

To offset the shortage in potatoes the peach crop kindly omitted its usual failure this year.

It has just been discovered that epilepsy is caused by a microbe. We shall soon hear of the microbes of love, and the microbes of hunger and thirst.

Even lumber appears to be subject to contagion; at least experienced lumbermen say that in the process of seasoning wood should be occasionally repiled and decayed or defective pieces removed, lest they infect the others.

The Philadelphia Times remarks that if England is buying American elevators and Spain is purchasing Yankee cars, we are countenancing royal institutions to the extent at least of establishing heralds' colleges over here.

It is announced from Paris that the clever chemists of the Pasteur institute have succeeded in producing food stuffs from absolutely inorganic matter, and if the report be true the time may come when a man can live on rocks if the wheat supply fails.

Rear Admiral Melville's idea of setting casks afloat to determine whether there is an ocean current across the north pole is a hopeful one. The casks are merely to be filled with shavings, and there will be no need of organizing expeditions to rescue them when they get lost.

New Zealand has decided that it would be prejudicial to her interests to enter the Australian commonwealth. The question was reported upon adversely by an investigating commission, and the report was afterward confirmed by the New Zealand parliament. The proposal will hardly be revived again for several years.

A train robbery in Minnesota and the hold-up of a stage coach in the Adirondacks, both having occurred on the same day, constitute gentle reminders of the fact that the road agents are still with us and gaining a precarious living from their nefarious business. The wonder is not that such things happen, but that they are not of more frequent occurrence in a country destitute of an efficient rural police. The comparative infrequency of road robberies under the circumstances testifies to the law abiding character of the American people.

The passion for pie cannot be floated or abated by the jeers and gibes of satirists and fun makers opines the New York Tribune. New York City is almost as insatiable as New England in its craving for this savory delight of the palate. Companies which produce and distribute pies in vast quantities and of every imaginable kind are now flourishing on an extensive scale. The wagons of these companies are among the neatest and most tasteful of the business vehicles seen in our streets. Fancies in food may change to some extent, but the sale of pies among the masses shows no falling off.

The disgrace of dying rich is possibly not so much feared as the discomfort of dying poor. We have heard it so asserted by persons of wealth whose actual practice of giving left room for no doubt of their sincerity. And the same belief is held by the thousands who, equipped with all the honors of flawless poverty, are yet sparing no pains to provide a moneyed and disgraceful end for themselves. But there does seem to be agreement among these that the way to get most satisfaction out of dying rich is to know that your money is going where you would really like to have it go. It is admitted to produce genuine anguish to be forced to give your savings to some institution which you care little about in order to keep it from relatives for whom you care less, observes Puck.

The uses of electricity for rendering homes more homelike, and relieving the burden of daily housework, have multiplied with astonishing rapidity of late. The devices now available for an establishment with a moderate income include hand lamps, ornamented candles, with miniature electric lights at their tip, lamp attachments to the faces of clocks, and even small lamps for decorative purposes. In to houses can be carried power from an economical plant for doing the larger part of housework, such as running flat-irons, coffee-mills, sewing-machines, and ice-cream freezers. The same current may be used for boiling water and doing most of the ordinary cooking. New mansions are being fitted with telephones in place of the speaking-tubes, and to correct buildings as well as town offices. Where a water-mill or a windmill cannot be used to supply power, the dynamo is run, in many cases, by a gasoline engine.

The discoveries of systems of wireless telegraphy are becoming too numerous to mention.

One of the chief uses of those South American republics is to make new histories, geographies and maps necessary every year or two.

The announcement is made that Indiana will put about 24,000,000 cans of "French peas" on the market this year. Now let Europe have another shiver.

The "touching" interest of the Italian people in the affairs of their king was strikingly manifested on the occasion of the birth of his daughter. Within two days after that event King Victor received 26,000 congratulatory telegrams and 20,000 requests for money.

Speed is becoming more and more the supreme consideration in the construction of war ships. Ships of the navy, it seems, must not only be able to fight, but it seems must also be able to run away upon occasion, and to steam great distances without stopping to take on coal, states the Baltimore Sun.

