DESOLATION.

My life is like the drifting wreck,
Cast by the waves upon the shore,
Whose broken spars and floating deck
Tell of the shipwreck that is o'er.
Yet from those relics of the storm
The mariner his raft will form
Again to tempt the faithless sea;
But hope rebuilds no bark for me.

My life is like the blighted oak
That lifts its sere and withered form,
Scathed by the lightning's sudden stroke,
Sternly to meet the coming storm.
Yet round that sapless trunk entwine
The curling tendrils of the vine,
And life and freshness there impart;
Not so the passion blighted heart.

My life is like the desert rock
In the mid-ocean lone and drear,
Worn by the wild waves' ceaseless shock,
That round its base their surges rear.
Yet there the sea moss still will cling;
Some flower will find a cleft to spring,
And shed around its sweet perfume;
For me life's flowers no more will bloom!

Chinese Acrobats.

A party of Chinese tumblers, lately introduced into the Chinese theater, San Francisco, are indeed marvels in their line. A number of athletic Mongolians appear, stripped to the waist, and begin a sort of combat on the stage. At first the fighting appears to be promiscuous; but six or eight finally ally themselves against one man and try to overcome him by springing against him and striking him full in the breast with the soles of their feet. He meets this curious mode of attack by standing like a statue, while the others fall heavily upon the floor. A number of tables are next brought out and piled one above the other until a height of about twenty feet is obtained. A performer, whose weight is no less than 150 lbs., mounts them, and, springing in the air toward the floor and the stage, strikes both feet with a heavy thud upon the bare breast of a man standing about ten feet from the foot of the tables, throwing him violently to the floor. How a man can stand such a blow is a mystery. Again the agile acrobat ascends to the top table, and, springing upwards, turns a somersault, while all the tables, except the lower one, are suddenly taken away. Upon the only table left he falls with a force apparently great enough to break every bone in his body; but he leaps up again immediately and turns back hand-springs across the stage. Again he climbs to the top of the tower of tables, while a second lies down upon a table a few feet from the base of the tower. Turning a somersault in mid-air he falls upon the other body, the two breast to breast, and bounds off again with a second somersault. Other acrobats climbed to various altitudes and fell upon the stage, alighting square upon their backs with a force which was astonishing. These feats are all executed by men in a semi-nude condition, so that there is no chance for padding their clothes. While the Americans in the theater applaud, the Chinese make no demonstrations of approval, but sit looking stolidly on. The managers informed the reporter of the San Francisco *Call* that the tumblers are trained from childhood, and become habituated to the terrible concussions only by years of practice. He added that many are killed in training, or maimed for life. None of their feats are graceful, but simply indicate a tremendous amount of strength, nerve, and endurance.

The Cure for Gossip.

What is the cure for gossip? Simply, culture. There is a great deal of gossip that has no malignity in it. Good-natured people talk about their neighbors because, and only because, they have nothing else to talk about. As we write, there comes to us the picture of a family of young ladies. We have seen them at home, we have met them in galleries of art, we have caught glimpses of them going from a bookstore, or a library, with a fresh volume in their hands. When we meet them, they are full of what they have seen and read. They are brimming with questions. One topic of conversation is dropped only to give place to another, in which they are interested. We have left them, after a delightful hour, stimulated and refreshed; and during the whole hour not a neighbor's garment was soiled by so much as a touch. They had something to talk about. They knew something, and wanted to know more. They could listen as well as they could talk. To speak freely of a neighbor's doings and belongings would have seemed an impertinence to them, and, of course, an impropriety. They had no temptation to gossip, because the doings of their neighbors found a subject very much less interesting than those which grew out of their knowledge and their culture.

And this tells the whole story. The confirmed gossip is always either malicious or ignorant. The one variety needs a change of heart and the other a change of pasture. Gossip is always a personal confession either of malice or imbecility, and the young should not only shun it, but by the most thorough culture relieve themselves from all temptation to indulge in it. It is a low, frivolous, and too often a dirty business. There are country neighborhoods in which it rages like a pest. Churches are split in pieces by it. Neighbors are made enemies by it for life. In many persons it degenerates into a chronic disease, which is practically incurable. Let the young cure it while they may.

Chalk.

It is odd to think that a bit of chalk has to be brought all the way from the cliffs of Dover, England, before it can make marks on your walls; but it is wonderful to learn that that bit of chalk is composed of the elytra, or shells of myriads of little animals, the *globigerinoe*, that lived and died in the ocean, year after year, age after age, for hundreds of thousands of years, and then, solidifying into compact rock, were pushed five hundred feet above the surface of the sea. The bed of the English channel is supposed to be of solid chalk, many hundred feet thick, extending over to France, and cropping up near Paris. Through this soft material the contemplated tunnel is to be bored, the bill authorizing the work having already passed through the House of Commons.

There is scarcely a trade or manufacture, workshop or school, that does not find use for a bit of chalk. Great quantities are ground up for whiting and putty, and, though it is an humble material, yet nothing can supply its place. There is little or none found in this country; all that is used here being imported from England, either kiln-dried or in blocks as it is quarried, at about $10 a ton.

