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Out of 110,000,000 souls comprising the Russian Empire, fully 80,000,000 are engaged in agricultural pursuits.

A French company is now building a street car line in Tashkend, the Capital of Russian Turkestan, where, not very many years ago, any white man who had visited the place would have lost his head.

New York contains an average of 37,675 inhabitants to the square mile, or fifty-eight to the acre. The population varies from three to the acre in Ward Twenty-four to 474 in Ward Ten. This last, which is at the rate of 303,360 to the square mile, is the densest in the world.

Since 1855 the course of the River Volga, in Russia, has rapidly been changing, until the city of Saratoy, once called the "Golden Port of the Volga," is left three miles away from its banks. Saratoy is a well-built city of about 125,000 inhabitants. Its trade, which was very large, depended mainly on the river.

There were published last year in this country 4665 books, according to figures just compiled. In this total, which has been surpassed in the last six years only by the number credited to the year 1886, are included new editions of American books and reprints and translations of foreign books, as well as original works.

In his "Race Prussienne," Quatre-fages maintains that the Prussians are not Germans. Ethnographically they are a different race, he says, but they have acquired the Teutonic tongue, just as the Highlanders have received English. According to him, the German is the vassal of the Prussian now, as he was of the Roman in the past.

Doctor Sargent, the Director of the Harvard College Gymnasium, and an authority on physical training, has for years been making a careful study of the human form. As a result of his investigations he has determined upon what would be considered the ideally perfect man from a physical point of view. W. C. Noble, the sculptor, is to prepare a bronze cast based upon these measurements which will be exhibited at the Columbian Exposition.

Loyalty to the lost cause dies hard in England, confesses the San Francisco Chronicle. The death of Mary, Queen of Scots, is still commemorated, and those who hold the Stuarts in veneration may lay flowers upon the tomb of this loveliest and most unfortunate of her race. There is something touching in this reverence, and in this country we could have more of it with profit, for the number of heroes that we hold in grateful remembrance is painfully small.

A curious movement of population is noted by the New Orleans Picayune in Illinois. Sixty-nine cars recently left Peoria for Central Iowa loaded with farmers, their families and household effects. The emigrants are mostly from McLean County, Ill. There were in all 112 adults and eighty-two children. They said that they were moving because their Illinois lands had grown so valuable that they could not farm them with profit, so they sold out and bought lands equally good but much cheaper in Iowa.

The Christian population of the world is ascertained to be about five hundred millions, constituting a third of the inhabitants of the earth. It is an interesting fact, remarks the Atlanta Constitution, that the increase within a century and a half has reached this number from only 200,000,000. A year ago the progressive nation of Japan revolutionized the Government and adopted a more popular form. At the first election for members of their Parliament it was found that several Japanese believers in Christianity had been chosen by popular suffrage. There are now thirteen Christian Japanese in the present Parliament and many offices of note are held by Japanese of the Christian faith. In fact, this beautiful country must soon take rank among the Christian nations, and when we consider how near it may be made to us commercially by the construction of the Nicaragua Canal, as well as by rapid transit across the American continent, we may expect our people of the twentieth century to become nearly as familiar with Japanese as they are with Europeans.

IN THE BATTLE.

If a trouble binds you, break it;
Life is often what we make it;
Good or ill—and so we take it;
Let not disappointment fret you,
If a seeming ill beset you,
Cast it off, and hopeful get you
On your way—
As you make it, so you take it,
In the battle every day.

If your genius slumber, wake it;
For our life is what we make it;
As we shape it, so we take it;
If we hunt for care or sorrow,
We shall only always borrow
Trouble from a better morrow
Every day—
As we make it, so we take it—
So the life will run away.

If the heart is thirsty, slake it;
If a blessing offers, take it;
For our life is what we make it;
Joy abounds in happy faces;
Pleasure lives in rosy places;
Let us court the goodly graces
By the way;
And we'll take it as we make it
In the battle every day.

