

Literature of China

Preserved in Memory

One of the many great men of the Victorian age was Thomas Carlyle. He exerted a powerful influence over his own age and molded the thought of his times as few writers have done.

Dragon-Fly a Marvel of the Insect World

The dragon fly is not one of those beings who have eyes and see not. When this insect looks at you he sees you well—71,000 of you.

This most wonderful organ of vision, though no larger than a pin's head, has facets upon the lens of the eye and these facets have been counted as high as 17,000, each one more perfect than any side of a diamond fashioned by the hand of man.

The dragon-fly usually is found near water, probably the stream whence it first emerged, says London Tit-Bits. Its wings, which are of the most exquisite and transparent gauze, move with incredible rapidity.

It can fly backwards or forwards, and turn at a right angle at top speed. Like the swallow, too, its flight seems tireless, and it is seldom seen to alight.

English Methuselah

Methuselah is reputed to have lived to be nine hundred and sixty-nine years old but there are no documentary instances as remarkable as that. According to the parish register of St. Leonard's, Shoreditch, England, the oldest man of modern times was Thomas Carn, who was born in 1831, outlived many sovereigns and died in Queen Elizabeth's reign in 1888.

Poor Spelling Common

Poor handwriting and incorrect spelling are faults not confined to the poor and ill-educated, asserts Will West in Liberty. "As for styles of writing, I'd say that bad handwriting, like Chanel blue and reptile leathers, is very good this year.

She Should Know

Responding to an invitation to see the school principal and talk over the question of her boy's transfer to a school better suited to his sluggish mentality an indignant mother appeared with her unpromising offspring.

Vegetable Maturity

According to a publication issued by the Department of Agriculture, it requires from 60 to 80 days for beets to mature, from 70 to 100 days for carrots, 20 to 140 for radishes, 125 to 160 for parsnips, 130 to 150 for onions grown from seed and 60 to 120 for onions grown from sets, 100 to 140 for peppers, 80 to 125 for tomatoes, 60 to 90 for lettuce, 40 to 80 for peas, 100 to 120 for watermelons and 120 to 150 for celery.

Formative Years May Have "Made" Carlyle

One of the many great men of the Victorian age was Thomas Carlyle. He exerted a powerful influence over his own age and molded the thought of his times as few writers have done.

He was born December 4, 1795, in Ecclefechan, Scotland. His father was exceedingly stern and Thomas' childhood was, as he afterward remarked, wholesome rather than joyous.

He stayed there three years, attending lectures at the university and paying his expenses by tutoring. He was not a sociable youth and he made few friends, but at Kirkcaldy, where he obtained a position as teacher, he became intimate with Edward Irving, a schoolmaster three years older than Carlyle.

Seafaring Men Long Clung to Sea Serpent

Since the days of the first seafarers who peopled the ocean with mermaids and mermen—as well as with awful monsters, the belief in sea serpents and similar marine wonders has been firmly held by many mariners.

In modern times sea serpents were reported to have been seen along the coast of the United States and Canada in 1806, 1816, 1844 and 1846, and in the latter years similar creatures were reported to be prevalent along the Norwegian coast.

The first case which gained any credence among scientific men, however, was the report of Captain McQuibban of the British navy, commander of the warship Dardanus, who declared that on August 6, 1848, while en route from the Cape of Good Hope to St. Helena, he and his men saw a strange monster of great size, having many characteristics of the sea serpent of the popular imagination.

Strawberry Tree

Apart from naturalists and botanists there are probably few people who are aware of the existence of the strawberry tree, as distinct from the strawberry plant.

Yet there is such a tree. It usually bears flowers about the end of September or beginning of October, and along with the flowers are found the fruits of the previous year.

The fruit is a large orange-red berry, closely resembling the strawberry; hence the name of the tree.

Nelson's Column

The Nelson column in Trafalgar square, London, cost the comparatively small sum of £28,000, including the statue, but excluding Landseer's four lions, which were not added until 1868, nearly twenty-five years after the completion of the memorial itself.

Reason and Instinct

The amount of conscious reason that an ordinary man uses in his life compared with the great unreason or blind impulse and inborn tendency that impel him, is like his artificial light compared with the light of day—indispensable on special occasions, but a feeble matter, after all.

Predicts Earth Will Stop

If the earth continues to slow up in its rotation, Doctor Crommelin, English astronomer, says it will cease to rotate in a "few millions of years," owing to the friction of the tides, according to Capper's Weekly. When that happens one-half of the world will be in sunshine and the other half in perpetual darkness—anything but a pleasant situation.

Pine Dresser Finally Got Back to America

There is no telling how much an antique piece may travel before it comes to rest in the hands of an appreciative collector or a museum. Recently a pine dresser was imported from England with some English furniture.

