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Commonplace.

A commonplace life," we say, and we sigh;
But why should we sigh as we say?
The commonplace sun in the commonplace sky
Makes up the commonplace day;
The moon and the stars are commonplace things,
And the flower that blooms and the bird that sings;
But dark were the world and sad our lot
If the flowers failed and the sun shone not
And God, who studies each separate soul,
Out of commonplace lives makes His beautiful whole.

Lightning and Kisses.

The storm is coming on apace;
The trees begin to shiver;
Big drops of rain drum on the pane,
And set me all a-quiver;
The clouds are black as ink, oh—oh!
How vividly it lightened!
And this premonitory hush—
Joe, I am sadly frightened.
"No wonder, darling, you're afraid
In such a storm as this is;
But never fear the lightning, dear,
I'll blind your eyes with kisses."

It's driving down upon us now;
The very house is rocking;
Wind-currents roar, rain-torrents pour—
Oh, how my knees are knocking;
The thunders crash and roll as though
The sky had split asunder;
Joe, I shall surely faint away,
I am so afraid of thunder,
"Darling, you well might faint away
In such a storm as this is;
But never fear the thunder, dear,
I'll silence bring with kisses."

"It's such a catching season, Joe,
I'm in a constant panic;
There's that about a thunder-cloud
Which seems almost satanic.
What did you say, Joe?—that you wish
'Twould come on every day so?
You cruel fellow—let me go—
How do you dare say so?
"Of such a cruel wish, my dear,
The explanation this is:
The grass and grain need frequent rain,
And I—need frequent kisses."

A BITTER GAIN.

A remarkable affinity existed between the occupants of two separate windows in one of a dingy row of brick houses one exceptionally hot summer not many years ago; it was the more remarkable that these two people were very unlike each other, being of opposite sexes, the one a grizzled, gruff, grumpy bachelor on the wrong side of fifty, the other a round, rosy, rollicking maiden of twenty. The man was evidently a foreigner, the woman an unmistakable American, and these two heads, framed by the embrasures of the separate windows, formed a strong contrast. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon, and both of them were looking for the postman—she from her attic window, he from his second floor front. They had been looking for the postman every day for a fortnight, and hope deferred had paled the cheek and subdued the merriment of the maiden, while it deepened the already rubicund color and sharpened the already testy temperament of the man. Presently appeared in sight the brisk dapper little fellow, in the grey of with his bag strapped over his shoulder, stepping along from house to house, dealing joy and sorrow, surprise, fear, ecstacy, all the emotions incident to poor hapless humanity as he went. But he dealt nothing to the two anxious watchers in the dingy brick row. Their heads simultaneously turned to watch him as he disappeared around a neighboring corner. The man grunted out a bitter ejaculation, and slammed down the window; the girl sighed, and with difficulty repressed a sob as she closed the blind.

The next day at four o'clock the same pantomime was enacted. The same anxiety, hope, fear, disappointment, e painted on the two faces. The girl brushed the tears from her eyes and put wearily back her hair. As the man with his usual expletive of disgust and disappointment, tugged at the blind, a puff of wind blew the light ribbon from the hair of the girl straight into his eyes, and from thence to the floor of his room. He saw it at once. It lay upon the faded carpet almost under his feet. His first impulse was to tramp upon it as he marched to and fro growling at the hard luck that had shut him up in this hot hole during the dog days. His next impulse was to kick the bauble aside; but it was not of a kickable nature, and clung close to his feet. He stooped at last and took it from the floor and found it suspiciously damp.

"She's been sniffling again," he said. "As usual, she gets no letter and cries; I get no letter, and I swear. I wonder which is the most consoling. And why in thunder don't she get her letter? She can't have any rascally lawyers to deal with, that lie, and cajole, and cheat and steal. She can't be waiting for a witness to come from the other side of the world to testify in a case that ought to have been settled before he went to sea. I believe it was a conspiracy on the part of these infernal lawyers to dawdle along with the case, and not discover the existence of this Martin Malloy till he had shipped again, and was well out of the pale. And now it seems that the fate of the suit depends upon the testimony of this fellow before the mast. At least five thousand pounds of my money at this present moment is at stake in the life of a miserable sailor far out at sea." Here his soliloquy was interrupted by a light tap at the door. "Come," he growled, without turning his head.

He thought it was his landlady, Mrs. Matson, for whom he had no particular affection, or her rough-featured domestic, that he felt certain was shortening his life by her miserable cookery. But a gentle voice said, "Did you want anything, sir?" And turning he beheld his landlady's daughter. And how in the world she could bear that relation to the fat, swarthy, coarse and commercial female who kept the house, this lodger could not imagine. Her eyes were so soft and brown, so pleading and innocent, frank and confiding as a little child's, whereas her mother's were narrow and sharp, distrustful and cunning,

The young girl flushed under this scrutinizing gaze, and said again: "You didn't want anything, then, Mr. McGraw? Mother said you pounded on the floor."