Dig the garden, smooth it, rake it;
For the math is what we make it;
As you work it, so you take it;
Sit not idly hoping, dreaming—
Wrapt in fancy's futile teeming;
Victory does not come by scheming—
Strike and stay!
As you make it, so you take it,
If you faint not by the way.

—M. V. Moore, in Detroit Free Press.

HER LITTLE JOKE.

MISS JOCELYN is looking out of the window. It is a dreary day, and there is nothing to be seen but the garden, with its heavy heated roses drooping under the down-pour, and the village street beyond, now fast becoming a rapid water-course.

"I call this the dullest place in existence," said Miss Jocelyn, half aloud—"the very dullest."

She does not finish her sentence, but turns to the massive pier glass to look at the reflection of herself—a handsome girl in a smart frock. After one glance she turns back to the window with a sigh.

"What's the use? One might as well wear sackcloth trimmed with ashes in this place, for all the people there are to see one's gowns. It was much more fun at school, after all."

"Why"—suddenly craning forward—"if that isn't that frumpy little Miss Blake with Mr. Stanford, and he is holding his umbrella over her! She has got his arm, too! I wonder how he likes it? Poor man—I wonder if he ever notices whether a woman is old and plain or young and pretty!"

"Now he's gone splash into a puddle, and she is actually looking up at him and blushing and laughing. Oh, what a joke. Fancy her blushing! Why she must be forty if she's a day—quite forty. And these little curls bobbing about as she goes!"

"I wonder if her sister makes her wear her hair like that? I wonder if she is in love with him? Poor old soul!"

Mr. Stanford is a curate, but he is a man first and afterward a cleric. Strong, manly, gentle, he plays cricket with the village boys, is ready to gossip for a few moments with the old gaffers, is a member of the debating society as well as the rowing club.

But Miss Jocelyn is young, and is not yet able to grasp more than the fact that she is better looking and better dressed than most of the girls whom she knows.

So to her Ruth Blake is a ridiculous sight, and Mr. Stanford's quiet courtesy, which he would extend just as readily and pleasantly to his washerwoman, is a "good joke."

She watches them part at the Misses Blake's little green gate, and thinks she can see Miss Ruth's upward glance and smile at the fine face above her before Mr. Stanford turns and comes striding and splashing back through the puddles.

Then, having nothing else to do, Miss Jocelyn plans a pretty little piece of mischief, which she promptly sets about carrying out. She has one gift, this handsome Miss Jocelyn; she is very skillful with her pen, and after a little practice can imitate almost any handwriting.

And now she remembers that there is in the study a letter of Mr. Stanford's to her father, and her eyes sparkle with delight.

"What fun to send poor old Miss Blake a love letter! Perhaps she has never had one. It will be a kindness, positively! How she will blush and simper—silly old thing! Well, serve her right! When there are so few young men in a place, what business have old maids strolling about with them under umbrellas."

"Miss Cornelia's a lying down, Miss Ruth. She has one of her bad headaches, and she says as how no one is to disturb her. And your tea is ready and waiting, Miss."

green; yet her fair hair—which the wind and rain have ruffled and made to look like a halo about her meek, small face—paleful curve of her lips, and her slightly flushed cheeks, render her appearance not altogether unpleasing.

She eats her simple tea quickly, glancing from time to time at a book which she has propped up against the milk jug—a book Mr. Stanford mentioned incidentally one day, and which she has obtained from the village library.

The next morning Miss Ruth gets a letter. She knows the handwriting upon the envelope before she opens it.

"Parish matters, of course," she says to herself. "Perhaps it's about the school treat."

She opens the envelope, unfolds the note within and is reading it slowly, when suddenly she utters a low cry, her breath comes fast and the familiar world about her grows in a moment strange and unreal.

For it is a love letter. She is thirty-three, and this is her very first.

And from such a man—the man whom she has looked up to and revered and followed so humbly and modestly ever since she first saw him! She goes over to breakfast with a flushed face, quivering lips and radiant eyes.

"Miss Cornelia's just on the ramp this morning, miss," says the little maid warningly, as she meets Ruth in the narrow passage that does duty for a hall.

