

# Victorian Times

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January 2019



*Traveling in Style: Journeys of the Circuit Judges • Simple & Savoury Souffles  
Some Curious Inventions • Nature Notes for January • The Crow  
Ancient Natural History Lore • Hand-Painted Screens • The Stage Coach  
A Look Back at the Early Victorian Era • Landowners and Speculators*



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

# Victorians with Staying Power

As I write this, Christmas is still on its way. Television is offering us the perennial supply of holiday movies—including, predictably, a host of modern take-offs on *A Christmas Carol*. Which got me thinking about Victorians who remain with us no matter how “modern” our culture becomes or how much, on the surface, it seems to change. These Victorians change their clothes to suit the fashion of the day—but they don’t change the characteristics that make them so beloved. Ebenezer Scrooge, of course, is one; the other is Sherlock Holmes.

Scrooge and Holmes. Nearly half a century separates their origins in literature: *A Christmas Carol* was first published in 1843, and Sherlock Holmes made his debut in 1881. Many other great characters have appeared in Victorian literature between the two, but rarely do we see them in “modern dress.” I began to wonder what these two, seemingly quite different, characters have in common—what made them appeal so strongly, not only to Victorian readers, but to readers in the 1920’s, the 1960’s, and the new millennium. Why are they able to step out of the gaslight and into a modern office building?

The answer, perhaps, lies in the time in which they were conceived. The Victorian era didn’t give birth to the concept of literature. But it *did* give birth to the concept of “literature for the masses.” Previously, a very different audience was reading books. “Everyman” didn’t read; often, Everyman *couldn’t* read. In addition, the production of books was still an expensive process, which meant that even if Everyman *could* read, he wouldn’t have been able to afford a shelf full of novels.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, compulsory education meant that, for the first time in history, people of every class in society were learning to read. And there’s a curious thing about learning to read—for many, it creates a hunger that can never be completely satisfied. If you love to read, you will always want more, and more, and more... At the same time, printing technologies made it possible to mass-produce books. The emergence of a new class of readers coincided with the emergence of the ability to put literature in the hands of those readers, at a price they could afford. And this, in turn, led to a rise in the demand for *more* literature.

But not just any literature. We’re talking “Everyman” now—or “Everyperson” if you prefer. Victorian readers were no longer limited to the great country houses or city mansions. They lived in humble cottages, London flats, tiny apartments. They worked for a living. They ran shops. They worked in factories. In short, they were very much like “Everyperson” today.

The Victorian period has been described as the era that gives birth to “the middle class.” Defining what is or is not “middle class” is far from simple, so I’ve opted for a more Victorian definition—it’s the era in which a growing number of individuals considered themselves “their own masters.” Victorian working-classes were moving away from the world of “servant-hood,” with its notions of a superior and an inferior class, and into the world of “employee/employer.” You didn’t have to have money to be middle-class. You *did* have to have a sense of your own worth, and a sense that you were in charge of your destiny—even if you were working out that destiny in a freezing attic in a London slum.

Victorian writers were no fools. Most of them fell into that category themselves. And they began to write about tradesmen, about people who lived in flats and humble cottages. Sherlock Holmes, despite his education, has little money and never seems to make more; that’s why he agrees to take Watson as a flat-mate. Ebenezer Scrooge has money, but there’s no doubt that he works hard for what he has. There’s not a coronet in sight in *A Christmas Carol*, and while Holmes does take on the occasional noble client, many of his cases involve clerks and typists and other ordinary folk. Literature has become “by the people, for the people, and about the people.”

But there’s one more element, I think, that sets these two characters apart from so many others that arose and vanished in the Victorian era. Both Scrooge and Holmes, in their own ways, are characters who work for the betterment of mankind. Eventually, Scrooge realizes that “mankind is my business.” Holmes, as a detective, may seem to scorn less intelligent folk (which is pretty much everyone)—yet he labors tirelessly to solve their troubles, and rarely seems to profit from the effort. Scrooge sets himself to aid mankind through his compassion; Holmes aids it through his intellect. Both, in their own ways, are characters who appeal to us not just because they are intrinsically fascinating, but because they are ordinary people who manage to make the world a better place.

As we leave Christmas movies behind us, it’s a Victorian lesson well worth taking into the New Year!

—Moira Allen, Editor  
editors@victorianvoices.net



# Journeyings of the Judges.

BY "KASOMO."



CIRCUITING is popularly supposed to be akin to junketing; but, as a matter of fact, it is often a very serious and sober business — especially for the prisoners. There is, however, much in circuit life that is curious and of interest, especially to those to whom custom

of York, and our own Prince of Wales figure on the walls in all the bravery of royal red and gold-leaf.

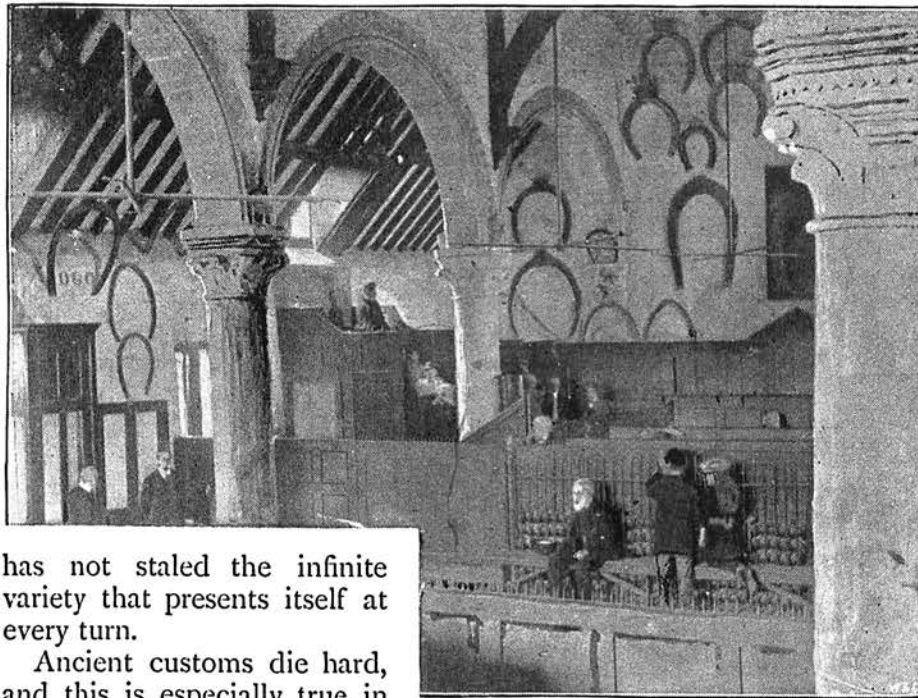
I do not propose to weary my readers with a learned disquisition on the origin and progress of circuits. Suffice it to say, and to say it briefly, that the circuit system, as we now know it, is much the same as that which

obtained with our ancestors from almost time immemorial; and this in spite of constant attempts at reform by the bolder spirits who would rule matters judicial. Let it be whispered that the reforms have for the most part proved abortive; and that in all probability we shall revert to the wisdom of our fathers, and to the old order of things.

Let us start with one of Her Majesty's judges on circuit.

Needless to say, we shall travel *en*

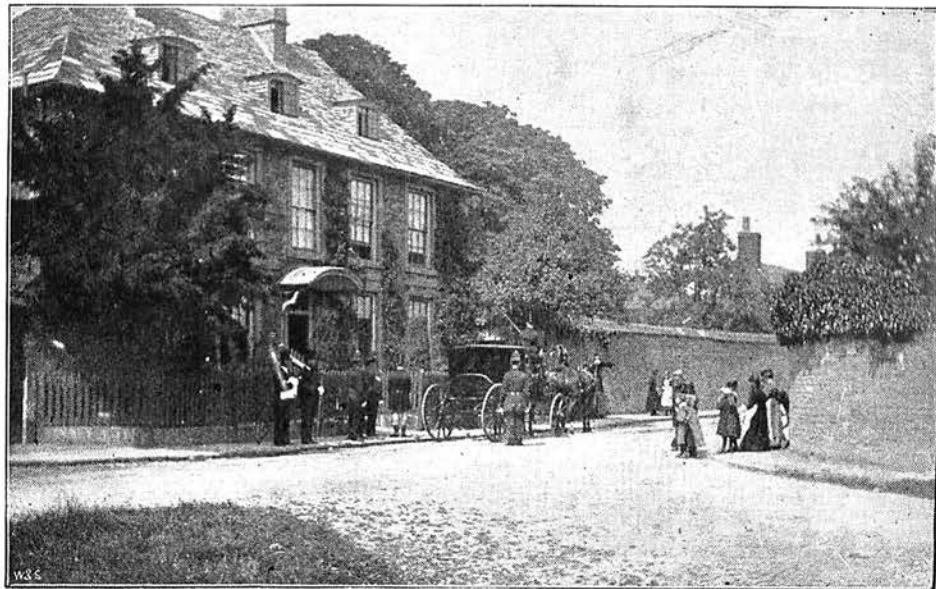
*prince*, for the railway companies are solicitous for the comfort of his lordship and the members of his staff, and provide reserved compartments, with a separate luggage "cupboard,"



OAKHAM ASSIZE COURT.

has not staled the infinite variety that presents itself at every turn.

Ancient customs die hard, and this is especially true in the remoter corners of the kingdom. At Oakham, for instance, the lord of the manor still exercises the right to demand from every peer passing through the town the near fore-shoe of his nag; a demand that is usually liquidated by a money payment to provide for a counterfeit presentment on a large scale of the coveted shoe, which is in due course nailed on the wall of the old Shire Hall, a structure that dates back to the time of the Conquest. Even Royalty is not exempt from the toll, and the "horse-shoes" of George IV., his brother, the Duke



OAKHAM—JUDGE'S LODGINGS.

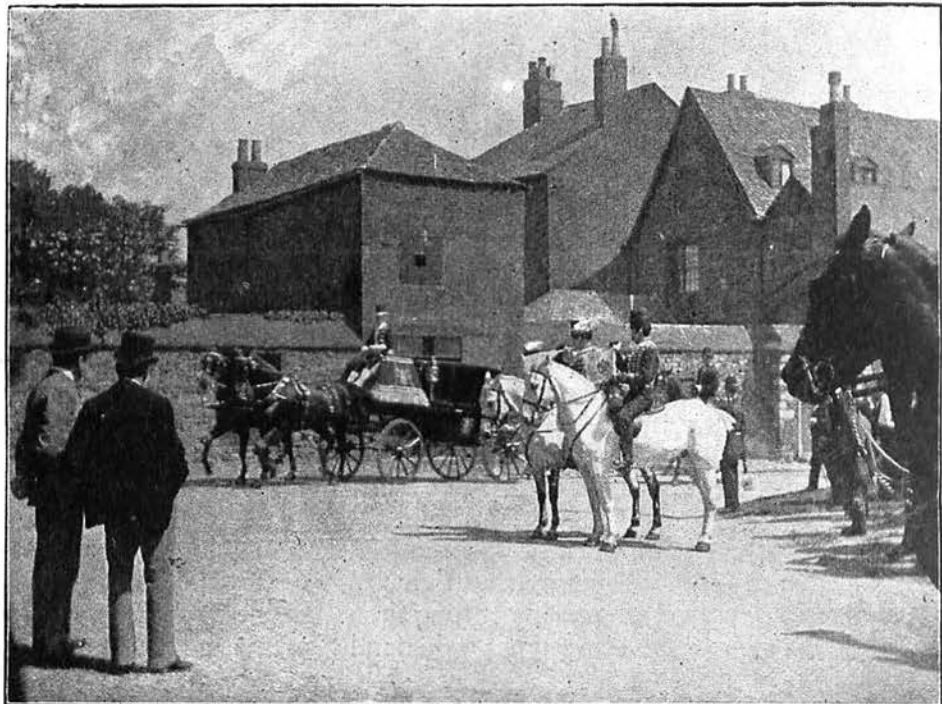


practically a necessity on account of the enormous quantity of baggage and impedimenta required for the five or six weeks' tour.

Arrived at the first town on the circuit, the judicial campaign really begins. The judge is met at the railway station by the high sheriff of the county, who usually looks very uncomfortable and self-conscious in the *quasi*-military uniform which is insisted upon for the occasion; the sheriff's chaplain, also in like plight in the stiffest of Geneva gowns, usually the gift of the sheriff; the under-sheriff, in any costume that his fancy may lightly turn to, ranging from a Court suit down to the most unconventional of morning dress; and a *posse comitatus*, in the shape of a dozen or so of stalwart county policemen, whose faces and uniforms are mostly a harmony of red and blue. The judge introduces his marshal (an able-bodied youth from one of the Universities, or maybe a budding Templar) to the high sheriff, who bows graciously, tries not to fall over his sword, and leads the way to the State carriage, accompanied by the chaplain and under-sheriff, and escorted by the good men in blue. At one or two assize towns there is an escort of "javelin men," armed with halberds raked up from the county museum probably, and attired in a hybrid livery, half "beef-eater" and half footman; but, generally speaking, the county police constitute the escort, with occasional relief in the form of a troop of Yeomanry, if the high sheriff happens to hold Her Majesty's commission of arms in addition to one of the peace.

As soon as the little procession emerges from the railway station, a couple of trumpeters, who have taken up a commanding position in the yard for the due display of their gorgeous liveries, set up an ear-torturing performance, supposed to be in imitation of an ancient fanfare. To this "rough music" the judge takes his seat in

the State carriage, and the whole party set off at a snail's pace for the judge's lodgings, the trumpeters fanfaring with a vigour and persistence that must have inspired the bandsmen of "General" Booth's lads in red. On the occasion of the trial of an election petition at a cathedral city, the mayor met the judges in a coach drawn by a couple of black horses that usually figured at funerals, and the secret of their vocation had somehow leaked out. As they were crawling along in the accustomed style, Mr. Justice Hawkins, who was one of the judges, said, with the quiet, incisive humour that has ever distinguished him: "Mr. Mayor, does not this very much remind you of following the dear departed?" *Curtain.*



LEICESTER CASTLE—OPENING THE ASSIZE.

The judge's lodgings are usually a fine old house set apart for the purpose, with occasional intervening visitations from Militia officers during the training of their merry men, and everything therein is of the stately order; though the furnishing and general fitment would probably vex the soul of a Maple or a Shoolbred. Bare walls glower on the judge, fresh from his own ornate house in Mayfair, Kensington, or Richmond; but there is an air of solid comfort about these old places, more particularly in the dining-room, where massive silver and table equipage of great antiquity make a brave show.

Arrived at his temporary home, the judge of assize forthwith arrays himself in the splendid robes of his high office, and





HERTFORD—JUDGE'S LODGINGS.

The next morning the business of the assize begins in real earnest, and the grand jury, consisting usually of magistrates of experience, are summoned from all parts of the county to consider the bills of indictment that are sent up to them by the Crown. Twenty-three is the regulation number of grand jurors for an assize, and to the credit of the squirearchy be it recorded that it seldom happens that fewer than the twenty-three put in an appearance. The roll having been called, the grand jury are sworn by the judge's marshal; the foreman, usually a county magnate of the first rank, being sworn first. The prescribed oath is impressive, and I give it for the benefit of my lay readers:—

proceeds to the cathedral or parish church, as the case may be, to attend the customary assize service. This is an institution honoured by time, but usually dishonoured by the townspeople; for there are seldom more than two or three gathered together to hear the words of wisdom and counsel that fall from the lips of the sheriff's chaplain, who has probably spent anxious weeks in the preparation of his sermon. Preachers vary as ordinary mortals vary, and so do assize sermons. Sometimes they are brilliant, forceful, and in every way worthy of a better fate than to be forgotten by the handful of people, great and small, to whom they are addressed.

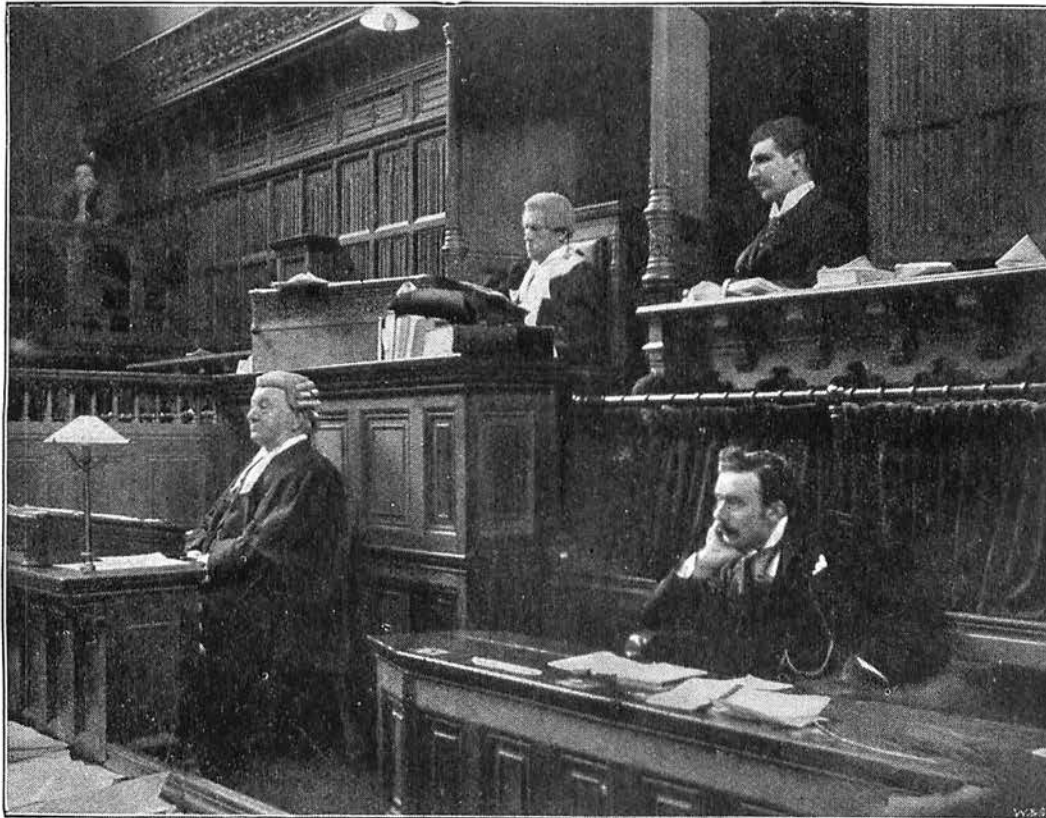
“ My Lord [or Sir],—

“ You as foreman of this grand inquest for our Sovereign Lady the Queen, and the body of this County of Westcumberland, shall diligently inquire and true pre-



NORWICH—JUDGE'S DINING-ROOM.





BIRMINGHAM ASSIZE COURT—BARON POLLOCK ON THE BENCH.

sentment make of all such matters, offences, and things as shall be brought to your notice touching this present service. The Queen's counsel, your fellows and your own, you shall observe and keep secret. You shall present no person out of envy, hatred, or malice ; neither shall you leave any one unrepresented through fear, favour, gain, reward, or the hope or promise thereof. But you shall present all things indifferently as they shall come to your knowledge, according to the best of your skill and understanding.—So help you God."

The rest of the grand jury are then sworn shortly in batches.

Now commences the charge by the judge, who touches upon the salient points of the more important or complicated cases in the calendar, for the guidance of the grand jury when they come to consider whether or not a *primâ-facie* case is made out against a prisoner.

Before a man can be tried for any offence, his case is first of all investigated before a Bench of magistrates, who in their discretion can commit a prisoner for trial before a judge and jury. The witnesses are bound over to appear at the sessions or assizes, and in due course give their evidence on oath before the grand jury, who bring their considerable experience to bear in determining whether

the case should go for trial or not. If they think it should, they indorse the indictment: "A true bill," and the parchment is handed down to the Court. The prisoner is then placed in the dock, and the indictment having been read over to him more or less intelligibly by the clerk of assize, he is called upon to plead "guilty" or "not guilty," as he may elect. If the latter, the petit jury, consisting of twelve good men and true, are then sworn, and the trial proceeds. This threefold inquiry is a great safeguard to the liberty of the subject, and as a matter of fact, a miscarriage of justice seldom takes place. The "great unpaid" are perhaps the best-abused class in this country, but they do their duty as between the Crown and their fellow-subjects, and do it well, Mr. Labouchere's weekly pillory in *Truth* to the contrary notwithstanding.

If a prisoner has a good defence to the charge made against him, assuredly it will be carefully supported at the trial, Her Majesty's judges holding fast to the old maxim of our law that "every man is presumed to be innocent until he is proved to be guilty," and if the case against him is not proved up to the hilt, the man will go free: all this in marked contrast to the system obtaining on the Continent, where the unhappy wretch is examined and cross-examined by State





LINCOLN—WAITING FOR THE JUDGE.

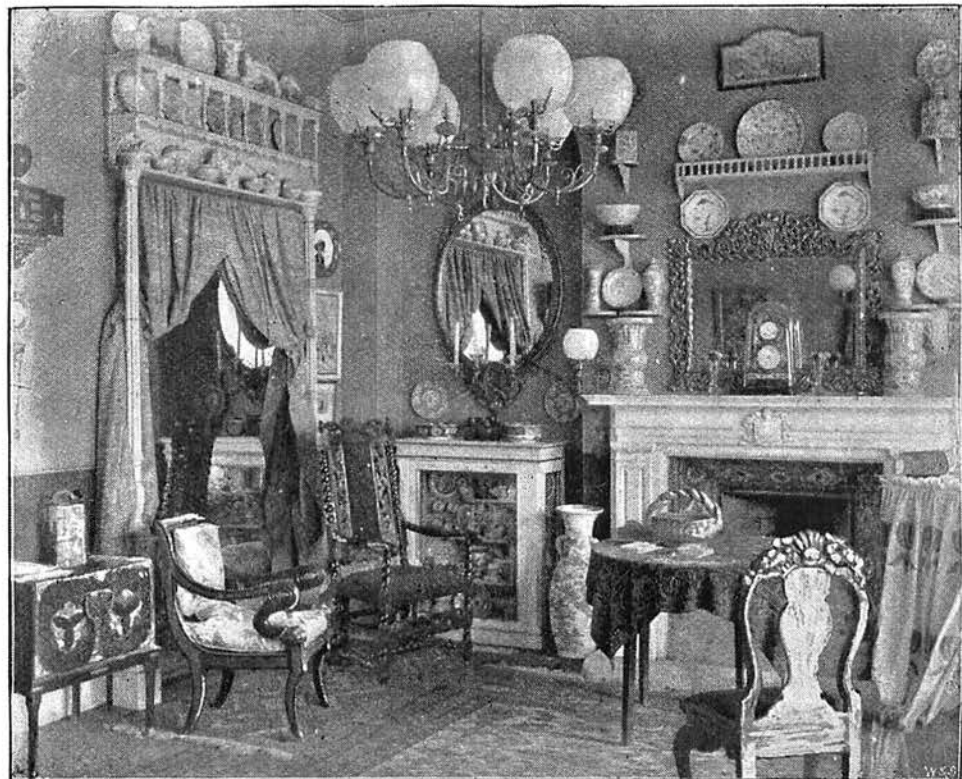
officials with the express object of securing a conviction.

Englishmen have reason to be proud of their judges for their absolute integrity and impartiality, to say nothing of their ability and learning, which probably speak for themselves.

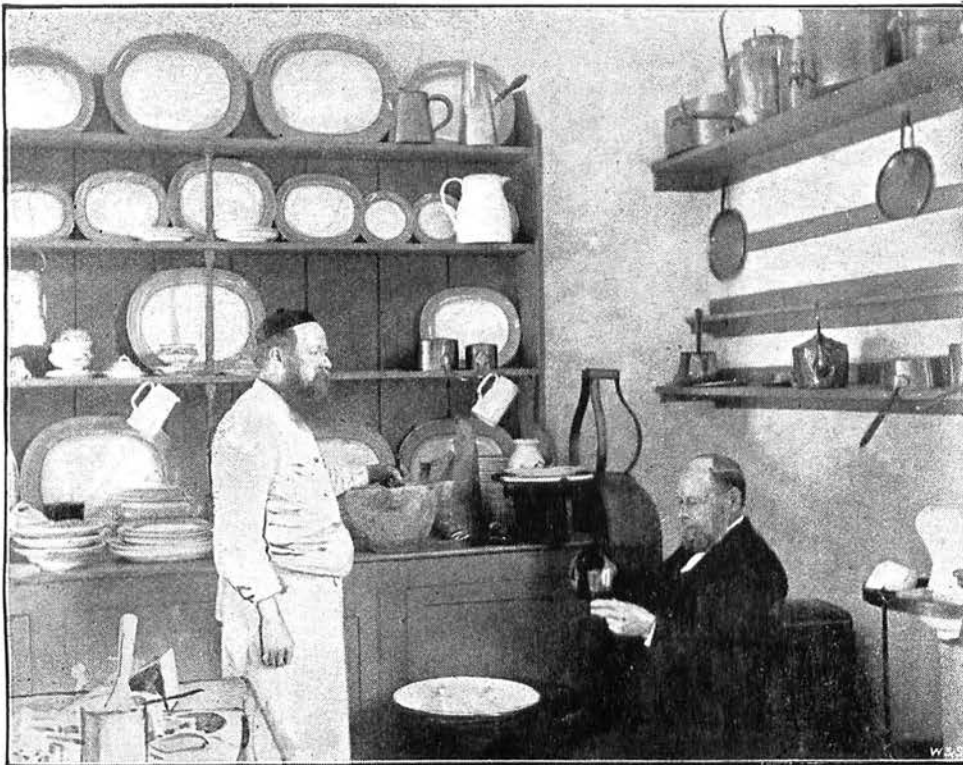
The comfort of a judge on circuit much depends on the stuff of which his staff are made. First comes his personal officer, the marshal afore-mentioned, whose duty it is to swear in the grand jury, and to attend the judge wherever he goes, sharing his meals with him in public or private, and generally making himself agreeable and useful; for the most part a pleasant office enough, but it is one that at times requires considerable tact and knowledge of the world in order to keep the path judicial from becoming too thorny.

The knight-errant, otherwise Her Majesty's judge of assize, has furthermore the constant

presence of a faithful esquire in the shape of his clerk, who, unlike the marshal, is permanently in the judge's service, both in London and on circuit. The duties of this officer are multifarious, and range from the most delicate diplomacy down to keeping the circuit accounts. Diverse are the duties, and diverse are the men, probably more so than any other body in the pay of the Crown. Formerly, some few of them rose to eminence, the late Lord Justice Lush being a brilliant example; but the Inns of Court have of late years, for



MONMOUTH—JUDGE'S DRAWING-ROOM.



A KITCHEN COLLOQUY—THE CIRCUIT BUTLER.

some reason not difficult to discover, prohibited any person holding an appointment as clerk to a judge, or in the central office of the Supreme Court, from becoming a barrister-student. A hard case, probably, and one showing, moreover, that petty jealousy is not unknown even in high places.

Next in importance, if not in usefulness, comes the circuit butler, who robes and valets the judge, controls the household, and when "on the road" acts as baggage-master.

