

Important Facts.

Thomas A. Becket is recorded in history as being very rich. On one occasion when entering a French town his procession was headed by 250 singing boys; then came his hounds in couples; then eight wagons, each drawn by five horses driven by five drivers; two of the wagons filled with ale to be given away to the people; four, with his gold and silver plates and stately clothes; two with the dresses of his numerous servants. Then came twelve horses, each with a monkey on his back; then a train of people bearing shields and leading like war horses nicely equipped; then falconers with hawks upon their wrists; then a host of knights, gentlemen and priests; then the Chancellor with his brilliant garments flashing in the sun, and all the people capering and shouting with delight. After this he suddenly changed his whole manner of life. He ate coarse food, drank bitter waters, and wore next to his skin sackcloth covered with dirt and vermin. (For it was then thought very religious to be very dirty), flogged his back to punish himself, lived chiefly in a little cell, washed the feet of thirteen poor people every day, and looked as miserable as he possible could.

Sesostris was the most distinguished of all the Egyptian kings. He formed the idea of conquering the world, so set out with an army of 500,000 footmen, 25,000 horsemen, and 27,000 armed chariots. His conquests were extensive, and he returned home laden with the spoils of various vanquished nations. He is said to have caused the captured princes, four abreast, harnessed to his car instead of horses, that they might draw him to his temple. In his old age he lost his sight, he became despondent and took his own life.

Cadmus was the first who introduced the use of letters into Greece, though some maintained that the same alphabet was in existence among the native inhabitants. This alphabet consisted of sixteen letters, to which eight were afterward added.

Hermes Trismegiste is celebrated for his philosophical writings. He added five days to the year, which before consisted of only three hundred and sixty.

Erasmus and Troncos were two brothers; their father Aristodemus having been killed in battle, they being twins, their mother was unable to tell which of them was the first born. The Spartans consequently agreed that they be joint kings.

Sardanapalus was considered to be the most effeminate of mankind. He never left his palace, but spent all his time with his women and his eunuchs. He imitated them in dress and painting, and spent with them at the dice table.

Xerxes had under him 2,000,000 fighting men, besides vast numbers of women and domestics, the largest army and assemblage of persons recorded in history.

Quintus Cincinnatus was called from the plough to the office of Dictator. He was considered to be the wisest and bravest man belonging to the commonwealth. He cultivated a small farm of four acres with his own hands. The deputies of the Senate found him following the plow in one of his fields. They begged him to put on his gown and hear the message from the Senate. Cincinnatus anxiously asked "if all was well?" He then desired his wife to fetch his gown from his cottage. After wiping off the dust and with which he was covered, he put on his robe and went with the deputies. They advised him to Dictator, and bid him hasten to the city, which was in the greatest peril. He saved Rome from destruction by his wisdom and valor.

A singular occurrence, showing the providence of God in the government of the world attended the siege of Rome. The city was at one time nearly taken by surprise; a number of Gauls having climbed up the steep rock on which it stood, were about to kill the sentinels and make themselves masters of the place, when some geese, kept near the post, being awakened by the noise, began to flutter their wings and cackle loudly, so as to arouse the soldiers. This little incident saved the capital, and perhaps the Roman name from extinction.

Asistole said when dying, "I entered this world in impurity, I have lived in anxiety, I depart in perturbation. Cause of misery pity me."

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Farm Notes. The farmer's wealth is not that which he receives and expends every season, nor can he estimate his yearly gains with any degree of certainty, as he may apply to his soil that which may require several seasons to give an adequate return. How many farmers pause to consider the increased wealth of the land itself, or the possible amount in value of crops that may be taken from the land for years without any addition to the soil in the shape of manures or fertilizers? Very few. Yet there are many farmers who are compelled to struggle under difficulties, and who barely make both ends meet from the beginning of the year to its finish, but who are slowly and surely becoming wealthy, though this gradual increase may not be immediately noticed.

