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"Down the Road."

A lusty tramp, one summer's day—
The sun was glaring fiercely down—
Trudged on along the dusty way
That led toward the nearest town.

No friendly tree its welcome shade
Athwart his weary pathway cast;
No babbling brooklet leaped and played
Along the roadside as he passed.

"Is there no shady spot," he cried,
"At hand?" to one who by him strode.
"Oh! yes," the other one replied—
"A little further down the road."

Ah, well! we all are tramps, at best;
We stagger 'neath life's daily load,
Yet on we press—and hope for rest,
"A little further down the road."

The Workman's Wife.

My loving bride no jewels hath
Save one plain ring she wears,
Few roses strew her daily path
Of humble household cares;
To deck her head with gorgeous plumes
No bird of beauty mourns,
No wondrous weft of cunning looms
Her graceful form adorns;
But she's the bright breast jewel of
My busy, toiling life,
Whose wish is but to live and love
As helpmeet and as wife.

White is her gown at morn—a fair,
Soft robe at evening's hour,
And, if aught she wear in her dark hair,
'Tis a simple wildwood flower;
But, oh! the kiss that bids me forth,
Light-hearted, to my work,
Surpasseth all the flowers of earth
That in the greenwood lurk,
And the glance that lights me home at last,
When the day's long task is through,
Is sweeter then is sunward cast
From violets dashed with dew.

From her soft arms our baby spreads
His chubby hands, and crows,
The glancing firelight round their heads
Its saintly halo throws;
And sometimes, when I see them so,
Or in the doorway stand,
Touched by the sunset's rosy glow,
With peace on every hand,
My thoughts revert, with reverent love,
Unto the picture mild
That Raphael wrought so purely of
Madonna and her child.

Few are the hours we snatch from toil,
Bread-winners in the strife—
We've little of the corn and oil,
And all the cares of life;
Yet whiffs we have of country air
Sometimes on afternoons,
With the birds and flowers, in park and square,
That are such grateful boons;
And we envy not the rich and proud,
Whose teams and coaches gay
We yet may watch, and swell the crowd
That lines their flashing way.

And, best of all, we never mope
Apart in grief—alone;
When heart to heart speaks comfort, hope
Ne'er quite deserts her throne.
Hard times upon us often press,
We've bread, and little more,
But whatever cup of bitterness
May be for me in store,
I know my wife will drain her part,
Though it mantles dark and high,
And I know the love that brims her heart
Will never, never die!

Granger's Little Place.

My friend Granger, though born and bred in the city, had always been of what he called "a rural turn"—fond of flowers and trees, and of pictures and poems representing country scenes and subjects. He had also frequently expressed a wish that he could afford to give up his city business and retire into the country, there to devote himself to model farming. Knowing these tastes of his, I was not much surprised on returning to the city after a rather lengthy business absence, to find among my letters a card, inscribed: "J. R. Granger, Woodbine Cottage, Rose Terrace," with an invitation to "call soon."

I went out on the following Saturday. The street cars took me into a newly-created suburb, and within four squares of Rose Terrace, which I found to be a row of tiny new cottages, and so called from having been 1 ft by the recent grading at an elevation of about eighteen inches above the level of the street, or rather road. Each cottage was buried in a Gothic portico or bow window, and they were all so exactly alike that I might have experienced some difficulty in finding Granger's but for the woodbine trained over the portico. On reaching the garden gate I perceived Granger himself, attired in a loose jacket and broad-brimmed straw hat, busied among some rose bushes and lilacs in the front yard. He had a pruning knife in his hand and a sickle and garden hoe lay at his feet. On seeing me he came forward, his round, ruddy face beaming with hospitable welcome.

"You find me rather rusticated, I suppose," he observed, with zest, "but the fact is I found the place sadly neglected—the lawn quite weedy and the shrubbery"—here he pointed to the lilacs and rose bushes—"very much in need of pruning; besides the grounds have got to be laid out, you see."

I found the house a snug little affair, of two parlors and a library on the first floor, and a couple of chambers above; rather more room than was required by a bachelor, I hinted, though Granger received the suggestion with contempt.

"A wife is too expensive; and I would hate to lose my independence," said he.

He took me into the garden at the back of the house—a space of some fifteen yards by ten—and displayed to me with pride what he had effected. The walks were tastefully bordered with gooseberry and currant bushes, but were rather narrow, and obliged us to proceed in single file. There were tiny beds of vegetables—a strawberry bed and a melon patch—cucumbers for pickles, and raspberries for preserves; besides, a trellis-work arbor, to be covered with grapevines.

"You see," he added, "there's nothing so pleasant as having fruits and vegetables of your own raising, served fresh and crisp from the stalk. It's convenient also, and renders you so independent of the market."

He called my attention to a row of bee-hives not yet tenanted; also pointed out a fancy poultry-house, and a patent dog-kennel. In the midst of the garden rose a pigeon-house of elaborate design, above which was a weathervane of his own invention—a shepherdess, pointing with her golden crook in the direction of the wind. On this original idea he greatly prided himself.