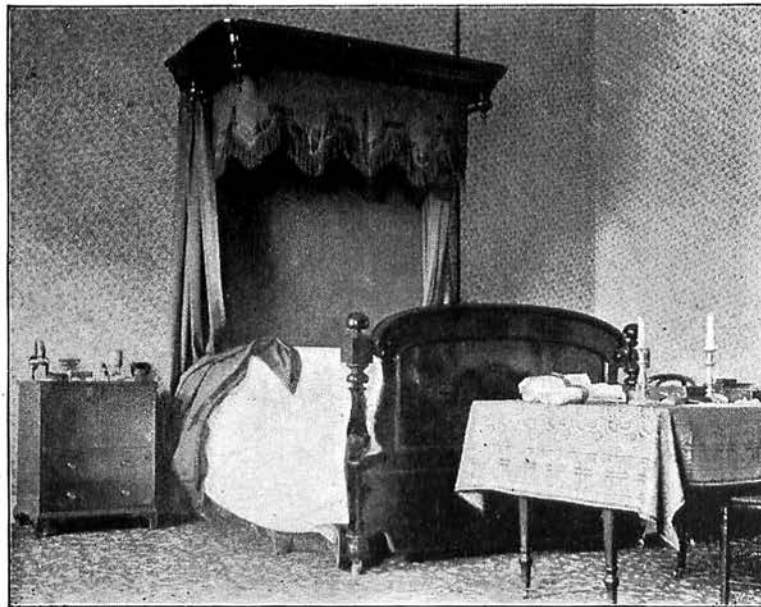
The marshal's man follows in order, and does duty as a sort of footman.

Last, but certainly not least, comes the cook. Formerly only

possessed of considerable forethought, and all-round ability as a caterer. The food supplies of many of the assize towns are often very primitive, but woe betide the unlucky *chef* if he sends up an insufficient or an unsatisfactory meal. Some of these Knights of the Black Cap rise to affluence in their profession, occasionally securing snug berths as cooks to the Inns of Court, be-

men-cooks were engaged by the judges for circuit, as the life was hard and the work arduous; but since the introduction of the single-judge system, that has excited so much opposition from profession and public alike, many of the judges have employed women-cooks, the work being in these days much lighter and the travelling arrangements more comfortable. A good circuit cook must be

besides carrying on businesses more or less lucrative, as confectioners and restaurateurs. One, in addition to all this, has become a member of the London County Council, and in course of time may represent the people in a larger sense, and help to make the laws for the judges to administer.

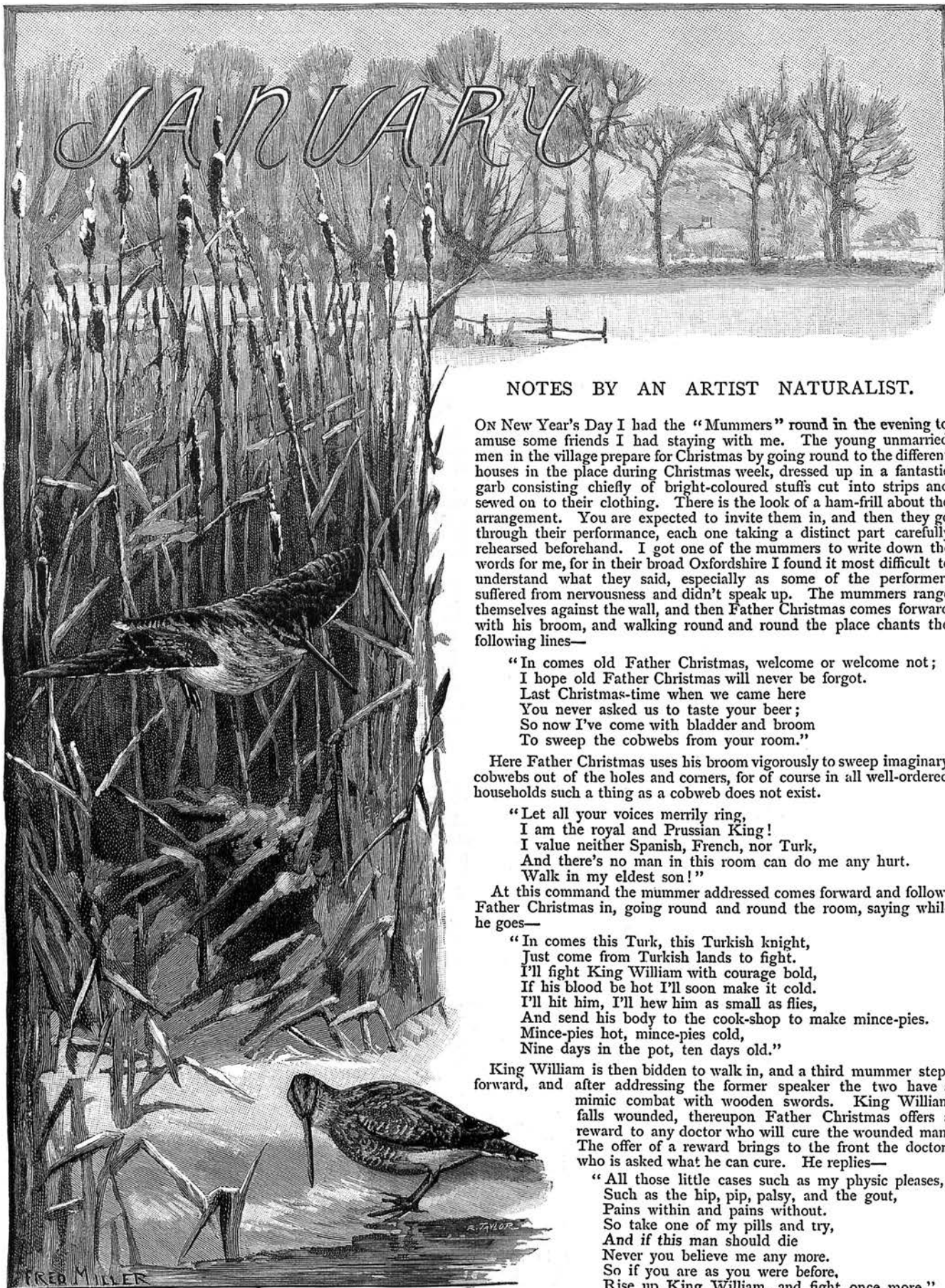


LINCOLN—JUDGE'S BEDROOM.

NOTE.—My photographic readers may be interested to know that most of the illustrations to this article were taken with a "Samuels" hand camera, many of the instantaneous pictures and interior views being obtained on Messrs. Elliott and Son's "Rocket" and "Barnet" plates.



# JANUARY



## NOTES BY AN ARTIST NATURALIST.

ON New Year's Day I had the "Mummers" round in the evening to amuse some friends I had staying with me. The young unmarried men in the village prepare for Christmas by going round to the different houses in the place during Christmas week, dressed up in a fantastic garb consisting chiefly of bright-coloured stuffs cut into strips and sewed on to their clothing. There is the look of a ham-frill about the arrangement. You are expected to invite them in, and then they go through their performance, each one taking a distinct part carefully rehearsed beforehand. I got one of the mummers to write down the words for me, for in their broad Oxfordshire I found it most difficult to understand what they said, especially as some of the performers suffered from nervousness and didn't speak up. The mummers range themselves against the wall, and then Father Christmas comes forward with his broom, and walking round and round the place chants the following lines—

"In comes old Father Christmas, welcome or welcome not;  
I hope old Father Christmas will never be forgot.  
Last Christmas-time when we came here  
You never asked us to taste your beer;  
So now I've come with bladder and broom  
To sweep the cobwebs from your room."

Here Father Christmas uses his broom vigorously to sweep imaginary cobwebs out of the holes and corners, for of course in all well-ordered households such a thing as a cobweb does not exist.

"Let all your voices merrily ring,  
I am the royal and Prussian King!  
I value neither Spanish, French, nor Turk,  
And there's no man in this room can do me any hurt.  
Walk in my eldest son!"

At this command the mummer addressed comes forward and follows Father Christmas in, going round and round the room, saying while he goes—

"In comes this Turk, this Turkish knight,  
Just come from Turkish lands to fight.  
I'll fight King William with courage bold,  
If his blood be hot I'll soon make it cold.  
I'll hit him, I'll hew him as small as flies,  
And send his body to the cook-shop to make mince-pies.  
Mince-pies hot, mince-pies cold,  
Nine days in the pot, ten days old."

King William is then bidden to walk in, and a third mummer steps forward, and after addressing the former speaker the two have a mimic combat with wooden swords. King William falls wounded, thereupon Father Christmas offers a reward to any doctor who will cure the wounded man. The offer of a reward brings to the front the doctor, who is asked what he can cure. He replies—

"All those little cases such as my physic pleases,  
Such as the hip, pip, palsy, and the gout,  
Pains within and pains without.  
So take one of my pills and try,  
And if this man should die  
Never you believe me any more.  
So if you are as you were before,  
Rise up King William, and fight once more."

However this doctor's physic does not produce the desired effect, so Father Christmas says—

“Walk in, Jack Finney.”

“My name is not Jack Finney, nor John Finney, but Mr. Finney, a man of great fame, who can do more than what thee canst or any man again.”

“What canst thou do then, Jack?”

“Cure a magpie with the toothache,  
Or a jackdaw with the headache.”

“How canst thou do that, Jack?”

“Cut his head off and throw his body in the ditch.”

Father Christmas calls him Barabbas and rascal; but Jack Finney gives the wounded man, who has all this while been lying on the floor while the rest of the mummers marched round him, a pill which at once performs a cure. Father Hubbabub is asked to walk in, and he finishes the entertainment with these lines—

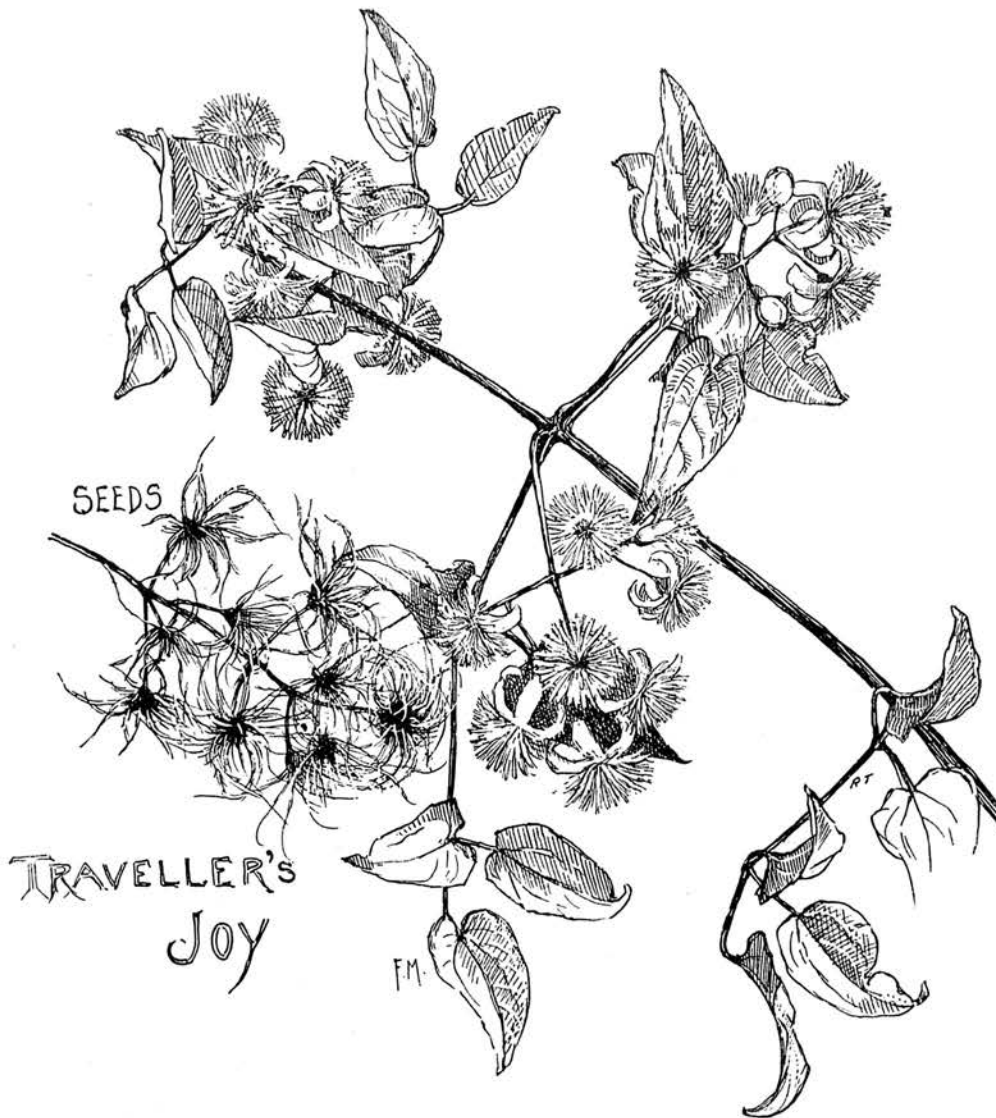
“In comes old Father Hubbabub,  
On my shoulder I carry my club;  
In my hand a dripping pan,  
Don't you think I'm a gallant old man?  
Green sleeves and yellow laces,  
All pretty maidens take your places.  
Make room for the fiddler this merry Christmas-time,  
For Jack's gone to Ireland, and Sal's gone to France,  
So we'll all rise up and have a merry dance.”

So many of these old customs are yearly disappearing that one is glad to preserve what few still linger on. These mummers are evidently a survival of the ancient morris dancers, and in this village an old shepherd instructed the young fellows in the mystery of mumming, it having fallen into abeyance for some years. When the old generations are gathered to their fathers, traditions which have been preserved orally for centuries will be buried with them. The disposition abroad is to seek amusement far afield, and those



DEAD HEDGEROW HERBAGE.





literally as beautiful as anything I know, and from a painter's point of view more worth doing than the same scene in midsummer when everything is uniformly green. I was much struck by a mass of dead bulrushes while skating on a pond. These particular rushes are never cut, and the yellow-grey stems and purplish-brown flowers made a beautiful passage of colour in the landscape. My brother painted a small picture of this pond which is engraved in this number of the "G. O. P.," for it illustrates the material a painter has to his hand in January.\* The sunlight in the afternoon, falling on the pollarded willows with the elms beyond, making the willows quite warm by contrast, only wanted to be realised in paint to be a most beautiful passage in a picture. I suggested some lines from a poem by Myers as a title.

"She watched the glories fade in one,  
The round moon rise while yet the sun  
Was rosy on the snow."

Have you ever noticed how just a few days in every year stand out clearly against the background of the whole fifty-two weeks, and years after one can recall them. One such walk I took, when staying just after Christmas in the country, along by the Nene River some few miles from Peterborough. The day was sunny though cold, and in the shade the hoar-frost still silvered the leaves and herbage. The dead reeds were quite golden in colour in the sunlight, and in one hedgerow we came to the silvery silky seed vessels of the traveller's joy (Father Christmas' beard we might term it), "Parcel-bearded with the traveller's joy," in Tennyson's words, and the crimson four-sided seed vessels of the spindle

\*See "A Winter Landscape," next page (Ed.)

delights which amused our forefathers are voted slow by the restless spirits of to-day. The newer generations of farmers give little encouragement to their men to keep old country customs and festivities. There is only one farmer in my neighbourhood who still celebrates the harvest-home, and yet my mother tells me that in the village when she was a girl the taking home of the last load of corn was the occasion of much rejoicing. It was called in Cambridgeshire the orkey load, and was drawn through the village decorated with boughs and evergreens, and afterwards supper and merry-making finished the day, cakes and ale (ale was then always home-brewed) being an important item in the feast.

Plough Monday, the first Monday in January, is unknown in Oxfordshire, but was kept in the Eastern Counties, the plough-boys going through the village cracking their whips and getting largesse from the farmers. But years ago all farm hands were hired by the year at the neighbouring statute fair, and the plough-boys slept in the house and were fed by the farmers. A "mess of milk," as it was called, was given to each boy and man before going to plough.

The conditions of life change, we know, and this in itself should occasion no regret, but as time goes on we are losing more and more of the picturesque or decoration of life. The world is made beautiful, and not only supplies our wants, but gives us delight, *la joie de vivre* (the joy of life) as the French say. Surely man, taking nature as his guide, should do what he can to preserve those things which tend to prevent life becoming merely material and barrenly sordid.

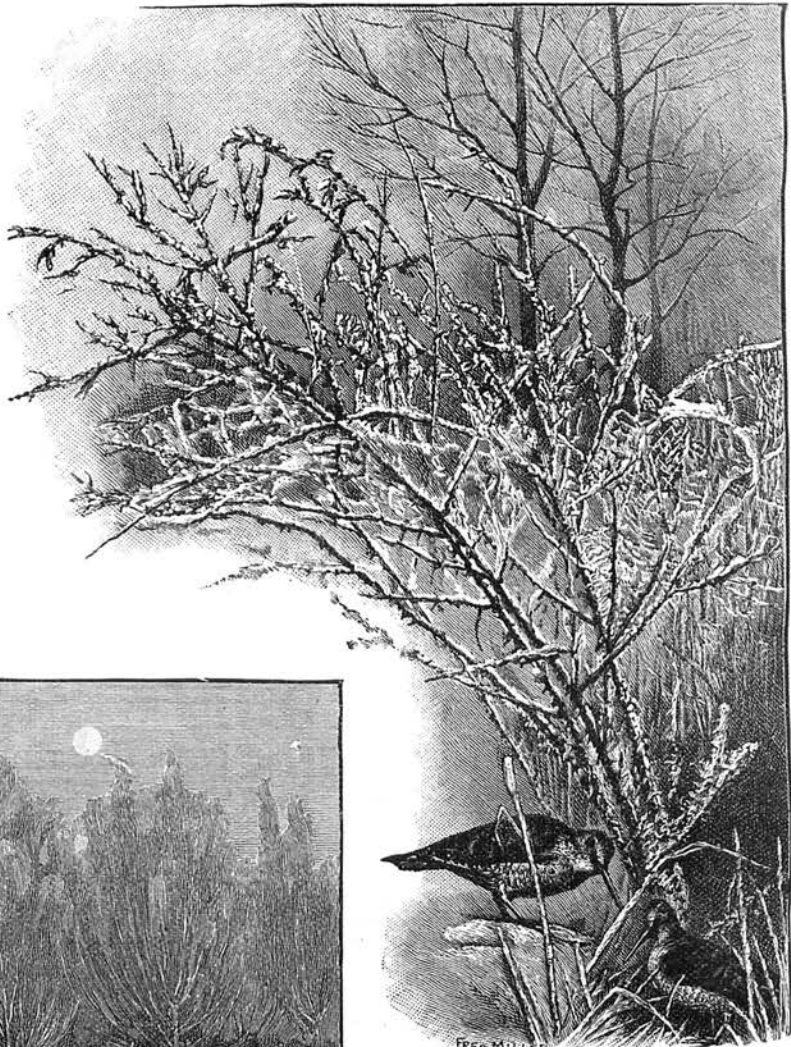
The dead reeds and herbage by the river are very beautiful either seen in the sunlight, which brings out their golden greys and russets, or when the rime frost has collected upon them for several hours and covered them with spinous icicles. There is much more colour in a landscape in January than many people imagine, and a sunny day now has for the artist more subtle beauties than one in midsummer. A bed of osiers or reeds, when the sunlight is on them, with the purplish greys of the distant elms as a background is



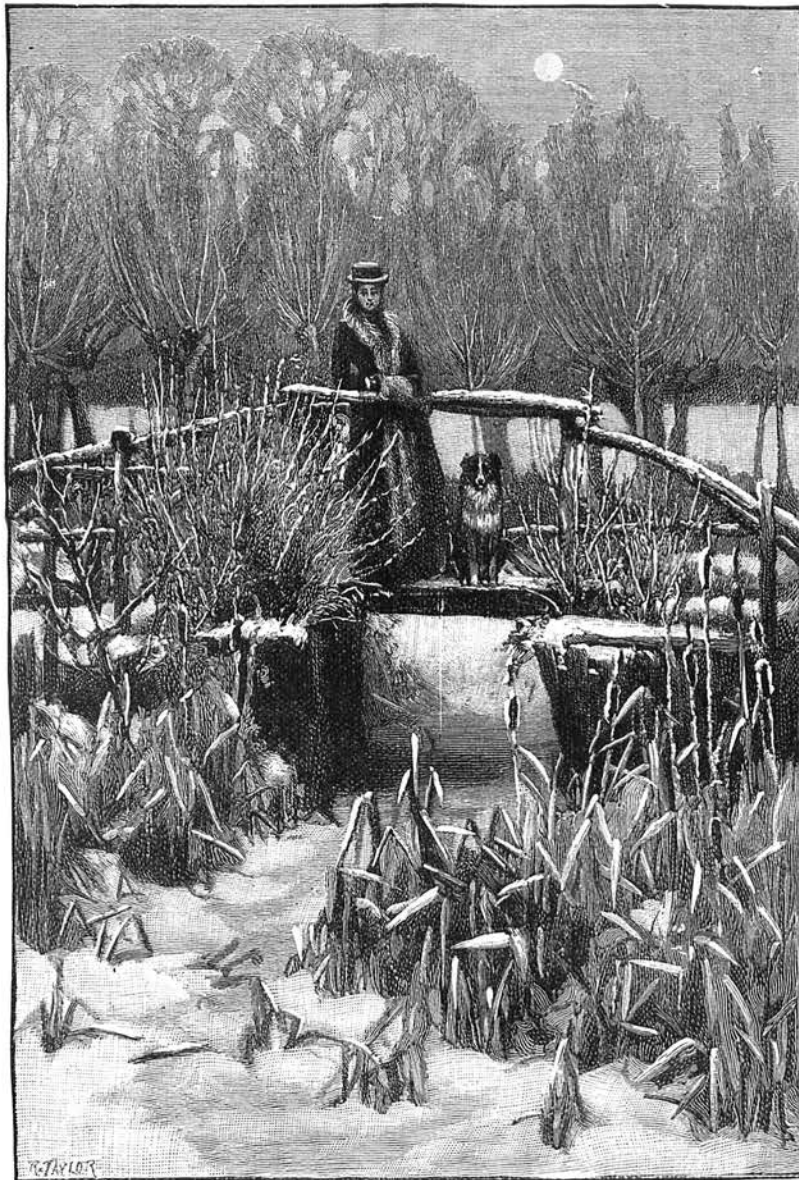
tree, which had split open and showed the bright orange seeds inside, were both striking and beautiful features in the landscape. These seeds of the spindle-tree being dry make most beautiful indoor decoration for winter, and we took advantage of the occasion to carry a quantity home to put in our empty vases.

I give a drawing of dead hedgerow herbage, which I used as the *motifs* in a screen I painted one year. The silvery greys of the dead thistles and the warm tones of the dock against a background of ploughed land made a capital harmony. The introduction of goldfinches and rabbits adds to the interest; and I commend this material to my decorative readers.

In addition to our summer visitants, like the swallows, we have those birds which, coming from the north, stay only the winter with us. The fieldfares, buntings and brumblings are among the most noticeable of these winter visitors, and then we have among the smaller birds the siskin and redpole, birds which easily reconcile themselves to captivity, and live for years in cages, growing exceedingly tame, as so many stories about them attest. In the winter in the Thames Valley, gulls, terns, and some of the rarer ducks like the golden eye and red-headed pochard, are yearly



HOAR-FROST.



A WINTER LANDSCAPE.

shot, while the common mallard and pintail in hard winters are comparatively common. Wild geese and an occasional swan also fall to keen sportsmen. One young farmer I know, out very early to have a chance shot at some wild ducks, stalked a pair very carefully for some time in the half-light, and finally got within range and secured both, only to find that he had shot a neighbour's tame Muscovy ducks. His bag that morning was an expensive one, as the birds he had secured were old and tough, and it cost him nearly a pound to buy another pair to replace those he had secured.

There is a strange feeling of loneliness about winter when one is out alone, walking over ice-bound fields or skating. The world puts on a disguise in winter, familiar landmarks are obliterated and changed beyond recognition, and there is little life stirring. Two painters I know spent the severe winter of 1891 in a house-boat on one of the Norfolk broads—ice-bound for six weeks. At night they could hear the pattering of rats over the ice as they came to steal any food they could find on board, and even an otter came and stole some fish they had caught and put aside for the next day's meal. Every little sound seemed magnified as it came over the ice. They told me that the feeling of loneliness was almost unbearable at times, as though they alone peopled the world. I can quite imagine it, as I have experienced the same thing when skating on the Thames alone in the gathering dark. The ice, as you skate over it, will give slightly and crack behind you as it splits

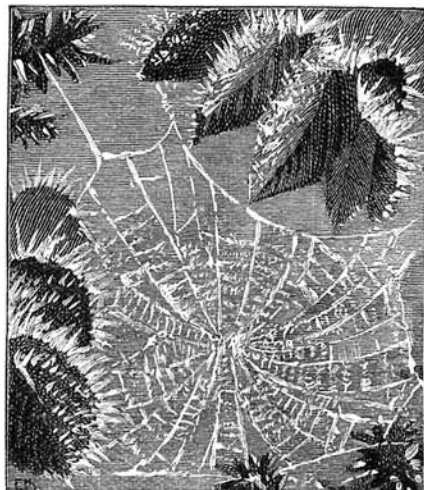


right across the river, and Tam O'Shanter could not have felt more scared than I have done once or twice when skating home on the river in the evening. The feeling is too awesome to be agreeable, and the sound is quite appalling and seems to run down the river for a long way.

Of flowers there are few so early in the year. In a garden near me some seedling anemones, with the rich ornate foliage, started flowering in November and kept in bloom till March. Christmas roses are the most beautiful, and if just protected by a handlight give much finer blooms. Iris reticulata, in a mild season, will be found in flower in the garden, and so will snowdrops and aconites. White, in his *Naturalist's Calendar*, gives as flowering in January, the polyanthus, double-daisy, daphne mezereum, red dead nettle, groundsel, hazel, hepatica, primrose, furze, wallflower, stock, white dead nettle, dandelion and crocus. Selborne being in the south, would be more forward than we are in the Thames Valley, which is notable for its extreme cold at times.

Birds are all getting active so soon as January is here, and the wren, robin and thrush make their voices heard in the gardens, while the beautiful coloured nut-hatch may be

seen running up the trunks of the trees after insects. These are the first birds to "chirp full choir," and they are soon followed by the whistle



HOAR-FROST.

of the blackbird, the songs of the larks and chaffinches, while the rooks may be seen visiting the elms to see what remains of last year's nests, and to prepare themselves for building operations in the next month.

With the break up of the frost the earth seems to grow into distinctness after being blurred by snow and ice, very much as a dissolving view, and few things are more exhilarating than to see the first flowers like the aconites thrust through the soil and open to the sun of the new year. On a warm day I can see swarms of insects dancing in the sun against any yew-hedge. One hears from travellers how striking is the growth of herbage after rain in India, and English people are astonished at the rapidity with which nature puts on her mantle green in America after the disappearance of the frost. Spring comes with leaps and bounds to our American cousins, and one is told that there you go from winter into spring with no interval to bridge the two together; but with us the seasons are much more uncertain. I have known January quite a warm month—too hot for fires, but later on, when we are taught by the calendar to expect fair weather, we find that "lingering winter chills the lap of May."



