

Embroidery.—Hand and Power.

Embroidery is the art of adding to the surface of woven textures, a representation of any object we wish to depict, through the medium of the needle, threaded with the material in which the work is to be executed. This may be effected by various methods, and on most descriptions of fabrics.

We are indebted to the luxury and magnificence of the nations of the East, for the invention of embroidery,—an art that has not inaptly been termed the mother of painting, its discovery claiming the priority by many centuries. In more modern times, it has been called the humble sister of the latter art; and the aim of the needlewoman has been to imitate, as closely as possible, the productions of the pencil, a labor in which she has been assisted by some of the most celebrated masters, many of whose works have been executed for the express purpose of being copied in needlework or tapestry.

The Greeks gave the honor of the invention of embroidery to Minerva; by Pliny it has been assigned to the Phrygians; he says the Romans called embroideries "Phrygiones."—The women of Sidon, before the Trojan war, were especially celebrated for their skill in this art; and Homer mentions Helen as being engaged in embroidering the combats of the Greeks and Trojans:

The art of embroidery was greatly practised among the ancient Egyptians; even the sails of some of their ships were wrought with fanciful devices, representing the phoenix, flowers, and various emblems. In the time of Moses, Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, was celebrated as "a cunning workman," and as an embroiderer in blue, in purple, in scarlet, and in fine linen. The curtains and ornaments of the Tabernacle, and the vestments of the priests, were decorated with embroidery.

Tarquinius Priscus, who first distinguished the monarch and senators by particular robes and ornaments, was the first Roman king who wore an embroidered garment.

The term embroidery, as employed in the writings of the ancient historians, has reference to all kinds of ornamental work done with the needle; thus comprehending within its meaning every description of decorative needlework, including tapestry and some descriptions of weaving. In the extended meaning of the term, nations and savage tribes unknown to the ancients, may equally claim the honor of a similar invention, as most of them have a species of embroidery peculiarly their own.

The Chinese have long been celebrated for the beauty of their embroideries; indeed, it has been doubted whether the art was not originally brought into Europe from them, through the Persians. They use floss and twisted silks, also the bark of a tree spun into a fine thread. The drawing of their embroideries is as uncouth as that of their paintings, but in some of their flowers, are botanically correct; and their works are not more to be admired for their remarkable freshness than for the extreme labor bestowed upon them. Success, as gained by patient application, is exemplified in China. The mere accomplishment of writing a good style, is the result only of many tedious years of study and self-denial. A Chinese uses no short cuts, resorts to no compendious methods for abridging labor; he is not without ingenious resources to accomplish an end, but his aim does not seem to be to save time.

The finest specimens of embroidery are done by men who stand while at work. Much skill and labor are bestowed on the embroidery of a plaited skirt worn by Chinese ladies, which is without a rival for beauty as an article of female attire. Embroidery and figured textures were generally in favor with the ancients, so that the discovery was thought worthy of a superior agency. The Chinese are fond of retaining what is old, and have preserved both these arts in their highest state of perfection.

(Concluded next week.)

"I wuns't know'd a county Meath man and a mighty quare janius he was, that took it into his head to invint perpetuall motion, and he actually made an eight-day clock that run three weeks!" So says Patrick.

Obligation to Brutes.

Brutes are sensitive beings, capable of, probably as great degrees of physical pleasure and pain as ourselves. They are endowed with instinct, which is probably a form of intellect inferior to our own, but which, being generically unlike to ours, we are unable to understand. They differ from us chiefly in being destitute of any moral faculty. We do not stand to them in the relation of equality. Our right is paramount, and must extinguish theirs. We have therefore a right to use them to promote our comfort, and may innocently take their life if our necessities demand it.—This right over them is given to us by the revealed will of God. But inasmuch as they, like ourselves, are the creatures of God, we have no right to use them in any other manner than that which God has permitted. They as much as ourselves, are under his protection. We may therefore use them for our necessities. We are designed to subsist partly upon animal food; and we may innocently slay them for this purpose. We may use them for labor, or for innocent physical recreation, as when we employ the horse for draught or for the saddle. But while we so use them, we are bound to treat them kindly, to furnish them sufficient food and with convenient shelter. He who cannot feed a brute well, ought not to own one. And when we put them to death, it should be with the least possible pain. We are forbidden to treat them unkindly on any pretence, or for any reason; there can be no clearer indication of a degraded and ferocious temper than cruelty to animals. Hunting, in many cases, and horse-racing, seems to be liable to censure in this respect. Why should a man, for the sake of showing his skill as a marksman, coolly shoot down a poor animal, which he does not need for food? Why should not the brute that is harming no living thing, be permitted to enjoy the happiness of its physical nature unmolested? "There they are privileged; and he who hurts or harms them there, is guilty of a wrong." Hence all amusements which consist in inflicting pain upon animals such as bull-baiting, cock-fighting, &c., are purely wicked. God never gave us power over animals for such purposes. We can scarcely conceive of a more revolting exhibition of human nature than that which is seen when men assemble to witness the misery which brutes inflict upon each other. Surely nothing can tend more directly to harden men in worse than brutal ferocity.