"It suits the pastoral nature of the place, you see," he observed, complacently; "and indeed I would not object to a pet lamb or two—only I'm afraid they might interfere with the vegetables."

We were summoned to supper by Mrs. Mix, the housekeeper, a woman of resolute aspect and determined mien. She looked sharply at me, and evidently did not altogether approve of my presence. Also, it struck me that Granger appeared a little subdued while she poured out our tea, and brightened up when, that duty performed, she majestically retired.

"You appear to have a good housekeeper," I remarked, glancing over the well-spread table.

"Oh, decidedly, never saw better cooking in my life, and for neatness and order not to be equaled. In fact, some persons might be satisfied with less precision and neatness. For instance, she prefers that I should enter at the back door; and thinks it best to hang my coat and hat in the closet under the stairs. Then, too, I can't always find my books and papers on the table and desk where I am accustomed to leave them."

"Servants can never understand these matters," I observed. "It takes a wife to accomodate things to man's tastes and habits."

"Maybe so; but I have no idea of giving up my independence. I prefer to rule alone in my own house," said Granger, with an air of authority.

When Mrs. Mix re-entered with a fresh relay of toast and tea Granger said, very much as if requesting a favor:

"Mrs. Mix, will you be good enough to bring the Cheshire cheese? My friend here is partial to it."

Mrs. Mix elevated her chin and looked down on us.

"That cheese, Mr. Granger, sir," she said with dignity, "that cheese ain't in exactly in the condition to be a ornament to this here tea table."

"Why, what has happened to it?"

"Rats, sir, has been at it, and nat'rally I didn't calkelate that a pared cheese would be the correct thing to set before a gentleman's frien's."

Mrs. Mix retired as before, and Granger, after a timid and suspicious glance toward the door, remarked in a subdued tone:

"It is really singular about the rats. I had no idea that they were so destructive in housekeeping. I can't say how many pounds of sugar, butter, flour, tea and coffee they have made away with in the few weeks that I've been here."

"Set traps," I suggested.

"I have done so, but without success. Not a rat have I succeeded in capturing."

"I rather think that I smell one now," I hinted.

"Indeed! Where?" inquired Granger, with interest, as he looked around.

"Oh, nothing—only it strikes me that Mrs. Mix may not be sufficiently economical."

"Oh, yes, I think she is. I don't complain of her wastefulness, only I fear she is a little careless at times. For instance, on Sunday I had a fine fowl, which I did not touch, preferring it cold; but, on inquiring for it at breakfast next day, she informed me that while entertaining her cousin she had carelessly left it in the kitchen window, whence a strange dog had stolen it. It was the same story the week before, in regard to a ham; and that cat also does a good deal of mischief among the pies and sweetmeats in the pantry. I should think that a woman of Mrs. Mix's sense and prudence could guard against such accidents; but women are so contradictory."

"A wife"—I commenced; but Granger interrupted me.

"You see, I'm too old to think of that now. Besides, a wife is too expensive. I can't afford it."

On my next visit to Woodbine Cottage I found things progressing not so favorably as had been anticipated. Some of the vegetables had not come up at all, while others, especially the melons and cucumbers, had grown so rapidly, that being planted only a few feet apart, they had naturally fatally encroached upon each other. The currant and gooseberry bushes had been attacked by mold, and had beside, in their rapid growth, become entangled across the narrow walks, which would have to be widened. The chickens had scratched up the flower seeds; the watch dog (of which Granger obviously stood in awe) was given to eating hen's eggs; the bees (for which he had sent per express to Texas) had declined residing in the new hives, and the vulgar minded small boys of the neighborhood had not only worried Granger by looking over the fence and inquiring if he were "raising supplies for the Rooshian war," but had made a target of the shepherdess, and knocked off her head and her gilded crook.

"The garden is rather discouraging in fact," Granger admitted. "The place is too small. I could succeed better with a model farm, if I could afford to buy one. Meantime I think of making some improvements in the house—adding a tower to the east end, and a high peaked gable on the opposite side—something between a cottage and a castle, you know. What do you think of it? I would plant ivy around the tower, you see, which would make it picturesque.

About a week after this Granger paid us a visit, and I could but notice how uncommonly bright he looked. Inquiring about his little place, he replied:

"Oh, things are promising much better, now. Fact is, there is a very pleasant family next door—a young married couple, with an aunt—ahem! A very intelligent lady, who knows all about gardens, poultry, bees and such things, having a country place of her own. She—ahem!—she has given me some very valuable information concerning these things—ahem!"

Granger's face was a little more florid than usual; but that might be the effect of his slight cough.

On leaving he invited my wife and myself to tea at Woodbine Cottage on the following Saturday to meet the Dennys and their aunt, Miss Timms.

