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According to the *Mail and Express* the United States now leads the world in the production of pig iron.

Ohio oleomargarine men want natural butter inspected, claiming that three-fourths of it isn't as good as oleomargarine.

"It will not be long at the present rate of progress," believes the *Washington Star*, until the oyster will have joined the buffalo in the happy hunting grounds.

Within the past thirty years, estimates the *Atlanta Constitution*, the population of our cities and towns has increased 251 per cent., from 5,000,000 to 13,000,000, while the rural population has increased less than one-third as rapidly, or about seventy per cent.

At the recent convention of street-car men in St. Louis, Mo., it was shown by statistics, avers the *New York World*, that after fifteen fares have been rung up on an ordinary horse car all the remainder of the money taken in for that trip is profit for the company.

There are 5000 Indians still living on reservations in New York. They are civilized, well educated and never give anybody any trouble. The same is true of the Cherokees in the Indian Territory. The Indians of the Northwest and far Southwest give us more trouble than all of the others.

The *New York Mail and Express* alleges that one of the great railroad corporations paid \$300,000 last year for towing car floats around the harbor. The amount paid by the five great trunk lines would equal the interest on \$30,000,000—enough to construct two or three bridges and tunnels.

The United States opened this year with 107,255 miles of railway in operation—enough, boasts the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, to go around the globe seven times, and enough to reach more than two thirds of the way to the moon. If it were all in a continuous line, and in absolutely perfect condition, it would take our fastest express train six months to run over it.

With regard to Germany, who can wonder, asks the *St. Louis Republic*, at the increase there of socialism in view of facts like these: In Saxony 73.51 per cent. of the population have an income of less than \$200 a year; and of this number 45.49 per cent., are wretchedly poor, having an income of less than \$125 per annum. The middle class embraces 23.47. Even these have less than \$820 a year. Only 0.60 possess over \$2400 per annum.

America is credited with many labor-saving devices, but there are some of English origin, acknowledges the *Boston Transcript*, that throw our best into the shade. One of these—for the benefit of authors—is described in an English contemporary. There are persons, it says, "gifted with no faculty of writing, who for a small sum are prepared to contrive you all the involutions and evolutions of a story, with a full complement of heroes, villains, lovers, heavy fathers, scheming mothers, and all the rest of it."

Captain J. M. Johnson, now a practicing lawyer at Kendall, Kan., tells an incident of the battle in which Custer was killed. He and Colonel Myers, commanding a troop, were riding on the charge when they saw a squaw prone upon the frozen ground dead, and beside her a four or five year old babe crying and begging her to arise. Taking pity on the papoose the Colonel ordered the First Sergeant to dismount and secure the youngster. He did so, and turning to the Colonel nonchalantly and pitilessly asked: "What shall I do with it—kill it?"

The announcement that the Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin wanted Prince Bismarck for President of his Council of State was sufficient to prompt Emperor William to abandon a pleasure trip to Cannes. Now comes the news that the people of Bavaria decidedly object to a review of their army by the German Emperor, although that army is an integral part of the defense of the Empire. On the horizon of Germany signs are abundant, observes the *St. Louis Star-Sayings*, that the Bismarckian fabric of Confederate States under Imperial rule is not so solid as it was on a certain day in March, 1890, when its founder was asked to step down and out.

THE WAYSIDE WELL.

He stopped at the wayside well,
Where the water was cold and deep;
There were feathery ferns 'twixt the mossy stones,
And gay was the old well sweep.
He left his carriage alone;
Nor could coachman or footman tell
Why the master stopped in the dusty road
To drink at the wayside well.
He swayed with his gloved hands
The well sweep, creaking and slow,
While from seam and scar in the bucket's side
The water plashed back below.
He lifted it to the curb,
And bent down to the bucket's brim;
No furrow of time or care had marked
The face that looked back at him.

