

*The Honourable Cordwainers' Company*

THE GUIDE TO TRADE.

THE

SHOEMAKER



RE-PRINT EDITION

Printed by

THE HONOURABLE CORDWAINERS' COMPANY

A Non-Profit Educational Corporation

In

The State of Virginia

Additional Books and/or Book List Available from:

Carl Lichte  
Honourable Cordwainers' Company  
4340 Fairfax Avenue  
Dallas, TX 75205

(214) 521-3373

Printed in Dallas, Texas

COPYRIGHT

THE  
GUIDE TO TRADE.

---

THE SHOEMAKER.

---

BY JAMES DEVLIN.

LONDON:  
CHARLES KNIGHT AND CO., LUDGATE STREET.

---

1839.

## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Preface . . . . .	5
<b>I.—BRANCH DIVISIONS OF THE TRADE</b> . . . . .	<b>15</b>
Grindery . . . . .	16
Kit, or Tools . . . . .	17
<b>II.—THE BEGINNINGS AT THE TRADE</b> . . . . .	<b>17</b>
<b>III.—THE MAN'S SHOE</b> . . . . .	<b>26</b>
The Shoe-closer . . . . .	26
Shoe-man . . . . .	29
Lasting . . . . .	30
Sewing . . . . .	32
Rounding-up . . . . .	36
Stitching . . . . .	37
Building and Sewing the Heel . . . . .	38
Taking-off . . . . .	40
<b>IV.—VARIETIES OF THE SHOE</b> . . . . .	<b>44</b>
The Shoe-made Golashe . . . . .	44
Channel Golashe . . . . .	44
Channel Pump . . . . .	48
The Pump . . . . .	48
Cloth Boot . . . . .	54
Stitch-work . . . . .	54
<b>V.—BOOT CLOSING</b> . . . . .	<b>55</b>
The Boot-closer . . . . .	55
Closing the Wellington Boot . . . . .	56
— Top Boot . . . . .	62
— Military Boot . . . . .	72
— Holderness Boot . . . . .	74
Fancy Closing . . . . .	75
Jobbing Closing . . . . .	77

LONDON:

PRINTED BY A. SWETTING, 15, BARTLETT'S BUILDINGS, HOLBORN.



23  
8 17  
42

	PAGE
VI.—MAKING THE MAN'S BOOT . . . . .	84
The Boot-man . . . . .	84
Cork-sole Boot . . . . .	93
Jobbing Making . . . . .	96
VII.—THE WOMAN'S SHOE AND BOOT . . . . .	98
The Shoe Binder . . . . .	98
The Lady's Shoemaker . . . . .	99
The Wood-heel Shoe . . . . .	100
Welt Shoe or Boot . . . . .	100
Pump or single Sole . . . . .	101
Sew-round . . . . .	101
Cork-sole . . . . .	102
Turn-over . . . . .	102
VIII.—INFERIOR WORK . . . . .	104
The Strong Shoe-man . . . . .	105
Cobbler . . . . .	106
Translator, Clobberer, &c. . . . .	107
Clogger . . . . .	111
IX.—KITS OF THE WORKMEN . . . . .	111
Boot-closer's Kit . . . . .	112
Boot-man's Kit . . . . .	113
Woman's-man's Kit . . . . .	114
X.—A FEW PARTING WORDS TO THE JOURNEYMAN	116

## PREFACE.

---

THIS very useful and extensively practised art, no doubt the most numerous in its followers, and the most widely spread of any, has, like all others of an every day nature, been consigned to the usual every day neglect—the progress of the art itself being left to the direction of mere caprice and chance, while the humble workman, in the passive unimportance of his position, scarcely ever made the least attempt either to give certainty to his designs or to claim a higher rank for himself in the opinion of society at large.

If antiquity or the most positive utility might give importance, then the art in question ought not only to receive, but to command, the very first attention; yet, as has been said, it has attracted little or none, and the shoemaker and the shoe he makes are still, at the present period of the world, just as the shoemaker and the shoe have been considered at all former periods—a very common calling, and a very common article. Nor is it to be expected that those who have been habituated to look up to the more lucrative occupations and arts of life, will discover any disposition to seek for the valuable in a trade so generally despised and so ill rewarded. What has been customary will be allowed to continue customary, nor is the loss felt because it has never been even indicated.

This result, however, is much to be regretted; for there is nothing so common that it should be wholly despised, and nothing so apparently valueless but what may be made of interest to some, through the manner in which the same may be explained or enforced, the mind asserting its own proper position in shewing that the efficiency of the fingers is not to be taken as the sole cause, but rather to be regarded as the offspring of the less noted mental operation, which, in every procedure of the lower as well as the higher arts, is still more or less the originating principle. We hastily conclude that there is no mental faculty employed, only because we have never been told to the contrary; and so we go on from generation to generation, like mere passive machines, proceeding through a scarcely ever altered routine of pre-appointed duties. Besides, when we think, we think so loosely or unconsciously that we are hardly aware that there is any thought at all in the case, and the intellect thus grows to be weak and languid, and the learner becomes a mere servile copyist of the teacher; conceiving that there is no necessity to trouble himself any farther, or to adventure into other paths than what have already received the general sanction. Our progress must, therefore, under this system, be necessarily slow and unenergetic—doing the right and the wrong with the same pertinacity; each workman, generally speaking, following in the steps of his predecessors, and feeling no stimulus to strike into a better path.

Lord Brougham, in his excellent Preliminary Discourse to the "Library of Useful Knowledge," regrets, and with much justice, this automaton—or, as he expresses it, this "rote" manner of carrying on our arts and manufactures, without paying any regard to the *reason* of each procedure. "If," he says, speaking of the workman, "he only learns his lesson by

rote, the least change of circumstances puts him out. Be the method ever so general, cases will always arise in which it must be varied in order to apply; and if the workman only knows the rule without knowing the reason, he must be at fault the moment he is required to make any new application of it." And the *Westminster Review*, No. XIV. in its notice of the same Discourse, strengthens the truth of the remark by this additional observation: "His work must be badly done till he has tediously acquired the necessary knowledge; and, after all, he is tied to a routine, since he can only learn by example; incapable of originating or improving, because deficient in fundamental knowledge, and a mere creature of imitation. Hence the persistence every where visible in ancient and imperfect practices; and hence the insurmountable difficulty which is daily felt in introducing even the most obvious and most profitable improvement." It is, then, to supply this want in an extensive and very important branch of our home manufactures that the present work has been undertaken by the writer, himself practically acquainted with the trade he writes upon; though strange it is that a work promising so much immediate and prospective advantage, as well in a private as in a national point of view, should so long have remained unattempted either by the employer or the employed, the interest of both being combined in the undertaking, as the knowledge of every such process as gives a greater fixedness and a more unerring direction to the mind, is as much for the benefit of the one as of the other—teaching the master his limits and the journeyman his duty—the limits of the former in explaining what is right, or is expected to be done, and the duty of the latter in bringing up his performance to these expectations.

I find, however, on reflection, I have just misstated one fact; and, also, that the writer in the *Review*

above quoted, in the observation that "there is absolutely no publication in our language which can teach his art even to a shoemaker," has, in the literal sense of the same, committed the like error. Such a work has been attempted; the author, as I have understood, being at the time he wrote, in the year 1813, a master boot and shoemaker at Bristol. The work was published in London, and sold at 7s. 6d. according to an old bookseller's catalogue. This work after a good deal of research I have lately met with; it has three sheets of copper-plate diagrams; runs to about 140 octavo pages; and is evidently the production of a man who meant well, and, taking into account his provincial situation, of considerable knowledge of the subject he undertook to describe and elucidate. In his preface, he calls his book a "novelty," and further names it as "the first treatise ever attempted on the subject;" comparing the difficulties of the endeavour to those "attending the formation of a new road or path over a boundless desert, or an unfrequented forest;" so many were the obstacles which his labour and diligence had to clear away or surmount.

One passage in the same preface deserves to be transcribed; the first portion of it is especially true, and the second not the less gratifying in shewing the good sense and sound aim of the writer. "It is well known," he says, "to the trade, that it is only by great attention and long experience that a proper degree of knowledge in it is to be obtained; not less than from ten to twelve years being requisite to form a complete workman, and then he will have enough to learn, although nothing more than what he will find himself defective in. Therefore what I expect to effect by this Essay is to draw the attention of the young beginner to the elementary part of the trade, that he may have a clear idea of the connexion and proportion of those parts, which will render more

perfect his judgment of the whole; and will accelerate his learning with greater facility, by his mind being brought to think of those dependencies; so that he will sooner gain that expertness, which is the result of the mind having a clear and mechanical knowledge of the combination of those parts."

In the series of Trade works, published in Paris under the authority of the king, and the superintendance of the Academy Royale, in the year 1767, there is a treatise on the art in question of much pretension, but of little value, either at the period it was written, or the present, when its value is scarcely noticeable. It is in the folio form and has been got up at great expense, with large copper-plate engravings, representing various articles and practices of the trade, though, unfortunately, the major part of the exhibition was more of a "show-room" affair than of any positive utility—the outlines of queer-looking awls, lasts, paste basins, leather aprons, and knives or "tranchets," like so many formidable shearing hooks, and many other needless particulars, doing very well to make a kind of picture, but effecting little or nothing towards the service of the learner.

The "Manuel du Bottier et du Cordonnier," published in the same country in 1831, and one of a similar though a far less expensive series than the foregoing, has likewise acquired no popularity with the trade, it being scarcely ever to be seen in the possession of the French shoemaker; nor appealed to as a book either to verify or to explain principles. The best chapter in it being one on the anatomy of the foot, with a plate of representations, though neither is of much practical use.

This, then, as far as I know, is the entire literature of the art of the shoemaker; the work before mentioned of Mr. Rees, our own English author, unsatisfactory as it is on the whole, being by far the most

deserving. The Germans have nothing of the kind. Indeed, as I have understood, there is a sort of mocking by-word used occasionally by the master boot and shoemakers of Germany to their workmen, which, of itself, is a sufficient proof in this particular. When giving out some difficult job or other piece of work to the journeymen, and being themselves unable to explain the manner in which the same is to be done, they, to get out of the perplexity, are accustomed to have recourse to the witticism of telling the questioner to apply to the "book of the trade," well knowing there is no such book; and thus leaving it to the workman to get on as he can—successfully or otherwise.

But what, after all, it may be said, has literature to do with leather, or with the workers in leather? Why, verily, if we are to consider the neglect that has been here stated, nothing; the connexion between them has as yet been so very meagre. But, how is this?—or why should it be? Is the perfection of the shoe or boot of really less intrinsic worth than the perfection of a cultivated daisy—the manufacture of a diminutive puppy dog—the art of breeding a spotted canary bird—or the proper tying of a cravat?—for I have seen a book written even on the last topic. The fact is, the subject has been uniformly allowed to remain in its somewhat repulsive obscurity; the occupation of the garret has no attraction to the proprietor of the parlour; it is left where it is—uncared about, and unnoticed. The sweep ascends to his task, rattles down the soot about our feet, and cries out at the top of his voice when he has reached the summit of the chimney,—and this is all we know or seek to know about the ingenuity of the process; we will not venture our own eyes into the offensive murkiness, nor soil our own hands by a single experiment—and hence the general preference of the

elegant, often including the positively worthless, before the useful. But why should this be?

Is, let me ask, the principle of the *right and left lasts*, in shoemaking, really valuable, or otherwise? and if valuable, why is it that the great majority of master shoemakers are yet in almost entire ignorance of the true properties of these lasts?—alleging, wherever they cannot complete a fit, an imperfection of foot, though the fault be entirely in their own insufficiency of skill. Or, why again is it that the light shoe or pump of the drawing-room sits often so loosely along the quarters, and in a most inelegant and injurious hollow curved line, where there should be no such curve whatever, making the foot appear thick and clumsy, while, day after day, the shoe becomes more and more ugly?

Is our science of boot-cutting, too, any thing like perfect; or, even such as it is in its highest known state, is the knowledge of the same any thing like sufficiently extended?

In the ladies' branch, also, how much is there to be effected! The handsome feet of our fair countrywomen being in the first instance pressed into a pair of miserable looking leather, stuff, or silk stocks—falsely denominated shoes, and which in a day or two's wear are usually seen writhed into the most offensive contortions; the heel of the shoe in one direction and the heel of the foot in another, while the vamp at the outside toes is scraping along the ground, and the sole, on the inside, is turned twisting up towards the face, as if to make complaint of the at once painful and unsightly deformity.

Old Jonson writes of a lover whose affection for his mistress was such, that he

Would adore the shoe,  
And slipper was left off, and kiss it too—

though, I surmise, it would require a very strong passion indeed to pay this devotion to such an article as above described. In another place he beautifully speaks of one who, as an angel, kept treading the earth :

And where she went the flowers took thickest root,  
As she had sow'd them by her odorous foot.

Very beautiful, truly; but if that foot, that "odorous foot," was burthened with a most ill-contrived shoe, would not the latent germ of the flower be rather repelled into death, than forced out into instant life and observation, as depicted in the verse of the poet?

Upright, and bearing even on each side,  
The rich silk slipper, twisting not awry,  
But keeping still its beauty to the eye.

Yes, let the shoemaker generally accomplish this much for the world of loveliness, and his desert will be great, his reward no doubt in sundry cases sweet and abiding; for he who causes the smile may perchance be smiled on himself, as our own worthy Crispin, it is said, when fitting on the good Princess Ursula's "crimson velvet shoes," had the fair fortune to experience.

This trade, as well as other trades, has its pleasures, its excitements, and its opportunities of advancement; and in its names of renown, where is the fraternity can shew either a longer or a more honourable catalogue? The shrewd, eccentric, and fortunate Lackington—himself originally a shoemaker, and afterwards the most extensive bookseller in London, amassing a very large fortune, and always taking pride in the strange and humble story of its beginning—purposed, as we gather from his *Memoirs*, the

writing of a no less sized volume than a "folio" on this very subject. He did not, however, do so, though there are materials enough—Sir Cloudesly Shovel, the admiral; and Mingh, another admiral; and Fox, the founder of the important sect of Friends; and the com-patriot of Luther, Hans Sachs, the poet of Nuremburgh; and another German, the celebrated Jacob Böhmen; and the learned Baudouin, who wrote himself an historical treatise on the ancient shoe; and a host of Reverends—Thorpe, Huntingdon, Bradburn, Watson, Carey, Morrison; the occult Sibley, and the astrological Partridge; the politicians Hardy and Holcroft—the latter more than politician; and the strong-minded Gifford; and Drew; and William Parsons, the companion of Franklin; and Robert Bloomfield, the poet, and his two brothers, George and Nathaniel—brothers in bardship as well as in blood; and Savage; and Blacket; and Strothers; and Bennet; and Woodhouse; and Elliot; and Gill; and Service; and Johnstone; and Gavin Wilson; and Fremolee, of Brussels; and the now living Whittier, of the American Boston; and many others, together with some score of my own acquaintance;—the list, in short, is almost unending of men who either drew force of character, learning, or inspiration, from the humble workshop of the shoemaker.

Let the shoemaker then think of all this; and the parent who would place his son apprentice to a shoemaker, or the gay lad himself who would willingly become a shoemaker. For the present let him do so, and another time, probably, he may hear more of these men—and of others—and of the trade itself in its historical character,—and of the first-rate employers and workmen it has produced—the social condition of the body—of every thing, in fact, calculated to enlighten and correct, to gratify and inspirit. "There

is no trade," says our friend, Mr. Rees, "so numerous as ours;" and I believe him. We have, therefore, among ourselves the prime ingredient of all power—numbers; and with self-knowledge as another, what may we not effect?—the highest advancement in our art, and, as workmen, the utmost attainable respectability of character.

## THE SHOEMAKER.

---

### I.—BRANCH DIVISIONS OF THE TRADE— THE GRINDERY—TOOLS.

THE trade of the Shoemaker, as now followed in London, and in the principal towns of the United Kingdom, is divided into many branches: namely, the shoe-closer, who is generally a woman, she who prepares the upper-leathers of the shoe; the shoe-man, or the person who attaches the sole part to the upper-leather; the boot-closer, or he whose employment consists in preparing the leg and vamp portions of the boot; the boot-man, or the person who does by the boot as the shoe-man does by the shoe; the jobber, or the better sort of shoe and boot-mender; the cobbler, the well-known acquaintance of most people, and who is his own master; the employing master; the blocker; the clicker; the runner; and the cleaner-up. In the women's or ladies' separate branch,—the binder, a woman; and the women's-man, or maker of women's shoes; though in this latter calling other sub-divisions might be named, as—the sew-round-man; the maker of women's welts; the wood-heel-man; and in their further classification, as inferior and superior workmen,—of the slop-man, and the wages'-man.

This enumeration probably may surprise some who have been accustomed to the country, where they have seen every branch of the general trade carried on in one small concern; and also, in occasional in-

stances, some other manufacturing or retail business connected with the same. The master of the late celebrated Samuel Drew—he who became so famous for his metaphysical inquiries—was a saddler and book-binder as well as a shoemaker, and this was probably the cause why the apprentice became but a bungling workman, though the native quality of his mind was so very acute and powerful.

#### THE GRINDERY.

The materials with which the shoemaker works is generally called *the grindery*,—it is so called at least through England and Scotland, though in Dublin it is called *finding*.

The cause of this technicality is now, I believe, scarcely known to any one in the trade. The relation to whom I was apprenticed, a man of a very active and inquisitive turn of mind, told me its history, which it may be worth while here to relate.

Formerly, before hemp, flax, wax, hairs, or any description of tools, were sold as now in shops set apart to this particular business, the shoemaker, not using the peculiar sort of stone rubber or the emery composition which he now uses to sharpen his knives upon, was in the habit occasionally of taking his knives to be ground (as the French shoemaker does at the present day) to some of the common knife-grinders of the neighbourhood. The knife-grinder having thus the shoemaker for a regular customer, began in time to add to his usual business that of selling hemp, &c.; hence his little shop being termed the *grindery*, every thing he sold became known under this name, and is still continued. Dennis, of George-court, Piccadilly, whose family is yet in business, was the last person, about forty years ago, who was known in London to grind knives. Ullathorne of Leeds, who also has an establishment in the vicinity of Lincoln's

Inn, has the chief trade in the sale of every thing connected with grindery. He has spread his business extensively, to Paris, and all over France, the writer himself having seen his goods sold while at Marseilles, and he has heard they are to be had in Italy, Germany, and in every part of America.

#### THE KIT, OR TOOLS.

The tools of the shoemaker are in their collective form denominated his *kit*. Anciently, and in the old songs of the trade, they were called "St. Hugh's bones," from a now almost forgotten, though somewhat pleasant tradition. In Stow, and in Randle Holme's "Academie of Armorie," 1688, we find this term; as, also, in the still older romance of Crispin and Crispianus; and in two plays, "The Shoemaker is a Gentleman," and the "Shoemaker's Holiday," of the beginning of the seventeenth century.

The kit of the shoemaker is, however, no longer now, as formerly, made up of "bones"—saint or infidel, human or brute,—but principally of good and kindly steel; purchased ready-made at the *grinder's*, or the grindery establishments before spoken of, and kept afterwards (in this country at least and in America) in repair and proper order by the ingenuity and care of the workman himself; though in France, and generally on the continent, much of this is done by another person, to whom such occupation is the sole means of livelihood.

Under the general term *kit* is comprehended the pincers, nippers, hammer, the various descriptions of awls, of setting irons, and many other articles, which in another place or occasionally will be mentioned, when writing of the different branch departments of the trade.

## II.—THE BEGINNINGS AT THE TRADE.

From these particulars we now come to the first beginnings at the trade itself, in so far as the duties of the shoemaker's boy or apprentice are concerned, and can be described.

As in other trades, the boy of the shoemaker is mostly bound for the term of seven years, to learn the "art and mystery" of the business—the term *art* and *mystery*, or *mystery* and *craft*, implying a trade that requires, as the Act of the 5th of Eliz. says, "skill and experience," as distinguished from the operations of the mere labourer, such as digging, &c.

The smaller establishments in the country produce now, as ever, the greater number of beginners to this employment; an employment, moreover, to which the boy himself is in general very partial, the abundance of gossip of the place, and the sage or humorous reputation of the master, being to the young mind inducements of no common order. It is a trade too, as the saying is, that is not likely ever to wear out—and hence another inducement; and also, as the mirthful Firke explains in the old comedy of "The Shoemaker's Holiday," one that need have no fear of foul weather: "Let clownes and ploweboyes, and those that worke in the fieldes, praye for brave dayes, wee worke in a drie shop; what care I if it rains!"

The boy in the first instance is usually sent for a short time on trial; he is then bound, and taking pride in his yet scarcely soiled leathern apron, he is never seen abroad without it, and his journeyings are manifold—taking home work to the customer, fetching various things from the different markets, or, if his master be any thing of a farmer, which is not an unusual circumstance, he may now and then be seen driving the cows to the milking station, or perhaps

riding a stout capering pony on some case of emergency. For some months he does but little work, at least at shoemaking, though he is always asking to be at it; and if determined to be a good shoemaker, he will be at it—either sewing certain stray pieces of leather together, as an exercise with the awl and end, or on a little last of his own manufacture, not near so large as the foot of the smallest infant, endeavouring to make some fairy-like shoe or boot as a gift for his favourite sister, or to shew to his mother on the Sunday.

The shoemaker-boy, in this state, is generally a very happy urchin, acquiring the first beginnings of his art with scarcely any pain; except, occasionally, when his hairs, in consequence of the *points* of his thread not being properly formed, come off in being pulled through the hole made by the awl; and then the hands fly into a perspiration, the cheeks get red, the ears burning, and he knows not what to do, or is almost ready to cry at the terrible mishap, a disaster which at the moment seems irreparable. Nor can any thing but patience ever remedy the evil; he must permit himself to become cool and collected, and by taking more care for the future of the way in which the hemp or flax strands of his thread are to be put together at those very awful places the "points," he thus, and thus only, can conquer the difficulty.

With these things, his threads, points, and the careful and smooth hairing of those threads, he must be soon, and ever after, very particular; it is his first great lesson, and the better he is enabled to effect what is right in the matter, the more perfect will be his other acquirements.

If there be no regular grindery shops in his neighbourhood, which, if in a small hamlet or other similar place, is not likely to be the case, he will have likewise to assist in making the paste, or the wax, two things

which in such a situation have generally to be made at home; though in all the principal towns, these, like every other article in requisition by the shoemaker, are to be had ready-made, and whenever wanted.

A boy, therefore, in this position soon becomes partially useful, either in going errands, assisting as he can, or in making some actual progress at the trade. At first, after having as above-stated learned how to make his threads and use the awl, he commonly gets to closing children's shoes, which he either closes in the *clams*—those two tall nipping pieces of stave-like timber which he holds, pressed hard together between his knees; or on the block—that somewhat half round clump of wood, which he lays along his left thigh, held down by the *stirrup*. But the *lining* of these shoes is more difficult than the closing, though when lined, the total of the work goes under the one denomination of *closing*. If the leather be hard and thick, there is great danger, in the first place, of the breaking out of what is called the *hold*, on putting in the awl; or, again, of the awl itself snapping in two, at the least yielding or shake of the wrist. Practice, however, will soon bring greater confidence, skill, and power, and these most painful results, the breaking of the awl especially, be of less common occurrence.

The *stabbing* is a different thing again; the portions of leather being in this case stitched directly through, either in straight or curved lines as may be necessary. The work to be acted upon is held either in the clams or between the knees, and receives the awl as usual at the right side, piercing through to the left or inner side, from whence the left-hand hair should be at once protruded, the right-hand hair being put in afterwards, and then the stitch smartly drawn in. This is called *blind stabbing*, and when the boy has obtained in it any high degree of proficiency, such as is generally acquired by the apprentice of the boot-closer, is cer-

tainly the most beautiful process in the whole trade; regular, easy, and rapid, and to the eye of the spectator a matter even of marvellous description. Quickly goes in the awl, and as quickly is out again, but not before the hair from the fingers of the left hand has found the passage, without being at all directed by the sight, but literally in the dark; and hence the term *blind stabbing*, the right-hand hair immediately following in the opposite course, the closed thumb and fore-finger of either hand nipping at the moment the hairs from these different directions, and drawing the same as instantly out, at once completing the stitch.

The ability to do this, is alone the acquisition of the British shoemaker; one Brown, who lived in Whitcomb Street, and who worked for the elder Hoby, the earliest probably of our boot-closers, being the first to use himself to it, about sixty or seventy years ago. It was soon followed by others, and now, and for this long time back, there is not a closer in the kingdom but can blind-stab, the art being easily acquired in youth when the sense of touch in the fingers is the most delicate, and thereby the most fit for this kind of operation.

A proficient closer, or closer's boy—for here, in general, the boy is even more expert than the man—will in the space of half an hour stab the four side rows and the two back rows of the counter of a boot, each inch of stitching taking about twenty stitches, and the entire work averaging about thirty inches, three hundred stitches being thus put in in thirty minutes, or fifty every five minutes, each stitch requiring in itself six distinct operations—the skill of sight or distance, the putting in of the awl, and again its withdrawal, the putting in the left-hand hair, and again of the right, and lastly, the careful though rapid drawing, or rather twitching, out of the thread itself. In a piece of work of this description, performed some fifteen or

sixteen years ago by the writer, there were sixty stitches in the inch; the awl it was done with, one of self manufacture, being of such extreme fineness, that on letting it puncture the soft part of the hand, the aperture was so small that not the least sign of blood could be seen to issue therefrom. Indeed, the tailor or the dress-maker can effect nothing like the worker in leather in this sort of stitching, either numerically speaking, or with any thing like the same distinctness and general beauty of appearance, each stitch impressed on the leather being so clear and marked, and free from any of that pluffy matter which either in cloth or the finest linen may be observed hiding the divisions of the stitch, or, in the operations of the worker, oftentimes betraying the needle into palpable irregularities.

The shoemaker's boy is in general very partial to this employment; and if in the country, and his master will but allow him a thread of the silk twist to try with, and he knows how to make his points to the same, many a gratifying piece of stitching he performs, shewing it through the shop, and to all in-comers, and when he goes of an errand putting it in his pocket, that, when meeting with some old play or school-fellow, the pretty achievement may be exhibited, and the fame of the young apprentice thus get spread abroad, as well to his own pleasure, as, probably, to the interest of his master.

Having thus acquired some little knowledge of closing, the boy in the next place may be now trusted further. By this time he will have learned many things: the names of the entire kit; the difference between a shoe and a pump, between those of a channel or goloshe shoe; between the women's and men's work; the greater perfections of the boot; the terms of the whole trade—vamps, quarters, boot-legs, boot-tongues; boot-fronts and backs; counters, tops, top-linings, linings, straps;

in-soles, welts (closing and making), rands, bottom-fillings, out-soles, split-lifts, lifts, top-pieces; the sewing stitch, fore-part stitch, rand stitch; the seat, heel, fore-part, feather, channel; clicking, hammering-stuff, blocking in-soles, pegging, fitting welts, levelling bottoms, rounding-up, jiggering, taking-off, glazing or balling heels, buffing-bottoms, stamping: all these things he will have learned, and, therefore, he may be now set to *block* the in-soles for his master or the elder boys (that is, to draw and fasten them in their wetted state over the last); afterwards he may use himself to the knife in *rounding* the in-sole of some child's shoe; he may be also put to *sew* the same, his master having first drawn and lasted it (that is, drawn and tacked the upper, stuff, leather, or silk, over the last). He will then, for the first time, put on the *hand-leather*, called in France the "*gant royale*," in honour, I suppose, of Prince Crispin; and being thus pleasantly manacled round the left hand with the royal ornament we speak of, but which, nevertheless, is one of very great service, saving the tender skin of the back of the hand from the tear of the coarse sewing thread, and thereby enabling the little shoemaker to pull in the stitch the tighter—with this glove or hand-leather, and his awl and thread, he now sews away; his master, the journeyman in the shop, or the elder apprentices, looking now and then to watch his progress, and give him some needful instruction in moments of difficulty.

This is his first beginning at sewing; and as he will soon get to feel easier at it, his progress will become proportionably the more rapid, and he may now be set to *stitch*.

He must not, however, be intrusted at first in this operation with the square or French awl—this would be a dangerous experiment; the round awl must do, and the child's shoe be taken to again as the article to try upon.

The thread for this purpose is rather finer than that used for sewing, the latter being made of hemp, the other of a soft, yellow dyed, flax. In sewing, the insole was bound to the upper leather, the welt being taken in at the same time at its under edge, where it is cut or fitted in a slanting direction. This welt in its upper part and the out-sole are now to be stitched together, and hence the term *stitching*.

On the outer or grain side of the sole a niche or *channel* is cut to receive the stitch, the welt being first pressed closely up against the sole, when the two, welt and sole, are properly pared down together in a direct square; which operation is called *rounding up*. The *edge*, then, as these portions are now named, is thus ready for stitching, and the boy may begin, though not using his hand-leather as in sewing, the work being of a much lighter nature. The awl is put in as usual on the right or welt side, and carefully forced out at the opposite side into the channel, the hairs immediately following, and the thread on both sides being evenly and firmly drawn in, the stitch gets completed.

In the stitching of children's work, and the commoner sort of women's welted, or, as they are often called, double-sole shoes, the stitch is somewhat long, being hid up in the sole side, as it is also on the welt side, the ink brush being rubbed along it at the back of the welt, and a portion of the welt pressed in and set over it. This hiding is considerably helped also by the largeness of the *feather*, or that edge of the insole which lies immediately under the upper-leather at its junction with the sole, and which when forced severely down by the thin or *pane* end of the hammer, or by the rubbing of the *long stick*, is not easy to be removed in proof of the quality of the stitch.

Stitching with the square awl comes now in due time. All men's shoes are generally stitched with this kind of awl, and in the northern counties of England,

particularly in Liverpool, the women's shoes likewise. The work done with this is the most solid; the stitches being enabled to be put in the closer, and hence both the greater neatness and durability of every article being so stitched.

The awl, besides its square or flattened character on each side, is also more curved than the round or common awl, and therefore the greater danger of *snapping* in being thrust through the leather. The apprentice, no doubt, will break many in his first trials; he must, however, go on; and if the master be wise, he will take as little notice in an angry way of these misfortunes as possible, for thereby the apprentice will feel himself safer, and thus, not having so much terror on his mind, he will make the fewer breaks, and do better in all.

*Stitching*, when performed with ease and certainty, is a handsome operation, and especially when the work is light; the performance, too, is rapid, the adept workman going round the entire welt of a thin-edged shoe or boot in something about an hour, though it is said the well-known "ready Moyle" has stitched many a boot for Hoby, for whom he wrought, even in half this time.

The apprentice having thus superadded the ability to stitch to those of his other acquirements, begins at once to feel himself secure, being in his own estimation (which is nothing the worse) almost a shoemaker already, so he proceeds with brisker and firmer confidence to become so completely. He, therefore, takes to handle the knife with more nerve and certainty, is allowed occasionally to rasp and glass the heels and fore-parts, gets to run the *jigger* and *shoulder-iron* over some old job or inferior sort of shoe; the excited perspiration meanwhile dropping lustily from his forehead, so busy and sanguine he is during these his first attempts to become a finisher. Here, then, I

shall leave him, as it would be needless, in this place, to follow his career any further, though much yet he must do for himself; much also may be done for him. In the following pages, it is to be hoped, he will discover something of this—a sort of outline of the whole trade, containing many most useful instructions; a thorough exposition of the first principles of the art; such, on the whole, if carefully taken to his study and his practice, as may render him fit to go any where, and if friends should arise, or other opportunity offer, as may enable him to become another Hoby—worthy as wealthy, although still the shoemaker.

### III.—THE MAN'S SHOE.

#### SHOE-CLOSER—SHOE-MAN.

In the preceding chapter, in describing the beginnings of the apprentice, a slight notice has been taken of shoe-closing.

In another place it has been said, that this generally is the employment of women. In all large towns it is so, but in smaller towns and other places the wife or daughter of the shoemaker himself is mostly

#### THE SHOE-CLOSER.

This person needs little kit; a slip of board to *fit* or prepare her work upon; a pair of clams; a block; a knife; about three awls, two differently sized *lesing* awls, and one stabbing awl; two seam-sets, or it may be three—one for the stabbed sides; a stirrup; a case of needles—short blunts; and a thimble. And in the grindery, she requires that sort of rather hard twisted silk, formerly known under the name of *barber's twist*, but since it has been brought into such plentiful use by the trade under consideration, this denomination has become nearly obsolete, and the single word *twist*

is now the ready appellation. This is for the closing; while the softer or common sewing silk is taken to *hem* or *whip* on the linings. Some paste, now and then a little flax for the coarse or strong work, and gum-arabic dissolved in ink or water, make up the rest.

The art itself may be soon acquired,—often in six or eight months,—the changes being few and simple; though considerable delicacy of hand is needful to the execution of the better description of work.

The seam closed (by joining the two shoe quarters and the vamp together, and also the back parts of these quarters) is mostly that which is called the *flat-seam*, or *outside-seam*; the inside-seam being either closed on the block in what is named the *split-hold*, or in the clams, with or without a welt (a thin strip in the middle), the awl in this case piercing the leather right through at the edges, the seam being afterwards rubbed out and flattened, and the welt, if there be any, taken off. This, however, is scarcely ever done but on the common or slop shoe; the outside-seam or the stabbed side both looking neater and lying smoother over the foot and against the heel.

The portion, too, which lies at the bottom of the ties or latches, is, in all cases, to be stabbed through, the better to bear against the action of the foot at the joints—this stabbing being necessary as a stay, as it may be seen that the shoe gets often fractured in the wear at this part.

The lining, in all shoes at least but those of the very strongest kind, is entirely the work of the woman, being done with the needle, and elegantly it often is done. The quarters thin and soft, and the lining leather of some lively coloured roan or morocco, the stitches abundant, and lying as they do so round, plump, and regular along the edge of the lining, and with an opposing tint in the colour of the silk of the stitch, the effect

looks well, and is no doubt calculated to please the eye of the purchaser. When the leather is very hard or very strong, the awl must be taken, which consumes much more time, though producing an equivalent in the firmer character of the stitch. In this case a thread of flax is generally used.

After the lining, the *upper* has to be *set*; a matter soon effected; the flat-seam-set, or, if stabbed, the stabbing-side-set, being heated at a candle (though this is not necessary, and might from the danger of the practice be well dispensed with) and a little dissolved gum being rubbed on the seam, the set is immediately to be somewhat forcibly and briskly pressed along the line of stitching, which thus takes an almost instant polish, and being also hardened, the upper becomes ready for shop; that is, to be sent to the *maker*, or shoe-man.

The earnings of the shoe-closer are not what they used to be, through the more extensive consumption of boots, and consequent diminution of shoes. I have known before now, though I speak of the highest paying establishments, of women taking from 22s. to 25s. or 28s. of a Saturday night as their week's wages. Five, six, or sometimes eight or ten shillings may at present be about the weekly amount; oftentimes less, though seldom more. In some establishments, however, where the shoe-closer receives the gentlemen's cloth and other half-boots to do, the receipts possibly may be nearly double, the labour in these boots paying much better than in shoes.

In many of the provincial towns, however, the women only *line* the shoes, or the shoes of the lighter sort; the other or stronger description of shoe being, as before said, done by the awl, and the maker himself. In this case she gets from 1½d. to 2½d. per pair for the lining, according to the quality of the work, or the position or station of the town. In London, the highest

price paid for closing and lining shoes is 10d. and 11d.; while at Northampton, the shoe-closer in some instances gets no more than a half-penny per pair, a fact perhaps scarcely credible, though nevertheless beyond disproof.

The shoes, or uppers, being closed, they are now given to the maker, or

## SHOE-MAN.

This individual is, in general, either a young or an inefficient workman, though cases have been and are still known, in which those who might command the better description of employment have given the preference to the shoe. Sometimes it may be through a sense of its much lighter labour, and at others from habit. Jones, or Bob Jones, as is his better known trade cognomen, continued a shoe-man even after he became a *prize-man*, and had won considerable reputation in the line.

The different procedures of the shoe, or *shoe-bot-toming*, have already been partially indicated in some of the notices of our apprentice.

In the first place, the *stuff*—that is, the combined leather that goes to make the entire of the bottoms—has to be *wetted*; the in-soles are then lasted, and while put to dry either in the sun or before the fire, the rest of the stuff may be prepared,—the welts fitted, the out-soles stretched, skived, and hammered, and the lifts skived, pared, and hammered; the sewing threads also may be *cast-off*.

The in-soles, though not entirely dry, are fit to be *rounded*—that is, the seat or heel part formed, the *feather* portion cut-off—a line, or slight channel, drawn round a little at the back of the feather, and about the same distance from the edge of the seat; the lengths of the stitches *holed*—the point of the awl entering at the mark, or channel, and coming out, either closer or wider, according to the substance of

the upper-leather, and the thickness of the welt, full through the middle of the seat, and upon the slanting edge of the feather. Jones, however, above spoken of, never holes an in-sole; neither does the French workman, leaving the awl to make its proper way at the time of sewing. Holing is, nevertheless, the safer method, and as it is quickly done, in a few minutes, it is as well to be adopted.

The number of stitches holed in an inch varies from two to six, or even more, according to the price paid as wages, or the character of the article, as light or strong; the light shoe or boot requiring much more *work* (as it called) than the strong, the thread used being much thinner—and therefore the necessity (while a superior smoothness and closeness are demanded) for the greater multiplication of the stitches to insure the proper solidity. In the seat, or heel part, the stitch is generally about one-third longer than round the fore-part.

After the in-sole is thus got ready, the next process is the

### *Lasting.*

Before beginning to last, the inside counter, if there is to be any, is to be properly fitted and pasted in between the counter-lining and the quarters. This done, the back part of the upper is taken and put on the heel of the last, tacking it near the back seam with a small tack at about an inch from the bottom. After this the upper-leather is to be drawn in the middle rather gently over the toe (keeping the ties at the time as level with each other as possible), and then temporarily tacked over on the inner sole with one tack. The vamp sides of the upper are then to be lasted, beginning with the pincers at about an inch and a half from the toe, and straining the leather at once both across and forward, taking care that the

force of the strain be observed as drawing from the back top part of the quarter, so that the shoe may sit closely along the sides of the foot; negligence in this particular throwing the quarters loose and open, and which no tightening of the binding can properly remedy. The two tacks, one on each side, thus put in, are distinctively called the *lasting tacks*. The next two are put in at the joints, or fullest part of the last, the upper here being drawn in a more direct line across, though still with a somewhat forward inclination. Between these two latter tacks, and those first put in, the other portions of the vamp are now to be pincered over, and tacked down as may be found requisite, different qualities of leather requiring more or less care or trouble from their greater stiffness or pliancy.

In lasting the waist, the quarters should never be harshly drawn down, but rather *laid in*, and there tacked; which if the upper be properly cut, can always easily be done; but if cut improperly, the workman must help the deficiency as well as he is able, the beauty of the shoe depending much upon the unforced lie of the quarters, having proper fullness below, and catching tightly above.

The front toe tack, and the two lasting tacks, are now to be let loose; and the point of the vamp is to be drawn back upon the last, in order that the two side-linings may be stretched forward, and laid evenly along the toe, and there braced with a stitch or two; after which all notches, fractures, or thicknesses, are to be cut or skived away. The toe is next to be re-lasted—drawn, in the first place, rather hard right over the toe, and then the two lasting tacks are to be put in again; the strain of the pincers forcing the same way as before directed. After this the *pipes*, as they are called, are to be taken from about the toe; the pincers, corner ways, nipping the leather, and

thus breaking these pipes into the smallest possible dimensions, a tack being put in at each necessary spot to hold down the leather, till the toe be completed. To finish this portion of the lasting another procedure is, however, necessary. The toe is to be *braced*, that is, a strong wax-end is brought through the inner-sole, near or a little below the lasting tack on one side, and drawn out at the back of the tacks placed on the edge of the vamp, and, being closely drawn round, is partially fastened to the lasting tack on the other side, when by twisting this tack (all the other tacks between the two lasting tacks being taken out) the brace is made firmer, the upper-leather forced closer against the feather of the inner-sole, and the pipes, thus guarded and held in, wholly disappearing.

The lasting being thus finished, a little thin paste may be rubbed over the upper with a sponge or bit of wet rag, to lay down the roughness occasioned by the working and straining. The shoe is now ready for

### *Sewing.*

In sewing the *inseam* (as it is called) there can be no definitive directions given about the sort of thread necessary to be used. The work sewed, as it is strong or light—cheap, or of the first-paid description, taking all kinds of stitches and threads. It must, therefore, rest with the practice and position of the workman to know which is the best for his purpose: besides, a shoe or boot, when well prepared in the lasting—the upper-leather lying firm up to the feather—needs not that *thickness* of thread which otherwise might be necessary, the proper preparation in the first place being a great step towards insuring the necessary solidity. A country shoemaker, with a thread like a pipe shank, hauling, twitching, and hissing away as he labours on his seat, does not, in all cases, make as sound work as he might seem to do to the

uninitiated spectator; the open and slovenly lie of the upper round the feather hindering the proper tightness of the seam, or sometimes occasioning fractures of the leather in endeavouring to force it as close as it should be.

The awl for sewing should have a good firm keen point; have no sharpness at the sides, and possessing considerable strength of shoulder. In sewing the stirrup is first used, placed over the last on the left knee, and pressed down under the left foot.

The seat, or back part, is first began, putting the awl in from the inner-sole, and sewing to you. In drawing the hairs through, the stitch on the quarter-side, by some workmen, is thrown into a sort of litch, that it may lie sufficiently loose for the awl to pass freely under it, when the heel is to be sewed down in piercing upward through the heel. It is, however, a bad system, and is only to be had recourse to where the in-sole is very soft, or in sewing round the toe, where the greater smallness of the inner portion of the stitch may render the cast necessary to keep the stitch on this side from starting through to the welt.

The seat being sewed round, the *welt* is next to be commenced upon; taking hold of it with the awl just below the skived portion, where sometimes a tool is run that takes a piece out like a groove, for the stitch to fall into.

In sewing, the hand-leather is generally brought into use; it forms a safeguard for the back or tender part of the left hand, being held on by a hole through which the left thumb is passed, and fastened by a few stitches on the inner or palm side of the hand. In all strong work it is of very great service, keeping the thread from chafing the skin, for the thread in being twisted round this on the one side, and round the neck of the awl on the other, is rendered harmless

when applying the necessary force in getting the stitch firmly drawn in. The thread in sewing is always to be kept sufficiently fresh by waxing, never allowing it to become, through haste or heedlessness, rough or loosened in the different strands composing it, for such thread assuredly can never make other than a *slim in seam*.

I have heard of an employer in London who has such a dread of slim in seams, that it is his custom, whenever a fresh hand is employed by him, to have the shoe or boot when sewed brought to him for examination, in order to ascertain the quality of the work. Another master, in a provincial town, has another and safer method of satisfying himself on this head. On putting on a strange workman, it is his way to give no more than the uppers, or, if for a boot, the boot legs, and the inner or insoles, saying they are to come again for the remainder of the stuff, as he is then too busy to look out for such description of leather as is wanted, or that he has none in the house suitable. On this the new journeyman goes to his lodging, and having no suspicion of the trap that is laid for him, proceeds with his work in his accustomed manner. Upon going again to the shop, he is told to return and fetch the shoes, or boots, sewed as they are, which being done, the master carefully examines the quality of the in seam, which he has thus an opportunity of testing, and, as it pleases or displeases him, so he deals with the workman, continuing him in his employ, or discharging him on the finishing of the first job.

Our careful forefathers, too, it appears, from one or two notices I have met with, passed positive laws upon this very subject. No shoe was to be sewed with less than *three stitches* in the inch, or the article on detection was to be forfeited, and the seller mulcted

in a certain fine. In an extract taken from the Burgh Laws of Scotland, referring to the time of Robert Bruce, it is said of the "souters," or shoemakers, that they never scrupled to sew their goods with "false rotten threid, throu the quhilke the shoon are tint before they are half-worne;" a very heavy allegation certainly, but one which I believe, at present, is not to be made against many in the body—except in places where a very low rate of wages is paid, which is probably the cause of the evil.

The sewing of the in seam being finished, it is to be rubbed down on the welt side with the long-stick, or the handle of the pincers; the spare leather on the top is to be next taken away, and then the *bottom levelled*, that is, all the hollow part immediately behind the in seam, or over the bottom, is to be filled up with skivings, or other pieces of leather, these being held down with paste, and afterwards pared off to a uniform evenness, so that the sole may lie and wear well.

The next thing done is to put on the *split-lift*, a piece of in-sole leather coming flush in its full substance to the outside, and pared off to a thin edge on the inner, where it is notched in the centre, so that on its being twisted inwardly round, the outside may take the form of the heel. This piece of leather is to extend about a quarter of an inch over the stitch on the seat, and the two ends to where the welt commences. It is to be pegged on, and then pared or rasped quite level.

The shoe is now fit for the *out-sole*, which, if it be not too dry—having been wetted and hammered before—is to be at once put on; but if so, it may now be slightly wetted and hammered again.

The sole on being about to be put on, is to be pasted on the flesh, or rough side, as is also the surface of the before-mentioned bottom-fillings, to re-

ceive and better hold the sole. To further fasten on the sole for *rounding up* and stitching, a hole has to be made with the peg awl within about an inch and a half from the toe, and a tack driven in; another tack driven in the middle of the widest part of the sole, and two or three tacks through that portion of the sole that covers the seat, or where it may only partly cover it. The sole being tacked in these various places, is to be well forced down, or bedded to the peculiar mould of the last, after which the rounding is to commence.

In preparing or rounding the edges of the sole and the welt for the *stitching*, a good knife is always necessary. It must cut keen and smoothly, and have beside a firm edge, as the knots or blotches in some sorts of leather are very trying; indeed, some sole-leather is altogether harsh, breaking off in patches, and not of the right or *cheesey* description.

In rounding, it was the custom formerly to leave the welt lying down against the upper, and to be directed by the in-seam stitch, so as to round up, which was a very perfect way; but generally the welt is now forced up by the thin end of the long stick, and both welt and sole taken off together. Care, however, in both ways is much demanded, so that sufficient welt and sole be left to bear well with the feather, neither taking off too largely nor too sparingly, which, in either case, is soon discovered when the last is drawn out of the shoe, or when the employer sees it. The rounding, moreover, should always follow the form of the in-sole, and, therefore, that practice avoided which depends upon after taste or management for any particular form of sole of shoe or boot. The workman, at the first, should know what is wanted, or what he intends to do, and should never rely upon any ulterior expedient.

After the sole is properly rounded, the *channel* is

to be cut, running, in the first place, a tool to mark the distance of the same from the edge, though many only use the guiding of the finger for this purpose. The channel is always to have an inward inclination on the sole; and is better to be cut so shallow that the stitches may be partially seen, than so deep as to injure the value of the article to the consumer; a straight down, deep cut channel being one of the most disreputable things in the trade, rubbing off in the wear, and looking very unsightly;—besides, it should be borne in mind, that there can never be any excellence in the manufacture of shoe or boot, where such so called excellence militates against the interests of the wearer. This, to both workman and master, should be always a guiding principle, though in many cases I am sorry to avow it is not so—the *ginger-bread fashion*, as the old workmen would call it, being at present too common.

The shoe is now ready for

### *Stitching.*

As in sewing, no proper description can be given of the sort of thread necessary to this part of the work; every thing, as in the other instance, depending solely on its fitness for the purpose, as strong, middling, or light—cheap or otherwise.

In stitching, the awl used is called the *square awl*: an awl with flattened sides, and formerly called the *French blade*, though, strange to say, in France it is now called the *alène Anglais*, or *English awl*. I believe, however, the fashion came originally from our neighbours, though afterwards Collins, at one time a celebrated awl maker at Liverpool, improved the make of the awl so much, that the stitching awls of his manufacture not only won a British but an European reputation, and are yet sought for by the name *alène Anglais*.

The advantages of this awl are, that it enables a far greater quantity of stitches to be put in than can be done by the round awl, and at the same time it will allow as large a thread to follow it, thus rendering the work closer and firmer.

On beginning to stitch, the thread first enters at the back of the commencement of the welt, through a hole made by a round awl from the sole side, and comes out in a slanting direction on the sole at the joint of the heel; the next stitch is made on the welt itself by the stitching awl, and thence on; the stitches falling on the off side into the channel, and on the near side ranging along the welt, each stitch lying firm and distinct, varying in their number from ten to twenty or more in an inch, according to the substance or the character of the work. One thread will generally stitch to the toe, and another finish.

