them, and in every kind of fungus. These are commonly lumped together as toadstools, and prejudice, allying itself to ignorance, denounces them in a body as poisonous; the fact being that the larger "toadstools" of this country number about 750 species, of which only about a dozen are actually poisonous; however, the greatest caution is needed in their selection.

The fields and gardens are no longer cheerful with the songs of birds. White of Selborne remarks that August is by far the most silent month of the year. The termination of nesting cares also for the most part ends their powers of song, though many birds

which become mute about Midsummer resume their notes in September, as the thrush, blackbird, and woodlark. "Are birds induced to sing again," remarks that genial naturalist, "because the temperature of autumn resembles that of spring?"

Hollyhocks and dahlias will now require stakes affixing to them, or wind and rain will ruin them. the wintering crops of cabbage and cauliflower which are to come in next spring. Lettuces should also be put in for winter use. The giant Rocca onion, which frequently grows to over a pound in weight, must be sown now, and either transplanted or much thinned next March. It is quite equal to a Spanish onion, and well worth some trouble to grow it successfully.



"HARVEST WILL BE IN FULL ACTIVITY"

Any early-flowering bulbs may be put in for next season. Polyanthuses, daisies, primroses, &c., ought to be propagated now by division. Budding roses must also be prosecuted vigorously, and those budded in previous months be attended to, shoots of the briar nipped off, &c. Bedded plants require plenty of watering. Towards the end of the month, the bronze hues of autumn will appear on their leaves, warning the gardener to save what he wants while yet there is time. In the kitchen garden this is the time to sow

Celery should be carefully earthed up, and followed up week by week, if it is to attain any size. As for potatoes, let them be housed during the first spell of fine weather. All experience proved during the last few years that leaving them in the ground is only to invite disease which, whatever its nature may be, is certainly engendered by wet and thunder. Let fruit be also gathered, rather under than over ripe if it is to be stored; indeed, extreme attention is demanded this month for the orchard.

M. G. WATKINS.

OUR FRIENDS THE SERVANTS.

By EMMA BREWER.

CHAPTER III.

"As a servant longeth for the shadow, and as a hireling looketh for the end of his work."

—*Job.*

IN almost every occupation for women and girls, except domestic service, there are certain hours of every day and the whole of Sunday absolutely free of control of employers; that is to say, hours at the disposal of the employed in which they can amuse themselves in any way they please, and concerning which no questions are asked, providing the hours of work are well and faithfully rendered.

Much to the credit of a large number of girls and women, these free hours are often devoted to study, to caring for their homes, to teaching in evening and in Sunday-schools, to visiting the sick, and in many like occupations. But the privilege so highly valued is, that the hours are their own, to use in any way they please, either in varying the occupation or in seeking amusement; and they consider it no mean advantage that at a certain hour in the evening they can put on their bonnets, and turn their backs on business until the morrow.

As I have said, *domestic service* stands out as an exception. The work goes on from morning till night, every day alike; and from the nature of the employment this cannot well be avoided. Those who choose domestic service are quite aware of this, and are prepared for it. Of course it greatly depends upon the families with whom they live whether their work is a hardship or a pleasure, a possible or an impossible task; and on entering a situation they hope for the best.

To live in a pure moral atmosphere, surrounded by kindness and homelike treatment, far outbalances the so-called privileges of other callings; if it were not so there would be no servants at all. Of course there are many poor girls who find the reverse of this pleasant picture, and who are so unhappy in their service as to have nothing to sweeten their lives but the thought of an occasional "day out," and a talk with the tradespeople who call for orders.

As long ago as fifty years *Punch* took up the cause of servants so situate, and tried to improve their condition by ridiculing the unreasonable demands of a mistress seeking to provide herself with a maid-of-all-work. He supposes her to be writing for the character of one Bridget Duster. She says, "I have kept house for five and twenty years, in which time I have constantly endeavoured to find a servant who should be without a fault; yet though I have given £8 a year, with tea and sugar—would you believe it?—I have never once succeeded." She goes on to enquire: "*Is Bridget an early riser?*—without any reference to the time she may be allowed to go to bed. A good maid-of-all-work should, so to speak, be like a needle, and always sleep with one eye open. *Has Bridget any followers?* Such creatures I never allow. I conceive that a servant ought to be a sort of nun, and from the moment she enters your house should take leave of all the world beside. Has she not her kitchen, for willing hands always to do something in? And then for company, doesn't she see the butcher, the baker, the dustman, to say nothing of the sweep?" She finishes up by writing, "I require a servant to consider herself a sort of human kitchen-clock. She must have no temper, no sulks, no flesh-and-blood feelings, as they are ridiculously called; but must go as regularly through her work as though she was made of steel springs and brass pulleys. For such a person there is a happy home in the house of your obedient servant, PAMELA SQUAW."

What a house for a poor girl to find herself in! And as to leaving with a good character, it would be next to impossible. Thank God there are very few such mistresses nowadays! although there are still many with whom to live is not a happy existence, and with whom servants have no advantages to compensate for loss of freedom and companionship. Still, just as there are good, bad, and indifferent servants, so there are good, bad, and indifferent mistresses; but there are many more good than bad in both cases.

We have said that English family life is a beautiful institution, and *so it is;* but in order to keep it in all its beauty, purity, and sweetness, there must be no schism in it, and every individual forming it must have his or her privileges and springs of hope. What is good for one member is good for another. The boys and girls at school look forward to their half-holidays and open-air games; the elder daughters to the visits of their sweethearts and to society generally; the parents have many sources of hope and interest; *but the servants—what of them?*

Well, except their "day out" and what they shall wear on the occasion, they have little to look forward to, nothing to vary the monotony of the long hours of work; and yet they are by no means an unimportant part of the family life, and, if the truth must be told, it is mainly to their skill, devotion, and faithfulness that all the component parts work in peace and harmony.

If it be a fact that they are an essential part of our family life, then of necessity they must have home enjoyments. The music-halls and low-class theatres are not suitable places of amusement for those who are one with us in family, even if hours were at their disposal to go to them.

What, then, is to be done for those who cannot select their own pleasures, and who are dependent on us for happiness?

There are many ways of making life pleasant for them. For example, servants are as a rule very fond of singing, and often have very good voices; would it not be possible to have them upstairs once a week, if only for half an hour in the evening, and teach them some part-songs, of which there are so many pretty and easy ones? This would be something for them to look forward to, especially if it were in company with the rest of the family.

On Sunday evenings an addition to family prayer might be the singing of hymns. Again, it would be a real pleasure to look forward to if in the summer the servants could, just for one day, be the mistress's *guests*, taken by her to some place in the country, or by the sea if they be London servants, and to London if they be country ones. Let the *rôle* of mistress and maid be set aside for that day, and let *friendship* be the ruling power on both sides.

Again, on certain days when everyone looks forward to some little pleasure—*Boxing-Day*, for example—would it not be possible to take the whole of the household to some good concert or entertainment, no distinction being made, but all members of the family sitting together, thereby proving the oneness of the home-life? These little acts of kindness and consideration would bring the members of the family into touch one with the other, and bring out all that is good in mistresses and maids; and for the latter, it would sweeten labour, and increase their respect for the mistresses.

This sort of thing has been done for years in some houses I know, and better servants or happier homes cannot be found than these.

A lady, whose home is a happy one, on being asked how much liberty she gave her servants, answered, "As much as I give my children."

These are only hints of what has been and could be done to render family life more complete and happy; for surely in these days of clever, beneficent schemes, thought out and built up by ladies for the recreation of toilers in London and in our great towns in their masses, there will be no difficulty in each lady providing for the members of her own individual home if she put her mind and desire into it.

For so large a class as domestic women servants—which includes something like two millions in the United Kingdom—it would be obviously impossible to provide any general rule of recreation, and even if it could be done it would be the destruction of family life for outsiders to interfere.

It must be the work of each individual mistress or housekeeper to think of and carry out her own plan for providing her servants with suitable recreation, which is as necessary to their health and usefulness as food and lodging. If one individual can create an atmosphere of friendliness and comfort for the few entrusted to her, and get near to their hearts, she will have done a good work in the world.

It will not always be easy to arrange for servants a share of those enjoyments of life in which we, as mistresses, freely indulge, and it must often be performed at some sacrifice of convenience; but it must be done all the same, for it stands to reason that the social feelings of the employed want exercise quite as much as those of the employers. If they are always kept to their work, with nothing to vary the monotony, how can they be perfectly happy and content? It is contrary to nature, and only harm can come of it. I hear that betting and drinking are becoming a practice in many kitchens, and the excuse offered is, that the maids are so dull they must do something for a change.

Where liberty can be given in matters such as going to church or chapel, it ought not to be withheld. A girl who has been brought up all her life as a Dissenter should not be compelled to go to the parish church, nor a member of the Church of England forced to go to chapel. It makes a great difference in the lives of our servants if liberty is accorded in this direction.

I have had a Welsh servant in my house for a long time, and for the first few Sundays she went with the other members of the household to our parish church. I soon noticed that she was losing her spirits and bright look, and found on enquiry she was very miserable at giving up her Welsh Methodist service, which she clung to with great tenacity. By granting her wish at once I have retained a good and faithful servant. She has never abused the liberty so given; on the contrary, she has made me greatly respect the sect to which she belongs.

The difficulty of managing our servants is, I

know, to many mistresses, a very real one, and productive of much sorrow and vexation; and it was with some interest and curiosity that I heard some little time ago of half a dozen mistresses being asked to meet a member of the Press, in order to give their opinions on the subject of maid-servants generally, and to express what they considered to be the cause of the unsatisfactory relationship between mistresses and maids.

After many opinions of little value, one declared it was the want of education, while another considered too much education was the source of the trouble; but the real cause of the difficulty, I think, was touched when one of the ladies remarked, "It does not matter how kind you are to them, or how much you put yourself out for them, they look upon you as their natural enemy; it has always been so, and always will be, and it comes from our *dual establishments—I mean, two families in one house, with no go-between but the children. One family lives upstairs, and the other downstairs*."

This, to my mind, is the root of the evil. There is no unity in the home. The dual establishment is an exhibition of class against class; and love, sympathy, and devotion have no place, no common ground for exercise. Harmony is out of the question; perfect confidence equally so. The mistresses are not interested in the family downstairs, and the downstairs in their own fashion take care of themselves. *It is a house* divided against itself; and the mischief goes beyond this—it is a *depreciation of the dignity of manual labour*.

With the disappearance of the dual establishment, much of the difficulty and trouble of mistress and maid will vanish also.

A very sore point with many mistresses is the way their servants dress when they are out of the house. It is quite true that one's nerves are jarred occasionally by the startling mixture of colours and incongruity of style and material; but it must be remembered that many of them have had no training or education in this direction, any more than in the duties of the household. The dress, however, is a much more delicate subject to set right, because personal vanity is involved.

To dress in the way which so offends good taste is not by any means a vice, but the result often of an earnest desire to look their best on the day they go to see their friends, especially their young men. In this, as in most other things, the heart of a domestic servant is worked by just the same machinery as that which sets her mistress's going.

Of course the mistake of their dress is palpable, even to their eyes. Poor girls! they have spent their hard-earned wages in vain, and they do not look half as well as in their pretty home-dress; still, they will not take advice or correction from mistress or housekeeper, who, they believe, want to deprive them of the power of looking nice when they go out, and wish to keep them down.

The fault of what is called over-dressing will never be corrected by anger, sneers, or laughter; but example, kindness, and real sympathy will do much to tone down the startling effects, until education and the knowledge of the fitness of things step in, and produce good taste in dressing.

It is noticeable that the higher you go in the scale of domestic service, the neater and more suitable is their outdoor attire. Take a general servant and a lady's maid. The latter will be much more quietly dressed than the former, not because she is a better woman or more faithful servant, but because she has more knowledge of the fitness of things. Nothing but a firm belief that the interest in them is real will induce a servant to take advice upon so important a matter as personal appearance.

A kind, overworked, soiled little lodging-house servant came into one of the rooms occupied by two girls one evening, and banged down the lamp on the table in her usual style, and displayed face and eyes swollen with crying. The girls wanted to know what was the matter. Her sorrow was, that she had received permission from her mistress to go the next afternoon to tea with her sister; and a young man lodger, who, she said, was half-inclined to keep company with her, was also to be there. The little maid had bought a new dress and jacket for the occasion, but she had not got a hat. She could not afford any more money to buy a new one, but had bought a shape for a few pence, intending to cover it herself; but the mistress said it was all nonsense, and would not allow her the time to trim it; and, bursting into tears, she said, "If I goes in my old 'at, Jim Baker 'll 'ave naught to say to me, for 'e's that perticklér about the way gells dress—'e is!"

Of course she was not disappointed of her hat. One of the girls made it with as much care as though it were for herself. I mention it to show that this little slavey was a type of most other girls. She wanted to look nice that she might give pleasure to her friends, "*specially* Jim."

A little time ago there was quite a raid against the pretty caps and aprons worn by most of our servants in the present day, some of them declaring they would rather starve than carry about with them these badges of servitude. I thought our Editor's remark to one of these servants was so good that I mention it here. He said, "Soldiers are not ashamed of their uniforms, neither are nurses of theirs; on the contrary, they are proud of them. Why should you be ashamed of a white cap and apron that will make you look dainty and nice?"

In one of our colonies, where the cap and apron rebellion was in great force, the parlour-maid, housemaid, and cook in the house of the Governor went to the mistress on the day of a large dinner-party and reception without cap and apron, stating that they did not intend to wear them again, and, if it were insisted upon, they would forfeit their month's wages and leave that morning. The lady, English to the backbone, although sorely perplexed as to what she should do about the dinner and reception, said quietly, "Then go, if you please, at once."

The lady called her daughters, whose ages were from twenty to twenty-six, and who were most sensibly brought up, and consulted with them as to what could be done. They knew it was impossible to get help at so short a notice, and determined to fill the posts themselves. One took the cook's duties, the second the parlour-maid's, and the third answered the door and assisted at waiting table, each wearing a black dress, cap, and apron. Everything went off well, and very few of the guests were aware of the honour they were enjoying of being waited upon by high-born damsels. I do not believe there is one among our friends the servants who would not have blamed and felt ashamed of the three wilful servants, and sympathised with the mistress.

(*To be continued.*)

MERCY TO MAN AND BEAST.

THE other day we heard of a story relating to the care of the poor by London clergy which will interest our readers. It having been decided to build some schools in connection with a church not far from St. Paul's Cathedral, a bishop presided at one of the committee meetings to finally approve the builder's estimate, when one of the younger curates, knowing well that among his poor flock many working men are cheated of their just wage, begged my lord chairman to see that a proper and just bond should be given by the builder that his scaffoldmen, bricklayers, plasterers, etc., should be assured a reasonable payment without reduction. After considerable discussion a clause was inserted in the agreement to this effect, for especially in the service of God's church it was deemed right that His poor should be thus far protected.

This incident reminds us of a story connected with a horse, and was told in olden times by *Sabbas de Castilion*, a knight of St. John of Jerusalem. There was once in Calabria a law made that whoso would complain against any man of ingratitude was bound to ring a certain little bell appointed for that purpose, at the sound of which certain commissioners met together, who having heard the complaint and defence of the parties, if they found that the party grieved had ground for his grief, they would presently award the complainant some satisfaction under penalty of a great fine. Now it happened that a Calabrian having for some years drawn full service out of his horse, which by labour and old age was fallen blind, became full of sores and was lame and altogether unprofitable, drove and beat the poor beast out of his stable, so that wanting meat he was fain to feed poorly abroad, pitifully tormented with wasps and flies. The horse limping and searching for some shadowy place, lighted upon the chapel, mistaking it for his stable. By chance there stuck in the bell-rope some boughs of a tree which the beast tugging at caused the bell to ring. The judges presently came together after the accustomed manner, and finding nobody there but the horse which they saw so lean and in such ill plight, they made him be brought into the market-place, and causing the owner to be brought before them, straightly enjoined him to take the poor horse into his care again, to feed him and use him in all respects as he was wont to be used in his days of health and strength, natural equity requiring that forasmuch as the horse had spent his years in his master's service he should in his old age be maintained by him.

It is surely the will of Almighty God that honest work, whether by man or by dumb beasts, should be decently rewarded by those who draw service from them for their own benefit.

OUR FRIENDS THE SERVANTS.

By EMMA BREWER.

CHAPTER IV.

"If thou wilt have a good servant find the servant a good mistress."—*Quarles.*

THE CHOICE of a mistress and the knowledge of her character is every whit as important to the maid seeking a situation, as her own character and qualifications are to the lady looking out for a servant; but the opportunities open to each for obtaining this information are widely different and altogether unequal.

A mistress would never think of engaging a servant without first enquiring into her character, and suitability for the situation from the lady with whom she last lived, nor would a good servant care to enter a situation where the lady did not trouble herself to do this—she would feel there was something wrong.

As we all know, there are no obstacles in the way of a lady obtaining every particular as to the life and character of the maid seeking her service, and quite right that it should be so; for the entrance of a new member into her household, is no small matter, and may affect the happiness of all within the home.

I know some people who invariably make it a subject of prayer that they may choose aright when engaging a new servant, so important do they think it.

For the mistress then all is as it should be; but what of the other party to the contract? What opportunity has the servant of learning anything about the lady or her household. It rarely happens that she is allowed to speak to the out-going servant lest she should malign the mistress whom she is leaving and speak ill of the house; neither, as a rule, is she allowed to look over the house which is to be her home, or to see the other servants—and so she is cut off from all lawful means of getting any reliable information. But this does not hold good on the other side; the lady may be very bitter against the maid who is seeking service elsewhere, but the poor girl has to risk this, and all that may be said against her, and abide by the consequence.

It would be better, I am sure, if the privileges appertaining to both parties in the contract were equal. Let a servant, before she is definitely engaged, see the house and the people with whom she is to live, and judge for herself if it is the kind of situation she wants. If this were done there would be a diminution in the practice of leaving and dismissing at the end of the first month, and much discomfort and expense saved to both mistresses and maids.

Everyone should be careful in taking a new servant, and very truthful when sending one away. The power of giving a character should be looked upon as a trust from God for which the mistress must give account to Him; the character should be truthful, without extenuation, or exaggeration, and never given in anger. False characters, in whichever direction they tend, are as bad as false weights and measures, and more disastrous in their effects, and for the honour of mistresses generally no one should punish by threatening to hold or withhold a girl's character.

There is no class of workers in our country to whom it is of so much importance that characters should be freely and honourably given, as to honest servants.

Important as it is that mistresses should be assured of the high character of a new servant, I think it is even more important that a servant should be quite sure of the character of the mistress to whom she is engaging herself. I feel very strongly on this point, as it was only a short time ago the following came under my notice.

A girl in the country advertised for a situation, and was answered by a lady living in a good part of London, and all seemed so satisfactory that the maid arranged to come on a certain day. It turned out that neither the mistress nor the house bore a good character, and, as she was taking her box upstairs, a gentleman met her, and seeing that she looked good and respectable, said to her, "Do you know the sort of house you have come to? No, I thought not! If you desire to retain your good name, do not stay a night nor even an hour here; go back at once; better lose your money than your soul."

Seeing that the girl agreed, he took up her box, carried it down, called a cab, put her into it, and placing a sovereign in her hand, said, "That is to pay the fare back to your home. Thank God I happened to be here." Asking her the name of the station, he told the cabman, and quietly went back to the house. The girl thinks he must have been a doctor.

If this poor girl had known of the Traveller's Aid Society, 16A, Old Cavendish Street, she might have written to the secretary a day or two before her arrival, and she would have been met at the station, advised and received. In fact, with its help she could not have got into the trouble.

I do not think this society is half enough known among our friends the servants, who stand more in need of it than almost any other class of toilers. One part of its work is to guard women and girls from the difficulties and dangers to which they are exposed, as they move from place to place in search of employment. I could write many pages upon its Christlike work, but it would be out of place here. I will, however, give one illustration.

A little servant-maid from the country, age fourteen, was discharged from her place one morning with her fortnight's wage of three shillings. Her place was a hard one and her strength not great, so her mistress told her to be "off home where she could live like a lady."

The fare home, however, was much more than any money she possessed, so she took a ticket to Gravesend, hoping that an aunt who lived there would take her in till she could find another place. The aunt refused to do this, and told her to go back to London and get the people at the station to pass her back to her own home. Arriving in town again, weary and broken-hearted, she told her tale to the officials, and they knowing all about the Traveller's Aid Society, took her at once to 16A, Old Cavendish Street, where she was well-cared for and sent home. She was much too ill to go to other service just then. It was a very pathetic story she told, though it was not without a touch of humour; for while sobbing out the particulars of her dismissal, she said, "I wish now as I hadn't took such pains with master's boots and the front doorstep."

Many a girl from the country, knowing nothing whatever of London, having been engaged to fill situations here with a promise that they should be met at a certain train, have not been so met, and had it not been for this Society, who took care of them until the people had been seen who failed to keep their promise, it is impossible to say what might have happened to them.

Servants are in many ways at great disadvantage in seeking new situations, unless they obtain them through recommendations, which is really the only safe way. Except in a few cases registry offices are failures—they take the girls' money and send them long distances for situations they know nothing about, and it is a perfect lottery whether anything worth having can ever be obtained by their means. Of course there are some very good ones, but how are the servants to know the good from the bad.

I wish very much that the incident I have related and chosen from many others, of girls engaging themselves to mistresses of whom they know nothing, would convince us of the necessity of having some central office where, by paying a small fee, a girl may learn something of the people who wish to engage her, and where she may go for advice in the many difficulties which beset domestic service, and where she may be instructed in some of the laws which govern it.

It would want well thinking out, but in these days when the market is glutted with philanthropic projects, cannot a little earnest thought be expended for the benefit of our *friends the servants* who are *part* of our families, and should stand near to us indeed? For want of the knowledge which such an office could give, many a girl's happiness and career are wrecked.