At a recent meeting of German spinners at Leipzig a table was submitted, which showed that the world's consumption of cotton was now about 14,000,000 bales annually. The United States stands at the head of the list, being credited with a consumption of 3,600,000 bales. Great Britain comes second, with 3,300,000 bales.

The value of street railway franchises in a big and growing city is exemplified in the offer which the Chicago City railway has made to the municipality in consideration of a 20 years' extension of its franchises. It offers to pave the streets it occupies from curb to curb at a cost of \$10,000 in return for the privilege it asks.

The last clause of a will which was filed for probate in Washington, D. C., the other day significantly says: "The net sum of \$188,000 left by this will is the financial result of a long life of industry and economy, and if used for good and useful purposes by those to whom it is now given is enough. And if not so used is too much."

The statistics collected during 1899 showing the damage done by lightning have been published by the weather bureau. The number of buildings damaged or destroyed by lightning in 1899 was 5527. In addition to these 729 buildings caught fire as a result of the proximity to other structures that were fired by lightning. The approximate loss in 2824 cases was not reported, owing undoubtedly to the fact that the loss was small. A conservative estimate of the total loss by lightning during the year would be \$600,000. The great majority of buildings struck by lightning were not provided with lightning rods. The same conditions prevailed in the preceding year.

Jules Verne, now long past his seventieth year, has begun his ninety-ninth story. Since he commenced writing some of his most marvelous tales have been proved to be only prophecies. For instance, we have submarine boats almost as wonderful as Captain Nemo's craft, and the journey around the world has been accomplished in much less time than that required by the mythical Fogg. If M. Verne wishes to write a novel of adventure so improbable that science will not catch up with it for a long time to come, he will have to tax his powers of ingenuity to the utmost; provided that at the same time, as in his earlier stories, he surrounds it with the specious atmosphere that imparts one of the chief charms to his narratives.

According to a writer in *Everet's Magazine* the family of the average American lives on a scale and a daily diet which would be regarded in Europe as lavish, such a one as can be afforded there only by the rich. His table is spread with abundance, not only with articles of domestic production, but of imported food stuffs. For example, his family consumes annually 1250 pounds of wheat flour, and 600 pounds of oat and corn meal, 750 pounds of meat, or about two pounds per day; 750 pounds of potatoes, 100 pounds of butter, and 300 pounds of sugar. He is the greatest coffee drinker on earth, one pound a week being required for his family's consumption. Of tea, however, he uses little, five pounds per year sufficing for his needs. His table costs him \$16 per month. He eats three meals per day, taking his dinner at noon. He retires between nine and ten at night, and rises at six in the morning.

A REAL TEST OF NERVE.

BY EDGAR WHITE.

Some years ago an eminent railroad man said: "They will build engines that will beat a mile a minute dash with a heavy train, but to operate them successfully you'll have to invent something besides flesh and blood."

And the tenderfoot who has clung to a fireman's "seatbox" while the machine under him was spinning out the miles at that rate will vigorously second the statement.

But that assertion was made back yonder in the 19th century. This is the 20th.

The Burlington had completed its eastern cut off to the Mississippi river, and one locomotive was covering the division between Brookfield and St. Louis, 175 miles.

The Northern Pacific express reached the mid-Missouri division 50 minutes late. The engine hauling it was sending aloft a geyser of steam from the safety valve and quivering all over as if enraged that in spite of its best exertions this dishonor had attached to it. And the engine driver was mean enough to slander it, by saying, "She just wouldn't make steam." If the machine could have talked it would have said something about "nerve."

A helper leaped into the cab as the engineer stepped off, and ran the engine down to the tracks leading to the round house. Then there was slowly backed up to the long line of vestibuled coaches that had come in from the Coast, a double compound, a type recently adopted by the road. The coupling was made so gently that the most sensitive passenger could not have told when the tender struck the front express car. The engineer, "Australian Jack," as the boys called him, walked over to the fireman's side and looked down the depot platform, where trucks of baggage and express were being noisily wheeled about. A tall man with an iron gray mustache emerged from the crowd and walked up to No. 850—Jack's engine. He was superintendent of the lines in Missouri.