The *forepart*, as it is called, being now stitched, the channel is to be cleared out with the channel file, and then, having some paste rubbed in it, is closed; after which the two tacks are to be drawn from the toe and the middle of the sole, and the sole to be laid hard and smooth with the hammer and long stick. The next proceeding is

#### *Building, and sewing the Heel.*

In forming the heel, if there be a piece-sole necessary, resulting from the shortness of that part of the sole which goes under the heel, this piece-sole is in the first instance to be attached to the sole by cutting the back part of the sole in a slanting direction from the top edge, and the piece-sole in a manner to dovetail with it, so that, on the heel being sewed down, the heel stitch may pass through both substances, and thus knit them the better. It would be preferable, however, to have no piece-sole; the French generally, and Mr. Hoby, adopt this plan. I am sure, where the

sole-leather is not very strong indeed, and therefore dear, the expense is not such as to justify a continuance in so imperfect a method.

The other pieces put on in building up the heel are called the *lifts*; sometimes there is only one of these, and at others none; the *top-piece* being pasted and tacked down immediately over the back part of the sole, without any intervening lift or substance whatever; though there mostly is, at least, one lift.

On the top-piece being secured in its proper place, the heel is then to be formed, paring it round to the requisite size and fashion; leaving the lower lift to spread still over the seat stitch, and bringing the entire bulk and round of the heel nearly to the shape wanted, so that after it is sewed, the stitches on the further paring, rasping, and scraping of the outside, may receive no damage. Before sewing, the top-piece is to be pegged on in the front and towards the back sides: then, being smoothly rasped off, holes are to be bored near the edge in the necessary direction to, and of the same number as, the seat stitches below, for it is to these that the whole heel is to be definitively fastened.

In sewing down the heel for the average sort of work, a stout awl and a full well-waxed hemp thread are required, for on the firmness of the sewing, helped as this always must be by the proper prior preparation of the whole of the heel stuff, the solidity of the heel depends, as well as its beauty, nothing looking worse than a rift or opening between the divisions of either lift or top-piece.

The heel being sewed, it is next to be hammered down, but not too severely, as this may make the heel start, or open, though by some workmen this is not expected—some of whom I have seen labouring away with their hammers as if the entire perfection of the heel depended on the heavy earnestness of their

striking. The seat-lift is here to be beat closely down upon the quarters, and the marks of the awl cleared away at the back. The shoe is now, as it is said, *in the stitches*, and ready for

### *Taking off.*

The first thing towards *taking off* is, to clear the forepart stitch with the notched bone intended for this purpose, using at the time a bit of soap to make the tool run easy. A small portion of the welt lying before the stitch is then to be struck off, greater or less according to the substance of the shoe. The *edge* may then immediately be *pared*, without what is called *paring*—an old and injurious habit—and which means the taking the pane, or upper part of the hammer, and striking with it along the forepart, so that the leather be marked with countless indentations—these indentations, in place of doing any service, only forcing the edge stitches from their natural places, together with portions of the welt and sole, which, in the wear, may start out and look very ugly. The best workmen, at present, never pane, except occasionally in the heel, or on being compelled by the narrowness of sole, and when it is necessary to make up the edge with a portion of the welt.

After paring, the edge is to be rasped; then with a bit of glass, or the *scraping* or *edge-knife*—a late and useful invention—it is to be made as smooth as possible. This being done, the shoe is fit to be *jiggered*—that is, to take the tool that sets up and polishes the fore-part stitch. In the first instance the jigger is used with a touch of soap rubbed along the stitches; the bits and dust of the leather from the paring, rasping, &c. being before-hand brushed away. Dissolved gum arabic is also used. After jiggering, the stitches are *pricked* or *divided*, this being done

with a sort of awl, straight and square at the point, and held in the right hand, the shoe lying between the knees: with this awl the workman goes on from stitch to stitch all round the fore-part. In jiggering there is usually a slight mark or ridge left on the middle of the edge from that portion of the jigger which, in working, catches on this part, and which, mark, is now to be glassed, or scraped off. The channel may then be slightly filed, from the sole towards the edge, where the leather will turn over a little, and make what is called the *crease*. The tool next used, named the *shoulder*, or *fore-part iron*, has a very delicate hollow cut in it at the extreme angle, to receive this leather so filed over from the channel, and to gather and press it into a hard and beautiful wire, the appearance it ultimately takes. This tool also effects a still better purpose, for through it the edge altogether derives that firm, even, and glossy character it commonly has: while, by the lip that runs along the top of the sole, the channel is hardened and polished. The edge, in all cases, should be kept thoroughly *square* in the rounding, paring, and shouldering,—the term “to shoulder” originating from the practice of pressing upon this tool with the shoulder as it runs on guided by the hand.

After the shouldering the jigger is to be applied again, though now it is to be heated at a candle; the stitch rapidly taking a bright polish, being at the same time much hardened by the pressure and warmth of the iron.

In completing the heel of the shoe, the same squareness should be minded as in the fore-part or edge; the heel of the shoe being generally so low of itself, that to attempt to pare it under, as in a high-heel boot, would be to spoil the true excellence of this portion of the shoe. The French and other foreign workmen

arc in this particular very much behind the workmen of our own country, their taste here being much out of place, and yielding neither delight to the eye nor any assistance to the consumer. The low shoe heel should be always pared square.

Before the paring is completed, the seat or under part of the heel has to be got ready, though this may have been partially effected when the heel was sewed; if so, it has been accomplished by the paring-horn being run behind the seat-lift, and the portion of the leather that there pressed against the quarters being cut off; in the next place, by the back file cleaning out at the root of the stitches, between the quarters and the split-lift; and, lastly, by the knife taking just as much off the lift at this place as leaves enough to make *the seat*, properly so called, or the lower part of the heel. The tool in use to set or harden this part, is called the *seat-iron*, going in with a lip at the back, and pressing a little way up the heel, and cut so at the angle as to leave a flat hollow crease behind. This tool, like the jigger, may throw up a ridge on the round of the heel, which is to be removed by scraping or glassing, as usual.

The heel being now finished as far as the paring, setting, and glassing are concerned, the top-piece is next to be looked to, rasped, glassed, &c. The shoe may then be *coloured*—that is, the edge and heel blacked by the application of a small bit of whale-bone, or other stick, dipped in ink as the colouring matter. When coloured, it is to be dried; when dry, the last is to be withdrawn; the pegs broken and cut out of the inside; and then the edge and heel to be set again, with the irons heated, to give the leather the brightness it is expected to possess.

The shoe is now nearly finished, nothing remaining to be done of any importance; the upper-leather only to be pressed upon the feather and over the fore-part

stitch, to hide the open appearance of the welt at the back; the bottom, or sole, to have the grain taken off, or, as it is named, *buffed*, and then sand-papered, washed, and *stamped*; the sides of the heel polished round with the hot *sleeking-iron*, the top-piece scoured with oxalic acid, wetted, and a little yellow soap next spread over it and cleaned off; when the shoe is fit for the shop.

In giving this description of the various operations employed in making a shoe, I have purposely abstained from saying any thing about the *pair of shoes*, thinking, thereby, I might more clearly keep these various and varying operations before the mind than otherwise I could hope to effect. I must now, therefore, state that the one shoe is seldom made right forward in the way it has been described, but that both shoes are generally proceeded with as nearly as possible together. Both in-soles are put on directly after each other, both in-soles rounded, both uppers lasted, both welts sewed in, both bottoms filled, both prepared after each other for stitching, both stitched in the same order, and the heels put on; in short, in this way of working, there is a considerable saving of time, the quickest, or, as they are called in the trade, the *readiest* hands uniformly taking this method.

A pair of shoes thus proceeded with, and put through all these different operations, can be made, at an average, in a day; 5s. the pair being the journey-men's wages given at two shops in London; other shops give from 4s. 6d. to 3s., or less; while, in the great shoe manufacturing districts, there are shoes made as low as 6½d. the pair, though of what sort may be easily guessed, as four or five pair in a day must be made at this wages, or otherwise the very humblest shoemaker could not exist, reckoning his expenses for grindery, fire, candle, &c.

## IV. VARIETIES OF THE SHOE.

SHOE MADE GOLOSHE—CHANNEL GOLOSHE—CHANNEL PUMP—PUMP—CLOTH-BOOT—STITCH-WORK.

The next article bearing on the shoe department is

## THE SHOE MADE GOLOSHE,

a sort of bastard manufacture, combining something of the shoe, and the heel of the proper goloshe. The same care is, however, not taken with the appearance of the stitches in the welt, these being hid up and blackened in place of being left clear, jiggered, and pricked, as in the shoe. The manner of making the heel will be seen in describing

## THE CHANNEL GOLOSHE.

The goloshe, perhaps it is needless to say, is that sort of shoe worn as a covering for the boot in wet dirty weather. To make it, it is lasted over some old boot, with a last in it, belonging to the person who is to wear the goloshe; or upon a last proportionally larger than the foot, in which case the last has a sort of wooden heel formed with it, in imitation of the boot heel, to serve in making a bed for it when the goloshe is in use.

For quarters to the goloshe, a piece of firm sole-leather is required, bracing round from a little beyond one corner of the heel to the other, and (after the goloshe comes off the last) stitched firmly up the sides with one or two rows of stout threaded stabbing; a slight groove being cut for the meeting ends of the upper-leather to fall into, the outside face of the stabbing shewing itself on these parts of the upper-leather, the sole-leather being inside.

The in-sole of the goloshe, it will be seen, being put on a boot, or over a wooden-heeled last, has to be

bedded into the form of the heel; the in-sole in this place making, strictly speaking, the box for the after reception of the boot-heel of the wearer. In rounding, it is not necessary to feather the in-sole, as in the shoe, nearly all its substance being left at the edge; some splitting the edge that the lower or grain portion may be thrown back in the sewing of the channel, and afterwards forced down to hide the stitch from the inside.

The upper for lasting should be large, so that the leather falls wide on the in-sole, where it is to be levelled and braced down, drawing the lasting tacks as the bracing proceeds; and then whatever vacant space may remain between the two sides of this bracing, is to be filled up as in levelling the bottom of the shoe. Some have a different method: they round and sew as in a shoe, though with much longer stitches, and only taking in the welt from the joints, which besides gives a stouter appearance of edge to the fore-part, the waists being also left lighter, and more yielding to the foot. In lasting over an old boot, a piece of sole is to be put across the toe, and also a raddling *instep-leather* up the foot, so that the goloshe in wearing may lie sufficiently at ease.

The out-sole, being somewhat thinner behind from the joints than forward, is now to be put on. This being firmly rubbed down and settled over the fore-part, and well moulded and secured at the back, the heel is next to be built.

It has before been said, that the quarter-piece of the goloshe is sole-leather, and the difficulty is to fit and properly prepare it to be thoroughly secured to the heel. For this purpose a slight channel, or slit, is usually cut round the seat of this quarter-piece, or, in other words, at a little distance from its under edge, where it is pressed upon by the commencement of the heel. Into this channel the awl in sewing is

first pierced, and thence thrust upward through the heel. As the heel is not very high, the labour of sewing is neither particularly severe nor difficult, though a good thread must be used, be well pulled in, and regularly waxed. When thus sewed, this channel, or slit, is to be closed and panned up tightly to hide the look of the stitches, though, when the goloshe is being taken off or finished, they will be hid still more by the black or heel-ball, then applied. The goloshe is often made with the shoe-seat, perhaps oftener than in the way just described, though the other, as the phrase is, is the more legitimate.

We now return to the sole. In paring the sole for the goloshe, it must be pared rather under the side of the last, and not pared so square as other edges; that portion of the sole that lies up against the upper shelving a little. When the edge is thus prepared, the next business is to make a channel on the top edge of the sole for the reception of the stitch, cutting the grain of the sole just through in two regular lines, and afterwards throwing out the portion between these lines, so that the thread may show itself sufficiently bold on the channel being set up and finished. The sole is now fit for holing, which is accomplished with a straight flat awl, held crosswise, or from the edge, going right through both soles, against the last itself, or the sole of the old boot, whichever the goloshe is being made on.

The goloshe is now to be taken off its mould, and sewed through these holes; the thread for this purpose being very full, rather slightly twisted, and getting plenty of wax to keep it alive and smooth. The sewing is began at the root of the heel, and one thread will reach to the toe. At the toe, and the parts near it, the labour is very irksome, the workman having here to *lead the stitch*; that is, to draw first a portion of the outside half of the thread through to

the inside; or, which is better, to draw a somewhat finer and harder twisted end, having no connexion with the work, partly through—then, making a hole in the middle of this end on the left side, the hair on the same left or inward side of the real sewing thread is to be put through this hole, and there bent into a sharp angle; this being done, the before mentioned unattached or leading end is to be pulled rapidly back, when the hair of the late left-hand sewing thread will be seen to accompany it, which, being now drawn from its noose, the leading end for that stitch being required no more, the other or proper right-hand thread is put in, and then the stitch drawn in as usual. In jobbing, this sort of stitch is also occasionally had recourse to, when it is named *leading the blind*; and a no improper epithet, particularly in the trial it affords of the patience.

After sewing, the slit, if there be one at the edge of the in-sole, is to be closed over the stitches; the last then put in again; the sole well scoured out and sleeked; the finish of the edge forwarded; and the stitches cleaned, squared, and separated, pricking them to make plain the divisions. The heel may then be returned to, pared, glassed, &c.; and lastly, the edges of both heel and fore-part coloured, dried, and polished, and then the goloshe is completed.

Such is the goloshe properly made, though the shoe-made goloshe is at the present the most common. Even when the channel goloshe is attempted, it is very rarely seen with the proper channel stitch, but with a kind of mock stitch set up out of the leather, the hidden sewing-stitch being long and comparatively slight, as may be observed by an examination of the in-soles of this sort of goloshes.

The price paid for making the channel goloshe is, as may be expected, from the comparative rarity of the employ, better than for the shoe; it being almost

as difficult to get a man for this purpose, as to insure, when such a man offers, any regularity of work. A pair of channel goloshes will last, at least, two or three winters. Few if any mere shoe-men, at present, know how to make them, or but very bunglingly; while those boot-men who might do so, can get more money at their own employ, and, consequently, are careless of trying. London, however, has yet one of the old stock of channel-men in the person of Billy Smith, who, some years ago, made a channel prize-boot, for which he received seven guineas, and who is still, as I have heard, able to do honour to the by-gone time. But this is trade history, and not teaching of the trade; so to proceed:

#### THE CHANNEL PUMP

may now be referred to, and only referred to; this kind of shoe—as is said in "*The Art and Mystery of a Cordwainer*"—not being "likely to come into general use again." It was really a shoe, and worn as the common shoe; with the quarter and heel made the same; only differing in the make of the fore, or forward part, in having no welt, and in being stitched right through, from the outside to the inside, as has been described in the goloshe shoe. Sometimes there were two rows of stitching, and it was then called the double channel pump. "They are," says Mr. Rees, the author of the above-mentioned work, "a stiff and heavy wear," consequently they became disused, an event hastened also by the better condition of our public thoroughfares during the last sixty or seventy years, and the general improving taste of the age, assisted, it may be, by the delicate perfection of what we now call

#### THE PUMP.

In making the pump, that is, the shoe with the single sole, or rather the shoe without a welt, the soles being

properly wetted, are taken up, and, the last being placed on one sole, or the pair of soles, if the soles be cut together, the back of the knife is run round, thus marking the outline of the sole. Then by one sole the other is to be formed. This done, the rough softness on the flesh side of the leather is, as usual, to be skived off, the soles properly hammered, and one sole being tacked on the last, it there receives the perfect rounding; and, if the workman be careful, he, strictly speaking, will make this the *perfect rounding*, leaving nothing of that fulness or those jags to be taken away in the finishing, which the slovenly workman so often depends on, though uniformly to his discredit.

The sole having thus received the necessary form, or nearly so, is now untacked, and placed on a smooth board to get a yet more careful paring. The so far finished sole is then tacked upon its fellow sole, the grain of the two soles meeting, when the uncut sole is to be cut exactly to the cut sole, the knife going in at the lower edge of the top sole and striking right through the overplus leather of the under sole. In rounding these soles so far, nothing, however, has been taken from the heel parts, a niche being made at the corner or beginning of the heel, beyond which the leather for the present is to be left in its fulness.

The next operation is beveling the flesh of the sole in the direction of the grain side, leaving less or more edge from the thinness of paper to the stoutest substance that may be required for the wear or the appearance. This bevel is, in general, about a quarter of an inch wide. It is done very even and clean, and at the extreme edge, with not a shade of difference in any spot. At less than the eighth of an inch from this extreme edge, a line is to be run to mark where the point of the awl in holing is to come out, though this width may be extended or even somewhat curtailed according to the thickness or lightness of the upper-

leather and linings. Some cut a sort of channel here, a bad practice, for this weakens the sole where it should be the firmest, and also when the pump is turned this very weakness compels the edge to start from the upper, thus hindering the necessary beauty and closeness at this particular portion of the workmanship.

This mark being made, the next process is to draw a slight perpendicular cut a little behind the top of the bevel; then another slanting cut behind that again, so that the knife may catch the bottom of the perpendicular incision and throw the piece out. The piece being thrown out, the groove it leaves must be well cleaned of all roughnesses or lumps, then a bit of soap rubbed along, and cleaned off with a cloth or any small piece of rag twisted round the thumb.

The sole is now ready for holing: the awl mostly used for this purpose being rather straighter than the awl the pump is to be sewed with; but it never should be thicker. In holing, the number of stitches as usual depend upon the quality of the work, running from five to fifteen in the inch. It is best to hole on a level board, and not on the last, as is done by the in-sole of the shoe or boot.

It is useless to go into any detail of the *lasting*. The sole is tacked on the last, the upper turned grain or inside out, and with a light feeling of hand and very fine tacks (so that the markings of the points shall not greatly blemish the outside of the sole, should any strike through) the thing is completed. The sewing may then be gone through, precisely the same as in the shoe, though generally with a finer thread.

In the rounding and sewing of the *french-edge* pump, some difference, however, is demanded. If the pump is to be frenched throughout, the grain of the sole must be nicely cleaned at the edge, and the beveling all round brought so close that only the point of the awl may be able to find an outlet at it. There

must also be considerably more stitches holed for, and the back of the awl in holing kept down much closer to the bottom of the leather, so that the stitches in the pump being put in, rubbed out, the pump turned, and the stitches rubbed out again, they may *rattle*, as it is called, or distinctly shew themselves to the eye of the spectator.

If the waists of the pump (or one waist only, the inside) is to be frenched, the place is to be marked where the change is to commence, and the necessary difference in rounding and holing from thence to be made.

In sewing for the french-edge, the one hand is always to be drawn out above the other, so that the thread from one side may ride upon that of the other, this manner of drawing in the stitch shewing itself the better when the pump is being finished, and after it is finished.

In making that sort of pump with the varnished upper-leather, which is now so often worn, the seam before turning should be rubbed down harder than common, that thereby, when the pump is turned, the print of the stitches may be sufficiently palpable to save nearly all after-rubbing, which generally frets and otherwise spoils the varnish at its junction with the sole. There are few pump-men that appear as yet to be aware of this, though a very little reflection or observation must prove it to them.

We now return to our common pump. Previous to its being sewed, the spare leather is cut away from the tops of the seam, the last withdrawn, and the pump turned; the last is then put in again, though, if *rights and lefts*, not the same last, but its fellow-one. The object in putting the pump thus on the last, is simply to level and beat out the crumplings the sole has received in the turning, and is merely the employment of a few minutes, and the last is withdrawn once more.

The last has now the in-sole put upon it, generally a good piece of handsomely coloured roan, skived thin up the fore-part near the edge, left sufficiently wide to cover the sewing of the sole, and cut square at the back part to receive the stitches of the seat. This being done, and the inside counter pasted in between the pump quarters, the in-sole also is pasted, and the last and in-sole together forced into the upper, the quarters drawn up behind, the counter-part neatly and firmly hammered and rubbed round, after which the seat may be sewed. The stitches in sewing the seat are considerably longer than those in the fore-part, and are left rather easy at the quarter-side, the better to yield a little when the back part of the sole is, as in the shoe heel, to be sewed down to these stitches. A thin lift is sometimes placed over this seat-seam, between it and the sole back part, to rise and thereby give a little more wear to the heel. When made on the shoe, as was one time the custom, this kind of heel was called the *spring-heel*, there being no top-piece.

In preparing the pump heel to be stitched down, whether or not there be any intervening lift such as has just been referred to, the back sole part is to be re-wet, it having got dry by this time, and drawn over to its utmost extent, and tacked through from the top. The superfluous leather is then to be pared away to the necessary form, and the channel on the surface to be cut; after which the seat may be stitched, the channel closed, the tack in the middle on the top pulled out, the leather beat down, the seat beat up, and the pump is ready to be *taken off*.

This is the usual manner of making the pump-seat; but the French way of withdrawing the last and stitching through the quarters is much the best method. It is at once firmer, closer, and handsomer. Nat Berry, a well-known name in the trade of London, Oxford, and Dublin, as a first-rate pump-man, prac-

tised it some twenty or thirty years ago, and though it is now called the French system, it was then called Nat Berry's! He long kept the secret to himself, proud of his skill, and seemingly determined that nobody should filch from him his reputation. But I must go on.

In taking off the pump, iron tools are at present in common use, though formerly the tools were made of wood. The *shoulder-stick* then in all cases set the edge, but now it is set with the *edge-iron*, and it is much better, readier, presses harder, and gives a more perfect gloss.

In taking off, should the sole in the first instance be carefully prepared, there is little trouble with the knife, at least round the edge, perhaps none. But if not so prepared, the piece of kit called the paring horn, or, as is often used, the sharpened shaft of a large pewter spoon, is run along between the upper and the sole, accompanied by the knife which cuts as it goes; the piece of horn or pewter held in the left hand, and the knife in the right. After this the edge may be delicately touched along with a bit of glass or the edge scraper, and it is then in a condition to be set.

In preparing the seat for the iron, the back-file is run along behind against the upper and seat stitch, the leather then pared square, next rasped, and then glassed or scraped. The seat being set, as well as the edge, both are to be coloured, and, after drying, are set again with the irons heated. The last is then finally withdrawn, the bottom buffed, washed, and stamped; the edge and back part freshly polished up, the upper-leather neatly pressed down against the edge, the quarters put in good appearance by being drawn over the knee between the fingers of both hands, and thus the pump is finished.

The same wages are generally paid by employers for making the pump as are paid by them for the shoe; and

where there is any thing like full employment, much greater earnings can be made. The work is clean, light, and elegant, requiring considerable taste, and a skilled expertness in fingering. For frenching there is an extra price paid; so much for the waists, and so much for frenching all round.

I have thus nearly completed this head of my instruction, there being scarcely any other sort of shoe necessary to be mentioned, though a word may be said of

#### THE CLOTH BOOT,

and but a word; for except in the short leg, there is no difference whatever in the make of this to the shoe. It pays, notwithstanding, a little better, and ought to do so, the article bringing a higher price, and requiring more care in the lasting, in keeping clean, and in having sometimes a *shank-picce*—but of this we shall speak under the regular boot. It is made, too, occasionally in the pump fashion, with the single sole, when it is a handsome thing indeed if well cut and fitted—a matter of skill and difficulty. As a pump, or with the pump sole, it may be considered an article of *style*: and here I am reminded of another high-life article of wear. Formerly in the trade, there was a rather numerous and influential class of journeymen called

#### STITCH-MEN,

but who are at present perhaps wholly extinct. I doubt whether even Mr. Hoby has any *stitch-work* done for him; or, if he has, the number of pairs must be very few. One Speirs, an inmate for several years back (as I have heard) of St. James's parish workhouse, was his last professed *stitch-man*. In many old paintings, and in the figures of much of the tapestry in one of the galleries of the Louvre, of the age of Louis XIV.,

this sort of work may be seen. There is a rand sewed in all round the shoe, heel and fore-part, through which are taken a series of stitches beautifully regular and distinct, and all formed with a flax, or, as it was in those times called, a *spindle* thread, covered with a sort of perfectly white wax then in vogue, and which wax had the name of "machine," a very strange appellation certainly:—*a ha'porth of machine!* how preposterously it sounds in contrast with a thought of some of the stupendous iron achievements of the present age. The *stitch-men* and their *machine* are, however, no more! though, withal, they were a well-fingered class these workmen, and proud workmen too; aye, as I have heard, the very proudest in the trade. And Speirs! he, too, will be soon gone among the rest! the shoemaker who used to wear his gold buckles and his cocked hat. What a pity he should die in a workhouse! but he thought not of that when he might. Poor fellow! I wonder if the younger or present Mr. Hoby would know him; but no doubt he would, and *does*. I have heard such things of him, and it is pleasant to believe them!

#### V. BOOT CLOSING.

THE BOOT-CLOSER—CLOSING THE WELLINGTON—THE TOP-BOOT—THE MILITARY—THE HOLDER-NESS—FANCY CLOSING, &c.—JOBGING CLOSING.

In this department of the trade, as in the foregoing, I shall take the subject in its natural order, and commence with the occupation of

#### THE BOOT-CLOSER.

It is pleasant in beginning to describe the operations of the *boot-closer*, to be aware at the very outset that the ability of our own native workmen in this depart-

with an awl or needle. When the boot-closer has a wife or daughter, she can do this. This hemming, however, should be carefully done, solid, and leaving no thread marks on the outsides. It is bad, likewise, to hem below the joints of the foot, as the fracture of the stitch may occasion a break through the vamp sooner than otherwise might happen. Mr. Rees advises in *lining*, that "the awl enter the lining first, as it can bear the fullest part of the awl better than the upper." Erroneous, certainly; though I believe it was the old custom, but a bad one. The lining awl of the present closer has not any thickness behind, but is as small there as immediately above the point, has no keenness of side, is shortly hooked, and entering on the upper in preference to the lining, the stitches can be taken firmer, securer, and more abundant.

The back is now taken up to stitch on the counter. At present the counter is mostly stabbed across the top, though at one time they were all whipped or closed, nor do I know which system ought to have the preference, having seen counters sewed on with a single flax waxed thread that stood to the very last. Should the backs be thin, I think closing them on not so good, and perhaps the stabbing suits best in general. At all events, a counter stabbed on by a boy or a beginner can be depended upon much better than if he were to attempt whipping or closing it.

After stabbing across the counter, the two back counter rows may next be stabbed. These rows are variously formed, though the straight row looks, I think, the best, and is so in reality. The generality of closers have latterly a habit of marking these rows, and indeed all other sorts of stabbing, with a toothed instrument, called a *pricker*, the pricker being struck down upon the leather in the required direction, and thus marking the holes for the entrance of the awl. This, however, though it may facilitate the learner, is

not altogether a praiseworthy improvement, the sharp edges of the teeth of this tool oftentimes fracturing the leather in a way which the awl never does. Boots through this custom are seen to fly open along the stabbing rows, and, therefore, if prickers be used, too much care cannot be taken that these prickers be clearly cut; much caution should be also exercised in the manner of striking the pricker into the leather so that every tooth may enter and press equally; and hence the necessity for good fitting of the counter and stiffener, a lump coming at any place under the level pressure of the pricker causing great injury to the leather at that particular part, which may occasion the whole stabbing row to break asunder in the lasting of the boot, or in its wearing—a misfortune of no uncommon occurrence.

If the back and front have the top-linings pasted on them, these top-linings may now be whipped, and then, after being pared, the sides of the boot may be closed.

In *closing the sides*, a flax thread is used, light or strong, as the work requires. The back being first taken in the clams, the grain of it outwards, and the top towards the workman. The front is held the same on the other or left side; the back and front receiving between them a strip of light leather called the *welt*. Through these substances the seam is made, the awl passing direct through, the stitch following, and so on till the portion immediately in the *nip* of the clams is finished; the leather is then shifted, another nip taken, and thus on till the *side*, as it is named, is closed. The other side is now to be done in the same way, though putting in the point of the awl on the front, the front part being now taken first in the clams, instead of the back as before. In closing the sides considerable caution is required that the stitches be regularly formed at an even distance

from the edges, nor can there be hardly too many stitches put in should the wages pay, so that the seam be firm, and a handsome welt produced.

When the sides are closed, a block is thrust down the hollow of the leg, on which the seams are to be thoroughly rubbed down with the long-stick, wetting them slightly at the time. The *straps* may next be whipped on; or if not to be whipped, but *let in*, the edges of the top-linings (left for this purpose loose in the closing) are to be joined neatly and firmly with an unwaxed silk thread; or should the top-lining be cut to go all round, and now for the first time to be put on, this sort of top-lining is to be fitted to the width of the leg, the two ends sewed together, and then being drawn over the leg, the under portion is to be whipped to the leg, and the leg is fit for *turning*.

Turning the leg, is bringing the proper or black side of the leather to the outside: it is soon done, and is succeeded by rubbing down the welts before-mentioned, which will now be seen lying loosely on the outside. To cut these welts off close above the stitch, with the utmost evenness, a pretty instrument is used called the *welt-runner*, which striking in at the beginning (holding it in the right hand and the welt in the left) cuts off the welt to the greatest nicety. The welt on being coloured, is now ready for the *Hessian-setter*. This tool still retains the name given it on the first introduction into England of the inside Hessian-seam, a great improvement on the original German or continental outside-seam on this description of boot, the forerunner of our present Wellington.

The welt being coloured and slightly set, the next business is to prepare the straps for stabbing; or if the top-lining had been put on after the sides were closed, to paste this up, make the cuts for the straps, put them in, and prepare them for stabbing. The side-rows on the counter and the vamp (if there are to be any) are at the

same time to be got ready for stabbing, marking these rows with a rule and *marker*, or with the pricker before-mentioned. The rows on the straps extend generally from an inch and a half to two inches, and on the counter and sides from about two inches to two inches and a half, and sometimes to three inches. The stabbing, though a handsome and careful is not a difficult operation, the apprentice generally doing this, and also stabbing round the top-edge of the boot, as is now mostly done. Formerly all boots were *corded*, that is, a well-wrought cord of silk sewed with the needle to the top of the boot-leg, as is still the custom in a few shops, *6d.* or *7d.* being paid for this cording.

On the leg being stabbed, it is fit for *setting*; the welt in all cases being set again, in a solution of gum-arabic and ink or water, and with a light in which to heat the setter. Sometimes, too, the stabbing is set, a custom of *old* date, though at present generally omitted, in order that the stitches may appear clean and pretty looking. This improvement, however, has more of the meretricious character in it, than the commendable; no stabbing keeping its appearance so well when the boot is blacked or in wear as the set-stabbing.

The time taken to close a single Wellington boot, is in general about three hours and a half, or four hours; though in the very common work, a pair may be done in four or five hours; while, again, ten or twelve hours may be consumed in closing a pair, as they are closed for some of the best paying employers. The difference in the prices paid is very great; some boot-closers receiving as much as *7s.* a pair, while others in London may get no more than *2s. 6d.*, and in the sale boot manufacturing districts the payment is still considerably less, as low as *1s. 6d.* and *1s. 4d.* Where the wages are low, the workman in most cases is assisted by the aid of one or two boys, apprentices, or other portions of his family; this branch of the trade

being one in which the lightness of the labour admits this sort of aid. The occupation, however, is very confining, and not such as a growing boy can well bear, either as it affects his health or his spirits. Bent from early morning to latest night over his knees, and seeing nothing but the walls of some house opposite, the closer's boy is pale, ailing, and huddled up in his growth; any thing, in short, but what he should be. It is beside a hard case for the man himself to be compelled to eke out a livelihood at the expense of his humanity. The business, notwithstanding, is well adapted for a boy; and, under favourable circumstances, he is in general very well pleased with it.

The next article is much more difficult, and therefore the assistance of the apprentice is not so much in request; for whilst almost every boot-closer now-a-days can close a Wellington passably well, there are few in comparison perfect at

#### CLOSING THE TOP-BOOT.

As in my opening observations on closing in general, I have said something on our supremacy in this department of our trade, I might now state that our top-boot closing in particular has a still greater superiority over any thing of the kind in any other country. We have had the most, indeed almost the sole, practice, the fashion and the wear being exclusively British. In Hungary, as I have read in some book of travels, when they put up "The English Gentleman" as a sign, he is uniformly dressed in top-boots; so is he written of abroad in all personal descriptions; and so made to strut about in all dramatic entertainments, as if this sort of boot alone were our one great characteristic. Latterly, however, we are falling from our individuality; top-boots have become scarce amongst us, and, consequently, top-boot closers also; the want of greater practice occasioning a want of proficiency. Yet we

have a few good ones remaining, a portion of the old stock, the very best in the world.

In commencing the top-boot, the closer should be also a *clicker*; that is, he should know how the work ought to lie, so that the boot when finished be what it ought to be, and not an offensive assemblage of ill-put-together pieces of spoiled leather. He must therefore be very skilful in his fitting, keeping vamp, counter, and leg, each in its proper place; letting the *tongue* fall in well; remedying every fault that may be in the cutting, the range, the position, the back catch of the counter; in short, if a clicker cannot be a closer, a closer should always understand the business of the clicker; and if he does not, his ignorance may spoil the very best cutting. It will hence be seen that the perfection of the *mere* stitches is not the first essential in completing the leg of the top-boot, but, on the contrary, that it is the fitting—for spoil or neglect this, and all is spoiled; the whole beauty of the boot is gone, be its leather and other workmanship as superior as they may.

The stitching is not, however, to be neglected, for though a secondary, it is an important matter, and if done rotten or pury, may likewise spoil the boot. Besides, the excellence of the stitch is a thing that almost every body can appreciate, and, in consequence, ought to be made to bear examination.

Some closers, in preparing the leather for the stitch or awl, have a custom of marking the width of the seam they intend to take with a tool formed for this purpose, running it along both edges of the leather; but I would never recommend this practice, thinking it in all cases better to permit the awl to catch its natural hold, as the leather may freely bear without constraint or forcing; for a small seam is not an excellence in itself, and is only so when it suits the material. Indeed, a small seam is not only a positive

blemish, but a real harm when forced upon leather which is heavy or thick. The huntsman rushing along through the brambles in the excitement of the chase, or the farmer in his usual field employments, has no need of it; nor are such seams secure enough for the wear and accidents of such diversions or occupations. Let then our closer bear this in mind; and now he may proceed.

In closing, there are three sorts of holds, as they are called; the old-fashioned flat hold, bringing the point of the awl out on the top of the extreme back of the leather on the near or awl side, and the awl point entering again at the same place on the off or left-hand side; the breadth of the seam, as above stated, being always in accordance with the proper bearing of both portions of the leather. This kind of seam is very rarely seen at present; nor has it much to recommend it, excepting its *flatness*, from which the term flat-closing, as now applied to top-boot closing, is derived. *Split-closing* is another sort of hold; the awl striking partially through the edges of the leather on both sides, and the seam thereby, on the stitch being pulled in, rising up full and round. This is the only kind of outside seam the shoemakers of foreign countries can close, and is little practised by ourselves, except in closing the *side-seams* of the top-boot—that is, the two short seams where the vamp and counter are joined together; the chief reason of its use here being, that it enables a better *joint-stitch* to be taken (i. e. the stitch that crosses the side-seam at the top), while the quarter or range is closing. The next is our general hold, a medium between the two just described; the awl side being of the latter, and the off or left-hand side of the former, which, when well done, makes a very excellent seam, at once sufficiently flat and solid.

To close the side-seam, as indeed in all flat-closing,

a block is placed on the left knee, the leather on that, and the stirrup over all, held tight by the under pressure of the foot. When the one side-seam is closed, it is mostly the custom to paste the quarter on the leg, letting the edge of it drop into a slight hollow which, in fitting the leg, has been there cut for its reception; though in very light legs this may be dispensed with, or the piece be cut out very slightly indeed. When both side-seams are closed first, the under portion of the two back sides of the leg are to be carefully made to fit within the counter, and then whipped together with a firm end; after which the vamp and counter are drawn over the bottom of the leg and pasted down, on both sides, into the channel above described. The further closing may then follow, beginning at the turn of the backstrap, which hitherto has been called the counter, and going right round, along the range, and up the tongue, where, at the top, the one thread will be finished, when a fresh thread is to be put in to close down the other side. This operation altogether is called *closing the tongue*: the name coming from that part of the vamp that runs partially up the front of the leg, and having the form of a tongue.

It is, I should suppose, this process of closing the tongue, that the author of the "*Results of Machinery*" had in view in the following passage:—

"There are (he says) boot-closers so skilful that they have reduced their arms to the precision of a machine. They can begin to close a boot with a thread a yard long in each hand, throw out each arm at once to the full extent of the thread and without making a second pull, and at every successive pull contract the arm so as to allow for the diminished length of the thread each time that it passes through the leather.— There are not many workmen (he continues) who can do this; but those whose sense of touch is delicate enough are not blamed by their fellow-workmen for doing that

by one movement of the arm which other men do by two movements."

The reasoning of this is well applied, though the fact itself is in no way so uncommon as might be inferred: the boot-closer, when the work allows, making use of no other threads but those he can draw out at one pull, the "two movements" being seldom required, and hardly ever practised except under peculiar circumstances, where the silk thread gnarls, or where a particular force or care is demanded.

The tongue closed round, the vamp and counter may be turned back a little, and the two side-linings put on, joining them in the first place to the loose under portions of the leg, and then whipping them on as has been described in lining the Wellington-boot vamp. This being done, the turned portion of the leg is now to be righted (re-placed in its proper form), and the well-fitted counter-stiffener put and pasted in, always making it pass from end to end over both the side-seams; after which the different substances covering the heel are to be carefully tightened together, the rows marked for the stabbing, the counter stabbed, and the tongue is then complete for the maker.

The time absorbed in closing a pair of tongues varies from six to eight hours, seven hours being about the medium: 3s. 9d. is the wages at the two first-rate shops in London, while others pay 3s. 6d. and 3s.; no provincial employer hardly ever paying less than this latter sum. From this statement it will be seen that this particular sort of work has upheld its uniformity of price much better than almost every other in the trade, the before alluded to scarcity of competent top-boot closers no doubt conducing to this result. The tongue, however, is only part of the closing, the boot having yet to be finished; but this is very rarely done till after the *boot-man* has attached the bottom or sole part: the *finishing* then commences.

The first thing towards *finishing* the top-boot is to fit the *back-strap*, the name that particular strap of leather has now received, which is to run up the back part of the boot leg: this is to be skived to the necessary substance (as the nature of the work may demand), and pared quite level along the edges. A block is then put down between the loose sides of the leg, and these sides held over this block by the stirrup, the workman taking a single fine flax thread, and whipping these sides together, over and over, with a split-hold, an operation called *whipping-up*. The back-strap is then pasted along this seam, exactly over its centre; moulded upon it, cleared off once more at the sides by a delicate handling of the knife, so that the under-leather of the leg receives no damage; and when the paste has sufficiently dried, the *closing the back-strap* is begun; the thread entering at the turn where the closing of the tongue left off, and the stitch being exactly of the same sort. One thread will close up one side of the back-strap, the seam extending to half an inch or better under the place where the top, when put on, will reach. Some in closing the back-strap put the point of the awl in first on the leg at the right-hand side, and some at the off-side on the back-strap, and also by turning the boot on the knee put the awl in, on both sides, on the back-strap. The difference, however, is of little account, as a good seam can be produced either way; the same also in closing the tongue, either by putting the awl in first on the leg or vamp, though in general I myself would prefer the latter mode, and have seen the best work closed so. The *Prize Tongue* of mine, so well known to the London trade for its remarkable lightness of seam and regularity of stitch, was closed from the vamp; nor could I have closed it so well the other way. It is undoubtedly the best method for the lightest work.

The boot being *backed-up*, the two webbing straps and the front leather button-loop are next to be got on, either whipping these on, or stabbing them through with a single end, so that the stitch appears as a lining stitch; though if they are to be stabbed, it is better these straps and loops were pasted on before the leg be whipped up behind, by which the stabbing may be much easier effected, holding the leg and strap between the knees, in the clams, and stitching in and out along the sides of the webbing, &c. Straps put on this way, especially in very close, hard, or strong leather, possess much firmer power of resistance to the pull of the wearer in getting on a tight boot, than if whipped on; besides, the work itself has a better appearance.

The *top* is now to be got ready; its edges, and its two back sides cut clean and equal; then placing it grain downwards on the face of the board, which must be perfectly free from any thing that might soil the white surface of the leather, the distance or depth of the fold is to be marked off, that is, that part which is to be turned to the inside of the boot where the leg and top are joined. Along this mark the tool called the *top-groove* is to be run, striking out a portion of the flesh side of the leather, so that the top may bend or fold to the necessary thinness at that particular place. Tops at present are mostly closed on the inside, with a welt, and *without turning*: the former methods of closing them inside on the block, and turning them; and of closing them, as a preventive to the injuries of this turning, on the outside, having almost wholly disappeared. To get them ready for closing with the welt, the edges are to be skived down a little, or, by a square-cutting sort of groove tool, to have a bit run out of them, just leaving sufficient room behind the stitch for the seam to fall fittingly into, on its being rubbed down. The welt to be closed in with the top is made from a piece of the top-leather itself, or from

some of the cuttings of the calf part of the boot-leg, if the grain be fair enough in colour, splitting off for this purpose the grain with a keen knife, and then doubling it and pasting it together. When dry, a compass is run along its folded edge, at somewhat more than one-sixteenth part of an inch distance (varying, of course, according to the substance or the nature of the top to be closed), and is then cut through at the mark, the folding part being the welt.

The invention of closing tops without turning has been known about twenty-five years, though there are many workmen in small country places who are yet unacquainted with the method. The grain side of the top is held from you, the fold bent backward, grain to grain—and drawing the two loose ends in an angular position inward, the edges are brought together, grain to grain, the leather at the fold pressed as close as possible; then putting the top in the clams, which nip it along the fold, the welt is placed between the two parts to be operated upon in the stitching, when the seam is gone on with exactly as in closing the Wellington side. Much more care however is requisite: the thread must be tightly made, waxed very delicately, and free from all impediments whatever. The welt, too, must be judiciously taken into the stitch in every spot alike, or the round or double of it, when the top is turned, will shew very ugly: for, in this case, there is no welt-runner used, no after taking off, but, as the hold is true or false, the effect will shew itself as good or bad workmanship. When the top is closed to within about half an inch of the fold or turn, the thread may be cut off, the seam slightly damped, then pressing it out by the force of the fingers, and turning the fold up from its bend, the top is seen at once to have something of its proper appearance, with scarcely any rumpling on the outside. The seam is then rubbed down, and set; the opening at the fold part whipped firmly together,

and the paper pasted within side which is to stiffen the top, and also act as a protective against the oil from the boot-leg penetrating the top, and thereby spoiling the beauty of its colour.

The tops being thus closed, papered, and left to dry, the side leather or *flash-straps* and *back-loops* may then be fitted, skived, folded, and cut to the proper form. Next, the boot is to be set, with a slightly heated iron setter, and, the solution of gum-arabic, as usual, or a touch of the glue-paste now so generally used by the closer for his pasting, as also his setting. Much of the beauty of the work, in the eyes of the employer, depends on good setting, though without the stitching itself be good the best of setting is valueless. The *seam-set* should have no sharpnesses, or jags, or notches, and be flat-cut, or deeper, just as the delicacy or greater strength of the article may render necessary; each separate stitch shewing itself in its clear perfect form, without any sign of force upon it, the sides of the setter catching closely in at their roots, and leaving a glistening impression along each side of the leather: the crease in the middle of the setter, also, leaving the like appearance in the centre of the seam. The stabbing rows, too, on the counter of the top-boot, should always I think be set; both because, as I have said before, all stabbing is the better for being set—and because unset stabbing and a set closing-seam do not perfectly harmonize together. There seems a disagreement between the two, and as it can be easily avoided, the workman ought to evince the proper taste, and set also his stabbing, as at one time every closer so set it.

The boot is now nearly finished—the top having only to be whipped on, and the straps stabbed. The *whipping on the top* is an easy operation. The top is drawn over the calf of the leg, fastened at the back and middle, which latter should be done very carefully,

as a *crooked* top is very offensive to the eye. It makes the seam behind, or welt, to lie awry on the back-strap, which ought to be particularly guarded against; and through neglect of this I have known many a top to be ripped off. The stitch in whipping is taken over and over, with a single twist or coloured silk end; and when the stitches are plentiful and regularly taken, and the seam flatted down, the work looks well.

The top thus whipped on, the fold is turned in, and beat slightly round on the block with the hammer; the side rows marked for the stabbing of the straps; the back loop pasted on; and, after being dried, the stabbing is begun. In general, the back-loop is the first stabbed, taking a clear thread of unwaxed white silk, and stitching round from the corner of the square of the under part of the loop, though in the lower line or row the inside back button-loop is also to be stitched in. This being skived off to an edge at the bottom, fastened there with a slight touch of paste, and pierced through with the stabbing awl, the thread will catch it, and combine both loops together, the one outside, and the other inside. Formerly this loop was whipped on inside below on the leg, but it being found, on the further advancement of the closing art, to throw an ugly bulge to the outside, the present better method was adopted. The side-stabbing rows are soon accomplished; the inside row, if the boots be right and left, taking no leather strap, and the outside receiving the leather or *flash-strap*, falling over the fold at the middle of the outward half of the top.

The top-boot is now completed; and though this latter described portion is only called the *finishing*, yet it is the greater half of the closing. Still the most judgment and care are demanded in the *tongue*, the finishing requiring, particularly in every operation connected with the *top*, merely a tact, confidence, and

cleanliness of handling. The backing-up is no more than a straight seam on a firmly held surface; but in closing the seam of the tongue, when arriving at the curve or turn of the angle, the case is far otherwise. Here, as the two leathers are continually being moved over the block, the real skill is needed, so that the work forms no contractions or puckerings, that the cutting or clicking be kept perfect, and that the maker may last his boot properly. The tongue is thus, as it were, the foundation, and all the remaining labour the superstructure. The one requires the principle, the other parts the grace; and when both are cleverly combined together, the total workmanship in closing the top-boot is no doubt the highest achievement in the trade.

Four shillings and seven-pence are the highest wages paid for finishing, 8s. 4d. being the full price given for the entire closing; but when this is divided, the tongues and finishing are separately paid for as stated. In other shops, 7s. 6d., 7s., 6s. 6d., and 6s., is the sum—3s. for tongues, and 3s. for finishing; this latter being probably the lowest rate.

Some closers without any help can close the tongues and finish a pair in the day; I have done so myself before now for Mr. Hoby and others, though these are not common occurrences; the average time being about a day and a half, or eight hours for the tongues, and ten for the finishing, when done for the better shops.

#### CLOSING THE MILITARY BOOT

differs but little from closing the top-boot; the only difference being in the *cap*, or in the form and stitching of that part that covers the knee. The cap or top is made of the common wax-leather or black calf-skin, and has a hollow cut out behind, less or more, according to the desire of the customer or the taste of the clicker. This is called the *ham*, and if cut three inches in

depth, the workman had 3d. extra allowed him by the head London "Wages Statement" of 1812; if four inches in depth, 6d.; and for every inch above the four, another 3d.; so careful was the workman in those days in guarding his interests.

The top of the leg generally for the military boot has to be pieced or lengthened. After this is done, the inside top-lining is pasted on, and then the cap or outside cover pasted on likewise. The straps too may be put in now or afterwards, their ends being slipped down between slits in the lining, and left just high enough to be caught by the boot-hooks. When the lining and the cap are sufficiently dried, the cap may be stabbed, holding the work in the clams, and stabbing first the under-row, beginning at about half an inch from the edge and leaving off at the like distance on the opposite side, the threads not to be cut off, but left to finish these parts when the cap sides are afterwards closed together. The top row of the cap may next be stabbed together, always taking care that the point of the awl has the proper downward inclination, so that when the waste leather of the lining and the leg is cut away from above the stitch, the stitches receive no damage either in being taken entirely off toward the inside, or in shewing themselves ribbed and ragged to the eye at the cut edge, a fault which has a very rotten and unseemly appearance. Another row of stitching is also customarily placed at about half an inch from the top row, not that this row has any particular utility, but for the mere grace, and it looks very well, as indeed all stabbing does in every situation; this kind of work being at once delicate and rich, remarkably slight in surface, and yet firm and distinct.

The cap and the straps having been stabbed, the sides of the cap are to be pared even with the leg, the sides thrown a little back, the leg and lining joined together, and the joining rubbed down; the cap may be

then closed with the regular outside-seam; after which its unstabbed ends are to be completed. The boot is then set; the spare leather cut away from the top row as above noticed, and the work is ready for the shop. Eleven shillings is the before-mentioned "Wages Statement" for closing a pair of these boots; it is a long unwieldy job, the difficulty of handling this kind of boot being the chief inconvenience to the workman.

The boot as here described, the proper officer's military boot, is, however, but rarely made at present; though in our heavy horse regiments something of the sort is seen, reaching up above the knee, and hollowed out at the ham. The leg however is not the same, but much stiffer, formed of a kind of dressed thick hide leather; and then this boot has no cap whatever, but runs up from bottom to top in the one unornamented length of leather. The lately invented

#### HOLDERNESS OR ENAMEL BOOT

has something, too, of the same general appearance. But it is not for the military, but is used for hunting, and would seem to have displaced, past revival, our own really distinctive English sporting top-boot. It has certainly a comely name and a taking polish to recommend it, being made of the stout varnished leather used by the coachmakers. As it reaches above the knees, it looks thoroughly protective against the dangers of bush and brier.