Very few girls know the laws concerning the giving up or dismissal from a situation, and have an idea that for mistress and maid they are the same, but except in one instance, that of a month's notice on either side, they are not so; for example, mistresses are quite within the law if they dismiss a servant without warning, provided they pay a month's wages, in addition to the wages owing at the time of dismissal.

And supposing a servant to have been guilty of immoral conduct, wilful disobedience or incapability, she may be dismissed without warning, and without a month's wages.

Servants, on the contrary, cannot leave their situations without warning, even by paying a month's wages. Should they leave thus they forfeit all the wages due from the last quarter's payment, and are liable to be sued for damages sustained by their employers.

Here again, the privileges are unequal, and the laws want rectifying, but whatever they are, a girl should not go into service ignorant of these things.

Knowing, as I do, how difficult it is for girls to find situations altogether satisfactory, I am grieved when, without thought or reason, they blindly rush into difficulties. For example, in the spring of this year an invalid lady, who was known for the great care and kindness she showed her servants, was startled by two of them, the cook and the housemaid, who had been with her some three or four years, giving notice to leave. After some questioning as to the reason for desiring to leave, they said they had no fault to find except that it was dull, and too comfortable, and they liked a blowing-up in the house sometimes; it made a change. "Beside," they added rather reluctantly, "we want just for once to live with a real lady."

The mistress replied, "You surprise me! I had an idea that I was what is generally known as a real lady, but perhaps you will explain."

"Well, ma'am, real ladies dress grand, have big parties, go out to dinners and storm about

the house if anything is wrong, and we should like to try it for a change."

As their grievance was one which the invalid found it out of her power to remedy, she accepted their notice.

I am sure that both mistresses and maids will agree that these two servants really deserved, what I believe they afterwards obtained, most uncomfortable places.

The invalid, speaking sorrowfully of the circumstance to her doctor, said, "I thought kind words, kind deeds, and sympathy meant home to my household, but I suppose I have been wrong."

It is this sort of inconsistency in servants which spoils what are called good places, and does much harm in destroying the sympathy between mistresses and maids which I hold to be the very keystone of the arch of domestic service. My personal feeling is that it does not matter how high in position, or how rich a mistress may be, she should be acquainted with every servant in the house, from the highest to the lowest; they are entrusted to her by the Master, and they have immortal souls, whose destiny it may be hers to decide, and she should be known to them all, even to the meanest, as their friend as well as mistress, and wherever this is a reality and not a sentiment only, it puts everyone on his or her mettle to merit the approbation of such a mistress. True, a lady may have a good housekeeper to look after the details of the work, but she cannot take the place of the mistress any more than the Prime Minister can take the place of our Queen.

In these days, when philanthropy is the most fashionable and attractive form of occupation, and no time or trouble is thought too great to amuse the workpeople and others at the East End, I cannot help thinking of the good that could be done by devoting some of the time to our own households—it would repay us a hundredfold, and in doing this we need not leave the other undone.

Two classes of mistresses were vividly brought before me a few months since in the following manner.

An elderly lady, very plainly dressed, called one morning upon a very rich woman living near her to inquire the character of a servant. Her name was announced so very indistinctly that it failed to reach the lady of the house. She did not ask the visitor to be seated, but said sharply,

"What is your business with me?"

"I have come," was the answer given in a sweet refined voice, "to inquire the character of a kitchen-maid who lately left your service."

"You should not have troubled me with such a matter, but have gone to my housekeeper. I know nothing whatever about these sorts of people."

"I am very sorry to hear that," said the visitor. "I know all my servants, and I think I may say they are one and all really my friends."

The lady was angry, and, looking at her dress, said,

"That is all very well for you, but not for people in my position," and ringing, she said, "the servant will take you to the housekeeper."

"Thank you," was the quiet answer; "I shall be obliged to you."

During the interview the housekeeper discovered that the visitor was the Duchess —— living in the same square, and whose kindness to all dependent on her was well known.

Let us hope that the rich lady learnt that to make of your servants *friends* is not a sign of low birth and poverty, but of noble breeding and a kind and loving heart.

A mistress who possesses the hearts of her servants may do much in teaching them *Thrift*, for we know that, as a rule, servants are reckless with their money; they think they have earned it and can do what they like with it; and never having been taught the value of money, they believe their quarter's wages will buy everything their heart longeth for. If however, they can be induced by the mistress to put aside a certain portion of it every quarter in the Post Office Savings Bank it is a double blessing—not only do the savings accumulate, but the servants gradually learn the value of thrift.

A friend of mine some years ago had two young servants, and she did her best to teach them this virtue: one took the advice, the other did not. At the end of three years the savings bank in which the girl placed her savings became bankrupt, and she, of course, lost all her money. The thriftless one now thought she had the best of it, and said, "Now, who is the best off? You went without things you wanted in order to save your money, and you have lost all ways, while I have spent all mine on myself and enjoyed it." The mistress who overheard this speech, said, "My girl, you are wrong; for you and your fellow-servant are not on the same platform at all. It is true she has lost her money, but she has gained the habit of thrift, which will abide with her always, while you, in these three years, have learnt the habit of self-indulgence; and so, you see, the roads you have been walking have led you far apart, although you have been living under my roof all the time. Three years' habits leave their mark on the life."

I have seen often that saving part of the wages has prevented destitution, which, as we all know, is often a forerunner of sorrow if not of crime, and in time of sickness money saved has proved invaluable.

One thing from which our friends the servants suffer frequently is want of punctuality in the payment of their wages. In not a few cases girls have told me that a second quarter is due before the first is paid, and that if they were to ask for it they would give offence. This ought not to be; the servant should be paid to the day, and if not, it should be considered no misdemeanour if she remind the mistress that the wages are due. The want of it puts her into difficulties and often leads her out of the straight path.

A punctual payment of wages cannot be too strongly urged. It is not only a good example, but it gives servants the opportunity of purchasing, which, if deprived of, might tempt them to dishonesty; and not only so, many a poor, sickly mother is kept from starvation by the help she gets from her good daughter in service—and this help she cannot send if wages are not paid when due.

(*To be continued.*)

HOUSEHOLD HINTS.

Many town people taking a holiday in the country are distressed at seeing horses tethered in the fields exposed to the swarms of flies which the switching of their tails is powerless to get rid of, but which wound and torment them beyond endurance, and in our drives and walks we are subject to the same annoyance.

The remedy is simple. Tie a bunch of the scented oak-leaved geranium on the heads or bodies of your horses, and wear a few of them in the front of your dress, and do not forget to place some on the tethered animals.

If you want to keep your room free of the flies, put some plants of the scented oak-leaved geranium in your windows. They will hardly venture through them, for they are always scared at the scent of them.

One word more. This is just the time to get the raspberry leaves, fennel, and parsley fresh from the gardens, so do not forget to prepare the remedy I gave in the November numbers for tired eyes.

Pickled French Beans.—Be careful to have them freshly gathered and quite young. Put them into a brine, made strong enough to float an egg, until they turn colour, then drain them and wipe dry with a clean cloth; put them into a jar and stand as near the fire as possible, and pour boiling vinegar over them sufficient to cover, covering it up quickly to prevent the steam from escaping. Continue to do this until they become green by reboiling the vinegar about every other day. They should take about a week.

Pickled Cabbage and Cauliflower.—Slice the cabbage very finely and cut the cauliflower in small pieces on a board or colander (a pastry board I find answers very nicely), and sprinkle each layer with salt and let it stand for twenty-four hours, sloping the board a little that the brine might run away from it. Procure as much ordinary pickling vinegar as you think will be required to cover the cabbage, and boil a small portion of it with a little ginger and a small quantity of peppercorns, also a small beetroot peeled and cut up to give it a nice colour; after it has boiled pour it in the remaining vinegar, but take out the beetroot. Put the cabbage and cauliflower into a jar and pour over the vinegar and spices; tie down and keep in a dry place. Will be ready for table-use in about a month.

Pickled Nasturtiums.—Gather them when quite young, and let them remain in brine for twelve hours; have sufficient vinegar to cover them, and with a small portion of it boil a little Jamaica and a little black pepper; when it has just boiled, add to the remaining vinegar. Strain the nasturtiums and put them in a bottle or jar and pour over the vinegar and spices, and tie down. These are very nice to use instead of capers for sauce with either boiled beef or mutton.

ART IN THE HOUSE.

HOW TO DECORATE AND FURNISH A GIRL'S BED SITTING-ROOM.

PART I.

DOING UP OLD FURNITURE.

I WANT to make these articles entirely practical and within the scope of the readers of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER, so I take a girl's room—a bed sitting-room, because I feel sure that I shall appeal to a wider circle than if I merely dealt with the decoration of a sitting-room only, and I shall hope to show her how much the girl owner may do herself in the beautifying of her "den." I want to avoid launching into expense, so I shall first of all deal with the doing up of old furniture, for in every house one finds what may be called derelicts, articles of furniture which have outwardly at least had their day, and yet like many an old weather-beaten craft there is a lot of good work still in them if one takes a little trouble and spends a little time in putting on a coat or two of paint and a little varnish.

I had myself three such derelicts, one a chiffonier which had originally been grained in imitation of mahogany, but which had got chipped and worn until it looked worth nothing more than firing. Yet as a piece of woodwork it was in good condition, for I daresay it was fifty years old, when furniture was much better made than it is now. The first thing was to clean it thoroughly, and to this end I got some soft soap and an old painter's brush (a good scrubbing brush will do), and with some boiling hot water gave it a thorough cleansing. It took some time to do this, for the dirt had collected in the corners, and the grease from two generations of dirty fingers had to be removed. It is most important where you are going to paint to have every vestige of grease removed; otherwise your paint will not dry. While you are washing it have a piece of pumice-stone (procurable at a good oil shop or decorator's colourman), and thoroughly rub down all the old paint so as to remove any roughnesses, blisters or other blemishes, and obtain a nice smooth surface. Don't hurry this part of the work, as much of the after success depends upon your preliminary efforts. Give the furniture a rinse in clean hot water and then wipe it dry with an old towel. The next day or within an hour or two it is ready for the first coat of paint.

FIG. I.—*Chiffonier painted white and decorated with stencilling.*

Plain Painting.

I like white painted furniture, so I shall assume here that you will also paint your furniture white or cream, and I shall reserve my remarks on painting in darker tones of colour for another occasion. White goes with anything and is easily decorated, as I shall hope to show. For a girl's room it looks cool, clean and dainty. White paint can be bought ready mixed, either in tins or by the pound, and if you know a reliable decorator you might purchase some of him ready for use, but of course you have to pay him for his trouble, and what you buy in tins is not only much more expensive than if you mix it up yourself, but is often adulterated. It is very little trouble to mix it yourself, and about half the price, so I will tell you how to set about this. Buy at some good oil shop or decorators say a couple of pounds of white lead ground in oil, a pint of best linseed oil, a pennyworth of patent driers and a pint of turpentine. The whole lot will cost you about 1s. 1d. A patent tobacco tin with a lid is a useful thing to keep your paint in, as when not in use the lid will keep it air-tight, and your paint will keep for a long time if not exposed to the air. Cover the lead with oil and if it is in a pound tin the oil should be an inch or more above the lead. Stir up with a palette knife to allow the oil to mix with the white, and add a tablespoonful or so of turps, and in a few hours the white will become the consistency of cream. If you find it too thick add more oil and a little turps and the driers, and proceed to strain through a piece of muslin. If you have another empty tin strain your paint into it by putting the muslin loosely over the empty tin, pouring some colour into the muslin and working it through by brushing it every now and again with a hog hair brush. The paint will gradually pass through the muslin, leaving any sediment or bits behind, and you then pour out a little more colour and work through, and so on until all is strained. You can finally squeeze the muslin with your palette knife against the side of the tin, but be careful not to allow any of the bits to pass through into your strained paint. The proportion of turps to oil should be one of former to three of latter, and of driers a piece the size of a walnut to the pound, but the tradesman of whom you buy your colour will tell you this. The paint for use should be the consistency of cream (not clotted or thickened) and should be put on evenly with a good brush, so you put enough oil and turps to make it this consistency. The brush is a very important item, and this is why amateur painters so often fail; they haven't a decent brush to work with. A good house painter's brush which has been in use some time is the ideal tool, and if you can borrow or hire such a one do. A wide, flat hog, say three inches wide will do, but it will not hold the colour that a house painter's brush will, and the constant filling of it adds to the labour of painting. Your brush should carry its colour so that you only have to use force enough to work the colour out on to your surface. You don't try to load the furniture with colour, but get on so much as easily passes from the brush to the wood. In filling your brush only dip the end into the paint, and then knock it against the side of pot or tin so as to distribute it through the hair and then it will not drop about when you use it. So many amateurs try to get a lot of colour on at once, and so get it on too thickly in places. Remember that you can only get a good surface by applying some three or four coats. Your first coat, as the under colour is dark, will look very dirty and thin, but this first coat is only a grounding one. The second coat, which must be applied when the first is quite dry, say in two days, will look much better, while the fourth coat ought to look nice and white. A painter to get a good surface keeps his paint the way of the grain of the wood. Thus the panel of the door would be vertical in grain, the drawer front horizontal. Take the panel for instance. You will get your colour on using your brush up and down. When it is covered "stroke" the paint evenly from left to right, and then "stroke" it again up and down. This will distribute the colour evenly, and if you do this carefully you will obtain a good surface.

Allow plenty of time between each coat, as to paint over a surface not quite hard will cause your paint to crack. If you find after your first coat that there are any cracks or holes in the old paint take a little of the stiff white lead, and with a little driers added to it use it as putty and stop up any places, levelling it over smoothly with a knife. By the time your last coat is on such defects ought not to show. If you decide not to decorate your furniture, as I have shown in illustration, then instead of using paint for the last coat buy a tin of white, ivory or cream enamel and use to finish. The enamel is not so easy to get on as paint owing to its sticky nature. You must apply it freely, but don't load it on, for the more evenly you apply it the better will it look. One coat will suffice if you have three good coats of paint underneath. When your brushes are not in use put them into a gallipot or other vessel half filled with water.

(To be continued.)

FIG. 2.—*Top of chiffonier decorated with stencilling. The two plants used are the dandelion and cyclamen.*

PART II.

How to Decorate Furniture with Stencilling.

The idea of decorating your own furniture

Fig. 1. *Stencilled border of butterflies and sprigs with background, suggested by a spider's web. For details see Figs.* 1B *and* 1C.

Fig. 1A. *The right-hand half is white on black ground, the reverse of the left-hand half. For details see Figs.* 1B *and* 1C.

seems to be an extraordinary thing to many readers, and yet I hope to show you that this much to be desired consummation is quite within your reach. In the former article I gave as an illustration a portion of a chiffonier I decorated with stencilling, as can be seen by referring to it, which, by the

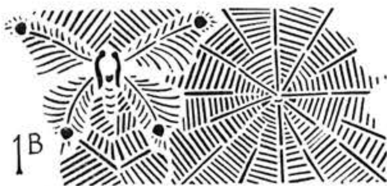


Fig. 1B.

way, is reproduced from a full-size design which was actually stencilled with the same stencils as I used on the chiffonier. Stencilling is a very simple business indeed if you will take ordinary care. Indeed the mere getting of an impression is a mechanical matter, as can be seen by the way packers mark boxes with stencils of letters. The art is seen in the way you colour the patterns and the use you make of your stencils, for with some four or five stencil plates, as I shall hope to show later, many combinations are possible; you can evolve new patterns as it were by taking a portion of one and combining it with a portion of another.

Some years ago, I forget how many, I described in these pages how to cut a stencil, but I had better for the sake of the newer readers very briefly explain the method. Good drawing paper I generally use from which to cut my stencils. Draw out your design upon the paper, and with a sharp penknife cut on a sheet of glass, so that the knife travels over the smooth surface and enables you to cut a quite intricate design with ease. Have a small oil-stone at hand to keep the knife in condition, for you ought to be able to cut clean without pressure.

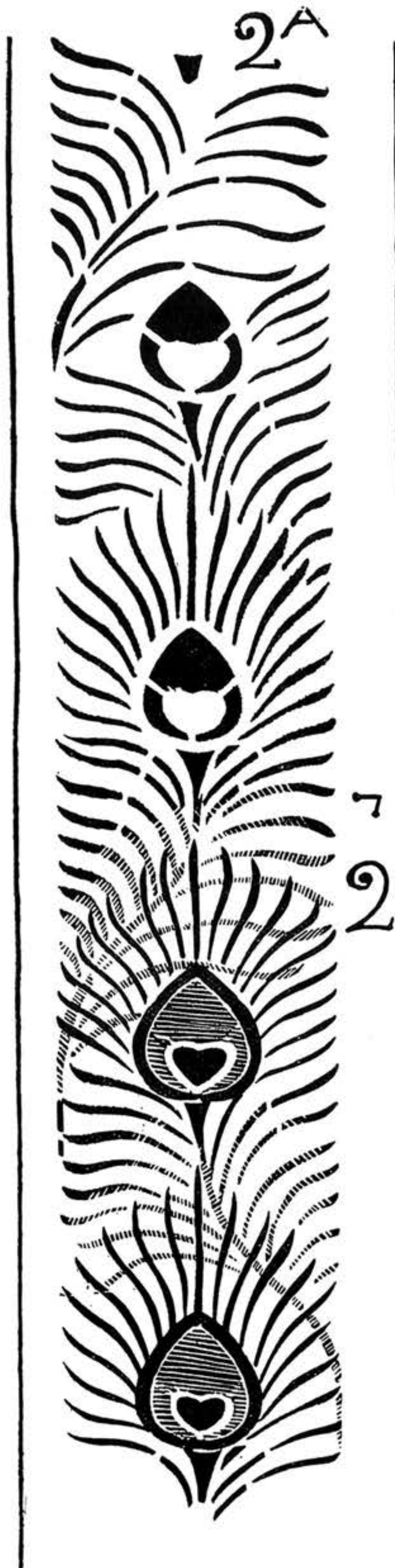
If you refer to the designs accompanying these articles you will notice that each form where it comes against another seems outlined in white. This effect is caused by the "ties" as they are termed. If we consider a moment we can realise that as our design is formed by the pieces we cut away an intricate design must be tied together, or the whole thing would fall to pieces. Take a simple case, the letter B. We must not cut out the letter without adopting some plan to keep the two pieces forming the loops in their place, so we tie them in so

We put a second tie in the lower loop to strengthen it as I have done in several cases among those designs given. Take another case, the flower in Fig. 1 C. By cutting each petal separate and the centre as a circle we get a very effective stencil, for the "ties" give form to the design. Take them away, and instead of a daisy we should only have a circular open space of no interest. One of the arts of successful stencil cutting is to make the "ties" form part of the design, and by a little management this can be done. I don't wish to point to my own work more than to say

Fig. 1C.

you can learn the method of stencil cutting by referring to the designs I have given to illustrate the subject.

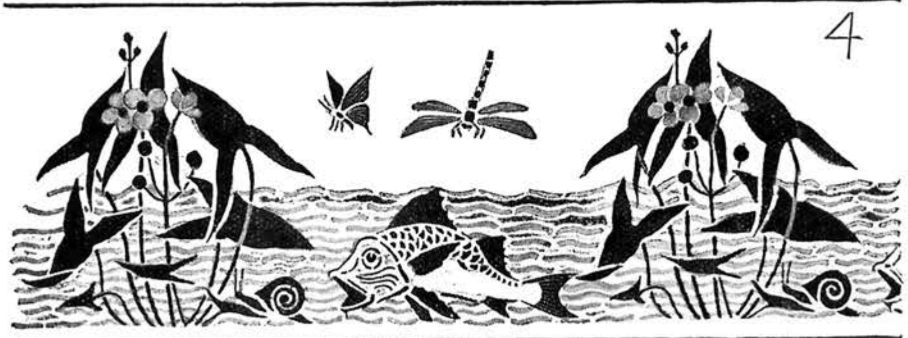
"Ties" which are left to merely strengthen



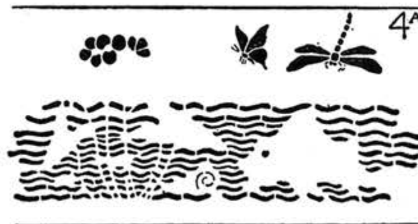
Peacock-feather border. The complete impression is given at 2, and requires the plates 2A and 2B to produce it.

a design, and which therefore do not help the effect, can be put in with a brush while the colour is wet if it be thought desirable.

If by chance you cut through a "tie" while cutting your stencil or break one when using it mend it with gummed paper or stamp edging. By keeping your stencils in repair they will last you years and do any amount of work. When the stencils are cut give them a good coat of varnish back and front, and allow it to dry hard. This makes the paper waterproof and greatly toughens it. "Knotting," which you can procure at a good oil shop, does very well for this purpose, as it dries quickly.

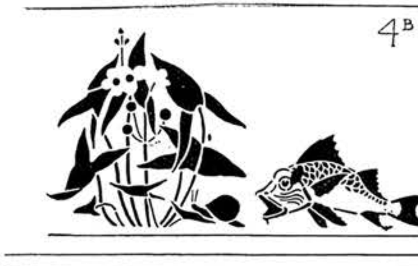


Repeating stencil of fish and arrow-head, with insects and water lines. For cutting this stencil, see Figs. 4A and 4B.



Detail of Fig. 4.

Those readers who prefer it can enlarge some of my designs and cut them, but others may like to try and originate them for themselves, so a word or two to them. Make your designs simple, and you mustn't attempt foreshortening (that is, drawing in perspective), as you cannot render such an effect in a stencil. A flat treatment is necessary, as though the plant you take to found your design upon were pressed between blotting-paper, like a dried specimen. You must not attempt to be too natural. An ornamental treatment is more effective, and you want to develop the decorative features in the plant you take, for you must not think of drawing a flower or plant so much as making a design based upon the particular plant.



Detail of Fig. 4.

