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Sleep.

When the evening shadows creep
Stealthily,
Hiding every hill and dale,
Hiding all things with their veil,
When the shining day doth die,
Sweet is sleep.

When the evening shadows creep
Stealthily,
To the baby in her nest,
Longing for her quiet rest,
Hushed by loving lullaby,
Sweet is sleep.

When the evening shadows creep
Stealthily,
To the weary heart and brain
Bringing tranquil peace again;
All our cares and sorrows fly—
Sweet is sleep.

Christmas Anthem.

Maidens mothers that may be,
Bring your wreaths to deck the shrine
Of the Mother-Maid divine
With her Child upon her knee;
Shout your silvery songs of praise
For the birth of better days.

Mothers, come! I see confessed
In your glances deep and mild
The adoration of the Child.
Come, your children at the breast;
Lift your prayerful songs of praise
For the birth of better days.

Children, come with confidence,
Seek the benediction mild
Of this gentle little Child,
Who was love and innocence;
Lisp your guileless songs of praise
For the birth of better days.

—Phillip O. Sullivan

BERYL'S CHRISTMAS.

Christmas eve, and raining. It had rained from early dawn steadily and without cessation, and now the night had fallen and it was raining still.

To the eyes of the girl that stood in the west window of the little villa among the elms, it was unspeakably dreary. She had stood there a long while watching the horses with their laden vehicles splash through the mud, and the pedestrians, laden too, hurrying along the swimming pavements; and now she pressed her face against the cold pane, and great tears fell slowly from her eyes. She turned away in a moment and buried her face in the cushions of a divan that stood near, and cried as if her heart would break.

The little fire in the grate flickered fitfully on the walls and pictures of the pretty room; the rain dripped down on the verandah and pattered against the pane; and the girl sobbed among the pillows, the firelight just touching the disordered masses of bronzed hair, and the slender form that shook with the intensity of her grief.

The little French clock on the mantel chimed seven and as she lifted her tear-stained face, and pushed back the heavy hair with two small white hands.

"I wonder if there is another girl as miserable as I," she exclaimed, as so many girls have exclaimed before her, and as so many will exclaim again. "I who have everything in the world to make me happy—health, a happy home, and friends; and yet, because I have quarreled with one of these, everything is less than nothing to me. Such a little thing to quarrel about! He knows I am jealous, and he has no right to praise Coral Gilbert when she is everything that I am not."

She was nervous, sipping a dainty amethyst up and down one slender finger, and the firelight catching I grew pale, violet flames from it. "Yes, and to send this back without a word—without one least little word. Just a year ago to-night he took it from me, and promised to keep it until I sent him back the one he had given me. If I did send his back, what right had he to return mine? He knew I would be sorry when I had time to think; he knew, too, I didn't mean one word of the hateful letter I wrote him; and I haven't seen him for six weeks, and he is going to take Coral Gilbert to the party to-night. I almost wish I was dead." The bronze-brown tresses were recklessly crumpled against the cushions again, and the rain outside seemed weeping in sympathy with her.

There was a clatter of glad childish voices in the hall, a ringing of happy laughter, a rush of little feet, and Beryl Dean had just time to jump up, wipe the tears away and smooth her hair hastily, when the children burst in without ceremony.

"Story, story!" they cried. "You promised, Beryl, you know."

"Yes, I remember," she answered, gently. In a moment the petulant, grieving child had become the quiet, womanly girl. "Have you had a pleasant time this afternoon?"

"Jolly!"

"Lovely!"

"Delightful!"

"Aunt Louise is the nicest woman in the world."

"Not nicer than sister," Baby Jessie said, loyally.

"Oh, no, indeed, of course not," they all said, and then Harry rolled a great easy chair to the grate and drew Beryl into it affectionately, and sat down on a little hassock at her feet and leaned against her knee; May sat down on one of the arms, Daisy on the other, and Baby Jessie clambered into her arms. And so they sat in the cheery firelight, and Beryl told them wonderful stories of Christmas tide and the Christ-child, her sweet, low voice often broken by eager questions, and Mrs. Dean came and astonished them beyond measure by telling them it was nine o'clock and bed-time; loving and with kisses and good-nights fer the elder sister, they trooped off.

But that night the white pillow under the bronze hair was wet with hot, girlish tears.

* * *

Christian day, and still it rained; would it never cease? Long before dawn the children had rushed into her room with "merry Christmas" on their lips. "Everything we wanted, we have," they cried. "Come down to the breakfast-room and see all your lovely presents." And she went down with pale cheeks and heavy eyelids, but with smiles and cheerful words over the pretty things that had been lavished upon her. Only the mother noticed that there were large shadows under the dark eyes, and the face was very pale, and the red lips often trembled as she looked from the warm, cozy breakfast-room, out to the wet, gray sky that leaned down sorrowfully to the sodden earth. The thoughtful little woman said nothing, but Beryl felt in many ways that the mother's love was a very tender and precious thing.

