

**WORLD IS FAR FROM FAMINE**

**Only One-Third of Its Potential Food-Producing Area at Present Under Cultivation.**

Only one-third of the world's potential food-producing area is under cultivation, and the crops raised on that third, thanks to agricultural science, increase yearly.

The United States has only some 400 millions of its 935 million acres of arable land under cultivation, yet it raises, among other things, one-sixth of the world's corn supply. The farms of America raise less than half as much wheat to the acre as those of England, yet even with her present standard size could raise enough corn to meet the needs of Europe on the land that is now lying unused.

Russia produces only ten bushels to the acre of corn, but when science has access to her untold millions of acres, and brings their capacity up to the standard of our own farms, then she alone will be able to supply the world's cereal needs, with the exception of maize and rice.

Less than a third of the world's population gets what we should call three good meals a day, yet the working capabilities of the, from our viewpoint, underfed continents of Asia and Africa will compare very well with either Europe or America. The average meat consumption of the world is 39 pounds a head, yet both the Australian and the American eat nearer 180 pounds per head, and the Englishman is not far behind with about 120 pounds.

It is evident, then, that we can tighten our belts a hole or two yet without running any undue risk of starvation.—Philadelphia Inquirer.

**"CRUCIFIX FISH" ODD CURIO**

**Figure of Man on Cross Plainly Revealed on Dried Skeleton of West Indian Product.**

Joseph Reichenbach of 80 Henry street, has a curiosity in the way of a fish which throughout the West Indian country is known as the "crucifix fish," and is regarded with a mixture of reverential awe by the natives, who throw specimens caught in their nets back into the sea and cross themselves when they come on the skull of one.

The dried skeleton of this fish shows plainly on the under side of the skull the figure of a man on a crucifix with a halo about his head. On the other side of the skull is a figure of a monk with a cowl bending before an altar.

Mr. Reichenbach prizes the specimen very highly. He keeps it in a little wooden box like a coffin. Formerly he was barber in the Hotel of St. George, and one day John L. Sullivan, the famous pugilist, happened in and Joe showed him a specimen of the odd fish. Sullivan was deeply impressed, and expressed a wish to have one like it, so Joe made him a gift of a duplicate of the fish.

There are other peculiarities about this fish skeleton which Joe has. When it is lifted up and shifted there is a rattling in the skull like dice rolling. Those are what are known as the "air bones."—Brooklyn Eagle.

**Determining Poisonous Vapors.**

In its efforts to determine the extent to which the vapors of fires are actively poisonous, the United States bureau of mines has sought vacuum-bottle samples of air from different places in burning buildings in 25 cities. Certain indications have been reported from the contents of such bottles as have been returned. Most dreaded at fires is carbon monoxide, but only one sample of air from above ground showed this gas, the quantity in that case being too small to harm when breathed a short time. The air and smoke in cellars, however, contain considerably more. The ventilation giving good combustion apparently disposes of any carbon monoxide produced, but there may be some accumulation in close places where ventilation is poor. Air charged with dense smoke was quite free from poisonous gas, the effect of such air being mechanical irritation from breathing the smoke; and the most poisonous air found was a sample containing little smoke that was taken from a poorly ventilated space among cases in a basement.

**Napoleon's Dessert Service Sold.**

A French dessert dish of gilt plate, double thread and shell pattern, consisting of two sugar sifters, four spoons, a pair of sugar tongs, 24 small spoons, 24 forks and knives with porcelain handles, formerly the property of Emperor Napoleon, and bearing the imperial cipher of the bee, was sold in a London auction house not long ago. The service was the property of a nobleman whose name is not revealed.—London Times.

**Wood Preservatives.**

Wood preservatives are found by the United States forest products laboratory to be necessarily soluble enough in water to produce a toxic solution, though in some cases the solubility may be as slight as one-millionth. Sodium fluoride and zinc chloride are freely soluble, the cresols as a whole only sparingly so. The toxic oils appear to act as reservoirs of the toxic ingredients, and to feed them out slowly to the wood.

Subscribe for the "Watchman."

**SAYING IT WITH FLOWERS**

**Pretty Japanese Custom That Is Regarded as Inseparable From the Period of Courtship.**

The Japanese courting is as apt to start in a flower message as any other way, the lovelorn swain indicating his passion by tossing a pale plum blossom into the litter as the object of his regard is carried by him. If she tosses it out his suit is rejected, but if she fastens it at her kimono girdle the affair may go forward. Another method is for the lover to slip up to his loved one's door at midnight and fasten a spray of blooming ceastrus alatus above the door. The next morning he walks by the house. If the spray is still there, all is over. But if it has been taken in, or if it has been watered, he knows the maid is his.

The actual terms of the marriage settlement are carried on by a go-between, always a man, we are told. A "complimentary present" is then sent, and if it is accepted the bride and her entire family are in honor bound to go forward with the ceremony. The groom then sends her sixty prescribed gifts that include silk of a certain length and folded in a certain way; garments, silken bags of rice and sweets, and barrels of wine. The latter the bride, as a rule, presents to her parents, and the contents are drunk in cups little larger than a thimble. The groom also sends a long piece of white silk for the wedding garment, and a piece of very fine gold embroidery to be used as a marriage girdle. The wedding day is often picked by a soothsayer, and there are scores of days that are prohibited.

**SEVERE ORDEAL FOR BRIDE**

**Afghan "Beauty Treatment" Torture to Which All Girls Approaching Matrimony Must Submit.**

The girl bride in Afghanistan is subjected to a very severe beauty treatment. Some elderly ladies massage her face, wash her hair and anoint it with oil and perfume. Then comes the tarr zaddani or removal of the superfluous hairs of the face. The phrase, composed of two Persian words—tarr, meaning string, and zaddani, meaning beating—is highly expressive of the act.