Birds, insects, fish, can all be cut as stencils if you attend to this ornamentalising which is necessary. The two flying birds, Figs. 5 and 6, are modelled on Japanese designs, and by a little management very excellent effects can be produced. Butterflies too can be made into very effective stencils, and in one case I have introduced a background suggested by a spider's web, Fig. 1. By only using the butterfly out of one plate and the web background out of the other we obtain a third combination as in Fig. 1A.

In the case of the large butterfly, Fig. 1A, it will be noticed that a pattern is stencilled on the wings, and to do this it is necessary to have a second stencil, Fig. 1B. I give impressions of these two stencils, Figs. 1A and 1B, so that you may see what is cut out in each plate and how the two fit together. You cut some one or two details out of both plates as a guide in placing them when in use, see Figs. 2, which requires the two Plates A and B to produce it.

In cases of stencils which repeat so that spaces of any length may be covered, it is necessary to cut a small portion of the next impression out of the stencil and put this

Flying bird in stencil, after the Japanese.

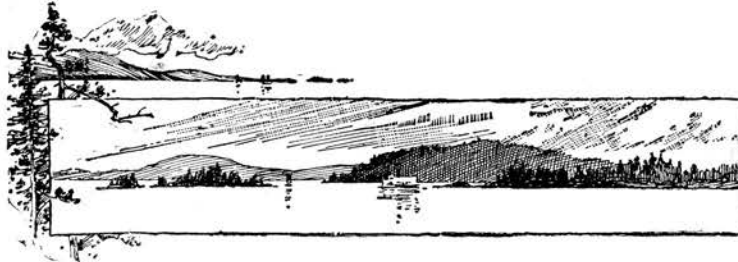
Flying bird in stencil, after the Japanese.

in, so that when you shift the stencil on to take the next impression, the left side of your stencil is placed over the right-hand side of the impression first taken. In the butterfly referred to in Fig. 1, the tip of the left wing is cut on the right-hand side of stencil, which is a guide for placing the stencil when we shift it for our next impression. In Fig. 4 it will be noticed that the nose of the fish is stencilled on the right-hand side to show you, when you shift the stencil along, exactly where to place it. In stencils requiring two plates to produce them, you draw out the design and then arrange in your mind the portions you will cut out of the first plate. When you have cut them stencil them on to the piece of paper to form the second plate, and having drawn or transferred the rest of the design to this second piece of paper you cut out the rest of the pattern. By stencilling the first plate on to the second plate you see how far to cut, for it is obvious that the two plates should fit together like a puzzle and form one design. The object of having two plates is that you can obtain an impression in two or more colours. Thus in the butterfly design having stencilled the insects in the first colour you can put on the markings and web-background in much lighter colours. If the sprig is to be put in and you want it against the web-background, you stencil this latter in first, and when dry the sprigs upon it.

By cutting a design out of two plates you can get a much more elaborate design and scheme of colour. The water in the arrow-head and fish frieze, Fig. 4, is a case in point, for the water lines and flowers can be in light tones of colour, while the fish and foliage are in darker ones, and by this means reli.f is obtained.

Were the water lines cut out of the same plate as the foliage, it would be impossible to keep them in a distinct colour and the design would look confused. The stencil too would be very weak, as the "ties" would have to be so numerous. This is a practical disadvantage, for if a stencil is very weak it is apt to break all up while you are using it. By the use of the two plates, Figs. 4A and 4B, we get two fairly strong stencils.

(To be continued.)



FROM THE LAND OF THE MOUNTAIN KING;

OR,

HOW BRUIN ALLOWED JOHANNES TO PASS HIM.

IN every part of "Sogn" the scenery is grand, but Fjærland is perhaps the most interesting part of all.

The fjord is narrow just there, and its colour is peculiarly light, a pale green, as if all through the year the banks and the mountain sides were clothed in fresh young foliage which was reflected in the smooth water; but the pale colour of the water is really caused by the glacier rivers which flow into it.

For, as we know, Fjærland is the land of glaciers; but none the less is it the country of mountains, and the home of "Bamsen," the mountain king. I am going to relate a story, and a strange one too, about a bear.

The fjelds in there, where bamsen prowls about, consist of towering peaks, which stand out alone and distinct in all their height; they seem forced forward by the Jostedalsbræ, which spreads itself over the whole plateau.

Each peak is of a beautiful and imposing form, and seems individually to place its back against the ice, which got room to twist itself round the feet of the cliffs, and thus Fjærland gained its two famous glaciers—the Boium and Suphellebræ. The Fjærland's fjord has a magnificent frame surrounding it.

These two glaciers, which at times are pressed by bruin's paws, force their way straight down to the valley below.

A driving road, as level as a floor, leads right up to it. You can unharness your horse from the stolkjærre and let him graze at the foot of the glacier, whilst you may sit peacefully on Bjerkelien and enjoy the magnificent view, forgetting yourself in the sight of this marvellous scene, this glittering sea of blue waves, so full of animation in its very stillness, and which, with a crash and roar, can in one moment open a wide abyss, changing form and colour before your eyes.

Fjærland has another peculiarity in its natural formation, which forms, so to say, a staircase up to the bear's playground.

I mean the high moraines, which at the mouth of the rivers lie up close against the walls of rock along the fjord, and give a peculiar character to the scenery.

These moraines do not date from the latest glacial period, but from one which existed thousands of years before.

They assume the most curious and picturesque forms, and are now covered with a rich vegetation; great birch trees have taken root between the huge stones which have been shot forward by the moraines, stones which resemble castles.

The road winds like a ribbon between these mounds and beneath the waving ferns which adorn these memorials of the past, which are also carpeted with red strawberries.

From this remarkable path there branches off a narrow mountain valley, lying somewhat higher, incredibly wild and romantic.

It is this valley which is so dearly loved by the bears; here they have their regular paths.

The people of the district know these paths well, for they have often been obliged to follow the bears along here to kill them, when they have been too destructive to the cattle.

But the Fjærland folk shrink from killing the monarch of the mountains. They imagine that he is part of and belongs to their mountain kingdom.

It was in such a valley that the bear story I am about to relate happened.

Yes, the story is true. I myself have heard it related by Johannes Mundal, the person who was concerned in it, and he is a fine, trustworthy man, much respected, and whose word would never be doubted by anyone who knew him.

One autumn a bear had made his home a long way up in the valley, and no one could get near enough for a shot, so that the pursuit was at last given up in despair; and as time passed, the bear was quite forgotten. One day Johannes was up on the mountain getting down some old stumps of trees. He had just approached a narrow ravine which was the only available way to get up or down the mountain, when, quite forgetting the existence of the bear, he suddenly saw its tracks before his very eyes.

He felt rather uncomfortable, being quite alone and without any weapons. Then he quickly determined to try and descend the ravine before the bear came across his path, for it was not a pleasant meeting-place, where his retreat could be so easily cut off. It was rather a serious consideration that in the ravine itself there was not room for one man to pass another, or an animal of any size.

He begins hurriedly to descend the ravine—when what does he see? Bruin coming up to meet him, and not slowly either.

"I know I grew pale," says Johannes, "for it flashed across my mind that there was only just room for one of us."

There is only room for one, just one.

Instinctively he squeezes himself up against the wall of rock, throwing his arms round the trunk of an old tree up so high above him that his feet scarcely touch the ground beneath.

And what of bruin?

He dare not turn and go down; his enemies would kill him. It is as imperative a necessity for him to get up as it is for Johannes to get down.

So he comes nearer and nearer, then he puts one fore and one hind foot down in the ravine, and the other feet against the bare rock on his left, climbs up the side, making himself as small as possible, so that Johannes (whom he has perceived) may have room to pass, and so one can get up safely, whilst the other can get down.

I think that is the most charming story of a bear I have ever heard of.

And the best of it was that none of the neighbours round would ever hunt that bear; they would not kill it.

So things are in Fjærland.

They told me numbers of stories about bears when I was there, but they all resembled other stories I had heard before; but this particular one is, I firmly believe, new.

Yes, as I have said, perhaps the most interesting place in the whole of Sognefjord is Fjærland.—*From the Norwegian of Bolette C. Pavels, Larsen.*

FIG. I.—*Panel of corner cupboard decorated in stencilling. The centre panel is founded on the iris, with the daisy at base.*

ART IN THE HOUSE.

PART III.

HOW TO STENCIL IN OIL COLOURS.

ORDINARY tube colours should be used for stencilling on your furniture mixed with a little copal varnish and slightly thinned with turps. Driers are put up in tubes under the names of *sacrum* or sugar of lead, and it is as well to mix a little with your colours as it makes them dry off quickly. The white should be mixed up in a batch with the varnish, driers and turps, and be of the consistency of thick cream. Your tinting colours should be squeezed out on your palette so that you can readily mix up your tones.

Stencil brushes are round and short in the hair, so that they present a flat surface on the stencil. You require three or four, two about an inch in diameter, one five-eighths and one three-eighths or a quarter of an inch. Two or three small flat hog brushes for touching in ties and putting in particular parts of a stencil should be handy. We will begin with the stiles of the door of chiffonier, which is decorated with the ornamental stencil B, Fig. I in first article. We put the corners in first and this corner I cut separately as I could not fit in the stencil I was using. Having done this see how your other stencil will work out, for it does not look workmanlike to start at the top and find that you have to end it with a different spacing to what you started with. If you begin in the centre of each stile and work to the corners you will obtain a symmetrical result. Always remember to space out any part of your work which is conspicuous, so that the stencil seems to just fit in the space as though it were cut specially for it. I find it a good plan to have some pins handy, and just tap in a couple, one at each end of the stencil, to keep it from shifting while you rub on the colour. Both your hands are then at liberty. Or you can get a friend to hold the plate down on the wood, but the pinning does almost better. If you shift the stencil before you have knocked out the impression you will not get a sharp result.

Having tinted your white to the desired tone spread a little of the colour on to your palette and knock your stencil brush on to this colour a few times, so that the brush takes up some of the colour, then begin by gently knocking the brush on to the wood over the cut-out portions until you have completely covered them with colour. Don't try to do this too quickly. Proceed gently, getting the colour out of your brush by degrees, and take up the colour from the palette in the same gentle manner. The reason for this caution is that if you take up too much colour at a time in your brush and knock it violently on the stencil plate, you will find when you lift up the same that the impression, instead of being sharp will be blobby at the edges through the colour having worked under the stencil.

The art of stencilling is in getting sharp, clean impressions, and this can only come of care and

taking time. On no account get the colour too thin. It should be of such a consistency as will enable you to knock it out of the brush with slight exertion. If too stodgy thin it with a drop or two of turps and linseed oil, and then mix with palette knife, but on no account get turps into the stencil brush or you will get very bad impressions, for the colour is sure then to run under the stencil. Therefore again I say, don't hurry.

I have said nothing yet as to the tones of colour to be used. This is a matter of taste, and is a most difficult subject to write about. Two artists will use the same colours, and yet one with an eye for colour will give us beautiful harmonies, and the other one wanting this delicacy of perception will give us crudity. Form in your mind some tone of colour suggested, say, by the warm mellow colours of autumn, the soberer russet and greys of the winter, or the light, fresh, delicate tints of spring, and carry these suggestions out in your decoration. The corner cupboard, Fig. 1, we might tint in the russet tones, and you will find that such colours as raw sienna, raw umber, yellow ochre, *terra verte*, burnt sienna, chromes Nos. 1 and 2, Prussian blue, French ultramarine, and light red will supply you with a very varied palette. White tinted with yellow ochre, raw sienna or raw umber are all good tones for stencilling in, and each of them can be mixed or toned with one of the others. The addition of *terra verte* or Prussian blue will give you soft tones of green. By using such a yellow as ochre to make greens you obtain softer, quieter tones than if you used chromes. Suppose you have small quantities of the above three tints mixed on your palette, you can take a little of one in your brush and knock that out on the stencil, and then a little of the next tint and knock that out, and so on with the third. In this way you get a variety of tints in the stencilled border and yet a certain "tone" will run all through, which gives one a sense of harmony, and at the same time variety, and so lessens the hard mechanical look which stencilling in just one colour is apt to give. Then, too, when you have knocked out one impression before lifting off the stencil, you can take one of the hog hair brushes or the smallest stencil brush and put in the body and the portion of the wings around it of the butterflies B in the corner cupboard, Fig. 1, in a little darker colour, say more raw umber or sienna. It is very little more trouble and greatly adds to the general effect to give these accents. The idea is to make the butterflies come off the web, so keep the web lighter and the insects darker. In the border B, Fig. 1, in first article the flowers might be touched in to bring them off the lines of the background.

The pattern on the spaces surrounding the door A, Fig. 1, can still be in the same tones, varied as I have suggested, but the panels of the doors being themselves more naturalesque, might be a little more positive in colouring, *i.e.*, the leaves and grass can be put in, in quiet, soft tones of green, while the flowers could be in lemon chrome and white or bluish purple made of rose madder and French blue or Indian red and Prussian blue lightened with white, but don't make the colouring too bright, so that it is in too strong contrast to the stiles. Greens made of blue and chrome are much cruder than if you use yellow ochre or raw sienna. Going back now to the colouring of the chiffonier Fig. 1 (p. 13) in first article. The plinth or bottom D can be in low-toned greens, not too dark but darker than the leaves in the panels, while the daisies can be in grey made of white, raw umber, and a touch of blue, with centres in yellow. Stencil the flowers first and then with a small brush put in the yellow centres. A slight touch of pink at the edges of the daisies might look well, effected by using a small hog brush and a little rose madder. The leaves around the column keep in the quiet greens used in plinth D. The back of the upper part of chiffonier, Fig. 2, with its shelf can be treated like the panels in colouring, and the festoon above the shelf can have the flowers in the grey and the leaves in russet not too dark, and the ribbon in pale blue. As you have a white surface to decorate, be careful not to get your colouring too strong. Use plenty of white with all your colours, for you will find that delicate tones are much pleasanter to live with than heavy ones. A little of the pure colours from the tubes will tint a lot of white, so the colours will not be a great expense. Buy the flake white in half-pound tubes for cheapness.

In arranging stencils act somewhat on the plan I have observed, which is to keep the more naturalesque stencils for such places as panels or other flat, broad surfaces, and as a framing to them the more ornamental patterns, to contrast with the natural ones. The butterfly border on the stiles of the corner cupboard B, Fig. 1, is a good foil to the iris panel, just as the border B, Fig. 1, is a good foil to the daisy panel in the chiffonier.

The conventional grass seemed a suitable pattern for the plinth, and such a purely ornamental design as a festoon not inappropriate to the shaped top.

I have mentioned before that great variety can be obtained by combining portions of different stencils. The plinth D, Fig. 1, of chiffonier, for instance, is a combination of two, the flowers being from one and the grass itself from another. The butterfly and sprig running border, Fig. 1, in second article, I have shown in variation, and the border in corner cupboard, A, Fig. 1, is made by taking the sprig portion only and putting the root in between each impression. When you want only a portion of a stencil cover over the rest with paper, so that you do not get an impression of a part you do *not* require.

Some colours are very fugitive such as indigo, crimson lake, yellow lake, etc.; but the colours I have mentioned may be relied upon for permanency.

When the stencilling is thoroughly dry it will preserve the work to give it a coat of white hard varnish. Apply this freely with a flat hog brush (or regular varnish brush), seeing that you miss no portion of the surface. Keep it from the dust until dry and you will have a pretty and useful article of furniture. Of course you may have some other article to do up than the chiffonier I have sketched, which I took simply because it was to my hand, but you can easily apply these hints to your own necessities.

When your stencils are done with you wash them thoroughly in turpentine, both back and front, and dry them and put them away, keeping them flat.

While you are using your stencils wipe the back after each impression, so that if any colour has worked there you can remove it. Have an old board and some newspaper to lay the stencil on when you clean it.

With the batch of stencils given with these articles endless variations and combinations are possible. Many of the patterns too could be easily adapted for needlework; in fact, you have only to lightly stencil your material in water colour and work over the impressions. Use Chinese white if a dark textile, and lamp black and Chinese white if a light one.

Though I have advised white paint for these two articles of furniture, there is no reason why you shouldn't try dark ones. Stencilling is very effective on dark paint, and a cabinet or cupboard painted a dark brownish green would look well with stencilling in shades of old gold. To get a rich colour the final coat must have very little white with it. For a brownish green use burnt sienna, black, deep chrome, and touch of Prussian blue, with only enough white to make it light enough.

FRED MILLER.

WHAT TO COOK, AND HOW TO COOK IT.

PRESERVING AND CONSERVING. AROMATIC HERBS AND SPICES.

By L. H. YATES.

"But happy they, thrice happy, who possess
The art to mix these sweets with due address."—*W. Hone.*

IN England "to preserve" means, five times out of six, to boil our fruit to a jam or jelly. Even in large factories only a small proportion of the stock of fruit used is set aside for bottling or canning. In America the opposite is the rule; to can and bottle is quite a matter-of-course with the American housewife—jellies and jams with her are a luxury. To sterilise or can fruit, they say, retains its flavour far more perfectly than any other mode, and this process is both less troublesome and more economical than the "old-fashioned" method of preserving fruit pound for pound with sugar.

This may be true, but it is also true that in England we cling to our old fashions, however much others may decry them, and we are loth to give up our beloved sweet, even if it is troublesome and costly. We might, however, with advantage keep our jellies and jams for table use only, making them extra good on this account, and use more "canned" fruit for cooking purposes. (By canned fruit we mean also bottled fruit).

Fruits may be canned (or bottled) with or without sugar, but as the sugar, unless it is previously boiled to a syrup, has no preserving quality, and as the fruit itself retains its freshness and flavour better without sweetening, it is best to leave it out.

To have a supply of bottled fruit in store enables us to indulge in tarts and compotes in winter that are but little inferior to those we enjoy in summer; but we find the indulgence to be a luxury if we have to buy the bottled fruit, as partly on account of the initial expense of the bottle and canning apparatus, and partly because this kind of stock is of a bulky and perishable nature, grocers and others charge more for them in proportion than for jams.

For home purposes, however, once the bottles with their screw tops have been purchased, there is no great expense afterwards. Large-mouthed glass jars should alone be used. If rubber rings are fitted to these as well as screw tops, see that the former are in

good condition each season, renewing them if necessary.

Only perfectly sound and freshly-gathered fruit should be used for bottling purposes. If bruised or cracked they will mould and taint all the rest. It is a good plan to set aside the best and finest fruit for this purpose when about to make jam, as the less perfect will boil down for the latter, and for jelly.

There are two ways of bottling fruit, *i.e.*, to cook the fruit until it is tender in water or syrup, then to fill the heated bottles while the fruit is boiling hot, fastening down at once; or to pack the prepared fruit into jars, filling each jar or bottle with cold water, placing the lids loosely on the top, standing the jars in a pan of cold water deep enough to allow of the water coming quite up to the neck, and bringing it very slowly to boiling-point. As soon as the water boils, lift the jars out, screw the tops down tightly, and set them aside (out of the draught), to cool.

All small fruits like strawberries, raspberries, and currants, apricots, pared peaches, and some pears, may be bottled in this latter way with advantage; but for plums, greengages, apples, and cooking pears, a cooking in syrup or water is much to be preferred.

When filling the jars, take care to have slipped these sideways, rolling them round in boiling water, and let them be as hot as possible at the time of filling. If the fruit is of a large kind, use a wooden spoon, taking care that one piece does not push another out of shape. Let the jars or bottles be full to overflowing with liquor, and see that no air-bubbles are on the top; then screw on the lids immediately. The fruit should not be stirred while it is cooking, as stirring spoils the shape.

The secret of jelly-making, to be truly successful, lies in taking the fruit at the time when the greatest amount of pectose is to be found in it, as it is this principle which makes jelly.

For instance, apples contain so much of this principle that but little labour or care is involved in making a jelly from them, but with other fruits this principle is present in a so much less degree that it vanishes to a mere nothing when the fruit is over-ripe. When any fruit has reached maturity, then this principle is present in its greatest strength, and taken for the purpose then, a jelly that will set firm may be made from almost any fruit. It is safer to err on the side of under-ripeness rather than let the fruit hang too long on the tree. Jelly made from currants a little under-ripe, if taken fresh from the bush, will set almost before it is cold; but if the currants are black ones the acidity will be too strong, and this kind it is absolutely necessary to allow to hang until the sun has ripened them fully.

It is not necessary that currants for jelly should be picked from the stalk. Wash them and drain well, then put them in the preserving kettle and allow them to come very slowly to a heat, that all the juice may be drawn away. Almost better than a preserving-kettle is a large glazed earthenware jar with well-fitting lid, that can be set in a corner of the oven to cook at its leisure.

When the fruit has reduced to a mash, strain all through a large hair sieve into a pan, then fix the jelly-bag in a safe position (say between two chairs), and place another pan underneath it. Empty the contents of the first pan into this bag slowly, and let it drip through to the one below. Measure off this strained juice, and to every pint allow a pound of the finest lump sugar.

Put the juice into the preserving kettle and set it where it will come rather rapidly to a boil. Let it boil twenty minutes before adding the sugar. While the juice is boiling the right weight of sugar should be spread out on tins and put into the oven to become hot; if it melts a little in the process it will do no harm. The reason for this is that the juice may not be retarded boiling by having cold sugar emptied into it. When the sugar is added, stir until it has quite dissolved, then remove the spoon. Allow the juice to boil up for just a moment, then pour without loss of time into very hot, small glass jars, and set aside out of a draught.

Jelly made thus will be found of a full fruity flavour, bright in colour, and will set almost before it is cold.

The key to the preservation of flavour and beauty of colouring lies in this—boiling well the juice or fruit, but not the sugar, as the key to the secret of obtaining a firm jelly lays in taking the fruit at the right moment.

Contrary to the rule which we must follow in bottling fruit, viz., covering tightly while the contents of the bottle are at boiling-point, jellies or jams should not be covered until they are cold.