Chinese Habitations.

Eastern architects may get some hints of things to follow or avoid from a description which the Virginia City *Chronicle* gives of the structures erected by the Chinamen in that city: "Between fights the Chinaman is an industrious animal. Just now he is turning his energies to building, and like his fighting, some of it is contrary to law and also shocking to a correct architectural taste. On the northwest corner of I and Union streets, John has created a marvellous affair. It is built out far enough to occupy a third of the roadway. The front elevation (height five feet) is composed of odds and ends of stone picked up in the neighbourhood. The one window is formed of three oil cans—two upright and the other laid across the top. The roof of this edifice—which has a frontage of about twenty-five feet and a depth of thirty or more—would make a handsome play ground for a school, as it is perfectly flat and composed of earth. The interior, which the reporter doubled himself up to enter, is divided into numerous little dens and a spacious saloon, with earthen floor and one oil-can window. The place is shortly to be opened as a restaurant, provided the police don't interfere, which they should do. The idea of utilizing oil-cans for building material has been eagerly seized by other Celestials, and the consequence is numerous fire-proof shanties. The cans filled with earth and piled one upon another, make a solid wall, and no bullet can penetrate them—not a slight consideration these times. Underground residences are also popular. A big square hole is dug into the hillside, covered in with sticks, straw, and an occasional plank. The door is naturally furnished by the eastern slope. Although such trifles as light and air are left out of consideration, the bomb-proof character of the underground structure has a charm for the Chinese inhabitant. The only drawback to such a house is the probability that on some rainy night an enemy may take into his shaven head to dig a trench and direct the water of the street down the chimney."

English Angling Matches.

An anecdote is told of a fishing match which took place in Sussex, on a river rendered somewhat difficult to fish by reason of the rising and falling of the the tide, the peculiar objection being that during ebb the receding waters must be followed up through deep mud. One competitor was bewailing his hopeless chance of winning the teapot which was offered as a prize, his only take being a diminutive eel weighing a little over three ounces. Presently some spectators, on a tour of visits to the competitors, arrived, and inquired after the nature of his sport. "Oh, I am completely out of it—this small eel being all I have taken." "There we differ with you," encouragingly replied the visitors: "for this and another eel of about the same size are all we have seen taken to-day." The hopes raised were, however, dashed to the ground, for the other eel weighed a bare eighth of an ounce more, and took the prize. In the late Sheffield contest, 4 pounds 15 ounces won the prize of forty guineas. The smallness of the take, is perhaps, to be explained by the fact of the competitors forming a line on the bank to the distance of three and a half miles, the fish being rendered powerless to feed from sheer perplexity. Fancy a fish coming suddenly upon an array of food hanging in mid-water as far as the eye can reach, looking to a human eye like an endless street of butchers shops. Fancy, I say, a fish coming upon such a scene. Here a bunch of gentles attracts its attention; but, before it has made up his mind, a lively brandling wriggles itself into notice. Then a choice piece of gravestempts the palate only to be supplanted by a wasp grub; until the bewildered creature attempts to fly the scene, but in vain. Turn where it will, food still meets its view; for miles nothing but food, food, food.

Winter Amusements.

Dr. Holland writes as follows in *Scribner's Monthly* on the subject of winter amusements:

It is an easy thing to establish, either in country or city neighborhoods, the reading club. Twenty-five young men and women of congenial tastes, habits, and social belongings can easily meet in one another's houses once during every week through five or six months of the year. With a small fund they can buy good books, and, over these, read aloud by one and another of their number, they can spend an hour and a half most pleasantly and profitably. They will find in these books topics of conversation for the remainder of the time they spend together. If they can illuminate the evening with music all the better. Whatever accomplishments may be in the possession of different members of the club may be drawn upon to give variety to the interest of the occasion. This is entirely practicable everywhere. It is more profitable than amateur theatricals, and less exhaustive of time and energy. It can be united with almost any literary object. The Shakespeare Club is nothing but a reading club, devoted to the study of a single author; and Shakespeare may well engage a club for a single winter. Such a club would cultivate the art of good reading, which is one of the best and most useful of all accomplishments. It would cultivate thought, imagination, taste. In brief, the whole tendency of the reading club is toward culture—the one thing, notwithstanding our educational advantages, the most deplorably lacking in the average American man and woman.

The exercise may take a great many forms which it is not necessary for us even to suggest. Books may be read, original papers may be presented, musical rehearsals may form a part of the entertainment, products of art may be exhibited, there may be dramatic and conversational practice, and practice in French and German. There is no limit to the variety of exercises that may be profitably entered upon.

The Vessels of the Temple.