Mrs. Dean had some household customs that were as changeless as the laws of the Medes and Persians. Her family spent Christmas day at home, always. They went to church always.

The beautiful Christmas sermon fell on a very sad and murmurous heart that day; and as Beryl's sweet, powerful voice arose in the first words of "I Know that My Redeemer Liveth," it trembled so she was frightened, and with a strong effort forgot everything but the grand chant. "How wicked I must be," she thought to herself, "to be thinking, always thinking about my own self, and fretting about that when every one tries to make me happy."

When the solemn benediction trembled on the air, as she arose for the first time she glanced down at the congregation; but she shrank back with her heart beating tumultuously as she encountered a pair of dark eyes looking up into hers. How long it had been since she had seen them. Flushed and trembling she ran down the stairs and hurried to the carriage with a celerity that greatly surprised Mrs. Dean.

"If I could only make some unfortunate happy, I think I could be happy myself," she thought, nervously. "I am so selfish and egotistical in my sorrow, no wonder I never have any rest or comfort. Ah!" as a sudden idea crossed her "I know. I will go and see Mrs. Hull. Poor old lady, she will be lonesome to-day."

And so while the late dinner was in preparation, and the children in the nursery perfectly carried away by some wild play she silently attired herself in a heavy cloak, and went down into the kitchen and filled a basket with chicken and jelly and grapes and everything which she thought would be likely to tempt the appetite; and took her way through the wet gray day to a little cottage a mile or two away where dwelt Mrs. Hull, a childless widow, destitute and alone in her helpless old age. She found her, patient and uncomplaining, laid up with a bad attack of rheumatism—the fire almost out in the clean little room.

The withered old face brightened up when Beryl came in. "I have come to stay with you an hour or two, Mrs. Hull," she said, taking off her waterproof and brightening up the little fire until it blazed and flickered in the cheeriest manner

"And here is your Christmas," wrapping a thick woolen shawl about her, and putting a pretty white cap and handkerchief on her own pretty self, and laughing and dimpling in the most delightful manner at her little surprise.

"And you and I are to have luncheon together; I couldn't wait to have it at home, so I brought it with me. I hope you'll excuse my unceremonious entry with my bundles. I dare say mamma will be scandalized when I tell her about our picnic," and Beryl laughed one of her pretty merry laughs, not caring to see the tears in the old eyes.

"This is like the larks we used to have at school. A whole year since I was a schoolgirl," with a heavy sigh. "I have enjoyed life half so much since." Girl-like forgetting the summer that was fairer than any poetic idyl to her young heart; forgetting the bright autumn days that were happy and dreamful and filled with a delicious peace; only remembering the sad winter days that had come in with storm and tears and misunderstandings.

She put fresh coverings on the bed, lifting the pain-twisted form tenderly in her strong young arms; she bathed the hands and face, and combed the gray hair gently, and hushed the grateful words that were her portion, by drawing a little table to the bed and covering it with the contents of her basket, keeping up a running stream of gay girlish chatter. Then she propped the old lady up with pillows, and drew the one chair to the table for herself, poured out a cup of hot fragrant tea which she had made for Mrs. Hull, and waited on her much more assiduously than she would have done for any of her mother's elegant friends.

"Mamma will be anxious about me," she said, at last. "I am afraid I must go," putting on her rubbers. "I'll just step into Mrs. Dunn's and tell her to send Maggie over for an hour or two, so you won't be lonesome, and I'll come again in a day or two. I think you'll be around all right, soon. The 'fogness,' as my little sister Jessie says, is very bad for the rheumatism."

She bent over the little white bed and kissed the wrinkled forehead gently.

"God bless you, dear," the old lady said. "You have made this a happy Christmas for me."

And out in the wet streets Beryl was wondering how Mrs. Hull could be resigned to her poverty and loneliness, and happy as well as content. Then she scolded herself heartily for her restlessness and the sore place in her heart.

"I know it makes mamma sad to see me so disconsolate. I must certainly reform. I'll begin this very minute."

She ran up the steps blithely.

"How long before dinner?" she called to Nora.

"Half an hour, miss."

"Can I dress in half an hour?" she queried of herself. "I must," resolutely.

She flew to her own room.

"I have taken no interest in my appearance at all lately; one would think I was a perfect beauty to judge by my nonchalent attire, and could afford to slight the 'arts of the toilet.' Christmas night! I must reform."

Surely no fairer Christmas vision gladdened any eyes in all the wide city that night than the slim girl-form that ran down the broad stairs into the brilliantly-lighted parlors half an hour later. Trailing robes of gauzy black, white arms and shoulders shining through, vivid scarlet blossoms at rounded throat and in the shining hair.

Bright fires glowed in the grates; beautiful odorous flowers trailed over the table and mantel and bracket; and as she turned to a long mirror to see the "effect of her train," the dinner-bell sent its silvery summons through the house.