Miss Ruth nods and smiles as if this were the pleasantest intelligence possible. Cornelia's diatribes this morning fall upon heedless ears.

Ruth answers at intervals, "Yes, dear," and "No, dear," and "I will see to it, sister," as in duty bound; but her heart and soul are filled with one thought—that wonderful letter.

After breakfast, Miss Cornelia goes out to visit her district. Then Miss Ruth takes up her pen and writes tremblingly out of the fulness of her heart:

DEAR MR. STANFORD—Your letter has surprised me very much. I scarcely know what to say, except that I am most grateful to you. It is so good of you to love me as you say you do, and love has always seemed such a beautiful thing to me, though I never thought that it was likely to come to either my sister or me. But I am very, very glad to have had your letter, and shall always be so, even if you change your mind, for, indeed, I am not worthy of all the good things you say of me. Still, whatever happens, I shall always feel happy to know that you once thought as you have written. And I beg you will think the matter over well. Though it seems impertinent of me to advise you, yet I think only of your good. And I am always your faithful friend,

RUTH BLAKE.

She reads the letter over several times, and then shakes her head.

"How poorly I have said it!" she thinks. "But he is so kind; he will understand that I mean well."

The curate, when he receives the gentle, humble epistle, is filled with dismay. He paces wildly up and down his small sitting room.

"Somebody has played a cruel, heartless trick upon that poor little woman, and I have to face her and tell her so. I would rather be shot."

He drinks his scalding tea in great gulps, and is glad of the pain it causes him.

"But what am I to do? Go and tell a woman—a kind, gentle, little lady—coarsely and brutally to her face, that she has been played with and insulted; that I never dreamed of loving her; that it is impossible for me to do so? Oh, cruel and cowardly! How can I strike a gentlewoman, or indeed any woman, such a blow as that?"

He rests his head upon his hands and groans.

After a while he reads the letter over again slowly. He reads between the lines and seems to see a soul laid bare before him, and he realizes how much that means to her. What a new flood of light has been poured suddenly upon that sad, unselfish life!

And there is no help for either of them. He must do it? Well, then, let it be done at once.

Mechanically he takes his hat down from its peg and goes out into the street, walking with his head bent down, seeing nothing, hearing nothing until he is close to the little green gate; then a child's clear, high voice reaches his ear.

"My g'annie made it," she says. "Ain't it pretty?"

"It's a beautiful doll," a gentle voice answers. "Is it a good baby?"

"Welly dood," the child says, tucking the rag doll under one chubby arm. "Dive me a wose, please."

Miss Ruth plucks one of the few remaining June roses, one of the prettiest, and puts it into the little outstretched hand.

As she turns to look after the child Miss Ruth sees him and pauses shyly. Something has to be said, so he comes forward.

"What a lovely evening!" he exclaims, though he scarcely knows whether it rains or whether the sun shines.

"Yes," she answers. "Won't you—were you—will you come in?"

He follows her into the house with an intense longing for something, however dreadful, to happen to him, and save him from what is to follow.

Ruth takes him into the dining room. He feels vaguely that his task is becoming more difficult. In the bare, chill little drawing room he could have said his say better. But she brought him straight into the sanctuary of her home, and again he feels oddly that her life lies open before him.

There is her work lying folded together. What a tiny thimble! He glances down at her small bare hands. She has taken off her ugly gloves. What a bit of a woman for a strong man to fight!

What a gentle life to be marred and shattered by a bitter shame!

Still Mr. Stanford does not speak, but stands there before her, looking very pale. His back is to the window and she cannot see his face well, but the light shines full upon hers.

"I did not show my sister your letter," she begins hesitatingly. "I thought I had better wait—that perhaps you would change your mind, think differently about it all, and then it would be best that only we two should know."

She does not say a word about changing her own mind. She stands there before him, a sweet, fair woman, in spite of her old-fashioned gown and her oddly arranged hair.