This boot is closed on the inside, with a short tongue; has no outside counter, nor no backstrap up behind; is cut out at the ham like the military boot, and being top-lined, is stabbed round the top with one row of stabbing, while the under portion of the lining is hemmed on.

Another of our new fashions, though not quite so new as the last, is the boot of varnished vamp, and

morocco coloured leg; which may be classed under the head of

#### FANCY CLOSING.

Some have green legs, some purple, some yellow; some are made of black Spanish, some of white-grain calf, some of a sort of half-and-half mixture; in short, the varieties of this dress-boot are as many as the varieties of taste in the wearer, or as the ingenuity or whim of the bootmaker can invent as a means to outdo or attract.

In closing this kind of boot, the varnish-leather vamp or tongue is first pasted on, and then the counter; then dried—then stabbed—and then the sides, either with or without a welt, are closed up as usual in the clams. The top-lining is put in according to the direction of the employer, either turning it over in a band, or in the form of a welt. The straps are lastly stabbed in, and the leg is finished. It were useless to be more particular in description: the shining of the varnish, the hue of the leg, and the general effect of the contrasted colours, commonly three at least, making little or no difference to the operations of the closer. All that is required of him in this sort of work beyond that in the common Wellington, being no more than greater caution and cleanliness in handling.

In this account of the occupation of the closer, I have yet said nothing of our old cordovan or grain-leather top-boot, with its inside tongue-seam, and inside single back-seam—the boot that fitted our forefathers as close to the leg as a stocking. Nor have I noticed the three-quarter boot as it was called, the sober wear of our old-fashioned English clergy—*welted and stitched* round the top, and though sometimes niced out in the front, scarcely ever carrying the ornament of a tassel. The Hessian boot, likewise, once so well known, I have passed over in silence, nor

is it needed that I should do otherwise, the same manner of procedure which originated and improved with the Hessian, being continued in the Wellington. There was too a military Hessian, and York Hessian—the latter so called from the patronage of the late Duke of York; of these I have not thought it necessary to say any thing, though I may just state here, that, along with the side-welts of the Hessian, the York Hessian combined the tongue of the top-boot, had often a morocco leather leg, and was not unlike our present fancy Wellington above described—excepting that it was worn over a tight pantaloon, instead of under our present loose trowsers. Sometimes, also, these York Hessians had a rich silver or gold fringe binding sewed round the top, and silver or gold tassels hanging from the front. They could be worn in the drawing-room, and were ostensibly a dress article. Morocco leg top-boots, too, have before now been known to pass under the skilled fingers of the closer, the price for closing these being about 12s. Wellingtons, likewise, are now occasionally given to the closer to do, having tongues; and even backstrap Wellingtons he has had to close, called also the Swiss Wellington.

The varieties of boot here enumerated are—with the exception of the Hessian, and another I have said nothing of, the Blucher—all English. Nor without our unrivalled skill as closers could some of them even be ventured on. The master had only to invent, or the wearer order, and the ability was ready to achieve; or if the workman of any other country began, coarsely and rudely, the English boot-closer soon carried the new operation to the highest perfection. Every thing superior in closing is ours: our blind-stabbing—our flat top-boot seam—our inside Hessian or Wellington seam—our double welts; also sundry other matters, some few of which I shall now endeavour to describe as occasion may offer.

## JOBGING CLOSING.

Closing a new vamp in a Wellington, though a job, is not a difficult one; the only care necessary is to make a firm smooth inside-seam at the joining parts of the old and new leathers above the turn of the blocking; the sides being closed in the clams as usual. When the vamp is to be closed in with the heel on, the difficulty in closing up the sides is greater, and more caution and labour are required in the turning. Fresh strapping boots (Wellingtons) it is needless to mention; and fresh topping and strapping top-boots is no more than going through the original operation. Putting new tongues in old jockey or top-boot legs demands considerable skill in the fitting, the old leather having in the wear been drawn oftentimes out of place, and therefore the necessity of shewing a timely care, so that none of the parts in the closing be either unduly stretched or contracted. But putting in a new leg is still more difficult, though this rarely happens to be called for, except when the old leg through accident may be burned to some extent, cut, or has largely broken away at the seams in consequence of bad workmanship, or, as it may be, through an over tightness by the pressure of the heel while the boot was being pulled on.

To put in the new leg, all the old parts are first cut away clear round from seam to seam—tongue, quarters, and under the backstrap; the old leg is then spread out over the new leg on the board, and the new leg cut exactly to it, or as far as its form may be guessed; though from where the double leather of the quarters commence, this portion is to be left a little deeper or lower down than the old leg, so that, on its being skived away to an edge, this edge may slide in between the two leathers of the outer and inner quarters. The new leg then being closed in, the leg is turned back, and

the unattached leather of the inside quarter hemmed along the quarter on the grain side of this new leg, as a means to secure the loose edge of the inner quarter against the downward pressure of the heel, when the boot is being drawn on. There is, too, another method to fasten this same leather—namely, by a running stabbing-stitch with a single thread or end, putting in the stab-awl at the outside close along the root of the quarter-seam, and catching the loose edge on the inside; the thread thence passes through from side to side, and the stitch being drawn in right and left, the edge becomes braced up with it: but the method previously described is the best. Further explanation here would be superfluous; and the ingenuity of the workman himself must also teach him other parts of the process:—how he is to keep his work straight, by tacking or tying it here and there so as to secure the utmost evenness in the lie of the tongue, quarters, and leg, when the job is finished; or how he is to hold his work on his knee, or occasionally between his knees, the better to conduct the operations of his closing-seam. This job is in general well paid for, and so it should be, the whole value of the pair of boots depending upon it; besides, it takes a long time, and requires much calmness and confidence of temper to overcome the difficulties which the operator is continually meeting with.

The same also may be said of many other jobs, as putting a new counter to a backstrap boot, putting a new back to a Wellington, repairing by piecing various sorts of fractures at the turn of the tongues and backstraps of the top-boot; while, again, there are other jobs very easy, such as stabbing on goloshes, padding boots over the tongues, and putting on the common patch either on the vamp or elsewhere. There is one way, however, of mending a break in the vamp, when it shows itself across the joints, which should

be described, as it may be serviceable to many workmen, and also to wearers not above putting on a cobbled boot.

To mend this sort of break, the broken piece must be entirely cut away, and then, laying it on another fresh bit of leather, considerably thicker than the old, the fresh leather is to be marked to the fullest size of the broken piece; and then a channel cut half way through at this mark, and the edges skived off thin from this channel. The piece is to be pasted round these edges, and it being lifted to the inside of the fractured boot, is there to be placed in the hole, the skived and pasted edges sticking up against the grain around the confines of the hole, and then, by putting in a small last, or some other fitting thing, the new piece is to be gently tapped round with the hammer, and thus bedded firmly and smoothly in its place. It is then left to get thoroughly dry; after which, by a neat over and over stabbing stitch with a single end, the two sides, old and new, are to be stitched together. If well done, when rubbed off and touched a little with the soft black-ball, the repair is scarcely noticeable, or, at least, looks fifty times better than the common bungling outside patch.

Another very useful closing job is, to repair the side seam of a Wellington boot when fractured, either through the *tree-ing*, or in the wear, or from some imperfection in the work, or, as it often happens, in the leather. This, as commonly done, is a complete botching affair, with every stitch seen on the outside, and without sufficient solidity. To repair this sort of injury the following is the procedure: the fractured portion is set thoroughly open; the inside halves of the former stitches taken out; the edges, if wanting it, pared: a good firm flax thread is then to be made, and piercing with the awl through the near edge of the leather, at the root of the fracture, the hair from the

inside is drawn up through this hole; and then another hole being made at the opposite side, the second hair is drawn up through this other hole, when both halves of the thread will be seen at the outside. The thread then must be levelled, each half drawn to the same length, and then catching the hairs in either hand, right and left, a small bit of welt is taken up, and the awl making a hole through this, close to its under edge, the two hairs are put through this hole, and the thread drawn in. Next, where the awl was put in first at the edge, it is now to be put in again, through the very same hole, though taking care that it does not injure the thread which before had been drawn into this hole. Then the thread that has been brought through the welt, from the opposite side, is to be drawn downwards through this hole, and the same proceeding being followed on the other side, and with the other thread, and both threads pulled in to their extent, the first or commencing stitch thus gets completed.

After this, at the proper distance of a stitch, the awl makes once more a hole on the near edge, then the same side thread being brought up through this hole, the opposite hole is made, and the other thread likewise brought up. The welt is then pierced again as at the first, the hairs again protruded from side to side, the threads drawn in, and again put down through a fresh opening of the holes at either side, and so on from stitch to stitch, until the entire fracture is bound together, when the welt is rubbed down, cleared off, and set, as usual.

This, it will be perceived, is a very tedious operation; though, if I have been but able clearly enough to explain it, its full advantages must be manifest, for, though the awl is still put in from the outside, without the least bend or force being inflicted upon the boot, yet nothing of the work is there to be seen,

but every stitch lies along the inside exactly as in the original inside seam, closed in the clams. When the side seam of a Wellington is broken under or just above the counter-part, this system of repairing the break is of the utmost importance, and particularly if the boot be new and of any value; all other ways of mending any such break, from the very fact of the proper seam being closed on the inside, and the repairing one on the out, necessarily leading to a very disagreeable contrast. A boot-closer of the name of Miles Sweeny, who, about twenty-five years ago, worked for Hale, in Fleet Street, was the first of whom I heard having done this job in the manner here described, though he told nobody how it was done. I was a boy then, but being told again of it some five or six years after, when I had passed through my apprenticeship, and having many such breaks to mend, I, at last, hit upon the way, and have ever since followed it, shewing the method to any one in the trade who asked me, as I was always of opinion, that every artifice or improvement tending to the greater excellence of any trade, profession, or calling, cannot be too generally known. Besides, what a miserable selfishness it is to act to the contrary! hitting, possibly, by mere chance upon, perhaps, nothing more than some peculiar trick of making a knot, or mixing a colour, and then, because we have done so, closely locking up the secret, and arrogating to ourselves a ridiculous importance.

These secrets, some valuable, others but very so-so, are among shoemakers called *crans*, probably from the word *cranny*, and are looked upon by the would-be knowing in such matters as of great importance, and the key is uniformly turned in the door when any such job is going forward. There are of this order, *gum-mixers*, *gum-stick-cutters*, *stitch colourers*, and I know not what others. I have heard

of a workman, who, in old times, before the jigger came into use, when the stitch on the fore-part was set up with the thumb nail, called latterly in derision "*thumb-nail-work*," was in the habit every Sunday morning of going into the Borough, to cut the thumb nails of the inferior craft at so much per thumb! and doing this Sunday after Sunday; for, as the nail would grow, so a new cutting was always needed, as well for the interest of the operator himself as for the perfection of the work. But the introduction of the jigger spoiled all, scattered the thumb-nail school, and took the whole of the virtue from the *cran*. Hoby had a keen suspicion of these men of crans. Between himself and his men there was at one time an agreement existing, that all sorts of difficult or unusual jobbing should be paid for at the rate of 9*d.* the hour. Jack and Joe Mew, brothers, were his principal jobbing closers, though the first was the better of the two. Once, then, this Jack, doing a certain job, charged for it according, as he said, to his time; but the wary master, to use the phrase of the pugilistic ring, suspecting that "time was not properly called," had another boot purposely fractured a few days after in the very same way as the boot that had been mended, and going himself with it to Mew, he bade him do it while he sat by him, as the customer was then waiting in the shop for his return. Mew, on this, began—looked at the thing as long as he could for mere shame, was as long as possible in twisting and hairing his thread, put in his awl as carefully (slowly) as he could—was particularly cautious (slow) in pulling out his hands—in short, he schemed altogether the affair as well as he might, the wary master still observing and noting all, and, no doubt, smiling at all. But, strange to say, when the job was completed, the workman had lost rather better than half an hour on his former reckoning,

and Hoby, naïvely though good-naturedly pointing to the watch, was not so modest but to remind him of the circumstance; and as he took hold of the boot, and was about to depart, he just stooped down his head a little, and whispering in the ear of his journeyman, bade him to remind in his next Saturday night's bill the *five-pence* he had overpaid him for the other kindred job, placing a very leisurely emphasis on the words *five-pence*.

The Mews were capital at the hidden stitch. Wilson, in the second prize boot he made, had the misfortune, on its being taken off the last, to find that the boot did not draw clear enough—that, in fact, there were prominent blisters lying along both sides of the vamp. Mortified, and not knowing what to do, he went to Joe Mew, the other being then dead, and engaged him to take a small piece out of each side the vamp, and then to sew the parts together as cleverly as he could, so as to hide the imperfection. Mew did the thing well; nobody could see it; the boot drew excellently, there were no blisters! yet where was the renewa? Silence, it is true, was enjoined, and paid for! but fame being to Mew of higher value than faith, the secret somehow or other slipped out; eyes began to pry, and, knowing where to look, the cunning imposition was discovered! Poor Wilson, he could only attempt to laugh, or be angry, as he might, Mew did not care, for he preferred the praise derived from the job to the shame of breaking credit with a friend.

The hidden stitch is thus effected: the parts to be drawn together being made as even at the edges as possible, the awl then first enters from right to left as in the usual split-closing seam, though the hold should be taken as light, or as near the top surface, as can be. The thread being passed through this hole, the job is then turned on the knee longitudinally, the awl

entering on the near side, at the root of the first made hole, and taking the hold alongside the edge, not passing across through either or both the edges, the thread follows on this side. On the other or off side the awl enters, and the thread follows just the same, and when the hold is next to be taken across, the awl, as before, going in at the root of the right-hand hole, the thread from both sides now following, and being drawn in to the necessary tightness, the stitch is completed; and so on through each successive stitch; nothing of the thread shewing on either side, but only the marks of the awl holes, which, when the sewing is finished, are to be rubbed over and covered up as well as they can—but never to the cozenage, and then the betrayal of the friend, as was the case with Mew.

I have been thus particular in some of these descriptions, as a means, if possible, to break up conceit; and, if there be a value in any excellence whatever, that that value should be known, not as a secret for the exclusive gain or pride of the selfish, but for its general usefulness. However valuable, then (speaking under the head in question), a good jobber may be, there cannot, notwithstanding, be any reason that we should not be all good jobbers; therefore, let us all learn, and also all teach each other.

## VI. THE MAN'S BOOT.

### THE BOOT-MAN—THE CORK BOOT—JOBBERING MAKING.

It has already been stated that, after the boot-closer has done with the leg, it is then transferred to another workman to affix the sole portion—that is, it is given to

#### THE BOOT-MAN.

This workman is variously called,—sometimes the *bottomer*, the *footman*, the *maker*, but the *boot-man*

is the most generally received name in the trade. Originally there were no boot-men, as such, or any other branch class; but closing and making of shoes, and closing and making of boots (women's and men's) were severally, when necessary, passed through the hands of one person—the *shoemaker*; and this common appellative is still given generally to all persons connected with the manufacture. Indeed some of our branches, as at present carried on, can be traced up to a very modern period; for instance, the boot-closing, and certain branches in the women's division of the trade. As we refine, we divide and subdivide: the hand engaged in the coarser branch becomes incapable of delicate operations; while, again, the workman in the latter soon begins to lack the necessary vigour for plain, rough workmanship. Besides, there is also, under proper encouragement, a natural tendency to subdivide and separate the different parts of an art. The richer the purchaser is, the higher ability he can exact, so, as a result, different grades of workmen come in requisition—the best for those that pay the best, and the inferior for those of more confined resources. Boots, then, being a much more expensive wear than shoes, and top-boots the most expensive of these, when the closing of this description of boot became the separate occupation of a workman, the individual who had afterwards to attach the foot made it a separate employment, the highest degree of skill being confined to the top-boot. At this period the boot-men, like the closers, were a very small minority in the trade, perhaps—speaking of London—not greatly out-numbering the closers. There were, however, necessarily many more aspirants to the one branch than the other; for whilst all the sanguine or more skilful shoemen had the desire, or were making the attempt, to become boot-men, the number of closers was scarcely if ever increased but

by means of a direct apprenticeship. At first, it is true, this was not the case, as all the early closers had originally been acquainted with both branches; but as this particular branch of the art acquired fresh excellence, by being exercised separately, it consequently became more difficult to change from branch to branch, and hence the closer was needed to be reared a closer, while the shoeman and boot-man have in general acquired their experience in the country.

In the relative numbers of the boot-men, shoemen, and closers, a great change also has taken place. Formerly, towards the close of the last century, when the top-boot and the three-quarter or clerical boot were the only boots in demand, except the military boot, as the closers were then few, so were the boot-men, while the shoemen were thrice as numerous as them both. It was a rare thing in those times for even the most extensive employers in London to keep more than two or three boot-men, the great bulk of the business being done in shoes. With the Wellington boot, however, all this has latterly been altered, for nearly every body now wears the Wellington. Boot-men, therefore, at present are, at least in all considerable towns, much more numerous than both shoemen and closers, for while the closer on an average will close his six pairs or eight pairs of legs in a week, the boot-man will only make his three or four pairs of feet; and as to the shoeman, there are three pairs of Wellington boots made in all such towns to one pair of shoes.—We must, however, again enter upon the more immediate object of this little work.

The boot-man, it has already been hinted, is a better paid workman than the shoeman, the article on which his labour is expended being of a higher value than the shoe; accordingly the work is in general more attentively done, and requires sundry additional processes. Yet, though this is the case, a great deal

that has been stated as the groundwork of the shoe, applies exactly to the boot. The same lasting of the in-sole, the same rounding of the fore-part, the seat alone being different, where, when the boot is to have a *stitched-rand*, the leather at the seat is to be pared quite flush for a low-heel, or if for a high-heel, inclining according to the inclination of the height of the heel. At the seat, the edge also is to be pared under the last a little, more or less, to allow for the thickness of the counter-leathers; and through which edge, from the surface of the in-sole, the hole for the seat-stitch is to be made, the point of the awl coming out a little below the centre of the edge. But when the french-seat, as it is called, is to be made, which is the one now in most common practice, the seat-part of the in-sole is left full to the edge of the last, and by some workmen feathered off as in the fore-part, though not so much so; the edge of the feather being afterwards stitched through upon in-stitching the seat from the side, another method of doing that for the boot-heel which has before been noticed in making the pump french-seat. The in-sole being thus prepared in either way, the boot is then to be lasted, opening the leathers of the counter with the fingers, and putting fresh paste in between before it is drawn on the last; and when drawn on, the back rows and side-seams must always be seen to be straight, altering them whenever otherwise. In lasting, too much care cannot possibly be taken—good lasting being one of the principal perfections required in the boot-man. It has, then, as may be expected, its difficulties; for while the leather of the vamp is in one part scarcely sufficient for the prominence of the instep, it will be found rather hard to manage in getting it down across the hollow at the joints, especially in very tinny or in stout leather, and more especially still in all varnished leather, it being rarely possible to last this

kind of leather so well as the common calf-skin vamp. The French leather from its greater softness is much easier lasted than the English—not to mention its other advantages over our own. But this should not be; and, as I have explained in a lately printed pamphlet on the subject, the shoemaker must take some decisive steps to effect an alteration for the better, come whence it will—from tanner or currier.

I have said that the joints may be difficult to last, and also the instep. In the waists, particularly the inside or hollowest waist, from the extreme tightness of leather brought over the instep, it is sometimes only just possible to get in a tack, though to overcome this difficulty the boot-man has a method of affixing a pretty large head of leather round the head of his long waist tacks; and, forcing in these as he can, the tightness gets strained down, the wide leather head of the tack securing the tight waist leather beneath it from tearing.

It should be recollected that on putting the boot first on the last, it is the custom of some of the best workmen to pincer the vamp thoroughly over the toe, while the counter-part sits only partially on the back of the last—*horsed*, as it is called, at about an inch and a half from the bottom; the counter being pulled down afterwards through the means of a slipping leather, used for this purpose as the shoe-horn is used to draw on a shoe, though the strain is in a contrary direction. As soon as the counter is got into its proper place, it is then to be well struck round with the hammer, not severely, but regularly; all the loose paste worked out, and never allowed to lie in lumps, which, in the wear of the boot, are always sure to break and moulder into dust, when the counter becomes soft and squabby. This should never be neglected, as it is of great importance.

The rand for the boot of the stitched-rand is, after

the boot is lasted, to be sewed in before the welt is sewed; it being a strip of upper-leather, with the grain taken off, extending from one corner of the heel to the other, and about an inch in width. For the french-seat nothing of this sort is required, but it is sewed round as in the shoe, and the stitch left partially loose on the counter. The boot being sewed, it now, different to the shoe, takes the *shank-piece*—that is, a piece of sole-leather running a short distance below the mark where the heel is to be built over, and ending just above the broad part of the tread of the foot. This is tightly pegged down, and skived off to the edge, when the remainder of the bottom is to be filled as in a shoe; the purpose of this shank-piece being, by the resistance it offers to the action of the foot, while the wearer is pulling off his boot, to protect the boot from injury by the sole being forced after the hollow of the foot, which would also prevent the boot getting off as easy as is needed.

The shank-piece in, and the bottom levelled, the rand is now to be *braced*—that is, to be turned over the seat of the in-sole, and there whipped down or braced with a strong end, when the puckerings consequent upon the rounding of it in at the edges are to be skived or hammered away, and then the face of the rand being set round with the flat seat-iron, the sole may be put on, and if the workman choose to stitch his fore-part first, or before he builds his heel, the operation is just the same as in the shoe. The rand, however, is always stitched prior to the fore-part; nor can the heel be built till after it is stitched. For stitching the rand a large, partially loose thread is required, and an awl very crooked, flat to the sides, and much broader than the stitching-awl, so that the breadth of the rand-stitch should almost fill the rand—the stitches being rather numerous for the thickness of the thread, from ten to twelve or fourteen in an inch;

the awl entering always on the face of the rand, and coming out at about half an inch within the back part of the sole or sole-piece. In making the french-seat there is none of this, the sole lying close down over the sewing stitches of the seat, and nothing more being done till the heel is built, sewed down, and the boot taken off the last. The outward lower edge of the sole is then channelled round the heel from corner to corner, sewed in this channel through to the inside with the blind-stab stitch, and, when the channel is closed, the seat pared, glassed, and set-up; and, finally, the *seat-wheel* being run round the seat, in the finishing operations of the boot-man, the seat thus gets finished, shewing the smooth back crease, and those regular indentations which it is the purpose of the seat-wheel to make.

But the *stitched-rand*, beside the stitching, has still an additional labour. The rand is to be *broke*—that is, with the tool called *the breaker*, having a toothed face, the doubled heads of the stitches are to be severely pressed, torn, and spread about, so that the whole face of the rand shows nothing but hemp; though this breaking is not to be till after the heel is built and sewed down—the heel in the stitched-rand boot not being sewed down from the seat-stitch, but from above the rand, close underneath at the root of the sole-piece. The heel built, sewed, and the rand broke, the rand is then, in the course of the general *taking-off*, to be made—that is, coloured and set-up with a thick gum dissolved in ink; and when the boot-man is about to perform his final operations, the *rand-wheel* is run round, and the rand finished.

This is the old and no doubt best method of making the rand, in so far at least as the breaking goes; though a still older method was, that the stitches were not broken at all, but left in their round and perfect fulness, and being cleaned off from the wax, first with

the rand-bone and soap, and then polished with clear gum in their grey and natural state. The divisions were next made more perfect by the single *rand-pricker* then in use (the forerunner of our present rand-wheel); this sort of rand getting afterwards, on the introduction of the above described black-rand, the name of the *grey-rand*, and specimens of which may occasionally be yet met with in those few antique *prize boots* which have had the good fortune to pass down to us through the neglect or vicissitudes of eighty or a hundred years.

The better sort of gentlemen's shoes, too, had at this period the grey-rand, called at the time the German-rand, the fashion probably coming from some part of Germany. The stitched-rand, however, was more than a fashion—it was an improvement; the solid system of its manufacture offering, as it did, the best possible surface to the oftentimes severe trials of the boot-jack. This sort of rand when well made scarcely ever flinched, either originally when the stitch was left whole, or even afterwards when the stitch began to be broke, and the black-rand got in vogue. The great cross depth of the hole, the thickness of the thread, and the number, proportionally speaking, of the stitches, giving it a hard and enduring firmness. But then, an altered method got at last in use; an easier system became fashionable among the boot-men; the severity of the labour of breaking was felt, so the stitch was at once almost cut away, and the breaker rubbed over as a mere matter of form; the stitches at the same time being neither so full wrought, nor left so broad. The thick black gum, notwithstanding, considerably helped the affair, and a good rand-face was effected—clean, very smooth, and surpassingly brilliant; and the master being pleased through the eye, had no other concern. So the matter went on, every boot-man taking up the easier trick; and though the failure on

proof, in the boot being tried in the jack, was ever recurring—these sort of rotten rands even sometimes wholly tearing away—the error was persisted in, till at last the master was compelled to think, and, in despair of seeing any better done, insisted on having the french-seat, a demand which gave rise to some grumbling at the time; but a little practice rendering this description of seat neither so suspicious nor so tedious, the operation soon became familiar, and is now the general method of work. Perhaps, however, it may not last—the old stitched-rand has yet many admirers; and even now certain of the first-rate employers in the trade of London will have nothing but the stitched-rand.

The head wages in London for making plain boots, stitched on the rand, or with french-seats, is seven shillings and six-pence the pair; the lowest about three and six-pence. In the country, the average price may be stated at six shillings, though the sale boots are made at from three shillings and six-pence to two shillings and four-pence per pair. These cheap boots, however, have neither the stitched-rand, nor the french-seat, but are of the description called the *blind-rand*, that is, the rand is sewed in, braced over, and set up, but not stitched; just as the strong shoes are made in many country towns. But, beside the above prices, there are in London, and also in the principal cities and towns in the kingdom, certain *extras* paid for extra work—for making the heels of various heights, for putting in spur-boxes in heels, for stitching in a double sole in the fore-part, or stitching or nailing on an outside or *clump sole*, for nailing heels or fore-parts, or for putting *tips* or irons on heels or toes, for making what is called the *channel-waist*, or the *mock-channel-waist*; in the first there being no welt, but the out-sole stitched through with the blind-stab stitch to the in-sole, and the leather brought off to a thin edge,

coloured, and slicked; though sometimes there are two rows of stitching, one at the edge, and the second a little behind. This, the real channel-waist, has twice the extra pay of the mock one, the mock-channel being no more than having the sole pared off from the top to an edge, coloured and slicked, the welt having been sewed in the same as in regular work. Neither fashion, however, has much to recommend it except the mere appearance of a greater lightness to the eye; and I know not but the mock-channel, though the easiest, is the preferable, as I think it stands the wear better, and certainly in the mending of the boot has its advantage.

Another of these extras which occasionally comes within the earnings of the boot-man, is the making

#### THE CORK-SOLE BOOT.

In making the cork-sole boot there are two methods: In the first, the in-sole being put on, rounded, and the boot lasted, a long slip of calf skin or upper-leather (the cork cover) is sewed in round the fore-part from corner to corner of the heel place; the heel rand being wrought as usual. But, in the sewing in the cover, to make the cork boot properly, a stiff piece of in-sole leather, skived to an edge to receive the stitch, should be taken in with the sewing between the cover and the feather of the in-sole, the intention of it being to give a firmness to the sides of the cork when covered, which without this *box*, as it is called, would be liable in the wear to slip about or double into folds. When the rand, the cork cover, and the box, are thus sewed in, the cork is to be fitted and put in on the top of the in-sole and between this box; the constant method of softening the cork to the operations of the knife being to warm or toast the cork at the fire, and then to slit, bend, or cut it to the necessary form. I shall, however, give a better method: this cork I should recommend

to be put to the steaming instead of the toasting process; as when the cork is softened by steam, every knot opens, it will bend easily, and is not at all liable to snap, as it otherwise so often does; and as to the cutting, the knife has then much more power over it. To steam it, any small vessel of boiling water will do, such as can always be found at hand, as a pot or saucepan. The cork, in fitting it, should be slightly hollowed out in the under centre, and ought to be left considerably thicker from the joints forward to the toe than in the waist part; and on putting it in, hot wax is run over the in-sole to hold it, though some do not take this trouble. The cork being in, and the top edge of the box and it made to lie well together, the fore-part rand or covering of the cork is then to be braced over, when the boot is ready for the sole. The heel may now be further proceeded with. The heel and sole on, the cork is next to be stitched, a channel being made on the sole as usual to receive the stitch on the top. In stitching the cork, in men's boots especially, a good waxed flax thread should be used, never for the sake of beauty taking a white silk thread however coarse or full it may be, nor yet whitening the flax thread with the machine of the old stitch-men before alluded to; for as the cork boot is solely an article for heavy or winter wear, what can be more valueless than the mere colour of the stitch? and the more so, when this *finicking*—as the trade term is—of workmanship may do a positive injury, the material oftentimes, as it does, falling asunder through it. The shoemaker should never forget the one paramount principle of fitness, in his seams, in his threads, in the number of his stitches; every thing he puts through his hands should be completely *fit* for the purpose it is required, and should never be spoiled through a desire of beautifying, or, where beauty is principally demanded, from want of a proper exercise of taste.

The ancient stitch-men in their use of the white thread were faultless; the shoes they made were for the people of the Court and the drawing room, for the walk along the Mall, and every other place of fashionable resort; but the cork boot is not so, but for the mire and the mud, and therefore should have its parts put together with a thorough knowledge of this as the guiding principle.

In stitching the cork, the awl enters a little below the sole on the rand or cork cover, pierces through to the channel, and the hairs being put in, and the thread drawn in, the stitch on the one side falls into the channel, and on the other lies full upon the rand, and which, when the fore-part is entirely stitched round, and the work done regularly, looks very well. After stitching, the channel is closed, the edge pared, coloured, and set, the rand or cover slicked or polished up, and, the heel being finished likewise, the boot gets completed.

An intelligent friend, a first-class ladies' shoemaker, tells me, as a means to guard against the breaking down of the sides of the cork, the principal demerit in the wear of the cork boot just described—that in place of sewing in an upper-leather rand or cover and a box with it, he has found it a preferable way to make his cover of sole leather, and have no box, this kind of cover, as he says, bearing the stitch quite well enough, as he has proved. As the men's and the women's cork boots are both made exactly the same, this hint may be serviceable. The other or new method yet to be described, is, however, better still.

In this method there are two sewings. In the first place the cork cover is to be sewed in, commencing and finishing a little behind the joints, and when the cork is fitted, put in, and braced over. This done, another in-sole is now placed over the cork, ending and lying down upon the under in-sole in the waist, and which additional in-sole being rounded as usual, a

welt is to be sewed to it, to which welt the out-sole is to be stitched as in the regular boot. This is the cork welt, the cork lying beneath the welt and between the two in-soles; the advantages of this sort of boot being, that by the additional in-sole lying above the cork, the cork is thereby the further removed from the direct pressure of the wearer; and, secondly, the out-sole of the boot can be much better repaired than in the unwelted cork, nothing more being required than to sole, or welt and sole the job as is commonly done to the common boot or shoe.

There is yet another cork, the inside, and which sometimes goes all through from heel to toe, and at others no more than half through, helping some particular lameness or malformation in the heel. This cork in the first place is fitted to the last and the height or other form it is to be, then is put over the sock or covering, and next the in-sole put over it; after which, the edges of the covering are drawn up round the sides of the cork, and sewed in with the upper and welt; the remainder of the work being gone through as usual.

There are various other changes and modes of operation which occasionally come under the notice of the bootmaker, but having already said every thing essential to a complete view of the subject, it is necessary to do no more than allude to them. The channel boot and the pump boot, for instance, are but simple modifications of the channel golashe, or the plain pump shoe, and repetition, if indulged in, would only add to the bulk instead of the value of these pages. In the same predicament is

#### JOBGING MAKING.

Every operation already explained in the shoe or boot is now and then repeated in the various kinds of jobs coming under this head. Shoes or boots are

soled; soled, heeled, and welted; half soled; under-laid; new tipped; patches sewed on, all without any particular manner or artifice. The jobber, however, in the majority of the shops in London, as also in the best shops in the country, is a particular calling; he being generally some old shoeman or boot-man, but who, through age and its usual infirmities, losing his former station, is compelled to take to repairing the old in place of making the new. A good ready jobber, notwithstanding, can earn much more than many a mere maker of shoes, and indeed than some slow hands as boot-men; besides the great advantage it is to be able in the decline of life to find any employment whatever as a means to depend upon for one's own independent support. The boot-closer alone, of all branches of the trade, has the least dependance upon himself in this particular. He can neither job at his former employment for a livelihood, nor, as a street cobbler, can be of any use in the bulk. The awls and the threads he has been accustomed to, are not those necessary to the mending of the torn and tattered shoe sole—they are of no use to him here; nor have his hands and arms sufficient aptitude for the coarse and heavy work, the mere labour itself being too much for him; not to mention, were he to make the attempt, how slow he must be in his performance, without the power, to use a homely though apt phrase, of winning even salt to his porridge! While, therefore, this is the case, the boot-closer should make it his business to look to it, for assuredly it is much better to be even the humble jobber or cobbler than be left without any self-dependance whatever.

## VII. THE WOMAN'S SHOE AND BOOT.

THE SHOE BINDER—THE MAKER—THE WOOD-HEEL SHOE—THE WELT SHOE OR BOOT—THE PUMP OR SINGLE SOLE—THE SEW-ROUND—THE CORK-SOLE—THE TURN-OVER.

Before any thing be said on the different methods of affixing the soles to the different kinds of women's shoes, some notice should be taken again of the shoe-closer, though but very little can be said of this work-woman as regards her occupation of preparing the upper parts of the woman's shoe for the *maker*. So little indeed can be said, that though, strictly speaking, all women's shoes as well as men's must be closed, yet is the closing part so inconsiderable a share of the employment, independent of the binding, that

### THE SHOE BINDER

is in all cases the common term for the individual who so prepares the woman's shoe or boot. This woman worker is no doubt of much greater antiquity than the man's shoe-closer already spoken of in the beginning of this treatise. In Rosellini's "Arts and Workshops of the Ancient Egyptians," a very expensive and interesting work, there are seen women shoemakers, women working in the same shop with the men, and, as we may guess, perfecting the lighter portions of the sandal. And at the present day, all who have ever been in Paris must remember the fair shoe binders of the shoemaker's shops of the *Galerie Orleans* and the *Boulevards*, three or four smart artisans of the needle sitting intently at their work within each prettily-set-out establishment. In these shops the shoe binder has a fixed salary—ten, twelve, fifteen, or, in cases, as much as twenty francs per week. She is besides more than a mere binder, being partially a

clicker also, in so far as the *rounding*, as in England we term it, of the shoe is concerned—that is, the fitting or cutting of the leather, stuff, or silk of the vamps and quarters for the binding; this being done by the French binder with her scissors, and always after the shoe is made; as the man's shoe is still done with us, though the woman's is not, but before it is sent to the maker.

In women's strong leather shoes for common or country wear, the uppers, as for the man's shoe, are generally closed with an awl and a waxed thread, that is, the side and back portions are so joined, and then the binding is put on, often itself of leather; but in all other cases, the entire work is begun and finished with the needle. The woman's boot is done the same, even when goloshed, the golosh being stitched in and out with the needle in imitation of the boot-closer's stabbing-stitch. The average price per pair for binding women's slipper shoes, may be stated at about fourpence—six-pence being the highest, while some are paid no more than three half-pence or a penny. Shoes with ties, and satin and silk shoes, are paid at a higher rate. But boots pay the best, at least in certain shops, two shillings and six-pence per pair being the wages obtained by the highest class of binders; and thence the price varies downward to eight-pence, or even less. A good and quick binder may earn in London, when the work is plentiful, sometimes as much as twenty shillings or upwards per week, though oftentimes not more than three or four shillings can be made, and in general not more than seven or eight. Much depends upon ability, and also upon fortuitous circumstances.

### THE WOMAN'S-MAN, OR LADY'S SHOEMAKER,

is the general term for a class making the various sorts of the woman's shoe now in use. Few can make every sort of shoe; and some follow one branch and some another, as makers of *welts*—*spring-heels*—*sew-*

*rounds—corks—turn-overs*; first-rate—second-rate—and slop-men—basil or mutton-men—cack-men or makers of children's shoes; and, to refer to a fashion of old times, the woman's high wood-heel shoe—the wear of our grandmothers and great-grandmothers, but now a thing for the Museum, and seldom to be met with.

The woman's shoemaker at the period when the wood heel was fashionable, was probably the most skilled workman in the whole trade; the tender texture of the materials he wrought upon, the proper fitting of the wood for his heels, and the nice perfection requisite to the sewing in, the lasting, and the stitching of the heel-rands or covers which went round this wood; also the various *glazings* of these rands—as blue, white, green, red, yellow, in short of every colour,—being matter altogether of much judgment and care, and requiring much time.

To make

#### THE WOMAN'S WOOD-HEEL PUMP

I must refer the reader, should he be so curious, to Mr. Rees's book for a full and the only existing description; while at present I must confine myself to the current method of the trade, and the sorts of shoe or boot now in wear.

#### THE WOMAN'S WELTED SHOE OR BOOT,

as coming most nearly to the man's common shoe, needs no lengthened description; the upper part of it being mostly of leather, like the man's—calf, cordovan or grain, and every part of the workmanship closely similar, except that to the in-sole of the woman's shoe a cover of linen is attached, and that in the *taking-off* or the finishing of the work, the stitches are not in general made to show themselves as in the fore-part of the man's shoe or boot, but are covered over and blackened, making what is called a *blind-welt*. Sometimes

this shoe or boot has got a top-piece and sometimes not, and when without one it is called the *spring-heel*; but if the heel is made to rise more than the thickness of the top-piece, and pared under, it is then called the *woman's military heel*, and rather more is paid for the making, which is the case also with the top-piece heel, though not so much as for the military heel.

#### THE WOMAN'S PUMP OR SINGLE-SOLE SHOE

requires, likewise, not much description. It should, however, if made of stuff, satin, or silk, in the upper, be very cautiously lasted, and particularly across the vamp, drawing the material always in a direct line, by which the threads of the weaving force evenly, and the shoe when it comes off the last shows greater beauty and freedom; the common ignorant way of lasting without care or thought spoiling both the look and the fit of the shoe. After a stuff, silk, or satin shoe is sewed, such parts of the leather lining quarters and the side linings as may remain above the stitch are to be cut off, though not the edges of the stuff, silk, or satin, as they are to be left and pasted down over the seam, the better to secure and keep them from ravelling away from the sewing stitch during the pressure of the foot by the wearer. The in-sole—sometimes only a half in-sole—is covered, too, with linen before it is put in, and a portion of the edges of the linen doubled over it on each side the waist, so that the in-sole, on being pasted down to the sole, with these doubled-in edges along, may hold and keep the linen the better in its proper place, and not allow it to fall out, or to be rumpled up in the wear.

#### THE SEW-ROUND SHOE

needs also but little to be said upon it; the only difference between it and the pump so called being in its seat or heel part, the seat of the *sew-round* being

generally made like all the rest of the edge, whether it be frenched or plain, and thence the name; the first and one sewing completing all the stitches necessary, one thread going round the whole shoe, and this being effected at one operation.

#### THE CORK-SOLE WOMAN'S BOOT OR SHOE

is, like the man's cork before described, a cork with a rand or cover sewed in, and may be made either in the same manner, or as recommended by the workman already alluded to—himself a thoroughly proficient ladies' shoemaker—or, it may be made as the man's welted cork is: the cork placed under the welt, and between the two in-soles, though I believe this system has not yet been attempted in the woman's cork. For stitching the rand of the cork, a good wax may be prepared of resin, bees' wax, and a little yellow turmeric, which will keep the flax-thread at once sound, smooth, and give the stitches a handsome appearance—such as the woman's-man generally aims at—looking fully as well as if the rand was stitched with white silk, and being infinitely more lasting.

#### THE TURN-OVER SHOE OR BOOT

can be made either as a welt or as a pump, the manner of making the seat or back-part being the source of the name it bears. A rand is sewed in round the heel, either of black or any other coloured leather or other material; it is then turned over, braced and stitched, and, the heel being afterwards finished, the rand is set up and finished likewise. At present there are very few turn-overs made, the fashion being of old date, like the wood-heel, and also the rand fore-part; though the latter at one time was the common way of making all women's shoes, with the exception of the pump.

The wages paid for making the woman's shoe or

boot varies, I think, more than any other branch. While one class of workmen, in certain establishments at the West End of London, get about three shillings for affixing a pair of pump soles to a pair of lady's shoes, another class of workmen, in the districts of the Borough, Whitechapel, or Shoreditch, will get no more than *six-pence*, or it may be *four-pence*, for affixing their pair of soles; the workman of the first class taking the better part of a day to complete his job, and the workman of the other making his six or eight pairs in the day. This difference is indeed extreme, and is nearly as injurious to the purchaser as to the powerless, dependant workman himself. In the provincial towns there is little of this, London being the great mart for all kinds of women's cheap shoes and boots; and where the journeyman himself, in many cases, is the sole manufacturer. This chamber-master, as he is called, purchases his own materials, cuts out his own articles, gets them bound, and with the assistance of some three or four mere boys, hired for the occasion, called *sewers*, throws, as it were, his dozens together by the day, and then slinging them in pairs over his arm, he goes forth and sells them to the master of the sale shoe shop—in some instances as low as thirteen shillings the dozen pairs! but which are of such flimsy quality, that if a pair will last decently an active servant girl or any other poor woman for a week, it is quite as much as they will do, being as they are no other than a complete sticking together of rubbish.

The article thus deteriorated, the ability of the workmen as a class also deteriorates with it. Pride is lost; there is nothing felt to stimulate; and as to a cultivation of taste, how is this to be expected where the desire and the reward are necessarily so reduced? The better paid ladies' shoemakers, however, in the country as in London, can still do something for the

manufacture; and it is very necessary they should; the required excellence of the article in demand by the higher description of purchasers, and the severe pressure of foreign competition, testing their powers to the utmost; the foreign shoe-shops underselling the better shops, and offering at a medium price a much neater article than any to be had in the sale shops.

The requisites necessary to a proficient ladies' shoemaker are a liking, in the first place, for his calling, manual expertness, an eye for the greatest available beauty in any given form or direction, and a practised skill in the ultimate production of a clean, well-lasting, smoothly laid, and nicely adapted article for its purpose, as the means at once to satisfy the consumer, and to please both himself and his employer.

### VIII.—INFERIOR WORK.

#### THE STRONG SHOEMAN—COBBLER—TRANSLATOR, CLOBBERER, &c.—CLOGGER.

Having described the operations of the four principal branches of the trade as they are followed by journeymen, namely, those of the shoeman, the boot-closer, the boot-man, and the woman's-man, though there are several sub-divisions, more or less numerous in each of these class branches, workmen of different degrees of merit, or who derive their support from different descriptions of work—having so far effected what I purposed towards a view of the various occupations of journeymen shoemakers, and finding the account is still not complete, I intend, under the present head, as concisely as possible, to conclude what yet remains to be told.

In the immediately foregoing division I have said something of what are called *the stop women's men*, of their *sewers*, and of the surprising quantity of work which, as a means to procure a bare livelihood,

they must put through their hands in a given time; but in writing of the shoeman, I intentionally passed over the inferior classes of workmen, such as the *strong shoeman*, the common *cobbler*, and the *renovator*, or *camper* (all these names for nearly the same class), in order to treat of them separately.

#### THE STRONG SHOEMEN,

as I understand, have their *Society*, not very long since established, their rules of self-government, their rates of wages, and already have had their *strikes*. Their chief localities are in and about the neighbourhood of Saffron Hill and Clerkenwell, though many of their number are to be found in other parts, both in town and country; wherever in fact the coarse, serviceable, and cheap shoe is in demand. The strong shoemen are generally the produce of the rude isolated situations of the country, or of the great manufacturing district of Staffordshire, from whence probably the majority of them come. With practised sinews, no disrelish to the enormously thick thread (many of their threads taking from thirty to forty strands of the coarsest hemp to its make), and much skill at driving in nails, this class of workmen scarcely or ever care about advancing themselves to the lighter branches; but, despising the niceties of the jigger, the pretty stitch, the smooth channel, and all the other delicacies of the finer shoe, as they were reared, so they continue; and having strength and perseverance, earn as much on the whole as, and no doubt feel more independent than, the *wages' shoeman*, who, getting 5s. per pair, when the others only get half the sum, are yet no better off, although his labour may be not quite so severe.

Any man accustomed to this sort of work, and having good abilities, is, when age comes upon him, excellent as

## THE COBBLER :

for the cobbler, strange as it may seem, must have good abilities. Being accustomed to the strong work, he will think nothing of the great awls and the large threads he must use; but in his mending, he will have such out of the way holes and fractures to put in order, that considerable practical skill will be necessary to gain him a reputation. Look at him in his bulk! he scratches his head, a carter's old shoe is in his hand, gaping like an oyster between sole and upper-leather, and with a rent in the upper-leather stretching half-way across the vamp, and running into various sinuosities. What is he to do? he himself wants his 9d. or his 1s. for the job, and the carter wants his shoe, and will call for it at his dinner hour. It won't do to scratch long, he must begin; and with a good patch, a good thread, and a good awl, the upper is made, as it were, whole again—no rent in it. The huge ripping at the welt is drawn tightly and closely together, so that no mud can get in, and the carter may go forth again in his *two* shoes, neither of which, without this achievement of the cobbler, would have been of any service.

A cobbler in a good situation is oftentimes better off and more independent than almost any journeyman. Besides, he is sometimes an employing master himself, and has his own journeyman; the two sitting face to face in the one little apartment, and in their pullings out discovering such a dexterous twist of the arms that none but those of their own class can at all equal. In France, as in England formerly with the maker of new shoes, there are itinerant cobblers—cobblers going about from place to place with a basket at their backs, square to the shoulders, and rounded outwards. In this they carry their few pieces of kit—knife, awls, and long cob-iron, or iron foot with a standing shaft, and

a necessary assortment of leather for patches and heel and sole mending. On getting a job they sit down at the door and do it, and then, like the tinker, they pack up their traps, and are off again, bawling out at the top of their voice as they go along, "Shoes mended!" The majority of this class, as I have heard, come from one particular department—Lorraine, which is said to be the great breeding place of the French *savetier*, as the neighbourhood of Italy is of the plaster-cast figure makers of Europe. In France, however, there is still another class, partial itinerants—cobblers whose sleeping place may be in a cellar or a garret, but who follow their occupation in the open street or the public market. I recollect seeing some in the South; a large umbrella spread above them, sticking with its strong shaft into the ground, the master and his men, or his sons, at work beneath it, and perhaps some villager seated on a low stool waiting for his job, his two unshod feet conspicuously showing themselves. The *savetier* and his customer now and then striking up the chime of a song, or talking politics with as many exciting gesticulations as if the fate of the "Grande Nation" itself depended on their decision. This is the *picturesque* of the craft; and if we add to the scene, a no unusual accompaniment, the foliage of a huge tree rising far above the umbrella group, though not entirely keeping off the strong sun-shine, we may easily imagine the difference between a cobbler of the fair south of France, and the cobbler of our own cities, squatted in his pigmy dog-house underneath the window of some low beer-shop, or other equally unromantic position.

To leave this glimpse of romance, and come again to common life, let me say a few words on

## THE TRANSLATOR.

This workman, as already said, is variously called, translator, renovator, vampier; and has his home at

present in almost every town of any size, as he long has had in Monmouth-street, in the purlieu of Petticoat-lane and Rag-fair, and, probably, in every other poor neighbourhood of London. The calling, however, has greatly improved. A Monmouth-street *translator* being a very inferior workman indeed, even where all are inferior. He is the lowest of the class, and called a *clobberer*, the name coming from the peculiar and disreputable cunning of his art. It is not alone with leather, and hemp, and the awl, that the clobberer works, but also with his *clobber*. This is a mixture of ground fire-cinders and paste, which he spreads over and forces into the crevices and breaks of old shoes or boots, instead of toe or side pieces, or half heeling; then sticking in the necessary nails, and letting the cement dry, the parts are afterwards shined off, and the article disposed of as having undergone a thorough repair. This is much worse than the "cobbler's heel ball;" but it is not to be supposed that the clobberer can do without his ball either, pasting up with it, as he does, the vamp fractures, to the deception of the purchaser, who, having no knowledge of any such trickery in clobber or ball, pays down his two or three shillings, and putting his new bargain on his feet, leaves his old shoes behind him, steps again into the slime of the streets, and, next morning, when he looks at his purchase to examine their condition, he becomes, indeed, wofully convinced that "there is nothing like leather!"

The best clobberers, it is said, are from Ireland; shrewd knaves, who, coming across the water from a scarcity of brogue-making at home, seek their experienced countrymen of the "Dials," and trying their hand at the new shoe mortar, are soon led to take such delight in the thing, that some of them have been known to follow a customer, that they might see the soles drop from his feet as he went along, and then

returning to their seat in the cellar, have a hearty laugh with their companions at the *fun*.

