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Courage.

Courage, friend, the world is wide
Life is all before thee;
Clouds that hid thy path at dawn,
Break in beauty o'er thee.

Out of evil cometh good—
Joy is born of sorrow;
Griefs that rend the heart to-day
Die in bliss to-morrow.

Nothing on the earth is ours—
All things are of heaven;
As we labor, so to us
Shall the fruit be given.

First the child, and then the man,
Life, and then the story;
First the dark and then the light—
Pain, and then the glory.

"The Widow's Mite."

A widow—she had only one!
A puny and decrepit son;
But, day and night,
Though fretful oft, and weak and small,
A loving child, he was her all—
The widow's mite.

The widow's mite—ay, so sustained,
She battled onward, nor complained,
Though friends were fewer;
And while she toil'd for daily fare,
A little crutch upon the stair
Was music to her

I saw her then—and now I see
That, though resign'd and cheerful, she
Has sorrow'd much;
She has. He gave it tenderly,
Much faith; and, carefully laid by,
A little crutch.

ALONE WITH A MANIAC.

I have been asked by many why I am prematurely gray, and I will relate the thrilling circumstance again, as I have done a hundred times before.

Hair has often turned gray in a night, but mine turned to silver threads in the broad sunlight of noonday, with a thousand upturned faces on the crowded street of a city gazing in wonder and horror at my helpless and fearful situation, all paralyzed by the sight, and none thinking or able to help me. Alone I suffered, and alone I triumphed, but added a half century to the locks that shaded my brow.

I was employed with a Lightning Rod Company, and was ordered to replace the old broken rod of St. Paul's church, in the city of ——, with one of our new patent spirals. That night I told my roommate of my detailed duty for the next day, and I noticed his strange keen eyes light up with some secret pleasure, but I thought nothing of it at the time. What a strange creature he was! an Italian landscape painter, a man of middle age, who had seen some deep sorrows in life, but whose secret I never knew. I only guessed it was some family difficulty, the memory of which at times softened his flashing black eyes, into all the dreaminess of a lover's, and at others filled them with the glance of frenzy, under which he would act so strangely that I thought at those times his reason was partially dethroned. But the cloud of the past would dispel itself, and in the sunlight of the present he would be as genial as ever. He used to show me all his paintings, and took pleasure in my high praise of them; but one he guarded with the most jealous care, and once when I came in unexpectedly upon him, and caught a glimpse of it as he was giving some finishing touches to it, he sprang to his feet, threw the curtain over it, and with a fearful gleam in his eyes, pushed me from the room. I saw that it was the portrait of a beautiful woman—with the dark eyes and hair of Italy, and the soft tinge of her sunlight and genial clime.

He met me in our room that evening as pleasant as ever, and nothing was said of his strange conduct, and so, with me, it was soon forgotten.

Two weeks after, I knocked at the door of his studio, and receiving no answer, I opened the door, and there, as before a shrine, he was kneeling before the portrait, and seemed to be oblivious of my presence. Never before had I seen such an expression of mingled devotion and agony on the human face as his bore; but O, the portrait! I stood spellbound and drank in the ravishing beauty of that sweet face, with the voluptuous smile, and the soft light of love beaming from the eyes in all the animation of a living creature. I turned to leave, when in an instant he sprang forward and grasped me by the throat and dragged me before the portrait, drew out a poniard and raising it high above me, exclaimed:

"Genovia, Genovia, accept this sacrifice of blood," when, as if by a miracle, the curtain fell over the face; and lowering his hand, he said, sadly, "No, no, baseborn wretch, go! Your blood would be an unworthy sacrifice to her; 'twill be some other hour your time will come;" and with a theatrical flourish he pushed me from him, dropped his poniard, and folded his arms in a melancholy manner.

I needed no spur to hasten me away, but got out as quickly as I could, and resolved to change my room at once, which resolve I would have carried into execution, but he met me at the supper-table so genial and kind that I forgave him, and regarded it but as the strange freaks of his love for some one in the past, and I simply resolved not to go into his studio any more.

When the morning arrived for me to go to the church, he requested that he might accompany me, as he wished to study a celebrated painting there, and would remain in the church until I came down. To this I willingly assented, and locking the ponderous door on the inside, I left him below, while I ascended to the topmost window of the spire, and arranged my ropes and pulleys for descending on the outside. A great crowd gathered in the street below to watch my movements, and with some pride that I was the center of attraction, I had lowered myself until the old rod was all detached and cast down, and had drawn myself up within ten feet of the window, when, upon looking up, I saw the Italian at the window, looking down at me with the fearful glare of a maniac in his eyes. He hissed through his clenched teeth:

"Your hour has come. I have sworn that no man should look upon her face and live. I am going to cut you down;" and to my horror, he drew a great carving knife, and began slashing at my rope. He could not sever the rope at one blow, and I saw that my only hope of safety lay in paying out rope so fast, that he could not cut twice at the same place. In this I succeeded, until the cut strands reached the pulley, where, catching for a moment they gave him time for cutting the rope; it was the end I held in my hands, and with fearful rapidity the rope rushed through the pulley, until a broken strand again caught so firmly that it would go no further. I now saw that he would cut the remaining rope, and send me to destruction, two hundred feet below.