He saw but a farmer's boy
As he stooped o'er the brink to drink,
And ruddy and tanned was the laughing face
That met his own o'er the brink.
The eyes were sunny and clear,
And the brow undimmed by care,
While from under the brim of the old straw hat
Strayed curls of chestnut hair.
He turned away with a sigh;
Nor could coachman or footman tell
Why the master stopped in his ride that day
To drink at the wayside well.

—Walter Learned.

BRIGITTE'S FORTUNE.

Short, thin, dry and wrinkled as an apple that lay withered during a long winter, such was the good man, Farmer Landry. Indeed, he was one of those close-fisted old peasants of whom it is graphically said that they can shave something from an egg shell.

Since the death of his wife he had retired from agriculture and lived alone in a little house at the end of the village.

And yet, not entirely alone, for he had with him his old servant Brigitte. But the poor woman counted for so little in the household, a little above the dog, but not so much as the donkey, that cost a hundred and twenty francs. She entered his family at the age of twelve to guard the ewes, and had been there ever since. She knew no other family life than this one, and the exceeding parsimony of the master seemed to her entirely natural. She was now a tall, hale woman of fifty, red-faced, square-shouldered, with feet and hands that might have been the pride of a pugilistic trainer. While exacting very little in the way of compensation, she drudged like a pack horse; for indeed, she could not do otherwise in Farmer Landry's house. Besides, in her simple mind existed a canine attachment and real admiration for her master, who was not ashamed to take advantage of her good nature.

Of course, in the service of this miser Brigitte had not earned a fortune. But the honest creature was amply satisfied when the old peasant, in a patronizing tone, praised her zeal: "What a good, simple creature you are, Brigitte, are you not?"

Then the good woman's mouth would open into a loud laugh.

"He! he! he! master! You have always your little manner of joking; he! he! he!"

One day while Farmer Landry was himself replastering his garden wall, so as not to pay the mason, he made a false step and fell into the pool just over the point where the deepest hole was. He splashed wildly about for a few moments, calling vainly for help with all the power of his lungs. At last, worn out by his efforts, he was about to sink from sight, when Brigitte at last heard him. The devoted creature courageously jumped into the water, at the risk of drowning herself. She succeeded in pulling him to the bank; he was entirely unconscious, but she raised him in her strong arms, as she would a child, put him to bed, and with rubbing and remedies recalled him to life. On seeing him open his eyes, the good Brigitte shed tears of joy.

"Ah, good master, how glad I am that you are not drowned and buried in that hole!"

The old peasant was glad of it, too, although he had one lively regret—the loss of his trowel, which fell into the water at the same time with himself. However, he had the decency not to express the wish that Brigitte should return and jump in after that also. Indeed, in the first impulse of gratitude, he said to his servant with a touch of emotion:

"It is you who pulled me out of the hole; I shall never forget it, my good girl, you may be assured of that. I am going to make you a present."

"Oh, master, indeed there is no need of that!"

"But I tell you I will give you something; don't doubt it!"

And really, the same evening, after a thousand hesitations, he drew forth his long leather purse and called Brigitte to him. While making a grimace like one having a tooth drawn, he selected a silver piece of twenty cents.

Here, Brigitte, is your present. It shall not be counted in your wages, you know. Do not be extravagant with it; that would be a sin.

For the service rendered it was not unbridled generosity on the part of the giver, and the former had some dim intimation of the fact, for he added (as if to enhance its value):

"It is just the price of a lottery ticket. Buy one, my girl, and you may win twenty thousand dollars."

It was the first time in his life that the poor man allowed himself to be liberal, so the thought of it haunted him for a long time; he constantly wondered about the fate of his bright silver piece. He often asked the servant if she had yet bought her lottery ticket.

"Not yet, master," was her unvarying answer.

But at length she decided to end this constant questioning by pacifying him. So one day she replied:

"Yes, master, I have bought one."
"Indeed! What number?"
"Oh, the number is 34."

"Very good!" said her master, repeating the number to impress it on his mind. Be careful not to lose it!"
"Never fear, master."
"Because if you do fear sometimes to lose it—"
"Eh, master?"
"Well, you need only give it to me and I will hide it in my bureau."
"Oh, I shall certainly not lose it!"