She looks at him with smiling, steadfast eyes, and bids him take or leave her as pleases him best. And his courage to hurt, wound, perhaps kill her, fails him. In a moment his resolution is taken. He strides hastily forward.

"Ruth, do you love me?" he asks, holding out his hands. And the calm of her face breaks up as she sinks into his arms.

"Oh, so much—so much!" she almost sobs. "But I am not worthy of you. You should marry some one else, ever so much better and younger and prettier than I. Do you know," hiding her ashamed face and confessing it as she would have confessed a sin, "I am thirty-three."

"And I am thirty-four," he answers. "Dreadful isn't it?"

When Miss Jocelyn hears the news, she goes away suddenly on a visit to some friends.

Three years have passed, and Laura Jocelyn is older, sadder, wiser. She has loved and suffered, and learned to sympathize with others. But she has never seen Mr. Stanford or his old maid wife again.

When she returned home the marriage was over, and they were gone to his new living.

"This was the worst thing I ever did," she says sadly to herself. "I will go and confess, and tell him how sorry I am. What a horrible thing to have ruined two lives!"

So she goes on her penitent errand to the small town forty miles away. On getting out of the train she asks the way to the vicarage, and walks there slowly.

A child's laugh startles her from her bitter musings, and she looks up and across the sweetbriar hedge that is in bloom at her side, for it is July again.

She sees but dimly an old-fashioned garden, a quaint, rambling house, for that is Mr. Stanford himself standing so close to her that she could almost touch him.

And who is that lady, the pretty little woman in the dainty gray gown, her fair, wavy hair knotted close to her head, and her eyes shining with happiness?

With a gasp Miss Jocelyn recognizes her. That is—no!—that was Ruth Blake.

"Now let him come to me," the little woman cries gaily. "Harry, you are spoiling the child. Let him come to his mother."

Ruth stoops down and holds out her arms, and a tiny figure in white rushes wildly for a little distance toward her, and then totters unsteadily, and finally sits down plump upon the grass, the performance being hailed with a shout of laughter from the father, echoed more softly by Ruth.

Under cover of their mirth Miss Jocelyn steals away. She has received forgiveness unasked, and she has the sense to see that to apologize to either of these two happy, blessed people would be an impertinence.—Boston Globe.

Frogs' Legs Are Dainty.

It is not a hundred years since Dr. Kitchener, in his quaint old book, "A Cook's Oracle," gave among culinary curiosities, with "roasted horse and lizards in hot broth," "fried frogs." Yet a dish of frogs' legs is to-day a dainty dish that almost any one will appreciate. It has been estimated that over 40,000 frogs' legs are used in New York in a single season. When it is remembered that they seldom sell for less than fifty cents a pound, it will be seen that they are no inconsiderable feature of our markets. They will be in market in the spring time, being in prime condition in the latter part of April and in May. The only part of the animal used is the hind legs. The finest quality of frogs' legs come from Canada. They are brought to market skinned and ready for use. All that is necessary is to twist off their claws. Sprinkle them with salt and pepper to broil them; dip them in sweet oil, squeeze over them a few drops of lemon juice and lay them on a broiler. Broil them very carefully, about five minutes on each side, until they are a very delicate brown. They should be served with a maitre d'hotel butter.

A more familiar way of cooking frogs is to fry them. Wipe them off, season with salt and pepper, squeeze a few drops of lemon juice over them if you wish; dip them in beaten egg and then in the finest sifted bread-crumbs. Lay them in a frying-basket so that they do not touch and plunge them into a kettle of boiling fat. When they have fried for five minutes lift them up, lay them on a hot platter, and serve them with a little decoration of green. Tartare sauce is very good with them. No one who eats frogs' legs cooked in either of these ways will be tempted to try the most elaborate fricassée of frogs' legs.—New York Tribune.

The gossip believes half she hears and tells the other half.—Elmira Gazette.

SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL.

France now produces incombustible shoes.

There are twenty thousand different kinds of butterfly.

Animal life ceases to exist in the ocean at a depth of one and a half miles.