If any moisture is found on the top before the paper is put on, wipe this off with a soft linen cloth. Cover with tissue paper drawn tightly and cut neatly to shape, fastening with fine string or strong thread, then pass a moist sponge over the whole surface when affixing the label, as this causes the paper to shrink when it is dry, thus forming an excellent cover.

In making jam, as we cannot wash the fruit, it behoves us to be all the more careful to pick it scrupulously over, and to see that it is gathered on a dry day while the sun is upon it. Here again we must remember that it is the fruit that requires cooking, and not the sugar; and at no time should the jam boil longer than twenty minutes after the sugar has been added, as boiling sugar passes so quickly from one degree to another. Take care that the fruit is sufficiently well-boiled before ever the sugar is added at all.

Jam should be stored in a cool and perfectly dry place, but not one into which the steam and odours of cooking will enter, unless there is ventilation enough to carry them away again.

Another way of preserving fruit is by desiccation or drying. This process is not one that the amateur can carry out successfully, moreover, as the best way of drying fruit is by exposure to the air and sun, and therefore warmer climates than ours are needed to carry out the process. The Americans achieve good results in the drying of hardy fruits like apples, but it is to the countries of the sunny south that we must go to learn what is the perfection of the art of drying.

Turkey, the Grecian Archipelago, Italy, and France all send out their stores of figs, dates, raisins, plums, currants, apricots, and apples; Normandy, the country most nearly resembling our own, has its own special export of pressed and dried "pippins"; Jamaica and the West Indies, Ceylon and India, send us ginger dried or preserved, the cocoanut both in its natural state and desiccated, with various other special products. The Cape and our Australian colonies have more recently opened up what promises to be a rapidly developing industry in the exportation of their fruits, both as fresh fruit, dried and canned.

For our spices and condiments we have long been under obligation to the far East, and to the West Indies. No plants that come to maturity in the open air of this climate possess sufficient aromatic flavour to enable them to rank as a spice, hence the tropics have the monopoly of the spice trade.

Spices, the chief of which are peppers, cinnamon, cloves, nutmegs, mace, ginger, and allspice, are all highly stimulant, heating, exciting to the palate, while pleasant because of their fragrance. Whether they fulfil any other function than a medicinal one in our temperate climate is doubtful, but since we may be said to range over the whole surface of the globe in quest of nutriment, it may not be inadvisable that with foreign aliment we should mix foreign condiment. The best quality that spices have is to stimulate the appetite, while their worst effect is to destroy by degrees the tender lining to the stomach if habitual use or indulgence is allowed.

Of aromatic herbs we have a longer list, and there is hardly one of the many that is not capable of cultivation in our clime, if indeed it is not indigenous to the soil. A broad classification groups them into two divisions, medicinal herbs, and those used for culinary purposes. The first-named is a list altogether too lengthy and too technical to be cited here; the second is much shorter, and as it belongs to our subject we may pause to consider it awhile.

Herb-lore, almost forgotten in our day, used to be of great interest to our foremothers; the housewife of earlier days, into whose hands so many industries fell, gave sedulous care to the cultivation of her herb-garden, as from its plot came the brews for the sick, the fragrant waters for the toilet, as well as cordials for the closet, fresh leaves to flavour the "sallet-bowl," and dried ones for the pickle and posset.

The gathering, storing, and arranging of these herbs was no light or inconsequent matter. In country districts some remnant of the practice still lingers, but there is comparatively little store set by this harvest compared to what was formerly the case. Cheap drugs and patent medicines have replaced the homely brew, and the spice-bottle or the ready-made sauce has assumed the place of favourite on the pantry-shelf.

"The art to mix these sweets with due address" is one that but few care to keep in practice.

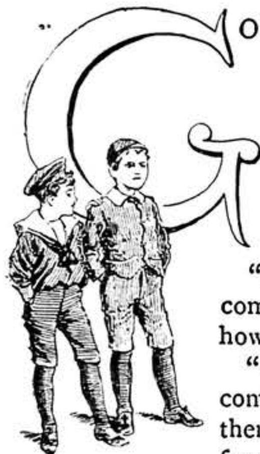
A chemist in a country town once gave me a hint to this effect, that was all the more kindly on his part as it went against his interest to give it. I was asking for a remedy for a cold resulting from damp, naming the district where I lived, and which I believed to be too marshy. "Go and look in the hedgerows," said he; "you'll find there both dulcamara and aconite. I go and gather them for my shop, why shouldn't you do the same?" And once, when I asked the same dispenser for a liver tonic, he rounded on me with the brusque command, "Go and get ye some dandelions in the fields round about ye!" He did not actually anathematise me, but I saw the glare in his eye, and fled.

The gathering of herbs, like the gathering of fruit, has its noonday of ripeness, which, when passed, means a decline of strength and virtue. Not the actual period of flowering, but just before, is the time when the fullest and finest flavours may be captured. They should be gathered and the roots cut sharply off, the herbs being tied in bunches, the stalks left uppermost. Quick drying is essential for culinary herbs, that bright colouring may be retained as well as flavour. For this reason to dry them over the kitchen stove is sometimes preferable to drying out-of-doors in the sun.

When perfectly dry, rub them through a fine wire sieve and store them in wide-mouthed bottles with well-fitting corks. Keep in a dark place, and see that the different bottles are plainly labelled.

The latter end of July and August is the time when most of the herbs should be gathered, but orange-thyme, fennel, tarragon, and chervil may be gathered in June with advantage. Parsley may be cut and dried almost any time after it is full grown, and sage may be left untouched till September.

Herbs might be called the flowers of cookery. They are not essentials, nor are they nutrients, but they give the charm, the elusive flavour, and the poetic touch that a flower lends to the table it adorns, hence let herbs have their due place and consideration.



"GOOD-BYE, dear! I really am sorry for you!" said my friend, Madeline Hay, as she rose from her comfortable chair, put down her tea-cup, and gave me a parting kiss.

"Sorry for me, dear! Why?" I asked with surprise.

"Did you not tell me the boys come home on Thursday? I *know* how dreadful it is!" was her reply.

"Oh, yes! They are all three coming, but it isn't all woe to have them," I answer, somewhat nettled; for although one likes a good grumble about the racket the boys make, and the length of the holidays, it is not quite agreeable to have the creatures talked about as if they were pests. When I had seen Madeline into her pony-cart, and waved my hand for the third time in answer to those farewell gesticulations so many women are fond of keeping up, I came back to the drawing-room; and as it was too hot to go into the garden, I sat looking at the purple shadows of the beeches on the lawn, and thinking of my boys, and how merry their voices would sound next week, and what laughter, and scoldings, chatter, and squabbles, there would be in the old garden. The boys! what queer creatures they are, with their extraordinary reticences, their remarkable frankness, their strange ideas of fun, their code of honour, the peculiarities of their tempers, and the varieties of their dispositions. They are exacting, but soon pleased; easily annoyed, quickly pacified; sensitive, and yet very thick-skinned. Whatever they are, the house is a changed place, when, with their lumbering boxes, their slang and their chaff, they come home for the holidays.

Do you not know the boy who hates girls? How disagreeable he makes himself when they are about; sometimes he hides, sometimes he sulks, occasionally he absconds altogether, when perhaps Aunt Maria and his three smiling cousins are come for the day, and wish to talk to, and play with, James. No James, or at best a very ill-mannered one, is forthcoming; and James's mother is well aware that Aunt Maria will for ever have a very poor opinion of her method of training. Then there is the boy who loves girls; he is at his best when Emily, and Lucy, and Mabel, and Gladys, are to be entertained; he is so careful about damage to their crisp print frocks; so thoughtful in finding the best racquets and the nicest balls for tennis; so attentive with the strawberries and cream, and so sweet-looking in his Eton suit or his spotless flannels, that his mother is filled with pride and joy. We are apt to laugh at the boy with a poetical

twist in his mind, and to think his fondness for beautiful sunsets, "lush" greenery, and the loveliness of spring, rather humbug, and we sometimes trample over heavily on the verses we find, where the lines won't scan, and the rhymes are far-fetched and uncomfortable.

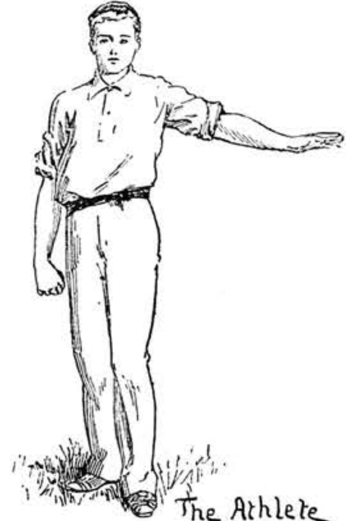
The Grumbler.

Who does not know the grumbler? Nothing pleases him. If we are going to have a pic-nic, he prophesies rain; if the little ones are happily playing he shows them what rubbish amuses them; he complains of the dinners, the drives, the cricket, the sunshine, the rain, the cold, the heat. Everything comes amiss to him, and his past, present, and future are alike distasteful; one is sorry for this boy, and foresees that life will hold sharp discipline for him.

Then there are the boys who amuse themselves from morning till night, without trouble to any one,

The Naturalist

who appear at breakfast clad in some ancient suit and carrying a large tin for insects and treasures of the like kind. Given a small bag of sandwiches, and a great stick with a net at the end, the naturalist will betake himself to the woods and streams, the ditches and dells, and will only reappear at dinner-time, very dirty and tired, but as happy as a king. One envies these lads, to whom a sixth sense seems to have been given, and who find in Mother Earth an inexhaustible treasure-house. Then there is the athlete, who knows all about the forthcoming sports and matches within twenty miles of home, and whose only tribulations are the sins of the laundress, who will not send home his flannels quickly enough, and the irritation of the trains, which do not always suit his needs. If a pony, or a tricycle, or the use of a dog-cart be accorded him, this variety of boy will not weary us with too much of his society in the holidays. Then we have the "masher," to whom clothes are a subject of interest—who knows all about ties, straw-hats, "toppers," and boots and shoes; he is aware what is the proper kind of tweed for his morning suits, and the correct cloth for his Eton jackets. This species is not very common, and it strikes one with wonder to see his bottle of pink hair-oil, his perfumed soap, his hair-brushes, and the starchiness of his linen. More familiar, by far, are we with the "grub," who possesses not one tidy set of garments, whose buttons never keep on, whose clothes never fit, whose hands are for ever dirty, and whose boots never take a polish. His hair will not part; he cannot find his gloves; his caps have broken peaks, and his hats have been sat upon; his jerseys go into holes, and his flannels shrink abnormally. He never cares, or wishes to be different now, but we believe a time will come when all this is changed!


The Athlete

The dunce is a tiresome specimen. He cares neither for classics, mathematics, geography, history, nor literature. He is always at the bottom of his class, and does not feel any humiliation at his position. His father lectures, his mother puts away the term reports with a sad sigh, but still the dunce goes on his way unmoved; and, oddly enough, does not seem to outsiders the ignoramus the verdict of masters and companions announce him. He must absorb knowledge by his pores, for he is often possessed of a large amount of general information, and he does not come out so badly in the school where men are scholars.

The "grind," too, is a boy whom we know well. He is continually in the front rank, and the hours he works, the books he "does," and the place he takes, are known afar. Cricket and football have no charms for him; the world may be bathed in sunshine or hidden in fogs; all outer things are shadows, his companions are the myths and men of olden time; and the queries of Euclid, the intricacies of algebra, or the charms of dynamics, are to him the only realities. His boyhood rushes by as he sits surrounded with his books and papers, his hand holding a pen in place of a bat, and his busy brain solving problems and construing hard passages, instead of scoring

The Dunce.

runs and considering records. His father wonders at, and his mother delights in, the "grind," while friends prophesy either the Woolsack or an exhausted brain for him in the future, according to their dispositions.

Who invents boys' argot? Why should a "decent dinner" mean the same as a "ripping spread"; and "don't get hairy," or "keep your hair on," be used instead of a request "not to cut up rough"? What is a "scut"?—a "swag"? What induces a boy to ask another to "bunk," to "mizzle," to "vamose"? Who can say?

But whatever they do, we love our boys. We wonder at them, we fear for them, we wish they would alter; we would not have them change; they plague us, they upset us, they are selfish, uncomfortable, and delightful, and we use our best endeavours to render their lives happy, and to make them good and useful inhabitants of this workaday world.

TASTY DISHES.

Fricasséed Rabbit.—Cut the rabbit into neat joints and wash well in salt and water; drain, then roll the pieces lightly in seasoned flour, and fry them in beef-dripping until a nice brown all over. Lay them in a stewpan, and cover them with clear stock made from bones and trimmings. Add an onion, a piece of celery, a carrot, and some strips of smoked bacon, a pinch of pepper, or a few pepper-corns. Cover closely, and let the stew simmer for an hour; then remove the rabbit on to a hot dish, and cover at once. Strain the gravy, thicken it with browned flour, put in a table-spoonful of tomato sauce and one of walnut ketchup, add more seasoning if required, then boil up and pour over the rabbit.

A Game Pasty.—The crust for this should be fairly rich, and requires to be mixed with an egg. To a pound of flour put ten ounces of Brittany butter, and make a stiff paste with a beaten egg and sufficient ice-water. Roll out twice, the second time divide the pastry, then roll out again the exact size and shape of a shallow baking-dish, keeping a small portion of paste from which to stamp ornamental leaves, etc.

The filling for the pasty should have been previously prepared by stewing for a long time any pieces or trimmings of venison, game, rabbits, hares, or whatever may be available. When thoroughly tender, remove all bones and skin, also all superfluous fat, and cut the meat into pieces as nearly equal in size as possible. Lay the meat on the lower crust. Season the gravy highly, colour it with browned flour, a pinch of mushroom-powder or a spoonful of ketchup, and pour over the meat as much as the depth of the dish will allow it to contain. It will be better to have dissolved a little gelatine in the gravy, in order that it may be a jelly when cold. Cover the pasty with the upper crust, wetting the edges that they may adhere, then ornament according to fancy. Let it bake in a moderate oven for upwards of an hour, shielding it if inclined to burn. When nearly done, brush it over with beaten egg to give a fine glaze.

Game Cutlets (imitation).—Fry in a little dripping a quarter of a pound of lean bacon or ham, then half a pound of calf's liver, cut into thick slices. When the latter is done, drain, and put both together in a chopping-bowl and mince them until very fine indeed, adding to them any scraps of meat or poultry you may happen to have. Add half the quantity of stale breadcrumbs, a tablespoonful of dried and sifted mixed herbs, a teaspoonful of salt, half a one of black pepper, a pinch of mush-room-powder, and mix the whole with a tea-cupful of good brown gravy. Shape the mixture into small cutlets, coat them with beaten egg, and cover with fine brown rasp-ings, fry them on both sides in a little boiling fat; let them be crisp, but not too dry. Drain them, place a tiny piece of macaroni at the end of each to imitate a bone, and serve them hot with thick gravy if liked, or with a well-dressed salad.

Ham Savoury.—Cut a slice of stale bread half an inch thick, trim off the crust, and make rounds or triangles of the crumb. Fry these on both sides in a little butter, when lightly browned drain them. Spread each one with a very thin layer of mango chutney. Cut some raw ham into very thin slices, fry these quickly that they may curl up, and place one curled piece on each crouton. Serve hot. These are a delicious dinner savoury.

Cheese Savouries.—Line some small tins with short pastry; make a light mixture with two beaten eggs, an ounce of grated Par-mesan or two ounces of Cheddar cheese, an ounce of stale bread-crumbs, half an ounce of butter, and a pinch of cayenne with half a tea-spoonful of salt. Put a spoonful into each case, bake them in a very quick oven for ten or fifteen minutes, then serve hot on a d'oyley.

Apple Syllabub.—Pare and core, and cook with a very little water, six sharp apples. Cook them quickly that they may make a white froth. Set this aside to become cold, then whip the whites of two eggs, and when these are firm whisk the apples with sufficient white sugar to well sweeten them, and after-wards lightly whisk in the whites of egg. Place a little bright-coloured jelly at the bottom of some wine-tumblers, fill them up with the syllabub, and serve with sweet biscuits.

Cottage Pudding.—Beat together two eggs and two ounces of castor sugar, add to them two tablespoonfuls of finely-chopped suet, three ounces of flour, one ounce of rice-flour, and rub a teaspoonful of baking-powder into the last; mix with a little milk if needed, but the batter should be rather stiff. Pour into a well-greased mould, and cover with a but-tered paper. Steam the pudding for an hour and a half. Turn it out when required for table, and pour around it a sauce made by dissolving half a pound of jam, with as much water, boiling it for a minute or two, then pouring through a strainer.

Orange Salad.—Choose thin-skinned, rather sour oranges, slice them evenly through, re-moving the pips. Lay the slices in a shallow dish, sprinkle with castor sugar, and let the salad "lie" for an hour before it is required for the table. Serve this with

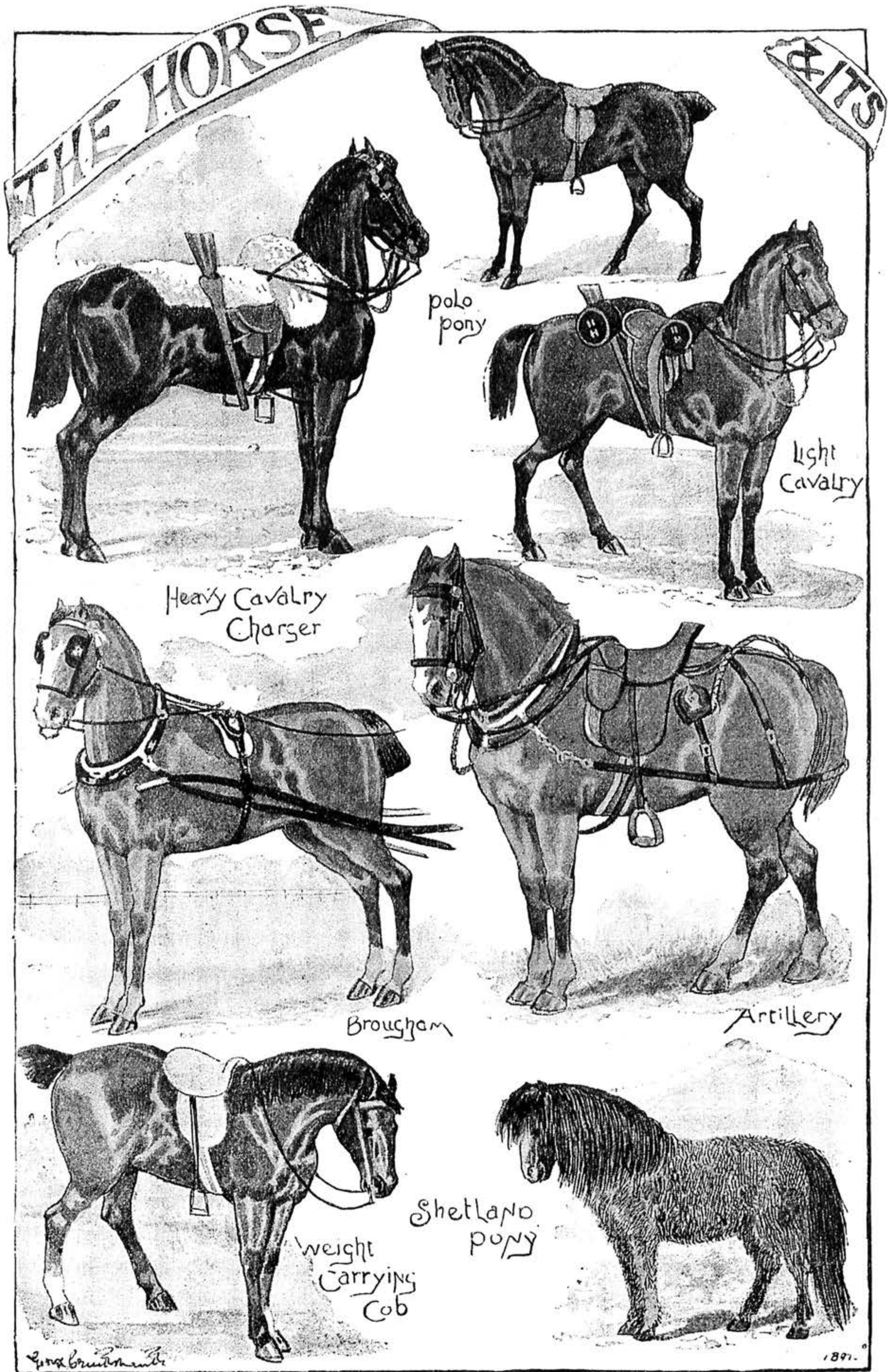
Roast Wild Duck.—A simple stuffing of potatoes boiled and mashed is the best for this. Baste the duck freely while it is cook-ing, as this is a bird with drier flesh than the tame species. Cover with buttered paper while it is cooking, and give a rather longer time than for the ordinary kind.

There is more flesh upon all game-birds than is usually imagined, so that they are profitable to the housekeeper, although some-what high in price.

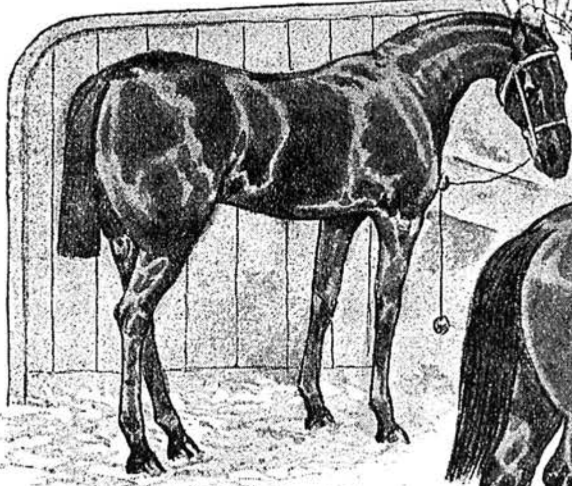
A Roast Guinea Fowl is an excellent dish, a nice salad accompanying it well, with gravy and brown crumbs.