The habits of daily life in the little household, disturbed by these events, soon settled into their regular course; eating sparingly, very temperate drinking, few hours for sleeping and many for work.

Farmer Landry was almost consoled for his forced prodigality, when one morning, in the barber's shop, where he went from time to time to read gratis the *Gazette*, a terrible emotion struck him. He read the result of the lottery drawing and at the head these words, like lines of fire, flashed before the dazed spectacles of the good man:

"The number thirty-four has won the great prize of 100,000 francs. The old gentleman gave such a sudden cry that the startled barber, in turning towards him, almost clipped a corner from the ear of the schoolmaster, whom he was shaving.

"What's the matter, Father Landry?" he asked.

"Oh, nothing, nothing," answered the farmer, who quickly recovered his calmness.

Rearranging his spectacles, he read again slowly, spelling each syllable to "make assurance doubly sure."

There was no mistake; the number 34, Brigitte's ticket, had won. He dropped the journal and started off in great agitation towards his house. Brigitte had prepared her master's frugal breakfast of nuts and cheese. He placed himself at the table, but he could not eat, for his emotion seemed to clench his throat and prevent him from swallowing.

"What is the matter, master?" anxiously asked Brigitte.

"Nothing at all."
"You are not ill?"
"No, I tell you," he answered angrily.

During several days he secretly observed the poor woman. Did she know that she had won 100,000 francs? No indeed! Entirely ignorant that she was the object of such close scrutiny, she performed her daily tasks with her usual good humor, while her master was in a fever of unrest.

One day he dared to asked her, trembling while doing so:

"Is there any news, my good girl?"
"Nothing, master, except that one of the hens has the pip."

Very good! She knew nothing about her good fortune. As for announcing it to her—that was entirely too much for his nature and long life habit. It seemed to him monstrous that another should profit by this marvellous windfall of a hundred thousand francs, produced by his piece of twenty sous—his own bright, silver bit! Time was lengthened from days to weeks. A notice in the journal (he really bought a copy of the one containing the announcement) formally stated that after a delay of three months the unclaimed prizes would be employed for a new capital.

The poor man had no more appetite for eating or drinking, or power to sleep; he was dying of uneasiness. Twenty times he was on the point of speaking of the ticket to Brigitte; and twenty times he bit the tip of his tongue. One word only might put his servant in the way to learn her good fortune.

One morning, after an unusually sleepless night passed in turning and returning in his bed, he arose with a smile on his thin lips. He had found the key to the problem. He commenced by ordering Brigitte to kill the plumpest chicken, and to cook it in the oven with a good piece of pork. And finally, he gave his servant money to buy coffee and sugar.

Brigitte asked herself if her master had gone mad?

"Surely some demon has taken possession of his mind!" she thought with a thrill of fear.

It seemed a fearful increase of the malady when the old gentleman, after having ordered her to lay the table for two, asked her to take her place as *vis-a-vis*.

"Oh, master, I should never, never dare to do that!"
"Sit down there, I tell you, foolish woman!"
Brigitte had heard that one must not oppose the wishes of maniacs.
So, without answering, she seated herself in great embarrassment on the edge of the chair.

"Come, eat and drink, Brigitte, my girl," he said, filling her plate generously.

However, this was not the last surprise for Brigitte. When the coffee was served the old gentleman suddenly said:

"You see, my good Brigitte, this means that I am going to get married!"

"Indeed, master, it is not yet too late; if you are old, you are still hale and

well," answered the simple servant, approvingly.

"Since that is your view, if you like, we will marry each other."

After the roast chicken and pork, and the coffee and sugar, Brigitte expected to hear almost any strange thing on the part of her master. But that! Oh, no, that!

"You are joking me, master!"
"Not at all," answered the old peasant. He explained that he was growing old, was without children or family, and did not wish to die alone like a dog. Beside he was grateful! He could not forget that Brigitte had saved his life—his faithful Brigitte. One must not be forgetful of such a service.

