Mildew in Engravings.

Mildew may be caused by some chemical used in the manufacture of the paper on which the engraving is printed, by attracting and absorbing moisture from the atmosphere, or from a damp wall. Iron mould is probably produced by the rusting of minute particles of metal which may have become blended with the paper when in a state of pulp by the wear of the machinery or the distintegration of buttons, etc., in the process of tearing the rags to shreds, but in all cases the formation of mildew and iron mould is assisted by damp. It is, however, satisfactory to know that any engravings so injured are capable of restoration. If on the first appearance of white fungus-like mildew spots the engraving be taken out of its frame, carefully aired, the spots removed with a soft camel-hair brush, the glass cleaned on the inside, and the engraving refilled, that is all that is necessary, and all that we recommend to be done; but should brown spots have appeared, then the engraving must be put into a special bath, which should only be done by a practised and skilful hand, for it must be remembered that the paper upon which engravings are printed is unsized, like blotting-paper, very absorbent, and when damp very easily torn.

With regard to the restoration of water-colour drawings, no general observation will apply. The paper on which they are painted varies considerably; as a rule it is very hard, and is heavily sized. Artists as a rule prefer old paper, the size in which has from age undergone an organic change, the nature or cause of which has not yet been discovered. We have had in our possession sheets of paper apparently in perfect order, but which, on having a sheet of colour passed over it, developed so many spots that it was absolutely useless. We have seen other paper in which the spots were developed only when one particular wash or colour was applied. Hence we say that no general observation applies to the treatment of water-colour drawings.

A Curious Specimen of Bookbinding.

In a recent article in a contemporary by M. E. Rogers on "Books and Bookbinding in Syria and Palestine," he says, "The oldest and simplest example of bookbinding that I have ever met with was shown me by a Samaritan. The volume was about fifteen inches square, and nearly five inches in thickness. It consisted of fifteen parts or quires of fifteen sheets each, fastened together very securely with strong cord or twist. The leaves had evidently never been pressed, and no glue or paste had ever been used. The back was strengthened by two rather clumsy blocks of polished walnut wood. Each block was pierced with six holes through which the cords were passed and neatly secured."