

But let us follow up the bone grease, which is of a dark tarry brown colour, and of an abominable odour.

By various processes it is more or less defecated, bleached and deodorized, and is separated into two or three different qualities, the most inferior of which goes to the formation of railway or other machinery greases, and the latter is saponified, and becomes, when well manufactured, a hard brown soap, still, however, retaining an unpleasant smell. It is now, after being remelted, strongly perfumed, so that, like the clothes and persons of the magnates of the Middle Ages, its own evil odour is hidden by the artificial perfume.

This is the "Fine Old Brown Windsor Soap" of most of our shops. The natural brown colour of the grease gives it the right tint in the cheapest way, without the colouring by caramel, which was the original method of the manufacturer.

Like all other things, there are cheap and dear Windsor soaps: and for the production of the former little is done beyond saponifying and casting into blocks or bars. Were we to rely upon the many experiments that have been made as to the degree of elevation of temperature at which putrescent or other contagious matter is deprived of its morbid power, we might conclude that boiling and saponifying had made this hitherto putrescent grease innocuous.

It seems, however, more than doubtful that such is the fact in this case, for the soap thus made seems to be capable of communicating skin diseases when rubbed on the face for use in shaving.

But another promoter of irritation is not unfrequently also found. Whether it be that it is more profitable to the soap-maker to have a liberal proportion of the finer particles of the ground bone made up with the soap, or that these are difficult to separate completely, the fact is that bars of this "Brown Windsor" soap are to be bought containing a rich mixture of those small sharp angular fragments of bone which before boiling was putrid. When a piece of such soap is rubbed hard to a man's face, the skin is more or less cut and scored by these bony particles held in the soap like emery in a head "lap," and thus the skin is placed in the most favourable state to absorb whatever there may be of irritant, or contagious, or putrid in the soap itself. The existence of the bone fragments is easily verified by solution of the soap in water or alcohol, and examination of the undissolved particles with a lens; and I can readily, if need be, send you a piece of such soap for examination.

Now, without occupying too much of your space, I may just state that I have, while using such shaving soap, thrice suffered from eczema of the face. On the first occasion, I derived no benefit from treatment by the two most celebrated dermal surgeons in London, and at last the disease went away of itself after giving up shaving for a time. I had by me a quantity of this brown soap, and through inadvertence took to using it again, for a time without effect; but when dry and hot weather came, with it came a recurrence of the skin disease, which also again, after some months of discomfort, went away. Curious to make sure whether or not the soap was the real cause, I a third time employed the soap deliberately to see if the eczema was due to it. I was in excellent health, and in about three weeks I found the disease reestablished, so that I think the soap must be viewed as found guilty. Good white unscented curd soap is now my resource, and with no ill effects.

Eczema is always a distressing complaint even when affecting those in the most robust health. With those of bad constitution or lowered health, however, it seems to degenerate into bad or intractable skin diseases, so that probably this notice may not be deemed useless or uncalled for.—*R. M., in Nature.*

NAGGING.

It is a popular error to imagine that the art of verbal irritation belongs exclusively to the feminine nature. To be sure, when cultivated by women, it can be brought, perhaps, to its greatest perfection; but it is by no means certain that gentlemen cannot acquire the accomplishment of nagging in a sufficiently intensified degree to make the sexes almost equal on this subject. And although the phrase, to nag, is usually regarded as only applicable to the lower classes of society, and is often heard in the police-court from the ordinary wife-beater, who offers it as an excuse for indulging his propensities, we all know pretty well that the practice is not confined to the warrens of the drunkard, but is understood and recognised in Belgravia as well as in Bermondsey. And, indeed, nagging is a fine art, properly speaking, and the vulgar cannot appreciate its merits. To nag a governess, for instance, is only given to people who are comparatively well off. The process is altogether different from the rough operation of scolding. The latter consists in the point-blank discharge of abusive epithets, in emphatic expressions of contempt and derision; in the mere cudgel-play, as it were, of the wrathful tongue. But to nag requires a deliberate temper. Temper that has been kept and bottled until it reaches a stage of acetous fermentation provokes the due disposition and spirit with which the work of nagging should be approached. A lady, for instance, with a taste for the business, feels a kind of curious pleasure in the fact of having a small justification for exercising her favourite fancy. A little domestic wrong has been done to her; she nurses her chagrin quite tenderly until it ripples to her lips in a succession of ironical terms. The victim would gladly compound for his punishment and take it all at once, even in the awful form of being presented to him in tears and hysterics; but the lady who nags economises her powers of torture, understanding that what it lacks in apparent force is compensated for by its terrible duration. Some women are such experts in nagging that they can divert themselves in this amiable fashion even before company. The experienced nagger will continue during what ought to be a cook's truce to spoil the very appetite of half a dozen ladies and gentlemen at table by a few socio-anatomical prods delivered at each respectively, and always distributed with a smile, as though the sour crab apple were a sweetmeat. Girls will nag until the naggee begins to cry; and this consummation is always enjoyed by the more youthful nagger, who has not yet learned to luxuriate in the mature joy of keeping the victim an inch or so away from the crisis of relief. Old ladies who have been carefully tended by their relatives—of the Mrs. Grummage type—have a licence to nag. As a matter of fact it is, however, interesting to notice how perpetual grumbling and fault-finding agrees with them—vitalises them, so to speak, like a rousing, long-standing-cough. Very amiable

people of either sex seldom reach seventy. The irascible temperament is tough and uncommonly lasting when fed.

