

partment was most extensive, and both for numbers and excellence they formed one of the best features of the exhibition. It would be impossible to speak in too high praise of the quality of most of the specimens exhibited. Some of the different varieties of those shown were especially excellent. Many new kinds were exhibited, some especially worthy of commendation, and evincing the careful and successful cultivation of this valuable root. The same praise may be accorded to the beets, carrots, parsnips, and other vegetables. And it may safely be asserted of this department, that both in number and quality it surpassed anything of the kind that has before been witnessed in France.

Miscellaneous.

OCCUPATION OF WOMEN IN FRANCE.—In France a woman is permitted to engage in many occupations which are performed with us entirely by the male sex. She often acts as ticket collector at railway stations, as bookkeeper at banks and shops, and as attendant on the heaped shelves of the reading room.

The watchmaker consigns to her delicate work the finer parts of his mechanism, and the jeweller the setting of his costly gems. The wood-carver expects his most delicate and tasteful work from her hands; and the picture dealer invites her to plant her easel in the Louvre or the Champs-Élysées, to reproduce, as she well can, the masterpieces of ancient or modern art. She holds the mallet of the sculptor considered to grace the hands of a princess—one of the latest statues of modern times, representing the Arc clasping the consecrated sword, the production of a daughter of the late Emperor. The individual and social advantages which the honor that is thus paid to labor are incalculable. Pride is never permitted to interfere with usefulness; and many a woman, who would have been debarred, through us, by its pernicious influence, from the honorable employment of her powers, is enabled to be wiser and more merciful arrangements to obtain in France, to secure a virtuous and comfortable independence.—*Scientific American*.

RELATIONS OF THE MICROSCOPE.—Wherever we go within the precincts of our own homes, in the field or moorland, hill or forest, by the seashore, or amidst crumbling ruins, fresh sources of interest are constantly to be found; and animals unknown to our unaided vision, with minute organs perfectly adapted to their necessities; with appetites as keen, enjoy-

ments as perfect as our own. In the purest water, as well as in thick, acid, and saline fluids, of the most indifferent climates, in springs, rivers, lakes, and seas, often in the internal humidity of living plants and animals, even in great numbers in the living human body—nay, probably, carried about in the aqueous vapours and dust of the whole atmosphere, there is a world of minute, living, organized beings, imperceptible to the ordinary senses of man. In the daily course of life, this mysterious kingdom of diminutive living beings is unnoticed and disregarded; but it appears great and astonishing, beyond all expectation, to the retired observer who views it by the aid of a microscope. In every drop of standing water he very frequently, though not always, sees by its aid rapidly moving bodies, from 1.96 to less than 1.2000 of a line in diameter, which are often so crowded together that the intervals between them are less than their diameter. If we assume the size of the drop of water to be one cubic line, and the intervals though they are often smaller, to be equal to the diameter of the bodies, we may easily calculate, without exaggeration, that such a drop is inhabited by from one hundred thousand to one thousand millions of such animalcules; in fact, we must come to the conclusion that a single drop of water, under such circumstances, contains more inhabitants than there are individuals of the human race upon our planet.—*Westminster Review*.

CURIOUS ANIMAL.—Australia is a land full of natural wonders to us. Great tracts of that country are covered with balls of quartz, shot, as it were, from some lunar battery; the natives kill the jumping kangaroo by shooting the boomerang "round the corner;" and there is the *ornithoryncus*, which puzzles naturalists to classify by its paradoxical peculiarities. It appears to be a link between the quadruped, bird and reptile. Its body is something like that of a beaver; it has four short legs, and is web footed, and on its little flat head it has the bill of a duck. These creatures live a great deal in water; their resorts are quiet creeks fringed with weeds, among which they search for food. They burrow in the banks of streams like moles; in disposition they are timid, playful and harmless and they have been made very amusing pets.

THE CITY UNDERGROUND.—The buildings above ground in our crowded metropolis are probably equalled by the subterranean works which traverse the city and suburbs in every direction. Endless miles of sewers, now to be in part superseded by vast cloacæ rivaling those of ancient Rome; water service brought to every inhabitant's door; gas mains and pipes, so carefully laid down that the whole soil is saturated by the foul air escaping from them; and those mystical wires, which carry out the whispers of the electric telegraph—all these cross and recross every foot of our great thoroughfares; and out of what seems their inextricable confusion,