## ANSWERING LETTERS.

Of all the minor social civilities, not one, perhaps, is so much neglected as the simple courtesy of answering letters, and it is a remarkable fact that, although other less important matters are punctiliously attended to in society—or if disregarded the delinquent would be made to feel the penalty by the proverbial "cold shoulder" or the "cut direct"—yet careless correspondents escape without reproof; for, excepting in the case of a relative or very intimate friend, it would be considered an affront to be reminded that a letter had remained unanswered, or to hint that any inconvenience had been caused by undue delay. Formal calls must be returned, "thanks for kind inquiries" must be sent, and all such little attentions are scrupulously observed; but the forgetful or idle correspondent may fail to answer letters, and no notice must be taken of the omission without the risk of giving dire offence. Thus, the real delinquents in such a case, as in most other cases, escape blame; but the sufferers, who are put to much inconvenience, dare not complain.

It is worth remark, as throwing some little light on this subject, that, while some persons have very great facility in the use of the pen, and can readily express their thoughts on paper, yet others, though fluent in conversation, find great difficulty in constructing a few sentences in writing; they will take any amount of trouble of another kind to avoid the task of penning a few words. People have been known to walk a long distance in order to accept in person a friendly invitation, rather than write a brief note in reply.

But setting aside such extreme cases—of positive repugnance to the use of the pen—there are individuals in whom mere indolence is often a cause for neglect of letter-writing;

a habit of procrastination is thus formed, so that from day to day the duty is put off, till at length the convenient excuse occurs that it is then "too late" to reply. People who are thus habitually indifferent to the convenience of others, are wanting in that most valuable quality, sympathetic imagination, which would enable them to fancy, and almost realise, the feelings of their correspondents. How little such indifferent people think of the daily, hourly waiting and watching for the answer that never comes. The anxious mind fancies that illness may be a cause of silence, or the thought may arise that some unintentional offence may have been conveyed in an unanswered letter; and all such annoying doubts might be avoided by a few lines, if only to acknowledge the receipt of a letter, which acknowledgment is undoubtedly required, not only as a mere act of courtesy, but as a duty.

I do not wish to make an apparently trivial matter too serious by carrying the question into the domain of social ethics, but I think it may reasonably be asked whether thoughtless and indolent individuals do not commit a wrong by causing needless inconvenience and anxiety to those with whom they associate; and in the matter of letter-writing a small expenditure of time and trouble would suffice to avoid the evils described.

Postcards ought to be a great boon to lazy correspondents, but, strange to say, it is the most tardy and unwilling letter-writers who seem to have the strongest prejudice against the use of postcards; it is true they are sometimes misused, but that is not a good argument against their proper use; everything is liable to abuse. Some of the devices that are adopted for the purpose of baffling curiosity are questionable; the best plan is to

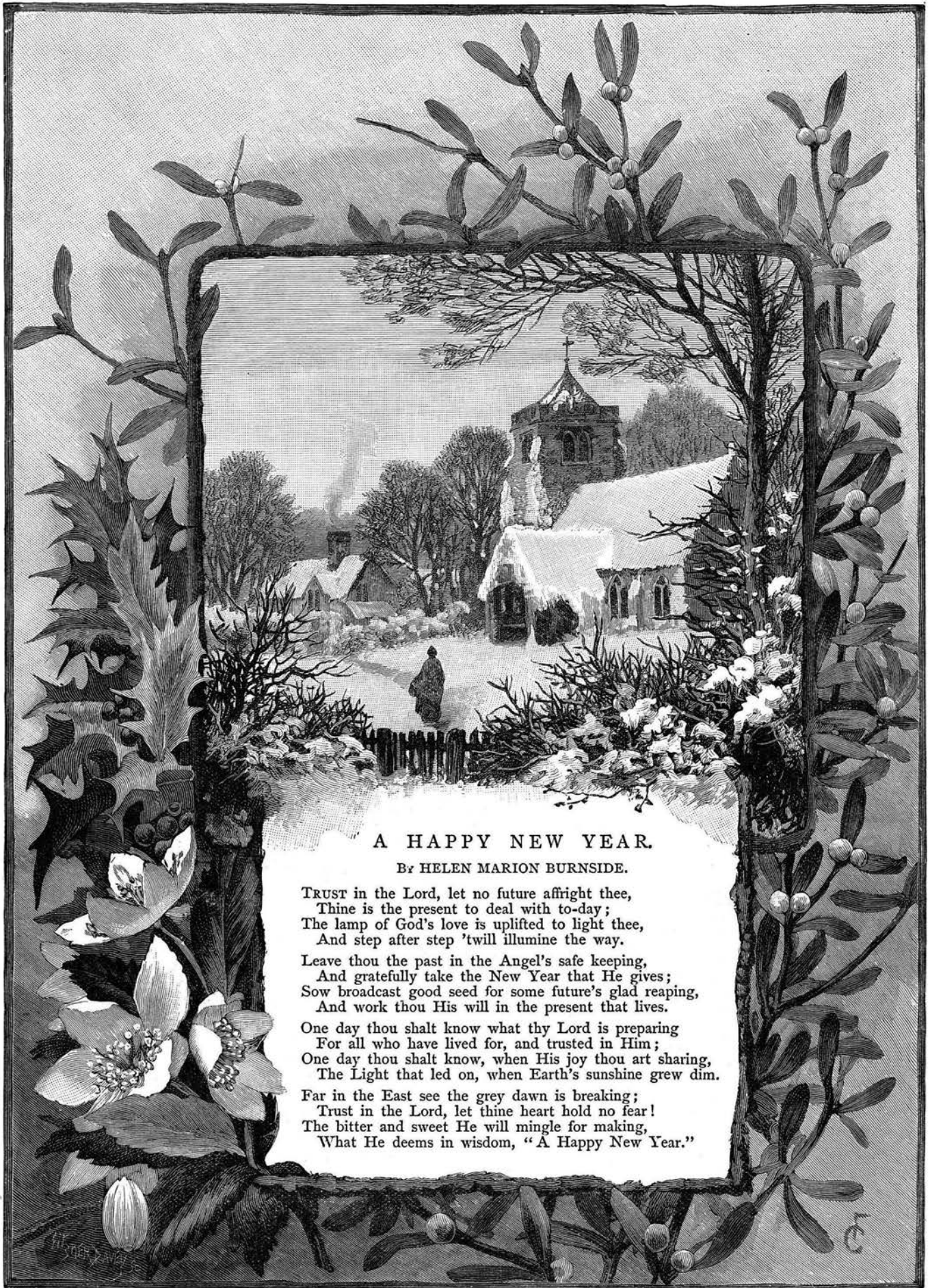
write a plain message straight off, as brief as possible, and so worded that no unnecessary information can be afforded to servants and others not concerned. For instance, a lazy or a busy writer might say, "Your letter received, will attend to your request;" or, "Will write more fully in a day or two." Such a message on a postcard would be a very good substitute for a letter *pro tem*.

Correspondents, of course, always arrange between themselves the method, whether secret or open, most convenient to them to carry on. The object of the suggestion is to put in a plea for the postcard as a very convenient institution, and to show that the prejudice which is entertained against the system may be chiefly due to the objectionable way in which messages are sometimes written, and such objections could be removed by the exercise of a little thought and care on the part of the senders.

Of course, numbers of letters are received that do not require any notice or acknowledgment—not even by postcard. Such are applications for votes, charitable appeals for money, etc., etc., and, unless when a stamped envelope is enclosed, those may be ignored. There are, however, letters which do require some answer and yet remain unnoticed. In pity for the writers of unanswered letters, these remarks have been penned.

It is said that "consideration for the feelings of others is the essence of true politeness." So, testing the subject by that rule, it may be insisted on that the courtesy of answering letters should be made a point of etiquette of as much importance as some other social civilities which are punctiliously observed by those who claim to belong to "polite society."

M. A. BAINES.



A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

By HELEN MARION BURNSIDE.

TRUST in the Lord, let no future affright thee,  
Thine is the present to deal with to-day;  
The lamp of God's love is uplifted to light thee,  
And step after step 'twill illumine the way.

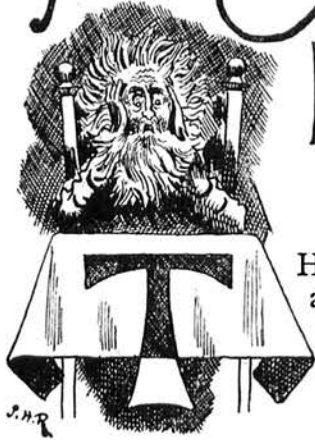
Leave thou the past in the Angel's safe keeping,  
And gratefully take the New Year that He gives;  
Sow broadcast good seed for some future's glad reaping,  
And work thou His will in the present that lives.

One day thou shalt know what thy Lord is preparing  
For all who have lived for, and trusted in Him;  
One day thou shalt know, when His joy thou art sharing,  
The Light that led on, when Earth's sunshine grew dim.

Far in the East see the grey dawn is breaking;  
Trust in the Lord, let thine heart hold no fear!  
The bitter and sweet He will mingle for making,  
What He deems in wisdom, "A Happy New Year."



# Some Curious Inventions.



THE history and growth of inventions are subjects in which all are interested. The difficulties and rebuffs which inventors have had to undergo in the perfecting of their ideas, their perseverance and ultimate success, form most interesting reading.

Vast sums of money are brought in by apparently simple inventions requiring no great mechanical knowledge. The accounts of these read more like the wildest fiction than simple fact, and are sufficient to make the least covetous among us bright yellow with jealousy. The very simplicity of some of them creates a feeling of annoyance ; we feel we could have invented them with the greatest ease. If we had only known better the wants and tastes of the public, we might ourselves have been the recipients of those compact round sums. The stylographic pen brought in £40,000 per annum, the india-rubber tips to pencils £20,000, metal plates for protecting the soles and heels of boots brought in £250,000 in all, the roller skate £200,000. A clergyman realised £400 a week by the invention of a toy ; another toy, the return ball (a wooden ball with a piece of elastic attached), brought in an annual income of £10,000, the "Dancing Jim Crow" £15,000 per annum, whilst "Pharaoh's Serpents," a chemical toy, brought in £10,000 in all ; the common needle-threader brought in £2,000 a year ; the inventor of a copper cap for children's boots was able

to leave his heir £400,000 ; whilst Singer, of sewing-machine fame, left at his death nearly £3,000,000.

But there is another side to the question—the humorous side. It is to this that I propose to confine myself more particularly here, and to describe, with the help of drawings, some of the wonderful things which people have thought it worth their while to patent, strong in the hope or making a big fortune in the near future, only to find in so many cases that their inventions were impracticable and very often perfectly ridiculous.

The prevention of sea-sickness has long been a subject of interest to all travellers. Some of the cures and preventives have been curious. One suggestion I remember

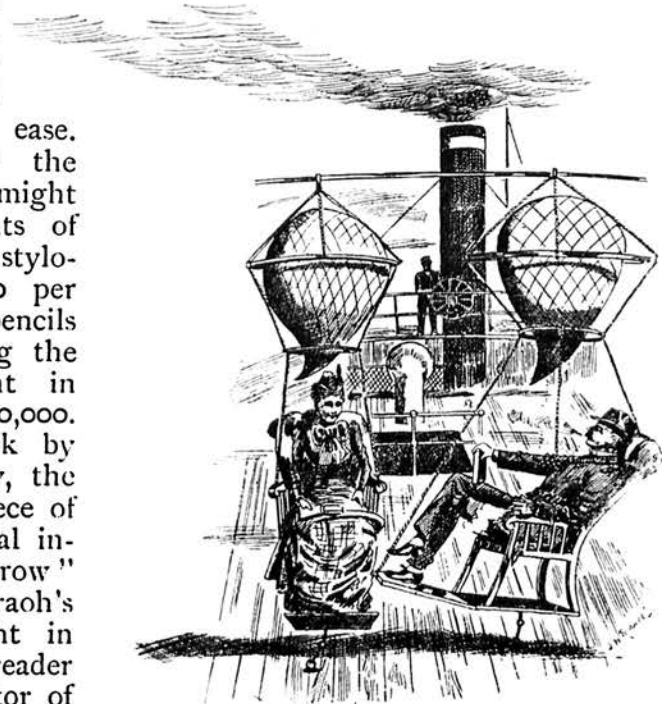


FIG. 1.

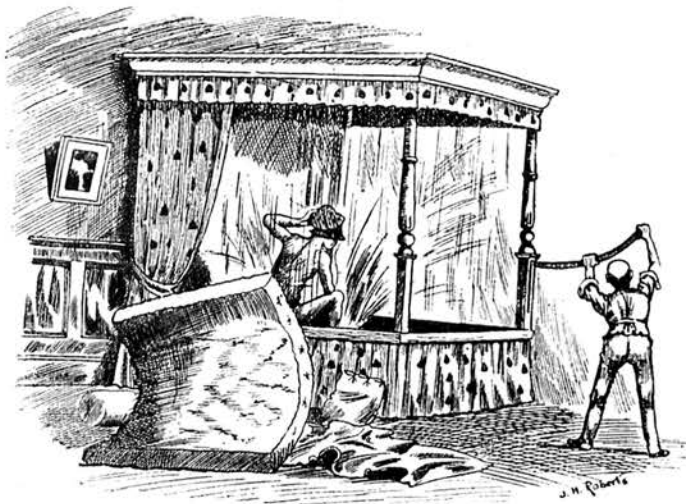


FIG. 2.

seeing recommended was the tying of a Bradshaw, or any other hard substance, tightly to the waist. But an invention depicted here (Fig. 1) beats this hollow in its originality of conception. The passenger's chair is attached to a balloon, the chair being connected to the deck by a ball and socket joint; to keep the balloon from swaying too much, it is attached to a rod above.

The next piece of furniture we will take is the bed. A man invents a four-poster, which can be converted into a bath. The

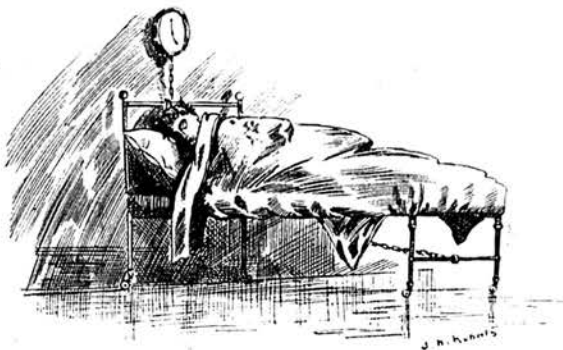


FIG. 3.

canopy above forms the vessel for the shower-bath, the water being pumped up through a pipe in one of the four uprights (Fig. 2). Another bed is called the alarum bed; at the appointed hour the two lower legs bend backwards and awake the occupant (Fig. 3).

The next thing is a vapour bath, constructed as depicted here, with a hole for the head and hands (Fig. 4). Of all the inventions mentioned in this paper, this is the only one I have ever seen in use.

The hat or cap has received a great deal of attention from the inventors. We find methods patented for making it water-proof, blow-proof, for ventilating it, for draining it, and for keeping it warm, some of these methods being as complicated and cumbrous as those applied to buildings.

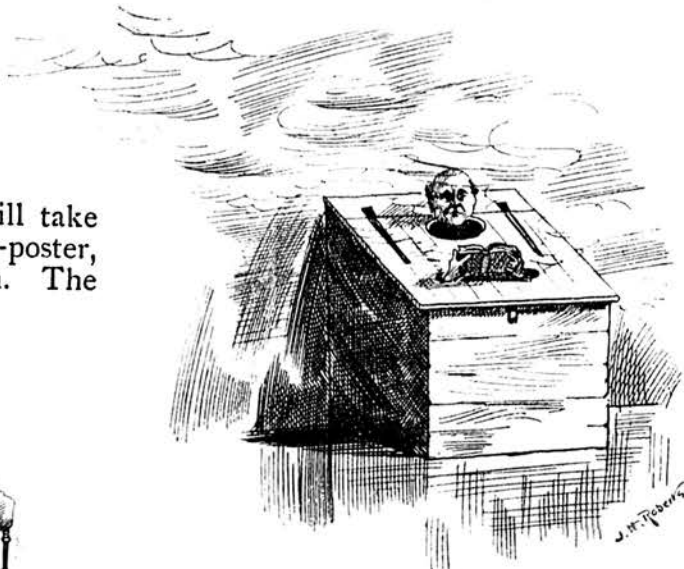


FIG. 4.

One of the methods for ventilating a hat is indeed startling. The crown is made separate from the sides. They are united by means of springs, slides, or staples, so that the crown may be partially or wholly raised, or shut down entirely, at the pleasure of the wearer!

I wonder how many of these hats were sold. I think the "every-day" man would prefer holding his hat in his hand if very hot. Perhaps this hat was intended for those whose hands are already occupied—porters carrying burdens, bakers pushing carts, or cricketers when fielding or batting (Fig. 5).

The next hat on my list goes in for being



strong, if nothing else ; it is made of tin, copper, or other metal. One can imagine the unearthly din and clatter there would be about one's head during a sharp hail or rain storm.

The next hat is patented by a scientific gentleman. His hat may be described as a medicinal or surgical hat. But let him describe it in his own words :—

“My invention consists in the introduction into coverings for heads of such combinations of metals or materials as shall form with the moist skin during the wearing of such coverings a voltaic or galvanic combination, and develop a current of electricity, the electrical current so developed curing or relieving headaches or other nervous or painful affections in the head of the wearer.”

What a delightful hat to wear at the Royal Academy or other picture gallery, for these are the places which one never leaves without a headache. The doctors, I am told, have discovered the headache caused by looking at pictures to be quite unique, and I hear it has been given a name all to itself to distinguish it from others. Why should not the Royal Academy have a counter where these medicinal hats could be had on loan, after the manner of opera glasses at the theatres? or, failing this, might not private enterprise satisfy the wants of the public? I give this suggestion away to the street newspaper boy or to the street toy-seller, or any other person who cares to have it. Of course, if these hats were found satisfactory, they would be worn at all times, and in all places, whenever one had a headache ; indeed, a neuralgic person would have a hat-peg fixed over his bed with the hat hung on, ready for instant use.

The next hat is not of such an ambitious nature as the last ; it is to be used more as a preventive than a corrective. In the words

of the inventor, “It is a cap which ensures safety, ease, and comfort to the wearer when travelling ; it consists of one, two, or three air-tight circular tubes to be inflated when required for use.” In this we have something very novel if nothing else, and suited to those people who tell you all they want is comfort, and that the look of the thing is nothing to them. What a curious aspect our railway stations would assume if these hats were generally worn ! Old gentlemen short of wind would tip a porter and get their hats blown

out for them ; porters would carry a pair of bellows hung from their belt expressly for this purpose. On cold days, when it would be dangerous to remove the cap from the head, passengers would blow each other out. What an animated scene ! (Fig. 6.)

The next hat on my list is one intended to protect the eyes from the sun and dust. Just over the brim we have two apertures for the eyes, filled with glass, gauze, or other suitable material. When the wearer is annoyed with the dust or sun, or in the distance views an enemy or dun (I see I have lapsed into poetry), he simply pulls his hat down to his ears and goes on



FIG. 5.

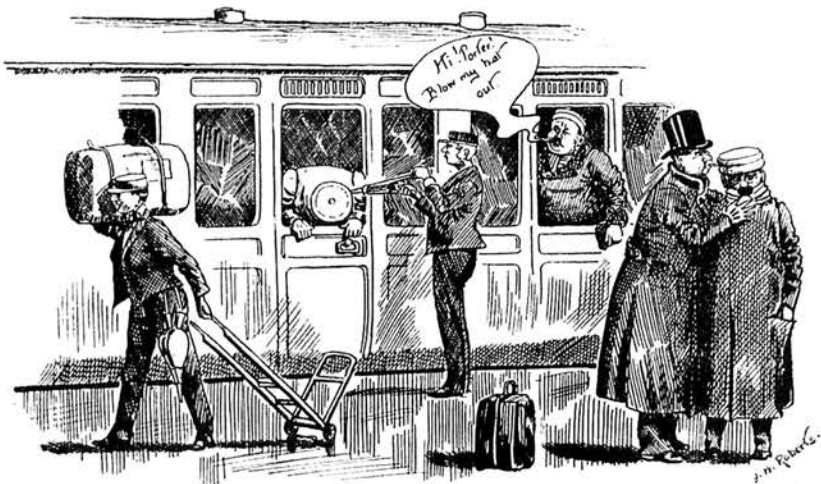


FIG. 6.

his way rejoicing (Fig. 7). Another inventor, apparently much struck with this invention, improves upon it. He makes the body of the hat in two parts, the upper part resting on the head, the lower part, which carries the brim, sliding over the other; it is



FIG. 7.

provided with apertures and screens as before described.

The next novelty is a reversible hat having a cloth surface for fine weather, a waterproof surface for wet weather. The next has an attachment for striking matches; the next contains a mirror. Then we have a hat constructed in such a manner that it will fit any sized head—a useful piece of clothing for large and graduating families.

The inventor we now come to has apparently been in a wholesale business, where he has got into the habit of doing things on a large and exhaustive scale, for he takes out protection for a hat with a brim or peak adapted to receive certain useful articles, namely, a looking-glass, comb, pencil, &c. But this is nothing compared to the invention of another gentleman who patents a walking-stick which contains a pistol, powder, ball, screw, telescope, pen, ink, paper, pencil, knife, and drawing materials! We can imagine this latter gentleman arriving at a sea-side lodgings without any luggage; we can see the landlady courteously, but firmly, refusing to take him in; we can see our inventor unscrewing his walking-stick, and exhibiting his belongings to the astonished landlady.

“Here, my good woman, is my luggage;” a smile from the landlady, and admission graciously granted (Fig. 8). Certainly these articles would be useless as toilet and

sleeping requisites, but why not have a Saturday to Monday walking-stick, to contain night-shirt, razor, sponge, tooth-brush and shaving-brush?

There is one more hat to be mentioned, and we must then get on to other garments.

This hat has a removable brim which can be folded up and put in the pocket; we are not told what advantage the wearer gains by getting rid of his brim in this curious and eccentric manner, but perhaps the hat is one meant more particularly for members of the conjuring profession; though it would certainly be useful to a person paying an afternoon call necessitating a hot and sunny walk. He would travel with the brim on; on approaching the house the brim would be taken off and concealed, and he would ring

the bell clothed in an ordinary hat.

In looking through these specifications, we find collars, gloves, stays, and crinolines have received the most attention. The latter seem to have exercised the brain of the inventor to a dangerous extent; the great problem was to construct a crinoline which would permit the wearer to sit down in comfort, to enter a vehicle, and to pass through narrow places. Some of the contrivances and dodges to attain these ends to the uninitiated sound most complicated. Strings and pulleys are freely used; I have only space to describe one of these inventions, I give it in the inventor's own words:—

“The crinoline is made of light air-tight



FIG. 8.

material, capable of collapsing, and having a small aperture in the upper part, in order that thereto may be adapted a minute pair of bellows of a very slender form; a second



aperture allows for the emission of air when ladies shall desire to sit down."

The next invention will be of interest to military men, to those fond of camping out, and travellers generally. Listen to the words of the inventor:—"My invention is an improved military cloak; the body of the cloak is nearly circular, a hood is fixed to the neck portion, sleeves are sewn to the body." Such a cloak, we are informed, forms an excellent close tent. The cloak can be suspended by the hood, holes can be made in the lower edge of the cloak for the passage of pegs, and the cold

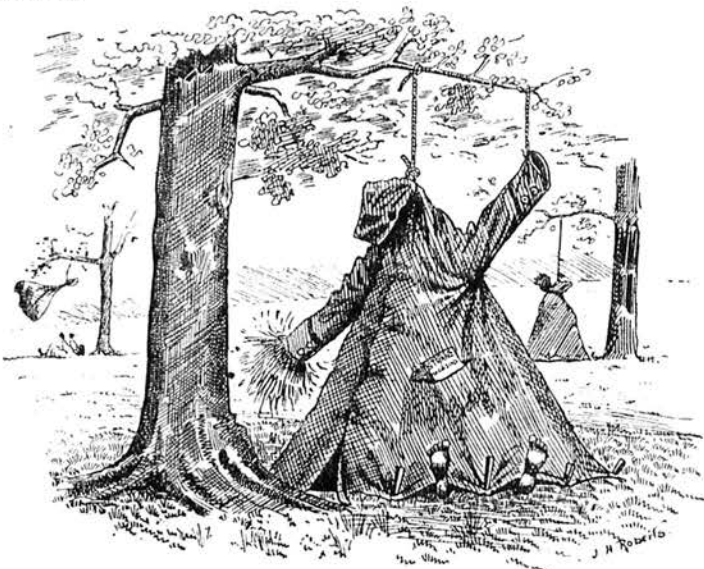


FIG. 9.

may be kept out by means of the customary buttons and buttonholes.

On the first blush this sounds rather a good idea, and almost practicable, till the thing is looked into more closely. We then find that the cloak must either be very, very large for the wearer, or, on the other hand, the tent must be very, very small for the occupant. To put it graphically, we have the choice of two sorts as depicted here (Fig. 9). We are not told what happens to the sleeves when used as a tent; perhaps one is stuffed with straw to keep out the cold, the other being used as a chimney or ventilator!

Another tent coat is formed by buttoning three coats together, each one being one-third of a circle in shape. Such a tent would be all very well for two of the men, but the third, I am afraid, would have to sit outside, to say nothing of the dog, supposing there was one.

Almost as marvellous as the above is the description of a coat, the skirts of which are attached to the body in such a manner that whilst it is being worn it may be readily converted into a frock coat, a dress coat, a hunting coat. Apparently the

front part of the skirt can be unbuttoned and buttoned back behind, forming swallow tails. Thus dressed the wearer can accept an invitation to dinner at a moment's notice. A white tie he could always carry with him, so as to be ready for any emergency.

Another frock coat is described which can be turned inside out and worn either way.

Here is another coat, which ensures you

a soft and dry seat wherever you may sit down (Fig. 10)—a peculiarly appropriate coat for a third-class smoking carriage: "In the back part of the coat there is placed, between the lining and the cloth, a bag or cushion, which, when inflated, forms a seat. A small tube of indiarubber extends from the bag to the side pocket." Fancy travelling by train, not knowing such a thing as this coat existed, and seeing your fellow passengers gradually rising higher and higher in the world on the seat opposite to you—how uncanny it would be!



FIG. 10.

Here are a few more curiosities:—A child's bib with a trough attached, the whole made of some waterproof material; a pocket which cannot be picked; a muff and boa filled with air, to save you from a watery grave; cuffs and collars made of steel, painted or enamelled white; trousers with double legs—on the outer legs getting soiled or bespattered you tuck them up, and behold a clean pair. This arrangement would be only suitable, I should say, when worn with

an overcoat. Last, but not least, we read of sham calves in stockings.

Under the head of umbrellas and walking sticks we get some very laughable inventions.

One is an umbrella, which, in some wonderful way, is converted into a walking-stick, and so formed that a spear can be attached, when it is useful as a weapon of offence and defence. I recommend it to elderly ladies in the dog-days, as a protection from sun and mad dogs.

The next invention is a rain absorber, to prevent rain from running down from hats and umbrellas. The absorber is formed either of uncovered sponges or of sponges covered by a fabric. We are naively told that the absorber can be readily removed from the article, squeezed, and replaced.