It was a very pleasant little tea party, and to make it pleasanter, Miss Timms turned out to be an old boarding-school friend of my wife. She was a nice, middle-aged lady, pleasant and sensible, and also good-looking, and, as my wife informed me, remarkably cheerful and kindly in disposition. Why she had not married, Mary Jane declared to be to her a mystery, especially as she possessed quite a snug little property of her own. She herself asserted, laughing, that it was because the right man had never presented himself.

I had never seen Granger so amiably beaming and blissful as upon this occasion, while presiding at his own board. Mrs. Mix, on the contrary, maintained a mien and countenance of extreme rigidity, and in special regarded Miss Timms with glances of strong disapprobation. The table, however, was well laid, and there was plenty of everything nice and tempting, though the pride of the board was a dish of lettuce-salad, flanked on one side by a handful of currants in a large glass bowl, and on the other by six or eight radishes, about three inches long, the product of Granger's own garden.

"You can have no idea what a luxury it is to have fruit and vegetables of your own raising," he said to me in a sort of aside, while the rest were admiring the currants. "Take a little salad—arn't it fresh and crisp? Next week I shall expect you to spring chicken and new potatoes. Miss Timms has been good enough to explain to me about raising the chickens, and, in fact, offered to help in taking care of the young ones, if the weather prove too cold for them."

We walked in the garden after tea, and my wife privately directed my attention to our host and Miss Timms, who were lagging behind in earnest discussion over a wilted cabbage; also to the countenance of Mrs. Mix, who at the kitchen window was peering at the two with a resentful eye.

"I am very much mistaken," observed Mary Jane, upon our return home, "very much mistaken if the reign of Mrs. Mix and the rats are not approaching a speedy end."

I thought it improbable, but the superior sagacity and discernment of woman was soon made apparent. Meeting Granger accidentally, I inquired how he was getting on at Woodbine Cottage, and whether he had yet commenced the ivied tower.

"Why," he replied, with a little embarrassment, yet a good deal of evident secret satisfaction—"you see I consulted a friend about it and she—ahem!—thought the style of architecture not exactly suited to my little place. Besides," he added, looking at me as if resolved to put a bold face on the matter, "I am thinking of—of moving a little further into the country. In fact, a model farm you know—a thing I always thought myself mot fitted for; and as Eliza's tastes agree with mine—and so we're going to improve her little farm; s"—

"I beg your pardon. Eliza I think you said?"

"Certainly, Miss Timms, of course, I mean." Here he blushed violently, and taking off his hat rubbed his bald forehead vigorously with his handkerchief.

"Warm weather, rather. You can't conceive what a luxury it is to me to get out of these dusty streets into the fresh air and greenery of my little place. I positively feel as though I were a new man, with a new life opening to me—a sort of youth-renewed feeling, you see—ha, ha!"

And chuckling joyously he waved me a hearty adieu as he boarded the street car bound Rose Terraceward.

This was sometime ago. For the last few days my wife has been very much interested in "shopping" in company with Miss Timms, and last night remarked to me what delightful visits we shall have to Eliza's beautiful place in the country, and what a happy, comfortable couple our two friends will make.

The Man With a Family.

Mr. Jasper Throckmorton, who lives out on Summer street, is the father of ten children. Yesterday morning Mr. Throckmorton was just on the point of putting on his hat to start for the office, when Mrs. Throckmorton called after him from the kitchen:

"Stop at Sodder's and tell him to come up and fix the water pipe, and get a big tin dipper and bring it with you this noon. Don't tell them to send it, they'll forget it."

Mr. Throckmorton said he would, and then put on his hat and started. As he reached the front door his eldest daughter shouted from up stairs:

"Pa! pa!! pa!!! Go to Greenbaum & Schroder's and ask Mr. Scott to give you two yards and a half of brown satin, cut on the bias, to match the dress I got last week. He'll know the kind. Bring it with you. I don't want to wait for it."

And Mr. Throckmorton, pausing with his hand on the door, said he would get it, and then sighed and opened the door. Just then his eldest son shouted from the sitting room:

"Father! the man was up here twice yesterday for the money for my new boat, and I just gave him a note to you and he'll call at the office to-day for his money and will give a pair of patent oar-locks and a dip-net. Bring them up with you when you come to dinner."

Mr. Throckmorton kind of stifled a groan like, and, saying he would attend to it, went out. As he passed down the porch step his second daughter leaned out of a window and cried:

"Oh, pa; do stop at Parsons' as you come to dinner and tell them to send a man to lay the new hall carpet when they send it up, and you can get ten pounds of cotton batting and bring it up with you, for we want it right away and can't wait."

The parent paused with his hand on the gate latch and, with a visible effort, promised to remember the errand and bring up the cotton batting, and opened the gate. But the voice of his younger son from the side yard caught his ear and held him for a moment.

"Pap, oh, pap! Want ten cents to pay for a winder I broke in the school house, and I can't go to Sunday-school till I get a new hat and some shoes, and please can't I have a quarter to go to the picnic?"

Mr. Throckmorton silently registered a flogging for the broken glass, a negative for the picnic, and said he would get the boots and hat. Then he turned to go, but as he passed down the street his six younger children came running after him:

"Oh, pa, don't forget to stop and see if the old umbrella's fixed, ma says."

