## Miscellaneous.

SOUND AND FURY IN OUR HOMES.—There are abodes made daily to resound with quarreling and scolding; there are families where mother and children all talk in loud angry tones. Escaping from such "the solitary" may well bless God for his own lot, which when viewed in the warm, loving light of a well-ordered and happy home, sometimes seems almost intolerable. Ye sad, lonely maidens; ye sour, fretful bachelors, when your desolation becomes too great a burden for you to bear, just go for a two days' visit to the family of the "brawling woman," and you will be, for the time, cured. Your silent, lonely room will be as a harbor of refuge for you during many subsequent days. If wives and mothers could but realise what they are doing when they begin the loud-voice scolding system, how quickly they would desist. But there must be authority and punishment in the family; and there is in many cases nothing so good as the rod. Mothers, do the little children swarm about you, and weary you by their wants and their ways? Try for one year the virtue of low, mild tones, decided measures, and in case of intentional naughtiness, the rod; and if at the end of the year you are not satisfied that this is the best course, break the rod and depend for discipline on scolding and loud threats never made good. Children imitate as readily as do monkeys, and if the mother's voice is loud and harsh, their's will probably be the same; if her ways are rough with them, their's will be so with each other, and their homes will be a place from which we shall be only too happy to escape.

NEW FRENCH METHOD OF RENDERING A HORSE QUIET WHILE BEING SHOD.—The head of the animal being covered, so that he cannot perceive what is going on around him, and an assistant having hold of the bridle, another person stands in front, and orders the horse to lift his left hind foot. In reply, the horse most probably begins to kick violently. A smart blow is then administered by the person who has spoken, on his cheeks with each hand—the hands, instead of being removed after the blows, being strongly pressed on the cheeks. A new order is given to lift the foot, and is again disobeyed, but less energetically than at first. The blows on the cheeks are repeated for the second time. At the third repitition, the animal trembles all over; and, resistance being at an end, he is shod as easily as the quietest horse.—*Ex.*

TOO MANY SCHOOL-BOOKS.—The annual report of the agent of the Massachusetts Board of Education, contains many useful hints and suggestions. The following paragraph points out an evil that cannot be too soon or radically abated:—

"Classes are multiplied by studying too many serial books on the same subject. In many cases the prescribed list includes a series of three geographies, three arithmetics and three grammars. I question the wisdom of requiring scholars to pursue the same branch in three different books, to learn the same rules and facts in three different forms of statement, involving waste of time, if not confusion of ideas. Instead of working through the primary, intermediate, common school and high school book, whether geography, grammar or arithmetic, let them early give more time to reading and spelling, to object lessons and natural history, to counting, to rapid additions and the simple exercises in mental arithmetic, till they are prepared to take up one sufficient and substantial text-book on these several topics. If Colburn's Arithmetic, or its equivalent, is in due time thoroughly mastered, I see no necessity for more than one text-book in written arithmetic to insure full preparation in this department for the practical duties of life."

AGGREGATE LABOR OF MANKIND.—Along with the compassion that is excited by a tale of want, there is apt to arise at that time, a feeling of astonishment that such a thing should be. Perhaps, however, the true wonder is that want is not universal. One-half of those who survive the period of childhood, are women, who do not, as a general thing, contribute directly to the production of wealth. Of the men, many are sick, many are old, many are idle, many are wasteful, many are parasites. Those who do not work, and live to the age of threescore years and ten, spend one-third of their lives in bed, one-twentieth at table, one-sixth in recreation. Much of their time is wasted in mistakes; much of what they succeed in producing is swept away by fire and flood. During half the year, nature sleeps; one harvest in five proves a failure. Only a fraction of the earth's surface is capable of cultivation. A large part of the general labor is absorbed in the production of luxuries, in repairing the damages of war, in preparing for future conflicts, in the transportation of produce, and in journeys. Probably not more than one-tenth of the whole amount of human force is expended in earning the world's daily bread. The standing wonder of society, therefore, is not that any should suffer for want but that there should be any who do not.

VIOLIN-PIANOS.—Mr. S. B. Driggs, of New York, has applied the principle on which a violin is made to pianos, through a company with half a million of dollars. The principle is simple and natural. All the extraneous lumber in the body of the piano is dispensed with. The sounding boards are merely two arched planks of thin wood, like the back and front of the violin. The strings are attached to a strong iron frame, completely separated from and independent of the wooden case, thus rendering the instrumental part absolutely free from the effects of weather and climate. Another novelty in the construction of this piano is the abandonment of the harp form in stringing, and the substitution of straight bridges, preserving at the same time the overstrung bass, of which Mr. Driggs is the inventor.—[*Ex.*

