

CLIPPINGS FOR THE CURIOUS.

At present more than 600,000 lives are insured in the United States alone. Cloves have been brought into the European market for more than 2,000 years.

The word toad expresses in several of the languages of Europe its habit of swelling.

Newfoundland dogs have been kept by the city, in Paris, to save human life in the Seine.

By a law passed recently, a pencil written note is just as valid as though written in ink.

The food of the Greenland whale is a small crustacean animal not so large as a common shrimp.

Mutilations, especially of the first phalanges of the left hand, are practiced by the Australians.

Nearly as many reams of paper, in the United States, are made into collars as are used to write upon.

The bridge of boats on which Xorxes crossed the Hellespont was fastened by cables made of papyrus.

Savages not only express satisfaction by smiling, but by gestures derived from the pleasure of eating.

Transfusing blood from a living animal to an unhealthy one has been practiced for three hundred years.

Two Iowa children who have pink eyes can hardly see in the daylight, but can pick up a pin in the darkest night.

The equatorial telescope constructed for the observatory at Vienna is the largest refracting telescope yet made.

An ape produces an exact octave of musical sound, ascending and descending the scales by tones and half-tones.

In several years the sickness of pneumonia has increased slightly in September, decreased in October and increased again with the Indian summer.

Fanny, an ancient carp in the pond at Fontainebleau, has just died. She is said to have been hatched in the time of Francis I., and had become gray.

Negro soldiers standing at drill bring the middle finger tips an inch or two nearer the knee than white men can do, and some touch the knee-pan.

Musk sheep, found in the Arctic regions, are said to have a whine somewhat like the snorting of a walrus, entirely unlike the bleating of a sheep.

In Greenland a marriage contract is easily broken. A husband has only to leave the house in anger for several days for the wife to understand, pack up her goods, and leave.

Legislation has designated a variety of periods after which burial grounds may be used over again. In Frankfort thirty years, Leipzig fifteen, Milan and Stuttgart ten, are prescribed.

New York's Growth.

A New York correspondent writing of the city's rapid growth says:

Thirty years ago the total valuation was under \$500,000,000. At that time we had no Central park. Yorkville was out of town and Harlem far away. There is no doubt that much of the increase in real estate value is due to Central park. The park itself has cost up to the present time, interest on the original outlay included, about \$48,000,000. The cost of the land was \$6,666,000. If the same land were now cut up in building lots it would probably bring nearly \$200,000,000. A plat that was sold in 1852, just before the park was laid out, for \$3,000, is held to-day at \$1,250,000. The same rate of increase has not, of course, been maintained all through—only in the best neighborhoods. The three upper wards, comprising the part of the city above the lower line of the park, were valued thirty years ago at about \$50,000,000. None of the land was then improved. The value of the same section is now estimated at \$310,000,000. As a large part of the land is still vacant, there is room for a further increase of value that can be reckoned only by millions. It is not at all unlikely that at the end of another twenty years the total wealth of New York will run up to \$2,000,000,000.

Alligator Fishing.

The unusual drought in Florida has had the effect of drying up Sibley lake to such an extent as to leave only a few slush spots here and there, and in these alligators sought refuge in large numbers, digging huge burrows into the ground. This has furnished great sport to the settlers in the neighborhood, who have gone in crowds to these spots, and fished with fine success for the enormous reptiles. The manner of catching them has been to thrust long rods with hooks at the end into one of the cavernous burrows and stir up the occupants. One of the alligators would snap at the rod, a jerk would fasten the hook into the soft part of the lower jaw, and it would then be easy to draw the animal out and kill it with hatchets. It is not every year that such fishing can be enjoyed, even in Florida.

A Western man, an ex-Congressman, thinks that the buffalo could be domesticated and that it would make much better beef than the flesh of the ox.

THE FAMILY DOCTOR.

Eat simple food at regular hours. According to a French medical journal whooping cough has been successfully treated by Dr. Barety, of Nice, by turpentine vapor.

Mechanical vibration is said to be of use in curing neuralgia. A tapping over the fifth nerve changes the state of irritation and produces ease.

A medical journal gives the following simple remedy for relieving hicough: Inflate the lungs as fully as possible and thus press firmly on the agitated diaphragm. In a few seconds the spasmodic action of the muscles will cease.

By using syrup or molasses for mustard plasters, they will keep soft and flexible, and not dry up and become hard, as when mixed with water. A thin paper or fine cloth should come between the plaster and the skin. The strength of the plaster is varied by the addition of more or less flour.