"Stop at the dentist's and see when he can fill my teeth."

"Bring my shoe home from the shoemaker's."

"Ma says be sure and tell the doctor to come up to-day and vaccinate the baby!"

Pap! Kin I go swimmin' in Hawkeye krick to-night?"

"Pa, oh, pa! gimme five cents to ride on the street cars!"

And Mr. Throckmorton went down town and amazed Fred Scott by telling him to cut him off about thirteen feet of water pipe on the bias, and he asked Mr. Parsons to let him have eleving dozing skeins of cotting batting and send him up a man with a tin dipper; he told Dr. Cochran, the dentist, to come right up and fill the baby's teeth, and begged the doctor to hurry right away and put a half sole on the school house window, and then he ran to the shoemaker's and asked him if he had vaccinated his little girl's shoe, and amazed a street car driver by asking him for a beah ticket, and when the man came around with the car-locks and dip-net, he told him to take them up and lay them in the front hall, the girls would show him where. And by three o'clock in the afternoon it had got all around town that old Mr. Throckmorton was drinking as bad as ever again, and hadn't drawn a sober breath all day.—*Burlington Hawkeye.*

New Test of Death.

The importance of having some readily applied and indisputable test of the fact of death is apparent, and many are the processes that have been offered to determine it. Nevertheless, such a test appears to be still a desideratum—unless, indeed, we accept that offered by Kappeler. In course of his researches on the electrical stimulation of dead muscles, Kappeler subjected twenty corpses to the action of various electric currents, noting the times of disappearance of contractility. In persons emaciated by chronic maladies, it disappeared much more rapidly than in well nourished individuals, or those who had had acute disease. It disappeared seventy-five minutes after death at the quickest, and six and a half hours at the slowest. In cases where a rise of temperature is observed after death, electric contractility persists longest. So long as there remains the least flicker of life the contractions continue intact. In the most prolonged faints, in the deepest lethargies, in poisoning by carbonic oxide, chloroform etc., there is no contraction as long as life lasts. But if the muscles make no response to the electrical stimulation, Kappeler pronounces life to be extinct.

Two Marriages Instead of One.

A marriage was arranged between two young people living some distance apart, near Bengal, India, but who had never seen one another. The bridegroom duly arrived at the bride's village, and the ceremonies had actually begun, when a report reached the bride and her mother that the intended husband was an incurable cripple. They both declared that they would commit suicide rather than complete the ceremony, and as it was a fact that the would-be bridegroom was a cripple, he was dismissed. But, according to the prevailing superstition, eternal disgrace would have attended the bride if she had not been married on that day when matters had progressed so far. So, another bridegroom had to be sought, and after searching the highways and byways a boy was captured and duly married in the place of the cripple. The latter being in the same plight, had also to provide himself with a bride before the day closed, and thus there were two marriages instead of one.

CONVICT LABOR ABROAD.

Some Facts About the Largest Penitentiary in Germany.

At Plotzensee, three-quarters of an hour's ride from Berlin, is the largest penitentiary in Germany, concerning which we gather these facts from a Berlin letter:

Those who have no trade, upon their entrance are given the choice of that which they will learn. There are accommodations for 1,200 prisoners, and at the time of writing there were only 100 cells empty. The division of solitary confinement and imprisonment for life is always full, for the emperor is so averse to capital punishment that he almost invariably commutes the sentence of death to long imprisonment. Here also each prisoner is expected to perform his certain amount of labor and make enough to pay for his existence. Confinement, without light and idleness, is entirely banished, or, if used at all, is only in case of violation of the prison rules as a second punishment.

For lighter crimes the prisoners work together. There are large and handsome workshops in which every variety of work is manufactured. In one division, as we passed through, where over a hundred men had finished their work and were eating their evening soup, our party excited a commotion which was really alarming, for visitors are seldom or never permitted to visit the prisons, and ladies never.

The greatest variety of articles are manufactured, from the most exquisite wood carving down to the commonest socks that are prepared by an American knitting machine. In one cell we found a man cutting corks. In another envelopes were cut and folded with remarkable celerity. A third made shoes, and so on through all the grades of handicraft. In the common workhouse richly carved oak chairs, with cane seats, were made, and found ready sale in Berlin, as does, indeed, everything made in the penitentiary. A fews days before our visit a fire had broken out at night in the inflammable material in one of the workshops. The building was entirely consumed, with all its stores of material and tools. The most trusty prisoners were permitted to assist in extinguishing the flames, and no damage was done to the main building.

In the kitchen the pots and kettles were of mammoth dimensions, and everything is moved by steam. A vat almost as large as a small-sized bedroom was full of peeled potatoes ready for the Sunday dinner. Everything is cooked to mush, or what could be really and truly called "spoon victuals," as of course no knives and forks can be used. Twice a week they receive fresh meat, which is always reduced to a stew with some kind of vegetables. A plate of soup was handed us to taste. It was for us simply horrible, being made from the German brown bread, a mixture to which our long residence in Germany had not accustomed us.

