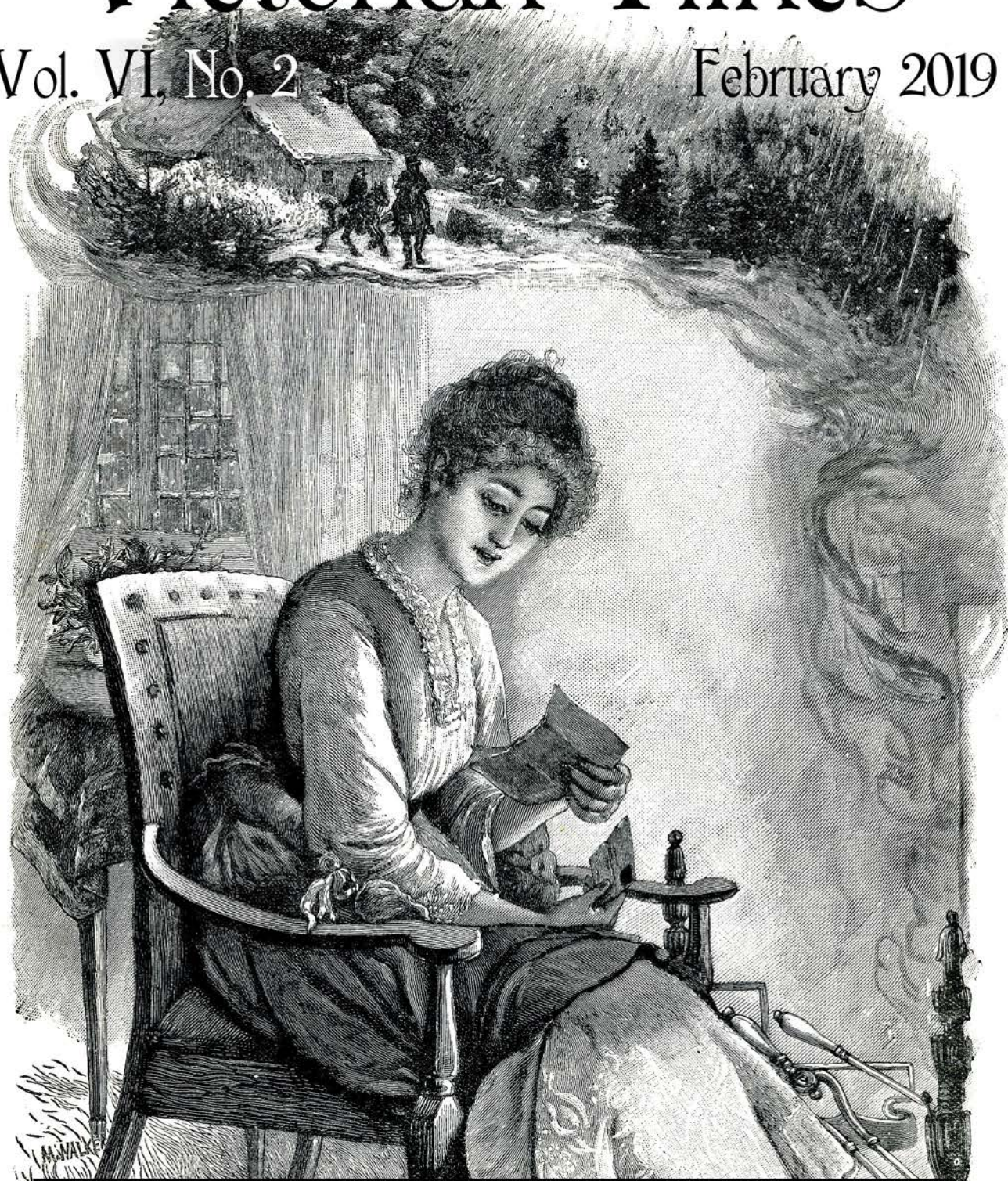


Victorian Times

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Cooking & Menus at Sea • The Art of Conversation • Some Peculiar Bicycles
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The Girl's Own Paper* *Cassell's Family Magazine*

You've Come a Long Way, Baby...

Remember that catchy phrase? Of course, it was originally used to promote Virginia Slims cigarettes, suggesting that being able to smoke with impunity was a huge improvement in women's lives! We know a bit better now, I hope—but the phrase still lingers to remind us how far we've come from our oppressive past!

I wonder what our "oppressed" sisters of the Victorian age would think of that phrase. For starters, if we *have* come "a long way," we have them to thank for it. They got the ball rolling. They were the ones who got us ladies into colleges, into jobs, into medical school, into government, into the press, and so much more. A Victorian lady of the 1850's would certainly look upon her descendants in the 1890's and say that they had come a very long way indeed!

But would a Victorian lady of those 1890's look upon *her* descendants of more than a century later and say the same? Trying to analyze the differences between the 1890's and today would require a very large book, so let's just dip into the media that I work with most here: magazines. I've learned a great deal about the Victorian woman from the magazines of her day, so I wonder what that woman would learn from our own?

Let's start by ruling out issues of fashion. No doubt the Victorian woman would be as scandalized by our styles as we are by Victorian corsets. Let's also rule out changes in technology. The Victorian woman would probably surmise (correctly) that our washing machines and dishwashers are simply a means of exchanging flesh-and-blood servants for mechanical ones. (What they'd make of Smartphones, I can't begin to imagine!) Now, let's try to imagine what a Victorian woman would *expect* from a woman's magazine published a century later...

First, I think she would expect to see a great deal about women's education. Since that was a burning issue in the 1880's and 1890's, with colleges only just beginning to award women the same degrees given to men for the same level of work, it's not surprising that magazines of that era have articles on how to pass exams, profiles of leading women's colleges, profiles of leading women scholars, and so forth. Glancing through the women's magazines on my coffee table, I find... not so much. If today's women go to college, you wouldn't guess it from, say, *Woman's Day*. Not only are there no articles on preparing for college—or, even, preparing your *children* for college—there's really not much indication that such magazines expect a high level of education from their readers. Articles are short—often less than a page—and accompanied by brightly colored illustrations. Language is kept simple. In today's women's magazines, you're not going to find, for example, an 8-part series on "archaeology for girls" or "understanding your government."

Similarly, since the Victorian woman has struggled so hard to enter the workplace, she'd probably expect quite a bit of career advice in the magazines aimed at today's woman. Again, as I scan the pages, I see... not so much. While there *are* magazines aimed more specifically at the working woman, those that you'll find at the checkout counter seem to assume that most women still stay at home and raise children. Lots of articles for moms, not so many for female CEOs. And none, that I've seen, that encourage or advise moms on how to *become* CEOs (though I admit that there are a few articles on home businesses run by "stay-at-home moms").

The Victorian woman would probably be a bit concerned by the central theme of *most* women's magazines, which is—personal appearance! She might wonder why we need page after page of articles on beauty tips, hair styles, and pieces comparing well-dressed celebrities with not-so-well dressed celebrities. She would probably be a bit flummoxed by our apparent desire to obtain health tips from actresses rather than doctors. And she would probably be baffled by the vast range of weight-loss tips featured in every women's magazine. It's interesting that Victorian magazines rarely, if ever, discuss the question of what to do if you are overweight—and when they do, they prescribe the same thing every time: "eat less, exercise more." So either Victorian women were not commonly overweight or they didn't talk about it much!

Now, I'd like to leave this as a comparison between *Victorian* magazines and the magazines of today—but it's not that simple. Recently I came across a copy of *Woman's Day* from 1966. Since it had cats on the cover, I took it home and leafed through it—and was amazed at the differences between that issue and the issues I receive today. Articles were *long*. They were *informative*. They assumed that women had brains, and were interested in something more than their looks, celebrity gossip, and entertainment. That wasn't 100 years ago; that was just over 50 years ago—at a time when "women's lib" was in full swing. And it got me wondering—when did women's editors stop believing that I had a mind, and might want to use it?

The women who smoked Virginia Slims might have thought they'd "come a long way, baby." But I'm not sure a Victorian woman would agree!

—Moira Allen, Editor
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VILLAGE LIFE IN THE OLDEN TIME.

By FREDERICK GALE.

With Illustrations by HUGH THOMSON.



AD I called this paper " 'Tis Sixty Years Since " I should be encroaching on the ground sacred to Sir Walter Scott, who chose that name for the first of the "Waverley" novels. I am endeavouring to draw an accurate sketch of rural England as it was sixty years ago more or less, so the above title seems to me an appropriate heading. My memory runs back very readily to the year 1827, and I shall confine what I have to say to a period between 1827 and 1833, both years inclusive, being the last six years of my first decade of life ; the whole of which was passed in country villages. When writing in the first person, about people and things of one's childhood, the difficulty is to keep the narrator in his proper place, which ought to be as a kind of chorus, similar to that in the Greek plays ; and except when absolutely necessary, never to let him appear as a prominent figure. Memory is a gift like drawing and music, and can only be assayed by careful testing. And now deviating for the first and last time, I hope, from the good intentions which I have laid down of only " playing " Chorus, I must put myself forward as a puppet twice, as a fair proof that my memory is pretty accurate. Any one living as a child in a small isolated country village in a wild down country shut in by ridges of green hills on every side, as I did, has impressed on his or her mind a perfect recollection of every local landmark, and every eventful circumstance which has occurred, for the simple reason that daily life was monotonous, and treats and indulgences were very few in days when locomotion, and communication with the outward world, were in a primitive state. Hence possibly it is not to be wondered at, that in 1846, on the evening previous to my first visit to the village in which I was born, and which I left in 1829 when six years old, I was able to make a rough ground plan of the village, marking lanes, turnings, foot-paths, etc ; and when I paid my first visit to and stood " on my native heath," or rather village green, I had no difficulty in leading my companion, a near relation who held a living in the country, to any point he named, and to give a pretty good history of events. It was so anyhow.

And again three or four years ago I was for the first time on the site of the old rectory of my childhood after an absence of fifty-eight years, and although I was prepared beforehand to find every vestige of the old house barns, fences, and walls, swept away and was shocked to find that the old village green had been absorbed in the new rectory garden, I could in my mind reproduce them pretty accurately. I was describing my original home to the present rector, and in walking round the garden I found one solitary landmark—an old pear tree, standing at the corner of a grand lawn-tennis ground—one of the " infamous " novelties, according to my way of thinking,

which have drawn honest young fellows away from the noble game of cricket ; and I pulled up the parson sharp, and found my bearings in a moment. To make a long story short I told him this : “ That was the entrance to the old kitchen, with a small yard inclosed by palings in front ; there where the pear tree stands was the small orchard ; between the yard and orchard there was a ditch about three or four feet deep with a little plank-bridge across giving access to the orchard ; in that ditch, on 16th July, 1827, were lying a broken dish, willow pattern, and some lobster shells and rubbish, and I fell off that bridge amongst the rubbish.” Facts of the case—July 16, 1827, was my fourth birthday and I was crowned king, crown consisting of white cardboard, latticed diamond fashion, and ornamented with coloured wafers and gold paper, and I had on a white muslin frock and trousers worked for me by a lady, who added thereto a pair of blue kid shoes—the first blue shoes I ever had. “ His majesty ” (myself) insisted on going alone, without a nurse, into the small inclosure—condition imposed by “ his people ” being that he should *not* go on the bridge. History : his majesty *did* go on the bridge, lost his balance and fell into the ditch. Conclusion of his majesty’s reign, who was deposed and put to bed, although like Arabi he became a kind of state prisoner later on, and was allowed to get up again to eat some of his birthday cake, though on a kind of parole for good behaviour ever afterwards, and with a reminder that he did not deserve the cake. Every autumn now I spend a fortnight in that part of England where I was born, and I don’t think my memory lies.

Now for a rural village of sixty years ago. The village was very similar to many others, scattered about at the foot of the downs in the neighbourhood—purely agricultural and very primitive in every way. The villages in the down country are still such as Maria Edgeworth, of blessed memory, painted in her charming stories. The special village which is now in the writer’s eye was situated some eight miles from any turnpike road, and as many from the nearest town. The parson and the squire probably took in the county paper, and here and there might have been a decently educated farmer who did so too ; and beyond the scraps of London news contained therein, the outside world was comparatively a blank, especially as the art of reading was very limited, and the price of postage was almost prohibitory. When such a rare occurrence took place as a villager having a letter from some relative—a convict perhaps, as transportation was a common remedy—who had gone to a distant colony, it sometimes happened that a “ whip-round ” amongst the neighbours was necessary to pay the postage, as letters were not prepaid, and Government did not give trust. Let us take a survey of a rural village and of classes and manners and customs of old times—commencing with the squire. When some great luminary, such as a peer of the realm, or a baronet and M.P., who was a mighty landowner in the county, was resident, all smaller lights were extinguished. Remember we are talking of an ordinary village in which an old-fashioned English squire was the head, and largest landowner. Frequently the squire was a member of a very old family whose ancestors like himself were stay-at-home people, and as magistrates and leaders in county matters acquired considerable influence.

The farmers often were representatives of the third or fourth generation of the same family who had occupied the farms, which commonly were small holdings of about two hundred acres or so ; they wore smock frocks except on Sundays, and were out looking after the labourers at daybreak and lived in what was called the kitchen, where the “ pot was swung ” over the wood fire which blazed and crackled in the big chimney place, which was so wide that often there would be a seat on either side. The chimney itself, in the back of which was the bacon loft—a square recess where fitches were hung to be smoked, was so roomy that on a snowy or stormy night the logs of wood would split and crackle from the effects of the weather without. There was a brew-house and outer kitchen for general use, and a small state-room which was only open for Sundays and for grand visitors. The kitchen was the centre room and generally paved with red bricks or stone ; it was low pitched and from the massive beams of the ceiling would be seen mighty fitches of bacon, and hams or tongues, hanging up in brown paper covers. On the walls, there generally would be seen “ samplers ” the last remnants of the tapestry art—which were triumphs of needlework executed by some of the womenfolk in their youth ; a few rather exaggerated scriptural pictures, in which apostles appeared in blue and red bathing gowns ; and Moses always had a “ cheese plate ” at the back of his head. Occasionally the

last dying speeches and confessions of highwaymen who had "suffered" at Hang Fair helped to decorate the walls.

Then there was a strapping village girl as general servant; but the farmer's wife and daughter looked after the household work and the poultry, and the butter and the produce of the farmyard, and were not above going to market. It was a very busy age. The only general education available was the dame's school and the Sunday school, and many of the farmers even could do little more than write their names. If the squire had a couple of thousand a year—all told—he was looked on as a rich man, but there was very little extravagance in his establishment. His house and grounds were better than his neighbours', and there were means of enjoyment which others had not in the shape of large lawns for bowls and other garden games, a field kept for cricket where it existed, and other sports. He kept two or three horses and hunted sometimes, and was contented with a fair head of game which he shot over with dogs, and with a moderate mixed bag, which was filled by hard walking and good exercise, but he seldom made field-sports the business of life. Classes were more defined than now, and there was one prejudice which in course of time did much towards the extraordinary change which has taken place, in the shape of the new men and old acres of to-day, and that was horror of trade. The squire liked his sons to go to one of the public schools and afterwards to a University and to follow the Army, Bar, or Church as professions; and we all know how few are the prizes in any of these three as a general rule.

So as a matter of course, when great changes, especially free trade, sprang up in later years, the country gentlemen were the first sufferers—they became poorer and those in trade made fortunes. As a matter of history, it was a fact that some men of the advanced school of politics, who were in Parliament during the agitation about the Corn Laws, went somewhat out of their way to heap ridicule and abuse on the "lords of the soil" or "owners of the dirty clod," as the country gentlemen were derisively styled. No doubt that amongst the mass of county magistrates there were hard men and black sheep, but possibly the Lord Chief Justice Cockburn was not far wrong when he stated in Court, pending an appeal case against a bench of magistrates, that his experience was that amongst the "great unpaid" as county magistrates were styled, there was sometimes a little bad law but generally fair justice.

The parsons for the most part were well-bred gentlemen and almost without exception were university men. Here and there you would find a man of good fortune among them, but as a rule they led a useful life of hard work. The Church duty was light, as in many parishes one service on a Sunday morning or evening in alternate weeks sufficed, but there was a good deal of parish work, as the poor looked to the parson and the parson's wife in all their troubles. The parson was schoolmaster to his own children when young and often took a pupil or two. If born and bred in the country he was generally a good gardener and rough carpenter and mended his own fences and painted his palings, and with the aid of one of the old-fashioned out-of-door man-servants, who was "Jack of all trades," and who understood pigs and poultry, and would look after a horse and cow and garden, got through a good deal of work in a day, plus schoolmastering, with an off day sometimes for a turn with his gun or fishing rod. A good fruit and vegetable garden was of no small object to a man with a family, and it was a great thing in the winter to have a good store of apples in the loft and preserves and other home-grown and home made luxuries.

And be it remembered if the parson had the good fortune to possess a clever help-mate he was doubly blessed, as the parson's wife had quite enough on her hands to occupy her and her daughters too. Her great pride was in the store-room with its many shelves and cupboards, and the linen room which contained all the ordinary requisites for the house and a small assortment of superfine table-cloths and table linen for state occasions. And in proof of this let the "Chorus" who was staying in the country last Christmas bear testimony. He was at a dinner party at the house of a lady who was born in the rural district of which this article treats, and the hostess had passed, by five years, the allotted period of life named by the Psalmist. He could not help exclaiming with delight at the dinner table, "What a splendid table-cloth!" It was known as the "pheasant pattern," and was like satin to the touch and shone like satin. "This table-cloth," said the lady, "was a wedding present to my mother eighty years ago." Now it had happened on this wise. It was the custom at that



*The Parson and
the Parson's Wife*

THE PARSON AND HIS WIFE.

period, and for many years afterwards before railways, for the linen manufacturers in Belfast to send their travellers all over England, and I can well remember the great strong North-of-Ireland men with light blue worsted stockings and corduroy breeches coming round, each one carrying on his head a basket like a very large washing basket full of Irish linen. The weight must have been very great. There was no devil's dust in those days, and ladies knew good stuff from bad. There was not much plate as a rule at the parson's beyond silver spoons and forks, but the lady of the house prided herself on the glass, china and table linen, and the master prided himself on his

mahogany dinner table—in days when the table cloth was removed after dinner—which was beautifully polished and shone like a looking glass.

A great deal seemed to be done with a very little money, but life was simple and every one worked. If there was a grown up sister, she taught the younger ones, and the daughters, when old enough, took it in turns to act as housekeeper, and the ladies worked regularly with the needle so many hours a day, and made their own dresses oftener than not. Boys were all taught to ride, and there was always a donkey or pony to begin on ; and such things as stirrups were never allowed until a boy could canter without them : in fact boys learnt to ride in a soft meadow by tumbling off, and very soon picked up the art of sticking on. There were few games, as the parson's sons did not mix with the sons of farmers, nor did the sons of the latter mix with the labourers' sons, and boys worked in their gardens, or learnt a little carpentering, or went out with the shooters and marked and carried the bag, or sawed or chopped wood in wet weather, or gathered the fruit in summer, and so on. The discipline was very strict, and children were never allowed to come on to the hearth-rug, or sit in arm-chairs, or to run in and out and slam the doors, but somehow the early life passed very happily. The fact was that there was no idleness, and there was, to any one with intelligence, great interest and amusement in learning about all the birds and animals and insects and inhabitants of the woods. Here and there outlying covers were strictly preserved and boards were exhibited about "man traps," and "spring guns set here ;" but I fancy there was more "bark" than "bite" about the threat. There were footpaths through the woods from village to village, open to all who would keep to them, and if boys trespassed in the wood a keeper would cut a switch and give him a wholesome reminder not to do it again. One of the worst features in the present age of the *nouveaux riches*, and of the reign of "new men and old acres" is the shocking way in which footpaths have been stopped, in very many instances most illegally. When country gentlemen were liberal in giving away their game and did not sell it, no one grudged it to them ; and the occasional poacher who wired a hare or snared pheasants was a very different character from the gang of desperate men about now, who are utterly regardless of life or limb. The village poacher usually was an idle drunken fellow who would not work, and if incorrigible would be sent to prison occasionally, though he could compromise matters by joining the army or navy. No doubt some magistrates were hard on poachers occasionally, but doubtless the extreme school of politicians exaggerated the evils. One of the funniest things which the late Mr. John Bright said in the House of Commons was on the occasion of a County Rating Bill being before Parliament, and he congratulated the House that "a large number of county members and country gentlemen had spoken, and not a single one had alluded to the game laws." The old quaker, who was a keen fisherman, never could be drawn into an opinion about preservation of salmon rivers.

Two of the greatest evils of the old days were the overcrowding of cottages, and the wholesale neglect of education. Children were sent out very young "bird-keeping," and similar employments on the farms which taught them nothing, and they grew up mere animals and became oftentimes brutal and cruel. They made splendid soldiers as they were hardy and strong, and had nothing to unlearn ; and recruiting sergeants always said that a country plough-boy was excellent raw material to work upon. Wages were in many parts very low, and bread was dear, but in the small villages where the parson and his family were of the right stamp, the poor had a great deal of help which they much needed, as, to tell the truth, I fancy farmers were rather grasping, and paid as little as they possibly could.

The "stocks" existed in every parish, but I fancy the use of them was almost entirely discontinued before my time. They were meant for the benefit of habitual drunkards and inveterate tramps. A lady who was staying at my father's house at a time before I can remember, told me that he ordered the constable to put an incorrigible tramp, who was a public nuisance, in the stocks the next time he came. The man did so, and told my father, who sent off to the nearest magistrate to have him taken out and brought before him. There was no magistrate at home and it came on to rain frightfully. "God bless my soul," said my father, "that poor fellow will be drowned!" So he took out a big umbrella, and sat by the culprit's side in the stocks, and sent for some bread and cheese for the man. "Do you think," said my father, "if I took off your boots you could slip your feet out?" "I'll try," said

the prisoner. It was a happy thought, and the man slipped out his bootless feet, my father holding the stocks up as high as he could. Out came the man's feet, into his boots he jumped and away he cut as he was advised. What a funny world! If the man had any sense he could have summoned the clergyman of the parish for aiding in an escape from justice.¹

There were certain perquisites which the poor had. They had the windfalls after a heavy gale, and boughs of trees which were blown down, whether in the squire's park or by the wayside were theirs; in the haymaking and harvest-time whole families were employed, and the poor had the gleaning in the harvest fields; milk, which is now all sent to London could be bought at a nominal price; "parish bags" of linen and bed clothing, which were made up at the vicarage, were always on hand in cases of sickness. In fact the poor were much looked after. Their amusements were not numerous, and the most was made of all local events, such as sheep-washing, sheep-shearing, throwing a big old tree, the village club-feast, harvest-home, and especially burning of a big bacon pig of twenty score—a noble art now almost extinct, but a great art of the past, when the village pig-burner would by the aid of layers of straw, singe all the hair off a pig directly after it was dead without scorching its hide and turn it out like a beautiful coloured meerschaum. Guy Fawkes's day was of course a great festival; and at Christmas we had the mummers who acted a traditional kind of play in which some were got up very much after the pictures in Mrs. Markham's *History of England*, and there always was St. George, with a real sword, the King of Egypt, whom he slays, and the Doctor who cured everything and everybody.

Many of these old villages are little altered in appearance externally, but the people are. The smock-frock has nearly disappeared, as have the red or grey duffel cloaks of the old women, who are now "Mrs." and not "Betty" or "Sukey" as they used to be. Agricultural labour is becoming scarce; steam threshing machines and other mechanical contrivances are commoner; old hedgerows and coppices have been swept away, and, to the great gain of the farmer, but to the ruin of the hunting, and to the danger of foot passengers on public roads and footpaths, barbed wire is now the common fence in many districts. Farmers now get farms at the lowest rent, and many hunt and shoot as much as they possibly can, and the tables are turned. In game counties now the keeper is king, and has done his utmost to destroy all living things which are inimical to game and (as Frank Buckland wrote) has destroyed "the balance of nature." Paths through the woods and fields are stopped everywhere and the covers are stocked with pheasants, hatched by steam from eggs bought anywhere; and are occasionally shot down by "sportsmen," who are accommodated with two guns and a shooting stool, and who break off in the early afternoon to join the home party at a hot lunch which is sent down. The keeper's hand has in many districts quite forgotten the touch of silver, and if one pound notes ever come in circulation and the keeper receives one of them from a very swell "gun" as he calls his patrons, he will think himself dishonestly done out of four pounds, as it should have been a "fiver" or gold. These changes I do not think are to the gain or enjoyment of any but a privileged few. Coursing was a great sport, and by a kind of general consent a gentleman who kept greyhounds was welcome anywhere.

We will now change the scene from a dreamy old down-country with its lazy sluggish canal picturesquely winding through the valleys to a country village of the most advanced state of civilization and enlightenment at a distance of a hundred miles and in a south-easterly direction from the old home, the era being 1830, exactly sixty years ago. Fancy what the difference must have been to a boy of between six and seven years old, who once only in his life had been to a country town for a day, and had never witnessed any traffic but the carts and waggons, and an occasional gig, and had heard nothing but the tramp, tramp, tramp, of "Colonel," "Captain," "Pilot," or "Daisy," which were, and still are, the hereditary names of the heavy old cart horses, to pass a fortnight in London on his way to a new home. How well I remember it all. I could hardly breathe for the close atmosphere and the horrible smell of the sewers—it was in the dog days. I could not eat the bread, which was sour, did not care about the meat, which was tough, or the green vegetables, which were uneatable, or the water which was filthy, or the milk which was "sky-blue"; and as to sleep

¹ The narrator of this story was the late Miss Matilda Crowe, daughter of old Mr. William Crowe, the Public Orator at Oxford. I remember the Public Orator when a very old man at his rectory or vicarage at Alton, Wilts. Jane Austen mentions the Crowe family in her *Life*.

it was impossible, owing to the animalcula which swarmed. We had lodgings over a chemist's in Regent-street, on the right-hand side. The noise of the streets frightened me and the only pleasurable reminiscences which I have were to watch the Household Cavalry pass down Regent-street every morning—many of the older soldiers wearing Waterloo medals—and seeing the parade at the Horse Guards or the trooping of the colour at St. James's, and I saw men who had really been in the battle of Waterloo. I remember one of the Guards' regiments, at any rate, had black men with white turbans on their heads who were drummers and cymbal bearers. I remember also the "Charlies," the old watchmen, calling the hours at night, and seeing them in their large great coats with lanthorns in their hands.

But the London church on Sunday astonished me most, my former experience having only been at a little country church where the blacksmith with a big bass viol, the barber with a clarionet, some one else with an instrument which was called a bassoon, and another with a flute accompanied the rustics to some of the Sternhold and Hopkins Old Version of the Psalms; and where the rustics touched their forelock if they passed the squire's pew, and a host of old men and women in the body of the church who could not read, and a lot of hobble-de-hoys of farm boys in the gallery, looked on in blank amazement at the whole performance. Probably the creed of many in my first home might have been summed up in a blind belief in the parson, the squire, the devil, the gallows, and ghosts. Hang fair when within reach was always popular, and bad boys and girls were taken to see men go by in the cart; and there never was a village in which some one's ghost had not appeared to many; and there were many corners bad to pass at night.

The church we went to in London was All Souls, Langham-place, and we sat in the gallery close to the organ. The thing which astonished me was seeing people coming to church in handsome carriages with servants in grand livery in attendance. The dresses of the ladies and the sound of the organ and the singing bewildered me, and I was constantly "hushed at" or a finger was pointed angrily at me for looking off my book, by a serious relation, who was always turning on the "Dr. Watts stop" morning, noon and night; and I was scolded on the way home, and cried a good deal, especially when the blinds were drawn down, that I might not see the wickedness of London, and I went to bed with the honest conviction that all the people who used their carriages on Sundays were booked for the very worst of Dr. Watts's termini. My old Noah's ark had been left at our old home and I could not take to a new one which had been given to me, and I began to lament my dear old Noah, and Shem, Ham and Japhet, and especially their wives who were straight down from head to foot but had no waists and were not symmetrical like my substituted Sunday toy.

How glad I was to get away to my new world and what a dazzling world it was—situated between London and Dover on the turnpike road. There must have been more money in the family somehow, as our new drawing-room was furnished throughout with rosewood, which was then the fashion; and that rosewood furniture is as good to-day as when it came from London, as I can vouch for, as I sit in some of the chairs and sofas every Christmas. Things were well made then, of seasoned wood and meant to last for ever.

My new village was a large scattered village with a flourishing population bounded on one side by the Medway. There were miles of corn-fields and hop-gardens and orchards laden with fruit, in such quantities that villagers who had had their "shoes wiped with a cherry bough" *i.e.* paid their first footing of sixpence, might pick and eat what they liked. The best native oysters were carried about and opened at the door at the price of three a penny. Farmers were rich men of capital who held fifteen hundred or two thousand acres and dressed like gentlemen and had good houses, and their wives and daughters came to church dressed as grand as the squire's wife. The road was alive all day with traffic, and coaches, carriages and four, and vans and vehicles of all kinds; the old broad-wheeled heavy waggons, with the lanthorn swinging in the tilts, and the tramp of the horses, which made a good accompaniment to the drowsy music of the bells made good music to my ear.

