

The Guitar.

The guitar is but little used now in England, though at one time it was very fashionable. Other nations who still employ it, call it by several names, most of which will be described hereafter. The guitar, is rarely, if ever, employed as an orchestral instrument, but is very valuable as a portable means of accompaniment.

The existence of frets upon the guitar limits the number of modulations capable of being performed in the normal tuning. When it is desired to make a complete change of key the *cado cado* screwed over the finger-board alters the tuning at any desired point, or a temporary change is made by the *grande barre*, that is by laying the forefinger of the left hand completely over the strings, the remaining fingers being engaged in stopping a chord. In the classification of musical instruments it is convenient to speak of three general sorts, wind, string, and pulsatile. The guitar belongs to the second kind, and may be said to represent a very large family universally distributed, bearing a variety of names according to the tongue of the nation by which it is used. All instruments may be considered as belonging to the guitar family which possess a resonance body or sound box, together with a finger board, against which the strings with which they are furnished may be pressed or stopped.

Following the course of history, we find that instruments of the guitar kind are of great antiquity, as well as of general use by people of all nations.

The kinnor and nebel, mentioned in the Bible, were stringed instruments, of the guitar or harp family, but of their exact nature it must be confessed little is known, though much is conjectured.

The Egyptian frescoes and other paintings, valuable as showing the frequent use of musical instruments, include several specimens of the harp and guitar family. The Nefer, one of the latter class, had a neck, sometimes with a carved head, and was furnished with three strings, and had a resonance box. Upon the neck, or finger-board, frets were tied or fastened, as in the modern guitar. Each string is said to have been able to produce two octaves.

The three strings were supposed to correspond with the seasons of the Egyptian year.

Grecian writers, describing Egyptian instruments, do not afford much real information concerning them, and all attempts to reconcile their statements only lead to confusion; for conjecture is not conviction. Too much trust has been placed in the accuracy of sculptured and painted images, and various theories have been founded upon the character of musical instruments as deduced from their represented forms. As with ancient, so with modern musical instruments of far-away countries; travellers' tales have too often been trusted, and their statements received as conclusive, when in the majority of instances they are confessedly ignorant of the subject upon which they give "authoritative judgment."

Philology does not, after all, furnish the best assistance towards determining relationships in this matter, and, as a rule, the picture of an instrument offers but a little help or guide in the matter. References of musical instruments by the poets of several ages offer no aid whatever, but on the contrary, often tend to mislead. If they were trustworthy, it might reasonably be assumed that no other instruments but the lyre and harp were ever employed to "assist the muse." But colloquial terms—often despised by classical poets—are of most value to the historian, and it is therefore found that the common names applied to a stringed instrument with a finger board, kinnor, cithara, zither, kithara, geytarah, guitar, point to the common origin.

There is no question but that the guitar was introduced into Europe after the Crusades. The name, purely Eastern, has been adopted with only a variation in spelling as European use demands. The modern Egyptians call it "gytarah barbariyeh," the guitar of the Barbors, the people who are the direct descendants of the ancient race of the country; and as names and words in the East vary in the course of ages less than those in the West, it is likely that the word is of high antiquity.

When Hans Christian Andersen, one of whose dearest hopes in going to Sweden had been to meet Fredrika Bremer, was presented to her on the deck of a steamer, she had never heard of him, and was quite stiff. He produced one of his books, however, as he left him; and after an hour or so she hurried back. "I know you now," said she; and thus began a lifelong friendship.

RELIGIOUS MATTERS.

It is stated that, since disestablishment, the Irish Church has raised \$20,000,000 for the cause of religion and charity. Nearly \$1,500,000 per annum has been secured for the stipends of the clergy. Upward of 1,200 incumbents receive an average of \$1,050, and 211 receive an average of \$600 per annum.

The Sixth Triennial Conference of the German Baptists of America was held recently at St. Louis. Delegates were present from 14 States and from Ontario. Prof. H. M. Schaffer was elected Moderator. Considerable attention was given to educational and publishing interests, and a new hymn book was ordered.

In the discussion recently in the Glasgow Presbytery of the Kirk of the volume of "Scotch Sermons," Dr. Norman Macleod ascribed the origin of the agitation against the sermons to a member of the Free Church, and asserted that more than one distinguished writer in the volume was in total ignorance of the other sermons with which theirs were to be combined.

The communion in the Church of Scotland grew out of the publication of the volume of "Scotch Sermons," is increasing rather than subsiding. The Glasgow Presbytery has ordered a committee of inquiry in regard to two sermons regarded as heretical contributed by one of its members, and more recently strong objections was made to Dr. Story, of Roseneath, becoming Moderator of the Synod of Glasgow and Ayr, because he was one of the contributors to "Scotch Sermons."