It is an old maxim that the safest investment is in land, for the reason that land cannot be stolen or destroyed, remaining permanently as deposited wealth until it passes into other hands. But the land is also the receptacle for more wealth and locks up within itself valuable material that may at some time be converted into marketable products. Every farmer who grows crops, raises stock, aims to improve his farm, will, in the face of all obstacles, store up in the soil, as plant food, wealth that cannot be utilized immediately, but which in the future will place him in a more independent position and offer fourfold that which it received by changing the unusable commodity of the farm into forms by which it becomes articles of demand. The fertility of the soil is the treasure of the farmer buried until he digs for it at the proper time.

Though nature is at work she requires materials, and the farmer simply utilizes the forces at his command to change the material, and place them in positions of advantage. The source of the farmer's increase is the manure. The manure heap is a real factory, a chemical laboratory, in which a portion of the products of the farm are worked over and changed and the more perfect the work performed in this laboratory the greater the aid and assistance afforded the crops during the growing season. The farmer every year becomes wealthier because he is converting waste material into plant food, which is added to the soil, and whether droughts entail failure, or prices fall, his mine of value over and above that which he may derive from the sales of his produce it is a mine.

Life in "Malberry Bend." It is upon "The Bend," in Malberry street, New York, that this Italian blight has fallen chiefly. It is here the sanitary policeman locates the bulk of his Four Hundred, and the reformer gives up the task in despair. Where Malberry street crooks like an elbow, within half of the mile of the homes of the rapacious. The law of the microscopic change that rules life in the lower strata of that city long since put the swarthy, stout emigrant from southern Italy in exclusive possession of this field, just as his black-eyed boy has monopolized the boot-back trade, and the Chinaman the laundry. Here is the back alley in its foulest development—naturally enough, for there is scarcely a lot that has not two, three or four tenements upon it, swarming with unwholesome crowds. What squalor and degradation inhabit these dens the health officers know. Through the long summer days their carts patrol the Bend, scattering disinfectants in streets and lanes, in sinks and cellars, and hidden hovels where the miserable homes of the rapacious. From midnight till the tramp burrows. From midnight till the tramp burrows. From midnight till the tramp burrows.

What Produces Death. Some one says that few men die of age. Almost all persons die of disease, personal, mental or bodily toll or accident. The passions kill men sometimes even suddenly. The common expression "choked with passion," has little exaggeration in it, for even though not suddenly fatal, strong passions shorten life. Strong bodied men often die young—weak men live longer than the strong, for the strong use their strength and the weak have none to use. The latter take care of themselves, the former do not, as it is with the body, so it is with the mind and temper. The strong are apt to break, or like the candle, run; the weak burn out.

The inferior animals, which live temperate lives, have nearly their prescribed term of years. The horse lives twenty-five years, the ox fifteen or twenty, the hog ten or twelve, the rabbit eight, the guinea pig six or seven. The numbers all bear proportion to the time the animals take to grow to full size. But man, of all animals, is one that seldom comes up to the average. He ought to live a hundred years, according to the physiological law, for five times twenty are 100; but, instead of that, he scarcely reaches an average of four times the growing period.

The reason is obvious—man is not only the most irregular and most intemperate, but the most laborious and hard working of all animals, and there is reason to believe, though we cannot tell what an animal secretly feels, that more than any other animal, man cherishes himself to keep it warm and consumes himself with the fire of his own reflections.

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Can Light His Breath. The strange case of William Jackson, whose breath was inflammable, excited a great deal of interest in medical and scientific circles two years ago. At that time, says a prominent writer, Mr. Jackson was a photographer in Fayetteville, N. Y. More recently he has been engaged in this same business in Middletown, Vt. One evening at ten o'clock he lighted a lamp with a match. Then with a breath of air sought to "blow out the match." Instantly his breath took fire with a slight explosion. Jackson gasped with fright, and the flame of the combustible air entered his mouth and blistered his tongue. His lips and face also suffered, and his mustache, eyebrows and the hair above his eyebrows were singed to a marked degree. The man was at first badly frightened, and his wife, who was a witness of occurrence, screamed with alarm.