The clobberer has, however, latterly been compelled to do better; he has been punished; Monmouth-street has been tried, and found out, and though at present something better is done, the pounded cinders not brought so often into use, still the 'occupation is gone!' and a rival class have not only commenced business in Monmouth-street itself, but in almost every other quarter of London,—the meaner the more advantageous—as also in every other town or place of likelihood. These are men who not only *repair*, but *renovate*; a class who let nothing be wasted, however old or unsightly; every shoe or boot, no matter how far gone, has to them a value; all are purchased. For a cast-off pair of Wellingtons of the worst description, they will give at an average about 8*d.*; and for a pair of Bluchers, with nothing but the backs sticking to them, 4*d.* or 6*d.* What is more singular, there are, as I have been told, forestallers in this market; cunning Jews, real Jews, who, having a good scent when old leather is getting scarce, are proportionally the more hungry in the pursuit of it, buying up all they can, and thus secure themselves the larger profit on its re-sale to the renovator. As the respectable shoemaker cannot do without his new leather, so the individual in question cannot do without his old.

The secrets of this trade are strange. What is not to be easily or well mended, is cut asunder. The sole of the old Wellington boot is at once ripped off, the back and front divided down the seams, and getting some dozens of these fragments together, the renovator commences currier; he wets and washes the whole bundle, giving each piece a thick coating of dubbing; they are then laid by for some days to moisten and soften; after which both grain and flesh side are doctored up again; finally, each piece is

*broke*, i. e. rubbed on a board beneath another slip of board, fastened by a strap, passing across the back of the hand, till the leather feels as mellow and yielding as new, though, I must say, it is not quite so good. With these pieces the vamps are made, fresh vamps for the quarters of old shoes, or the backs of old Bluchers, or to join to the vamps of other Wellington boots; the journeymen, for there are many journeymen at this sort of work, getting from 1*s.* 6*d.* to 1*s.* 10*d.* the pair, according to the station of the employer, for putting in these vamps and the soles to them; which when done are sold, the shoes at about 3*s.* 6*d.*, the Bluchers 4*s.* 6*d.*, and the half-vamped Wellingtons at 6*s.* 6*d.* or 7*s.* the pair.

I was once in one of these shops, and, being inquisitive, was pleased to find that even here fraud was sought to be prevented, and a reputation obtained. Examining a number of Blucher shoes ranged along a shelf, I observed that every pair had a peculiar punch mark on the edges of their laps, or tongues. On inquiring the cause, I was given to understand that this was the shopowner's practical system of check-keeping against the wrong doings of his journeymen renovators. "If," says he, "a customer comes back with a ripped shoe, I refer to my mark, and there finding whose work it is, I at once send it back to be re-sewed by the party, which he must do for nothing, or otherwise I give him the *bag*," the phrase for a discharge. "My customers," he went on to say, "cannot afford to be cheated, and being contented with my own profits, I shall see that they have hemp enough." "Hemp enough!" said he again on recollection, and laughing, "but in its right place, and not in the way of a Jack Ketch." I could wish the poor always had such considerate friends, and hope the moral of the anecdote may not be lost either on renovators in general, or on any other persons who, having

the power, may feel inclined, in their several conditions of life, to give *hemp enough*.

This sufficiency of hemp, however, is not much required in the operations of the next workman,

#### THE CLOGGER;

to whom, before I conclude these descriptions, I may just allude, for though the shoe is not a clog, the clog at all events is a shoe; the clog being an article with a wooden sole, and the usual leather upper parts; the upper-leathers being fastened to the sole of wood in the same manner as the leather is secured to the wood of a pair of bellows. In the northern English counties there are still workmen of this profession who travel about from place to place in pursuit of their calling, or who may, in a few instances, find constant employment at some one shop. They need little of the tools or the grindery of the shoemaker; one common awl, to put together the upper-leathers, being all that is required, with a little coarse flax, a bit of wax, and the necessary bristles for hairing their closing threads. The trade of the clogger has long been on the wane, and, like that of the maker of the wood and iron-shod women's patten, will no doubt eventually wholly merge, the one into the entire leather shoe, and the other into the entire leather goloshé.

#### IX.—KITS OF THE WORKMEN.

He who desires to be a good workman must always make it his care to have a good kit. There is no cutting true with blunt scissors, nor shooting straight with a faultily bent bow; how then can the shoemaker with bad knife, blunt awl, or unevenly cut jigger, or shoulder, or rand, irons, or any other tool, get through his work with the cleverness and perfection which, with good knife, good awl, and every thing else good, he might accomplish? That this matter might

be kept to itself as being most likely to draw the necessary attention to it, has hitherto been my reason for refraining from saying any thing particular on the subject; besides, I felt, as I went on describing the different operations of the trade, it would mar the continuity of my writing or instructions, by noticing on all occasions the sort of tool at such and such a time to be used, with the nature and make of that tool. Nor do I now intend to be minutely descriptive, but rather to catalogue; deriving my notices from a personal inspection of some of the best sets of *kit* of some of the best workmen in London, belonging to the three chief branches; namely, the boot-closer, the boot-man, and the wages' woman's-man; it being needless to say any thing of the others, the tools of the shoeman, with the exception of those used by the boot-man for the rand or french-seat of his heel part, being the same as those of the boot-man; and as to all the inferior classes of workmen, these on every occasion just do with as few as they can help, the knife, the awl, and hammer, being their great reliance.

#### THE BOOT-CLOSER'S KIT

is as follows, with the price of each article in brackets:—Three awls for flat closing, two for lining, two for stabbing, two for side closing of Wellingtons [the general price of these awls, three a 1*d.*], two pairs of seam setters [1*s.* 6*d.*], two welt setters [9*d.*], two stabbing setters [6*d.*] top and goloshe setters, two [6*d.* each], bone setter for welts of inside top closing [4*d.*], punch [6*d.*], set of files [2*s.*], petty-boy or seam slicking stick [3*d.*], bit of rule [2*d.*], marker [2*d.*], set of prickers, six in number [9*s.*], compasses [1*s.*], two knives [3*d.*], knife rubber [6*d.*], cutting board [1*s.* 6*d.*], closing blocks, two [1*s.* 6*d.*], setting board, generally *lignum vitæ* or some other hard wood [3*s.*], clams [2*s.* 6*d.*], stirrup [3*d.*], groove for tops

[1*s.*], welt runner [6*d.*], rag stones for pointing awls [3*d.*], piece of pumice stone for hairs [1*d.*], in all between fifty and sixty different pieces, amounting in their total shop value to about thirty shillings, though after the workman has put the major part through his hands, and got them, as the term is, properly "cut," and his awls "pointed," this value is very much enhanced. Besides, almost every workman has a peculiar method of his own in preparing his kit, and thereby to him it is of still greater value.

#### KIT OF THE BOOT-MAN.

Large hammer [1*s.* 6*d.*], smaller or waist hammer [1*s.*], two pairs of pincers, large and small [3*s.*], nippers [1*s.*], three knives [4*d.* to 5*d.* each, 1*s.* 2*d.*], welt fitter [6*d.*], rand fitter [2*d.*], two rasps [1*s.* 3*d.*], a dozen files [4*s.* 6*d.*], jiggers, six in number [9*d.* to 1*s.* each, 5*s.*], shoulder or fore-part irons, from six to ten [6*d.* to 9*d.* each, 6*s.*], two or three breakers [1*s.* 4*d.* each, 4*s.*], one rand iron, a tool for setting up the rand before stitching [1*s.*], three boot irons, tools for setting and finishing the rands after stitching [3*s.* 6*d.*], one rand wheel [4*s.* 6*d.*], same for french-seats [2*s.* 6*d.*], glazing iron, tool for burnishing the heel [1*s.*], seat-file [6*d.*], two stamps [1*s.* 6*d.*], joint-iron and peg-fitter [9*d.*], crooked knife, or knife for taking pegs out of the inside after the boot is made [9*d.*], prick-stitch [3*d.*], stitch-bone [6*d.*], rule [3*d.*], long-stick [9*d.*], colt [6*d.*], dull knife [2*d.*], fore-part brush [6*d.*], buffing and edge knives, three or four [6*d.*], knife sharpening strop [8*d.*], paste-horn [3*d.*], bottles for gums and ink-bottle, three in all [2*d.* each, 6*d.*], compasses [8*d.*], sewing awls, three [3*d.*], stitching awls, six [6*d.*], rand awl [1*d.*], heel awls, two [2*d.*], pegging, holing, pin-point, and sprigging awls, six [6*d.*], joint awl [1*d.*], tacks for lasting [3*d.*], stirrup [6*d.*], waist-strap [2*d.*], hand-leather [2*d.*], shop-pau

or tub for wetting the stuff in [6d.], last-hook [6d.], apron [1s. 6d.], skiving board [3d.], rag-stone [3d.], paring-horn [2d.], channel-cleaner [1d.], and lap-iron [4d.]

In this enumeration there are upwards of a hundred different pieces, costing in their shop value about £3., a considerable increase over the tools of the boot-closer, though the kit of the boot-man is much easier packed and carried than that of the other; the heavy blocks, and setting board, and long awkward clams of the boot-closer being too bulky for any sort of knapsack. Yet there are boot-closers who, by certain contrivances of hollow blocks and jointed clams, can make all into a bundle, and are as fit for the road as the other. It were better, however, for both parties to put all into a box, a box too that holds something more than the tools—a little decent wearing apparel; and a *box-lodger*, as is well known, always gets better treated in the places of his stopping than the mere kit-lodger, and the reason is obvious.

#### KIT OF THE WOMAN'S-MAN.

Three knives [at 4d. or 5d. each, 1s. 2d.], a crooked and a bevel knife for seating and dressing wood heels or cork seats [8d. each, 1s. 4d.], a wrinkled knife [1s. 6d.], the name coming from the use it is put to in dispersing and making smooth the wrinkles on the inside of pump boots. There are four shoulder-sticks, which are generally made of cocoa or boxwood, and may be had for 6d. each [2s.], two pairs of pump-irons for the same purpose as the shoulder-sticks, but are used for strong work [8d. each, 1s. 4d.], a channel-iron [8d.], a seat-file [6d.], a long-stick [9d.], two stamps [1s.], pincers [1s. 4d.], scissors [1s.], sharpening strop [8d.], rasp [6d.], bottom-file [6d.], files for cutting the kit [2s.], six instep-leathers, leathers used

by the English workman to lift the instep of the women's shoe, the French workman using what is called the *block-last*, the same as the man's boot or shoe is made off [9d. each, 4s. 6d.], two or three scrapers or buffing knives [3d.], paring-horn [2d.], fitting board [4d.], a dozen awls in haft [1s.] Besides these there are many other pieces of kit now falling into disuse in consequence of the work going out of fashion, such, for instance, as the long-necked cramp-hammer, once necessary to the cramping in the sole at the heel of the high-heeled woman's shoe, the purpose of which is scarcely known to the majority of the present race of workmen.

This kit of the woman's-man, it will be seen, contains in all about fifty different articles, and is not so expensive as the boot-closer's or boot-man's, and much more portable than either. A kit, however, as before said, has in each case a far higher value than its cost value; and there is nothing looks so promising in a beginner as to see him attentive to it; fresh cutting it whenever necessary, and never, as some do, relying upon the kindness or purchased assistance of a shopmate to do for him what he ought to try to do for himself. Above all things, the young shoemaker should be assiduous here, as almost every workman has his own peculiar way of working, which renders it nearly impossible for another to make any tool exactly to suit a different hand. One individual may have been accustomed by the master he learned under to hold his jigger, shoulder-stick, or iron, close to him; another, on the contrary, may have been accustomed to hold it from him; how then can a third individual, who can only cut a tool in his own way, in a medium as it were between these two extremes, be expected to satisfy both? Yet such things have I often known, the incapable parties not considering the difference and the

difficulty. Besides, he who can cut his own kit need be but seldom really idle, as he may generally find something to do on his own seat, which, when done and he is at work, will be found very serviceable and satisfactory.

According to the account of a late traveller—Elliot, in his work, on the Three Great Empires—it is no unusual thing to see in the cemeteries of the East the hammer or last, or some other implement of his trade, figured out on the stone which marks the grave of a shoemaker. A custom as interesting as it may be useful; any such trade memorial to one who made his occupation, however humble, the pride of his life, being just as worthy an emblem of the defunct as the wreath that adorns the tomb of, perhaps, the once merciless conqueror.

#### X. A FEW PARTING WORDS TO THE JOURNEYMAN.

I have now gone through one portion of my task to nearly a finish, and must, therefore, in conclusion, beg of the young shoemaker who has accompanied me so far, to hear a few words more.

Let him, in the first place, bring himself, above all things, to respect that which, as a trade or calling, is to be the chief, perhaps the only, means of his support. If he is to be a shoemaker, let him be one in reality; neither ashamed of the name, nor careless of its value. His trade, at all events, is what emphatically may be called a *sure* trade; and no matter how "black his thumb," he will always find the good sense of the old proverb on his side, and find that no one of worth will despise him for its necessary blackness. Think of our late venerated Hoby, himself at one time very poor, and no great workman on the *seat* either; think of his creeping on from a mere

pedlar at the trade, to the time when he entered his large shop at the corner of St. James's-street and Piccadilly; and then how he succeeded there! emblazoning the panels of his doors, and the tops of his windows, with the names of dukes, and princes, and kings; how, in short, he commanded so much business, that it occupied four clerks, from morning to night, to keep his daily accounts; and, better than all, how he still paid the very highest wages to his men; while, at his death, though he left behind him wealth for a shoemaker scarcely credible, yet none of those journeymen begrudged the reward of his exertions, but, content in their own sphere, were proud of the honour such success had reflected upon themselves.

Our trade is nothing but a series of gradations, and wherefore should any one be afraid of not reaching the highest point. The apprentice, from first learning to make his threads, next gets to sewing; then to make the child's shoe, then the woman's, or man's, then the boot; it is, altogether, a sort of climbing ladder, and if the proper care be taken, and in the proper time, the uppermost step may be attained at last. A business, more or less, may be won of your own, and, though you will still have to work, the labour will be softened by feelings of independence and self-satisfaction, the best of all rewards. This is the vista! this is what is to be looked to—though even as a journeyman much happiness is still within your reach.

Do you love change? Are you desirous, as the saying is, of seeing the world? Then, as a journeyman shoemaker, no artisan can do so better. Reared in the country, you make your way up to London; or, pent up in London till your apprenticeship expires, you can put a kit on your back, and, for the first time in your life, get out into the high roads and open fields, and, like all uneducated children of the city, discover what a large place is the country, and how

beautiful and exhilarating it is, and how novel! How different the lark looks, freely ascending up to the heavens, to hanging out of a murky garret window, in its dark and wire-barred confinement! In short, you will then first understand the majesty of sky and earth, and of the world; and, perhaps, something of the majesty of your own nature, the most wonderful of all. When you *tramp*, let these always be your aspirations—cultivate them earnestly and studiously, and getting work “in some fine town or city,” as the old song of your trade says, the labour will go on the pleasanter in reflecting on the new and bright things of your acquaintance. Or, making to the sea-side, how imposing will seem that scene! the gentle curling of the waves, or the high dashing of the billows; the far horizon in the distance, and the lonely ship coursing along; you will feel it pleasant for a shoemaker to be able to go about thus, and if you have been a chance reader of the Poets, and the other imaginative writers, you will discover how far they fall short of the reality, and how indescribable is all! Still you will call to mind something that has pleased you, something that will raise an enthusiasm, cleansing the mind from the rubbish of the narrowly selfish, and lifting it to a loving of the whole, yourself and every thing and every body! Learn, and read, and see—learn as you best can your business; read at your leisure, or occasionally you may make it your leisure to read; and see what you please. All this, however, is not to be done at once—but as time goes on; nor is it to be accomplished without sacrifices, such sacrifices as the drunkard cannot make, nor the idle, nor the vicious; nor such sacrifices as either of these *will* make, but which you, living for other ends, *must* make—the sacrifice of the company of each and every one whose habits are heedless without advantage, or wasteful without satisfaction. What a

melancholy loss of opportunity it is, for a workman to be continually moving about from place to place—through the most lovely scenery, the most spirit-stirring localities—and have no other perception and sense of his situation and duties, than the mere condition of the road he is travelling over, the reputed character of the trade rendezvous he is making towards, or the sort of companions to whom he shall be there introduced. Eager he pushes on, heeding neither the novelty that surrounds him, the information he may gather, nor yet the after satisfaction he is neglecting to lay in store for himself, his mind alone active to reach his immediate destination, and when there to seek employment, confine himself to his workshop, and getting a few shillings in his pocket, know no other use to put them to, than to booze and racket away the leisure of his days or evenings, in the coarse or petty pastimes of his like motiveless fellow-workmen—pastimes leaving no real satisfaction behind, but which soon lapse into a sort of dull regret or mortification—so dull that the victim cannot even see the cause, and consequently is still beyond the chance of amendment. Opportunities of this sort, and so neglected, are indeed a most grievous loss. It is not seeing the world this, nor acting rationally, but solely a waste of time, and a contracting of habits without purpose, and, I might say, without even present enjoyment. Life to be used worthily is not to be thus squandered, but to be made the most of—doubled as it were, joining the animal with the mental existence, the necessity to live with the desire to think, and endeavouring to harmonize these together as well as we can, so as to command the most of what is best, as far as in our different situations may be attainable. I could wish you then to be aware of and to reflect on this. Willing as I am that you should understand the benefits of change, I would have you, at the same

time, to guard against the motiveless folly I have just been describing. Much you may accomplish, both to the strengthening of your own esteem and your after happiness, if you take the proper method and precaution—having in every thing you do a really defined object, or even when you are acted upon by a compulsion beyond your powers, seeking to discover an advantage under the sternest circumstances of that compulsion.

In virtue's name, let these be your aims; and, in the mean time, till we meet again, take this along with you as an assurance of what you may do for yourselves—that he who has written thus of the occupations of the Journeyman shoemaker, and who next proposes to write of those of the Master—of measuring, cutting out, fitting-up of lasts, blocking; in short, of every thing connected with the duties of the shop—has had difficulties to overcome of habit, of personal suffering, and a want of all the guiding helps of education, which at one time might have seemed insurmountable, but which after all he has sufficiently conquered to be able to put together this little book. At the same time let me also add, that he is not in the trade what is ignominiously called a *botch*, but as a workman has made himself proficient. This was his first object, as I hope it will be yours; for, secure in this, the other pursuits or enjoyments of existence may then follow, when, as the author of *Rasselas* says, though in illustration of a different matter, “the mind will easily straggle from the fingers,” yet without detriment to the work you may be engaged upon.

THE END.

PRINTED BY A. SWEETING, EARLETT'S BUILDINGS, HOLBORN.



THE  
GUIDE TO TRADE.

---

THE SHOEMAKER.

PART II:

BEING THE DUTIES OF THE SHOP.

---

BY JAMES DEVLIN.

LONDON:

CHARLES KNIGHT AND CO., LUDGATE STREET.

---

1841.

## NOTICE BY THE AUTHOR.

---

A Prospectus of the work alluded to in the Preface to the First Part of "The Shoemaker," and to be called "THE CRISPIN CRAFT," being a general History of the Trade, will be appended to another little volume, preparing for the Press: the time and place of publication to be stated by Advertisement. In this Prospectus, the general bearing of the proposed Work and intentions of the writer will be fully explained. It is to be published by *Subscription*, the peculiar class it is intended more especially to interest, and the heavy expenses of the undertaking (it being one of considerable magnitude), compelling to this mode of proceeding.

44.  
2. 14.  
2.



LONDON :

PRINTED BY A. SWEETING, 15, BARTLETT'S BUILDINGS, HOLBORN.

\* \* \* The *First* part of "THE SHOEMAKER" contains the following errata:—At page 21, in the account of the stabbing of the counter of a boot, instead of reading "the entire work averaging about *thirty* inches," it should be *fifteen*; the error originated from the computation having been originally made of the *two* counters, when, in altering the passage, the "thirty" was overlooked, and allowed to remain in. The other, page 89, line 8, states, that the boot being sewed, "it takes the *shank-piece*;" and again, line 21, that after this "the rand is now to be *braced*." It should be the contrary: the rand is braced *first*, and then the shank-piece put in and fitted up.

## CONTENTS.

	PAGE
I.—PURPOSE OF THE PRESENT PART EXPLAINED	5
II.—THE PURCHASE OF LEATHER. . . . .	13
Trenching . . . . .	25
Cutting up of Hides . . . . .	28
III.—MEASURING FOR, AND CUTTING OUT, THE	
MAN'S SHOE . . . . .	32
Measuring . . . . .	32
Cutting out the Shoe . . . . .	35
The Strong Walking Shoe . . . . .	35
Dress Shoe, or Pump . . . . .	37
Oxford, or Spencer-tie Shoe . . . . .	38
Covered-tie Shoe . . . . .	39
Goloshe Shoe . . . . .	40
Gentleman's Slipper . . . . .	40
Blucher Shoe . . . . .	40
Man's Cloth Boot . . . . .	42
Lining for Shoe . . . . .	42
Rounding the Shoe . . . . .	43
Seat-pieces . . . . .	43
IV.—BLOCKING . . . . .	44
Machine for . . . . .	44

	PAGE
V.—THE MAN'S BOOT—MEASURING FOR AND CUTTING . . . . .	63
Measuring for the Boot . . . . .	64
The term Clicker, and of Clicking . . . . .	67
Cutting the Wellington . . . . .	72
— Hessian . . . . .	77
— Clarence . . . . .	78
— Cross-tongue . . . . .	80
— Dress Wellington . . . . .	84
— Opera . . . . .	85
— Top-boot . . . . .	85
— Military, Holderness, and Three-quarter Boots . . . . .	96
— New Tongue . . . . .	96
VI.—CUTTING-OUT FOR THE WOMAN . . . . .	97
The Slipper . . . . .	98
Tie-shoe . . . . .	98
Varieties of the Woman's Boot . . . . .	102
VII.—FITTING-UP OR PREPARING THE LASTS . . . . .	106
VIII.—THE BOOT AND SHOE TREES—CLEANING UP, STRETCHING, &c. . . . .	124
IX.—THE SHOEMAKER'S ACCOUNT BOOKS:	
Instructions towards a proper manner of Keeping . . . . .	130
X.—THE MASTER IN HIS SHOP:	
Advice to him there on various heads . . . . .	143

## THE SHOEMAKER.

### PART THE SECOND

#### I.—PURPOSE OF THE PRESENT PART EXPLAINED.

It is a general remark among shoemakers, that a person may be a very good *scatsman*, though knowing very little of the duties of the shop; the converse, however, is scarcely as much as this, it being still more difficult to become the Master without some knowledge of the operations of the Journeyman. The remark, notwithstanding, is more often applied in the first instance than in the other; it appearing to some minds very strange, that the apparently real maker of the shoe or boot—he that does every thing to it, except, as it seems, the mere cutting out—should find the least deficiency in himself in any one particular. But the truth is, that the journeyman has neither the proper practice, nor scarcely has ever even sought to inform his mind by observation, of the particular skill necessary to qualify for the employer: as he gets the work prepared for him from the shop, he does it, and troubles himself no more about the matter; all his knowledge of the duties of the master being that comprised in his own manner of fitting his own foot with an occasional pair of shoes or boots, and which not seldom are very far from what they ought to be. The

duties of the shop are, besides, of greater amount than some may conceive—the back of the cutting-board being quite another place to the snugger of the seat—more in the eye of the world, requiring a better address, a closer insight into the diversities of the human character, a well-considered acquaintance with the nature of outlay and profit, and many other matters important to know.

In the various details or separate occupations of the trade, there is often indeed found enough for the individual workman to do to acquaint himself thoroughly with some one of them to secure his employment among the active competition into which he is thrown; and hence his application and his care being directed in this particular way, he has neither time nor heed to adventure further. As he is placed, he sees he must keep his place, for where there is no leisure to experiment, the invitation is not to be indulged. From this, then, comes that want of general information to which allusion has been made, the trade in its entirety being so seldom mastered, the opportunities being so few, and the observances demanded so manifold. Nor, even independent of these considerations, can the trade be called an easy one. I have heard somewhere of a German Prince, who being so frightened at the revolutionary mania which, about half a century ago, discovered itself in France, and thence struck terror through all Europe, that he felt there was no safety for himself but in acquiring the practice of some manual art, whereby he might be enabled to support existence when the worst would come; but at the same time fearing that one trade might not prove sufficient, he learned severally that of the tailor, the cabinet-maker, and some others, among which he attempted the shoemaker—though doubtlessly they were all no more than *attempts*. In shoemaking, however, he less satisfied himself than in any other—he was con-

tinually meeting with some mishap—his wax would not work—his hairs came off—his awls broke—his sewing had neither smoothness nor regularity—and as to fitting, though he had his own foot before him every moment of the day, he never could produce a shoe (and he tried several pair) that was any thing like a fit for himself—nor can we suppose that in this particular he was as nice as he might have been had the shoemaker been any other person. Peter the Great of Russia, we are told, learned ship-building, a noble art certainly, and being pursued with a true nobility of ambition he succeeded, for by his skill he not only had in view to build a ship, but also to build up a nation—and he did both; while what he did, in nation-building at least, looks well to exist yet for ages—he laid his foundation so broad and secure. Still the German Prince was worsted at the shoe, and this although he had our own Crispin (likewise “a Prince born”) to give him hope and confidence. But, seriously, the art of the shoemaker is really a difficult art—intrinsically difficult, difficult in itself, for although neither requiring what we commonly call education, nor any other preparatory helps, still is it not to be attained easily, but only in the majority of cases after a service of a second apprenticeship—a seven years’ probation as a journeyman, in addition to the first seven years of the youth, and few then are wholly proficient, and probably in no more than in some one of the branches. Formerly, indeed, there might have been those who, to use the trade phrase, could “box the *craft* round,” though at present or of late years I neither know nor have ever known one, such a high excellence is required, and, besides, so hard it is to command the leisure, or even to get the necessary sort of work to learn upon. Let my reader, in proof, just reflect upon the various procedures described in the antecedent portion of this little manual, many of them,

from their very fulness and minutiae, only as it were glanced at; let him do this, and he will own at once the truth of what I have been remarking: yet, withal, is he not to set down this kind of writing as needless, for truly it is the total want of some such general view or understanding of our trade, as it may be with many others, that so many among the body are so really incapable as they are—only knowing something of one thing, though to know something of all could be no harm, and might, on occasion, prove highly valuable. The journeyman, as I have said before, has a right to look to be a master, and the master, in his turn, should never be wholly ignorant of the processes of the journeyman, though he often is, as the journeyman is unacquainted with almost every duty of the shop.

In the preface to the former part I have already alluded to this very necessary knowledge, and now intend to draw attention to it a little further, feeling as I do its importance, and conscious as I am of our general heedlessness to any such extended conception of the useful and the proper. And, moreover, where could I offer any remarks on this head so fittingly as at present, when, as it were, my reader is at the very threshold of advancement, and thence requiring as he does all the aids he can get towards his ultimate success.

The *Athenæum* (No. 590), in reviewing the "*Printer*"—the first published little guide book of this series—speaks of the positive benefit to be derived from such a class of works in their absolute value to the young beginner, adding that their "morality is so strictly utilitarian, so immediately bound up with self-interest, that the mere enlightenment of the intellect goes far towards obliging the will." And in an earlier paper (570), in the notice of a volume, the fruit of the French school of Arts and Manufactures, it is stated, that though "nothing can be done without

practice, still no man pursues his trade or art successfully or well, who does not, besides the practice, possess the science of it; and the great distinction between artificers, for the most part practically equal, is this, that some have and some have not the knowledge or science of their art." Now, although the application of this extract is excellent, still for the present case the term *science* is not the proper one, but rather the word *knowledge*—knowledge of a series of operations essential even to an approach towards perfection, knowledge being taken to direct, and the practice to follow. The knowledge of shoemaking as a whole is not, then, to be got by the greatest proficiency in any one attainment, nor, in the circumstances of the workman, is a general knowledge scarcely ever attainable, and therefore the evident utility of attempting something as a means of assisting to this information, so that at least the mind may derive an outline of that which the fingers may be called upon to perform, or the operator might wish to perform.

Mr. Rees, the master boot-maker of Bristol, already mentioned in the former part, speaking of cutting out boots, observes, he had not been so particular "were it not hidden in such obscurity that nine-tenths of the trade are at an entire loss how to proceed; and the major part of those who have any knowledge of it, find a great many difficulties for want of general rules." (Preface, p. viii.) And, again, p. 102, is this passage, a reiteration of the same opinion: "It is rather singular that the generality of cutters are in the constant habit of cutting boots at random, that is, without a regular and certain rule; though without some rules they seldom attempt to cut shoes; but as boots are of more consequence in the trade than shoes, they ought to have certain and fixed laws. In the course of my practice I have seen boots from a great many parts of these kingdoms, and from many parts of the continent of

Europe; but no two pair of them alike. The leading shops in the metropolis are not regular in their mode of cutting boots; for from one and the same shop you will see various modes of cutting; which is a convincing proof that there is no regular system or order."

What he means by rules for shoe cutting, though there are none for boots, I do not know; I have never seen the perfection either in the one instance or the other; nor do I believe in the value of any set system of rules whatever; at the same time I should condemn the opposite indiscretion—that of those mere chance methods, methods picked up from some casual connexion, or by the imitation of some particular set of paper patterns, which probably had originally been obtained from some reputed shop in London, or London clicker (such things have been even hawked about the country as the means of a livelihood), and afterward so nibbled at and altered to please the eye, or from sheer ignorance, that it often becomes a very dangerous thing indeed to follow them. Not very long ago I was shown a set of these patterns—the price being about half a guinea the set—almost every pattern, and the ladies' ones especially, being cut out of a different coloured paper, glazed black, blue, red, &c., and in some cases beautified at the binding parts by an imitation of gold and silver fringe, so intent was the salesman to catch the eye of a purchaser. It is much better, however, to teach and satisfy the mind, than merely to attract the *eye*—to call in the aid of the reason as the best assistant to the taste, and by which the hand will derive a safer guidance than in any other way. Patterns are things without change, and therefore, in a business liable to every variety, are not to be had recourse to on all occasions—modifications of them will be required, and without the operator is cautioned in the manner of these modifications—so that the principle or fitness be not destroyed

through the diversity—it might be better he was left without any authority whatever, and had no other reliance than the exercise of his own conception of the right. How useless, then, is this servile pattern-following system? just as if any one mode could be found to suit all wants—one undeviating scheme of cutting made universal, or one form of last to fit every foot. The supposition is folly itself, and the belief in such a supposition a still more lamentable folly. It shall be my endeavour, therefore, while I aim at my instructions having something of the character of general principles, to guard or caution against an unbending stiffness of these principles. As with the leather the shoemaker is still handling, *there is a way with it*, so with all applications of our trade—the right will always be in the needed, and as varieties will be demanded, these varieties will then be the needed. The journeyman, to be the efficient journeyman, must himself attend to this view of his calling; and so must the clicker, or master;—the master requires the assistance of his workman, and the customer the joint aid of both, but as the customer has only to depend on the one, the master is in a twofold predicament—he must suit his customer, and, beforehand, find the suitable man to assist him to this result.

The obligation of the journeyman—the one man employed from week to week in the one unvarying process—is single, but the duties of the employer in every way diverse; and particularly of that employer (as often is the case) who carries on a general business—a shoe and boot-maker for both the man and the woman; he will be called on to judge of the various descriptions of leather, skin, or hide—of the qualities of the stuffs, silks, or satins, used for the females' wear, and of the proper manner to proceed with and way to make the most of each—of measuring—of all the varieties of cutting out—of preparing

the lasts—of knowing the perfection or imperfection of the work of the journeyman, when it has been returned to him—of getting the goods home when finished:—divers indeed are the matters requiring both his sagacity and care.

The position of the master shoemaker is in no way an idle one; nor yet is it without its gratification; the very variety of its demands has its advantages; it may, indeed, as I have heard some complain, be the one thing over and over again, but then these repetitions are at intervals—the man who this week is purchasing one description of leather, another week is purchasing another; to-day he is cutting out, this hour the shoe, the next the boot, to-morrow he fits up his lasts, now to one sort of foot, and again to a different; at one time his judgment is in exercise to find the deficiencies of some particular piece of work that does not appear exactly as it ought, and at another time he is delighted with the perfection of a better piece; a good fit pleases him, and a bad one instructs;—the employment that yields this variety, and at the same time has its chief holding upon the necessities of life, being neither greatly dependent on the caprices of fashion, nor on the mere fluctuations of capital, has much undoubtedly about it not to be heedlessly disparaged or neglected. It may, too, with all this, be the one changeless condition—the only one to which the individual can turn his individual acquirements, and hence, in the most imperative sense, it is not to be causelessly neglected. Every addition of skill will bring an addition of security; whereas, on the contrary, every sloth of nerve or unwillingness of endeavour will be as sure to terminate in both loss and regret. To do well, as will be found, there is much to do—much to learn, and demand attention.

## II.—THE PURCHASE OF LEATHER— TRENCHING—CUTTING UP HIDES.

The commencing business for one's self, though in certain cases the feelings be sanguine and cheerful, has in general something about it of the foreboding; almost before we venture we want to be assured, and the more especially this is the case where our capital is but small—its very smallness speaking of the difficulty with which it was gathered, and therefore the greater fear of the risk we are embarking in. And then, when we do actually commence, how rapid is its departure! truly, to use a common though most significant term, it seems to "melt"—the *fiel* of it goes insensibly from us—from a substance it has become a fixless fluid, and we dread shipwreck in the way it may entoil us. Some of it has gone one way, some another, some we can scarcely tell how—it is still going: nor can we now stay its progress, but must on with it to success or failure. In the first place, sundry shelving and other matters must be put in the shop; and then the shoemaker must get his lasts and his boot-trees, and, heavier than all to the purse, have to purchase his stock of leathers. And here, where is he to go? or how to judge? If the resident of a large town, he has heard of a hundred houses where leather is to be had; if of a small town, he can turn to only one; he has known ill of the one, and of the hundred he knows nothing—the tales he has been told are so suspiciously contradictory. Besides, he has had no practice, and thus in another way is without confidence. If hitherto he has been but a journeyman, his only acquaintance with the materials he seeks is in some recollections of shoe vamps, boot-legs, or mere patch-like portions of prunella,—he may

not even in the latter instance know the form of a web-piece, and as to a skin, perhaps he never bought one in his life—a hide he certainly has not. This is putting the case closely, though, I am sure, necessarily. But few commence shoemaking with large capitals; and fewer still are thoroughly qualified to commence at all: it is rather a position to which men are driven, than one taken up from choice; yet, such as it is, it has conduced to many a modestly comfortable home, and he who would obtain this, is not, when such position is obtained, without cause of being thankful. Let me, then, try to assist.

The present head, a consideration of the proper qualities of leather, so as to furnish the best means of judging at the time of purchase, involves considerable difficulty. Of the particular sorts of leather, called the dressed or curried, it is hard in any way to happen on that which will satisfy;—it is rarely in the market, and in consequence rarely purchaseable. The consumer demands what the shoemaker would willingly obtain for him; and if with his best knowledge he cannot get what he seeks, where is the remedy?

A statement, as curious as remarkable, transcribed from a document of much character, and connected with the present matter, may be noticed here as requiring some comment. In the evidence on the leather trade, taken before a committee of the House of Commons in the year 1816, a Mr. Hassel, an extensive leather manufacturer at Bristol, on being asked about the shoemaker's knowledge of leather, gave it as his opinion, that "shoemakers are not always the best judges of leather," though, he said, "the public might find it out in the wear." (P. 42.) The difficulty, however, as already has been observed, has a still more hopeless feature, for where there is very little good leather to be purchased, it must necessarily be very hard to find the *good*. Mr. Rees,

in his book published two years before the evidence of Mr. Hassel was given, and writing from the same town where Mr. Hassel carried on his business, was, it seems, by his own confession, only "judge" enough to choose the better of the bad—all he had in his power to do. If Mr. Hassel, or any other leather factor, could help over this difficulty, he would do much, as well to the benefit of a very extensive working interest, as to the service of the public in general. As it is, however, the shoemaker must at present do the best he can to the satisfaction of his own mind; and as a means to this, I shall take the liberty to notice a few additional particulars, and to make some corresponding remarks, knowing, as I do, how vital the subject is to his interest, and how deeply already he has suffered, and may yet still more deeply suffer.

In the evidence alluded to, Mr. William Adams, coach-currer, of Dean-street, Soho, being asked "whether leather was as well curried in this country as abroad?" answered, that he thought it was better." Mr. Stafford Price, currier, St. Martin's-lane, stated that "at this time the *tanning* of leather in France is very respectable, but the *currying* of leather is very imperfect, although they have come to this country as far as they could for English workmen." (P. 17.) And Mr. Edward Lawson, of Spitalfields, being asked a similar question, "understood that in France, through the introduction of British curriers, there are goods manufactured equal, and he heard superior; but it is through the introduction of the English mode." (P. 20.) And again, on being questioned as to the number of English curriers who go abroad, he said he had conversed with many young men who had been there, "believing them to have been led to the change by their 'vagrant ideas,' though, withal, so careful were they of communicating a knowledge

of their business to the French, that they wrought in separate shops." Mr. Hassel also believed "no leather was better than the British; it was cheaper, but not so good." (P. 40.) Mr. Daniel Freeman, leather factor, Leadenhall Market, on being questioned as to his knowledge of French leather, said that he had "seen calf skins from France quite equal to any that was ever tanned in this country; but he never saw any sole leather so good." (P. 65.) Mr. Walter, leather dealer and manufacturer of shoes at Northampton, was likewise of opinion, that "the French lately had paid much attention to the improvement in leather." (P. 65.) While a Mr. Burlington, a glove manufacturer of Worcester, "thought that the French got up their leather better than the English, having a peculiar mode of dressing." (P. 102.) Mr. Hepburn, also, tanner of Long Lane, Southwark, "had seen as good skin leather which came from Holland, as any he had ever seen in this country."

From all this, then, it appears, that curriers and tanners themselves have scarcely any safer knowledge of what constitutes good leather; than even the ignorant shoemaker. The *first*, a coach carrier, thinks our leather the best in the world; the *second*, a shoemaker's currier, has a very favourable opinion of foreign tanning, though all foreign *currying* is very imperfect. British curriers, says the *third*, are of much esteem abroad, through whose means French leather was made superior to the English; and yet, as he afterwards tells us, these British workmen communicated nothing, but were "so careful, that they wrought in separate shops;" the *fourth* believes no leather is better than the British; the *fifth*, a leather factor, thinks well of the French calf skins, but not so well of the foreign sole leather; the *sixth*, from a praiseworthy desire to be impartial, has a sort of medium opinion; the *seventh*, a glover, believes

we are inferior; and the *eighth* has seen good *skin* leather from Holland, agreeing with the fifth, and as it were contradicting the second, who, a currier, sees nothing but imperfection in the skin leather of our neighbours! Where then is the right between this clash of opinions? Individuals in different interests giving different statements; or is the public alone, as Mr. Hassel says, to find the truth out "in the wear?" No master shoemaker, carrying on a respectable bespoke business, the best of all authorities, was called upon in this instance; and only one, partly a sale shoemaker and partly a leather dealer, and who, as he probably never saw for the second time a shoe or boot of his own manufacture, could know nothing of the condition of the leather after trial, the best of all proofs, and which the bespoke master is every day in the habit of seeing thrust upon him; the public, as Mr. Rees very justly states, "charging these defects to the trade, though no way concerned in them."

On this subject I have already said something in a pamphlet on the '*Boot and Shoe Trade of France, as it affects the Interest of the British Manufacturer*,' and from which, as its circulation has been confined to a portion of the London trade, I shall now take the liberty of extracting the following passages:—

"If we look (it is there said) to the nature of our leather, to almost every description of our leather, excepting that used for the soles, we shall find the article not so good—so intrinsically good—as that which the French boot and shoemaker can purchase; and what is still more pertinent to the matter is, that formerly it was not so; when a greater time, and a more honest consideration, were paid by both tanner and currier, to the production of the highest degree of wholesomeness, superadding beauty of grain, a perfect blackness and polish, as merely graces, rather than

being the only necessary perfections. But what cares the manufacturer? he gets his work done rapidly, and, in consequence, *cheaply*; and being, as he is, protected from the full effects of French and other competition, by the 30 per cent. importation duty, and, likewise, through this circumstance, feeling himself secure of the commands of the home boot and shoemaker, he goes on in his cupidity, hurrying and driving through as much business as he can—safe in his own interests, and never pestered, hurt, and insulted, by those complaints which the less fortunate and apparently more responsible shoemaker is every day or hour under the compulsion of submitting to from the consumer, about the leather breaking, tearing, or cracking, or of its pressing on the foot with the severe hardness of an uncomplying piece of wrought iron.

“ Still good leather, though very high priced, is to be had occasionally in England, and is sought for and used by certain master boot-makers, such as Mr. Hoby and others; I have said *occasionally*, because, strictly speaking, it is no more than occasionally. A Mr. Rees, a master boot and shoemaker of Bristol, and who published a work on the trade in the year 1813, in advising the procuring of the best tanned and curried leather, ‘ laments that both are very defective at these times—and by the public these defects are charged to the trade, though no way concerned in them.’ Nor can it now be averred in 1838, that there has been any change for the better; though confident I am, that such a change might be, as well from the character of our raw hides and skins themselves, as from the undoubted ability of the working currier; and in proof of this, let me instance the superior quality of our own jockey or top-boot legs, so clear, so soft and workable, so handsomely grained, and so exquisitely drafted. No country can equal

the British currier in this particular, nor in the white leather for the tops of these boots; and why his inferiority in other articles? The reason in both ways is obvious.—England, if not now, was at least some years ago, the only jockey-boot nation *par excellence*, and hence so far our superiority; the competition among us being so extensive, as to urge to the highest progressive perfection; and that perfection always meeting its proper reward in the greater commands for orders. In the other description of our leather, however, another sort of competition has been entered upon and fostered—the competition of gain and facility, two very valuable considerations doubtless, though in the results the evil has become too paramount, and particularly so in the upper leather of our boots and shoes, where the material commonly is put to the severest test, and where at the same time both ease and beauty are demanded. Were the same substance of leather to be wrought generally into boots and shoes by the British manufacturer, as is wrought into boots and shoes by the French manufacturer, the imperfection would be still more glaring; and hence we are often compelled into clumsiness, to make the coarse and unsightly, that we may produce the serviceable, and so save the pocket at the expense of the taste and the wish for the more pliant and pleasurable wear.

“ Our roans too, with which we line our boots and shoes, can bear no comparison with the roans of our neighbours; they are in many cases so hard and stiff, with the remains of the unextracted gelatine matter of the skin, and are so scoured on the grain, with various chalks and pigments to produce the requisite surface, that the awl or needle in working is continually being thrust into many loose fibres, thus rendering the work not any thing like so agreeable or so perfect as it ought to be. Add to which, the quick

manner in which such lining dirties and roughens in the keeping of the shop, and in the use of the customer.

"The leather manufacturer, however, conceives himself wholly secure; the 30 per cent. protection duty sets him, he thinks, beyond the fear of rivalry. The home shoemaker must still be his customer—he has no other option; the foreign leather, with its heavy charges for carriage, and its customs' dues, super-added to its own sale price, becomes too dear a material to extract the necessary profits from; therefore there is no choice; and as our leather-seller knows this, why should he care about others?—a care which is not at all usual in the world. True, there is some of the leather in question imported here at times, and sold; but this generally is of the cheapest, and consequently most inferior kind, none other producing profits enough to give any adequate encouragement to the venture. But it comes, notwithstanding, made up in boots and shoes; and here, indeed, our leather manufacturer, in spite of the apparent safety of his position, is compelled somewhat to suffer; and he deserves it, as well for his own culpable greediness, as for his wilful blindness. Yet, how does he suffer? Not at all on a par with, or to the extent of, the boot and shoemaker. A pair of boots, which, on the average, will take in the manufacture three days—in trenching out, in blocking, in cutting for the closer, in closing, in fitting up lasts and stuff for the maker, in making, in cleaning up, and lastly in sending home—has only for all this labour 2s. 3d. protection duty on its value, the other 2s. 3d. protection duty being on the leather of these boots, the workmanship and leather being valued together at 20s., each sharing half—the three days' work at the boots, and the pair of boot-legs and other materials, which, probably, usurped in all no more than the same number of hours in labour.

"But how, it may be asked, can this leather have attained such an apparently undue value as is here set forth? Why, in this way:—there are six or seven, if not more, profits on it; the profit of the ground landlord, of the grazier, the cattle-dealer, the carcass-butcher, the hide and skin salesman, the tanner, the currier, and, lastly, the leather-seller; while the boot-maker, putting, as it were, the entire work through his own hands, is denied all the benefits arising from these various transferrings; and, therefore, having no one to make interest with him, no one does so, and thus he is left to himself.

"The injustice comes direct on ourselves; or, as it is felt, solely; we having, as has just been described, to give the immediate worth of full three days' labour for the purchase of the same amount of profit-augmented materials, though notwithstanding these materials are not near such as we could wish, yet is there no election, for still we must purchase."

From all this, then, it will be seen, that the shoemaker's knowledge of leather, at first or second sight as it may be, or the experience of the public of the same, is no very trifling matter. Ignorant or not as he may be, he finds the evil, and still fears to find it augmented. Unacquainted as he is with the nature of *samach*, which as a tanner of Bermondsey stated before the Parliamentary Committee already noticed, "operates much quicker than the bark, gives the leather a greater weight, and a favourable appearance, fixing its colour materially" (p. 85); or of the practice of the currier in using this *sumach* to supply the deficiency in the tanning; or of the effects of *valonia*, which, as another gentleman said (p. 85), "occasioned such damage to some of his customers, from the breaking of the leather, that he was compelled to reimburse them for the injury sustained;" ignorant or unacquainted as he may be with either the hidden

practices of the tanner or currier, still is he not unaware that a better leather is to be produced—and wishing for this superior material, he does all he can to find it; putting himself indeed, in many instances, to great expense and inconvenience to get it from France or elsewhere, seeing, as he does, the trade going from his shop day after day, and solely through the want of better leathers.

In this predicament, all that the master shoemaker has it in his power to do at home, is to make his choice in the best way he can; taking care that none of the dressed leather he purchases be of too large growth for its substance, having, if waxed calf skins, a free easy grain; a fine flesh, not ruffling into hairs, but, when bent inwardly a little, discovering a series of diminutive ridges or curls—a pretty correct token that such leather has not been taken down too deeply; it should always be silky and soft to the feel, not rank with grease, but yielding and smooth from the manner it has been wrought. In those fronts and half-fronts for the Wellington boot, which are commonly bought at the town leather-cutter's, ready trenched out or blocked as it may be, the article is seldom good—the large description of skins, which they are cut from, yielding sometimes three or four pairs of fronts, taken from middle to side, while a smaller plumper skin could not afford, perhaps, more than one pair. Nor are skins freshly curried to be purchased for immediate use; all calf or other oil-dressed leather being the better to be laid by, skin over skin, for a month or two before they are cut—leather in this condition, as the phrase is, *fattening*, and thereby attaining a more durable character. The purchaser should also be very careful of examining into the flaws made by the butcher in skinning, a flaw oftentimes, when falling in the way of a front, occasioning the loss of a shilling or two on the return value of the skin.

Black Spanish, moroccos, bronzed, and other delicate skins, used principally for ladies' shoes and boots, have in three ways their perfection—in their absence of flaws, so that they may cut profitably—their softness—and their health and brightness of grain; all basils, roans, and the rest of the cheaper leathers used for linings, should be alike well to cut, kindly, and of a clear, fresh appearance to the eye. The stuffs—prunella, jean, &c. and the silks and satins—have their quality in general pretty fairly set forth by the price put upon them in the shops. Prunella at 2s. 6d. per yard will not be of as much worth as that selling at 3s. 6d.; nor a satin at 6s. nearly equal to satin at 9s. The deception in these matters is not the same as in the leathers; any man's wife, sister, or other female friend, will tell him that where there is a good round thread, a smooth surface, closely wrought, and flexible in its proper degree, a purchase may be adventured—though doubtless there are deceptive tricks played here, as in other matters.

For the lighter kind of the woman's shoe, the sole leather employed should be as nearly as possible of the substance wanted, being supple, and clearly wrought; a thin irony sole, although no weightier than the more fitting one, being neither so pleasurable in the wear, nor yet so durable; nor is there any utility in buying leather to have it afterwards taken down to a slighter substance, as leather never works so well when thus cut, as it were, into its heart. The article intended for severer use, requires, on the contrary, both substance and firmness, and here a similar material is needed alike for the woman as man.