"Jack," he said, "we're nearly an hour late. The president and two of the directors are along, and they want to catch the Iron Mountain at Union station in the morning. There's a big consolidation meeting of the Southern at Memphis tomorrow, and they have to be there. They won't wait for them if they're late. Blossom lost time out of the junction because he was afraid of the new track work, and the 'biz' uns' are 'most wild. You understand what this means to me."

Australian Jack touched his hat and inclined his head a little, but said nothing. As the superintendent turned away a messenger boy rushed up toward 850. The official stopped him and took the message from his hand. He said: "Never mind; Jack don't want that now. I'll give it to him at the station."

When 850 started there was no slipping of the drivers, no sudden jerk and shutting off of the steam. The engineer clasped the lever with a velvet touch and the wheels began to move. The start was so gradual that the great men, who were smoking their cigars in the rear compartment of the president's car frowned and wondered if the man at the throttle was of the sort that could gather up that 50 minutes out of a schedule that called for nearly 60 miles an hour.

"I think Jack will make it all right," said the superintendent; "but I'm afraid I played him a scurvy trick tonight, and one for which he will never forgive me when he learns the truth."

"What was that?" said the president.

"Well, his mother, who lived down the road a piece, had been unwell for several days, and just before starting the telegraph boy went toward the engine with a telegram. I knew it wasn't a train order because they were all in. It struck me that Jack had better not get the message just then, and I took it. It was from his sister and simply said, 'Mother is dead.'"

concluded the superintendent, with a sigh. "It was too late to get another man, and I didn't tell him."

"And he is ignorant of his misfortune?" said one of the directors.

"Of course," answered the superintendent. "It might be dangerous to let him know while making the sort of run he has to make tonight." The speaker judged from sharp experience.

The men smoked their cigars in silence. The smooth rolling cars began to gather momentum, but there was no jerking, no swinging of the solid train—just an easy slipping along as a pneumatic tired buggy might run over a velvet carpet.

The superintendent explained the distances between the stations and the men who had thousands at stake on the success of the run got out paper and figured the rate at which the miles were being thrown behind. The 34 miles to Macon were made in 39 minutes—the numerous coal switches in Macon county being responsible for the loss of five minutes. This made 55 minutes behind, and the railway magnates gloomily shook their heads.

"Boys," said the president, "I'm afraid the jig is up. He'll never make it. It's queer they refused to postpone that meeting; guess they don't want us there."

The superintendent looked at the floor and said nothing. It seemed to the impatient men in the rear car

that the express and baggage men at Macon would never get through. At last the signal was given, and the train started out on the new St. Louis cut off. After creeping through the yards, it came into the open and plunged through the rich farming lands, where the early pioneers of the middle west had fought Indians, leveled the great forests, and made history. The rock ballast road bed was as level as a billiard table, and Australian Jack had struck the schedule gait before the officers realized it. At a tiny station, 10 miles northwest of Paris, the superintendent noted his watch. Within 10 minutes the roar of the rushing express train started the echoes in the drowsy county seat of Missouri's Democratic Gibraltar, Monroe county, and a minute afterwards the red lights on the rear car were disappearing in the direction of the Mississippi. There was but one more stop until the Missouri river was reached, and the superintendent knew Jack would make the run of his life to Old Monroe.

The next 10 miles was made in eight and one-half minutes. Then the engine settled down to work. The rate was increased to 10 in eight minutes; then in seven; then in six, which was the limit and which was held without deviation. The president dropped back in his chair. He knew the man in front was doing everything humanity could accomplish. Out of every 10 miles traversed he was placing four minutes against the 55 on the debit side, and if the gait was kept up to the city limits the train would back into Union station exactly on time.

As the early dawn of the June morning crept over the Mississippi, the limited crossed the line of Audrain and invaded the soil of old Pike, the starting point of so many of Missouri's worthy sons. Some of the passengers, scenting the approach to the river, walked out into the vestibules to look at the scenery in the twilight. Then they noticed something of which they had been unaware while lying in their chairs—that the mileposts and other objects were whizzing past them at a rate they had never before experienced in all their lives. It was hard to believe that gently rocking train was annihilating distance at the rate of 80 miles an hour, but that is the story the mileposts told.

