THE PEANUT SECTION

It Takes In Portions of Virginia and North Carolina.

ENORMOUS CROPS IT GROWS.

Nineteen Counties In the Two States Produce an Average of Twelve Million Bushels a Year—The Way the Toothsome Goober Grows.

Suffolk, Va., is the greatest peanut shipping point in the world. More of the delicious goobers are raised in Nansemond county, of which Suffolk is the capital, than in any other county on earth.

If one takes the map and draws a pencil mark around nineteen counties in southeastern Virginia and northeastern North Carolina he will put a fence, so to speak, around the greatest peanut section of the world. Those counties are: In Virginia, Nansemond, Norfolk, Isle of Wight, Southampton, Sussex, Greenville and Prince George; in North Carolina, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Gates, Hertford, Chowan, Northampton, Halifax, Edgecombe, Martin, Pitt, Bertie and Washington.

This territory, which is within a radius of 150 miles from Norfolk, produces 3,000,000 bags of peanuts every year. Every bag contains four bushels, so that 12,000,000 bushels is the average annual production. The shipping centers of this belt are Suffolk, Norfolk, Petersburg and Smithfield, all in Virginia. Some peanuts are raised in Tennessee and California, but the crop of those states is a bagatelle as compared with the production of the Virginia-North Carolina territory.

The shelled peanuts are planted about the middle of May by means of a drill, similar to a corn drill, which drops one or two kernels in a place, about twelve inches apart. The soil that raises the best peanuts is light, sandy loam. It need not be rich. In fact, a great deal of Virginia land that was considered in the antebellum days too poor to raise anything on is now producing great quantities of peanuts.

Very little cultivation is required. Peanut lands are usually plowed only once or twice when the plants are small to choke out the grass.

The digging time is October, when the peanut leaves turn yellow. A plow is run under the peanut vines and throws up the goobers after the fashion of digging potatoes in the north. Poles seven or eight feet tall are stuck into the ground, and the vines are shacked around them, with the peanuts next to the pole, so that the leaves and vines form a protection from the weather. If the weather be bright and cloudless while the peanuts are curing so much the better. If rain sets in, the hulls become blackened and mildewed, which lessens the value of the crop.

Formerly all peanuts raised were picked from the vines by hand. Now machines similar to thrashers separate fully 75 per cent of the peanuts from the vines. No machine has been invented, however, that will do this work perfectly. The tendency of machines is to crack the hulls, and peanuts with cracked hulls are likely to spoil.

When the peanuts are separated from the vines the farmer sacks them and hauls them to a factory, and his work ends there. Delivered at these so called "factories" his nuts bring 3 to 5 cents a pound (each bushel containing twenty-two pounds) for the best grades and 1¼ cents to 4 cents a pound for lower grades. The nuts still have on a generous coat of dirt.

At the "factory" they are dumped first into a drum where the dirt is removed and a powder is mixed with them to brighten and polish them. At the same time two fans separate the light and shriveled nuts from the perfect ones. The nuts are then dumped on slowly revolving tables, where negro women and girls continue the process of separating the good from the bad.

When the nuts are cleaned and separated they are carefully sacked and graded according to quality and are then sold at 4½ to 6½ cents a pound to jobbers all over the country. From the jobbers they find their way to street venders, candy manufacturers and factories that make peanut butter and salted peanuts.—Exchange.

Empress Eugenie's Playfulness.

Some years ago the Empress Eugenie was a capital hand at whiling away her own and other people's time when residing at obscure watering places where the accustomed resources of royal gayety were at fault. One game which she invented and which gave much delight was this: A costly jewel was placed upon a saucer and covered with an inverted teacup. A lady then tossed them to a gentleman seated on the opposite side of the room, and if he caught the flying utensils with such a steady hand that the jewel was not displaced from under the cup the gem became the property of the lady. Of course the gallant who was to "catch" felt an intense solicitude, inasmuch as the prize for the lady which his adroitness might gain or his awkwardness lose had a value which rendered its possession exceedingly desirable and made its loss acutely felt. It is said that the emperor was the best "catcher" of them all, and when he was present the game was played with an enthusiasm which would rival that of a thickly populated nursery.

Fortunate.

"How dreadfully stout the general is getting!"

"Yes. Isn't it fortunate? Otherwise he wouldn't be able to wear all his medals."—Tit-Bits.

Why Jimmy Didn't Sit Down.

The woman who had shopped until the closing gong had sounded stood at the transfer station and awaited the suburban trolley.

"What," she wearily asked herself, "does it profit a woman if she gain the elusive bargain and loses every trace of physical freshness?"

