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MURACLES IN STEEL.

Blades That Are Famous the World Over and the Care With Which

and Methods of Manufacture. Twelve centuries of swordmaking in Japan have surrounded the brade with all manner of legends and customs and con ventions. The long range life is the weapon of the army now, but the making of swords still absorbs the interest of

Japanese connoisseurs. The government still fosters the art to which emperors and princes have not disdained to serve an apprenticeship.

The etiquette of swords is observed in Japan today very much as it has been observed for continuous. To draw a sword to continuous the served for continuous. served for centuries. To draw a sword from its scabbard without permission is as insulting to its owner as to open his letters. Blades that bear the dates of the eighth and minth centuries are as good now as when they were forged, without a nick or a spot of rust. The sword is always withdrawn very slowly, the scab bard held horizontally and the blade rest ing on its back as it slides out.

Lest the faintest breath should reach the steel, the connoisseur, when he shows a valuable sword and the guest to whom he shows it, wear shields of paper over the lower part of their faces. The bade is handled with silk y To touch it wish the bare hand is an affront to its owner. Climatic changes are carefully guarded

Captain Zalinski, who was in Japan at the time of the China-Japan war, wanted to see how they were made and, by the emperor's permission, induced the imperial instructor in swordmaking in the school of fine arts in Tokyo to give s demonstration of his work. The sword smith prepared for work by prayer and penance, fasting and cold ablutions; religious articles were placed about in the forgeroom; little wisps of straw were stuck here and there, and folded papers

hung over the forge.
Unless he offered prayer while he worked, it was explained, the art was not thought to be complete. It was on the principle that a bad man made a bad sword, and only a good man, throwing his heart and soul into it, could make a good sword. Each family of swordsmiths has its own secrets, which it guards jealously, the special characteristics of their swords remaining the same century after

The swordmaker took two pieces of steel, one of which was chilled in water and broken. He chose for his sword the pieces that looked well at the break and welded them, folding them over 15 times or more. Four such bars were made and mbined, sometimes being plunged into water, but more often cooled in straw ashes. He would hammer the bar out long and bend it double, hammer it broad and flat and fold it down the mid-

swordmakers, the captain was told, folded their bars diagonally. all was finished, the forger had made some 4,000,000 fine layers. It was this that gave the sword its "hada," or an almost imperceptible granular appearance, running lengthwise or side ise or diagonally, according to the methd of folding. Some of the swords, by a peculiar treatment, turned out pure and sheer and showing no such grain.

With a drawknife the swordmaker shaped his hot steel and began the tem-pering, with accompaniment of prayers and much religious observance. The forgeroom was darkened, to make it easier to judge the right glow of the steel on the forge. The blade was covered with loam or clay from one to three-sixeenths of an inch thick, and a narrow was scraped bare at the cutting edge, Various smiths, with varied fancies, scrape it off with straight or dentated or wavy lines, and the pattern always

remains after the tempering is over.

The blade was heated with great care, that it should have just the right cherry glow, and plunged into the bath. Here, too, the fancy or the traditions of the maker's family dictate different methods. Maker's family dictate different metallic.

Some plunge the sword in perpendicularly, some liorizontally, with the blade
downward; some with the edge downward. The blade was kept in constant motion. The part that had been covered with loam was very soft when the steel had cooled. The part that had been scraped bare was very hard. The curve the finished blade was a marvel of ac-

The finished sword is usually engraved with the maker's signature, but the best smiths are so proud of their work, and it has to the expert eye so much individuality, that they disdain any signa-ture. The sword is finished on a whetstone by careful and tedious rubbing and is polished with fine stone and rice powder. Some ancient sule of the art has fixed upon winter as the best sea-

son for polishing a sword.

To be really valuable and worthy of a place in a nobleman's collection the blade must be tried at an execution on one or

more men at a single blow.

There are other tests, such as cutting coins, hairs and leaves, but these minor forms, like most of the other details of swordmaking, are often hereditary, and the maker tries his blade on exactly the same objects and with the same ceremo-nies that were used by his great-grandfa-

ther and his ancestors before him.

A large number of the swords bought by strangers in Japan and taken home to be displayed with much pride and circumstantial relation of swordmaking legends are gross frauds. The sword that is really valuable should have fastened to the heft, by a wax seal, the linen tag of the imperial inspector, certifying to its date, its maker and its test.

Judging a blade is as much an art as is the judging of porcelain or gems. The greater the contrast between the blue of the soft steel and the white of the tempered edge the better the blade. The line between the two colors should not be too fine. On the side of the blade are usually paler spots, shaped like little clouds, and placed symmetrically at intervals of a tew inches. These are the "innoy," addfew inches. These are the "innoy," adding much to the value and beauty of the
sword and made by a trick of tempering.
Captain Zalinski found that Toledo
blades, as far as the secret of their manufacture could be learned, were made by
almost the same method used by the
Japanese. He broke an old Toledo, and, putting the fracture under a microscope found its texture apparently the same as that of the Japanese sword.-New

It is probable that the portable and table clocks were invented in Germany dur ing the revival of clock making there is the sixteenth century.