A cry of horror came up from the crowd in the street, as they now realized what the strange conduct of the man above me meant. It was an awful moment of suspense, but in that moment I looked for some chance of escape, and found that my only hope lay in catching hold of some foot rods that had been placed from the windows below to the one from which the maniac was again cutting my last rope. These irons were shaped something like a stirrup, and grasping them I ran my left arm through one, with my foot upon another, just as the rope came rattling down, almost jerking me loose with its weight; but I detached it from me, and for a moment breathed free as an encouraging shout came up from the crowd.

O, who can realize the horror of my situation, suspended two hundred feet high upon those slender, rust-eaten irons? I felt myself growing faint, and remembering the sailor's warning, "Look aloft," I glanced upward, when, to make my situation more terrible, the maniac screamed out:

"I am coming down to cut your throat;" and, suiting the action to the word, he climbed out on the foot rods and began to descend with all the assurance that a maniac alone could possess.

A moment more, and taking that great knife from his teeth, he would let out my blood and close my eyes forever in death, hanging there, with my arm through the stirrup. But I thought of a strange thing, and that strange thing saved my life.

I had, hanging upon the hook in my belt, a coil of small rope with a running noose in one end. Now, when I was in Mexico, I became very expert in throwing the lasso, and I determined to lasso the maniac if possible; so, taking the coil, I waited until he was within ten feet of me, and threw it; fortunately, I was successful, and with a desperate jerk I tightened the rope around his neck, and as quick as lightning sent him crashing headforemost two hundred feet below. I heard a sickening thud, and a cry of horror from the crowd, and seemed to remember no more.

How I ever got in at the window I do not remember, myself; I only remember lying on the floor in the spire near the great bell, with the sexton and a crowd around me. They told me my hair was white.

I paid the funeral expenses of the poor Italian. The portrait is mine now, but I never look on its beautiful face without a shudder at the fearful adventure it cost me.

A Hopeful View.

The New York *Daily Graphic* publishes an imaginary conversation between a Wall street "Bull" and a "Bear," which clearly and happily sets forth, dramatic form, the antagonistic views of their respective class upon the probable future of values and prices in this country. It may be summed up as follows:

The "Bear" argues that the cloud of the panic still overshadows the land; that the Western droughts, fires, grasshoppers and chinch-bugs and the Southern floods have tended to diminish the crops and depress commercial activity; that the sight spurt of revived business activity which followed the adjournment of Congress has already died away and a reaction ensued; that the necessities of repayment of the thousand millions of borrowed foreign capital and the interest thereon press heavily upon our people, who are now poor, restricting them from their ordinary expenditures in purchases of goods and in travel; that, consequently, manufactures and railroads suffer, and in sympathy with them all values are and must long remain depressed; that the panic has frightened people from investment in new enterprises, particularly those of a joint-stock character, and that it will be long before it will be practicable to so far re-establish public confidence as to give a healthful impetus to any form of speculation.

The "Bull," on the other hand, takes a much more hopeful view of the future. He claims that there has been direct good resultant from the panic, in diverting individual energies from speculation to production, in enforcing a valuable economy, and in clearing the country of goods and thereby creating an increased demand for manufactures; that notwithstanding all the malign influences mentioned by Mr. Bear the crops of the present year will be twenty per cent. greater than in any preceding year; that this increased harvest will give new life to our railroad and shipping interests, and its profits will afford abundant means for the purchase of manufactures, the stimulation of trade, and investment in new speculative enterprises; that the currency question is so settled as to adapt the supply of our medium of exchange to the demands of business; finally, that we are a nation of bulls, hopeful, volatile, not easily depressed for long and quick to turn ourselves so as to wrench success from the jaws of defeat, hence that the country, with the encouraging crop prospect now before it, is on the eve of a prosperous season of legitimate speculation and healthful inflation which will very speedily wipe out all the sad traces of the panic.

Reviewing these opposing arguments, we are inclined to heartily endorse the judgment of the "Outsider" to whom they are supposed to be addressed, that there has never been a better season for investment, by those who have money, than the present. Prices are low—lower than they should be—and must inevitably speedily appreciate; and, while we cannot fully coincide with the Bull's eager confidence in an almost immediate commercial millennium, we are well satisfied that a very short time must elapse before the song of "hard times" is heard no more and the better time coming at least gives unmistakable signs of its approach.

A Horse Chaunter.

"A fellow being called as a witness in one of the courts, the Judge demanded:

"What is your trade?"

"A horse chaunter, my lord."

"A what?—a horse chaunter? Why what's that?"

"Vy, my lord, ain't you up to that ere trade?"

"I require you to explain yourself."