Remedies against the Cloth Moth.

It is an old custom with some housewives to throw into their drawers, where woollen articles are kept, a number of fir-cones, under the idea that their strong resinous smell might keep away the moth. As the odor of these cones is due to turpentine, it occurred to Reaumur to try the effect of this volatile liquid.—He rubbed one side of a piece of cloth with turpentine, and put some grubs on the other; the next morning they were all dead, having voluntarily abandoned their sheaths. On smearing some paper slightly with the oil, and putting it into a bottle with some grubs, the weakest were immediately killed; the most vigorous struggled violently for two or three hours, quitted their sheaths, and died in convulsions. It was soon evident that the vapor of oil or spirits of turpentine acts as a terrible poison to the moth grubs. Perhaps it may be said that even this remedy is worse than the disease; but as Reaumur justly observes, we keep away from a newly painted room or leave off, a few days, a coat from which stains have been removed by turpentine; why, therefore, can we not once a year keep away for a day or two from rooms that have been impregnated with the smell of turpentine? It is, however, surprising how small a quantity is required.—A small piece of paper or linen just moistened with it, and put into the wardrobe or drawers, for a single day or two or three times a year, is a sufficient preservative against moths. If a small quantity of turpentine be dissolved in spirits of wine, whereby the odor will be almost wholly removed, it will be a sufficient preservative.

There were about 7,000,000 gallons of ardent spirits consumed in Ireland last year.—This would amount to about \$9,000,000.

Contraction and Expansion.

From certain experiments made in America by a gentleman of practical scientific research it appears that it is impossible, in countries having a variation of more than 90 degrees Fahrenheit annual temperature, to construct a coping of stones five feet long in which the joints will be water-tight. Mr. Lyell, proceeding on the calculations arrived at in these experiments, states that if we can suppose a mass of sandstone a mile in thickness to have its temperature raised 200 degrees Fahrenheit, it would lift a superincumbent layer of rock to the height of ten feet. "But suppose a part of the earth's crust 100 miles thick, and equally expansible, the temperature of which was raised 600 or 700 degrees. This might produce an elevation of between 2000 and 3000 feet. The cooling of the same mass again, might afterwards cause the overlying rocks to sink down again, and resume their original position. By such agency we might explain the gradual rise of Scandinavia." Calculations have been made by geologists which appear to account for the elevation of land in Sweden by a rise of only three degrees temperature, (Reaumer,) supposing the stratum to be 140,000 feet thick. Upon a similar supposition, the rise and fall of the waters of the Caspian Sea might be explained, supposing its bed subject to alternate elevations and depression of temperature. Again, if the strata were principally clay, as it is well known that that substance contracts when heated, we might account for the subsidence of land on the supposition that the clay strata were contracting under the influence of heat. No one at all acquainted with the enormous, the, in truth, immeasurable force of attraction and expansion under the influence of caloric, will feel a doubt that the caused assigned is at least adequate to the effects produced. Yet how apparently inappreciable the amount of increase in a heat-expanded stone!

Physiology of Vision.