The doctor told us that every morning different divisions of the men passed in review before him to state their grievances and ailments, and that nine out of every ten made "an evening prayer and morning petition for a change of food." But this style of food is one of their punishments, and no change is permitted until they have reached the point where the stomach actually rejects this slushy preparation. Then they are confined to their cells and furnished with solid food until it resumes its normal tone. Every device is resorted to to prove themselves unable to partake of the common rations, and the doctor assured us he was sometimes at his wits' end to decide between real and feigned sickness on this one point.

Good Talkers.

A persistent talker is not a good conversationalist. The very word conversation defines its meaning; it is an interchange. The man who insists in talking at you is a bore. The English definition of a bore betrays the great national weakness in this regard: "A bore is one who insists on talking to you about himself, when you want to be talking to him about yourself." Neither is the confirmed gossip a good conversationalist, for conversation suggests discourse about things rather than people. Here is another bane of social interchanges. They are too often on the lower level of that talk which finds its subject matter in persons. That is gossip. People who do not read or think most largely make people and neighborhood events the staple of their talk, but the bad habit obtains even among those who by culture have been fitted to make better use of their tongues. Gossip does not always indicate ignorance. It is to be feared it has become a fashion into which even intelligent people are drawn. But this kind of talk is neither edifying nor wise. If there were no worse results, it narrows the mind to shut up its views to neighborhood details. There is no excuse for it now. The world's gates all stand open. The papers bring all lands, all governments, all rising ideas, to our very doors. Books lead us into the liberty of the world, and the best of its doings and thinking. A growing vice in conversation is a fondness for smartness. Tartness, repartee, and satire are very good for an occasional reasoning; but, like horse-radish and mustard, they make a very poor dinner. People with this propensity of saying grinding things have a terrible power; you go away from them with a feeling that the world is stuffed with sawdust—that you yourself are an imbecile and impostor. It may take days for you to recover your proper standing with yourself. Then, if you ask your soul what fatal gift has the tormentor, which carries with it this fatal power of making its fellow mortals miserable, you discover that it is the gift of selfishness. The person to whom you have been talking is ungenerous. A generous man or a generous woman—you cannot come near such an one without receiving something that makes amends for your own disappointment with, your opinion of, yourself. An ungenerous person adds the weight of another to your side of the scales, and down you go.

A Tragedy.

Two brothers had grown up together. Their names were Henry and Stephen Hanes. Their father had died when they were quite young, leaving a large fortune to be divided between them. Stephen was a sober, steady going young man, and hoarded his money; while Henry was a profligate. One day, in 1867, after Henry had squandered all his money, he suddenly disappeard, and nothing had been heard from him since. Stephen continued to prosper and is today a very wealthy and much respected citizen. A few evenings ago, while Stephen was quietly sleeping—he, with his family, having removed to a palatial mansion—he was awakened by hearing a noise in his room. He immediately grasped his pistol and sprang from his bed. The boots of a man were protruding from under the bed. He took deliberate aim and fired four times in quick succession. No sound was heard. Had he killed the burglar instantly? He grasped the boots and gave a tremendous jerk, and then went backwards over the washstand, and his own boots went through the window. The cat was under the bed and had been killed. He threw the body out of the window and went to bed. Yesterday he received a letter from his brother, who is doing quite well "out West."

The Steppes of Central Asia.

The steppes are the bottoms of ancient seas which once rolled over a large portion of the continent of Asia, an i which, when swept by storms, rise in tumultuous waves, not of water, but of sand, the particles of which might be likened to spray, but that they burn like sparks of fire. The terror inspired by these storms is such as to deter even the most adventurous merchant from traversing the steppes in summer, unless under the most pressing necessity. Their aspect, when covered with snow, is described as strangely awful and oppressive, exhibiting the expanse of the ocean, without its animation, and the solitude of the Arctic regions without their sublimity. Woe to the traveler who is overtaken by a snow-storm in the steppes; his doom is inevitable, and bodies of troops, which have essayed the perilous task of marching across the steppes in winter, have been overtaken and overwhelmed by a tempest of snow. Dreary as are the steppes in winter, their aspect in spring is not without a certain beauty. The vegetation is rapid, and they are clothed with short vivid green grass, interspersed with scarlet poppies, wild tulips, yellow larkspurs, geraniums, and many kinds of cruciferous and leguminous plants. The oases of Central Asia affords a striking contrast to the surrounding desolation, and the cities which in past ages sprung up in these favored spots abounded in everything that could gratify the heart of an Asiatic. Even in their decay they possess attractions which excite the enthusiasm of travelers, and Bokhara, Balkh, Khokan, Samarcand, Khiva, and Tashkend are still celebrated for their babbling streams, bubbling fountains, delightful gardens, and deep, umbrageous groves. The oases are very carefully cultivated. Watermelons are grown over extensive areas, and afford the most grateful alleviation to the often overpowering heat; fruits of various kinds are raised in great perfection, and tobacco of the finest quality is produced in such abundance as to place this necessary of life for an Asiatic within the reach of the poorest individual. The gardens, Mr. Schuyler says, constitute the beauty of this land. The long rows of poplar and elm trees, the vineyards, and the dark foliage of pomegranate, transport one at once to the plains of Lombardy, or the south of France. In the early spring the cities and their vicinity are one mass of white and pink with the bloom of almond, peach, cherry, apple, apricot and plum trees, which perfume the air for miles around. These gardens are the favorite resorts of the people in summer, and well they may be, for nowhere are fruits more abundant, and of some varieties nowhere are they better. The apricots and nectarines it would be impossible to surpass. Peaches, though smaller in size, are said to possess a higher flavor than the best of England. The large blue plums of Bokhara are celebrated over the whole of Asia. There are in common cultivation ten varieties of melons. In that hot climate they are considered particularly wholesome, and in summer form one of the principal articles of food. An acre of land properly prepared will produce in ordinary years from two to three thousand, and in good years double that quantity.