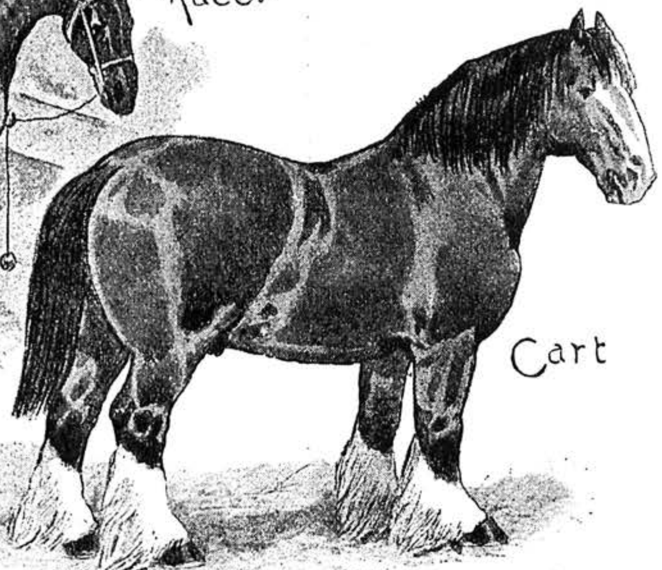
Browned Bread-crumbs, the usual garnish for all game, are made by grating some stale white bread on to a tin, placing bits of butter amongst them, and putting the tin in a very quick oven. Stir the crumbs frequently, that they may brown all alike.

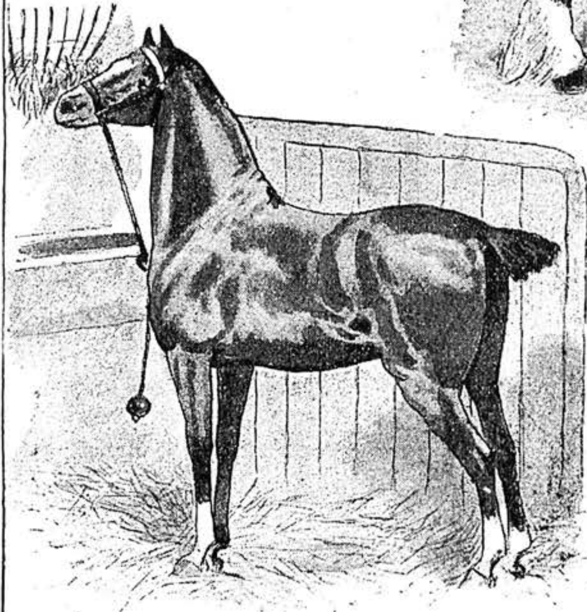
L. H. YATES.

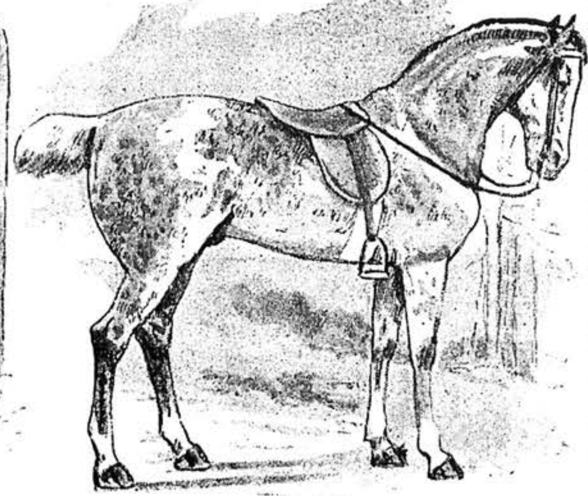

THE HORSE
& ITS
Polo pony
Light Cavalry
Heavy Cavalry Charger
Brougham
Artillery
Shetland pony
Weight Carrying Cob

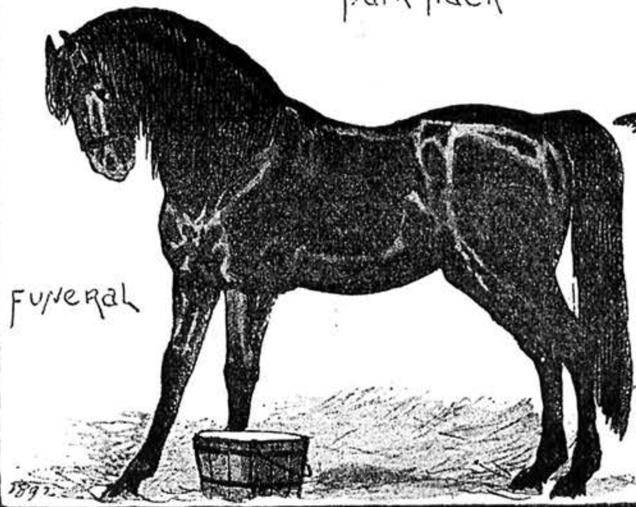
OCCUPATIONS

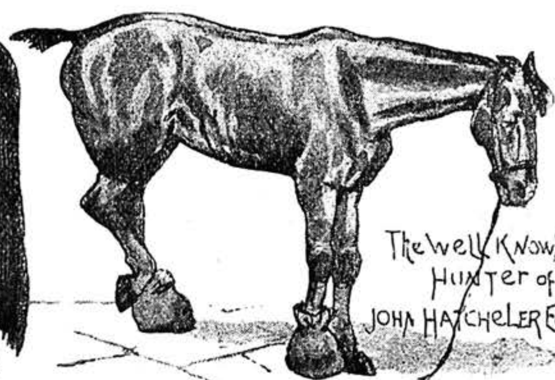








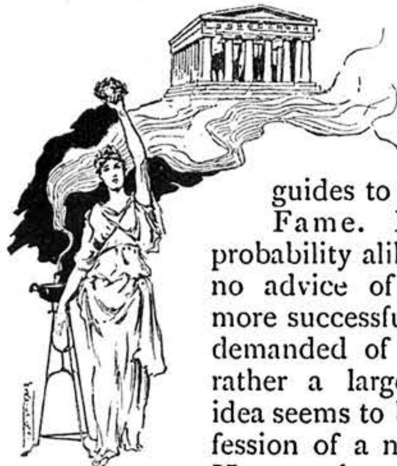




The Compleat Novelist.

By James Payn.

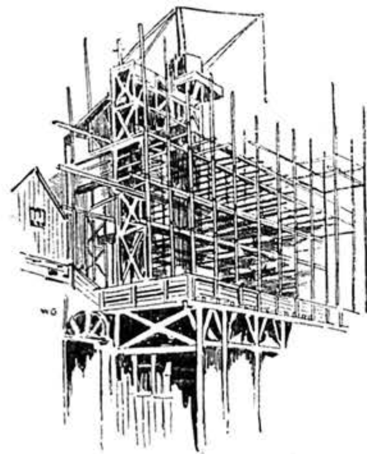
HAVE for years been subject to inquiries from persons utterly unknown to me (except that their name is Legion) as to how fame and fortune (but especially the latter) are to be won by writing novels. The college where the art of "How to write fiction" is to be taught, though well ventilated, is not yet, it appears, built. There are professors, but they have not regularly set to work; they resemble Ministers without portfolios, a class of statesmen the nature of whom is a puzzle to many persons; there are even books—handbooks, primers—published on this subject, but they do not seem to have fulfilled their mission as guides to the Temple of Fame. Modesty and probability alike suggest that no advice of mine will be more successful. The service demanded of me is, in fact, rather a large order. The idea seems to be that the profession of a novelist (though Heaven knows we are no conjurers) is similar to that of those *prestidigitateurs* who, after a performance, are prepared for a consideration to inform the curious how it is done. Still, as the inquirers are so numerous, and as that section of the public (though fast diminishing) which does not write novels seems also to take an interest in the subject, I propose to give a hint or two on it which may probably prove serviceable. The theme itself is by no means dull, and has features in it which are even amusing. I need not say that the correspondents who ask: "How to write Fiction," though they have probably written reams of it, have published nothing. When a man—and especially a woman—has done *that*, he wants advice from nobody, and exceedingly resents it being offered. These, however, are all Peris (most of them female ones) standing more or less "disconsolate" at the gate of Eden (situated in Paternoster Row), whose "crystal bar" has proved immovable even to their tears.



"How shall I sit down to write a novel?" inquires one, pathetically, who obviously desires instruction from the very beginning. There is a greater choice about this than she probably imagines. I knew one novelist who, while pursuing his trade, never sat down at all, but stood at a desk—which is how, not his legs, but his shoulders "got bowed." Another walks "to and fro" (like the Devil) seeking for ideas. A bishop, the other day, revealed to us the fact that he always wrote on his knees; but the work, we conclude, was a devotional one, and not a novel. One popular story-teller, to my personal knowledge, used to write upon his stomach (*i.e.*, lying upon it), with his reference books around him, like a sea beast among rocks.

This preliminary settled, however, my fair inquisitress asks me how to begin. This is an inquiry the importance of which is apt to be underrated, and, though an initial one, should not be the first. The first should be: "What shall I write about?" It is amazing how many of our story-tellers, and especially of the female ones, begin story-telling without having a story to tell. They start off, often at great speed, and sometimes too fast, but in no particular direction. "Where are you going to, my pretty maid?" is a question which, in their turn, might be asked of them. They are certainly not "going a-milking," if their milch cow is the public. It is fair to say, however, that almost all beginners, whether male or female, fall into this error. Yet it is only geniuses who can write brilliantly about nothing. "There is no preparation, there is no mechanique," is a statement only applicable to great magicians. Think how the greatest novelists have, sooner or later, had to give their attention to plot! There have been, of course, some very fine character-novels; but these have not been written by beginners; to delineate character requires above all things experience and observation. As a general rule the advice that should be given to all budding novelists is: "Don't be in a hurry to blow. If you have no story to tell, wait till you get one."

The necessity indeed of having the plot of one's novel—or at all events the skeleton of it—arranged beforehand, is surely as obvious, when one comes to think of it, as that of knowing the lines of a ship, or the plan of a building, before commencing their construction. Few of us, having determined to build our own houses without the aid of an architect, have not come to grief; I know one enterprising person who forgot the stairs. If you only want a bungalow—a cottage on the ground floor—of course, this doesn't so much matter; and similarly, the smaller the story the less there need be of plot; but some sort of plan to work upon—subject to alteration and with plenty of room for additions—you must have. The question, of course, arises: How to get it? But this must be answered by the inquirer himself. It must depend upon some incident or circumstance more or less dramatic, which has made a deep impression on the writer's mind; it may have originated there (which is the better way) or it may have been communicated to it, but the impression must be deep. Moreover, it should not be recent; the longer he reflects upon it, as the cow chews the cud, the more likely he is to succeed with it. Half-a-dozen lines suffice in the first instance for the germ of the story. They look bald enough, but there are potentialities in them for those who can use them, just as music, the poet tells us, lies in the eggs of the nightingale. As the born story-teller dwells on them, they expand page after page. New incidents, new situations, new characters gradually present themselves as in some magic mirror. The two former may be the offspring of the imagination, but the latter should owe their being to memory: they should be studies from real life. Great care must, however, be taken to prevent recognition. The appearance, the neighbourhood, the profession of those portrayed should altogether differ from what they are in reality. Great distress of mind as respects this matter has been caused by many an undesigned coincidence, and all traces of personal resemblance should be concealed as carefully as an Indian hides his trail.



Whatever may be the merits of novels of character, it is certain that they do not appeal to the great world of readers as those do which deal with dramatic situations and incidents. As the life of the body is the blood, so the life of the novel is its "story." My correspondents seem to treat this as easy to procure; but they are mistaken. There are many people indeed who protest they

have any amount of plots to give away; "just the very thing to write about"; but as John Leech used to say when a poor joke was suggested to him for *Punch:* "Admirable indeed, my dear fellow, but it does not lend itself to illustration." Not one tenth of the stories suggested by our friends are suitable materials for a novel.

Singular as it may appear, before the beginning of a story is attempted, the writer who wishes to do the best for himself, and is not afraid of taking pains, should fix upon the end of it. However long may be the journey, and tired may be the horses, the post-boy who has any self-respect will always "Keep a gallop for the avenue." He is well aware of the advantage, as regards renumeration, of leaving a good impression at the last. While as for the post-boy who doesn't know his way, nor even the place for which he is bound, it is obvious that he doesn't understand his business. I am convinced that the best novels,

not "sensational" ones only, but those of sustained interest, have been composed, so to speak, backwards. The having the *denouement*, perhaps the catastrophe, well on one's mind from the first, is a precaution similar to that which is taken by a public speaker who, whatever he forgets, is careful not to lose sight of his peroration. He well knows that is what he has to lead up to, and that upon the nature of it will chiefly depend his success. However well he may have got on up to that point, if his conclusion is lame and impotent, his speech will be a failure. Moreover, the foreknowledge of the end suggests much of the proper course of events in a story. This is hardly to be understood by one who is not a novelist. Perhaps I may be forgiven the apparent egotism of an allusion to "Lost Sir Massingberd"—a small thing, but mine own—to which I venture to allude only as an illustration.

An ancient tree, which though perfect to the eye was hollow, suggested a novel method of disappearance. A man might climb into it and fall through, hands over head, without possibility of extrication. Only his muffled cries for help might be heard in the wood for hours without recognition. This was obviously not a position in which to leave one's hero, but a very good way of disposing of one's villain. The wicked baronet of the story was drawn from life; but he never would have been drawn at all except for the tree. He was buried — not in elm, if I remember right, but in oak—before he was born. In thinking the story out before putting pen to paper, the other characters introduced themselves, quite naturally.

If the conclusion of a story occurs to one as striking and dramatic, it must not be put aside, of course, on the ground of its being melancholy; but as a general rule I would warn young novelists against "bad endings"; it is their weakness to indulge in them just as it is that of young poets to rhyme about premature death. Youth has the "trick of melancholy." A few readers may sympathize

with this feeling, but the majority exceedingly resent an unhappy termination to a story in which they have been interested. Some persons will not open a novel suspected of this drawback, and I have known even books like the "Bride of Lammermoor" to remain unread in consequence. What right has a man to pen a story like Turganieff's "On the Eve" to make generations of his fellow-creatures miserable? What lesson is to be learnt from it save the inscrutable cruelty of Fate? Who is the better—or even the wiser—for it?

Trollope was, on the whole, a kindly writer, but who does not resent the absurd scruples he puts into the mouth of Lily Dale which make the life-long fidelity of Johnny Eames futile? Take, on the other hand, Mrs. Oliphant's equally simple story of "A Rose in June." There is sadness enough in it, but how much more naturally and satisfactorily is the course of true love brought to its close.

At all events, whether the ending is good or bad, it ought to be concealed. There are some readers indeed who are so unprincipled as to look at (what used to be) the third volume first, just as children cannot keep their hands from the dessert when the soup is on the table; but this conduct is contemptible. Wilkie Collins thought it criminal. I shall never forget his distress of mind when, in the vanity of youth, I boasted to him of how I had guessed the secret of "The Moonstone" at an earlier date than he had intended.

The plot of the story having been decided upon, it is advisable to make a skeleton plan of it on large cardboard, with plenty of room for the filling in of such *dramatis personæ* as are deemed appropriate to it, and any incidents which may occur to the mind as likely to be suitable and attractive. The fictitious names of the characters should be placed side by side with the real ones, that their connection should not be lost sight of, while their idiosyncrasies and other recognisable qualities should be carefully avoided. It may, I hope, not be necessary, but it is still advisable to warn the neophyte against making use of the unfair advantage which publication gives him to satirize persons who may be obnoxious to him; this is too often done, in ignorance, perhaps, of the serious consequences that may flow from it; but it is a most cowardly proceeding, like that of striking with a deadly weapon an unarmed enemy. When a satire becomes personal it is a lampoon. Even when no harm is intended, and recognition takes place, much distress of mind may be caused not only to the person satirized but to the satirist. There was little in Charles Dickens's writings to be repented of, but it is well known that he grievously regretted his delineation of Leigh Hunt as Harold Skimpole. Hunt's peculiarities were recognised at once, and the vices of Skimpole, which were not Hunt's at all, only too readily attributed to him. Apology in such cases is useless. *Litera scripta manet;* the mischief is done.

I may here say, though it is anticipating matters, that no man who wishes to be happy in his vocation should become a novelist who is so thin-skinned or impatient of censure as to take unfavourable criticisms as a personal affront, or seek to be "even" with the man who writes it. I have known some very unpleasant consequences arise from this foolish indignation, especially where, as often happens, it has been misplaced, and the outrage has been attributed to the wrong man. By him who aspires to be a man of letters all personalities should be avoided, and especially by the writer of Fiction. If he wants to be uncivil, let him write an historical novel, and pitch into somebody who has been dead for a century or two. Matters will become much too personal with him, whether he will or no, before he has done with novel writing: it necessitates a study of his fellow-creatures that will compel him to see faults where he would far rather be blind, and things distasteful in those he loves.

As for the scene of his story, I would recommend Scott, junior (if he will allow me to call him so), not to select foreign ones, however conversant he may be with them; the taste of the British novel reader is as insular as his dwelling-place, and he prefers to read of places he has visited, and of customs with which he is familiar. There have been some exceptions, but, as a rule, even our most popular novelists have lost something of their circulation when they have ventured on alien soil. With readers who have passed much of their time abroad, there is of course no objection

to this; they may even prefer it, as awakening pleasant memories; but they are but a small minority; the others best like to read of what they are familiar with, and are in a position to pass judgment on. The case is somewhat similar to that of foreign novels: those who can read them in the language they are written in take pleasure in them; but translations of them are not popular with the less accomplished. Wherever the scene of the novel is placed, however, it is absolutely necessary for the writer to become thoroughly acquainted with it. No time, or trouble, should be grudged in this matter. It is by no means, however, necessary to stay long in the chosen locality; on the contrary, the salient points which strike one on a first acquaintance are apt to be lost through familiarity with them, and it is these which strike the reader.

To pass from "place" to "period" I would observe that, though of late years there has been a great resuscitation of the historical novel, it is generally a mistake for writers who would be popular to place their story in a far back time. One or two have recently made a great success in so doing, but it is given to very few to clothe dry bones with flesh. It is of course necessary to study the period and to read much literature concerning it; and the too general result of this is to give to the composition the impression of "cram," of its having been "got up" for the occasion. The story that finds most readers is almost always a tale of to-day. They like to be in a position to criticise; to say this and that is contrary or in accordance with their own experience; that they have met, or not met, the characters described; whereas for the vraisemblance of folks in armour who moved in society upon horseback, they are obliged to accept the author's *ipse dixit*.

Almost all young writers cast their fiction in the autobiographical form, for indeed they are generally their own heroes. This has been done a few times only with success (as in the case of "David Copperfield"), even by great authors; with small ones it is a fatal error. There is always a great deal too much about the author's boyhood, which, except to his mother, is absolutely uninteresting. "Boys will be boys," it is said by way of apology, and they need it. Some adults may want to have their school-days over again, which only shows they have forgotten them—but they don't want to read of other people's school-days. There is nothing duller than the reminiscences of boyhood, except those of girlhood. Women writers scarcely ever allow their readers to escape from these narratives. They *will* begin with their heroine in short frocks, and sometimes in long clothes. She has her skipping-rope, with which we wish she would hang herself, and her girl friends, who are as unentertaining as herself, and her "yearnings." She yearns through a dozen chapters, while the reader yawns. It would be such a relief if she would do something, even if it were to run away with the page. Children are charming (and so are dogs) when they leaven a story, but they should not be allowed, any more than in real life, to occupy too much of the attention. And whether in youth, or at any other period, there should be no ego in a novel. The introduction of self into it is fatal. Thackeray, it may be said, did it; but it was a mistake even in his case, and it is probable that Scott, junior, is not a Thackeray. Does he suppose that his puppets are so lifelike that it is necessary (like Bottom the weaver) to put his head outside the puppet-show to assure us that they are not really alive? Does he imagine that his tale has such a sustained interest that it can bear this solution of continuity? If he does, he possesses at least one quality which some people think is necessary to literary success—"a gude conceit of himself."

On the other hand, he should not be afraid of expressing his opinions; while young at the trade, it is better to do so through the mouths of his characters; but if this cannot appropriately be done, let him

state them, though always in an impersonal way. To students of fiction it is interesting to mark how, as authors gather strength, and gain their places in the world, they deliver their *obiter dictar* upon things in general.

I may here tell a secret, or at all events something not generally known, concerning popular, and presumably good, novelists. Sometimes, of course, their circulation wanes with their wits; old age has its natural effect upon their powers of imagination; but much more commonly their reputation decays through another attribute of old age, which is by no means unavoidable, namely, indolence. They flatter themselves they are sure of their public, which, indeed, is always faithful to them as long as can be reasonably expected, and even beyond it; and they no longer take the same pains to please as they used to do; they substitute recollection for observation, and trust to memory where they formerly drew from experience. It is irksome to them to take trouble. Now, though no definition of genius is so idiotic and absolutely contrary to the fact than that which describes it as "an infinite capacity for taking pains," if pains are not taken, even genius cannot in the end succeed, however fortunate it may be in the beginning. While if Scott, junior, is only a young person of talent and not a genius (as is possible), he may just as well hope to be a great engineer, if he takes no pains, as to be a novelist. It seems so easy to those who have never done it to succeed in fiction; story-telling appears such a holiday task to the outsider; but as a matter of fact it requires a great deal of application, observation, study, and, above all things, patience and perseverance. Only a few writers "awake to find themselves famous," and even these have generally had rather a long night.