When Parliament met or rose, the road was like a perpetual Derby Day. Foreign potentates, Royalty very often, opera singers and dancers, peers and members of Parliament were posting away to or from the continent as fast as four horses could draw their carriages. Every country town on the route had its posting houses where



A VILLAGE CHOIR.

the coaches changed and post-horses were provided; commercial travellers drove good horses in their own traps and the inns all had a turn. Express boys—little feather-weight boys on broken-down thoroughbreds—in their smart uniform and livery, hat and cockades—for they were supposed to belong to the Crown—galloped by with despatches for Government, Rothschilds or the Press; smuggling by land or water was quite a fine art and money was flying about wholesale. And we had at various times crowds of itinerants;—“Buy a broom” girls, tramps, Punch and Judy men, distressed Poles, little men—jockeys—wrapped up in flannels and with their saddles strapped round them, “wasting” as they walked, leading race-horses; pedlars with jewellery, and vendors of fruit, fish or crockery-ware; which latter were carried in little carts drawn by dogs; and men with performing bears and monkeys. It was a very lively part of the world indeed and very advanced compared with the shires.

national schools had sprung up, and education grew rapidly. The quietest turn out on the road was the Duke of Wellington's light travelling carriage, never drawn by more than a pair of horses, and when on his way to or from Walmer Castle the Duke was saluted by every coachman on the road.

Many of the large farmers were radicals and dissenters or with Calvinistic tendencies and utterly indifferent to influence by the squire or parson; and just as now, tithes were the subject of much controversy. On the plea of the oppression of the tithes, the farmers and their labourers came to loggerheads. London agitators sent the fiery cross throughout the south and west of England. Violent and revolutionary tracts, signed "Captain Swing," were circulated wholesale, with recipes for making fire-balls and slow matches; and in the early winter of 1830, when the dark nights came, the sky was one blaze on all sides with burning ricks. Riotous mobs paraded the country breaking the threshing machines. The night coachmen brought reports of fires and rioting all along the road and times were bad. The magistrates and the yeomanry were constantly out, and the Riot Act was read and the yeomanry were pretty free with the use of their swords in many parts of England. Orders were issued by the government to the county magistrates not to yield to intimidation as regarded the equalizing of wages or employing machinery. It was a bad time, and a special winter commission was held in the Assize towns, and I remember as well as yesterday the rick burners being hanged at Pennenden Heath near Maidstone, and seeing the crowds going by in carts and on foot to Hang Fair just before Christmas, 1830. I read the particulars a short time since in the Kentish papers of that execution. A man, who was a desperate character and ringleader, and two boys, both under the age of twenty, were carried out in a waggon with their ropes round their waists, guarded by warders with loaded blunderbusses, and escorted by a troop of cavalry to Pennenden Heath; and I fully remember the account being told to me a day or two after the execution by a young artillery officer who was there. I heard his account and saw the last dying speech and confession which the cook bought of a hawkier. There was a rough wood-cut of the gallows and the three rick-burners hanging, which kept me awake for many a night, especially as the young officer told me that the men "gave up the ghost." The execution of the two youngsters was a "murder." The boy who turned king's evidence was declared by the jury to have been the "putter up" and instigator of the arson, and was a fortnight at work inciting the boys to do it, and himself *brought the tinder box and brimstone matches* (lucifers not being invented) and lit the straw for them to put under the rick. "Look, brother," said one of the boys (according to the newspaper account) "the gallows is an awful looking thing—let us shake hands before we die." "Tell mother not to fret," said one of the boys to his sister, who came with the father—bringing their coffins in a cart to the gallows; and he said that he was glad that his father had leave to carry the bodies home, and directed how they should be placed in the cart. Six months later, or in July, 1831, a boy of fourteen was hanged at Maidstone for murder on the ground of *malicia supplet aetatem*. Mr. Justice Gaselee was the judge, and left him for execution without mercy. The boy and his brother and accomplice, *aet* twelve, who was admitted as king's evidence, were two ignorant and neglected young savages—but it was a terrible murder. They waylaid a boy of nine years old who was coming home with a few shillings due to his father for pension, and they planned the murder in the morning on meeting the boy on his road to a neighbouring town for the money. They got him into a wood and cut his throat and hid the body under a heap of stones. The suspicion fell on them, as on the Sunday following the murder it was remembered that they changed half-a-crown to buy apples in a shop! I remember that murder and the crowd going to Hang Fair as well as yesterday, and I met an old cavalry officer last Christmas who was then a youngster quartered at Maidstone, who was riding by the gaol and saw the boy hanging. A late Governor of Newgate, Mr. Jonas, who was a great friend of mine, was commencing his career as a prison officer, and was at Maidstone with some prisoners on the day of execution, and told me thirty years afterwards that out of mercy the warders made a canvas jacket heavily weighted to put on the boy.

Then in 1832 came the Reform Bill Riots, and mobs pervaded the rural districts, and possibly some of the liveliest elections ever seen were at the first election after the Act passed. Probably Dickens took the Eatanswill election from Chatham and Rochester in which the first scenes of *Pickwick* were laid. An old servant took me into Chatham on my donkey, and the donkey and I were knocked about like two

shuttlecocks, hustled every way by the crowd. The drinking, fighting and row were tremendous. As I heard at the time, voters were hocused and sent off in post chaises and kept away till the polling was over, and bribery was rampant.

There was much military and naval life also in this district as Chatham and Sheerness were in the neighbourhood. Young military officers were not allowed to go about in mufti within a certain distance from a garrison town and they made a good show in their uniform. The young officers had a knack of wearing their hair long, cultivating bushy whiskers, smoking a good many cigars and drinking a great deal of wine, and they flavoured their conversation with a good deal of fancy swearing. Duelling was still in existence and did not die out entirely until 1842, when Colonel Fawcett was shot by his brother-in-law, Lieutenant Munro of the Blues.



FROM *The Looking-Glass for the Mind*.

Now for the dress and manners and customs. I have before me old school-books, amusing books; music-books, and books of social life. With due deference to the



FROM *The Adventures of a Pincushion*.

learned men of to-day, I believe that the Eton Greek and Latin Grammars were the easiest ladders to learning those languages. Only test their value by the brilliant scholars of to-day—such men as Mr. Gladstone, Lord Selborne, Lord Cranbrook, the Bishop of Southwell, and the like. As regards our other books Maria Edgeworth's tales, to which Professor Ruskin gives the post of honour in his bookcase at Brantwood, which he showed to me there, was our favourite. Then there were wondrous moral tales with wonderful pictures, *The Looking Glass for the Mind*, illustrated by Bewick, especially has one of Adolphus and Dorinda walking in the greenhouse, the former holding his coat-tails, and the latter holding her skirts aside so as not to injure the flowers. In another, *The Adventures of a Pincushion*, there is a priceless picture of Earl Godwin choking himself with a crust of bread which a lady is describing to her children who have seen the picture at the Royal Academy. For the benefit of youth the picture is represented by illustrations, and Earl Godwin and his friends are attired in the costume of George II. Then as regards the ladies' dresses. Ladies who "dressed" dressed very expensively. Silks and satins were very dear and lace was a great feature. Before me now is a miniature of an old relative of the period who has an enormous cap in the shape of a butterfly and a collar and pelerine of splendid lace. Ladies wore preposterous bonnets and shortish dresses, and, in full dress, at dinners and balls, dowagers wore large broad-brimmed velvet hats with an ostrich feather and a loop of diamonds or other jewels. Young ladies wore enormous balloon sleeves, and their hair was worn in curls with a



"COME, LET US GO FORTH INTO THE FIELDS."
(From Mrs. Barbauld's *Hymns in Prose*.)



"A CLEAR FIRE, A CLEAN HEARTH, AND THE RIGOUR OF THE GAME."

mass of hair on the crown kept in by a tortoiseshell shovel-like comb. Their dresses were worn short with a good display of foot and ankle. Old gentlemen and young men of the higher class too, in the country almost invariably wore breeches and boots, and the evening dress of elderly men was a blue coat and gold buttons, frilled shirt, white waistcoat, blue breeches and silk stockings and pumps with gold buckles. Many still wore powder. I can call to mind three "pigtales" only. Young dandies adopted the blue coat, gold buttons, black trousers and white waistcoats, and their

shirt fronts were of lace with small frills and ornamented with studs, and gold chains, black trousers, elaborate silk stockings; and for dinner parties gorgeous cut velvet waistcoats, and jewelled buttons were in vogue, and instead of the frilled shirt they often wore a black satin "waterfall" neckcloth with expensive pins and chain. A few middle-aged bachelors still wore pantaloons tight at the ankles. Men danced all the figures in the quadrilles and knew the steps. Few but military men could waltz well, and comparatively few girls were allowed to waltz, it being considered "fast." A good deal of wine was drunk at and after dinner, port and sherry being almost the only drinks. Champagne and claret were little known. Beer was drunk at dinner as a matter of course as well as wine, which was placed on the table for guests to help themselves, and at dinner people had to ask some one to take wine with them. Except amongst military men there was very little smoking amongst the old school, and visitors on going away, if they did smoke, would never think of lighting a cigar in the hall. Cards were played a great deal. Old ladies, especially widows, and old single ladies looked forward to their rubber, as did many country parsons, and I have seen old ladies with their snuff-boxes beside them, a fashion set by old Queen Charlotte in days past. I fancy the stakes were small, silver threepenny or sixpenny points perhaps, as I never saw copper. In large country towns, card parties were common, but mostly amongst the local inhabitants, and round games were played at which people lost perhaps three or four pounds in an evening. Cards were the toys of children in the winter evenings, but never for money, and children learnt most games, beginning with "casino," "commerce," and "Pope Joan"; and it always did a deal of harm if some good-natured old boy at Christmas put down a shilling or two or a half-crown for the children to play "fright" for. It did harm, and sent many a child in tears to bed.

Music in general was not of the highest order. Young ladies touched the light guitar, and sang namby-pamby songs, or played some stock "music-master's" piece. I remember a terrible thing called *The Battle of Prague*—a military piece with a good deal of bass and heavy pedal for cries of the wounded, &c. Old music books are before me now. *Love's Ritornella* is the name of one, of 1830, with a picture of a benevolent bandit with guitar enchanting a coquettish maiden tripping on, with a castle and mountain in the background; *The Bridesmaids' Rondo* is another with a picture of charming young ladies with Princess Charlotte waists singing to a young masher forester with a horn at his side, and a villainous old forester with a double squint; then there is *Der Freyschutz Rondo*, with a picture of a party of impossible foresters with impossible guns, blowing impossible horns and drinking bumpers of nothing out of impossible stage goblets. How I delighted as a child when a dinner party was on and there was a little good music after dinner, to creep down out of my bed and sit on the stairs,—at which the servants thoroughly connived—and to listen to "*Good night, All's Well*;" or some of Locke's music of *Macbeth*; "*The Chough and Crow*," and such like; and time passed merrily, especially when one of the servants brought me some tippy cake or macaroons. One portion of my life is not pleasant to look back to, and that is the reflection on miserable Sundays of the past. I think heads of families erred, on the right side perhaps, in a district where Sunday on a great post road was almost unknown as a day of rest to the floating population, as Sunday was the great travelling day for foreigners, and many of the London world also, and the public traffic was incessant. But our Sundays *were* sad. We began the day with much "Dr. Watts:" French collects and other lessons were laid on, to say nothing of two long services; and in the winter much reading of books appropriate to the day—and some *were* "scorchers"—"*Death Bed Scenes*" for choice was the worst. I read the death bed of an infidel farmer in that book last Christmas. Upon my word it was as bad as the cries of the wounded in *The Battle of Prague*.

In many things we are much more civilized; in many also we have much gone back. We do not hang men outside gaols now before the public gaze, but I much doubt whether the unblushing accounts of horrible murders, and verbatim accounts of sensation trials do not do more harm than public executions did. I am sure that our grandmothers, whose pride was to be "gentlewomen," would never have dreamt of going to hear a horrible trial and to witness sentence of death on one of their own sex. Men don't ruin themselves as they did at the gambling houses sixty years ago, but betting and playing for stakes which the players cannot afford seem to be the curse of the age.

FEBRUARY

BY AN ARTIST-NATURALIST.

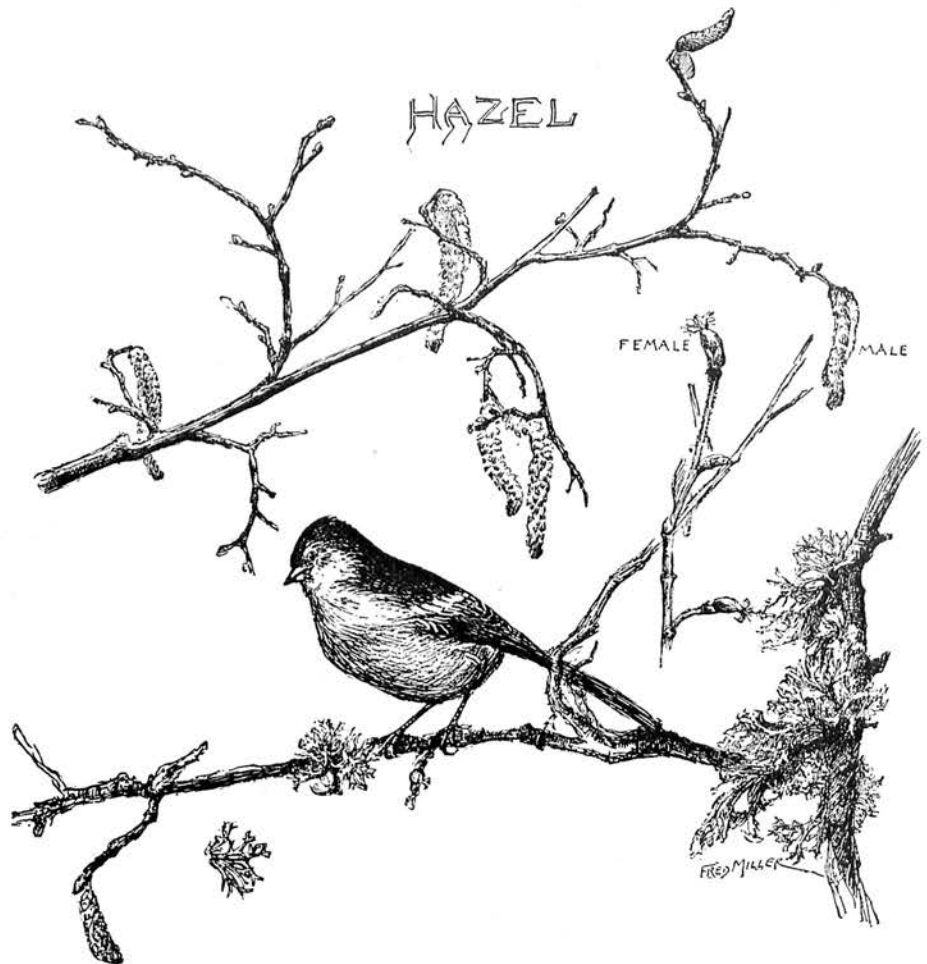


"Now, when the catkins of the hazel swing
Wither'd above the leafy nook."
—*Buchanan.*

THIS is the month of catkins. The hazel, with its pale yellow blossoms hanging down in groups of two and three from the ends of the twigs, is a conspicuous feature under our woods and in our copses and spinneys. The catkin is the type of inflorescence of many trees like the arbele and elm, and if we examine one of these "pussy cats' tails," as children call these blossoms, which fall in such countless numbers after they have cast their pollen to the winds, we shall find that it is composed of a central rope or hanging stalk, upon which are numerous little tufts of stamens, each such collection of organs being a separate flower. Botanically, a catkin is a unisexual spike that falls away after fruiting or flowering. Early in the year, if we examine a hazel catkin, we find that it appears to be a solid mass, brownish in colour, sticking out angularly from the twigs. By February it has expanded and

loosened out; and as the month progresses the catkin gradually lengthens, and finally hangs down like a tassel, swaying about with every breath of wind. The anthers burst open under the warmth of a February sun, and clouds of yellow dust or pollen are shaken over the tree, and the female blossoms are thus fertilised. These latter flowers (if such they can be called), which in the autumn produce the nuts that everyone is so eager to gather, are quite inconspicuous, and are only seen by those who look for them. I have drawn one taken from a filbert tree. It consists of some darkish green bracts, with a number of reddish filaments projecting from the end of the bud. These pinkish hairs constitute the pistil, and are ready to catch the pollen that is floating about. Nature is prodigal in all her processes; and though there would be enough pollen in one catkin to fertilise some hundreds of blooms if every grain fell in the right place, we have dozens of catkins to effect this, so that the chance of a single female flower remaining unfertilised is small indeed. All wind-fertilised plants produce their pollen in abundance. A field of corn—for all grasses are wind-fertilised—must produce an amount of pollen out of all proportion to the quantity actually made use of. We are reminded by Tennyson that Nature—

"Out of fifty seeds,
She often brings but one to bear."





And we find this abundance in all Nature's handiwork. If you pick a catkin that is in full blow, and shake it over a piece of white paper, you will get a cloud of yellow dust; and those who have a microscope should examine this pollen, as it is very beautiful when magnified. The pollen of the mallow is a favourite slide in all microscopic displays, and no idea of the structure and beauty of each grain of pollen can be formed by the naked eye.

According to the old country saying, February is supposed to "fill the ditch," but our last February (1891) was an unprecedentedly dry month. The long frost which marked this last year vanished completely when it did break up, and we started the month with a warm sunny day. I was reminded by my mother, who is a Cambridgeshire woman, that the 2nd of February was Candlemas Day. The word had no significance to me; but then I am a Londoner, and the poetry and romance of life has but a sterile soil to take root in in a huge city like London. The word Michaelmas is hardly used there, and yet in the country almost everything dates from this day.

"If Candlemas Day be wet and foul,
Half the winter is June at Yule;
If Candlemas Day be fair and dry,
Half the winter's to come by-a'-bye"—

is a quatrain that is still used by villagers, and we watched this 2nd of February with some

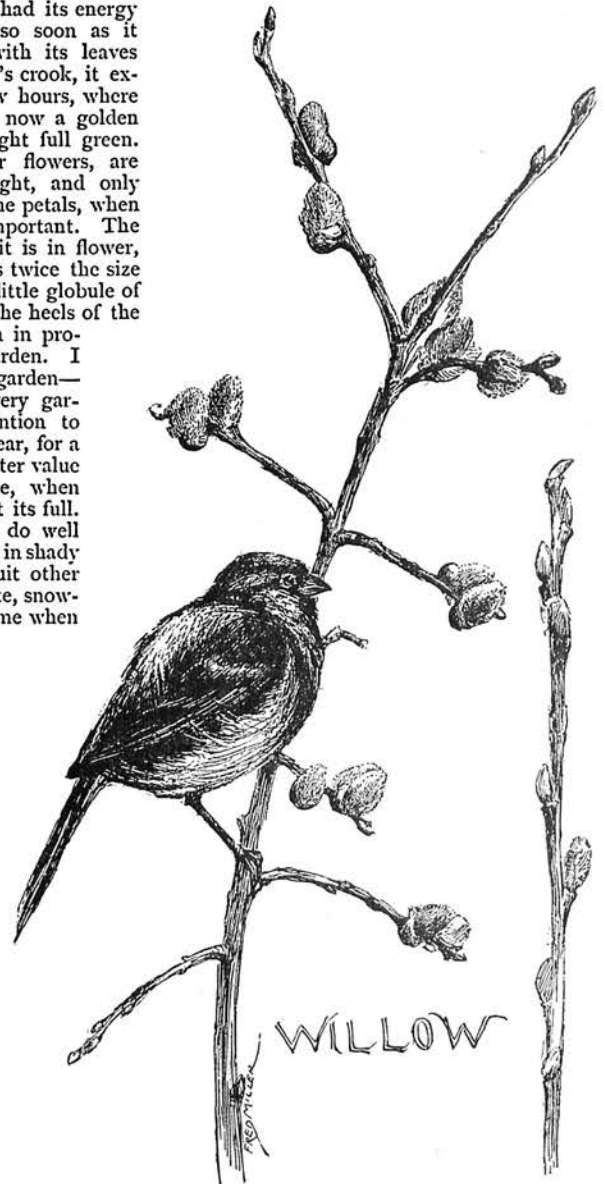
interest. The day was not wet, but it was certainly dull and gloomy.

In a note in my diary I saw the first of our spring flowers, the aconite. I always greet this humble flower with cheers, for it is the very first to put in an appearance. It is one of those plants that seem to have had its energy imprisoned underground, and so soon as it pushes through the ground, with its leaves wrapped round like a shepherd's crook, it expands, and, seemingly in a few hours, where the soil was erstwhile bare is now a golden cup standing in a saucer of bright full green. Aconites, like so many other flowers, are entirely sensitive to the sunlight, and only open when the rays fall upon the petals, when they open and become quite important. The aconite goes on growing while it is in flower, and at the end of a fortnight is twice the size it was when it first showed its little globule of amber. Snowdrops follow at the heels of the aconites, and should be grown in profusion, as they tell well in a garden. I consider that every lover of a garden—which is synonymous with every gardener—should pay great attention to these flowers of the opening year, for a bloom in January has a far greater value than a dozen or two in June, when Nature's banking account is at its full. And all these earliest flowers do well under trees and hedgerows, and in shady places that later on do not suit other flowers. Flowers like the aconite, snowdrop, and violet, bloom at a time when most trees are bare, and when sunlight falls on spots that later in the year are always shaded. In Regent's Park the plan has of late years been adopted of sowing these early flowers in the grass; and certainly they are much more beautiful when so grown, the grass being so much better a background than earth to show them off. Crocuses, I think, should only be grown in grass, for a certain stiffness and formality that obtrudes itself when these flowers are planted in borders is quite lost sight of as they push their way through the blades of grass. Where flowers are planted in lawns, they must not be moved as soon as they have finished flowering, but must be allowed to ripen their bulbs by allowing

the leaves to remain for a month or two after the blossoms have fallen. The two most beautiful snowdrops are *Galanthus plicatus*, which has broad rich green leaves, with a glaucous band down the middle of each leaf, and *G. Imperati*, which has longer leaves than the former, and all glaucous in colour.

The snowflake (*Leucojum vernum*), like a large snowdrop, only with each petal distinct, and marked at the end with a yellowish-green spot instead of the inner cusp, as in the snowdrop, should find a place in every garden. So too should the mauvish-blue anemone hepatica, which throws up its flowers from the midst of its worn brownish-green leaves, that have come over as a heritage from the previous year. There is a double variety.

In most years violets are in full blow in February. The large pale Russian violet must be grown in a cold frame to flower it early in the year. The scent of violets, like mignonette, is an odour that comes in waves. It is not persistent, like the strong scent of such flowers as lilies, which soon satisfy one, and then, with their abundance, repel rather than fold one to themselves. The scent of violets, on the other hand, is a perfume that I always feel I could kiss or fold in my arms. It is an invigorating, life-giving odour, so unlike the languorous, enervating smell of orange flowers or stephanotis. Put your nose





into a bunch of violets, and after the first whiff you receive no definite sensation; but let that bunch of violets be put in a vase in the room, and its sweetness will keep stealing in upon your thoughts like the lines of a favourite poem. I class all scents under two heads—those of the violet class, that endear and invigorate one, and those of the lily kind, that fill and satiate one.

So Valentine's Day came and went without my being reminded by anything that it was here; but on Shrove Tuesday, just as I was sitting down to breakfast, a number of children, both girls and boys, came in the garden, and forming themselves into some sort of order round the front door, set to vigorously singing some lines which were quite incomprehensible; all I caught was "Give me penny, give me twopence," yet they sang the verse through two or three times, though each time faster than the previous performance, as though the important point was to get through the song as many times in five minutes as was possible. I got one little girl living near by, who had sat to me on several occasions, to write down the song, and here it is. I must tell you, though, that it took me some time to punctuate it, for it was written down without stops, and I didn't quite take it in until I had studied it a bit.

"Pity! pity! pan's hot; I be come a-shroving;
Give me penny, give me twopence, I will
be a-going.
Lard, dear, flour, dear—
That makes me come a-shroving here."

The money presumably the children collect in this day is to go to making pancakes. Mother tells me that in her native village, when she was a girl, the children used to assemble in a field opposite the vicarage, and there have

games. Stalls with sweets and cakes were there, and some pancakes were cooked outside and given by the vicar to the children. There was also an opportunity of trying one's hand at tossing a pancake—a feat I have only heard about.

As February grows older the buds begin to burst their coverings, and the life within just puts forth the tip of its nose. The buds in the briars show pink at the tips, while the thorns, with their beads of buds, just brighten on one side. Gooseberry and currant trees do more than this—they put forth the tips of their leaves as well; and if it is a forward spring, by the end of the month the gooseberries will be in small leaf. The lilac is one of the forwardest of our shrubs, and its bright pale green buds are a conspicuous feature in gardens.

I have given a page of bud studies so that those who have paid little heed to the world of herbs in its infancy may be induced to do so. I recollect that almost my first attempts at drawing from Nature were done from the buds I used to gather by the Botanical Gardens in Regent's Park. There are two distinct recollections about the spring that have come down to me from my early schooldays in London—the gathering of buds on Sunday afternoons, and watching the young ducks, when they were just hatched, darting from side to side after the flies that skimmed over the surface of the water. I have a distinct recollection, too, that I found these buds very difficult things to render satisfactorily; and to the best of my recollection all my earliest attempts at drawing brought nothing but dissatisfaction and disappointment to me, to think how far behind Nature always left me.

The buds of the ash are a velvety black, and

are still very dormant, as this is one of the last trees to come into leaf. The one from whence I drew the twig was covered with its bunches of seeds or "keys;" and I was trying to account for this, seeing that other ash trees near were without seeds. Turning through the pages of *White's Selborne*, I came across this note:—"Many ash trees bear loads of keys every year; others never seem to bear any at all. The prolific ones are naked of leaves and unsightly; those that are sterile abound in foliage, and carry their verdure a long while, and are pleasing objects."

The chestnut buds are swollen to bursting by the end of February, and the gummy exudation that covers the buds can be seen standing in beads. This gum is evidently a protective covering, and in all plants—but particularly those that are forward—Nature is most careful to wrap up her buds and blossoms with horny bracts, that drop off as the bud opens, and with a thin semi-transparent brownish tissue, which one might call Nature's brown-paper. In the aconite we find the leaves wrapped over the flower, and the plant itself curled over so that its head is buried in its breast. In apricot and peach—both of which flower this month—the calyx is of a thick fleshy nature, and entirely envelops the petals, whereas in the apple the leaves wrap over the blooms, and when the outer sheath that covers the buds is burst, and the leaves expand, the pink buds are disclosed, and are ready to open. The apricot, which flowers nearly three months sooner than the apple, has no leaves to protect the buds, but this office is performed by the dark pinkish sepals. The apricot, with its pinkish-white petals and yellow anthers, and the peach, with its rose-pink flowers and dark red anthers, are highly suitable for all decorative purposes.

The Japanese constantly use them as *motifs* in their work.

In the drawings of oak and rosebuds you will notice I have given instances of the transformation that buds will undergo when pierced by a weevil or boring insect, in order to deposit her eggs in the bud. Oak-apples are produced in this way, and if you cut a young oak-apple open you will find the maggots inside. Later in the year the oak-apples have a small hole in them, which the insect within bored in order to take flight, to live its brief space in the air. On rose trees and briars tufts of a moss or wool-like growth are frequently seen. If these are found on sweetbriars, the scent of the briar seems concentrated in these growths. This is produced by an insect, and if you cut them open you will find several cells, in each of which is a small white maggot.

Until I came to make a drawing of the cutting of the arbele, I don't remember to have seen a tree before. I did not know it when I was attracted to it by seeing it covered with its dark pinkish blossoms sticking out at all angles from its twigs until mature enough to hang down and scatter their pollen. It is a handsome tree, resembling an ash, but the trunk is smooth as it ascends, and of a silvery-grey colour.

The grey velvet flower-buds of the willow, when they catch the light, glisten like silver, and as they expand and open the yellow anthers show themselves. In osier or withy beds the blossoms, when the sun shines upon

them, are a very telling feature in the landscape, and quite distinct in their beauty.

The rooks are busy now patching up old nests or building upon last year's foundation, for the same nests, providing they do not get blown away in the winter, are used year after year. They are birds that always live in colonies, and I was told last year that in a neighbouring rookery some birds wanted to build in a tree that had never been used, but that as fast as these would-be independent birds placed their twigs in the tree, the rooks from the colony came and pulled them out, and in the end these seceders had to cast in their lot with the colony. White says:—"Rooks are continually fighting and pulling each other's nests to pieces; these proceedings are inconsistent with living in such close community. And yet if a pair offer to build on a single tree, the nest is plundered and demolished at once. Some rooks roost on their nest trees. The twigs which the rooks drop in building supply the poor with brushwood to light their fires. Some unhappy pairs are not permitted to finish any nest till the rest have completed their building. As soon as they get a few sticks together a party comes and demolishes the whole."

Rooks prefer elms to any other trees, as the numerous short-forked branches at the top of these trees afford good anchorage for their nests.

February is the month in which all our resident birds pair, though it is not before March that much is done in the way of nest-building. I fancy they take some time in

selecting a suitable site. I noticed at the end of the month my walnut tree, which is thickly covered with green moss, was being visited by birds to pick some of it off. The silvery grey lichen—which, by-the-way, covers some of the hazels growing at the outskirts of a wood near here—is largely used by birds like the chaffinch to decorate the outside of the nest. This lichen is like a miniature stag-horn fern, or even not unlike seaweed, to which class of plants it belongs. It might be made a very decorative feature, as it yields every tone of grey that the eye of a painter could desire.

Thrushes, robins, and wrens sing very cheerily now, and, with chaffinches and sparrows and tits, are the most familiar birds in the garden—rather too familiar with the gooseberry and currant buds. I am fond of watching the tits darting up the apple trees and rapidly poking their beaks into every crevice, and then hanging downwards under a twig, for they are birds that can climb in any position. They are accused of being bud stealers, but I fancy they are more after insects than buds.