RECENTLY the Duchess of Edinburgh, accompanied by two ladies and a gentleman, visited Canterbury Cathedral. The verger who conducted the Duchess and party over the building had not the remotest idea who he was guiding until after they had gone the round. Indeed, the Duchess and her suite were asked to withdraw from the north aisle on the plea that no one was allowed to remain in that part during divine service, a request which was immediately complied with.

In his charge recently the Archbishop of Armagh said, concerning the Disestablished Church, that, during the last 10 years, nearly one-half the clergy who occupied benefices at the time of disestablishment had disappeared from among them—some retiring from age and infirmity, some removing to other dioceses, and others having gone to England. Of course, those who went away had carried their commutation capital with them. Owing to these causes, it would become necessary to fall back upon the practice of former times, and place more than one parish under the care of one minister. The candidates now presenting themselves for ordination were generally below the required standard of education. Even the qualification of a collegiate degree had sometimes to be dispensed with. There was such a dearth of uniformity in the value of their benefices that there was little prospect of promotion, and nothing to attract the rising talent of the country.

Carolina's Sweet Sixteen.

A curious petition was that addressed in 1733 to the governor of South Carolina by sixteen maidens of Charleston. It ran thus: "The humble petition of all the maids whose names are underwritten. Whereas, we, the humble petitioners, are at present in a very melancholly disposition of mind, considering how all the bachelors are blindly captivated by widows, and our own youthful charms thereby neglected; in consequence of this, our request is that your excellency will, for the future, order that no widows presume to marry any young man till the maids are provided for; or else to pay each of them a fine for satisfaction for invading our liberties, and likewise a fine to be levied on all such bachelors as shall be married to widows. The great disadvantage it is to us maids is that the widows, by their forward carriage, do snap up the young men, and have the vanity to think their merit beyond ours, which is a great imposition on us, who ought to have the preference. This is humbly recommended to your excellency's consideration, and hope you will permit no further insults. And we poor maids, in duty bound, will ever pray." The forlorn sixteen would have approved the edict of the Portuguese king, which forbade widows more than fifty years old from remarrying, on the ground that experience taught that widows of that age commonly wedded young men of no property, who dissipated the fortunes such marriages brought them, to the prejudice of children and other relatives.

French Orders.

The badges of the inferior orders of the Legion of Honor have been pretty eagerly sought for by foreigners, even by Englishmen. It is related of an English merchant who had rendered some service to Napoleon III. that he was invited by that prince to spend a few days at Fontainebleau. When the merchant took his leave, the Emperor asked him whether he could be of service to him in any way. "May it please your Majesty," stammered the guest, "I should like—the Legion of Honor." Repressing the national habit of shrugging his shoulders—ever so slightly—Cæsar replied that he should be most happy to give him the cross. "I fancied," he added, "that your government did not allow you to wear foreign decorations. However, if you can make it right with the English administration, you are heartily welcome. Meanwhile you must permit me to give you a cross of the Legion worn by my uncle the King of Westphalia." So saying, the Emperor went to a drawer, and took out a diamond that had once glittered on the marshal's uniform of Jerome. It was handsomely done: grave as were his faults, Napoleon III. always showed himself a gentleman.

The Legion of Honor has this agreeable peculiarity, that it is accompanied by pensions—in the case of military knights. A plain chevalier receives 250 francs a year, a Grand Cross 5000. The chancellorship of the order is a very snug berth indeed. Besides a fine income, the Chancellor has handsome apartments rent free and "perquisites." Of course the post is generally bestowed on an old soldier; though on the restoration of the Bourbons in 1814 it was given to an eminent clergyman whom it had been found difficult to put in any other place. The porter of the palace caused some amusement by addressing the abbe, on his official entry, in the set phrase which he had used toward successive captains of great fame: "You have only to command, marshal; it will be my business to obey."

There is one other French order of importance: the military medal. It is of gold, encircled in silver, and suspended by a short ribbon of green and yellow. Coveted almost as much as the Victoria Cross, its numbers have been extended so as to include civilians, the proportion being one of the latter to every two soldiers or sailors. When Bazaine had been for some time a Marshal of France and Grand Cross of the Legion of Honor, he received the military medal—a graceful compliment, which was meant to indicate that the cup of honors was full, and that there was nothing left for his imperial master but to give him the remainder of the lesser decorations.