Fifty-one metals are now known to exist. Four hundred years ago only seven were known.

There is talk of putting a fleet of electrically propelled launches on the lagoons at the Chicago World's Fair.

It has been found that milk can be thoroughly sterilized by heating it to a temperature of 140 degrees Fahrenheit.

A recent improvement in making water conduits consists in imbedding wire netting in the cement used. The piping thus made is greatly strengthened.

J. J. McDonnell, Day Chief Operator in the Western Union Telegraph office at Tacoma, Washington, has developed a sextuple system of telegraphy and applied for a patent on it.

Frederick Schwatka, who once experienced a temperature of seventy-one degrees below zero in the Arctic regions, is said to be the only civilized being who ever endured such cold.

The Dead Sea loses every day by evaporation several million tons of water. This enormous mass is easily drawn up by the rays of the sun, the valley wherein the sea lies being one of the hottest upon the globe.

The skeleton of a whale, over 100 feet long, has been discovered buried in the sands on the shore of Baranoff Island, off Alaska, far above the high-tide mark. It is supposed to have been there hundreds of years.

Pipes of cement, in which wire netting is imbedded, are now manufactured in Berlin, Germany. The wire netting is said to greatly increase the strength of the pipes against bursting, so that they are well adapted for water conduits.

Recent experiments show that the permanency of the power in magnets is greatly increased by heating them in steam and remagnetizing them. When this has been done several times the magnet will suffer very little from heat.

When Portland cement is mixed with water and used in atmosphere below the freezing point it will set, but rapidly disintegrates. It has recently been found that the mixing of a small amount of caustic soda will overcome this difficulty.

To say that Venus and Jupiter recently came in conjunction is a figure of speech, by which is meant that Venus, in running her orbit, swings into the line of sight from the earth to Jupiter. Jupiter is really 1400 times as large as Venus, and their distance apart is more than 400,000,000 miles.

A French physician is authority for the statement that the regular tramp of marching soldiers is much more harmful to brain and body than the less regular walk of the ordinary pedestrian. According to the scientist, walking ten miles in line is as exhaustive as walking twenty at a go-as-you-please gait.

A novelty in the line of building material comes from Germany, where a firm has perfected a means by which sawdust is mixed with an acid and the whole is then pressed into the required shapes. The process makes the material non-combustible. It is lighter than iron or steel and stronger than wood, being also very cheap.

Electric heating is now attracting great attention, due in part to the success which has lately been made in street-car work, but more particularly to the increase in the possibilities of obtaining current at a reasonable figure. The strides made in the transmission of power from a cheap source has opened up a very wide field for this branch of the electric art.

Miss Eleanor Omerod is the most distinguished entomologist of England. Her first object in taking up the science, it is stated, was to save the farmers' grain from destruction, and in order to render herself familiar with the habits of insect life, she often spends hours stretched upon the ground studying them. She has been appointed Consulting Entomologist to the Royal British Agricultural Society.

Electricity Serves All Purposes.

Wondrous boasts are made in this country of the progress of electrical science, and many Americans seem to imagine that the United States leads the world in this regard. But the fact is claimed that little Switzerland is far ahead of all competitors in the use of electricity. Its rushing streams and waterfalls are everywhere utilized for the production of electric power. Arrangements have just been completed at Maloja Kursaal for heating a great hotel by this agent. The heaters are to be scattered about the buildings, just as stores or steam coils would be, and it is understood that the current is to be employed for cooking too. The circuits run, of course, into every room, and at night nothing will be easier than to unship one of the little lamps and put in the wires for a hot-water "grog" boiler, or for a bed-warmer, both of which will stay warm through the whole night, and at one predetermined heat.—New Orleans Picayune.

Of course a fellow is pushed for time when an officer hustles him into a penitentiary.—Binghamton Republican.

LIFE'S TANGLED THREADS.

A woman sits the livelong day
By a swiftly moving wheel,
While through each hand a single thread
Runs from a whirling reel;
And as the wheel turns round and round
In its unvaried track
The threads are twisted in a cord
Of mingled gold and black.