Mrs. Dean came into the drawing-room, her gray silk rustling softly, looking pleased as she noted the pretty picture her child made. Mr. Dean, silent and a little abstracted, followed, and the children came down the long stairs with laughter and merry nonsense.

Beryl was bright and animated as she had not been for weeks, and even the servants below smiled at the gay bursts of mirth that floated down occasionally from the dining-room.

But after an hour or two, when the children had gone upstairs again, and mother and father had gone to the library, memory, which is never still, awoke in her heart again.

She had drawn a low easy chair to the grate, the work had fallen from her idle hand, and the dark eyes were watching the flickering fire light steadily.

How many pictures it showed her! and in each there shown one face. Dark, imperious eyes that could be so tender, grave lips that could smile so rarely, the one face that had filled her life for a year. She remembered the many hours that this face had shone upon her. The boating on the river; the drives along the country roads; the lingerings in the moon-lit, flower-scented old garden; the leaves they had gathered in the gorgeous autumn; the books they had read, and the songs they had sung together in the chill winter evening.

It all came back to her, this chill winter night, and the tender, girlish, undisciplined heart was sorely wrenched.

"How could I have been so mad as to give him up without a word of explanation? But he did not care for me, or he would have written or come before this! I know I shall be miserable all my life, because I was so foolish, so childish."

The soft eyes slowly filled with tears. There was a ring at the door-bell just then, but Beryl did not notice it. A moment later a step came along the hall and stopped in the open door, but Beryl heard it not.

It was a pretty picture—the luxurious flower-filled room, and the fair pensive girl looking into the fire, wrapped in her revery.

The proud face of the man, who saw, softened and grew tender, as he looked—another moment he stood beside her chair.

"Beryl."

The fair startled face was lifted to him as she half arose.

"My darling," he said, as he saw the grieved red lips and the tears in her dark eyes. He drew her to him closely and kissed her white brow tenderly.

"My little one, did you think I could let this night go by, and not see you?"

Snake and Frog.

Many years ago, while in Ceylon, I lived in a house in "Slave island," raised on a high platform. The steps up to the door had become loosened, and behind them a colony of frogs had established themselves. One morning I watched a snake (a cobra) creep up, insert its head into a crack and seize a frog, which he then and there swallowed. But the crack that admitted the thin flat head and neck of the ophidian would not permit of the same being withdrawn when the neck was swollen with the addition of the frog inside it. The snake tugged and struggled, but in vain, and after a series of futile attempts disgorged its prey and withdrew its head. But the sight was too tantalizing. Again the head was inserted in the crack and the coveted morsel swallowed, and again the vain struggles to withdraw were renewed. I saw this repeated several times, till, gaining wisdom by experience, the snake seized the frog by one leg, withdrew it from its coigne of vantage and swallowed it outside.—*Nature.*

CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS.

Some Odd Variations in the Popular Myth of the Happy Season.

In the north of Germany and on the Rhine it is St. Nicholas on his donkey, accompanied by his servant Ruprecht, who makes his rounds on Christmas eve. The little ones expect the mysterious visitors to fill the dishes which they place on the window-sills, or the shoes and stockings which they thrust up the chimney, with his gifts. They go to bed with the firm determination not to fall asleep and miss hearing the donkey's bray which is to announce the arrival of the bountiful pair. However, they are not allowed to leave their beds until early dawn, when a general scramble takes place. With shouts of delight or sobs of disappointment the various receptacles for the expected presents are examined and the several papers undone in which the gifts are tied up to prolong the suspense. Some reveal the coveted sweets, the long-desired picture book, the prayed-for fairy doll; others contain palpable hints of the parents' displeasure in the shape of a birch rod, a written reprimand, etc., or are empty altogether. The lucky recipients are congratulated; those under a cloud laughed at, and harmless fun reigns supreme throughout the house.

In a similar way St. Nicholas day is celebrated in France on the sixth of December, and in Lorraine the role of Ruprecht is played by Pere Foutettard, preceding St. Nicholas, who is seated on the inevitable donkey, in his official robe, with mitre, cross and long beard. In the south of Germany St. Nicholas appears in person on Christmas eve or sends his bearded servant, Ruprecht, wrapped in furs or blankets—the more ogre-like the better—with a birch rod in his hand and a well-filled bag or basket on his back. Before distributing his gifts, which consist of apples, walnuts, oranges, penny dolls and similar trifles, he examines the children about their behavior since last Christmas, rewarding the good ones and expressing his displeasure by the character of his presents—white wax, sweet wine or raw potatoes — to the naughty ones. Ruprecht is appealed to by the parents many weeks previous to Christmas for keeping in order the youngest members of the family.