Bullfinches are the worst culprits in this respect, and a good many are trapped under the fruit trees when they are on their predatory expeditions.

On a sunny day the pale brimstone or sulphur butterfly, which has been hibernating in some crevice all the winter, will come out to stretch her wings and visit some of the flowers that are in blow for their nectar. My aconites were always haunted by bees on a warm day.

WHAT TO COOK, AND HOW TO COOK IT.

AMONG fish that are especially good in February, we have whiting and skate. A very good way of cooking the first-named now that eggs are dear, and to be done without whenever possible, is to turn them round, the tail in the mouth, dip them in dissolved butter, lightly sprinkle with pepper and salt, strew them with pale raspings, put them in a baking-dish with a little butter, and bake in a quick oven for a quarter of an hour. They are also delicious, especially for an invalid, when boiled; for which, place them in a saucepan with hot water and a pinch of salt, or what is better—hot milk; let them simmer gently for five minutes, then serve with a creamy white sauce.

Skate improves with being kept for a day or two, and should always be skinned. It is best cut into fillets and simmered in a white sauce, then laid on a dish. A few fine bread-crumbs sprinkled over and grated Cheddar or Parmesan cheese. Slightly brown before a quick fire, and serve very hot. Or if boiled in water, then drained and served with black buttersauce, *i.e.*, butter that has been allowed to frizzle until it turns colour and spruce sprigs of parsley thrown in—it is also very good. Skate is a somewhat cheap fish and often despised on that account, but there are few that better repay right treatment.

Our vegetables are still sufficiently numerous to give us a fair variety; peculiar to January however, is the mock oyster-plant or—

Salsify.—This, though a somewhat troublesome vegetable to prepare, is most delicious when fried or scalloped. For frying it must be previously boiled until tender, then cut into inch lengths, dipped in a batter, rolled in raspings, and fried in boiling fat. A dish of these, garnished with parsley, finds acceptance on the supper or luncheon table. (Of course the salsify is scraped before boiling.)

Scalloped Salsify.—Boil the roots after scraping and washing in salted water until

tender, then drain and crush them in a colander to a paste. To the paste add a few fine bread-crumbs, a little butter, some pepper, a pinch of celery, salt and the yolk of an egg. Butter some scallop-shells, sprinkle with crumbs, fill with the mixture, sprinkle more crumbs over, and a pat of butter, then bake in a quick oven until the surface is brightly browned.

Some salsify, when scraped and cut into inch lengths is a delicious addition to a stew of mutton or veal.

Cooked celery is a winter vegetable we should profit by, as it is most wholesome and good. Boil it until tender in sufficient water to cover it, after which stir in a little thick white sauce, a spoonful of cream, and season rather highly.

Here is a Dutch way of cooking carrots. Take long well-shaped carrots, split them lengthwise into thin strips and cut across in short lengths. To a vegetable dish full of carrots add one medium-sized onion cut small. Place the vegetable in a saucepan with a good-sized piece of beef dripping or butter, and pepper, salt and half a teacupful of water. Stew until thoroughly tender. Turn out into a vegetable dish when ready for the table.

Brussels-Sprouts if drained when partly boiled, then laid in a stewpan with several little dabs of butter and a sprinkling of salt and pepper, then stewed until quite tender through, are very much nicer than when plainly boiled.

Chestnuts in Brown Sauce make another good winter vegetable dish. Boil the nuts until the husks begin to crack, then throw them into cold water; peel them, removing the brown skin also. Make a little thick brown sauce with stock, a spoonful of soy and potato flour to thicken; season rather highly and make very hot, letting the chestnuts

simmer for a few minutes in the sauce, then pour into a vegetable dish.

Leeks are very good and large this season, and—

Leek Soup is both stimulating and invigorating. Into an iron saucepan put a piece of good beef dripping, when it is hot add to it a bunch of leeks cut up small. Cover the saucepan and stew—stirring occasionally—until the leeks are tender and nicely brown. Dust a little flour over them, pepper and salt them liberally and add a grate of nutmeg. In a stewpan put a pint and a half of water (cold), and add to it a slice of white bread an inch thick, cut into dice and without crust. Boil this, then add the leeks to it and simmer all together until wanted.

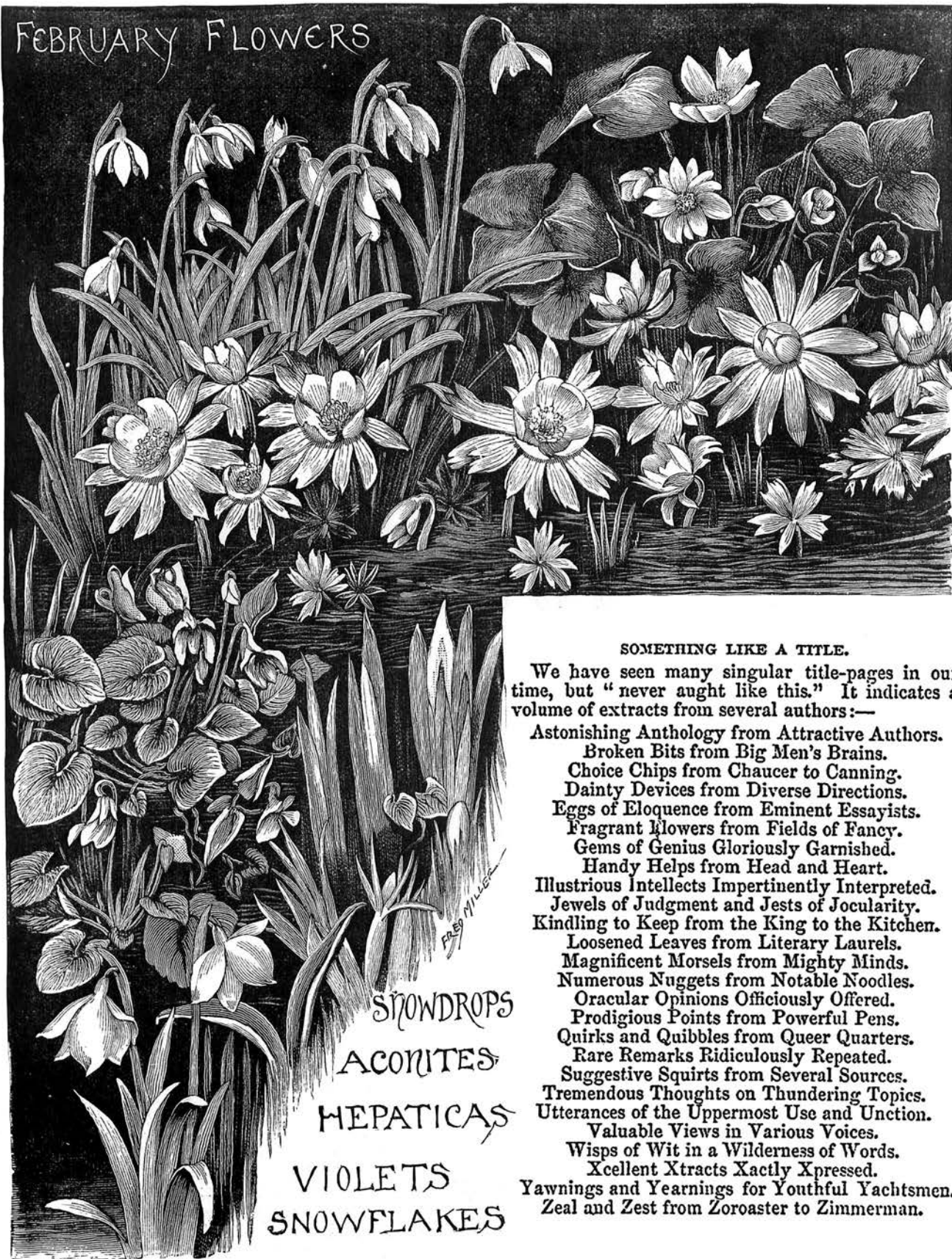
Stewed Figs are excellent; the best figs cost but sixpence a pound, and they are by far the best for cooking purposes as well as for dessert. Separate them and place in a stewpan with sufficient water to well cover them; let them stew in a corner of the oven for a couple of hours at a gentle heat. When cold, and with the addition of a little cream, these make a splendid *compôte* for the dinner or nursery table.

A Rice Sweet to eat with stewed figs or prunes. Simmer a quarter of a pound of rice in sufficient milk to well cover it until all the milk is absorbed and the rice is dry and flaky. Whilst it is cooking take a pinch of saffron and stir it into the rice, to which it will give a beautiful golden colour. Add a spoonful or more of golden syrup to sweeten it, then pour on to small plates and sift more sugar over.

Quaker Oats, if boiled as directed on the wrappers, and then poured into scallop-shells or little tin moulds previously wetted with cold water, and turned out after a few minutes, make an excellent nursery sweet to go with baked apples or stewed fruits.

LUCY H. YATES.

FEBRUARY FLOWERS



SNOWDROPS
 ACONITES
 HEPATICAS
 VIOLETS
 SNOWFLAKES

SOMETHING LIKE A TITLE.

We have seen many singular title-pages in our time, but "never aught like this." It indicates a volume of extracts from several authors:—

- Astonishing Anthology from Attractive Authors.
- Broken Bits from Big Men's Brains.
- Choice Chips from Chaucer to Canning.
- Dainty Devices from Diverse Directions.
- Eggs of Eloquence from Eminent Essayists.
- Fragrant Flowers from Fields of Fancy.
- Gems of Genius Gloriously Garnished.
- Handy Helps from Head and Heart.
- Illustrious Intellects Impertinently Interpreted.
- Jewels of Judgment and Jest of Jocularly.
- Kindling to Keep from the King to the Kitchen.
- Loosened Leaves from Literary Laurels.
- Magnificent Morsels from Mighty Minds.
- Numerous Nuggets from Notable Noodles.
- Oracular Opinions Officially Offered.
- Prodigious Points from Powerful Pens.
- Quirks and Quibbles from Queer Quarters.
- Rare Remarks Ridiculously Repeated.
- Suggestive Squirts from Several Sources.
- Tremendous Thoughts on Thundering Topics.
- Utterances of the Uppermost Use and Uncion.
- Valuable Views in Various Voices.
- Wisps of Wit in a Wilderness of Words.
- Xcellent Xtracts Xactly Xpressed.
- Yawnings and Yearnings for Youthful Yachtsmen.
- Zeal and Zest from Zoroaster to Zimmerman.



ALTHOUGH we live at a very enlightened period, and are disposed to regard rather slightly the wisdom of our ancestors, there still exist, happily, some few amongst us, who, despite of progress and the march of intellect, are content to tolerate ancient observances. For myself, I honestly admit that I belong to the old school. I confess a memory very tenacious of holidays; I am a very chronicler of birthdays, and anniversaries generally; for Saints' days, great and small, I have a kindness, if not a veneration—from the Fast of St. Stephen, the first Christian martyr, to the Feast of St. Valentine, the merriest, if not the wisest, saint in the calendar. For the latter I seem to have a peculiar sympathy, since I can trace back my recollections of it to somewhere about my sixth year—now, alas! almost forty years ago.

I well remember the unwelcome reception which greeted me on that eventful 13th of February, as, at my ordinary bed-time, I opened the door of the nursery, and found the servants assembled in full convale, with the sole exception of the footman, who was, I suspect, mounting guard over the occupants of the dining-room. "And who sent you up so early, Miss?" demanded she, who in the nursery held special dominion; with a clutch of the shoulder, half-slap, half-shake, ostensibly directed to the improvement of my carriage. Before I could reply, the good-natured cook, whose diplomacy was of a more suave character, came to the rescue, promising me tea and toast if I would afterwards go quietly to bed, as they were about to write letters to their friends, and could not possibly be interrupted. To this compromise I was fain to accede, and even now I recollect the incidents which seasoned this meal; the whirl of the tea-cups and the fortunes discovered in the grounds; the "fair young man" promised to the housemaid, and the "dark sailor" who fell to the lot of the cook. Unluckily, my open mouth and staring eyes revealed an interest too intense in these mystic rites; and I was hurried off to bed, whence I could hear a great deal of laughing, talking, scratching of pens, and a lavish tearing up of paper. Certain poetical effusions (whether original, or copied from the "Polite Letter-Writer," my literary experience did not enable me to determine) were at length read aloud, and met with unbounded applause; copies, however, were refused, which was pronounced rather unhandsome between friends "as might be trusted." The kindly goodwill to their correspondents, evinced in the majority of these missives, was not, I regret to say, universal. I have a distinct impression that a communication of an offensive character, was addressed to a nameless somebody, who ranked in the estimation of society, as "a stuck-up Miss;" and that a debate ensued, whether a green paper pair of gloves should be enclosed to her, as indicating her forsaken condition, or a yellow pair, betokening jealousy. Something I heard about despatching Joe to the post-office the next morning to intercept the letters before they were put into the letter-bag (which was always opened by the head of the household); and then I fell asleep.

I have not forgotten the arch look of my father when the bag was brought in at breakfast the next day. "Plenty of letters this morning—eh, Pursell!" said he, with a knowing look at the servant, as he opened it. "Why should there be more letters than usual?" inquired my simple-minded mother. "Only two I declare," he continued, "and both for myself; not a Valentine for any one, not even for you, my pretty pet; but, never mind, lovers and valentines will come in plenty by-and-by." "I wonder, Charles," said my mother reprovingly, "that you can talk such nonsense to the child;" then, turning to the servant, she observed, that it gave her pleasure to find no member of her household encouraged such idle and unprofitable correspondence. My father laughed again. Pursell, I think, tried to look sympathetic and respectful with his mistress, and knowing with his master; but, finding the combination a difficult one, muttered something about the door bell; and quitted the room. The good-humour which reigned in the nursery that evening was quite exuberant, and I was pronounced the best of children.

My next recollection of this eventful anniversary was at that well-known establishment for young ladies, Acacia House, Kensington—kept at that time by the late Miss Frigid—now the Montpelier Collegiate Institution for Ladies, under the Lady Principalship of Madame Surveil. Although one of the junior pupils, my former experience enabled me to interpret the signs of the times: the eager consultations of the elder girls, and their visible impatience of juvenile society; the vigilant watchfulness of their teachers, and the stately pre-occupied air of Miss Frigid herself, as the day approached, were none of them mysteries to me. It was an ordainment of the presiding deity, that the equilibrium of our minds

should not be disturbed by the distribution of letters until the duties of the morning had been accomplished. Our digestive faculties, however, were less tenderly protected, for the half hour before dinner was the period set apart for the enjoyment of our correspondence. On St. Valentine's Day, the young ladies had elicited from a friendly domestic the welcome fact, that "Missis had a heap of letters for them," and they awaited, with ill-dissembled impatience, the moment at which they usually assembled around Miss Frigid's table, to receive their treasures. The deportment of that lady was unusually bland, as she announced her regret that she had no letters for the young ladies. She ought, perhaps, to add, she continued, that certain communications had reached Acacia House, but of such a character that she had felt in committing them at once to the flames, she only anticipated the desire of the ladies to whom they were addressed. She felt gratification, too, in sparing them the feeling of indignation which such impertinences were calculated to awaken in well-regulated minds. With a look of bland decision, Miss Frigid swept out of the room, leaving behind her quite as many indignant emotions as from the aforesaid well-regulated minds she could have expected, though whether directed precisely in the quarter she desired, may be a matter of doubt. Kate Aquillette (only daughter of Colonel Aquillette, of Woolwich) went into real hysterics of disappointment, having intended to patronise society very largely on the strength of the numerous tributes to her charms, which she had reason to expect would pour in from a coterie of young gentlemen—then engaged in the service of their country, and the study of military strategy in that garrison.

Of my own personal experiences of St. Valentine's Day, I shall say but little. I received, perhaps, somewhat less than the average number of letters, of rather above the average style; and here I may observe, *en passant*, that it was remarkable how much the general character of these effusions harmonized with that of the popular literature of the day. During the time of the ballad poetry of Sir Walter Scott, they were usually of a genial and chivalrous cast; but when the fierce fashion of Byron set in, nothing short of blackness and blight could do justice to the intensity of passion of these Comrads and Laras of modern times. I could almost fancy, that in my early youth the shadow of Old Maidism must have hung over me, for one long extract from Hayley's "Triumphs of Temper" hailed me as a sort of *Serena rediviva*; and once a full page from Miss Bowdler's "Love of Solitude" complimented me upon the *penitens* character of my tastes and habits. None of these addresses, however complimentary, terminated in any practical result; and it is strange that, in the whole range of my Valentine experiences, I have only met with two cases that ever did so. In the one instance, a gentleman—who, though past the first flush of youth, and seriously interested in the lady, could not summon courage to address her *viva voce*—tendered his homage for five successive years, in the shape of a lock of hair; the white threads in which, increasing in number after every interval, seemed gracefully suggestive of the danger of delay on her part. A dark tress at length required the silent but constant lover, and for many a year those two fates have been united. In the second instance, the interference of St. Valentine was rather incidental than direct; but at any rate it was equally successful.

Ladies of all ages and conditions are accused of entertaining a particular penchant for the clergy, and in my own person I am most ready to admit the truth of the impeachment; for surely, if the Church is our venerable mother, to cherish her sons is but a sisterly duty. Similar views being entertained by the other members of my family, it happened that the young Incumbent of our village became, soon after his arrival there, a more frequent guest at the Hall than the courtesies of country visiting rendered absolutely necessary. Although the High Church party considered him too liberal to Dissenters, and the Low Church found it impossible to profit fully by sermons preached in a surplice, Mr. Hargreaves was acknowledged by all to be an excellent young man, who did his duty thoroughly, but might be richer with advantage. (Blackwell-cum-Tithe-ridge is a perpetual curacy only, rated in the clergy list at £193 16s. 5d. per annum). The beneficial influences of his society soon evinced themselves in the increased interest taken by my second niece in the ancient matrons, and other objects of charity which the village afforded; and when the young Divine avowed one evening, with unconscious enthusiasm, that he considered Mary the sweetest name in the calendar, I began, though no match-maker, occasionally to ponder the question, whether good principles, good talents, and good lineage, might not worthily match with a good fortune, even though a pretty girl were attached to it. The practical decision of this point, however, rested not with me, and my speculations respecting it seemed doubly vain and profitless, when the visits of our pastor waxed gradually fewer and shorter. I noticed in our chance encounters that he looked as though keeping an anticipatory Lent, and also that Mary had become subject to headaches and ennui. Not liking to see grave faces where I had been accustomed to meet glad ones, I resolved, after some hesitation, to call at the parsonage, and see what medicaments I could offer for the mind or suggest for the body of its occupant. Our friend's staid housekeeper ushered me into the study, promising to fetch her master, who was then engaged in a colloquy respecting the grate for the vestry. I turned to the table to take up a book, when lo! there lay spread out before me, pure and spotless, three of Mr. De la Rue's most elaborate lace-bordered Valentines. For the first time in my life, I was horrified at the sight; for what would have called forth only a sympathetic smile in other young men, seemed undignified and unbecoming in a clergyman. I thought, too, of poor Mary, and sighed as I did so; in fact, when the culprit stood before me, I could hardly collect myself sufficiently to respond to his courtesies. He in his turn became surprised, and followed the direction of my eyes, still fixed on the evidences of his guilt. He took them up, and a faint colour and a fainter smile were perceptible on his countenance, as he inquired if I did not think them beautiful, and added, that he hoped they would give pleasure to her for whom they were intended—one, little susceptible of enjoyments, but well worthy of all her friends could afford her. He read my surprise in my looks, and then forth came the mystery. He had an only sister, at once the care and object of his life. A fearful fever had visited her some years before, which, whilst sparing her life, and many of her personal attractions, had reduced her mental powers to the simplicity of childhood. Her memory, he added, by one of those strange instincts which science has failed to elucidate, whilst blank to almost all beside, was still alive to expressions of admiration and the pleasures of a first Valentine. "So, year by year," he continued, "I strive to keep alive this remembrance, and add a drop of honey to the tasteless cup of life."

His confidences did not end here. His love; the doubts and misgiving of success, which had almost overwhelmed him; the hopes he had scarcely dared to indulge, all were laid bare before me. I bade him—how could I do otherwise?—come up to the Hall and plead his own case, in his own words. The sequel may easily be guessed. If he had been charming before, the episode of the afternoon rendered him irresistible. My good brother was vanquished by a hint that Mary's headaches might become chronic; and, with a mention of the merry wedding we had on the 14th of February last, I conclude these Reminiscences of St. Valentine's Day.

A NEW ART OF CONVERSATION.



WE are all proud of belonging to the nineteenth century. We regard it with justice as being one of the most varied and brilliant epochs in the history of the world. We point with complacency to its splendid triumphs in science, in art, in literature.

In our restless activity we suffer nothing to remain stationary—everything must be progressive. We are extending the bounds of education, increasing the facilities for learning, issuing, in our provident anxiety for the eager and intelligent reader, cheap editions of our great classics, reprints of rare volumes, facsimiles of obscure MSS. We disseminate knowledge in lectures, in reviews, in newspapers, in magazines. We can excuse almost anything but ignorance.

All this is, of course, very encouraging, and, regarded as a whole, very satisfactory; but in the midst of it all there presents itself one of those curious problems to which it is difficult at first to find an answer. Every careful student of history must have been constantly puzzled to account for the strange paradoxical turn to which social phenomena and historical incidents are liable. Sometimes, for instance, he will find a glorious world of chivalry and splendour, full of romance, of mysticism, and poetry, without a poet to sing or interpret it, as in the age of the Crusades. At another time he will see a magnificent world-poet springing into life out of a miserable desert of petty feuds, divided aims, narrow sympathies, and despicable interests, as Dante in the fourteenth century. Sometimes he will see blowing in a foul, polluted atmosphere, the fairest flowers of honour and purity; and sometimes he will see, where the general tone of an age is pure and lofty, a far longer and fouler series of repulsive crimes than the most iniquitous era could furnish. To waive, however, these graver illustrations of a general truth, he will often notice, pre-eminently in the career of the Italian Renaissance, how a very low standard of intellect in ordinary social life is found compatible with an extraordinary elevation of taste, acquisition, and genius in the upper walks. But of all these paradoxical problems, the most extraordinary is one that can scarcely fail to have forced itself on the attention of every reflective man who has any opportunity of observing modern social life—namely, the low standard of ordinary conversation, as contrasted with the

intelligent and enlightened character of the age we live in.

A shrewd observer of men and manners lately deceased, who could look back on fifty years of social experience, pronounced that one of the most striking peculiarities of English life was the steady but rapidly increasing degeneration of conversational power. It is not that we have no wits like George Selwyn or Sydney Smith, no brilliant talkers like Macaulay or De Quincey, for that can fairly be accounted for, and perhaps dispensed with; but that there are so few persons who can keep the ball of conversation rolling at all.

Anything more dreary than nine-tenths of our *réunions*, dinner-parties, “at homes,” and the like can scarcely be conceived. A few remarks about popular actors repeated and retailed to infinity, two or three trite comments on current literature, a few vague generalities and unfruitful platitudes on general topics, comprise the conversational resources of most of the heroes and heroines of our drawing-rooms. It is as uncommon to make as to hear any original and sensible opinions about anything.

A gentleman, when addressing a lady, makes a point of treating her like a child; a lady addressing a gentleman, only anxious to escape the imputation of being an eccentric or a blue-stocking, faithfully returns him inanity for inanity, silliness for silliness, and both regret it—both know they are wasting their time; but they are the victims of conventionality, and consent to remain so.

What is most extraordinary about this state of things is that everybody acknowledges and laments it, and would, to do them justice, apply a remedy. The question remains, then—is there a remedy to apply, or is the disease incurable? We believe not: the disease is remediable, and the remedy is as simple in its nature as easy in its application.

There are two great stumbling-blocks in the way of natural conversation (that conversation should be natural, we all know, is one of the conditions of its being good), self-consciousness and affectation. If a man is self-conscious, he can neither think nor talk freely, his ideas will be confused, his utterance constrained, his sympathies narrow. Everything will pivot round himself: he is nervous, embarrassed, he is afraid of being eccentric and ridiculous, and accordingly sinks to the common-place and conventional both by choice and necessity. It was this unhappy defect that notoriously ruined the conversational powers of four great men who naturally possessed every element of success in conversation—Dryden, Butler, the immortal author of “*Hudibras*,” Addison, and Goldsmith. Not less pernicious is the kindred quality, affectation. Affectation is a more composite defect, for the affected man is usually ignorant, conceited, and shallow; like the man in Martial’s epigram, he is always striving to be what he is not, and disguising what he really is. Anxious only to put himself forward, he has no re-

gard for the feelings or the opinions of others, except in so far as he can direct them to a favourable estimate of himself. This of course strikes at the very root and essence of conversation, which is nothing but the mutual interchange of ideas and impressions—the art, in fact, of building on your companion's remarks. Nor is this all. If we defined conversation to be the ability for sustained monologue, the affected man would be equally unable to fulfil the conditions requisite for success, for he has neither that fascinating *nescio quid* possessed by all great talkers, to arrest attention, nor the intellectual capacity to retain it. All reform then in conversation must commence with the relegation of self-consciousness and affectation. But the mere absence of these, though it will go a long way, is not the only qualification necessary, as many of the worthy people who weigh like an incubus on social life are neither affected nor self-conscious. Three things should be remembered by everybody—that one of the most glorious of man's faculties is speech; that all human beings, even the veriest drawing-room misses, are rational creatures; and that you may learn something from every one, as the great Pliny used to say about books, "there is no book how bad soever from which you may not acquire some knowledge if you know how to use it." There is no necessity whatever for our social gatherings to be regarded with contempt by sensible people, and for everybody to continue to complain about the insipidity of drawing-room and dinner-party conversation.

If a man were to courageously quit the ordinary conventional questions, and boldly venture into interesting conversation, it would in nine cases out of ten be appreciated, provided he artfully adapted his remarks to his companion. What, for instance, is the use of giving a poetical turn to the discourse you may be holding with a practical middle-aged lady, who you know can have no real sympathy with such topics, but who holds herself bound to keep pace with fashion, and to affect an interest which she cannot feel? You are inviting her to pour out a string of platitudes and cut-and-dried opinions, you are boring her, and she is boring you: you are both in a false position. She knows nothing and cares nothing about Tennyson and Browning, but she knows that being an educated woman she must hold her own. And so you have managed to pass a tiresome and unfruitful hour, though she really has plenty to tell you, if you could only elicit it. She may be a shrewd, observant woman of the world, with plenty of anecdotes, plenty of sensible comments, drawn from a wide experience of mode and manners; she may be a keen observer of character: you might have learned from her many a useful hint, many an interesting reminiscence. You have struck the wrong chord, and got nothing but discord for your pains. Again, your companion may be a young inexperienced girl, and you bother her with inane gallantries and ridiculous compliments, which degrade her and yourself too, whereas she would be grateful if you would talk sense, and treat her as a sensible creature. She may of course happen to be silly and affected, in which case

you are justified by the rules of courtesy in suiting yourself to her humours; but remember that if she is not—and it is your duty to find that out—your frivolities and foolish speeches are little less than refined insults. It is a very great, though a very popular error, to suppose that English young ladies should be treated as children, or, to speak more properly, as pegs on which to hang idle flatteries and every other social absurdity. If you boldly turn the conversation on to topics which she can understand and which interest her, you will be rewarded for your pains. Nothing can be more delightful, as Thackeray used to observe, than to hear the free, genuine criticisms of a young girl on the justness or injustice, accuracies and inaccuracies, of novelists who have written about her sex, as most novelists have done. You may learn where they are true to nature, where untrue; you may learn much which you cannot learn elsewhere.

For one of the best pieces of criticism ever made on Tennyson's "May Queen," a leading Tennysonian commentator has told us that he was indebted to a young girl with whom he fell into conversation on the subject. What can be more delightful than the descriptions of society or scenery, reminiscences of past enjoyments and departed friends, given by a girl before she has learned to be self-conscious and affected? What keen observation, what wonderful life and freshness, what *verve* and graphic colouring! Talk to her of what she does not understand—the fascinating little talker is dull and silent, or silly and simpering, bored and boring, all because you have not the art of discovering where her strength lay. It is always good to remember that every one, however clumsy and inexpressive, has something on which they can talk. They may know little perhaps of books, of art, or literature, but they will have had experiences, adventures; they will have stumbled on something in their life's journey which it will interest you to hear, which it will please them to tell. The art of drawing people out—not a very difficult one to acquire—will save one many an hour of senseless platitudes and dreary scandals.

It would be well for the interests of social life if a little more abruptness were permitted and employed, especially among men—if, for instance, without any floundering and circumlocution, we could ask sensible men sensible questions, always allowing them the same latitude in exercising an arbitrary silence. The writer of this paper remembers meeting a man who had the most extraordinary amount of information on almost every topic, but who was plainly not a man given to books or book-learning. On expressing surprise at the man's multifarious acquisitions, the happy possessor replied, "Sir, I have always struck life at angles. Where I have been with a companion who was a scholar or an antiquarian—and I always make it my business to discover where everybody's strength lies—I boldly put it to him: 'What was the population of Rome in the time of the Empire?' 'Is the parallel between Hannibal and Napoleon Bonaparte a really striking one, or is it merely fanciful?' I am a man whose studies have not lain in those directions,

and I ask for information. Now, sir," he continued, "I have sometimes, I must confess, met with a rebuff, but very, very rarely. More generally I have found myself, without any trouble, in the midst of an animated and delightful conversation. You must take care, of course, that such abrupt questions are put to a man of sense and real learning, for a pretender is placed at once in a most embarrassing position."