"Vel, my lord," said he, "I goes round among the livery stables—they all on 'em knows me—and ven I sees a gen'man bargaining for an 'orse, I just steps up like a tectotal stranger and sez I, 'vel, thats a rare 'un, I'll be bound,' ses I, 'he's got the beautifulest 'ead and neck as I ever seed,' ses I; 'only look at 'iz open nostrils—he's got vind like a no-go-motive, I'll be bound; he'll travel a hundred miles a day and never once think on't; them's the kind of legs vat never fails.' Vel, this tickles the gen'man, and he ses to 'imself, 'that ere 'onest countryman's a rare judge of a 'orse;' so, please you, my lord, he buys 'im, and trots off. Vel, then I goes up to the man vat keeps the stable, and I axes 'im, 'vel, vat are you going to stand for that ere chaunt?' and he gives me a sovereign Vel, that's what I call 'orse chaunting my lord; there's rale little 'arm in't there's a good many sorts on us; some chaunts canals, and some chaunts railroads."

A Story about Crows.

A Delaware correspondent writes to a Baltimore paper on the subject of crows as follows: "A novel amusement, which is at present indulged in to a great extent in the upper part of this State is crow-shooting as a substitute for pigeon-matches. The rules and customs are the same in either case. The substitute was made out of a sort of humanitarian notion among the people, as well as to benefit, pecuniarily, residents about Reedy Island, in the Delaware, from whence crows are taken. I have been told that this spot is the favorite roosting-ground of these birds, and that toward nightfall they congregate there by thousands. When darkness overspreads the island, the catchers enter among the low trees with bags, and capture any desired number, simply plucking them from the limbs like so much fruit. The birds cannot fly in the darkness, and, even if shaken from their roosts, they cling to the first object that comes within reach. It is said that a man, standing beneath the tree from which the birds are shaken, with outstretched arms, will soon be covered with them."

BUSINESS PROSPECTS.

What is to be Expected, and What is Hoped For.

In an editorial on "Business Prospects," the New York *Tribune* says:

The condition of England, France and Germany is far from that state of robust health which is necessary to make them good customers and easy creditors of the United States. In England a readjustment of wages and prices has been in progress for nearly a year, and is yet far from being completed. The exports of British manufactures for the first six months of this year are not only less than for the same months in 1873, but less than for the same months in 1872. A trade whose growth has been for half a century the wonder of the world has been for two years either stationary or declining. This is a sign of bad times which cannot be questioned. The same condition of affairs, though perhaps in a less degree, exists in France and Germany. It exists also in the United States, but we fail to see here the energetic struggle which is making in England to adopt wages to her changed situation. We are to have a great crop and lower prices of food all over the world in consequence of the abundant harvests now being gathered. This will unquestionably be of great benefit to Europe, and particularly to Great Britain, and the ball will in the end rebound back to us. But probably two or three years will pass by before the full effect is produced. Perhaps two or three good harvests will be required to produce such a state of prosperity as existed throughout the civilized world in 1872. Meanwhile the immediate consequences of a good harvest in both Europe and America may be productive of inconveniences to our Western farmers, and, conjointly with other circumstances, to the general trade of the country.

The United States are great sellers of grain and provisions in ordinary years. A fall of 25 per cent. in breadstuffs, operates injuriously upon the producers and carriers. It makes them less able to pay their debts, and compels them to restrict their purchases of manufactured goods, and other articles of commerce. The ordinary mortal spends all, or very nearly all, he gets. Only the few save. Whatever, therefore, curtails the money, which has been erroneously said to "fructify" in the pockets of the people, checks the consumption of merchandise, and tends to produce dull times. And it is not only the consumption of merchandise by farmers, and those dependent upon the custom of farmers, which is likely to fall below high-water mark. The price of cotton has been low for nearly a year, and bids fair to continue depressed. Moreover, that great industry, the iron manufacture, still remains prostrate. It seems to us, that the change imperatively demanded, by the present and prospective low prices of all articles consumed by laborers, is a reduction of wages. But wages are not reduced in good times. On the contray, they are advanced in such times. If wages are to be reduced, times must continue to be dull for a while.

Considering, therefore, that the whole commercial world is stimulated and depressed by slow working influences, which, like the sunshine and the air, have no boundaries; remembering that the transitions from prostration to exaltation have hitherto usually been powerfully gradual, and believing that many obstacles still exist in both hemispheres to that full working of the industrial machinery which requires every man's labor and supplies every man's rational wants, we cannot join in those cheerful predictions of impending prosperity which, it is said, will overflow the country at or before the time Congress meets. Weeks before the panic, we warned our leaders. It was not a grateful task; but those who heeded us have had reason to be grateful since. It would be far pleasanter now to prophesy smooth things. But our readers look to us for what is true rather than what is pleasant, and have a right to demand that we shall point out the actual situation and prospects rather than what we and they alike should be glad to have them. We expect a revival of business to begin to manifest itself this fall, but we do not expect to plunge at once into the full tide of such apparent prosperity as the country was riding upon in the winter and spring of 1873. "Slow and sure" should be the maxim of business men.