Presently the car came along. It had the usual crowd of humanity, and the woman resignedly prepared to stand, when a grimy youth arose and tendered her his place. Protesting faintly, she sank into it guiltily and registered a vow never to shop overtime again.

In due time several seats were vacated, and the woman looked hopefully toward her knight.

"Jimmy," a friend of his was saying, "there's room inside now. Why don't you sit down?"

And the last drop of discomfort was added to the woman's cup of humiliation when Jimmy responded:

"Aw, what's the use! No sooner I'll get my legs stretched when another tired old hen will get on and I'll have to hop up!"—New York Times.

Capping Verses.

On going into the rooms of one of his friends who was absent Dr. Mansel saw on the table the opening lines of a poem in the following lofty style:

The sun's perpendicular heat
Illumined the depths of the sea.

Taking up a pen, he completed the stanza in the following witty way:

The fishes, beginning to sweat,
Cried, "Hang it, how hot we shall be!"

Dr. Watson, regius professor of divinity, had at one time been tutor of Trinity, and when he was made bishop of Llandaff an honest publican in Cambridge, who kept an inn called the Bishop Blaise, out of respect to Dr. Watson changed his sign and replaced the head of Bishop Blaise by that of Bishop Watson. This transfer drew from Mansel, who probably had some grudge against the late tutor, the following epigram:

Two of a trade can ne'er agree—
No proverb ere was juster.
They've ta'en down Blaise, you see,
And put up Bishop Bluster.

—London Chronicle.

What Is Patriotism?

What is patriotism? Is it a narrow affection for the spot where a man was born? Are the very clods where we tread entitled to this ardent preference because they are greener? No, sir. This is not the character of the virtue, and it soars higher for its object. It is an extended self love, mingling with all the enjoyments of life and twisting itself with the minutest filaments of the heart. It is thus we obey the laws of society, because they are the laws of virtue. In their authority we see not the array of force and terror, but the venerable image of our country's honor. Every good citizen makes that honor his own and cherishes it not only as precious, but as sacred. He is willing to risk his life in its defense and is conscious that he gains protection while he gives it.—Fisher Ames.

Tears and Joy.

Under the title "Tears of Joy" George Friederici writes to a Berlin paper that the custom of "weeping and howling on all occasions of great joy was general among the early inhabitants of America" and that in many tribes visited by him in South America the approved form of welcome was still to weep. "Tears of welcome," he says, are also shed by the natives of the Caribbean islands and by the Sioux, Algonquins and other North American Indians. From all that I have seen, I judge that in times past tears and joy were inseparable and that the emotion which civilized people now display at parting was once the expression of hearty welcome."

Made It Complete.

When Lablache, the famous operatic singer, was presented to Queen Victoria her majesty, who had heard of the artist's hobby, asked if it was true that he had a large collection of snuff-boxes. He replied that it was correct. He had one for every day in the year—365.

"Nevertheless, your collection is not quite complete," was the queen's response. "Here is another for leap year."—Pearson's Weekly.

The Misjudged Turk.

The rural Turk at home, when not goaded into violence by his corrupt rulers, is the very antipodes of the monster of popular imagination in England. His domestic virtues are at least equal to those of any western population. He is honest, industrious, patient, gentle and of fine natural manners.—London Times.

Just a Hint.

Chapleigh—I say, dwuggist, can you—aw—give me something to—aw—bwighten me up, doucher know? Druggist—You're in the wrong place, young man. This is a drug store, not a night school.—Chicago News.

One Advantage.

"What do you think of this idea of having dogs for caddies?" asked the old golfer.

"It's a good idea," replied the beginner. "The dogs can't laugh at you!"—London Standard.

An Old Timer.

"I guess that Tom over there is pretty old," remarked the young Tomcat.

"I should say," replied the other. "Why, he claims that once in his youth he actually saw a bootjack."—Philadelphia Press.

Near There Now.

She—They say Tom Swift is going to the bad. He—He'll have a short journey.—Pick-Me-Up.

WIT OF AN IRISH STORY.

Lost, as a Rule, When the Tale Is Reduced to Cold Type.

"Irish wit loses more in reduction to cold type than that of any other nation on earth." At least that is the opinion of a St. Louis Hibernian who himself furnishes many excellent examples of the article in question.

"When an Irishman perpetrates a witticism it is always tinged with a personality which in print or even in the retelling is often completely lost. There is always something—a wink, a smile, an arch expression, a shrug or gesture—that emphasizes the joke and must be seen to be appreciated. Sometimes an Irish witticism put into type is mistaken for mere dullness of superstition.

