

THE WEDDING-RING FINGER.

This is the fourth finger on the left hand. Why this particular digit should have received such a token of honor and trust beyond all its congeners, both in pagan and Christian times, has been variously interpreted. The most common explanation is, according to Sir Thomas Browne, "presuming therein that a particular vessel, nerve, vein, or artery, is conferred thereto from the heart," which direct vascular communication Browne shows to be anatomically incorrect. Macrobius gives another reason, which may perhaps satisfy those anatomists who are not satisfied with the above. "Pollex," he says, "or thumb (whose offices and general usefulness are sufficiently indicated from its Latin derivative *pollex*, and from its Greek equivalent *anichier*, which means, 'as good as a hand,') is too busy to be set apart for any such special employment; the next finger to the thumb, being but half protected on that side, besides having other work to do, is also ineligible; the opprobrium attaching to the middle fingers, called *medius*, puts it entirely out of the question; and as the little finger stands exposed, and is more over too puny to enter the lists in such a contest, the spousal honors devolve naturally on *proculus*, the wedding-finger."

In the *British Apollo*, 1788, it is urged that the fourth finger was chosen from its being not only less used than either of the rest, but more capable of preserving a ring from bruises; having this one quality peculiar to itself, that it cannot be extended but in company with some other finger, whereas the rest may be stretched out to their full length and straightness.

**SWEARING REBUKE.**—The learned and pious Desaugliers, being on one occasion in the company of a number of persons of the first rank, a gentleman of the party, who was unhappily addicted to swearing, at every oath he uttered kept asking the doctor's pardon. The doctor bore this levity for some time with great patience; at length he was obliged to silence the swearer with this fine rebuke: "Sir, you have taken some pains to render me ridiculous (if possible) by your pointed apologies; now, sir, I must tell you, if God Almighty does not hear you, I assure you I will never tell him."

The Rev. J. H. K— was, several years since, pastor of a Methodist Episcopal church in Western New York. During his sermon, on a hot summer's Sunday morning, Brother Ansten, one of the official members of the church, fell fast asleep. Mr. K— suddenly paused, and called out: "Brother Ansten, will you please to open the window there a little? *Physicians say it is very unhealthy to sleep in a close room.*" The brother was awakened, and complied.

It is a good thing to have proper nourishment. Particularly for invalids. The Englishman builds up on beef; the Frenchman on delicate made dishes; the German on a generous combination of beer and krait, as we infer from the reply of a good Teuton, who, on being asked how much sauer-kraut he had put up for winter use, replied: "I've not got much; only ten barrels—*joost for sickness.*"

AN INDIANAPOLIS WOMAN recently gave birth to twins during her husband's absence, and just before his return "the neighbors" borrowed two other babies and placed them in bed with the little stranger. When the father was asked to see his children the coverlet was turned down, and, although he must have been immensely surprised, he coolly turned to his wife and asked, "Did any get away?"

Old Dr. B— was a quack, and a very ignorant one. On one occasion he was called by mistake to attend a council of physicians in a critical case. After considerable discussion the opinion was expressed by one that the patient was convalescent. When it came Dr. B—'s turn to speak: "*Convalescent!*" said he; "why that's nothing serious; I have cured *convalescence* in twenty-four hours."

"AH, MR. SIMPKINS, we have not enough chairs for our company," said a gay wife to her frugal husband. "Plenty of chairs, dear, but too much company," replied Mr. Simpkins, with a knowing wink.

SIGNATURE OF THE CROSS.

The mark which persons who are unable to write are required to make instead of their signature, is in the form of a cross; and this practice having formerly been followed by kings and nobles, is constantly referred to as an instance of the deplorable ignorance of ancient times. This signature is not, however, invariably a proof of such ignorance. Anciently, the use of this mark was not confined to illiterate persons; and it is still always used by Roman Catholic bishops as part of their signatures. Among the Saxons, the mark of the cross, as an attestation of the good faith of the person signing, was required to be attached to the signature of those who could not write. In those times, if a man could write, or even read, his knowledge was considered proof presumptive that he was in holy orders. The word *clericus*, or *clerk*, was synonymous with *penman*; and the laity, or people who were not clerks, did not feel any urgent necessity for the use of letters.

The ancient use of the cross was, therefore, universal, alike by those who could and those who could not write; it was, indeed, the symbol of an oath from its holy associations, and generally *the mark*. On this account, Mr. Charles Knight, in his notes to the "Pictorial Shakspeare," explains the expression of "God save the mark," as a form of ejaculation approaching to the character of an oath. This phrase occurs three or more times in the plays of Shakspeare; but hitherto it had been left by the commentators in its original obscurity.

MEMORIZING EXTRAORDINARY.

An English magazine supplies the following information on "Remarkable Memorizers":

Among the instances cited is that of a child of ten—*le jeune Chevier*—who, being examined, made an exposition of Jussieu's botanical system. After dividing it into its three parts of acotyledons, monocotyledons and dicotyledons, the boy subdivided these again into fifteen classes, and each class into families, urging his way undismayed through orbranchoides, rhinanthoides, polemoniacie, and other such like throat strainers, explaining politely when called upon.

Joseph Scaliger gained his renown from learning the "Iliad" and "Odyssey" by heart in three weeks.

Lipsius would recite the histories of Tacitus word for word, giving any one leave to plunge a dagger into his body if he made a mistake.

Francis Suarez could quote the whole of St. Augustine's works—a perfect library—"from the egg to the apple."

Dr. Thomas Fuller could name in order all the signs of the street, from the beginning of Paternoster Row, London, to the Mansion House.

William Lyon, for a bowl of punch, was in the habit of repeating the full contents of the London *Advertiser*, which he had read once only.

An editor and his wife were walking out in the bright moonlight one evening. Like all editors' wives, she was of an exceedingly poetic nature, and said to her mate, "Notice that moon; how bright, and calm, and beautiful!" "Couldn't think of noticing it for any less than the usual rates—a dollar and fifty cents for twelve lines!"

"Why did you not admire my daughter?" said Mrs. P.— to a gentleman after a party which her daughter attended.

"Because," said he, "I really am no judge of painting."

"But surely," rejoined the lady, "you never saw an angel that was not painted."

AT THE breaking up of a dinner party two of the company fell down stairs, the one tumbling to the first landing place, the other rolling to the bottom. It was observed that the first seemed dead drunk. "Yes," said a wag, "but he's not so far gone as the gentleman below."

A MAN called to see Mr. Greeley at Memphis, and asked him if, in his opinion, guano was good to put on potatoes. The good man paused a moment, and then said: "It may do, my son, for those whose appetites are vitiated by rum and tobacco, but I like guano the best."

Make haste slowly.

"GENTLEMEN," said an eminent counsel, there are three points upon which we rely for the defense. In the first place, the kettle was cracked when we borrowed it; in the second place, it was whole when we returned it; and in the third place, we never had it."

Johnny attends school, which will explain the following short dialogue between him and his father: "Johnny, I didn't know you got whipped the other day," said he. "You didn't? Well, if you'd been in my breeches you'd have known it."

AN ENGLISH SHOPKEEPER had, for his virtues, obtained the name of the "little rascal." A stranger asked him why this appellation had been given to him. "To distinguish me from the rest of my trade," quoth he, "who are all great rascals."

THEODORE HOOK once said to a man at whose table a publisher got very tipsy, "You appear to have emptied your wine cellar into your bookseller's!"

A MAN who don't know anything'll tell it the first time he gets a chance.

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