"Pounded!" said Mr. McGraw; "of course I pounded. If I don't get a letter soon I'll make smithereens of some of this horsehair furniture about me. If your mother has any regard for her squint-eyed ancestor over there, she'd better take him down and out of the way. He's been following me about with that damaged leer of his for the last fortnight. It's a mercy I haven't stabbed him through the canvas. And, say," he added, for the girl was fast vanishing out of his sight, and she was wondrous pleasant article to look upon in this gloomy old barrack—"say," said Mr. McGraw. He was still twirling the bit of blue ribbon in his fingers and now held it out to the young girl. "It fell in the window to-day as we were both looking for that confounded postman. I hope we'll have better luck to-morrow, Maggie."

"I thought sure we would to-day, sir," said Maggie, blushing and sighing. "I had a good sign this morning."

"What was that, Maggie?" said Mr. McGraw, still holding his end of the blue ribbon.

"Why, see, sir," she said, and pointed to the skirt of her dress. "I put it on wrong side out this morning, and never changed it, for Martin used to say it was sign of good luck."

"And who is Martin?" said Mr. McGraw. "It so happens that I am interested in that name."

"The one I'm looking for a letter from, sir. The vessel was due a month ago;" and here her voice broke, and the brown eyes filled with tears.

"A sailor with the name of Martin?" said Mr. McGraw, with increased interest. "What's his last name, Maggie?"

"Malloy, sir—Martin Malloy."

"God bless my soul!" said McGraw; "this is a remarkable coincidence! Why, Maggie, this is the very man I'm waiting to hear from. A heavy sum of money depends upon this friend of yours. I suppose he is more than a friend, Maggie?"

"We're promised to be married, sir, after this voyage. He had a chance of rising to second mate; and oh, I'm so sorry we waited!"

"So am I," said Mr. McGraw. "If he'd stopped long enough to be married we might have got hold of him for a witness, and that would have been the making of many a thousand pounds for me; but never mind, Maggie; let's depend upon the augury of the petticoat. You see our fates are linked together, and as only one of us wears a petticoat, the one garment must serve for us both; and I'll tell you what, Maggie"—for she was fast vanishing again, and he hated to see her go—"I'll tell you what, when Martin comes back, and wins for me this money, a good round sum of it shall go for a wedding outfit for you."

"If he only comes back!" said Maggie, and went out of the door, leaving the ribbon still in the hand of Mr. McGraw—a meditative, softened, altogether changed expression upon his face.

"A most remarkable coincidence!" he repeated to himself. "This accounts for the interest I've taken in that girl from the start. A queer freak of destiny has thrown us together, and here we are both hanging upon the fate of this sailor. I don't suppose he's worthy of her. No doubt he's a rough, common, abusive brute; but he's young"—here Mr. McGraw gave vent to a grunt that was meant for a sigh—"and, I suppose, after his low fashion, good looking." Here Mr. McGraw kicked over the ottoman that obstructed his way, put the blue ribbon in his vest pocket, drew a chair to the window, filled his pipe, and looking out upon a triangular bit of the western sky fell into a profound reverie.

The next morning Maggie was at her old post at the attic window. Mr. McGraw was also rattling at his blinds; but he looked fully as often up at Maggie as he did down the street for the postman, and was quite jocular and smiling for a man of his nervous temperament.

"Any more signs, Maggie?" he said, almost dislocating his neck to get a good look at her pretty face.

Maggie shook her head, and smiled mournfully at him.

"I dreamed of white horses, sir, and mother says it's a bad sign."

"Your mother is always a f—" Here the postman stopped at the door, and nobody will ever know whether Mr. McGraw meant to call his landlady a fine woman or a fool, for all further conversation was stopped by the coming the long-looked-for letters. There was one for Maggie, and one for Mr. McGraw. Maggie had run down to the door, taken both letters, and fled up stairs again. Her hand was trembling and cold as she put the letter in Mr. McGraw's hand.

"I'm afraid to open mine," she said; "it's in a strange handwriting." Mr. McGraw watched her disappear, then tore open his own envelope without a tremor. At the first sentence, however, Mr. McGraw started, and put his spectacles firmer upon his nose, and by the time he had read the missive half through, his face had become the index of many conflicting emotions. All at once there was a heavy thump upon the floor of the room above.

"My God!" said Mr. McGraw, "she's got the news already. And rushing out of the room and up the stairs as fast as his rather gouty legs could carry him, he saw the poor girl stretched lifeless upon the floor, the fatal letter crumpled in her hand. Then he pounded in right good earnest, and being a man of action, had proper restoratives used, a doctor brought, and after a time poor Maggie wearily opened her eyes. The moment she saw Mr. McGraw she screamed and fainted again.

"I'm a bitter reminder of her loss, said Mr. McGraw. The doctor and Maggie's mother looked at him inquiringly, wondering how Mr. McGraw could remind Maggie of the drowning of her lover. But Mr. McGraw did not explain; he merely stepped aside when Maggie opened her eyes again. After her first long, sobbing breath, her first words were for Mr. McGraw.