The eccentric man was right, though his method of proceeding required a little more judgment and discrimination than most people anxious for improvement possess. Clever men are always willing to impart knowledge, as Chaucer says of his scholar—

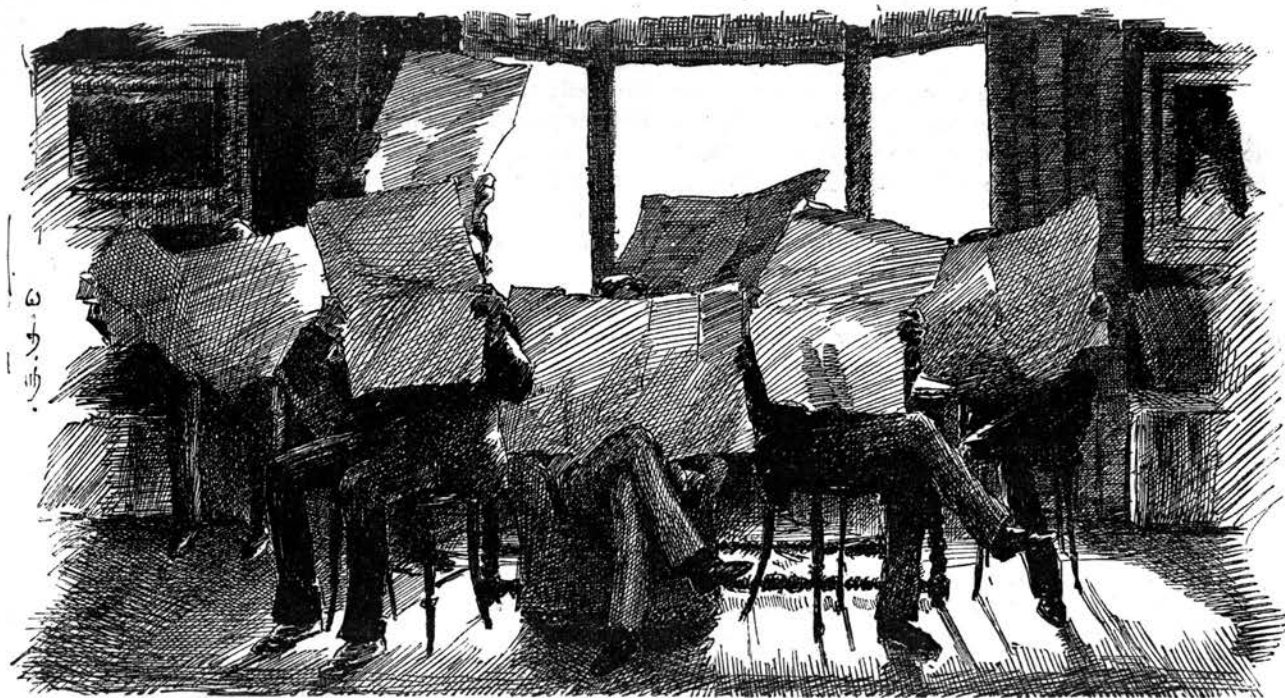
"Gladly would he learn, and gladly teach ;"

and nothing is more deplorable than to see such a man obliged to lock his lips, or falling in with the requirements of conventionality, descend to talk nonsense and tittle-tattle, because nobody gives him an opportunity for talking anything better. To make conversation moreover what it should be, we must provide not for the mediocre only, who have naturally not much to say even under the most encouraging circumstances, but for those who have colloquial abilities, and are seldom at a loss either for topics or words. Where they wreck themselves is in their tendency to talk for effect, to contradict what is plain and obvious, that they may substitute what is paradoxical and falsely brilliant. Now nothing is more against the genius of true conversation, and nothing more calculated to make people retire into themselves, than this. Practical, common-sense people—and in every society such people will be in the majority—despise the speaker, though they may not be able to answer him; men who can speak remain silent, for they see they must either contradict the assertions made and become polemical, or they

must play into the hands of a man who is merely attempting to show off and to monopolise attention. This they are seldom willing to do, and so conversation is again brought to a dead-lock. What, then, are the requirements of a new art of conversation? First, let every one try to enlarge his sympathies and get out of himself, let him acquire broad interests, and take pleasure in what concerns and touches the rest of his fellow-creatures. Having attained this, he will be little troubled either by self-consciousness or affectation. Let him remember that the essence of conversation is a willingness to give as well as to take—in a word, the art of building on the remarks of his partner—and till this is acquired there can be no real conversation; that, to make the best of social intercourse, it is our duty to discover where the strength of our companion lies, and to adapt ourselves as much as possible to his or her capacities and interests; to rest assured that most people will be thankful to exchange empty gossip for sense and reason, but that few will naturally break through routine and conventionality if they are not encouraged to do so; that for this reason a little abruptness will be useful, and is by no means offensive; that no greater compliment can be paid to a woman than to treat her as a worthy companion and a rational creature, not as the subject for foolish remarks and fatuous compliments; that every one can talk if encouraged, and possesses experiences and opinions if they can only be elicited.

"The soul of music slumbers in the shell
Till touch'd and waken'd by the master's spell;
And feeling hearts, touch them but rightly, pour
A thousand melodies unheard before."

In these lines is condensed half the art of conversation; in their ulterior meaning, reflection may discover the other half of that art as well. J. C. C.



OUR SOCIAL CLUB.

Cupid as Reporter :

A REMINISCENCE OF ST. VALENTINE'S.

I'M not at home if Cupid calls (she said)
To ask for "news" concerning whom I'll wed;
The subject has no interest for me,
Nor even sense, so far as I can see.
Besides, I hate the matrimonial press,
And petty puffs of fortune, face, and dress.
So, if he calls—that brazen baggage, Cupid!—
Just say I'm out, or ill, or—stay, you stupid!
Invite him in—but say, with cold regard—
Mind, *very* cold!—"Please, sir, I'll take your card!"

Hark! some one knocks! Can it be he, I wonder?
It must be he—just hear the knocker thunder!
YES!—*Come right up!*—Poor fellow, he's in haste;
'T would be a shame his precious time to waste.
What rosy cheeks!—what *perfect* taste in dressing!
And yet, I fear!—these press-men are so pressing!
Good-day, kind sir!

CUPID.

Sweet Lady, I am sent
By "Hymen's Times" to get your views anent
A candidate for our next spring-election;
Is Mr. C—the man of your selection?

SHE.

Oh, dear me, no! (Be seated, please, by me.)
Yet do not think we do not quite agree;
And do not say that I have told you this,
Or that I'm not for him—swear on this kiss!—
And this!—since two are needed to a bargain.
And this!—since three will leave one kiss for margin.

CUPID.

Sweet Lady, please repeat! I've seldom heard
Such eloquence, and wish to jot each word.
Ah, thanks!—I fear you'll smother my next question!
If you will pardon me the bold suggestion,
Do you prefer some other candidate?

SHE.

Oh, dear me, no! But, sir, you must not state
That he's *already* on the Party-slate!—
And do not say that I have told you this,
Or that I care for him!—swear on this kiss!—

CUPID.

Sweet Lady, I can "swear" the heavens blue—
And I am free to say *he* swears by *you!*
The point is not, to swear my blue eyes dim,
But frankly this: will *you* swear thus by *him?*
If you refuse, 'tis settled in a trice!—
Another Party calls him "*very nice!*"

SHE.

What, she!—O Cupid, hasn't he more sense?
Her charms are all in the imperfect tense.
I will say this: He's far too good a man,
To be entrapped by that sly Party's plan.
He ought to join some Party of the best
Youth, beauty, taste, found either East or West;
Whose principles, both elegant and sound,
Are firmly based on such important ground
As strict reform of the Domestic Service—
But do not say that I have told you this,
Or know such Party—swear upon this kiss!

CUPID.

Sweet Lady, you're that Party to the letter,
But he describes your virtues, more and better,—
Then may I understand we *quite* agree?—

SHE.

Who has my suffrage asks on bended knee!
But do not say that I have told you this—

CUPID.

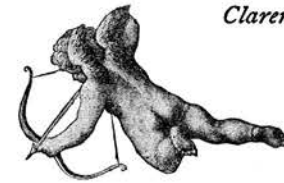
I "swear," Sweet Lady, on a triple-kiss!

* * * * *

SHE.

Here's "Hymen's Times," Feb. 14—'83;
I wonder what it says regarding me?—
GOOD GRACIOUS!—was there ever such a scandal!
He's *printed every word I said!*—THE VANDAL!
Not only that!—He's interviewed my maid!
And she has told him all she knew!—The jade!

Ah, well!—who'll be the wiser anyway?—
You can't believe a word the papers say.



Clarence Clough.

The Postman.

ST. VALENTINE'S DAY.

How fast the postman goes
Laden with joys and woes
Along the street!
Young eyes watch with delight;
Eyes not so young, with quite
As quick pulse-beat.

He carries painted hearts
Transfixed with harmless darts;
Live hearts too hide
Stowed in his swinging bag
And doubtless make it wag
From side to side.

Here, prayer of parted friends
And shaft that malice sends
Elbow for space;
The pang that hurts and stings,
The balm that healing brings,
Run equal race.

A scentless rose, a verse
That hardly could be worse,
A soul's despair,
A tear blot, and a jest,
A happy love confessed,
A laugh, a prayer!

Is he a man or elf?
Pandora's box itself
Could scarce send wide
Such motley crowd and fleet,
Save that gifts fair and sweet
Its ills divide!

Bird-like, he mounts and swoops
Swift up and down the stoops;
He's drawing near.
Though I may moralize,
I, too, have waiting eyes—
Oh, please stop *here!*

Mary Ainge De Vere.

The Evolution of the Cycle.

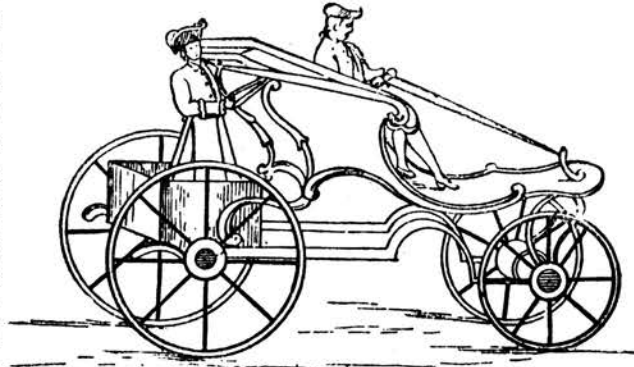


TO speak of the wonderful strides made in cycle construction within twenty years or so, to compare the modern racing, air-tyred, ball-bearing, tubular racing safety with the boneshaker of 1868, or the hobby-horse of 1820; to rhapsodise upon the heights to which the mechanism of the cycle has now been carried, to speculate upon its future development—these things are common-places. Let us, while touching lightly upon the descent of the modern cycle in a direct line, chiefly amuse ourselves by contemplating the various extinct species—those developments of the original germ which have somehow taken the wrong turning in the course of evolution, have then stopped, and, as rare fossils, are now only looked at as rarities and curiosities.

The records of the Patent Offices, both here and in America, contain drawings of many hundreds of these quaint articles, many—perhaps most—of which probably never grew beyond existence on paper. Also, there were gathered together last year, by the Stanley Bicycle Club, a quaint collection of actual existing fossils—masses of machinery actually constructed and now forgotten. Of members of this collection, now dispersed, and never to come together again, we shall reproduce a number of photographs; also we shall reproduce many of the outline drawings buried in the Patent Office, with all their garnishment of indicator letters and figures, whether we allude to those wonderful signs or not.

When the idea first took form of enabling a man to travel by his own leg power, assisted by wheels, none can say; nor is it known who first attempted to put the notion into practice. Certain it is that, in 1761, a description of a machine to travel

without horses appeared in *The Universal Magazine*; and since this machine—invented by one Ovenden—is alluded to as “the best that has hitherto been invented,” it is pretty obvious that Mr. Ovenden had his predecessors in this particular department of design, though of them we know little. Here is Mr. Ovenden’s machine.

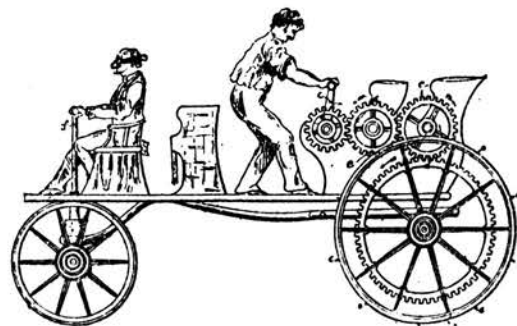


OVENDEN'S MACHINE.

The unfortunate footman (whose overworked legs are mercifully hidden from sight in a sort of tank), supporting himself by a strap, was expected to drive that immense wooden carriage and its contents “with ease” six miles an hour, and with “a peculiar

exertion” (quite so) nine or ten miles an hour. The owner of the equipage, meantime, gaily steered with a pair of reins. We hear nothing further of Mr. Ovenden and his machine. Can he have fallen a victim to a secret assassination committee of footmen?

In 1804 a genius of the name of Bolton turned up in America, and invented another quaint engine. We reproduce his own drawing from the patent specification, indicator letters and all, so that his representatives may not accuse us of doing his work an injustice. We can justly admire the



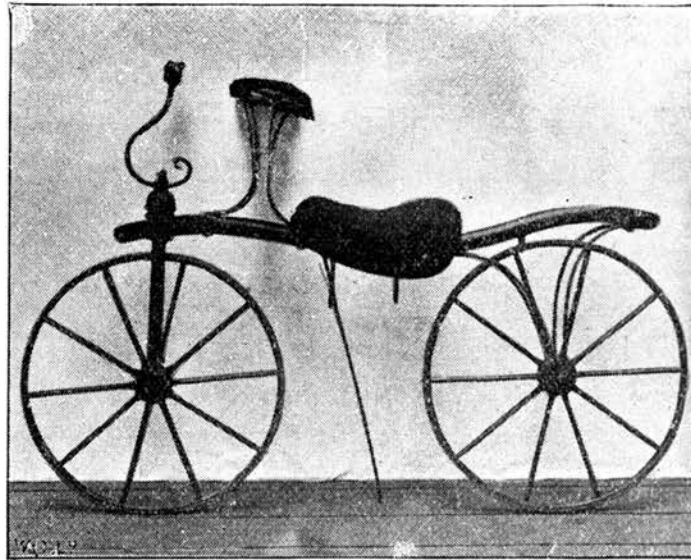
BOLTON'S MACHINE.

foresight of the inventor in representing the unhappy operator in rolled-up shirt-

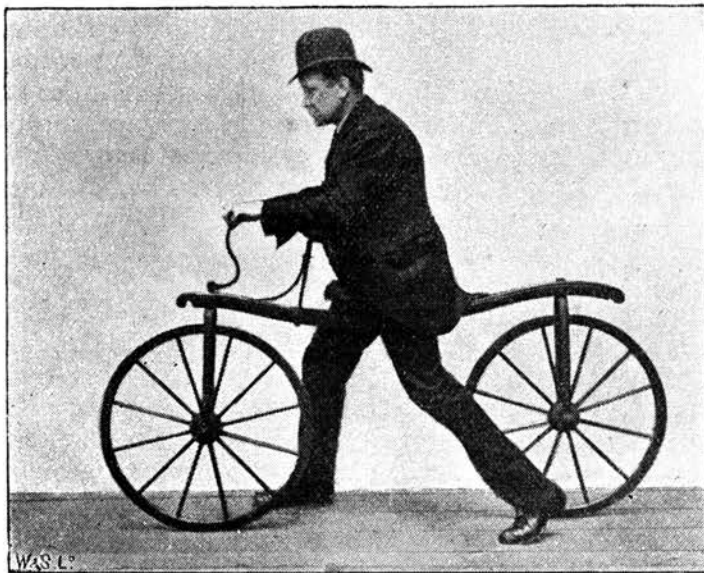
sleeves, for verily elbow grease would be called for in wholesale quantities. The knowing person who does the steering smiles furtively at the reflection that he is coming out very much ahead in the matter of division of labour. But even with that, it will be observed, he has pulled his hat over his eyes as though rather ashamed of himself for so using a fellow-creature. As well he may be.

After this came the hobby-horse. In 1808 this strange machine—two wheels, tandem fashion, connected by a bar—made its appearance in Paris. There were no means of steering this thing, so that presumably, when the rider, after straddling across the seat placed midway on the connecting-bar, and paddling furiously with his feet against the ground, arrived at a corner, he had to lift up the whole thing and dump it down again in a new direction. After

the machines in his club's historical collection are used.



DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH'S DANDY-HORSE.



JOHNSON'S DANDY-HORSE.

These dandy-horses became all the rage, the coat-tails of our grandfathers and great-grandfathers fluttered bravely over the roads, and the striding legs of the same gentlemen beat up the dust north, south, east, and west. It became fashionable, as well as popular, and at the exhibition of the Stanley Club one was shown which had been the property of the great-grandfather of the present Duke of Marlborough.

This ducal vehicle is appropriately rather a swell. It has an ornamented brass fitting at the top of the steering-socket, and an extra large cushion (albeit now burst out) upon which rested the ducal elbows. This was the production of a maker and patentee of the name of Parker. Being fashionable, of course the craze was caricatured, and many

some few years, this seems to have struck a genius as an inconvenience; whereupon said genius proceeded to mount the front wheel, so that it might be turned, and, behold! there emerged the dandy-horse. A Mr. Dennis Johnson, who was a coach-maker, at 75 Long-acre, took out a patent for this dandy or hobby-horse in 1818, and we here reproduce a photograph of one of these very machines of Johnson's—still in existence, and represented as bestridden by Mr. J. Dring, of the Stanley Club, by which gentleman's permission the photographs of

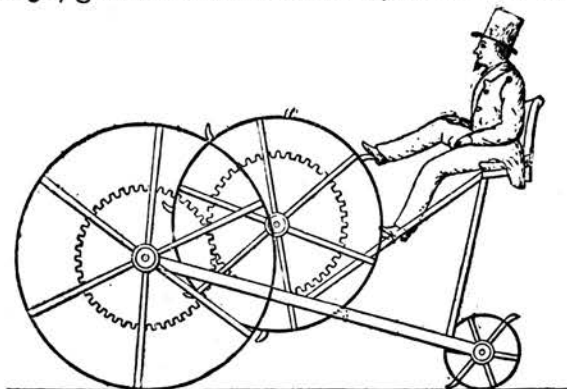


From a Drawing by "AT FULL SPEED."

[Cruikshank]

spirited drawings by Rowlandson and the Cruickshanks are now regarded as prized relics by cyclists of historical tastes. One of these drawings, which we reproduce, gives a good, although exaggerated, idea of the action of a rider of a dandy-horse at full speed. A Continental inventor, one Gompertz, came out with an improvement upon the ordinary hobby-horse, providing an auxiliary driving-power for the front wheel. A cogged wheel was fixed to the side of the front hub, and a sextant-shaped rack gearing with this and moved by a lever which was also used as a steering-handle, served to drive the wheel forward.

The hobby-horse mania seems to have died out almost as suddenly as it came into being, and a period of blankness in cycle invention followed. A French patent of 1830, granted to a M. Julien, relates to an

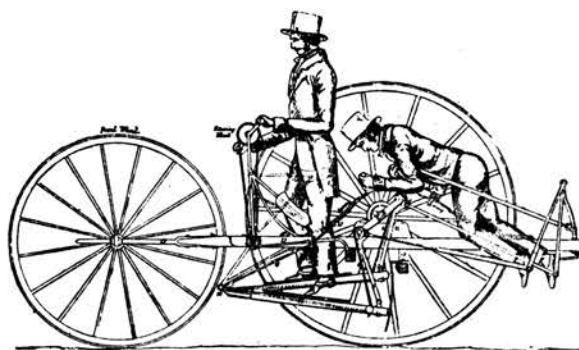


JULIEN'S MACHINE.

invention not very easy to comprehend. In the drawing it will be observed that the gentle soul in the chimney-pot hat works a sort of "everlasting staircase" (this being a slang term for the treadmill), by that means turning an immense wheel in front. A thing herein difficult to understand (although it really may be a hidden beauty) is the balancing and steering of this elegant instrument, the inventor having carefully refrained from finding anything, mischief or otherwise, for his victim's idle hands to do. Another difficulty is suggested by the back wheel. We quite appreciate M. Julien's good intentions in providing a couple of spikes to prevent the whole arrangement running backward when proceeding uphill, but he seems to have forgotten that some retarding effect to forward motion might be involved therein. Perhaps he found the thing so tremendously speedy that something of a check was necessary; or the con-

trivance may have been intended to plough with.

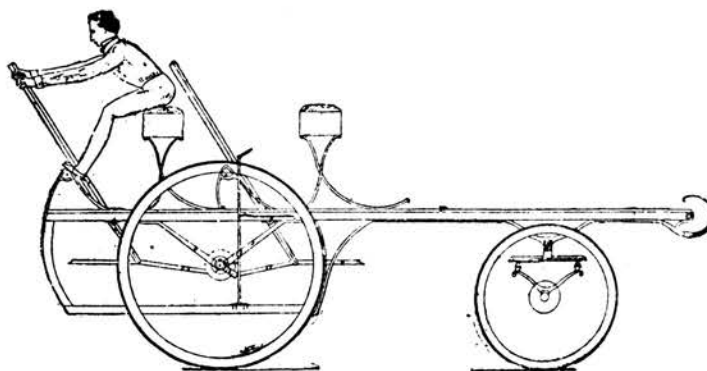
Later in the same year Messrs. Bramley and Parker, in England, went in for some-



BRAMLEY AND PARKER'S MACHINE.

thing comprehensive and elaborate. They have, at any rate, the honour of inventing the first tandem tricycle. In their drawing they omit the nearer hind wheel, whereby we have the advantage of a clear view of Mr. Parker (or is it Mr. Bramley?) working his best in a sort of swimming attitude. The more favoured partner (whose hat is really too large) steers by an arrangement obviously suggested by the rudder wheel of a ship, and drives by an arrangement more humbly derived from the travelling knife-grinder. The hinder gentleman obviously has not come out to admire the landscape, and it is to be hoped that his hat may never fall among all that mechanism, for its own sake.

In 1831 Mr. Alexander Cochrane invented the first recorded road machine in which the rowing motion was used. Several inventors since this time have devoted their ingenuity to adapting this motion to cycles, without any particular success. Why it is considered desirable to go out of the way to use an action obviously foreign to and unsuitable for the road, is one of those

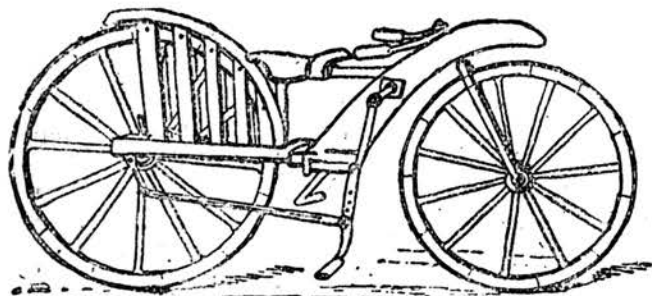


COCHRANE'S MACHINE.

things which perhaps will never be explained. Cochrane's notion, however, was

not so insane as many put forward in the early days, and it may be seen that, with his long levers, he at least provides a great deal more effective power than other inventors of manumotors thought necessary.

Some years after this (exactly how many is uncertain) Gavin Dalzell made his bicycle at Lesmahagow, in Scotland. This machine has long been considered the first two-wheeled one-track vehicle in which the rider was placed clear of the ground and provided with a satisfactory driving and steering apparatus; in fact, the first practicable bicycle, as we now know it, and, stranger still, the almost exact prototype of the latest pattern of rear-driving safety. But of late it has been found that another machine, on precisely the same principle, was made by Peter McMillan, also a Scotsman and a blacksmith, a little before Dalzell made his. Still, there seems no reason to suppose other

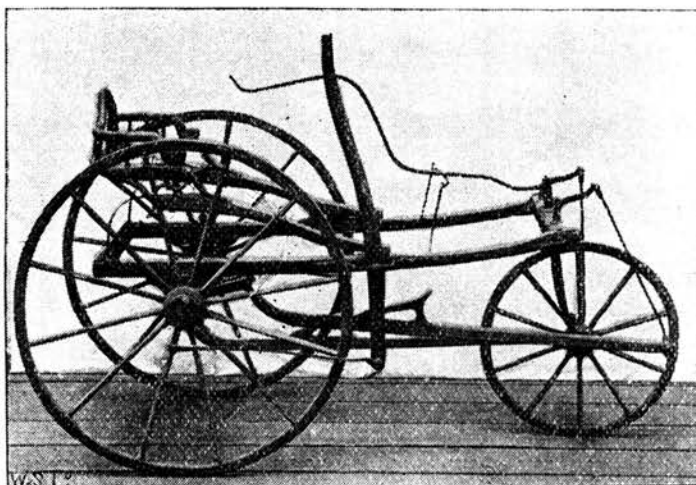


DALZELL'S MACHINE.

than that these were separate inventions of the same thing, and that the whole business was a curious coincidence. Dalzell's original machine is yet in existence, much time-worn and worm-eaten, but in working order still. The machine is chiefly of wood, with iron fittings and tyres. The rear wheel is 40 inches in diameter and the steerer 30 inches. It will be seen that the front fork slopes back just as does the front fork of a modern machine, and that the handles are curved back quite in the fashionable mode of to-day. The rear wheel is driven by cranks and levers from single-barred pedals. The frame, heavy and clumsy as it is, is not unlike that of a lady's safety. The rabbit-hutch arrangement over the back wheel is a dress guard. This again, of another sort, is used on the lady's bicycle of to-day.

One of the first of the crank-driven tricycles was shown in the Stanley collec-

tion, and is here represented. It was of wood, with a Bath-chair steering apparatus, and the cranks were driven by levers hung from the fore part of the frame, by the



THE FIRST CRANK-DRIVEN TRICYCLE.

steering-wheel. The pedals were of the shape of a boot-sole, like unto those of a sewing machine, and a hand lever was provided at the side to start the machine, and to supply extra power when necessary. The maker of this tricycle is not known, but it dates from about 1840.

In 1861 an American, Mr. Landis, patented what seems to have been intended rather as a toy than as a vehicle. It consisted of a rocking-horse mounted upon a carriage set on wheels, the hinder end of the rocker being cranked to the back wheels in such a way that the rocking motion might turn the wheels. It is, however, described as a "velocipede"—

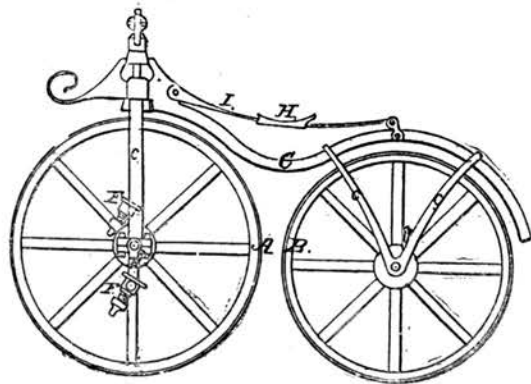


LANDIS' MACHINE.

the name at that time applied generally to any human-driven vehicle.

Now we arrive at the era of the Bone-

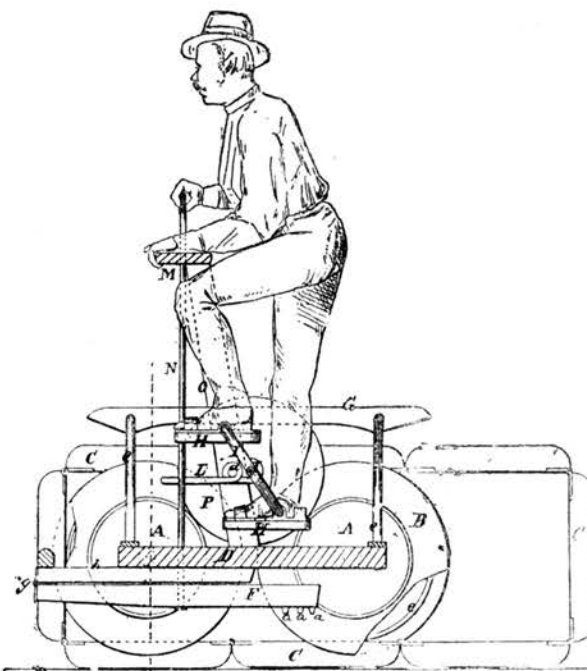
shaker—that clamorous, rattling, wobbling two-wheeled truck which astonished the



LALLEMENT'S MACHINE.

world in the sixties. Pierre Lallement, a French mechanic, is considered to be the inventor of this, and, indeed, until the discovery of Dalzell's machine, was given the credit of inventing the balanced and crank-driven bicycle altogether. Lallement was in the employ of M. Michaux, who made three-wheeled velocipedes and perambulators in Paris. Somewhere before 1864 the design of the boneshaker sprang into being in the brain of the ingenious Lallement, and the concrete result in solid wood and iron is familiar to most of us. There is another claim to having invented and ridden the cranked bicycle about this time on behalf of an Englishman named Phillips, but the evidence is weaker than that supporting the pretension of Lallement, of whose first dozen machines two were bought by residents in Ireland. Lallement was able to take out a patent for some part of his machine in America, and his drawing then presented we reproduce. The pedals, it will be seen, are weighted, to keep them

right side up. One of these machines was shown at the Paris Exhibition of 1865, and in 1869 their use was taught at Spencer's Gymnasium, in Goswell-road, London, Charles Dickens being for a short time one of Spencer's pupils. English makers at once sprang up, and Beck, Stanley, Parfrey, Keen, and the Coventry Machinists' Company were some of the first. The machine made by Beck in 1870, which we illustrate, was greatly improved, and considered at the time to represent the high-water mark of cycular invention. It was one of the first two or three bicycles fitted with india-

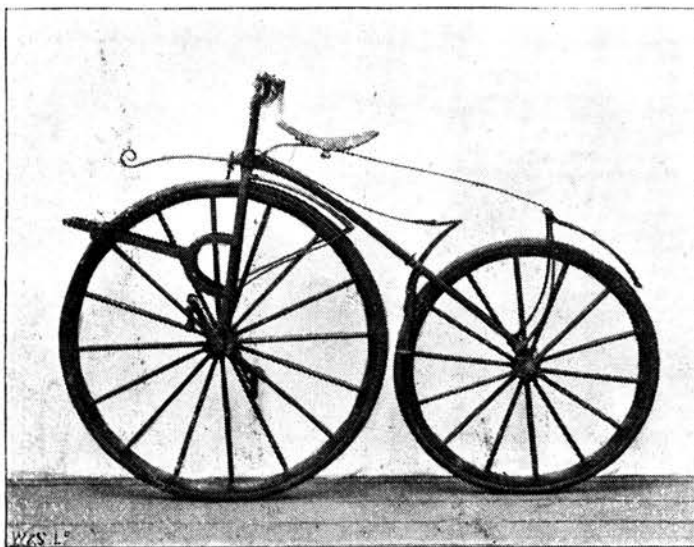


GLEASON'S MACHINE.

rubber tyres, had an improved brake (worked by a string) and leg rest, and weighed—what do you think? One hundred and fifty pounds!