An Italian correspondent writes: "Garabaldi's scheme to regulate the course of the Tiber has probably nowhere met with such approbation as in the Ghetto of Rome, for the Jews hope that by dredging the mud at the bottom of the river, the silver and golden vessels once used in the Temple at Jerusalem might be found. These were carried to Rome by Titus after the destruction of Jerusalem. There they remained for full three centuries, until the days of the Vandal King Genserich, who sacked Rome, and put the vessels of the Temple together with the rest of the booty on ships, in order to carry them to Africa. One of these vessels was wrecked between Sicily and Africa, when most of her contents, and among them a dish of pure gold made by King Solomon, weighing five hundred shekels, went to the bottom of the sea. Another of the ships is said to have foundered on the Tiber, opposite to Rome, when several of the vessels of the Temple went to the bottom of the river."—*Jewish Chronicle.*

The Last Temple.

The last European temple in which public worship was paid to the old divinities is said to have been that of Apollo at Monte Casano, which remained open until its destruction by Benedict in 529. Since then the human mind has wandered in many mazes and labored under dreary hallucinations without end. Who shall say, in these days of decaying faiths, how near Voltaire's prediction may come to fulfilment? Day by day the claims of science to universal priesthood are urged with increasing confidence. The old mythology stripped of its imagery, (it may be said,) unidealized and resolved into its pristine elements, is a system of natural philosophy; and modern science in its latest phase is little more than a return to the old opinions under a new nomenclature. It would be strange, indeed, if the rumor of Pan's death, promulgated so long ago, should prove unfounded after all!—*Fraser's Magazine.*

Age and Crime

Age materially influences the extent and degree of crime in both sexes. In relation to physical and functional development, age exists as a defining force. It appears to affect the criminal careers of the sexes in two ways; by permitting such a degree of bodily power to be reached as to render possible criminal acts in different degrees; and, the bodily powers remaining the same, the varying mental conditions produce changes in the force and direction of the criminal impulse. Each period of life, therefore, is characterized by degrees and qualities of crime which belong to it. In other words, certain phases of crime are perpetrated at one period of life in excess of any other period. These remarks do not apply to both sexes equally, for these periods do not correspond either as to age, or in the nature of the offense, the excess of which distinguishes one period from another.

AGRICULTURAL.

PLANTING GRAPE VINES.—The increase in the production of grapes in this country during the past few years is simply enormous, and the indications are that at no distant day the quantity of wine which can be supplied from our own vineyards will supersede the necessity of importing at the expense of so many millions of coin, or its equivalent, the products of the vine which we now buy from foreign countries. The great secret of the wealth of a nation is the supply of all its wants within its own borders; and the people of the South are now discovering the mistake they made in former times of discouraging manufactures in their States, and which, happily, they are now endeavoring to remedy by the establishment of cotton mills and other factories alongside of the products of the soil required for their operation.

What we want now to impress upon every householder, as well as the farmer, is if they can do nothing more, they should at least plant out a vine or two in their yards or gardens, as every one who owns a small piece of ground can have plenty of the best varieties of grapes, at no cost at all, simply by going in the fall or early in the spring of the year to farmers who have them, and getting some of the trimmings. Take them and spade up a strip of ground on the north side of the fence; take the vines and put two or three buds in the ground leaving one out; keep the ground loose and the weeds away, and when the shoots get ten or twelve inches long, pinch off the end so the stalk will mature better, and next spring plant out eight feet apart each way. But before planting, gather up old bones out of the woods, etc. Dig your holes three feet square, and two feet deep, throwing the soil on one side to itself. Now take the bones, throw into the holes; next a little ashes, then the soil, then the grapes, and last fill with other soil close around, not using the clay. We will guarantee grapes to thrive and do well, and always bear when treated this way.

WINTER FOALS.—Like all other young and growing animals, they require an abundance of fresh air and exercise, and should have free opportunity of indulging in the gambols and frolics, and races to which their nature prompts them, and which is so essential in order to propeoly distend the lungs, swell the veins, invigorate the entire system, and make a hardy, healthy, active horse. Give muscle and bone-forming food in abundance, but feed corn sparingly, and, if at all, only in the coldest weather. Oats and wheat, bran and grass, and hay in abundance will make the colt grow; and exercise, with protection from severe storms, will keep him healthy. It is indispensible that he should run out and take all the storms as they come, which, by the way, should never be permitted, give more corn with the feed, as that produces fat, which is a protection from the cold. Were we to be compelled to choose between the two extremes of close confinement, with high feeding on heating grain, and no exercise, and the other of running at large in the fields, exposed to the merciless storms of winter, with free access to the corn-crib, we should unhesitatingly take the latter course as likely to develop the hardier, healthier, stouter horse, because we regard the opportunity for abundant exercise as absolutely essential to a healthy, harmonious development in all young animals. But generous feeding and secure housing from inclement weather is not at all incompatible with plenty of exercise, and such a coarse of treatment will bring the youngster through the winter in perfect health, with constitution unimpaired, and growth unchecked.—*Wilkes' Spirit.*

KEROSENE HORSE LINIMENT.—A correspondent sends the following: "It is not as generally known as it ought to be that kerosene oil is one of the very best remedies for strains, sprains, or bruises that can be applied to the flesh of beasts. I knew an instance in which a young colt got cast on its back in a manger; when taken out it was utterly unable to stand or move its hind limbs, and so continued for some time, when two or three applications of the oil, twelve hours between, completely restored it. This and similar facts led me, when studying drugs several years ago, to concoct the following, which I named kerosene liniment: Kerosene oil, one ounce; aromat spirits ammonia, three drachms; tinc. stramonii, two drachms; oil origanum, two drachms; olmenthe, twenty drops; chloroform, one drachm; spirits camphor, two drachms. This article is incomparably superior to anything of its kind for bruises, soreness of the muscles from any cause, or nervous pains. Its value however, will best be known by its use. Many a prescription has been sold for $50, which, compared with this, was not worth the paper it was written on. Equally good for beasts or men."