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FEMININITIES.

Russian girls try to ascertain their prospects of matrimony in the following manner: A number of them take of their rings and conceal them in a basket of corn. A hen is then brought in and invited to partake of the corn. The owner of the first ring uncovered will be the first to be married.

An Oklahoma bachelor started to Joplin, Missouri, not long ago and on the way he met a widow with seven children. It was a case of first-sight love, and marrying her the next day he carried a wagonload of family with him. The chances are, with these seven small mouths to fill, he will not have so many peanuts to market here-

Mrs. Madeleine Yale Wynne of Chicago daughter of the inventor of the Yale lock, is said to be the only woman silversmith in the world. While there are a few clever women who design jewels, Mrs. Wynne actually, does every bit of the work herself, from the handling of the metal as crude ore until it is a finished work of

A New York justice has decided that a wife does not constitute a family The case came up where judgment was obtained against a man who was bound to pay ten dollars a week for the support of his family The couple had no children and the justice said he knew of no authority holding that a wife abandoned by her husband constituted

a family The shipment of two wives by express from Issaquah, Washington, to their husbands at Dawson City, by the Nugget Express company is something of a novelty in the express business. Mrs. L. T. Mullarkey and Mrs. L. T. Jones constituted the novel consignment. An express messenger accompanied them to look after their baggage and he will take a receipt from the respective husbands on delivery of the goods.

ALL SORTS.

A German has invented a thimble of felt or gum for the use of pianists. In Italy 600,000 people find employ-

ment in raising silk worms. The hair of rabbits and other animals in Russia is converted into bowls. dishes and plates which are valued for their strength, durability and lightness. The articles have the appearance of varnished leather.

More matches are used in the United Kingdom than in any other country in the world. It has been estimated that English people use an average of eight matches each person per day, and annually over 1,700,000,000,000

burned. Africa is the most elevated of all the continents. It is the "continent of plateous." The great tableland in the south has a mean altitude of over 3.500 feet; the wide tableland on the north has an average elevation of about 1,300 feet.

The young Maori men who have beet to college apparently become as white men in all their ways, but after a couple of years home drift back into their gypsie customs.

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mere at tea.her, West Side Business Obega, Chicago, Maggie Kerr, as strongrapher with the Sutherland Innes 10c, Obstann, Fred. McGavin, as Stenographer with McColl Bros., Paints and Oi's, Toronto, James Redford, Book-keeper, Durham Furniture Co., Varna, Ont.

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KILLING A KATTLER,

CLEVER WAY IN WHICH THE KING SNAKE DOES THE JOB.

A Battle to the Death In Whiel Lightning Swiftness and Musele Were More Than a Match For Venomous Fangs That Couldn't Strike.

If the rattlesnake is justly called the ting of America's woods and rocks, yet his crown is not held without danger, since he is hunted diligently and successfully. His faugs are indeed deadly, and ne wears a fine suit of armor, but the deer and the wild hog never fail to at-tack him, and he has an enemy of his own kind still more dangerous to him.

Snakes may be divided into three class-

es, those which are venomous, the con strictors and those which are neither. Unless the second of these are wonderful for their size they secure little of our attention, and yet they are generally beautiful in colors, most graceful in action and often among our best friends.

In Florida we have two constrictors especially noticeable, the black racer, which grows to the length of 12 feet and makes a business of warring on rats, and the king snake, whose mission seems to be the extermination of the rattler.

One day I was returning from a day's hunt, at peace with the world and myself, when I heard a squirrel scolding as if he were a ward politician the night before election. The noise he made was so foud and insistent that I turned out of my way to see what could be the matter. I found the little fellow on the trunk of a pine about ten feet from the ground, jumping about as if in convulsions. He would flourish his tail wildly, scold in anger, threaten an assault, run back a little way up the trunk and then return

and scold again.
I looked carefully and saw that his anger was directed at a rattlesnake that lay coiled at the foot of the tree. The snake was compressed into a ball, from the middle of which its rattle sounded continnously. Its blazing little eyes were fixed unchangingly upon those of the summer air with a sleepy effect, but the squirrel scolded in an ever ascending key. But for the hint of the squirrel's eyes I could not have located the rattler. His color and his variegated markings offered but little contrast to his surroundings His monotone of noise was indefinite, and to sight as well as in sound he seemed only a blur on the background of dark

sand on which he lay. Was the squirrel only curious to satisfy himself as to the character of that strange object or was he hypnotized? 1 have often amused myself by exciting the violent curiosity of the little animal, but never did a waving or jumping object waken such intense and painful emotion as the rattler always demands. I knew what must follow soon-that the squir-rel's cries would grow weak; that he would grow dizzy and finally tumble from the tree, hang a moment by one claw and then drop into the jaws of the living death that lay in wait. I had raised my rifle to save the little fellow, when the tragedy was interrupted from another