A Smart Dog.

The following story appears in a letter from Unionville, Conn.: Our neighbor, Chauncey Hart, has a dog that is remarkable for his apparent knowledge of the English language, if his owner's statement about the dog is true—and as to his veracity there is no question. Mr. Hart is a blacksmith by trade, and he has an acre or so of land which he cultivates, and during the season of hoeing rises at about four o'clock in the morning to subdue the weeds. His dog is always with him. When the time arrives for making a fire to prepare the morning meal, Mr. Hart goes into the house, makes the fire, and says to the dog: "Go call your mistress." He goes immediately to the bedroom and wakes her. If she does not notice the call the dog will pull the clothing off the bed and will not leave until she gets up. If Mr. Hart sees a pack-peddler coming he says to the dog: "Carlo, there is a pack-peddler coming." He will start off at once, and prevent his coming on to the premises.

On another occasion Mr. Hart walked over to a neighbor's house just as the neighbor came home with some bones he had procured for his chickens, and threw them out of his wagon. Carlo got one of them and brought it near where they were talking. When Mr. Hart saw it he said: "Carlo, that bone don't belong to you; go carry it back where you found it, and go home." Carlo carried the bone back to the place where he got it, trotted off about ten rods toward home and sat down waiting for his master. The neighbor also had a dog about the same size that was in hearing. Seeing Carlo where he had sat down, the other dog picked up the bone and carried it to within a few feet of Carlo; there he laid it down and came back a little way. After waiting awhile and seeing that Carlo did not take it, he placed it a little nearer—very close to him this time—but he would not touch it, but sat there until Mr. Hart went home. When he came up to where the dog was sitting he said: "Carlo, you may have that bone now." The dog immediately picked it up and carried it home. Nothing was said to either dog but the order to carry back the bone; but both dogs seemed to know what was said, and the visiting dog was determined that Carlo should accept the proffered bone as a pledge of friendship and as a hospitable entertainment.

A Unique Aerial Trip.

The *Dispatch*, of Erie, Pa., says: Queer county, that Lancaster. Many marvellous stories have been told, but this decidedly takes the mule by the tail and makes him turn about face in less than a York second. Think of being caught up by a whirlwind and carried as a dead-head for two miles on the ragged edge of an inky cloud that cuts the air at the rate of sixty-seven miles an hour, and then being kindly dropped near some convenient hospital. Romantic, decidedly picturesque, ain't it? Can't swallow it, eh? Well, we do not intend to, but give it as a matter of news. The Williamsport *Gazette* is the guilty party that uttered it. The man's name was Jacob Eisenberger, and he lived at Parkersburg, Lancaster county. Jacob went out walking last Sunday. Storm came up. Wind blew three cyclones. Jacob wss light, and a wave of the cyclone caught him, wrapped itself around him, carried him above the tree tops for a distance of two miles, pounded the air with him, then dropped him heavily against a seven-rail fence. Jacob had one of his jaw bones broken, and was seriously injured internally. He is now in the Lancaster county hospital, and cannot explain his novel aerial ride only save to say that he was insensible through the entire performance.

A BLIND SHIPBUILDER.—One of the most successful shipbuilders in Bristol, R. I., has never seen a ship, nor the waters on which it floats. He has been blind from infancy, yet this has not deterred him from reaching the foremost place in his business. By passing his hand along the timbers and occasionally rapping it with his knuckles, keeping his ear close to the wood, he can tell its imperfections better than any who have their sight.

SNAKES.

A Blue Racer Over Twenty Feet Long—Two Girls Killed by Rattlers.