"Where is he?" she said. "Let him come to me. He has lost his money, and I have lost—" Here the words froze on her lips, and she held out her hands to Mr. McGraw, who had reached the couch upon which they had lifted her. She put her arms around his neck and sobbed there like a little child. Mr. McGraw had lived a lonely bachelor's life; his kith and kin were far away. This was a new experience to him—new and strangely sweet. For years and years the fragrant breath of a woman had not touched his lips. His eyes were wet and blurred; a queer choking sensation arose in his throat; his voice was husky as he blurted out some consoling words.

"He can never come back to speak for you," said poor Maggie. "You have lost all your money. I'm very sorry for you, Mr. McGraw."

She meant she was sorry for herself, but the poor child craved companionship in her grief.

Heaven knows she got it from Mr. McGraw. From this time out he became devoted to the duty of assuaging the grief of the bereaved girl. He filled his pockets with bonbons, and ribbons, and the various gewgaws he thought would soften the affliction of a girl of twenty, and failing with those, sought to distract her by junketings to parks and promenades and shows, and finding these were distasteful to her, at last yielded to her desire to go down to the wharves where the big ships lay. Here they spent hour after hour, Mr. McGraw content to hold one of her hands in his, while the other lay idly in her lap, and her eyes went wistfully wandering out over the water, till the shadows grew longer and longer, and the day was done. Then he would say, gently, "Come, Maggie," and she would obey in a sweet, dutiful fashion, lifting her face to his, full of some sort of affection—he didn't stop to consider what it was; but Maggie knew that she owed this luxury of melancholy entirely to Mr. McGraw. He had coaxed her mother into giving over Maggie's ordinary drudgery to other hands, so that she could have the comfort of nursing her grief under the auspices of Mr. McGraw. His landlady had, indeed, needed very little persuasion, and met his entreaties half way. Mr. McGraw found nothing distasteful in this maternal solicitude, having for years parried the thrusts and entrings of anxious mothers in behalf of their portionless daughters, the more so as it furthered his own happiness, and rendered him more and more comfortable as time went by.

Now that the hot summer was gone, and the stormy winds of winter began to blow, the old brick lodgings were not so gloomy. The obliquely visioned ancestor had been taken from the wall; the horsehair furniture covered with a gay chintz; the rusty grate was rubbed into a rubicund brightness, and therein he coals blazed generously. There was no stint in the maternal blessings showered upon this lodger, and Mr. McGraw for the first time, appreciated his dealings with a commercial woman, who was willing to spend money when there was considerable to be made by it. This excellent woman even endeavored to put an air of smartness into Maggie's wardrobe, and garnished her cloak with a crimson trimming. Maggie wore the cloak, but her face was sadly out of keeping with the brave garment. She had grown so much more subdued, and so much in moderer manner and appearance, that Mr. McGraw felt more and more at ease in her society, and of the two he began to appear the brightest, and wore an air of briskness and vigor that went far to make up for his mature years. His lawyers declared that never, in the whole course of their experience, had they seen a man possessed with such admirable philosophy.

As the months went by, it began to be generally conceded by all concerned that Mr. McGraw was "paying attention" to Maggie, and she was treated with that rare consideration that her good luck demanded.

The only creature that seemed utterly ignorant of the situation was poor Maggie herself, who had never for a moment forgotten her dead sailor, or ceased reviving his memory to Mr. McGraw, who seemed the only one that could fully sympathize with her and console her. Prodded on by the encouraging hints and allusions of the girl's mother, Mr. McGraw had endeavored to infuse into his manner something of the bearing of a lover, but Maggie invariably received these advances with the gentle gratitude that had become a part of her nature, and Mr. McGraw instinctively shrank from anything that might shock her delicacy, or estrange her from him. One morning, as they stood upon the long pier and looked out to sea, he said to the girl clinging to his arm: "Shall you be sorry, my dear, to see me one of these days sailing away from you in a ship like that one over yonder, never perhaps to look upon your sweet face again?"

She said no word, clung closer to his arm, and two big tears rolled out of her eyes. He took courage then to put his arm about her—not but that it had often been there before, but that was in a fatherly sort of way.

"Would you be afraid, Maggie, to cross the sea with me?" he said.

"Afraid!" she replied; "I could never be afraid of the sea."

There was an unpleasant inflection in these words that was closely connected with the dead sailor, and Mr. McGraw essayed still another inquiry. "Don't you love me a little, Maggie?" he said.

"I love you better than anybody now," she said.

He longed to ask her if her love was anything of the nature of the ardent passion she had once held for the sailor Malloy, but of course he refrained, and indeed he was well content with his present happiness. Mr. McGraw felt certain of the future. There seemed no obstacle to his happiness, and that very day he resolved to get his affairs in shape so that he could leave the country at a moment's notice. He stooped and kissed Maggie good-bye, and started off blithely to see his lawyers.