We next come to an article which the inventor has named (take a long breath and shut

your eyes) the "Rhabdoskidophorus." This is an umbrella which takes to pieces; the silk and ribs being hidden within the stick, it is thus transformed into a stout walking-stick.

Let me now bring to the notice of frequenters of the Row and riders generally an umbrella with telescopic handle, which is attached to the saddle behind in such a manner that it can be adjusted to any angle. When not in use, the silk portion can be removed.

The next umbrella, to use a vulgarism, "takes the cake." It is one provided with windows, so that the occupant or user thereof can see where he is going. Thanks to this umbrella, a collision is avoided (Fig. 11).

Walking-sticks have been patented with all manner of attachments on them and within them. Among other things mentioned we find almanacks, thermometers, pistols, pipes, perfumes, inkpots, and crutches.

The feet come last, and form a fitting end to this article. There is only one invention worth mentioning, which consists of metal plates which are attached to the heels of boots, thus protecting the trousers from splashes of mud (Fig. 12).

The moral of all this is, that every man can be an inventor, but not necessarily a successful one.

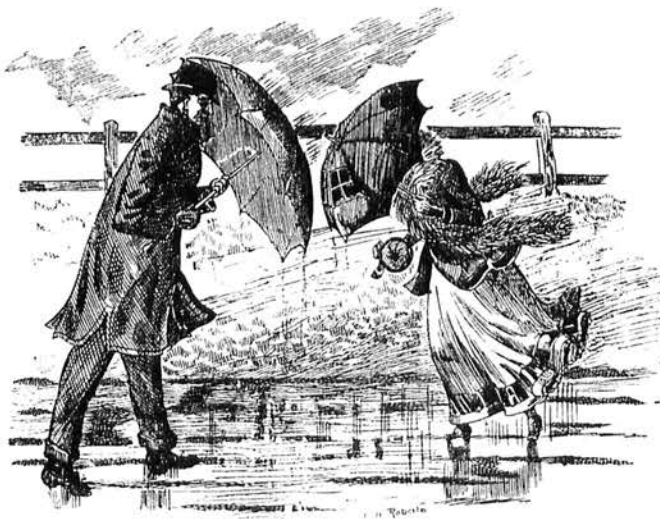
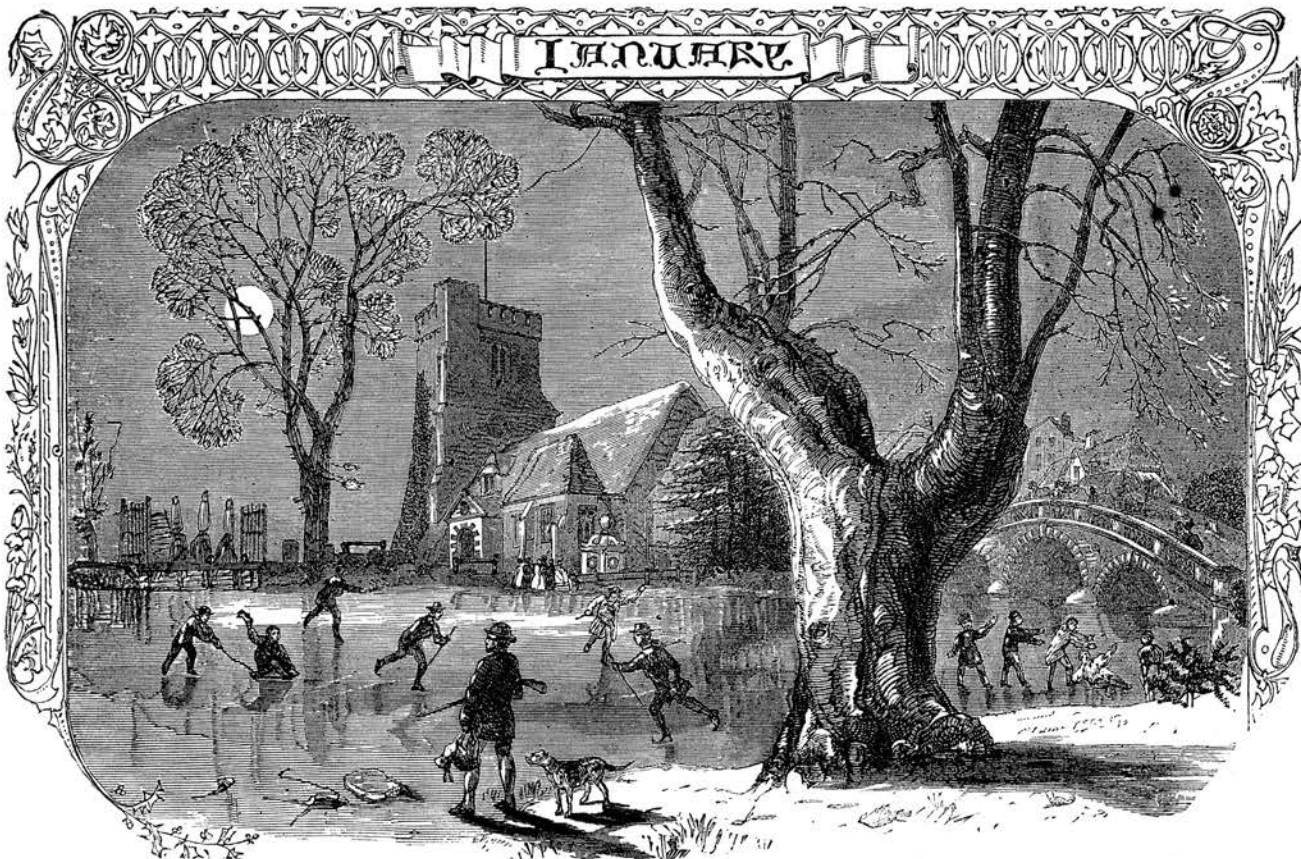


FIG. 11.



FIG. 12.





Illustrated London Almanack, 1860

SKATING.

## Editor's Easy Chair.

IT would be an Easy Chair culpably negligent of the last phenomenon of manners which should fail to observe the recent return of old times in the form of the stage-coach. In English tradition there is something very blithe and breezy in all mention of the coach, and the music of the guard's horn is one of the most inspiring sounds in the story of old England. In the "Shades" of every kind and degree, and in every part of the world, nothing is so characteristically English as the engravings of coaching that hang upon the walls. There is one familiar series, representing the start, the night-fall, the dawn, and the arrival, so full of happy movement and comfort and coziness that the spectator, musing over his pint as he sits by the little table in the dingy room with the sanded floor, half expects to hear the winding horn and the rattling arrival at the door. As the pint before him shrinks to a gill and disappears, he feels sadly that the life of England and America, in losing the stage-coach, has lost half its poetry; and as he drains the final drop, and the mug is inverted toward his nose, the world also seems to be turned upside down, and the railroad and the locomotive to be personal grievances for which he is ready to call George Stephenson and Commodore Vanderbilt to stern account.

There are stage-coach scenes in the old English novels which every reader remembers, and which would not be possible in the vast community of a railroad train. The coach was the inn put upon

wheels, and rolling forward through the country, the guests sharing the feeling of the sanded public room. There are stage-coach scenes, also, nearer home in the experience of Easy Chairs of half a century's standing—the spanking team dashing into the spacious grounds of the country boarding-school on a bright spring morning, with the coach like a triumphal chariot, to take up a merry load of school-boys going home for vacation. There is no purer pleasure than that, so long vanished. The sunny freshness of that morning air; the vague, eager hope in those bounding hearts; the very creak of the springs as the coach took the unevenness of the turnpike; the stir of curiosity in the little villages as it bustled through; and the hearty young huzzas that greeted the slow-going country traveler along the road—what delight it was, and what music to remember! To the eyes that looked from the top of the coach the most familiar objects were enchanted. Each was alive, also, and saluted with a witticism not worthy, indeed, of the old masters, although often old, but good for the young—'twas enough, 'twould serve. "Good-by, old meeting-house; your steeple's short, but 'twill be long, thank Heaven, before we meet again!" "Good-by, old pump; you'll shed a daily drop for us in vain, in vain." "Ah! Mrs. Birch, seater of trowsers, we're off to cut out work for you."

There are stage-coaches yet among the White Mountains. But when there is a rail to the top of Mount Washington, it is foolish to speak of

genuine coaching. Yet it is not many years since a dash upon the coach up the valley of the Saco and through the Notch was one of the most inspiring trips possible. And still longer ago he was a happy traveler who could bowl down the valley of the Connecticut from Littleton to Greenfield on the top of the coach, and then turning westward, wind along the secluded and exquisite valley of the Deerfield, through Shelburne Falls, Charlemont, Zoar, and Florida, and over the mountain—which is now pierced by the Hoosac Tunnel—descending in the shadow of Greylock to Berkshire and the Housatonic Valley. If then he chose to go southward through that beautiful county and see Bashpish Falls and the lakes of Salisbury before he stopped, he would have in his memory a picture whose beauty the illumined shores of Naples Bay and the tender lines of Bellaggio upon Lake Como would not efface.

The revival of coaching seems to be the restoration of whatever is traditionally most poetic in the old system. The bloods and dandies of London, instead of making themselves Mohocks, as in the days of the *Spectator*, or wrenching off door-knockers with the sparks of the Regency, have wisely preferred to canonize Tony Weller and drive a coach. Forming a four-in-hand club, the more zealous members, owning coaches and horses, have selected various routes from London to some neighboring village, a score of miles or so away, and make a daily trip, the member of the club himself taking the part of Weller on the box. There is a booking-office in a fashionable street, where the passenger, as he takes his seat, may recall Mr. Lovell, in the opening of the *Antiquary*, securing his place, and daily the coach for Dorking, or Maidenhead, or some other rural point, departs and daily returns, conforming to all the conditions of poetic tradition. In this pastime several New Yorkers have taken degrees. Stage-coach driving in England by Americans has not, indeed, been wholly unknown hitherto, but never before has there been a club and a system, and for the first time the taste and the practice have been transferred to this country. This has been done so effectively that the lounge upon "the Avenue" may now see all the poetry of stage-coaching, so far as an arbitrary imitation can restore it.

A true English coach, with its spacious outside accommodation, whirls up to the door of the Hotel Brunswick, which, for readers of the year 2876 who may make excavations in our magazine literature, the Easy Chair will record is at the southeastern corner of Fifth Avenue and Twenty-sixth Street. It is an attractive-looking house, and its sunny southern aspect is toward Madison Square. The dining-room, on the lower floor, and opening upon the square, recalls, on a warm spring day, the pleasant *cafés* of Paris in the early summer. If the dinner is in harmony with this general appearance and suggestion—and of that the Easy Chair cherishes no doubt whatever, leaving its readers to "settle" the matter for themselves—the Hotel Brunswick is an exceedingly desirable place to which to return after a gay excursion into the country. Before the coach has reined up at the door, however, the sound of a real horn, blown by a real English guard, has been heard; and when the coach stops, a coachman in a white box-coat, with top-boots, and a large nosegay at his breast, throws down the "ribbons" which

guide the four horses, each with a nosegay at his left ear, and so leaps to the sidewalk. This driver is a gentleman of New York, Mr. Delancey Kane, who drives the coach daily to the Markis of Granby, or, more accurately, to the old Lorillard House, at Pelham Bridge.

The gay company, whose names have been booked long before, climb to their seats. The attentive guard sees that all is right. Then the accomplished driver mounts the box, takes the ribbons, or the lines, or the reins—as they are variously called by the spectators—the guard winds his horn, the crowd stares, the horses start, and up the Avenue rolls the stage-coach, the 'buses drawing out of the way, and all of the "town" that is on the street looking on content. Swiftly through the leafing and blossoming Park, along the broad way beyond, over the bridge, and out to the placid fields of Westchester the team gallops and runs. Presently it is changed. The good-humored passengers, excited by the novelty of the circumstances and the beauty of the landscape, enjoy the scene, familiar, yet strange, and in an hour and a half have reached their bourn, and alight. Four hours with luncheon swiftly pass. Then on with the coach, let joy be unconfined; and galloping and running back again, the coach dashes up on time at the Brunswick, and the "lark" is ended. Except, indeed, that the passengers will not forget to fee the driver and the guard, who both bow respectfully, and pocket the two shillings from each one of the company.

It is as good a bit of poetic stage-coaching as could be had, and very much pleasanter on a pleasant day than much of the real coaching in the good old English times, when the strain and labor of six and sometimes eight horses drew the carriage through the mire. The passengers were constantly out, upon a long journey, two hours before day, and after dark in the winter. Horace Walpole in 1752 describes the roads near Tunbridge Wells, which were so different from those in our Central Park that the young gentlemen were obliged to drive their carriages with oxen. And ten years later Lord Hervey writes from Kensington, a suburb of London, that the road is so "infamously bad" that there is an impassable gulf of mud between him and town, and he is as solitary as if he were upon a rock in the middle of the ocean. The word that has dropped naturally from the pen is the true comment. The pretty excursion of to-day is not real coaching. It is a delightful drive, a pleasant play. But then how much better to be alive and young in 1876, driving on the top of a light-springing coach over perfect roads and with a jolly company, than to have lived in 1728 and to have toiled up to town with Mrs. Delany from Gloucestershire, the coach breaking down, and we obliged to get out and take shelter—even Mrs. Delany—in an ale-house, then jogging on again, and about an hour later "flop we went into a slough, not overturned, but stuck!" There is no flopping and sticking for the merry company that depart from the Brunswick, stepping with the brightening season out of the drawing-room into the fresh air, and finding upon the coach top a new zest in their pleasures as they whirl from Easter to St. John's Day, from New York to Newport.





## SCREEN-PAINTING IN OIL COLOURS.

By FRED MILLER.

THE illustrations accompanying these few notes are reproductions on a very small scale of a four-fold screen I recently painted. The original was some 6 feet 6 inches high, and the illustrations, being necessarily on a very small scale, are apt to appear somewhat confused, especially the side painted with the reeds. But there is a very decided advantage in having illustrations of this character reproduced from actual work, for the amateur gains a much clearer idea of what the original screen was like from whence the cuts are taken than if I had redrawn the screen merely for the purpose of illustration.

Photography helps one greatly in these matters, for having a camera I photographed

both sides of the screen, and the result is now before my readers.

The use to which the owner of this screen has put it strikes me as a very good one. He uses it to put round the seat of the piano, and so keep the draught from the performer—a most useful purpose my readers will allow, for too often the player is exposed to all the breezes that blow in a drawing-room. As a draught excluder, a screen is most valuable, and therefore always have the bottom of the screen close to the floor, and not elevated on knobs or castors, which may look elegant, but which allow the wind playing along the carpet far too much scope.

The framework of this particular screen I

had made for me by a cabinet-maker who works for the trade, and its cost was £4 5s. The panels, which are of pine, would be worth at least another £1 or 25s., and they then want priming, so that the actual outlay in producing such a screen would be some £6 or £7. The framework, I must mention, was stained black and polished. Of course, a much cheaper article can be had. A good carpenter would make the framework of deal; and instead of having it stained and polished it might be painted white. A screen could be made in this style for, I should say, £3. You might do the painting yourself by purchasing some colour ready mixed or in tins, for colours of all shades can be purchased in tins ready for



A FOUR-FOLD SCREEN. FRONT VIEW.

use at many places. Aspinall's enamel seems a good thing, judging from work I have seen done with it, or there is the *Chez-lui* enamel. In priming the panels purchase some white lead ground in oil (to be had of any good oil-man), and by diluting with turpentine and straining through canvas or muslin, and with the addition of a very little copal varnish just to harden it (be careful to put very little varnish, or the ground colour will dry with a gloss which is objectionable to paint upon), a very good grounding colour is at hand. You will require to put two coats at least upon the panels, as the wood is very absorbent and sucks up the first coat. In the screen I am referring to the whole surface was painted; that is, instead of using an arbitrary colour for the sky and other parts not decorated, I painted in the sky, etc., round the work as it progressed, and in such cases a white ground is the best, for you treat the panels in much the same way as you would canvas.

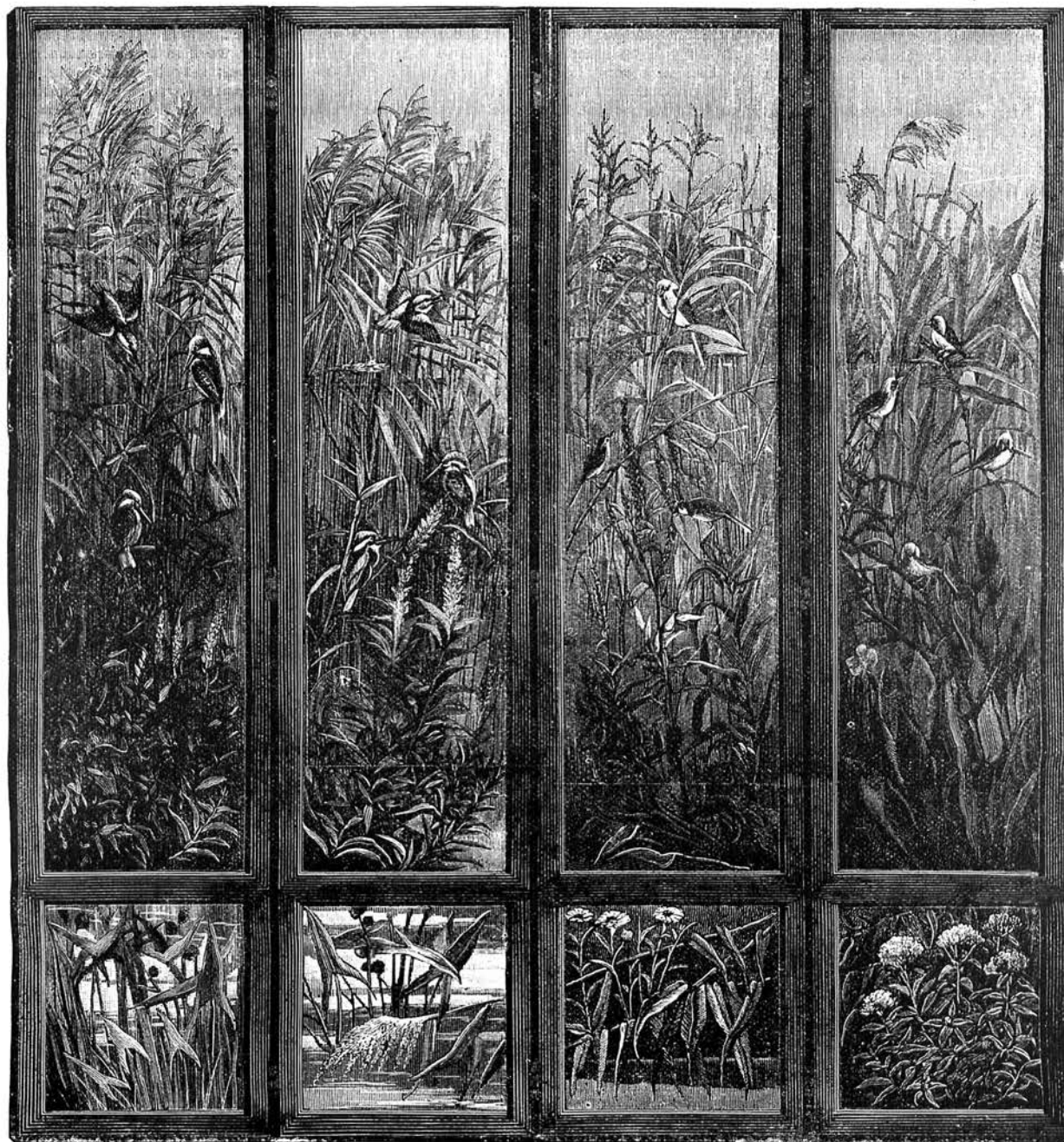
But many very effective screens can be

worked in the Japanese style by having the panels painted, say, some agreeable grey, and just throwing the work across it in a very "decorative" spirit. The screen figured here is more realistic than decorative in character, but in former volumes of THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER illustrations of a decorative character have been given.

Another form of screen which is cheap is to have a comparatively rough framework made and then stretch over this stout tough brown paper, putting strips of leather or other material on the edges, and nailing with brass-headed fancy nails. Brown paper is a capital material for painting on, as it is absorbent. Japanese gold-leather paper is also an admirable material to use, and the plainer varieties (there are some with little or no pattern upon them) are very effective when decorated. Canvas such as used in oil painting can be purchased by the yard, and this might be used. The cheaper kind will be good enough, and that with a coarse grain is to be preferred. We are

nothing if not practical in THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER, and that must be my excuse for so far digressing from the actual subject of these notes. But as the old cookery book says, "First catch your hare," and so here, first have your screen to decorate, and then think about the decoration.

My main idea in painting *this screen* was to suggest a river bank, and to use only such subjects as would be found in close proximity to water. I have always been charmed by the beauty of waterside foliage, and have often made studies of single growths. The side treated with reeds I actually painted in the autumn on the banks of the Ouse, near St. Neots, though of course it was finished in the studio. Those who live in the country might paint the whole screen out of doors, and each panel might be treated separately, and not made to form part of the whole scheme as I have done. This side of the screen I call the autumnal side, as it was painted in September and October, and I attempted to reproduce some



A FOUR-FOLD SCREEN. BACK VIEW.



of the gorgeous tints that are only to be seen in riverside foliage. The purple loosestrife, for instance, is to be seen in every shade of scarlet and purple. The dock, too, is gorgeous in colour, as are the willow herb, meadow sweet, and sedg.

The difficulty in painting direct from nature is in selecting the various groups and arranging them effectively. One is apt to be dazzled and confused by the wealth of the material, and, in endeavouring to get this effect in one's work, to simply produce a confused jumble of foliage, formless and uninteresting. This comes of not knowing what to leave out. You must fix your attention upon some one object, and give that prominence by making all else subsidiary. In the lower portion of the upper panels I have massed the reeds at the back, and treated them more as a background of colour than as individual forms, in order to give prominence to the loosestrife, dock, and meadow sweet. This is what artists term "breadth," and is essential if we would make our work effective when viewed from a distance. Look at nature with half-closed eyes, and paint with half-closed eyes. By this means you will see only the most essential things, and nature will mass itself, for much of the detail will be lost. One sees too much of nature in fact. The trained eye only sees what is important and what can be represented. It is knowing what to leave in the ink-pot makes the writer; as knowing what to lose in breadth makes the painter. I would advise my readers to make individual studies of the different plants, though there is no reason why a suggestive background should not be employed as well as an arbitrary one. Suppose you want to make a great feature of a clump of loosestrife with a background of reeds. Treat the reeds as a mass or wall of colour, and in a lower key—that is, greyer, so that they do not interfere with the loosestrife. Keep out all strong lights and darks from the back-

ground, reserving these for the foreground objects.

In getting many of the tints associated with autumn, recourse must be had to glazing. Scarlets are best obtained by glazing rose madder, raw sienna, burnt sienna, and Indian yellow over lighter tones of these colours. Rose madder glazed over cadmium produces a gorgeous scarlet. So it will when glazed over vermilion. In glazing, use a little varnish, say copal or amber, rather than megilp or medium. The underneath colour should be quite hard, and I would advise my readers to paint in the dry method, using turpentine or spike-oil of lavender to thin the colour, and no medium or varnish. When the work is finished and has stood some time, varnish carefully with mastic or other good varnish (or Soehnee's spirit varnish), and your work will be permanent.

The following is a list of the colours I used in painting my screen:—

Yellow ochre, raw sienna, burnt sienna, vandyke brown, raw umber, black, light red, Indian red, vermilion, rose madder, cobalt, French ultramarine, Antwerp, ceruleum, viridium, cadmium pale, cadmium orange, Indian yellow, lemon yellow.

This is a complete list, and suffices for all requirements. It will be noted that I leave out all the chromes. Delicate tints cannot be obtained by their use. Yellow ochre is the finest colour for greens; with cobalt it makes delicious greys, and with ultramarine and Indian yellow rich juicy greens. Avoid greens made of bright yellows and blue. They are always crude. Emerald green might be added to the above list, as it is useful for toning with blues and gives with them a fine peacock blue such as is wanted in kingfishers, but avoid it in greens, and never mix with any of the fine yellows, as it destroys them.

The other side of the screen, painted with yellow flags and swans, speaks for itself. The

distant reeds are only just indicated. The swans are here the feature, and must be carefully drawn if introduced. There are some good photographs of swans taken instantaneously to be seen in photographic publishers' windows, which are very useful for painting from, if one has studied the bird from nature as well. There is a danger of getting the swans out of tone—that is, too white for the rest of the work. You must always set tone into your work, so that every object seems to fit in harmoniously. Tone in painting is very much what the "key" is in music. This side of the screen I kept grey in colour, for where one has much green to deal with, great care must be exercised in avoiding crudeness and vulgarity. Nature is full of grey, and you have only to put a crude green in comparison with nature to see the truth of this.

The lower panels are treated with smaller flowers, such as forget-me-nots, but there is no reason why the panels should be divided as I have done. This is simply a question of individual caprice.

One word as to bird drawing. I have made a great feature of birds on both sides of the screen. The Natural History Museum offers a fine field for work in this direction. Among the new cases may be seen many waterside birds, such as reed warbler and bunting, kingfisher, ducks, gulls, and tits, and as they are very finely stuffed one might paint direct from them. It will be necessary to write for a student's ticket before permission to draw is granted. The Booth Museum in the Dyke Road, Brighton, contains, I suppose, the finest collection of stuffed birds in England, for Mr. Booth is both a naturalist and sportsman, and he has had the cases set up under his own supervision, and the habits of the various birds are strictly adhered to, so that looking at a case is like reading a chapter of natural history or looking at the book of Nature herself.

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## HOUSEHOLD HINTS.

**FRESH** lard will remove tar from the skin.

**A CLOTHES-LINE** which has been boiled will not twist as a new rope is apt to do.

**THE seat** on the left side of an omnibus is always more resting than that on the right side, as it slopes towards the kerb-stone.

**SEWING-SILKS** are often prepared with a solution of lead, which is highly injurious to health. Care should therefore be taken never to bite the threads when working with sewing-silk.

**ALUM-WATER** will restore almost all faded colours. Brush the faded stuff thoroughly free from dust, rinse with a little soap, clear water, and then alum water, and the colours will be much brightened.

**BLACK SILKS** or satin may be wonderfully revived by sponging with potato water and ironing on the wrong side when slightly damp. The potato water is made by soaking the peel not the potato for some hours.

**If the new leather** on soles of boots is well soaked for three days before use, in linseed oil to which a few drops of castor oil is added and then allowed to stand for a few days to dry, it will last nearly twice as long as usual.

**POISONOUS** liniments and liquids should be kept in bottles with a rough surface outside, so that they can be known at once by the touch. Attention to this simple rule may be the means of preventing serious accidents. They should also not be kept near other bottles.

**CAULIFLOWERS** should always be boiled in two waters, first in one and then another. This removes the strong and rank flavour. All green vegetables should be boiled with the lid of the saucepan off. The water in which they have been boiled should at once be poured away in the garden on the earth and not down any sink or drain, but if there is no available garden, pour it into a pail and cover it over till cold and it can then be poured down a drain. If this is not done, the smell is most offensive, as we all know.