Canned grape juice makes a refreshing drink with water and a little sugar; stew the grapes and strain through a colander, not pressing hard enough to send through any of the pulp. Add a little sugar, boil as long as scum rises, skim carefully and pour hot into glass cans. It will keep perfectly well, is a very desirable addition to the housekeeper's store, and is especially serviceable as a drink for the sick.

How the Japanese Cover Their Floors.

In Japan, however, the floors are universally hidden by the tatami or beaded mats. These are of regulation size throughout the empire, and in building a house the rooms are divided off so as to hold a certain number of these units of floor measure. A tatami is exactly five feet nine inches long, three feet wide, and two and one-half inches thick, or in round numbers and Japanese measure, 6x3x2. The only difference between the mats that cover the imperial floor and those of the cottagers is that the former are larger in size and covered with a gayer border. In ordinary houses this border is black or indigo blue. In the palace it is white. Even the throne of that defunct official, the tycoon, as well as the place of eminence of the mikado, whom he imitated, was only a square, padded mat, a few inches higher than common, and edged with variegated colors.

A Japanese floor being so substantially covered, need be only of cheap, unplanned wood, laid without mortices. This floor is two and a half inches below the grooved sills in which the doors, or rather partitions, slide. Hinges are used only on gates. Into this huge pan, so to speak, which the floor makes the mats are laid and fit snugly together, lying with their surface level with the sills or grooves. The mats are the household property of the tenants, as landlords rent the houses uncarpeted, as we do. In case of a fire, people pull up these expensive ornaments and run a collection of tatami usually requires the first outlay of a Japanese couple toward housekeeping. Often these exquisitely clean and soft mats are the chief, if not the only article of furniture in certain rooms. The Chinese for centuries have used chairs and lounges, but the Japanese eschew these luxuries, using the floor and its covering for ceremony and the occasions of eating, drinking and sleeping.

The tatami serve for tables, bedsteads, chairs and lounging purposes. In palace and in hut, alike guiltless of sitting machinery, has grown up that elaborate system of etiquette and ceremonial, renowned over the world. Only by the generals in the field were folding camp-chairs used. In the monastery the abbot sat in state or for reflection, in the arm-chair. The Japanese have the word "koshi-kake" (back-roster), but there is no general word nor equivalent for our simple word "chair." Most of the obsequious and exaggerated politeness of these Oriental islanders may be thus mechanically accounted for. If the superior is no higher than the floor the inferior must bow low indeed. To salute properly, indoors, one must turn his head into a temporary tack-hammer and pound vigorously on the floor.

These tatami last nearly a lifetime, as they are trodden on not with boots, but only with socks. Every traveler in Japan is charmed with these soft, clean, durable mats. Every gentleman, native or foreign, removes his shoes, cloths or sandals before he imprints them. Stocking feet is the rule indoors, and the native socks are more thickly soled than ours. The custom of wearing boots is rapidly driving the "civilized" natives to banish tatami and lay down carpets. An English lady traveler recently speaks of these mats as being "soft as Axminster carpets;" though her statement that they are "as expensive as Brussels carpet" is an exaggeration. There being by the last census over 7,000,000 houses in Japan, and each house averaging at a low computation thirty tatamis, there are over 210,000,000 of these mats, or in area 420,000,000 square yards. They are the very emblems of silence and cleanliness, and fashion may some day demand that the tatami find a place in our houses, churches and hospitals.

SCIENTIFIC SCRAPS.

A solution of blue vitriol is used to preserve timber from dry rot.

Lamp black more completely absorbs light than any other substance.

A young barnacle has three legs, a single eye and a digestive apparatus.

A copper wire one-tenth of an inch thick can support 300 pounds weight.

A school-room should contain from 200 to 400 feet of cubic air to each pupil.

A German physician asserts that railway employes are liable to affections of the spinal cord.

The average candle power of New York illuminating gas, as taken from the last statement of the six gas companies, was 23.84.

The achirus, a kind of flat fish in the East and West Indies, has no air bladder, and consequently remains always at the bottom of the sea.

Finding the arteries empty after death gave rise to the idea that they conveyed only air. Hence their name. It was this belief which Harvey overthrew in 1820.

There is in the Paris Electrical exhibition an induction coil capable of giving a spark forty-two inches long and piercing a block of glass six inches thick.

Common charcoal, when freshly burnt and in fine powder, has the property of taking away the color of common vinegar and of several other liquids.