At Old Monroe there was a wait. The dispatcher had calculated on a run of only 60 miles an hour out of Macon, and had permitted a north-bound train to leave West Alton on the limited's supposed lost time. The president and directors frowned and began to look anxious again. Ten minutes were placed on the wrong side of the ledger. The officials from their observatory glared at the innocent freight engineer, and the president said something the Sundays schools books don't approve of.

It seemed so long this time before 850 struck the maximum that the president thought the engineer must have abandoned the task. He suggested that the superintendent go forward and see what the matter was, but that gentleman said:

"We are on a gradual grade, and have an unusually heavy train. He's doing the best he can. I think he'll make it."

Along the river before striking the bridge is a level stretch of road, about the best on the system. When 850 reached it she "jumped" like a race-horse. It was the first jar felt by the passengers during the trip from the central Missouri division. Along here the speed of the train was little short of a hurricane. The section was covered before the passengers hardly realized they were on it, and the train leaped over the bridge without diminution of speed. Then a smooth road, a few turns, and the heavy fog of the city obliterated the appearances of day. The officials looked at their watches.

"There's only one way he can make it," said the president. "Will there be much travel over the streets this early do you think?" he asked the superintendent.

"There'll be some," that officer replied, "but they'll open the bell valve and take the chances. If we don't strike anything you'll reach the station to the second."

Along the winding, wriggling track around the lumber yards, warehouses, glue works and factories the nerve racking rate was held with death-like tenacity. At one crossing a team escaped annihilation by hardly a hair's breadth, and the men who looked out of the glass windows in the rear could see the driver and several people gesticulating and shaking the fists in their direction. A policeman standing in a saloon door scowled and wrote something in his note book. With a roar and a rush the train shot up on the elevated, flew past the ancient levee warehouses, around the tenements in the southern district, and then took one strand of the web south of Union station and followed it to a given point; then stopped and slowly backed into the sheds.

"Gentlemen," said the superintendent, "the Iron Mountain is over on the 10th track. You have three minutes to reach it." He then hurried to the front of the train. Australian Jack leaped from his cab and waited. His face was as pale as death and his lips twitched. Soldiers tell us the bravest men lose their nerve after the battle. "Jack, my boy," said the superintendent, "you've done me a good turn

tonight and I fear I've done you a ill one. I got this message for you at Brookfield, and wouldn't deliver it then because—because—because—" "For fear I'd flunk," said Jack. He took the paper mechanically. He didn't start, as the superintendent expected, but folded it and put it in his pocket.

"I saw the boy hand you the message," said the engineer, "and you read it and looked at me. That told me the story. I knew then my poor old mother was dead, because she had been very ill and my sister had agreed to tell me how she was just before we started. I knew the worst had happened when you did not give the message to me." And Jack sat down on the step of the tender and buried his face in his arms.

The superintendent reverentially took off his hat and looked across at the network of tracks and moving switch engines. He appreciated his subordinate's devotion to duty because he himself had risen through efforts of a kindred nature.—The Criterion.

QUAINT AND CURIOUS.

The Saxons, whose original settlement is determined by the little kingdom of Saxony, derived their name from the sea, or short, crooked knife with which they armed themselves.

An old dining table at which Prince Charlie dined when he marched into England was exposed at a sale of household furniture at Moffat, Dumfriesshire, recently and was knocked down at 30 shillings.

The word rival at first meant a brook, then was applied to the persons who lived on opposite sides and quarrelled about the water, and still later it was understood as applying to contestants for any desired object.

When the King of England goes a-traveling he does not jump an ordinary train and take any vacant seat he can find. Instead of that he has his own business car, which has the right of way over almost any railroad in Europe. This car which is just being finished, has been under spasmodic construction for over two years. It is said to run very smoothly, and, as soon as the necessary trial trips have been held, it will be turned over to His Majesty.

