

The Church and Bull Fights

Writing of the bull fight as an institution the London 'Daily Chronicle' points out the ludicrous manner in which the English press, having condemned Spain and its bull fights from time immemorial, has now discovered untold graces in the former, and considers that the latter is no more cruel than some forms of British sport. The 'Chronicle' remarks that amongst the other objections to that pastime is this, that it raises the cruellest passions in those who witness it. Says the writer: 'This is so well understood that the Roman Catholic Church, which is usually supposed to be an accessory, has waged a war upon bull fights—a war in which she has been worsted. Popes have issued Bulls against this diversion, but these Papal Bulls have not made themselves heard in the clamor surrounding the bulls in the ring. It is the Papal Bulls that have got no quarter. A national habit becomes ingrained when there was an attempt made to cross the border with the bull fights, and to localise them in the southern towns of France, the outcry was more effectual; and a Pastoral Letter, in which the Bishop of Nismes twenty years ago anathematised bull fights, and all who assisted at them, procured for him not merely praise in his own country, but a letter of thanks from all the Bishops of Spain.'

UNITED STATES—An Imposing Ceremony

A vast crowd, numbering from 15,000 to 20,000 persons, witnessed a novel and imposing ceremony at the Brooklyn Navy Yard on May 27, when a Solemn Mass of Requiem, a Military Mass, was celebrated on the Campus near the marine barracks in a blinding, drenching rain storm. The altar had been erected at the west end of the field with nothing to protect it from the elements. It was beautifully decorated with flowers, and directly behind it was hung an immense American flag.

The Simplon Tunnel

A few weeks ago the Simplon tunnel through the Alps, between Italy and Switzerland, was formally opened by the King of Italy. The tunnel, which is one of the greatest undertakings of modern times, cost over £3,000,000. Over seven years were spent in its construction, which was not an excessive time, considering the many unforeseen difficulties that the engineers had to contend with, and its great length of 12½ miles—two miles more than the distance from Dunedin to Mosgiel, and a mile and three-quarters less than that from Christchurch to Kaiapoi. It reaches from Brig, in Switzerland, to Iselle, in Italy. It is the longest railway tunnel in the world. The St. Gothard tunnel, which also cost £3,000,000, is nine miles and a third in length, and the Mont Cens, which cost £2,500,000, is eight miles long.

Difficulties, unexpected, and at one time regarded with dismay as being well nigh insuperable, accompanied the tedious progress of this gigantic work. The preliminary work was started in August, 1898, and the actual digging began simultaneously on both sides of the mountain, November 13, 1898. In December, 1901, the engineers from the Italian side encountered 120 feet of rotten rock, which kept caving in continually, cost eighteen months' incessant labor to overcome, and retarded the Italian end of the tunnel a year beyond the Swiss end. Then came torrents of moving sand, which swept away the timber supports. Finally hot springs were tapped which flooded the tube and drove out the men for days at a time.

The rock through which the Simplon tunnel passes is mostly granite. The average rate of progress was 20 feet a day from either side, or 40 feet a day in all. The undertaking consists of two parallel single tunnels connected every 300 feet by transverse galleries. The two boring parties met February 24, 1905. The Simplon affords direct communication between Paris and Milan. It will be open for traffic in September. The Swiss and Italian Governments are fortifying their respective ends as a precaution against invasion.

With regard to the recent incursions of the sea on the British coastline, it is interesting to remember that the returns of the Board of Agriculture gave the area of Great Britain in 1867 as 56,964,260 acres, and in 1900 as 56,782,056 acres, making a loss of 182,204 acres in thirty-three years; but it must be borne in mind that these figures include land reclaimed from the sea, and therefore the loss is really greater than the figures given would indicate.

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Domestic

By 'Maureen'

Spring Cleaning.

Furniture becomes dull, not necessarily from wear and tear, but from the action of gases which are in the air at all times. This dulness, as well as scratches, bruises and like spots, may be done away with.

In cleansing the solid wood pieces, mahogany chairs, walnut tables, oak sideboards, or any of the hard woods that have either a shiny, highly polished or dull surface, the best thing to use is crude oil, that should be sparingly put on with a clean cheesecloth rag. When rubbing this into the wood care should be taken to polish or work with the grain, not against it, if all the finger stains and spots are to be removed quickly and the surfaces left clean and free from streaks. Where there is carving or small crevices in the wood, the oil should be worked in with a stiff brush. To make sure there will not be enough left on the wood to rub off on the clothing, and make a spot, a fresh piece of cheesecloth should be used as a polisher to work it into the surface as much as is possible.

As to cleaning upholstery, the task is more difficult. With velours there is little to be done except a brisk brushing with a stiff whisk broom to take out the dust. If there are stains and spots the best way to remove them is with naphtha, benzine or just plain water, soap and ammonia, according to the character of the spoiled places. In cretonne, silks and damasks the colors can be brightened and cleaned with naphtha or benzine, though there are several preparations now sold that make excellent cleansers, for they not only remove spots but take out the dirt as well.

Enamel paint, either on furniture or woodwork, can be cleaned more satisfactorily with whiting than with soap. Wring a piece of flannel as dry as possible from clear, warm water, dip into the whiting and apply. Use the whiting liberally, rinse off well with clean water, and dry with a clean chamois skin.

Brass beds, chandeliers and lacquered goods may be improved wonderfully by taking a soft rag, putting a little sewing machine oil on it and then going over the bed or fixtures. The oil will remove fly specks and leave a lustre. It does not harm the lacquer. Don't be afraid to use a little elbow grease. But never use such things as onions, lemons, benzine, turpentine, gritty soap, acids or lye, which will remove all the lacquer, more or less producing a coat of verdigris if the articles be not cleaned every day or two after the lacquer is removed.

If you have carpet squares or rugs you wish to clean at home, proceed as follows: Stretch and tack the square upon a clean floor, then scour it well with soapsuds. After the scouring it must be thoroughly rinsed to remove all trace of the soap, after which the rug should be left in the same position to dry, and the tacks should not be removed until it is perfectly dry. If it is is gone the rug will not shrink and will lie perfectly flat upon the floor when put down.

A Brussels carpet or rug that has become dingy or faded can be agreeably freshened by preparing dye the desired shade and applying it to the carpet with a paint brush. The carpet should be tacked smoothly to the floor and no furniture allowed on it until thoroughly dry. A second or third dyeing may be necessary to get the desired color.

A cloth wrung out of milk is the best means of taking up the dust and brightening linoleum. Where milk is scarce, use lukewarm water to which has been added half a cupful of kerosene oil or some good furniture polish. Wring the cloth rather dry from this and go over the linoleum after sweeping. An ordinary broom should not be used upon linoleum any more than upon a hardwood floor, because it is too harsh, and in time produces unsightly scratches. Have a soft, long-handled brush, which takes the dust from a polished surface much better than a broom and does not scratch or mar the surface; then finish with a clean cloth wrung out of the oil and water. Most housekeepers scrub oilcloth and linoleum as though they were a bare floor. They are dusty rather than dirty, since everything remains on the top.

Maureen