"Don't be long," she called from the window. "I shall wait here till you come back."

"God bless the child!" said poor Mr. McGraw. "There certainly now is nothing to hinder our happiness."

The lawyers were cats and the office was in care of the boy. On a low chair by the door a man sat, with his head resting upon his knees. His whole appearance was of that slipshod nature that it seemed as if he might fall to pieces at any moment. His frame, of herculean dimensions, was the more pitiable that the flesh had shrunken from the bones, and the features of his face were harsh and forbidding in their prominence. His clothes were faded and patched, his hat was pulled over his eyes, and altogether he was a most forlorn and pitiable object in this office of a prosperous solicitor.

In the heyday of happiness, how could Mr. McGraw pass this wretched fellow-creature by without a word?

"Good morning, my poor fellow," he said. "You seem to be in sorry plight. Can I do anything for you?"

"You can tell me," said the man, in a hoarse and hollow voice, "if it's true that these people here will be glad to see me. I'm told there's a reward offered for any news of me, and I'd like a little money to prink up before I go to see my sweetheart. She'll be thinking it's my ghost if I go to her like this."

"Some wretcher criminal," thought Mr. McGraw, "who has risked everything to see this woman he loves. See here, my good fellow," he said, lowering his voice, "if this money will be of any use to you, take it, and go; but I'd keep clear of the law if I were you."

"Why, thank you, sir," said the man, putting back the bills, "but I'm no beggar. I'll wait and hear what these land sharks have to say."

At that moment the senior lawyer entered, and turned upon the fellow a distrustful glance. "What do you want here?" he said, sharply.

"I want the money that was offered for news of a shipwrecked sailor called Martin Malloy."

"I offered ten pounds," said the lawyer, turning to Mr. McGraw.

"The deuce you did!" said Mr. McGraw, who had fallen into a chair, and was gazing at the man with strained eyes. "This Malloy is dead," he added, still keeping his eyes upon the man.

"He ain't quite dead," said the man, "but as near as he likes to be." Then he went on to tell the story of the wreck, the expected in the cream as you desire to have gravy. If you have not cream, use a little white stock or water, and thicken to the consistency of cream with butter rubbed down into flour; let this boil for about twenty minutes, then put in the minced fowl to become thoroughly heated; serve with curls of fried bacon round.

"You're an old man, you know, and thought of your money—but my Maggie!" here he stopped, and the flame of delight burned in his cheeks and eyes. He grew suddenly young and strong under the gaze of poor Mr. McGraw.

Maggie sat there by the window, as she had promised. Oh, the bitterness of that moment to one, the happiness to the other! One moment Mr. McGraw saw her as he had left her—pale, calm, subdued, patient; the next, a crimson glow had leaped to her face, then left it paler than before; suddenly it disappeared, and Mr. McGraw thought it had fallen away somewhere in a faint; but presently it shone on the breast of the sailor, so radiant and beautiful that it dazzled poor Mr. McGraw.

"Why, you did know me," said Martin, tears bursting out of his burning eyes. "In spite of everything, she did know me! I owe you a dollar, Mr. McGraw!"

"And, 'Master Shallow, I owe you a thousand pound,'" quoted Mr. McGraw, with a bitter grin.

What more can be said? The wedding took place a little later on, after the lawsuit had been decided in favor of Mr. McGraw. Maggie's wedding trip was across the sea, but not in a steamer. It was in a trig little vessel, which Mr. McGraw gave as a wedding present, at the express request of the bride.

"Martin wouldn't give up the sea," she said.

"And you wouldn't give up Martin," said Mr. McGraw.

"Why, no, sir, not for the world," said the foolish girl.

So poor Mr. McGraw took passage alone.—*Harper's Weekly.*

A Word About Diamonds

The diamond has many histories. It has a chemical and a commercial, a mineralogical and a mystical history. It has what might be called a personal history, comprising the varied adventures of individual stones; there is a history of diamond cutting and counterfeiting, of diamond discoveries and diamond robberies, and there promises soon to be a history of diamond manufacture. The earliest known home of the gem was in India and in India it made its way westward to the Greeks, who, among its many remarkable qualities, singled out its pre-eminent hardness as that by which it was thenceforward to be distinguished when known, and detected when doubtful. They named it adamas, the indomitable, and invented fables in illustration of this character, which found credence and question for many hundreds of years. Such was the obduracy of the genuine diamond, they maintained, that the attempt to break it between hammer and anvil resulted, not in the fracture of the stone, but the rending of the metal; and numerous gems of the purest water were immolated, generation after generation, to the vain tradition, which persisted and gained by iron. There was, indeed, it was added, one method by which this otherwise invincible resistance could be overcome. Immersion for a certain time in warm goat's blood rendered the crystal amenable to the blows of the hammer, although even then, like the Calydonian hero at the siege of Thebes, it contrived to involve its sturdy adversary in its own destruction.