A LITTLE LESSON FOR WELL-DISPOSED WIVES.—"Why is it?" asked a lady, "that so many men are anxious to get rid of their wives?" "Because," was the reply, "so few women exert themselves after marriage to make their presence indispensable to the happiness of their husbands!" When husband and wife become thoroughly accustomed to each other—when all the little battery of charms which both played off so skilfully before the wedding-day has been exhausted—too many seem to think that nothing remains but the clanking of the legal charms which bind them to each other. The wife seeks to develop in her affection no new attraction for her husband; and the latter perceiving the *lapsus*, begins to brood over an uncongeniality which does not exist, and to magnify the ills that do exist into unsurpassable objects in the way of his earthly felicity. This is the true secret. The woman who charmed before marriage can charm afterward, if she will, though not of course by the same means. There are a thousand ways, if she will only study them out, in which she can make home so attractive that her husband will unconsciously dislike to absent himself from it, and so she can readily make herself the particular deity of the domestic paradise. This done she may quietly laugh at all attempts to alienate her husband's inclinations; and with those inclinations will always go, in such cases, his active judgment.

REVELATIONS OF THE SPECTRUM ANALYSIS.—A new and interesting discovery in the application of the spectrum analysis has just been made by two independent observers. One is the eminent astronomer, Father Secchi, who reports to the French Academy; the other Mr. Huggins, a Fellow of the Royal Society, who reports to that learned body. Each had been studying the spectrum of the great nebulæ in the sword handle of Orion, and had arrived at precisely the same conclusion with regard to the composition of that wonderful celestial object. It has hitherto been the favorite theory of most astronomers that the faintest nebulæ in the skies could be resolved into distinct stars with telescopes of sufficient power. The fact that most of the nebulæ have been so resolved—and that every new improvement of the telescopic ken adds to their number—has given strength to this opinion. But the delicate test of the spectrum analysis comes in to combat it. All of the recognized stars, whatever their degrees of magnitude, give a peculiar spectrum, a broad colored band. If the star is a brilliant one, the band is bright and clear; if a dim one, the band is faint and shadowy. But, in the case of every star, there is a spectrum uniform in its principal characteristics of breadth and colors. The metallic ingredients disclosed in these spectra are the same as those found to exist in the photosphere of the sun—magnesium, sodium, iron, chromium, and others—thereby establishing, it is claimed, an idetity of composition between that body and the stars. Now, no portion of the great nebulæ of Orion shows such a spectrum as is emitted by known stars, but a vague, characterless one, in which no metals can be distinctly recognized. Instead of a wide continuous band, the spectrum presents only three faint lines at some distance from each other, and is in its general appearance analogous to that of all illuminated gaseous matters. The bright points in the nebulæ, which are easily seen by a 3½ feet achromatic glass, and which have generally been supposed to be enormous stars, surrounded by an infinite number of smaller unresolvable ones, gives exactly the same spectrum as the luminous mist which envelops them. The inference of both observers is, that the entire nebulæ is in a gaseous state; and that the bright discreet points which have passed for stars, are only portions of the nebulous substance undergoing condensation; and that none of it has solidified, so to speak, into suns. According to the old hypothesis, the nebulæ of Orion was placed so far away in the heavens that light was thousands of years coming from it; and the stars that were visible in its midst were of a magnitude incalculably vaster than the ordinary stars of the firmament. If the teachings of the spectrum analysis are true, the nebulæ of Orion may be no further off than Alpha Lyræ, 61 Cygni, or other stars which are supposed to be comparatively near to our solar system.

The spectrum analysis, and its audacious attacks upon the time-honored theories of the schools, will probably give rise to much animated discussion at the summer sessions of the scientific associations both in the Old World and the New.—[*Journal of Commerce.*

MAMMOTH TELEGRAPH CORPORATION—CAPITAL $40,000,000.—We understand, on what we esteem reliable authority, that "The Western Union Telegraph Company," with a capital of twenty-two millions of dollars, and "The American Telegraph Company," with a capital of about two millions of dollars, have agreed on terms consolidating the two companies under one management, at the rate of two and a half of the consolidated stock for every share of the American Company's stock. A half share more of consolidated stock for every share of the American we understand is contingent on the recovery and possession of the Morris line from Washington city, southward. Under these arrangements the wires of the consolidated company will extend not only to every quarter of the country, California and Oregon included, but by connections now being prosecuted with almost every habitable quarter of the globe. The united capitals of the several companies, as contemplated, namely, twenty-two millions of the Western Union, ten millions of the Russian Extension, six millions of the American, a million, probably, for the Washington and New Orleans, and an additional million for some two or three other minor local lines, will aggregate a capital of this one combination of about forty millions of dollars. Few people outside of the companies, though perhaps profiting from the advantages of the use of the lines, have any just idea of their extent, or of the magnitude of the business done over them. Combinations of this character, with capitals so large as to make them monopolies, are powerful engines for good or evil, and their progress to consummation should not pass unnoticed by the press and the public.—[*Phil. Ledger.*

AMERICAN INVENTION.—No people are so full of ingenious little expedients for saving labor and material as are the Americans. The force of circumstances has made the Yankee a master in the art of extemporising little "dodges" in mechanism. Self-help is the great lesson a man receives when he sets foot in a new country, and it is in the invention of helps in metal and wood—helps which need no wages, and which never strike, or tire, or grow sick—that the New Englander excels.

