

DEATH IN THE PEACH.

A fatal case of poisoning by peach-stones which has just occurred in Paris, may serve as a warning to those families in which children are allowed to look after themselves for hours together. It may be assumed that very few children under the age, say, of ten or twelve, have any idea that peach-stones or peach blossoms are dangerous. They have been shown the deadly nightshade, and probably the wild hemlock, and have a canny dread of them; but nurse-maids are not nearly so fond of pointing out the peach tree as an object of horror and aversion. The victim of the recent accident in Paris has certainly not been cautioned against the attractions of the peach. He had developed, at the tender age of five and a half, the faculty of reasoning on inductive principles, and he saw no reason to doubt that as cherry and apricot stones contained eatable kernels the holier fruit had at least an equally desirable treasure in its least recesses. Accordingly he secreted the stones of a number of peaches which had been sent to his mother from the country, and possessing himself of a hammer when left alone broke them open industriously, and then set upon a solid feast to which he did lastly but completely justice. The taste of the kernels was not perhaps on a par with the expectations previously entertained, but it would be ridiculous to go through the severe labor of cracking such hard shells without entering into the portion of the labor when once finished. So the un lucky child was found by his parent on her return writing in the grievous agonies produced by prussic or hydrocyanic acid. The arrival and efforts of the doctor were vain, and another item had to be added to the long list of "deaths by imprudence." It is as well, now that the season of wild fruit has arrived, to explain what extent of poisoning properties is possessed by the peach-stone. The writers on toxicology state that an ounce of the kernels contains about one grain of pure hydrocyanic acid, and it is known that one grain of the poison will almost to a certainty kill any adult person. Two-thirds of a grain has very often been fatal, and, indeed, may be regarded as a fatal dose for a child.

THE ORIGINAL OF THE CULTIVATED POTATO.—A potato plant (Solanum Tuberosum) growing in great abundance in northern New Mexico is supposed to be the original of our cultivated potato. This native plant forms one of the chief articles of diet of the Navajo Indians. The squaws dig up the small tubers with whatever implements they can obtain, often using a strong, smooth piece of wood with a wedge-shaped end. The plant grows on low, rich spots, and by spring the earth is turned up in every conceivable direction in the search for the potatoes. The latter are from one-half to three-quarters of an inch in diameter, and of good flavor—tasting somewhat like boiled chestnuts. The Navajo Indians consume such large quantities at a time as to cause griping pains, and as a remedy take at the same meal a quantity of earthy matter containing magnesia, which relieves the stomach. Some years ago a quantity of the tubers of this species of potato were received and distributed by the Department of Agriculture. Reports from various localities stated that, in many cases, these improved under cultivation, and increased largely in size.

HOW TO MAKE GOOD PICKLES.—Many housekeepers are now putting up pickles for winter use. There is nothing so annoying or unpleasant to the thrifty housewife as to find, on inspecting her pickle jars, instead of good, firm green pickles, that she has for her labor a soft mass of tasteless, insipid stuff, unfit for the table, rendered so most likely from the use of impure vinegar containing acids or other deleterious ingredients. Following is a recipe taken from a reliable agricultural journal which has been tried and found correct by an old housewife of many years' experience: "Pour boiling sea water over the pickles, using a handful of salt to one quart of water. Let them stand in a tub or other vessel, and then strain them off, composing the cover thereon, and then pour over them in excess of what the other two parties concede to them. In every view we regard the result in the district as extremely doubtful, but if the Greenback party holds the vote it proposes to in Indiana, White's own county, that inflated statesman will have abundant time to employ in pushing forward his magnificent project of improving the Kiskiminetas and Conemaugh rivers by means of slack-water navigation.