Darwin says that a lady subject to nervous headaches finds in the morning after one of her patches of hair her hair white. In a few days the hair recovers its color.

The peculiar color imparted to silver spoons used in eating eggs and fish, and the blacking of white lead paint in stables, is solely owing to the formation of metallic sulphides.

Bone-black is used in manufacturing blacking, which is generally prepared by mixing four parts bone-black with one of sulphuric acid, adding four parts of syrup and a little water.

In order to hear distinctly an echo of one syllable, the observer must be sixty feet from the surface which reflects the sound. For echo of more than one the distance must be over one hundred feet.

If two thermometers—exposed equally to the sun—be covered, one with white, the other with black cloth, the instrument under the black cloth will indicate a higher temperature than the other.

The Two Kinds of Able Men.

There are still people who think that nothing is of much account unless it brings in hard cash. A *Tribune* correspondent met one of these a short time ago, as he was inquiring his way to the famous school of philosophy, held every summer at Concord. He was a sunburnt farmer working in a field near the road.

"Do you belong down there?" said he to the correspondent, pointing to the place where the school was held.

"No," was the reply, "I am no philosopher."

"Queer lot, they are," continued the farmer. "I wonder how much the whole lot could earn, put 'em right down to good solid work. But I guess they've got their bread and butter ready provided, and I don't suppose they have to find out how much they are really worth."

We have known better-informed men than this old farmer who held in considerable contempt the gentler vocations, and were disposed to say, with the cobbler of old, "There is nothing like leather." Men have their leather. It may be Greek; it may be metaphysics; it may be popcorn; but whatever it is, there is nothing like it for them.

There are two kinds of valuable persons: Those who make life possible, and those who make life worth having.

The sunburnt farmer belongs to the indispensable who make life possible. Business men, manufacturers, merchants, mechanics, all who do, and all who direct the world's daily work, belong to the same class. But oh, sunburnt farmer, who made your farmer's almanac that hangs in the fireplace by its loop of tape so considerably supplied by the publisher?

And farmer, who invented your clock, price one dollar and fifty cents? Who found out how to make your boy's accordion, and who composed the book of instructions with one hundred of the best pieces of music, that came with the instrument without extra charge? Who painted the beautiful picture of "Emma," and who made the grand chromo of Washington crossing the Delaware that hangs on your walls?

And who will preach your sermon next Sunday morning? and how would you get through the Sunday afternoon without your denominational weekly to doze over? The people who provide these things could not earn much money hoeing corn; but they belong to the class who make it worth while for corn to be hoed. They make life worth having.—*Yonah's Companion.*

PEARLS OF THOUGHT.

Frugality is founded on the principle that all riches have limits.

No ashes are lighter than incense, and few things burn out sooner.

Unbecoming forwardness oftener proceeds from ignorance than impudence.

We seldom find people ungrateful as long as we are in a condition to render them services.

Old men's eyes are like old men's memories; they are strongest for things a long way off.

The fortunate circumstances of our life are generally found to be of our own producing.

The generality of men have, like plants, latent qualities, which chance brings to light.

The most miserable pettifoggery in the world is that of a man in the court of his own conscience.

Everything without tells the individual that he is nothing; everything within persuades him that he is everything.

Be courteous with all, but intimate with few; and let those few be well tried before you give them your confidence.

Truth can hardly be expected to adapt herself to the crooked policy and wily sinosities of worldly affairs, for truth, like light, travels only in straight lines.

Cunning is not best, nor the worst of other qualities. It floats between virtue and vice. There is scarce any exigency where its place may not, and perhaps ought not, to be supplied by prudence.

Down in the World.

It may also be said, writes the New York correspondent of the *Buffalo Courier*, that New York swarms with men who, once well up the social ladder, if not actually at the top, tumbled clear into the mud at the bottom, and are still lying there, with no prospect of ever again getting up. Such men are to be seen in the streets every day, and any one making a tour of the cheap lodging-houses in Chatham street and the Bowery would probably find a good many of them. In some cases the fall is the result of misfortune, but in most it is caused by fault. A special case came to my attention a few days ago. A shabbily dressed man, with the general looks of a tramp, passed me in the street. In glancing at his face, I thought it was familiar. As he slouched along the sidewalk, I noticed that he looked into the gutters and bent his head over ash barrels and boxes—a tramp beyond doubt. A full look at him took me back twenty-five years.

