

IN THE ODD CORNER.

QUEER AND CURIOUS THINGS AND EVENTS.

Water Boils When It Bubbles from the Effect of Heat, Says the Unscientific Person — The Scientist Practically Comes to This Conclusion.

SOULLESS PRAYERS.

I do not like to hear him pray
On bended knee about an hour,
For grace to spend aright the day,
Who knows his neighbor has no flour.

I'd rather see him go to mill
And buy the luckless brother bread,
And see his children eat their fill,
And laugh beneath their humble shed.

I do not like to hear him pray,
"Let blessings on the widow be,"
Who never seeks her home to say—
"If want o'ertakes you, come to me."

I hate the prayer so loud and long,
That's offered for the orphan's weal,
By him who sees him crushed by wrong,
And only with the lips doth feign.

I do not like to hear her pray,
With jeweled ear and silken dress,
Whose washerwoman toils all day,
And then is asked to work for less.

Such pious falsehoods I despise!
The folded hands, the face demure,
Of those with sanctimonious eyes,
Who steal the earnings of the poor.

Those sainted faces that they wear
To church and for the public eye,
Hide tricks that are not on the square
And wickedness done on the sly.

I do not like such soulless prayers!
If wrong; I hope to be forgiven;
Such prayers no angel upward bears—
They're lost a million miles from heaven.

—Hartford Times.

SPIDER IS WEATHER WISE.

Most birds and animals have the faculty of discerning the approach of a storm with more or less accuracy, but in Yucatan they have a spider that is a marvel as a weather forecaster. This insect is known as "am," on account of the effect produced by its poison. As far as its own conduct goes the insect is inoffensive and can be handled with impunity, but if anybody had the misfortune to get one mysteriously mixed with his food he is certain to die after a few hours, and meanwhile, for some unexplained reason, will frequently ejaculate "Am! Am! Am!"—hence the name of the spider. Throughout the peninsula this is affirmed to be a fact, and if an "am" falls into fodder of horses or mules the animal that swallows it surely dies. This spider is shaped like a crab, minus the claws, and is of a bright yellow color, with brown spots; the biggest could be accommodated upon a silver dime. Its favorite abode is among the leaves of the banana shrub—commonly, but erroneously, called tree. There it spins with extreme rapidity, its web, which is prodigiously large, considering the size of its architect, and proceeds to devour flies that are unlucky enough to get entangled in the meshes of this astonishing little glutton, that is not satisfied with less than a dozen a day; that is to say, it consumes a good deal more than its own bulk. Its progeny are numerous, and appear, at first, like mere black specks, smaller than the smallest pin's head. The sky may be blue and cloudless when suddenly the am commences taking in its sails, or, rather, gathering in its net, with neatness and dispatch, crumpling the whole of the material into its diminutive body entirely out of sight. A few minutes completes the job, and the spider takes up its position on the under surface of one of the great leaves, to be killed by the gentle swaying and sheltered while the storm rages. It is for this that the am has prepared, and never is it mistaken; when the web is taken in rain will certainly fall within an hour. The moment the am is touched it feigns death and lets itself drop, showing no sign of life until again placed upon a leaf or on the ground. Many a one has lain in the palm of the writer's hand, inert, as its legs drawn close to its body, while it is examined at leisure, even being picked up in the fingers without its manifesting any life.—Chicago Chronicle.

WHEN DOES WATER BOIL?

The joke is on the teacher who said: "Water boils when it is 212 degrees Fahrenheit temperature." The girl who answered, "Water boils when it bubbles," was right and teacher wrong. Between what is called scientifically the boiling point of water and the temperature, or "when" it actually boils, is a vast but clean-cut difference. The boiling point of water at 760 millimeters, 29.92 seconds barometer, is 212 degrees Fahrenheit, but even when water is 212 degrees Fahrenheit it does not necessarily boil. If the barometer is today 30.6 seconds it boils—i. e., bubbles—at 213.1 degrees Fahrenheit. Bubbling is even the scientist's test, because he never dips his thermometer into the boiling water itself, but only in the steam from the bubbles. If the barometer is at 29.5 seconds it boils at 210.2 degrees Fahrenheit. This is the case on the seacoast. In New York, where the barometer in a year ranges between 29.5 seconds and 30.6 seconds the boiling temperature varies between 210.2 degrees Fahrenheit and 213.1 degrees Fahrenheit, a difference of three de-