The sole leather in England is in general better than it is in any other country. It has had a long growth, and been carefully nourished. The other day, in looking over Sir Henry Ellis's Original Letters, illustrative of British History, I found a very inte-

resting document on this subject, in form of a communication from William Fleetwood, Recorder of London in the time of Queen Elizabeth. He writes to the Lord Treasurer Burghley in explanation of some opposition taken by the tanners against certain law enactments enforced relative to the procedures of the tanner, the chief objects of complaint being "the one for lymyng, and the other raisyng." In stating his own opinion, he says, "All the excellencie and conning of a tanner consisteth in skillfull making of his owes: surelie they must be manye and severall, and one stronger than an other. The time of changing of the lether from one owes must be timed at prescribed houres, or els the lether will be utterly spoiled. My Lo., there be an infinite number of rules to be observed in tannyng, the fewe which tanners did ever conceyve, much lesse the Parliament who conceyved theire informacion of suche whome nowe I do by experiens knowe not to be skillfull." (2d series, vol. iii. p. 28.)

This extract will partially enlighten the shoemaker, ignorant of the special interest formerly bestowed towards the improvement of leather, though the letter altogether might be still more satisfactory. Latterly, however, it has been the custom of the Government to leave such matters to themselves, considering the wisest policy to be that where there is the most freedom, and leaving the chief check of foul or injudicious practices to the working out of society itself.

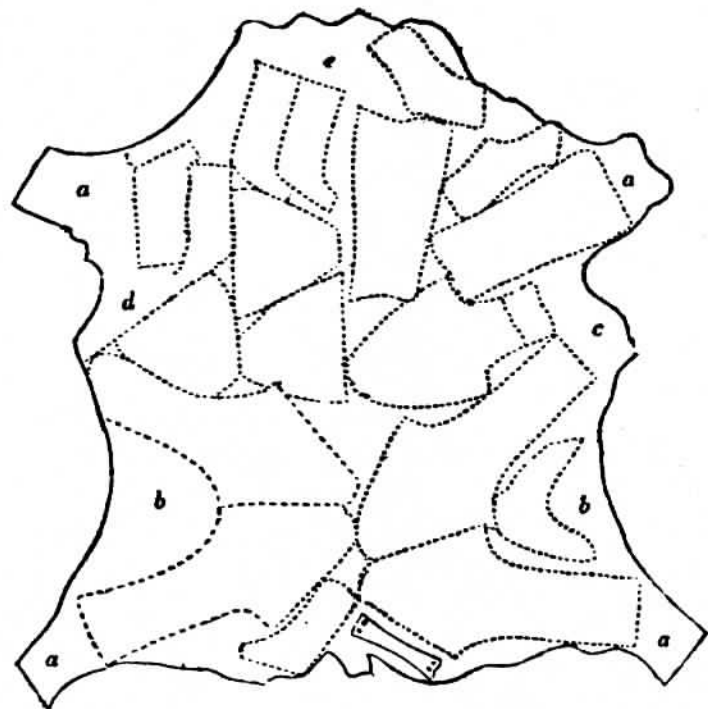
The qualities of the sole leather are defined by its closeness, weight, and, when cut, by the uniform healthiness of hue it offers to the sight—badly-tanned hides being generally streaky—black, brown, grey, and green. The best proof, however, of all sorts of leather—calf, cordevan, Spanish, or hide—is to be found in the wearing; and he will show himself the

most careful of his interest, who will take observance of this truth, and go to that market where he has derived the most satisfaction.

#### TRENCHING

is the next affair of the master or shop clicker. By *trenching*, we understand the proper cutting up of skins for all the upper and leg parts of shoes and boots. Leather, it is well known, is a dear article, and hence the necessity of practising the greatest possible economy, combined with fitness, that can be exercised in this department. Some clickers, where there is an extensive business carried on, will in this particular alone save more per week than the amount of their wages, while others, more careless or less efficient, are, as the trade saying is—and these sayings are generally as true as trite—continually *murdering leather*. There is an old English proverb also on this point, where the shoemaker is stated to be given "to cut large thongs from another man's goods." Ignorance, however, does much more injury in this way than dishonesty; the want of a quick eye and a practised hand often leading into great blunders, whereas the better qualified are enabled to take in as it were at a glance the whole capability of the skin; and acting on this impression, they can at once proceed with their work, and trench out to the best advantage. The following diagram, notwithstanding, may help the young beginner considerably. It is intended to represent a good plump calf skin, weighing about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  or 4 lbs., and shows by the various lines marked on its surface, the economy of trenching. The primest part is given to the four fronts for the Wellington boot; the two opposite fronts going together as a *pair*, as their substance is more gene-

rally alike than any two fronts cut side by side. The second pair from the rump are considered the best; and the hole or flaw marked on the near side of the first front to the right hand, shows how, on putting on the front pattern, some slight alteration had to be made from the direction of the opposite or left-hand front; the leather, however, is not wholly wasted; a quarter for a shoe being thrown in there, as a piece for a trowser-strap may be taken from the other angle. The shorter front lying beside the two on the right



hand, is either for a Clarence boot, or for a new vamp for a Wellington, to be joined across the front leg, in which latter case it is to be cut off at the fainter and shorter mark. Two Wellington backs are marked

near this, though probably from their situation they may not be found on the whole sufficiently good or firm to do without being lined. For all medium-priced boots, it may not, however, be safe to put in better. Two quarters and a vamp for a Spencer-tie shoe are shown in the same half of the skin as the spaces in the leather best suit; and three vamps for the common shoe, and four quarters, cut to fall back to back, that is, to pair together, on the other side; the spare space between the two left-hand fronts having no defined purpose, as oftentimes in these parts the skin is very flimsy and coarse. *a, b, c, d*, and the other unmarked places at the edges, are what are called the shanks and the offal, and are made into linings; and *e*, the neck, from its greater thickness, into the inside counters for boots.

It will be observed in this diagram, that the centre, where runs the back-bone of the beast, is never crossed; and when possible, or the connexion of the establishment can afford it, it may be remarked, that the leather should in general be trenched out with as little bias as can be given it, particularly in all the vamp or chief wearing parts, the reason being, as has justly been stated by Mr. Rees, that "all skins have their fibres running lengthwise from the head to the tail, and down the legs; therefore the strongest way of the skin is in that of its length. Indeed, a skin (he continues) is not much unlike a piece of cloth; for the fibres of the skin of an animal are like the warp-threads in the loom, which constitute the length and strength of a piece of cloth; for the woof (or the threads carried along the shuttle) is to bind and keep the warp-threads in the form the cloth is to be of; and hence it does not constitute its real strength. Therefore, as a skin is similar to a piece of cloth, the strongest way is in *the* length, or in the direction of the hair of the animal; but of

woolly animals, such as sheep, the skins are not so regular, besides being very porous."

This passage is very good; and by leading the mind of the beginner to the reason of the operation, shows, I should hope, its value in a much better way than a mere telling to do so, the common method of instruction. In trenching out for the various other sorts of boots or shoes, I have not thought it needful to give other diagrams, as practice and care will soon in each various case point out the best methods to be followed. For the tongues of top-boots the very superior parts will be always required; as for boys' or other inferior work, the coarser may be employed. Women's leather shoes are in general cut out of dressed horse hides, called *grain leather*, that is, blacked on the grain, and sold in long lengths or ranges without having so much offal as the calf skin, and in no ways so difficult to plan. Spanish, and oil-dressed goats' skin, as also seal and kangaroo, are much easier to trench from, the grain-side of all these leathers being for the outside, giving, even in the loose parts, a smoother surface.

#### CUTTING UP HIDES

is also another very important matter, so as to gain at once the greatest saving, and secure the greatest utility. At first this operation will be found very difficult, the usual hooked sole-cutting knife—a knife, by the bye, according to Wilkinson, which is as old as the time of the Pharaohs—being an instrument quite novel to the hand of the young practitioner, and the labour itself hard. The hide is laid flat before the person; the shanks and belly then rounded off, and, likewise, some cut away the slight shoulder parts and neck, right across the hide. The remaining prime portion is then to be run into ranges, from

side to side, and of such width, for men's or women's work, or smaller or larger soles, as may be requisite. In the best of these ranges there is no necessity, however, for the width of the range to be fully twice that of the last to be wrought upon, as by the maker turning the wider part of one last to the narrower part of the other, the piece will be found sufficient for the two soles. The writer before quoted—indeed our only writer on the subject—is of opinion, that the cutting up of sole leather in ranges is the simplest, and attended with the least waste—but this I doubt, considering the single sole cutting system the preferable. In the establishment of Mr. Hoby, for the last twenty or thirty years, the latter way has been followed; and when we reflect on the extensive business done there, and the shrewd character of the owner, who from long calculation must have made himself quite certain he was in the right, I think I have an additional support to believe and recommend the same. The present Mr. Hoby, as his father did, still keeps a man for this purpose, whose principal duty is to cut up soles, having a series of single metal patterns to suit all sizes of feet and top-pieces, and through which, by taking out a larger or smaller sole or top-piece, as the space may offer, hardly a slip or corner is wasted, separating afterwards the sizes and substances to their proper places, for the better convenience of giving out the stuff. Many of the London retail leather-cutters follow also at present the same system, and where the little master has found it his advantage to go for his small purchases, the occasional pennyworth or two pennyworth weighed in, in the other way, neither being a real gain to the seller, nor of any use to the buyer, but a direct loss.

In some of the great women's shoe manufactories of Paris, this and more is all done by machinery—the hide leather pressed under a roller to give it

extent and firmness, and then it is transferred to the cutting or punching operation, taking each sole clean out in the exact form for the maker, who has no other trouble, but, as it were, to put it on his last and sew away. The machine by Mr. Brunel, which during the last French war was worked at Battersea, for the making of soldiers' shoes with nails instead of stitches, stamped out the soles on the same principle, and this was also effected before Mr. Brunel by an extensive shoe manufacturer near Kendal, in the north of England.

The loose under and other inferior portions of the hide, not being fit for the outer soles, are appropriated by the shoemaker to his inner soles, lifts, shank-pieces, &c.; some of these inferior parts also being cut off by the leather manufacturer himself, in the making of what are called *butts*, and when the parts so cut off are slightly dressed in dubbing, and otherwise prepared for the purpose of welts, these dressed welts being much better both for the work and the wear, than those used by the shoemaker of other nations, though the greater number of stitches put in by the British workman in his foreparts, makes such quality of welt-leather much more indispensable to him than it is to the foreign workman.

About twenty years ago there was in the employ of Messrs. Davis and Gann, foreign order boot and shoemakers of Gracechurch-street, London, a person who, it was said, could cut up more hide leather in a day, and sort and make it ready for the maker, than any other three men could do in the same time. Nor were his employers inconsiderate of his merits, for they gave him twice the salary of any other individual engaged on the premises. This individual afterwards began business as a bespoke master for himself, and, as might be expected, was very successful. After a few years, however, he left it off,

transforming his premises in one night into another line of trade entirely, so that when the shutters were taken down in the morning, instead of boots being in his window as usual, there was now seen nothing but *biscuits*, to the great chagrin of another biscuit-baker who lived only next door, and who had some little time before refused to accept the sum of three thousand pounds from the shoemaker for his business; the parties having had a prior understanding to this effect, which being afterwards broken by the biscuit-baker, the shoemaker at once determined upon, and soon and secretly accomplished, the above described magician-like sort of revenge. Mr. Moxhay, the name of this clever man of the world, is yet living, and is well known and respected in the city, having first made his advance from a shopman to a shop of his own, and then from boots to biscuits, and now, besides his biscuits, he is the owner of several first-rate merchant vessels, bearing rich freights to and from the East; and yet, as I have heard, still respecting the name of the shoemaker, and doing occasional good service, as a befriended party himself has told me, to an old workman, one who, to use the sneer of Byron,

“ Cobbling at once his verses and his shoes,”

can only repay the thoughtful offices of his benefactor by a birth-day copy of verses, or such other trifle, addressed to some of the younger branches of the family, who being, as they are, all lovers of poetry and music, as Mr. Moxhay himself is, feel, therefore, no doubt, sufficiently gratified, as the father considers himself repaid. The befriended party here alluded to has lately produced the poem of the “*Drunkard*,” inscribed to the Rev. T. Mathew, of Ireland, so remarkable and praiseworthy for his great and effective exertions in the cause of temperance. I may mention, too, in this book for the shoemaker, that Mr. Hyde,

the principal agent or assistant of the reverend gentleman, in his urgent and extensive moral missions, is also a member of the trade.

### III.—MEASURING FOR, AND CUTTING OUT, THE MAN'S SHOE, &c.

I shall continue the same order in these descriptions of the operations of the Master as has already been done in those of the Journeyman, and, therefore, shall now commence with the man's shoe, the immediately foregoing notices of the purchase of leather, of trenching, and of the manner of cutting up hides, leading naturally to this.

#### MEASURING.

“It is their usual practice,” says the traveller, in Mr. Lover's characteristic novel of *Rory O'More*, “to take *measure* of their customers.” “Is it, then?” “It really is.” “See that, now!” rejoins Rory, with an air of triumph, “you would think that they were cleverer in the town than in the country; and they ought to be so by all accounts; but in regard of what I towd you, you see, w're before them entirely.” “How so?” said the traveller. “Arrah! bekase they never throuble in the country at all with takin' their measure; but jist go to a fair, and bring your fut along wid you, and somebody else dbrives a cart-load o' brogues into the place, and then you sarve yourself; and so the man gets his money, and you get your shoes, and every one's plazed. Now, isn't that betther then sitch botches as thim in Dublin, that must have the measure and keep you waitin'?”

The Irish peasant's opinion of the uselessness of measuring, it will be seen by this, is very strong; he thinks it an unnecessary trouble, and discovering great want of ability in the town shoemaker, seeing that he cannot carry on his business without it, as

is done in the country. Randle Holme, speaking of the divisions of the shoemaker's scat, says, “in the chief is the shoemaker's measure, by which he taketh the length or size of all feet, whether children, men, or women; the said measure being so made that it runs one piece into another, that the feet at each end coming together make one perfect shoe.” (Book iii. chap. 8, p. 349.) This “measure,” as he calls it, is the *size-stick*; fashioned formerly as he has described it, the two parts when closed together taking the semblance of the “perfect shoe,” though only one part is moveable, that which gives way for the admission of the foot, the other that catches behind the heel always remaining stationary. “The size of a shoe,” he says in another place, (book iii. chap. 3, p. 98,) “is the measure of its length, which is in children divided into thirteen parts, and in men and women into fifteen parts; the first of them being five inches long before it be taken for a size; when the shoe exceeds that length, every fourth part of an inch is taken for the size 1, 2, 3, and so forward to 13, which is called the boy's or girl's thirteens, or the short thirteens, and contains in length eight inches and a quarter, from which measure of eight inches and a quarter the size of men or women, called the long size or man's size, begins at 1, 2, 3, &c. to the number 15, each size being about the fourth part of an inch as aforesaid, so that the shoe of the long fifteens is in length twelve inches just. Some term it (he adds) a gauge, or shoe measure.”

This account is curious and true, and shows at least distinctly enough, that the English shoemaker, at the time our author printed his book, in 1688, had, despite the above quoted opinion of Rory's, a favourable belief in the utility of measuring, it being a common practice. We are told, however, of no other sort of measuring but that of the size, or length; and it is a singular truth, that up to about half a century

back, the general manner of taking the dimensions of the foot in its round was *by the hand*, the shoemaker grasping the foot of his customer from the bottom, and spanning over the joints, putting two, three, or more of his right-hand fingers between the opening at his left hand, or spanning fingers, and by which alone was he afterwards directed in looking out the proper last for a fit; or in giving orders to his journeymen what *filling* or *fitting-up* leathers he was to put in (block-lasts, or those divided under the instep, not being then in use), the journeyman having to carry home in his eye the girth of his master's fingers—a very uncouth and bungling method certainly. But at present this finger-fitting is wholly done away with; and besides the measure of the length, we are also now very careful to get the round of the foot, using for this purpose a marked strap, with the inches and all their divisions on it. or a long slip of paper, into which, as we measure, a small rent is made at each successive place, as an after reference. The first measure taken is at the toes, the second at the joints, and if for a short quarter or high vamp shoe, above the joints at the root of the instep. (See p. 64.) The length is then obtained by the size-stick, or, as some do, by the same strap or paper measure with which the thickness of the foot is had, bringing this measure from the lower part of the back of the heel round on each side to the tip of the great toe. Another method is, to take the whole bearing of the under part of the foot on paper, the customer pressing his foot down on a sheet laid before him on the floor, and the shoemaker drawing a pencilled outline of the shape, in its breadth as well as length; this system being altogether the best, as will hereafter be explained. When the foot is thus measured, some memorandum is usually taken, marking on either the order-book, the slip-measure, or on the sole-gauge, the different distinctions as

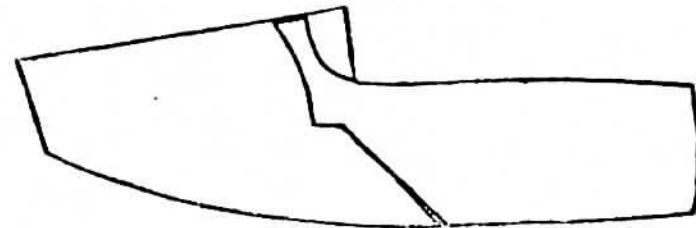
they have been found, the particular requests the customer has made, and your own impression of what you are to accomplish. The manner of this memorandum may run thus: April 21, 1840, Mr. Williams, 20, South-street, stout walking shoe, high or low vamp, square toe,  $4\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $8\frac{1}{2}$ , 9; that is, four sizes and a quarter in length measure eight and a half at the joints, and nine above the joints; other peculiarities of form or wish to be also noticed, and the time when wanted. They who use and preserve the strip-paper measure do not require this noting of the round of the foot, the paper itself being employed to fit up the last by; and when done with for the time—it being the measure of a regular customer—it is hung up in the shop on a nail, through a short slit cut at one of the ends, and thus preserved for any future purpose.

#### CUTTING OUT THE SHOE.

The measure taken as described, it is now to be referred to, and the shoes *cut out*.—Some cut out by the last, others merely by the eye or guess, and others again by pattern; but as the latter method is the safest, most methodical, and in every other way the best, I shall make use of it here.

The following is the outline of a

#### *Strong Walking Shoe:*



supposed as representing about ten sizes from heel to toe—and as from two to three sizes may be allowed

over the last, a shoe cut to this pattern will take a last called a *sevens*, or a little better. Shoe-uppers, however, need not always to be left full three sizes longer than the last; the greater thickness or lightness of the leather used, the manner of their closing, inside or out, or the form of the toe of the last itself, differently requiring more or less leather, as experience, assisted by observation, will teach.

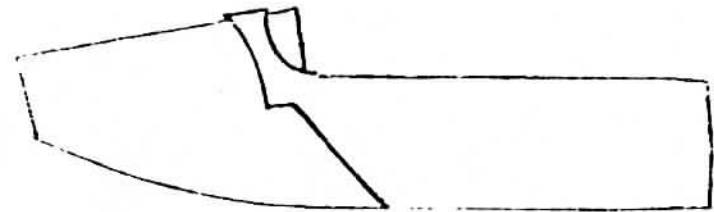
The lie, or *position*, as it is called, of this pattern on the board, ought to be carefully noted; for in the perfection of this the upper takes, as the term is, its *draft*, so that it will draw both well over the last in lasting, and in wear sit tight and neatly round the foot. An upper dipping lower at the bottom of the quarter and at the point of the vamp, more straightened along its under extent, and starting up under the ties, can neither be lasted easy nor well; nor, no matter what tightening in the binding it is afterwards put through, will the shoe ever sit handsomely along the sides of the foot. The lie here given is that of a medium; but where the last has any peculiar property in its direction from heel to toe, it must be the concern of the cutter to so adjust the bearing of his pattern as to fall in with this difference. A last of a less or greater fulness across the *joints*, or broader portion of the foot, or showing a more acute *spring*, that is, the forward part of the wood turning more direct up, must, it is evident, require an alteration or distinction of cut to the upper intended for the plainer forms of last. A narrower or wider vamp is only requisite in the first cases, and in the other a greater draft, so that the leather may catch in at the angle of the quarter ties, and not purse out and offer so loose a resistance to the pincers of the workman in taking the vamp over the last. The chief beauty of the shoe, when made and in wear, as also to the eye, depending on good cutting and on good lasting, it is here then to be remarked, how necessary it is to advise both

the employer and workman to a union of attention in this matter. Many an excellent workman have I known blamed without cause for some defect he had no power to remedy; while, again, many an ignorant or heedless one, has been as really culpable in his commission of error, where every thing had been prepared for him in the most proper manner.

A shoe, though generally considered the commonest article in the trade, is, notwithstanding, an article which very rarely discovers the perfection it is capable of being made to exhibit.—The form for the upper of a

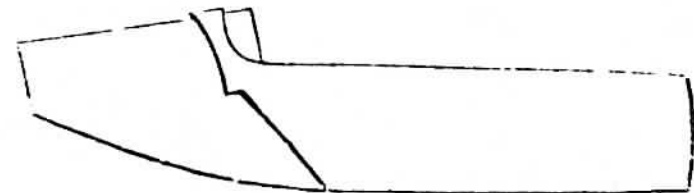
#### *Smart Walking Shoe*

may be thus given:—



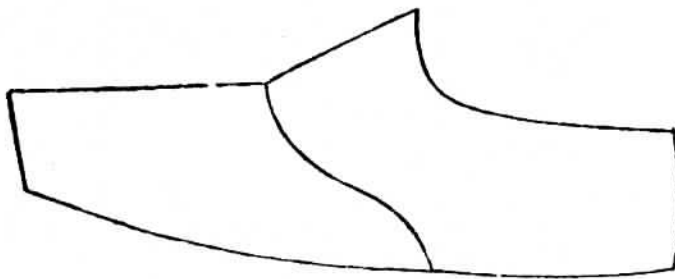
The next is for a long-quartered dress shoe, or a pump, though latterly the pump upper is often cut without ties, these being either attached after when made, or a ribbon run through the holes at the top of the vamp to knot over, and give the appearance of a fastening.

#### *Dress-shoe, or Pump.*



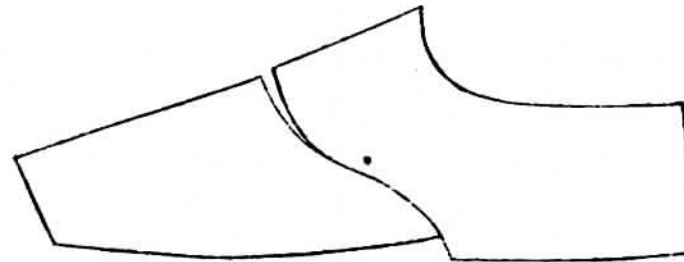
The reader will observe in this delineation the lower drop of the quarter where joining the vamp, the length of the quarter reaching beyond the greatest width of the foot; and, therefore, while a less depth of material is given, the opening from seam to seam is proportionably contracted. The thoughtless or inexperienced in cutting this kind of shoe, seldom have heed or knowledge of the contraction here required, and, as a consequence, the upper, when prepared in the usual way—except it may be in the difference of length of quarter—has no catch or hold over the last, and being dragged down at the side-seams into contact with the wood, the seams get nearly all drawn away, the shoe or pump at the entrance has no holding for the wearer, and in walking he is under continual apprehension it will drop from his foot.

*The Oxford, or Spencer-Tie Shoe,*



it will be seen, has, properly speaking, no *tie*, in the received acceptation of this term in the trade. It is a snug, compact article, lacing over the instep, and with a sweeping side-seam, offering something of taste or elegance to the eye. In cutting this sort of shoe it is a common fault to throw the whole front in

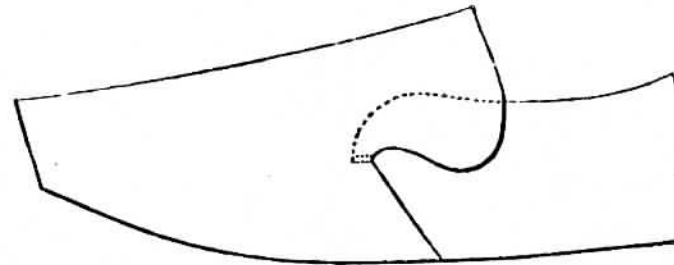
form of that of a boot-front, as the above pattern, differently placed, will explain;



the result being, difficulty in lasting and injury,—the better form, dropping easily and naturally into its place, and showing the same correctness on the foot. Another usual heedlessness, is that of cutting the instep part too straight (the other fault leading to this by the deception wrought on the eye), so that when laced over the foot the higher rise of the instep is left uncovered—a gap of half an inch, or in some cases more, being observed—a defect of a very unpardonable nature, seeing what a little degree of consideration is calculated to discover the remedy.

The next pattern, or outline—

*The Covered-tie Shoe,*



is one of but late introduction, from our inventive neighbours, the French; the dots on the falling part of the vamp showing the form of the quarter in the portion covered. Though called the

*covered-tie*, it will be observed, properly speaking, there is *no tie*. Two lines of stabbing bind the top of the seam at the angle. This shoe, though not very elegant, as seldom is the case in any deceptive adoptions, is, notwithstanding, a cheap and passable substitute for the boot—a contrivance of combined pride and economy.

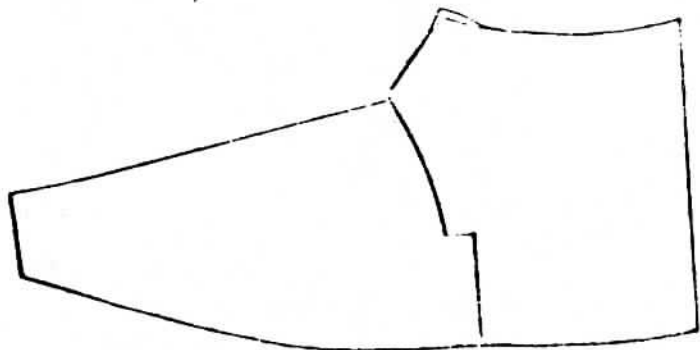
#### *The Gotoshe Shoe.*

The manner of forming the upper of the *gotoshe*, it is needless to represent. In the preceding part of "THE SHOEMAKER," (p. 44,) is noted the sort of leather employed for the quarter-piece; the vamp meets this at the corners of the heel: a tying is made over the instep, between which, and the bending of the foot, a portion of the vamp is hollowed out, to yield the freer entrance to the foot of the wearer (the straps being untied), as also, in walking, that the foot may have the easier play.

#### *The Gentleman's Slipper,*

it is not necessary to be particular about. It is for home—for the fire-side, having no ties, but with a loose flap coming over the instep; and if in its draft it be cut as directed in the shoe, no more is required.

#### *The Blucher Shoe,*



a name, by the bye, somewhat unaccountably acquired.

the first form of the Wellington being called the Blucher boot, reaching half-way up the leg and opening on one side, where was a strap that buttoned round. The fame of our native General, however, usurped that of the foreign, though for a time, during the stay of the Allied Sovereigns and the other distinguished characters who visited England after the peace of 1814, the honour was doubtful. But Blucher, returning at length to receive the congratulations of his own zealous country people, the alliterative appellation fell into disuse, and the battle of Waterloo next year giving a new *eclat* to our own hero, his name became now indissolubly attached to the article mentioned. Wishing, however, to continue some show of respect to our Prussian friend, we brought into fashion again the high shoe, or "high-low" as it was formerly called, and the cheapness of it, compared to the longer-legged boot, suiting the pockets of all the more needy class of leather-wearing gentlemen, it had great demand, and continues so to have.

The Blucher shoe is a prominent feature in all sale shops of the trade in London and country, being principally manufactured, along with other articles in demand, at Northampton, and Wellingborough, in the same county. It is useful and economic; and when cut out so as to sit with ease and closely round the ankle, has its share of merit. The back is made of one piece folded, there being no necessity to have a seam behind, for if thrown, in the manner of the pattern, sufficiently forward at the top, it will be found to sit neatly enough about the small of the leg. The laps in front are tied through two or three holes, with a leather thong, piece of black tape, or ribbon, the part there being lined at the inside to secure the strength of the holes,—though often the back is lined all through, and then there is no occasion for these facing or strengthening bits. Properly, the front be-

fore cutting should be turned on the block, though by the smaller shop-keepers it is common to make the turn by attaching a sort of tongue of a less perfect leather, and thus enabling themselves to get up the article cheaper.

#### *The Man's Cloth Boot,*

contrived with flaps to button, or to lace on the inside, is to be cut as hereafter will be described, in treating of the woman's boot. In general, and this is all the difference between the manufacture of the two, the lining is made of a stronger material for the man than for the woman—and the more especially when a strong article is demanded, as used for fishing, shooting, or for other kindred purposes. When, however, this boot is required as an object of dress, which in late years is often the case, it has either a prunella or a silk leg, and is lined with a fine linen.

Reverting thus to the lining, it will be recollected that nothing as yet has been said on this subject in connexion with any of the foregoing descriptions of shoe, the notice being purposely left to the present.

#### *The Lining for a Shoe,*

is made up of four parts—a *quarter-piece*, in general cut folded; two other pieces called the *side-linings*, to be joined to this at the ends, and to run along the sides of the vamp; and a *bur-piece* or facing for the vamp under the tying part. The *nils* or ties of the quarters have likewise their facing or strengthening bits for the tie-holes, these being pasted and stitched in by the shoe-closer.

Sometimes the bur and side-linings are cut all in one, a less saving though a better way—there being no overlappings to risk the hurting of the foot, or joinings, which may give way in the lasting, or in the wear. In pumps or dress shoes the quarters have mostly a silk lining also, the other of leather, soft

and in general very showy, being hemmed on this. Sometimes, however, the silk alone is used, a stiffening piece being wrought in behind between the silk and outside quarters. This, too, is a custom in making most shoes: the wearer otherwise being very liable to tread his heel awry.

The reader also may be reminded, that, in the above representations of the shoe upper, the seams at the sides are in all cases cut to take the *flat-seam*, as a means of greater neatness and less risk of pain to the foot of the wearer. In shoes, however, of a ruder sort, where the fit is not wanted to be so nice, the *stab-side-seam* may be admitted, or the seam closed in the clams, as noticed under the head of the shoe-closer. A very firm thread can be employed in either of these ways, and thus the work rendered more suitable for all the trying purposes to which the coarser shoe is applied.

As belonging to the clicking of the shoe, and in conclusion of the present head, a word may be here said of the *rounding*.

#### *Rounding the Shoe,*

as in the former part has been noticed, is the preparing it for the binder. This is effected after the article comes from the maker—the leather along the top edges of the quarters and across the vamps is pared to the requisite neatness; the appearance of both shoes made alike, the binding measured off, and the thing is done. Putting in the

#### *Seat-pieces,*

generally of some soft showy leather, fitted to and pasted within the heel parts, is the last knife operation the shoe undergoes, and takes place when it comes from the binder.

#### IV.—BLOCKING.—AND NEW MACHINE FOR, DESCRIBED.

Under the head *Trenching*, is given the appearance of the Wellington front when prepared for the *block*, the instrument on which the leather is to be moulded into the peculiar inward bend necessary to the boot, and whence the term *Blocking*. This instrument is of wood, the half-leg front measuring in general from sixteen to seventeen inches, and the foot part from ten to eleven. Along the whole shin and down the foot, it is brought to an edge, with the sharpness merely taken off, and should widen to the back parts to about two inches, though this is very seldom the case. Sometimes, also, *back-blocks* are used, and, till not many years ago, this was a common practice—particularly when the Hessian boot was in fashion—the stiff, thick material employed in the back part of the legs of these boots, with the necessary greater fulness to be given in consequence, compelling their use. This block, though having but little of the fulness here spoken of, is still employed in the establishments of Mr. Hoby, and a few others: its value, however, through the lightness of the leather at present cut up for the back of the boot, can easily be dispensed with, as a loss of no harm, as its service would be of no benefit. To save a sort of duplicate representation, the eye may pass forward to p. 72, where, in the front as it is blocked and laid out for cutting, the character of the front block may be observed, the leather, as it is taken off it, giving a faithful resemblance.

The art of blocking is originally Austrian, introduced into England some few years before the close of the last century. The vamp and leg parts of all boots antecedent to that time were made of separate pieces; but in the Austrian or Hessian boot of one

piece, curved into the requisite shape by a repetition of small rounded gatherings, which being neatly and regularly placed, polished, and secured on the inside from coming out or flying back again, were made an elegance. These pretty pipings, though for a period novel and therefore fashionable, became at length to discover certain demerits. Their beauty waxed old too rapidly; they got damaged in appearance, flattened, fell in on the flesh of the foot and gave pain—were spoken about, found fault with, and, finally, a change was compelled, either to some of the old fashions again, or to a better scheme of the new. Myers, a master shoemaker, in St. James's-street, a native of Germany, who had been induced to come to London, as he was patronized, by some of the Royal Dukes, began first to experiment in blocking without this wrinkling. Hoby, feeling the necessity for something of the same, almost as soon took the hint, and having an enthusiastic love of his trade, as well as spirit, watched the process from day to day under his own roof, and though a considerable quantity of leather was spoiled in these trials, still some fronts were made to do, and thus the Hessian without wrinkles established its reputation. Sixpence is about the general price paid at present for blocking a pair of Wellington fronts—for the backs, another twopence. For backs and fronts of the Hessian boot, it was a usual thing formerly to pay three-and-sixpence per pair! Blocking thus, as a matter of course, became one of the best remunerated branches in the trade to be employed upon; those who could do it, had, as it were, an heir-loom in their skill, and valuing their good fortune were no way eager to let others into the secret. One Turton, of London, a woman's shoemaker, and a very good one, and who also had acquired a knowledge of blocking from some relative, engaged, on application being made to

him, to go to Ipswich, to one Brett, a chief master there; this Brett having obtained a considerable order to furnish Hessian boots to the men of some horse regiment that then lay at that place; and as neither the master himself nor any other shoemaker of his acquaintance had the least knowledge of getting up this description of boot, through a total incompetency in the blocking, Turton was sought for and employed; the price stipulated for being that paid in London—three shillings and sixpence per pair, backs and fronts; and it is told, that, with the assistance of his wife and an apprentice, he furnished as many as three dozen pairs in a day—thus earning the astonishing sum of £6. 2s. for this extent of application, and with the aid mentioned. His gainings in this way being so great, he soon made a settlement in Ipswich, took a house, and, opening a grinder's shop, wisely prepared for the time when the art of blocking as a money consideration was fated to experience its vicissitudes. Something perhaps of a forecast of the same dropping off of income actuated another blocker in Dublin in these palmy times of the art. This workman had the tact to get the journeymen of the trade, in their capacity as a Union, to agree to and pass an interdict, forbidding any other person than himself, or those he might choose to employ under him, from doing any blocking! A sapient resolution, certainly, and telling very little to the credit of a gathering of voices, a fact in such cases too often to be lamented. In Dublin, blocking has been done of late years for not a tenth of the original demand. Numbers will push where the best feast is indicated; nor can one man bar out a thousand—the tide rises, and then falls the embankment!

These little reminiscences and bits of information it is to be hoped will be taken as they are intended. In a practical sense their value is nothing, though as an inkling of chit-chat, thrown in to give variety to detail,

and at the same time being german to the subject, their presence may be admitted. It is no good school where it is all spell! spell! and the teacher needs a change as well as the taught. The insect, too, has its history as well as the elephant, and could it but be told, it might be as edifying as that of the others. Besides, in every matter of positive utility it can be no harm to try to ingratiate, and as the heart is seldom won through the dogma of the lesson, the pleasanter method as a first trial may surely be adventured on. In being about, therefore, to draw the attention of the reader more seriously or rather more closely to the subject under notice, he will have, as I flatter myself, something to start him—a sort of speck of information which might otherwise be lost, and to which afterwards he may recur as one of the small *data* making up the whole of a humble existence.

Blocking, though a somewhat repulsive, irksome, and unsatisfactory process, is, withal, one of near interest. It may lead to a rather unpleasant dabbling in water—to dirty hands, and a greasy smutched face, but nevertheless it leads to perfection. A boot indifferently blocked can never be a good boot; it is a sort of foundation, and if not skilfully and firmly laid, the superincumbent leather is sure to expose the failure and bring to disgrace.

Mr. Rees' notice of blocking, is but a notice. He makes no complaint of its general faultiness—all he says about it may be transcribed in a paragraph, and here it is:—

“When blocking the legs, let them be first wetted in cold water; or, if the leather should be rather stiff to work, and you think that warm water will render it more pliable, let them be wetted in warm; but mind that the water be not beyond blood heat; otherwise, if it should be, it will scorch the leather, and render it of very little service. When laying the front of the boot-

leg on the block, mind that the first two tacks are put on each side of the block at the angle, and that the leg be strained across the instep. Then strain the leg (he means here, I should suppose, the vamp) down the foot, and up the leg to the shin, with tacks on each side, about an inch or two from each other, and work the folds in well at every tack, till you get it quite smooth as if there had been no fold, but one direct piece of leather."

Now, what is the learner to take from this? all, no doubt, that Mr. Rees knew, though, I am confident, not all he must have thought over as fearing himself deficient in. In the first place, no *warm* water should be used. If the leather be "stiff," it must be mastered by time and nerve, and not by a scheme. He who imagines at one time warm water to be a benefit, will be apt at another to try a warmer dip as a greater aid, and thus on, till, probably, he gets to scald all the virtue out of the leather. Neither should it be said, that the folds between the tacks are to be *worked in*: in good blocking, on the contrary, every thing should be *pincered out*: it is this "working in" but to *come out* again that is the bane of the art; judgment, care, plenty of tacks, and a fear when you are doing wrong that you are doing something that will tell thrice against you—in the closing of the boot, in the making, and in the wear—is the better advice.

It is somewhat mortifying to remark, that though we in England, encouraged by the impetus originally given by the elder Hoby, were the first to perfect and give universality to the present mode of blocking, we have not kept our ground. Certain circumstances, possibly, may have helped to this. Our trade since that time has had considerable inroads made upon it in the way of master-men. Where were capital, desire, and enterprise, as with Mr. Hoby, Messrs. Taylor and Dogget, MacNaughton, and Smith of Nor-

folk-st., Strand; Duncan of Edinburgh, and M'Cartney of Parliament-street, Dublin; there the blocking must have been necessarily well attended to, because in such establishments it must have been a fully regular and repaying employment. Masters getting more numerous, perhaps twenty or thirty to one—even in a far greater ratio than did the boot wearers—the custom became divided—each must have some share; and hence, as these shares individually to the majority were but of small amount, the ostensible or professed blocker got in great part superseded, few being able to employ him. The master in this condition became his own blocker, or his general assistant in the shop, and thus, the responsibility getting lessened, heedlessness took its place, till, as a general affair, blocking became a matter of hurry and hardship, all having a distaste for the repulsive work, and when compelled to it pushing through at a venture.

On the Continent, through some chance, the matter had a more fortunate turn. The currier took in charge what the shoemaker neglected or got weary of—he became the blocker, and made it his advantage. In his establishment it became altogether a separate occupation, a distinct and carefully regarded means of a livelihood, and as a consequence soon attained the standard of perfection. In the pamphlet on the boot and shoe trade of France, I have already urgently stated our overlookings in this way, and shown the lamentable result; and though in this matter and some few other particulars, I was so unfortunate as to have it thought and represented—and much, too, to my loss at the time—that the statements there introduced were calculated to injure, instead of being of service, still I knew very well that the apprehension was groundless, and that quite different effects would ensue. This has happened. The big bow-wow of clamour being over, and the sting of prejudice having shot itself, the

mind began to cool into discretion, and strike into the wholesomer belief. I may therefore now, under these more favourable circumstances, restate here such portions of this imputed matter of offence concerning our current purpose, as still has its value, and especially as the present little treatise will get into hands which the other had no chance of doing, and likewise as it will be kept longer before the world.

“ Another fact to be closely attended to (it is there said), is the one in the boot department, of our very inferior manner of blocking, or turning the front piece of our common Wellington boot; in this we are far behind our neighbours. Take up one of our boot-fronts so prepared, and compare it with a front coming from France, and the difference is as perceptible as lamentable. How stiff, how dead, and how forced, is the one; and how easy, moist, and elastic, the other. The first, to one unskilled in the operation, might seem to be baked, rather than gently moulded when wet into the position it has received; and then catch it by top and toe, and pull it ever so tenderly back, and lo! at once its crabbed beauty is gone; and though you may press, shove, or contract it again into something of its original form, still it can never be made to look the same thing as before. Now, do the like to the French front; nay, more, you need not pull it ‘tenderly,’ but at your might—apply your strength to the two extremes—force it, as it were, straight; and then, letting it go again, lay it on your board, and by a little application of the hand it will look nearly as well as ever—no puckering, no looseness, and still possessing the requisite curve.

“ Here is a great matter, a very great matter indeed. The English front so blocked, gets unplaced and ugly in the closing, in the making uglier, and in the wearing uglier still; it fits clumsy and hard, through the want of some little elasticity about the

instep; and when it is old, as seen in a cobbler's stall, how offensively gouty it appears, the leather lying in bolsters at the turn of the top part of the foot—in unsightly, ungainly, ridges—which render the boot altogether only fit to be thrown to the dogs.” (P. 34.)

In another place, the cause of this and the method of improvement is thus minutely set forth:—

“ In these countries the shoemaker is his own blocker; while in France, the *cambrure*, or blocker, is a person solely in the employ of the currier, fifteen or twenty hands being, in some large establishments, wholly engaged from day to day at this work, with a sort of overseer or master blocker, whose duty it is to take care that the procedure be properly done, he being the chief responsible party. Under this system, then, as may be supposed, the art in question has had more attention in all ways bestowed upon it, than among ourselves, and, as a consequence, has attained a much higher perfection.

“ The blocks themselves in France are of a better make, are considerably thicker at the back portions, or where the tacks are put in, and have not so much of round immediately beside or behind the front or blocking edge, and thus are they easier and better to be wrought on; this *roundness* impeding, as it does, the easy draft of the leather in the operation of the pincers, as also when the leather is being forced back by the pane of the hammer, the blocking-iron, or the stick. Again, these blocks are not near so wide either across the foot part or up the half-leg, as ours are; the French blocker uniformly putting his tacks in at the *under*, and not, as with us, on the *top* edge; and thus, there being nothing of those rows of tacks in his way, as is the case with the English blocker, he can give a full force to the use of his hammer-pane, blocking-iron, or stick, without any danger of breaking down a single tack, and thereby,

beside the injury to this particular article, often occasioning unsightly rents in the leather, and loosening, moreover, those parts of the work which had already been accomplished. Against all this the French blocker has easily and judiciously provided, and we must do so likewise. To effect this, however, thoroughly, we must bring in requisition *sets* of blocks, that is, if we wish to trench our leather for the fronts with economy, the smaller measure requiring the smaller piece of leather, and that again the smaller blocks, and the same in the larger, *vice versa*. This will be evident, and is important; for while we save in one case, we are enabled to give the proper sufficiency for the other, and thereby, in the latter instance, are not under the compulsion, in the cutting out of our boots, of leaving those fractures and holes up the side of the front, which are too often observed, and which not seldom are even dangerous, besides their offensiveness to the eye. So far, then, these precautions, though very useful, are very simple, being no more than having trenching patterns to the different necessary sizes, and blocks again to suit these trenchings, the smaller blocks being appropriated to the smaller front leg-pieces, and the larger and intermediate blocks to the larger and intermediate front leg-pieces, thus enabling the work to be done better, from the greater fitness of the instrument to its purpose; no leg-front in being put through the operation of blocking, either leading into difficulty or error from its wasteful abundance, or its confined poverty, two things which should be always avoided.

“The utility of *sets* of blocks, therefore, must be evident, as also our own general neglect in this particular. In many of our petty shops especially, two or three pairs of blocks are at most the usual complement in use; while in others, where there are more, these again are so heedlessly assorted—if indeed they be assorted at all—as to be scarcely of

greater advantage to the full purposes of blocking; besides, as before said, blocking with us is mostly but no better than a sort of job work—a pair of fronts being put on now and then either by a clicker or a cleaner up, or by the master himself; or the fronts are bought ready prepared as blocked by some one at the currier's; though these generally are more faultily blocked still, or rather merely *shoved in*, and then pasted up and thickly gummed over, so that the paste and gum, at the least application of the fingers, breaks and falls off; and thus, on closer inspection, discovers the really disreputable nature of the trick altogether, as well in the intrinsic character of the work itself, as in the worthlessness of the mask with which it has been decorated, cheating the eye by an appearance of beauty not at all stable, and by which also, probably, the most inferior sort of leather is sought to be palmed off as being of first-rate quality.

“Blocking, too, is often with us too much the affair of the moment—in all small shops especially. The order is given, the fronts trenched out, then hurried on the blocks, and probably afterwards suddenly dried before the fire—the stamina being thereby in many cases so scorched or burnt out of the leather, as to render the article when finished almost next to valueless.

“Now in the boots of the very lowest-priced shops of France there is never any fear of this;—this, however coarse or slight the materials, and the quality of the work, is nevertheless not to be feared; and, moreover, those very boots, from the simple fact of the higher perfection of the blocking there, than with us, have a *compactness* of look about them, which would put to shame some even of the highest-priced boots of our own manufacture, hanging in gibbets as they usually do, and as in wearing they still more woefully gibbet-like appear.

"It is highly essential, therefore, that something at all events should be done, in this particular, towards inducing an alteration for the better. As yet we have been in the dark—long and injuriously so; and the one or two French blockers now in London, sagely careful of their own interests, are, it seems, in no ways desirous to enlighten us with their knowledge. Working singly by themselves, and refusing to do otherwise, they leave us to our heedless and uninstructed ignorance, that they here, and their friends at home, may enjoy the longer and the richer benefit. Something, notwithstanding, may be done—aye, and much—and feeling, as I do, pride in being about to herald the way to this so earnestly-to-be-desired change, I hope my fellow-tradesmen will not be backward in seconding the effort, but make it each and all their endeavour to do better for the future.

"But to proceed with these instructions; and now to the more immediate process of blocking itself.

"The front, in the first place, is to be sufficiently wetted in cold water, and never, as is sometimes done, in warm or hot water—a foolish and most dangerous habit. A little soaking, and afterwards a short and brisk rubbing between the hands, with an occasional dip or two, will do for this purpose. On being thus wetted, it is to be doubled and laid on a board, and there drawn out with the pincers as much as possible at the two heel or joint corners, as also at the front-top of the leg, in an upward outward position. After this it is to be strained, somewhat in the way a jockey-boot tongue is strained, though in a contrary direction, the straining hand in this case being the *left* in place of the *right*—that is, the downward or foot part is to be endeavoured to be turned, instead of the upward or the leg part. The straining leather or cord will be fastened or tacked down, therefore, at the *top* of the front; and as a

stronger exertion will be here requisite in pulling with the left hand, it may be proper to recommend as a help to this, that a piece of cross stick or other holding be attached to the end of the strainer, so as to command a greater power while in the act of yielding as much curve to the leather at the instep part as may be possible; though this, at the best, will be no great deal. Such curve, however, as shall be gained this way, will be highly serviceable, and much expedite the after process. When this is done, the fellow-front, or series of fronts, are to be done so by likewise, and then the blocking may commence.

"On beginning to block, the curve of the front is to be taken in the right hand, and placed directly over the curve of the block; then the two corners are to be forced with the fingers as far out as they possibly can be got, and next slightly pincerd out and tacked down, at or near the block corners, each corner with two or more tacks, as may be seen in all French blocking.

"The instruments or tools to be used are, besides the pincers, only two:—one is a sort of wooden rasp, with rounded back, made often by the workman himself, the teeth blunt, and standing at about a quarter of an inch from each other; the wood of a fine, smooth, and hard description, and the length of the tool altogether being from fourteen to sixteen inches, the rasp portion extending to about ten inches in the middle, and the two untoothed ends used as the handles. Sometimes, also, a circular notched stick, made by the turner, is preferred by certain blockers, though I believe the other kind is thought the best by the best workmen, the top portion serving occasionally as a sleeking, or what in the trade is technically called a *long-stick*.

"The other tool or instrument, is the blocking-iron or *blocking-knife*, with a heavy deep handle, the

whole width of the hand, and cased at each end with a plate of steel, to serve as a hammer in striking in the tacks, it being no matter how the tool in the hurry of work may be taken up, each end equally serving the purpose; the *knife* or under part is of a blunt edge, and in depth about two inches, and near upon four inches wide, with rounded corners.

“The working bench of the French blocker ought also to be described: this rises a little above his knees as he sits at work, and upon it he keeps his tacks, pincers, wooden rasp, and blocking-knife; it has a sort of front ledge, between two and three inches in height, nailed or otherwise fastened on, at about the same distance from the near edge of the bench itself, against which the workman lays his block for a support, in the various necessary directions, the purchase or hold he thus gets over it giving him a much greater power in the use of the stick just described, than otherwise he could command.