Finally, the worthy woman, whose head was turned by this stroke of good fortune, believed in his sincerity. She, a humble servant, marry her master? Think of it! It was, indeed, something to turn one's brain.

The bans were published, and the marriage followed. The couple were greeted at the church by the good natured smiles of the whole village.

After the ceremony the new husband hurriedly conducted his wife home.

Having crossed the threshold, he hastily demanded in a joyful voice, while energetically rubbing his hands:

"Brigitte, my girl, where have you put your ticket?"
"What ticket?"
"Your lottery ticket, No. 34!"
"What lottery?"

"You know very well," he cried, impatiently. "The one you bought with my twenty-sou piece, that I gave you!"

The bride began to laugh stupidly.

"Ah! the twenty sous! Listen, Master. One seldom wins in those lotteries. It was very cold last winter, very cold."

"Well, well?" interrogated Landry, who began to grow very yellow.

"Oh, indeed," she concluded, "I did not buy the ticket. With the money I bought me some good fur-lined slippers, which I was sure would do me good. Yes, indeed."—From the *French, in American Cultivator*.

The Indian Witch Dance.

The Indian witch, or medicine dance is very different from the performances before described. It is really a weird affair, and almost as difficult to witness as the celebrations that New England witches were said to indulge in the old time. It must have some religious meaning, although the writer was never able to get exactly at what the meaning was. The medicine men of the Sioux do not seek publicity in their incantations, and it was entirely by chance that I came across three Indians going through some peculiar operations, at a point remote from their camp. A stick about three feet in height was stuck in the ground, and from it hung out in the breeze a long-haired scalp. The hair was dark, and looking on from a short distance I could not tell whether the scalp was that of a white woman or an Indian. It might have been either. The three Indians were leaping and gesturing and at intervals mumbling something, not a song apparently, but disconnected words. Occasionally they would point toward the scalp. Then they would mumble again and jump about. They were not painted, and their attire was different from that of the ordinary braves. They noticed me, and, while they made no demonstration of hostility, their expression meant plainly that they would rather be left alone. The shades of evening were falling on prairie and hill and river. The Missouri stretched like a mighty serpent below, its yellow waters tinted with a ruddy stain by the final gleam of the setting sun, and here on this hill, away from the painted tents and the silent cottonwood, these children of nature were enacting their strange enchantment to move in some way that supernatural power which seemed to have deserted the Indian race. With eerie feelings I withdrew, leaving them to their superstition, and conscious that perhaps its parallel might be found among more enlightened nations.—*Chicago Herald*.

How to Visit the Queen.

Should you be invited by Queen Victoria to dinner, the following, according to Edmund Yates in the *New York Tribune*, is some of the etiquette that you will have to observe:

Guests are expected to arrive in time to dress for dinner, and they leave after breakfast the next morning. The rule is for guests to repair to the corridor in full dress at 8:30 o'clock, the dinner being 8:45, and the Queen comes in from her own apartments just as the clocks chime the quarter, bows to the company and proceeds into the oak room, where the meal is served. The dinner is always excellent and the wines are superb, but the conversation at the table is of course most rapid and conventional. After dinner the company usually stand about the corridor, or go into one of the three drawing rooms which adjoin it. The Queen speaks a few moments to each person in succession, then retires, and the guests see her no more, as she never appears in the morning; so that a visit to the Castle does not involve much personal intercourse with her Majesty.

After the Queen is gone to her rooms, the company remain in one of the drawing rooms for music or whist, and when the ladies retire the men adjourn to the smoking room, in which is a billiard table, a very comfortable snuggery.

Electricity has just been applied to the reeling, weighing and making up into balls of silk and similar woven fabrics.

How She Impressed It on His Mind.

Have our readers ever tried to remind themselves to attend to something of importance by tying a knot in their handkerchiefs and then when they came to take it out, racked their brains in vain to recollect what the knot was intended to recall to them? The housewife in the subjoined anecdote was evidently determined to take no chances in the matter.