In Alsace the Christmas messenger appears as Lady Bountiful, clad in white, her face powdered with flour. On her long auburn hair, made of tow, she wears a crown of gold paper surrounded with lighted wax tapers, holding in one hand a silver bell and in the other a basket filled with presents. She, too, is suppose to arrive on a donkey, and is accompanied by Hans Trapp, the indispensable bugbear, wrapped in bear skins, the blackened face hidden under a slouch hat, and in his hand a birch rod. Anxious to conciliate even the donkey, the children place a bundle of hay behind the door for its accommodation and a glass filled with wine as welcome for the lady and her attendant, singing a quaint old German rhyme:

Ohrischtkindele, Chrischkindele,
Kumm nein zu meyner
Merr hann e frisch's Heubindele
Un an e Glasele Wyn.
E Bindele
Fir's Essele
Fir's Kindele
E Glasele,
Un bete kenne mer au,

the explanation of which may serve as an amusement for a holiday afternoon. The proceedings of Hans Trapp are about the same as those of Knecht Ruprecht; but the Lady Bountiful intercedes for the naughty children on their promise of amendment and places her gifts under the Christmas tree.

A Terrible Story of the Sea.

In a lately published book, written by Rear Admiral Werner, of the German navy, a strange story is told of the loss in which many years ago, in 1836, a French man-of war went down with all hands on board in West Indian waters. The ship had been in commission for two years on the Antilles station, and during the whole of the time her captain, who is described as an incarnation of cruelty, had exercised his ingenuity in tormenting in every possible way both the officers and men of his crew. So well had he succeeded that the lives of all on board had been rendered a burden to them, while the captain himself was hated with an intensity of which proof was soon to be given. Orders at length came for the ship to return home. Not long after the anchor had been weighed it became evident that a heavy squall was coming down on the ship, and the captain directed the officer of the watch to shorten sail. The orders were given but not a man moved. Again the orders were repeated, this time by the captain himself; but still not a man moved, "This is mutiny," cried the captain, and then a hundred voices answered: "We will not shorten sail." In vain the terrified captain appealed to the officers to support him. They stood silent, and neither threats nor promises availed to make man or officer move, save only a few who were noted as spies and favorites of the captain. A few minutes more and the squall struck the ship. In a moment the vessel was thrown upon her beam-ends. "Cut away the masts!" shouted the captain; but still not a man moved. In another minute, however, the rigging was carried away, the masts went by the board, and, thus relieved, the ship righted herself. Then the long suppressed rage of the crew broke forth, and rushing aft, they seized the captain. A few minutes more and he would have followed the rigging, but the first lieutenant, going below, opened the door of the magazine and fired his pistol into it. There was a loud report and the ship was no more. An hour afterward an American vessel passing over the spot picked up one of the crew, who told the story of what had happened and died shortly afterward.

Greasing the Sea.

The expression "to pour oil on the troubled waters" is generally regarded as a metaphor or figure of speech, illustrating the action of some persuasive peacemaker, softening the angry passions of contending disputants. On the other hand, the mollifying influence of oleaginous liquids upon the waves was long ago demonstrated as a scientific fact, and the equinoctial gales would probably have been kept in subjection ere now, on the high seas, but for the uncertainty of the weather and the estimated expense of oiling an area as limited even as the bay of Biscay. It would appear, however, that a gentleman of Perth has solved the problem of economy as applied to greasing the sea, and that in future ships may carry with them, at a comparatively trifling cost, a sufficient supply of oil to nullify the rigors of the fiercest cyclone. A northern contemporary states that a series of experiments have lately taken place in the north harbor, Peterhead, with the most satisfactory results. The experimentalist filled some bottles full of oil and sank them to the bottom of the harbor while a gale was blowing. Presently the oil was released, and, floating to the top of the raging billows, stilled them as if by a miracle. As a consequence of this experiment, it is thought in the neighborhood of Perth that oil can be laid on continuously by pipes to the bars of all exposed harbors, so as to enable vessels to gain port in safety in the midst of the most violent hurricanes. The invention would be invaluable if applied to the channel passage in dirty weather. Day by day we are taught that there are no bounds to the conquest of science over nature, and now that we can oil out the gluy wrinkles of the stormy ocean, we need not despair of being able, sooner or later, to warm the north pole with otherwise waste steam and fertilize the great desert by artificial irrigation.—*London Telegraph.*

Absence of Mind.

It is essential to skill that the muscles of the body should work unconsciously, but the moment they assert, as it were, their independence of self-consciousness, and prompt to the initiation of efforts outside of what they have been taught, a diseased condition is begun which we call "absence of mind." Such a habit begins in little things, more generally by an omission than a commission. Thinking of something else while dressing, a part of the toilet is overlooked, the necktie is forgotten, the wrong coat is put on, and the hair is unkempt.

Soon, as the habit increases, absurd and even harmful acts are committed. The collection of anecdotes are full of stories of such follies. We know of an able young lawyer who, instead of pouring a tonic from a bottle on his desk, carefully emptied the ink from his inkstand into a spoon and swallowed it. Another, an ex-attorney-general of the United States, went on a fortnight trip to attend an absorbing legal case. His wife packed a half-dozen shirts in his portmanteau. On his return there were no shirts visible. Pushing her inquiries she found that her husband had regularly a clean shirt every other day, but had forgotten to take off the soiled one, and now returned wearing the whole half dozen! An authentic anecdote of the great political economist, Adam Smith, tells us that when called upon to sign a contract, instead of writing his own name, he made an elaborate imitation of the signature of the other party which had already been affixed.

