

beds in summer. This, of course, makes them hard and heavy. Before putting them away for the summer, they need some cleansing, but, unless the covering is really soiled, the sunshine and fresh air will freshen and sweeten them properly. Hang them out the whole of at least one sunny day, then put them away, not packing them too closely. If they must be washed, untack them and wash only the covering, laying the cotton out in the hot sunshine for a day or more, then tacking the whole together as before.

OLD BED QUILTS.

These must be washed when much soiled, and a washing machine and wringer seem almost indispensable. Plenty of suds should be used, and a thorough rinsing be given. If they happen to hang through a good pouring rain, it will do no harm. They can be patched up, when very badly worn out, more easily than some imagine. If placed in large blocks, they can be patched with dark or light, according to the shade of the worn portions, so as to look almost as good as new. Of course they need not be ironed.

TO WASH BLANKETS NICELY.

I have seen various directions for this work, but a few things seem essential in every case: to avoid hard water and resinous soaps, to wring without twisting (i.e., with a wringer), or not to wring at all, to use water of the same temperature all through, or to increase in heat during the changes, not to rub the soap upon the flannel, but mix it with the water. Flannel is of so porous texture, that it is cleansed in good suds without much rubbing. Hard rubbing tends to "full" the cloth, and to rinse in cold water flannel that has been washed in warm water, is a sure way to shrink and harden it. From cold to warm, but never from warm to cold. I have seen the direction to rinse flannels in soapy water, but I am sure there is no value in this. The clean, warm rinsing water is sure to be soapy enough, if good suds have been used in the washing. One suds or two may be used, according to the degree to which the flannels have been soiled. When they have been rinsed, two should take them, one at each end, and shake and snap them well, to make them more soft and fuzzy.

An American paper writes:—"We learn from an East Indian exchange that one of the railways of that somewhat sultry climate is being supplied with "punkahs." This article, which we are told "is not only necessary for the comfort of passengers, but, one may say, for their safety, during a long journey in the scorching heat of an Indian summer," is thus described: The punkah is attached to an iron rod which extends from one end of the carriage to the other. This rod, worked by a coolie who sits outside the carriage, is caused to make rapid semi-revolutions, thus causing the punkah to move, not only quickly but noiselessly, and to produce a strong breeze. For the coolie a small platform is provided at the end of the train, protected by a canvass awning. The idea of a colored gentleman sitting outside of a railway car and moving back and forth an iron rod to which a big fan in each car is attached is a novelty in India, as well as elsewhere, this being its first introduction. It occurs to us, however, that a Yankee would doubtless have invented a plan to utilise the revolutions of the wheel, or axles so as to cause the fan to move automatically, thus dispensing with sweltering the coolie. If the close English compartment cars are used on these roads in summer, it would also be in order to suggest that the abolition of the smothering partition between the seats, and the adoption of the American plan of cars, open from end to end, would render the punkah less a necessity and the traveller's life less of a burden."

IMPROVEMENTS IN UMBRELLAS.

(See page 285.)

The present method of attaching the ribs of umbrellas by means of a wire to the notch-ring at the top is, as most people are aware, not the best means that a mechanic would suggest, for when placed on one side after a shower of rain, the water finds its way to this vital part of an umbrella's frame, and speedily rusts the eyes of the ribs, which accordingly soon break, especially when any strain is brought on them, through twisting. Mr. W. Martin, of Friday-street, has recently obtained letter-patent for a method of adapting the principle of the ball and socket joint to umbrellas, which will be clearly understood on referring to the illustration.

Instead of the top notched ring now used firmly fixed to the stick of the umbrella, parasol, or sunshade, is an annular ring of metal, round the outside of which are as many receptacles, cups, or sockets as there are ribs; to the end of each rib and stretcher is a ball made so as to fit in the receptacles or sockets. The top ring is made in two pieces, and when the balls at the ends of the stretchers are inserted into the cups or sockets, the two parts are joined together, the balls or ends of the stretchers having free play in the receptacles by means of slots cut in the lower piece or portion of the ring. The lower ring is somewhat differently constructed, being made in two pieces, the upper piece firmly secured to the runner, while the other part is screwed in its place and held there by a screw collar, so as to hold the balls on the ends of the ribs in place; thus the ends of the stretchers or ribs are firmly secured in position without the aid of wire or other fastenings. Another part of the invention consists in a novel mode of joining the ribs to the stretchers. The end of the rib is made T-shape, and on the stretcher at the point of junction is brazed or cast a small piece of metal, just sufficient to make a double flange, into which the T-piece is inserted, and pinched or pressed together, thus making a strong and secure fastening. Fig. 1 represents an elevation partly in section, and Fig. 2 a plan of the lower ring. A is the upper ring; B, the upper part of lower ring; D, the lower part of this ring; C is the runner on which B is fixed; it is screwed at the lower end to receive D and a screwed collar E; and the T-joint is shown at F.

HOW TO SUCCEED.

If your seat is hard to sit upon, stand up. If a rock rises up before you, roll it away or climb over it. If you want money, earn it. It takes longer to skin an elephant than a mouse, but the skin is worth something. If you want confidence, prove yourself worthy of it. Do not be content with doing what another has done—surpass it. Deserve success and it will come. The boy was not born a man. The sun does not rise like a rocket, or go down like a bullet fired from a gun; slowly and surely it makes its round and never tires. It is as easy to be a leader as a wheel-horse. If the job be long the pay will be greater; if the task be hard the more competent you must be to do it. Follow these instructions, and all will be well.

GIVE THEM A LIFT.

If you know of a poor fellow in distress, give him a lift. "Don't kneel in prayer, nor moralize with his despair; the man is down, and his great need is ready help—not prayer nor creed. 'Tis time when the wounds are washed and healed that the Christly motives be revealed; but now, whatever the spirit may be, mere words are but mockery. One grain of aid just now is more to him than tones of saintly lore. Pray, if you will, in your full heart; but give him a lift—give him a start. The world is full of good advice, of prayer, and praise, and preaching nice; but the generous souls who aid mankind are scarce as gold and hard to find. Give like a man, and speak in deeds; a noble life is the best of creeds; and he shall wear a royal crown, who helps a man when he is down."

FRIED CUCUMBERS.—Cucumbers that are too large to use in the ordinary way, even when they begin to turn yellow, may be sliced, and treated in the same way as egg plant. Slice the fruit crosswise, about half an inch thick, peel and stack up; put a plate with flat-iron on top, or lay the slices in strong salt and water to remove a slight bitterness. At the end of two hours dry the slices on a cloth, and dip in a thin batter of egg and flour, and fry to a light brown, or instead of the batter, dip first in beaten eggs and then in cracker powder. Serve hot.