It is again reported that Governor Hampton, of South Carolina, has issued a requisition directed to Gov. Hartranft, for United States Senator, John J. Patterson, who, since the adjournment of Congress, has been an occasional visitor to this state. Patterson is badly wanted in South Carolina to answer several high and aggravated charges, of which, if he was innocent, he would long since have returned to Columbia to confront and overthrow, instead of evading, and by his cowardly course rendering a requisition necessary to secure his presence in the Palmetto State, from which he boldly and openly brought his way into the Senate. The Legislature of his native State, Pennsylvania, in 1863, at the instance of Cyrus L. Pershing, then a member from this county, branded him in a resolution as a perjurer, and since that time his career has been one of uninterrupted infamy. It is understood that he is willing to resign his seat in the Senate if Gov. Hartranft will assure him of full exemption from the present proceedings, on his return to the State, but as Hampton has no sympathy for thieves, if Patterson is caught and taken south he will not again disgrace the Senate as he has done.

Messrs. EDITORS: Dr. QUINCY A. SCOTT'S



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ALTING The political assessment of Washington goes unceasingly on, every bureau and department has been roughly assessed, notwithstanding Taxes civil service and of Jan. 29, 1878.

The National Republican is after that hazy-handed son of toil, Ben Butler, and challenges him to give his consent that the Register of the Treasury may exhibit the records of his office, in return for which the Republican promises that it will undertake to show that Butler is now, and has been for some time, the owner in his own right, and the custodian of United States Government bonds aggregating more than \$1,000,000.

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The trade dollar is now, in accordance with the order recently issued by the Treasury Department, received by Government only at its real bullion value, of 80 cents.

METHODS OF COUNTERFEITING SILVER COIN.—A silver piece passes current so long as the imprint is not badly defaced or weight greatly reduced.

A hole through the coin, however, condemns it—a fact, we believe, not generally known. The low value of silver prevents any such proceedings as in the case of gold, as the amount that could be safely abstracted will not pay for the trouble of doing it. Consequently all silver counterfeiters are true imitations, and there is hardly a date of a dollar, half dollar or quarter which has not been copied with remarkable accuracy. The counterfeit either makes a mould in plaster from the real coin, and casts from it, or he stamps his imitation in dies. As this last process is the same as in use in the mints, the counterfeiters thus produced are more difficult to detect, because besides being more accurately finished, the compression which the alloy receives brings it nearer to standard weight. A large number of counterfeit silver coins are made chiefly of type metal. A very dangerous half dollar is composed of silver, copper and zinc, and is worth about twenty seven cents, it is from seven to ten grains too light. Spurious half dollars have appeared which constantly deceive bank tellers and other experts because they are of full weight. They are made of a compound similar to German silver, and are so well plated with genuine silver that the acid does not effect them. They are, however, too thick, and the gauge, as usual where the balance fails, shows the fact. Counterfeits of the quarter-dollar, though very plenty, are less dangerous than those of larger pieces. They are composed of antimony, tin and lead, and they are both too thick and too light, although they have a good ring. A peculiar composition has been employed, to which powdered glass is added to give a clear sound; but this is but a clumsy expedient, as the coin is far below proper weight, a fact easily appreciable by mere handling.—Scientific American.

How GAS WAS FIRST USED.—Great was the amazement of all England when, at the close of the last century, Wm. Murdoch discovered the use of combustible air or gas. So little was the invention understood and believed in by those who had not seen it in use, that even great and wise men laughed at the idea.

"How could there be light without a wick?" said a member of Parliament when the subject was brought before the House. Even Sir Humphry Davy ridiculed the idea of lighting towns by gas, and asked one of the proprietors if they meant the dome of St. Paul's for a gas meter.

Sir Walter Scott, too, made himself merry over the idea of illuminating London by smoke, though he was glad enough, not so long after, to make his own house at Abbotsford light and cheerful on wintry nights by the use of that very smoke.