A phenomenon attended an earthquake that visited a little town in Mexico recently. Having wrecked several houses in the town the tremor passed on to a lake in the neighborhood, the waters of which it put into violent agitation. The agitation ceased after a few minutes, and then the water gradually disappeared, leaving the bottom of the lake exposed, when it was seen that the earthquake had opened a fissure in the bottom, and thus drained it.

Among the various proofs of the relics brought to London from Toulouse being the relics of St. Edmund is the fact that when the shrine at Bury was defaced in A. D. 1539, no mention was made of anything having been then discovered inside it. Another important piece of evidence is that upon a verification of the relics at Toulouse in A. D. 1644, no bones were missing save the radius of the forearm, which was the identical relic alone mentioned in later records of Bury Abbey.

One of the most curious perquisites in connection with King Edward's coronation is the right of one of the peers to claim the bed and bedding used by the Heir-Apparent on the night preceding the coronation! In olden times this was a perquisite of considerable value, as the "bedding" usually consisted of richly embroidered coverlets of velvet or silk, with priceless hangings of cloth of silver and gold. Nowadays it is, of course, of less value, excepting from the point of view of the quaintness of the privilege.

In the village of Hirzbach, near Asbach, Germany, there is a peculiar garden gate. In the year 1820 Ludwig Marenbach, a farmer, planted at the entrance of his garden two beech trees, which he united in one arch. Over this arch the cultivator made several rows of small arches with all kinds of figures with some small branches. Today the whole in its blooming green dress seems like a living triumphal arch. The many years it has existed makes it look more like a work of nature than the work of a human hand.

A Truck Farmer's Paradise.

How great are the possibilities of Hawaii as a fruit and vegetable growing country will be understood when it becomes known that four crops of potatoes have been produced in succession on the same piece of land within 12 months. Radishes become edible 10 days after sowing. Strawberries are of the finest flavor.

Cabbage grows all the year and it apparently makes no difference whether it is planted in the spring, summer, autumn or winter. Parsley once sown grows forever, apparently. Lima beans continue to grow and bear for over a year, and they have to be gathered every week after starting to bear. Cucumbers bear the entire year and so do tomatoes, which, with proper attention, bear for years. Raspberries bear for six months.

Pineapples come into bearing when the plants are four months old and bear in abundance for years. Lettuce can be planted at any time and it develops quickly. The same is true of celery.—Fruit Trade and Produce Record.

THE GREAT DESTROYER

SOME STARTLING FACTS ABOUT THE VICE OF INTEMPERANCE.

Dr. John Madden Has Contributed an Especially Notable Paper to the Discussion Whether Alcohol is a Food or Poison—Inimical to the Body.

To the scientific literature produced in answer to the question, "Is alcohol a food or a poison?" Dr. John Madden has recently added an especially notable paper. Dr. Madden is a professor of physiology in Milwaukee Medical College. His article on the subject is contributed to the *Scientific American*. After a thorough review of the various experiments that have been made to solve the problem and a rehearsal of the opinions of other high authorities, Dr. Madden presents the following conclusions:

"If those small quantities of alcohol oxidized within the body are to be called foods, should we not consider the characteristics of food by increasing the normal functions of brain or muscle? "Is it not a fatal inconsistency to call any substance a food which does not give increased warmth to the body, but, instead, decreases the body's temperature, which does not protect the nitrogenous tissues from waste, but does increase their rate of metabolism; which does not give added power to the nerve cells of the brain, but, on the contrary, always decreases the quality of their products, which does not enable the muscle to contract more vigorously, but does, indeed, decrease its capability for doing work?"

"The argument has been made repeatedly and reiterated persistently in the past year or two that the fact of alcohol not being oxidized within the body was prima-facie evidence that it contributed to bodily energy. But this is proved by incontrovertible evidence to be fallacious. "Another argument much used in favor of the food value of alcohol is that physicians and it valuable in certain cases of extremely low vitality; that there are certain conditions of this kind which alcohol alone can reach.

"Such assertions as these are not easy to refute, simply because they are vague and so much of a personal equation enters into them.