SUMMER FALLOWING.—This practice is gradually and deservedly falling into disuse. Farmers are beginning to find by experience that there are other methods of cleaning the land and getting rid of weeds that are equally effective, and less costly. The plowing and cultivation which are found useful in cleaning foul land can also be made equally useful in producing a crop at the same time if the right crop is selected, and the proper culture bestowed. For the loss of time needlessly incurred in summer fallowing there is neither reason nor excuse, as we intend to show hereafter. The farmer's land is his capital, and if he expects to succeed in his business he cannot afford to be carrying over idle capital from year to year for a purpose that may be equally effected in another and better way. The amount of loss incurred by this practice is much greater than we supposed, and it is quite time for farmers to look into it.

FALL PLOWING.—A correspondent of the *Rural Home* argues thus about fall plowing: If land where there is no sod is plowed in the fall and a heavy snow comes upon it before being frozen it is found about as hard as land not plowed and no good comes of it; but if a clay soil is plowed when dry in the fall, and is frozen hard during winter it will be finer, and work up lighter for spring seeding. Clay soils not well drained and so situated that the surplus water cannot get off will be injured by throwing them up loose in the fall, for the rains will so saturate them that they will be as hard as a bed of dried mortar, and no after culture can bring them into condition for a spring crop. But with good drainage the opposite conditions prevail.

SAVE hog manure now, as it is especially valuable from fattening hogs. As nearly all the nitrogen of the food is contained in the liquids voided, none of it should be allowed to waste. Litter the pens with an absorbent—dry earth or muck, or cut straw. Much of the net profits of stock comes from the manure, hogs included, and yet not one farmer in ten saves half the hog manure made. This is the kind of economy that makes hard times. It is estimated that if all the manure a pig makes was saved properly, it would add, on an average, about two cents to the value of each pound of pork.—*Ohio Farmer.*

SAYS an old grain-grower: "In gathering corn, take such ears only as are finest and from the most prolific stalks. Never take from a stalk having but one ear, if large, thrifty stalks can be found with two or more good sized ears. Generally one of them is fit for seed, and that usually the second from the ground; but if the lowest is the best take that. Always take the ears that are filled out to the end, and that run beyond the husk, if such can be found. When you come to plant, before shelling, break every ear, and see if the pith of the cob is dried up, for if it is not, the corn is not ripe."

SCIENTIFIC.

The Corn-Market And Sun-Spots.—We have heretofore recorded the efforts of savants to establish a relation between the recurrence of spots on the sun and the fluctuations of the potato-disease. Mr. Schuster, studying the same series of phenomena, has pointed out that the years of good vintage in Western Europe have occurred at average intervals approximating to eleven years, the average length of the principal sun-spot period. Later, Prof. Stanley Jones, F. R. S., has endeavored to prove that the price of corn and the variations of the sun-spots are inseparably connected. A paper was read by him on the subject, at the recent meeting of the British Association. The data regarding the prices of corn were taken from Prof. E. T. Roger's "History of Agriculture and Prices in England," in which is given the prices of commodities in all parts of England between the years 1259 and 1400. From calculations based upon the facts thus afforded, it was found by Prof. Jones that the price of each kind of produce examined rises in the first four years of the sun-spot cycle, and thence declines. The *maxima* prices occur in the tenth, eleventh, first, second, and third years of the cycle. These results, however, are considered as merely preliminary, and requiring further investigation. Yet more extended consequences are indicated by these observations. It is found that commercial panics have tended to recur during the last fifty-four years in a distinctly periodic manner. The average length of interval between the principal panics is about 10.8 years, nearly coinciding with 11.11, the length of the solar-spot period. Ere long, it appears from this, our commercial men will look to the astronomers for a certain prediction of the price of corn.