In Mr. Charles Lever's most recent novel, "Lord Kilgobbin," there is an excellent illustration given of the nagger in the most elaborate condition of development. Miss O'Shea, or Shea, who comforts Kearney with suggestions on the details of his last hours, who exposes the various raws she can discover within her range of vision with an unflinching pertinacity, is the complete impersonation of the nagger proper. Most of us remember ladies of the same quality amongst our acquaintances. They contrive to remind us of how our book has failed, our whisker dye is evident, our singing a disappointment to an evening party, our wife unfortunate in bonnets, our aunt in the country a trouble to the vicar by starting the religion of the "Peculiar People" in the parish. And these various uncomfortable narratives are conveyed with an air of provoking compassion and interest. Of course, only our nearest relatives have the privilege of nagging directly. They can depreciate our abilities, our appearance, our fiddling, speech-making, or what not, with the full candour of their anxiety for our benefit and welfare. And, yet, would we not often prefer to remain in gross ignorance of these gifts of knowledge, information, and advice the nagger presents us with! We could quite pardon a forgetfulness and want of appreciation which would involve an escape from a shower of disparaging criticisms. And here we must confess that the male nag is, if possible, more intolerable than the female of the same species, when he besieges you with condolences and furtive reminiscences. It must have been deuced hard on you, he observes, to have had that picture rejected by the Academy. It is just like what happened to you last year. Did you notice that article in the *Comet* on your novel? If you did not, your very good-natured friend has a copy in his pocket. The race is universal. The custom of harping on a disconcerting theme with the licence which only familiarity could permit almost makes a man eschew familiarity altogether. *Hinc illa lachrymæ.* Hence these bachelors. But there is no security, after all, in single misery. The nag can exist and flourish in the club; you may shun him, but he will lay hold of you some time or other, and confound you with the spectacle of selfish petulance and spleen which he affords over a mutton chop or a cup of coffee. When a lady and gentleman of the tribe come together in the bonds of matrimony, and have turns about and tournaments of nagging, we may drop the curtain over the scene. They furnish comedy for the kitchen, and ultimate jobs for the Divorce Court; out they are almost too miserable for an essayist to speculate upon except with funereal gravity.—*London Globe.*

MARK TWAIN ON CHAMBERMAIDS.

Against all chambermaids of whatsoever age or nationality, I launch the curse of Bachelordom!

Because!

They always put the pillows at the opposite end of the bed from the gas burner, so that while you read and smoke before sleeping, (as is the ancient and honoured custom of bachelors), you have to hold your book aloft in an uncomfortable position, to keep the light from dazzling your eyes.

If they cannot get the light in an inconvenient position any other way, they move the bed.

If you pull your trunk out six inches from the wall, so that the lid will stay up when you open it, they always shove that trunk back again. They do it on purpose.

They always put your boots into inaccessible places. They chiefly enjoy depositing them as far under the bed as the wall will permit. This is because it compels you to get down in an undignified attitude and make wild sweeps for them in the dark with the boot-jack and swear.

They always put the match box in some other place. They hunt up a new place for it every day, and put a bottle or other perishable glass thing where the box stood before. This is to cause you to break that glass thing, groping about in the dark, and get yourself into trouble.

They are forever moving the furniture. When you come in, in the night, you can calculate on finding the bureau where the wardrobe was in the morning, or thereabouts; and you will proceed toward the window and sit down in the slop pail. This disgusts you. They like that.

No matter where you put anything, they won't let it stay there. They will take it and move it the first chance they get.

They always save up the old scraps of printed rubbish you throw on the floor and stack them up carefully on the table, and then start the fire with your valuable manuscripts.

And they use more hair oil than any six men.

They keep always coming to make your bed before you get up, thus destroying your rest and inflicting agony upon you, but after you get up, they don't come any more till the next day.

"PECULIAR PEOPLE."

(From Punch.)

People who like the bagpipes.
People who dislike oysters.
People who at this period of our commercial prosperity, when writing-paper costs next to nothing, cross their letters.
People who say leisure, interesting, inhospitable, and applicable.
People who have no poor relations.
People who dye their hair.
People who always know where the wind is.
People who like getting up early in the morning.
People who have more money than they know what to do with.
People who possess a stock of old port.
People who have never been abroad.
People who give donations to street-beggars and organ-grinders.
People who send conscience-money to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.
People who take long walks before breakfast.
People who spend an income on flowers for the button-hole.
People who light and leave off fires on fixed days.
People who like paying Income-tax.
People who go to hot, uncomfortable theatres, full of fees.
People who buy early and costly asparagus—nine inches of white stalk to one of green head.