Swift as light a form raced on the stage. It was clothed in a gleaming coat of beautiful white and black spots. It shifted and shone like a necklace of preious stones, and I knew the king snake claimed a victim. The newcomer was smaller than the rattler, its ground color was a greenish gray, and the snots scin-tillated in the sunlight which sifted down upon the scene from the tangled branches overhead. At the first rustle of its approach the rattler lost all interest in the squirrel, which ran back into the tree.

The king snake held his head high and raced round the rattler in a wide circle, while the rattler tried to slink away. The king darted forward as if to attack, and he rattler threw himself into a coil. The king was again away and racing around with a swiftness the rattler seemed una-ble to follow with his eye. The rattler was cowed already. His crest was lowered, his buzz, buzz was jerky and uneven, and although he presented a very different appearance from the self confident arbiter of the woods which he had seemed when I first saw him I could think of nothing but some human bully surprised in the act of torturing his helpless victim and suddenly compelled to face an adversary worthy of his strength. The king snake seemed to enjoy the situation as a cat does her cruel dallying

with a mouse.

Round and round went the king snake, and the rattler followed the movement till its neck was twisted. Whenever it attempted to turn, the king would spring forward, and it was evident that the first failure of the rattler in swiftness would be the signal for muscle to clinch with The king would race from left to right and then reverse, and if the rattler failed to follow that would be the end of him. This happened, and I saw the king in the air, but could not catch the strike o instantaneous was it. There was a confusion of flying pine needles in a cloud of white dust, and I saw that two inches of white dust, and I saw that two inches of the king's coil was about the throat of the rattler. Over and over they went, the king's head above that of his enemy and a curve of his body acting as a buffer to keep up the motion which enabled him to take another turn and still another. And so the struggle continued till the rat-tler could not writhe freely, and he was

held as a vine wraps a tree.

When he lay still, the snake began to uncoil himself slowly, and at every mo-tion of his enemy the constrictor's folds contracted and crushed with killing ef-tect. Even when there was only a quiver of the tail the king still gripped the throat. It was plain he had a wholesome respect for the fangs that were still terri-As a last precaution the king applied his nostrils to those of the rattler plied his nostrils to those of the rattler and repeated that several times as if to detect the faintest breath. Satisfied at last, it released its enemy, but still watched, ready to resume its hold at the slightest sign of life. There I left him, becomes arim superd ever the hole of him keeping grim guard over the body of his vanquished foe.—Youth's Companion.

Different Circumstances. "Remember." said the young man's fa-ther, "that when I was your age I carned

my own living."
"Of course," was the answer. "You did the best you could with your opportu-nities. But I'll venture to say you didn't get nearly as good a living as I get now without working."—Washington Star.

"When a man wants an excuse," said

Charles Kingsley, "the devil will soon fit bim with a good one." Books are divisible into two ela



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IN INSECT LIFE.

Here are Some Very Interesting Facts About Germs.

The Small Forms of Life that Cause Many Diseases

Researches made by two Swedish physicians show that preparations of meat and fish, with less than 15 per cent. of salt, always contain a constant and luxuriant vegetation of micro-organisms, with products of micro-organic life, and they own their specific taste, color, consistency and smell chieny to the presence of

this microbian flora.

Germ in Springled Streets. Tests made at Frieburg, Switzerland, have revealed the unexpected fact that the number of bacteria is on an average twice as much in the dirt of sprinkled streets as in those of the unsprinkled. This shows the favorable effect of moisture on the growth, of bacteria. The increased numbers are, however, compensated by the stationary position of the sprinkled dust instead of its being whirled in the air by every breeze,

as in the unsprinkled streets. Celery as a Vehicle of Infection. The American Medical Journal calls attention to the dangers of typhoid fever from eating celery grown in truck gardens, where free use of fertilizers from all sources is used. This popular vegetable with its corrugated stems, etiolated by banking up with earth often saturated with fertilizers of one kind or another, and generally eaten raw, might very possibly carry the germs of disease. The dan-ger is not great or we would hear nore of it, but it may exist occasionally. It is not intended to ad vise against the cating of celery, but only to suggest that it be well clean-

Bacon—I suppose, like most women, your wife wants the earth? Egbert—Well, yes; but I have learn-ed that she don't want it on her parlor

sed first.

Ald yourself and heaven will aid Do not trust a poor alc

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