Long before the war the same figure was a familiar one on Broadway. He was one of the dandies then, and his natty dress and curling hair that hung thick to the shoulders made him an object of attention on the promenade. He followed no business, but his family—theatrical and operatic people—were pretty well off, and he had all the spending money he wanted. And now—well, now he is a tramp, picking crusts out of the ash-boxes, sleeping in the station-houses, or possibly in the parks, and as miserable a creature, this one-time dandy of Broadway, as it is possible for man to be. And there are scores, if not hundreds, of just such examples in the streets every day. Other places have a fair share of the same class, no doubt, but New York has the largest variety and can show specimens of every degree, from the scapegrace son of the merchant prince all the way down.

The Grandees of Spain.

Grandee is the name of the highest rank of the Spanish nobility. The grandees—Grandes de España—were originally the descendants of the great feudatories, or landlords, mostly of Gothic blood, who held immediately from the crown; but from the time of the Emperor-King Charles V. it became the practice of the Spanish sovereigns to elevate new men to the rank of grandees, just as in England men were raised to the peerage as a reward for great achievements, and sometimes only to please their favorites. This occasioned an immediate distinction between the old and the new order of grandees, which was marked by the former addressing each other in the second person singular—"thou"—without regard to age or official station, while they addressed, on all occasions, the new nobility by the title of "Your Excellency" with studied punctiliousness. The collective body of the grandees is called *La Grandeza*, corresponding to the peerage in Great Britain, but they have no political power, and retain only some trifling privileges at court, such as keeping their hats on in the king's presence and having military honors paid to them by the guard at the royal palace.

The estimated yield of wheat in California this year is 25,000,000 bushels. Last year it was 47,000,000 bushels.

"It is a fine morning," as the judge remarked when he met the prisoner at the bar to the tune of \$20 and costs.

TOPICS OF THE DAY.

Records show that the longest drought which this country has ever struggled through was in the year 1762, when for 123 days in succession, ending September 1, no rain fell over a considerable part of what was at the time settled territory.

The sultan of Turkey is so morbidly afraid of assassination that he ventures out doors but very little, and foreign diplomats are troubled about gaining necessary access. The Spanish ambassador had to wait forty days for an interview, and the American minister over a month.

The first official Sunday-school census in the United States is now being taken by the government. Circulars containing questions are sent to every superintendent. These cover the number of teachers and children, the ages of scholars, the number, value and character of books in libraries, the property owned, the money collected, and the increase in attendance since 1870.

The United States consul-general to Roumania writes that 991,000,000 bushels of wheat were exported from that country in 1880, and also remarks that the implements used in harvesting this immense crop are exceedingly primitive, the plow in general use being simply an iron-tipped tree branch, while grain is still cut with a sickle. He thinks that manufacturers of American farm machinery would find a good sale for their wares in Roumania, and advises them to send agents there at once.

Of Indian railroad laborers, a Mexican letter to the *Chicago Times* says that they toil unceasingly, but accomplish little. On shoveling, it would take six of them to equal one white man. It is a new kind of work for the Italian, and strains his weakest part. The muscles of the arms are not developed. An Indian is strong in his back and legs, and when it comes to carrying a heavy load, a white competitor is nowhere. Difficulty has been experienced in familiarizing the Indians with the wheelbarrow.

Mormon missionaries will be apt to give Ohio a wide berth hereafter. One evening recently two of these worthies undertook to lecture at a small town named Green Hill, located in the coal regions of that State and mostly peopled by foreigners, but when they appeared they were set upon by the inhabitants and egged out of town. So excellent was the aim of the indignant citizens that the prophets were said to resemble anything but saints. The revelations of Joe Smith and his successors are not exactly the doctrines that will be received or tolerated in a civilized community.

The Salvation army is having a rougher campaign in England than it had in the United States. Recently in a public street in Walworth, a suburb of London, a woman in the procession, having darted from the ranks to seize a pipe from the lips of a spectator with the exclamation, "that's your devil," found herself knocked to the ground with what is described as a terrific blow in the mouth. Other members of the army who went to her assistance were similarly treated. Such occurrences are not especially adapted to inculcating the gospel of peace.

It seems that Charles Howlett, whom the Bloomington mob took out of jail and hanged for killing the keeper, had previously offended the people of the place by fooling them. He went there two years ago, wearing good clothes and showing gentlemanly manners, and quickly became a social favorite. He declared that he had no knowledge of who he was nor any recollection of his past life, being unable to even recall his real name. This intellectual peculiarity won him great sympathy, particularly from the women, and the physicians discussed his case in a public meeting. Then the fact came out that he had long been a professional criminal, and several thefts sent him to prison for trial.

