

POPULATION AND FOOD.

REFUTATION OF THE ARGUMENTS OF A MODERN MALTHUS.

In Almost Every Country There is Food to Spare—Why Malthus' Doctrine is no Longer Plausible—The Earth's Food Producing Capabilities.

The current number of The Forum contains a sprightly article by Thomas W. Knox, entitled "Standing Room Only." It shows that several countries in the world contain so many people that they can scarcely walk about without jostling each other.

Mr. Knox thinks that it is time to study the philosophy of Malthus, who held that population, unchecked, increased in geometrical ratio, while food could only be made to increase in arithmetical ratio.

NO CAUSE FOR ALARM.

This modern Malthus has no cause for alarm. In almost every country in the world there is food enough and to spare. In nearly every land food producers are discouraged by overproduction.

The truth is, the doctrine of Malthus is exploded. It was a plausible theory at the time he wrote, but the introduction of machinery on farms, the use of steam in agriculture, the improvement in breeds of animals, the utilization of products formerly wasted, the new methods of preserving fruits, vegetables, meat and fish, and last, but not least, the increased speed of vessels and the low rates for carrying all kinds of articles intended for food, have produced a revolution and destroyed the philosophy of the pessimist of the dinner table.

FOOD PRODUCING CAPABILITIES.

We have hardly begun to test the food producing capabilities of the earth. A German traveler declares that Siberia is capable of producing grain enough to supply all western Europe with bread.

By selecting breeds of animals that mature early, and constantly supplying them with suitable food, steers are made to weigh as much when they are thirty months old as they formerly did at twice that age.

The Low in Michigan.

Advance agents of theatrical companies have to be cautious how they bill Michigan towns. The law of the state is very particular as to the kind of pictures displayed, and reads: "No sign, picture, painting, or other representation of murder, assassination, stabbing, fighting, or any personal violence, or of the commission of any crime, shall be posted, under penalty of fine or imprisonment."

A Remarkable Operation.

A very remarkable operation has just been performed by Mr. Keeley, at the West London hospital. A child was brought in, having a large mole covering nearly the whole of its cheek.

JACKSON'S VICTORY.

AN INCIDENT OF THE BATTLE OF NEW ORLEANS.

On the Plains of Chalmette—A Troop of Panic Stricken Fugitives—No Food for Cowards—Bread and Meat for Runaways.

At 7 o'clock the battle began, and the roar of the artillery, with the discharges of musketry, was almost as distinctly heard as if in our immediate neighborhood. There was no the slightest noise in the apparently dead city. It held its breath in a awful suspense.

In the morning of the preceding day the famous battle of the 8th was fought on the plains of Chalmette, four miles below the city. In a few lines the distance must have been very short between the field of action and the Bore plantation, six miles above New Orleans by the windings of the river, for the furious cannonading and the discharge of musketry were prodigiously distinct.

"These men the English! bab!" They came rapidly to the piazza, about six feet high, on which we stood, and along which ran a wooden balustrade. M. de Bore did not understand one word of the language spoken by these unexpected visitors, whose ragged and unkempt appearance was no recommendation.

"Who are they, and what do they want?" inquired Mr. de Bore, surveying them evidently with no friendly eye. He was informed by one of his family that they were "the English," and that the Americans had been completely routed, that they themselves were a portion of the defeated, and that they begged for food.

He was superb at that moment, and turning his back upon the pitiful looking posturing, he kept up patting the piazza like a chafed lion in a cage. My mother followed him a few feet behind, as he walked to and fro with a hurried step, and thus expostulated all the while:

"No! no food for cowards. I have said it." "They seem to be so jaded and hungry." "No! I say no!" "Father, they are so wet and shivering with cold."

Mean while the little boy, who had grown up to be the octogenarian who writes these lines, had a grand time of it, for big fires were lighted over the vast court yard, calves and sheep were killed and roasted, huge pots of hominy and of rice were prepared, and he himself enjoyed the barbecue, if he may be permitted to use this well known modern expression, that was given to those men, who were a detachment of the Kentuckians that had fled from Col. Thornton's attack upon Gen. Morgan's command on the right bank of the river, as related in history.—Charles Gayarre in Harper's Magazine.

A DEATH BROKER.

BUSINESS WHICH REVERSES THE OPERATIONS OF LIFE INSURANCE.

Making Post Obit Investments, as They Are Called—Buying Legacies of People With Expectations—Benefits and Losses of the Business.

It was in a real estate broker's office on Court street, and the time was after dinner. The broker had just disposed of a big brick swell front house on Commonwealth avenue with as much ease and as little difficulty as you could sell a pint of peanuts at a cattle fair.

"I rather liked him, although I was not 'stuck' on him, for I was taught in my earlier and innocent days to be cautious in my dealings with the man who talked business as cool bloodedly to me as an Anarchist hurled a bomb at a czar of all the Russias."

"You buy legacies?" I remarked. Such a flat, state-of-the-artistic remark, I thought, beside the vigorous and prolonged push which he gave to his sacrilegious vocabulary.