"I remember once hearing an Irishman tell a story about a wonderful old time king on the north coast who caught the devil at some trick and for a punishment made Old Harry carve his own head on one of the cliffs. The story was told as seriously as a sermon would be preached. No one could apparently be more sincere than the story teller. He seemed to believe the legend as devoutly as though it came directly from holy writ.

"After he had wound up the narrative, noticing a smile on my face, he stared in apparent surprise. 'Don't ye belave it? Sure, the old king's hammer and chisel is kept in the church beyant, and what better proof could ye ax?' And he gave a wink and a grin and spread out both hands in a gesture of expostulation just as a lawyer would when posing before a jury and putting his most convincing argument in the form of a question.

"It was the most exquisite bit of acting I ever saw. The tone of perfect conviction in which he told the story was inimitable; then the contrast from solemnity to comic dismay at the idea of any one being so grossly incredulous as not to believe the story and the wink, which indicated that he didn't believe it himself and was simply talking for amusement, were worthy of any actor that ever trod the boards. Yet in the type all this was lost. To appreciate properly the wit of an Irish story you must hear the Irishman tell it."—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

SOAP IS ANCIENT.

It Was Used by the Gauls as a Dressing For the Hair.

Who invented soap? That it is not a modern convenience is well known, but just when it came into general use is a mystery.

In Biblical times cleansing agents were used. The books of Job and Jeremiah contain the word "soap." But this is merely a convenient use of the word in translation. The Hebrew word "borith," for which it was substituted, is a general term for cleansing substances. What those substances were is unknown, but they were probably little like the modern soap.

Pliny speaks of the invention of soap by the Gauls, who, however, used it only as a sort of pomade or hair dressing. He also refers to the use of both hard soap and soft soap by the Germans. The use of fuller's earth, which has saponaceous qualities, for cleansing purposes was known to the Romans.

The French word for soap, savon, comes from Savona, France, where it was manufactured. The first manufacture of soap in London is said to have been in 1524, and previously Bristol had supplied it for use in the English cities.

According to the historian Sismondi, a soapmaker was included in the retinue of Charlemagne, king of the Franks, at the end of the eighth century.

In the excavation of the ruins of Pompeii a soap boiler's shop was uncovered, with soap in it, showing that the making of it was known in the first Christian century.

Pliny, who wrote of the eruption of Vesuvius, which destroyed the two Roman cities in 79 A. D., stated that soap was made from tallow and ashes and that the German soap was the best. Galen also referred to the use of soap.

A Gracious Negative.

"The other day I got the politest turndown," said a bond salesman, "that ever happened. I had been talking from 11 o'clock till almost noon to a man I'd known at college, trying to interest him in $10,000 of what I considered very exceptional bonds. Finally he looked at his watch.

"'Bob,' he said, 'it's lunchtime.'

"'That's so,' I answered.

"'Bob,' he went on, 'if I buy those bonds will you take me out to lunch?'

"'Of course,' I said. 'Why, sure.'

"'Well, Bob,' he concluded, 'you'd better have lunch with me this noon.'"—New York Sun.

Solitude Cures Crying.

"The best way to cure yourself of crying is to live alone," said the woman. "I used to cry an awful lot when I was married, but I hardly ever do now. It's the saddest thing in the world to hear yourself crying all alone in your flat, and what's the use anyway if there is nobody around to say 'There, there!'"—New York Press.

The Change.

"You don't love me as you used to," declared the termagant wife. "Before we were married you considered me absolutely perfect"—

"Yes," interrupted the downtrodden husband, "but now you're perfectly absolute."—Philadelphia Press.

Circumstantial Evidence.

Mrs. Coburgger—It isn't right to charge Freddie with taking that money out of your pocket. Why don't you accuse me? Coburgger—Because it wasn't all taken.—Harper's Weekly.

It Would Improve It.

A clergyman speaking on charity held that charity which was not graceful and clean was bound to fail, bringing to the donor scorn instead of gratitude.

"Thus," he once said in a Sunday school address, "a rich landlord while making the round of his tenants' cottages collecting rents met a little girl whose beauty much impressed him.

"In the shabby front room of the cottage the landlord talked for awhile with the little girl, and as he rose to go an unwonted feeling of kindliness warmed his heart.

"'Let me see,' he said, fishing in his pockets 'let me see if I haven't something to give to this dear little girl.'

"And, smiling and chuckling, he went through pocket after pocket. Finally in his hip pocket he found a peppermint drop. He dusted the fluff and lint from it and extended it gayly to the little girl.