Dogs Lived Eight Days Without Food or Water

The tenacity of animal life is an interesting subject if it is tested by accident and not by design; and it has had a test by accident in Wales.

Two dogs, a sheep-dog and a spaniel, which had succumbed to the temptation of rabbit hunting, were missed for nearly nine days.

Many Tomato Varieties

The ground cherry, musk tomato, strawberry tomato or winter cherry grows wild in the Mississippi valley and in other parts of the world and is a member of the tomato family. It is known as the blue tomato by truck gardeners. It grows in a small husk which if left on will preserve the tomato through the winter.

Water Power Long in Use

The oldest water power site in America, more than 100 years old, is on the Piscataqua river at South Berwick, Maine. It was established on the site of the present Burleigh blanket mills in 1620 by Ferdinando Gorges, who obtained a grant from the English crown giving him the right to settle and develop the territory from sea to sea lying between forty-fourth and forty-eighth parallels north latitude.

Had Odd Accomplishment

Earl Russell has this anecdote in his book, "My Life and Reminiscences": "My grandmother, Lady John Russell, was a great favorite with Queen Victoria throughout her life. Not alone, of course, because she had the peculiar and unusual capacity of wagging her ears like a dog.

Presumptuous

A newly rich man once invited Beau Brummell, the famous fop, to dinner, and asked him to name his own party. He accepted, and chose to the number of eleven, including himself.

Hottest Spot on Earth

The latest official records show that the hottest spot on earth is at Azizia in northern Africa. It is on a plain almost equivalent to a desert. The thermometer at Azizia has gone to 138.4 degrees in the shade. The average temperature during the whole year is more than 70.

Pond Recalls Many Memories of Thoreau

For some two years and three months Thoreau lived beside Walden pond, and "Walden" is probably the best known and most characteristic of his works. At the time the era of anobility in nomenclature began in Massachusetts and turned so many good old ponds into "lakes," Walden pond was duly made "Lake" Walden.

The scenery of Walden is on a humble scale, and, although very beautiful, does not approach to grandeur, nor can it much concern one who has not long frequented it or lived by its shore; yet this pond is so remarkable for its depth and purity as to merit a particular description. It is a clear and deep green well, half a mile long and a mile and three-quarters in circumference, and contains about 61 1/2 acres; a perennial spring in the midst of pine and oak woods, without any visible inlet or outlet except by the clouds and evaporation.

Bees Proved to Have Keen Sense of Color

Flowers attract insects by both color and odor, while form, and such markings as stripes or dots, also help to guide the visitors, in the opinion of investigators for the Carnegie institute, who have conducted a series of tests at the Pike's Peak laboratory for nine years. They discovered that blue is the most popular color among bees and other insects, red the least.

Judicial Sarcasm

One of the best bits of judicial sarcasm on record was presented by the late Judge K. M. Wanamaker of the Ohio Supreme court, who differed with his colleagues in a revolver case. He declared that if it is a crime for residents to have weapons in their homes, then a large percentage of the people of the state are criminals.

Sincerity Is Invaluable

Sincerity is the foundation. Without this rare but basic element, all that follows will be insecure. Emerson once said, "What you are speaks so loud, I cannot hear what you say." One of the prophets said, "The show of their countenance maketh them known."

Work With Hands and Feet

Craftsmen who fashion trinkets with their hands and feet still thrive in and around the Great Bazar, a little, tomblike city of its own on one of the seven hills of Stamboul, Turkey. Copper and iron smiths hammer out their wares in small recesses along the miles of arcades in the great, irregular stone building that is dark, smelly and dusty with the dust of centuries.

Anxious Seat

"Old Lem Sawyer is in a heck of a fix." "How so?" "Well, he managed to marry a widow lady, and has just found out that her first husband was a gent he had helped to lynch about two months ago. He ain't discovered yet whether she don't know it or just natchery married him out of revenge. But, either way, he is expecting something to happen any minute."—Los Angeles Times.

Good in Introspection

This world would be a paradise if every man were as good as he expects his neighbor to be. The trouble is we see the faults of others quicker than we see our own. Introspection is more profitable than inspection.—Grit.

Earth's Surface Never Quite Without Motion

No portion of the earth's surface is ever at rest, though all but the great movements of earthquakes escaped attention until recent years. The minute vibrations are followed by J. J. Shaw in Nature as an unending train of waves, waxing and waning in amplitude, that are unceasingly coursing along the earth's crust and reach to unknown depths. The wave period ranges between 4 and 8 seconds; the amplitude is between one 50,000th and one 2,000th of an inch, but with a wavelength of 8 to 16 miles. The speed of the waves is believed to be about two miles per second.