A thin silken string is held close to the skin by one of the bride's attendants; a second attendant pulls the thread out and giving it a spin with her index finger and thumb, lets it go. As it strikes the skin and springs back, it pulls out the hair, Iqbal Ali Shah writes in Asia Magazine. The position of the string is changed and the action is repeated. This very painful operation must be performed on every bride, whether she has hairs on her face or not. When the ordeal is over, the tortured face is washed with warm water, without soap, and well powdered.

**Origin of the Name "Sni-a-Bar."**

This story is told regarding the origin of the name of Sni-a-Bar creek. The story runs that in an early day a Frenchman named Abar was ascending the Missouri river in a Canadian boat. Just below the present site of the town of Wellington he came to the mouth of a little river or creek.

"See now, my children; here we have a sni, placed by the good God for our backs' relief," he said. "A little breathing space, a quiet time, a resting from the river. Ah, the dear sni!"

Sni is French for slough. Abar fancied he had struck a quiet loop of backwater which would lead him again to the river in a mile or two. But in a mile it became apparent that it was no slough, but a small stream. And so the boat was turned and poled back to the Missouri. From this circumstance the creek was called Sni-a-Bar, from the word "sni" and the name of the Frenchman, Abar.

**Lamps of Greeks and Romans.**

From the stage of hand-modeling and sun-baking, the evolution of the lamp proceeds to the Greeks and Romans, who devoted a large share of their attention to the art of lamp-making. Each Roman or Greek lamp-maker strove to achieve some new triumph in the art. Just as rare paintings bear the signatures of their painters, lamps of the early Greeks and Romans bear the inscribed names of their makers. Irrespective of their pale, flickering uncertain light, the ancient Greek and Roman lamp was a very costly object, its valuation ascending according to its artistic beauty. So obsessed were they with the beauty of the vessel that little, if any, consideration was given the efficiency of the light produced by the lamp.

**Commodore Preble's Temper.**

The hasty temper of that early hero of the United States navy, Commodore Preble, says a writer in the Boston Herald, furnishes the basis for an amusing story that people of the older generation used to enjoy telling.

The old sea fighter, it seems, was a testy chap. One afternoon his wife was entertaining several lady callers at their Portland home. Just as they were going out they heard a tremendous racket on the floor above, and down the front stairs came crashing a large and very solid table. It badly frightened the callers, who were lingering in the hall for a parting word. "Why, Commodore Preble!" cried his wife, "what are you doing?" "That, Mrs. Preble," roared the commodore, "is my blasted temper!"

**REFUSED TO TAKE CHANCES**

**Fortune Teller's Prediction Caused Crews of Two Vessels to Desert the Boats at Quebec.**

From time immemorial superstitions of sailors, with few exceptions, have naturally been associated with things of the sea, notably the belief which marks departure from port on Friday as a certain omen of bad luck. St. Elmo's fire, the bo'sun fish, whistling for the wind in a calm, the presence of a priest on board ship, all these deal with actual elements of sea life that played a great part among such legends. The Flying Dutchman legend was also born of the sea; likewise the ghostly crew coming from the wreck of a sunken ship to haunt the crew of the vessel which caused their loss.

A more annoying variety of superstition was revealed the other day by the action of the crews of two American tugs who deserted their boats at Quebec. Before these two boats left Detroit bound for New York a fortune teller predicted the doom of one of the boats before it finished its voyage. This prophecy so worked on the sensibilities of the members of the two crews that they struck on reaching Quebec. Old salts might sniff at such a prophecy as this as being of the fresh-water brand and not worthy to be enrolled in the ancient and honorable company of deep-sea superstitions, but the prophecy worked its evil upon the tug owners. The loss of their crews made a real thing of it.

**ALUMINUM TO REPLACE WOOD**

**Increased Production of the Metal Will Relieve Drain Upon the Country's Vanishing Forests.**

One of the greatest consumers of wood is the shipping box. For this purpose no fewer than 6,000,000 cords were used last year. Viewed from any standpoint, it is a gigantic draft upon our forest resources.

Unquestionably before long metal will largely take the place of wood for the making of shipping cases. Which means, of course, aluminum, or an al-

loy thereof. Aluminum, relatively speaking, is a cheap metal now, but it is destined to be vastly cheaper.

When one considers that aluminum constitutes more than 7 per cent of the entire crust of the earth, it seems absurd that there should be lack of it for any and all purposes useful to mankind.

The next generation may live in apartment houses built wholly of aluminum and travel in aluminum trains and steamships. But the matter of most immediate importance is the relief which cheap aluminum may give to the drain upon our vanishing forests.

**Canada Admits Hindoo Woman.**

The first Hindoo woman and the first Hindoo boy who ever entered Vancouver or British Columbia, Canada, to make the province their home, arrived recently on the Empress of Japan. There are thousands of Hindoos living in the province, engaged in working in the woods or in operating sawmills. Some of them have made much money. For a long time the government refused admission to Hindoo women, but recently this ban was lifted. The new arrival was the first woman to take advantage of it. Her husband went to India from Vancouver three years ago, to pay a visit to his home. He had made money and intended to remain in India, but when the ban on women was lifted he decided to return where opportunities were greater. He brought his wife and twelve-year-old son. The father intends to send the boy to the public schools of Vancouver.

**Women's Hair Price Increases.**

The price given by hairdressers for women's hair has increased enormously during the last 12 months. While some women in America and Britain sell their hair, the real trade in this commodity is done in Continental countries. Peasant girls in France, Belgium and Italy sell their hair at regular periods to dealers. This hair is mostly of the fair and black variety, while most golden hair is obtained from Scandinavians.

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