Such incidents tend to depreciate a man, though perhaps unjustly, in the opinion of those with whom he does business. They become also a grave annoyance to the individual himself. In a sense they are mental weaknesses which, pushed to a certain degree, pass into mental diseases. Senility and insanity are not unfrequently marked by automatic actions, carried out without the will or consciousness of the doer. The absent-minded one, like the sleep-walker, performs actions without the knowledge of them, and neglects duties which are pressing.

Early, therefore, it is a source of anxiety with every thoughtful person when he finds himself falling into this bad mental habit. It is usually gradual in its onset, stealing over one in moments of intense occupation. Unlike other mind-weaknesses, it is not the foe of the idle man so much as the busy one. Yet habits of reverie and day-dreaming may also bring it about. Those who feel this habit creeping over them will do well to make an early and special effort to resist it. It can be conquered by a habit of attention, and by severe self-chiding when the mind yields to it.—*Medical and Surgical Reporter.*

Furnishing a Home.

If you wish to have your surroundings make a good impression, with economy, there is but one short and easy rule to follow: Buy everything of the simplest sort; get your stone china of the plainest shape, neither worn tops for your sugar-bowl, and scroll handles for your tureens, and figured borders for plates. Get straight-legged chairs, with as little molding as the makers allow, buy your carpets and lounges of small and modest figurings, don't get that vivid crimson carpet because it "looks warm," or you "have an eye for color," or for black and white, or the green and white panel pattern because it is the last out. Take the oldest, cheapest thing in the shop, if it is in taste and will look well with the rest of your belongings. So many old styles are coming up again that yours will have a chance of being modish any day, and if they suit each other, they will please, in spite of the style of your immediate neighborhood, which may be governed by the whim of a dealer's stock, out of date three years ago. Have plain bevels to the woodwork of your house, instead of beadings and groovings which only hold the dust and swell the carpenter's bill. But insist on deep window seats and low baseboards, and don't allow any grained paint about your house. Plain paint, well varnished, looks better and keeps nice longer; and doesn't always repeat "I'm a sham, I'm a sham," like the pretended oak and walnut. Buy at second-hand, third-hand, restore paint and glue things yourself, and don't be afraid of honest, hand-finished pine without either paint or varnish. The prettiest effects in summer houses are gained from yellow Georgia pine, and the white pine, finished with clear shellac. The simplest forms prevail in some of the new furniture. An expensive oak dining table of newest pattern is square, with turned corners, and a support which is a square pillar with braces, plain as the rudest Saxon could desire, but beautiful in its clear wood, sand papered and hand finished to almost marble smoothness. Such a table sells for eighty dollars at the most fashionable makers in the city. A set of chairs with straight turned maple uprights and legs, with basket seats of the old pilgrim fashion, cushioned with Momie cloth and fringed and furbelowed are pretty enough for any sitting room, and such simple, original pieces give an air of taste and research to a room worth any mere fashion.—*Shirley Dare.*

Carp Culture for Farmers.

The Philadelphia *Ledger* has been studying Professor Baird's report of the work of the United States fish commission; and makes some remarks upon one feature of that work—namely, the introduction of carp. It says. The business of water farming has already its rules and its profits. It makes an old farmer stare to be told that a quarter of an acre, laid down in water, will bring him in more profit, in food raising, than a quarter of an acre cultivated in any other way. Also that corn fed to carp brings in twice or three times the returns in food that the same number of bushels fed to pigs or other cattle does. The carp is a vegetable feeder, so that it can support itself in the vegetable growths and conferve of ponds and streams. But it thrives and increases enormously when regularly fed as other stock is fed. It does its own grazing if it is let alone; but it can be fattened for the market on bread crumbs or cabbage leaves. Its most profitable food, however, is boiled dry corn—that is, corn out of the corn-crib, dried on the cob and then boiled.

Less than four years ago about one hundred and thirty European carp, Bohemian and others, were brought alive to this country and given a home in the ponds of the commission at Washington. These have increased so rapidly that the commission recently found itself in possession of 150,000 of these desirable fish, which are being distributed over the country to those who apply for them. About 50,000 young fish, in lots of twenty, have already been distributed throughout New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Ohio, Missouri, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Connecticut, Tennessee, Georgia, Texas and Mississippi. There are 3,000 applications still to be supplied in turn. The progeny of twenty in a few years is sufficient to stock a five-acre pond, but the quarter-acre ponds are sufficient to begin with and to work for market and table supplies. The carp breed at two to three years of age, and their growth is as rapid as their fecundity is great. The "four-year-olds" in the government ponds weigh from ten to fifteen pounds. As so many farmers have ponds upon their grounds, and so many more might have them, we think that the culture of the carp should become a source of supply in numerous farmers' households and by-and-bye a valuable source of income.