Now the truth is that the diamond, although the hardest of known substances, is also one of the most brittle, since it possesses a natural cleavage along which it splits with the utmost facility. When the Koh-i-noor was being recut in 1852, the jeweler to whose care it was intrusted during the operation admitted it to the inspection of one of his most valued customers, who heedlessly let it slip through his fingers. The jeweler, seeing it fall, all but lost his senses with terror, and called forth a similar access of retrospective dismay in his distinguished visitor by explaining that if the jewel had touched the ground at a certain angle it would almost infallibly have separated into fragments.

The extreme difficulty of polishing the diamond caused it, in early times, to be sought after as an amulet rather than as an ornament. The belief in its efficacy both as a poison and as an antidote to poison is of high antiquity, and its regard in this latter branch is even yet not wholly extinct. Benvenuto Cellini relates that he owed his life to the avarice of an apothecary in substituting powdered beryl for the diamond dust which he had been bribed to mix with his salad; and the same pseudo-deadly substance was administered to Sir Thomas Overbury in the Tower. On the other hand, the Romans regarded it as a sure remedy, not only against poison, but against various other perils, and the conviction of its mystical virtues continued to prevail throughout the middle ages. It was said to confer valor, to insure victory, to repel witchcraft and madness, to give success in lawsuits. Pliny is careful to tell us that if worn on the left side it would cleave the skin, and prevent nocturnal panic; and Sir John Mandeville adds that it should be given freely, not bought or sold.

Diamond superstitions, in our days, seem to have taken refuge in the East. The Shah of Persia is said to possess one set, in a cimeter, which has the power of rendering the wearer invisible, and the great diamond of the Rajah of Mattan, in Borneo, weighing 367 carats, and supposed to be the largest in existence, is credited with the virtue, not of talisman alone, but of a panacea as well, the natives of the island believe that water in which it has been immersed cures every disorder; and the vast price offered for it by the Governor of Batavia, of $150,000, two ships of war fully equipped, together with sundry arms and munitions, was refused, not because of the intrinsic value of the jewel, but because the fortunes of the dynasty were traditionally affirmed to depend upon its possession.

It appears to be commonly lost sight of that these gems have a commercial value entirely independent of their decorative purpose. A peculiar modification of diamond, known as "carbonado," which is as unsightly as cast iron, is sold for use in rock-boring machines, at an average price of four and a half to five dollars the carat. Fifteen years ago an unlimited supply of this substance was offered to a London merchant at the ridiculously low price of three pence a carat; the Amsterdam cutters, however, reported unfavorably as to its employment in their trade, and the proposal was declined. It was never renewed; for shortly afterward the serviceableness of the stone (which is as hard as diamond itself), both for rock drilling and gem-engraving, was discovered, and from a drug in the market it became an object of energetic competition. "Carbonado" resembles in appearance certain meteoric stones of a blackish-brown hue and crystalline texture. It is composed of the same material as diamond, and is in fact supposed to be diamond which has somehow got spoiled in the making. It is found in masses of from one to two pounds weight, and only in the neighborhood of Bahia, for the lumps of "carbon" occasionally met with in South Africa are deficient in hardness, and thus seem to have been arrested at a still earlier stage of their progress toward mineral perfection. "Bort," which is another deficient member of the diamond family, but is nevertheless also highly prized in the arts, consists in an aggregation of tiny crystals, mixed, like the black diamonds of Borneo, with a certain proportion of amorphous carbon. We see in it a failure or a freak of nature; and just as the ring of asteroids in the solar system is supposed to represent a single majestic planet, so the forces thus scattered in separate centers of crystallization would presumably, under normal conditions, have united to form one radiant jewel.

A Hint for the Dairy.

In the principal dairy districts in France many of the dairymen milk their cows thrice daily. A French paper, alluding to the marked disadvantage of the practice of milking but twice daily, says: In an experiment with three milkings a day for eleven days, a cow gave 170 quarts of milk. With two milkings the same cow gave only 146 quarts in the same number of days. Moreover, analysis showed that the milk in the first case was richer in butter globules than that in the second case, in the proportion of 4.1 to 3.5.

Indigo Factory.

Have you ever thought what indigo is, and where it comes from? Near the city of Allahabad, in India, our missionaries may see the little indigo plan growing, and the factory where our indigo is prepared for use. The following account of the preparation of the indigo from the plant was given by the proprietor to one who traveled in that country:

It is the young shoots of the humble plant you see before you which provide us with the precious material for dyeing, and not the flowers, as is commonly supposed. The gathering of these shoots is a very delicate operation. When they have arrived at a proper degree of maturity, they must be speedily removed, and each cutting must be executed with rapidity and during the night, for the sun would wither the branches, and deprive them of their properties. We therefore require a great many hands; all the villagers on my estate are placed in requisition. The workmen are all dispersed in the fields at midnight; and in the morning the produce of the harvest is deposited in these stone troughs, which have been previously filled with water. Then is the time for the sun to perform its part. Under the influence of its rays the substances undergo a species of fermentation; the water becomes colored with variegated tinges, and rapidly turns blue. After a space of about forty-eight hours, the liquid is drawn off from the smallest troughs. It now emits a slightly ammoniacal smell, and the color is almost black. It is allowed to evaporate again, and is then placed in metal vats, heated by steam, in which, when the evaporation has ceased, a deposit of pure indigo is formed. It only remains to dry this deposit, pack it, and send it to the market at Calcutta.