The greatest bugbear in the eyes of the young novelist is the critic. This wicked creature is credited with an irreconcilable enmity to imaginative literature, and with a disposition to dance upon the bodies of all who follow it, but especially upon the young. The exaggerated fear in which he is held is in reality caused by his victims' exaggerated ideas of their own importance. If they knew what very little displacement was caused by their plunge into Fiction, they would know how brief is the effect of any comments that may be made upon it. As a matter of fact, very few people read reviews, and the impression they create seldom endures beyond the week in which they appear; one review pushes the next out of recollection, as one pellet drives out another in a pop-gun. The harm wrought by an ill-natured, or what is called a "nasty," review—for, of course, we are not considering a just one, to which no objection should be made—depends chiefly upon whether the author vituperated is fool enough to read it. It is quite amazing how otherwise sensible persons are tempted to do this throughout their lives. I knew one very successful author who could never withstand the temptation to read what he had already heard was an "attack upon him" wherever it was. He used to buy the review or newspaper—thus actually increasing the resources of his enemy—and after having made himself thoroughly miserable with reading it, tear it into fragments. The other unpleasantness about unfavourable criticism is that one's friends always get hold of it, and perhaps send one a copy of it, explaining in a sympathetic letter how they "deplore it." This is scarcely what is called "backing" on the part of one's friends. The "Compleat Novelist" would be a misnomer indeed for a gentleman who embraces that profession with the fear of the critic before his eyes. Let him lay to heart the admirable saying, "No man was ever written down except by himself."

When the skeleton of his story is finished he must be careful to avoid plumping it out by padding. He should be always marching on with his story and never "marking time," like a recruit at drill. Dissertations and disquisitions should be avoided. Where his characters indulge in reflection they should be as brief as epigrams, and, if possible, as pointed. There is nothing so tedious in fiction as a Hamlet hero.

As to the nature of the novel, that must, of course, depend upon the nature of the author, but it is certain that popularity most attends the writer who can attach Cupid to his chariot wheels. By far the majority of novel readers are the ladies, and they prefer, above all others, the love story. It is true that some of our greatest writers, Thackeray especially, and in a less degree Dickens, have not been very successful in their treatment of this matter, but genius has no laws. I have already apologized to Scott, junior, for taking it for granted that his gift is short of genius; if it were otherwise, he needs no teaching. But it is quite curious how independent is a writer who has a speciality for describing courtship of any other attractions. Trollope, who, of course, had many other gifts, could turn out whole volumes descriptive of the tender passion. The too faithful Johnny Eames is exhibited at the feet of his inamorata not only in one novel but several; his courtship has continuations; yet the ladies never tired of it. In these days, popularity has been sometimes obtained upon these lines after a fashion to which it is not necessary to allude; I will not suppose Scott, junior, to be capable of seeking the bubble reputation in dirty waters, as a mudlark dives for pence. There are plenty of honest women and honourable men in the world, if he have the eyes to see them and the hand to draw them.

Still I would warn him against the diffuse descriptions of the young people whose course of true love he has set himself to narrate. It will astonish him perhaps to learn that no novelist has as yet described the appearance of a heroine so as to be recognisable by his readers; the picture of her they make in their own minds will not be the one he would fain have suggested to them. At the very best it will be only such a likeness as may be gathered from a passport. Women writers will fill a dozen pages with their heroine's exquisite features (not forgetting the lobe of her ear), and a dozen more with her dress. This I do not recommend, and as for that latter matter, though I understand it is attractive to female readers, Scott, junior, being a male, is certain to make a mess of it. Nor do I think it is advisable that he should "pan out" too much on the scenery; as a matter of fact, this is mostly skipped, but I may add concerning it, as of the portrait-painting, that unless there are very salient points about it, it fails to give the impression desired. Any-one who visits the places described by even such a master of the pen as Walter Scott, must acknowledge that that is his first introduction to them; he has gained no familiarity with them through the printed page.

The chief point of a novelist's endeavours should be to give his story *sustained interest.* It is, of course, necessary, in a long one, to break the thread when he introduces new scenes and characters, but it should be picked up as soon as possible, and both old and new combined in it. There are many admirable works that can be taken up and laid down at any time, but this should not be the case with a novel. The aspiration of one of our greatest writers was "to cheat a schoolboy of his hour of play" (a much more difficult task, by-the-bye, than to cheat him of an hour of work, which he will cheerfully give up for almost any other occupation), and the ambition of a novelist, unless he is one of those who write "with a purpose," should be to—what some excellent people would call—"waste the time" of his readers; that is to say, to so fascinate them that they cannot lay his story down, or go to bed, until they have finished it; and no matter what may be his wit or wisdom, he will never accomplish this unless he has a story to tell them. And thus we come round to the point from which we started, the paramount necessity of a good plot. "A good plot," as Hotspur says, "and *full of expectation*, an excellent plot."

Lastly, neither time nor pains should be spared in the choice of title. This is very important, especially with a new writer. The same foolish persons who tell us that all the plots have been exhausted, will doubtless say that the titles also have already been appropriated. A great many of them have been so, as is evidenced by the number of novels that have had to change their

names between their serial publication and their book form in consequence. They are names, of course, of unknown novels, for no one would be so impudent as to take that of a well-known one—which their authors have not even thought it worth while to spend five shillings in registering. It is pretty certain that no court of law would award damages for doing what could not be helped, and what could not but result, if it had any result, in the advantage of the person (supposed to be) injured. Still, it is advisable to take every precaution possible to avoid this duplication. The title should indicate the nature of the story without revealing its secret, and should not be a proper name, which can attract nobody. "David Copperfield" and "Martin Chuzzlewit" are attractive to us, because we are all acquainted with their contents, but they are, as titles, colourless, and excite no curiosity. When Scott, junior, has attained fame, he can call his novel what he pleases.

Some care should be also taken with the names of the characters of a novel. Matters are improving in this respect, and we seldom read such obvious titles as were at one time common in fiction, reminding us of those in the "Pilgrim's Progress." The Faithfuls and Easies, the Gammons, the Quirks and Snaps, the Sir Harkaway Rotgut Wildfires, once so familiar to us, would now be pronounced crude and extravagant. Dickens was almost the first to escape from them; his names were all taken from real life, either from what he read over shops or in the Post Office Directory. The exception is in "Nicholas Nickleby," where, however, there is an excellent name of the "Pilgrim's Progress" type—Sir Mulberry Hawke. Scott, junior, should take his names from the Directory, but be careful to put an out-of-the-way Christian name before them, so as to avoid the risk, if not of an action for libel, at least of some personal unpleasantness. People don't like being called "out of their names," but still more do they dislike their real ones stuck on to a bad character in a novel, like a lady's head on the body of a comic photograph.

In all that I have said of him, let Scott, junior, distinctly understand that I pretend to teach no method of making bricks without straw. If he has no natural turn for story-telling, no human being can give it to him; but if he has a bent that way—and not merely a passionate desire to see himself in print, which is a much commoner attribute — I have endeavoured to show him how he can utilize it; what he should give his attention to, and what he should avoid. I cannot promise him success, but I believe I have shown him the way in which he is most likely to attain it.

Revision.

I WROTE some lines, from end to end
  In praise of dearest May.
I showed them to a critic friend,
  To see what he would say.

"They're crude," said he, "and so are you."
  (He was a grouty fellow!)
"Just let them lie a year or two,
  To ripen and grow mellow.

"Go over them from time to time,
  And polish bit by bit;
Perfect the meter and the rhyme,
  And sharpen up the wit:

"In half a year, but for the theme,
  And for the lady's name,
They'll be so changed you'll hardly dream
  The lines could be the same."

I let them lie, I worked them o'er,—
  Changed epithet and rhyme.
I hardly knew them any more,
  They'd mellowed so by time.

"Black eyes" had mellowed into "blue,"
  And "ringlets" into "strands";
"One dimple," ripened into "two";
  "Small," grown to "shapely" hands.

And what was once "*nez retroussé*"
  Was now a "Grecian" nose;
In fact, the very name of "May"
  Had mellowed into "*Rose*."

Esther B. Tiffany.

SOME CONTINENTAL RECIPES FOR EGGS.

CONSIDERING the size of the egg, it contains more nourishment than any other food, and its use in soups, puddings, vegetables, etc., is invaluable. In France, Italy, and Switzerland, where eggs are so numerous, they are introduced largely into the *cuisine*, not only for the inevitable omelette or custard, but also for thickening gravies, flavouring soups, or giving a dainty colouring to blancmange, etc. In one Swiss hotel, where I studied cooking, I noticed that soup was never sent to table without being first poured over one or two raw, beaten-up eggs, and the practice of beating a new-laid egg into one's coffee or chocolate is not uncommon. In families where it is not customary to have two meat-meals daily, the egg plays a conspicuous *rôle*, and many a dainty and inexpensive dish may be prepared from it.

Vogelheu (*Eggs and Bread*).

Ingredients.—Two rolls, half a cupful of milk, two ounces of butter, four eggs, salt.

Cut the rolls into thin pieces, damp the pieces in milk, and fry in the butter. Whisk up the eggs with half a cupful of milk and a little salt, and pour over the fried bread in the pan. Stir all together until the eggs are set and serve at once.

Eierkuchen mit Sauce.

Ingredients.—Four eggs, a cupful of broth, salt, and chopped parsley.

Beat up the eggs with about two tablespoonfuls of broth, and add the salt and a handful of chopped parsley. Cook in the same way as an omelette.

Make a brown sauce in the following manner:—Stir a tablespoonful of flour into an ounce of steaming butter until it is of a light brown colour, add a cupful of broth and a little Harvey sauce or ketchup. Pour this sauce over the omelette and serve at once.

Œufs au Gratin.

Ingredients.—Four eggs, parsley, bread-crumbs, two ounces of grated cheese, butter, pepper and salt.

Take four patty-pans, butter them well and break an egg into each, taking care not to break the yolks, put over them a little grated cheese, chopped parsley, bread-crumbs and a small lump of butter, pepper and salt. Bake in an oven for about five minutes.

Œufs à la Maître d'Hotel.

Ingredients.—Two ounces of butter, one tablespoonful of flour, a cupful of milk, minced parsley, four eggs.

Heat the butter and stir in the flour, add the parsley and milk, pepper and salt, and simmer for five minutes. Boil the eggs hard. Cut into halves amd pour over the sauce. A little lemon juice or vinegar makes the sauce piquant.

Piquantes Butterbrod.

Ingredients.—The yolk of an egg, a teaspoonful of mustard, a small lump of butter.

Beat all the ingredients well together and send to table, spread on thin slices of white or brown bread.

Pannequets.

Ingredients.—Two spoonfuls of flour, five eggs, one teaspoonful of sugar, one pint of milk, two ounces of butter, salt.

Make a paste with the flour, yolks of three eggs, and two whole eggs, sugar, milk, a pinch of salt, and the butter, which must be melted. Make a small omelette-pan warm and grease it with a little butter. Put one tablespoonful of the paste in the pan at a time and make thin pancakes. Spread jam or jelly over the pancakes and roll. Send to table with a sprinkling of powdered sugar.

Eggs in Milk Sauce.

Ingredients.—Two ounces of butter, four eggs, half a pint of milk, one tablespoonful of flour, pepper and salt.

Stir the flour into the butter in a frying-pan, and add by degrees the milk, and pepper and salt to taste. When the sauce boils, add the four eggs, taking care not to break the yolks. Let the eggs cook in the sauce until the whites are set. Take the eggs out, lay them on buttered toast, and cover with the milk sauce.

Braune Eier (*Brown Eggs*).

Ingredients.—Raspings of crusts, butter and eggs.

Butter some little tin pans and cover with raspings. Into each pan break an egg and bake in a moderate oven or, better, on the hot plate until the whites are set. Turn the eggs out on a hot dish.

Œufs aux Champignons.

Ingredients.—One Spanish onion, half a pound of mushrooms, five eggs, pepper, salt, a cupful of broth or gravy, a small lump of butter.

Cut up the mushrooms and onions and fry in butter. Boil the eggs hard. Slice them and add to the mushrooms and onions. Simmer all together in the gravy and serve very hot.

Deutscher Omelette mit Fruchten
(*German omelette with fruit*).

Ingredients.— Four tablespoonfuls of flour, half a pint of milk, four eggs, two ounces of butter. Any sort of fruit.

Make a stiff and smooth paste with the flour and milk, and then add the eggs one by one, and half a teaspoonful of salt until the paste is the consistency of cream. Heat the butter in the pan and cook as an ordinary omelette, a nice brown on both sides. Serve the omelette with cooked apples, pears, cherries or plums. In the case of stoned fruits it is better to remove the stones.

Plattenmus.

Ingredients.—Three eggs, two ounces of flour, one pint of milk, half a teaspoonful of salt.

Mix all the ingredients well together and lay in a well-buttered pan. Bake in a moderate oven for twenty to thirty minutes.

The same can be placed in cups or a basin, and boiled in water for half an hour.

Eier als Gemuse-Garnitur
(*Eggs as Vegetable Garnish*).

Ingredients.—One tablespconful of flour, two eggs, a pinch of salt, two tablespoonfuls of milk.

Make a firm paste with the flour and milk, beat the yolks and whites of the eggs separately and add also. Put a piece of butter the size of a walnut in the pan, and when quite hot, add the above mixture (about two tablespoonfuls at a time), and make very thin pancakes. Roll these and cut them into pieces two inches in length and garnish round spinach, beans, peas, etc.

Nudeln (*Home-made Macaroni*).

Ingredients.—Four eggs, half a cupful of milk, half a pound of flour.

Mix the above ingredients together until a stiff paste is formed. Knead well on a paste-board and roll out over and over again until as thin as the blade of a knife. Hang up the paste for about an hour to dry. When dry, cut the paste up to four or five pieces, lay them one on top of the other, roll and cut into fine strips. Boil till tender in boiling and salted water, and serve up either with gravy, butter and grated cheese, fried onions or stewed fruit. Nudeln, thus prepared, have a much finer flavour than macaroni. They can be kept for several weeks.

Œufs au Four.

Ingredients.—Six eggs, three ounces of butter, half a pound of cheese, minced chives or parsley, pepper and salt.

Smear a baking-tin thickly with butter, and lay half the cheese cut in thin slices over it. Break the six eggs carefully, and over each egg grate some cheese, put a teaspoonful of minced chives or parsley and a lump of butter. Bake in the oven for ten minutes.

Œufs au Béchamel.

Ingredients.—Ten eggs, parsley, two cloves, one bay-leaf, savoury herbs, flour, salt, a few mushrooms (if possible), half a cupful of cream or milk, white stock.

Put the stock into a pan with the cloves, bay-leaf, a tablespoonful of savoury herbs, the mushrooms and half a teaspoonful of salt. Let it boil for an hour, strain it and thicken with flour. Cook the eggs hard, peel them, take out the yolks and thinly slice the whites. Pile the yolks up in the middle of a hot dish, place the slices of white round and cover all with the white sauce and a sprinkling of chopped parsley.

Ouovi e Pomedoro (*Eggs and Tomatoes*).

Ingredients.—One Spanish onion, half a pound of tomatoes, water or broth, pepper and salt, butter, three eggs.

Chop the onion fine and fry in butter until brown, add the tomatoes, also cut up, flavour with pepper and salt, add half a cupful of broth or water, and simmer for a quarter of an hour. Have ready three hard-boiled eggs, shell them and cut them in quarters lengthwise. Lay them on a hot dish and cover with the tomato sauce. A few *croûtons* or slices of toast should be served round the dish.

Egg Sauce.

Ingredients.—Three eggs, half a pint of melted butter, a little minced parsley.

Boil the eggs hard and chop into small pieces. When the butter is hot, stir in the eggs and add a sprinkling of parsley.

A good sauce for fish, such as cod, etc., is made by adding the chopped eggs into an ordinary thick white sauce and flavouring with a little lemon juice.

Poulet aux Œufs.

Ingredients. — A chicken, one Spanish onion, two tomatoes, broth or water and meat extract, pepper, salt, two eggs, butter.

Cut the chicken into joints. Chop up the onion and fry in an ounce of butter, add the tomatoes, and, after five minutes, add the pieces of chicken. Let all cook together for five minutes more, and then add half a pint of water or broth, pepper and salt. After about half an hour, add two beaten-up eggs to thicken the sauce, and serve.

This is a most dainty way of serving chicken. An old fowl cooked this way loses its toughness, but then a longer time must be allowed for the cooking.

Any kinds of meat or bird or even fish prepared in this way will be found appetising. In Italy cod and hake are generally treated in this manner.

Spiegeleir mit Schinken (*Eggs and Ham*).

Ingredients.—Thin slices of ham, two ounces of butter, two eggs, pepper and salt.

Fry the ham lightly and lay it on a warm plate, beat up the eggs with pepper and salt, fry lightly, cover the ham with them and serve.

ANNEXED BY THE TSAR.

He was a huge dog, and he stood by the kennel, in old Dr. Gorham's back yard, in an attitude of deep meditation. There was one subject for dog-thought lying right before him, and another lay only a yard or so beyond the first.

The one was an empty "muzzle" that lay upon the grass, close by a couple of well-picked bones. The second was an equally empty steel collar, with a strong chain attached. The end of the chain was hooked into a staple at the side of the kennel door.

Tsar was a dog to look twice at. His father had been a Siberian bloodhound and his mother an English mastiff, and Dr. Gorham would have trusted him to pull down a wild bull or to ring a church bell, if he could once have seized with his massive jaws the nose of the one or the ringing-rope of the other.

Tsar made no audible remarks, but there was no difficulty at all in divining his meditations.

"They have fed me an hour before sundown, for some reason, and now they 've gone off and neglected me. No muzzle, no chain, no master around, and all the country left open to me. It is a state of affairs to which I am not accustomed at this time of day. If there were another bone with meat on it, I 'd know exactly what to do."

He put out a great paw and turned the muzzle over. Then he walked forward and smelled of the helpless collar. Then he peered solemnly into the kennel. There was a mystery about the whole matter, and it seemed to suggest a visit to the front gate. That too was wide open, as a witness to the haste required by the summons of the last pa-

tient, and Tsar could therefore walk out and look up and down the shady road for an explanation of his own case. He could not see any, at first, for there was nothing to be learned from a flock of geese, three hens, and one stray calf. The very pig that was rooting under the walnut-tree paid him no manner of attention.

Tsar shrugged his broad shoulders to make sure about the collar, pawed his nose for a moment in memory of his muzzle, and turned for a look at the gate. There it was, with a very dingy old tin sign on one post, whose faded letters read "Dr. Heber Gorham," and with a very new tin sign on the other post, whose bright, fresh gilding announced "Dr. Heber Gorham, Jr.," as also ready for patients.

That was all right, and it occurred to Tsar that a walk would be good for his health. He acted on the suggestion promptly enough, but with dignity, as became a dog of his size; and no voice from the house recalled him, as he marched away down the road towards the sea. A sniff of salt air would be just the thing for his digestion, after the hearty dinner he had eaten at the kennel.

The sun was getting very low towards the horizon, and yet, away down there on the rock at the head of the cove a curly-headed young lady of nineteen, or thereabouts, was still seated, bending over a portfolio spread across her lap. From time to time she cast anxious glances from the lines she traced upon the sheet of Bristol board under her hand to the more and more shadowy island, out there in the mouth of the cove.

"That will do," she said. "It looks bigger than the boat, now, but it is n't big enough for the tree. I must make the tree smaller; the cow's back, too, — it 's half as long as the island. There is always something dreadful the matter with my waves." She worked at the waves for a few minutes. "If I had time, I 'd try to put in the sunset. Dear me, how late it is! It will be almost dark when I get home. It gets dark so quickly, nowadays, after it once begins."

She rose a little hastily, but she gave the island a very long last look, as she closed her portfolio, — long enough for a bystander to have read her name, in gilt letters, on the leather cover, — "Percie Lee." But no one was there to read, for a lonelier spot than that it would have been hard to find, however well adapted it might be for the making of marine sketches.

Percie was in the road in half a minute more, and she could but see that the shadows were lengthening rapidly. She reflected: "It is lonely for a little way beyond Dr. Gorham's, but I won't mind it from that to the village. I do hope I shall not meet Heber Gorham. I will not speak to him, if I do. I won't even see him. He has not called since he came back from Europe and I hope he never will again. I detest him."

She said it with needless energy, and then she began to walk briskly onward. She tried hard, too, to persuade herself that she was only wondering whether, in her sketch, she had made the horns of the cow bear a proper proportion to the upper branches of the tree on the island. She was really almost thinking sincerely about the cow, and the cow alone, when she suddenly felt called upon to exclaim, —

"Oh, that dog!"

To be sure, that dog. Tsar was on the other side of the road and he did not seem to be taking any particular notice of her, but thus Percie truly remarked of him!

"He is perfectly enormous!"

She forgot about the cow in an instant, but she did not speak her opinion directly to the dog. Neither did she think of sketching him, although he was certainly worth it. She seemed hardly to care to look at him.

Tsar, on his part, had taken a good look at Percie Lee. He was not mistaken about her for one moment.

" Very nice girl. Well dressed. Pretty, too; but she 's out late. Most likely her family are friends of Dr. Gorham. I must have an eye on that young lady. It is getting dark."

That eye was what startled Percie so dreadfully, a moment later; for she happened to look behind her, and there was that vast creature solemnly stalking after her.

" He is following me! " she exclaimed.

Not a doubt of it, and the fact that he stopped or went on just when she did hardly seemed to help the matter. It was getting darker and more shadowy every moment, and Percie would have been almost willing to run, if she had not feared that if she did the dog would run too. He appeared larger and larger, every time she glanced behind her, until she was afraid to look again, and her breathing grew a little hurried.

" Nobody 's any business to have such a dog! " she gasped, in a whisper. " It 's awful."

" She seems to be scared about something," thought Tsar. " Girls are apt to be timid. Ah, I see! It 's those ragged rascals, coming down the road. Villainous-looking vagabonds. If there is anything in this world that I hate, it is a tramp."

That is a universal sentiment, among dogs of Tsar's social standing; but the three ruffians who were now approaching were either ignorant of that fact, or did not know that such a dog was so very near.

" Dreadful men! " had been the unspoken thought in the mind of Percie Lee, and it was followed by a doubt as to whether she should ever again dare to come down to the cove.