"Let me give you an illustration of the benefits of this business. Only a few days ago a sailor chap steps in here. Says he, 'I've just come ashore, having laid aside one of Uncle Sam's guns for years. I haven't a nick, ye see, and a chap as would like to go with me to see Jake Kilrain and Joe Lannon mail each other give me the tip that I sell what right I has in the property left me and me brother by the old man. I can't get a pick near so big, drive me timber if I don't think it'll be a big break before he goes aloft. So, ye see, I goes to me brother, and axes him what he'll give me for my share. He tells me that my share ain't worth a schooner of beer. I'm disheartened, d'ye see, until this chap as wants to see the fight—a feller as reads, he is, though he does booz—tells me that you could do me up. Now, if ye can, and does, I'm no tar if I don't drink yer health more'n wunst. Ye see, cap'n, we want to get a peep at the mauling.'"

"Questioning the fellow further, I was assured that his claim was solid, and I offered him \$500 for it at the first crack. He went away and soon returned with the information that his brother had abandoned the schooner of beer theory, and would give him \$1,000 in cold cash. I went the brother \$200 better, however, and we closed the trade.

"So, you see, I have not as yet received a copper in return for my expenditure, and won't until the sailor's mother dies. Of course, the chances are against her living long enough to enrich me out of my investment. You must remember there are cases where the principal and compound interest of the sum advanced may in time exceed the sum realized in the end. You see, some old women never die. What's to kill them? Having passed through all the critical stages of womanhood, leading exemplary lives, retiring early and not arising too early, drinking tea and eating toast, why shouldn't they live long enough to baffle me! Some day—far away—they may dry up and blow off, and I have a show to make a dollar.

"You see this business is the reverse of life insurance. While the life insurance man is interested in the prolongation of human life, the legacy buyer looks upon death as the messenger who unlocks the safety deposit. You must remember there are cases where the principal and compound interest of the sum advanced may in time exceed the sum realized in the end. You see, some old women never die. What's to kill them? Having passed through all the critical stages of womanhood, leading exemplary lives, retiring early and not arising too early, drinking tea and eating toast, why shouldn't they live long enough to baffle me! Some day—far away—they may dry up and blow off, and I have a show to make a dollar.

Selling Wooden Sashes. An agent for a safe company several months ago made sale in Bad Ax, Mich. A few weeks ago an agent for another company came along, and, according to the local newspaper, by the aid of a jack knife and a gimlet proved to the safe buyers that their safe had a lining of wood, a filling of clay and a covering of thin sheet iron.—New York Sun.

SCOLDS.

In Leicester, England, in common with many other places, scolds were ducked in the river; and there is still preserved in the museum of that town a "cucking chair," in which these wives were seated while undergoing the punishment. Rough music to the scolds was the custom of some villages.

So recently as 1860, at a village in the South of England, when a man was shut out of his house by a termagant wife, the boys and young men dressed up an effigy of the woman, imprisoned it in the pond for a time, and then burned it before her door.

Brand, in his "History of Newcastle upon-Tyne," states that in the time of the Commonwealth scolds were punished with the "brank." In the museum Oxford one of these curious articles is now on exhibition in an excellent state of preservation.

This form of punishment appears more recent than the "cucking chair." The whirling was formerly a very common punishment for trifling offences by suitors, brawling women and such offenders—a kind of circular wooden cage turning on a pivot, and when set in motion whirled around with such amazing velocity that the delinquent soon becomes extremely sick.

An old writer says of the same punishment: "The way of punishing scolding women is pleasant enough. They fasten an arm-chair to the end of two beams, twelve to fifteen feet long, and parallel to each other, so that these two pieces of wood, with their two ends, embrace the chair, which hangs between them upon a sort of axle; by which means it plays freely, and always remains in the natural horizontal position in which a chair should be that a person may sit conveniently in it whether you raise it up or let it down. They set up a post upon the bank of a pond or river, and over this pond they lay almost 'in equilibrio' the two pieces of wood, at one end of which the chair hangs just over the water; they place the woman in this chair, and so plunge her into the water as often as the sentence directs, in order to cool her immoderate heat.

SMILES.

You can't have the last word with a chemist; he always has a retort. Birds in their little nest agree, they'd rather not fall out, you see. The man who shoots off his mouth is not necessarily a son of a gun.

Formerly the foolish virgins had no oil: now the foolish virgins are too free with the kerosene. A fellow named Carney fell through a Philadelphia sidewalk last spring, and has become one of the sufferers of the city.

Where's the best place to get fat? asked a thin housekeeper of a neighbor. All over! was the unexpected reply.

Do not marry for riches, my son, but remember that the husband of an heiress is seldom obliged to get up at 5 o'clock in the morning and build the fire.

Bagley—Have you heard Patti sing Home Sweet Home? Bailey—No, but I've heard the next thing to it. Bagley—What's that? Bailey—A Jersey mosquito's hum, sweet hum.

The assertion that a man who would run a corner in food would pick pockets, is denied by the Pittsburg Dispatch, which gives as a reason for its opinion that the profits of picking pockets are too small.

Omaha mamma—Now, dear, you must invite one of your little friends in to share your candy.

Little Dot—I—guess I'll invite Lucy.

Well, that will be nice. Yes, candy makes her tooth ache an' she never eats much.—Omaha World.

Mrs. Blobson—What's that? Oh horrors! The hotel fire! Mr. Blobson—Yes, come on. We've no time to lose.

Mrs. Blobson—But here I am in my night-dress! Mr. Blobson—Good enough! I'm glad you've got out of your ball dress into something decent.

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