Fixing Her Hair

When a girl concludes to put up her hair and make herself look sweet, the best policy is to let her have her own way. She can't be drawn away from her mirror by any of the ordinary things of this life. A fire will sometimes do it, but it has been shown that even a fire may fail to excite some girls. The other night a New York lodging-house took fire, and at a most uncomfortable hour, when most girls probably have their back hair down. One of the young ladies heard that her place was burning down, but she didn't feel like minding her appearance before the crowd that had gathered in the street looking like a perfect fight. She shut the door leading into the hall to keep out the flames and went to her mirror to fix her hair. Anybody who has waited for a girl to fix her hair knows that it takes time and a great deal of it. This girl wasn't any quicker than the average, and she was very particular about having her hair done up exactly as it should be. The fire had cut off her chances of escape by the stairs, and her lover, after appealing to her for some time, finally lost his patience and got away without her. A fireman got up to the room on a ladder and she made him sit on the edge of the window and wait until she had arranged her hairpins and ribbons for a right sort of public appearance, then she threw herself into his arms—it was so romantic—and slid down the ladder with him, looking just sweet. The whole thing was a tremendous success, but when the careful young girl was safely landed on the pavement she found that she had forgotten her stockings.

THE *Osservatore Rom.* tells its readers that, notwithstanding the terrible trials under which the Irish are now suffering, the faithful of Cashel, mindful of the needs of the Holy See, have contributed a sum of money equivalent to 60,000 francs for their Archbishop's present to the Pope.

INTERESTING ITEMS.

Belgium had no gold coin until 1847.

A GENTLEMAN writes to the *London Standard* that cats can be trained to retrieve game as well as dogs do. When he takes his gun in his hand his three cats are in ecstasies in anticipation of sport.

PROF. LEVI, in lecturing at King's College, London, on the value of a good harvest to trade and manufactures, said that every day of sunshine during forty or fifty days after July 15, St. Swithin's day, was worth about \$5,000,000 to the country.

AN insane woman at Cleveland laid a little boy down with his head between two stones, and placed a heavy timber across his neck in such a way that he was held fast without being choked. She left him to die, and he had almost done so when discovered.

A SOAP-EATING match was a diversion at Springfield, Ohio. The quickest devourer of a bar of yellow soap got a prize of \$5. The winner performed the feat in less than an hour, but was much longer in the hands of the physician, because the lye poisoned him.

THAT gigantic floating palace, the *Livadia*, made, in passing from Cork to Gibraltar, upward of seventeen miles an hour, while there was a total absence of any disagreeable motion, her "pitch" being but one degree. This may lead to a great change in ship building.

THE subcutaneous injection of sulphuric ether, in three-drop doses, at intervals of 12 hours, is recommended by Dr. Comegys for the successful treatment of sciatica; and he also thinks that the substitution of ether for ergotine in dealing with tic-doloureux would give good results.

OZARK furnishes another tough Arkansas story—that White Oak Mountain is flinging out stones of all sizes up to two pounds in weight, which fall like hail into the fields and disperse the inhabitants. Were the stones hot, or were smoke and flames seen, a volcano might be surmised; but the affair is spoken of like one of simple stone throwing.

FEW persons outside of England, where coursing is one of the national sports, have any idea of the value of greyhounds. At a recent sale ten dogs brought 711 guineas, the highest being sold for 400 guineas and the lowest 10 guineas. This is not in excess of former sales, Badlamite and Peasant Boy, two well-known hounds, each having brought 500 guineas, and for master McGrath, probably the most famous dog ever bred in England, his owner, Lord Lurgan, was offered the sum of \$4,000.

SHIPS that will not sink are to be desired in these times, and an Englishman named Lamb thinks he has one in a steel steam launch, which has seven flat air-tight cylinders on each side. There are some minor novelties in construction, but there seems to be no difference in essential principles between Mr. Lamb's and the ordinary compartment system. This latter might do better were it rigidly kept free, in practice, from improper use in the stowing of cargo and surplus material.

THE bridegroom of a Waukegan wedding was a Baptist and the Bride a Methodist. They had agreed that, immediately after the ceremony, they would decide by chance which should embrace the other's religion. The officiating clergyman declined to toss up a cent, partly because he would not countenance such a proceeding, and partly because, being a Methodist, he might be accused of fraud if the bride won. The bride herself finally threw the coin, and lost. When she went to join the Baptists, however, they rejected her because she did not believe in close communion. That displeased the husband, and he went over with her to the Methodists.

THE other day an Englishman went over to Ireland to see a friend of his, who is an Irish landlord. He said that he should like to meet one of the most ardent opponents of landlords, and his friend referred him to the village blacksmith, who, he said, was a good enough fellow, but who, he believed, contemplated shooting him shortly. To the forgo he betook himself, and the blacksmith explained the wrongs of Ireland. "Are we not," he said, "suffering from absenteeism taking from Ireland all the money that we earn, and do you suppose that we mean to continue to pay this tribute to the Saxon?" "But," replied the Englishman, "here there are many resident landlords." "You are mistaken," answered the blacksmith. "I know the country, and I tell you that it is full of absentees."