" I must sketch the island," she said, " but I will come in the forenoon."

The three men were walking abreast, now, and they were plainly determined not to turn to the right hand or the left for Percie Lee. She had just time to grasp that terrible idea and to feel her heart jump, when one of them actually spoke to her.

She never knew what he said, and her only reply, as she retreated a few steps was an altogether unintended little scream. It was not a loud one, and there was more surprise in it than fear, but it was followed by remarkable consequences.

Tsar had quickened his lordly pace, full twenty seconds earlier, and, for some reason of his own, he had advanced a little under the shadow of the fence; but his eyes had not wandered from the human beings in the road before him. His head and tail were raised a trifle, and there was a very peculiar expression on his broad, hairy face. There was no love of tramps in it at all.

" Oh now, we hain't hurt you. You need n't squall."

That was what the second of those three ruffians began to say, when an awful, wrathful, roaring growl, as of warning, sounded from some deep-jawed cavern among the shadows at the right of Percie Lee. It was followed, in one long, elastic, power-expressing bound, by a huge dark form that in one second more was crouching in front of her.

The first and second tramp upset the third, and tumbled over him, so sudden was the retreat they made, while Tsar, for their special benefit and more at length, repeated his growl, with a supplementary snarl that sounded fearfully like the announcement of another spring forward.

The remarks made by all of those vagabonds, as they scrambled to their feet, were in a manner complimentary to Tsar, although not intended to be so.

Percie Lee stood behind her protector, and she could not see, as they did, the white rows of gleaming teeth and the fierce green light in the threatening eyes. She could perfectly understand,

however, that there was an enormous amount of very good dog between her and any further approach of ruffianly insolence. She was almost astonished at the sudden feeling of security which came upon her and at the entire ease with which she began to breathe again.

Tsar did not spring. He did but crouch in that picturesque attitude until the nearest tramp was fifty yards away, on a steady run; and then he stood erect, sending after his enemies one deep, sonorous "Woof-oof," to keep them company.

"Good dog! good fellow!"

"Ur-r-r-r," was the gentle response of Tsar, and he even wagged his tail, moderately, but he did not condescend to look around. He walked slowly on up the road, and it was now Percie's turn to follow him.

"I do not think I had better leave her," said Tsar to himself; "not even when we get to our house."

It was not until they reached the turn of the road, away beyond Dr. Gorham's, that he at last stood still. Percie wished very much to pat him, but she could hardly muster courage, and while she was hesitating there came a sound of wheels, and a light buggy pulled up in the middle of the road.

"Dr. Gorham!"

"Percie Lee! Is that you? I declare! Miss Lee — and that great brute — it 's all my fault. Did he scare you much, Percie — Miss Lee?"

"Is it your dog, Heber — doctor?"

"Tsar! Come here, sir!"

"Oh doctor, don't scold him. He has been taking care of me. There were three of them."

"Dogs, Miss Lee?"

"No, sir; tramps. Dreadful-looking — they spoke — he is a splendid dog, — beautiful."

"He? Ah, — well, — it 's a good thing he did n't take hold of one of them. There 'd have been a fine surgical case prepared for me, in no time. But how did he happen to be out? Unmuzzled, too. I remember, now. All my fault."

"I guess he must have been left out to take care of me, doctor."

"Ain't I glad of it, though! Now, Miss Lee, you must step right into my buggy, and let me carry you home. Tsar, go home, sir!"

He turned to obey, but a small, white hand was on his head as he did so.

"Good dog, Tsar; thank you, sir."

It was odd, indeed, but something in that remark seemed aimed at the dog; and it must have hit him, too, by the proud way of his walking off; but some of it went further. The young physician assisted Percie into the buggy, and drove away; and it was quite a distance around the corner of the main road that they passed a dimly discernible and quite breathless group that leaned against a fence. Nobody going by in a buggy could have heard them mutter, —

"Tell ye what, boys, that was the awfullest dog I ever seen."

"Guess we won't try that there road agin to-night. He 's loose."

"All them sort o' dogs has got to be killed off, or the roads won't be safe."

Perhaps, but at that moment Tsar was reëntering his own yard, for he went straight back to his quarters. He stood for a moment turning over his empty muzzle with his paw, and then lay heavily down. He thought he understood the entire matter, now.

"Heber Gorham knew that that young lady would be in need of me. It 's all right, but I doubt if I did my whole duty. Unmuzzled, too. A lost opportunity!"

As to the tramps, yes, but not as to all other parts of his performance. He hardly knew how it afterwards came to pass, but before long he discovered that he had formed a habit of going down to the cove with Percie Lee, to see her take sketches of islands, trees, waves, cows, and other matters and things, and

of remaining till Heber Gorham, Jr. M. D., came to take his place, with or without a buggy. He failed fully to understand the business until another sort of day arrived, when he found himself called upon, first, to attend a wedding, by special invitation of Percie Lee; and then to recognize her as a permanent addition to his own household at the old Gorham homestead. He agreed to it. He had liked that young woman from the first time he saw her. And so, to tell the truth, had his master.

William O. Stoddard.

USEFUL HINTS.

HOUSEKEEPERS who wish to keep their storerooms well supplied may be reminded that in August greengage and other kinds of plum jam should be made. Rhubarb jam, too, is best when made in this month. It keeps better because it is less watery than when made in the spring. Small onions and other vegetables should also be pickled in August, and shalots should be procured. If a few (one pound, say) are put into an onion bag, and hung in a cool dry place, they will keep till spring, and they are constantly wanted in cookery. I give a recipe for making mushroom ketchup. Probably it will be the only one needed for the stores named.

Mushroom Ketchup.—Pasture mushrooms are in season in August, September, and October. They are found in July also, especially when July is rainy. It generally happens however, that July mushrooms are maggoty. The summer heat is too much for them. Artificially cultivated mushrooms are to be bought at the greengrocer's all the year round, but they are by no means equal in flavour to pasture mushrooms, which are the only kind which ought to be used for making ketchup.

Where pasture mushrooms can be obtained in quantities, it is well worth while to make mushroom ketchup at home. The preparation is most useful for flavouring hashes, stews, and gravies, and it is not at all difficult to make, it only requires attention. The ketchup of commerce is too often made of various strongly flavoured ingredients other than mushroom juice, consequently large numbers of people have no idea what true mushroom ketchup is like. This is a great loss.

One of the reasons why mushroom ketchup is seldom made at home is that housekeepers have found that it does not always keep well. Disappointment in this direction, however, is seldom experienced when a little pains is taken to have the mushrooms gathered in dry weather, to have the bottles used for storing the mushrooms dry and small, so that when once opened the contents may be used, and to have the bottles corked tightly with new corks and sealed to keep out the air. Some housekeepers put a dessertspoonful of brandy with each pint of ketchup to help it to keep; others put a teaspoonful of salad oil on the top of each bottle. Either plan is good.

To make the ketchup break up the mushrooms into a deep earthen pan, sprinkle salt amongst them and over them in the proportion of six ounces of salt to each gallon of flaps, and leave them for forty-eight hours. Stir the mass two or three times a day while it is standing, but do not press the mushrooms in order to increase the quantity of liquid. The juice which flows freely is much superior to that which is obtained by pressure. At the end of the time put the mushrooms in a cool oven or place them in a saucepan by the side of the fire, and heat gently for about half an hour to draw out the juice. Strain without pressure and measure the liquid, then boil it gently for half an hour. With each quart put a teaspoonful of black peppercorns and a blade of mace, pour off free from sediment and bottle when cold.

In order to prevent waste the mushrooms that are left after the clear liquor is poured off may have a little more salt sprinkled over them, and be put into a cool oven for a night, after which the juice can be well pressed from them, and this, with the sediment left after the juice was strained, can be boiled with a quarter of an ounce each of black pepper, Jamaica pepper, cloves, and bruised ginger, three anchovies chopped small and a spoonful of port to every quart of ketchup. This will afford ketchup, which though thick and inferior to the other in flavour, will yet be very useful for stews and hashes.

Skate and Browned Butter Sauce.—When salmon is not obtainable, the attention may be turned to skate, which is a very palatable fish, and very likely to be in the market in March. It is sold at the fishmongers cut in strips and rolled round. Let it lie in cold water for an hour before cooking it; then drain it and divide it into shapely morsels, which can be prettily dished. Put it into a stewpan with water to cover it, to which a little vinegar has been added; and, by way of making it more tasty, put with it a little turnip, onion, and the usual flavourers. Bring it to the boil; then let it simmer for five or six minutes; take it up with a slice, and pour browned butter over it.

To make the browned butter sauce, put a good slice of butter in a small stewpan, and let it cook until it becomes deeply browned without being burnt. Pour it over the fish; in the same stewpan boil a tablespoonful of vinegar, and pour it over the butter. The excellence of this dish depends very much upon everything being served very hot.

M. Kettner, who is a great authority in all matters connected with the table, says, that for "triumphant occasions" skate should be cooked as follows:—"Boil the skate with a tumblerful of milk, a little butter, two pinches of flour, two cloves, two shalots, a bayleaf, thyme, salt, and pepper. Take him out of this, and strain the liquor. Put him next into a pie-dish, the bottom of which has been covered with grated Gruyère cheese. Intermix cunningly a dozen little onions which have been already cooked. Surround the dish with fried crusts. Pour upon the skate the strained sauce in which he has been cooked, cover him with more grated cheese, send him to the oven till he takes a fine colour, and rejoice over him." Housekeepers who want a change from the ordinary recipe may like to try this method, using Parmesan cheese if Gruyère is not at hand.

Rice Pudding and Stewed Fruit.—Wash two tablespoonfuls of rice, and add to it one pint of new milk, a little nutmeg grated, and sugar to taste. Bake in rather a slow oven for an hour and a half. Have ready the stewed fruit and pour it gently on the top of the pudding, then the whites of two eggs that have been whipped to a stiff froth laid on the top. Put into the oven again and bake a light brown.

PRECIOUS STONES; THEIR HOMES, HISTORIES, AND INFLUENCE.

By EMMA BREWER.

SEMI-PRECIOUS STONES.

CHRYSOPRASE, AMETHYST, GARNET, AMBER, AND CORAL.

THE stones yet to be spoken of, though classed as semi-precious, occupy places scarcely inferior to the precious, and are certainly equal to them in honour and interest. Chief among these are the stones mentioned at the head of this chapter.

The chrysoprase is of a beautiful apple-green colour, nearly transparent,* and capable of high polish. It is a green variety of chalcedony, and is generally found in company with the opal and other varieties of chalcedony and quartz.

It seems to have been known and used far back in the past, but it is only within the last hundred years that it has been traced to its true home and companions.

Its position in the walls of the new Jerusalem, Rev. xx., gives it a sacred and honourable distinction; and as far back as King Solomon's reign the chrysoprase was highly valued as one of the most fortunate of stones.

All through the reigns of the Georges, and up to about forty years ago, it was very fashionable for brooches and necklaces. These last were as a rule composed of nine oval half-slabs of chrysoprase, in form like the half of a small hen's egg, mounted with diamonds. One of the last made was by Mr. Streeter for the late Mrs. Henry Hope, of Piccadilly and Betchworth, and cost £1000.

Soon after this, chrysoprase completely fell out of fashion, and became a thing forgotten by the public; for, as the chrysoprase ornaments fell into the hands of firms like Rundell and Bridge, of Ludgate Hill, they were unmounted and thrown unceremoniously into a drawer as useless, and Hunt and Roskell, who were the successors of this firm, treated the chrysoprase ornaments in the same manner.

As a result the accumulation steadily increased, and on the retirement of Hunt and Roskell all these unmounted and broken pieces of chrysoprase were put up to auction and bought in by Mr. Streeter, who had them reduced to small pieces and cut *en cabochon*, and mounted in the most exquisite manner. The consequence was that the public taste was taken captive, and the stone so long despised and forgotten is now to be seen in the foremost ranks of fashionable life.

The Empress Frederick, who has been greatly interested in the reproduction of this stone, sent a quantity of it to Mr. Streeter from a mine on one of her estates, which he bought of her.

Many of the present generation look upon this stone as a new production of nature, while in reality it is but a long-forgotten beauty awaking from sleep with increased charms to attract and delight all who look upon it; and it is not likely that it will ever again be subject to contempt and forgetfulness.

Beside being pleasant for the eye to look upon, it is believed to possess the power of bestowing certain blessings on the owner, such as assiduity in good works, gladness of heart, and an utter absence of covetousness.

It is no wonder, therefore, that at present the supply is not equal to the demand, which accounts for the number of imitations offered for sale, and which consist principally of dyed agate. The beautiful apple-green tints of the true chrysoprase are derived from oxide of nickel, which with a little water forms 2·5 of its composition; the 97·5 being silica.

Its real home is in Silesia, where it lives in the society of its friends and relations, the opal, chalcedony, and quartz.

THE AMETHYST.

"Last in the Holy City set,
With hues of glorious violet,
Forth from the amethyst are rolled
Sparks crimson bright and flames of gold;
The humble heart it signifies
That with its dying Master dies."

The word amethyst is supposed to be derived from the Greek verb to *intoxicate*, probably because of the belief that this stone was an antidote to drink and a charm against intoxication; indeed the ancients went so far as to say that wine, however strong, drunk from an amethyst cup, was incapable of producing intoxication.

It receives other names, according to the places where it is found. Its composition is very much like that of the chrysoprase, viz., silica, but with a different colouring matter, viz., oxide of magnesia, which gives it the beautiful violet tint.

It is dichroic, like the emerald; the one distinct tint being reddish-purple, and the other a bluish-purple. As an instance of its former value and subsequent fall, we would mention that Queen Charlotte had an amethyst necklace valued at £2000, which, apart from its historical associations, would not realise to-day more than £100.*

A very good amethyst was formerly equal to an Oriental diamond of its own size.

It was one of the stones of the breastplate of judgment, Ex. xxviii., and had its position in the walls of the New Jerusalem, Rev. xxi. It is emblematic of earthly sorrow, deep love, and faithfulness unto death.

The very best, called Oriental amethyst, is found in Brazil, Uruguay and Siberia, while the less rare may be found in many parts of the world.

Turkish women have always been fond of adorning themselves with it. As a rule the stones are polished in Venice and brought to Constantinople.

The composition of the amethyst is, as I have said, silica coloured by oxide of magnesia. Its hardness is the same as that of the chrysoprase, viz. 7.

THE GARNET.

The group of minerals known as garnet is extremely interesting to all who love precious and semi-precious stones. It has characteristics peculiarly its own, one of which is that it admits into its circle stones varying in colour, chemical composition, and even in specific gravity, insisting only upon their crystallisation and the unchangeableness of their fundamental form.

Variety of colour is, as I have noticed, no hindrance to their admission into the circle, for garnets are red, orange red, green, a beautiful yellow or no colour at all, the tone of colouring being the amount of iron more or less which they have taken to themselves, for "iron is the great colourist of nature."*

The garnet that most of us know best is of a beautiful red colour which approaches very nearly to that of the ruby, for which gem it is not infrequently mistaken, as you will have seen in the chapter on rubies. It ought not to be possible to make this error because of the difference in the hardness of the two, the one being 9, the other only 7.

It probably derives its name from its colour being like that of the blossom and kernel of the pomegranate, or it may be from "granium," a grain, because it is so often found in granular form.

The surroundings of its home depend very much upon the part of the world in which the home is situate; it suits itself to circumstances as we should say. In Austria the crystals are found in serpentine, in the Zillerthal in chlorite slate, in Sweden in micaschist. In the Simplon Pass between Brieg and Domo d'Ossola they are discovered in the glacier streams, and in the United States they are found in granite, while in Brazil their companions are diamonds. As a rule they are found in alluvial soils in the form of pebbles, grains, or masses. Very good garnets come from the Ural, and those of Bohemia are quite famous; you may see them beautifully mounted in the jewellers' shops in Dresden, Prague, and Vienna.

The most beautiful is the Oriental or Sirian garnet, so called from the river Siria in Pegu and not from the country Syria; and there are some lovely ones found in Ceylon and Brazil, nearly if not quite equal to these in beauty and value.

There are eight kinds of garnet, two of which only are used for jewellery. It was much more valuable in early days, being equal to a diamond of its own size. The Pegu garnet is the only one at present which commands a high price.

Quite lately some lovely garnets have been found in Central South Australia; they are called Australian rubies, and it has been difficult even for experts to decide whether they are rubies or garnets.

New varieties of garnet have lately come into our market from Siberia; they are very brilliant, of a beautiful green colour and unlike any stones we know of.

AMBER.

The Eastern fictions about precious and semi-precious stones were, as we know, transmitted through many ages, and were the delight of old writers, and often, as in the case of amber, prevented any desire to know the true nature of the stone.

An imaginative abbot, for example, was of opinion that amber was honey melted by the sun, dropped into the sea from the mountains and congealed by water; while Nicias the historian asserts that "the heat of the sun is so intense in some regions that it causeth the earth to perspire and the drops, coagulating, form the substance called amber, and

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* When quite transparent you may be sure it is an imitation.

* Mr. Streeter.

* Haüy.

that these drops of perspiration are carried by the sea into Germany."

There is a couplet of the fireworshippers which gives a still stranger origin, and is as follows—

"Around thee shall glisten the loveliest amber,
That ever the sorrowing sea-bird hath wept."

According to some poets, the sisters of Phæton, who were changed into poplar-trees on the banks of the Po, wept tears of amber perpetually for their brother, who was slain by lightning.

The Greeks held the following graceful tradition:—"The juices distilling from new trees and solidified by the sun are received by the shining river, and borne as offerings to the brides of Italy;" while the Gauls accounted for amber as being the divine drops that fell from the eyes of Apollo at the death of his son Æsculapius.

Amber has been known from the earliest times, and a philosopher who lived 600 years B.C. spoke of its property of attracting light bodies, such as chaff and straw, in the same way that the loadstone attracts iron; and it is more than probable that this simple observation was the foundation of the modern science of electricity. Certainly, it is from the Greek name *electron* that we derive our modern term electric.

No doubt the regard of the ancients for amber was maintained by the fabulous tales of its origin and the mystery connected with it.

The earliest history of amber is to be found in the *Odyssey* of Homer,* where, in the list of jewels offered by the Phœnician traders to the Queen of Syria, stands a gold necklace hung with bits of amber. In such repute was it in Rome in the time of Pliny that he sarcastically remarks that the price of a small figure in amber, however minute, exceeds that of a living healthy slave. In his time, too, it was fully believed that a collar of amber, worn round the neck of a child, was a preservation against secret poison and a counter-charm against witchcraft and sorceries, and it has been the fashion through many generations for young children to wear necklaces of these beads; indeed, it is only during the last fifty years it has fallen into disuse.

Among precious substances employed as ornaments, the yellow amber played a grand *rôle* in early times, and the efforts made to procure it were largely instrumental in carrying the germs of civilisation into countries which up to that time had remained outside the culture of the world.

Without the commerce of amber the ancient navigators, especially the Phœnicians, would never have heard mention of the Western Seas, where this substance has its origin. During the reign of Nero an expedition was sent from Rome to explore the amber-producing country (the Baltic coasts), and so successful was it that it brought back as a present to the emperor 13,000 lbs. of it.

The yellow amber, which is transparent, frequently envelops insects,† plants, and mosses, showing that it formerly was in a liquid state, and that the process of solidifying was slow.

Amber, notwithstanding all the mystery which has surrounded it, is in reality only a fossil resin, composed of carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, a little clay, alumina, and silica, the two first forming 88½ parts out of the 100.

When heated, it gives off certain organic matter, and leaves a black residue, which is used in the manufacture of the finest black varnishes.

The amber most esteemed is transparent and of a beautiful lemon colour. It is much valued in the East for mouthpieces for pipes and cigars because of the belief that amber never allows the transmission of any infection.

It is found mostly in the great plains of Germany and along the coast of the Baltic in a loose clayey sandstone called blue earth, while occasionally it occurs in beds of bituminous wood. The amber-gatherers have two or three methods of collecting it; they dig it from the soil, pick it from the cliffs or collect the pieces cast on the shore by the waves; these last are probably washed out of strata of brown coal by the action of the water.

In last year's report it was stated by the British Consul at Dantzic that the supply of amber is now limited to the out-put of the mine in East Prussia and is practically a monopoly, and that the small quantities found in other places scarcely pay the working expenses. In 1892 about sixty tons of raw amber arrived in Dantzic to be worked into beads and ornaments which find a sale in the East of Europe and in some parts of Africa.

The new process of pressing the small pieces of amber together and thus utilising what was formerly only melted down for varnish has disturbed the market, and amber is not so much sought after as formerly.

A short time since we went over a large factory in Austria in order to see the working up of amber into pipes and cigar-holders. We saw the rough pieces of yellow amber which had come from the North Sea, and the black amber or *schatt* as it is called, which to our surprise we heard came from England. The first thing the work-people did was to cut off what is termed the shell, a certain amount of which is found on all amber, and then it is worked on the lathe by steel instruments, and polished on a leaden wheel with pumicestone and water. We noticed how much clearer and brighter some of the amber was than other, and were told that it depended greatly on the quality which varied very much. About a hundred gross of amber pipes are made in this one factory every week, beside innumerable cigar-holders. A good deal of amber is from time to time picked up on our own East coast.

* Nearly 1000 years B.C.

† The insects found buried in amber are similar to those with which we are familiar, but the plants are quite unknown on the North Sea coast.

CORAL.

"We wandered where the dreamy plain
Murmured above the sleeping wave;
And through the waters clear and calm
Looked down into the coral cave."
J. C. P.

"Heo is coral for goodnesse"
Harleian MS., about 1200 *A.D.*

"The coral which wards off the thunderbolt and preserves from violent death."
14th Cent.

There are many varieties of coral; but we have only to speak of that called precious, which is composed of carbonate of lime and animal secretion. It is the production of gelatinous creatures called polypi, whose dwelling is almost entirely in the tropics. They are extremely like the sea anemone, the one great difference being that they have the power of secreting a dense calcareous skeleton out of the lime found abundantly in every sea. It seems almost miraculous that such great works should be performed by such tiny creatures.