A gigantic blue racer, twenty feet eight and three-fourths inches in length, and ten inches in circumference in the largest place, was recently killed in the southwestern part of the township of Cannon, Mich., by a citizen of good repute. He had a terrible encounter with it. On going from his work to a neighboring spring to get a drink of water he saw the grass wave a few rods from him, when the serpent came toward him with lightning velocity and head uplifted about three or four feet high from the ground. When within about ten feet from the man it halted, as if to look its prey over. It ventured nearer and nearer, and finally attacked the man. The snake twined itself several times around the man's legs, and felled him to the ground. The man took his knife out of his pocket, and with a few desperate strokes completely severed the monster's head from its body. It had previously been hurt, or it probably would have crushed the man, there being a large bunch on its side. Since then the man's hair has turned gray.

A daughter of Mr. J. G. Briery, of Twin Creek, Osborn county, Kan., aged some thirteen or fourteen years, went with her brother one Saturday morning not long ago to his claim, some five miles distant, wher he was doing some work, and the two expected to return together in the afternoon. They changed their plans, however, and about eight o'clock the girl set out for home on foot and alone, carrying a pail in which to gather some wild berries on the way. Later in the evening her brother returned home, and great was the surprise to find that the girl was still absent. Search was immediately instituted, but went on without any avail until two o'clock on Sunday. The pail she carried was found by the roadside about two miles from home, partly filled. This seemed to confirm beyond a doubt the great fear that some awful fate had delayed her return. Mr. Ward and another party, who were engaged in the search, at last heard a call, and proceeded in the direction whence it came. There, sitting on the ground in a nearly denuded state, they found the poor girl by a pool to which she had found her way. She was trying to extract the poison which the fangs of a rattlesnake had buried in her foot, by burying it in soft mud. All this time she had remained there alone, and experienced the symptoms of a horrible death approaching, for the venom was working in her system. Although sufficiently conscious to call for help when it was near, her denuded state indicated that her sufferings had, at times at least, driven her to frenzy. She died.

One Monday lately a colored girl, about thirteen years of age, daughter of Richard Dunn, colored, who lives on the premises of Mr. Walter Jeffreys, near Neuse Depot, N. C., was bitten by a rattlesnake. The snake was soon killed and found to have four rattles. The girl lingered a few days, when she died in agony.

The Indian's Test of Honesty.

An old trader who had established himself at what happened to be a favorable locality among the Northern Indians, tells a good story of his first trials with his red customers. Other traders had located in that same place before, but had not remained long. The Indians, who evidently wanted goods, and had money and furs, flocked about the store of the trader, and carefully examined his goods, but offered to buy nothing. Finally the chief, with a large number of his tribe, visited him.

"How do, John?" said the chief. "Show me goods. Aha, I take a blanket for me, and that calico for squaw; three otter skins for blanket, and one for calico. Ough! pay by'm by—to-morrow."

He received his goods and left. On the next day he returned with a large part of his band, his blanket well stuffed with skins of various kinds.

"Now, John, I pay.

And with this he drew an otter skin from his blanket, and laid it on the counter. Then he drew a second, a third and a fourth. A moment's hesitation, as though calculating, and he drew out a fifth skin—a very rich and rare one—and passed it over.

"That's right, John."

The trader instantly pushed back the last skin, with:

"You owe me but four. I want only my just due."

The chief refused to take it, and they passed it several times back and forth, each one asserting that it belonged to the other. At length the dusky chieftain appeared to be satisfied. He gave the trader a scrutinizing look, and then stepped to the door and gave a yell, and cried to his followers:

"Come; come, and trade with the pale-face John. He no cheat Indian; his heart big."

Then turning back to the trader, he said:

"Suppose you take last skin, I tell my people no trade with you. We drive you off like a dog, as we drive off others; but now you Indian's friend, and we be yours."

Before dark the trader was waist deep in furs, and loaded down with cash. He found that honesty had commercial value with the Indians.

Fights Between Iron-Clads.

Mr. Scott Russell, an English writer on naval affairs, thinks twenty minutes will be a long time for an engagement—that is for the period which will elapse between sighting an enemy and either sinking him or being sunk. This is staggering, but Mr. Marshall has his reasons, and puts them forward boldly if not theatrically. "Standing on the deck, twenty-four feet above the water, I see my enemy clear on the horizon. He is seeking me. I am seeking him. We are six miles apart—at a modest speed a mile takes six minutes—at that rate we shall meet in eighteen minutes. What to do in these eighteen minutes is a serious question. There is not a heavy sea on, but an ordinary swell; our ships roll gently; steam steadily; our guns are charged; all is ready; twelve minutes are consumed in the mutual approach and the disposal of the next six minutes is serious. During the first three he maintains the only course is to meet the enemy boldly and run at him and insists that a commander's orders must be 'Stand by! Steady! Full speed ahead!' Then the three minutes are soon over! The engineer gets all in order for the crash! All in the ship is already made fast! The commander's eye never leaves the enemy. At the end of a minute he sees the enemy hesitate. Then, if the enemy is not sufficiently alert to double or tack, he must sue for mercy, or the only course of dealing with him is to 'stem on, stem into him. His side is open to the sea.'" Mr. Scott Russell's conclusion is, however, that, "whichever side may win, it seems unlikely that an encounter between two such ships will last through more than three minutes, or that the time of an engagement will be prolonged. Eighteen minutes to meet, and eighteen minutes' close quarters seems a long time to fight." So, the lessons he would have us learn, by way of preparation for this rapid work, are first to possess the "greatest strength to strike an enemy with most harm to him and least to me," and the second, "to possess the greatest gunpower."