A fickle goddess sits supreme
Upon her throne of state,
While joy and sorrow through her hands
Pass like the threads of fate;
And as the wheel of destiny
Turns out life's cord, behold,
From end to end the fiber runs,
Of mingled black and gold.

Hope is the thread of shining gold,
The sable, dark despair,
And not a soul exists, but both
Are strangely blended there;
Yet when the tangled cord of life
By death's cold hand is riven,
Faith, like a silver thread of light,
Still reaches up to Heaven.
—L. P. Hills, in Atlanta Constitution.

HUMOR OF THE DAY.

A wedding trip—The broken engagement.

The minister's study—How to make both ends meet.—Life.

No form of error is more nauseating than that which lauds itself as exclusive truth.—Life.

The strange thing is that hotel runners are not the people who run the hotels.—St. Joseph News.

"We shall live by hook or by crook," said the fisherman when he married the shepherdess.—Boston Post.

That no one will take a fellow's word is not necessary proof that he will keep it.—Binghamton Republican.

If you have a Jonah among your friends don't sit down and cry about it; be a whale.—Aitchison Globe.

The professional thief is sometimes called a bird of prey, and yet he's only a robin!—Binghamton Leader.

It must not be supposed that a woman is out of temper because she moves about with a bang.—Boston Gazette.

Astronomers do not attempt to knock the spots off the sun. They only stand and look at them.—Picayune.

Wonder if this agitation against "sweat-shops" will affect parties who are running Turkish baths?—Boston Bulletin.

No wonder the swine ran down into the sea. Is there anything more rash than a rasher of bacon?—Binghamton Republican.

High-school Teacher—"Why do comedies always end with a marriage?" Pupil—"Because that is where the tragedy begins."—La Figaro.

"Who is that across the street?" "Oh, that's a very close friend of mine." "Indeed!" "Yes, he never lends me a cent."—Texas Siftings.

"Waiter, this steak is much smaller than the one I had yesterday. How's that?" "Oh, it comes from a smaller ox."—Fliegende Blätter.

Raving—Is Parsons as much of a bibliomaniac as ever?" "Yes. He paid \$500 to get his own book published last summer."—Brooklyn Life.

It is often the case that the women who give their children romantic names have husbands who do not know how to spell them.—Aitchison Globe.

Humanity appears to be very unequally divided between those who can't stand prosperity and those who can't get any to stand.—Binghamton Republican.

"Do you wear your sunniest smiles when you want to get an unusual favor from your husband?" "No; I wear my briniest tears."—Yarmouth Register.

The two-headed boy may not have so many corns in proportion to his size as other boys, but he must have a great deal more toothache.—Binghamton Republican.

Officer—"Private Huber, how is a soldier to behave when he comes in contact with a civilian?" Soldier—"That depends on how the civilian behaves."—Texas Siftings.

She—"What is that little silver design on your 'aol'?" He—"Examine it." She—"It's a tiny tree with an axe lying near." He—"Exactly. It means that I only need to be axed."—Pittsburg Bulletin.

Mrs. Childers (at 3 A. M.)—"Charles, something's the matter with baby's arm. Hear how he cries? Perhaps his arm's asleep." Mr. Childers—"Is it! Then don't wake it up—perhaps it will spread to the rest of him!"—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

Stern Father—"Are you aware, sir, that my daughter has always been accustomed to every luxury that money could buy?" The Young Man—"Yes; but less you, that won't make any difference with me. I'd just as lief marry that kind of girl as any other."—Chicago Tribune.

An American lady, visiting Paris, was continually interested in the smart little boys, in white caps and aprons, who deliver the wares of the pastry-cooks. One day she said to one of these boys, who had brought her some cakes: "Ah, I suppose you get the benefit of one of these cakes yourself sometimes?" "What do you mean, madam?" "You eat a cake now and then?" "Eat them? Oh, no, madame, that wouldn't do. I only lick 'em as I come along!"—Argonaut.