“With these tools, then, and being thus placed before this kind of bench, the blocker may proceed. He has already fastened his corners, after which, by the action of his fingers, he may ease and work back the leather on both sides the block as well as he can, using occasionally his knife or his rasp, though yet to no great effect; two tacks at each side the vamp, at its fullest part, may then be put in, and next, after a little more working of the rasp or knife, one tack at each side, above the turn on the leg; the top of the front is now to be drawn up to its proper extent (which practice will better teach than any description), and then at both sides tacked, as also with one tack at the middle or fold, or one tack at each side the fold; the latter the preferable, as being the firmer method.

“The front being thus, in these different places, temporarily secured, namely—at the corners, the foot,

and the top—the wrinklings or foldings of the generally pury leather are next to be conquered. And now it is that the rasp is brought into efficient operation; being taken between the two hands, and pressed downwards and crossways on each side the block, bruising, confining, and flattening the wrinkles into smaller dimensions, the higher portion of the stick, where are no notches, to be occasionally rubbed over or along the block at its front angle, to keep the leather here level and clear. The blocking-knife is next to be employed, to force these wrinkles to their utmost, or entirely from observation.

“Much art and care, however, are required in the working of this tool, as inducing to one of the principal perfections of good blocking. In England, we generally, for this purpose, take the pane or flattened end of our hammers, and force each wrinkle heedlessly in a *direct* line to the position of the working hand—either across, above the turn, from the angle to the sides, or downwards, below the turn, right towards the toe, and to the tacks we put in along the lower part of the block;—but in France they have discovered the better system. The French blocker holding the edge of the block to his person, as it lies on his knees, and the foot to the right and the top part to the left, pressing inwards to his side, he, in the first place, begins with his knife at the *turn*, and forcing the wrinkles in a sweeping or outward semicircular direction, pincers and tacks out the edges as he proceeds, for the space of about three inches; then turning the block, he does the same by the other side. He next begins with the wrinkles on the foot or vamp portion, giving likewise the curving direction to the action of his hand, commencing at the turn and making the sweep of about four inches in extent, less or more, according to the length of the foot of the block. In no case does he press

the wrinkles right down the foot, and only makes use of the tool in forcing right across the foot when the wrinkles have disappeared, and he is about to pincer the lower portion of the vamp leather to its utmost extent.

“ There is another operation which he performs in his blocking, that is never practised in England, and which, besides, is of the most positive utility. Before the blocking of the leg and foot parts be entirely finished, he draws his foot tacks; and taking the leather at the extreme end in his pincers, there forces it over the toe at his utmost power: the effect of this being, that when the front comes to be taken off the block, the high state of tension it has been put through will give it, on being pulled back, that extraordinary degree of tightness at the turn, which is so very remarkable a feature in the superior character of the French to the English blocking; and which also, even through the making and the wearing, it uniformly is observed to retain, conferring at once a beauty and a perfection of the most necessary description.

“ It is needless, I think, to amplify more on this matter, or to tell here of such simple things as all should, at the least, be already well aware of, namely—that in blocking, the tacks should be put in regularly, each tack as opposite to its fellow-tack on the opposing side, as may be possible; and that all soft, flabby, or foul leather, should be carefully drawn out, even to the top; that in cuts opening out at the edges to the eyes of the blocker in the time of his occupation, he should make it his endeavour to do the best by these he can, helping the good leather as far as he may over to the side of the damage, so that, in the cutting out of the boot, these blemishes may be taken away. It seems to be needless to state these matters, or to caution about them, though one direc-

tion I must add as being of considerable value. This is, that when the boot-front is blocked as before described, and yet in its wet state, a portion of that sort of grease called *dubbing*, should be, in all cases, rubbed along the sides of the foot or vamp part; but not such dubbing as may be bought at our curriers' shops, raw and innutritious as it is; but dubbing made from a mixture of the best tallow fat and good oil, an article which, I have been told by a person closely connected with one of the most extensive currier's establishments in Paris, is a chief means to the production, in the dressing, of that superior fulness and softness in the French leather over our own; and if so, or even but partially so, how lamentable it is that a remedy of such trivial cost should so culpably be overlooked, our thin and rank stuffing oozing out at the blocking, and in the wear, like mere water, and leaving the meagre starved leather to fret, harden, and perish, long before its proper time, not only to the loss of the consumer, but to the constant mortification of the shoemaker himself—the still blamed, though in this case the still innocent party.” (P. 36—45.)

As an excuse, where blame seemed untenable in controverting the main truths of these observations, it was, and is still, alleged by some—But the French have the better and easier wrought leather? Well! and why is this? and cannot improvement be enforced here also? Again, it is said—But it is their habit to block when the leather is in a partially raw or uncurried state;—and cannot we do the same? Doubtless this is an advantage, and yet not so much so as may be imagined. The French do not always do this, but, as the master-shoemaker does here, leather is bought in its complete marketable state, trenched out as suits the purpose, and blocked as it is with ourselves. I have seen, too, blocking lately

done in London as well as it is possible to do it; and many years ago there was a man in Glasgow, whose skill in the line was of the very first order—he had perceived the utility, and prided himself in the performance. When any art whatever is frowned on, or is let drop into a general neglect, the resuscitation is difficult; it is not, however, impossible; and to those living by any such art, and who thus ought to honour it, this resuscitating is a most imperative duty; it is more—it is a *necessity*: others will advantage themselves by the error, and, in taking away the repute, take also away the reward. He who minds not his own oven must expect a diminishing of his loaf, and then a little meal and misery are but indifferent companions.

Besides, formerly we *did* block—boots with silk legs were then blocked, a thing at present no one might be willing to attempt. Satin, black, and other colours, were actually turned as leather is now. An old man of the name of Thomas—old many years ago, and no doubt long since dead—had been a famous hand in this way in his time. He had been in France during the Consulate of Bonaparte, was welcomed there, and when he came back was still as welcome here. The way I remember he said this was done, was as follows: The silk or satin had a lining of soft sheep-skin, blocked first; this was then coated with a delicate glue or paste, and the satin wrought over. For cutting out, the silk was turned back from the edges, and the lining cut as required, the thread remnant being left to be drawn to the inside, and closed in by the closer, as a security against its afterwards ravelling or breaking from the seam. This boot possibly may come in vogue again, and these hints be useful.

In going over this article on blocking, I find nothing said of the Wellington half-front, though now a few words may be added. It is usually blocked

on the Wellington block, but a shorter one would be more convenient and better. The manner of blocking these fronts in England is in general even more defective than in blocking the whole front—more foul leather gets about the neck, the neck not being kept up. With the short front block this can be helped; the neck can be tacked up over the top of this, and thus the length kept from running down. When so much loose leather is let fall into so short a space the evil must be great, and is so, our footed boots generally discovering more bagginess about the heel than our new ones.

I may also subjoin a few words on the blocking of the patent-tongue or vamp for the dress Wellington. This is somewhat difficult to do; and is effected on a sort of half or tongue-front, designed for the purpose, as in the last instance. The leather at the neck or turn is, in the first place, to be delicately and thickly slit with the knife, then being wetted, to give as much freedom as possible, the vamp is to be carefully placed, tacked, and wrought over the block, till the greatest smoothness is given to it at the turning part, though at the best some slight wrinkles may be still observable. To turn these vamps of varnished leather is accounted a great difficulty in almost all country places, and in consequence the leather-seller gets them generally prepared from the larger houses he deals with as a help to his customers, though, as may be supposed, the service costs dear enough.

A *blocking machine* has been lately introduced into London by a French inventor, who had been a master-shoemaker in Grenoble, but has since established himself in Paris in this new line of business, and has now opened a branch of the same in the neighbourhood of Regent-street. For the machine he charges £70. It looks simple. Two upright supporters standing some six feet, and measuring

from side to side about two and a half, holds two perpendicular cast metal planes, through the opening between which a thin sliding block of brass presses down, worked by a hand crank, the leather being placed over the entrance, and the descending force carrying it through. As the sliding block bears the usual curved form of the common wooden one, closing evenly over the lower frame, it thence is passed downwards in the nipping groove, and thus the leather being spread over and bedded round it, the necessary curve is transferred to it. The block with the leather attached having passed through, it is slipped out by the hand from below, and if requisite can be put through again, as is sometimes the case, when the leather is of stubborn nature. To give, however, the workman-like finish, the front, before it dries, is afterwards put on the wooden block, and there tacked down at the corners, and cleaned off with a shining size. I am informed that two men working at a machine of this sort can execute as much labour as eight or ten men employed in the usual way—the one wetting and putting the leather through the compressing process, and the other finishing off. Mr. Simon, the inventor, has set his prices at 7*d.* per pair for pairs given in singly, and at 5*s.* the dozen. This rate, however, will, no doubt, soon come down. An Englishman in the same neighbourhood has put up an opposing machine, though of much similarity, and as the work when done proves satisfactory, and the trade patronizes, others will start, and probably hand-blocking in all large places be wholly set aside.

The excellence, however, which has been claimed for this machine, is yet unestablished; and I have doubts whether this sort of working can ever be made to equal that done by the hand; though, as a means of a great saving of labour, and that of a disagreeable kind, it deserves a fair and patient trial.

## V.—THE MAN'S BOOT.—MEASURING FOR, AND CUTTING OUT.

MEASURING FOR THE BOOT—THE TERM CLICKER, AND OF CLICKING—CUTTING THE WELLINGTON—HESSIAN—CLARENCE—CROSS-TONGUE—DRESS WELLINGTON—OPERA—TOP-BOOT—MILITARY, HOLDERNESS, AND THREE-QUARTER—NEW-TONGUE.

The matter again claiming notice is deserving of the utmost attention. The Boot is an expensive article—the material and workmanship coming high; many will never venture to make it; many cannot make it; while, again, many of those who both venture and make, know little of the perfection it requires and can be made to receive.

At present we are emphatically a booted people; so are the French and the Americans: the fashion goes onward with the great progress of civilization; it is, as it were, its very sign. Homer has applied to his own far-famous countrymen the epithet of the *well-booted Greeks*, a somewhat singular coincidence at first sight, though doubtlessly he meant no more than some sort of stiff leg-covering as a protection necessary to the warriors of whom he sang, and bearing no likeness to the gay delicate boot of later times. The fame of the English in this way is not, however, altogether new; though from what the present generation must have observed, since the introduction of the Wellington, it may seem otherwise. We were, it appears, a booted people before, or at least were so considered. "I will amaze my countrymen," said Gondemar,



(2), as also for a top-boot; the other line (3), passing round immediately above the calf, is for the same kind of boot, many gentlemen requiring the top to catch in there, at the first inclination of the ham. The line *c c*, round the small of the leg, marks the place of measuring for the man's cloth, or the woman's boot. For the boot called the Clarence, reaching a little higher, only a slight difference is needed, as will be explained when speaking of the cutting.

All this, it is hoped, is sufficiently clear: the eye will at once observe the method; and if only care be taken to carry the right lines from the figure to the actual member, the result so far must be certain. The young tradesman must go on one knee, take the customer's feet directly before him, and proceed measuring and noting, recording in his pocket order-book with his pencil the distances at the respective places, his tape-measure showing this; or if using a paper slip measure, nipping the spot for the different tears, lest a miss or slide in the fingers should lead to an error. In placing and holding the measure round the parts, the same degree of handling ought to be made use of invariably, neither yielding nor catching; nor should the measurer in this ever submit to his customer, to tighten it, or to loosen it, as he may desire: *one* way is the only safe course, and ease or pressure can afterwards be given, according as may be sought or judged the most prudent.

Another advice in taking measure may be given; and which is—to guard against the double vanity of a too great haste to show ability, and a mannered sloth to be thought careful. It is better to be slow and sure than to risk reputation and your leather; as, again, it is wiser to be *actually thinking* of what you are about, than busied dreaming of what may be *thought* of you. A slight move of the hand, heed-

lessness of eye, or drowsiness of attention, may occasion drawbacks not at the time to be imagined, and not easily got over.

#### THE CLICKER, AND OF CLICKING OR CUTTING.

We now come naturally to the various nice and responsible operations of the knife, as far as the varieties of the man's boot are concerned. Having, as it were, began our practice on the shoe, as already treated of, this will come in as a middle duty—our fronts blocked, and our other leather beside us—and when gone through, giving us confidence to turn to the more delicate wear of the woman.

In London, the class of persons called cutters or *clickers*—men's and women's—are a numerous body. A trade directory I have seen, attempting to be particular without knowledge, has, if I recollect exactly, set the amount down as no more than fifteen, whereas there is scarce a shop in London of any standing or character whatever but has its clicker—in some cases, three or four; nay, in certain of the large wholesale or order manufacturing establishments, there may be in one house as many, if not more, hands employed than so stated above. The term itself, clicker, it may be interesting to remark upon. “Clicker, to *click* or *cluck*,” Baile says in his Dictionary, “as shoemakers do at their doors.” Hence, therefore, we may guess the reason of the name—these shopmen being, no doubt, formerly employed either to cut, clack (from the French, *claquere*), or sell, as needed—soliciting custom from the passers in the street in times when the most people were abroad, and at other times engaged with the knife or the size-bowl—Day and Martin's blacking not then being in existence. A Shoemaker's clicker or clacker, thus came the name; offering another among the many instances of the strange adhesive quality of words to things and

callings outliving the desuetude of by-gone manners. The shell remains, though the life is vanished, and where unhappily we forget the burial, we are left but to conjecture of the species.

Among the clickers in London there has long been established a society giving aid in sickness, and a certain sum to defray the funeral expenses at the death of a member. The other objects of this union, unlike those of the journeymen, have nothing to do with the wages-worth of the parties united. Each is at liberty to agree as he best can, or may choose; sometimes as the chances of life vary, getting from two to three pounds per week, and others scarce one pound. Ability, too, has some effect in this, though not so much as might be expected, mere address or assurance often superseding the more valuable qualities.

Another of the useful practices of this society is that of keeping a record of the wants of its members: those out of employ have their names set down in a book kept for the purpose, and masters applying to the secretary are by this means often suited. Also, such advertisements from both town and country employers as repeatedly appear in the public papers are, likewise, through this means, attended to, the partially out-door position of the clicker, in comparison with the home-seat worker, leading to much better chances of a knowledge of these, than the same system could effect for the latter. At present, through various causes which it would be out of one's province here to particularize, the journeyman has much of disagreeableness and degradation to bear with in this way; he goes round from shop to shop, showing as a specimen of his abilities a piece of work which is seldom his own, and the master knowing this, accordingly treats the applicant with very little respect; and yet, after all, it is mostly by this means he at any

time takes on a fresh hand. Thus a sort of twofold evil is encouraged; suspicion on the one side breeds an offensive contempt, and duplicity on the other is continued.

As having relation to this subject, the following passage may be transcribed from one of Montaigne's Essays:—"My whilome father," he writes, "a man who had no help but from experience and his owne nature, yet of an unspotted iudgement, hath heretofore told me, that he desired to bring in this costume, which is, that in all cities there should be a certain appointed place, to which, whosoever should have need of any thing, might come and cause his business to be registered by some officer appointed for that purpose; as for example, if any one have pearls to sell, he should say, I seek to sell some pearls: such a man would fain have a companie to travell to Paris; such a one enquireth for a servant of this or that qualitie; such a one seeketh for a master; another, a workman; some this, some that; every one as he needed." (*Florio's Trans., London, 1613, p. 111.*) This at present in Paris is exactly done for the shoemaker—a bureau as thus recommended is there instituted; the officer who has the direction being supported through the means of the small fees paid by those to whom he gives the address of such employers as may want to employ, and who almost invariably make their engagements through this source.

Having often thought of the evil here noticed in the absence of such an institution amongst ourselves, and now thrown out this hint of a remedy, it may be proper, moreover, to strengthen the recommendation by the remark, that I believe such a scheme would be most welcome to every well-meaning employer—those who would fain look upon man as a man, no matter on what step of the ladder of life he may be placed, the one nearest the ground, or on any other.

Besides, if it has worked and still works reputably for the clickers of both the old and new societies—for there are two of them—why may it not be tried for the seats-man? for, really, what can be more trying and painful to a worthy and sensitive mind than the trick of carrying a new-made shoe or boot, or a closed boot-leg, from shop to shop, through a whole district of streets, still hopelessly asking for work, and still on being questioned telling the specimen he shows is his own, though the individual he solicits sneers and believes it not. It is a custom, but a bad one; and thinking it but right to expose it, and make these observations, I have done so; and should be glad they might induce to something more worthy.

The trade altogether might be in many a way improved; but as it is more my present obligation to give sinew than surface, the tool to labour with rather than the gild to set off, I must now keep again to my more immediate purpose, and proceed through the science of cutting. The reader, however, though using this term, should be told even now that there is nothing ostensibly arbitrary in this so-called science; and, indeed, here is the chief difficulty connected with every branch of the shoemaker's art. It can, in no one particular, to use a plain phrase, be compassed and squared; as a whole, it may submit to some general proportions, but in the ever shiftingness of its parts, the manner of adapting or working out these, is quite another affair. Hence the folly and even mischief of those *skeleton* teachers, who go about the country with their prepared patterns—things which may *look* but cannot *reason*, showing a door but giving no way of entrance. I remember when a youth being so disappointed. In the Painted Hall at Greenwich, on the left as you enter, there is a sort of vision trap. You see, as you think, a doorway, and the light coming through the glass casement

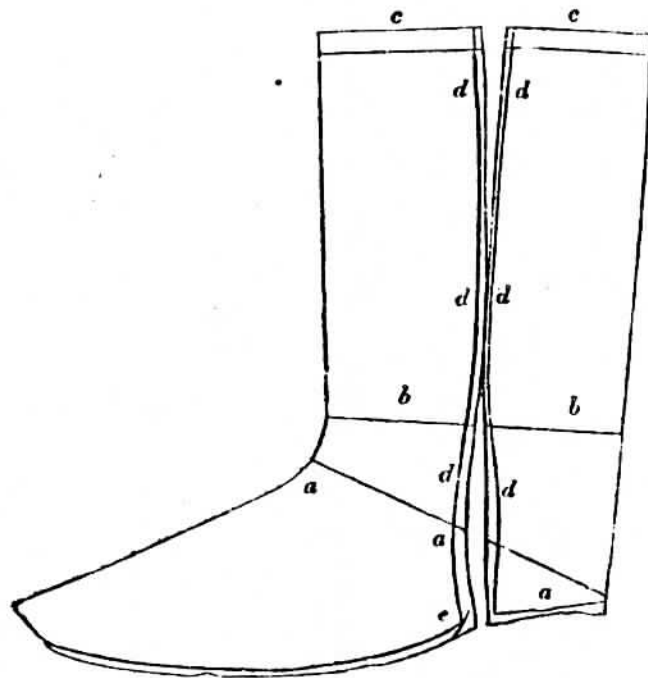
above as from the open air: a key hangs from a nail; the spot on the door round the key-hole has been roughened as it were by the repeated rubs it received in the iron searching for the hole. Nothing is more plain—you conceive you neighbour upon a garden, stand, gaze, and wish; and thus enamoured into certainty, the complaisant door-keeper bids you go. You do so; snatch the key hastily from its hanging, put it—but where? there is no admittance; it is only after all a thing of paint, of appearance. The same by these science teachers; with a few battered rags, wrought to a pulp, pressed, and bleached into a half-pennyworth of paper, they will form you a something which will neither alter to your measure, nor assort with your leather; and then, should it be questioned as to the dilemma, it can say nothing, the seller is gone and his tongue with him. The reader, therefore, having this caution, must not expect to be qualified by this easy eye-knowledge. But of this I shall soon further explain.

#### CUTTING THE WELLINGTON.

The following is a Wellington front and back, the first as it comes from the block, flattened a little; and the latter, stretched, and folded for the knife, the open form of both being shown in the diagram of trenching, p. 26.

The measure of the boot we are now about to cut, we will suppose to run thus: *Instep*  $9\frac{1}{2}$ ; *Heel*  $12\frac{3}{4}$ ; *Calf*  $14\frac{1}{2}$ . The length of foot may either be taken as a sixes or sevens, a matter of little consequence, the leather of the vamp not being trenched to such nicety; it is better left long enough, the blocking in cases leading to considerable differences.

The marks along the bottom will define the supposed cutting for the last; those up the side edges for



the leg measure. The way we proceed is this. We look out our last in the first case, and try our vamp to it, seeing what is to spare, or if it may be deficient. If any thing to spare, by pressing the leather in our hand round the wood we notice it, and with our knife take it off on the board. We cut in the same way the under part of the back to suit with this. The foul tack edges of the front are then cleared away, giving as near as possible the form the whole side is designed to exhibit. The back is now drawn forward in its upright position, the measure put aslant the heel, *a a*, at about a quarter of an inch from the bottom of the back; then direct across, *b b*, from fold to fold, where the heel of the wearer, in going on or coming back, has its passage. The width of the calf,

*c c*, is then observed, and the lines *d d* drawn downwards, and cuttings made in the direction. The superfluities of the front and back being thus cleared from the rest, both portions can now be brought more readily together, the swelling parts towards the middle touching, and the top and lower parts receding considerably.

The measure is now again applied, first to one part and so on, and if any portions are yet to come off, they are so cut. When the back is blocked, as has already been noticed under the head blocking (p. 44), the appearance will not exactly be the same as with the unblocked back, the slight degree of fulness in the blocked back, as thrown from above the heel upwards along the fold, leading to a straighter direction of the sides. After these general instructions, it may now be more particularly explained how the measure should be observed, and the cut of the boot shown in its properties and elegance.

The instep, as has been said, is  $9\frac{1}{2}$ ; heel  $12\frac{3}{4}$ ; calf  $14\frac{1}{2}$ . The instep may be cut to either last or measure. Where the boot is to be narrow-waisted, more leather will be required than when fuller; this in the first instance must be allowed. In the one case, nearly the whole depth of the instep, that is, about four inches and a half of leather in the double, will be required; while in the other, four inches will do, or less. In France, the master seldom meddles with these parts at all. The maker there, being his own closer, in a sort of first lasting, when he has closed the sides up, and turned his leg, sees how his leather suits, and trims it accordingly to the requisite dimensions; and also by this gets a sort of guide for the nice depth of his feet linings. In England, this opportunity is not allowed, and hence the necessity for the greater care, so that the maker may have material enough to come properly up to his in-seam; while the

lining falls handsomely along the vamp, being neither too high nor too low. A short angle cut at the under corner of the front, as marked in the diagram, *e*, when the waist is to be hollow, will allow a portion of leather to be made serviceable in this particular. One thing however is to be noted, depth is not to be admitted to the production of another fault. A customer with a very low instep may require a narrow waist,—in which case the eye or the immature judgment may be deceived. To suit such a foot, the leather is generally over abundant, yet still no more than the mere positive quantity is to be allowed. For instance, should the heel be cut to a too great depth of vamp, the last when wrought on, though the proper size across the heel, will have no catch whatever over the instep, and thus both difficulty and mischief be produced. The maker has to wet, strain, and rub down the too much leather—as also to drop unduly and injuriously the seat of his last deeper up the counter, and thus in all ways have trouble and proceed in error. It is here also the linings are made to suffer, perhaps nearly all to be sewed away. Besides, the boot when made will now be too much straightened in the heel—sit badly, be difficult or impossible to get on. This caution, if recollected and attended to, will be useful.—Now of the leg again.

In cutting to the heel measure, I should advise as a general principle, that the measure be exactly abided by, taking your line from the instep angle to a little above the bottom of the back part of the back. Where the blocking of the front has been loose, the cut may be tightened; as also where the leather is very tender, or strong and ungainly, a greater allowance is to be made. Cutting above the heel, *bb*, for a stout boot, or for some wearers, the whole extent of the heel measure may be given; while, again, for a light boot, with well-conditioned lively back, and

where the customer wants and likes a *strain*, a boot may go on and come off again if cut from half an inch to an inch under the measure. Likewise, where the instep is high, a boot will go on with a less extent than where the instep is low, the heel of one person being as long as the other.

The calf is to be cut exactly as measured for; and the length, with the allowance of about half an inch for the loss occasioned by the maker in sewing in. The inward inclining portions, *d d*, in both front and back, downwards from the direct heel measure, need likewise an observation. The front, as will be perceived, has a little more of this than the back. The cutting the boot so, gives as well beauty as perfection. It fits and holds neat and handsomely round the ankle parts when on, and will not bag, look ugly, and hurt there, which, without this expedient, the manufacture of the uninformed tradesman is sure to do.

Another remark may be added. The back in its width from fold to edge upward, should always have a slight advantage over the front so seen; and at bottom should be continued so that the seam may be wrought in about the commencement of the heel. It keeps its place, and looks better this way. With the injudicious short heels, however, which some customers require, the proportion of beauty gets endangered should this rule be strictly followed; under such a necessity the seam may come beyond the heel. In the Wellington boot, the seam when properly directed, will always appear to run up and down in a straight line. They who curve in the back more than the front in cutting, can never get this; therefore when the edge of the front has received its proper form, it may not be amiss for those whose eye may not be sufficiently faithful, or who are doubtful for want of practice, to place the front on the back to act as a sort of guide. The little necessary difference they

will afterwards easily know how to make. Another remark. As front is cut over front, and back over back, there must be much carefulness practised in keeping the line of evenness. I have oftentimes known great differences between boot and boot through heedlessness in this particular—one to go on, and the other to refuse. This disappointment, too, may sometimes lie with the customer—his legs and feet may be of a different size.

The reader now who has followed me so far may be reminded, in his retrospect of much of these instructions, of what already has been said of the utter impossibility of mere patterns being of such service as is needful even to the most confined scope of practice. They are indeed a harm instead of a good. Like laws too harsh to be obeyed, and yet sanctioned in their immutability, they more distress than benefit: attempt to conform, and we find it impossible; nature cannot yield to them nor will they yield to nature; and so with less things. Out of matters having scarcely any generalities, we indolently generalize a science, it being easier to go round and round in a circuit of heedlessness, than to be put to the pains of searching out the sharp and lurking defects. Even in preparing the inward leathers of the boot-leg, there can be no general rule; some wearers will need a very stiff counter; others, a much more yielding one; some a high one, others a low one. The same by the linings—the same in every thing. The shoemaker must think and practise, and practise and think. With certain directing ideas, a comparing head, and steady hand, he may go on, vary, and succeed; but wanting these, he can be no more, no matter how sharp his knife, than a mere spoiler of leather.

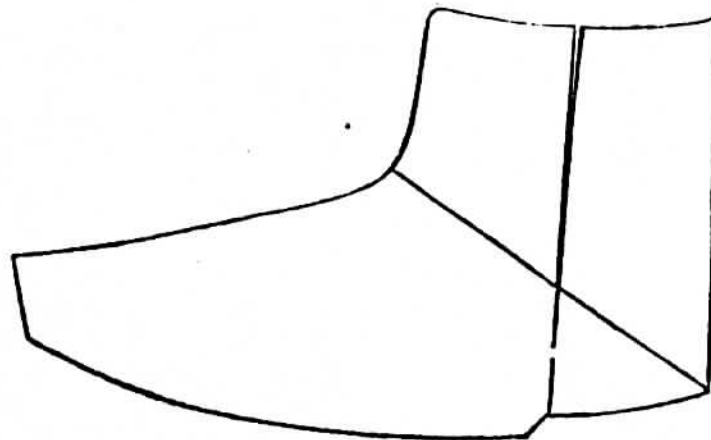
## THE HESSIAN,

in a sense, being parent to the Wellington, requires very little notice: give the latter a stiff and somewhat swelling back, a different form of top, a tassel, and see it put over a tight pantaloons, and you have the Hessian. This boot is so seldom seen at present, that when ordered of any of the less experienced in the trade, they hardly know how to proceed, their chief apprehension being about the top. These tops fall from a rising twofold peak, at the head of a slit or niche over the shin-bone, and in their day of fashion had considerable variety; as also had the tassels which hung dangling from the root of this niche. Before *rights and lefts* came in demand, the slit and style of top were cut on the centre of the front, and as the half width of a man's leg outward to the shin-bone is greater than that inward, this manner of cutting led to an inelegance, the niche and the part it should fall upon not asserting. Nor in the straight-footed boot could this be remedied. With the right and left, however, the thing was soon altered. One side was then temporarily bent against its fellow side, a little less inward, the niche made, and the sweep given, by which, when on the leg of the wearer, the niche not only fell in the right place, but the two rounded tops had exactly the same appearance. These tops were generally bound round with a silk cord, the employment of women, which paid extremely well,—and for particular occasions, they were sometimes decorated with gold or silver fringe. Another method was what was called *velting and stitching*, for which the closer received an additional two shillings a pair—the welt being a thin strip of leather closed through to the top, the loose edge placed between the lining, and a row of stabbing passed round.

This boot we may expect to come into use again, when some fashion-former of the day, having a fine calf and thigh, and wishing to keep them in sight of the world, will cast away the loose trowsers, and, if he must wear boots, wear only such as will show the fair proportion of his limbs. We may further observe, that the boot thus spoken of as having pretensions to the chances of a revival, has, in its general form, a much older date than that of the Hessian of the close of the seventeenth century. The same outward character may be detected in the representations of the ancient costume of the Phrygians; and, again, in Brown's Travels, some hundred and fifty years ago, I find it on the figure of a noble Hungarian; and hence probably its introduction into Austria and Germany in general. Just before the death of Byron, 1824, in complaining of Count Gamba's extravagance, the Hessian boot is one of the articles mentioned; thus showing, and so lately, its return towards its Eastern place of birth.

#### THE CLARENCE BOOT.

The Wellington is, as we have said, a sort of stunted Hessian, hiding its contraction under the trowsers; and the Clarence is still more contracted—reaching but about eight inches up the leg; fitting pretty closely to it, and falling-to on one side. It is in the vamp blocked like the Wellington, or the half-front next to be mentioned, and the form of trenching may be referred to, see p. 25, taking the higher line, the lower being for the half-front. The front and back of this boot, when cut, will have the following appearance:—(Heel,  $12\frac{1}{2}$ ; leg, 8 high; 9 round.) The inside is turned to the spectator.



The break in the upright line at about an inch and three quarters from the bottom, shows where the commencement of the gusset should be—a thin yielding piece of leather stitched to each side, and from the name of gusset, as may be guessed, being pointed below and widening to the top; the addition of room gained by this gusset for the downward and returning passage of the heel, enabling the boot to be got on and off as easy as is required, while, when the boot is on, the gusset drops readily to the leg—the stronger leather closing in upon it, and thus giving the wearer a feel in the leg of the presence of the article he wears. At first the sides were laced; sometimes kept together by a strap, as has been remarked already of the beginning of the Wellington or Blucher. The *Clarence* has but an indifferent repute; is variously pulled on, by the hands grasping the top, by a strap behind, by straps at the sides,—its awkwardness in this particular helping to its discredit. The name, though of royal affinity, was, I suspect, purely gratuitous. In the wardrobe collection sold after the death of the late

King William, though possessing many sorts of boots and shoes, there were none of the Clarence kind.

#### CROSS-TONGUES

is the name in the trade for old Wellingtons receiving the under portion of a new front, being at the same time re-made in the bottoms. The like can be done for the Hessian, or the Clarence, though the latter article is seldom honoured with this expenditure towards its renewal. *Footing* is another term, and the one best known to the customer from the sundry items of his bills; this being the style generally used in such instances. *New ramping*, also, is another name for this job; among the French, "vampie."

The habit of getting boots newly footed, has of late years become very common; scarcely a gentleman but at some time or other has them so done, unwilling, as it would appear, to part with a favourite boot while they can obtain it a chance of renovation. There are shops both in London and Paris, whose owners are entirely *new-footers*, being but a more ambitious class of cobblers. A footed boot, however, can be got up very respectably; and while there are in the world those who can only afford the less expensive article, it is better to be employed on this than to have people go bare-foot. Those shoemakers, therefore, who so senselessly complain of the great damage done to their interest since this *cut-throat* fashion began—for so, in their anger, they emphatically call it—are beside themselves in seeing no further. Plenty of footed boots are better than none; and he who asserts that he would rather stand idle at his board, than draw his knife across the neck of an old boot, would, no doubt, if opportunity offered, prove stronger in words than in self-denial. The employed,

as a general principle, can never command their own terms of what they will or will not do; nor should the young tradesman ever yield himself to this restive humour while any chance is to be embraced by which, in the legitimate way of his business, he can turn the penny. "Pride that licks the dust," as Pope says, is no good to the shoemaker—though employed on the foot, he must not forget he has a head. "Oh, he would neither make a shoe, a boy's boot, nor any of that trash," as I once heard said of a celebrated workman in the trade; and he had his way, but the world had the same; it was too big a football to be so contemptuously kicked; so the kicker in the end got kicked, from the shop to the work-house, and thence to his grave! Had the footing of boots been in vogue at the time, no doubt they would have been put under the same interdict. It is to be hoped, however, my reader will derive benefit as well from the application of this anecdote, as by submitting himself to learn what may be taught towards this boot-footing; and so to teach others.

An old boot on being left at the shop to be footed, has generally, as a note of the circumstance, the knife run across the front, and is thus thrown by. This *sure* method of after recognition, is, notwithstanding, but an indifferent expedient to assist a negligent keeper of his books, or a bad memory. When orders are distinctly defined, and the old boots marked so as to be known, this is neither necessary, nor looks well. It may lead beside to chagrin and loss. A cut so given heedlessly at a chance, may be very crooked or too high, so that when you really want to cut your cross-tongue—the new vamp, blocked and ready, will be found too short at the neck—and hence further delay, and, perhaps, ultimate disappointment to the customer.

The first thing to do in preparing the cross-tongue, is to part the seat of the boot from the stitches—

taking care that the knife does not cut the leather of the back. The sides, to the height of the cross-tongue, or a trifle above it, are then to be ripped up, and then the old vamp can be cleared away at the line desired. The old back is then to be stretched down, as also the remaining top portion of the front. After this, you apply your new front, cleared across the neck at the height you want; as also cut to its proper depth at the instep, as in the new Wellington. Laying the new half-front thus on the top of the old front leg part, a mark is made, and, where marked, you cut off. After, you try your heel measure, angle wise, and across, and proceed as for the new boot.

This in description may seem easy, though in fact the cutting of the cross-tongue is commonly very bunglingly performed. The reasons are these:—Every clicker is almost invariably pertinacious in following out his own system—and here, again, we discover another proof that this word *system* or *science* can lead to no practical service with the shoemaker. A certain clicker may cut out cross-tongues to boots, originally of his own cutting, well enough; he knows from habit the lie or bearing of the parts, and the general form of the front required; and thus is at no loss, or rather can secure himself from error. Give him, however, and in this sort of job it is rather common, another person's cutting to cross-tongue, and, if a man of mere system or heedlessness, or devoid of any original capacity, it is ten to one but he goes astray: the cross-tongue cut in his own way may be the wrong way; it may straighten too much, or be too loose; and hence the cause why footed boots so seldom yield the satisfaction as to *fit* that the new boot can be made to do, though, as being part of the property of the customer before the new-footing, they are generally taken and borne with. The cutter,

therefore, as a matter of course, should expect, look out for, and be most careful in, his notice of all these possible differences, and accommodate his skill accordingly. When the old back to be cut is unusually full, or narrow, or has any other particular deviation, he also must deviate to work out the proper fit. With room enough he may *amend*, but where there is not, he can only *follow*. I should also caution him, to look at the *two* backs. I have known the under parts of a pair of old backs—from a difference in the material, insufficient or uneven stretching, or from the original fault of cutting—to differ a full inch from each other, and yet, with the two fronts cut alike, and sent to be closed, one front gets this additional width of heel more than the other—an unpardonable blemish and blunder. In cutting out the unblocked back for new boots, the necessity of good and even stretching may be seen, and how the imperfection afterwards *tells*—the wearing forcing away the imperfect tightness, and the heel swabbing on the ground—an ugliness which many may have observed.

Boots, it may be added, can be new-footed with the old heels on, leaving also the old insole; the closer doing his part by turning the leg as usual; making the cross-seam; closing the sides, part in the clams and part in his knees, the opposition of the heel leading to this difficulty. The leg done and replaced in its proper position, is then to be given to the maker. This job, however, has no very creditable character when finished, and is only had recourse to by the lowest-priced boot-footers, excepting, it may be, where the boot to be footed is all but new, and then the heel and the lie of the seat may warrant this labour and leather-saving expedient.

## THE TONGUE, OR FANCY WELLINGTON,

as belonging in name to a class, may now be slightly noticed. This Wellington is generally cut with seams up the sides like the common one. The nature of the materials employed has already been stated in the first, or Journeyman part of this Treatise.

When the boot has a tongue, it is inserted, sometimes as in the top-boot, next to be described, and closed in with an inside seam; the varnished or shining leather used for the tongue, and the grain morocco for the leg, forbidding the outside seam. In other cases, the tongue is cut as usual, and stabbed on. This is the most general and securest way. The form of the tongue, and the position or hang of a tongue-boot-leg, will be seen under the Top Boot, and need not be here written upon, or an outline be given. The reader will only have to suppose a shorter leg attached in the present case, as a longer one will be in the other. With the tongue added as a substitute for or to give the direction of the blocked front, the fancy and common Wellington are cut exactly alike. The fine, bright, elastic-coated leather, known as the patent or varnish, is the chief difficulty in this boot: it has neither any oiled softness, nor much substance, and hence the necessity of a nice skill to give it every possible chance of bearing with the stitching, working, and pulling on and off, not to mention the wear. To help against its weak capability in this way, the vamp is mostly made to take an inside lining, hemmed sometimes over the inside seam, and, where the tongue is stitched on, either secured with it, or is otherwise fastened to the leg edges, going under the tongue. The vamp for this boot has to be put through a sort of blocking, as already described. The tongue blocked and cut, and the fronts and backs cut like-

wise, the height of the counter is to be holed for on the backs—this counter being of the same material as the vamp, placed outside, and kept by the closer in a range with the ankle-sweep of the tongue. The tight firmness of quality, and neat fitting of the inside counter, or stiffener, is also a conjoint duty of employer and closer. The first should know, and always give, what is proper; and the other be as particular of this point in his workmanship.

In France, where the closing in general is so inferior to what it is in England, the dress or patent-fronted Wellington is often without a tongue, the vamp being merely stabbed round as in a goloshe cover; their boots of this description having thus neither the grace nor the finish of ours. In some shops in London this boot, though having a tongue, has no side-seam—the outside counter running up at its middle in a back-strap, and there being pasted over the joining of the back of the leg, it is stitched through to the leg, as the tongue is stitched.

## THE OPERA BOOT,

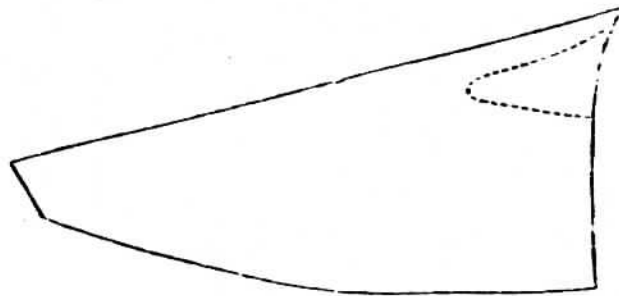
is another dress Wellington, with a soft doe skin or chamois leather leg, coloured and rubbed up to look like black cloth. The foot part has the vamp and quarters of a shoe stabbed on it; the boot being intended to carry the appearance of shoe and stocking. No more detail is needed.

## THE TOP-BOOT.

In one of the accurately descriptive tales in Chambers's Journal, an account is given of the former ascendancy of the top-boot, as also of its after fall into

comparative disuse. The top-boot has, notwithstanding, as being the most carefully perfected and skilled article in the whole trade, the fullest claim upon the attention of the learner. It is still, besides, occasionally in demand, and as he may be called to get it up, it is only proper he should make himself acquainted with the right way to proceed.

The wishes of the customer, or the best adoption of materials to such purpose as that customer requires, will guide, in the first place, to make a proper choice of legs, vamp leather, and all the other requisites of the top-boot. The vamp is commonly of a much stouter leather than the leg. Having then chosen such legs, &c., as may be needed, we are now, therefore, to begin to prepare them for the knife; and here it is material, before going any further, to have a properly formed pattern by which we are to trench the vamp out of the skin, as the neglect of this may in many ways (either by an unnecessary waste of leather, or by an undue contraction of those parts of the vamp that join with the counter, or are to fall into the waist of the last at the end of the heel) prove very injurious, as well to the beauty as to the right fit of the boot. The vamp pattern for all medium feet ought to bear somewhat of this general appearance when doubled.



When laid along the side of the last, the vamp or

pattern should extend from where the corner of the heel may be supposed to end, to nearly two sizes before the toe. Should the instep be higher than usual, a greater depth will be wanted across the wider portion; or, if lower, the under part is to take a more straightened direction; for if these precautions be not taken early, the boot will either have to be cut as *it can*, too tight for the last, or be so uncomfortably high at the neck of the instep, that it will be beyond the power of the maker, as he attempts to get the leather down, to keep the leg from falling along the ankle-seams into at once injurious and unseemly puffs and blisters; the range, too, displaced, and the liveliness of the draft gone. In all descriptions of shoe-making, it ought to be an indispensable rule, that leather should never be forced beyond its natural power of endurance, or permitted to lie in rolls or loosely about any portion of the foot. The first will be the cause of a hurried cracking; and the second, beside the clumsiness of the thing itself, by giving the wearer too much room in certain parts, renders him liable to run over the edges of the heel or sole in these parts long before he would otherwise do so.

The outline of the vamp being thus an object of attention, we are in the next place to stretch it, and afterwards to *turn* it—that is, by means of an iron or copper plate, such as is used at Hoby's, and other large establishments; or by a cord, to give the tongue such curvature as is requisite to run up into the shin of the leg. Such a plate is about eight inches long, and an inch-and-a-half in depth; it is fastened on the counter or some other board, and by drawing the leather (which should be first wetted along the neck or tongue part, and partially niched there) over it, and staying it down with tacks, the proceeding is at once accomplished. The simpler and older way of effecting the same purpose by the cord, can be made

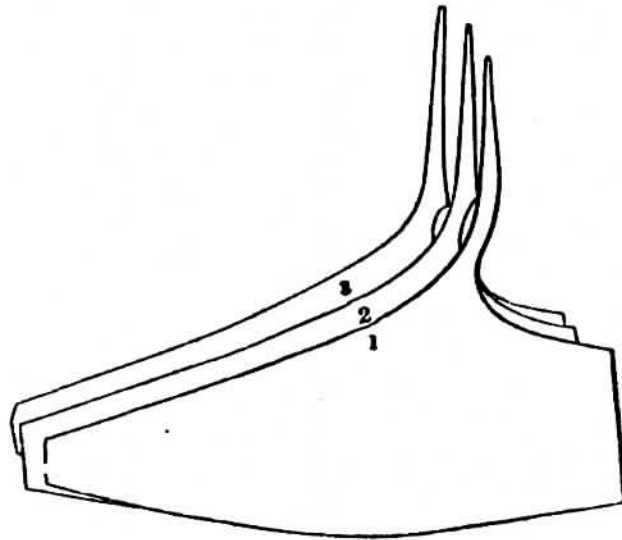
answer fully as well. You take a cord or narrow strip of leather, it matters not, and tacking one end of it lengthwise on your board, draw it between your wetted and doubled vamp, and then, after making fast the bottom and corners of your vamp, notch or cut a piece out at the neck or turn in the form of an egg, as marked in the diagram, and force your cord upward against the tongue to get the necessary curve, working the while with the pane-end or face of your hammer, to remove the wrinkles as they arise, and give more freedom to the lie of the leather.

The vamps turned, they are now to be left to dry a little, before they are taken from their place, and in the interim you may proceed to trench and stretch (if you have not done so already) your back-straps, as also to stretch and put your legs in order. Some knowledge of what you are about is particularly needful in the latter instance, for here, even in the rude character of the leg, you are to have an assured foresight of what is to be.

As there is a certain draft or degree of elasticity wrought into the cross way of all legs intended for top-boots, so it is essential to be careful how we deal with this draft, neither, as I have seen done, letting it be wholly taken out with the pincers, nor yet are we to begin to cut without any stretching whatever. There is a valuable medium in most things, and so in this. If we stretch the leg too much, and at the same time attempt to fit closely to the heel and round the ankles, the perfection of a well-cut boot, it is ten to one but the heel, when the purchaser is trying on his boots, will burst open the leg near the seam at the bottom of the back-straps, a disaster which at least takes full one-half from the value of the article. And, on the other hand, should we make no application of the pincers, we spoil the boot in another way; the sweeping seam which runs from the turn of the tongue along to

the back of the heel, being made as well on the vamp and back-straps, which are not the least elastic, as on the leg, tends still more to confine the leg, and, as a consequence, the forcing down of the foot through a new boot, which should always go on with a somewhat tight pull, strains rudely the draft portion of the leg from its fair position, and throws it into a long ungraceful pipe along the quarters, and for which there can be no real remedy, every day's wear, no matter how we rub in and tree the boot, having the effect of still more enlarging and hardening the foul excrescence. We must guard against these results by the aid of a proper discretion; taking care always by an observance of the draft which has been put into the leg, as may be seen by the dark figures which the currier has put upon the grain, and the length of the heel we are cutting for, to make a right approximation of the two. We are, besides, after folding the leg into its double form, and gently tapping or rubbing it down at the edge of this fold, to apply the pincers evenly and somewhat strongly to both top and bottom, till it lies completely flat again on the board; and likewise, by drawing it at the front top and front bottom a little outwards from its perpendicularity, give the middle part a slight inward inclination, the better to fit it to begin cutting upon.

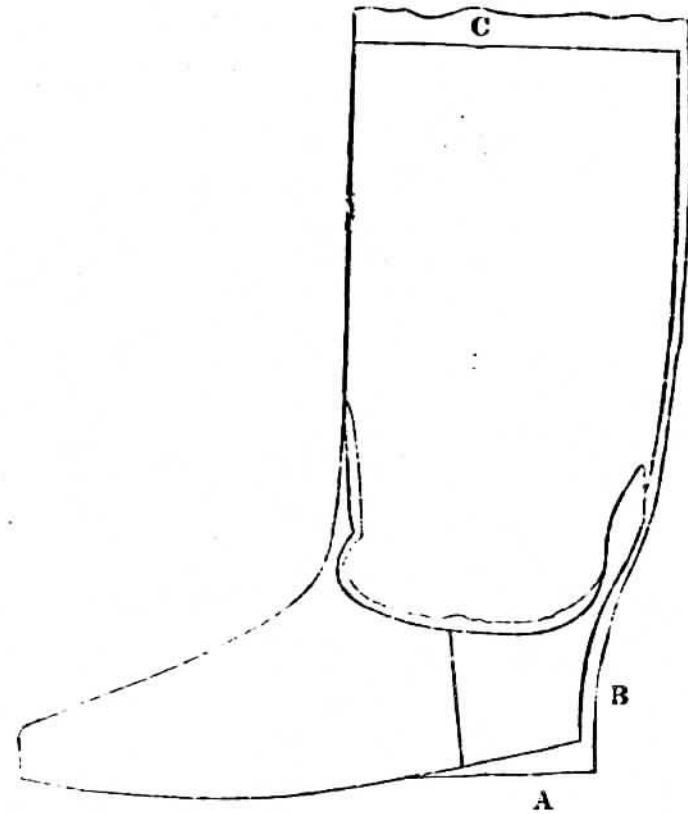
Your vamp, back-strap, and leg, being so far ready, you mark on your vamp with the back of your knife, or, if you use the round knife, with some other blunt edge, the form in which you would have the tongue appear; and as this is matter of taste rather than principle, I have set down for your choice some few specimens of these forms, the first not unlike that so long in fashion at Mr. Hoby's, and the others aspiring to a more modern elegance.



I will take the second of these illustrations, and proceed with my description.

The tongue—for we now no longer call it a vamp—being marked as has been said, is not to be cut immediately, except in a partial way at the side-seams, but laid on the leg along with the back-strap or counter, when the three pieces will have the appearance as seen in the next page, the inner and more regular line showing the entire scheme, from the tongue to the range; that part of the mark running across the ankle being called the range.

