

Miscellaneous.

MISNAMED THINGS.

The misapplication of a name in speaking of the common things of life is the source of many errors. Why things are not correctly named is probably due to the deficiency of our language in descriptive words. The *Journal of Applied Science* has this to say upon this subject:

Why should trade not have a Johnson to classify and correct the mass of inconsistencies that go to make up its nomenclature? We not only tax our brains to invent "fantastic" names for every new fabric, varied, perhaps, only by a thread or a shade from what our grandparents wore a century ago, but there are in use positive misnomers for many staple articles of merchandise. The following imperfect list, culled from sources already at hand, will give a faint idea of them:

Acid (sour), applied in chemistry to a class of bodies to which sourness is only accidental, and by no means a universal characteristic. Thus rock crystals, quartz, flint, etc., are chemical acids, though no particle of acidity belongs to them.

Blacklead does not contain a single particle of lead, being composed of carbon and iron.

Brazilian grass does not come from Brazil, or even grow there; nor is it grass at all. It consists of a palm leaf (*Thrinax argentea*), and is imported chiefly from Cuba.

Burgundy pitch is not pitch, nor is it manufactured in or exported from Burgundy. The best is a resinous substance prepared from common frankincense, and brought from Hamburg; but by far the greater quantity is a mixture of resin and palm oil.

China, as a name for porcelain, gives rise to the contradictory expressions—British china, Dutch china, Chelsea china, etc., like wooden milestones, iron milestones, brass shoe horns, iron pens, steel pens.

Cuttle bone is not bone at all, but a structure of pure chalk, once embedded loosely in the substance of certain species of cuttle fish. It is enclosed in a membranous sac within the body of the fish, and drops out when the sac is opened, but it has no connection whatever with the sac of the cuttle fish.

Galvanized iron is not galvanized. It is simply iron coated with zinc; and this is done by dipping it in a zinc bath containing muriatic acid.

German silver is not silver at all, nor was the metallic alloy called by that name invented by a German, but has been in use in China time out of mind.

Honey soap contains no honey, nor is honey in any way employed in its manufacture. It is a mixture of palm oil soap, and olive oil soap, each one part, with three parts of curd soap, or yellow soap, scented.

Japan lacquer contains no lac at all, but is made from the sap of a tree called *Rhus vernicifera*.

Kid gloves are not usually made from kid skins, but of lamb or sheep skins. At present many of them are made of rat skin.

Meerschmum is not petrified "sea foam," as its name implies, but is a composition of silica, magnesia and water.

Mosaic gold has no connection with Moses or the metal gold. It is an alloy of copper and zinc, used in the ancient musivum or tessellated work.

Mother of pearl is the inner layer of several sorts of shells. It is not the mother of pearl, as its name indicates, but in some cases the matrix of the pearl.

Pen means a feather (Latin, *penna*, a wing). A steel pen is not a very choice expression.

Prussian blue does not come from Prussia, but is the precipitate of the salt of protoxide of iron with prussiate of potassa.

Salad oil is not oil for salad, but oil for cleaning sallades, i. e., helmets.

Salt is not salt at all, and has long been excluded from the class of bodies denominated "salts."

Sealing wax is not wax at all, nor does it contain a single particle of wax. It is made of shellac, Venice turpentine, and cinabar. Cinabar gives it a deep red color, and the turpentine renders the shellac soft and less brittle.

Sperm oil properly means "seed oil" (Latin, *sperma*, seed), from the notion that it was *spermaceti*, (the sperm or melt of a whale). The sperm whale is the whale that gives the "seed oil," which is taken chiefly, but not wholly, from the head.

Whalebone is not bone at all, nor does it possess any of the properties of bone. It is a substance attached to the upper jaw of the whale, and serves to strain the water which the creature takes up in large mouthfuls.

Rhinoceros horn is not horn at all, but a kind of matted or compact hair, and is only like a horn from being a protuberance on the animal's head.

GLASS-WORKING.

Glass is usually brought into shape by being moulded or blown. There are a few other operations, however, which are constantly needed by the amateur, and which we will describe.

For cutting flat glass, such as window panes, and for cutting rounds or ovals out of flat glass, the diamond is the best tool; and, if the operator has no diamond it will always pay to carry the job to a glazier rather than waste time and make a poor job by other an inferior means. When, however, it is required to cut off a very little from a circle or oval, the diamond is not available, except in very skilful hands. In this case a pair of pliers softened by heating, or very dull scissors, is the best tool, and the cutting is best performed under water. A little practice will enable the operator to shape a small round or oval with great rapidity, ease and precision. When bottles or flasks are to be cut, the diamond is still the best tool in skilful hands; but ordinary operators will succeed best with pastilles, or a red hot poker with a pointed end. We prefer the latter, as being the most easily obtained and the most efficient; and we have never found any difficulty in cutting off broken flasks so as to make dishes, or to carry a cut spirally round a long bottle so as to cut it into the form of a cork-screw. And, by the way, when so cut, glass exhibits considerable elasticity, and the spiral may be elongated like a ringlet. The line of the cut should be marked by chalk, or by pasting a thin strip of paper alongside of it; then make a file mark to commence the cut; apply the hot iron and a crack will start; and this crack will follow the iron wherever we choose to lead it. In this way jars are easily made out of old bottles, and broken vessels of different kinds may be cut up into new forms. Flat glass may also be cut into the most intricate and elegant forms. The red hot iron is far superior to strings wet with turpentine, friction, etc.

For drilling holes in glass, a common steel drill, well made and well tempered, is the best tool. The steel should be forged at a low temperature, so as to be sure not to burn it, and then tempered as hard as possible in a bath of salt water that has been well boiled. Such a drill will go through glass very rapidly if kept well moistened with turpentine in which some camphor has been dissolved. Dilute sulphuric acid is equally good, if not better. It is stated, that at Berlin, glass cutting for pump barrels, etc., are drilled, planed and bored, like iron ones, and in the same lathes and machines, by the aid of sulphuric acid. A little practice with these different plans will enable the operator to cut and work glass as easily as brass or iron.

Black diamonds are now so easily procured, that they are the test tools for turning planing or boring glass where much work is to be done. With a good diamond a skilful workman can turn a lens out of a piece of flat glass in a few seconds, so that it will be very near the right shape.—*Amateur's Handbook*.

A PLEASANT REMEDY FOR TOOTHACHE.—Dr. T. C. Osborn, in the *Medical Brief*, states that his cook came to him with a swollen cheek, asking for something to relieve the toothache with which she had been suffering all the night. He was on the point of sending her to a dentist, when it occurred to him that there was in the house a vial of compound tincture of benzoin. "After cleansing the decayed tooth," he says, "I saturated a pledget of cotton lint with the tincture, and packed it well into the cavity, hoping this would suffice for the time, and told her to come back in two or three hours if she was not relieved. I was turning away, when she said it might not be necessary, perhaps, as the pain was already gone. Supposing her faith had a large share in the relief, I would not allow myself to think that the medicine had anything to do with the cure any more than so much hot water would have had. But when I arrived at my office, two other patients were awaiting me with the same affliction, and I determined, by way of experiment, to use the same remedy. To my agreeable surprise both patients declared themselves immediately relieved, and begged a vial of the tincture for future use. During the winter a number of similar cases applied, and were instantly relieved by the same treatment, all expressing much satisfaction with the remedy. In December I told my druggist of the discovery, and recommended him to sell it to any person applying for 'toothache drops.' This, he reports, he has done, and that every one seems delighted with the medicine."