East River Bridge.

On the Brooklyn side, the East river bridge tower has been raised twenty feet since the 11th of June, and it is now altogether 225 feet above high tide, the keystones for the arches having been placed in position. The work of placing the keystones, which weighed 11 tons each, required the utmost care.

Only 17 courses of stone remain to complete the tower, and as the workmen are laying stone above the arches at the rate of about a course a week, it is expected to be completed by the middle of November.

The ordinary blocks of stone employed are of about six tons weight, but the top courses and cornices will require blocks still more massive, and cannot be constructed so rapidly as the main part of the masonry.

When both towers and anchorage are completed, a wire will be carried across the river, probably by a tug boat. Having got one wire across, the engineers will by this easily draw over the cradle ropes, four stout twisted ropes of steel wire, which will serve as supports for the cradles, or moveable frame-works, on which the workmen will stand while employed between the two towers. From these ropes will also be suspended a wooden and iron foot bridge, to be built in installments, by which the workmen will be able to go from the shore to the ladders leading up to their perches.

An endless wire rope having been stretched across the river, passing around immense drums at each anchorage, the machinery will be worked by a steam engine to stretch across the wires for the bridge cables, by the same principal on which the ropes are worked in a block and fall. In this case, of course, the traveling sheave will run on a horizontal instead of a perpendicular line. Each of the four permanent cables will be sixteen inches in diameter when completed, and will be composed of steel wires laid straight like a bundle of rods. A twisted rope would be insecure, as in that it would be impossible to exert the same tension upon all the wires, and some would prove weaker than others.

A Vindictive Queen.

Henry Carey, cousin of Queen Elizabeth, after having enjoyed her Majesty's favor for several years, lost it in the following manner: As he was walking one day, full of thought in the garden of the palace, under the Queen's window, she perceived him, and said to him in a jocular manner, "What does a man think of when he is thinking of nothing?" "Upon a woman's promise," replied Carey. "Well done, cousin," answered Elizabeth. She retired, but did not forget the answer. Some time after he solicited a peerage, and reminded the Queen that she had promised it to him. "True," she said, "but that was a woman's promise."

THE CORN CROP.

The August Returns of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

The August returns to the Department of Agriculture from New England, show a general improvement in the corn crop during July, though it is still backward. Maine averages 92 per cent. of a full crop; New Hampshire, 98; Vermont, 97; Massachusetts, 101; Rhode Island, 100; Connecticut, 107. It is very promising in portions of the Middle States, but in other portions it was injured, either by drought or excessive rain. A decline is noted in New York, where the average is 94, and in New Jersey, 91. Pennsylvania and Delaware have both risen to one per cent. above the average. Of the South Atlantic States, Maryland shows 96 per cent., with the crop damaged by drought, especially on stiff soils; Virginia, 90, also damaged from the same cause and from insect ravages; North Carolina, 91, a loss of one per cent. South Carolina and Georgia have risen to 10 per cent. above the average. Florida, 102, maintains her July average. Texas declines from 106 to 102. The other Gulf States show enhanced averages as follows: Alabama, 107; Mississippi, 95; Louisiana, 77. The last named is partially recovering from the effects of the freshets. Some insect injuries are reported. Of the Southern Inland States, Arkansas, 85, and Kentucky, 80, show some improvement; while Tennessee, 70, and West Virginia, 82, indicate the continuance of unfavorable conditions. These low averages are accounted for by severe and extensive drought. North of the Ohio river, all the States show a depressed condition from drought and insect injuries. Chinch bugs were active in Illinois, and grasshoppers in several counties of Wisconsin. The State averages are as follows: Ohio, 93 per cent.; Michigan, 98; Indiana, 106; Illinois, 86; Wisconsin, 98. West of the Mississippi river, the ravages of grasshoppers and chinch bugs have been severely felt in some counties, in some cases, sweeping all the summer crops. It is very remarkable that in Minnesota, where local injuries have specially occupied public attention, the high state of the crop, in counties not affected by the pests, have raised the condition to a full average. The other States, however, show a decline as follows: Iowa, from 104 to 102; Missouri, 100 to 74; Kansas, 102 to 70; Nebraska, 109 to 42. In the last-named State, every county reports severe injuries from grasshoppers. On the Pacific coast, California has raised her average from 99 to 103; Oregon depressed hers from 103 to 100.

A Strange Plant.

Darwin, who is always after something singular, tells us of a strange plant which feeds on insects. The petiole, or leaf-stalk, is of the shape of a handle of a tea-spoon, the only difference being that its upper surface is channeled along the middle, instead of being flat. By its broad end it is united to the leaf by a narrow isthmus, of about half a line in breadth.