**NEITHER** the soap, tooth, nor nail-brushes should ever be covered over on the wash-stand. The brushes get soft, and smell disagreeable if covered over; they are better placed in one of the upright iron stands made for the purpose, or lying bristles downwards wherever they are put. Sponges also should never be covered and should occasionally be rinsed in strong soda water or ammonia and water to extract any grease that may be in them.

**FOR** washing cretonnes, chintzes and art muslins, ammonia is invaluable. A teaspoonful to every gallon of water in which they are washed and a handful of salt in the rinsing water will restore the colours and prevent any running. Blankets will be the better for a little ammonia in the tub, and it will lighten the labour of all washing.

**WHEN** uncorking a bottle, be sure to grasp the neck with a cloth in your hand, so that if the glass cracks or breaks it will not cut your hand.

**EGG-STAINS** can be taken out of silver by rubbing with a wet rag dipped in salt.

**A HEAVY** meal should never be taken when the body is greatly fatigued. The digestive organs are as weary as the body, and are not ready to undertake an excess of work.

**A LARGE** onion peeled and cut across the top, then placed in a pail of water in the centre of a room with the door shut, will remove all smell of fresh paint in a very short time.

**FAT** which is to be kept should be cut up small and boiled in a saucepan in a little water and never put into the oven to melt. If it has to be done in the oven, the door should be left open.

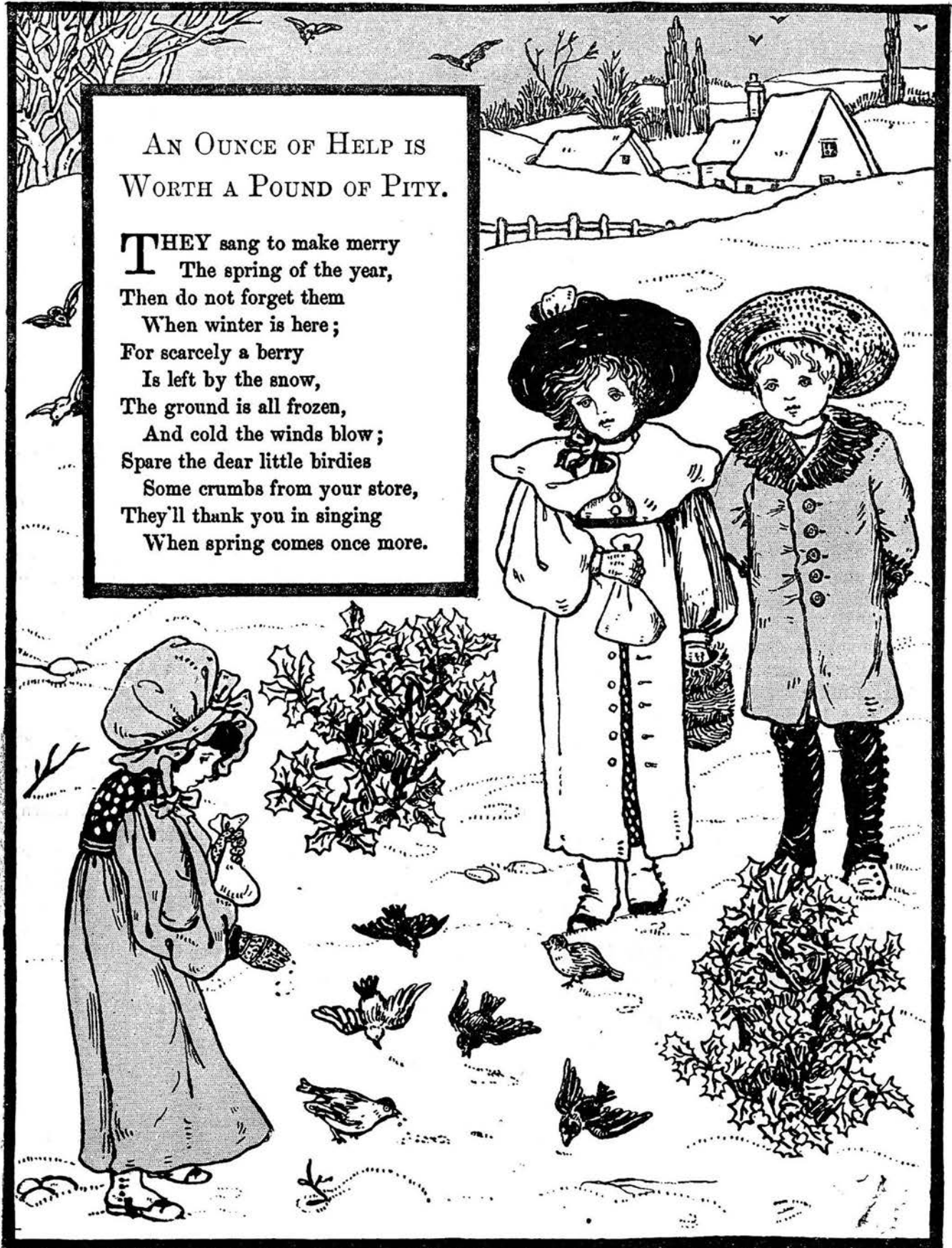
**BREAD** or potato should never be put in the mouth at the same time as fish, especially by children, or it will be difficult to detect bones in the fish and they may be swallowed by mistake.

**THE** largest quantity of fluid that is required by an adult person, unless under exceptional circumstances, is two pints in the twenty-four hours. The majority of persons take too much fluid and thus weaken the digestion.

**FOR** all workers the clothing should be loosely fitting on the body, and of a material that admits of free transpiration from the skin. Thick close material is very objectionable as checking evaporation and retaining moisture from the body, and the habitual use of waterproof material is very injurious.

AN OUNCE OF HELP IS  
WORTH A POUND OF PITY.

**T**HEY sang to make merry  
The spring of the year,  
Then do not forget them  
When winter is here ;  
For scarcely a berry  
Is left by the snow,  
The ground is all frozen,  
And cold the winds blow ;  
Spare the dear little birdies  
Some crumbs from your store,  
They'll thank you in singing  
When spring comes once more.







“NEXT DOOR!”

BY R. FOLKSTONE WILLIAMS, ESQ.

My heart now feels a sort of an expansion,  
I shall again my peace of mind restore ;  
I've taken a new house—with *such a mansion*,  
Next door!

Upon my face no wrinkles I discover,—  
Besides, I've still the best of life before,  
And may-be I may find another lover,  
Next door!

'Tis very strange that, after all my labours,  
This mystery I cannot yet explore :  
I should so like to know who are my neighbours,  
Next door!

I've made inquiries of my servant Betty,  
Who knows “what's what,” and doubtless something more  
She says she's seen a lady rather pretty,  
Next door!

I'm on the rack! I'm bursting with vexation!  
I've watched the window till my eyes were sore,  
But I know nothing of their name or station,  
Next door!

Perhaps 'tis Smith, or Jones—nay, I'm not joking!  
Or Johnson, Thomson, White—or Store, or Gore ;  
I can't tell what they are—they're so provoking,  
Next door!

They eat enough to satisfy a glutton,  
Yet meat this week is not a farthing low'r.  
The butcher's left another leg of mutton,  
Next door!

There are the pies returning from the baker's—  
They must be running up a pretty score!  
I don't believe they're Methodists or Quakers,  
Next door!

Just now I heard a song—and when it ended,  
Rose many voices, crying out “Encore!”  
I've not the least idea to what it tended,  
Next door!

Now I hear shouts of mirth from six or seven ;  
Again the laugh bursts out into a roar :  
I'm sure they do not go the way to heaven,  
Next door!

And I've heard screams, and sounds of lamentation,  
Which then made me perspire from every pore.  
I don't begin to like the situation,  
Next door!

I saw two surgeons pass, and three physicians!  
(Some walked exceeding fast, and some went slow'r ;)  
This really is enough to raise suspicions,  
Next door!

My patience, not my vigilance, relaxes,—  
My rage cools not because the frost is hoar :  
I don't believe they've paid their rent and taxes,  
Next door!

I wonder with what sort of folks they mingle ;  
I've counted since the cat began to snore,  
Ten double knocks, and half a dozen single,  
Next door!

I've had a peep from Betty's attic chamber,  
Which overlooks the wall they spiked all o'er,  
That nothing human might attempt to clamber,  
Next door!

From there I noticed several persons walking,  
And very strange apparel too they wore ;  
Some laughing ; many playing, and some talking,  
Next door!

They seemed like actors a new play rehearsing,—  
One in a rage his glossy ringlets tore,  
While others their unlucky stars were cursing,  
Next door!

Then a well-gaitered man amid the riot,  
I couldn't hear him, but I thought he swore ;  
And all the rest were in an instant quiet,  
Next door!

My Betty had gone out—but did not loiter :  
I heard her step upon the second floor,  
So I ceased for a time to reconnoitre,  
Next door!

Perhaps they're St. Simonians, in whose union  
The world will own the purity of yore,  
And hold their goods and women in communion,  
Next door!

Should it be true that there each sacred brother  
Assembles, exiled from his native shore,  
Who knows but they'll make me their “common mother,”  
Next door!

Perhaps they're plotting sanguinary traitors ?  
I'll now inquire what characters they bore :  
I don't like that old gentleman in gaiters,  
Next door!

Oh dear!—Here I'll not stay, were I believing  
The ground I trod on precious as Bejoar !  
Who *could* have thought that they were so deceiving,  
Next door!

I shall go mad, or swoon!—Here's Mr. Smile'm,  
Who took me in a steam-boat to the Nore,  
Declares I've got a LUNATIC ASYLUM  
Next door!

## Threescore Years and Ten.



THE big dining-room of Aylesmere Castle is panelled in priceless oak, black with time, and the carved roof is studded with the shields and arms of various branches of the great house. On the walls are portraits of various Earls of Aylesmere. Here is a Holbein, a figure of virile strength, painted in maroon velvet, studded with gems, a man with a square chin who might be Calvinist or Catholic, but which ever he was assuredly that he must have been utterly, and with all his soul. By the fireplace a Lely, an Earl of less austere type with a weak mouth and vaguely handsome face, toying with a spaniel and becomingly dressed in black, with high brown riding-boots and a wide, white collar. Over against that door is a Rubens, an older man full of the zest of life. He had been an Ambassador and had tried to plunge two nations into war to make a scornful beauty regret him. The massive sideboard, covered with gold plate, is flanked on each side by an ancestor depicted by Reynolds and Gainsborough. The former is an Earl, weighty with years, in a full wig and with the ribbon of the Garter over his broad bosom. A two-bottle man at dinner, and one who swore by Church and King and hated everything French except the brandy. The latter is a young fellow with wistful eyes and chiselled countenance, pure of outline and with the majesty of his birth writ large across it. Men said that Pitt took counsel of this Earl when he was First Minister before he was thirty. The Earls of the nineteenth century were only two. The elder, a sensualist who had made one in the debauches of Byron, had sat to Shee. The younger had been painted by Millais, as a giant full of athletic vigour, a very Esau among men.

That same Earl sat at the head of his table, stiff and erect, despite the fact that he had passed the patriarchal limit of threescore years and ten by fourteen hoary winters. Yet life was no burden to him.

Confronting him at dessert, after the ladies had left the room, was his heir and grandson, a ruddy, healthy lad of fourteen, who had completed his first term at Eton.

"Many changes since I was your age, Neville."

"I believe you, grandfather."

"Why, look at Eton. To-day you can walk down the High Street bold as brass and touch your hat to any master you meet. Whereas we had to skulk and run into doorways, while a good-natured master suffered from sudden ophthalmia and a beast used to take our names."

"What happened?"

"Swished, of course. The Head used to swish forty to fifty boys every day at twelve, and it was five shillings each in their bill. Why, it was more lucrative to swish than to teach."

"They don't do that now."

"In my time we did nothing but Latin verses and Greek construe. But then we fagged; and fagging was something in those days."

"It's not much now."

"More's the pity. It was a splendid thing for an English gentleman to have to black another's boots literally and actually. Taught him not to be uppish."

"You've seen a lot, grandfather."

"I can go back seventy-nine years to 1824 and remember seeing my mother burst into a flood of tears at the news of Byron's death. I can just recollect the tone of my father: "Because he sinned in rhyme all women will regret him!" And it seems like the next day, though it was nearly two years later, that the crash of the joint-stock banks was brought home to me by the wailing of my nurse over the loss of her savings. I know I brought her my money-box and asked if she had lost more than that, because if not she might console herself with it."

"That was like a brick, grandfather."

"I remember the Duke of York staying here just before he died. He was an atrociously bad general. And when the column was put up to him in Waterloo Place it was said he had been stuck at the top to keep him out of the way. He could never open his mouth without an oath; but everybody swore until the Queen came to the throne. She was devoted to Lord Melbourne, but even in her presence he could not reply without using swear words now and then, to which she always retorted, 'I do not understand strange tongues, my lord.' As for the Duke of York, and, still more, William IV., they roared oaths as though they were shouting to sailors at the masthead."



"What sort of a Johnny was William?" asked Neville, intensely interested.

"A heavy lump of a man. When he was here he stumbled against my mother's train, and said to her, 'I trust, Lady Aylesmere, you will have your winding-sheet wound tighter round you!' He played cards by the light of wax-candles and always snuffed them with his fingers. He hated all his Ministers and distrusted everybody. I think he always fancied that the Duke of Wellington would usurp the throne."

"Did you ever see the Duke of Wellington?"

"My boy, when you are my age, I hope

Foreign Secretary. After all it is not much worse than the fact that only now has a Colonial Secretary ever been to a colony."

"I shall go, grandfather, when I am a man."

"Neville, I consider a journey to our chief colonies is to-day as imperative for an English peer who has a voice in the government of the Empire as the grand tour was for a nobleman when I was a boy. Australia is to-day more accessible from London than Athens was in my boyhood. Journeys were no joke, let me tell you, with highwaymen all over England. Post-chaises were fairly comfortable, though horribly expensive, but every



"HE WOULD TALK FREELY TO ME ALONE."

you will be able to say that you never missed an opportunity of meeting a prominent man. Of course I saw the victor of Waterloo. He stayed here several times, usually in winter, when there was a meet, for he rode pluckily to hounds. A very saturnine man, who unbent only to children. He would talk freely to me alone, and relapse into a cynical silence directly an older person came near us. His language was on a par with that of the rest. But he could speak some French, whereas most men knew none in those days. Once there was an English Cabinet in which only one individual could even understand French, so he had to be

peer used to journey in his own chaise. One Irish peer having seven children travelled all over the Continent with his wife, offspring, nurses, and valet to see the world and give the little ones a general education. They travelled in three carriages half over Europe, and the children used to draw lots which could avoid sitting in the paternal coach."

"Why, I'd be awfully glad of your company."

"Thank you, Neville"—with a grim smile—"but the times have changed a good deal. You have no idea how we had to treat our elders. We always stood up when our parents entered the room and said 'sir' to my

father. I remember once he sent for me and, muttering 'So you stole those plums,' knocked me down with a prodigious box of the ear. I picked myself up very ruefully and said, 'I didn't, sir.' Whereupon he sent me down on the other side with an even bigger buffet, thundering, 'How dare you contradict me?' After that he proceeded to mete out justice. But he was as good a father as any other."

"He does not sound like it, anyhow."

"You cannot judge. We used all of us to be caned or birched for the least offence. I remember my aunt telling me that when she was having her wedding-dress tried on she argued about some detail with her mother, who thereupon birched her soundly and said she was ashamed to send such a hussy to the altar. When I was a lad of eight or nine learning to ride, my father used to belabour me with his hunting-crop if I did not sit down in the saddle. Tutors and governesses were as bad."

"Like their cheek," said the boy.

"My sister hated mutton fat. So she left a large piece at dinner one day. It was brought up for supper and she was told she should have nothing else until she ate it. She refused and went to bed famished. Up the filthy thing came at breakfast, and then she succumbed. I often spent a day either in a cupboard or in the coal-cellar, and no one gave me even a word of condolence. You all get a better time now."

"I should think so," with a grin, helping himself to some fruit.

"Sunday in my youth was a terrible day. In many households in Scotland, up to only thirty years ago, the blinds used never to be pulled up between Saturday night and Monday morning. That reminds me of the mourning of the Queens of Navarre, who when they were widows had to lie in bed for six weeks in a room lighted only by candles, after which they resumed life in any way they pleased. I remember Mr. Gladstone telling me that he thought very badly of a man who only went once to church on Sunday."

"We've to put in two chapels at Eton," said the boy.

"But I don't see many attendances at worship in the holidays, I am sorry to say," retorted his grandfather. "In my young days people did and caused no unnecessary work on a Sunday. A walk to the stables or the home farm in the afternoon was the only decorous diversion."

"You should see the crowd on the river

in the summer, grandfather; heaps of them playing cards in backwaters, and motors toot-tooting on every road."

"In my young days we had no motors. I remember when I was about your age going abroad with my brother and a tutor. We went down to Dover in our own coach, saw it shipped on to a sailing vessel, reached Calais next morning, and drove off again, posting towards Paris. Why, when the first railway engines were started, country folk used to stand looking at them and saying that they were the work of the Evil One, while in the House of Commons itself a member said it was tempting Providence to try and go twenty miles an hour. In those days a young fellow going into the Indian Service took leave of his family. If he lived, he might come back with a liver and a pension in five-and-twenty years' time. But by then he would know no one in England except a few cousins and some Indian chums on half-pay. He would ally himself to these cronies at the Oriental and eat hot curries, curse the climate, and play incessant rubbers of very bad whist. To-day it seems to me young men don't like the club-life of their elders. A club was a home to some of us, but these young men belong to three or four, into which they leisurely stroll when they have nothing else to do. They rarely feed there, preferring restaurants, which are a purely modern invention."

"When Uncle George took me to the Savoy I thought it clipping fun," put in Neville.

"At the times I best remember, the first of chop-houses had sanded floors, and tables with coarse, unclean cloths. The waiter served you a steak done to a turn, followed by a prime piece of cheese. You might have beer, though it was vulgar, but if you wanted a bottle of good wine you could get it, which is more than you can say to-day in many of the most expensive establishments. We all drank claret and burgundy in those days. Champagne was very sweet, and there was an air of rapidity about you if you drank it. Whisky was unknown."

"And a good job, too," said the boy, pouring himself out a second glass of port, an action to which his grandfather paid no heed.

"There was more distinction between the classes. You'll be a great peer, Neville, when you succeed me. It's your inheritance just as it was mine. But you'll have to make yourself respected, whereas I was respected because of my position. Indeed, a little wickedness was



pardoned in a fine nobleman. When you read the first novel of the nineteenth century you will find that Lord Steyne had everybody to Gaunt House, though he was such an old reprobate, and there were more to match him. Not that the peerage is immaculate to-day. Only then the nobility flaunted their vice, whereas now they discreetly conceal it among their own set."

"What has caused the difference, grandfather?"

"Women, my boy. The women of my young days were sweet, good, and alluring. But they were not well educated. They could be protected and pampered or be ill-treated and neglected. But they were never on an equal footing with men. Much of the emancipation was due to the Queen; a good deal to George Eliot, who wrote in reprobation of what she had herself done—a thing you'll hear of later in life."

"Ladies were different then."

"They were exotics; to-day they are hardy annuals. A girl when I was young might occasionally ride and might go out with a powdered-headed footman walking two paces behind her. But she was generally at her mother's heels, and at the least thing she used to swoon in graceful attitudes. I never hear of anyone fainting now, and if one did, she would be whisked off to a heart specialist and then sent to do a cure at Nauheim."

"I should think girls have a much better time to-day."

"We don't yet know if it will make them better wives and mothers. Certainly the children of to-day are dull, spoilt, and indifferent. They are loaded with expensive

toys which bore them, and are the victims of artificial schemes of education from which they learn nothing. Children to-day dislike sweets and hate dancing. We rarely had sweets, and perhaps one evening party a year, whereas you go to one every night in the Christmas holidays."

"Oh, they are not bad fun, don't you know," returned the boy, "if you can get a nice girl with her hair done up to sit out half the evening with you."

"She'd be packed off to a maiden aunt in the country next morning in disgrace if she had lived seventy years ago, and you would not have sat down comfortably for three weeks."

"Jolly hard lines," retorted Neville; "it's no harm."

"No harm' is the cry of to-day, just as 'No Popery' was the watchword fifty years ago. Then a lord was a lord, and the richest speculator could not elbow his way into society. The people on an estate looked up to their landlord in a patriarchal way. There were abuses, of course, but he knew about them all; his wife dispensed soup and coals in winter, while his daughter

visited at every cottage and never entered without knocking, but taught in the Sunday-school, read by sick-beds, and nursed the babies. Yes, the old order has changed."

"How did it go, grandfather?"

"Well, I think it slipped away with Protection, and certainly the much-abused bribery at elections did put a lot of money in poor people's pockets. Except Georgina Duchess of Devonshire, few women meddled much at electioneering until Lady Randolph Churchill set an example, followed by the dames of the Primrose League. In my



"AT THE LEAST THING SHE USED TO SWOON IN GRACEFUL ATTITUDES."

time a lady served her husband's party by giving dinners to his chiefs and 'roust' to their following."

"What was a 'roust,' grandfather?"

"A 'roust' was an evening party without the expensive refreshments now regarded as necessities. Everybody hung about, staring at no one in particular, but the men were dressed as dandies. That struck Mr. Gladstone most of all, the continuous cheapening of fashionable dress so far as men were concerned. Women always dressed superbly, vying with one another. It is a mistake to suppose women dress for men, because the latter never know a fashion until it is out, and really prefer simplicity. But they show off their frocks against one another."

"Yes, I've seen that at the Opera."

"That has gone on all my life. Always the fashion and always the despair of really musical people. A few superb singers and all the rest excruciating. But it has been a lounge, and as silly as the rest of our customs. Fancy a couple of thousand people cooping themselves up for hours in a foetid atmosphere on the hottest nights of the year."

"Seems rummy, does it not?"

"You'll do the same, lad; it's all custom."

"Ever seen Dickens, grandfather?"

"Once I went to one of his readings. But neither Dickens nor Thackeray were ever in Society. Bulwer Lytton was affected, grandiloquent, but with a spark of talent in him. He was modelled on Count D'Orsay, who was admired because he had the ill-luck to escape being horsewhipped before he became the fashion. Disraeli was another novelist before he became a politician. I can see him now with his bare head, looking as though it were covered with raisins instead of hair, though the latter hung in greasy curls round his absolutely pale, sphinx-like

countenance. His dress was outrageous—a canary-coloured waistcoat with three watch-chains, a velvet coat, and a walking-cane with a huge knob. Very different was the last time I saw him. An old man in a tall hat and long black overcoat, leaning on the arm of his devoted friend, Monty Corry. Disraeli was supposed to be an enigma, but the key was so obvious that it nearly always escaped detection."

"What was it?"

"From start to finish he was a Jew, with a marvellous Oriental eye for effect—a marvellous aptitude for calculating. The Queen detested him at first, but at the end she liked him better than any Minister of the Crown. Why? Because all the others had thought of her as Queen. Dizzy alone remembered she was a woman."

"Ever seen a man hanged, grandfather?"

"It used to be a regular social event for the young bucks. We would hire a window opposite the gallows and spend the night carousing, after we had wrenched off a few door-knockers and hustled a few sleepy watchmen. It was great sport to creep behind a drowsy sentinel at St. James's Palace or the Horse Guards and overturn his sentry-box. There he was, helpless on the ground, no more able to get the wooden thing off his back than a tortoise can rid himself of his shell."



"IT USED TO BE A REGULAR SOCIAL EVENT FOR THE YOUNG BUCKS."



"But the execution," persisted the boy.

"Oh, the execution was a holiday for the crowd, who used to shout and sing below the gallows. As a rule, the culprit was indifferent to his fate. A good many were drunk when they came to the gallows, and very few paid any attention to the mechanical ministrations of the chaplain. The murderer was generally given a bunch of flowers, and for the hour was a popular hero—the theme of doggerel

"Took it as part of his daily business, I should think. There is no class of men in England who have so enormously improved as the clergy — aye, and the dissenting ministers too, I believe, for the matter of that. The parson in my youth was a plethoric, selfish sort of man, who had a dozen written sermons, one of which he droned off every Sunday. Week-day services were unknown, and choirs were always



"SERMONS USED TO BE VARIED BY THE RESOUNDING WHACKS OF THE BEADLE'S STICK."

ballads, which had a ready sale in the throng. The ceremony was brief. There was always a hush of absolute silence during the short proceedings, and then the crowd broke leisurely up, discussing the demeanour of the deceased, just as folk talk of the actors as they leave a theatre."

"Rum go it must have been," was Neville's appreciative comment. Then he added, "Wonder what the chaplain thought of it?"

led by the clerk, who gave out the note after getting it on a tuning-fork. The sermon was always preached by the clergyman in a black gown, and the apathy of the congregation was something which only Hogarth could adequately have depicted. But in those days everyone except a rake went to church. We all sat in high-backed pews, many of them square, above which our heads just peered when we stood up for the Psalms. There

was a fireplace in the pew of our family chapel, and directly the clergyman had exceeded forty minutes in his sermon my father used to take up the fire-irons and make an unbearable clatter with them until the blessing was uttered. Sermons used to be punctuated by audible snores from the most respectable members of the congregation, and varied by the resounding whacks of the beadle's stick coming forcibly upon the shoulders of any boys he detected cracking nuts or eating sweets."

"They never do that to us at Eton, but give us poena."

"Games have enormously improved since I was your age. Cricket has become a fine art, a popular source of interest, and also a profession, not only for honest professionals, but for more lavishly remunerated amateurs. I remember Gentlemen v. Players at Lord's when everybody participating wore tall hats, and there were not fifty spectators. Football was always a rough village amusement, but it had few rules except brute force. Over horses thousands ruined themselves, and the history of the Turf in my long life seems to me green with the graves of those it brought to shame and poverty. Polo was unknown, but later on some ladies used to be thought very unfeminine because they went in for archery."

"Not bad sport, I should think."

"As for the dress of the fair sex, the hoops and crinolines were finally cured by the caricatures in *Punch*. They were amazingly uncomfortable and there was no exaggeration in saying that a woman swam or glided into a room. Of course to your eyes the fashions would be as ugly as the furniture, which was solid and most uncomfortable. Easy chairs were supposed to be the prerogative of old age, and all the family possessed in the way of ornamental boxes, woolwork, and other atrocities used to be arranged on one big round table in the centre of the drawing-room. The only light was from lamps which smelt and candles which guttered. Gas caused much alarm at its introduction. As for laughing gas, which you will associate with visits to the dentist, it used to be inhaled as

an exhilarating pastime at village fairs, when a crowd of bucolics used to explode in loud guffaws at the contortions of the victims."

"I think it's a jollier England to-day than then."

"There are compensations for the losses, certainly. Of course, women have gained most. Their liberty often surprises me to-day, but it is partially due to the greater safety and convenience of conveyances. You cannot imagine what a filthy old vehicle a hackney coach used to be with stinking straw at the bottom and a drunken jarvey in a huge felt cape, who would shout profanity at a lady or fight a male fare for an extra sixpence. Omnibuses when they came in charged threepence for the shortest fare in the vilest discomfort. Penny postage and the expansion of the Press are the two great agents for modern improvement, added to the facilities of international communication, trains and telegraphs putting connecting links with the uttermost parts of the earth."

"It's a lot to think of," said Neville.

"If you live to be my age you will see far more startling changes."

"In what direction?"

