

paper when folded. To make it soft and pliant again, it is rolled anew, some six or seven times, under two different cylinders, one of which has been warmed by the introduction of hot coals inside, and this is sufficient to give it that bright new look which we all so much admire in fresh silk.—*Exchange.*

The Gloss on Silk.

THE method of giving an artificial gloss to the woven pieces of silk was invented in 1663. The discovery of the method was purely accidental. Octavio Mey, a merchant of Lyons, being one day deep in meditation, mechanically put a small bunch of silk threads into his mouth and began to chew them. On taking them out again in his hand he was struck by the peculiar lustre they had acquired, and was not a little astonished to find that this lustre continued to adhere to the threads even after they had become dry. He at once saw that in this fact there was a secret worth unraveling, and, being a man of ingenuity, he applied himself to the study of the question. The result of his experiments was the *procédé de lustrage*, or "glossing method." The manner of imparting the artificial gloss has, like all other details of the weaving art, undergone certain changes in the course of years. At present, it is done in this wise: Two rollers revolving on their axes are set up a few feet from the ground, and at about ten yards, in a straight line, from each other. Round the first of these rollers is wound the piece of silk of twenty, forty, or one hundred yards in length, as the case may be. Ten yards of the silk are then unwound, and fixed by means of a brass rod in a groove on the second roller, care being taken to stretch the silk between the two cylinders as tightly as possible. A workman with a thin blade of metal in his hand daintily covers the uppermost side of the silk (that which will form the inside of the piece) with a coating of gum. On the floor under the outstretched silk is a small tramway upon which runs a sort of tender filled with glowing coals. As fast as one man covers the silk with gum, another works the tender up and down so as to dry the mucilage before it has had time to permeate the texture. This is a very delicate operation; for if, on the one hand, the gum is allowed to run through the silk, or if, on the other, the coals are kept too long under one place, the piece is spoiled. In the first instance, it would be stained beyond all power of cleaning, and in the second, it would be burned. None but trusty workmen are confided with this task; and even with the most proved hands there is sometimes damage. When ten yards of the piece have been gummed and dried, they are rolled around the second cylinder and ten more are unwound. This is repeated till the end. But the silk, with its coating of dry gum, is then stiff to the touch and crackles like cream-laid note-