Whenever an insect, or any object, touches, however slightly, any of the six filaments above mentioned, the lobes close sharply upon it, just as a rat-trap closes on the animal caught; the closure is at first, however, only partial. When the leaf is thus half-closed, it is easy to see what is the significance of the two sets of prongs along its edges. They are observed to be set alternately along the borders of the two lobes, so as to fit into each other as the teeth of a rat-trap do. The reason why the leaf does not at once close firmly on its prey—at first sight not very apparent—Mr. Darwin has been able to explain, by observing what happened when an insect finds itself caught and attempts to escape. If it is small, it easily makes its way through the grating, formed by the crossing of the teeth; and in this case, the leaf expands again very gradually, and is then ready for another victim. If it is large, all its efforts to regain its liberties are futile. Repelled by its prison-bars, it is driven back upon the sensitive filaments, which project into the interior of its cell, and again irritates them. By doing so, it occasions a second and more vigorous contraction of the lobes. The result is that the creature is this time not only captured, but crushed, to be eventually digested.

The leaf, having thus closed, remains for a week or more in the same state. At first, the two lobes are so flatly pressed against each other, that the insect between them forms a bulging projection on either side. But soon a quantity of juice is secreted by the internal surface of the leaf, which, as it collects, distends the space occupied by the insect, which after a time becomes diffluent, and is eventually absorbed. This process of gradual liquefaction and absorption, Mr. Darwin has shown by numerous experiments, to be of the same nature as that by which food is digested in the stomach of higher animals.

Chinese Domesticities.

A writer on the Chinese in the *Temple Bar* says: "They have a large screen before the doorway, which gives privacy sufficient for their need. The window sashes are closed either by a sort of jalousie or thin matting. They do not surround their domesticities with the same mystery and secret precautions with which we envelope these proceedings in Europe. Human nature, they argue, has to sleep, and here is the mat upon which it stretches itself. Why conceal it? It also wants to eat, and it satisfies its appetite, no matter how many eyes are gazing. Tell a Chinese cook you are hungry, and he will immediately fetch his fire, his cooking utensils, his provisions, and cook under your very nose. He has no idea of concealing his operations in some far-back region. He squats down anywhere, makes a fire on or in anything—a basin, dish, pan, or pot—there is no limit to his invention. He will cook in the middle of the street, or in the center of his guests in a restaurant. Upon one occasion, when on board a junk, I observed a man cooking his own and his neighbor's food together in a tub, and an earthern saucer containing the charcoal. Wonderful creatures they are, these despised Chinese, with a deftness of finger and ingenuity of patience unsurpassed by any nation under the sun."

Fever in Water.

The *Journal of Chemistry* warns the drinkers of the water of wells that are near dwellings to beware of the typhoid poison sure to be found sooner or later in those reservoirs if any of the house-drainage can percolate them. The gelatinous matter often found upon the stones of a well is a poison to the human system, probably causing, by its spores, a fermentation of the blood, with abnormal heat or fever. Wholesome, untainted water is always free from all color and odor. To test it thoroughly, place half a pint in a clear bottle, with a few grains of lump-sugar and expose it, stoppered, to sunlight in a window. If even after an exposure of eight or ten days, the water becomes turbid, be sure that it has been contaminated by sewage of some kind. If it remains perfectly clear, it is pure and safe.

"The Seducer and His Victim."

The seducer! Playing upon the most sacred passions, he betrays innocence. How? By its tenderest faculties; by its trust; by its unsuspecting faith; by its honor. The victim often and often is not the accomplice so much as the sufferer, betrayed by an exorcism which bewitched her noblest affections, and became the suicide of her virtue! The betrayer, for the most intense selfishness, without one pretense of honor—by lies; by a devilish jugglery of fraud, by blinding the eye, confusing the conscience, misleading the judgment, and instilling the dew of sorcery upon every flower of sweet affection, deliberately, heartlessly, damns the confiding victim! Is there one shade of good intention; one glimmering trace of light? Not one. There was not the most shadowy, tremulous intention of honor. It was sheer, premeditated, wholesale ruin, from beginning to end. The accursed sorcerer opens the door of the world to push her forth. She looks out all shuddering; for there is shame, and sharp-toothed hatred, and chattering slander, and malignant envy, and triumphing jealousy, and murderous revenge—these are seen rising before her; clouds full of fire, that burn but will not kill. And there is for her want and poverty and gaunt famine. There is the world spread out. She sees father and mother heartlessly abandoning her, a brother's shame, a sister's anguish. It is a vision of desolation, a plundered home; an altar where honor and purity, and virtue and peace have been insidiously sacrificed to the foul Moloch. All is cheerlessness to the eye, and her ear catches the sound of sighing and mourning, wails and laments; and far down, at the horizon of the vision, the murky cloud for a moment lifts, and she sees the very bottom of infamy, the ghastliness of death, the last spasm of horrible departure, the awful thunder of final doom. All this the trembling, betrayed creature sees through the open door of the future; and with a voice that might move the dead, she turns and clasps his knees in awful agony: "Leave me not! Oh! spare me—save me—cast me not away!" Poor thing—she is dealing with a demon! Spare her?—save her? The polished scoundrel betrayed her to abandon her, and walks the street to boast his hellish deed. It becomes him as a reputation! Surely society will crush him! They will smite the wolf and seek out the bleeding lamb. Oh, my soul, believe it not! What sight is that? The drooping victim is worse used than the infernal destroyer! He is fondled, courted, passed from honor to honor, and she is crushed and mangled under the infuriate tramp of public indignation. On her mangled corpse they stand to put the laurels on her murderer's brow! When I see such things as these, I thank God that there is a judgment, and that there is a hell!—*Henry Ward Beecher.*

New Theory of Comets.