Another Application of Machinery.—The little machine sometime since invented in France, by the aid of which stenographic writing may be accomplished at the rate of between two and three hundred words per minute, is claimed to have proved a practical success. It seems to be very simple. There is a keyboard, operated by the hand, and composed of twelve black and an equal number of white keys; and on each side of the instrument is a large key, moved by a pressure of the wrist, and serving to give supplementary signs which simplify the reading of the characters printed. All the keys, when operated, produce indications in ink on a roll of paper, which is taken from a reel in a manner similar to that on the Morse telegraphic apparatus; the black keys, however, give long marks, while the white ones cause similar dots to be transcribed. At each pressure of the fingers on the key board, the paper is automatically unrolled for about 0.02 of an inch, so that on each line any combination of twelve double signs may be imprinted, and these signs are arranged in three groups of four each, and read from left to right in the ordinary manner. The number of characters which may be made on each division of four is more than sufficient to require a single movement to form a single letter; in other words, with practice, three letters or less can be written at once. If the useless letters be surpressed, such as double letters, e mute, etc., frequently a single movement will produce an entire word. The manipulation of the key board requires about six months practice to insure skill.

The fact is now quite conclusively shown by Prof. Langley, who has given such careful study to the solar spots, that in the penumbra there are not only numerous small cyclones, and even right and left-handed whirls in the same spot, but probably currents ascending nearly vertically, while the action of the superposed approximately horizontal currents is so general that they must be considered a permanent feature in the study of meteorology. The outer penumbra is, he concludes, formed by a rupture; and the penumbra is all but wholly made up, it appears in a first examination, of cloud-like forms. The normal darkness of the outer penumbra, Prof. Langley declares, is nothing else than the darkness of the grey medium in which the granules float all over the sun, though much deeper tints are here and there found, which sometimes make the penumbra itself resolvable into a ring of little spots, and he thinks that filaments and granules are one and the same thing in fact, though presenting themselves in different aspects.

It has been usually supposed that insects of the moth and butterfly sorts confined themselves to food that was accessible to a sucking apparatus, without any aid from a penetrating tool. The British Royal Microscopical society have a slide containing the proboscis of a curious unknown specimen, which sets at naught the commonly accepted idea. It terminates in a sharp chitinous tooth, above which are several saw-like teeth, and also some teeth set the reverse way. Mr. McIntire who presented the slide to the society, says that the insect from which he obtained this organ was "a drab colored moth, inclining to a reddish brown," which he bought, with other damaged specimens, "said to come from West Africa." As he observes, "this instrument would pierce most vegetable structures, and when penetration was affected, the recurved spines would act as hold-fasts, and enable the insect leisurely to obtain its food."

A New Link in Evolution.—Prof. E. S. Morse, of Salem, occasionally turns from his specialty, the brachiopods, and amuses himself with the study of other recondite subjects in natural science. Some time ago he determined the fact that in embryonic birds there are four tarsal as well as four carpal bones, the presence of the *intermedium* being the main point. He has since discovered that there are embryo claws on two of the digits of the fore-limb, the index middle finger. Hitherto only a single claw has been known, and that in but few cases. These interesting results throw new light on the relationship between reptiles and birds which Mr. Huxley has insisted upon.

Conduction of Heat by Building Materials.—The coefficient of conduction for heat of various building materials has lately been carefully investigated by Lang, who, in his studies, has endeavored to exclude the influence of radiation, and has made measurements by means of the thermo-electric multiplier. He finds that the stones considered by him are much better conductors of heat when wet than when dry, and that various classes of stones, such as marble, sandstone, granite, &c., have approximately the same coefficients of conduction, while bricks of all kinds are much worse conductors than the natural stones.

Enamel Colors.—In making enamels the following mixtures have been found serviceable for purples, blues, &c.: Take 3 parts of sand, 1 of chalk, and 3 of calcined borax, or 3 parts of glass—broken crystal glass—and of calcined borax, 1 part nitrate of soda and 1 part of white antimony or tartar emetic. A vitreous mass of enamel containing copper, when removed from the smelting pots, sometimes only exhibits a faint greenish hue; in this state a single exposure to a gentle heat is all that is required to produce a brilliant red.

The Proper Time for Cutting Trees.—An extensive inquiry has been made in Prussia into the effect upon the durability of woods of the season at which the trees are cut down. In general, the wood felled when the sap is not running has a decided preeminence as to its durability, strength, and density. The heat given out in burning wood felled in December and January is also, according to these experiments, greater than from woods cut in February and March.

—Pullman Palace Car company's stock is selling for $75 a share.

DOMESTIC.

DIFFERENT WAYS OF PREPARING CABBAGE FOR THE TABLE.—An excellent cold slaw is made by shredding a solid head of cabbage with a thin, sharp knife or a slaw cutter, then placing the cut cabbage in your dish, pour over it a dressing made by heating a pint of vinegar scalding hot then beating into it quickly one beaten egg, with a lump of butter as large as a walnut, and a tablespoonful of sugar. The cabbage should be slightly sprinkled with salt and pepper as it is put in the dish.

To fry cabbage, chop or shred quite fine, have a spider hot on the stove in which is a small quantity of butter or meat drippings, season, and put in the cabbage, and cover tight, stirring often and taking care it does not scorch on the spider. Cooked in this way it is very sweet and nice.

Cabbage makes a nice dish also cooked by dropping into salted boiling water, and when tender taken out, minced fine with a knife, then pouring over it a dressing made by taking a piece of butter the size of an egg, and a coffee-cupful of boiling water; cut up the butter with a half teaspoonful of flour, and stir it gradually into the hot water. When it boils, stir in a dessert-spoonful of vinegar, and a dust of pepper, with a little salt. For the sauce, thick, sweet cream is an excellent substitute.

