

Orators have known the value of a hand and its expression, for a fine hand has more than once come to the help of an indifferent speaker; whereas a glove, especially an ill-fitting one, might destroy the effect of the best of speeches.

I now come to my last paragraph, namely, glove fastenings. Since the time, about a hundred years ago, when an Englishman first invented clasps to fasten gloves to the arm, there have been many and various changes in the mode of fastening, but with very little improvement. Buttons, which are seldom properly sewn on to the glove, generally come off at the first attempt to button, as every lady knows to her annoyance. Then, again, elastics draw the hand and cause it to swell, so they are of no material service, hence we are still in want of something better than buttons, clasps, hooks, or elastics wherewith to fasten our gloves without pinching, pressing, coming off, or causing our veins to swell; and gloves will not be perfect till a comfortable and safe fastening be invented.

Apropos, there is a new way of buttoning boots (an American invention, I think), which, with a little alteration, might perhaps be available for gloves as well as boots; this is to have buttons each side of the boot (or glove), and to run a lace round one button on one side, and then round one on the other, and so on, till all are laced; then draw together according to pleasure, and tie. This process answers admirably for boots, why should it not, with amendment, answer for gloves?

—Correspondence in *Land and Water*.

SCIENTIFIC.

Dr. Prestel, a German naturalist, attributes the cold weather in Europe, during the late spring, to the frequency of aurora borealis and spots on the sun. He says that the same kind of weather, and a frequent occurrence of those phenomena, were observed in 1838, 1840, and 1866, in intervals, therefore, of eleven years, and prophesies a comparatively cool summer and cool fall for Europe.

R. D. Munson is a persistent Yankee, a native of Williston, Vermont, who has devoted ten of his fourscore years to the achievement of making a clock that is more complicatedly ingenious than the Strasbourg time-piece, and is vastly more serviceable. It runs eight days, and the dial marks the second, minute, hour, and day of the week, month, and year; a thermometer rests against its pendulum, giving the state of temperature; the ball of the pendulum contains a miniature time-piece, which derives its motive power solely from its vibrating position, and keeps accurate time; with this there is a delightful musical apparatus, which plays an air at the end of each hour, and it is piously precontrived so as to play only sacred tunes on Sunday, beginning and ending with the "Doxology." On national holidays the airs are diversified patriotically with "Yankee Doodle," &c. This wonderful time-piece presents a black-walnut front ten feet deep, and is embellished with profuse scroll-work and national designs.

PREPARATION FOR GUN COTTON.—Mix in any convenient glass vessel one and a half ounce (by measure) of nitric acid, of the specific gravity from 1.45 to 1.5, with an equal quantity of sulphuric acid, specific gravity 1.8; when the mixture has cooled, place 100 grains of fine cotton wool in a Wedgewood mortar, pour the acid over it, and with a glass rod saturate the cotton as quickly as possible. Then pour out the acid, and squeeze the cotton with the pestle. Then wash it in water several times, or let the tap flow upon it until the acid is washed out, and no acid is perceived. Then squeeze it and dry it in warm air, and it is all ready.

ANATOMY OF A PIANO FORTE.—The actual materials used in a pianoforte may be worth stating. In every instrument, there are 15 kinds of wood, viz.: pine, maple, spruce, cherry, walnut, whitewood, apple, basswood and birch, all of which are indigenous; and mahogany, ebony, holly, cedar, beech and rosewood, from Honduras, Ceylon, England, South America and Germany. In this combination elasticity, strength, pliability, toughness, resonance, lightness, durability and beauty are individual qualities, and the general result is voice. There are also used of the metals, iron, steel, brass, white metal, gun metal and lead. There are in the same instrument of seven and a half octaves, when completed, 214 strings, making a total length of 787 feet of steel wire, and 500 feet of white (covering) wire. Such a piano will weigh from 900 to 1,000 pounds, and will last with constant use (not abuse) fifteen or twenty years. The total manufacture of pianos in New York alone averages 15,000 per annum.