There is nothing out of a pantomime more ludicrously clever than some of the inventions which have of late years been introduced into this country (Great Britain) from the West. The process of making common pails by machinery is so rapid as to baffle the eye, and so comically instantaneous that the stranger who witnesses it for the first time laughs over it as a most excellent practical joke. There is a whizz of revolving wheels, a sputter of light shavings, a procession of little staves chasing one, another in the air, then another whizz of the collected staves, and the bucket is hooped and made. Scarcely less amusing is the little mechanical device for paring apples by machinery. The machinery is the veriest toy—simple and cheap—but it brings off the rind with almost magical delicacy, and while it pares the fruit with an accuracy which seems to bespeak a special sense of touch, it slices the apple and takes out the core at the same time.

Success in such small matters has made the American bold, and has trained him to habits of innovation. So far from dreading novelty, he likes novelty for its own sake, and to secure it, he often reverses our way of doing things. In his steamboats he builds up the cabins tier over tier upon deck, instead of below, and he suffers the engine to work high in air above the many stories of cabins. When he wants to put another story to a great building, he adds the new floor at the bottom, instead of at the top; and be it a bank, hotel, or huge store, he is ready at your command either to lift the entire block or to slide it on its travels to a more eligible location.

In printing newspapers he builds his type upon cylinders instead of laying it upon the slow-working table, and he makes the machine pick up and take off its own printed copies with a regularity and exactness which no number of trained hands can equal. His gunboats are floating martello towers, that can fire fore and aft as readily as from the side. His river steamers are amphibious, and may go anywhere where it is a little damp. He is partial to machinery because it does not grumble, is not impudent, is not extortionate; and hence it comes that his crops are gathered with patent reapers, his linen is washed with wooden hands, his cows are milked by the patent cow-milker, his potatoes as well as his apples are pared by one of the queerest little steel kitchen-maids who has no "followers," and who wastes none of the fruit; and even his chairs, his tables, and his cabinet work in general, come from manufactories as large as our cotton mills, where they are turned out in parts by swift moving machinery.—*Dundee (Scotland) Advertiser.*

THE RELATIVE DECAY OF THE SEXES.—Decay in the male sex is much more rapid than in the female. In the three years ending June 30, 1840, the total number of deaths among males throughout England and Wales, was 518,000, while the deaths among females were only 499,058, giving an excess of male deaths, in three years, of 18,942.

After this statement, it cannot appear surprising that the number of females in any country should notably exceed the number of males. In the present time, in London, there are 996,600 females to 878,000 males, or an excess of 118,700 ladies. Coupled with this fact and obviously depending on it, is the superior longevity of the female sex. Their died throughout England and Wales, between 1st July 1839, and 30th June, 1840, 5,247 females, aged 85, and upwards; whereas, of the same age there died only 3,954 gentlemen, leaving what is called in the city a "balance" in favor of the old ladies of 1,293. Among the females who died 71 had passed the age of 100, but only 40 males. There are only three diseases common to both sexes, which carry off more females than males; they are consumption, cancer and dropsy. The deaths from child birth form but a very small fraction of the mortality of the female sex. The proportion is only 8 per 1,000, of the total mortality, and as half a million children are annually born in England and Wales, and scarcely 300 deaths take place in child birth, so there is only 1 death to 170 confinements.

The researches of the Registrar-General have brought to light some singular results with reference to the proportion in which acute diseases affect the two sexes. In the zymatic tribe the conformity is quite extraordinary. Thus out of 8,194 persons dying of measles in 1840, throughout England and Wales, 4,443 were males, and 4,351 females, a difference of only 92. Again, out of 861 persons dying of scarlet fever in the same year, 9,927 were females, and there were males a difference of only 7.

On the other hand, it appears that of 14,806 dying of pneumonia, 8,177 were males and only 6,629 females. Of 22,687 dying of convulsions, 12,689 were males, and only 10,098 females.

The superior value of female life which this and all other statistical considerations tend to prove, and which insurance officers, by their variation of rates, acknowledge, is not attributable to any difference in the original construction of the body (for man is the of stronger material than woman; but, first, to the smaller demand made on her vital power during the middle period of life; secondly, to the healthier condition and temperature of the female mind; and, thirdly, to the lesser amount of toil and anxiety which, in a highly civilized country, falls to the share of woman.—[*Dr. C. Gregory.*