The magnet as a means of mitigating pain and curling disease is again seriously submitted to the consideration o specialists.

Popular Science.

It is a noticeable fact that the animals originally found in America were not so large nor so strong as those of the old world. Horses were originally imported here from the eastern continent, though now found running wild in nearly all of its parts.

Friction tapers are now made in England from a mixture of one ounce saltpeter, one half ounce powdered orris root, one eighth-ounce minium, and one ounce phosphorus; on the latter being dissolved, one or two ounces of castor oil are added, the quantity varying according to the resultant tenacity of flexibility required.

Those nations of the Caucassian race which have become inhabitants of the torrid zone in both hemispheres, although their descendants have been for centuries exposed to the most active influences of the climate, have never exhibited the transformation from a Caucassian to a negro complexion. Hence climate is believed to have no permanent influence upon the color of the human family.

When potatoes are frozen the amount of sugar they contain is doubled, the starch undergoing a corresponding diminution while part of the protein passes from the coagulable into the soluble form. During the process of rotting the potato loses half its nitrogenous constituents and the whole of the sugar.

The minute lines and furrows on persons' hands are likely to receive a far more useful attention than the observation of the great lines of fortune-tellers. There is reason to believe that the spiral whorls on the thumb and finger points are peculiar to individuals and race, and may be as certainly used to define the ethnological class or positive identification of the being possessing them as the measurements of the skull or the examination of a photograph would be. Doctor Henry Faulds, of Tsukiji hospital, Tokio, Japan, in an interesting, but sometimes illogical and confused letter in the *Nature*, directs attention to this subject in a way which will, however, attract the attention of naturalists and students of the theory of development and heredity. The value of well-based rules of hand-marks in judicial inquiries can hardly be overestimated.

PROMINENT PEOPLE.

Mark Twain says there is something very fascinating about science—it gives such wholesale returns of conjecture for such trifling investments of fact.

The fisherman of Great Britain have reason to be grateful to the Baroness Burdett-Coutts, for she is said to have expended the snug little sum of $500,000 in efforts to improve the condition of the poor and deserving of this class.

Miss Louise McLaughlin, the discoverer of painting under the glaze on pottery, realizing that art, like health, was free to all, told her process to other women, explained it to reporters, and even published a book giving directions. A man has now taken her process and patented it!

M. Gambetta ten years ago was one of the handsomest men in France. His face was a face of fine lines and spiritual contours; his figure was lithe and graceful. He is still a man of striking presence, but he has no more the almost poetic good looks of his youthful days.

Victor Hugo is described as still very active, red-cheeked, and with short, stubbly gray hair. He is a great talker, and it is related of him that once, when he used to be intimate with Louis Phillippe, the two talked everybody to bed, and the king had to take a candle and light the poet downstairs.

J. F. Russi and others, of San Antonio, Texas, having protested against the playing of the army bands at concerts, General Sherman answers that as even longer may it doesn't always repeat "I'm a sham, I'm a sham," like the pretended oak and walnut. Buy at second-hand, third-hand, restore paint and glue things yourself, and don't be afraid of honest, hand-finished pine without either paint or varnish. The prettiest effects in summer houses are gained from yellow Georgia pine, and the white pine, finished with clear shellac. The simplest forms prevail in some of the new furniture. An expensive oak dining table of newest pattern is square, with turned corners, and a support which is a square pillar with braces, plain as the rudest Saxon could desire, but beautiful in its clear wood, sand papered and hand finished to almost marble smoothness. Such a table sells for eighty dollars at the most fashionable makers in the city. A set of chairs with straight turned maple uprights and legs, with basket seats of the old pilgrim fashion, cushioned with Momie cloth and fringed and furbelowed are pretty enough for any sitting room, and such simple, original pieces give an air of taste and research to a room worth any mere fashion.—*Shirley Dare.*

Carp Culture for Farmers.

The Philadelphia *Ledger* has been studying Professor Baird's report of the work of the United States fish commission; and makes some remarks upon one feature of that work—namely, the introduction of carp. It says. The business of water farming has already its rules and its profits. It makes an old farmer stare to be told that a quarter of an acre, laid down in water, will bring him in more profit, in food raising, than a quarter of an acre cultivated in any other way. Also that corn fed to carp brings in twice or three times the returns in food that the same number of bushels fed to pigs or other cattle does. The carp is a vegetable feeder, so that it can support itself in the vegetable growths and conferve of ponds and streams. But it thrives and increases enormously when regularly fed as other stock is fed. It does its own grazing if it is let alone; but it can be fattened for the market on bread crumbs or cabbage leaves. Its most profitable food, however, is boiled dry corn—that is, corn out of the corn-crib, dried on the cob and then boiled.