A wife recently gave her husband a sealed letter, begging him not to open it till he reached his place of business. When he did so he read:

"I am forced to tell you something that I know will trouble you, but it is my duty to do so. I am determined you shall know, let the result be what it may. I have known for a week that it was coming, but kept it to myself until today, when it has reached a crisis, and I cannot keep it any longer. You must not censure me too harshly, for you must reap the results as well as myself. I do hope it won't crush you."

By this time cold perspiration stood on the husband's forehead with the fear of some terrible unknown calamity. He turned the page, his hair slowly rising, and read:

"The coal is all used up! Please call and ask for some to be sent this afternoon. I thought by this method you would not forget it."

He didn't.

Race Changes.

Professor George Barbour, in his work on the resources of Florida, describes the strange race of bipeds which isolation and abnormal climatic influences have developed on the border of the tropics, in the next neighborhood of enterprising Yankee-like communities. But it is not possible that those communities, too, will by and by experience the influence of a winterless climate? Thus far their energy has been sustained by a constant influx of Northern immigrants, but that influx will cease after the population of the North and South has reached the equilibrium of its distribution, and the "cracker" of the hummocks will then come to form the type of a new race. Strange metamorphoses have happened in Southern Europe, and only the incontrovertible testimony of historical records can persuade an ethnologist to recognize the present inhabitants of Sicily as the direct descendants of athletic Grecian colonists and of the heroic Normans who followed Robert Guiscard across the Strait of Messina.—*New York Voice*.

Man-Food.

On the large islands in the delta of the Amazon River there are banana gardens which have continued to produce enormous crops for nearly a hundred successive years, though the cultivators never use any kind of fertilizer or think it necessary to practice irrigation, or rotation of crops. Two hundred bushels of fruit per acre is considered only a moderate yield, while on the Irish potato farms incessant toil and the use of all available fertilizers fails to insure the tenth part of that produce, and too often even fails to prevent complete degeneration of the plant of which millions have staked their hope of survival. It is true that the potato is not indigenous to the soil of the British Islands, but would it be possible to substitute any perfectly reliable food-plant, and might it not, after all, be the best plan to adopt Paul Courier's suggestion to devote the colder latitudes to pastures and factories and raise our field crops in the tropics?—*New York Voice*.

A Mexican Farm.

"On one farm in Mexico I saw enough of the luxuries of life produced to make any man happy," remarked C. F. Wood, of El Paso, Texas. "The farm was not large as some farms go in Mexico, it was, to use a slang phrase, a 'stunner.' I don't think the mind of man could imagine a vegetable product that could not be produced on that farm. At any rate I saw growing there coffee, sugar, rice, potatoes, rye, wheat, oats, corn, berries, cabbage, tomatoes, apples, bananas, cocoa, figs, cochineal, and a dozen other products. On the upper end of this farm you could find gold, silver, sapphires, onyx, and other precious stones. Some of these articles were not produced in quantities large enough to pay to market them, but they were all found there, and all at the service of the owner of the land. Oh, I suppose the farm contained 10,000 or 20,000 acres of land, but it extended through all temperatures and all elevations."—*Kansas City Times*.

Something About Coal.

It is said that when coal was first used in England the prejudice against it was so strong that the House of Commons petitioned the King to prohibit the use of the "noxious" fuel. A royal proclamation having failed to abate the nuisance, a commission was issued to ascertain who burned coal within the city of London and its neighborhood, to punish them by force for the first offense, and by their demerit in transgressing. A law was finally passed making it a capital offense to burn coal in the city, and only permitting it to be used by forges in the vicinity. It is stated that among the records in the Tower of London a document was found according to which a man was hung in the time of Edward I. for no other crime than having been caught burning coal. It took three centuries to entirely efface the prejudice.

A TWILIGHT STORY.