TO MAKE BOILED CUSTARD.—Take a pint and a half of milk, twelve drops of almond flavoring, a bit of stick cinnamon, three ounces of loaf sugar. Beat up the eggs with their whites in a half pint of the milk. Rub two of the lumps of sugar on the rind of the lemon till they are quite yellow; then put in the whole of the sugar, the pint of milk and the cinnamon into a saucepan. Let the ingredients boil for five minutes; then throw the whole out to cool for a short time; then beat all up together with the beaten eggs; return it to the saucepan for a few minutes, stirring over a very slow fire till it thickens; then strain it through a fine tin strainer into a jug; put the almond flavoring into another jug, and keep pouring the custard out from one jug to the other till it is cold. If it should be inclined to turn to curd, which it will do if boiled too rapidly or over too fierce a fire, keep pouring it through the strainer into the jug; when cold pour it carefully into the glasses. Over the top of the custards may be grated some very fine nutmeg, or some blanched almonds cut up into fine shavings. The above quantities will fill from twelve to fourteen custard glasses according to the size of the glass.

A TEST FOR EGGS.—Among the minor troubles of city life is the difficulty of procuring a regular supply of fresh eggs. When we cannot remove our woes, the next best thing is to try to understand them. So we devote this paragraph to what will interest all out of hearing of the cheerful sounds of the barn-yard. An egg is generally called fresh when it has been laid only one or two days in Summer, and two to six days in Winter. The shell being porous, the water in the interior evaporates and leaves a cavity of greater or less extent. The yolk of the egg sinks, too, as may be easily seen by holding it towards a candle or the sun; and when shaken, a slight shock is felt if the egg is not fresh. To determine the precise age of eggs, dissolve about four ounces of common salt in a quart of pure water, and then immerse the egg. If it is one day old it will descend to the bottom of the vessel; but if three days, will float in the liquid. If more than five days old, it will come to the surface and project above in proportion to its increased age.—*Ex.*

LEAF PHOTOGRAPHS.—Dissolve an ounce or two of bichromate of potash in water, making the solution as strong as possible, turn it into a shallow dish and soak sheets of white paper in it. They will be a bright yellow color, and must at once be put in a dark place and dried. On a thin board lay a little cushion of paper, then a piece of the prepared paper, place the leaf on this and a piece of glass over the whole, and clamp them together with clothes-pins. Carry it into the sunshine, and in a few minutes all the yellow paper, except that protected by the leaf, will turn brown. Take out the picture and wash it repeatedly in pure water to dissolve all the unaltered salt, and when dry the process is complete. Little sprays of ferns make pretty pictures for spare places in the album; some leaves show the veins perfectly, and a great many combinations can be made by cutting letters and placing them in a little wreath of ferns, photographing dried butterflies, etc.—*The Housekeeper.*

A RECENT writer on household furniture says: "The next great comfort, apart from a good bed, is a well made chest of drawers or wardrobe. Have you ever been aggravated by badly made furniture? I have; and I know of nothing more vexatious and tormenting (in a small way) than to pull at drawers that will not open, or which come out all askew—to push at those which will not shut—whose handles come off—chests which creak and shriek and totter on three legs because the fourth is rather too short. Don't buy chests of drawers which are badly put together, even though they have a tempting appearance—may be inlaid or with superior handles, but are in reality manufactured simply with a view to catch the eye, and afterward displease the owner in a dozen respects."

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.—Every little while we read of one who has stuck a rusty nail in his foot or some other portion of his person, and lockjaw has resulted therefrom. All such wounds can be healed without any fatal consequences following them. The remedy is simple: It is only to smoke such wound, or any wound or bruise that is inflamed, with burning wool or woolen cloth. Twenty minutes in the smoke of wool will take pain out of the worst case of inflammation arising from a wound we ever saw.

In caring for your fowls provide them with a vessel of lime water for an occasional drink. It is prepared by pouring hot water over quicklime, and after the lime is settled and the water covering it has become clear, pour it off. It will keep fit for use a considerable time.

TO DRIVE away rats, an English journal gives the following recipe, which it says has proved very successful: Take some glass and powder with pestle and mortar, then mix with some lard into pills and drop into the rat-holes. It will drive rats and mice out of the place; they die of decline.

DUSTING articles of steel, after they have been thoroughly cleaned, with unslaked lime, will prevent them from rust. The coils of piano wires thus sprinkled will keep them from rust many years.

MOLASSES SPONGE CAKE.—Take 1 cup molasses, 1 spoonful melted butter, 2 eggs beaten very light, ¼ cup sweet milk, 1 teaspoonful cream tartar, ½ teaspoonful soda, 1½ cups flour, a little ginger.

RAISIN CAKE.—Take 1 cup flour, 2 cups cream, 1 cup batter, 4 eggs, a pound of raisins, cloves, cinnamon, candied lemon cut fine, 1 teaspoon of soda. Stir well.