Less than four years ago about one hundred and thirty European carp, Bohemian and others, were brought alive to this country and given a home in the ponds of the commission at Washington. These have increased so rapidly that the commission recently found itself in possession of 150,000 of these desirable fish, which are being distributed over the country to those who apply for them. About 50,000 young fish, in lots of twenty, have already been distributed throughout New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Ohio, Missouri, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Connecticut, Tennessee, Georgia, Texas and Mississippi. There are 3,000 applications still to be supplied in turn. The progeny of twenty in a few years is sufficient to stock a five-acre pond, but the quarter-acre ponds are sufficient to begin with and to work for market and table supplies. The carp breed at two to three years of age, and their growth is as rapid as their fecundity is great. The "four-year-olds" in the government ponds weigh from ten to fifteen pounds. As so many farmers have ponds upon their grounds, and so many more might have them, we think that the culture of the carp should become a source of supply in numerous farmers' households and by-and-bye a valuable source of income.

Reminiscences of a New York Fireman.

"The pride and ambition of each fire company," says Mr. Zophar Mills, "were to be the first to reach a fire, and the most efficient in putting it out. We had as much love for that as we possibly could have for anything else. We would leave our business, our dinner, our anything, and rush for the engine. The night I was getting married there was a fire. I could see it, and I wanted to go immediately. But the next morning early, before breakfast, there was another fire, and I went to that. So you may judge how we liked it. If we had a parade, we paid the expenses ourselves. We always paid for the painting, repairing and decorating of our engines. Engine No. 13, to which I belonged, was silver plated—the first that was so—at a cost of perhaps $2 000. We didn't ask the corporation to foot the bill. I kept an account of my expenses in connection with the fire department, and I found that in seven years I had paid in charity, in clothing and in incidentals $3 000. Mr. W. L. Jenkins, president of the Bank of America, was a member of engine company No. 13. Many of its members were Quakers. There were few 'roughs' then, as in modern times. Nor were there any salaries, except in the case of the chief engineer, and temporarily of the assistant engineers. Firemen now are liberally compensated; they get $1,200 a year each, and are retired on half-pay, if infirm, after ten years' service. Many and many a time have I worked my breath out while pumping old Thirteen, and lain in the street, and jumped up again and seized the brakes, because there was no one to take my place.

"At a fire in Haydock's drug store, in Pearl street, near Fulton, on the first of July, 1834, I had a narrow escape. The building was high, and all of it above the second story was consumed, leaving only the gable walls standing. Some firemen, after the flames had been extinguished, were ordered to take their hose up to the second story, and play upon the debris, in order to prevent sparks from flying about, and fire from smoldering. As I stood there, at six o'clock in the morning, with two or three of my men, I suddenly saw one of the high gable walls spread out like a blanket, and coming down upon us. My only chance was to turn my back and take it; there was no time to run. I was knocked flat, of course, by the falling mass of brick, and was forced through the second-story floor, and also through the first-story floor, into the cellar. I remember raising myself on my elbows, wondering why I returns of conjecture for such trifling investments of fact. after having gone through two floors with that wall on top of me. Why didn't it kill me? I don't know. It was Providence—a miracle. Eugene Underhill and Frederick A. Ward, who stood a few feet from me, were instantly killed. John T. Hall and William Phillips, two other firemen on the same floor, jumped out of a window, and one of them landed on a fence, and was badly injured. I was laid up with a bruised back, sore my back, and my flesh in consequence was black and blue for six months. My cap was not dug out of the cellar until evening. The former foreman of Thirteen, who was on the second story, advising us, was buried standing up to his neck in hot bricks— so hot as to burn off some of his toes, and a brick's length off the calf of his leg. In consideration of his misfortune he was made foreman of fire-bell ringer of the city hall. He lived thirty years after that. Chief Engineer Gulick displayed great presence of mind in the emergency. His first order was to cut off the No. 13, which was working near the fire, to take off the tail-screw, let the water out of the box, and then pump air in the ruins. The men were digging all day for their buried comrades, and for the bodies of poor Underhill and Ward, who stood not fifteen feet away from me when the wall fell without warning. We were playing 'washing down' as we called it, the object being thoroughly to put out the fire that lingered in the straw, cotton, and so on. We considered that the fire was pretty much out, and were only giving a few finishing touches. Thirteen afterward erected a marble monument to Underhill and Ward in the cemetery in Carmine street, opposite Varick.—*Harper's Magazine*

A Case of Mistaken Identity.

A most remarkable instance of mistaken identity is related by the Geneva correspondent of the London *Daily News*. Professor Schulin, of Basel university, while making an excursion in the Grand Duchy of Baden, was arrested at Hagen by the police on a charge of having assaulted a women a short time previously. In vain he protested his innocence, explained that at the time the alleged offense had been perpetrated he was at Basel, and asked leave to communicate with his friends. The public prosecutor said a serious crime had been committed, and that several witnesses were ready to swear that Schulin was the guilty man. He refused to listen to his explanations, and the judge before whom the professor had been taken sent him back to his cell, where he was kept ten days. As it happened, Schulin was betrothed and the marriage day fixed, and his confinement in prison on so serious a charge, the difficulty of contuting it and the prospect of losing at once his character, his bride and his professor's chair so preyed upon his mind that he attempted to commit suicide by cutting open his veins with a pocket-knife. The authorities at length allowed him to communicate with his friends, when overwhelming evidence was at once forthcoming that on the day when the offense was committed Schulin was lecturing in Basel university. Almost at the same time the man for whom he had been mistaken by the police was arrested.