The desire to conceal from the world any imperfection which wounds our self love, is inherent in the human heart, and leads to all sorts of artifices on the part of those who, by natural conformation, advancing years, or other causes, suffer from imperfection in their vision. Thus it is, that some persons prefer to use an eye-glass, others reading glasses, in lieu of spectacles. Reading glasses, however, are objectionable from their not being firmly fixed in front of the eyes. The motion of the head not being in accordance with that of the hand which holds the glasses, has the effect of trying the eyes exceedingly, in their constant and ineffectual endeavor to adjust themselves to the position of the glasses, inducing unnecessary fatigue to the eyes, and rendering necessary an earlier resort to glasses of a higher power than would have been required had proper spectacles been adopted from the commencement. But a single eye glass is more injurious still; and many young men, who, from shortness of sight, or a singular vanity, have thought proper to use a quizzing glass, as it is termed, have had reason to regret it to the end of their lives. The consequences to perfect vision are serious, for as one eye is made to do more work than the other, an alteration in their relative strength takes place; the result is, that sooner or later, when the person resorts to spectacles, he finds that the lens which suits one eye will not suffice for the other. Watchmakers and other artists, who work with a magnifier, are very subject to this imperfection of vision, and generally find that they see better with one eye than the other. If, instead of always applying the magnifying glass to one eye, they were to use the other eye in turn, a habit which might be easily acquired in early life, although with difficulty afterwards, they would preserve the power of their eyes more equally and the perfection of vision longer; for, by using the eyes alternately, rest and an opportunity of recovering from the fatigue produced by the exertion of looking through the magnifier, would be afforded to each. In like manner, those who indulge in microscopical or astronomical pursuits should learn to use either eye indifferently, instead of always trusting to one, although we almost instinctively apply the right eye to a telescope or microscope.

Effects of Opium.

Unless taken for the relief of disease, and even then administered with the greatest caution, the continued action of opium, as a sensual stimulant, tends rapidly to the wasting of youth, health, strength and beauty. Those who begin its use at twenty may expect to die at thirty years of age; the countenance becomes pallid; the eyes assume a wild brightness, the memory fails, the gait totters, mental exertion and moral courage sink, and a frightful marasmus or atrophy reduces the victim to a ghastly spectacle, who has ceased to live before he has eased to exist. There is no slavery so complete as that of the opium-taker; once habituated to his dose as a factitious stimulant, everything will be endured rather than the privation, and the unhappy being endures all the mortification of a consciousness of his own degraded state, while ready to sell wife and children, body and soul for the continuance of his wretched and transient delight; transient indeed—for at length the utmost effect produced is a temporary suspension of agony; and finally, no dose of the drug will remove or relieve a state of suffering which it is utterly impossible to describe. The pleasurable sensations and imaginative ideas arising at first soon pass away, they become fainter and fainter, and at last entirely give place to horrid dreams and appalling pictures of death: spectres of fearful visage haunt the mind—the light which once seemed to emanate from heaven is converted into the gloom of hell—sleep, balmy sleep, has fled forever—night succeeds day, only to be clothed with never-ending horrors:—incessant sickness, vomiting, diarrhoea, and total cessation of the digestive functions ensue; and death at length brings, with its annihilation of the corporeal structure, the sole relief to the victim of sensual and criminal indulgence.

Singular Prophecy.

Lorenzo Dow, of eccentric memory, was in possession of a German work on the Prophecies, which he valued highly, and frequently made quotations from. Among other remarkable sayings of the author, were these:—

- "I would not be a king, in 1848."
- "I would not be a grave digger in 1849."
- "I would not be a soldier, in 1850."
- "I would be either, in 1851."

The work alluded to was written about 200 years ago. It certainly possesses an interest for the curious. How frail the tenure by which kings held their crown in 1848! Who would like the office of grave digger in 1849, unless he was solely mercenary? How more than presumable is it that the military men of the earth will contribute multitudes in 1850, to fill a wide and quiet grave! And we may hope, at least, in 1851, for the fair harbingers which promise "peace on earth, and good will to men."—[Jour. of Com.

[The above is all fal-de-ral. Kings held their crowns in 1848 by as strong a tenure as they did in 1832. 1849, so far, has been a tolerable good year for grave diggers, and 1850 in all likelihood will be a good year for soldiers, as fighting is surely some part of their business. We will wait for 1851. It is very likely that it may be as eventful as some other years past and gone since this wonderful book, 200 years old, was written.

The Secret of Diligence.

"Seest thou a man diligent in his business?" says Solomon, "he shall stand before kings." We have a striking illustration of this aphorism in the life of Dr. Franklin, who, quoting the sentence himself, adds: "This is true; I have stood in the presence of five kings, and once had the honour of dining with one." All in consequence of his having been "diligent in business" from his earliest years. What a lesson is this for our youth, and for us all!

Mr. Green the celebrated English aeronaut has been drowned. He was found dead on the Flathouse Sands. His balloon was seen floating away to sea, but it was afterwards found on shore uninjured.

Mr. Norris, the great engine builder, contemplates building a large machine shop in St. Louis, Mo.