Furniture.

NEW QUEEN ANNE STYLE.

What people now call Queen Anne fashions, with a charming indifference to trammels of dates, are the fashions of the three Georges, the "Marie Antoinette style" (under that queen the Louis XV. furniture and decoration, whilst still sumptuous, became refined and moderate), and especially everything which came in during the Empire (Napoleon I.) Now, as Anne died in 1714, and Napoleon resigned his crown in 1815, there are just a hundred years of perhaps the most remarkable changes and developments in art which ever occurred in a century, all named after Anne, whose tastes, strictly speaking, belonged to her father's generation.

Chippendale, the elder, was a cabinet-maker who flourished about the middle of last century. He was the author of many of the most elaborate Louis XIV. patterns in England—frames, tables, commodes, pedestals, all of them ingenious, and contradicting every sense of purpose in frames tables, commodes, and pedestals; not a straight line anywhere, not a moment's rest for the eye, all wriggling curves like bewitched vegetation, giving birth in unexpected places to human heads, beasts and birds.

He also adapted his workshop to the prevailing taste when it turned pseudo-Greek, and manufactured many good, and as many bad, articles of furniture. His simulations of bronze stands, the impossible curves strengthened by internal wires, were turned out among his bureaus and chairs really well and durably constructed, with mere servility to the customer's purse. A fashion for plainness and simplicity in decoration is convenient in more ways than one. It is convenient to the new-made virtuoso; convenient to those born without taste, for it saves them *fiascos;* convenient to the impecunious, for it saves them money; convenient to decorators who have crept into notice by good luck, not merit. Hence the running popularity of the so-called "Queen Anne" furniture and scheme of decoration now attainable by every upholsterer.

We know that the keynote of all these "Queen Anne" rooms is quiet and mortally "severe;" the chairs are few, hard, square, and heavy, and covered with dingy stuffs laboriously made to look poor and imperfect in web, and recalling in color mud, mildew and ironmould. We know that there is not to be a low or easy chair in any room. We know we must expect only small bevelled mirrors in mean little frames, or convex ones which make our faces seem bloated with toothache or hollow with atrophy, our figures spent and wasted as with a sore disease. All this we know—the papers on the walls, the colors in the carpet, the inescapeable blue china, the one or two autotypes, photographs, and etchings alone permitted us—the bare, comfortless bedroom, the austere dining-room. We know this sort of thing is æsthetic, and let us be æsthetic, or we are nothing.

All these rooms resemble each other. The Queen Anne-mad decorators have but one idea, and drive it to death. We know without entering it what that house is like. There is not one original thought in it, from its inconvenient entrance to its last dark and æsthetic cranny. We know every chair—every tint—every brass knob—every wretched hard sofa and skewer-legged table—almost every "orthodox" work of art on those deadly-lively walls. These houses reflect no inmate's character, no natural need and requirement; they contain no thought, no sweet little surprise—no touch of genius, not even of ability.

Yet they are "æsthetic." Much labor and lucre are spent on making them so, and the inhabitants are duly "worked up" to their walls, with a garb and a language of their own. After all, what does æsthetic mean? If æsthetic means "discriminating," we only see that the æsthetic discriminate between vulgar comfort and select misery; if it means "eccentric," popularity is surely bringing the seeds of death, unless the eccentricity be of speech, and then we bow, baffled, before the "inescapeable and lordly" *nice*ness which results in "distinctly inevitable" obscurity. But though our unregenerate hearts may sigh for relief and sometimes neither blue-green nor green-blue, we must not be unjust. These rooms are so convenient, after all! They are less offensive than the cold red and gold business. You can move easily among the sparse furniture. The little joints and inlaid spots are very "nice," and the little skewer legs vibrate sympathetically at a touch, so slight are they. There is something weakly and feminine about this style which goes to our hearts. Yet the inoffensiveness, unwarmed by some character, some *chic*, is in itself sometimes an offence.—*American Cabinet-Maker.*

EARLY IRON MAKING IN ENGLAND.

In the reign of Edward III. iron was so scarce that the pots, spits and frying-pans of the royal kitchen were classed among the king's jewels. Up to the end of the fifteenth century, English iron was not only dearer but inferior to that manufactured on the continent. During the fifteenth century the manufacture of iron began to be extensive in Sussex, where the ore and timber for smelting it abounded, and iron mills soon became numerous in the country. The landed proprietors entered into the business eagerly and not only were many ancient houses enriched thereby, but several new men acquired wealth and founded families. In the forest of Dean also iron was largely smelted, but the land soon became denuded of trees in consequence of the exclusive use of charcoal for smelting; people became alarmed, and many edicts were fulminated restricting the manufacture of iron. Eventually the feeling became so strong, that from the time of the Restoration the iron manufacture of England rapidly declined. Coal as then used, injuriously affected the quality of the iron, and it was not till the beginning of the 18th century that steps were taken to overcome this difficulty.

Diphtheria and Milk.—In his last annual report on Bradford, Mr. Harris Butterfield records certain cases of diphtheria, which, with great show of probability, he attributes to the use of infected milk. The child of a milk dealer was taken ill with sore-throat on August 18th; the servant of a family living some way off, was attacked with diphtheria; and on September 9th, four cases, in three separate houses (one at the house where the servant was lying), were recognized. The houses were not in a bad sanitary condition, and there had been no communication between the families. The only circumstances common to all was that they obtained their milk supply from the dealer whose children were ill with the disease. Mr. Butterfield thinks it probable that, on two occasions, at least, the milk was infected with the poison of diphtheria. On the occasion of his visit, the milk cans (which were rather dirty) had not been cleansed at half-past eleven in the morning. They were kept in a scullery or wash-kitchen, in which was a sink with an untrapped pipe. Under this sink was a chamber utensil containing excreta. Near the milk cans was a wash-tub half full of dirty water, and resting on the milk cans were two bundles of dirty linen from the bed and person of a child found ill in bed with unmistakable diphtheria. The milk supply from the farm was, of course, at once stopped, but not before another child, who had partaken of the milk and occasionally visited the farm, had become infected. This last case died, as also did the mother, who contracted the infection while nursing the child.—*British Medical Journal.*

To Make a Strong Paste.—To make a strong paste for fastening bills in a file book, or for any purpose where a very strong paste is desired, the following recipe is recommended:—Rice or starch paste is the best. Four parts, by weight, of fine glue are allowed to soften in 15 parts of cold water, and then moderately heated until the solution becomes quite clear; 65 parts of boiling water are now added with constant stirring. In another vessel 30 parts of starch paste are stirred up with 20 parts of cold water, so that a thin milky fluid is obtained without lumps. Into this the boiling glue solution is gradually stirred, and the whole kept at a boiling temperature for a short time. After cooling, a few drops of carbolic acid are added to the paste. This paste is exceedingly adhesive, and may be used for leather as well as for paper and cardboard. It should be preserved in corked bottles to prevent evaporation, and in this way will keep good for years.

A New Screw for Driving.—A new screw, which is well adapted for driving, and which enters the wood without tearing the grain, has lately been patented. The gimlet point is dispensed with, and a cone point substituted. The thread has such an angle that it drives in barb fashion, offering no resistance in entering, but firmly resisting all attempts to withdraw it except by turning it out with the screwdriver. The head is flat, but in setting it up two studs or square-shouldered projections are raised in it by the one operation. The screwdriver takes hold of these instead of the customary nick, and holds quite as firmly, and when driven flush the projections on the head are not in the way, and do not disfigure it. It is said that this screw can be made one-third cheaper than ordinary screws, the principal saving being effected in doing away with the necessity of sawing the nick in the head.