People who have no sense of humour.

People who give large parties in small rooms.

People who lavish their money on the heathen abroad, and leave the heathens at home to take care of themselves.

People who have the ice broken to enable them to bathe in the Serpentine in Winter.

People who look forward to a time when there will be no Income-tax.

People who keep all their old letters.

People without prejudices, weakness, antipathies, hobbies, crotchets, or favourite theories.

Critics who are satisfied with the hanging of the Royal Academy.

People who have nothing the matter with their digestion, and can eat anything.

People who take snuff.

People who hold their tongues.

People who go on sending contributions to *Punch*.

VARIETIES.

An Illinois paper speaks of three men who have gone crazy recently—"one for love, one for religion, and one on general principles."

Rather equivocal. A sign pinned to a shirt front of a River street store in Troy says: "Would you be without a nice shirt for seventy-five cents?"

The last question that has troubled philosophers is this: Which causes a girl most pleasure, to hear herself praised or another girl run down?

At Pere La Chaise is to be seen the following epitaph:—"Here lies Madame X—, who was gentleness and virtue itself, and so merits an exclusive tomb."

A London debating society proposes at its next meeting to discuss the startling proposition that infanticide, under proper Government control, is a desirable practice to legalise.

An Indianapolis paper advises one of its too enthusiastic contributors to "confine himself to a thin diet for a week or two, and wear a bag of pounded ice in his hat."

A farmer saw an advertised recipe to prevent wells and cisterns from freezing. He sent his money, and received the answer, "Take in your well or cistern on cold nights, and keep it by the fire."

A servant girl told her master the other morning that she was about to give his wife warning and quit the house. "Happy girl! would that I could give her warning and quit the house too!" was the brutal response.

The *Decatur Republican* remarks: "The time of year has arrived when young folks hang on the gates and quarrel and bite each other. Put good strong hinges on the gates, if you have young folks at your houses."

Said a Detroit lady to a gentleman of that city, "You are not a musician, I believe." "No," said he; "If I were the proprietor of a hand organ, set expressly to play 'Old Hundred' I couldn't get over seventy-five out of it."

The following maternal notice recently appeared in the *Davenport Gazette*: "If K. H., who left home, in Davenport, on Thursday, February 29, will write to her mother, telling her where she is, she will not be asked to come home, but her trunk will be sent to her."

A man who was delivering an address at Lawrence a few evenings since, accidentally stepped from the platform on which he stood and fell some distance to the ground, but, striking on his feet, continued, unconcerned, "to come down to the level of my audience."

The *Chicago Post* has the following: "The buzz-saw has slain its thousands, and the mower and reaper its tens of thousands. The season for being killed by base ball opens a little late this year, but a satisfactory report has been received from Racine. Age twelve. Hot liner. In the stomach."

One of the exquisites of Paris in the art of constructing the femininely beautiful in costume to hide the femininely beautiful, has suggested a new colour for silk—namely, "burnt love-letters." Some umbrella maker might improve upon the idea and produce a male umbrella for Don Giovanni, to protect them from betrayed loves' tears.

In Belfast, Me., it goes by the good old Puritanic name of "rum," in Bath they call it "tangle-foot," in Machias it is called "fire-skull," in Bangor they call it "the baby," and drinking is called "kissing the baby," in St. John it is called "Stagger juice," but in Portland, under the vigilant eye of the Sheriff, they do not stop to call it, but drink it at sight.

George Washington was once at a dinner party where his host had set him with his back to a fiery red hot stove. Finding it quite too hot for comfort, after some squirming he beat a retreat for a more comfortable position, at the same time explaining the reason. "Why," said the hostess jocularly, "I thought an old General like you could stand fire better than that." "I never could stand fire in my rear," replied the General.

At a sociable of some sort at Cedar Rapids, nineteen mothers accidentally met, each bearing her youngest in unconscious imitation of the well-known wife of the martyred wife of John Rodgers. By and by some indiscreet individual suggested that a vote (by ballot) be taken to decide which one was the handsomest. The mothers voted, the ballots were counted, and one vote was found for each of the nineteen infants in the room! Each woman gave a single, solemn, silent look at her neighbour, and in five minutes every mother among them was on her way home.

During the war some good jokes were heard at the expense of the French knowledge of geography. A recent case shows, however, that some improvement has been made. Two Parisian bourgeois of the true type, who had not been eaten during the siege, were this week exchanging the news of the day on the Boulevards. The first one said, "The news from Russia is terrible; twenty thousand persons have been burnt by the fire of Vesuvius." The second Parisian here exclaimed, with a theatrical shudder, "Why that is truly horrible, horrible! Who can have set it on fire?" The first one responded, "It is unknown as yet; but the Sultan will doubtless 'inform himself,' and the miscreant will suffer the full penalty of the law."