"I imagine electricity will render steam obsolete, and that we shall travel by flying machines. The pressure of existence will become so great that there will be a revolt against it. Warfare will become a matter of mathematical destruction at a mutual distance of many miles, and when our strange civilization seems as artificial and as great as possible, it is quite probable that the yellow race may overrun the West and reduce modern Europe to the same state of deserted oblivion as the once gorgeous empires of Babylon, Nineveh, and Mexico."

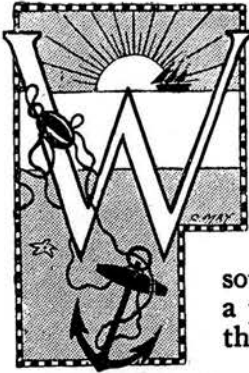
"Whew!" said the boy, drawing his breath hard.

"And now let us join the ladies, for we have exhausted their patience while I have been painting Past as compared with Present. But in each age, Neville, England expects every man to do his duty, and the obligations of nobility become more onerous and more valuable."





## SIMPLE SOUFFLÉS.



WHAT is a soufflé? or, rather, what should it be? A very light pudding, either sweet or savoury, steamed or baked. There are writers on the *cuisine* who assert that no one can learn to make a soufflé by reading, and that a practical lesson is the only thing to ensure success.

I think otherwise. I yield to no one in my belief

in the value of practical training for any sort of work; but I am of opinion that any person of average intelligence who can make a pudding worthy the name should be able to concoct an eatable soufflé (not, perhaps, a first-rate one) although she had never watched the operation. Why? Just because certain principles underlie the art of the making of soufflés, and if these are committed to memory, the rest should be plain sailing.

There are people who have what is termed a "heavy hand"; there are others who are above paying attention to details; neither of these ought to attempt the task under consideration, as they would be sure to fail.

No mention is made in this paper of the elaborate cold savouries now served as soufflés, and I will confine myself to the humblest of the class of dainties that bear the name. If the first venture should turn out too much of a failure to set on the dinner-table, the chances are that it will be consumed secretly, if not openly. Let all beginners in the culinary art take comfort in the thought that there was a time in the history of the greatest of French *chefs* when the boiling of a potato was beset with difficulties, and that perfection is the child of experience. But to our dishes. First, the

### *General Rules for Guidance.*

The flour, or any other farinaceous substance that may form the foundation, must be dry, free from lumps, and carefully sifted. Eggs should be fresh and separated, so that not a particle of the yolk gets mixed in the whites. The latter must be beaten so stiffly that the egg should not fall from the plate when turned upside down. During the beating a pinch of salt will facilitate the stiffness, and there should be a current of air.

The person beating should stand near an open window or door. However hard the mixture may be beaten *before* the whites of

egg are introduced, there must be nothing more than thorough *mixing* after. For a *steamed* soufflé, the water should simmer regularly the whole time; for a *baked* one, the heat should be great enough to fetch it up without burning; and the smaller the dish, the quicker the heat all through.

From the oven to the table should be the work of a moment; and better keep the eater waiting five minutes for the soufflé than reverse the order, even by half the time. The *serviette*\* to pin round the tin should be quite ready and well warmed by the time the soufflé is done.

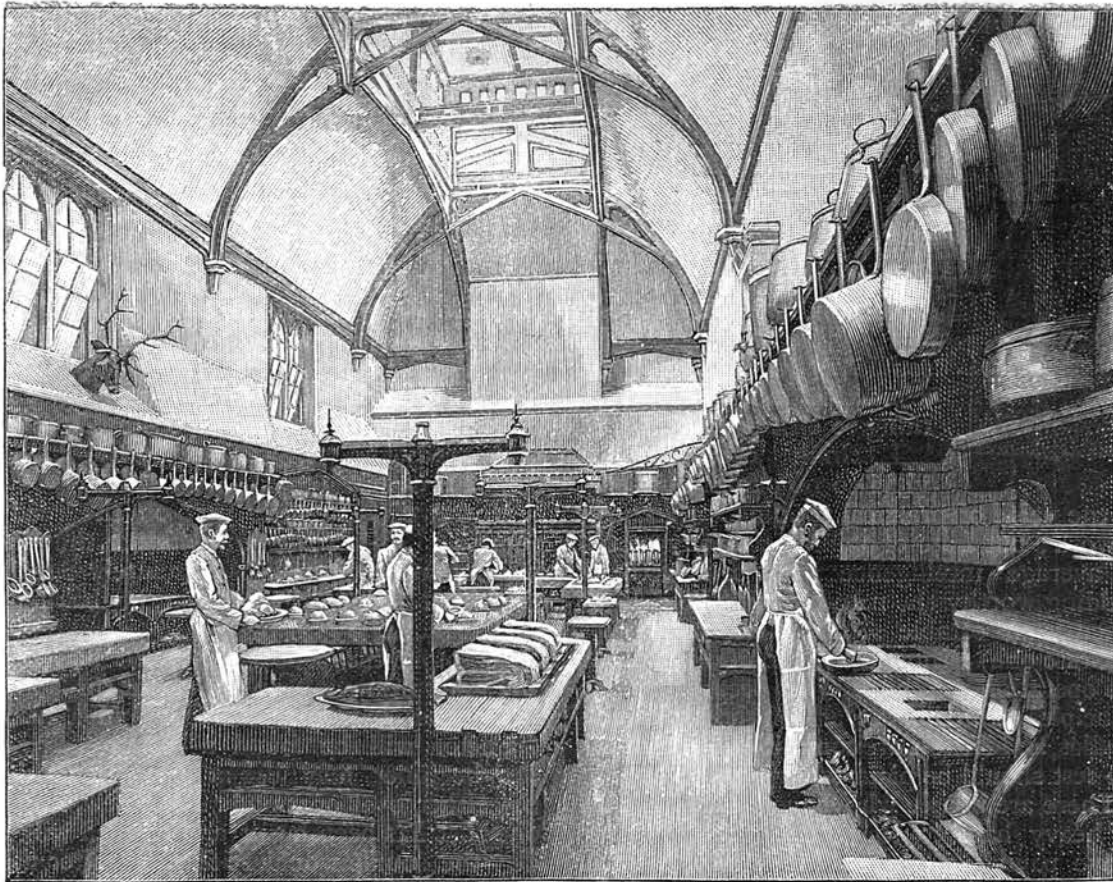
Now we are a little way on the road to success. A last general hint: the most scrupulous cleanliness is absolutely needful; the least taint in saucepan or baking-tin spells failure.

A soufflé-tin proper is to be bought of any good ironmonger; one about three and a half inches in depth and four and a half in diameter will be found a handy size; but the beginner may use a bright new cake-tin, either oval or round: I say new, because one that has been burnt and scraped will not do—the soufflé would stick; and after use it should be wiped out while hot with a clean coarse cloth. Failures will happen, and any burnt part *must* be scraped away; but avoid this as much as possible. Then to grease the tin: no salt should be in the butter used, and it is best melted and brushed thoroughly into every part; the soufflé will stick to any unbuttered portion. Then pin a strip of thick paper, also buttered, round the tin, to come a few inches above, because the soufflé should rise a good deal. This is best pinned at the join and tied round the tin; it is then doubly secure. For a *steamed* soufflé, put on a saucepan of water, and when it boils, set the tin in; the water should come an inch or two round it, and must not touch the paper; a sheet of paper should be buttered on the top side and laid over before the lid goes on. The soufflé should rise gradually, and when done, must be firm to the touch. The one below will take about twenty minutes, or a trifle more. It is called

### *Vanilla Soufflé.*

I have given this first place partly because it is very easy, and partly because those who can make this may make a dozen more by altering the flavouring. It is literally a dozen dishes in one. There is no harm in

\* This is to be put round the tin or dish in which the *baking-tin* is slipped.



THE QUEEN'S KITCHEN, WINDSOR CASTLE.  
 (From a photograph by H. N. King, Shepherd's Bush.)

trying one's prentice hand with even half the quantities given below.

An ounce of flour, an ounce of butter, three-quarters of an ounce of castor sugar, a quarter of a pint of milk, about half a teaspoonful of vanilla essence, and four eggs\* are required. The mode is as follows:—Take a little saucepan and melt the butter by gentle heat; shake the flour in and stir to a smooth paste; then, still stirring, add the milk; let it boil up, not ceasing the stirring, and when it leaves the sides of the pan take it from the fire and sweeten it; then put in the yolks of three eggs, one at a time, beating hard, but do not put the pan on the fire again; the flavouring and four stiff whites go next (*see the hints above*). Should this turn out "tough," you may take it for granted that you have *over* cooked it. If *under* done, the sides will crack.

The turning-out needs a little "nerve." The soufflé must be gently slidden on to the dish. Don't be in a violent hurry, although

\* For soufflés made with three or four eggs, omit one of the yolks, the whites generally exceed the yolks in this proportion.

speed is important. Cut the string and take the paper off, lift the tin up and slope it towards you, then turn it, that the edges of the soufflé may leave the tin; and in turning it on to the dish, mind not to drop the tin, or its weight would crush the soufflé. If any sauce, pour it gently and neatly round without splashing.

Any good sweet pudding sauce does, but a very nice one is made by boiling a table-spoonful of raspberry jam in a gill of water for a minute; a little colouring, a few lumps of sugar, and a squeeze of lemon-juice will be wanted: or, in place of lemon-juice, a heaping teaspoonful of good marmalade. The sugar and water should boil to a syrup before the rest of the materials are added; and in straining the sauce, remember to make the strainer very hot. Apricot jam in place of raspberry is only one of the dozens of variations, and a little thin melted butter sweetened with red currant or black currant jelly can be recommended.

The amount of sugar in the soufflé itself is small, for much would reduce the lightness; for this reason a sweet sauce is called for.



Now conjure up some other flavourings for the soufflé proper ; and when dealing with spices, let me remind you that essences often give a better flavour than ground spices, without injuring the colour.

Cassia, nutmeg, mace, ginger, cinnamon, and many others, are almost certain to be liked, but always adapt the sauce to the dish. For example : if flavouring the soufflé with ginger, it will at once occur to you that the syrup from some preserved ginger, with a little of the fruit, if you like, in tiny dice, forms a fitting adjunct to the sauce.

#### *Lemon Soufflé.*

This will take about forty minutes' steaming. The ingredients are an ounce and a half each of sugar and butter, the same of arrowroot or corn-flour, four eggs, a lemon, and half a pint of milk. The lemon must be wiped and peeled, and the peel infused in the milk for a time on a warm corner of the stove. When well-flavoured, the milk is strained off, and the materials blended in the way I have detailed above. Another way, which I recommend to those who do not begrudge a little extra trouble, is to rasp the rind of the fruit on the lumps of sugar, and then to crush it, and add as before.

Of course, essence of lemon might be used, but the dish is not so good in any respect. A little good custard, flavoured with fresh lemon-rind, goes well as sauce with this. Should you have no arrowroot or corn-flour handy, use a couple of ounces of pastry-flour ; the larger quantity is owing to the difference in the amount of starch. Of arrowroot less is needed, by reason of its starchiness ; this should be borne in mind always in making variations of this sort.

#### *Orange Soufflé.*

This needs a little less sugar than the lemon soufflé. The rind of a small orange should be used in addition to that of half a lemon ; otherwise, proceed as above. A good sauce is composed of the juice of an orange and half a lemon, some sugar, and a little orange marmalade, boiled to a thin syrup.

#### *Cherry Soufflé.*

This is a dish that is very popular in Germany. The term *auflauf*, the German word for soufflé, is applied to dishes of very peculiar kinds, many of which are of a very substantial nature so far as the foundation goes ; in such cases a large number of eggs have to be used to produce the lightness of a really good soufflé ; and some are troublesome to prepare. The following is one of the simplest : the foundation is nothing more

than a carefully-made batter, and all sorts of stone fruit may be used in the same way, the spice being regulated according to taste. Too much sugar, however tart the fruit, must be guarded against ; a little extra sweetness in the sauce should be relied on to make up any deficiency.

Take an ounce of fine flour, the same of potato-flour, half a pint of milk, two ounces of butter, three eggs, a saltspoonful or so of powdered cinnamon, two or three ounces of sugar, and half a pound of ripe black cherries. The flour and milk are blended and stirred over the fire to the boil, and cooked until smooth, then removed and stirred until half cold. The butter is beaten to a cream and added with the yolks of the eggs, and the beating can hardly be too hard ; the sugar and spice go next, and then the whites of the eggs, prepared as detailed above ; here the yolks and whites are equal ; at the same time, an extra white always means increased lightness. The fruit is put in just before baking, and if not put in the oven at once it will sink. A good heat is wanted at starting, but after, a slightly reduced temperature is desirable. This may be simplified by using an ounce more flour and an egg less, and a smaller amount of fruit ; the dish will then be found good.

Sugar alone may be sent to table, or sugar and cream, or a sauce of the melted butter type, with sugar and a little syrup—that from bottled cherries comes in handy ; but for the best dishes some cherry syrup is used, drawn from the fruit as for making jelly, and it is much improved by mixing a little currant juice with it.

#### *Apple Soufflé.*

When apples are cheap, this is quite a low-priced, though high-class dish, in the matter of taste and appearance. There are hosts of ways of preparing the apples for the base, but not one beats the simple one of baking them in their skins.

Supposing, then, half a pint of pulp be handy, free from core and skin, of course : let it cool, then beat it up until white and foamy with white sugar and a little spice ; the grated peel of a lemon is a good flavouring, or some like almond essence ; then add half a pint of batter, prepared as for the cherry soufflé given above, but with the yolk of one egg only, and the whites of two. Butter is optional—from an ounce to two or three would be used by many cooks, or cream would replace it. It wants a moderate oven, and should be dredged with sugar.

Space fails to tell of the number of soufflés of the *savoury* order, but with the Editor's permission, they shall have attention later.

DEBORAH PLATTER.



#### Wanted—a Universal Tinker.

IN some of our cities the introduction of the French eight-day clock created a new occupation—that of general clock-winder. Householders found that their clocks required a good deal of setting, and regulating, and encouraging, and scolding, and winding; so a score of them would club together and hire a man to call around once a week and do all of these things. This made the French clock enduring, and life went smoothly on again.

Good modern houses are now so elaborate, that what we sorely need is an expansion of the clock-winder idea; that is to say, there is room for a new occupation—that of Universal Tinker. Nearly every day in the year, in a large dwelling-house, you will find a mechanic of some sort at work. To-day a slater is renewing a slate on the roof; to-morrow a plumber will be renewing a washer in a bath-tub; yesterday a joiner was adding a shelf in the china closet. These men must be paid one or two dollars apiece for service worth from ten to fifty cents. The Universal Tinker—under a regular salary of three dollars a month, paid to him by each of forty or fifty householders along a street or in a neighborhood—would have done the three jobs in an hour, and the expense to you would be nothing but his trifle of wages and the trifle of material he would use.

At first the Universal Tinker would be pretty busy—until he got your house in ship-shape everywhere; after that he would become largely a *preventer* of mischief, by watching for it and checking it before it got a fair start; and so, as a rule, ten minutes a day would be all the time he would need to spend there. And what rest and peace he would give you after all these years of fretting and harassment!

The coming benefactor—the Universal Tinker—will do such things as these for you, to-wit:

Put in window-panes.

Mend gas-leaks.

Keep the waste-pipe and other water-pipe joints tight.

Make periodical search for sewer-gas and head it off, instead of waiting for an unaccountable death in the family to suggest possible sewer-gas and an examination.

Watch the zinc and things in the electric bell batteries, and renew them; add water before the water gets out; reënforce the strength of the sal ammoniac while it yet has some strength to reënforce.

Find out why a certain door or a certain window won't go on the burglar alarm, and apply the remedy.

Find out why the alarm clock persists in taking the alarm off the house in the night and in putting it on in the daytime, and cure the defect.

Keep all the clocks in the house in repair, properly set, and going.

Mend roof-leaks, with slates, tin, or shingles.

Glue the children's broken toys, especially those costly French dolls whose heads are always coming off, and whose parts have to be sent all the way to New York to be fixed together again.

Paint newly inserted joints of tin eaves-pipes the color of the rest of the pipe. The tinner never does that, but leaves a three-minute two-dollar job for the painter.

Glue and otherwise repair the havoc done upon furniture and carved wood by the furnace heat.

Keep the cats out of the cold-air boxes, and put wire netting over the box-ends.

Pack water-pipes in sawdust, where the thoughtful plumber has left them a chance to freeze.

Silence the skreaking door-hinges with soap or oil.

Jack-plane the edges of doors that won't shut.

Reset door-lock sockets which have become too high up or too low down by the settling of the house-walls.

Supply lost door-keys.

Fix the window-catches so they will catch.

Correct obstinate sashes that refuse to slide up and down.

Readjust window-ropes that have gotten out of the pulleys and won't work.

Put up a shelf here and there where it is wanted.

Repair the crumbling chimney-tops from year to year.

Dig up and repair the earthenware drains now and then.

From time to time unchoke the pipes that drain the roof.

Level the billiard table and tighten the screws.

Put a dab of paint or putty or something here and there where needed.

Any bright, handy fellow can learn to do all of these things in a little while. The writer knows a householder who does them all, and is entirely self-taught. The Universal Tinker could earn eighteen hundred dollars a year, be idle an hour or two a day, and save you five hundred dollars a year at an expense not worth mentioning.

X. Y. Z.

## ECONOMICAL SAVOURY SOUFFLÉS.



FOR the details connected with the making of soufflés, reference should be made to a former number of this MAGAZINE. To repeat them would take up half the space at my disposal.

There are many

soufflés of modern introduction, very elaborate in appearance, and most complicated in the mode of manufacture. To those who have never made a soufflé, such dishes would be impracticable; but by grasping thoroughly the principles laid down in the paper referred to, after a few experiments with soufflés of more moderate richness, and in the making of which less skill and trouble are involved, anyone of average intelligence should be able to turn out the highest-class dishes. Cold soufflés, sometimes iced, are a class



of themselves, and are not here dealt with. There are a few points about a soufflé worthy of remark. When nicely baked it is a most inviting-looking dish ; it can be quickly cooked ; a small amount of meat or fish goes a long way ; it is a welcome change from the usual run of dishes, and even from one recipe a number of others can be evolved. For example, veal, chicken, or rabbit may be employed similarly; varying the flavours as required.

It is very important that care in the little details be duly observed ; to ignore them here is to court failure literally. Then one is apt to blame the dish, and never venture on a second trial.

#### *Oyster Soufflés.*

This mixture may be baked as one moderate-sized dish, or it will serve for half-a-dozen small ones, and the latter are the easier to bake and serve successfully. Take half-a-dozen good-sized oysters, an ounce and a quarter of flour, the same of butter, a gill of milk and a spoonful over, the whites of two eggs, a whole yolk and half a second, and some seasoning. The flour and butter are stirred over the fire until blended, and the gill of milk added and boiled up. A little salt and cayenne, with a drop or two of anchovy essence, are required, and, off the fire, the yolks should be well blended after the extra spoonful of cold milk has been stirred in. The oysters, bearded, and cut in small pieces, and the strained liquor, are to be stirred in as soon as the mixture is taken from the fire. If time allows for the simmering of the beards in the liquor a short time beforehand, the flavour will be better ; it must be strained carefully. If much reduced, the original quantity must be made up with white fish stock. The whites must be very stiff ; they will cause failure unless they are. The moulds should be barely three-parts filled, and the oven must be moderately hot. From ten to fifteen minutes will be ample time. A sprinkling of brown bread-crumbs on the top, and a morsel of butter in the centre of each, should not be forgotten.

A variation of the above may be had by altering the flavour : a dust of nutmeg or spoonful of chopped parsley will be liked by some, and the soufflés are delicious steamed. They can be set in an ordinary potato-steamer over boiling water, which should be kept at a steady simmer only, and a sheet of greased paper must be laid over the top of the cases. Serve instantly

#### *Veal and Ham Soufflés.*

Here you get a real dainty at a moderate cost. It may be served as an *entrée*. The

first thing is the preparation of the mushrooms. A couple of tablespoonfuls, measured after washing, drying, and pressing well from any moisture, then chopped extremely small, should be put in a stewpan with a quarter of an ounce of butter and a squeeze of lemon-juice, and simmered for ten minutes with frequent stirring. Then put by to cool. Two ounces of raw veal and half as much ham must then be prepared by scraping the meat free from skin, and sieving it. The yolks of two raw eggs are beaten up with it, and some seasoning : salt, pepper, cayenne, and a morsel of parsley, or in place of the latter use an eschalot, cooking it with the mushroom. It may be chopped up or put in whole, and removed after enough flavouring has been obtained, just as preferred. The next addition, for the order makes a great difference to the result, is a quarter of a pint of cream that has been well whipped, and a tablespoonful of any nice white sauce. The stiff whites of four eggs go in at last. The same directions for the cooking of the oyster soufflés apply here. You will notice that there is no "panada" for these, hence the delicate nature of the dish ; and let those who may for the moment feel inclined to grumble at the cost of the cream notice how small a quantity of meat is used. In fact, for a high-class dish, it is decidedly cheap.

#### *A Plain Cheese Soufflé.*

This is a good and cheap savoury dish. Those who are accustomed to the use of Parmesan need no reminder that it is *the* cheese for the purpose. Those who know it not should lose no time in making its acquaintance. The soufflé can, however, be made with any cheese that is dry enough to grate, Stilton, Gloucester, Cheshire, or Cheddar, for example, or half of either, with half Parmesan. Many think that the mixture ensures better results than the use of any cheese singly. For the dilution of the other materials, water or milk is used at the option of the cook, many giving the preference to water, as it is pretty generally considered that it makes a lighter soufflé. Take, then, a gill of either, or mix them, an ounce of butter, three-quarters of an ounce of flour, a teaspoonful of mignonette pepper, a hint of cayenne and salt ; the saltiness of the cheese must determine the exact amount of the latter, and if you care for the flavour, add a grate of nutmeg ; two ounces of grated cheese and three eggs make up the materials.

Melt the butter in a stewpan and fry the pepper in it. For the sake of the novice, let me add that the pepper referred to is nothing more than coarsely ground peppercorns,

obtainable through any good grocer. Then strain this butter into a second saucepan, as you want only the flavour of the pepper ; stir the sifted flour in and mix smoothly, then add the liquid and cook until the whole leaves the sides of the pan freely, never ceasing the stirring. This is called the "panada." Now, off the fire, beat in the yolks of eggs and the rest of the seasoning, and the cheese. The whites are to be whipped to a stiff froth, with a pinch of salt, and added when the mixture has cooled ; it should be only just warm. This is an important point, and so is the light but thorough incorporation of the whites. If put in with a heavy hand the soufflé will not rise. One of the yolks should be omitted ; a white more than a yolk, or in very large dishes two whites more, is a feature of a soufflé. Take care not to peep too early in the baking stage, and particularly avoid banging the oven door, or when you peep next there will probably be a hollow in the centre as if you had put your fist in it. Remember that should this happen, your soufflé will refuse to be coaxed up again, and flat it will remain. With very good luck this *may* rise to the top of the paper in baking, hence, you must be prepared for a little sinking on removal, owing to the action of the cold air ; but if properly baked, there will be far less sinking than there often is when too fierce a heat and too short a time in the oven are employed. Remove the paper very quickly, and slip the dish into the serviette, which should be warm, and so pinned that the dish will pass in easily.

Here is a dish that should commend itself by reason of its small cost. You must have good potatoes, and they must be baked in the skins.

#### *Scrap Potato Soufflé*

is its name. Assuming, then, that the tubers have been cooked by this, the mode *par excellence* for all such dishes, pass the inner portion carefully through a sieve and measure it. To half a pint, add the yolks of two eggs, an ounce of butter, and half a gill of milk ; the butter is to be melted in the milk, after it is brought to the boil. Add to the potatoes and beat hard, putting the yolks in when a little cool. Season liberally as for the cheese soufflé, with the addition of some chopped fresh herbs if obtainable, or some powdered dried ones.\* The exact amount and the kind rests with you. From two to three tablespoonfuls of any underdone cold meat, chopped finely, goes in next ; some should be fat, or a little bacon or ham can be added, and in the words of an Irishwoman, if "some of the meat

\* "Aromatic seasonings," a mixture of herbs and spices, is useful for all such dishes.

be game or poultry," all the better. And here is a hint worth the taking. Would you raise the dish to a high standard, although of so homely a foundation, drop in with a steady hand some anchovy essence, less than a quarter of a teaspoonful, and a suspicion of grated lemon-peel ; the veriest hint of garlic, obtained by rubbing your mixing bowl with a morsel, or putting in a few drops of garlic vinegar, raises it still higher above the commonplace. This is finished off as above, allowing an extra white of egg. It is soon baked, and the chances are that it will be soon eaten.

Such a dish as this loses half its value if alternatives are not enumerated. Space allows but a few only. Minus any meat at all, it is not to be despised, and with a spoonful of cooked onion or chives, minced to the smallest degree, it is very good. Again, any fish scraps, such as dried haddock, will give zest, and here the anchovy may be used more freely ; many other sauces and ketchups may be employed for the sake of variety. A spoonful or two of minced lobster and a little essence of shrimps will furnish a very tasty snack. A spoonful of any cheese, with a saltspoonful of pounded bay-leaf, and about the same amount of curry-powder, gives another admirable finish to the dish, and, of course, cheese alone will suggest itself.

The more sauce, the less milk, and only the condition of the potatoes can guide you to the right quantity of either. It is better to make several small ones where convenient, or in the case of a large one to test the mixture by baking a morsel ; but only the beginner need take trouble of this kind.

For small soufflés, the best way is to use the little paper cases, serving one to each person. They should be prepared by oiling them, using a small brush and a little pure salad-oil, and letting them dry on the plate-rack or in the oven. They must not be exposed to great heat, as after baking, they should be only a pale brown. Those who possess the little fire-proof china cases will, of course, use them in preference to the paper ones. They are now to be had in many pretty shapes.

In the case of so homely a dish as the scrap potato soufflé above detailed, a proper dish or tin is not a real necessity. Many cooks send such simple *plats* as these to table in a deep pie-dish ; should this be used, either pin a warm serviette round, or slip it into a pie-dish collar of any pretty colour. Never forget that with a plain dish of any sort the appearance is important. Daintily served, we have only to make believe very much, and our imagination will convert the snack into a richer and more costly one.

DEBORAH PLATTER.



## The Crow.

BY MRS. C. S. NOURSE.

OF all the abused birds, and they are not a few, the family of the crows is, perhaps, the most slandered and ill-used. One reason for the evil repute into which it has fallen, is the fact that being a very extensive family it, like most large families, includes in its numerous branches some rather disreputable members, and after the way of the world, they have been taken as the representatives of the race; but then the world does not know they have aristocratic relations, of no less pretension than the birds of paradise who are their own blood relations. But though this is true, we cannot deny that some of the English cousins bear an extremely bad reputation among those who know them well. But we maintain that on the whole they have been abused from time immemorial.

The raven, a prominent member of the family, has been regarded in all countries and in all ages as a bird of evil omen, and the most courageous Roman warrior quailed at seeing one alight upon his banner; while if we come down to mediæval times, we find the poor bird strongly suspected of having dealings with the devil. Both facts, however, give evidence that he must have been possessed of superior intelligence and talent in order to have acquired such a character; for whatever other qualities may be attributed to the devil, no one accuses him of stupidity, and accordingly we find these birds possessed of extraordinary powers. The raven, the magpie, the chough, all belonging to the *Corvidæ*, can be taught to speak, and all crows have the faculty of imitating sounds.