The bearing of the whole may thus be satisfactorily traced. The top of the leg somewhat inclines over the break or neck below, there is no out-jutting down the front, the tongue and range appear to have a uniform purpose, and the back of the heel, when the boot is closed and lasted, will sit closely in, but not abruptly so. There is to be taken about half an inch from the back under portion of the leg, as is seen at the mark A, and also up the back length of the leg



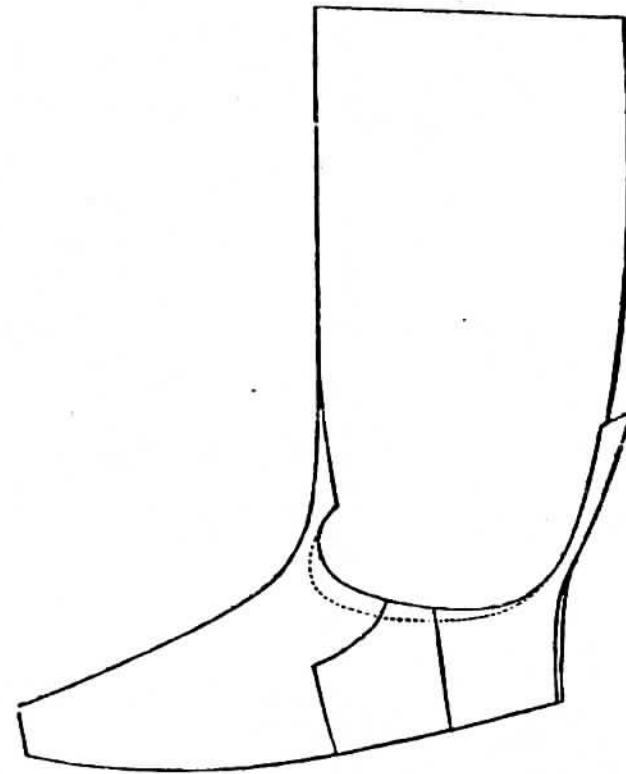
(B) a piece is to be cut off according to measure, and likewise from along the top of the leg (C). This outline is necessary to trace before a single cut is made into the leather; if we except such piece as may be taken from the under part of the back-strap counter, as a guide in that place to our cross-heel measure. In proceeding thus we are in no danger, while, on the contrary, by beginning to clip and pare as some are in the habit of doing, before they are fully aware of the effect of the whole, irremediable mischief may be perpetrated.

After this we may begin to cut, first the tongue,

and next the duplicate to make the pair, and then the back-straps; making, if we think proper, such slight deviations from the marks as may be thought to afford a better or more graceful turn to the whole.

Having pleased ourselves, and accomplished our purpose so far, we are next to lay our tongue and back-strap again on the leg, and by putting these as before, in a right position, we are now to take a blunt awl, or some other such instrument, and drawing this down and round from the top of the tongue to within about an inch of the vamp side-seam, mark where the incision is to be made for taking out the leg-piece to receive the seam of the tongue. This piece taken out (as also the form given where the linings are to be joined, as indicated at *a*) and the tongue put up against the fresh cut edges, the back-strap is laid over, joining the vamp side-seam piece, and a mark drawn now along the remainder of the range, and where the closer is to lay on his back-strap in his closing. It is necessary also to make another mark, or pierce with the awl, the latter the best, on the removal of the back-strap, at the side-seam part of the vamp, through the folded leg, as by so doing you leave the closer an additional guide, when fitting his work, to keep all as you intend. The boot is now cut; the vamp falls into its place, and the three pieces together look in this, their completed state, as in the next page.

The measure to form this outline of a boot, I reckon to be  $9\frac{1}{2}$  over the instep; heel about 13; calf  $11\frac{1}{2}$ ; and length of leg 16—one inch less being taken to allow for the inward fold of the top, afterwards to be attached. When the leg is wanted to fall down loosely when on, a considerable addition is necessary. Let us, then, take this measure, and remark the way in which we have cut to it. The vamp, doubled, is  $4\frac{1}{2}$  deep at the instep; the heel we cut exactly to the measure—so we do the calf; but about an inch or so



above the heel, where the chief strain of the boot is felt in going on, we must use a varying discretion—the softness or stubbornness, greater or less draft, or elastic quality of the leg, being always to be taken into our consideration. When the leg is fresh and kindly, by putting the measure across such portion as is now under notice (this and the other lines of instruction being the same as already given in the Wellington), we may cut it in its double, from half an inch to better than an inch under the measure; but if the leg be stale and harsh, nearly or perhaps the full extent of the measure must be given. Another caution in the present part of our subject should be noted, namely—that the leg should never be permitted to fall loose or baggy in this place, but, when closed and made, have a

certain tightness or draft, when taken hold of by the top and drawn upwards. This, however is to be guarded against more by the position, as it is technically called, which we give the entire boot, than by any rules for the cutting of the back portion of the leg. By reverting again to the immediately preceding diagram, this position may be noted, and the learner will do well to be careful in his observation. The vamp, he will see, declines much more than he might suppose; the neck of the tongue has no sudden abruptness, and the front top of the leg hangs in appearance rather over this part. The heel behind is almost upon a perpendicular, and the back of the leg swelling gently from thence up to the wide calf, from whence the outline turns in a little, as is common with the human leg.—One word as to the range. By the range dipping lower (as in the faint under mark striking from the proper range, a misdirection too commonly practised), the leg at this part is liable to great displacement—the draft is sent awry for the want of the higher binder the other form of range is known to effect, and thus the leather yields and falls into pipes, looking bad and being so.

Having thus cut our boot, and, perhaps, it is needless to add, the duplicate one to make the pair, we have now only to trench out our linings, and whatever pieces we may choose to have stabbed in between the counters, and the work, on being tied up, is ready for the closer.

It is not usual, although Mr. Hoby's clickers do so, to prepare the tops at this time. but to prepare them when the boots have come from the maker, and are again to be given to the closer to finish. To cut the top, we fold in two such a sized piece of paper as we may deem requisite to suit the fashion of the day in this particular, and doubling over a portion from the top to make what is called the turn-down or fold, we lay the calf of the unfinished boot upon it, with the

front towards us, as also the front folded part of the pattern, and then taking our knife, we cut the paper along in the direction of the calf, but a little more than the eighth of an inch wider. Next, we draw the back of our knife close along the top of the leg, so as to leave a mark on the paper, and at the height we desire the fold, and then, lifting the boot away, cut off the fragmentary portion at this mark, and afterwards form the bottom of the pattern to whatever depth or style of top is required—this varying always according to the fashion of the time, or the predilection of the wearer. By holding the boot up, with the pattern attached, before us, we may easily satisfy ourselves of the appearance we obtain, and when satisfied, we have only to open and spread our pattern on the leather which is to make the top, cut this leather, make two holes near the two outer edges, where the turn-down is to be, and the thing is finished. The spare pieces left from cutting the tops are always sufficient to make the leather or outside straps for the top-boot; these also varying according to fashion or taste, the strap that goes behind, and which is so handsomely stitched on by the closer, being called the *back-loop*, and the one falling over the top on the side, the *side-strap*. The top-boot has also the two webbing inside straps like the Wellington, to get it on by; with two others of leather, a back button-loop and a front button-loop—these, as the name imports, are to be attached to the knee buttons of the wearer's small-clothes.

The reader having now gone through this article, as also having refreshed his mind with the account given of the closing of this boot in the former part, will find in the two every thing he may require towards his knowledge of, and assistance in, getting up the top-boot.

THE MILITARY, HOLDERNESS, AND THREE-  
QUARTER BOOTS.

To the article *closing*, in the former part, I may refer for almost all that may be necessary to say of either of these descriptions of boot, and the account there is very concise.—The manner of the top-boot runs through each. The military has a tongue and back-strap, and only differs in the cap covering the knee, and the consequent greater length of leg to reach this height. The Holderness has also a tongue, though closed inside, as in the fisherman's boot. The leg is long, like the military, or longer, falling over on the knee at its upper extent; sometimes blocked into this form, and at others thrown into it by the cutting out of a thin angular piece, underways, towards the ham, the edges cut from, on being drawn together by the closer, forcing the back or knee to the bend required. The three-quarter boot is the leg of the top-boot with the cut of the Hessian in the front; though sometimes, in this boot, the top goes right round. As said, in the closing article, it is the wear of the old-fashioned clergy, and hence sometimes its name—the Clerical Boot.

The top-boot, and these other three differently named boots, having thus one general characteristic, are, therefore, in all their vamp parts, when needing repair, to be repaired much alike: each must receive what is called

THE NEW-TONGUE,

a renovation, akin to new vamping the Wellington.

The bottoms, as there described, are separated from the tops,—the seat of the heel being cut from the leather behind, the stitches run through along the old tongue, and thus the worn-out incumbrance being removed, the new is to replace it. Generally, too, in cutting the new tongue to an old top or any other sort of boot here mentioned, the same manner is nearly followed as was employed in cutting this part originally. The

tongue in the first place formed, then laid on (the old leg being before well stretched out and flattened), and the parts underneath cut away. When the boot is also to be new-counterred, the operation is still more thoroughly the same.

When the boot to be new footed, however, is in very good condition in all its other parts—has not been much worn, the former vamps having met with some unlucky accident,—or should this new vamping be merely the consequence of a change of taste in the customer, that he may have a different formed boot in the fashion of the foot—a broader or a narrower toe—a straight, or a right and left,—in these cases I should advise, when the vamp is taken out, that it be flattened on the board, and in this its flat character placed over the new vamp, laid open likewise, and the latter to be then cut to it. Cut in this way no turning will be required, and the old stitches being picked out of the leg half of the seam, the new vamp can be closed to, and when finished the seam will look in all respects as well as at the first day, and the joined leathers lie as well. But this, when the boots have been much worn, can rarely be done, the fractures about the seam compelling to a thoroughly fresh hold;—it may be useful, notwithstanding, to know it—as making, where the best is required, the best job.

VI. CUTTING OUT FOR THE WOMAN.

THE SLIPPER—TIE-SHOE—VARIETIES OF THE  
WOMAN'S BOOT.

The mere woman's man or maker of the woman's shoe, or he who in a shop is only concerned with such, and sees no necessity to concern himself further, must refer in the first place (if he has not gone through this little book from its commencement) to what has been said of *measuring*, pages 32 to 35; and again—to page

64, &c. From the observations there to be met with, he will gather all such instruction as could only be repeated here without advantage, and which, if indulged in, must considerably enlarge the bounds of this treatise. A human foot is a human foot, whether of one size or another,—the female like the male in its general form; so for both cases, the one way to take the measure is all that is necessary to describe.

If any thing under this head offers grounds for remark, it is this:—Woman's shoes and boots being generally of a much more delicate texture than shoes and boots made for the man, it is necessary, therefore, that the care in measuring for these shoes or boots be of the most delicate niceness; the faultiness in the foul sitting of a piece of rich silk or satin, looking much more unpardonable than the like faultiness where the material is of a coarser character. Adventuring this early caution, I will now proceed.

#### THE SLIPPER,

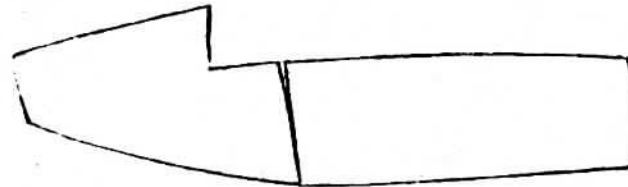
as the most usual article of the woman's wear, comes first to be noticed. The name is, no doubt, a misnomer as here applied—a *slipper* being a shoe without, at least, any back quarters; or, otherwise, an old shoe trod down at heel, or rather the quarter trod down, and thus, from the easy slipping in and out of the foot, the term slipper. The Empress Maria Louisa, when news was brought to her of the abdication of her husband Napoleon, was at the time in her slippers, and very prettily, though touchingly, said "it was well it was so," seeing how on the instant she had to change her position.

The *woman's tie-shoe* is very seldom seen at present, even in the country places, the tying being a trouble, and, besides, the shoe looking too masculine for the chaster taste of the wearer. Where it is ordered, the seam parts in general are cut to close inside with an awl or a needle, and the straps having no

corner, nip at the under part and top of the seam, a few stitches are taken through them, and the binding goes up from thence and round;—women's shoes, as before noticed, being bound before they are made.

Since, then, the slipper is almost the only shoe wear of the woman, the few common and Spencer-ties seen occasionally being comparatively of no account, there will be no necessity to do more than merely thus to advert to them, as the woman's-tie and Spencer shoes—with the exception, in the first, of the want of the under strap nip—are cut exactly like the man's, the difference being only (where any difference is required) those of taste, as refers to the longer or shorter form of the vamp or quarters.

The upper for a slipper of the medium sort will have this appearance—



The slight opening between the quarter and the vamp, where the side-seam is to be, is a contrivance, when the shoe is closed together, to make the quarter catch in a little above, and thus sit better round the length of the foot. The quarter, it will be perceived, is deeper in the middle than behind. Mr. Rees recommends the contrary:—"The quarter should be something deeper behind than at the side, even to those that desire the quarter straight; for, if the quarter be cut in a straight line from the sweep of the front of the vamp to the end of the heel-seam, it would appear in the slipper rather of a rise or swell in the middle than straight; therefore the quarter should be from an eighth to a quarter of an inch

lower at the side than behind, and let it be in a gradual sweep, from the top of the heel-seam to the front of the vamp." (P. 130.)

Now, as this to those who neither observe nor have been taught better, is a sort of authority for an imperfection, the quotation may not be without its value, as a curious proof of a long inconsiderately followed error. If the cut is even straight, he says, it will "appear in the middle to have rather a rise or swell." It is not so: a slipper cut straight along its line of quarter will, even in the first day's wear, show a hollow fall on the side of the foot, particularly on the outside, taking the sweeping droop of a canoe, and looking as if the foot that trod the slightest puddle in the street was in danger of being inundated; as with a slim galley at sea, the water seems threatening its confines, and what it threatens may happen. This is the commonest and most offensive fault in women's shoe-making. What the slipper seems at the board, is not what it will be on the foot; it will there look sprawling—a bit of leather stuck across the toes, and the sides running away to find fellowship in the dirt! degraded from a nearer connexion with the up-rising and therefore beautiful instep. The foot in its own native state, or with a stocking, or covered wholly with any other uniform casing, as a silk, or prunella, or other boot, is a thing of elegance, with its regular lines and gentle roundnesses; but with the quarters of a slipper-shoe, sticking like a foul patch at the base of each side, "making mouths" every step that is taken, slipping from the holding or feel of the nervous waist below, is a spectacle as ugly as the wear is unpleasant. These remarks and the aim of them, I hope, will lead to thought. Observe and think. Mr. Rees advises that the back of the slipper-quarter be a quarter of an inch higher than at the side: a quarter higher at the side than the back, is the present advice; the difference is but

half an inch in all—though at the side of the foot this is a very great deal, as well to the look as for its utility.

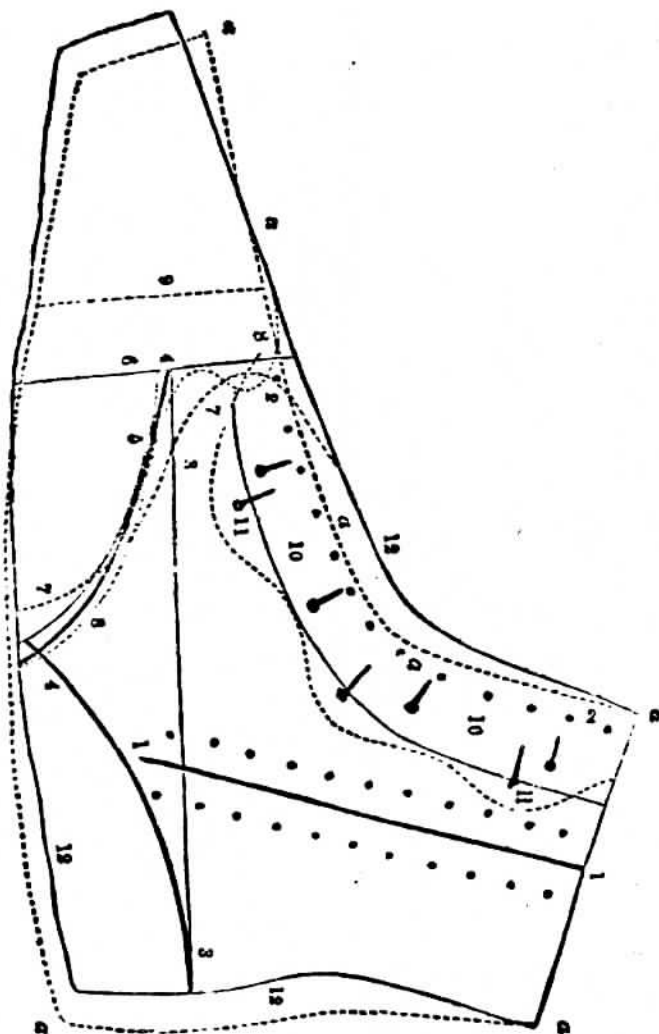
For peculiar feet, flattening much along the ground, the length outside showing a hard acute angle, and the inward ankle dropping low, there should be even a difference in the two quarters. In cases, as much or near upon half an inch higher may be given for the outside than for the inside quarter, and then the shoes will pair better to appearance when on, the feet be kept tight and snug, and not exposing such a large patch of uncovered stocking to soil and offend

Mr. Rees instructs us as to "mathematical proportion," though in practice he admits there may be no necessity for it—experience and attention supplying its place. As well might a mere mathematician talk of forming to perfection all the bumps, points, and jaggings, in those whitewashed and intended for ornamental flint stones in the garden now before me while I am writing, by the power of his cubes and triangles, as the shoemaker shoe the foot through any one regulated course of proceeding. As just shown, he must oftentimes vary to be perfect, always looking to what should be, and considering and experimenting how this *should* be *is* to be. If a quarter cut straight or hollow causes, when on, the top part of the foot to look broad and bulky, he should try another cut; and succeeding in part, then dare again, and go a little higher, till thus he may surmount the entire difficulty. A foot with extra long toes will need, for a similar consideration, a longer vamp than that which a shorter-toed person can wear. These and many other particulars will be matter for one's own working out; while, at other times, there will be some obligations which are imperative—those demanded by the customer, to meet the individual's peculiar desires. If a short quarter be ordered, it must be cut;

and if a long one, the same, and so on: these are matters of custom, or taste, or fancy; but who orders a thing for its deformity, if a choice be but permitted?

#### THE WOMAN'S BOOT

is the next thing, and here it is:—



This representation, lined, figured, and dotted over so prodigiously—the fashion of many boots in one—is contrived as well to save space, as to show that it is the outline which in reality makes the boot, and not the figments. There are twelve sorts of the woman's boot in it, numbered from 1 upwards, besides the lines *a, a, a, a, a*, outside at the heel part, and down the front, showing a very prevalent though erroneous method of forming this boot—a method by which it is difficult to get it on, and when on never allowing that free play to the foot that is needed—sitting foul about the leg, and from the contraction felt behind, sooner or later forcing to fractures there. The two seen together, will at once convey to the eye the opposition in their character. A correct notion of the necessary outline being thus obtained, the particular forms may now be described.

In the *side-lace boot*, 1, 1, the proper direction of the cut is given in a straight slightly inclining line, a usual faulty way being to *sweep* this line still further forward on the foot, that the boot, as it is thought, may be got on the easier, though the difficulty results from another cause, the bad outline as above-mentioned. The number of holes to lace is optional, some choosing less or more, though the more there are, the boot sits the better. The sweeping cut never laces well, the holes, from their transverse direction, drawing awry and producing blisters.

The *front-lace boot*, 2, 2, requires no particular description; the opening sufficiently long, and the leg kept from hitching forward, the foot goes in free enough. This, about twenty years ago, was the chief woman's boot, and is still in request for the stronger wear of country places. The same form is used by the male rustic. Gentlemen, too, have often a shooting boot made in this way; and as it is capable of bearing a great deal of ornamental work in the closing, in these instances it looks very well.

Of the *goloshe boot*, 3, as also 4, 4, the character is easily discernible; the straight *goloshe* being for the more serviceable, and the jointed where economy and taste are sought to be coupled. 5, is a sort of *goloshe* ear, run from the vamp, and so far protecting the side.

6, 7, 8, are three forms of vamps—the straight, and the other two taking opposite directions. The choice between them is generally that of the customer. 9, is called the *toe-cap*, like 6, a straight though still shorter vamp, very prevalent at present.

The *button boot*, 10, 11, shows two forms, the plain and the scalloped. The cloth boot for the man is generally made in this way; the flap lining being of leather, as giving to it a firmer character. 12, the plain outline, is the last boot to be mentioned, without any vamp of leather or *goloshe*; and may have the foot opening either in the front or at the side. Ladies' silk boots are often thus all of a piece.

The *sandal boot*, not engraved, has a series of square tie-pieces, of the same depth and width as the incisions whereby they are formed. These are bound together cross-ways, up the front of the foot, the stocking appearing through the declining openings. Another boot is also occasionally seen, lacing up behind from the top of the hard counter part. Neither of these two last, however, as may be imagined, has much repute: the modern mock-sandal commanding but a poor comparison with the rich interlacing of the ancient Grecian and Roman thorough sandal; and the back-lace boot being as well irksome to get on, as in danger of tearing in getting on.

After this notice, some few further observations are necessary.

In cutting out such light materials as are required in general for the woman, it has already been mentioned that too much care cannot be bestowed. The

leg and heel of a stuff, silk, or any other similar boot, should, in these parts, to allow for the *give* of the threads, and to insure the requisite perfection, be left about the eighth of an inch under the measure. A pattern is carefully prepared in the first place, suiting your last and measure; your pattern is then laid on your linen lining-piece doubled—a lead weight keeping both firm beneath the knife: you then trench the linen in the direction of the pattern, leaving it about a quarter of an inch larger up the back and down the front. This is for the *turn-in*, or seam parts, a series of prickings made at the exact edge of the pattern, by a sharp round-pointed awl, giving the line to the binder where the *turn-in* is to be. In the side-lace boot you may now also cut the form and depth of the side-slit, these two linen insides going for the two lacing insides—the other two for the non-lacing ones, and therefore having no side-openings. In these side-openings, where the holes are wrought for the lacing, there is attached a strengthening strip of leather or tape, a little behind and running along the whole line of holes. Some have these hemmed on by the binder on the eye or glazed side of the linen—thinking this the strongest method to guard the holes. They are, however, wrong here; the needle in working the holes seldom catches very firmly so far in; while, if this piece be placed between the outside and lining, the catch is perfect, and the security better. Your linings completed, you now cut your outsides, not minding to be nice in the style, as long as *turn-in* enough is left for the binder, she, in her manner of work, making the outside to follow the inside.

Next is the getting ready your leather vamps and *goloshe* quarters (if there are to be any), these being formed to suit exactly the last or the size required. Where boots are so vamped and quartered,

the leg-piece need not be wasted in running it forward to the toes, though the lining must always go right through. In outsides all of a piece, or wanting covers along the sides (if of the material under consideration), there should never be a pinching of the stuff along the under parts, nor yet in the linings, there being great danger, if the workman has not enough of both to catch well within his stitch, and a portion beside to turn over his sewing seam upon, that the foot will burst out, and thus the boot be spoiled. The same is to be observed of the shoe. Where women's boots or shoes, however, are made of leather, a closer cut will do, as there will be no occasion for what then would be a waste. In the quarter linings also of stuff shoes, being in general a white soft leather, there is to be no turn-in allowed for, nor any allowance for covering the inseam sewing. It should likewise be observed, that for the linen lining and stuff outside of a boot, or shoe, or slipper quarter, the length or web direction of the thread is always to be followed; but where a stuff or silk vamp is required, the thread is reversed, and goes across the foot; the same for the vamp of the slipper.

I know not if I can add any thing of value more; and therefore this will finish whatever comes under the head of *cutting*.

## VII.—FITTING-UP, OR PREPARING THE LASTS.

What is called fitting the customer, as far as the foot is concerned, comes under the present head—*fitting-up*, being the preparing the last for the shoe or boot to be made from. Hitherto nothing has been said of this matter; so that the reader who wishes to

know about the man's shoe or boot, or the woman's shoe and boot, relative to getting ready the last, by turning here will find the desired information, the differences being specified where necessary, as the subject is considered in its wholeness.

The perfection of the graceful and proper fitting shoe or boot is of old standing, and many memoranda might be brought together to show it. In Horace there is this line —

“ And his large feet to raillery expose ;”

with shoes on, made no doubt by some clumsy workman. In the time of Nero, we are told of a shoemaker slave—as the artisans of Rome generally were—who was disposed of to an officer attached to the Imperial Court, and in which position, it appears, though despised before as an inferior hand, he now obtained extravagant repute, and became chief shoemaker to the Emperor; and hence was sought after, and flattered, and looked upon as a most valuable assistant towards the favour of royalty. Such a man, no doubt, must have fitted well.

Petrarch, the famous love poet of Italy, at the period probably he first sought to show his “best outward” to the eyes of Laura, is said to have nearly lamed himself from the many pinchings he endured for the sake of displaying a neat foot. The shoemaker who could have pleased him would have been, no doubt, a good fitter. In the early English translation of Lazarillo de Tormes, is this passage: “If you bid a shoemaker, who has been thirty years at his trade, make a new pair of shoes, with broad toes and high in the instep, and tight about the heel, he must pare your feet before he pleases you”—a passage which seems to possess a twofold reflection; in the one way pointed against the imperfections of the shoemaker, and in the other, against the vanity that would

appear in a nice fashionable shoe, even though the foot needed to be "pared." The author, no doubt, knew many who were desirous of this masterly fitting.

Gay, in his *Trivia*, has some verses on this matter, expressing, what is rather uncommon, considerable artistical truth within the shackles of rhyme:—

"Should the big last extend the shoe too wide,  
Each stone will wrench th' unwary step aside:  
The sudden turn may stretch the swelling vein,  
Thy cracking joints unhinge, or ankle sprain;  
And when too short the modish shoes are worn,  
You'll judge the seasons by your shooting corn."

Another of our English poets, however, a much older one, Chaucer, strikes off, in the conclusion of the following passage, the very perfection of a fit: it is in the instructions given by the god of Love to the poet upon entering into his service:—

"Maintain thyself after thy rent (*income*)  
Of robe and eke of garment,  
For many a sithe fair clothing (*sithe, time*)  
A man amendeth in such thing.

And look always that they be shape (*fashioned*)  
(What garment that thou shalt thee make)  
Of him that can they best ydo,  
With all that pertaineth thereto,  
Pointés and sleevés be well sittand (*sitting*)  
Full right and straight upon the hand:  
Of shoon and bootés new and fair,  
Look at the least thou have a pair,  
And that they fit so fetously (*properly*)  
That these rude men may utterly  
Marvel, sith that they sit so plain, (*plain, close*)  
How they come on and off again."

The shoemaker who could or did this, ought not to have been left without a memory. Who is he?

and Echo answers—who? We know no more of him but the doing, and this the poet has rendered immortal.

From all this, then, and many other proofs which might be adduced, it will be seen that the art of the shoemaker has been even for ages an art in which excellence was obtained and prized, and no doubt taken pride in. To do well, or rather to fit well, became a valuable ambition; it gratified the self-love while it assisted the pocket. Nero's shoemaker, in his change of fortune, turned out to be a more respectable character than the stultified piece of mastership who had so ignorantly cast him aside: he succeeded, though not going beyond his *last*; from satisfying the foot, he took possession of the head. It is good to be any thing good; it may, too, bring its reward.

If one might be forgiven for bringing remote things to connect themselves with the present, perhaps an attempt to speculate on the manner of fitting the foot anciently, would not be without interest to the legitimately inquisitive—those who would know all things—and their ingenuity might find its satisfaction in working through the comparisons. How they measure in Ireland, by the hand, Mr. Lover has described in his *Rory O'More*; and how they buy boots in Bogota, by the hand also, another writer has lately told to the world:—"They have a singular way of fitting themselves with ready-made boots or shoes. They never try them on at the time of purchasing, but have a mode of determining the right size with the hand; and I believe the measure is uniformly correct, although the same mode may not suit those in the latitudes of the north. But here, if the length is ascertained correctly, the fine model of the Spanish foot will be sure to answer in every other particular; whereas, with us, the high

instep and the low instep, the wide foot and the narrow, the straight and the crooked, and twenty other differences, tend to put all such calculations quite out of joint."

Fitting, then, in the "latitudes of the north," is really a difficulty; though for Ireland, being a little westward, there seems a dispensation. Chaucer has beautifully described the best fit; Gay has cautioned of the bad. It is singular in reflecting on the passage of the old poet, how much it contains of the very perfection of the trade. One might suppose (and perhaps it was the case) that a sort of woven leather was manufactured in his time, so that the boot drew on like a stocking, and came off the same. We have nothing now like it, but pride and pinch; the best darer being the best wearer. Our material, it is certain, has little or no elasticity, so where it presses it pains; and here, too, is the shoemaker's great difficulty. The "high instep" is nothing—he may get over that as easily as a blanket over a pillow; but then in trial the foot swells, and the leather has no yielding; besides, how is the getting off to be effected? With Chaucer, one may marvel again!

A worthy shoemaker of Edinburgh, instead of seeking for the elasticity here adverted to, has found it in the soles, and patented the invention; the length in his opinion is all; he wants something that will move with the foot, not a thing to be carried or dragged along as the snail labours with its shell, but a sort of sensitive outward foot, to go about in easy company with the inward, stretching out as the toes stretch, and springing back again with the recoil. For this purpose he uses a compound of caoutchouc and animal skin "so manufactured as to bestow on the fabric the elasticity of caoutchouc, while it retains the durability of leather." This extract is taken from his own description, as read before the Society of Arts,

London, of which he is a member, and afterwards printed in Professor Jamieson's Edinburgh Journal, January 1839. There are to be elastic side-gussets, freely allowing of every varying position in walking, "without (says the patentee) checking the elastic motions of the foot, with which the shoe is elongated when under pressure." The "elongation," therefore, as before stated, is his chief aim; in a word, the desideratum is, that of producing a bona fide "walking shoe" one that will move with the movement, and not have to be forced along. It may benefit the zealous shoemaker to know all this, so that by setting the mind to notice even a scheme the most valueless, some thought may be induced as to what is or may be the best. The "compound" of Mr. Dowie is a soft insole leather, coloured black, and impregnated (it may be) with a solution of Indian rubber or caoutchouc. The piece goes in the waist of the shoe, and the side-gussets meet it at the bottom of the quarters. The clump sole is his chief help, the heavy heel and forepart having thus together a greater command over the "compound" middle hinge. I have heard of an invasion of his right of patent, the party working in a bit of soft hide-leather, giving it a coat of wax—sending home the goods and pleasing, the imitation being so easily effected.

This is one of the scheme systems; another is that of the *Panus Corium*, or patent leather cloth, and another the patent buckskin, about 500*l.* being thus expended to secure freedom to the feet, though the generosity of the parties inventing allows nobody to afford this pleasure but themselves. The adepts of the science systems are different men again; for as we have scientific cutters, we have the same in the fitting-up department, some proceeding, as with the other, by "mathematical proportion," and others being proficient of anatomy. These latter, too, have been

fortunate; they have had already their book reputation. A writer some years ago (*Edin. Mag.* April, 1824) speaks of the "anatomically formed shoe." "Tailors," he says, "profess to fit the human form anatomically; and even shoemakers do not disdain to call in plaster casts to their aid, in order to get their lasts accurately made." The reader, no doubt, will have observed the establishments of many of these plaster-skilled shoemakers; there are usually a white or gold-gilded foot or two in the window, with the pecky heel and pumpy toe standing out most portentously. The customer takes off his shoe or boot and stocking, and plunging his foot, ankle deep, in a mess of white chalk-like porridge, leaves behind him the outline from which the last is to be "accurately made." Whoever first brought in this scheme had, it may be depended upon, high expectation; the very term itself—to fit anatomically—was enough to bring all the shoe and boot-wearers with their orders, and so literally smother him in business. When the trial, however, came, the article produced must at once have horrified, by its absence of all pretension to any appearance of shoe or boot. A boot or shoe made thus must have had more the look of a scooped out hoof than the thing pretended. Since then the pretension has been kept up, but not the practice; the plaster-foot is still seen in the window, but never the last from this plaster: it is pleasing, notwithstanding, to some, to believe that their shoemaker is a little of the anatomist; the pretension, too, has actually led to a benefit, the one outline of last so common, even since the introduction of the right and left, has given place to a variety, and this, after all, is the only perfect shoe and boot fitting. The length of a foot and its width, and the length of a last and its width, are familiar accomplishments of old standing; but the judgment to vary in the fit is another thing, and here is the true skill.

It is remarkable, that latterly almost every master shoemaker has a different style of last; and still more remarkable that they all in a manner are successful. Some early prepossession, or teaching, or chance, led possibly to some leading manner, which, taken up thus, as it were, adventitiously, became afterwards to them a sort of principle. How people of a peculiar make of foot have been able to find the particular parties so making the shoe or boot to suit them, is matter again of curious speculation; yet certain it is that they do find them, and in this way there appears a fortunate linking and interchange of benefits between the employed and the employing. There is, too, a family foot, as well as a family face or head—the child is best fitted where the parent is best fitted; and thus the connexion goes on, and even in some degree is perpetuated.

"It is surprising how they all get custom," is an observation often heard among the trade in reference to this subject. If it be thought that such a one is right, all the others in consequence are judged to be wrong, and thence the surprise by what chance it is that the erring are so fortunate. The feet, however, direct the head in this particular; a trial is made here, there, and in a variety of places, and still unsatisfactory; when at last, as the old proverb is, getting out of the "shoemaker's stocks," a better fate commences, and the feet seek the same good fortune for the future. Thus it is how all get a share; yet as the more efficient are generally the most successful, no reliance is to be placed by the young beginner in being able to wear through the period when he will come in for *his* portion. Competitors are every where about him; his little capital may run out; the established shops will keep their place, and he may fail. Under these circumstances the most chances, it will be perceived, are the best; that is, the most ways a

man can turn his hand towards fitting the greatest variety of feet. Three customers, with three sets of differently formed feet, must be better than two of a twin description; and one is better than never a one.

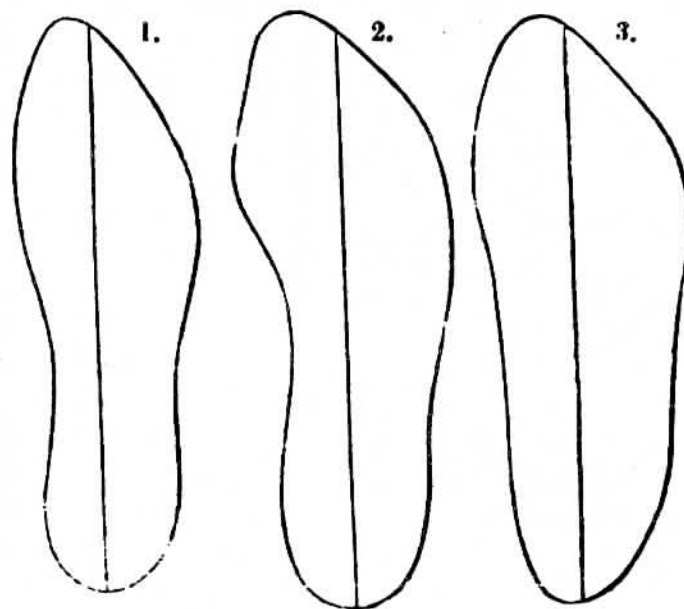
They who have never examined a foot but as it offered itself to the eye during the time of putting the measure round it, can really have no conception of the appearance it may make in the outline of the sole; and again, of the difference between it and some other foot, perhaps the next succeeding one that may be measured. There is a custom of strangers at Yarmouth to cut their foot-marks on the planks of the pier as a memento to leave behind them, the name or initial within; and a most valuable study is that scene to the shoemaker. Some with toes spreading, some the contrary; this with a wedge heel, another with one as fall and as round as a pitching quait; one foot twisting inwardly, and a neighbour one looking outwardly; here one as broad as a flat-fish, and in a different quarter a mere eel of a thing. These are the stocking-foot pictures (for they take some trouble), and even the shoe representations are not without a considerable variety—the broad and the narrow toe; the cornered inside, and the lumpy out; the long and the short heel—each seem in some way different, yet all are of the human foot.

Now it behoves the shoemaker that he should know, and attend to, the instruction gathered from this way of considering the bearings of his trade. A last fitted only up to the length and width may do, or it may not; it may do by chance, or fail from necessity. The direction of the foot is to be taken, as well as its measurement, and even more than this—an observance of its chief treading parts; that is, where it inclines the heaviest, and is most likely to wear through the sole, and press over the upper-

leather. It is seldom, however, that the shoemaker, be his skill what it may, can succeed in these particulars on a first or even second trial. The foot in places may look and be bulky, and yet not tread severely at these places. In walking, certain muscles will project themselves, which, during inaction, are undiscoverable; trial, therefore, assisted by observation and wise contrivance, is the only remedy.

Shoemaking considered thus, and in many other ways, is then a most difficult affair; and where excellence is attained, should not be denied its reward. As much care, and thought, and shifting expedient, are demanded by it as can possibly be conceived, and which very few are either naturally or from education fitted to bestow.

I give here, from the actual foot, a few of these sole representations, with a line run through their centre, to show their side variations:—



Looking at these it will be perceived how widely they differ, and how impossible it is for any one form of last, suiting otherwise the measure of the feet, to yield the proper shoe or boot. The first is of a medium foot, the centre line showing a pretty equal division between the inside and outside tread; the toes go regularly off, and the heel well formed. Now supposing the bottom of a last to be placed on this outline, the inside joint of the great toe would discover itself beyond the last; and the lower swell, outside, in a somewhat less degree. At the toes, the last would project forward, while at the back-heel there would be scarcely any difference. Now, a shoe or a boot made to a foot of this character will have a very handsome appearance, providing the top of the toes and the instep have an equal perfection; yet, and it is singular, this foot in general is fitted the worst, though at first it may seem otherwise, this sort of foot looking well in almost any kind of boot (having the proper size of upper-leather) when it is newly put on. The common deviation of our right and left lasts leads to this—they incline too much to the inward; and though apparently sufficiently full at the outside, are not so in reality, the wrong proportion given to the inside working itself out fuller in every day's wear, and throwing the foot with the greater stress in the more confined direction.

It may appear a paradox to assert that the straight last in its effects was actually more right and left than the right and left that was brought in to supersede it; yet this is the fact. When the shoe or boot that was made off the straight last was changed to the contrary foot from day to day, as some accustomed themselves, the cast of the article was kept good; but where the one foot continued its wear of the one shoe, the upper and sole were compelled aside, and the

article altogether was soon spoiled. The remedy then being sought in the right and left (a revival, by-the-by, of the very oldest date), it was judged that nothing could be right and left but that which took a decided inward turn, leaving the outside joint to follow, and the inside long and prominent, to take from the otherwise crooked look of the thing. The shoemaker thus deceived himself, and the deception is still continued. Men or women have not, generally speaking, these in-twisting feet, so that nearly every thing a straight last requires is to give it a deeper and longer hollow in the waist intended for the inside, a slighter or less joint there, and a little longer joint to the outside. This and its fellow would make a better pair of right and left lasts for a great majority of wearers than hundreds of pairs now in use, roughed out in blocks by the last maker for the purpose, and finished off in the system. It is from this error that remarkably direct or straight-footed people are so often seen with very bad-looking shoes or boots, wondering how it is they can never get a right and left to suit them well, the very perfection of their feet being the cause, owing to the ignorance of the imperfectly skilled manufacturer. A very narrow sole, comparatively speaking, when evenly placed under the foot, will carry that foot more upright, and give more wear, than a sole half as broad again if not rightly directed.

Let us now look at the next figure (2). This, we see, will require a last inclining more to the inside than the one we have just been noticing; and here the shoemaker may more usually fit. The great toe, it will be observed, strikes conspicuously forward; and this showing itself so readily to the eye, the thing is remarked and provided for, though at this part the usual right and left last will suit very well. The last, however, may fail at other points; the joint of

the great toe, though full at the round, may here have no under projection or pressure, so that if the sole be thrown right out to bear against this joint, the foot in wear drops away from it, and the sole, left without any command over it to keep it down, turns up and produces deformity. Here again, therefore, it will be seen how much of attention and observation are requisite to the thoroughly efficient shoemaker.

The other figure (3) is different again. The foot has no heel-seat, particularly to the outside, widens out far broader at the waist than either of the foregoing, and seems quite a lump at the toes. This is a *flat foot*, and will require much care to fit properly. A last of the common sort will not do; it will be too narrow, as well as too hollow in the waist; the heel will not incline off enough—the forepart of the last not be sufficiently *dead*, what is called the *spring* out of place for this kind of foot—this spring being the upward direction which the toes take from the joints of the foot, a flat foot pressing full and flatly down.

To extend these observations to the many other diversities of the human foot in the way of describing what is called the *tread*, and the manner of providing the lasts, would be a long and expensive undertaking; every diversity requiring its distinct outline, to carry to the eye the sense of the description. Besides, practice after all must be the best teacher, the mind having already derived some preparatory information towards leading itself to make experiments for the best.

Many shoemakers hardly ever consider this portion the most essential of the duties of fitting-up; the last comes from the last-maker's, the length of it tried, the measure put round, and, if suiting so far, away it goes to the workman. Yet is the fitting-up to width not to be neglected; and the perfection, as usual, resolves itself into more than the one system.

Suppose a measure be this: *toes*, 8; *joints*,  $8\frac{1}{2}$ ; *instep*,  $9\frac{1}{2}$ . Now, a last measuring at all these parts the same, will be but scarcely large enough for certain feet, independent of the wishes of the customer, who may desire the shoe or boot still easier. Again, another foot giving the like proportion will require quite an under measuring last, abstracting from the toes a quarter of an inch, the joints more than half, and the instep near upon a half; and what is the reason? Why, it will be found in this: The foot requiring the larger measure is angular and hard; the foot requiring the smaller, round and soft in its fleshiness. One can bear no pressure, the other needs it; or otherwise the leather will appear in a very short trial as lying too loosely, the even fleshy surface throwing itself up against it, and putting it to a regular stretch, where afterwards will appear fulnesses and wrinkles, to the disappointment of both purchaser and manufacturer. To fit up for the shoe, a little more width is needed than for the boot, as also for either boot or shoe when the upper-leather is heavy or strong.

The two feet likewise of the same person may be of a very different construction, of which I have seen remarkable examples; the right one may have a toe or toes starting up very prominently, be hollow in the waist, and of a high instep; and the left, on the contrary, have the toes spreading out, and the general bearing of the foot, as through some injury or natural malformation, be thrown all inward, the ankle nearly touching the ground, and yet the two feet, in their measure, be nearly alike. Now it ought to be evident, that though the pair of feet may measure the same, the pair of lasts necessary to these feet must have a very opposite character at the toes and every other place,—the one be a last with a spring, the other flat; the width of the measure in

the one be thrown in the greater width of the waist and to the sides, so that the leather coming off this last be as a mould for the foot to fall into, and not the foot to have to make the mould, which, in many cases, and with a hard or uncomplying material, it can never do effectually.

There are various other difficulties in regard to the last to be attended to. Some feet are much wider forward than over the instep; it will not do, therefore, in this case, to fit up the wood to the measure, it being evident in the making of a boot, that the last so fitted up cannot be drawn out through the smaller extent of the instep; the forward part, then, as a precaution, is to have a moveable leather placed over a smaller given wood, which leather the workmen can afterwards draw out first, and thus the smaller wood have room to come through the straightened instep. The wearer in getting on such a boot may have his toes for the moment compressed a little (which they will be), but the wood has nothing of this compressibility.

The last, as now made, is of two parts, the under or main, and the top or block part; the block in the first is withdrawn, and then the remainder. Sometimes, however, the block immediately above the cross-cut of it, where it goes against the forepart of the last, is much more confined than at the cross-cut below, and consequently through this the block cannot be withdrawn; a divided block must then be the remedy,—when one portion coming out, the other will follow.

Many masters supposing, or cheating themselves into the belief, that a handsomely constructed last must produce a handsome boot, are very much given to have their lasts thinned off at the sides, and the thickness thrown up at the instep, and hence the wood plunges down in an almost direct line across the joint part. In some cases this may be necessary.

but not near so often as is conjectured by these masters. Few workmen either *can* or *will* last to such a last as is needed, the hinderance is so great, and the time consumed so injurious to their earnings. Besides, how rare it is to find the natural foot with these wall-like sides, hill-built tops, and steep underlying valleys! The master is here cozening the eye at the expense of his judgment.

Sometimes, to fit up properly, a *bedding* spot is requisite; the under ball of the great toe may press and be very full downwards, in which case a piece put on the last to meet this place will make there a sort of socket, the insole when wrought over this projection taking a bed, where the prominence, in wearing the shoe or boot, will be received.

A boot may take a little shorter last than a shoe, the catch of the leather at the instep hindering the foot from getting so forward in it. Length, however, is desirable in most instances, and particularly where the foot is thick—a longer thinned-off toe helping to an apparent more slender character of foot.

To these might be added many other instructions relative to the last; they, however, I should think, will not be needed, the reader having already been made acquainted with most if not all of the leading features connected with this part of the subject. The mind brought to think and duly observe is in the right way of progress; the guide and the hints being given, the after application remains with itself.

The remaining duties of fitting-up can be shortly explained. The lasts got ready, and the shoe uppers, or the boot-legs, the stuff or leather of which the bottoms are to be made is next to be cut up and sorted. A pair of insoles, the welts, the outsoles, sole-pieces to join them (though soles to go all through are the best), the lifts (those portions with which the heels are raised), and the top-piece, with some scraps of upper leather

or *fillings-up*, to fill in between the insole and the out, are the portions necessary for the shoe. The boot, in addition, requires the shank-piece (the under stiffener for the waist), rand, if to be a stitched rand boot, and in general a greater number of lift squares, to build up the higher heel which is mostly given to the boot.

The quality and suitableness of all these are likewise to be looked to,—the light for the light article, and the strong for the strong, and, besides, their fitness as to size, so that, while there be no waste, the workman on the other hand shall have a sufficiency—a carelessly given out pair of soles or top-pieces often leading the workman into error, from the necessity to follow his material, in place of his directing it. A few of the bespoke shops in London employ persons solely to fit-up—to get ready the lasts and leather in their pairs, two pairs, &c., as it may be, tie them up with the uppers or legs, write the directions for the workman, and so leave each bundle marked and compact to itself, to be given out when called for. A last-maker, too, may probably be kept in addition; and some masters make their own lasts. Mr. Hoby, at present, I believe, has his own last-maker: though, as I suspect, not much to his advantage, competition abroad often compelling more to the excellence of an article than encouragement at home.

A few words now, in conclusion, of the woman's last. Like the man's, it is in general of the right and left, though, unlike in another way, it has seldom the block. The length obtained, the fitting-up to the width is got by instep leathers, or as they are simply called "leathers." The leathers are of various size and form, but are all for one common purpose—to put on the top of the wood last, and being tried to the measure and found suiting, are then given out with the last for the shoe or boot to be made from.

For woman's work, the last is mostly fitted up under the measure, the reasons for which, and the proportions, may be gathered from what has already been said on this head of the man's last. Another reason is, the kinder nature of the material used for the uppers, and thus yielding better to the foot.—With the soles, insoles, &c. a piece of linen is given to cover the insoles, a delicacy which in the man's shoe or boot would be considered out of place.

To pass any strictures here on that peculiar form of the woman's sole, which so commonly it receives, would altogether be needless. As long as the purchaser pays for her choice, she has an undoubted right to have it; yet I am sure that as much and more stable beauty might be obtained were the method to be changed, and ladies, instead of walking upon things like in appearance to the back of a narrow brush, were to have their shoe and boot soles of the more natural outline—with an enlarged outside to bear up against the tread, in place of treading upon a mere edge—the foot pressing the upper over it on the ground, and, in wearing it out, running also into bulkiness. The misfortune, too, is, that the poorer class of females, who can so ill afford it, are at a very great loss through the almost general adoption of this injudicious fashion; a woman's shoe, it is thought, must be like a woman's shoe, that is, not like the foot, but like some other thing having the name of shoe.—In a few weeks, a servant girl, going errands or actively engaged in a house, will run out a pair of these shoes, of little price, it is true, at the time, but dear in the end. Badly contrived, badly paid for, and, in consequence, badly made, the slop or trade articles of this description are the worst commodity in the trade.

### VIII.—THE BOOT AND SHOE-TREES— CLEANING-UP, STRETCHING, &c.

The skin leather purchased and trenched; the hides the same, and cut up; the shoes and boots—men's and women's—measured for and cut out; the lasts fitted up for the customer; the various work, too, as may now be supposed, returned in its nearly complete state from the various kinds of workmen,—the next and almost concluding duties to be spoken of are those connected with the final finishing off of the articles before they be sent home as ordered, or hung up or otherwise placed in the shop for sale.

To clean-up, that is to *tree* and polish off, boots and shoes after they come from the workman, is, in some shops, the sole employment of one or more of the shop hands—hence the terms cleaner-up and cleaning-up—the men so employed and the thing so employed upon. The wages for this is in general from eighteen to twenty-five shillings per week. The *runner* is also another of these shopmen; in some cases doing nothing but carrying the work to and from the men, and when finished taking it home to the customer, or going for such odd jobs as may be requested, and, again, in collecting the accounts.—It is easy to qualify for a runner—though commonly the situation is embraced by some shoemaker, who, from being an indifferent hand, or not liking the confinement of the seat, or perhaps from its not agreeing with his health, seeks and makes the change. The runner when so engaged is paid about the same as the cleaner-up, though often both duties are exercised by the one person, the amount of trade to the shop not permitting a greater expense. A mere boy, too, is commonly inducted to this office from the like pecuniary consideration.