Harking back a little, however, we find a delightful invention in America, 1868. To describe it would be an impossibility, wherefore we reproduce the inventor, Gleason's, drawing. Here is an independent cyclist who carries with him not only his machine, but the road to ride on. Here is Mr. Gleason's own description:—

“The object of this invention is to obtain locomotion by the direct application of the weight of the operator. An endless track, composed of the hinged parts C, C, C, as shown, loosely close each of the two wheels on a side, and are kept



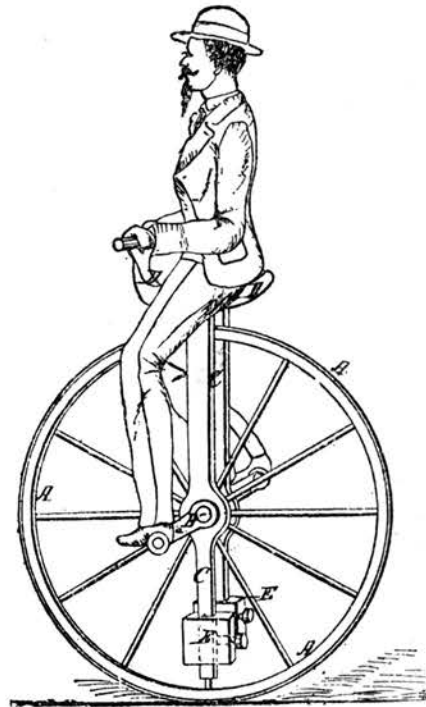
BECK'S MACHINE.

in proper position by means of the flanges *B* of the rolling wheels as shown. By this means the track is laid in front of the wheels, and passes over from the rear of the same in an endless belt, as shown. The guide rails *G* are supported above the traction wheels by means of arms *e*, as shown, and prevent the jointed track from leaving the flanges." It is a great thing to be able to have a smooth road everywhere, carrying it as a part of the baggage, but perhaps most of us will be contented to take the road as it comes on our bicycles

to move the machine by continually impelling the weight forward is not quite clear, but there sits Mr. Hemmings in the picture, and if it never became his fate so to sit in the actual machine—well, perhaps it saved him a lot of trouble after all.



HEMMINGS' MACHINE.

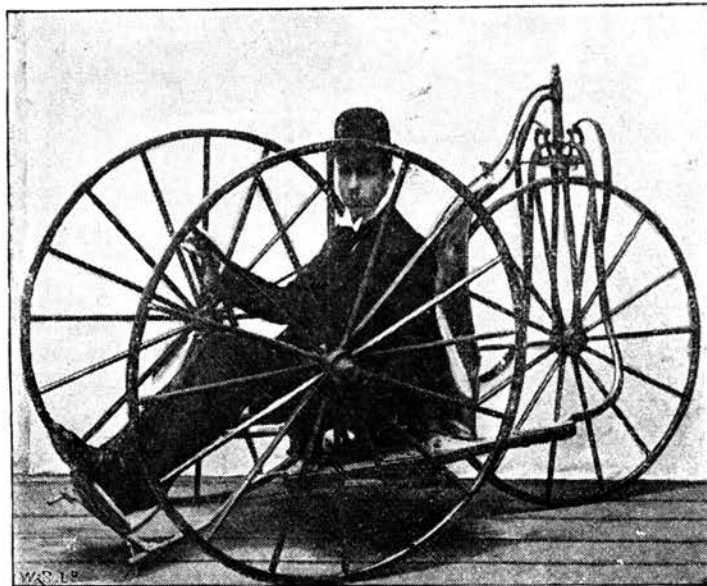


WARD'S MACHINE

But Mr. T. W. Ward, of New York, preferred to sit astride his one wheel. His ingenious dodge was to carry the forks below the bearings, and then to fasten weights whereby he might retain a dignified perpendicular. But, in his enthusiasm, Mr. Ward omitted to consider what sort of

as they are, thanking Mr. Gleason all the same.

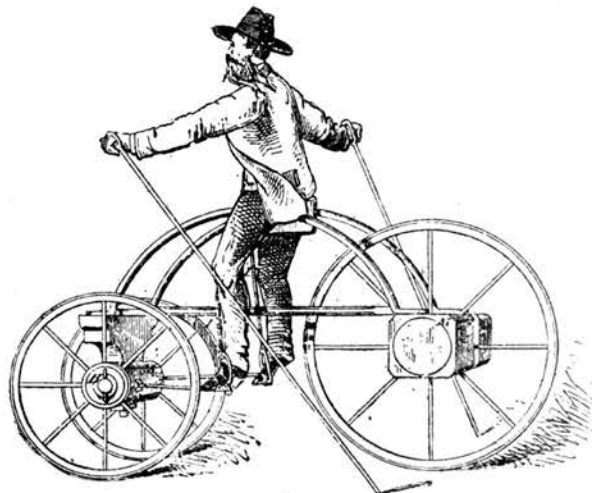
In 1869 another American, Mr. Richard Hemmings, made an attempt in which he had both predecessors and followers. Many people have been struck with the notion of using one big wheel only, the centre being made open to contain the rider. It would be rash to guess at the number of patents taken out with this central idea, but all have been failures—few of the inventors even taking the trouble to provide a means of steering. Mr. Hemmings' is one of these. His outer wheel, it will be seen, runs loosely upon the rollers of his inner framework. His feet hang in stirrups, and as he turns the wheel *c* the band *G* drives the wheel *B'*. Whether the latter wheel drives the outer by friction or cogs, or whether it is intended



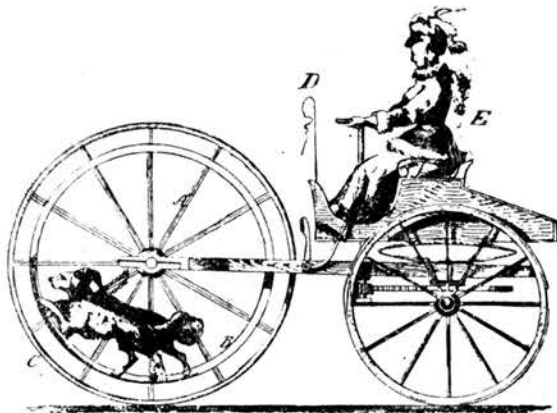
CHARSLEY'S FIRST MACHINE.

weights he would require, and what amount of them. If Mr. Ward weighed twelve stones he would want about a quarter of a ton, with the forks of the proportions shown. In these circumstances it is difficult to know whom less to envy, Mr. Ward or any unlucky person he might run against.

The first tricycle ever made to the design of the Rev. Mr. Charsley, who has given great attention to designing tricycles for the use of the lame, was made in 1869, and was hand-driven by cranks. "He that is down need fear no fall," might have been Mr. Charsley's watchword in placing his rider. Still, quaint as the machine looks, it was the forerunner of the most successful hand-



CROFT'S MACHINE.



MEY'S MACHINE.

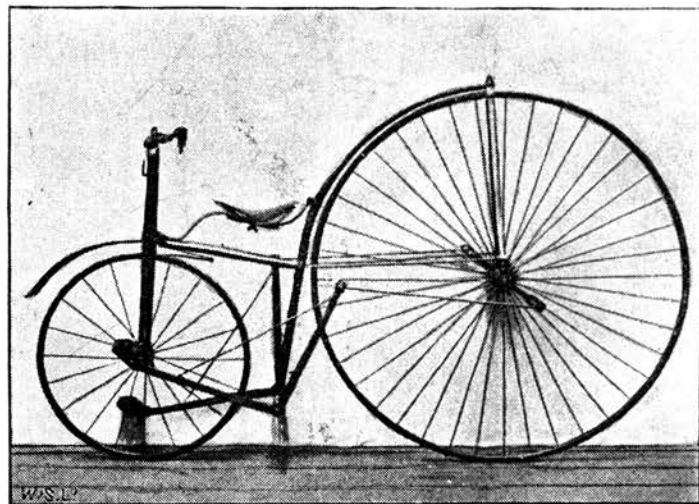
driven tricycle ever produced. It was steered by a movement of the back against the broad guard before the steering wheel.

Another American distinguished himself in 1870—Mr. Mey, of Buffalo. An idea of his invention is best conveyed by his own drawing. Here we see, doubtless, one of the original "Buffalo gals" in a smart trap, the motive power of which is a sort of magnified squirrel-cage, in which two wretched dogs are expected to gallop, and, in the inventor's words, "will impart motion to the wheel and to the vehicle, as will be clearly understood." Mr. Mey thoughtfully provides a whip, and marks it with a big, big D, although a means of reaching the dogs with it when they are encased in the wheel A B C must form the subject of another invention—and a clever one.

Still another American, a Mr. Croft, invented a fearful and wonderful engine in 1877. Really, it is not easy to believe that even a cycle inventor (and some of them are mad enough

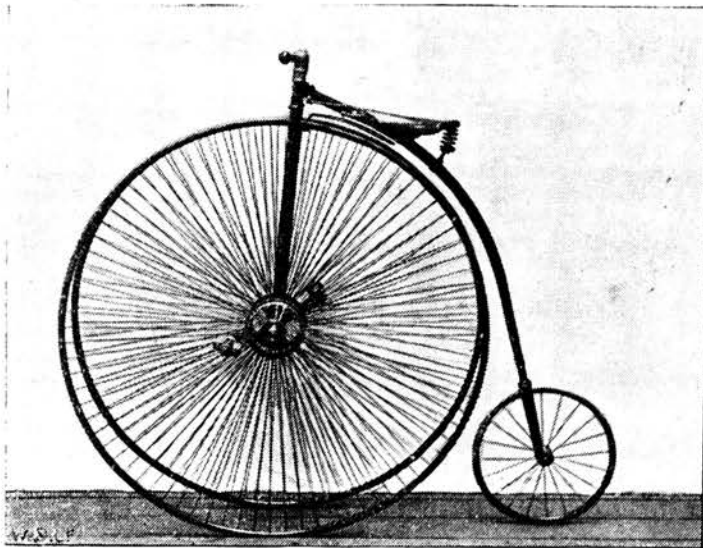
for anything) could perpetrate such a thing as late as 1877. The rider, as the gentle reader may see for himself, was to punt himself along with a pair of poles—literally to punt along the public highway, steering meanwhile by means of his feet in stirrups. An idea of the fiery pace of this contrivance is skilfully expressed by the fluttering beard in the inventor's picture; but, notwithstanding his liberal use of the alphabet in the diagram, we fear that Mr. Croft flatters himself. We would almost back the dogs against him, or M. Julien.

Soon the boneshaker became a bicycle with a tall front and a small back wheel, and the first effective attempt to cope with the danger from headers thereupon consequent was comprised in Singer's Safety, the invention of Mr. Lawson in 1878. The identical machine here represented was



LAWSON'S SAFETY MACHINE (MADE FOR VISCOUNT SHERBROOKE.)

made for Viscount Sherbrooke—then Mr. Robert Lowe—who, as a rider of the



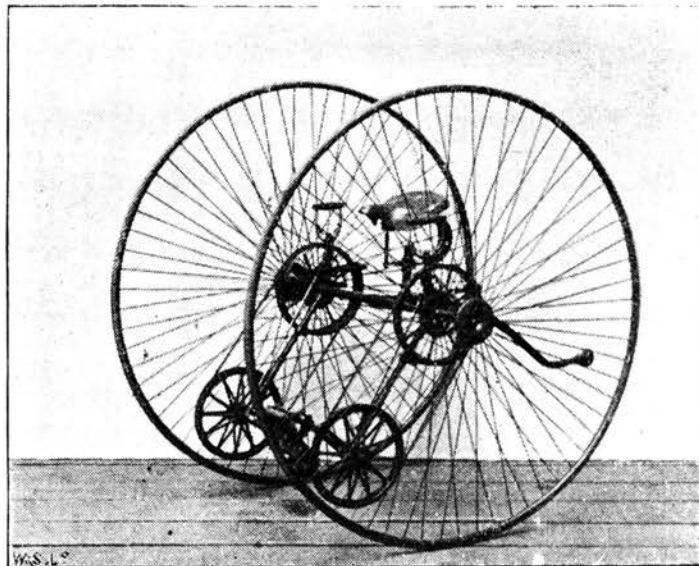
THE BI-TRICYCLE.

original dandy-horse, is perhaps the oldest cyclist now alive. It was driven by cranks upon the hind wheel, actuated by pedals, bent levers, and connecting rods. With its great flopping back wheel and its small, sensitive steerer, the machine might have been more handy, but it was a sound machine in its safety principle, and well built. Its stable companion was the Challenge tricycle, almost identical in design, except that two steering wheels were used, turned by Blood's patent gear. This was the first tricycle made with wire wheels and rubber tyres. More than one inventor has built a bi-tricycle, a machine combining the faults of the two- and three-wheeler, with the advantages of neither.

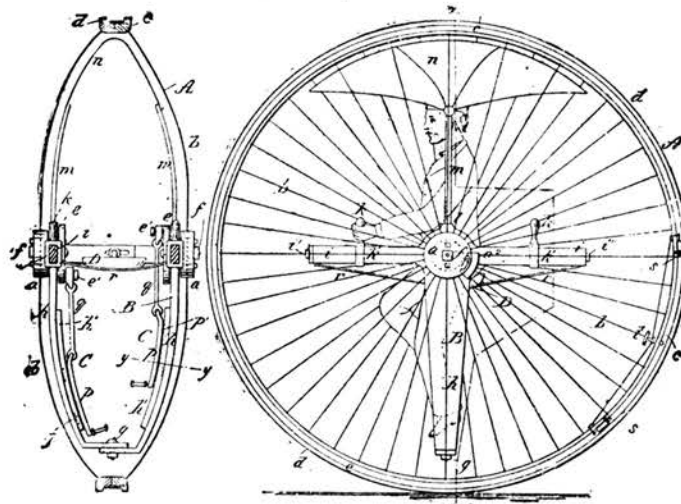
In 1880 a very novel bicycle—or dicycle, as some called it—was invented. This was the Otto, wherein two large wheels were placed side by side, both driven by cranks through endless metal bands. The rider sat *above* the centre of gravity, and his chief business in life was to guard his nose and the back of his head from the assault of the roadway. Steering was done by either hand, the driving

band being loosened upon the inner side, whercupon the outer (driven) wheel turned upon the inner one. The Otto was a pretty invention, but it never succeeded as a machine for pace.

One more American invention, and we have done. It is Schaffer's monocycle, and looks a terrible thing. The victim is entirely caged up inside the wheel, and what means of escape he could avail himself of in case of collision or bolting nobody but the inventor could tell us, and he doesn't. A large flap of the wheel and spokes, it seems, was to be removable to enable the victim to be inserted. It is a charming



THE OTTO.



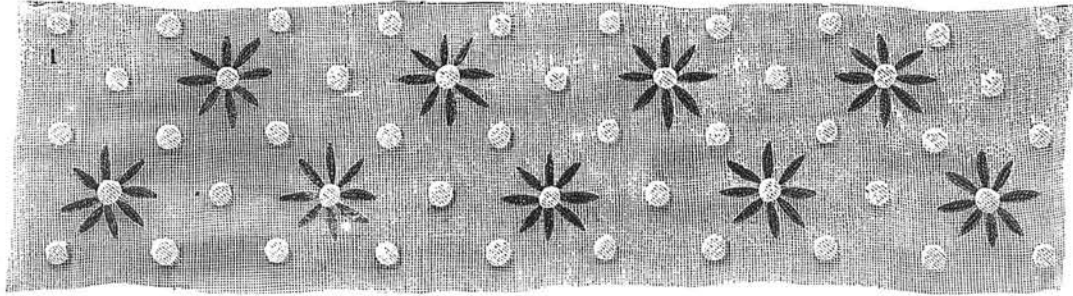
SCHAEFFER'S MONOCYCLE.

thing, and with all its index letters (which seem to have been sprinkled in from a pepper-box) has quite a learned and scientific appearance; notwithstanding which, there is no record of its use upon the high-road. So that the high-road is a less dangerous place than it might be, after all.

With the highly finished machine of the present day our business does not lie.

DAISY WORK.

By JOSEPHA CRANE.



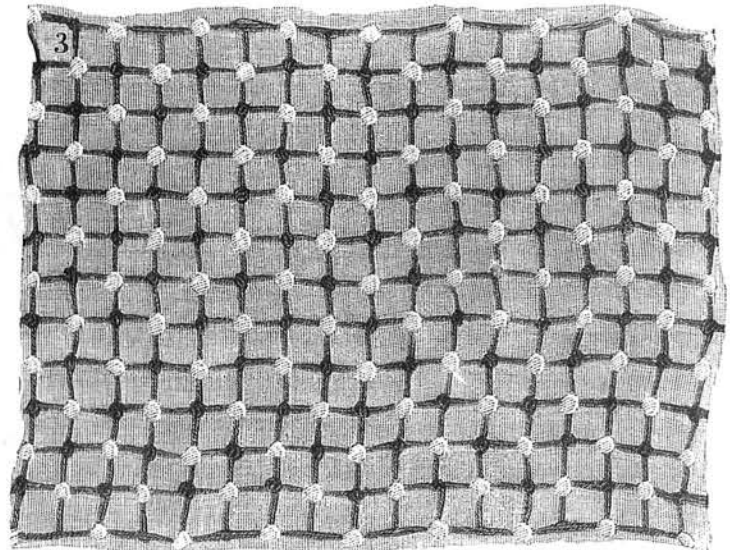
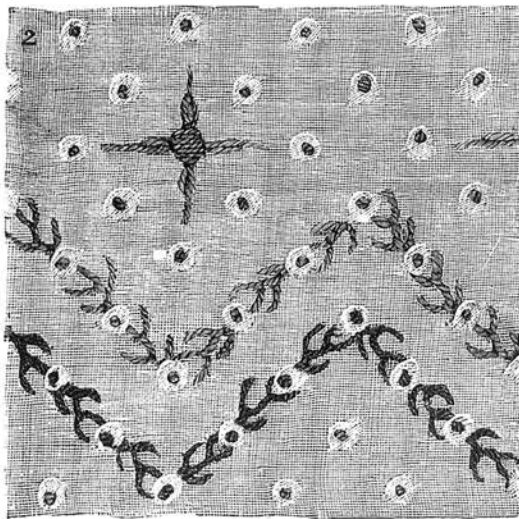
DAISY work recommends itself to those who like what can be very quickly executed and which costs little. It has another charm, and that is that it is easy to do.

Ordinary spotted muslin is the foundation for

in with ribbon, and a slit down the middle allowed for the admission of the night-dress. Of course it was lined with sateen, and if you wish to make your work very smart indeed you can line it with silk.

as to how the muslin may be employed, but there are some rules always to be borne in mind.

If you are inclined to pucker in working run the muslin upon glazed calico or *toile cirée*.



this pretty work, and I should always advise the purchase of the best quality. Very thin, coarse muslin is useless, as it will not bear the work, however lightly the latter may be done.

Daisy work can be done on spotted ribbon or sateen as well as on muslin, and can of course be thus adapted to very different purposes.

I will begin by describing the work when done on muslin. When finished it is very suitable for sachets intended to contain comb and brush, night-dress, etc., and for the small sachet bags containing lavender or perfume for laying among your clothes.

Apropos of night-dress sachets, I must tell my readers of one which I lately saw made of muslin, which would be admirably adapted to daisy work. The shape of the sachet was very novel, being formed precisely like a cracker. Each end was gathered

Small tea-cloths can be made of muslin, and these should be lined, and a little covering for baby's cot can also be inexpensively and daintily fashioned in daisy work.

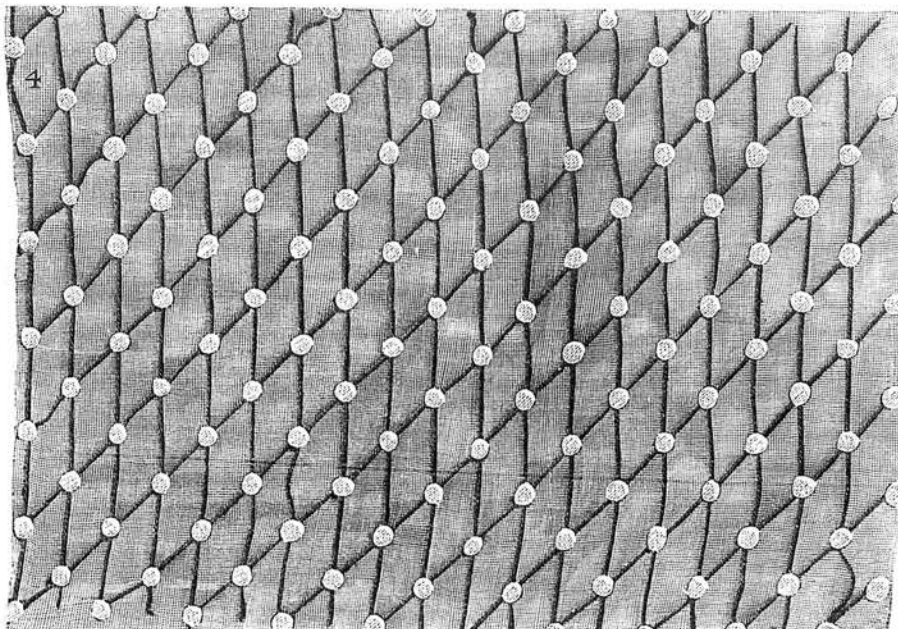
Our illustrations will give you many ideas

Never pull your thread.

Unless your thread can lie exactly under a stitch and so not be apparent through the muslin, do not carry it from one spot to another but finish off under the spot.

Use for muslin what will wash, *viz.*, washing silks, fine flax, or D.M.C. embroidery cotton, D.M.C. *coton à repriser*.

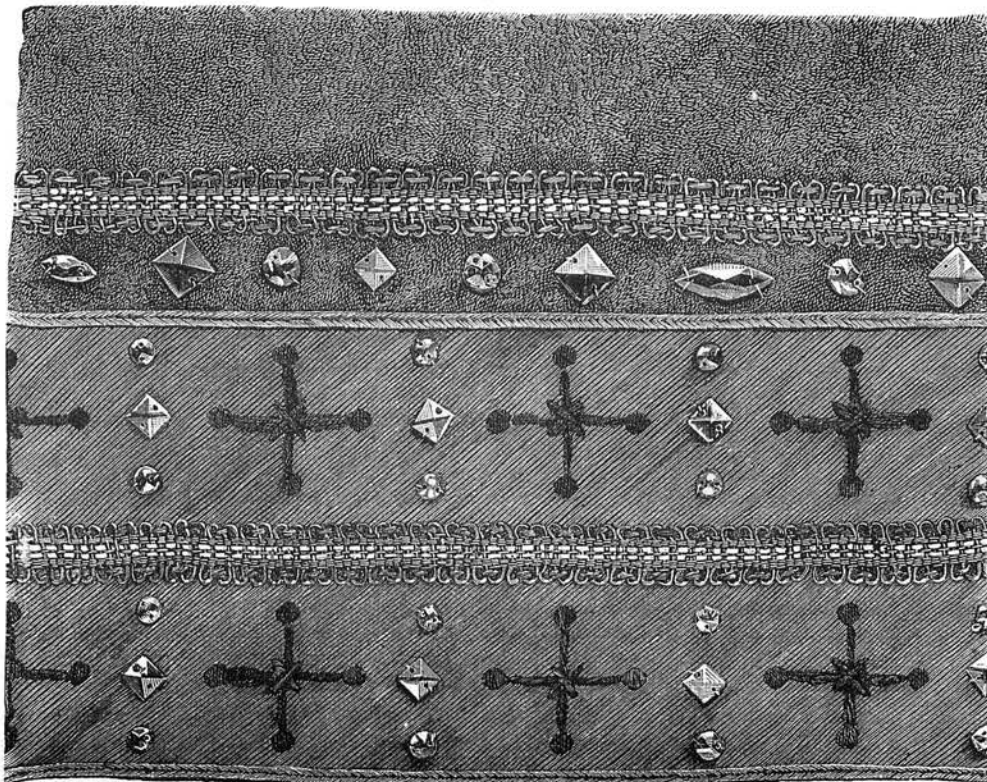
In Fig. 1 you see the spots treated exactly like daisies, just single stitches of red cotton, *coton à repriser* being used, and the muslin spot forming the centre. In Fig. 2 the embroidery is done in pink and pale green silk. The crosses are worked with a satin-stitching, done over the spot, and four loops of picot stitch coming from it. Coral stitch is carried from spot to spot to form the Vandykes, and in each spot is one French knot which I must remind you must be firmly fastened off at the back.



is sewn down between the spots in a way clearly seen in the illustration. You can get some very fine gold-coloured silk in skeins of Pearsall's, which is made expressly for the purpose of sewing down gold cords and braids, and this is the best to use.

Where the gold braid crosses is sewn down a jewel round or square, ruby coloured. The gold braid and jewels are to be had at Mr. Kenning's, 1-3, Little Britain, where every variety of cords and braids and jewels of all shapes and sizes can be had at very moderate prices. Always use very strong cotton for sewing on your jewels, as silk is apt to cut. You will need a very fine needle, and if you wish your work to be very elaborate indeed, you can cut up some bullion into very small pieces, and threading it on your needle, let it hide the cotton you have used as it secures the jewel in its place.

Fig. 9 is another way in which spotted ribbon can be used. A fancy gold braid is laid down in diagonal lines, yellow and red jewels of different shapes and sizes being sewn between. A border of this kind would be very pretty for a bracket, or else for fastening round a small table.



You can make very pretty little ornaments, which are useful as well, with those small wooden stools to be had at many shops, and which cost but a few pence each. Cover the top and legs with satin or plush and nail a pretty border such as this we just described round the top. This is nice to place on a table, as it serves to hold a pot of flowers, photograph frame, etc.

The table-cloth border is done in blue ribbon which has a red spot on it. The latter forms the ends of the crosses, worked simply by taking long stitches of red cable silk, and

fastening them down crosswise in the middle. The jewels used are yellow, and a line of them appears on the terra-cotta serge upon which the band is mounted. A narrow gold braid edges the ribbon, and a wider one of a fancy pattern runs along the middle. This is sewed down with thick red silk, and a line of the same is on the serge itself above the jewels.

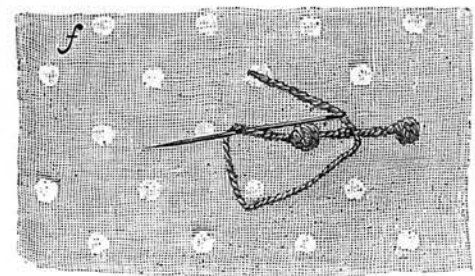
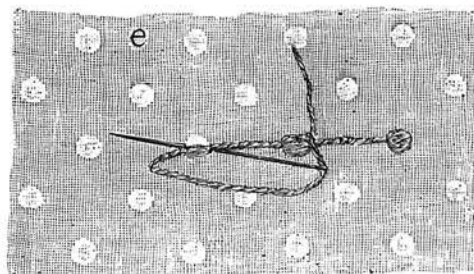
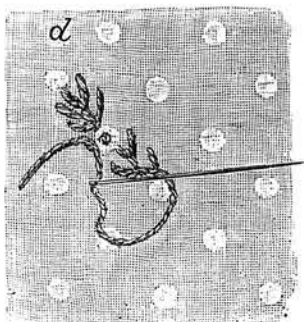
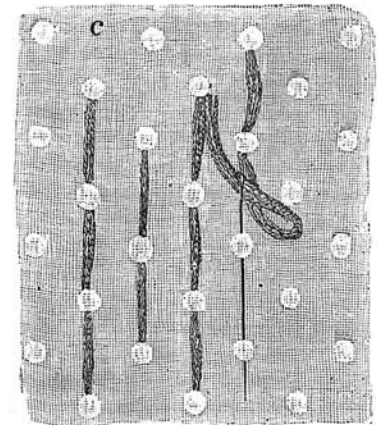
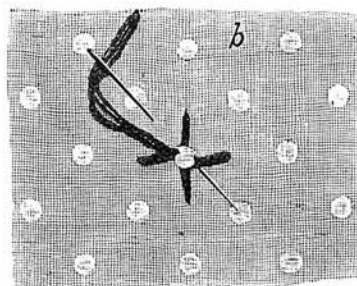
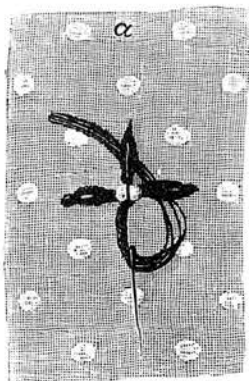
Now as to how the stitches are done.

