

ulty of the body to absolute perfection. I ready even to admit that it is a very right d fit thing that one man in five or six millions could devote his life to showing the very ut-at that can be made of the human fingers, or human muscular system as a whole. It is fit that a man here and there should cultivate an accomplishment to a perfection that looks great just as it is fit that a man here and there should live in a house that cost a million pounds to build, and round which a wide tract of country shows what might be made of trees and fields where unlimited wealth and exquisite art have done their best to improve nature to the fairest forms of which it is capable. But if it were possible, it would not be desirable that all human beings should live in dwellings like the Hamilton Palace or Arandel Castle; and could serve no good end at all—certainly not worth the cost—to have all educated men muscular as Tom Sayers, or swift of hand as the best Houdin. Practical efficiency is wanted the business of this life, not absolute perfection.—*Fruzer's Magazine.*

**A GOOD SMOKEHOUSE.**—We lately observed a well-planned smokehouse on the premises of a farmer, worthy of a brief description. It is about six feet square, the lower half built of brick, furnished with an iron-lined door, and being as an ash-house, and place for the fire. The upper part is about four feet high, besides the pitch of the roof, was made of wood. It was separated from the lower part by scantling to a space of two or three inches between them, through which smoke and air could freely pass, but sufficient to catch any ham that might accidentally fall, and thus save it from the fire. The upper part as well as the lower, was entered by a door from the outside; this upper door was kept locked, except when admitting or drawing hams; but the lower may be left unlocked, for the hired men to build fires, without danger of the contents above being spoiled, as the thief cannot pass through the slats between the joists.—*Country Gentleman.*

**SEA-BIRDS.**—The question is often asked, how do sea-birds obtain fresh water to slake their thirst? but we have never seen it satisfactorily answered till a few days ago. An old peasant, with whom we were conversing on the coast, said that he had frequently seen these birds at sea, far from any land that could furnish them with water, hovering round and under a low cloud, clattering like ducks on a hot day, and drinking in the drops of rain as they fell. They will smell a rain squall a hundred miles, or even further off, and descend for it almost inconceivable swiftness. How long birds can exist without water is only a matter of conjecture; but probably their powers of resisting thirst are increased by habit, and possibly they can go without for many days, if not several weeks.—*Wilson.*

**NOTES ON RAVEN STORIES.**—It is a curious fact that a bird of so grave and sedate a demeanour should so affect inns and taverns. Whether it is that, being burdened with an evil conscience, he seeks there to drown it—not by indulging in intoxicating liquor, but rather in the row and riot consequent on its absorption by morals; or whether, being of a cynical turn, he delights in the contemplation of folks going the same thing from the most opposite reasons—drinking, because they are jolly, and because they are miserable, because they can afford it, and because they are so wretchedly poor—is more than I can say. I only know that of the few remaining ravens in London, at least one half are attached to public-houses, and nearly always to such houses as adhere to the old custom of sign-posts and water-troughs. Some years ago there was attached to a tavern at Stoke Newington a raven, whose great antipathy was grey or white horses. Brown, black or roan horses might halt outside, and welcome; but so sure as one of the detested colour drew up and appeared at the water-trough, Peg was on the alert. She would perch on the edge of the trough and abuse the poor animal in the very choicest Billingsgate, or “gee, whoa!” in exact imitation of a carrier, and start it off. I should have thought all this was done for pure fun and love of mischief, but for an incident related to me by the landlord, and which at once proved that the bird was actuated by sheer malice. It happened one day that Peg was particularly curious respecting a tobacco box belonging to a sailor who was drinking ale in the parlour. Presently the sailor took a “quid” from the box, and put it in his mouth. Peg watched the operation with great attention, and observing that the sailor re-bed the disgusting mouthful, as soon as his back was turned she darted at the box and swallowed its contents at a gulp. The consequence was that for the remainder of that day and the next she was very ill indeed. A few days after an unlucky white horse, attached to a hay cart, arrived at the house in question, and was drawn up to the trough to drink, and the raven instantly began her persecution. The white horse, however, had met Peg several times before, and had learned to treat her importunities with indifference. Finding abuse and assault of no avail Peg turned into the house, and finding some men smoking in the taproom, she caught up a paper of tobacco from the table, flew to the edge of the trough with it, and deliberately dropped it into the horse’s nose-bag.—*Home Pets, (Oct.)*

**THE NEW ARTESIAN WELL NEAR PARIS.**—The sinking of the artesian well at Paris cost £40,000. The result is, however, beyond all previous calculation. Instead of the 12,000, or less than 75,000 cubic feet spring up every twenty-four hours—the well at Grenelle giving only 3,000 at the utmost, now reduced to 2200 cubic feet.