FARM, GARDEN AND HOUSEHOLD.

Household Hints.

FRUIT STAINS.—To remove fruit stains, let the spotted part of the cloth imbibe a little water without dipping it, and hold the part over two or three lighted brimstone matches at a proper distance. The sulphurous gas which is discharged soon causes the spots to disappear. Or all bright colored fruit stains can be removed by scalding in clear, boiling water, before any soap is applied.

TO PRESERVE AUTUMN LEAVES.—Have a middling hot iron and rub on quickly a little white wax, then quickly press both sides of the leaves; wax the iron anew for each side of the leaf; only rub the iron once over the leaf. "Forest tree leaves for wreaths" are prepared in the same way.

TO PREVENT FLIES INJURING PICTURE FRAMES.—Boil three or four onions in one pint of water. Brush your frames over with the liquid. No fly will touch them, and it will not injure the frames.

TO DESTROY VERMIN.—Boil some bits of alum in a pint of water, and wash over the slats of the bedsteads. Scatter paris green in the corners of the beds and on the slats, and you need never fear the reproach of harboring bedbugs. To kill and drive away cockroaches, crickets, etc., scatter powdered borax plentifully over all their haunts, and not a bug will be seen. To drive away red and black ants, obtain a large piece of chalk, and rub it on the edges of your shelves, the tops of barrels of sugar, or on firkins, and it will prove a Rubicon to the largest army of ants. Scotch snuff will also kill crickets, cockroaches and ants.

TO CLEAN BLACK LACE.—Black laces of all kinds may be cleaned by alcohol. Throw them boldly into the liquid; churn them up and down till they foam; if very dusty, use the second dose of alcohol; squeeze them out, "spat" them, pull out the edges, lay them between brown paper, smooth and straight; leave under a weight till dry; do not iron.

GOOD USE FOR SOAP-SUDS.—Save your washing suds for the garden; if they are poured over the roots of the plum trees, they will kill the curculio; if turned at the roots of geraniums, roses, etc., they will enhance their beauty tenfold.

IRONING.—To iron smoothly purchase a few cents' worth of beeswax, and rub it over the leaves of a thin pamphlet, which have been heated through with the flat-iron; keep it with the ironing sheet and blanket, and when the flat-irons are to be used, run them over the waxed surface; then wipe gently on a soft cloth. Shirt bosoms can be easily ironed in this manner.

Useful Medical Hints.

FOR TENDER FEET.—Bathe the feet every night in warm water, and immediately after apply to them strong vinegar. When they are inclined to crack, or become dry and hard (which is frequently a great annoyance to aged persons), after using the vinegar, anoint them freely with spermaceti ointment.

TO PURIFY THE COMPLEXION.—Eat an orange or two every morning before breakfast, drink plenty of lemonade, not sweetened; never drink tea, coffee, nor any kind of stimulants; do not use soap on the face or neck; take a sponge bath every morning—either cold or tepid—in water made soft with powdered borax, teaspoonful in a basin of water.

REMEDY FOR WHOOPING COUGH.—Take half an ounce each of spirits of hartshorn and oil of amber; mix them well together; every night and morning anoint well the palms of the hands, pit of the stomach, soles of the feet, armpits, and backbone. As long as the ointment is being used do not allow the parts anointed to be washed; the back of the hand may be washed, but not the palm; care must be taken afterward not to take cold. This cannot injure the smallest infant. Keep the bottle well corked.

REMEDY FOR FELON.—Take the root of the plant known as the dragon root, Jack-in-the-pulpit, or Indian turnip, either green or dry; grate about one-half a teaspoonful into four tablespoonfuls of sweet milk; simmer gently a few minutes, then thicken with bread crumbs, and apply as hot as possible. This can be heated again two or three times, adding a little milk each time. If the felon is just starting this will drive it back; if somewhat advanced, will draw it out quickly and gently. It is well to put a little tallow on the poultice, especially after opening, to prevent sticking. This same poultice is good for a carbuncle or any other rising.

POISONS.—For any poison, the most speedy, certain, and most frequently efficacious remedy in the world, if immediately taken, is a heaping teaspoonful of ground mustard, stirred rapidly in a glass of cold water, and drank down at a draught, causing instantaneous vomiting. As soon as the vomiting ceases swallow two tablespoonfuls of sweet oil. If no ground mustard is at hand, drink a teacupful or more of sweet oil, or any other pure mild oil, melted hog's lard, melted butter, train oil, cod-liver oil, any of which protect the coats of the stomach from the disorganizing effects of the poison; and, to a certain extent, by filling up the pores of the stomach (the mouths of the absorbents) prevent the poison being taken up into