The precious coral is like a tree with leafless branches, about a foot high and an inch thick, though on rare occasions it is as thick as a man's body. These branches require about twelve years to attain the length of ten or twelve inches, and the thickness necessary to cut them into beads for necklaces and ornaments, and so great is the care taken while fishing for coral that the same ground is never gone over twice in that period.

The mode of obtaining the coral is by drawing among the rocks a heavy cross of wood weighted with stones, and its edges covered with twisted hemp of coarse netting, and the wood as it rubs along the under surface of the rocks breaks off the coral branches, which get entangled in the netting and are thus drawn to the surface. Coral reefs are in reality beds of limestone; the largest existing coral structure is the great Barrier Reef of Australia.

It is as difficult for us to describe the coral-building animal as it was for Punch's railway porter to describe an old lady's tortoise. He declared, "that being neither a dawg nor a bird, it must needs be a hinsec'!"

Until the 18th century it was believed that coral was a tree living and developing itself under the sea. It was a Frenchman in 1727 who established its real nature, and showed that the flowers of this tree were radiated animals and that the coral was gradually formed by them. There are few objects which show more clearly than coral the power of Nature to effect her designs by feeble objects, and it requires an intimate knowledge of the habits of the coral-building creatures to credit what stupendous submarine reefs and islands are indebted for their structure to these tiny architects.

Coral is of various colours, but the red is by far the best and commands the highest price. The ancient Greeks called it "korallion," from two Greek words signifying "ornament" and "sea."

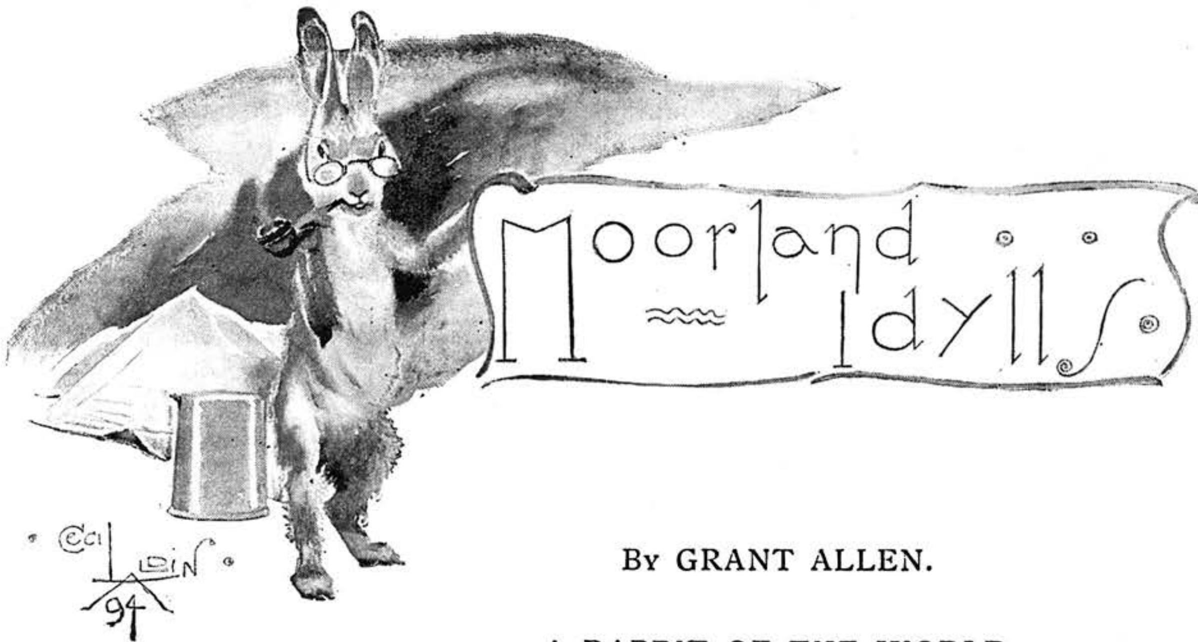
Orpheus, the poet of the Greeks, attributed wonderful powers to the coral, the gift of Minerva; it baffled witchcraft, counteracted poison, protected from tempests and robbers, and, mixed in powder with seed-corn, secured growing crops from thunderstorms, blight, caterpillars and locusts, and was regarded as the farmer's friend.

Most erroneous ideas were held concerning it. Theophrastus called it a precious stone, and Pliny spoke of its medicinal qualities and the employment of it as an article of luxury.

Indians had the same passion for grains of coral as Europeans have since had for pearls. The ancient Gauls ornamented their bucklers and helmets with coral, while the Romans placed pieces of coral on the cradles of new-born infants, to preserve them from infantile maladies; and Roman physicians prescribed preparations of coral to invalids suffering from fever, fainting-fits and ophthalmia.

Of course coral forms a fruitful source of fairy-tales among the fishermen, some of which are very fascinating, and indeed they should be so; the dullest imagination must be stimulated by a sight of the submarine pictures presented to it when the water is deep and clear; the extensive coral groves are indeed beautiful, planted as they are in beds of white smooth sand, and showing through the transparent water the various colours of pink, blue, white, and yellow.

There is a very interesting property possessed by coral, which gives it even now the high rank it has always occupied in medicine. It seems that there are people who cannot wear coral against their skin without discolouring it; as a rule they are invalids who act so curiously on the coral. The ancients declared that if a person wearing a coral necklace was on the verge of an illness, the coral showed discoloration before the person was conscious of the approach of the sickness or disease. Naturalists and chemists have tried to discover the cause of this curious property, but at present there is no solution of it.



By GRANT ALLEN.

A RABBIT OF THE WORLD.

A LITERARY Lady, sentimental as was the wont of literary ladies before the incarnation of the New Woman, went once to call on a Great Poet, who pervaded these regions. But the Great Poet was coy, says the legend, and listened not to the voice of the Literary Lady, charmed she never so wisely. He refused to be drawn by her cunning blandishments, but smoked on in peace, glaring gruffly from his chimney corner. So at last the Great Poet's wife, feeling that the situation grew slightly strained, endeavoured to create a diversion by saying, "My dear, won't you take Mrs. Gusherville to see the garden?" The Great Poet, thus checkmated, rose unwillingly from his seat, and strode three paces ahead through the shrubbery paths, followed, *longo intervallo*, by the panting Mrs. Gusherville. Never a word did he say as he paced the lawn with his heavy tread; but at last, as he approached one garden border, he turned towards his visitor. Speech trembled on his lips; Mrs. Gusherville leant forward to catch the immortal accents. The Poet spoke. "D—mn those rabbits!" he said; and then relapsed into silence. That was all Mrs. Gusherville got out of her interview.

I am reminded of this episode, which if not true to fact is at any rate true to human nature, by the short sharp barking of Fan, my neighbour's spaniel, resounding from the heather in the direction of the Frying Pan. Each bark is an eager impatient snap, and its burden is—"Rabbits!" Now I sympathise with every living thing that breathes; yet if it were not for a constitutional objection to unnecessary vigour of language, I could almost back Fan, and echo the Great Poet's indignant exclamation. For whatever we try to plant among the heather, by way of beautifying our small patch of moorland (as who should paint the lily or gild refined gold), those unscrupulous rodents immediately proceed to treat as their private property. Not one of our white brooms has survived their attacks; and the way they have devoured our periwinkles and our St. John's wort is a credit to their appetites, and a testimonial to the magnificent air of this healthy neighbourhood. The lad who attends to my garden (we call it a garden by courtesy, not to hurt its feelings) is always saying to me, "Let me set a trap for 'em, sir." But grave as their misdemeanours are, I can't bear to trap them. I remember that after all they were the earliest inhabitants. They dwelt here before me; and when I plumped down my cottage in the midst of their moor, I seriously interfered with their domestic economy. "There's a horrid house built," said the mother rabbit: "I suspect a dog will follow, and perhaps a gun too." "Never mind," said the father, who was a rabbit of the world; "they'll more than make it up to us, I predict, by planting greenstuff, which is a deal jucier, after all, than gorse or bracken."

The Danger Signal

And indeed, I feel I owe a duty to these earlier inhabitants ; I love their fellowship, and do what I can to encourage their uninterrupted residence. The night-jar still perches nightly on one accustomed branch of the big lone fir-tree ; the cuckoo comes and calls to us from the clump of stunted pines by the dining-room window ; the merry brown hares dart obliquely across the ill-grown green patch of tennis lawn ; and the baby bunnies themselves, all unconscious of their misdemeanours against the growing shrubs, brush their faces before our eyes with their tiny gray paws as we sit upon the terrace. My neighbour has a shot at them with gun and dog ; and even as I write, I can hear the *ping*, *ping*, of his murderous cartridges and the quick cries of Fan in the adjoining plot of moor ; but for myself I refrain. I would rather have the gambolling of such innocent fellow-creatures on my patch of grass in the dusk of evening than all the rhododendrons and azaleas and cypresses the florist can palm upon me.

And how pretty they are, those harmless little malefactors ! How they frolic across the sward with tiny irregular jumps, like a sportive kitten, only ten times more guileless—no tinge of bloodthirstiness in their liquid eye, no stealthy cruelty in their honest gray faces ! Your rabbit is a decent and inoffensive vegetarian. Besides, its mode of life sorts well with the uplands ; it never disfigures nature, but accommodates itself to the environment like a good working evolutionist. When we first thought of building here, a clever Girton girl, whom we met at the little inn, held up her hands in horror, "Why *build* on Hartmoor at all ? Why not simply burrow ?" And the rabbits burrow. The hilltop is just honeycombed with their underground palaces. There they lurk for the most part during the heat of the day, and come out at night to feed on the furze-bushes that protect and conceal the mouths of their burrows. Indeed, the very shape of the furze-bush, as we ordinarily know it, depends on the constant activity of the hungry and greedy bunnies. Naturally, gorse, if left to itself, would grow feathery from the soil upward, without any gaunt stretch of naked stem at its base ; but the rabbits eat off the growing shoots just as high as they can reach by standing tip-toe on their hind feet ; so that the resulting shape is a product, so to speak, of rabbit into gorse-bush. Where the soil is light and sandy, as here, burrowing is universal ; but on cold wet moors, the rabbits avoid the chance of rheumatism by constructing long tunnels above ground instead, through matted galleries of heather and herbage.

Cowardice is the principal defence of the rabbit, as of all other unarmed rodents. At the first alarm, he flies headlong to his burrow. What swiftness of foot does for the open-nesting hare, that swiftness of retreat does for his underground cousin. Natural selection in such a case favours the most cowardly ; for to be brave is to court immediate extinction. That is why rabbits have the noticeable patch of white under their tails—their scuts, as sportsmen very aptly call them. At first sight you would suppose such a conspicuous white mark must be a source of danger. In reality it has been evolved as a patent safety signal. For while the rabbits crouch and feed, unseen in the gray grass, they are very little conspicuous ; but the moment one of them spies any cause of alarm, off it scampers to its hole ; and, raising the danger-signal as it goes, it warns the whole warren, all whose members scuttle after it apace without waiting to inquire into the nature of the panic. The mouth of the burrow runs quite straight just at first, so that the retreating bunny can dash into it at full speed without checking his pace ; but at a convenient point, a few feet in, it begins to bend and divaricate, besides branching and subdividing as a precaution against weasels and other vermin enemies. It has also at least two entrances and exits, like a room at the theatre, in case of pursuit ; and it is cunningly engineered against the chance of intrusion. But the nursing chamber, where the timid wee mother hides her naked and shapeless young, is quite differently contrived with but a single mouth, and is fitted up with every internal luxury. The good parent lines it with soft fur pulled from her own warm coat, and goes stealthily by night to suckle her little ones. When she comes away, she plasters up the entrance with earth to conceal it as well as she can from prying enemies ; and there the baby rabbits remain alone in the dark till her next visit. Three or four such broods are produced each year, for your rabbit is indeed an uxorious creature.

Odds and Ends.

AMONGST the many industries for which England had a deserved reputation, and which are rapidly declining, the most serious decrease is in that of watch-making. So bad is the present state of the industry that it can scarcely be said to exist as an English manufacture. The reason for this serious decline is not far to seek, and it is extremely simple. It has been the habit of the British watch-manufacturers to allow the jewellers and shop-keepers to stamp their names and addresses upon the watches they sell; and not only do they permit this, but they themselves place the name and address upon the watches that are bought by various shopkeepers. Consequently such a thing as a great name in the watch-making trade is almost unknown whilst there are many jewellers' shops which have a great reputation for their watches. These are actually made, regulated, finished off, and sent out by some firm or other which never receives the credit. Another curious thing about this manufacture is that watch-springs are not made in this country, the steel being actually sent to Switzerland where it is cut up by a machine—invented by the Swiss who entirely monopolise the trade—into the thin delicate strips that form the mainspring, which are then sent to England. These spring-cutting machines may be bought for a very low price, but oddly enough they are not used in England.

HALF a dozen drops of spirits of nitre in a spoonful of water, if applied with a feather to ink-stains in mahogany, rosewood, or black walnut furniture will instantly remove them. As soon as the ink disappears the place should be rubbed with a cloth that has been wetted in cold water, or the nitre will leave a white spot that will not be easily removed. If the ink remains after the application of the nitre, a second trial will be found effective. Here, too, are some useful hints with regard to the treatment of *passementerie* and jet trimmings that have become dull and rusty, as is so often the case. It is quite easy to clean them by wetting a piece of soft black cloth in alcohol that has been diluted with a little water, and then rubbing it over the trimmings. Shoe-polish will always renovate those portions of the *passementerie* that have become brown with wear. The *passementerie* should be brushed with it.

GENEVA is the great centre for the manufacture of musical boxes, thousands of men, women, and children being employed in the factories. The different parts are made by men who are experts, and who do nothing else year after year. The music is marked on the cylinder by a man who has served an apprenticeship of many years; another man inserts pegs which have been filed to one length. The comb or set of teeth which strikes these pegs and makes the sound is arranged by a workman who does nothing else. When all the parts are completed and put together, the cylinder is revolved to see that each peg produces its proper tone, and the most delicate and difficult work of all is the revising of each peg, this being done by a man who has a good ear for music. He sees that each peg is in its proper place and bent at the proper angle, so that the comb in catching it may produce the required sound. When finally the instrument is in its case an expert examines it most carefully to see that the time is perfect.

"BELITTLING our neighbours is a sure sign that we are on a low level ourselves and desire to pull them down so that they may stand no higher than we do."

"TO understand how to rest is of more importance than to know how to work. The latter can be learned easily, the former takes years to learn, and some people never learn the art of resting. It is simply a change of scenes and activities. Lounging may not be resting. Sleeping is not always restful. Sitting down with nothing to do is not restful. A change is needed to bring into play a different set of faculties and to turn the life into a new channel. The woman who works hard finds her best rest in playing hard. The woman who is burdened with care finds relief in something that is active yet free from responsibility. Above all we should keep good-natured and not abuse our best friend—the digestion."

IT is a common superstition that moonlight has great influence upon animate and inanimate objects, and many people believe that a person can be driven mad by sleeping with unshuttered windows when the moon is shining. But moonlight is only reflected sunlight, and neither the quality nor the quantity of its light is what is generally imagined. Astronomers say that it would take 618,000 full moons to give the same amount of light emitted by the sun, and that there is only sufficient space in the sky for 75,000 of these planets. A certain amount of heat comes from moonlight, but in so small a degree that it cannot be measured by the ordinary astronomical instruments, and the great scientist Flammarion declares that the whole heat emitted by a full moon at the zenith, cannot possibly be more than one eighty-thousandth part of the amount given by the sun at noon on a July day.

CURVED or stooping shoulders may be easily straightened by the daily and patient following of this exercise. Stand in a perfectly upright position with the heels together and the toes at right angles. Drop the arms by the side inflating and raising the chest to its full capacity, keeping the chin well drawn in and the crown of the head in exactly the same position as if it were attached to a cord fastened in the ceiling above. Then slowly rise upon the balls of the feet as far and as high as possible, thus exercising all the muscles of the legs and body, and drop into the standing position without moving the body out of its upright position. Repeat the exercise afterwards upon one foot and then the other, and in a short time the effect will be observed not only in the curve of the shoulders but in the greater expansion of the lungs.

AN American professor has invented a cooling stove, which he claims will reduce the temperature of a room during the hottest summer day to one of cool comfort. Salt, a small quantity of ice, and a patented chemical are the fuel of this novel invention, and so great is the cold induced that it is as dangerous to touch this stove when it is in operation as it would be to place the hand on an ordinary stove when fully heated. The skin is instantly taken off, the effect produced being exactly like that of a burn.

AUSTRIA has been described as "the paradise of old ladies." In no other country are elderly ladies treated with such deference. No Austrian would ever dream of receiving a lady's extended hand without bowing to kiss it, and girls and young married women of the highest station never consider it beneath their dignity to kiss the hands of ladies who have attained a certain age.

ONE of the medical students at the Royal Free Hospital, in the Gray's Inn Road, London, is the Hon. Ella Scarlett, a sister of Lord Abinger's. Miss Scarlett was presented at Court and went into society for two seasons, but she soon wearied of an existence of mere pleasure, and, meeting a Russian lady-surgeon abroad, gladly allowed herself to be persuaded to give her time and energies to the alleviation of human suffering. For two-and-a-half years she has been working hard at the Royal Free Hospital, and when her course is finished there, will go to the Rotunda Hospital in Dublin. The training lasts five years, and during that time Miss Scarlett is going to learn Hindustani, so that she may practice in India when she has taken her degree. She hopes to be appointed to the court of one of the rajahs. Miss Scarlett holds a surgical post in the Royal Free Hospital. Whilst speaking of women doctors, it is interesting to note that out of ninety serious operations performed at the New Hospital for Women in the Euston Road, where all doctors are women, there have been only two deaths.

IT is generally supposed that a snake in killing its prey always bites it. But a naturalist, who for many years has studied the habits of these reptiles, declares that this is not the case, and that snakes cannot possibly bite because their jaws are connected only by a cartilage, and are not hinged and therefore cannot be brought together with any force. The snake simply hooks the fangs that are placed in its upper jaw into its victim, the lower jaw not coming into action at all, exactly in the manner in which anybody in a boat fixes a boat-hook in a chain or on to a pier.

THAT much-used preservative against the ravages of moths, camphor, comes from Japan where, however, the tree only grows in certain localities that are within reach of the sea breezes, and that always face towards the south. The tree is of remarkably slow growth, growing only one and a half inches a year, and a camphor tree plantation of about two and a half acres will yield quite £2,000 worth of camphor annually. Owing to a careless and indiscriminate felling of the trees, there are now very few available and the price of the product has naturally increased. Chips from the stumps and roots of trees cut down years and years ago are used by the Japanese farmers for making crude camphor, but the process by which it is obtained is so wasteful that it is estimated that only a very small percentage of the camphor actually contained in the chips is extracted. This crude camphor contains only from ten to fifteen per cent. of the camphor oil which in its turn yields fifty per cent. of pure camphor. There is a large district in the island of Formosa entirely covered by camphor forests, and it is from these, it is said, that the future supply of camphor will come.

COUNTRY SCENES.—AUGUST.

Thou shalt hear
Distant harvest carols clear,
Rustle of the reapèd corn;
Sweet birds antheming the morn;
Acorns ripe down-pattering,
While the Autumn breezes sing. KEATS

Illustrated London Almanack, 1848

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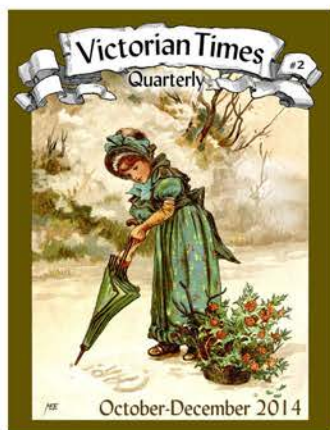

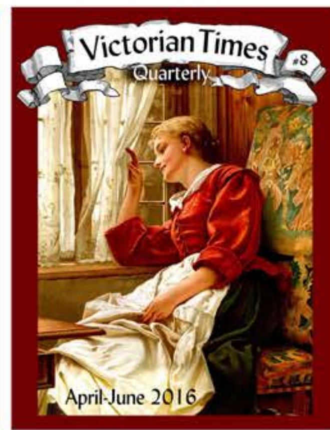

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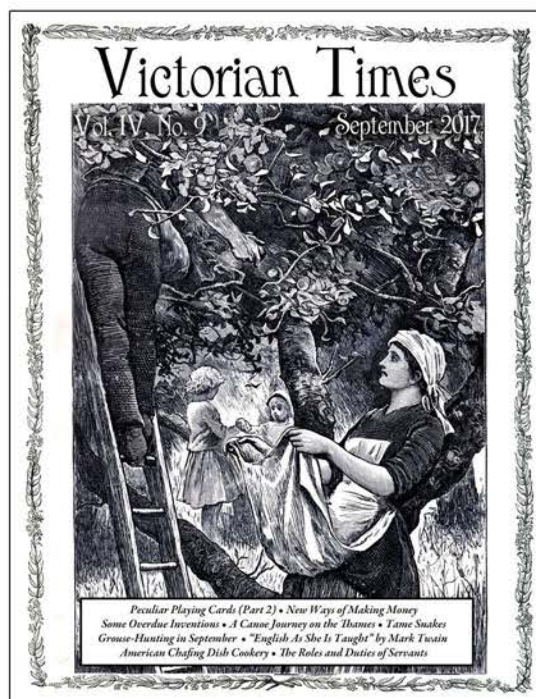
- A Canoe Journey on the Thames
- Some New Ways to Make Money
- Inventions We'd Like to See...
- A Look at Victorian Girls
- Tips on Going into Society
- A Flight of Moorland Quails
- And, of course, recipes, household hints, and more...



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