COTTON BILLIARD BALLS.—We have in this city, says the Albany *Argus*, a manufactory of billiard balls, which, after some trials, has turned out a perfect success. The balls are made of cotton fibre or Asiatic hemp, which, when submitted to hydraulic pressure, becomes as solid as stone and as elastic as metal. The ivory ball is liable to warp, and so becomes uncertain in its movements. When this happens it has to be turned, and is thus reduced in size. The colour, too, is only surface deep. The new patent gives a ball of standard weight and equal thickness, of absolute hardness, and of a colour that permeates the whole, enamelling. It is received with great favour by players, and finds a market in the Pacific States, the Mississippi Valley, New Orleans and Texas. Nearer home it is not yet in general use—but the few defects that attended the first experiment are now amended, and it is destined to supplant the ivory ball everywhere, for it costs only half the price of the latter.

The French are a gay-souled people. Now that the Prussians are gone from the neighbourhood of Paris they are pronounced to have been *des bons diables* after all. At Sardou's place at La Juchère not an article has been carried off, and so pleased is the dramatist with the order and cleanliness the enemy has left behind that he declares his bold intention of introducing a Prussian into his new piece, and giving him a good rôle. It is evident that the dramatist must be appreciated at Berlin, for the only trace of the passage of the German hosts at La Juchère was found in the shape of a written card affixed to the bedroom chimney:—"Monsieur Sardou,—Your chimney must have troubled you, for it smoked confoundingly. It has been rectified, and will smoke no more. To think of a man of your talent being condemned to endure such a nuisance! We had but to make it a chimney *à la Prussienne*, and it was cured instantly. Could not the hint be taken for many other things in France?"

MISCELLANEOUS.

In the Bourse at Cologne a box is fixed to receive contributions towards the completion of the cathedral. After a lapse of three years it has just been opened, and found to contain 10 gros. (1s.)

A QUEER SECT—NO CHURCH ON SUNDAY.—The following advertisement appeared in a Swindon paper last week:—"Free Christian Church, New Swindon, Sunday, July 2nd, 1871.—In consequence of this being what is called 'Trip Sunday' at New Swindon, this church will be closed for the whole day." "Rest awhile." (6 Mark, 31 v.)

The French officers, while prisoners of war in Germany, returned the compliment of Prussia by inspecting the weakness of the country and its resources for the purposes of invasion, just as the Prussian spies spied out the weakness and resources of France when war was being meditated. It is said the information is very valuable.

Nottingham builders must have faith in their works, for they seem to fancy that a Wesleyan chapel recently built there will stand for more than a thousand years. They have enclosed in the foundation-stone of that edifice some information addressed "To Macaulay's New Zealander, or any other person it may interest, in or about A.D. 2960."

The following lines, the authorship of which is unknown, give in a few words the history of the "Tichborne case" so far as it has been already unravelled:—

The firm of Baxter, Rose, and Norton,
Deny the claimant's Arthur Orton,
But can't deny, what's more important,
That he has done what Arthur oughtn't,

The Right Rev. Dr. Goss, when he expressed the solemn belief that a "birch rod was the handiest and handsomest article of domestic furniture," forgot to add that it should be placed in the hands of a "handy" and determined person. An individual who must meet all the special requirements advertised thus in the *Guardian* newspaper:—"Barrister's daughter (thirty-five), healthy, good-tempered, and cheerful, desires a matronship. Is experienced in applying the birch-rod. Address, &c."

There is something very amusing in the idea of what may be called the "fitness of things" in regard to snuff-taking, which occurred to an honest Highlander, a genuine lover of "sneeshin." At the door of the Blair Athol Hotel he observed standing a magnificent man in full tartans, and noticed with much admiration the wide dimensions of his nostrils in a fine turned-up nose. He accosted him, and, as his most complimentary act, offered him his mull for a pinch. The stranger drew up, and rather haughtily said, "I never take snuff." "Oh," said the other, "that's a peety, for there's grand accommodation!"