"'Here we are,' he cried. 'I thought we had something. Here is a nice peppermint drop for you. And now,' he ended, 'what will you do with it?'

"'Wash it,' said the little girl gravely."

Beginnings of Baseball.

The history of the American game dates from the first National Association of Baseball in New York in 1858. The first series of important match games was played between picked nines of Brooklyn and New York, at Flushing, in the same year. Nearly 2,000 persons—a large crowd for those days—paid their 50 cents a head to see the contest. The rules of baseball were very crude in those days. The pitcher's position was simply limited to a twelve foot line forty-five feet from the home base, behind which he could take any number of slips he wished. All he was required to do was to pitch the ball as near as possible over the home base. There was no penalty for wild pitching or for refusing to strike at fair balls. I once saw a pitcher deliver sixty balls to a single batsman in one inning before there was a strike. Not until 1870 were there any paraphernalia for defense. Old time catchers' hands were a sight with their cracked joints and bruised palms.—Harry Chadwick in Outing.

French Bulls.

The number of phrases of the class called "bulls" to be found in polite works are not all the product of the Irish brain.

A novel that was crowned by the French academy as possessed of unusual merit contained a sentence of which the following is a translation:

"It was midnight. A man who lay in ambush listened to their conversation, but suddenly a dense, dark cloud passed in front of the moon and prevented him from hearing more."

Another phrase, written in downright seriousness by a master of French criticism, runs something like this:

"It was one of those duels in which one of the blades literally buries itself in the heart of the other."—Minneapolis Journal.

Their Little Surprise.

They were elopers, and the stern parent was supposed to be in pursuit. But he wasn't. On the contrary, a telegram awaited them at the next town. "Is it forgiveness?" asked the agitated youth as he handed it to the angelic one. She read it through and burst into tears. Then the startled youth took it and read it aloud. "Your mother and I offer congratulations. Your hasty action meets with our approval. We can now carry out a plan that we have long contemplated and that was delayed only because we had you with us. In other words, we are about to break up housekeeping and go into a flat!"—Argonaut.

Helpless!

A city man had a friend in from a north country farm on a business matter the other day, and they lunched together at a restaurant. The Cork man ate his meal entirely with his knife. When he was near the end he discovered that he had no fork.

"Look here," he said to the city man, "that waiter didn't give me a fork."

"Well, you don't need one," replied the city man seriously.

"The deuce I don't!" came from the farmer. "What am I going to stir my coffee with?"—London Opinion.

Village Schoolmaster (explaining "biped" and "quadruped")—Now, Jones, what is the difference between me and a pig? Jones—Couldn't tell you, sir.—London Opinion.

THOUGHT HIM A SPY.

An English Official's Narrow Escape In France In 1870.

The thrilling adventure which befell Captain Haworth, one of Queen Victoria's messengers, vividly illustrates the perils of the diplomatic service when a member of that corps is traversing a country where the storm and stress of war is raging.

It was during the Franco-German war, and Captain Haworth was on his way home charged with dispatches from the English ambassador, then at Tours. He got as far as the town of Le Mans, when something suggested to the excited townsfolk the idea that he was a Prussian spy.

He was arrested, carried before the juge de paix and required to give an account of himself. He explained that he was in the service of the British government and produced his credentials. He was then asked to show the contents of the little bag which, as he affirmed, contained his official dispatches. This he absolutely refused to do, though he showed them the government label and seal.

His refusal was thought suspicious, and he was plainly told that unless he could produce some more satisfactory evidence he must be prepared to die. The unlucky messenger was actually led away for execution and was saved only by some little glimmering of common sense in the captain of the guard he was committed to.

This officer remonstrated with his prisoner on the folly of refusing to satisfy the court by submitting his papers to their inspection. Captain Haworth told him that their bullets should go through that bag and his breast at the same time and that then they would have to reckon with the British government. The officer seemed to be impressed and sent him back to the authorities. After further parley the Englishman was ordered to clear out of the town with all speed, an order which he did his best to comply with.

How Kingfishers Perish.

Dreadful is the death of the stately kingfisher. A hard winter is his certain doom. Long observation seems to indicate the birds do not migrate, and from having to enter the water for their prey in winter their dripping feet quickly become incased in ice. As in hard weather it is only possible for them to alight either on snow or ice or in water, it is easy to see how the ice around their feet would quickly accumulate and bring about a lingering death.—London Globe.

Mean Thing.

"I really must get to my room," said the first college girl. "I can't afford to keep late hours, must preserve my complexion, you know."

"The idea!" exclaimed the other. "I thought the kind you bought was already preserved."—Philadelphia Press.