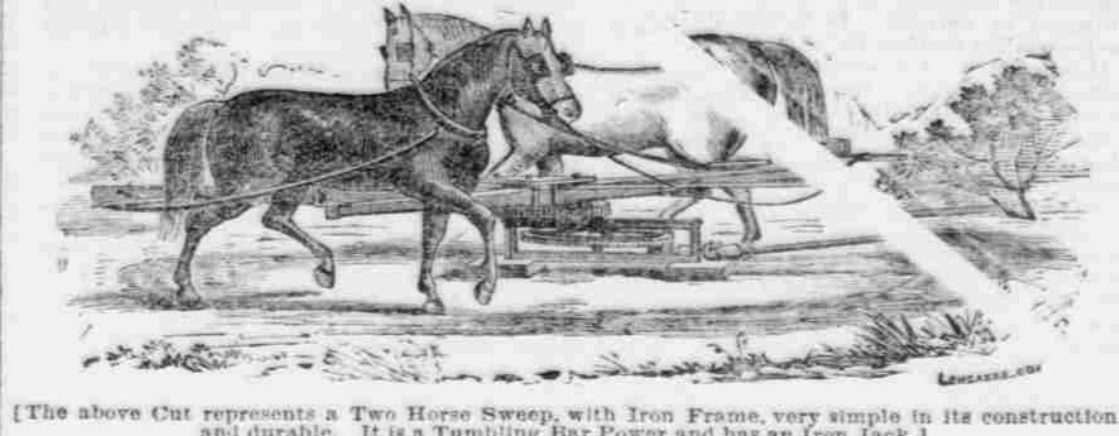
When the house of Commons was lighted by gas, the architect imagined that the gas ran on fire through the pipes, and therefore he insisted on their being placed several inches from the wall for fear of the building taking fire. The members might be observed carefully touching the pipes with their gloved hands, and wondering why they did not feel warm.

The first shop lighted in London by the new method was Mr. Askerman's on the Strand, in 1810; and one lady of rank was so delighted with the brilliancy of the gas lamp on the counter, that she asked to be allowed to take it home in her carriage.

A WONDERFUL FLOWER.—At the home of Thurlow Weed, in New York city, there is now or was a few days ago in bloom one of the rarest flowers in the world, the Dove Flower, or Spiritus Sanctus, of Brazil. The flower is rare, even in its native land. The stalk is about forty inches in height, with a leaf like that of a tobacco. On the top are four of the flowers, the lowest of which is in full bloom. The three others in bud. The flower is delicious. It is similar in shape and size to the Madeira nut opened, but still joined. One-half of the flower lies down exactly at right angles to its mate, exposing in the erect part a most dainty floral grotto, in which rests, apparently upon a perch, a petal shaped like a dove about to fly, with outstretched head and extended wings. The dove is cream white, with the exception of the upper extremities of the wings, which are beautifully speckled. The perfection and life-like appearance of the dove are incredible to persons who have not seen the flower. In the land of its growth it is in absolute veneration. Many legends are told about the "sacred flower." Mr. Weed received the plant about a month ago, and it bloomed week before last.

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Some Interesting facts to Remember About the Sun.

The sun is 320,000 times as large as the earth. The sun is 400 times as far off as the moon. A lady who weighs 160 pounds here would weigh 2,700 pounds if she were on the surface of the sun.

Another theory is that comets and meteors matter falling into the sea may be its ailment to offset the tremendous mass which combustion certainly involves.

The earth is flying around the sun at the rate of 1,000 miles a minute. The sun and all the stars are moving through space, accompanied by their planetary systems, at a rate varying from 20 to 500 miles a second.

THE LYRE BIRD.—This bird, it is known to the ancients, was bred in the central sun of our universe, and our sun and the visible stars are revolving around it in orbits measured by millions of years.

A VETERAN FARMER told me a few days ago of a method of relieving a choking cow which was new to me, but which he assured me was unending.

FARMS AT PRIVATE SALE.—The undersigned offers at private sale in the following townships, Blair county, 1/2 mile east of East Tyrone, containing 100 acres, improved, lying thereon all the necessary farm buildings.

Preserving the Skins of Animals.—So soon as the skin is removed from the carcass, and while fresh, make a brine of salt and alum strong enough to beat an egg; then put the skin into this blood warm, and let it lie and soak twenty-four hours; then take it out, and having tacked it upon a board, (the fur inward,) scrape the skin, and a thin membrane will come off, and having warmed up the pickle again, put the skin into it a second time, and let it remain five hours more, after which take it out and nail it upon a board to dry, (the fur inward,) and then rub it with pumice stone and whiting. Hair and other skins may be prepared in the same way. They are in best condition for preparing in winter.