After waiting an hour to see if there would be a repetition of the phenomenon, Jackson went to bed. The next morning he consulted his physician, Dr. T. E. Quinly, who recognized the case as a singular one, and engaged the writer of this article to report it for the medical journals. The truth of the reports was at first questioned on all sides, but, after the matter was thoroughly investigated, it was admitted that such a case might possibly occur. Then in 1874 it was learned that an European medical journal had published a report of a similar phenomenon, and many scientific tomes were searched, and one item discovered that substantiated the present. Then Jackson discovered that he could reproduce the phenomenon almost at will, but as the experiment sometimes resulted in unpleasant burns he would exhibit his peculiarity only on special occasions.

At last medical men figured out a theory to explain the freak. They came to the conclusion that it was not the breath from Jackson's lungs, but air belched from his stomach, that would take fire. The patient had never been a drinking man, so the gas was not rendered inflammable by the presence of alcoholic liquor, but for years he had suffered from a peculiar kind of dyspepsia. Dr. William Manlius Smith, professor of chemistry in the Syracuse Medical College, after careful study concluded that food in Jackson's stomach underwent a butyric acid fermentation, one of the products of which was carbonated hydrogen, sometimes called "marsh gas," the "freedom" of mines. Jackson understood a little about chemistry and one day, questioned on all sides, but, after the matter was thoroughly investigated, it was admitted that such a case might possibly occur. Then in 1874 it was learned that an European medical journal had published a report of a similar phenomenon, and many scientific tomes were searched, and one item discovered that substantiated the present. Then Jackson discovered that he could reproduce the phenomenon almost at will, but as the experiment sometimes resulted in unpleasant burns he would exhibit his peculiarity only on special occasions.

Germany's Royal Children. The young Emperor of Germany, William II, has five little boys. The eldest is seven years old. He is the Crown Prince and the heir to the throne. He will some day be Emperor of Germany. He is a fine, manly little fellow. Germany is a very military country, and the Emperor William is such a thorough soldier that strict military discipline is the order of the day in the nurseries of his little people. As soon as petticoats are left off the tiny boys are dressed in baby uniforms, and the young Crown Prince looks quite like a little soldier.

When their father visits them in their own quarters, as I suppose I ought to call such a military nursery, the Crown Prince commands his military brothers to "fall in." Then Frederick and Albert, who are scarcely more than babies, "fall in." Little Prince Albert is such a mite that he is not able to keep his position for long and he soon trots away to his nurse's side. But the Crown Prince and Prince Frederick stand stiff and starched like real soldiers till their father returns their salute in proper fashion.

When the little Crown Prince was six years old he was given a bedroom to himself, instead of sleeping in the nursery with the others. He was very pleased, and said: "Oh, that is nice; now I need not be with the children any more." In the summer of 1888 all five boys had a charming holiday with their mother at the beautiful castle of Oberhofen, in the forest of Thuringia. Their father was away. A little fort was built for them in the corner of the garden, with a tent and two small cannons. The three eldest, dressed in officers' uniforms, paraded in front of the fort. Then while the Crown Prince beat the drum, an old soldier showed the other two how to attack and defend the fort. Little Prince Augustus William, who was only a year and a half, was dressed in white and wore a tiny helmet. He looked on and clapped his hands. In Germany every boy, whether he is the son of the Emperor or of a peasant, has some day to be a soldier. The Emperor is very fond of his five boys. Almost his first question is, when he returns home, "How are the boys?"

A Stove Used as a Bed. In the north of China the climate is quite cold, and there are no stoves or fireplaces in the wayside inns. In some of the general rooms are small charcoal braziers, but the bedrooms, which are very scantily furnished, contain neither stove nor bed. In their place is a brick platform, long enough for a man to stretch himself at full length upon and raised a foot or two from the floor, with an opening in the side. Into this aperture the servant pushes a pan of burning coals, and when the bricks are thoroughly heated the traveler spreads out upon them the bedding he has brought with him, and lies down to rest on his stove.

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