FARM, GARDEN AND HOUSEHOLD.

Scours in Calves.

A "Farmer's Wife" in the *Country Gentleman* writes: It has been my province for several years to take charge of the calves, and I have had very good luck, and find that when they first begin to eat sour milk they are generally apt to scour, and if the looseness is not checked, it reduces them. Now, as an ounce of preventive is better than a pound of cure, I use about a great spoonful of prepared chalk in their drink. I stir it into the milk, and they never mind it. One dose is sufficient as a general rule. Another good thing for the calves is occasionally to throw a shovelful of fresh earth upon the floor of the stable where they can see it. They will lick it up, and seem to enjoy it very much. When they are old enough to be turned out, they generally help themselves to a few licks of earth every day. It seems to be a natural instinct, and something that they crave.

used to give rennet, or a solution of rennet just as it is prepared for cheese making, when a calf scoured; a couple of spoonfuls in six quarts of milk; but I like the prepared chalk much better. It can be procured at any drug store at small cost; and it is a very handy thing to use, and has always proved efficacious, not only in preventing, but also in curing the complaint. I think the earth is quite a necessary item, and as I have never seen anything written or printed about it, I have ventured to suggest that those who are raising calves should supply the little creatures with fresh earth, and see how much they relish it. I take it from the garden, and it is better to be moist than dry.

When I began to feed meal to the calves I used wheat canaille, or shorts, preferring it to anything else. I take half a pint, pour boiling water on it in a pail, stir it well, put in a teaspoonful of salt, and then fill the pail (which holds ten quarts) with sour milk, and stir it well. I feed this twice a day, and give them good bright hay for dinner. They thrive well, and seem well satisfied with their rations.

Management of Grass Lands.

John B. Moore, Esq., of Concord Mass., gives his experience with grass lands, which is very suggestive. He does not top dress the land, but plows it up every five or six years. The land which he lays down to grass is generally where he has raised a crop of cabbages or cauliflowers, frequently both. He generally plants a couple of acres with cauliflowers, and his rule is to keep twenty-five acres in grass. On this, with ten acres of swale hay, he keeps four horses and thirty head of cattle, and sells annually fifty tons of hay in a year. On his farm he always has refuse from his vegetable garden and also corn-stalks, which he feeds to his cattle. He cuts two crops of hay in a year. The first crop he sells; the second, with his swale hay, garden refuse and cornstalks, he feeds to his stock. His horses he feeds with his best hay, and never lets his cattle feed upon his mowings. The grass that grows after the second mowing he lets remain upon the ground. The land which he has in grass is mellow, and he could not permit cattle upon it without their poaching. This he considers one of the reasons why he raises such heavy crops of hay. A neighbor of his, who always fed his cows on the aftermath, and who has equally as good land as his, and who manured as heavily, failed to get anything like as good crops as Mr. Moore did. When asked why it was, Mr. Moore replied that he attributed it to the fact that he never fed his aftermath. Since that, his neighbor ceased turning his cows upon his mowing, and now he cuts as heavy crops of hay as does Mr. Moore.

Recipes.

IRISH POTATOES.—Old potatoes should be pared and soaked several hours in cold water; then put over to cook in cold water. For baking, wash, trim and soak as above. New potatoes should be prepared just before cooking, and put over in boiling water.

SCALLOPED TOMATOES.—Cut and peel your tomatoes; first a layer of bread crumbs, then a layer of tomatoes, then pepper, salt, a little sugar and butter, then the bread crumbs; over the last layer of crumbs spread beaten egg, and bake three-quarters of an hour.

RAISED MILTON MUFFINS.—One quart of milk, a little salt, two spoonfuls of yeast, two eggs, piece of butter size of an egg, melted in milk, which must be warmed; make in the morning and raise until night, or vice versa; eggs to be put in just before cooking; flour, bake in rings, in a spider over a slow fire, split and butter before sending to table.

CHICKEN MINCE.—The quantity of chicken must be finely chopped, and the seasoning added to taste. In hashes and dishes of the kind it is impossible to give the exact quantity. The seasoning consists of chopped mushroom, pounded mace, sweet herbs, dried and rubbed through a gravy sieve, and pepper and salt; put altogether into a stewpan, and add as much cream as you desire to have

RELIGIOUS NEWS AND NOTES.

The gifts of the Presbyterian church in the United States to missions, home and foreign, last year amounted to $931,000.

There are now sixty Protestant churches in Spain, whose congregations aggregate 20,000, and are rapidly growing.