CORNS can be cured by putting on them a bit of cotton saturated with sweet oil or glycerine. Keep making fresh applications for a day or two, and wear no boot or shoe.

ACID STAINS.—Sal volatile or hartshorn will restore colors taken out by acids, and may be dropped upon any garment without doing harm.

BROWN BREAD.—Take 2 cups sweet milk, 1 cup sour milk, 3 cups meal, 1 cup flour, ½ cup molasses, 1 teaspoonful soda. Bake two hours.

HUMOROUS.

A VALUABLE ELEVATOR.—There is a man in Jersey City who owns an elevator. The other night he was asleep, and his wife was awake. He dreamed and uttered words in his sleep. She listened. He said:

"Dear Ella, darling Ella, sweetest Ella!"

She would hear no more. She grabbed him by the shoulder, shook him till he awoke, and then shrieked:

"Who is dear Ella?"

"Who is dear what?" he asked, with a surprised look.

"The dear Ella you've been calling darling and sweetest in your dreams."

"Oh, I suppose I must have been thinking of the dear elevator which has cost me so much thought and trouble for the past two months. It's all been out-go and no income with it."

The wife subsided. She may be fully convinced that he was wholly truthful, but she keeps a very suspicious eye on him. He chuckles when he's alone and says:

"By George! that elevator was a lucky thought. If she only knew!"

Then he chuckles a little more and goes and elevates his elbows.

THAT JEWEL.—Detroit husbands and wives sometimes—once in a great many years—have disputes. The other day when a Beech street couple were holding an angry argument the husband raised his hands and exclaimed:

"Oh! Consistency, thou art a jewel!"

The wife at once broke down, and as she sobbed she gasped out:

"You saw her at the opera, I suppose, but if she had to split wood, wash dishes and take care of six children she wouldn't look any better'n I do—hoo!"

A DEJECTED-LOOKING hen stepped into a down-town grocery one day last week and asked the price of eggs. "Thirty-five cents a dozen," replied the storekeeper. The hen cast her eyes to Heaven as she went back to her nest, remarking, in a delightful tone: "At last a hen has some incentive to doing a full day's work," and with this consoling thought she cackled over her diurnal egg, grateful for the fact that it was worth nearly three times as much as a postal card.

"HAVE you mailed that letter I gave you yesterday morning, my dear?" said Mrs. Young-husband, last evening, as she handed her mate his cup of tea. "Well, no," said Mr. Y. H., "I can't say that I have *mailed* it yet, *but I've made all the preliminary arrangements.*" He was made to surrender up the letter forthwith, and five minutes later Bridget completed the "arrangements" by dropping it into the post box on the corner.

"YOU SEE, grandmother, we perforate an aperture in the apex, and a corresponding aperture at the base; and, by forcibly inhaling the breath, the egg is entirely discharged of its contents." "Why, bless my soul!" cried the old lady, "what wonderful improvements they do make. "Now, in my younger days, we just made a hole in both ends and sucked."—*New Orleans Times.*

A TRAVELER visiting a cathedral was shown by the sacristan, among other marvels, a dirty, opaque glass phial. After eyeing it some time, the traveler said: "Do you call this a relic? Why, it is empty." "Empty!" retorted the sacristan, indignantly. "Sir, it contains some of the darkness that Moses spread over the land of Egypt."

THE literary color—Read. The newsboy's color—Yeller. The undertaker's color—Done. The color of a hurricane—Blew. The apothecary's color—vial-it. Britannia's color—Sea-rule-I-on. The agricultural color—Reddish. Albert Edward's color—Indiago The color of a Slavonic dinner—Russ-et.

INDIAN CORN in North Germany often assumes a place among household plants. It is regarded there as tropical. In the United States it becomes tropical only under the name of Bourbon, and then it warms a man up so that he feels as if he were under the tropic of Capricorn.

THE latest addition to the umbrella is a pane of glass inserted in the front breadth. This must prove a great convenience. Through this glass the umbrella fiend can see the owner approach and have time to dodge around a corner and escape his interrogating glances.

PSHAW! It's easy enough to put up stove-pipe! All you have got to do is to put on your kid gloves, take up your cane, and leave word at the tinner's and when he gets ready, and can't think of any other job, and doesn't want to go fishing, he will put your stove up.

A QUAKERTOWN man has solved Mrs. Livermore's query: "What shall we do with our daughters?" He has purchased two washing machines and will take in washing. His wife and seven daughters are to do the work and he will superintend the business.

"MRS. HENRY," said John to his wife, the other morning, "if you give me a Christmas present this year, please arrange it so that the bill won't come in till the next month. It's just as well to keep up the illusion for a short time."

"WAS THE crowd tumultuous?" inquired one man of another who had just come from a mass-meeting. "Too multuous," replied the other. "Oh, no, just about multuous enough to comfortably fill the hall."