The *trees* for cleaning-up shoes and boots are certain pieces of wood made so as to be put into them, filling out all the upper and leg leather, and when thus filled out, the roughened outsides have to be sized, rubbed down, smoothed, blackened over, and polished. An old lexicographer describes a boot-tree as two pieces of wood and a wedge: of the shoe-tree he says nothing, it possibly not being introduced at the time. A set of good shoe-trees, however, as now in use, will make about ten or twelve pieces; and a proper set of boot-trees from thirty to forty, and even then not have enough for all cases. The two pieces and a wedge tell, notwithstanding, something of the origin of the scheme. A front, a back, and what we now call a key, were all that was then employed—the foot received no attention. Afterwards, however, the front took a foot, fitted into it by a centre groove, and turning on a wooden pin—the foot always being attached, though capable of running forward and falling back, as the part was put in or withdrawn. Some of these are even yet seen lingering about country places; and in France there is scarcely any other contrivance. I know not indeed if I ever saw our present English fashion, of separate fronts and feet (a great improvement), in any of the shops of our neighbours.

This bit of history, then, may show the cleaner-up that intellect has been even made subservient to *his* profession; it has strided on more than twelvefold—the three pieces have augmented to upwards of forty! Morison, too, the very learned and worthy Chinese Missionary—whose portraits are in the Missionary and Royal Asiatic Museums, London, and whose Chinese Dictionary is there also, and in the library of the East India House—he, it is said, was once a boot-tree maker, and, as such, probably had some share in the improvement—the period of his wood-working giving reasonable belief of the fact, the

many-made tree-pieces first appearing about the time. The brush ought to brush brighter at this.

In cleaning-up a shoe or boot the principal requisite is carefulness, particularly as regards the boot. A boot may be much injured by the person who trees it—stretching the leather beyond the measure, or by forcing away the seams, or rather the material from the root of the stitch, the stitch or seam itself very rarely yielding. The manner of some cleaners-up is all guess-work; without looking to the measure of the boot in the first instance, they put foot and front and back in, and then the key or keys, just almost as the sizes may offer to their hand, and if on trial they find themselves a little wrong, it is still hazardous, in the key must go—a good knock with a heavy hammer, or severe pounce on the end, like the operation of a lusty street paviour, is a ready expedient; and in this way often comes mischief, though others get the blame. Should the boot prove too large, the cutting is in error; or, if the seams fracture, the closer. The fault is never with the cleaner-up; what he has done has been in the unnoticed corner of the shop, and nobody has any word in the business but himself. I have seen much of this, and have known workmen to lose their employ through faults imputed to them which were solely the effects of the negligence here stated.

The cleaning-up of boot or shoe, beside the mere care necessary to a right fitting in of the right tree, is matter of little pretension—in the shoe scarcely any. A coat of blacking, a smart rubbing with a well-grained piece of box or other hard wood, called the *long-stick*, two or three additional applications of the blacking, with a brisk use of the polishing brush, and the affair is finished. The labour, however, when long continued, and in hot weather, is rather severe.—To clean off the top-boot requires the greatest share of

attention, as well from the danger of soiling the white top as to keep the top in its proper place. The last particular is very commonly neglected; in going the trees at a chance, the single seam at the back of the top being probably thrust all awry, so that instead of falling on the centre of the back-strap as it should, it lies altogether to one side, and offers a very bad appearance. At present it is usual with a soiled top to wash it in a solution of oxalic acid, destroying afterwards the effects of the acid as much as possible by the application of clean water, with which the whole is wiped off, and then left to dry, but never near the fire, this manner of drying giving a hard brown cast to the leather. Pounded Bath brick scoured over and then cleaned off the leather, was the manner of proceeding before the use of this acid, the white of an egg giving the surface finish. The patent or painted top, at one time so common, though now rarely seen, had its only merit in the facility with which it could be cleaned; a little soap and water, applied with a sponge, and the thing was at once effected. A gathering together of the receipts for cleaning boot-tops, as given in various collections of the sort, and as occasionally appearing in the periodical press, would make a curious display of the ingenuity absorbed in this matter, though not unaccompanied with its counterbalancing weight of quackery. The most perfectly cleaned tops I ever saw were those worn by a Sir Anthony Lechmere—the deep old-fashioned top of the real hunting character—the leather so clear and fresh looking, not paper-like, but, as it should be, warm, lively, and healthy.

The tops of boots, when required to be stretched, are at considerable risk in the seams, from the custom of wetting the tops all over, though sometimes the seam part only is wetted, to give as supposed a better chance of safety. Both are wrong, and the

latter the worst. Leather stretches readiest when wet, it is true, and at the weakest place most, and hence at or rather *from* the seam, the awl holes taking in more of the water there, while the holes themselves are cause of the least resisting strength. The seam thus may *fly* (its technical term), and often does, while by wetting all the leather except the mere seam, much force may be applied and yet the seam stand.

This is a usual misapprehension in the trade, and not only in this particular, but in every case where stretching is needed, the leather being invariably wetted along the seams, though if wetting be necessary it should be just in the contrary way. It is best, however, to stretch without the aid of any water if possible, just as the articles are received, applying a little soft dubbing or other moistening substance at the time, and then, with a proper purchase, a considerable enlargement can be made.

The contrivances for stretching are various; some stretching on the last with additional leather pieces on, and some on the trees with the same. The boot-tree makers also instruments for this purpose called *stretchers*, the most elaborately fabricated of which I remember seeing in the shop windows of the ingenious Sokiskie, boot-maker of the Palais Royale, Paris, all drilled through with springs, working with knobbed heads upon every part of the foot by means of a top screw. I have understood, however, that the power of this contrivance does not equal its pretensions; yet whether so, or from its expense, certain it is it is not in general use in Paris. Something like it has been tried in England, but also without success.

For easing the foot part a means may be obtained by a longitudinally divided last-made stretcher, grooved along the division to receive a forcer, which, on being struck downwards, throws out the moveable sides of

the last, the last at the extreme toe being held together by an expanding hinge. But a better way is still more simple. A series of lasts will be required of different sizes, having no divided blocks or upper parts, when one of these, according as suits best, is to be put into the boot or shoe; afterwards knobs, slips, or other contrived pieces of sole leather are run in between this last and the upper leather, and then a wooden wedge driven forcibly forward, pushing up the overlying leather pieces, and so stretching the upper part or parts immediately above. The shoe or boot thus widened is to be left so for a day or two, lest the force being taken away too soon the stretched portion should contract again. For easing the woman's shoe or boot, the wedges used are technically called *corkers*.

The stretching of boot or shoe, it will be seen, is thus in many ways worthy of considerable attention, not to mention its pecuniary importance; a little pressure on some delicate muscle or injured bone, without such help by enlargement, rendering the goods valueless to the purchaser, and therefore returnable to the manufacturer. A mere cleaner-up, or any thing else he may be called, if considerate and efficient, may in this way, then, be a very valuable auxiliary to the well-doing of an establishment, and instances are not wanting in which he has had his reward, in the first case from the good favour of his employer, and afterwards in succeeding to a shop of his own. I could name many masters in London who have had this origin. In getting into a shop a man elbows, as it were, upon promotion; standing near, he can see behind the counter—acquires a knowledge of faces which may be of use to him—of habits which are necessary—becomes familiar with the manner of trade—learns how to discourse about it—to watch its chances—is honoured, perhaps, as a proof of confi-

dence, to have something to do with the books, and there guessing at the combined profit account, feels zealous to be a sharer, and will be so if he can:—awaiting the best, when it offers, he embraces it. And in all this there is nothing discreditable. With a worthy perseverance and self-regard, he seeks the advantage and comfort of a greater respectability of condition; and here it is we find the real gold of society—the worth that gives it at once its endurance, weight, and lustre; keeping the links from being broken down, the staple in its proper balance, and all in beauty and order. The stigma afterwards attempted among the disparaging and the envious—“Oh, he was only a shoe-black!” is powerless. The sneer has no avail—the world will not heed it, and the man himself has no misgiving—he looks in his books, and finds his security.

## IX.—THE SHOEMAKER'S ACCOUNT BOOKS.

### INSTRUCTIONS TOWARDS A PROPER MANNER OF KEEPING.

It is a singular circumstance that the business of the shoemaker is very rarely descendable. In some cases a son may inherit it from a father, but such do not often happen; and in large towns, and with extensive connexions, this descent, which is still more singular, is much rarer than in country places, where the connexion may be of the most humble and badly-remunerating character. Beside, masters of this sort are very rarely if ever successful; so seldom it is that men of ability, as shoemakers, are shop-reared,—the able shoemaker mostly coming, as came Napoleon's comrade generals, from the ranks,—and yet it is a common trade saying, that it is the greatest “botch” who gets first into the shop; as a general thing it is so, botches

in comparison with the “dons”—the men whose perfection is their security, and whose confidence in themselves is the means of keeping them where they are,—these, conceiving they must still be right, attempt nothing, and are therefore stationary. It is different with the botch, as he is called, or rather the common-rate workman. This man is generally of a thinking turn, sees that as his years go on his chances fade away with him, and being thus fearful he is kept on the alert; when some opportunity for the better offers he at once embraces it, and being still assiduous to do the best, he succeeds, and often dies the respectable employer; while, it may be, his former more-assured competitor has his funeral services from the workhouse! A man, however, succeeding thus, and withal originally not a first-rate hand, is still, compared with the shop-reared employer, the greater proficient; he knows more of his trade from actual practice, and how intimately the knowledge of the man and the master is connected in seeing his way clearly, and thus he succeeds, and thus it is the other fails. Hence, then, the fact, that the business of the shoemaker is rarely descendable. In country places it may be, where the son of the shop-owner, like the father himself, works whenever he can—because he is compelled. Death under such circumstances can lead but to little default. The son stands truly in the shoes of the sire.

These remarks lead to this: the employing shoemaker is seldom a scholastic character—his literary attainments are generally very humble. When a boy he might have been taught to read, and perhaps write a little; he was next bound apprentice to some neighbouring shoemaker—and here he played whenever he could get the chance, and passed all his other time in working, eating, and sleeping. He becomes afterwards a journeyman; and in the putting

together of the few items making up the total of his Saturday night's bill (if he can write at all), is the whole of his practice in this way. Another change makes him a master, and still what is his position, as a man able to use his pen and keep his accounts? He finds in these matters he is miserably at a loss, and he feels it acutely.

He may, however, be assisted even here; and willing, if possible, to be the means of so doing, I have availed myself of the kindness of a very esteemed friend in introducing at this place the following article, specially written on the subject of the books of the shoemaker, and which, as it is the result of an immediate and intimate acquaintance with a very extensive business, I feel the more confidence in making use of it than any thing I could offer of my own. One remark, notwithstanding, is to be made; he wishes it not to be supposed that his plan is to be taken as descriptive of a complete system of book-keeping, but only as far as is sufficient to direct attention to this very important matter, and to show its advantages to the parties to whom such instruction may be needful.

Every trade, he writes, have their peculiar kind of account books, and the shoemaker, as usual, his own distinct and appropriate ones; nor does it matter much the degree of their value or appearance—be they ever so humble, or so thin-leaved—as long as the honest mind is assured, so far as is needed, of clear accounts between itself and the world.

The different books required in the trade under notice are as follows: the Bills of Parcels or Invoice Book, the Order Book, the Work Book, the Wages Book, the Number Book, the Last Book, the Day Book, the Ledger, the Cash Book Inward, the Cash Book Outward, the Bills' Delivered Book, and the Stock Book.

## THE INVOICE BOOK.

First, you must be sure never to receive any lot or lots of goods into your house for the purpose of being manufactured, without requiring and getting an invoice from the porter who brings them; or, if you reside in the country, never use any goods before you are thoroughly acquainted with the cost of them, and rather than do so wait till you can obtain an invoice from the house whence your goods were transmitted; and, again, if you return goods at any time, be sure and demand a credit receipt for the same from the authorized agent of whatever party you may be dealing with. By thus acting you keep yourself secure against the possibility of any after mistake; as also, by this means, you become so conversant with the nature, bearings, and prices of all sorts of goods you may require, as to be able to call to mind the low, the medium, and the high value of each at pleasure, and thus to have sufficient judgment to direct you in the entire carrying out of your business as far as these matters are concerned. In every way this knowledge is most essential; the proper cost price of any article will be always known to you, and by a comparison between your outlayings in these particulars, and your own manufacturing charges, the justness of your demand and your own security will be seen in conjunction.

The various articles coming under this head, are, in great part, here enumerated for the information of the young beginner:—

*Uppers.*

Calf skins	Calf japan
Calf curried, or grain	Calf japanned on grain
Calf butts	Calf chamois

*Uppers*—continued.

Kip butts	Sheep skin, and mock
Kip grained shoulders and bellies	sheep skin
Hides curried on grain	Cape sheep roans
Hides japanned on grain	Skivers of all kinds
Cordovan hides	Jockey legs and tops
Cordovan shoulders and bellies	Calf fronts prepared
Basils curried	Calf backs prepared
Basils dry	Buck skin prepared
Seal skin curried	And in addition, for the
Seal skin japanned	<i>Ladies' branch</i> , beside
Seal skin dry	many of the above,
Seal skin for bindings	Silks, plain and figured
Goat skins curried	Satins
Spanish dry	Bronze, and various othe.
Morocco leathers	fancy leathers
Kid leathers	Fur skins
Lamb skins	Every variety of binding
Buck skin	ribbon
Doe skin or real chamois	Instep leathers
	Buckles and clasps

*Bottom Stuffs.*

Crop hides	Welting
Crop butts	Single soles
Shouldering	Spring soles
Bellies	Half soles
Middles of bellies	Top-pieces
Ranges	Insoles
Counterling	Lift stuff

Other matters, named as *Furniture* for boots and shoes, may be stated as,

Lastings	Velvets
Jean	Bindings
Galloon	Different cloths
Linens	Buttons

*Furniture*—continued.

Webbing	Boot powder
Dubbing	Corks for soles
Spurs and spur boxes	Tips for heels or toes
Lasts	Screws, brads, and all
Blacking	other sort of nailing
Brushes	Different water-proof sub-
Boot and shoe trees	stances
Stretchers	

It is these articles that it will be your duty to insert in the invoice book, with the various prices attached; though before you enter any one item of any such material as may be purchased by weight, you should first be assured that the weight stated be correct, and also to take the like care in all other matters; even that the charges are rightly summed up, by calculation on your own part; and let each entry in your invoice book have the date of the day at the top, and the name of whatever house the goods may come from distinctly written, with the total amount of each invoice, so that when you carry the account of these goods to the debtor side of the ledger, the entry shall be the total only of such invoice.

## ORDER BOOK.

This is the book above all others which the shoemaker should feel proud in being able to look into without ever experiencing any distaste; and, it is hoped, without ever sighing for not having enough of that variety to feast the eye and cause that pleasure which must ever arise from an abundant, thriving, and well-conducted business. In no book is there required plainer and more careful writing than what this book should contain, if success is at all wished for or in the least sought after; for nothing can show greater want of attention than acting on the assumed perfect understanding you have of what the customer desires,

though, on the goods being sent home, he finds two or three directions particularly given entirely disregarded or passed over, and all, perhaps, from a negligent or defective way of keeping the *Order Book*.

In commencing an *Order Book* you must affix the day of the month and the year, and each successive day put the day of the month over the first order taken on that day; and in entering an order, put the surname of the customer first, and then the christian, which, in the politest manner possible, you must endeavour to obtain in full. Then subjoin the address; and if recommended by a customer, the name of that party. The measure of the foot, &c., will follow next: the length by size-stick, width of the joints, instep, heel, ankle, calf, sort of last, and all other notices according to the nature and shape of the article wanted. I may here advise, that in all cases a full measure be taken; the trouble is little, and afterwards such measure may be of great service should it happen that the customer, having changed his residence to some distant part, wishes and sends for any different article than the one at first ordered. Besides this, you are to make memoranda of all such essential matters as the customer may be desirous of having performed, as also of your own observations at the time; and likewise to put the name of the day when any such article may be promised or required, and keep to this if at all possible, for punctuality is a wonderful help towards success in business. I may still further add, that if the goods when finished are to be forwarded to any stated place, or from town to country by any particular coach or carrier, name these things also, and copy them correctly on the parcel when made up; and if you book them, or send them to be so booked, at the coach-office, for railway or any other conveyance, have a *Parcel Book*, that you may be doubly sure in case of any loss or dispute.

Next in importance, and in immediate connexion with the *Order Book*, is

#### THE WORK BOOK.

After each order is numbered from 1 to 100, or from 1 to 1000, or upwards, those surnames belonging to each order must be carried to the *Work Book*. This book is certainly one of great value and use, for it should contain an account of every pair of boots and shoes, and every distinct part of workmanship connected with the making or repairing of boots or shoes, arranged under separate heads, and after the following rule. The size of the book should be that of large foolscap. The width of the sheet will allow of four suitable columns, with about 3-8ths of an inch of spare room between each separate division, the perpendicular markings being made with red ink, and the horizontal ones with blue. Four pages will be sufficient to contain the principal features of a week's good business.

By skipping the first page in the first sheet of this book, you will have two pages opposite one another, which is the most convenient plan. The first page will be occupied with the names belonging to the orders for all new boots or boots to be footed, and all kinds of half-boots and shoes ordered or bespoke—the same to be copied from the *Order Book*, with the numbers as they stand there attached. The new boots in one column, the fronted in another, and the half-boots and shoes by themselves in another, so that in glancing over these columns you have the names of all your customers, with the facility of finding the order immediately by the number attached; thus affording the ready means of knowing in what stage the work has arrived at by its connexion with the other pages adjoining, which will contain the names of all the makers, closers, binders, and repairers,

divided according to the proportion each man is capable of performing during the week. The repairer having the greatest number of jobs will receive the most room, and so in proportion. The clicker or cutter, as he cuts out any shoe-uppers, boot-legs, &c., is to mark off from the Order Book the articles so cut out; and as such work, when cut, is afterwards given to the different closers who receive it (women or men), an entry then is to be made to this effect in the *Work Book*; and so with all other work given to be done—no matter by whom, clicker, master, or any other individual—every particular should be entered; and especially the jobs should be looked after, for these often are such stealthy things that they creep in and out again without ever paying for their visits. You may write on the soles of all old boots and shoes the names of their owners with chalk, and place them by according to the necessary repairs they require, still marking against the repairer each job or set of jobs as they go out, your memory serving you as to what is being done to them should you have occasion to enter the particulars and charges previous to their return to shop, for you will find, when you have a smart run of business, many things will be paid for in advance, according to circumstances.

The WAGES, NUMBER, and LAST BOOKS, are but contrivances, or rather subdivisions of the *Work Book* just mentioned; the purpose of each being to ascertain at any emergency, and in the quickest way, such information as may be needed. The Wages Book to contain a transcription of all the workmen's bills, to compare when necessary with the account set forth in the *Work Book*; the Number Book to direct to any head or item with the least loss of time; and the Last Book, to check against any abstraction of the property of the employer, in case any last or lasts should not be duly and honestly returned by the workmen.

## THE DAY BOOK

may be now noticed. This book will receive the particular or technical wording of every transaction connected with the business of the shop, in conjunction with your own undeviating fair charges, such as already you have decided to make to your customer according to the nature of any given job. From the *Work Book* you will copy into this book the names of those parties for whom you are making or repairing work, with the particulars of each, which should be done daily. From this book you will make out your bills for those who pay cash; and those who have credit will have the different items carried to their account in the Ledger. All goods manufactured for stock, or for purposes of sale in the shop, will have to be entered here, and from this book transferred to the *Stock Book*, which is essential where there is any considerable business.

## THE LEDGER

is a register book, and divided for debtor and creditor accounts, which ought to contain all the several items not paid for at the time of being sent home—posted from the Day or Manufacturing Book, and representing the collected matters, new or repaired, for those of your customers to whom you allow three months or any longer term of credit. This posting should be done at stated intervals, once a week if possible; or never letting it go beyond a month—though, let whatever lapse of time you allow to take place, regularity is of the utmost importance. The Ledger will also receive the various accounts of your leather-seller and all other persons with whom you do business, or receive goods from,—the different total amounts of each

quantity of goods being copied from the Invoice Book. At the end of each quarter—if it should be the time when you send out your bills—the amount of each bill so sent out you can enter in any small book you like, so that it is handy about your desk without having occasion to resort to your Ledger; and as each bill becomes paid, erase by a line the name of the party paying it, and the amount, out of the little **BILLS DELIVERED BOOK**, and enter the amount immediately in the **CASH RECEIPT BOOK**, with the date at the time, and let not a fraction be received in cash, either from a ready-money customer or those you credit, without its being entered with the same care and despatch. Again: in the **CASH PAID BOOK**, you must likewise enter every amount of money, whether large or small, you pay away, and all sums of money you take out of business for yourself and family—in fact, every transaction, whether receiving or paying, should be fairly entered in the proper book at regular intervals. So, too, before the end of each year, these cash books will have to be posted to the ledger; or, in other terms, the moneys you receive from those persons whom you credit must be carried to the creditor side of their accounts, and all moneys received for goods sold in the shop will be carried from the cash book to the proper folio appropriated in the ledger. Likewise all moneys paid away for goods to your leather-seller, or to any other individual whom you may deal with, you will place to the creditor side of your account with either party: also all other sums expended, as for sundry things, such as repairs, rent, taxes, rates of all kinds, lasts, and all those smaller articles you are in the habit of paying ready money for, you will carry to the proper folio in the ledger; while every farthing you take for yourself must be kept quite distinct.

## THE STOCK BOOK

is intended to enable you to know the amount and value of goods in your possession, or connected with your business, at any required time. A tradesman thus, though not possessing the actual money, may yet have arrived at an advantageous position in regard to property. For instance, a hundred pairs of boots, reckoning the cost price of each pair at 20s. or thereabouts, will be equal to that sum of money in his desk, or, perhaps, better—for the ability to keep such an assortment of saleable articles on hand will gain his shop a reputation, and repeatedly help him to a return of money with a profit, which, without such stock, he must necessarily lose. The taking of stock, then, is the collecting and casting up, from time to time, the state of these matters; and your stock being considered in conjunction with your other concerns, the true position of your affairs will be seen. In fact, all the manners or methods of account-keeping hitherto described leads only to the one great end—a thorough knowledge of your real situation as a man having dealings with the world; for which purpose, moreover, it is usual at the close of each year to strike what is called a

## BALANCE SHEET,

a notion of which may be thus given :

Stock on hand, both raw and manufactured;

Moneys owing to you :

With these credit yourself for what you owe.

Cash paid for goods—all outlays for rent, taxes, and all actual manufacturing business expenses, losses by bad debts, &c.—these must be balanced against

Moneys received for goods manufactured and sold.

And if you find the stock on hand too small in value to cover what you owe to your leather-seller, &c., and no cash or balance arising after deducting your own and household expenses from your returns to make up this deficiency, you may be assured there is something radically wrong in your affairs, and that you are living (it may be) beyond what the business will afford, and by these means living upon your creditors; and such is the deception arising from a good business in regard to this matter, that unless a very careful examination occasionally takes place, you can never be thoroughly certain of either your prosperity or your danger.

What Defoe has said on this subject in his *Complete English Tradesman*, a work of much sound remark and good sense, may here be well transcribed as a finish to this particular head.

“Exact book-keeping is to me (he says) the effect of a man whose heart is in his business, and who intends to thrive. He that cares not whether his books are kept well or no, is in my opinion one who does not much care whether he thrives or no; or else, being in desperate circumstances, knows it, and that he cannot or does not thrive, and so it matters not which way it goes.” And in another place he remarks thus:—“Books well kept make business regular, easy, and certain, so books neglected turn all into confusion, and leave the tradesman in a wood, which he can never get out of without damage and loss.”

## X.—THE MASTER IN HIS SHOP—ADVICE TO HIM THERE ON VARIOUS HEADS.

As by this time we may suppose the reader, as well from his own practice as from such assistance as he may have been fortunate enough to derive from this general Treatise on Shoemaking—the first part on the duties of the Journeyman, and this, the second, on those of the Master—he may now, before I bid him another farewell, come a little further. He is already, as it were, at the shop threshold, and need have no misgiving of being permitted to enter. The attention he has hitherto bestowed, supposing him still to be one of the willing and persevering, gives a guarantee of success. Hope—the good remainder of a life—perhaps the calls and enlinkings of a tender family circle—the inspiring desire of a cheerful and comfortable home, all these propel and excite him to better his situation if possible. Besides, a man at the board, some how or other, is more respected than one on the seat—no doubt because the advancement itself is a sort of proof of merit in the general estimation of society; though, as is well known, the most efficient may often rank the lowest. Yet, though this, through certain causes, may be the case, and there be no help for it, still it is always self-satisfactory to feel one has the happier chance, and proper that the chance should be embraced when it offers.

The change from the seat to the shop, and especially if the business be a good one, is a very important matter. As a journeyman, a man is open to many temptations and much vexing annoyance. In starting first from his apprenticeship, he is usually under the necessity of finding his future companions in life among a class of very dangerous acquaintance: as a workman he is generally more or less deficient, and thus

having to look for those to sit by to whom he may turn for further instruction, he has little or no choice, and, as too often is the case, finds himself immured in some close and thronged garret, with men of thoroughly reckless habits, and who themselves have probably had their dispositions moulded from the same cause and in the same way. From this the evil proceeds: the ability to do as others do may come, though generally not before some six or seven years have passed in this system of tuition, and then, at what expense is the gain in other respects? True self-esteem may be gone, and almost every praiseworthy desire but one, when the man, having no other pride but in his work, becomes so inextricably the shoemaker, that he has scarcely a thought or motive but those belonging to his particular situation.

When by any good chance, or from a determined cast of mind seeking for and pushing towards a better position than the one here indicated, the journeyman has become the master, he should consider himself as being most fortunate. He may now do in great part as he likes; he may be sure, as it were, of his own home; he can take his own way, and seeing and believing he can make some progress towards a better and more agreeable reward for his labour, his pride and energy are strengthened together, and the shop is (or should be) never absent from his thoughts.

As a journeyman, it is true, there is this advantage—a man is under no direct or continuous constraint; he may change his abode or connexion at almost any week, or even at any hour; go about where he likes; but he is still only the journeyman, and in all employments and in all places the variations in his condition are so very inconsiderable, that nothing remains of them at last but the mere recollection, and that, in most instances, as matter of regret. The master is not able to do this; for once in a shop, and once out,

there is scarcely again any hope. Here all his assiduity is required; and if, as often is the case, he is still but indifferently acquainted with the duties he has imposed on himself at a venture, no instruction is to be neglected; he must seek it in every way he can; by observation, by the asking of advice, and so endeavour to secure his success. What then has been said in the present part of the Shoemaker, must to any such person be of essential service. If properly disposed, he will already have found helps of much use to him; and now, in conclusion, I would as earnestly draw his attention to some few other observations, which, though not coming under any distinct heads, are, nevertheless, deserving of his regard.

In the first place, and most especially, he should never forget himself—forget that, though in a shop, he is still of the trade. This in different ways is peculiarly needful, for by a kindly consideration of the confirmed habits of such workmen as he may have to do with, he may at once benefit himself and those he employs. It is no unusual thing for the master shoemaker to be what is bitterly called the *upstart*,—priding himself in his releasement from the caste of the seat, he is apt to take airs at the beard; knowing the poverty of the parties with whom he has to deal, he may be too arrogant, carry himself too haughtily—speaking his directions with an offensive indistinctness, and blaming all faults with a short and threatening bitterness—the result, probably, of ignorance as much as ill-nature.

In any man assuming or having authority over his fellow-man all this is most lamentable; and then, again, what subserviency is too often required! A journeyman comes for a job; it is not ready, and he has to call again; and when he returns at the hour appointed, it is still not ready. This sort of disappointment or play with the feelings may be continued

for perhaps that or the whole of the next day, or even a longer period. Now, if the employer has not such work to do as he promises, would it not be better at once to say so? A man during a given time might get another job, and so far be greatly benefited; while, by such conduct, the suffering party has his mind sorely and repeatedly harassed, and the other only wins for himself the repute of a confirmed liar, beside the injury it may do him, when at any emergency he really is in want of hands and no one is willing to serve him, as, indeed, why should they be, when every remembrance and hearsay of the man is of the most ungrateful description. In this way, moreover, the workman is made negligent of himself; going for his work on a Monday morning, he is told to come again—he does so, and it is still, come again! when, tired with wandering the streets, and vexed in mind, he meets with some other workmen equally disappointed, who together turn to some house of public resort, to kill the time in any way possible, and there yield themselves to drinking and the other amusements of such places.

Another of the many things I have noticed as demanding remark, and as proper to be guarded against by the young master, is that of a bad system of payment to those employed. The shoemaker, no doubt, when first beginning business for himself, is but seldom overabundant in the way of money; it is in general a struggle with him to commence at all, but, having commenced, the payment of wages should always be his most urgent consideration, even should he keep his own back from a new coat, or his wife from a finer display in a gown-piece. His own advantage will be the result, for the better qualified workman will not refuse the offer of his employ; while, contrarywise, if he can only command the most indifferent hands, through his loose or niggardly method

of payment, what he gets done will be badly done, and the customer, finding out the fault in time, will leave and go elsewhere.

I have always been of opinion, and have observed such to be generally the truth, that where the employer shows a proper consideration for the man, there the man is most ready to serve. I recollect a master shoemaker saying at one time in my hearing, that the way to keep men submissive was to keep them poor; and, acting up to this belief, what was the situation of his shop? He had twice the number of hands he required; a closer had but two or three pairs of legs to close in a week, when he could do eight or nine; a bootman might get two pairs of bottoms to make when he could put through his hands more than twice the number—and so on. Thus his men were always needy in the extreme, were never settled, and having much time to spare, would only work when it pleased them. As a consequence the *bag* or discharge would be given, and these going elsewhere, perhaps on tramp to distant towns, were replaced by others, those others to be treated in the same manner; the connexion between the employed and the employing being so thoroughly insecure. On the Saturday night he would pay no one man before what he called his *time*, so that if any individual workman had finished the sorry amount of his week's labour at three or four o'clock in the evening, he could not obtain his money till some five or six hours after, till the slowest or most cueless had also finished theirs, and then the whole party were paid together. Thus, at about ten or eleven o'clock at night might be seen some eighteen or twenty men ranging their backs along the shop wall, and waiting like so many mere vassals for the demand of their bills, and the receipt of their paltry amount. The man of family after this had to take his little sum home, send his wife at the worst possible hour to market, or

perhaps wait till Sunday morning, when every choice of a good and profitable selection was gone, beside the thorough bad look of the thing. Now, as there cannot be the slightest advantage made to accrue from this manner of acting, does it not seem strange that any person having the least authority over another should thus conduct himself, and particularly so as it is more to his own hinderance than otherwise. The journeyman will do nothing for such a master but what he really cannot help; and, where he is a thoughtful and determined man, he will look out for what connexion he can make towards becoming his own master, and perhaps take away some of his employer's best customers.

In offering these remarks it must not, however, be supposed that the writer, on the other hand, is wholly blind to or unacquainted with many very repulsive points in the usages and habits of the journeyman himself. Intimately acquainted with and long observant as he has been of the class, it is impossible he could be. Bad doing, notwithstanding, is neither to be cured nor excused by a return or reciprocity of bad doing. If the workman drinks—has no proper self-pride—pays little regard to his promises—seems never to be settled—goes despicably dressed—works on a Sunday, and is off *fuddling*, as it is called, on the Monday,—in short, if strictly censurable for whatever can be alleged against him, still I conceive, and have long been of this opinion, that much of the remedy remains with the employer, by being more punctual himself in his intercourse with his workmen—by showing them a greater regard—awarding them a higher respect—by, in fact, doing all his better position and a more cultivated sympathy will lead and teach to be done. Nor is it to be imagined that all journeymen are of the description here given, or, as some would affirm, are naturally so inclined; for so

far is this from being true, that it is a common observation when a man has the good fortune to get from a bad to a good shop, that his conduct and appearance soon change with his employment, and he becomes altogether altered for the better.

A most unjust, offensive, and unworthy article on the character of the journeyman shoemaker was, some months ago, transferred from a report given in to Government into the pages of "Chambers's Edinburgh Journal" (a publication of much value, and very widely spread; the editors generally using the most praiseworthy discrimination in the selection of their articles), and thence into most of the provincial papers. Purporting, as it did, to come from a master shoemaker of some standing in London, I made at the time every inquiry into the circumstances, and as to the identity of the person on whose authority the statements were guaranteed. The censure was sweeping in the extreme; he never knew, he said, a shoemaker better than the parties he was pleased to describe in the most abandoned light; they were all drunkards, and possessed not one good quality; and assuming to himself a position of notoriety in the trade, the whole of his averments were, no doubt, as largely believed in as they were widely circulated.

Mr. Hoby's men, those also of Mrs. Bann—of Humby, of Goatly, of Miller and Myers, of Macnaughton, of Martin, of Burn, of Laidlaw, of M'Dowall, of Thomas, of O'Hara, of Page and Cambell, of Taylor and Bowley, of Burlington, of Furnes, of Peterson and Didsbury, of Medwin, of Sully; in short, of numbers of other names I could mention, were all downright reprobates—though I doubt if there could be produced among any operatives in London of a kindred grade, more respectably dressed and well-inclined workmen than those to be found as belonging to these establishments. And all this condemnation

came from nobody! I searched through Pigott's Directory—I made every possible inquiry, and took many journeys, and no person of the name there given was to be found, or was known about. How discreditable, then, in all ways, was such a statement, coming from such a quarter, and vouched for by the pains-taking gentleman who got up the report, and had it laid before and printed under the sanction of Government! The way of fabrication and insult is surely not the way of correction. Men must be lifted and not cast down; it may even be a doubt, if the truth is to be told, whether in all instances it be prudent to describe it in its painful harshness—for, by so doing, that may break and go to a total destruction, which a gentler and more generous treatment might soothe and influence to a better result. Moreover, it is most unseemly to speak falsehood against, as it were, one's own household. Mr. Grove, in naming himself as a master shoemaker, so far forgot himself as to make his own virtue suspicious by the very prominence he gave to the vices of others. The clearness of moral vision that could see, and integrity of mind that could discover, so much of all that was bad and base in his own fraternity, appear themselves of much too bright an emanation to win credence when fairly reviewed. And still, how much more is such conduct to be suspected, when the author has no true identity, and the thing altogether is either an imposition at first or second hand.

The interest of master and journeyman is not to be served in this manner; but so far from it, that if one falls, both must. Good conduct and good feeling, on the contrary, will conduce to the opposite result; and he who, being in a better position, is in the best way to assist to the desirable and the right, is neither excusable nor wise to lend himself to the worse

behaviour. When succeeding, and in this manner, it is then alone his success can be called honourable; while, contrariwise, there are few indeed of the successful among the really evil-disposed.

From these considerations it will be seen how much it is not only the duty but the interest of the employing shoemaker to behave and conduct himself as he should. If he can do so—and who has not this power over himself?—there can be no possible disadvantage, for he will only be doing what in some manner will be enforced from him, be his heedlessness or unhandsome propensities as confirmed as they may. Besides, when a master can thus secure the willing and favourable opinion of those immediately connected with him, he is then only at liberty to fulfil his other duties. In according ease to others, he best ensures his own truest freedom—when, experiencing no molestation of thought, or hinderance of action, every task may be taken in its proper regularity, and proceeded with and completed.

In the manner of dealing with the customer the employing shoemaker is also required to be very careful; yet as this is a matter his own comparative subjection will soon teach, not so much is requisite to be said upon it. Incivility, or haughtiness, or neglect, is so quickly followed by its due and sensible consequences, that the dullest or most obdurate are soon taught amendment. The saying of a "shoemaker's promise," is commonly applied as a thing of the most uncertain dependence; and though, no doubt, there may be much cause for the same from certain circumstances not easily to be avoided from the peculiar nature of the trade, yet I believe latterly that, through the more active competition in which the trade has been engaged, or from the general greater respect paid by all classes of tradesmen to their word, these promises are almost as valid at present as it is possible

to be. In the getting up of any article in the boot and shoe line, many hands are required, and as it happens but very seldom indeed that every man, as the trade phrase is, is waiting with "the thread in his mouth" for a job, the job when it comes has to bide its turn as a matter of course. This perhaps is the principal difficulty in the trade, and leads to what may appear like neglect, though if duly and properly stated to the customer, in cases of this nature, the excuse must be admitted.

Supposing the goodwill to be reciprocal between master and man, the master in the first place has only to do the best he can towards cutting out and getting the work ready, and then he may be sure it will be finally executed with the least possible delay. The employing shoemaker is no more, therefore, necessarily debarred from the proper fulfilling of the wishes of his customer than any other tradesman placed in similar circumstances. He cannot, it is true, when a lady or gentleman comes into his shop and orders certain articles in the greatest hurry, get the order at once ready and send it home, by merely going to a particular place, or through the medium of a pair of scales. This is not expected. The command is one of greater difficulty; the article must be manufactured—has to go through various operations; but yet there is a time in which it may be done, and generally a prudent and well-esteemed employer will be able to have it completed in this time. It is singular, however, the reflection arising from this matter. How is it that the shoemaker is so generally pushed in this way? and at the same time so generally blamed? Is it really the case that the customer is too often all but barefoot before any new shoe or boot is ever thought of or ordered by him? and hence the mortification of a week or even a day's delay in such instances of extreme necessity. A relation or friend may die un-

expectedly, and a suit of mourning be needed rapidly; but surely a shoe wearer may observe a piece of manufactured leather give sufficient indications of its approaching destruction so as to have opportunity enough to prepare in due time for its displacement. May not, then, the customer as well as the shoemaker be equally a sharer in the censure here adverted to? When we have eaten our dinner to-day, we know we shall want another for to-morrow, and, if wise, will prepare for it; so with our apparel. It is a most niggard consideration that fears the stepping of another into our *old* shoes, while we are leaving all the wealth of our coffers for the purchase of *fresh* ones. This, however, is not the affair of the shoemaker. As one obtaining his livelihood by the support of others, no way individually speaking dependent on or connected with him, he has only to do the best he can to please; and if people will risk their feet and their health before they make use of their heads, it is not for him to revenge the indiscretion when he may suffer by his temerity.

Business, in every way, is emphatically business. You must know what you are about—intend it—and see to it. It is neither to be shuffled from or with, but, possessing the proper ability, tact, and prudence, neglect, despise, or waste nothing; and, what is more, all this is to be effected without any disparagement of the man, but rather to an elevation of his character, as it certainly must be to his pecuniary benefit.

In the *Complete Tradesman* of Defoe, he insists much upon the dignity of living by one's business; it gives, he says, "a superior figure;" and drawing a comparison between certain grades of the gentry and a tradesman, he adds, "and as for the lower gentry, from a hundred pounds a year to three hundred or thereabouts, though they are often as proud and high in their appearance as the other; as to them, a shoe-

maker in London will keep a better home, spend more money, clothe his family better, and yet grow rich too. It is evident (he continues) where the difference lies, *an estate's a pond, but a trade's a spring.*"

With this prospect before the shoemaker, and he possessing the proper confidence and ability to his success, all therefore that now remains with him to do is left with himself. In his first experience as a master he will no doubt find many difficulties and suffer considerable uneasiness of mind. All will be new to him and appear in the most disturbing light; yet if he will only keep up his courage, and try, and economize to the utmost, his progress will become easier, and his position at last be secured. A failure in such an attempt is even worse than to have never made the trial; it brings, and always carries with it, a feeling of mortification, and almost invariably deters from a succeeding endeavour. It is imperative, therefore, when he begins at all, that he should do so with the most careful forecast and resolved energy. No time is to be lost, nor opportunity miscalculated; and he may have to do more even than attend to the actual demands of his trade. His deficiencies may be otherwise; he may, though a capital shoemaker, know but very little of the other qualifications of the shop. As already remarked, his early education may have been of the most niggard description, and hence, now that he must have something to do with the keeping of accounts, the sending out of bills, and letter-reading and writing, he must seek in some manner to remedy these deficiencies; though it were always better before actually entering into business, that these matters were thought of in time, and the necessary qualifications attained. When, however, it is not so, and the want is felt—circumstances leading into business partly, perhaps, unexpectedly—the best is to be done that can be done, and the resolution at once taken to try

to improve. The want beside is very irksome, and is ever showing itself, when a man cannot take a pen in his hand without not only the fear but the certainty of exposure.

A contemporary writer, in one of a series of articles entitled "Characteristics of Trades," has remarked upon this very fact as relative to the shoemaker; and as Burns says "we should see ourselves as others see us," the introduction here of the passage may not be without its service:—

"Did the reader (it is said) ever pay any particular attention to his shoemaker's accounts? We mean did he ever do so, considering them abstractly, and merely as specimens of calligraphy. If he did, he must have been struck, we think, with their extraordinary sameness as regards the hand-writing, or rather scrawling, and the perfect similarity in the particular of orthography, that marks every one of these interesting documents.

"Let it be observed, however, that we do not speak of your flashy shoemaker, your fashionable boot and shoe warehouseman, whose windows and doors are radiant with plates and bars of polished brass. We do not speak of *him*, for all *his* business is done after a ship-shape fashion. His bills are as smart as copper-plate and fine writing can make them. They are all right.

"Our shoemaker is your respectable old tradesman, who was in business long before shoemakers dreamt of flashy establishments. His shop is a little dingy place, well filled though, and, in despite of its dinginess, exhibiting very marked signs of substantial wealth.

"Our friend himself is a little, stout, thickset, elderly man, of—we must confess it—rather fierce aspect. Have a care of him, ye dilatory payers; he is not a man to be trifled with; his round, full face

partaking much of the complexion of his own leather, to which it seems, in process of time, to have assimilated, having acquired a sort of light dry-brown colour. A leathern apron, a scratch wig, brown also, and a pair of spectacles, raised high on his forehead, completes the picture of *our* shoemaker—our ancient, unpretending shoemaker.

“But it is with his accounts, his yearly or half-yearly bills, as the case may be, that we have particularly to do on the present occasion. And we ask, did any man ever see the slightest difference, excepting perhaps in amount, between the account of one such shoemaker as we have described and another, during, if his experience goes so far back, the last half century; and however different or distant the parties from whom they emanated might be, are they not all distinguished by precisely the same cramped hand, and all show a similar spirited independence of orthography, as the following?—

	£.	s.	d.
To hailing and souling your Bots	3	10	
To too peaces on your Shos . . .	1	3	
To pare Shos for the childde . . .	2	0	
To pare bots for yorself . . .	1	10	0
To sowling pare Shoos . . .	2	6	
&c. &c. &c.			

“We wish we could conveniently exhibit here a fac-simile of this account. If we could, we are very certain the reader would at once recognise it.

“However ungainly or uncouth our worthy friend's bills may be in appearance, they are always sufficiently correct in the matter of calculation. In this, the main thing, the old boy makes few mistakes. His summations are correct to a farthing. Catch *him* erring there!”—*London Sat. Journal*, vol. i. p. 270.

Now the truly healthy mind, however deficient the

individual may be on the score of pen and book-learning, will not, I am sure, look upon this as matter of insult; nor yet the better informed in the trade gainsay the general truth of the position, because of their own example to the contrary. There is no shame, properly speaking, in not being able to show one's self in that favourable light which a better cast of circumstances might have effected in our behalf. For myself, I remember the time when the little schooling I had received in my boyhood, or rather childhood, by the long neglect of all such duties supervening through the term of my apprenticeship, left me with scarce the skill to write down a single word. I had forgotten my y's from my g's, knew not whether 3*l.* or 3*s.* should stand to the right of a column or to the left, and experienced many other of the like deficiencies. Being at length tasked by my master to earn a certain weekly sum, I was compelled into some sort of bill-writing to keep my accounts, and thence had to teach myself to write again, to learn my multiplication table, and struggle through, without any assistance, the first branches of arithmetic, addition, subtraction, and the rule of three; and, finally, from the necessity thus created, and from the perseverance with which these objects were followed, I am now, in a way, able to write to others; and I may add, without I hope an unbecoming vanity, to put a book together in relation to my own trade, which I doubt if any other man among the thousands of shoemakers in the United Kingdom is as well qualified to perform as myself, from my long observance of it, and the study I have given it; all, probably, arising from the mere chance of my being compelled to know, as the saying is, my p's from my q's; and thence the result, when, possessing the instruments by which thought can alone be made to spread itself, I did what I could to make record of the progress. Thus then there should be

no despair, nor yet any sense of degradation, when adverting to these matters. As I have done others may do; or as others have done I may yet do, and make, perhaps, further advances. Besides, to the young man living in 1840, there are many advantages open, which the young man of twenty years ago was wholly deprived of; there were no Mechanics' Institutes then—no Mutual Instruction Societies—no cheap knowledge flying about as there has been latterly, from the miraculous agency of the printing machine! There was nothing to entice, nor scarcely any spirit abroad to encourage; and the humble workman having no chance of relaxation from the severest constraint but that to be found in the pot-house, there was forced to go, to the contraction of habits of the most evil tendency.

In an especial way is the publication of these *Trade Guides* a portion of the same great agency thus brought into operation towards the general enlightenment at present in progress. Had a book been thought about twenty years ago to teach the shoemaker his art, or to give the boy the slightest conception of it, who would have purchased it—printed it? or, when printed, who afterwards would have read or attended to it? When Mr. Rees wrote and published, as I should suppose at his own risk, what was his return? Ask any of the trade in London, and they have never heard of such a book, though many might have been benefited by some of the instructions there set forth. And, again, what ignorance was manifested in certain works bearing the name of Books of Trade! Sir Richard Philips printed one. In this, under the article Shoemaker, we are told, referring to the plate given in illustration of the business, that the master is represented as “cutting out an upper leather of a shoe to a paper pattern;” and in the next paragraph, “the journeyman as in the act of joining the upper leather to the sole of

the shoe.” But how are these represented? The master stands behind his board with a round knife in his hand, a skin spread out on the same board, and on that lying something in the shape of a pattern, but which, indeed, appears like any thing but what it should be; namely, the pattern of an upper leather for a shoe. It is folded, or seems so, and bears in its outline the form of a made shoe, rather than the extended unwrought representation to which the upper leather in this state should possess. The little “seven-year old journeyman,” as he is called—and the figure in the plate appears no older—is alike faulty to as great an extreme. The letter-press describes him as “joining the upper leather to the sole of the shoe;” but, instead of doing this, he would seem rather to be mending a rip up the back seam of the quarters; the sole and the heel of the shoe looking the spectator right in the face, which is never the case as seen in such an operation as is thus said to be illustrated.

The following is another sample of the glaring ignorance of the trade there manifested. “The last (it is said) for shoes is made of a single piece of wood to imitate the foot; but that for boots is slit into two parts, between which a wedge is driven when the boot-leg is desired to be stretched.” In all this, again, there is not one fact stated as it should be. In the first place, in what shoemaker's shop do we see the last that imitates the foot “made of a single piece of wood,” except, indeed, in those few instances where we make straight women's shoes? but as the writer is evidently speaking of men's work, as we gather from the remaining portion of the sentence, the statement is entirely incorrect. In this remaining portion we are informed, too, that the last “for boots is slit into two parts” (a strange way, certainly, of describing what we call the block-last), “between which,” it is added, “a wedge is driven when the boot-leg is desired to

be stretched." The youngest beginner at his trade must smile at this stretching of the *leg* part by means of the last or model whereon the *foot* part is made; though how this is to be effected, even allowing for the driving of "a wedge," there is no power of guessing.

It was a close remark of the shoemaker in ancient times, who, when the great Grecian painter, Apelles, volunteered the risk of general criticism on a master-piece of his skill as a painter, that the latchet or tie-part of the shoe, as shown in the representation, was faulty; but the same critic going beyond this on another occasion, and blaming without truth or sufficient judgment, the indignant artist bade him keep to his last for the future; a reproach which has become a very proper and useful proverb, in so far as there ought to be positive acquaintance with any matter whatever before we assume the judge and pronounce any decision. Every thing we know of or can conceive has certain qualities, by which certain properties are alone to be established: and without information of these qualities, how are the objects to be sought, or the credence of others obtained? In closing, then, this account of my own trade—considered in its character of an art—I feel, as I have felt all along, the assurance of this knowledge. That which has been offered in the way of instruction to my reader is of my positive acquaintance; while such advice as has occasionally been given, is the result of the best wishes for his welfare—and in this confidence and with this satisfaction, I take my leave.

THE END.

*The Honourable Cordwainers' Company*

THE GUIDE TO TRADE.

THE  
SHOEMAKER



RE-PRINT EDITION

Printed by

THE HONOURABLE CORDWAINERS' COMPANY

A Non-Profit Educational Corporation

In

The State of Virginia

Additional Books and/or Book List Available from:

Carl Lichte  
Honourable Cordwainers' Company  
4340 Fairfax Avenue  
Dallas, TX 75205

(214) 521-3373

Printed in Dallas, Texas

COPYRIGHT