The Northern Methodist church has seventeen churches in New Orleans, with 3,500 members and church property valued at $131,000.

The Methodist church is making steady progress in Denmark. Ten years ago there were but two churches of that faith, now there are five.

The American Baptist missionary union will begin mission work in Liberia this year, with the object of establishing ultimately a mission in the interior.

The Presbyterian church of England has 268 churches organized into 10 presbyteries. Its ministers number 249, and its communicants 54,259. It has 350 Sunday-shools, with 57,148 scholars.

The Primitive Methodist missionary society of England has 72 mission stations in the United Kingdom, and in Canada, 90 in Australia, and 3 in Africa, with 318 missionaries and colonial ministers.

Large accessions from the Mormon population have been made to the Presbyterian church at Salt Lake City, Utah. In San Peto county fifty or sixty have been received into the Presbyterian church there.

The Presbyterian general assembly, lately held at Madison, adopted resolutions against the reading of secular papers on Sunday, and against the investment of money in enterprises carried out on Sunday.

The last religious census in France shows that there are 35,387,703 Roman Catholics, 467,581 Calvinists, 80,117 Lutherans, and 33,119 of other Protestant denominations. The Jews number about 50,000, and 90,000 are attached to no church.

The late general synod of the Reformed chuch reports an increase of 10 churches in the year, making now 510; a loss of two ministers, now 544; a loss of 1,000 families, giving a total of 43,289; a decrease of 20 communicants, giving an aggregate of 80,208. Number of infant baptisms not given.

During the four and a half months' labor of Messrs. Moody and Sankey in St. Louis, Mr. Moody averaged from ten to twelve sermons every week. The meetings were a success; to what degree eternity alone will reveal. It has been estimated that the number of professed conversions reached 2,400. The additions to the various churches from November 1, 1879, to May 1, 1880, were about 700.

Mr. E. Payson Porter, of Philadelphia, has collected with great labor statistics of Sunday-schools of the United States. He finds that there are 92,261 schools, 886,328 teachers, and 6,623,124 scholars, making a total of 7,509,452. In Canada there are 5,400 schools, 41,712 teachers, and 340,170 scholars. These figures include of course only Protestant evangelical denominations. There are in the world 1,460,881 teachers, and 12,340,316 scholars.

At the late meeting of the Congregational general association of New Jersey the report of the churches made a favorable showing. The association has received two churches during the past year—the Congregational church, of Plainfield, N. J., and the Third church, of Jersey City. It has dropped one—the First church of Plainfield. It now numbers thirty-two churches. Two other churches have just been organized and will probably soon apply for recognition. The total membership of the association is 4,910; its total benevolent offerings for the year, $14,120. The limits of the association extend south to Baltimore, where the last meeting was held. The church in Washington is the largest, numbering 631 members, and the church in Chester, N. J., is by far the oldest.

The Bumble-Bee.

Did you ever stop to consider the immense power possessed by a bumble-bee? An insect weighing no more than a tenth of an ounce is capable of "raising" a man weighing 220 pounds from a bench in the public park, and then have lots of lifting material left. Just stop and think of it. The stinger of the bee is not as large as the finest needle, but such is the force behind it that it can be driven through heavy cloth pants, backed by merino drawers and into the flesh. If a man could wield a crowbar in comparison, he could drive it through seven sawmills and a distillery at one blow. Nature could not afford to give teeth and claws without spoiling its beauty, and in compensation she gave this stinger as a weapon of attack and defense. If the bee had no weapon, ants, beetles and bugs could cuff him around as they pleased; but, as it is, he is the boss of the walk, and won't take a word from any of them.

The bumble-bee is not naturally of a quarrelsome disposition, but he can't sit down over half an hour without feeling that some one was doing him a great wrong. If left to himself, he will crawl up your coat sleeve, look around and go about his business; but if welcomed with a blow between the eyes, he is going to be revenged if he breaks a leg. He invar ably closes his eye when he stings, and you have only to look a bee square in the face to see when he is fooling around, and when he means fourteen per cent. per annum.

The hayfield is a favorite resort of the bumble-bee, but you can find him almost everywhere else if you try hard. Having no pair of long hind legs he cannot build his nest in a marsh, like a frog; and having no beak in which to carry straw he cannot nest in a tree like a bird. He therefore takes to the grass, and under the roots of an old stump, or among a pile of old rails, he rears his gentle young, and gives them printed instructions as to the difference between stinging six-inch stove pipes and runaway boys. The knowledge of old bees is powerful. They know where the schoolhouse is. They know when the school is out. They can sail miles away from home, get in their work on a farmer's son weeding out corn, and return home without missing a fence corner, or need of an afternoon nap. As a rule they are early risers. Barefooted boys driving up their cows at daylight will find the bumble bee out of bed, and ready to begin the arduous labors of the day. Along about sundown he quits work, counts noses to see if the family are all in, and then stows himself away for a night of calm and peaceful repose.