The following novel theory of comets has been proposed by a contemporary: "Comets are supposed to consist of thin vapors of gases, held together by the mutual attraction of their particles. Like all bodies so circumstanced, they necessarily assume the spherical form; and therefore the common notion, that they consist of a comparatively small and bright nucleus and an immensely long and illuminated tail, evidently derived from their appearance in the heavens, cannot for a moment be entertained. That their spherical form, as shown by the reflected light of the sun, would scarcely be discernible at the distance of our earth, even though the comet were as dense as the densest cloud of our atmosphere, would not be surprising; but if their attenuation, as described by Sir John Herschel, be considered, all wonder ceases. Sir John Herschel says 'that the most unsubstantial clouds, which float in the highest regions of our atmosphere and seem at sunset to be drenched in light and to glow throughout their whole depth as if in actual ignition, without any shadow or dark side, must be looked upon as dense and massive bodies, compared with the filmy and all but spiritual texture of a comet.' Owing to this extreme tenuity of matter, the rays of the sun's light, as reflected by it, are absolutely invisible to the inhabitants of the earth; but the other rays, penetrating into the center of the comet, are refracted by this powerful lens of twenty millions of leagues diameter into the focus which forms the nucleus of the comet, where there is, perhaps, a greater concentration of rays of light than anywhere else, not in the body of the sun. Hence this large body of concentrated light, streaming in a narrow path through the remaining half of the comet, in a direction opposite to the sun, forms that splendid appendage called the tail.

The Quaker and the Hackmen.

The Boston *Bulletin* gives the following ludicrous account of the experience of a Quaker with New York hackmen: A tall, portly, dignified citizen of the Quaker persuasion, well known in Philadelphia, arrived in New York the other day, and, having no baggage but a light traveling satchel, was utterly oblivious to the appeals of the hackmen as he emerged from the railway station.

"Fee—thavanoo Hotel! Fifth Avenoo—goin' ritup! Fifth Avnoo!"

Broadbrim stalked right on without a word. Another knight of the whip charged down upon him.

"Say Nicholas Hotel! Say Nicholas Hotel coach? This way for the S' Nicholas!"

No response from the passenger, and not a muscle moved at his appeal. Then there was a rush of half a dozen.

"Kerridge, sir, Kerridge? Wanter ride up?"

"Winsur House! Whose going up to the Winsur?"

"Astor House, sir?"

"Brevoort House? Brevoort?"

"Metropolitan Hotel?" "Right down Broadway!" "'Ere you are; kerridge, sir?"

The traveler loomed up like a ten-pin among vinegar cruets, and, with face as placid as a pan of milk, was calmly and silently moving away from the crowd of jarvies, who looked after him with something like amazement, when a sudden thought seemed to strike one, who, running after him, seized hold of one of the handles of his traveling bag—

"Deaf and Dumb Asylum, sir! Going right up!"

This was too much. Dignity relaxed into a laugh, and the driver got a fare for a down-town hotel."

STOPPED THEM.—Two muscular men in a Pennsylvania village, each of whom entertained the opinion that he was an adept at sparring, had arranged with each other and some friends to repair to a field one morning, and fight for one hundred dollars. The money was placed in the hands of a friend, and by him passed over to his wife for safe-keeping. A Catholic priest, however, hearing of the proposed encounter, resolved upon a novel method of peace-making. He went to the stakeholder, took the one hundred dollars, and then told the principals to go ahead. It is almost needless to add that they gave up all idea of fighting.

Up a Tree.

The *Arcadian* says: "From France, that land of romance, comes a new and pathetic story. A young man, in the bloom and health of vigor, was engaged to be married to a beauteous maid. This ingenuous youth had one eye fixed on the main chance, and arranged with his future father-in-law that on the day of his marriage certain 'real estate' should be transferred to him. The memorable morning arrived; the air was laden with the perfume of flowers, the birds sang, and the villagers held a festival similar to those which we see in Italian operas. The bridal party reached the chapel, which lay ensconced among traditionary elms. Through the churchyard meandered a streamlet whose silvery ripples glistened in the morning sun. Punctual to the time the cure arrived and took a preliminary pinch of snuff as he surveyed the people before him. Everybody settled into his or her allotted place. The ceremony was about to be commenced when it suddenly struck the bride that the bridegroom was *non est*. She clasped her hands to her heart, and, with a piercing shriek, fell senseless. Clear as a bell over the clamor that ensued was heard the voice of the father calling upon his friends and relations to go in search of the missing one. High and low they hunted, but the game could not be found. At last they discovered the object of their search comfortably ensconced among the spreading branches of a lofty oak. On being requested to descend he inquired 'if they saw any green about him,' to which those below, who had their eyes on the surroundings, replied 'Plenty.' In the midst of an interchange of violent epithets he gave a characteristic remark somewhat to the following effect—that 'he be derned if he would till that there real estate was transferred.' While the bride was thus bowed down in anguish and the bridegroom was boughed up in the tree, the father-in-law tore his hair, and amid sobs and tears urged the unreasonable nature of the request, but to no effect. Finally the document was brought forth, duly signed, and the recalcitrant bridegroom slid down the tree. After the necessary repairs had been made in his pantaloons, with his *rentes* secured and his rents sewn up, the bridegroom adjourned with the rest of the party to the chapel. The bride recovered from her faint, the cure took a fresh pinch of snuff, and the knot was tied."