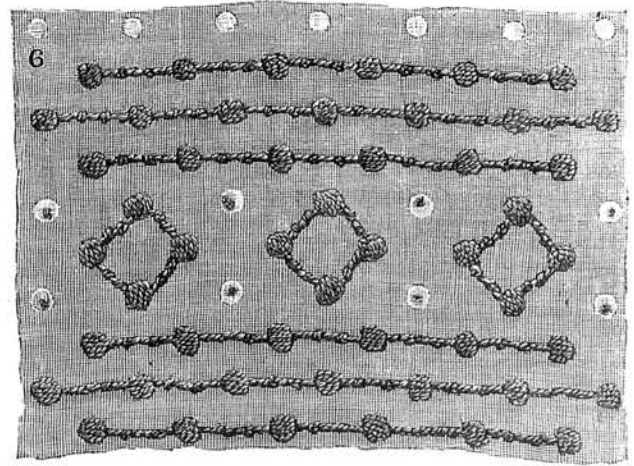
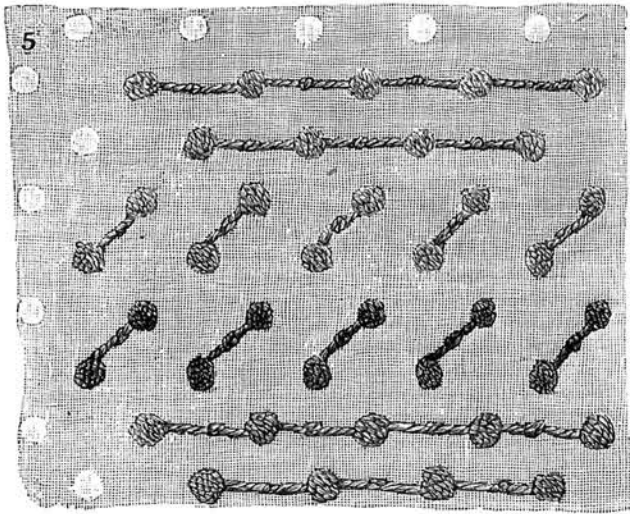
As will be seen by the foregoing illustrations there is no rule about stitches, as so many kinds can be effectively used, and space forbids my giving you more examples than six.

In *a* you see picot stitch. Make a loop as if for a chain, keeping your cotton under your needle, then withdrawing the needle fasten down the loop with a single stitch about a quarter the length of the loop.

In *b* you see how the straight spike stitches are formed. They must all be of equal length or else a correct star or flower is not formed.

In *c* the needle is left to show how in the crossing the cotton is passed under the spots. Always begin and end your lines at the edge of the piece of muslin, and never break off and





This would look exceedingly pretty as an ornamentation of dresses for children, and a little dress embroidered all round with work of the kind and with yoke and bands on sleeves to correspond would be charming. It should of course be worn over a coloured slip of silk or sateen to go with the embroidery.

Fig. 3 shows yellow *coton à repriser* crossed under and between the spots, a green French knot done in embroidery cotton securing the cotton where it crosses on the plain muslin. If you wish to work this pattern still more elaborately, you can make a French knot in the middle of each spot.

As everyone almost knows how a French knot is made I have not given an illustration of it. It is simply twisting the cotton round the needle one or more times, and then replacing it almost in the same place. There is a certain knack in doing them, as, if badly done, the knots get into a tangle as you draw the needle through it.

Fig. 4 has much the same kind of pattern, the threads being taken diagonally instead of straight across. This is done in orange-coloured embroidery cotton.

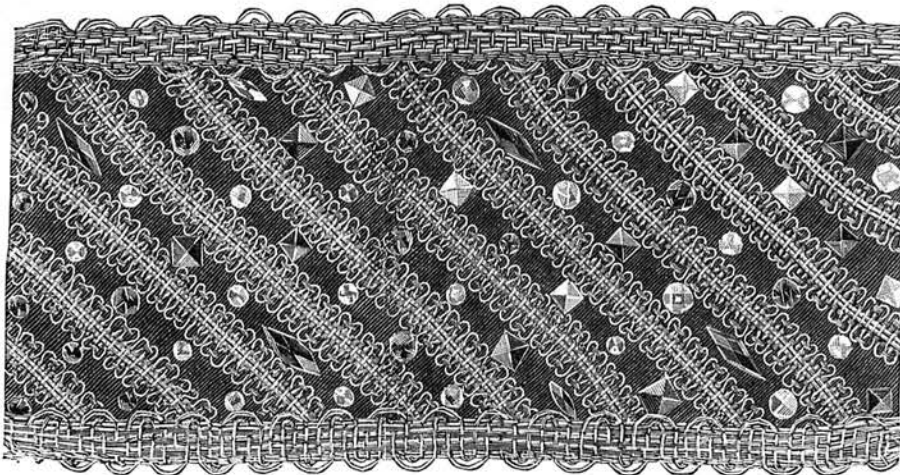
Fig. 5 would answer very well for a child's

Fig. 6, and as you will easily see, once you begin work of this kind you can form all kinds of patterns.

Fig. 7 is done in red crosses with a yellow French knot in the middle. The stitch for the cross is picot stitch. Every spot, as you will see, has also a yellow French knot. This is a very pretty pattern, and would be nice for window curtains as well as other things.

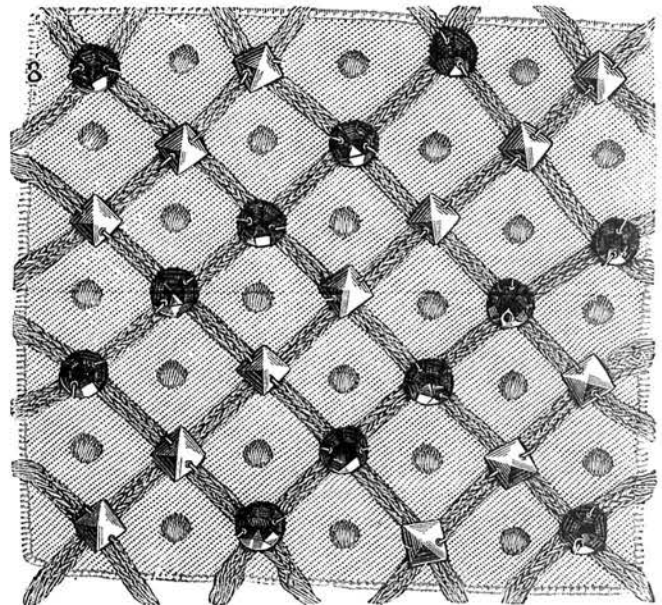
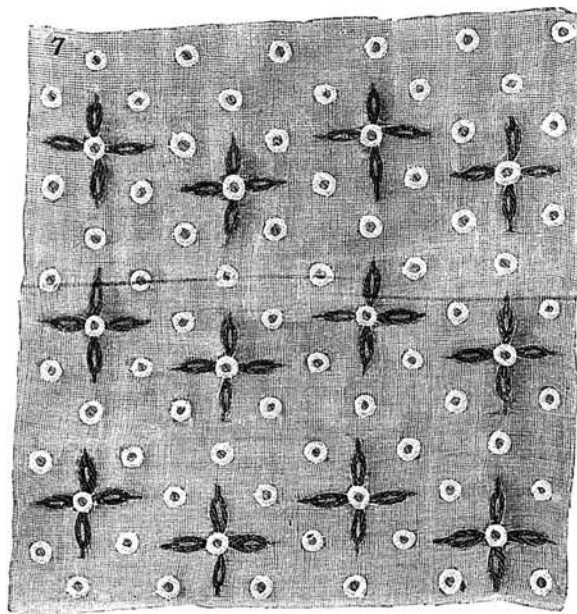
You can often get ribbon of different widths which have spots on them, and these do capitally for embroidering in this way. When finished you can mount them according to your taste. A strip of ribbon embroidered as you see in Fig. 8 would do very well indeed if laid across a tea cosy made of plush, or else if mounted on velvet or plush, etc., to form a glove and kerchief satchel.

The ribbon before you is white with golden coloured spots which I have left not ornamented in any way. Very narrow gold braid



dress, and is very effective indeed done in silks of two colours. Each spot, as will be seen, is worked over in satin stitch, the line connecting the spots being worked in snail trail stitch.

Both satin stitch and snail trail are used in



fasten or begin again in the middle or any other part.

Coral stitch is seen in *d*. Let your branches always be of the same size, and before passing on to it again make the French knot in the spot.

In *e* you see the satin-stitch, which should always be evenly done and worked across the

way of the cotton spot, and not in the same direction.

Snail-trail is seen in *f*. Instead of, as in chain stitch, you put the needle in the loop, you place it behind the silk. Then draw the loop and go on to the next.

Before ending I must remind my readers that if they wish the work really to simulate

daisies, they should do the flower in white silk tipped with deep red. This can be done by fastening down the loop of the picot stitch with red, or else making a tiny red French knot at the end of a spike. The middle should be worked in yellow stitch, or else a cluster of small French knots made so as entirely to cover the spot.

St. Valentine's Day.



The Girl's Own Paper, 1882

Recent Escapes from Gaol.

BY MAJOR ARTHUR GRIFFITHS.



ALL escapes from prison have a family likeness. The breaking out of duration, whether successful or not, is governed by much the same conditions now as in the past. It is only made possible by the neglect of due precautions by warders or the superior intelligence of captives, whose ingenuity in contrivance, promptitude in seizing opportunity, and boldness in facing risk have defeated the combined restrictions of chains and bolts and bars. Certainly escapes are less frequent nowadays; constant watchfulness and close personal supervision are more effective than massive walls; moral has done more than physical restraint. Yet all these are still evaded at times. At the great convict prisons numbers are worked in almost semi-freedom beyond the prison boundaries, and generally quite securely. For instance, at Borstal, near Chatham, they are sent out by rail several miles, in curious special narrow-gauge trains, under escort, locked in, and are employed in building extensive fortifications, coming and going within the circuit of sentries as freely as ordinary navvies. Yet even here they will make a bold bid for liberty; following some sudden uncontrollable impulse, they will run the gauntlet of rifle shots, and occasionally get clear away. Many ingenious devices have been tried at the convict prisons to compass escape. The main object is to secure concealment or disguise. In one case a man, who was employed with others stacking bricks, arranged a hiding place for himself in the middle of the stack. Here, when the officer's eye was off him, he lay down full length, and then each friendly comrade as he

passed laid on him the bricks he was carrying. By this clever device he was quickly buried out of sight, and only his fellows who were still loyal to him had any knowledge of what had become of him. He lay close while the hunt was made and at the narrow risk of suffocation; after night-fall he got away.

In another very similar case at Portland the would-be fugitive allowed himself to be interred in a trench, which was soon lightly covered over with earth. Here, again, all search seemed absolutely fruitless, but the warders, being satisfied that the man could not have left the island, took to prodding the ground near where the escape had occurred with their bayonets, and when one of these pricked the convict below, a howl immediately betrayed him.

Disguises are obviously difficult to obtain by prisoners, but they have been devised out of the most unpromising materials. The "cleaning rags," as they are called—odd pieces of flannel and cloth, only a few inches square, given out to clean tinware—have even been patiently and secretly stitched together into the semblance of a suit of clothes, stained dark by soot or ashes brought in from the works. A suit of this kind was put on next the skin and under the prison clothing, all of which is covered with the tell-tale brand of the Government Broad Arrow, and the convict boldly



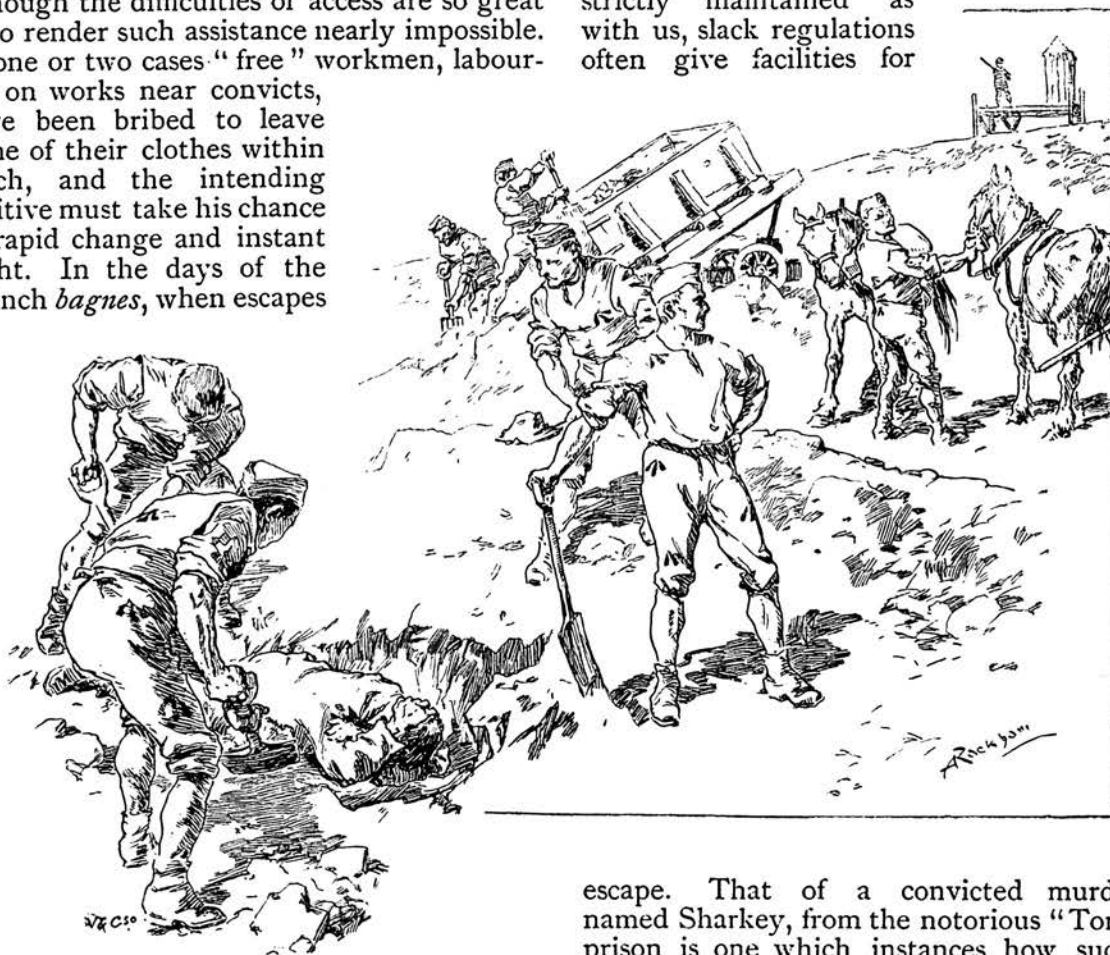
JACKSON'S ESCAPE FROM
WAKEFIELD.

issued forth, hoping to pass the ordeal of "searching," which is strictly performed on all prisoners going out to work or returning therefrom. One whole party is, however, detailed daily to be sent to the bath-house to be stripped completely, and, as ill luck would have it, that of the convict with his flannel disguise was chosen on the very day he had decided to wear it and risk a bolt. Of course the attempt was frustrated. A great difficulty with escaping convicts is their boots; there is no changing them, no mistaking them or the footprint they make, for the nails in the soles are arranged in the form of a Broad Arrow, and every tread on dust or mud leaves the Government mark behind.

Disguises have been supplied by friends, although the difficulties of access are so great as to render such assistance nearly impossible. In one or two cases "free" workmen, labouring on works near convicts, have been bribed to leave some of their clothes within reach, and the intending fugitive must take his chance of rapid change and instant flight. In the days of the French *bagnes*, when escapes

New Caledonia, and there is a steady stream of fugitives homeward from Cayenne, who travel across the Atlantic as openly as ordinary passengers. An authentic story is told of a French convict in Cayenne, who was determined to see the French Exhibition of 1889, and escaped on purpose. He was present at the grand opening, and stood at no great distance from the President, very busily and profitably employed in his professional business of picking pockets. When he was, in due course, re-arrested on some offence and sentenced afresh to transportation, he proudly declared that half, at least, of his travelling expenses had been defrayed by the public.

In the United States, where prison discipline is not always so strictly maintained as with us, slack regulations often give facilities for



THE TRENCH AT PORTLAND.

were of constant occurrence, false beards have been furnished with the clothes; a hat to replace the *bonnet vert*, or green cap, which in France was the distinctive badge of the convict; a file and cold chisel to rid the runaway of his inevitable chains. Escapes nowadays in the French penal settlements abroad are also very frequent; whole boatloads get away from

escape. That of a convicted murderer, named Sharkey, from the notorious "Tombs" prison is one which instances how successful is craft joined to effrontery. Sharkey awaited execution, as the American manner is, for more than a year. During all that time he was regularly visited by his sweetheart, Maggie Jourdan, who was permitted to sit with him at his cell gate for hours and hours together. One day she came with a friend, another woman, who passed on to an upper floor, while Jourdan went as usual to sit with Sharkey. About one o'clock—very early for her—in the day she left the prison.

Soon afterwards another woman came downstairs, a woman of peculiar appearance, in a heavy woollen dress, who had broad shoulders covered by a black cloak, and was closely veiled. As she produced a ticket of admission granted to all visitors, there was no idea of detaining her ; but by-and-by, when Maggie Jourdan's female friend came down, she was found to have lost her card. She had, in fact, given it to the murderer Sharkey, to whom a disguise had been brought, and with it, of course, a skeleton key to pass him through his cell door. There were the prison clothes in his cell when entered, and on a shelf the remains of his moustache, still covered with the lather of recent shaving. Both the women were arrested, and charged with complicity in this escape, but nothing was proved against them. Sharkey, evading all efforts to recapture him, eventually made his way to Cuba, where the Spanish authorities employed him as a spy upon the patriots, and he came in due course to a bad end.

A still more recent escape was made only the other day from the old Sing Sing Prison, on the River Hudson, which well illustrates the danger of combination. In this, one man got out of his cell by stratagem at the dead of night, overpowered his warder and forced him into the cell he had just vacated, locking him in, after taking possession of his keys ; with these he was able to release a friend, and the two together then attacked and overpowered the second night watchman. Then three more prisoners were set free, but they refused the liberty thus unexpectedly brought to them. So the two first men climbed up into the skylight in the roof, and thence dropped down on the boundary wall. Sing Sing stands at the water's edge, the river flows close up under the walls, and anyone who reaches that can secure a boat. By the time the escape was discovered and pursuit organised, the fugitives had crossed the river and had got far away.

Ingenuity in seizing disguise has never been better displayed than in the escape of a female from Millbank only a few years ago. It must be premised that women seldom break prison ; they are handicapped, obviously, in every way—costume, want of strength, and freedom of movement. But Eve's daughters make up for such drawbacks in artfulness. This woman was of exemplary character. Her offence had been a series of hotel robberies ; and as she was somewhat superior to the ordinary run, quiet, moreover, and civil spoken, she was chosen as "cleaner" —a personal attendant of the matron of the prison. As such, she had constant access to the matron's quarters, and this, contrary to

regulation, at a time when she was only beginning her sentence. She made herself so useful, and was always so industrious and obliging, that she went in and out as she liked, while neither drawers nor cupboards were locked against her. One day the matron, when she came off duty, found no "cleaner" in her quarters. Some of her best clothes had also disappeared. The prisoner had taken advantage of the scant supervision she endured, had disguised herself from head to foot, even to her shoes, in articles of the matron's wardrobe, and then, with consummate hardihood, had presented herself at the main gates to be "let out." She was a private friend of the matron's, spending a few days with her, and was now on her way to do some shopping in town. The gate-keeper had no sort of suspicion that this neatly-dressed person was other than the matron's guest, and opened the gates to her without further question. However, she did not remain long at large. She was traced to a house in Chelsea, where she was recaptured, concealed under a bed. The matron's clothes were lying about in the same house ; the fugitive's prison clothing, over which she had thrown her disguise, she had destroyed. This woman told her captors that her escape was not premeditated, the sudden temptation had overpowered her irresistibly when she saw the facilities offered for escape.

Impulse goes for much in these attempts, following tempting opportunities unexpectedly offered. Jackson, who murdered a warder at Manchester and escaped, could hardly have carried out his fell purpose had he not seen the sudden chance when closeted with the warder alone in an isolated house. Jackson was a clever plumber, and he was working at his trade when he saw the hammer handy and the officer off his guard. This Jackson was at the time "wanted" for a previous escape. He had got out of durance at Wakefield, not long before, by his daring adaptation of favourable circumstances. He was employed as an assistant in the reception ward, being a smart, active man, and while there the authorities had discovered a weak spot in the roof. The building was ventilated by a circular, hitherto unclosed, aperture, which it was thought safer to close by an iron grating. Before the grating was firmly fixed, Jackson found that he could not only move it up or down by the lever and string, but that there was just room for him to squeeze through it. The height was barely eight feet, as the building was all on the ground-floor. One day, when unobserved, he climbed up into the ventilator and put it to the test ; but it was so tight a fit that he had to

strip his clothes off and draw them after him. There was a little loft above the ventilator, where he lay *perdu* for a time; then, removing a few slates in the roof, he emerged into daylight, and dropped down outside into the high road. There was a hue and cry after Jackson, but he managed to elude all pursuit, and probably would never have been arrested after the first escape had he not got away again with the brand of Cain upon him.

In our prisons of to-day, so well watched and guarded, stratagem still prevails, and the captive, whose mind is concentrated on one object, will sometimes beat the closest vigilance, the best precautions. One of the most remarkable of modern prison-breakers was a youth—he was little more—who escaped from Wakefield prison under very singular circumstances. This man, H., although young, was of much experience, and he was gifted with very quick perception and great powers of observation. H. was by trade a shoemaker, prison taught, and as such he was engaged almost from the time of his arrival in mending and cobbling shoes. This gave him the command of tools during a great part of the day, and access to certain material, a very necessary, even indispensable, aid to successful escape. At this prison in those days further assistance was unwittingly offered to would-be fugitives by the existence of often imperfectly secured traps in the cell doors. The “traps” or flap-openings were at one time used to give in the food rations and the supplies of material for daily handiwork. But latterly they had been abolished and bolted up, but the process had not been perfectly effective in every case.

H. was a convict undergoing his “separates,” or first period of nine months’ cellular confinement, and as such he did not leave his cell, except for chapel or exercise. Going and returning at those times, he stood facing his cell door, either till he got the order to march off or until a warder arrived with the key to let him in. H., during these long waits, had abundant leisure to notice that the small trap-door did not fasten securely, and more, that with a little humouring he could always open it from inside. This was a first great point gained. When a prisoner can get at the far side of his door to tamper with the cell lock, he is on the way to better things, for he can tamper with the key-hole which is only on the outside. H. found, when he had let down his trap, he could, by stretching his arm out through the opening, work easily at the key-hole.

His next business was to make some sort of skeleton key. Among the articles left in his cell was a small iron-bound tub for soaking

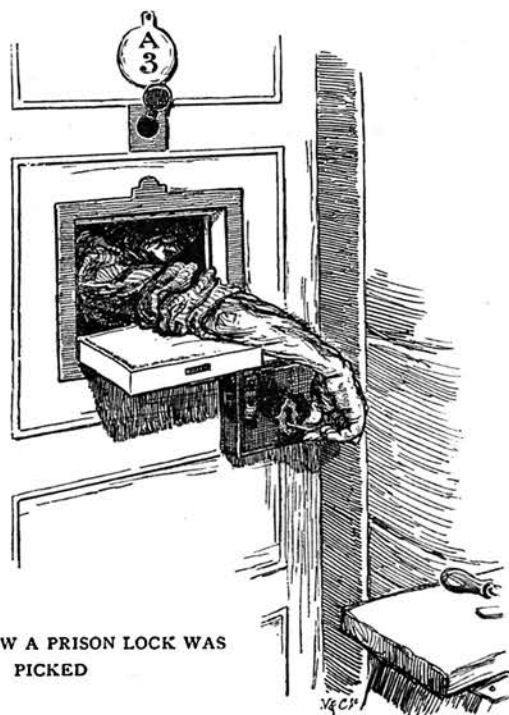
leather in. With his cobbler’s rasp he filed off a long narrow strip of iron, which he fashioned with infinite pains and ingenuity into a pick-lock. The key had only one ward at right angles to the handle, and this handle was only a large loop of the metal bound round strongly with waxed thread. It was no doubt a long job, making and fitting this key; the work must be done in the night time when the watchman was at a distance, yet with extreme caution, for in the death-like stillness of the prison halls the slightest noise is heard. But the key was fitted in due course and used, for one night H. walked out of his cell. He now found more implements right under his hand. It was the custom at Wakefield to leave the shoemaker’s bench and tools just outside the cell door, and here he picked up a mallet, a cobbler’s knife, and a heavy file.

H. knew his way about the prison, for he had often been an inmate, and he went



“THE GATE-KEEPER HAD NO SORT OF SUSPICION THAT THIS NEATLY-DRESSED PERSON WAS OTHER THAN THE MATRON’S GUEST.”

straight to what he remembered as a weak point—a cell on the top storey, connected by a ladder with the heating, or, rather, ventilating, apparatus in the roof. H. used his false key to enter this cell, found the ladder, went up it, drew it after him, closed the trap-door, and was so far out of reach. He had worked noiselessly hitherto, but now, having to get through the roof, he began to hammer at the wooden beams and knock about the slates. These sounds, more or less regular or continuous, betrayed him. The night patrols heard, and, fearing there was something wrong in the gaol, gave the alarm. Reserve warders were roused, the governor called up, and a number of officials ran in the direction of the noise. They traced it to above the closed trap-door, but were unable for a long time to penetrate to the upper level. When at last they broke through and clambered up, it was only to see the hole in the roof. Unfortunately no one thought of taking post in the yard or garden below, and it was by this route that H. made his escape. With great daring he committed himself to a water-pipe, which ran from the roof to the ground,



HOW A PRISON LOCK WAS PICKED

and slid down it. He had the start after crossing the yard, and fortune still favoured him, for he found an empty house abutting on the boundary wall. By breaking a window on the ground floor he entered this house, ran upstairs and out on to the roof, whence he dropped into the fields outside. He was now absolutely free.

So far he had been greatly helped by his

luck no less than by his quick wits. After that, as we shall see, the tables were turned on him. Although he had left behind him an impudent message, written on his cell slate, to the effect that he had only escaped because he wished to develop an invention that was "to bring him many thousands and benefit the whole world," he went back to his old business—that of burglary. A first *coup* gave him the means to get to the south, and there he seized a good opportunity to break into a large shop or emporium, where he fitted himself out from head to foot in new clothes, and filled a sack with various valuable items, which he took to the nearest railway station, hoping to move on beyond the radius of immediate pursuit. His appearance, however, in good clothes carrying a heavy bag just about day-dawn, brought him under the eye of a suspicious policeman, and he was then and there "run in."

Committal to the borough gaol promptly followed, and he was soon put back for trial at the next assize. All this time there was no notion that he was the H. of the Police "Hue and Cry," the fugitive from Wakefield, and he seems to have been subjected to no especial watch as a prison breaker. Once more he set his wits to work, and quickly saw a new opening for escape. The cell he occupied was, strange luck, old-fashioned and insecure, at least for such a truant spirit. He began to pick at the walls with his tin dinner knife, and soon found by scratching at it that the mortar had rotted, and that he could dislodge the bricks around the air grating which communicated with the outside. After a night or two of unremitting toil, he was able to remove the grating bodily, thus opening an aperture wide enough to allow him to pass through. While he had been thus busily employed, he had been careful to keep appearances, and, although the bricks were loose and easily removable, he kept them in their places until the last moment, using paper chewed into a thick paste instead of the mortar.