A Year's Work at the Mints.

The following is a statement of the coinage executed during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1880.

	Pieces.	Value.
Double eagles....	1,075,768	$21,515,360 00
Eagles.....	1,883,632	18,836,320 00
Half eagles.....	3,158,172	15,790,860 00
Three dollars....	3,030	9,090 00
Quarter eagles...	1,230	3,075 00
Dollars	3,030	3,030 00
Total gold...	6,124,862	$56,157,735 00
Standard dollars..	27,933,750	$27,933,750 00
Half-dollars.....	6,550	3,275 00
Quarter dollars...	15,350	3,837 50
Dimes.....	15,730	1,573 00
Total silver..	27,971,400	$27,942,437 50
Five cents.....	24,950	$1,247 50
Three cents.....	32,750	982 50
One cents.....	26,774,150	267,741 50
Total minor..	26,831,850	$269,971 00
Total coinage.....	60,928,112	$84,270,144 50

The above is the largest coinage in any one year in the historyof the mint.

RATS.

Mrs. Benedict's Remarkable and Valuable Discovery.

It has always been easy for housewives, who are troubled with rats to poison them, but the problem has been to induce them to die upon the field of honor, so to speak, to wit, the kitchen floor. They have usually preferred to retire to their inaccessible retreats in the walls as soon as they have felt the symptoms of arsenic poisoning, and the low state of sanitary science prevailing in their communities is such that poisoned rats are never properly buried or incinerated by their associates. The problem has been how to kill the rats without bringing unpleasant odors into the house.

Mrs. Benedict has solved the difficulty and is entitled to the honor we give to an inventor and benefactor. She was engaged, it appears, in the domestic manufacture of plaster casts of various kinds. Complaint having been made of the fragility of those wares, Mrs. Benedict began a course of experiments with the hope of giving greater durability to her casts. One of her devices was to mix wheaten flour with her pulverized plaster of Paris, so that the gluten of the flour might make the paste less brittle. One evening she had visitors, who rang her doorbell just as she was sifting the mixed plaster and flour for the third time by way of mixing them intimately, as the chemists say. She had already set a dish of water at hand, intending to make a cast at once, and when the doorbell rang she hastily removed her apron and went to welcome her guests, leaving her materials upon the kitchen table. The guests stayed until late bedtime, and when they bade her adieu Mrs. Benedict went to bed without returning to the kitchen.

What happened in the night was this. A rat, sniffing the odor of flour, made up the legs of the table to the top, where he was speedily joined by other foragers—his brethren. The dish of flour and plaster was easily reached, and the rats ate freely and hastily of it, as it is their custom to do. It was rather a dry supper, and water being at hand, each rat turned from the savory dish of flour and plaster to slake his thirst with water. Everybody who has had to do with plaster of Paris will guess at once what happened. The water drank first wetted the plaster in the rats' stomachs, and then, in technical phrase, "set" it; that is to say, the plaster thus made into paste instantly grew hard in each rat's stomach, making a cast of all its convolutions. The event proved that with such a cast in existence it is impossible for a rat to retreat even across the kitchen.

The next morning thirteen of them lay dead in a circle around the water dish. Mrs. Benedict, like a wise woman, kept her secret and made profit of it. She undertook, for a consideration, to clear the premises of her neighbors of the pests, and succeeded. It was not long before the town was as free of this sort of vermin as if the pied piper of Hamelin had traveled that way. Then Mrs. Benedict advertised for agents to work up the business throughout the country, selling each the secret for a fair price.—*New York Evening Post.*

Reporting by Telephone.

The London *Times* gives an account of a method of reporting late debates in the house of commons by telephone lately adopted in the office of that journal. A type-setting machine has for some time been used in the office, to which, it is stated, a fair workman can attain an average speed of one hundred lines an hour, even when composing from manuscript which he has to read for himself, and this speed can be doubled, or nearly so, when the operator is assisted by a reader, and thus composes from dictation. The mode in which the telephone has been brought into use in connection with this machine is thus described: The contents of this journal, having obtained permission from the metropolitan board of works to lay down the necessary wires in the subway of the embankment, formed a new connection between the house of commons and the office, and placed one of Edison's loud-speaking telephones at either end. The immediate result of this arrangement has been to bring the operator at the office into direct communication with the parliamentary reporter at the house and to enable the debates to be reported and printed from half to three-quarters of an hour later than had previously been possible. The notes made by the reporter can be read directly into the telephone-receiver in a room adjoining the gallery either by himself or by another person employed for the purpose, and the compositor at the machine in the office sits with his ears in juxtaposition with the other terminal of the instrument. The plan which has been found the most efficacious for the purpose of shutting out distracting sounds of other kinds is to place the disc of the telephone above and behind the compositor and to arrange two tubes, each with two trumpet-shaped extremities, in such a manner that these extremities are applied at one end to the two sides of the telephone disc and at the other end to the two ears of the compositor. The compositor is also furn