Length of the Human Step.

At a recent sitting of the French Academy of Sciences, Monsieur Marey read a very interesting paper, giving the result of his experiments with a machine for measuring the length and rapidity of a man's stride in walking. Marey found that a number of circumstances modified the length of the step. The step is longer going up hill than going down; longer for a man carrying a load than for one unloaded; longer with low heels than with high heels; and longer for a man wearing thick soles and those which project slightly beyond the toe than for one wearing short and flexible soles. It was found that while the heel might be lowered indefinitely without detriment to the gait, the sole could not be made perfectly rigid nor prolonged too far without interfering with the speed and ease of the wearer. Experience alone was able to determine the exact length and thickness necessary to produce the best results.

Probably fifty years hence there will be abundance of trees in the West. Agriculturists are rapidly awaking to the necessity of planting them. The Fort Scott and Gulf railroad company has begun the planting of hundreds of acres of trees on its lands. A Boston capitalist has engaged a company of raisers of forest seedlings in Illinois to break and plow a large area in Kansas, and plant no less than 2,720 trees to the acre, and cultivate these until they shade the ground. At the end of that time—say ten years—the plantations will be delivered over to the owner. No trees less than six feet high are to be counted. The Fort Scott railroad has adopted this plan, one advantage of which is that the tree enterprise will be attended by experienced men, whose interest it will be to make as much of a success of it as possible.

The *Locomotive* publishes engravings in each issue showing how boilers look just after they have exploded. This doesn't seem to hit the case at all. What is needed is a picture showing how a boiler looks just before it is going to explode. We could then learn when to get out of the way.—*New Haven Register.*

FARM, GARDEN AND HOUSEHOLD

Farm and Garden Notes.

There is no better feed for fowls when moiting than sunflower seeds.

Apples boiled with milk are good fo pigs.

It pays to feed cows giving milk liberally. Butter is high and now is the time to feed profitably.

Always give the soil the first meal. If it is well fed with manure it will feed all else, plants, animals and men.

Rapid drying of paint is insured by the addition of a small proportion of litharge, sugar of lead or Japan varnish, according to the material or color.

Recent experiments in England show that thin sowing of wheat in drills is more productive than thick sowing. By special culture on small plots a single grain to the hill has given a yield of 100 to 152 bushels to the acre.

A dormant bulb of the calla should be planted so that the point shall be just above the surface. The exact depth of this plant in a pot or tub is not a matter of much importance, as it readily adapts itself to circumstances if it has a constant supply of water.

None but earth colors should be used in painting floors, and the rapid wearing off of a coating of oil paint on a floor is a sure sign that white lead has been mixed with the paint. It is important that the first coating should be perfectly dry before the second is laid on.

In selecting cows for milking, the free easy step, the pleasant and comfortable expression of countenance and the round, capacious form of body are far more important than the line of descent or family history. Pedigree goes for very little unless it carries with it marks of a good cow.

In all attempts at breeding domestic cattle no immature stock should be used. Mature sires and dams are essential if strong healthy stock are desired. "Like produces like." If the parents are immature the stock from them cannot be strong and healthy, and if this mischievous practice is continued for a few generations it must end in producing a feeble race of stock.

A lady says that to kill insects she uses one tenspoonful of kerosene to a gallon of water, and sprinkles it on the plants with a hand-broom. It destroys green flies and other pests.

Horses and cattle normally require, in round numbers, four pounds of water for each pound of dry substance in their food, while sheep require but about two pounds, half as much.

A Mississippi farmer dashes cold water into the ears of choking cattle. This causes the animal to shake its head violently, and the mucsular action dislodges the obstruction.

Save lameness and coughs by an immediate covering of the horses after a drive, if only stopping for a few minutes. Do not cover the horse with blankets when he is in exercise; not even in a storm; but rub thoroughly, and cover after the horse has found shelter.

The following recipe for a durable whitewash is furnished by the *Illinois Family Magazine:* Take a barrel and slack a bushel of fresh lime in it by covering the lime with boiling water. After it is slacked, add cold water enough to bring it to the consistency of good whitewash, then dissolve in water and add one pound of white vitriol (sulphate of zinc) and one quart of fine salt. This makes a whitewash that will stick as well as paint. It owes its durability chiefly to the vitriol, which hardens and fixes the wash.

Domestic Recipes.

DOING UP SHIRTS.—A shirt-board for ironing is a necessity for every well-regulated family. This should be covered with at least two thicknesses of blankets, and have the ironing sheet also double, smoothly pinned over it, so that it cannot slip. Keep wax tied up in a r