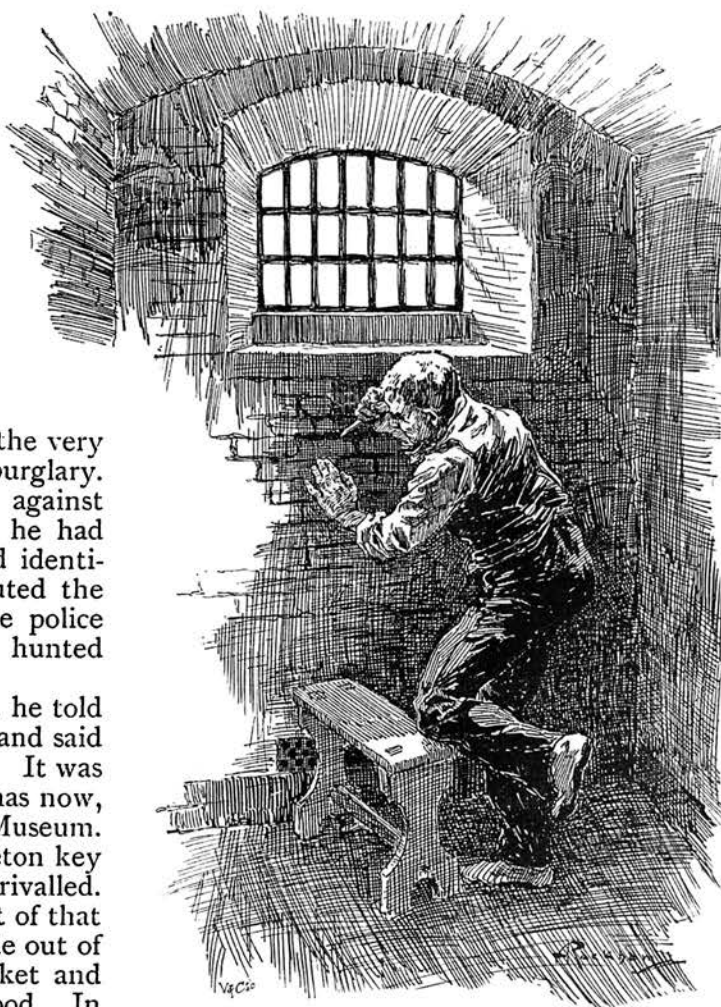
The night he chose for evasion was dark and stormy with heavy showers, circumstances that must help him greatly. When he crept through the wall into the yard beyond, he was able to elude the observation of the night-watchman who patrolled the precincts, although, as H. lay close, watching his next chance, the officer passed within a few inches of where he was hiding. After that he made use of a convenient plank, noticed by him during the day when at exercise, placed it sloping against the boundary wall, then ran up the inclined plane. By the same process he got down on the far side, and he was free.

H. was still in the clothes he had stolen—not in the prison dress—and so was more or less safe from immediate detection. Now he made his way across country to the nearest port, and managed to hide upon a craft just clearing out to sea. The ship was well down Channel before the stowaway was discovered, but then he got short shrift and was at once put back on shore. Once more he took to the road, wandering on in ignorance of his whereabouts, until his star, no longer in the ascendant, led him to the very town in which he had committed the burglary. Still worse, his luck, now altogether against him, took him past the very shop he had ransacked. The proprietor, who had identified his stolen goods and had prosecuted the thief, immediately recognised H. The police were promptly informed, H. was hunted down and recaptured.

It was after his recommitment that he told the whole story of his first escape, and said where the false key was to be found. It was for some time in my possession, but has now, I think, been deposited in the Black Museum.

H.'s clever manufacture of a skeleton key has often been equalled—indeed, outrivalled. Another prisoner, at Holloway, got out of that splendid building by using a key made out of scraps of iron fitted into a quill socket and provided with a cross handle of wood. In this particular escape, consummate artfulness, as well as great ingenuity, was displayed. The man was supposed to be ailing from some serious internal complaint and actually unable to walk. The treatment he received in hospital was said to be greatly benefiting him, and just before he recovered the use of his limbs he managed to run away. He let himself out of the hospital with his skeleton keys, and used them everywhere with success. In the yard he found a ladder or plank, and completed his escape in the most approved fashion by scaling the boundary wall. He was not long at large, but on his recapture he was not again dealt with as an invalid. The keys above mentioned were supposed to have been made surreptitiously in the prison workshop, although how the pattern was exactly obtained never appeared. But in this the extraordinary readiness of prisoners has often been shown. False keys that worked perfectly were once made, it is said, by a man who had merely watched intently the shape of the keys as they were carried by the chaplain when talking to him.

I have already, when speaking of Jackson,



“HE BEGAN TO PICK AT THE WALLS WITH HIS TIN DINNER KNIFE.”

referred to the acute physical discomfort that prisoners will endure when bent upon escape. To this may be added the case of a man who was employed with others in beating carpets, and who one day most mysteriously disappeared. It is now nearly certain that he got himself rolled up in one of the carpets, and was passed out of the prison gates thus packed up at the bottom of a loaded cart. There was a remarkable escape from Millbank some years ago, when a prisoner, Punch Howard by name, worked himself through the narrow space of his cell ventilator—about 12 inches by 14. An American prisoner, Schrader, also got out of the Tombs prison in New York through an aperture in the wall 29 inches long by 6½ inches wide. In order to facilitate his squeeze he soaped himself entirely from head to foot. He slipped his head through first, and then dragged his body by twisting and contorting it, using one of his hands braced against the inner side of the wall.

COOKING AT SEA.

BY A. G. PAYNE, AUTHOR OF "COMMON-SENSE COOKERY," "CHOICE DISHES AT SMALL COST," ETC.



THERE! don't bother me; I don't know which way to turn." How often has this remark been made by our old friend, the good plain cook, to some interrupting fellow-servant, most probably the unlucky page, who, on occasions of preparation for extra festivities, generally has rather a lively

time of it. On these exceptional occasions, perhaps a little fussiness, and even a little extra irritability of temper, may be excused; but what a dreadful thing it would be if some modern Mr. Bultitude, who had not thrown away his Garuda stone, were to wish his good plain cook to change places with one at sea!

In one instant the comfortable and spacious kitchen shrinks into an iron-bound apartment probably one-quarter the size. The kitchen range becomes the galley fire. The view from the window, commanding a delightful prospect of the area railings, is changed into one of rolling billows crested with foam. What was formerly the kitchen floor is now an inclined plane, sometimes sloping thirty degrees in one direction, and sometimes in another. Then the creaking, groaning, banging, swinging, crashing, shouting, which seem inseparable from sea-travelling, that are always going on. How bewildering!

The ship is the *Kaisar I Hind*. We are midway between the ports of Aden and Colombo. Our cook is Mr. Baker, an old friend of mine, whose first experience of cooking at sea was making an omelette on board the lugger *Mary Ann*, while Captain Webb swam by the side on his memorable journey from Dover Pier to Calais Sands. The bill of fare, which to-day is considerably more extensive, is as follows:—

P. AND O. S.S. KAISAR I HIND.

AT SEA BETWEEN ADEN AND COLOMBO.

5th day of November, 1884.

SALOON MESS.	SECOND CLASS.
Passengers . . . 82	Passengers . . . 22
Officers . . . 8	Children . . . —
Children . . . 13	—
—	Warrant Officers . . 12
Engineers . . . 6	Natives . . . 8
European Stewards . 41	

BREAKFAST.

FIRST CLASS.	SECOND CLASS.
Porridge.	Porridge.
Findon Haddock.	Mutton Chops—Chips.
Rump Steak and Onions.	American Hash.
Hashed Poultry.	Minc'd Collops.
Irish Stew.	Ham and Eggs.
Kidney Omelette.	—
Curry Rice.	ENGINEERS' MESS.
	Do.
FIRST CLASS CHILDREN.	
Porridge.	
Fried Fish—Mutton Cutlets.	
Fish-Pash—Hashed Fowl.	
Boiled Eggs—Curry Rice.	

LUNCHEON—FIRST CLASS.

Roast Ribs of Beef.
Roast Shoulder of Mutton—Mint Sauce.
Pigeon Pies—Corned Leg of Pork.
Salmon—Cucumber.
Potted Meats.
Mashed Potatoes—Biscuit and Cheese.
Currant Buns.

DINNER.

FIRST CLASS.	FIRST CLASS CHILDREN.
Soup:	Soup.
Scotch Broth.	Boiled Mutton.
Joints:	Roast Fowl.
Roast Shoulder of Mutton and	Cornish Pie.
Onion Sauce.	Curry Rice—Pastry.
Entrées:	—
Chicken à la Marengo.	ENGINEERS' MESS.
Green Peas à la Bretonne.	Soup.
Poultry:	Roast Beef—J. P.
Roast Goose and Apple Sauce.	Cornish Pie.
Curry—Allahabad.	Curry Rice—Pastry.
Pastry:	—
Naples Pudding.	STEWARDS.
Meringues of Damsons.	Corned Beef.
Lemon Cheese Cake.	Vegetables.
—	—
SECOND CLASS.	WARRANT OFFICERS' MESS.
Soup.	Corned Beef.
Corned Beef—Carrots.	Vegetables.
Roast Mutton.	
Cornish Pie.	
Curry Rice—Pastry.	

Before entering into a description of cooking at sea, and explaining how such cooking differs from the ordinary methods on shore, I must first guard against the common error with writers who may be described as amateur sailors, of using what they would call "sailors' lingo." I shall therefore, in order to render myself perfectly intelligible to all classes, including that very large one—those who have never been to sea at all—carefully avoid using any nautical phrases. There must be, however, a few exceptions.

The first thing that naturally attracts the attention of a landsman is, what a fearful state of confusion there must be in the galley during a rolling sea! Imagine an ordinary kitchen grate covered with saucepans, &c., were it suddenly to begin to swing backwards and forwards like a see-saw. This diffi-

culty, however, is easily overcome. Every galley fire is fitted with a number of iron bars fastened to a rod at the back, and which fit into little grooves in a rod in front. Consequently, when the sea is rough these bars are fixed, and each cooking utensil is held tightly in its place between the bars just the same as a saucepan could be held over an ordinary fireplace with a strong pair of pincers.

Another difficulty is when the saucepans on the fire are at all full—when the ship rolls they run over. The remedy for this is as simple as Dr. Abernethy's one for the old lady who complained of having such a dreadful pain in her arm when she went "so." He pocketed his guinea and said, "Don't go so." So with the saucepans, the simple remedy is, "Don't fill the saucepans." No saucepan on board ship should ever be more than three-quarters full when the ship is rolling.

My first impression in watching the cooking on board ship was—how many practical lessons might be learnt from it by cooks on shore! How often do cooks complain that "there is no doing anything in this pokey kitchen;" the pokey kitchen being probably quite four times the size of the galley in which I am standing, in which breakfast, lunch, and dinner have to be prepared daily for over 200 persons. The requisite qualities required for success are early rising, an entire absence of fussiness, and, by no means the least important, the power of looking ahead and seeing that each person minds his own business without interfering with another's.

We must not, however, be tempted by the strange surroundings, especially of faces and temperature, to write an article on cooking without giving some new receipts. On turning to the bill of fare for the day, there are at least two or three dishes the names of which are to me quite unfamiliar. These are Pish-Pash, American Hash, and Cornish Pie, to say nothing of the Allahabad Curry; but at some future time I hope to explain the different kinds of curries, which are so numerous that they require a dictionary all to themselves.

It will be seen that Pish-Pash is one of the dishes served at the children's breakfast. It is very simple, and a more excellent dish for children, whether on sea or at home on land, cannot be conceived. It is made from the remains of chickens which have been previously cooked. The meat is carefully removed from the bones and cut up into small pieces not bigger than dice, and it is served mixed with boiled rice moistened with a little stock. Sometimes Pish-Pash is made from the remains of boiled mutton. Children, of course, eat it with a spoon and fork. This dish is one that certainly deserves to be more widely known than it is at present.

The next dish which strikes my eye as a novelty is American Hash. This is made by mincing some corned beef in a sausage machine, and mixing it with mashed potatoes and flavouring it with pepper, mustard, anchovy sauce, and nutmeg. The mixture is pressed and shaped in a mould; it is then egged over and baked in the oven.

I may here state that the cooking on board the *Kaisar I Hind* was really first-class, quite equal to that at the first-class establishment in which our present cook formerly served. I was, however, particularly struck with the economy shown, which in my experience invariably goes hand in hand with excellence. The grand maxim of gathering up the fragments which remain, that nothing be lost, was carried out to perfection in the cook's galley on board the *Kaisar I Hind*, while at the same time every dish prepared was nourishing and appetising.

The Cornish Pie—another name also new to me—was made by mixing meat and potatoes in equal quantities, adding gravy, flavouring, &c., and covering the whole over with pastry. This again is a dish that only needs to be better known to become very popular.

I think I have met with the same dish in the North of England under another name, but I cannot recall it to mind.

There is one other dish in the bill of fare which, perhaps, may need a little explanation, and that is *Poulet à la Marengo*.

This is an exceedingly nice entrée when properly made. I will describe how to make enough for six or eight persons. First parboil a young and tender fowl, and when it is quite cold cut it up into small joints; the legs must be cut through the joint, the bone of the drumstick chopped off close to the meat, the thigh cut in half, the bone being chopped; the wings should be cut off rather short, and the breast cut across so as to make three joints. These, with the merrythought, will make twelve meaty little joints without using any of the back. These joints should be quickly fried a bright golden colour. They are best fried in oil, but they can be browned in the frying-pan, in which has been placed a very little oil or butter, which must be made very hot. The mistake generally made is that in frying the joints brown the cook dries them up. The joints of fowl should be piled up neatly in the centre of a silver dish, and a rich sauce poured over them, made as follows:—

Take first some really good, rich, brown gravy—say rather more than a quarter of a pint. The gravy must be similar to what would be served with a roast goose or roast turkey—not thin beef-tea thickened with flour, as one so often finds it in middle-class homes on shore.

To this quantity of good gravy must be added four or five table-spoonfuls of tomato pulp, or, as it is called, "tomato conserve." This can be obtained in bottles, and is far superior to the tomato sauce, which contains vinegar and has much less of the pure tomato flavour. A small tin of mushrooms should be added to the gravy and tomato pulp, and the whole made thoroughly hot. The dish should be garnished round the edge with fried eggs and pieces of bread cut into some shape and fried a bright golden brown colour. The eggs should not be fried like those served at breakfast, but should be sent up resembling in appearance small, round, light brown balls. A few of the largest mushrooms should be picked out of the tin

and dipped in some bright glaze, and placed round the edge to assist in ornamenting the dish. A few stoned olives may also with advantage be added just before serving.

In the altered mode of living which we experience when first we exchange our bed for a berth, perhaps the change is most apparent on the breakfast-table.

constant item in the breakfast bill of fare. What is more to the point is that the dish was always a favourite one with the passengers. Travelling does a great deal to rub off prejudice. If those housekeepers who are constantly complaining—and they are a large class—of the sameness of the English mode of living were only to look abroad, they could astonish their



THE COOK'S GALLEY ON BOARD THE *KAISAR I HIND*.

Probably many persons, in glancing over the bill of fare served on the occasion I have mentioned, will have their attention drawn to the rump steak and onions and Irish stew served at breakfast. We have always regarded Irish stew as a dish best suited for supper on a cold winter's night. Here it is served as a breakfast dish, with the thermometer standing at over 80° in the shade. I remember on the occasion of a former voyage to New York, Irish stew was a

households with a series of startling and most agreeable novelties.

Let, therefore, some good housewife who has had to listen to complaints, wait till some hot day in August or September, and serve for breakfast, in lieu of the continual boiled eggs and fried bacon, some Irish stew followed by a dish of curry. If expostulated with on the innovation, she can quote the breakfast-table of the *Kaisar I Hind*.



HOUSEHOLD HINTS.

CHILDREN should be given onions in any form they like best with their food; they are very wholesome, and cure many ailments from which they suffer.

LEMON-JUICE is invaluable for its medicinal qualities. For inactivity of the liver, take night and morning the juice of half a lemon in hot water. It is also good for bilious attacks, and stimulates the digestion.

STARCHED materials should be avoided in hot weather, as the starch prevents a free current of air from passing through. Porous and light woollen material is the coolest to wear.

UNCOOKED meat in the larder should never be laid on a dish, but hung by a string on a hook in a free current of air. It is also a very good plan to flour the meat well before hanging it up.

POWDERED dry charcoal, or some Condyl's fluid and water in a saucer should be placed in the larder with meat and other food, and renewed every day. Meat that is a little tainted can be made quite fit for use by washing in weak Condyl and water, but care must be taken not to use the Condyl too strong, or it makes the meat hard.

WHOLEMEAL bread should be eaten much more than it is—white bread contains very little nourishment.

It takes eighteen times more strength to go upstairs than is required for the same distance on a level.

CHILDREN should never be forced to eat fat. With most of them it entirely disagrees, and does not digest, so that it is a natural instinct in them to dislike it.

If the toe-nail grows into the flesh at the side, it may be cured by making a V-shaped cut in the centre, the broad part of the V at the top of the nail.

A SHORT nap after a heavy meal is most helpful to the digestion, and in no case should the blood be attracted away from the stomach by reading or hard thinking whilst the food is digesting.

CAPITAL washing-gloves may be made out of the least worn parts of old bath towels which are discarded. They should be cut to the required shape and neatly bound at the bottom. White knitted gloves would also be most useful for washing with; the separate fingers would get into difficult corners.

AN obdurate screw may be removed by applying a red-hot iron to the head for a short time, and then apply the screwdriver while the screw is hot.

BOARDS should be scrubbed along the grain of the wood, and not against it if they are to be properly cleaned. And to make them white, soda and water only should be used, and not any soap.

A VALUABLE cure for dysentery is a cordial made of cloves, port-wine, cinnamon and log-wood, of which take a teaspoonful three times a day. Any medical man or chemist can give the proportions necessary.

PEOPLE who are troubled with sticky hands should powder a little very fine oatmeal into their gloves, and it can also be applied inside one's stockings with good results in hot weather.

PRESSURE on any part of the body should be avoided, the pressure of a tight hat, boots, shirt, collar, garter or stays are all injurious in various ways, interfering with the free course of the blood through the veins. Tight belts or stays impede respiration and throw quite unnecessary work on the muscles of the abdomen and small of the back.

COOKING AT SEA.

BY A. G. PAYNE, AUTHOR OF "COMMON-SENSE COOKERY," "CHOICE DISHES AT SMALL COST," "THE HOUSEKEEPER'S GUIDE," ETC.

IN TWO PAPERS.—SECOND PAPER.



It will be found, as a rule, that there is a great similarity between life on board ship and life in a small country village, where there are, comparatively speaking, no shops worthy of the name. In both it is essential to look well ahead in what we may call the housekeeping department. There are, perhaps, few housekeepers in England who would know what to do were they so placed that there was no laundress to whom they could send weekly, and also if the home arrangements were such that no washing could be done at home, yet such is the fate of all those who are compelled by business or pleasure to travel by sea. In the case of a voyage to Australia in a sailing ship, very considerable forethought is necessary on this point, as the average length of the voyage may be roughly put down as three months. On the shorter and quicker voyages made by steamers, a good deal of inconvenience is experienced by passengers on this head, and it is not an uncommon thing for the chief steward or stewardess to have to explain matters to some indignant travellers, who are terribly upset by being informed for the first time that they cannot send their things to the wash in the usual manner.

So far as men's dress is concerned, I can give a few hints that may possibly be useful. It is needless to say that paper cuffs and paper collars will be found very handy. With regard to linen, old travellers generally contrive to have by them a good quantity, in that state which may be described as on its last legs, which at the end of the voyage is handed over to one of the stewards; and, as naturally there is a considerable difference of opinion among travellers as to what constitutes "last legs," sometimes these left-off articles of wearing apparel constitute valuable perquisites.

It is not, however, merely in regard to the eating and drinking that the housekeeping on board ship resembles a village, but in the social intercourse of the passengers. I think it will be found that in all little communities new-comers are regarded as interlopers. Even in a railway carriage where there are two persons, the one who entered last is regarded by his companion as an intruder; if, however, they have entered into conversation, should a third party enter at the next station, they will both regard him, perhaps, with looks of mingled mistrust and aversion.

We have often heard and read of the gossip and scandal of a country village; trivial things, which would pass unnoticed in a city or large town, on board ship become objects of general attention. The wearing of a new dress will vie with a distant shark or whale as a subject of general conversation, though

probably the wearer of the dress would be as unconscious of the fact as the whale itself.

Cooks on board ship have a great deal to put up with. Persons who all their lives have been in the habit of eating excellent dinners, public and private, and have never once given a thought to the bill of fare, will find themselves on board ship unconsciously becoming critics and even *gourmets*, for there is a great deal of difference between a *gourmand* and a *gourmet*. During a long voyage I made a list of every dish that was to me a novelty, and, thanks to our very excellent cook, Mr. Baker, I can give a description of how to make them. Housekeepers who live in villages, and still more in isolated country houses, will do well to bear in mind how many nice dishes there are that can be made independent of "the shops."

Just as on board ship, though we can generally depend upon fresh mutton and fresh poultry, yet we must look to a great extent to the store cupboard to supply the rest, and it is wonderful what an inexhaustible supply these ships seem to carry. Indeed, though we may be at times a thousand miles away from the nearest port, we suffer no more inconvenience than if we lived next door to the manufactory. Every fruit and vegetable we have ever heard of is served in due course, and, indeed, sometimes we are regaled with some we have never heard of. I will now give a description of a few dishes that were served at sea, and which, of course, can be equally well prepared at home, and will mention the meal at which they appeared, and also what part of the globe we were in when they were served.

On the 2nd of December, 1884, we were between Calcutta and Madras, and the following dishes appeared in the bill of fare for breakfast: Pepper Pot and Fish à la Creole. First, with regard to Pepper Pot: cooks seem to differ as to what constitutes Pepper Pot, but, as the name implies, it is evidently very highly seasoned. One English receipt for making Pepper Pot is an extraordinary mixture of gravy, beef, lean ham, pickled pork, savoury herbs, onions, and potatoes, which are used for making broth, which broth is used for stewing a mixture composed of fowl cut into joints and the meat of a lobster or a crab finely minced, small suet dumplings, vegetables, consisting of cauliflowers, French beans, lettuce, or spinach. The entire mixture is eventually served in a soup tureen. Another form of Pepper Pot is a sort of hash, composed of the remains of game and poultry, served in a West Indian sauce known as casaripe. Housekeepers who have never used casaripe would do well to procure a bottle from their grocers. Casaripe is a sauce somewhat resembling soy in appearance, and in small quantities can be used for flavouring and colouring soups and gravies. It also possesses the power of imparting a gamey flavour, consequently it is exceedingly useful in adding to the gravy which is served with the remains of any kind of game or poultry; for instance, take the case of the remains of a roast hare, the meat can be separated from the bones, the bones chopped up and

stewed in a little gravy, the casaripe added to it, and the dish can be ornamented with pieces of fried or toasted bread and a few red and green chilies. Casaripe can also be used in serving up the remains of roast or boiled turkey. Indeed, the sauce itself is suggestive of the flavour of turkey. In all cases of game soups, such as grouse, venison, hare, soup, &c., a little casaripe forms a very nice addition, and is very superior for colouring purposes to burnt sugar. Cooks so often spoil the flavour of the soup in their endeavours to obtain a good colour by means of burnt sugar. Casaripe is made from a plant that grows in the Bermudas.

The Pepper Pot served on board ship may be described as a sort of "everlasting hash," served in a rich sauce, the sauce being sufficiently high-flavoured to keep good what is put in it. Indeed, in making Pepper Pot there is no limit to what may be put in it, and its contents may be as varied as the inside of what was known in the olden days as the "resurrection pie" at school. The dish is always sent to table ornamented with red and green chilies. The reason it may be called an everlasting hash is that the cook can take out enough hash to be served at any one meal, and add the remains of game, poultry, meat, &c., to what is left in the stewpan; but it is evident that the sauce must be very rich and pungent.

On the 16th of December we were between Colombo and Aden, and the following dish appeared as an entrée in the bill of fare for dinner: "Forced Bengals." What was probably really meant was "Forced Bringals," which is a vegetable exactly similar to what is sold occasionally in Covent Garden Market as Aubergines. The inside of this vegetable can be scooped out and filled with ordinary sausage-meat, but a still nicer way of serving it is making a mixture as follows: Scrape some fat boiled bacon, place it in a small frying-pan, and add to it some mushrooms, onion, parsley, and lemon thyme. To make this dish on a small scale, the proportions would be for a small tin of mushrooms—that is a half-pint tin—a piece of onion as big as the top of the thumb down to the first joint, a tea-spoonful of finely chopped parsley, and a salt-spoonful of lemon thyme; add a little salt and black and red pepper, and sufficient scraped bacon to fry the whole into a moist mash. As this mixture is very rich, it is, I think, an improvement to add an equal quantity of bread-crumbs; this, of course, makes double the quantity, and has the effect of toning down the mixture. The scraped-out vegetable is filled, and baked in the oven till it is quite tender. Grated Parmesan cheese is shaken over the top. It will be seen that this mixture, with which we fill the scooped vegetable, is exactly the same as we use in making Mushrooms au Gratin and Tomatoes au Gratin; in both these dishes we also use grated Parmesan cheese. In making Forced Bringals, we must make the flavour of the cheese more predominant. As Aubergines are not often to be obtained, housekeepers would do well to serve small vegetable marrows in this fashion: the vegetable can be cut in half, the pips and centre

parts can then be scooped out and filled with the mixture we have described. The mixture must be cooked before it is placed in the vegetable marrow. The vegetable marrow must be placed in a tin with a little butter. If plenty of Parmesan cheese be used the dish will be brown at the top. As soon as the vegetable marrow is tender the dish can be served. The length of time required for baking, of course, depends on the size of the vegetable marrow. Small vegetable marrows must, however, be used, and not large ones, as the large ones would break in the oven while baking.

On the 24th of December we were in Port Said harbour, and at dinner, under the head of poultry, we were served with the famous Oriental dish known as Pilau. Pilau is made of fowl, and served with rice. The rice is parboiled, and fried a light brown colour; sufficient stock is added to the rice after it is fried brown so that the rice soaks up the whole of the stock. Saffron is used to give the whole a bright yellow colour; some powdered cinnamon is added, and if any one flavour predominates more than another when the dish is served it is perhaps this cinnamon. Some fried almonds, stoned raisins, and fried onions are added to the dish and mixed with it. The dish should not be watery, but, as I have said, no more stock should be added than can be soaked up by the rice. Round the dish, the contents of which should be heaped up in the middle, are placed hard-boiled eggs and slices of bacon. The eggs should be cut in half so as to show the yellow yolks.

The following day was Christmas Day, and we had left Port Said and were on our way to Marseilles, and I will conclude by giving the very excellent bill of fare on that occasion:—

BREAKFAST.

FIRST CLASS.

Porridge.	Liver Sauté.
Fish à la Creole.	Grilled Ham.
Rump Steak and Onions.	Poached Eggs.
Hashed Mutton—Reform.	Curry, Rice.

SECOND CLASS PASSENGERS.

Porridge.	Grilled Bones.
Fish—Beef Steak and Onions.	Poached Eggs.
Hashed Mutton.	Irish Stew—Curry, Rice.

ENGINEERS' MESS.

Ditto.

FIRST CLASS CHILDREN.

Porridge.
Fish—Beef Cutlets—Hashed Mutton.
Fish-Pash—Poached Eggs.

LUNCHEON.—FIRST CLASS.

Pea Soup.
Cold Roast Sirloin of Beef.
Roast Shoulder of English Mutton—Mint Sauce.
Leicester Pie—Pressed Ox-tongue.
Corned Round of Beef.
Ham—Brawn—Cheese Fondue.
Mayonaise of Salmon—Potato Soufflé.
Baked Potatoes, Biscuits, Cheese, Short-bread.
Tomato and Beetroot Salad.

DINNER.

FIRST CLASS.

Soup:
Mock Turtle.
Fish:
Roach—Salmon—Shrimp Sauce.
Joints:
Roast Saddle of English Mutton.
Entrées:
Chicken Cutlets and Mushrooms.
Filets of Beef à la Jardinière.
Poultry:
Roast Turkey and Sausage.
Curry:
Veal.
Pastry:
Plum Pudding—Mince Pies.
Gâteau of Fruits.
Fanchonnettes.

SECOND CLASS.

Soup.
Roast Beef—Boiled Mutton.
Roast Goose—Boiled Fowl.
Veal and Ham Pie.
Curry, Rice—Plum Pudding.

FIRST CLASS CHILDREN.

Soup.
Roast Beef—Boiled Fowl.
Roast Goose and Apple Sauce.
Veal and Ham Pies.
Curry, Rice—Plum Pudding.

ENGINEERS' MESS.

Soup.
Roast Beef—Boiled Mutton.
Roast Goose.
Curry, Rice—Pastry.

STEWARDS.

Soup.
Roast Beef—Roast Goose.
Vegetables.
Plum Pudding.

WARRANT OFFICERS' MESS.

Soup.
Roast Beef—Boiled Fowls.
Vegetables.
Plum Pudding.



THE HABILIMENTS OF GRIEF, FROM A COMMERCIAL POINT OF VIEW.

On the occasion of a recent visit to London, whilst I was debating with myself over the breakfast things as to how I should spend the day, I received by the post a letter deeply bordered with black, evidently a messenger of affliction. I tore the white weeping willow upon a black background which formed the device upon the seal, and read the contents. It proved to be an intimation from a relative of the sudden death of her brother-in-law, and a request that under the circumstance of the sudden bereavement of the widow, I should undertake certain sad commissions relative to the articles of mourning required by the family.

I at once set out upon my sad errand. I had no difficulty in finding the *maison de deuil* to which I had been referred. It met me in the sad habiliments of woe; no vulgar colors glared from the shop-windows, no gilding amazed with its festive brightness. The name of the firm scarce presumed to make itself seen in letters of the saddest gray upon a black ground. Here and there beads of white set off the general gloom of the house-front, like the crape pipings of a widow's cap. The very metal window-frames and plates had gone into a decorous mourning—zinc taking the place of what we feel under the circumstances would have been quite out of character—brass.