The whole genus is fond of the company of man, and, notwithstanding shabby treatment, always remains in his neighborhood, partly, it may be, for sociability, and partly from inter-

ested motives—for the advantage of sharing the products of his labor.

The general characteristics which distinguish the appearance of this race of birds are, a head rather flat than round, a strong bill slightly blunt at the end, and stiff, bristle-like feathers which are placed at its base, and lie forward covering the nostrils. In the raven the feathers about the neck are loose and

proverb of rarity, yet instances do occasionally occur. They are sometimes entirely white—bill, feathers, legs, and claws—and found so in the nest, thus refuting the very ancient error that they became white from old age. On the contrary it has been ascertained that where the young birds are quite white, they turn black as they grow to maturity, and gain their full strength. Naturalists attribute the

want of color to weakness of the secretions, which increase in vigor as the bird becomes strong and healthy.

The American crow is a different variety from the English, and has many genuine Yankee characteristics; shrewd and knowing, he possesses a degree of cool assurance which is worthy of his nationality. The race is found from Maine to Florida, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific, but is most numerous in the States of Pennsylvania and New Jersey. The largest crow roost in the world is upon the Delaware River. They resort in untold numbers in the neighborhood of the town of Bristol, opposite Burlington, N. J., upon that river. They may be seen on a cloudy day in the late Autumn rising in such numbers that they darken the air like a thunder cloud, from the western bank of the river, and crossing above it to the Jersey side, and sending the echoes of their gathering cries far up and down the stream. They alight upon a field of ripened corn, by wide circling flights and suspend their "caw, caw, caw," for a time while they are engaged in tearing open the dry husks or searching among the stalks for small game, worthy of their pursuit. Upon the top of some small tree or high fence-rail, close in the vicinity, may be



THE COMMON CROW AND WALNUT TREE.

longer and somewhat rough in appearance, but in the crows proper, they lie smooth and close. The claws are large and strong, suited to the purpose of seizing and retaining their prey. The plumage is generally black, with a strong purple reflection from above and green upon the under side. The hooded crow of Europe has a hood like a monk's cowl, and is gray below the wings. A white crow is a

seen one of their number stationed as a sentinel. He appears to be most faithful to his trust, if we may judge by the quick turning of his head this way and that, and the keen peering glances of his bright eye when he is approached. A carriage or wagon driving upon the road, no matter with what noise of wheels, or snapping of whip, does not disconcert him in the least; a woman, or child, will be allowed to come quite

close to his perch, without his betraying any sign of uneasiness, but let a man be seen coming and the closest scrutiny is at once instituted; if he carry anything over his shoulder, as a rake or a hoe, the head turns about rapidly and a warning note is uttered with a kind of uncertain sound, as if he admitted to himself that his fears might not be well founded; but if he carry a fowling-piece, the cry of warning will be clear, sharp, and decided, and in an instant the whole flock will rise from their feast, and with a clamorous noise take instant flight. The difficulty of scaring them off a field by scare-crows is well known to every farmer. When the hat and coat, which are generally used, are first set up in the middle of the field, so, as much as possible, to resemble a man, the birds are very shy indeed; they hover over the place at quite a height, but gradually, as they become more and more convinced of the hoax, circle nearer and lower, examining closely, until one more adventurous than the rest will alight upon the suspicious figure, and the matter ends perhaps by placing their sentinel upon the top of the scarecrow's hat. In truth, the scarecrow is a mistake, as much a mistake as the act of Henry the Eighth which set a price upon a crow's head; for the corn which the birds eat may well be spared them, for the sake of the insects and other troublesome marauding animals which they destroy, such as mice, moles, etc.; though it must be confessed they do sometimes snatch a young chicken in the spring when other food is somewhat scarce. But on the whole they do more good than harm. If they could be persuaded to pursue the grasshopper and the potato bug, they would be indeed public benefactors: but they are not numerous in the region where the latter most abound.

A crow once attempted to take a chicken from the callow brood, with the intention of making a dainty meal, but the plucky mother pursued him so pugnaciously, that when he took refuge in a neighboring apple-tree, she followed, making such a din, that in sheer terror, it would seem, at her noise, for of course he could soon have carried his victim out of her reach, he dropped her nursling at her feet, and flew off in ignominious fright at the feminine power of vociferation.

In building their nests, these birds are extremely careful to avoid notice, and use all their fine powers of intelligent contrivance. The nest is placed upon some high rock, or in the crevice of a bank, often mid-way of some lofty precipice; sometimes, where no such places can be found, they build in the tops of high trees, though in a flat country, where there are no trees, they sometimes build lower, in the midst of large swamps among grass and reeds, the object seeming to be secure from notice.

There is in the Delaware River an island called the Pea Patch, which is the gathering place of the clans; the birds resort there by

thousands to roost, and on one occasion a severe storm beat so violently upon the shallow retreat, that immense numbers of them were drowned and swept by the tide against the Jersey shores, but no diminution was perceived in their numbers the following season.

The nest is built of twigs and mortared well with mud or clay, a strong and serviceable dwelling, rather than a delicate or luxurious one. They all build very early in the season, the young birds being strong and hardy, to sustain the cold blasts of the early spring of our harsh climate, for as their nests are generally placed near the banks of streams or some body of water, they are greatly exposed to their severity.

There is no doubt that the shy and wary habits of these birds are the result of the harsh treatment they have received at the hands of men, for in exceptional instances where they have been domesticated and treated as pets, they have become extremely tame, and very sociable, not to say saucy.

On the whole I think that a summing up of their good qualities will make a very fair showing. Certainly none can deny that they possess talent and pluck, and that in a fair encounter of wits, the crow often gets the better of his human persecutors. He certainly understands the nature and appearance of a gun as well as the best sportsman, displays the greatest prudence, forethought, and executive ability in the management of all his affairs, causing "the best laid schemes of mice and men, to gang alee," capturing the one without mercy, and circumventing the other in nine cases out of ten. He is a cosmopolitan and something of a bohemian, but a pretty good fellow after all.

These birds have a fancy for being caressed and soothed like cats. A gentleman who had taken one of the English choughs, a first cousin of the crows, as a household pet, declares that it would sit up on his knee some-

times for hours, while he fondled and caressed it, but immediately resented the least opposition to its will with beak and claw.

It is probable that they take pleasure in a damp atmosphere and are certainly not much afraid of cold, being found in very high latitudes.

Virgil says the croaking of the crow foreboded rain,

*"Tam corvix plena pluviam vocat improba voce,"*

and this habit is generally indicative of pleasure in other creatures, as in the tree-frog, which is never so happy as in announcing an approaching storm by its sonorous croak.

The ancient belief in the appearance of the crow being an evil omen has assumed various forms. The Romans thought it so, when seen on the left hand, and in Scandinavian countries, it is believed to forebode death if it enters the house, a superstition of which Poe availed himself in his celebrated poem. I have spoken of the raven and the crow almost without distinction here, for they so closely resemble each other, that there is really no very important difference, and popular superstition regards them in the same light. The raven is, however, the most easily tamed, can be taught to speak and imitate various sounds. They will bark like a dog, and mew like a cat, mock the notes of the jackdaw and other birds. We are all familiar with the exhortation of that astute and philosophic bird belonging to Barnaby Rudge, "never say die, never say die," interspersed between the drawing of innumerable corks which he seems to have considered as a sound encouraging in its nature and highly conducive to the carrying out of his plucky principles.

In the fables of Æsop, the crow is always represented as exhibiting great sagacity, as in the device of raising the water in the pitcher, which was too low for him to reach, by dropping pebbles into it until the water came near the top. Many such stories are related of him and of his congeners, among which are found, I am sorry to say, those arrant thieves, the magpies, whose dexterous abstraction of glittering things has so often given rise to serious trouble. A tinner once leaving his work-bench to go to his shop to serve a customer, found on his return that a part of the cup upon which he was working was gone. His seat was just in front of a window, which was wide open indeed, but too high from ground for any one to reach it from the outside, and he knew no one had entered through the shop. The matter puzzled him extremely; for though the loss was nothing, the thing had an "uncanny" look, as the Scotch say; nor was the mystery explained until a large tree near the house was cut down and the handle of the tin cup found fixed upon the edge of the nest.

Though it is now a well-known fact to all naturalists that many



THE CROW ON THE DELAWARE.



birds enjoy collecting bright twigs to adorn their nests, such knowledge has only a comparatively recent date, and for a long time the corvidæ enjoyed this reputation alone. A common crow was once seen flying over the deck of a sloop with something shining in his bill; an expert marksman brought him down, and the shining thing was found to be a new iron hinge which had probably been picked up where some new building was going up.

The whole race have a turn for mischief, and apparently a sense of humor which gives them a particularly keen appreciation for it. The magpie is not only a thief, but he is a loud, insolent, and vulgar bird, possessed with the love of mischief, and apparently having as much pleasure in it as a monkey, often alighting upon the backs of sheep or cattle, and resenting their attempts to rid themselves of him with a degree of temper which is really ludicrous in its cool impudence.

The carrion crow is a distinct species, and his bad character should not be allowed to prejudice other members of the family, for though generally omnivorous in their habits, they do not willingly associate with unclean birds, but find their own living by persevering industry and most intelligent devices.

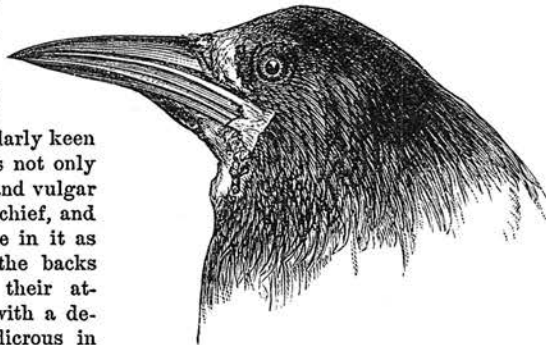
The fish crow subsists mostly by crabbing, and is most fond of such dainty food, but as his beak is not stout enough to break the shell, he resorts to the witty expedient of seizing the crab, rising high in the air, over some rock or stony place, and when at a sufficient height, dropping it, that it may be broken by the fall, when he can descend and eat it at his pleasure. If there are no crabs he resorts to a still more singular method, not quite so legitimate. He will watch some other bird at his fishing, and when he has swallowed a good supply, pounce upon him and force him to disgorge the fish which he has taken, in order to save master crow the trouble of capturing his own game.

I have said that the crow places its nest in secluded places, which it selects with wonderful acuteness, choosing such as seem inaccessible, this matter appearing to be decided by the perception and intelligence of the individual, not only by general instinct, as in many instances the fact that it is inaccessible can be learned only by observation and experience. They are exemplary parents, both sexes taking a share in the labor of incubation, and the care which they take in going to and from the nest, the stratagems which they resort to, to mislead the observer, are truly wonderful. A naturalist records having watched for many hours for the return of the bird to her nest, without success, though quite sure that she would not have left her nestlings so long without food; but so wary had been her motions, so acute her observation, that she had actually eluded his close watch, and returned without being seen.

The magpie protects her nest from invasion by a covering or dome of thorns, which is reared as a screen from other birds who would devour the eggs or the young. "Set a thief to catch a thief," says the proverb, and the consciousness that the eggs of her neighbors

are not quite safe from herself, may quicken her ingenuity. Indeed nearly all the crows will eat eggs of other birds when they have an opportunity.

You may think that my candor has not left the crow a very fair character, but I beg my readers to remember that I began by saying that on the whole they did about as much good



"CAW, CAW, CAW."

as harm, and I leave it to their judgment to decide whether that is not more than can be said for most human beings, and whether after the whole truth has been told crows do not compare very well with men?



SINGLE BLESSEDNESS.

TO MR. J. B.

BY MRS. J. L.

ONE can easily see his wife is away,  
He wanders so restlessly through  
the livelong day,  
Ever and ever down and up, up and  
down,  
Where there's usually a smile,  
there's now nought but a frown.

FOR, let me tell you, he has to get his  
own dinner,  
And that's perfectly dreadful, you  
know, for a male sinner,  
Fancy his washing potatoes and  
preparing the meat,  
And so on *ad infinitum*, in order to  
get something to eat.

I AM informed, on reliable informa-  
tion,  
He despises cooking, like all true  
lords of creation;  
Considering it beneath his dignity  
as a man  
To touch the dish-cloth, much less  
the dish-pan.

GAIN, it is whispered, the birds that  
he cooked  
Resembled dry cinders, instead of  
birds looked;  
Cooks generally read not the affairs  
of the nation,  
Whilst a dinner is undergoing  
preparation.

THIS housekeeping I would like  
much to get a sight,  
Everything, I dare say, in a very,  
very sad plight;  
Dishes no doubt piled high in the  
pan,  
With chaos ruling supreme as when  
the housekeeper's a man.

BUT there seems no chance for such a  
peep,  
'Tis evident his secret he means to  
keep;  
For when about to go out, the cur-  
tain descends,  
To shut out the questioning eyes  
of his friends.

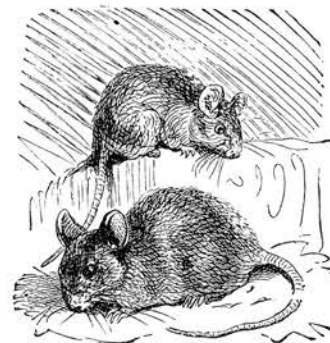
HE is a very nice man, very quiet and  
so on,  
But indeed 'tis not edifying the  
sight of the demijohn  
Which he carries about; and I  
heartily wish his wife would ap-  
pear,  
For when she's around, of that he  
shies clear.

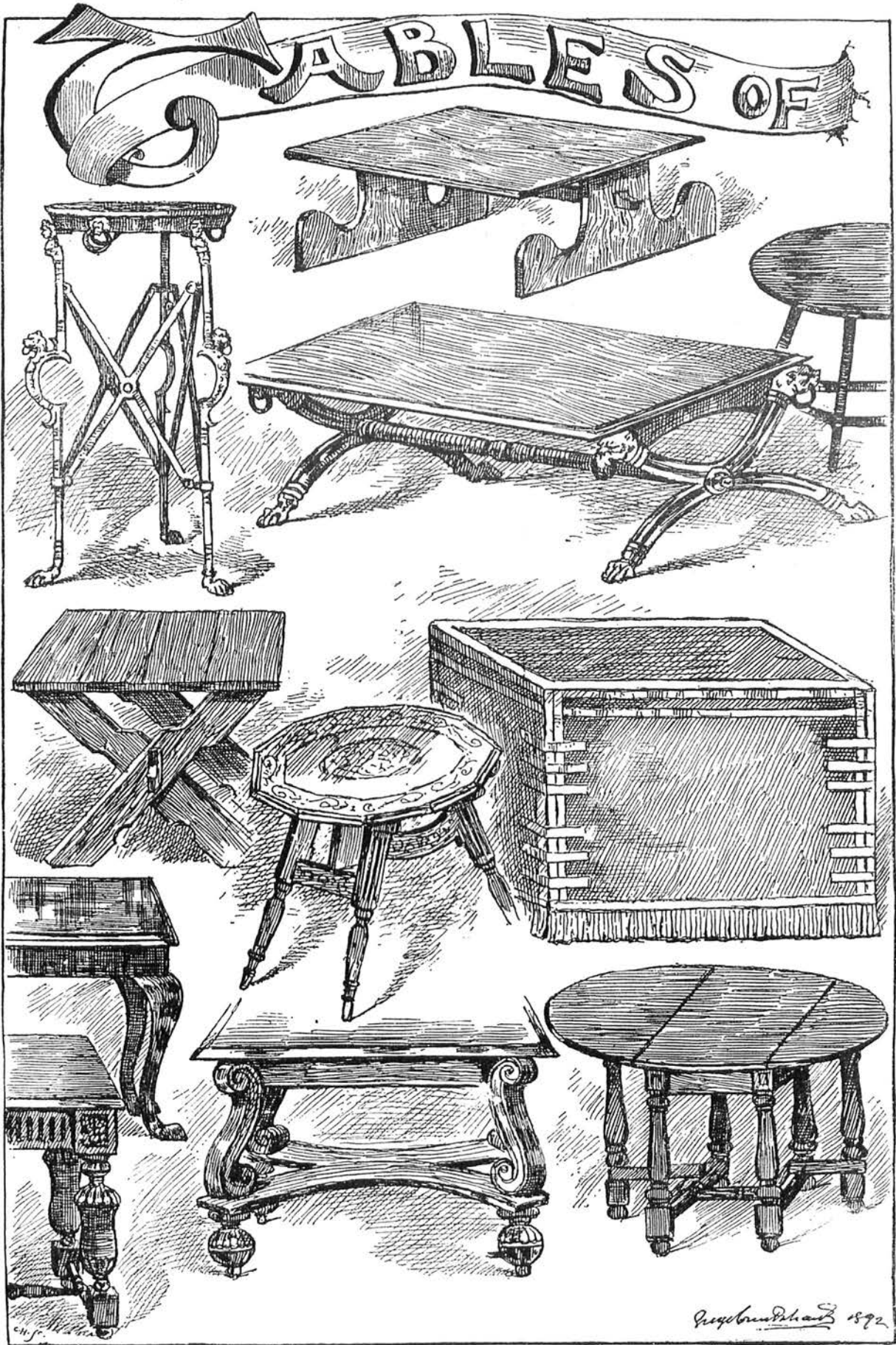
WE are very good neighbors, this Mr.  
J. B. and I,  
Very good indeed when his wife  
is by;  
We talk, and laugh, and joke, as  
friendly as can be;  
But when she's away, it's quite a  
different thing, you see.

HE goes past my house some four, or  
six, or eight times a day;  
I smile, but never to him a word  
do I say,  
Deeming it well, in the absence of  
wives,  
With the lonely husbands not to  
sympathize.

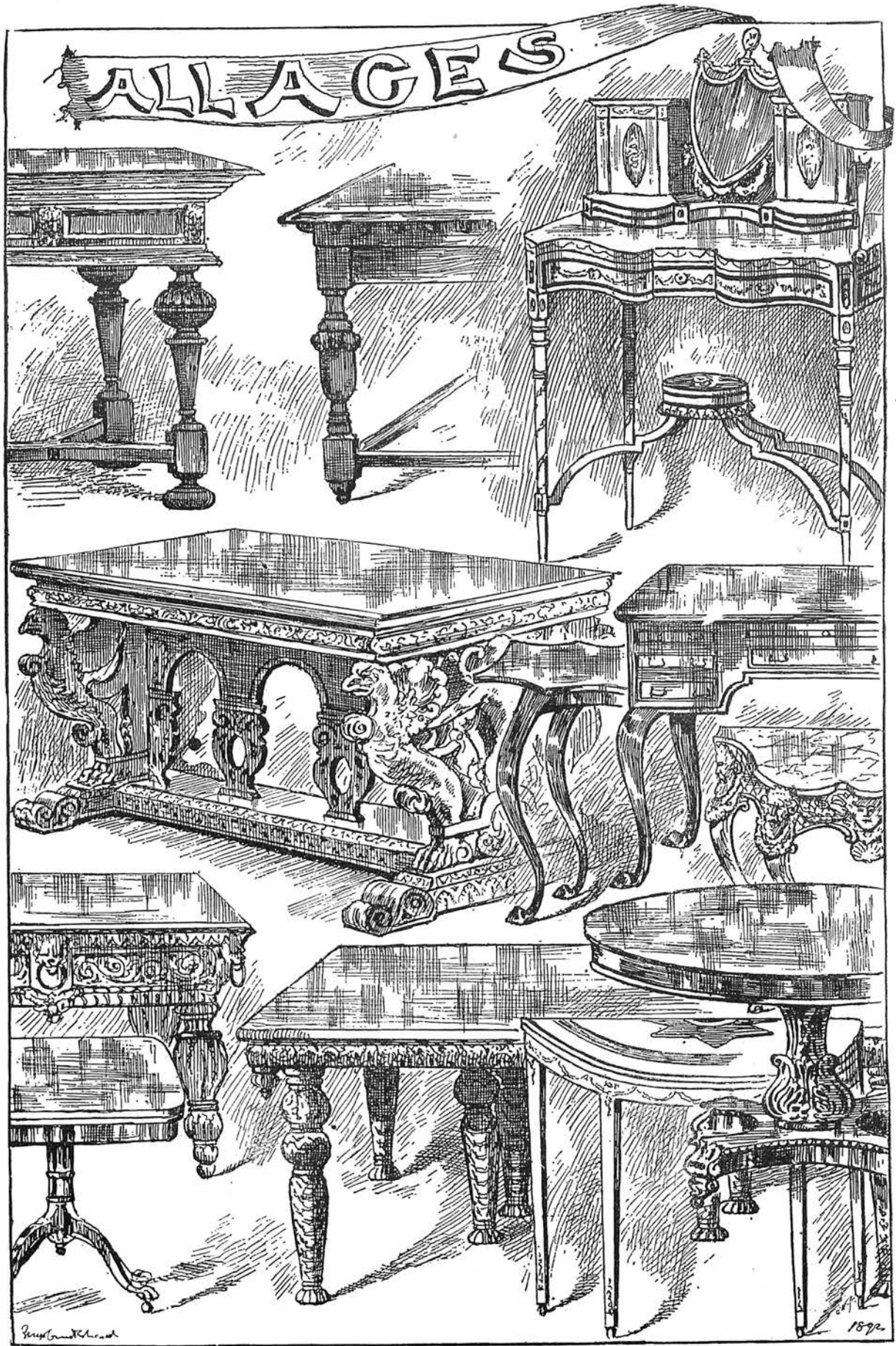
BE sure, he has his dog, his gun, and  
his pipe—  
Ah! what *would* he do without that  
last solace of his life;  
And then besides there's the car-  
penters' shop,  
Where nought goes on, those idle  
days, but smoke and gossip.

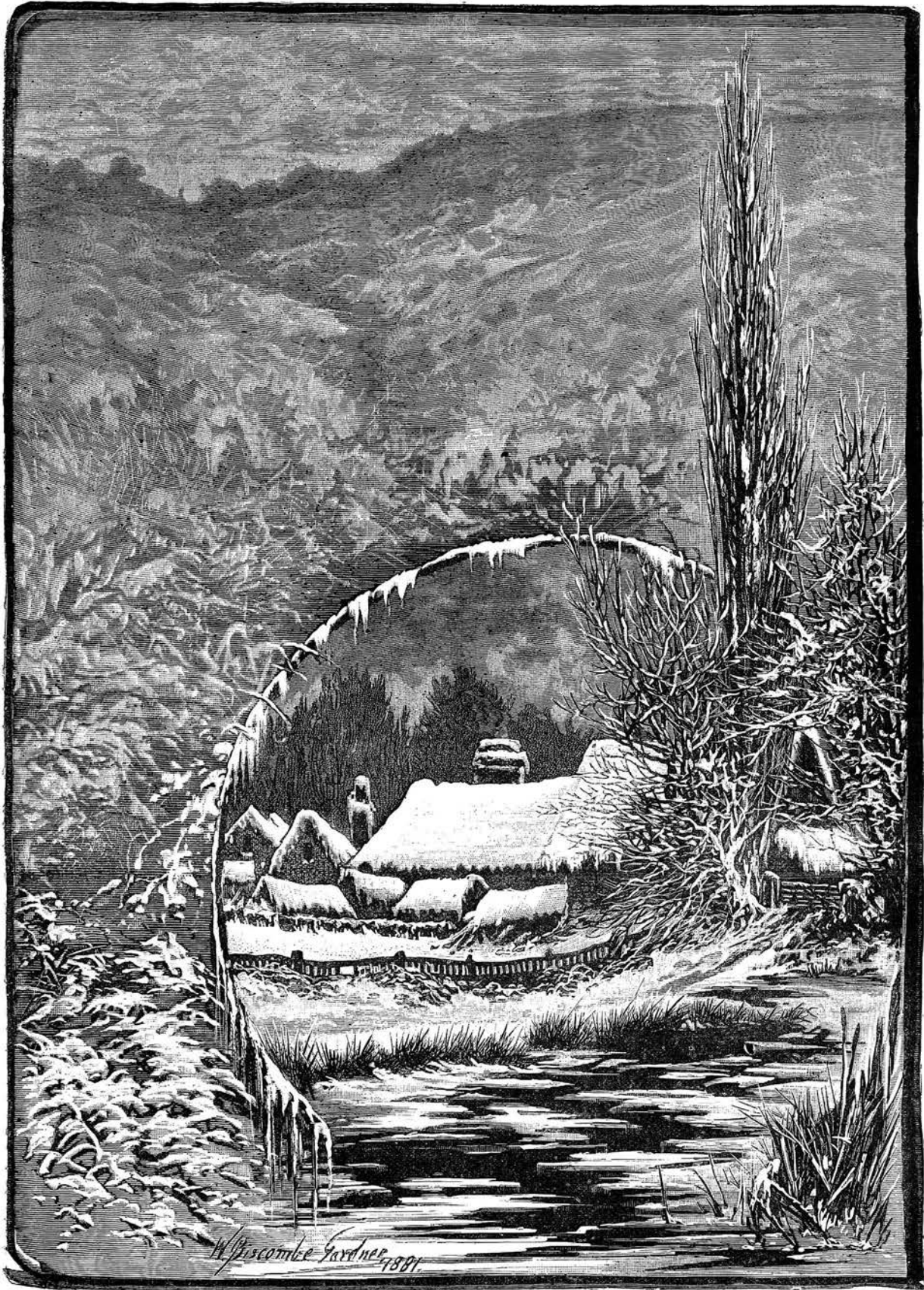
WELL, those few days of keeping  
solitary "Bachelor's Hall,"  
Will increase his love and appreci-  
ation tenfold, that's all;  
'Tis a little strategy of us wives,  
I guess,  
To give our husbands thus a taste  
of "Single Blessedness."











Girl's Own Paper, 1883

"O'ER NATURE'S FUNERAL PALL IT THROWS  
A MANTLE RICH AND RARE TO SEE."



# HOW LANDOWNERS ARE MADE.

By ARTHUR GOODRICH.

*Illustrated from Photographs by C. Pilkington.*

**T**HERE can be no doubt that the success which has attended us as a nation is largely due to our cities, despite the fact that many people maintain that the only thing which can reconcile a man to a residence in town is the blessed hope of getting out of it. That cities have their evils no one will deny. The life they compel us to lead is artificial and often unhealthy. Nature presents us with luxuriant woodlands, open moorlands, lofty hills and deep verdant valleys ; breezes which stir the

became congested, a further exodus had to be made. Then came the problem, Where were they to go to next? At the opportune moment Mr. F. F. Ramuz, Mayor of Southend-on-Sea, conceived the idea of purchasing some of the Essex land which agricultural depression had driven out of cultivation, cutting it up into plots and selling them on reasonable terms to the public.