ELECTIONEERING BRIBERY.—An English attorney remarks that nothing is easier to carry out than bribery, if common prudence be only observed. He tells of a case in which he was professionally employed to supply *sub rosa* £2,000 to an important electioneering agent. He was desired to be looking in at a print-shop window in the Strand precisely at twelve o'clock, when a party behind would tap him on the shoulder, and repeat a line of Shakespeare; that at five minutes past twelve he would receive another tap, and have a second line from the same illustrious author repeated in his ear; that a further interval of five minutes would ensue—his watch to be consulted—when the immortal Shakespeare, already made a *particeps criminis*, was again to be a subsidiary—to what vile uses do we come at least!—and a third line from his divine page administered with the indispensable tap on the shoulder. "Then to some foul corrupting hand, their craving lusts with fatal bounty fed, they fall a willing, undefended prize." After this, the learned gentleman handed from his pocket to his poetical but mythical friend behind, a packet containing the bank-notes. When the disputed election came to be investigated before a Parliamentary committee, he was able to swear that the person produced was one whom he had never seen in his life.

It is clear that, when the Prussians come to add up their losses for the last year, they will have to establish a separate column for the unfortunate Werthers of the army who have perished since the cessation of hostilities. It is not long ago that a good-looking Prussian officer blew out his brains on being rejected by a buxom widow at Amiens, though he had broken ground and made his approaches in a manner worthy of a favourite disciple of General von Moltke. Another German officer fell romantically in love with a girl of sweet seventeen, and though he was successful at first, was finally defeated. The fact was that the marriage day was named, when the news arrived that the brother of the betrothed had been beaten to death at Spandau, at which forth he was a prisoner. Officer No. 2, on being repulsed, refused his rations, and finally died of starvation. The fate of another amorous hero is for the moment undecided. He appears to have met with considerable success at the commencement of his campaign, but towards the end of the operations the young lady of Metz to whose heart he was laying storm demanded as the price of her surrender the exorbitant sum of five milliards. Nothing more has been heard of this officer, who is supposed to have perished in the waves of the Moselle. It is clear that if the Prussian troops remain much longer in France they will do well to establish a Lover's Leap, in imitation of the famous rock at the Cape of Leucade, where a special office may be created for the purpose of keeping a register of the names and woes of these interesting youths, and furnishing matter for a true chronicle of Rejected Addresses.

MISTAKEN JEALOUSY.—A very amusing incident occurred at the corner of a certain well-known business street in London. A lady, about entering an omnibus, saw, as she supposed, her husband taking tender leave of another woman at the point in question. With a rather hasty judgment, she rapidly regained the street and approached the lady, who, standing at the corner, was still looking after the gentleman, who had gone into a shop. "You seem to be very well acquainted with that gentleman," was her sudden and unexpected salutation. "Madam!" was the surprised rejoinder, accompanied by a look which clearly denoted her suspicions of the questioner's sanity. "I say you appear to be acquainted with that gentleman." "Well, yes—I think I ought to be." "How long have you known him?" "A number of years. He's my husband." "Indeed! He's mine too." "What do you mean?" cried the lady, evidently greatly excited. "Just what I say. He's my husband!" The lady darted into the shop, and the next

moment re-appeared with the unfortunate benedict. "William, this lady says you are her husband!" One glance, however, was sufficient; the lady saw her mistake, and crying with vexation and shame, frankly confessed her error.

If tourists in Wales are very sharp, they may detect to the left of Trevor Hall, some curiously shaped fields in the valley below them. It is said—and the story has the merit of being true—that a London tailor, "a member of the tillocracy," as Jerrold would have called him, once purchased the property with money saved in the exercise of his art, and in remembrance of his success he hedged certain fields so as to make them resemble the various parts of a dress-coat ready "cut out" for his subordinates to put together.

NOVEL SUBSTITUTE FOR GUTTA PERCHA.—A singular marine plant is washed up on the shores in the vicinity of the Cape of Good Hope, South Africa, which has come into considerable use as a substitute for gutta percha and similar substances, in the manufacture of fancy articles, such as canes, picture frames, inlaid work, etc. It is of a dark colour, and, when fresh, it is thick and fleshy; but when it is dried it becomes compact, and its surface looks like a beautifully grained deer's horn. After it becomes dry and hard, it can be rendered soft again by steeping in water, and in this condition may be stretched and formed into various shapes. It can also be reduced, when dry, to powder, then made plastic by soaking in water, and in this condition it may be stuck into almost any shape in a die press—coming out of the mould like articles formed of gutta percha. The plant is prepared for its industrial uses by cleaning it first with weak caustic alkali, and then with diluted sulphuric acid, after which it is washed, and before it is quite dry it may be pressed into sheets or any other form. It then may be rendered very hard by steeping it in a hot solution of alum, after which it is removed to a hot room where it is dried, and retains its shape afterward. Reduced to powder, it may also be mixed with various substances, like india rubber, and moulded into a great variety of articles.—*Coll. Courant*.