"Auntie, will you tell a story?" said my little niece of three, As the early winter twilight fell around us silently,
So I answered to her pleading: "Once, when I was very small,
With my papa and my mamma I went out to make a call;
And a lady, pleased to see us, gave me quite a large bouquet,
Which I carried homeward proudly, smiling all along the way.

"Soon I met two other children, clad in rags and sad of face,
Who grew strangely, wildly joyous as I neared their standing-place.
Twas so good to see the flowers! 'Give us one—oh, one!' they cried.
But I passed them without speaking; left them with their wish denied.
Yet the memory of their asking haunted me by night and day.
'Give us one!' I heard them saying, even in my childish play.

"Still I mourn, because in childhood I refused to give a flower;
Did not make those others happy when I had it in my power."
Suddenly I ceased my story. Tears were in my niece's eyes—
Tears of tenderness and pity—while she planned a sweet surprise:
"I will send a flower to-morrow to those little children dear."

Could I tell her that their childhood had been gone this many a year?
—Mary J. Porter, *Harper's Bazar*.

HUMOR OF THE DAY.

A peck of trouble—Henpeck.
Can't be cured—The stage ham.
Brevity is often a sign of the poverty of wit.
The gifted youth is simply fashion-plated.
Losing caste—An operation for strabismus.

Sunshine is molasses on the bread of nature.—*Washington Star*.

We hate to see girls throw kisses. The average girl is such a bad shot.—*Mercury*.

Take love and taxes out of life, and not much is left.—*Indianapolis Journal*.

The man who can't sing and has a baby if usually made to sing.—*Elmira Gazette*.

The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that wields the hammer a few years later.—*Life*.

People who live in glass houses should raise early vegetables for the New York markets.—*Life*.

The New Theory: "Do you believe in a single tax?" "Not a single tax!"—*Lowell Citizen*.

You cannot tell from the number of its feet how long a run a poem will have.—*Norristown Herald*.

Funny, when a man starts out on a business career the more checks he receives the sooner he gets there.—*Binghamton Leader*.

It is one of the curiosities of natural history that a horse enjoys his food most when he hasn't a bit in his mouth.—*Texas Siftings*.

"It seems that I am not in it," said the boy to the shark. "No," replied the shark, picking its teeth, "you're out of sight."—*Chicago News*.

What is more pathetic than to see the simple faith with which a bald-headed man will buy an infallible hair restorative from a bald-headed barber?

Canine Person—"I am extremely sorry my dog has bitten your wife, sir." Affable Old Gentleman—"Don't mention it, I pray, sir; I like a dog to be a dog."—*Judy*.

The kiss I stole from Eulis,
With my choicest poem ranks,
Because, to tell you truly,
It was, "Returned with thanks."
—*Judge*.

Barker—"She didn't return your bow, did she?" Parker—"No. The next time I meet her I will explain to her the reason I was with you."—*Munsey's Weekly*.

"That Sallie Harkins is the greatest girl for getting bargains at second hand." "Isn't she? I understand she's going to marry a widower."—*New York Sun*.

A lady who advertised for a girl "to do light housework," received a letter from an applicant who said her health demanded sea air and asked where the lighthouse was situated.

Mrs. Homeseeker—"These apartments are charming and the price is certainly reasonable. Are you sure there are no nuisances connected with the building?" Honest Agent—"Well, mum, it has a janitor."

Where Coral Comes From.

The largest quantity and the hand-somest corals come from the Algerian coast. These coral grounds have been worked since the middle of the sixteenth century. Other coral grounds are found on the coast of Sicily, Corsica, Sardinia, Spain, the Balearics and Provence. More than 500 Italian barks and over 4200 persons are engaged in the coral fishery. Beside these, French and Spanish barks are engaged in the same occupation. The Italian fishermen pay a high royalty to the French Government for their right of fishing for corals on the Algerian coast. There are more than sixty workshops in Italy, forty of which are in the little town, Torre del Greco, at the foot of Vesuvius. These shops give employment to about 9000 persons, mostly women and children.