The Essex landowners, being wise in their generation, so approved of the scheme that the man of enterprise was soon in a position to say, "Come to me, all you lovers of Nature, doomed by circumstances to see the sun set from January to December behind a chimney-pot instead

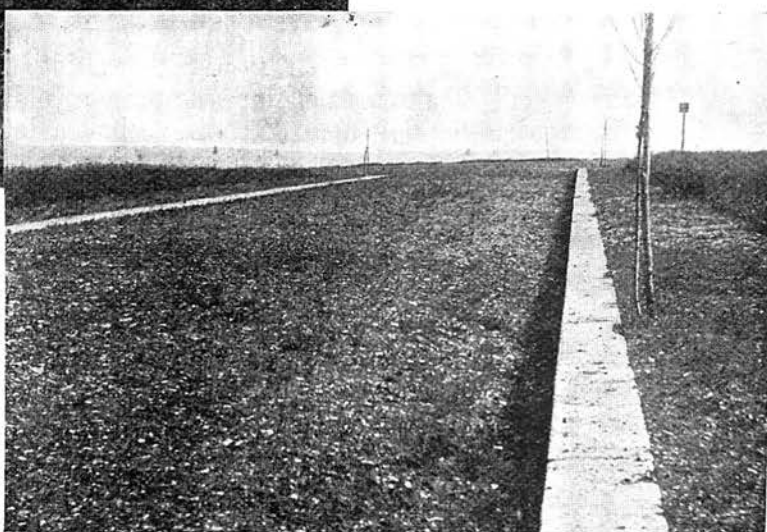


BUNGALOWS LEAD THE WAY.

hedges and set the trees a-waving, redden the skin and expand the frame. The vitiated air of big cities, with their close streets and stuffy rooms, impoverishes the blood and undermines the constitution.

Every year has so swollen the population of the cities, and so increased their size, that the country, despite the talk about the locomotive conquering space, has gradually become more and more remote. This is true of all our cities, but more particularly of the Metropolis.

Small wonder, then, that thousands of fresh-air-loving Londoners, finding their tether becoming gradually more and more narrowed, look eagerly about for some means of freeing themselves from the bondage of the big city. The suburbs for a time provided an asylum, but when these in their turn



ROSEBERY AVENUE AND SALISBURY DRIVE.

of a purple hill. Come to me, and I will provide you with a resting-place, out of sight and yet within easy journey of the great city, where you can plant your household gods amid groves and glades, hills and dales ; where those you love can watch the sunshine painting the meadows with delight, giving splendour to the flowers and beauty to the trees."

But confidence being a plant of slow growth, the public were loth to respond.

It was in vain that the voice of the pioneer announced that the plots would be sold absolutely without reserve; that payments would be extended over four years; that conveyances would not only be free, but that there would be absolutely no law costs; that tithes would be redeemed whenever practicable, and possession of the land immediately given.

It was all very well to talk about immediate possession, but what about roads and drains? Who would defray the cost of these?

"I will," said the vendor.

"There must be something wrong about the scheme if you do. You must have an axe of your own to grind. You offer us land on better terms than one can purchase a piano! It's bound to be a swindle!"

So the very people who should have canonised Mr. Ramuz denounced him as a trickster, and even when the enthusiastic Mayor, in order to dispose of the land he had purchased, offered to take them by special train and cheap tickets to the sale, they still held aloof.

"Well, free luncheon as well," cried the now desperate pioneer. And the lunch did it.

There was something suspicious about the plots. Terms and prices were too reasonable, or at least they looked so. But a thirty-mile railway journey and back with a champagne luncheon for two shillings; there could be no mistake about that. So they went, and as the road to the Englishman's heart lies through his stomach, they found the luncheon so good that they stayed to the sale, and, feeling at peace with the world just then, planked down their money with great cheerfulness.

They part with their money more readily now, but not so cheerfully. Deep down in the human heart, sociologists tell us, dwells an innate desire to own land. At land sales the instinct reveals itself in bidding that borders on the acrimonious, especially when plots directly facing the sea are put up.

Sales during the season are held three and even four times a week, and although 50,000 landowners have already been created, the special trains are always packed. Mr. Ramuz, the originator of the movement, notwithstanding his duties as Mayor of Southend-on-Sea—which, as far as I can judge, largely consist in feasting the juvenile population—still finds time to attend some of the sales, though the enterprise has evolved into what is known as "The Land Company," with Mr. George Ramuz, a son

of the Mayor, as auctioneer. So estates have been bought and cut into plots at Southend, Leigh-on-Sea, Westcliffe-on-Sea, Prittlewell, Maldon, Norton Park, Shoeburyness, Wakering, Tilbury Docks, Laindon Hills, Pitsea, Vange, Basildon, Chingford, Rochford, Rayleigh, Herne Bay, Westminster-on-Sea, Bishopstone Glen, Hilborough-on-Sea, Ropley, Ilford, etc., etc. But more are wanted, and prices must be low enough to bring the land within the reach of all.

At Laindon—breezy Laindon, as they call it—the Mayor sells plots to the working class, 100 feet by 20 feet wide, outright for £5, and spreads the payments over four years, which means that anyone can become a landowner for 6*d.* a week.

During the summer months the specials, fare nominal with luncheon thrown in, are simply packed. A tradesman will tell you on the platform that after forty years behind the counter he thinks sleeping in the air of the country will do him good.

And such a mixed gathering, too! May-fair may not send its contingent, but all other sections are well represented. Half-pay officers, on whose slender resources the rents of town press heavily, clerks, professional men, well-to-do mechanics, young couples, some starting in matrimony, others waiting till they have got the home, young men, old men, speculators of the sort who buy a lot with the object of selling it at a profit, and others who have come to buy for friends, a pushing, eager crowd, whose indifference to China, Transvaal, and other brimming questions is evidenced in the absence of newspapers and the abundance of plans of the estate. Ah, those plans! how they are conned over!

"You see that plot," said a gentleman to me recently in a land sale train, bursting to take someone into his confidence. "If I don't get that plot, I won't have any."

"Has it any particular advantages?" I asked.

"I should think it has," was the reply. "There's a running brook on this estate, and if I buy this plot I shall be able to divert the stream through my garden into some reservoirs I shall build. As it will be years before the water company comes along, I shall be able to supply the neighbours with water for some years on my own terms, which will be a halfpenny the pail."

Community of object making short work of insular reserve, conversation in land trains is delightfully general. Everyone laughs at the simple folk who make no effort to free





ONLY KIOSKS AND BAND-STANDS WILL BE ALLOWED ON THE ESPLANADE.

themselves from the miseries of town life, and is confident that the real secret of long life and happiness lies in purchasing a small piece of land outside London and building on it a house after a design of one's own.

On the train's arrival at its destination, the company with great precipitation rush from the station and, headed by the auctioneer, make straight for their future homes. To-day's sale is at Herne Bay, and as Herne Bay is close, quite close, to the German Ocean—which, as we all know, is remarkable for the quality of its ozone—everyone sniffs. This causes the auctioneer to declare that "Herne Bay is not only the garden of England, but quite the healthiest place in the world," which is, of course, saying a good deal.

It is a beautiful day, and everyone looks supremely happy save the land speculators. When the weather is bad attendances are small, and lots are knocked down cheap. The place we are bound for is the West Cliff, Herne Bay.

A smart walk of twenty minutes so



THE SITE OF THE FUTURE TOWN.



EN ROUTE TO KLONDYKE.



FUTURE LANDOWNERS CONTEMPLATING SEA STREET.

sharpens our appetites that the moment the marquee is seen all insensibly hurry forward. But the time for luncheon is not yet.

Messrs. Ramuz insist that their clients shall know what they are bidding for, so, escorted by the auctioneer, they are introduced to their future homes. A few take up their quarters in preference outside the luncheon-tent, to rest maybe, or possibly to have the pick of the seats—who knows? But the majority, plan in hand, follow the auctioneer.

"We are now, ladies and gentlemen, in Rosebery Avenue." You look round; you are in a field dotted all over with little pegs, and, just where you are standing, kerbstones and a sprinkling of gravel indicate the site of the thoroughfare yet to come. To-day it is no more Rosebery Avenue than Cornhill is Cornhill, but it will be before long; of that no one doubts.

"Which is Sea Street?" says a lady, who, having made a small fortune out of a lodging-house at Southend-on-Sea, is going to build another of her own to accommodate four-

teen guests, and do without "wretched landlords," as she calls them. Sea Street having been indicated, and a grocer from the south of London having been assured that no shops save those shown on the plans would be allowed on the estate, the genteel section of the crowd are taken to Alexandra Drive and Salisbury ditto.



SOME UNHAPPY LAND SPECULATORS—  
PRICES RATE HIGH ON A FINE DAY.

New communities are always aspiring, and those who owe their existence to the Mayor of Southend and his friends believe in high-sounding, not to say full-flavoured, names. At land sales it is so common a thing to hear the auctioneer exclaim, "We will now take the plot in Graccchurch Street or the Strand," that no one betrays the slightest astonishment. Besides, imposing and stately names add to the dignity of towns in the bud.

The people who rent moors and deer forests don't dislike their shooting-boxes any the more for their being called castles. Why, then, should we sneer at lesser mortals who find Sir Walter Raleigh Drive, Ann Boleyn Avenue, Ravenscourt Chase, etc., more attractive than Robert Street, Borough Road, and the like?

The tradesman who would refuse credit to

anyone living in Rothschild Avenue must have a very poor opinion of his species.

The company having been assured by the auctioneer that no houses will be allowed in front of the Spa and the Grand Esplanade, nothing except kiosks and band-stands, a bell is heard, whereupon everyone rushes with positively frantic haste to the marquee. The German Ocean has done its work, and for the moment plots are forgotten.

Land sale luncheons are above criticism. People will put up with anything when they pay for it. Give it them for nothing and they become critical at once. But the viands are first class—so excellent, indeed, as quite to neutralise the impression which, under less happy auspices, might have been conveyed by the itinerant orchestra in attendance outside.

There is nothing novel in the spectacle of several hundred people feasting in a tent, but this crowd is worth studying. Deadheads



"BLESS THE MAN! DO  
YOU MEAN TO SAY  
YOU CAN'T FIND YOUR  
PLOT?"



FREQUENT MEASURING PREVENTS SHRINKAGE.

are, of course, present. They talk glibly about land, study their plans with apparently absorbing interest, and occasionally bid, but they never buy. So, this being

noticed, and their address obtained by an official on the pretext of sending them a catalogue of the next sale, they one morning receive a letter politely requesting them not to patronise the sales any more.

Luncheon over, the tables removed and a rostrum erected, the auctioneer clears his



throat, calls for silence, and proceeds to describe the property he is about to sell. There is nothing automatic about this auctioneer. In fact, his eloquence grows quite seductive when he assures his audience that the place is not one of those delightful spots only to be reached after a long and agonising sea voyage, or an interminable journey by train, being actually within an hour and a half of London.

“Westward Ho! ladies and gentlemen, is a veritable Paradise at London’s gate. Fish is scarce off the Dogger Bank, but not here; and as to shrimps—”

“Never mind the shrimps, man,” says an austere lady with an eye like

“I’VE PLOTS EVERYWHERE.”

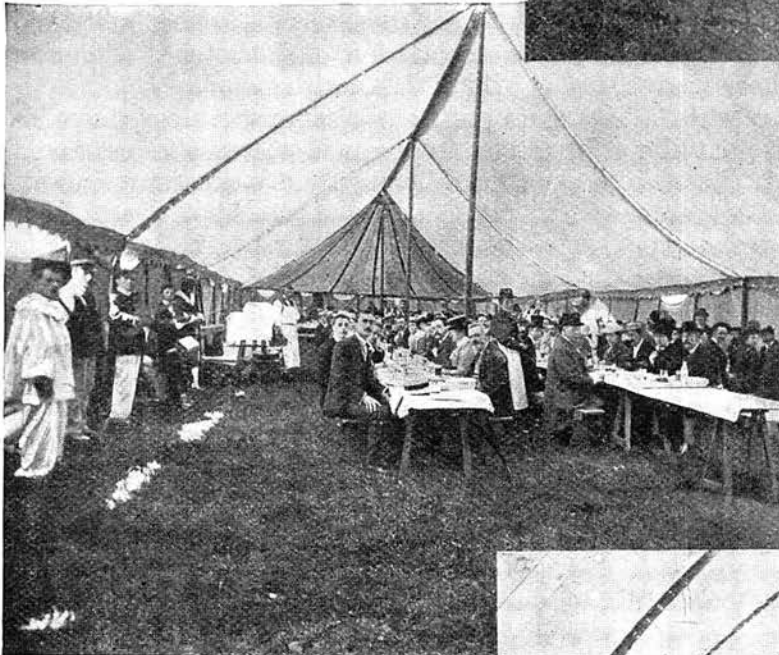


satisfactory as to out-falls, drain-pipes, water-borings, lighting, etc., he has a distinctly bad time of it. Sometimes when closely pressed he will flood the meeting with eloquence, saying—

“Gaze around you, ladies and gentlemen. Here the sunshine glorifies sea and earth alike, ripening the crops and covering the dimpled surface of the ocean with splashes of molten gold. Think what the attractions of this enchanting spot will be like if the railway company redeem the promise they have made to build a rail-

way station. When that time comes, you will be brought within one and a half hours of the great Metropolis, where from clammy dawn to foggy eve stand interminable lines of houses, with every brick alike, myriads of chimney-pots, and lamp-posts by the thousand.”

But what is the use of badgered land auctioneers taking refuge in such verbal gorgeous-



DURING LUNCHEON LAND IS QUITE FORGOTTEN.

Mars to threaten and command; “tell us something about the drains.”

“Are the town council of Herne Bay to be relied on?” says another.

“What is the attitude of the Local Government Board towards Westward Ho?” cries a third.

“Unfriendly, you bet,” says a stout man. “Whitehall don’t care about us landowners.”

Then a heated debate ensues. There was a time when people bought plots without reference to sanitary conditions, but all that is changed now. The auctioneer has to undergo a searching examination, and if his answers are not



THE COMPANY NOW SETTLE DOWN TO BUSINESS.

ness when a lady sternly interrupts him, saying, “There are mothers present, and in their name I ask you, sir, to say plainly whether

the authorities at Herne Bay will look after the sanitary wants of Westward Ho ! ”

One admirable feature characterises these sales. There are so many lots for disposal that anything in the shape of a knock-out is difficult. It has been tried, with results disastrous to the ring.

It is whilst the bidding is in progress that you learn what a varied thing humanity is. An extremely genial old lady buys several lots. You ask who she is. It transpires that she keeps a sweetstuff shop somewhere in London. The neighbourhood is so poor that she declares that only on two occasions has she ever sold, in twenty years, as much as a pennyworth at a time. Yet she has saved out of ha'porths and farthingworths enough to invest £400 in land.

But her investments are greatly exceeded by those of another lady, who, as far as the number of her estates and plots is concerned, is the largest landed proprietor in the world.

“I could not really tell you how many plots I possess,” she said, in answer to a question of mine. “All I know is that it's everywhere.”

Judging by the sweep she gave her arm when she said this, I took everywhere to mean all over the world.

The public evidently believe in the future Westward Ho ! of Herne Bay. Shop plots, always a sure test of the calculated development of local prosperity, fetch high prices. The bidding is characterised by a sublime disregard for the schemes of those reformers who would nationalise the land.

I have alluded to the landowning desire as an instinct. This applies only to the gentlemen. With lady bidders it becomes a passion, revealing itself in the most curious and unexpected manner.

I watched one lady bidding unsuccessfully for plot after plot. Presently she secured one. “My boy is a landowner at last,” she cried, and the tears rushed into her eyes. I looked at the infant she carried in her arms. Being only two months old, he did not, of course, realise the enormous change the last few moments had wrought in his *status*.

Another thing noticeable in the crowd which attends land sales is their lack of humour. That they are hopeful admits of no doubt. They bid as if the lots were in Klondyke instead of Kent or Essex, but they won't joke.

When the auctioneer playfully recommends

a lot on the ground that there is more ozone in Lot 45 than there is in Lot 46, which he has just sold, someone is sure to remark, “There won't be any at all if you allow any more buildings in front of it.”

They are also peculiar in other respects. When an Englishman determines on transferring his goods and chattels to some other clime, choice is regulated, as a rule, by the advantages offered. At land sales it is different. People from the south of London will buy in Kent, but not in Essex, and *vice versa*.

By 5 p.m. the last lot is disposed of, and the newly made landowners stream into the open to sample the land of which they are now the proprietors. Some glare at their purchases with a stern intentness, as if they suspected the plot had an intention of absconding ; others gaze rapturously at the site on which the home is to be built, and debate the position of the kitchen and how much will be left for the garden.

I noticed one landowner regarding his investment with such evident distrust that I asked him if he was afraid of its running away.

“There's worse dangers than that,” he replied severely. “Three years ago I bought a lot at Rochford. Last year I ran down just to have a look round, when I found that someone had built on it by mistake. I *was* pleased.”

“Why ? ”

“Because I got good compensation. Run away ! That's why I like land, because it does not run away.”

Nevertheless, owners at first frequently behave as if they thought such a contingency not impossible. To pay a weekly visit to your plot after it has passed into your possession, “just to see that it is all right,” is quite a common thing.

It is quite a sentimental scene, with the landowners all round one surveying their purchases ; but the lengthening shadows warn us at last that the day is ageing fast.

“Train goes at 7.15,” cries the auctioneer.

Still none of the magnates stir. True, the land on which they stand is their own, but have they laid out their money to advantage ? Of course they have. Is not the air laden with health and exhilaration ? Why, of course ! And are not the payments spread over four years ? Nothing like leather ? “Nothing like land ! ” says the Britisher.



## OLD NATURAL HISTORY NOTIONS.

WHEN Sir Walter Scott said he could believe everything of a dog but that he could talk, the great minstrel gave utterance to a sentiment in which few of us do not share. A disposition, however, to estimate highly the intelligence and capacity of the lower orders of the animal creation was an especial attribute of the earlier writers on natural history. In none of these is it more conspicuous than in the excellent Bishop of Bergen, Dr. Eric Pontoppidan, whose "Natural History of Norway" is one of the most fascinating works it has ever been our hap to meet with.

Reynard, from time immemorial, has been the subject of popular reviling: his base cunning, his cowardice, his faithlessness, his inveterate dishonesty, cruelty, and selfishness, have been celebrated in almost every tongue, and in an infinity of ways. But, in treating of his habits, the reverend Northern divine, not extenuating his undoubted faults, dwells chiefly on that marvellous aptitude of his for meeting serious emergencies and supplying pressing wants. For example, he tells us that when a fox desires to rid himself of a party of filibustering fleas who have quartered themselves in his fur, he takes a bunch of moss or straw in his mouth and goes backwards into the water, slowly wading deeper and deeper. The fleas have thus ample time to ascend to the only dry regions of his person, to wit, his head and the upper part of his neck. He then gathers them on to the moss or straw, drops them into the water, and, "free from all incumbrance" himself, paddles back to dry land. Admire, also, his piscatorial skill and ichthyological knowledge. He likes crabs—we have the bishop's authority for the assertion—and knows *they* like things of a hairy substance; so when he goes fishing for them he just drops his "brush" in the water, and when they seize the tempting bait he drags them ashore as captives in his rear. Then does the bishop tell us of the krage, a bird which, though it feeds on carrion, has olfactory nerves so marvellously acute, that it can smell gunpowder at a vast distance, and is thus able to render essential service to its feathered brethren by warning them of

the sportsman's approach. Indeed, it is said to follow him with the benevolent purpose of giving this warning. When Franciscus Sanctius, the great grammarian, denied that the nightingale had a tongue—though, by the way, nightingales' tongues were understood to have been a favourite *bonne bouche* of Heliogabalus—could he have paid a higher tribute to the capacity of the songster capable of emitting such enchanting strains, though destitute of so useful an organ?

Take, again, the much-maligned pig, whose very name has long been a synonyme for a gluttonous and thoroughly debased nature. Juvenal and Varro—the first, evidently an ill-tempered, snarling sort of fellow—declare the sole objects of the pig's creation—its being's end and aim—to have been to contribute to the gratification of man's gustatory propensities; whilst Martial, in a more generous spirit, remarks, in its "condign praise," that though its fare had been acorns, and its days passed amongst savage boars, it was an excellent beast after all—on the dinner table. Pliny, after eulogising its flesh as an article of food, observing that, whilst the flesh of other animals had each a flavour peculiar to it, hog's flesh had no less than fifty flavours of its own—a rare merit, we submit—remarks—"Animals of this kind delight in rolling in the mud. The tail is curled, and it has also been observed that those whose tails curl to the right are a more acceptable offering to the gods than these whose caudal inclination is to the left." Having no personal acquaintance with the inhabitants of Olympus, we can affirm nothing as to the latter proposition; but, as to the first, it should be remembered that, in his wild state, the hog "lives cleanly like a nobleman." It has been his introduction into civilised life that has made him a dirty wretch. The invention of the sty was none of his; he owes it to mankind, so boastful of their refinement. The pig, as Pliny testifies, is remarkably delicate in point of diet. He suffers from improper food quite as much as the most dainty lady in Belgrave-square. Beech-mast, according to one opinion, is the viand the most befitting him,

rendering his flesh delicate and tender, although others believe it makes him coarse and gross. Fed on the acorns of the holm oak or the cork tree, his rotundity of shape disappears, his complexion becomes pallid, and his whole frame is meagre and lumpish. When Miss Seward described to Dr. Johnson the learned pig she had seen at Nottingham, and its feats, "Well," he said, "then the pigs are a race unjustly calumniated. *Pig*, it seems, has not been wanting to *man*, but *man* to *pig*. We do not allow time for his education; we kill him at a year old."

If the pig has been stigmatised for equalor, the bear has been censured for his uncouthness; yet are we told on excellent authority that, should a bear, when swimming, overtake a boat, he will enter it if he can, and sit at the stern peacefully and quietly, as a well-mannered beast should do. In short, if you treat him as a gentleman, he will behave himself as such.

Islip and Blechinton, an old naturalist records, are both in Oxfordshire, and are but two miles apart; yet the observation has been made, that whenever a snake or adder was carried from Blechinton, where such reptiles abounded, to Islip, where they were scarce, it forthwith pined away and died, a circumstance as affecting as that Mrs. Somerville relates of the Ionings, or Lapland marmots. These migrate in large bands, every twenty-five years, to the Western Ocean, which they voluntarily enter and are drowned, thereby averting the evils incident to a state of things in which population is in excess of food. The stork, too, according to some German writers, has formed a nice estimate of his duties, and never remains in a city in which their dues are withheld from the clergy.

Instances beyond number of the intelligence belonging to the humbler classes of animals might here be cited, but one of the most singular is that of the bear, who, directly he finds himself indisposed, hastens to seek the only remedy for his disorder—an agreeable repast of human flesh. Whatever we may think to the contrary, this animal, who, the Norwegian peasants declare, has the wit of two and the strength of seven men, is really a "delicate monster" after all, and has his ailments and maladies like other folks. In the spring, his paws, which he has

been sucking all the winter for his sustenance, are so tender and soft, that he hobbles rather than walks, and should he, by chance, step on a stone, no gouty alderman suffers more than he. In Northern Europe there is a sort of weasel who is as great a gourmand as was the late Sir William Curtis. He makes a principle of never quitting a carcass until he has picked every bone quite clean, and so, when he finds he has reached a state of repletion, he hastens forcibly to insert his body between two trees growing in close proximity to each other. The compression he thus insures enables him to eject the food he has already swallowed, and, this result obtained, he hastens back to his banquet, repeating the process till nought is left him to consume. The lynx is a beast of less voracity. He kills much, but eats little; his feasts are very moderate during the waxing of the moon—when it wanes he indulges himself more liberally.

We may think strange the practice which obtained in the time of Albertus Magnus of physicking hawks, when sick, with pills enveloped in honey and pepper. But our surprise will diminish when we learn that, in Norway, should a cow chance to break her leg, the disaster is immediately repaired by giving her cow's bones to gnaw, which she does with all the dexterity of a dog. That stately beast, the elk, unknown to these islands for many a long year, is understood to be peculiarly subject to cramp and epileptic fits, and the way he repels their assaults is by stretching his hind foot to his head, and vigorously scratching his ear. So potent is he in overcoming these disorders, that rings, made from his cloven hoofs, are thought to be preservatives against them, just as the dried flesh of the greedy wolf, when taken in the form of a powder, is considered to stimulate a jaded appetite. A Middle Age writer on these subjects says that, if the heart of a crow or a bat be laid on a person, it will prevent his sleeping, and so, also, will the head of a bat, powdered and bound on the right arm. On the other hand, should it be laid on the stomach of a sleeping person, he will sleep on until it be removed. Of course, there is no doubt of the fact—for is it not stated in a learned book full of dark sayings and incomprehensible jargon?—but the reason thereof is not



easy of discovery. Nor can we well understand why such virtue was formerly ascribed to the tincture of coral as a therapeutical remedy, and why it should be thought that coral beads, hung round the neck, were prophylactics against apoplexy, the plague, and a multitude of other diseases. Enough to know that to this belief coral necklaces were indebted for their origin.

Mr. Beckford, of "Vathek" celebrity, was a man brimful of humour, and nothing delighted him more than, as the Irish say, "poking his fun" at other people. After observing he thought it "a little hard" that through the selfishness of the Dutch, "frogs were excluded from the magistracy of their country," he continues—"Very slight authority would persuade me that there was a period when Holland was all water, and the ancestors of the present inhabitants fish. A certain *oysterishness* of eye and flabbiness of complexion are almost proof sufficient of their aquatic descent; and pray tell me for what purpose are such galligaskins as the Dutch burden themselves with contrived but to tuck up a flouncing tail, and thus cloak the deformity of a do'phin-like termination?"

Mr. Beckford had, probably, no converse with the writings of some of our earlier natural historians, or he would have found a more suitable subject for his badinage. He would have learnt from them that in nature metamorphoses occur quite as extraordinary as that he describes in his mirth. A wise people of antiquity, the Egyptians, symbolised the idea of deformity by the figure of a bear—that animal being known to change its sex regularly every year.

In Scandinavia, the cuckoo, we are told, in his second year becomes a kite. In his original state he is accounted a lazy bird, for, instead of catering for himself, as most respectable birds do, he is indebted for his food to a faithful friend and attendant—a diminutive specimen of his own kind—who waits on him for the purpose. Directly on his conversion into a kite, he reveals his change of condition by incontinently gobbling up his benefactor, and earning for himself the title, which is everywhere given to him, of the ungrateful bird.

In the vegetable world these transmigrations are also not uncommon. There are places in the North where, in wet years, barley degenerates into oats; whilst, in favourable seasons, good oats become transformed into barley. A German writer, formerly of great repute, positively contends that, under certain circumstances—which he indicates—wheat sinks into the degraded condition of tares; and that a nutmeg from the Moluccas, when planted in Europe, grows up a walnut-tree. It was seriously maintained, in a thesis by another erudite German, that geese belonged to the vegetable, and not the animal, kingdom, and actually grew upon trees. Whatever were his reasonings, they had cogency sufficient to convince the doctors of the Sorbonne, who, accordingly, issued a decree declaring these birds to be no birds, and permitting their use as articles of food in Lent. It was in a spirit of similar enlightenment that another learned faculty, of the same school of divinity, authoritatively pronounced the *tail* of the beaver to be fish, and the *body* to be flesh.



Beavers.

JANUARY.



Spring Crocus.  
Daisy.  
Box.  
Butcher's Broom.  
Spurge Laurel.  
Mezerion.  
Furze.  
Willow.  
Elm.

WILD FLOWERS.

Illustrated London Almanack, 1866