

NASSAU'S CURIOSITIES.

QUEER FRUITS, VEGETABLES, ETC.,
FURNISHED BY DAME NATURE.Ready Made Frames for Houses—A Vegetable
Tooth Brush—Marbles Ready
Grown—Lace from Bark—Vegetable
Sponges—Flowers for Boot Blacking.Nature in her all-enfolding beneficence
here has trees which form roof, corner posts
and studding, only requiring that they be
clothed in, and as if realizing that the
circulating air is best, hints of living under
them just as they are. The giant cecropia sends
out from its base great plank like buttresses,
which form stalls in which to stable cattle.A wide spreading, low branching tree—it
might be an oak except for the curious wheel
like fruit tipping the branches, green and
poison when young, gray and explosive
when ripe—the fruit is a capsule made up of
deeply grooved series of nuts, flat and
round, disposed on edge in a circle, clinging
to a central disk which is hollowed and par-
titioned, when fully ripe the capsule ex-
plodes with a report like a pistol, and the
nutlets scattered far and wide, open and let
the kernels drop—a reasonable way in which
nature provides for the replanting of new
trees. This fruit is called the "sand box,"
because in old pre-blotter times they were
used to hold black iron ore sand, with which
writing was sanded instead of blotted. Even
now by loading the fresh dry capsules with
lead, so as to prevent its explosion, they form
quaint paper weights. This fruit is also
called the monkey's dinner bell, because
where the tree abounds in the tropics mon-
keys abound also, and when they hear the ex-
plosion they hasten to dinner—it's "nuts" for
them.

A VEGETABLE TOOTH BRUSH.

The chaw stick is a vegetable tooth brush.
The negroes here noted for fine white teeth,
and often you will see them with a piece of
chaw stick in the mouth. The plant has a
flexible stem which climbs by tendrils. This
looks like licorice root. This cut into six
inch lengths, the ends chewed, furnish a
fibrous vegetable brush. It contains an ar-
omatic, slightly bitter principle allied to soap
in its effect, hence chewing it, as we say of a
favorite dentifrice, makes the teeth clean,
the mouth sweet, the breath fragrant. The
colored folks at public festivals sell small
beer of various flavors on the street, and with
this chaw stick they give it free.The children have a living fountain of
chewing gum trees. There is in the tropical
grounds a fine example of ficus indica, the fig,
which yields india rubber. The leaves large,
oval, thick, shining and vivid green, the
roots spread over much surface. The chil-
dren scrape off a little bark, the milk flows,
and they let it run over the fingers and
palms. When I saw this done I thought it
would be a long job to get those hands free
from the sticky stuff. But lo! on exposure
to the air a few minutes, rubbing the hands
together meanwhile, the milk became dark
gray and presently peeled off and left the
skin as clean as if washed with soap. A vast
improvement over soap and towels.The boys find ready grown marbles, yellow,
gray and red, hiding from them in the
thickest of goulardia, or Bonduie vines.
Each prickly pod has from one to three
"nokers," or nuts—hard, round and smooth.
Necklaces, brooches and ear rings are also
formed of them.

NATURE'S MANY CONVENIENCES.

To fish without labor I would bruise the
root bark of Jamaica dogwood and throw it
into the water, to be sure of stupefying all
the fish within its influence, without injuring
them as food. This tree is common in Nas-
sau—Piscidia erythrina—and its bark is now
considerably used as an opiate in medicine.Curiously enough, the odor of the bark is
similar to that of opium. For a sponge I
need not go to the sea, but whip against a
stone the ripe fruit of the Egyptian
tulip, which so commonly here reaches its
aquatic life into the sapodilla tree. This
thien freed from seed and peel gives me a
wash rag or vegetable sponge—for both kitchen
or bath. Bottle, bottle, jug and cooking
pans grow on trees—the calabash tree.
Already leavened, but not baked,
hangs in great leaves on the arctocarpus, or
bival fruit tree—a glorious picture it is,
with its flame, deeply cut leaves. So
cannot strawberries grow like currant
clusters on trees, are yellow instead of red
and not instead of sweet. Would you drink
ambrosia, fit for the gods? Send a black Hebe
into a plummy coconut tree to fling down a
nut in the milk. Should I need light
have only to rob the bayberry of its green-
ish, wax, or string together some nuts of the
mambo tree with cotton wicking. A torch of
palm pine need be no larger than a pencil.Would I have lace? A colored woman will
take a gray, smooth branch of the Loggia,
and from the spread peeled bark, moistened
and beaten on a stone, unfold twenty lay-
ers of white filmy lace, as delicate and
elegant as silk. Would you have a downy
pillow? Watch till the round ovate pointed
pods of the silk cotton tree become ripe,
ripe, and while you hold it in your hand
maybe it will quietly open, as it did in mine,
and out gushing comes a brown, silken misty
cloud, welling up and over, falling slowly at
your feet. With a sigh of surprise you wonder
where or how that big basket full of silky
down could have been packed into that little
empty pod in your hand.There is an exquisitely rich, crimson hibis-
cus here, called the changeable rose, ex-
tremely ornamental on lawn and shrubbery,
and yet to "what base uses may we come?"
—the flowers bruised are used to blacken and
polish boots.—Frederick Stearns in Detroit
Free Press.

PLAYS AND ACTORS.

Mr. Morell Mackenzie's son is now playing
with success in a farce at the Strand theatre,
London.Gonerive Ward has brought out a new
play, called "The Londoner," by Edgar
Penberton.The Russian National Opera company, with
twenty principal singers and fifty chorists,
will come to this country next September.W. S. Gilbert, in denying that he intends
to appear on the stage, writes: "I am a suf-
ficiently good actor to know what a very bad
actor I am."Charles Wyndham, who has just been play-
ing an engagement in St. Petersburg, has
been presented by the czar with a double
ruby and diamond ring, while Miss Mary
Moore received from the same personage a
double stroke diamond brooch.Helen Barry has produced a new drama,
called "Held Amunder," at a Prince of Wales
matinee, London. The heroine is an Ameri-
can actress who is courted by a father and
a son.The story is a weird, but the play, by
William Warren, is really wonderful.Fred Gebhard will send Eola, Elliot and
St. Barvier to his California ranch. The ranch
is located sixty-two miles south of San Fran-
cisco, and comprises 3,200 acres, of which
1,500 acres are suited to grazing horses, but
there is a great deal of mountain and craggy
land which will not be available.

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root bark of Jamaica dogwood and throw it
into the water, to be sure of stupefying all
the fish within its influence, without injuring
them as food. This tree is common in Nas-
sau—Piscidia erythrina—and its bark is now
considerably used as an opiate in medicine.Curiously enough, the odor of the bark is
similar to that of opium. For a sponge I
need not go to the sea, but whip against a
stone the ripe fruit of the Egyptian
tulip, which so commonly here reaches its
aquatic life into the sapodilla tree. This
thien freed from seed and peel gives me a
wash rag or vegetable sponge—for both kitchen
or bath. Bottle, bottle, jug and cooking
pans grow on trees—the calabash tree.
Already leavened, but not baked,
hangs in great leaves on the arctocarpus, or
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