On my pushing the plate-glass door it gave way with a hushed and muffled sound, and I was met by a gentleman of sad expression, who, in the most sympathetic voice, inquired the nature of my want, and, on my explaining myself, directed me to the Inconsolable Grief Department. The interior of the establishment answered exactly to the appearance without. The long passage I had to traverse was panelled in white-black borderings, like so many mourning-cards placed on end; and I was rapidly becoming impressed with the deep solemnity of the place, when I caught sight of a neat little figure rolling up some ribbon; who, on my inquiring if I had arrived at the Inconsolable Grief Department, replied, almost in a tone of gayety, that that was the half-mourning counter, and that I must proceed further on until I had passed the repository for widows' silk. Following her directions, I at last reached my destination—a large room draped in black, with a hushed atmosphere about it as though somebody was lying invisibly there in state.

An attendant in sable habiliments, picked out with the inevitable white tie, and with an undertakerish eye and manner, awaited my commands. I produced my written directions. Scanning it critically, he said:—

"Permit me to inquire, sir, if *it* is a deceased partner?"

I nodded assent.

"We take the liberty of asking this distressing question," he continued, "as we are extremely anxious to keep up the character of our establishment by matching, as it were, the exact shade of affliction. Our paramatta and crapes give satisfaction to the deepest woe. Permit me to show you a new texture of surpassing beauty and elegance, manufactured specially for this house, and which we call the *inconsolable*. Quite a novelty in the trade, I do assure you, sir."

With this he placed a pasteboard box before me full of mourning fabrics.

"Is this it?" I inquired, lifting a lugubrious piece of drapery.

"Oh, no," he replied; "the one you have in your hand was manufactured for last year's affliction, and was termed 'The Stunning Blow Shade.' It makes up

well, however, with our *sudden bereavement* silk—a leading article—and our *distraction* trimmings."

"I fear," said I, "my commission says nothing about these novelties."

"Ladies in the country," he blandly replied, "don't know of the perfection to which the art of mourning genteelly has been brought! But I will see that your commission is attended to to the letter." Giving another glance over my list, he observed: "Oh! I perceive a widow's cap is mentioned here. I must trouble you, sir, to proceed to the Weeds Department for that article—the first turning to the left."

Proceeding, as directed, I came to a recess fitted up with a solid phalanx of widows' caps. I perceived at a glance that they exhausted the whole gamut of grief, from its deepest shade to that tone which is expressive of a pleasing melancholy. The foremost row confronted me with the sad liveries of crapen folds, whilst those behind gradually faded off into light, ethereal tarlatan, and one or two of the outsiders were even breaking out into worldly feathers and flaunting weepers. Forgetting the proprieties of the moment, I inquired of the grave attendant if one of the latter would be suitable.

"Oh! no, sir," she replied, with a slight shade of severity in the tone of her voice; "you may gradually work up to that in a year or two. But any of these"—pointing to the first row of widows' weeds—"are suitable for the first burst of grief."

Acquiescing in the propriety of this sliding scale of sorrow, I selected some weeds expressive of the deepest dejection I could find, and, having completed my commission, inquired where I could procure for myself some lavender gloves.

"Oh! for those things, sir," she said, in the voice of Tragedy speaking to Comedy, "you must turn to your right, and you will come to the Complimentary Mourning counter."

Turning to the right accordingly, I was surprised, and not a little shocked, to find myself amongst worldly colors. Tender lavender I had expected; but violet, mauve, and even absolute red, stared me in the face. Thinking I had made a mistake, I was about to retire, when a young lady, in a cheerful tone of voice, inquired if I wanted anything in her department.

"I was looking for the Complimentary Mourning counter," I replied, "for some gloves; but I fear I am wrong."

"You are quite right, sir," she observed. "This is it." She saw my eye glance at the cheerful-colored silks, and with the instinctive tact of a woman guessed my thoughts in a moment.

"Mauve, sir, is very appropriate for the lighter sorrows."

"But absolute red!" I retorted, pointing to some velvet of that color.

"Is quite admissible when you mourn the departure of a distant relative. But allow me to show you some gloves?" and, suiting the action to the word, she lifted the cover from a tasteful glovebox, and displayed a perfect picture of delicate half-tones, indicative of a struggle between the cheerful and the sad.

"There is a pleasing melancholy in this shade of gray," she remarked, indenting slightly each outer knuckle with the soft elastic kid as she measured my hand.

"Can you find a lavender?"

"Oh yes! but the sorrow tint is very slight in that; however, it wears admirably."

Thus by degrees the grief of the establishment died out in tenderest lavender, and I took my departure, deeply impressed with the charming improvements which Parisian taste has effected in the plain old-fashioned style of English mourning.

L. B.



PETTY CHEATING.

WE lately read in a morning paper an account, all too brief and generalised, of more than three-score tradesmen, some of them occupying prominent and "respectable" positions in a certain district of London, all of whom were had up before the magistrates in one day, and fined for using false and fraudulent weights or measures! It is satisfactory to find that the rogues were brought to book and punished; but it is not satisfactory, and not at all right or just, that the names and addresses of these dishonest people should be suppressed. All such offenders should be posted ignominiously in sight of all men, in order that those who deal with them should know with whom they have to do.

It is mortifying to learn that this method of cheating is continually on the increase, and one's indignation fires up on reflecting that it is the humbler and struggling classes who are for the most part the victims of it. One article in which the poor man is victimised continually is that of tobacco. Buying his tobacco in very small quantities, he gets it handed to him ready packed and weighed—in ounces, or half or quarter ounces. But does he often get fair weight in these minute packages? For the sake of information on this point, we lately entered a shop much frequented by labouring men on Saturday night, and brought away three half-ounce packages of "bird's-eye." On weighing them scrupulously without the envelopes, it appeared that, according to shopkeepers' reckoning, there are three half-ounces to an ounce—the whole of the tobacco barely balancing an ounce in the scale. We might be told, perhaps, that all tobacco is moist when taken from the barrel, and dries in paper packets; but fifty per cent. is a rather large allowance for moisture. We might be told, also, that the purchaser of any quantity, however small, can see it weighed if he chooses; but what if the weights are false, like those of the three-score offenders mentioned above?

Then, in the matter of his beer, the poor man is cheated both as to quality and quantity. In the first place, the London publican is given to poisoning the beverage with drugs—doctoring it, as it is professionally termed—by which process it is increased largely in quantity, and so altered in its constituents as to excite thirst instead of quenching it. In the second place, it is often drawn from the tap in pots of short measure—either in the shape of fancy pots that never pass beyond the bar, or in others ingeniously, though to all appearance accidentally, bulged inwards, so that their containing capacity is profitably diminished.

The peripatetic trades of London find their customers

for the most part among the lower middle classes and the poor; and of many of these traffickers it may be said that cheating in some form or other is their normal system of doing business. It would seem that the weights and measures of the out-door traders, are not subject to the supervision of the inspectors—at any rate, we never hear of these gentry being brought to account for their exploits. A pound of cherries bought from a handcart in the street is rarely found to weigh a dozen ounces; oftener, indeed, it may weigh eight or nine. The so-called pound weight of the street fruit-seller is a nondescript lump of metal, manufactured for the purpose, and has no definite relation to a pound avoirdupois, unless in appearance. In selling fruit by measure there is the same sort of sophistication. False wooden bottoms are common, as the buyers of nuts know well. If the measure is correct, which is assuming a great deal, the method of filling it is a delusion. A practised hand will fill a quart pot with a pint of plums or gooseberries, and make it appear as though it were brimful and running over. Watch him narrowly, and you will see how he does it. He lays the measure horizontally, and covers the lower side with fruit; then raising the measure gradually, he heaps a handful of fruit over the top with his left hand; at the same time having a good-sized plum, say between the finger and thumb of his right hand, he ingeniously inserts that as a kind of key-stone to prevent the crowning heap from falling into the hollow beneath: thus the measure appears choke full and filled up, though something like half the due quantity is lacking. This clever piece of cheaterly is executed with astonishing rapidity—two seconds, we should say, affords ample time for it. When the measure, as in the case of strawberries and raspberries, goes with the fruit, the cheating, as everyone knows, consists in filling the lower half or more of the pottle or punnet with some worthless material—grass, hay, fern leaves, or anything that comes to hand—so that half a pint of the fruit shall look like a pint, or a pint like a quart. It would appear that the summer fruits never have been honestly sold in the London streets. We can remember well the occasion on which we bought our first pottle of strawberries in a street in Paddington—*O mihi prateritos!*—it was more than fifty years ago—and the grievous indignation we experienced on finding that the middle and lower strata of the deceitful measure consisted of nothing but fusty grass. It was our first introduction to the rascality of trafficking human nature. Would it had been the last!

But we can trace this phase of cheating much farther back than fifty years ago. There is an old book known by curious readers as the "Diary of Henry Machyn, Merchant Taylor of London," written in 1552, in which there is a record of a man who was placed in the "pelere" for "selling potts of straberries, the whych the pott was not alf fulle, but fylled with ferne (fern)." This brief record is more creditable to our ancestors than any truthful record of similar matters in our day would be to us. The cheat of three hundred years back, it is evident, was regarded and treated as a rogue, and his cheating punished as a crime. We moderns have changed all that, and should no more think of punishing the trader who cheats than the member of Parliament who bribes—though why both of them should not be well trounced is not so clear.

A singular phase of cheating, which makes its appearance in London about the fall of the leaf, and is at its height in the mellow month of October, is one known among adepts as "coming the double," which is effected by a kind of sleight of hand, so cleverly managed as to

deceive the most watchful eye. Some fine morning in October, you hear a sonorous voice in the street bawling out "Fine bilin' happles! yaa! fine keepin' happles—russetin's yaa! half-a-crown a hunder!" You know you would like a winter stock of apples, and you send Betty to the door to see what sort of fruit the man has got. She brings you in a sample in her apron—good plump specimens, big enough for dumplings. You decide on buying a hundred of them, and while Betty goes in search of a basket to contain them, the man and boy lug their huge hamper into the hall in readiness. Then, as you sit at your work or book, you hear them counted out—"five, ten, fifteen, twenty," and so on, till the hundred is told, the money is paid for them, and the hawker goes roaring on his way. Now if you are not a very thrifty personage, and do not count over these apples yourself before you store them away, you will hear very soon that they are all gone, and will be puzzled to imagine what has become of them. If you do count them, however, you will find that, instead of one hundred apples, you have little more than half the number—the ingenious messenger of Pomona has been "coming the double" over you, and for every apple he has given you has made you pay for two. Nay, we have known instances in which the double has been so dexterously done that the total result of the counted-out hundred was not one over fifty—but such a case is exceptional, and may be regarded as a touch "beyond the reach of art." You are, perhaps, inclined to blame Betty for her stupidity in suffering herself to be defrauded; but allow us to assure you that the result would have been precisely the same had you consummated the transaction yourself. The exploit is accomplished in the following way:—The accomplished "doubler" adjusts the edge of his hamper over the purchaser's basket, and, bending over the wares, takes five apples in the hollow of both his palms: the first five go into the basket, and the second and subsequent fives appear to follow with astonishing rapidity; but so dexterous are the man's movements, and so delusive is the swift motion of the fruit, that although one half or more of the apples he takes up go back again into his own hamper, you are not only not aware of it, but, when the thing is well done, have not the remotest suspicion of the fact.

The grocer may be regarded, in all districts where the poorer classes most abound, as the poor man's provision merchant—the commerce of poor families with the butcher being but comparatively small. But grocers' wares are unfortunately subjectible to admixtures and falsifications to a greater extent than almost any other. Sugar will carry a rare amount of moisture as well as of solid matters not saccharine; tea may be subjected to infusion, and dried and rolled and infused again a dozen times over—a capacity which has created a race of industrials, known as tea-leafers, who live by preparing it again for the market after all its strength has been exhausted; and coffee may be imitated by a dozen roasted substitutes, and made saleable by flavouring with chicory. It is the same with condiments and provocatives: the poor man's pepper is often half dust; his mustard is three-fourths maize or lentil-flour; his vinegar is half water; his pickles are gone dead and artificially preserved from corruption; and his anchovies, if he thinks of indulging in anchovies, are manufactured from a redundant overflow of sprats. The wholesale cheating practised upon the poor is sometimes rebuked in an indignant strain by editors of newspapers: while we write, a paragraph is going the round, exposing the tricks of the butter trade, from which we learn that a large proportion of the so-called

butter sold to the poor, and sold nominally as the over-plus of the market, at a comparatively low price, is not butter at all. It is, in fact, a preparation of beef suet, beaten up with a liberal per-centage of water, and coloured with anatto, the mass being well salted to save it from putrefaction.

In towns where large numbers of working men are employed, and where their families form the major portion of the population, the provision-dealers usually assume a sort of vested right in them, fleecing them systematically, and supplying them with wares often of the very vilest quality at high prices. In a town, which for this time shall be nameless, where the intolerable peculations of the retail shopkeepers had risen to a shameless height, and where some thousands of workers are employed on Government work, certain influential friends of the artisan established small stores on the canteen system, where the workmen and their wives could purchase goods of fair quality at a fair price. It is no wonder that not only the Government workmen, but other inhabitants of the place, took advantage of a just market, and flocked to the canteens to purchase their daily supplies. But mark a characteristic fact: the shopkeepers, finding themselves deserted by those whom they had been accustomed to regard as their lawful victims, actually sent one deputation after another to the Minister of War, to represent to his lordship the injury which would thereby be done to their vested interests in the servants of the British Government, and they made special complaints of the unfairness and impropriety of allowing civilians also to deal at the canteens, with the object of obtaining better weight and better wares at a fairer price than they could do at the small shops of the town. We do not hear that his lordship, who must have derived from the deputations some novel ideas of commercial morality, complied with their joint requests; but we do hear, on the contrary, that the traders, finding they could do no better, reformed their system, and, by selling honest wares at a fair price, were enabled to compete successfully with the canteens, and thus to recover their lost trade, at least in part.

With regard to other necessaries of life there is the same complaint to be made. Whenever the poor man has to be served, the "shoddy" principle comes into play: his furniture, though when new it may shine with lacquer and French polish, is often made with "slab" and refuse timber: the inferior leather, which will not do for the average market, is made to do for him; the coarse garments of the slop-seller, who supplies him with clothing, are in good part manufactured from materials which have already run their course in some other shape; and we all know that, while he pays more for house-rent, in proportion to the accommodation he gets, than the rich man does, he is housed in the vilest way, and has to brave pestilence in a thousand shapes, because he is deprived of the commonest safeguards against it.

For a large proportion of the cheating and impositions of which they are the victims, the humbler classes have themselves to blame. They have allowed themselves too easily to become the dupes of the dealers, tallymen, and others who exact unreasonable profits; they spend their money, even in their prudential purchases, with far too much recklessness and haste, and usually without knowing or caring to know the real characters of the parties with whom they transact business. In a word, they do not take that care of their own interests which they might take, and which people in the ranks above them usually do take.

TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING.

BY CLARA AUGUSTA.

THERE is one thing in which I think novelists make a great mistake. If they particularly desire to enlist the sympathies of their readers for their hero, or heroine, they represent him, or her, as alone in the world, destitute of relatives or friends, with no uncle nor aunt, or even a country-cousin to fall back upon.

Now, to my mind, such a situation is the acme of this.

Everybody who reads this will call me a brute; but I wish, before he judges me, he would wait until he is the youngest of sixteen children; born of a mother who was afflicted with twelve brothers and sisters, and son of a father who has ten sisters living.

That is my situation—the situation of James Franklin Brown, of Brownville.

I cannot remember the time when my relatives were not a source of trouble to me. All through my childhood I was pestered with aunts. They wanted to kiss me; and though I never objected to being kissed by the ladies in general, I do object to this monopoly of aunts. And, besides, all of my aunts but one took snuff; and she smoked.

As I grew older, my uncles became my trial. They wanted me to do chores. They were all settled down near my father's residence—most of them farmers; and if the sheep got in the field, or the horses jumped out of the pasture, or the cat eat up the chickens, Jim was called upon to attend to the matter. It's the greatest wonder in the world that I did not run my feet off before I reached the age of young manhood.

When I reached the period of being tortured with the tie of my cravats, and agonized about the glossiness of my dickies, then my cousins came down upon me with their wants. If they wanted to go to a concert, or singing-school, or lecture, or dance, why there was cousin Jim. Of course, cousin Jim would be delighted to go.

And cousin Jim would go; and they would flirt with some other fellows, who were not cousins, all the evening; and likely enough get to sleep going home, and leave cousin Jim the privilege of whistling to the moon for amusement.

When I was about twenty, my father removed to Boston. Twelve of my brothers and sisters

were married; two were at school; and only Ellen and myself were left at home.

I was delighted with the change. We should be relieved from our relatives. Most of them were thoughtful of their money, and would not be likely to spend fifteen or twenty dollars in visiting us.

I began to make myself into a gentleman. I patronized the barber and his unguents—and cultivated a mustache, which was my *beau ideal* of perfection. I wore bright-colored neck-tyes, and sported a gold watch, and invested three dollars in a rattan, and six dollars in a beaver, which always gave me the headache, and made me look precisely like an inverted candle-mould. But no matter for that, so long as I was fashionable.

I made the acquaintance of several charming young ladies, among whom was Miss Flora Van Voorhies, the belle of the street on which we lived. Flora was a beauty, and one of the most fastidious creatures in the world. Nothing was quite good and elegant enough for her. She would not have breathed the common air if she could have conveniently dispensed with it; and if the soles of her dainty boots touched the soil of mother earth, it affected Flora's nerves so badly, that she had a headache for hours afterward.

I was raised to the seventh heaven and lemon-colored kids by her preference; and every night I devoutly prayed that none of my relatives would appear and nip the whole thing in the bud.

Five months rolled away, and I began to feel at ease. None of them had troubled us, and we had not heard from them in any way. I indulged the hope that they had forgotten us. So, I think, did my mother, who had become quite genteel, and had formed some very genteel acquaintances.

One morning, while Mrs. St. Michel, and Mrs. Leroy, two of our most distinguished acquaintances, were in the parlor with my mother, one of the railway hacks stopped at our front door. An indefinable dread seized me. I felt myself growing cold as a peeled frog. From the hack there issued three hand-boxes, two trunks, a butter-box, a handled basket, a bundle in brown paper, an umbrella, and, lastly, a green poke

bonnet, beneath which I distinguished the little wizened face of my father's oldest sister—aunt Sally Nutter. The very black sheep of the whole flock of relatives!

"Bring 'em all right into the entry," she called, in a stentorian voice, to the coachman; "I'm to hum here. This is brother Jason's house. La! Jason's got up in the world sense he used to peddle lobsters! It was a lucky thing for him when he went to making pills, and got doctor hitched on before his name! I expect Martha's so big you can't tech her with a ten foot pole. But, law! she needn't try to put on no extras with me! I know 'em all, root and branch! egg and bird!" and she burst into the room, carrying her basket, and band-boxes.

The blinds were drawn, and aunt Sally's foot struck against an ottoman, which brought her down, basket, bundles, and all, to the floor. The cover of the basket flew off, and out rolled several dozen of eggs—most of which were smashed by the fall, but some were in a good state of preservation.

"Consarn it!" cried aunt Sally, struggling from the ruins, "there goes seven dozen of eggs! And I brung 'em up here to git thirty cents a dozen; they hain't but fifteen at Brownville! What on airth do you have your house so dark for? Anybody sick, or dead, or gwine to be? It smells mouldy here! Do open a winder, so I can see an inch afore my nose!"

My mother, red and discomposed, threw open a blind. Aunt Sally rushed up to her.

"Why, Martha, how tickled I am to see you! You look as natral as life, only, seems to me, you begin to show your age! Wall, tain't to be wondered at! A woman that's brung up so many children as you have, when she gets to be fifty year old, will natrally begin to look old! And here's Jim, I declare! why, how you've growd! But, I must say, you hain't growd handsome! The Brown family hain't apt to. He's a going to be the express image of his old granther Bewly—hain't he, Martha? Jest the same drop to his under jaw! But who's these ere people here? Some of yer city friends, I reckon?"

Mrs. Leroy lifted her eye-glass, and surveyed aunt Sally with ill-concealed contempt.

"Ho! ho! I reckon you're nigh-sighted, marm; thought so the minit I seed your eyes. Eyes that is kinder faded out, and reddish, like yourn, is apt to be weak. Ever tried red rose-leaves steeped in milk?"

Mrs. Leroy arose, and drew her skirts around her. Her face was as red as her eyes. She spoke very pointedly,

"I think I will be going, Mrs. Brown; you have other company vastly more amusing."

My poor mother stammered out something, and followed the ladies into the hall. Aunt Sally brought up the rear, crying out,

"You'd better do sunthin' for your eyes rite off! They look dreadfully! I can see it clean here!"

My mother drew my aunt back.

"I will show you up stairs, now, if you please," said she.

"Oh, no! thank ye. I don't keer about seeing your house jest yet. There'll be time enuff for that; for, if I like Boston, I calkerlate to stay four or five weeks! I'm tired, now; them pesky keers has eanamost shook me all to pieces. And then your roads here is so rocky, I got all jounced up! If I lived here, I'd have the rocks picked out of the roads, if I had to do it myself."

I seized my hat and left the house. I was too much excited to remain in aunt Sally's society any longer at present. Anything was better than staying at home with her.

I rushed down the first street that offered; but, my course, was soon stopped by a crowd, among which the star of a policeman shone conspicuous.

"I say I didn't do it!" cried a somewhat familiar voice, pitched on an extremely high key. "I tell you I didn't tech it; and if you don't let me alone, I'll knock you down, by hooky! Hallo! there's my cousin Jim! He knows me, and he'll tell you that I'm jest as honest a feller as the day is long!"

I shuddered. Here was another of my relatives; and at a little distance I recognized the glossy tile of Dick Van Voorhies—Flora's brother.

"I say, Jim!" cried my cousin, Tom Brown, flourishing his arms at me, "come here, this minit, and tell this man that I hain't a pick-pocket! I say, Jim!"

"I do not know you!" stammered I; and, taking a step backward, I stumbled over the stand of a candy and apple-woman, upsetting the whole concern, and myself besides. The woman was angry, as she had a right to be; and she called me some hard names in a very strong brogue, and hit me two severe blows with a long-handled, two quart noggin!

I scrambled to my feet and fled, hearing, as I went, the flattering remark from a bystander,

"He looks more like a pickpocket than tother one! Shouldn't wonder if he was the one! He's got a real hang-dog expression!"

I plunged into the first cross-street that

offered, and came upon George Seaward, a young sprig of the aristocracy, with whom I had an acquaintance. He gave me a segar, and we walked up the street together, smoking, and making remarks on the ladies we met.

A coal-cart came rattling along, and a lusty voice sung out,

"Hallo! if there hain't cousin Jim Brown! Jim, I say, look up here and see Sam Smith, won't you? Shake hands with a feller, do;" and he extended toward me a paw which, for size, would have fitted a Hercules, and, for color, an Ethiopian.

I made a dodge into the back yard of a house, the inmates of which set a dog on me; and, inspired by the stimulus of his bark, I managed to escape into another yard, by climbing over the fence, and leaving my hat and coat-tails behind me as a *souvenir*!

In my mad flight through yard No. 2, I nearly overturned a young woman who was hanging clothes on a line. I opened my mouth to apologize, but she seized me by the arm with an exclamation of delight,

"Why, Jim Brown, I declare! don't you know me? Me, your cousin Nelly?"

I broke from her; and no grass grew under my feet until I was safe in my own chamber. I sunk down completely exhausted, wondering if the entire population of Boston consisted of my relations.

Suddenly, I remembered that I was going to the theatre that night with Flora. I must put my hair in papers, and perfume my mustache.

At dinner, aunt Sally eyed me curiously, and asked me what I'd got my hair rolled up for. She guessed there was a going to be a quilting somewheres, she said. My mother, unfortunately, informed her that I was going to the theatre. From that moment my doom was sealed.

That was the very place, of all others, that aunt Sally wanted to visit. And she "could go with me jest as well as not, if not more so," she said, complacently.

I dressed myself, when the time came, and hurried out at a side-door, determined to baffle aunt Sally; but the old lady was too sharp for me. There she sat, composedly, on one of the stone lions that flanked the gateway, dressed in a flounced, pink calico, and a yellow bonnet, waiting for me.

"I'm all reddy," she remarked, jumping up; "and I've took my work-bag along, with some crackers in it. If it holds in till arter nine o'clock, we shall want a lunchin."

We stepped into the street. The people stared

at us. I felt as red as a full-blown poppy. My face streamed with perspiration. I could not endure it; it was no use. Politeness I ignored in this case. I took advantage of the old lady's rapt gaze at the window of a print-shop to bolt down a by-street; and in a few moments I was in the presence of my divine Flora. We walked leisurely to the theatre; I at my ease—for I knew the old lady never could find her way, unassisted, to the theatre.

Judge, then, of my horror, when, on reaching that place of amusement, the first spectacle that greeted my eye was aunt Sally, standing in the door, her work-bag on her arm, her voice raised to its highest tension, and her right hand gesticulating to the crowd she had gathered around her.

"He went out of sight jest like a flash!" she was saying; "and I give a little boy a ten-cent piece to show me the way here—and I'm a waiting for him to come along. I'm kinder afeard he's got lost, for he was allas rather weak-headed; but, seeing as if he might have asked somebody the way; he's got a tongue in his head— Hallo! there he's now, and the Queen of England with him, by her gound! Come along, Jim; the meetin's jest a goin to begin! They're a tooting on the bass-viol now! Where on airth did you go to so quick? Is that your gal?"

Indignation and dismay held me silent. Flora's face was like a blush-rose. The crowd, by a great effort, restrained themselves from cheering the old lady; but it was very evident to me that they would not long exercise any such forbearance.

"Jim," said my ancient relative, in a confidential whisper, loud enough to be heard by the whole assembly, "you've got some smut onto your upper lip! I seed it before we started, but I didn't like to say nothing. You'd better wipe it off; it looks dreadfully!"

The crowd fairly roared. Smut, indeed! my cherished mustache, that I had scented and oiled, and admired for three long months! If the old lady had been a man, I should have challenged her on the spot. With a desperate effort I addressed Flora,

"Flora, my dear, we will go in, and not pay any regard to this insane old woman."

Flora turned toward me, an iron determination in her blue eye,

"Frank," she said—she always called me Frank—"tell me who that horrid old creature is before I go another step!"

"Horrid critter! I hain't a horrid critter!" cried aunt Sally, waving her work-bag. "I'm a

decent woman, and haint got no paint onto my face, as some folks that I know of has. And I'm Jim Brown's own aunt—his father's sister, Sally, that married a Nutter; and I've mended his pinnyfores and trowsers many a time!"

Flora listened; and when aunt Sally finished, she cast upon me such a look!

"Mr. Brown," she said, quietly, "I have the honor to wish you a very good evening, with your estimable relative;" and then she took the arm of Fitz Ludlow, and sailed away.

I thought I should have fainted on the spot; and, perhaps, I should, if I had not felt my sleeve vehemently pulled. I turned, and saw a lean-faced man.

"Jim," said he, "lend your uncle five dollars, do. I've left my pocket-book to hum!"

Good gracious! it was uncle Solomon French! and behind him was my uncle Bill; and behind him my aunt Mary, and cousin Susan. I did not stop to see how many more there was. I took it for granted that the whole audience was to be composed of my relatives. I jumped down the steps, and fled at the top of my speed. Aunt Sally cried at the extent of her lungs,

"Stop him! Stop him! I'll give a quarter to the man that captivates him!"

Community at large at once decided that I must be a thief, or a murderer; and they rushed after me at railway speed. A dozen dogs joined in the chase, making night hideous with their howling. I was in too much of a hurry to keep a very keen look-out for obstacles; and the first thing I knew, I ran headlong over a lady drawing a baby-carriage.

Of course, she was angry. She seized the baby with one hand, and my shoulder with the other, and began a lecture in language more forcible than polite. I tore myself loose and renewed my flight.

But they overtook me. I had committed a crime which people never overlook; I had abused a woman with a baby—so they said. I deserved death on the spot.

A couple of policemen came up opportunely.

They made a little flourish of authority, and marched me off to the watch-house.

In that interesting school of morals I remained until the next morning, when my examination took place; and no one appearing against me, I was discharged.

But I would not go home. Aunt Sally was still there; perhaps a dozen more of my relatives; since "it never rains but it pours."

A bright thought struck me. I would put the ocean between us. A whaler was lying at one of the wharves, which was advertised to sail that very day. I went down there, entered my name on the book, got a seaman's rig, and presented myself to the captain for inspection. He received me with open arms.

"Why, Jim!" he exclaimed, "how glad I am to see you! My dear cousin——"

"Good heavens!" cried I.

"Yes!" said he, "I am your own cousin, David; and your cousin Daniel, and George, are among the crew; and your aunt Peggy is going as far as Florida for her health."

I waited to hear no more. The vessel was just putting off; but I could swim! Yes, thank heaven! I could swim! And without so much as saying good-by, I dashed into the water, and struggled to the shore, to be met by aunt Sally, who exclaimed,

"Better go right home, Jimmy, and change your stockings. Wet feet is dreadful apt to bring on the rheumatiz. Don't mind him, captain!" yelled she, after the receding vessel; "he was allers a little weak in the upper story!"

I broke from aunt Sally—went to a hotel—dried my clothing—got into a railway car—went to Philadelphia, and enlisted in the army; and my captain is my uncle Saul; and I have three cousins in my company, and five more in another regiment with which ours is brigaded.

Did ever a poor fellow have such luck?

If I should ever be found, some fine morning, at the end of a rope, it will all be the fault of my relatives.



FEBRUARY.



Poetid Hellebore.
Green Hellebore.
Marsh Marrygold.
Periwinkle—small.
Hazel Flowers.
Alder Flowers.
Coltsfoot.
Large Periwinkle.
Willow.
Butcherbar — Coltsfoot.

WILD FLOWERS.

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