"JULIUS, why is de gettin' out o' bed on de 31st ob August like one ob Moore's melodies? Does you gib it up, my 'spected cullud friend?" "In course I does. Why?" "Bekase it's de last rose ob Summer!"

"HAS YOUR son Timothy failed?" inquired Gubbens of Stubbens the other day: "Oh! not at all, he has only assigned over his property and fallen back to take a better position," was the reply.

A DEAF old Yankee lady being asked if she had ever had her ears pierced by the wail of distress, said she couldn't exactly remember, but she believed it was done with a shoemaker's awl.

"THE prisoner at the bar seems to have a very smooth face," said a spectator to the jailer.—"Yes," replied the jailer, "he was ironed just before he was brought in."

A RESIDENT of Ecuador, being asked what kind of soil his country had for agriculture, answered, 'Excellent—if it would only keep still for a month or two at a time.'

A CORRESPONDENT of a Western paper having described the Ohio as a "sickly stream," the editor appended the remark: "That's so—it is confined to its bed."

"WHAT is that dog barking at," asked a fop, whose boots were more polished than his ideas. "Why," says a bystander, "he sees another puppy in your boots."

"MY SON, put away that ball. Do you know where the wicked boys go who play base ball on Sunday?" "Yes'm; they go down by the fair grounds."

"CAN you spell donkey with one letter?" asked a silly young man of a bright girl.

"Yes," she answered, "U."

WHAT requires more philosophy than taking things as they come? Parting with things as they go.

A GENTLEMAN of strong attachments—The Sheriff.

EASILY put out: The gas.

GIRLS' rights—Kisses.

Painting Portraits by the Head.

Narcisse Plochard is a hairdresser in Paris, but he is also an amateur portrait painter. As he charges only twenty-five francs a portrait, he has a great many orders among the humbler classes. Recently he was called upon to paint the portrait of Mme. Beaulogis, a buxom janitress. She was painted in professional posture, seated with one hand on the cord and the other resting upon the back of her pet cat, a handsome Angora, which reposed in her lap. The portrait was excellent, the Angora being particularly good, as in this particular the artist's knowledge of hair was of advantage. But after the first compliments the scene changed. Mme. Beaulogis drew a Louis d'or from her purse and handeed it to the artist. He pocketed it and asked, "Where is the other?" "What other?" said the surprised janitress. "The other Louis; your portrait is forty francs." "But you told me it would be twenty francs." "By the head. There were two heads—yours and that of your cat." "But the cat is an ornament, a mere accessory like the cord. Do you want me to pay for the cord, too?" "The cord doesn't count, but the cat counts; that is a head. Count by heads. Will you give me the other louis?" "No." "Well, then, I'll take away the picture," and he did so. Mme. Beaulogis seeks to replevin it. Narcisse in return demands his two louis d'or, and the Paris District Court will soon have to decide this weighty lawsuit.

The Origin of Life.

like the future of life, remains an unsolved mystery. Science has tried in vain, by analyzing the phenomena of Spiritualism, to read the future. The attempt has been fatal to the reputation of Crookes, and has injured that of Wallace. Baffled in the future, Science is now trying as vainly to read the riddle of the past. How did life originate? Bastian thought he had found the clue in inorganic matter, but Pasteur and his kettle wrote and boiled the "promise and potency" of life out of Bastian's soulless germs. A new theory, first broached in 1865 by Richter, ascribes the origin of life to atoms contained in meteoric stones that have been hurled upon this planet from other parts of the universe. These atoms are supposed to have contained the mysterious principle of existence which we call "life." But the proof advanced is of the slightest, and the demonstration if it could be made, would still leave the puzzle as much of a puzzle as ever—more so, in fact, since this would transfer it from the earth to the universe. How did life originate in the infinite space from which the meteors whirl?

Parisian Houses.

The construction is fire-proof. The outer walls are solidly built of brick or stone, and the interior partitions laid up in plaster of Paris. If they are to be permanent, iron ribs are first set and the plaster put on soft. The scratch coat, brown coat, and white coat style of plastering which we have is unknown there. Take a floor for instance: wooden or iron beams are used, and one is precisely as fire-proof as the other, provided it is properly protected. If wood is employed a piece of slate is dropped between the beams; on this again a layer of cement is spread and floated level, and then the floor boards are laid. Below pure plaster is alone used, and a ceiling is secured which never shows a sign of cracking be the house ever so old. When partitions are put in they meet a fire-proof surface at floor and ceiling. I remember during my stay at Paris, seeing a house afire or rather a floor. The furniture was completely consumed, and yet the other stories above and below were not injured sufficiently to warrant the putting in of a claim for damages. Neither water nor fire could work their way through the floor or ceilings.

"Heal Thyself."

The People's Common Sense Medical Adviser, a book of about 900 pages, illustrated with over 250 engravings and colored plates, and sold at the exceedingly low price of $1.50, tells you how to cure Catarrh, "Liver Complaint," Dyspepsia, or Indigestion, Sick, Bilious, and other Headaches, Scrofula, Bronchial, Throat, and Lung Diseases; all diseases peculiar