HOUSEHOLD MATTERS.

Kerosene applied with a cloth to stoves will keep them from rusting during the summer. It is also an excellent material to apply to all iron utensils used about a farm.

TO CLEAN CARPETS.—Salt, sprinkled upon the carpet before sweeping, will make it look bright and clean. This is also a good preventive against moths.

Mildewed linen may be restored by soaping the spots, and, while wet, covering them with fine chalk scraped to powder, and well rubbed in.

To drain land in level places, sink a well down to the first porous stratum. The water from the upper soil will flow readily into the well, especially if drain pipes or tiles be laid in its direction.

WASHING FLANNELS.—A correspondent writes to the editor of the *Household* as follows:—"I notice among the hints to housekeepers that flannels should always be washed in hot water and scalded to prevent shrinking. This is exactly contrary to my method, and my flannels never shrink, but grow thinner until worn out. I always wash them in lukewarm water, rubbing on as much soap as is necessary, then rinse in cold water."

WET CLOTHES.—Handle a wet hat as lightly as possible. Wipe it as dry as you can with a silk handkerchief; and when nearly dry, use a soft brush. If the fur should stick together in any part, damp it lightly with a sponge dipped in beer or vinegar, and then brush it till dry. Put the stick or stretcher into a damp hat, to keep it in proper shape. When a coat gets wet, wipe it down the way of the nap with a sponge or silk handkerchief. Do not put wet boots or shoes near the fire.

BLACKBERRY WINE.—Crush the berries with a wooden pestle in a wooden tub or bucket; draw off all the juice, and add to it an equal quantity of water, and two pounds of refined sugar for each gallon of the mixture. Keep it in jars till the fermentation is complete, and then bottle and cork it up. A second fermentation will take place in the ensuing spring, during which another pound of sugar should be added to each gallon. The wine thus prepared will keep well, and improve by age.

TANNING LEATHER.—The following recipe for tanning leather may prove useful to any farmer who is not already acquainted with it. Soak the hide eight or nine days in water, then put it in lime; take it out, and remove the hair by rubbing it, and soak the hide in clear water until the lime is entirely out. Put one pound of alum to three of salt, dissolve in a vessel, containing water, sufficiently large to hold the hide; soak the hide in it three or four days, then take it out, let it get half dry, and then beat or rub it until it becomes pliable. Leather prepared by this process will not do very well for shoes, but answers well enough for ham strings, back bands, and various other purposes on the farm.

FIVE WAYS TO DESTROY ANTS.—1. Pour copiously hot water as near the boiling point as possible, down their burrows and over their hills, and repeat the operation several times.

2. Entrap the ants by means of narrow sheets of stiff paper or strips of board, covered with some sweet, sticky substance. The ants are attracted by the sweet, and sticking fast, can be destroyed as often as a sufficient number are entrapped.

3. Lay fresh bones around their haunts. They will leave everything else to attack these, and when thus accumulated, dip them in hot water.

4. Pour two or three spoonfuls of coal oil into their holes, and they will abandon the nest.

5. Bury a few slices of onions in their nests, and they will abandon them.

WATERING PLANTS WITH HOT WATER.—It has lately been shown, by careful experiment, that sickly potted plants, even some that have almost died out, can be greatly benefited, and sometimes, indeed, entirely restored to vigour, by applying warm water to them instead of cold. In certain cases, oleanders which had never bloomed, or did so only imperfectly, after being treated with lukewarm water, increasing the temperature gradually from 140° up to 170° F, produced the most magnificent luxuriance of bloom. Similar results occurred with an old plant of Hoya, and also with an India rubber tree which had nearly withered away. In all these cases the application of water heated to about 110° F, without any other precaution, caused a new and flourishing growth.