"The writer has seen many cases of this kind and has had many in his own practice in which the therapeutic value of alcohol was thoroughly tested, but he cannot recall a single case in which the alcohol was known to have saved a life, or, indeed, to have been of any value as a food, and the majority of the best and most carefully educated and most experienced physicians of to-day are against alcohol in any quantity as a source of bodily nutrition.

"Considering the foregoing evidence are we not fully justified in calling alcohol a poison, meaning thereby that it is a substance inimical to the organism, producing injury in small and death in larger quantities? Are we not, moreover, by the same evidence, fully justified in denying it a place in any classifications of foods because it neither repairs tissue waste nor protects the organism, neither is it a source of organic force?"

"Let us continue to teach our boys and girls that alcohol is a poison; that the fact of its being oxidized in the body, if taken in small quantities, is not sufficient to constitute a food; and that the normal man is never benefited by it in any quantity."

The Drunkard's Limit.

Dr. Charles L. Dana, of New York, professor of nervous diseases, Cornell University Medical College, and visiting physician to Bellevue Hospital, New York City, has just written a remarkable article on "Inebriety—a Study of Its Causes, Prevention and Management." His conclusions are chiefly based upon investigations at Bellevue Hospital.

One of Dr. Dana's significant statements is in regard to the number of times that a drunkard can get drunk without succumbing to insanity or death. Dr. Dana puts the extreme limit at 2000 and says that only a few are able to reach the 100 mark. In his article which is contributed to the *Medical Record* Dr. Dana says: "The cases that are brought into the wards at Bellevue include all phases and degrees of alcoholism. I personally studied 350 cases in 1891, and a somewhat larger number in 1892, 1893 and 1895. I found the acute effects of hard drinking to be dissipation, sixty per cent.; delirium tremens during recovery, thirty-six per cent.; delirium tremens with complications ending in death, four per cent."

Regarding the divisions by classes of persons subject to inebriety Dr. Dana says: "It is not the day laborers, the mechanics, artisans and small tradesmen that furnish the greatest proportion of cases. Drivers, waiters, painters and liquor dealers supply a very considerable quota. It is the indoor workman, however, who is oftentimes the victim."

German Army and Drink.

The Christian Commonwealth (London, England), in an editorial note entitled "The Drink and Crime," thus comments on some statistics published in the *Kreuz Zeitung* regarding army prisons in Germany.

"This is not the only country where the drink produces crime. We are sometimes told that the drink habit of the Germans is quite harmless; that the beverage they use does not lead to evil consequences; that it is only in those countries where distilled liquors are chiefly used that the habit becomes vicious. But facts do not support this contention. In an article in the *Kreuz Zeitung*, warmly advocating temperance and the disuse of alcohol in the army and navy, the writer brings forward remarkable statistics in support of his plea. In 129 army prisons throughout Germany forty-six per cent. of all the murderers committed their crime while under the influence of drink. Sixty-three per cent. of the cases of manslaughter, seventy-four per cent. of serious injury to the person, and seventy-seven per cent. of criminal immorality are due to the same cause. In the navy, out of 1671 punishable cases during the last six years, seventy-five per cent. of the most serious cases have been due to drunkenness. Evidently the drink is the same old evil, whether in Germany, England, or any other country. Everywhere it leaves devastation in its pathway."

Age in Inebriety.

Concerning the interesting topic of age in inebriety, Dr. Dana says: "The average duration for men of the drinking habit in serious cases investigated was about fifteen years—the maximum being over forty years. Among periodical inebriates the average duration was nineteen years. In general it may be concluded that hard drinking can rarely be carried on for more than twenty years, and it generally brings the victim to grief at about the age of forty."

The Crusade in Brief.

The health of the liquor business may depend on your depending on the liquor for your health. Dr. Dana, of New York, finds that the number and proportion of woman inebriates are increasing. Alcohol causes the strength of grip to increase just after the drink has been swallowed, but this is followed by a rapid decline. How many of your friends and acquaintances are addicted to the use of liquor? Perhaps they are waiting for you to assist them to a way to be cured of their appetites.