The Reason Why.

It is always desirable that facts should be supported by reason. The editor of Arthur's *Home Magazine* gives the following questions and answers, which are pertinent to this season of the year:

Why is fruit most wholesome when eaten on an empty stomach?

Because it contains a large amount of fixed air, which requires great power to disengage and expel it before it begins to digest.

Why is boiled or roast fruit more wholesome than raw?

Because, in the process of boiling or roasting, fruit parts with its fixed air, and is thus rendered easier of digestion.

Why should salt be applied to vegetables intended for pickling, previously to putting them in the vinegar?

Because all vegetables abound in watery juices, which, if mixed with the vinegar, would dilute it so much as to destroy its preservative property. Salt absorbs a portion of this water, and indirectly contributes to the strength of the vinegar.

Why is bread made from wheat flour more strengthening than that made from barley or oats?

Because, as gluten, albumen and caseine are the only substances in the bread capable of forming blood, and consequently of sustaining the strength and vigor of the body, they have been appropriately called the food of nutrition, as a distinction from those which merely support respiration. Wheat contains eight hundred and twenty-five parts of starch, three hundred and fifteen of gluten, albumen, and caseine, sixty of sugar and gum; while barley contains twelve hundred of starch, one hundred and twenty of gluten, albumen and caseine, and one hundred and sixty of sugar and gum; hence wheat is much richer than barley in the food of nutrition.

A Wen that Cost $150,000 to Remove.

Young Stevens has gold in abundance, but what are millions to a man so deformed that dogs bark at him when he goes halting by, and lovely womanp, even when the golden luster of untold wealth glitters about his head, faints at sight of him? From his birth a peculiar wen, growing larger day by day, has made his face and neck hideous. Covered with long hair, it looked like a repulsive wild animal clinging to his head. Stevens hid himself from the general eye and moped in loneliness. In early youth he was betrothed to a beautiful young girl, but as the wen grew great, his determination never to inflict his horrible deformity on a fellow-creature was firmly formed.

The best surgeons of Europe and America gave him no hope. They were unanimous in declaring that to remove the wen was to permanently remove the patient. But recently he met a daring practitioner who declared that it was within the skill of the surgeon to lop off the excrescence and restore the afflicted man to a healthy condition. Stevens listened gratefully. "Do it," said he, "and your reward shall be $150,000." With electric knifes the confident cutter went to work, and in a very brief time had earned his mammoth fee. The skin beneath the tumor was smooth and sound, and Stevens is in excellent health.

Victory of the Roaches.

A correspondent tells us, says the Louisville *Journal*, how to get rid of our colony of roaches: "Sprinkle the desk and floor with pulverized borax; let it remain some days without being brushed off the desk or floor, and, our word for it, brown roaches will be completely vanquished, to appear never more." Oh, you be hanged. Didn't we try the borax, and didn't the roaches immediately hold a public meeting and adopt a series of resolutions thanking us for the kindness we had done them, and didn't all the other roaches in town attend that convention and determine to become permanent members of the colony when the meeting adjourned, and aren't they swarming around us this moment "as thick as Tewkesbury mustard?" Give the scoundrels borax, and they think you are a mother to them.

A REGULAR HABIT.—Doddington was very lethargic. Falling asleep one day, after dinner, with Sir Richard Temple, Lord Cobham, and several others, one of the party reproached him with his drowsiness. He denied having been asleep, and to prove he had not, offered to repeat all Lord Cobham had been saying. Cobham challenged him to do so. Doddington repeated a story, and Cobham owned he had been telling it. "Well," said Doddington, "and yet I did not hear a word of it; but I went to sleeep because that I knew about this time of the day you would tell that story."

THE FAMINE IN ASIA MINOR.

Five Thousand Persons Dead of Starvation in one District--Dead Bodies Lying in the Streets.