Some curious statistics have been published of the cremation furnace erected at Gotha in the autumn of 1878. Thus far it has been in use fifty-seven times—once in 1878, seventeen times in 1879, and sixteen times in 1880. For the present year, up to August 17, only the number has been twenty-three. Of the total of fifty-seven cases, only one came from Berlin, one from Breslau, seven from Dresden, one from Frankfurt-on-the-Main, one from Hanover, one from Carlsruhe, two from Leipzig, three from Munich, one from Vienna, one from Paris, and one from Weimar. Gotha alone contributed twenty-three. Only ten cases were women. Of the forty-seven men, ten belonged to learned professions, four to the army, and four to the nobility. There were ten physicians.

It is not without surprise that the American people who for months have read so much about the distress of the

British working people will be told that they have deposited this year in the government savings banks about \$11,000,000 more than they did in the year ending March 3, 1880. The number of depositors in England is one to thirteen; in Scotland, one to fifteen; in Ireland, one to sixty-five. There is an increase of capital even in the Irish savings banks. In that country the total amount on deposit is about \$7,780,000; the names of about 10,000 new depositors were added; the proportion to population is one in sixty-five, as compared to one in seventy-four in 1879. Every county in Ireland contributed its quota. Even those scheduled distressed exhibit an increase over the previous year.

The wonderful progress made in China has been emphasized of late by the Rev. Griffith John, a long time missionary of the London Missionary society, who has been visiting in this country. Forty years ago it was a crime for a foreigner to learn the Chinese language, or for a Chinese to teach it to him; and though the Nanking treaty was made in 1842, when Mr. John went to China, twenty-five years ago, there were only five places in the vast empire in which a foreigner might dwell. The great interior was still closed, as none might go further than could be reached in twelve hours from a treaty port. The whole empire is now open. Thirteen out of the eighteen provinces have been actually occupied by missionaries and their families, the gospel has been preached in nearly all the principal cities and towns, and the Bible and many forms of Christian literature are circulated everywhere.

The emperor of Japan has been making quite lately an official tour through his realms, and on the occasion of his arrival at a village, Otsumura by name, he was presented with three large carp for his special eating, which fish the chronicler of the imperial travels declares to have been three feet each in length. The wonderful things the Japanese do with their fish we can scarcely understand. It seems as if carp are among the most ancient of Japanese fish, and have been preserved by them from time immemorial. Some recent travelers tell marvelous stories as to the age and size of the ciprinoides, which are kept in holy precincts. It looks as if the carp to-day, since it has received its impulse in the United States, will make the circuit of the world. Future biologists will not have to speculate, as does Mr. Wallace, on the migration of animals, deducing their movements from many different sources, for the man of to-day, like Noah of old, carries his dumb friends along with him. Recently it was noted that some of the carp raised in the government fish-ponds by the United States fish commission had been carried to Ecuador. The result has been perfectly successful. Though the land journey over the mountains extended for many days, and the small fish had been carried in tin vessels on the backs of porters, the little carp were placed in the best possible condition by an enterprising South American gentleman in a pleasant pond in the very heart of the Andes.

Babies in Germany.

Jenny June, the well-known writer on fashions and kindred topics, in a recent letter from Bonn, Germany, says: Fashion seems of much less importance here than in the city of London or New York. There are things that take the lead of it even among the women of the upper classes, while for the lower it does not exist at all. Children are of enormous importance in Belgium and Germany, and their care occupies not only the mother, but the entire family, especially the female part of it. Moreover, the Belgian and German haus-frau is pre-eminently the house-wife, and though she is not averse to fine clothes gives no time to them which ought by right to be devoted to husband and children.

It ought to be of enormous importance to care well for children everywhere; but the important duty is often sadly neglected. Children are in numerous instances committed to the care of servants, and their parents see them only at infrequent intervals. The mother who spends all her time in a round of amusements, consenting only to see her child once a day, and sometimes not in weeks, cannot wonder when the child grows up if there is that lack of affection and respect that children should manifest to parents. And worse than this—habits are contracted, unknown to the parents, that work evil and only evil continually. If the fashionable woman complains that the care of her children is a great trouble, and so puts the duty upon another, she is sowing a deep grief for after years. It would benefit humanity vastly were it to become fashionable to personally care for one's own children in their infant years. Another thing Jenny June commends in Germany: "The children of the better classes have simple styles of dress, adapted to their years. This fashion writer preaches good sermons from Bonn.

France has 1,000,000 lunatics.