Vultures Do Work of Scavengers in India

In my travels in India, writes a correspondent, I was in the vicinity of the Massacre Ghat, of evil repute in the Mutiny of 1857, and saw a vulture over the Ganges. This scavenger bird was apparently on the surface of the water, and was flapping its wings, for all the world as if a small crocodile had gripped its talons and was trying to drag it under. Then I observed a white object come to the surface momentarily and bob under again. My interest was aroused at the strange proceedings which followed. The vulture flapped its wings as the weight of the fotsam told on its strength.

Unique Telephone Use

Surgeons have discovered that by means of a telephone and an induction balance particles of metal lodged in human flesh can be detected instantly. Thus the surgeon knows exactly where to begin work without having to take a "picture" in many cases.

Yodeling Swiss Custom

For more than a century Tyrolean yodelers have been heard on the concert and vaudeville stage of Europe and America. The first Tyrolean to popularize the yodel in the theater made a fortune in England by so doing and, returning to his native land, purchased a castle and retired in wealth.

Strictly Business

Masters was the meanest man that ever lived and had never been known to give anything away. He either sold it or arranged an exchange. "You've got a very bad cold," he remarked to a friend one day. "The worst I ever had," wheezed the other.

New Era

A friend asked Chauncey M. Depew what he thought of women solons. As usual, Depew was not at a loss for a diplomatic answer. "Well," he said with a chuckle, "I suppose the day may come when all the congressmen will be ladies. And when that time comes, I expect we'll have to call it 'The house of Miss Representatives.'"

Weird and Wonderful Biskra Girls' Dances

In Biskra one hears the sound of the African tom-toms and the playing of pipes, the tapping of the drums, all night long, writes Lillian Gent, in the American Art Magazine. The street of the Ouled Nails is not only the most interesting street in Biskra but the most interesting street I have ever seen in my life.

At night when the girls have their dances in the little coffee houses in the street of the Ouled Nails, it is a most interesting sight. Every one seems absorbed in the dance. The attendants and the audience sit around in a ring on their haunches, sipping mint tea and coffee, calling to the girls and dancers who sit on a platform before you.

Each awaits her turn to come down to her dance with the confidence of a prima donna on the opera stage. The dance is very wonderful. First the gyrations of the neck, the rest of the body held absolutely rigid. Then the quivering of the shoulders with the rest of the body rigid. The hum and the din of the little cafes become very exciting. These Ouled Nails dancers, daughters of the Nile, are often murdered for their gold.

Conceit and Timidity Bars to Advancement

Henry Ward Beecher once called conceit "the most incurable disease known to the human soul."

Conceit, however, is not to be confused with pride, self-respect or self-confidence. There is merit in these qualities and many a man of limited abilities has stamped and pounded his way to the seats of the mighty.

But the conceited man moves in quite a different realm. His is simply an unreasoning, unfounded opinion of his own importance. He is a giant in a world of pygmies.

Many men fall because of timidity and modesty. They secretly tell themselves that they don't amount to much, that they are mediocre and that nobody is interested in their words or deeds. They sink into the hidden recesses of obscurity of complete failure.

There is a sane middle ground upon which those who get anywhere worth while in life must ever stand. Neither conceit nor timidity will carry anyone very far.

Berlin's Many Mills

The Berliner on the whole knows little about his drinking water except that it ranks among the best and purest of any capital. Most people living there think it is taken from the many lakes surrounding Berlin. But this is not the case.

The consumption of water in the summer reaches 500,000 cubic meters daily, but the water works are capable of supplying even more than that—namely, 740,000 cubic meters daily, so that an emergency can easily be met. Next year they will even be in a position to produce 800,000 cubic meters daily.

Books Must Have Air

Recent tests by the United States bureau of chemistry analyzing a large number of worn leather bookbindings, show that leather books need pure air and deteriorate when exposed to harmful sulphurous and acidic impurities. Backs of leather books deteriorate quicker than the sides because ordinarily they are more exposed to light and impure air, the tests reveal. To prolong the life of treasured leather bindings, steps should be taken to prevent their deterioration through the absorption of atmospheric impurities, the bureau advises. Certain coatings and finishes, notably neat's foot and castor oil, are stated to be excellent for the purpose.

Hard to Duplicate

A Colorado town was a man too poor, to indulge in any luxuries other than a superabundance of children. After the coming of a number of singles and doubles a loving but unreasonable wife presented him with triplets—three girls—and he sought for some family to adopt them.

Inexcusable Mistake

There is a delightful old Irish woman who keeps a corner fruit stand in a Western town. One day a gentleman disposed to be facetious took up a fine melon from her stall, and said gravely: "You have pretty good apples in this state; but where I come from we have them twice that size."