Rev. Dr. Clark, of the American Board of Foreign Missions, has received a letter from J. O. Barrows, of Cesarea, in which he gives some thrilling details of the terrible famine now prevailing in that region. Mr. Barrows writes:

"While at Yozgat, which is eighty or ninety miles north of us, I witnessed the ravages of the famine, which is very severe, and also toward Angora. Many villages are entirely deserted. In some, one, or two, or three, or four, or parts of families remain. In the district of Sungarlu, (which is beyond Yozgat, and in which city there is a Protestant church, as many as 5,000 persons have died of starvation. But the horrors of this famine are indescribable. Many people have subsisted on grass for weeks, and then died. Beggars have flocked to the cities, and there many of them have died because they could not get a morsel of bread. Old men, mothers with babies at their breasts, young men that have become children, young boys and girls, half-naked, begging, crying, fainting, dying—this is famine. Beggars have flocked to our doors; we have given what we could, and are still doing the same; some relief has been afforded by contributions of friends in Stamboul, and other places, but it is only a drop in the bucket. Mr. Farnsworth has made a long tour through the famine-stricken people, and given from friends in Stamboul some $500, and perhaps by this means 500 people will be kept alive, but multitudes are dying and will yet die. The people of this country give but little, with rare exceptions, the more wealthy Moslems giving nothing. Selfishness reigns. Every man lives for himself. The Mohammedan religion is a religion of selfishness. If a man does any good deed, it is that he himself may be benefited. There is no public spirit—no love to man as such. But what this famine is, can be known only by those who see it. We say that so many have died. These statistics are cold things. Famine is the going out in utter darkness, wretchedness, and death of all that goes to make up human life. You find a little, half-naked girl, of eight or ten years, sitting in some corner of the street crying. What is the matter? Her father and mother are dead, or have abandoned her. She has not a friend, or one to care for her on earth; she has nothing to eat. She pleads and reaches out her bony hands to every passer-by; or perhaps gets enough during the day to buy one piece of bread. This kind of life lasts a few weeks, and she is picked up by those who are ordered to bury the dead that they may find in the streets.

"When in Yozgat I heard a cry of children in the crowded streets before me. I looked, and saw three little children. The oldest was perhaps ten or eleven, the second six or seven, and the youngest three or four. The little one wanted to be carried. The oldest one was too feeble, but finally bending down took the little one on her back. The other child clung to her ragged clothes, and so they went on, all crying together. But such a sight! It made an impression that I believe will never be effaced from my mind. These children were so poor that the flesh which covered their teeth was a mere skin, and as they cried the expression of their countenances was something more sad and pitiable than I had conceived possible before. These three were left clinging to each other, dying together, with no one to care for them. One learns here at such a time as this that the tender mercies of the wicked are indeed cruel. One is forced to exclaim, Oh, God, what will the end be? why must there be such terrible suffering? But God is good and man is sinful. Bodies have lain in the streets one, two, and even three or four days before burial, and the dogs have feasted on them. Many of our Protestant communities and families have suffered greatly. At Sungurlu some of the brethren have sold house, shop, household furniture, beds, clothing, everything, and now must beg or starve. And perhaps they will both beg and starve. In one village there was one Protestant family; the father, mother, and all the children but two have died of starvation. In the village of Injirh there was a pleasant little Protestant community, several of whom were members of the church, with a preacher residing with them. But they were poor. Last winter their provisions failed, and there seemed to be nothing but starvation before them. But this preacher went to the city of Yozgat and purchased flour, becoming responsible for the pay himself, and so kept alive six families. But now unless the preacher can be repaid his creditors will take everything from him. It was a very kind and generous thing that he did. I feel like appealing to friends in America to help him out of this dilemma. The board do not wish us to make special appeals to our friends for aid in carrying on our missionary work, but this is a matter of humanity. If American Christians could only see how some of their fellow-christians here are suffering, they would certainly imitate our English Christian friends and others in Stamboul, who have given liberally for this object."

A Shocking Death.

Two men living in Philadelphia desired to visit Pittsburgh to look at a prize fight, and not having the means to pay their fare, determined to steal their way. Embarking at West Philadelphia, they climbed upon the top of the skylight of one of the palace cars attached to the Pacific express train west, and lay down, one with his feet pointing to the front, their heads being together.

On nearing Mill Creek bridge, one of the men named Vanderslice, who was lying with his head on Mencaly's shoulder, rose up a little and in an instant one of the iron bolts in the girder that sustains the roof of the bridge, plowed a furrow through the top of his head, scattering his brains in all directions, killing him instantly. His companion held his body in position until the cars arrived at Lancaster, when he made known the accident to the railroad officials. The body was removed from the top of the car, placed in the depot and the Coroner sent for, who summoned a jury and held an inquest on the remains, the evidence being about the same as the foregoing statement. The jury returned a verdict of accidental death, in accordance with the above facts.

An Earnest Official.

Occasionally you find an official who is almost as accommodating as an editor. The Boston *Globe* says that Geo. F. Field, the General Passenger Agent of the Eastern Railroad, is one of those men, and writes the following as an example: A train on his road took a large party to Conway, N. H. It left eight pieces of baggage behind. Mr. Field, knowing that the baggage would be wan