grees, and many an observing housewife has noticed that meats, vegetables, etc., cook soft much more rapidly on a crisp winter day, with the barometer at 30.6 seconds, than on a dull, muggy July day, with only 29.5 seconds barometer. In Chicago water in an open vessel never boils at 212 degrees Fahrenheit, because the city is 800 feet above the level of the ocean and its highest barometer actually never goes above 29.9 seconds. The weather bureau publishes 30.6 seconds, etc., data, but this is because all barometer readings are reduced to ocean level, otherwise the actual readings of New York (normal, 29.9 seconds), Pike's Peak (16.3 seconds), Denver (24 seconds), Minnedosa (25 seconds), and Chicago (29.2 seconds) could never be compared. The highest actual reading in Chicago may be 29.9 seconds, corresponding to a boiling point of 211.9 degrees Fahrenheit; the lowest about 28.7 seconds, or a boiling point of 208.8 degrees Fahrenheit. Therefore, string beans, which are easily done in New York in one hour, take two to two and one-half hours in Chicago, because the cooking does not depend on the bubbling, but on the temperature. In a boiler with ninety pounds pressure water does not "boil" or bubble—i. e., make surplus steam—for the bubbles are steam balloons surrounded by a thin capillary shell of water, until 320 degrees Fahrenheit are reached. Water boils in Denver at 201 degrees, at Pike's Peak at 184 degrees, at Lincoln, Neb., at 206 degrees, at Chicago at 210.5 degrees, at the normal barometer of 30 seconds reduced to sea level, or the actual average barometer tension of these places. Denver needs already closed pots with screwed-on lids to boil peas and beans. If the teacher therefore again asks the cooking pupils, When does water boil? she had better accept the answer, "When it bubbles," for all scientists take this view. But if she wants to know at what temperature does water boil her pupils can only say: "Wait till I have looked up the barometer readings of our weather report and I can then figure with only a few logarithms in half an hour the exact temperature at which it boils today." In general they can say: "Water boils in Chicago, as everywhere, when it bubbles." A thermometer will then show between 209 degrees and 212 degrees Fahrenheit, but never quite reach 212 degrees in Chicago—generally it will be about 211 degrees Fahrenheit.—Chicago Tribune.

SLAYS BIRDS BY SCORES.

A bird which from both an ornithological and popular point of view is probably the most interesting of the feathered kind which finds a congenial summer home in the vicinity of Baltimore is the cowbird. As the name implies, the birds are the associates of cows, or, in fact, cattle of any kind. When this is said the entire list of their friends is complete, for the birds seem to be shunned as a serpent by others of their kind. This is not strange when the fact is known that, although the cowbirds are by no means birds of prey, they indirectly slay more feathered songsters than many of the larger and carnivorous members of the family. In appearance the birds are unassuming little creatures of somber hue, about the size of a bluebird and with a faint, dry voice which could not possibly sing its owner either into the good graces of man or beast. In the springtime they come to the fields of Maryland from their winter haunts in the south. In flocks of six or eight they roam restlessly about among the pastures, following the cattle, catching the flies and other insects that make life miserable for the dumb beasts. They are fearless of their animal friends. When mating time comes the birds develop their slaying proclivities in a peculiar manner. Possibly they have no intention of killing the young of other birds. The end is accomplished just the same. They build no nest, but the females shift the duties of motherhood by laying their eggs in the nests of other and usually smaller birds, forcing them to incubate and rear the offspring. A peculiarity of the eggs of the cowbirds is that they hatch from one to two days earlier than those of the other birds, and as the young cowbirds by this start are given time to gain strength before the rightful occupants of the nest are ready for food the result is that they are crowded to death by the foster child. At no time during the growth of the changeling do its real parents come to aid in providing food to satisfy its voracious appetite. The strangest part of the whole procedure is that the birds which are thus imposed upon do not rebel. Usually only one egg is laid in a nest, and to deposit their usual clutch of four eggs the cowbirds travel from nest to nest. To every cowbird egg deposited four or five deaths result, and their presence in the vicinity of a nest is the death blow to the domestic hopes of the rightful proprietors.—Baltimore Sun.

SNUFFY MARTIN'S PUPIL.

After the recent ceremony of receiving the freedom of Glasgow and while passing from his cab to the hotel Mr. Carnegie was greeted with the salutation, uttered in the dialect peculiar to his native Flshire: "Well done for Snuffy Martin's school!" That was the local designation of the humble scholastic establishment in Dunfermline where Mr. Carnegie as a lad conned the letters of the alphabet. The exclamation came from an old school fellow. Mr. Carnegie stopped and gave the speaker a hearty handshake.

The ink of the Greeks and Romans was merely lamblack mingled with gum in the proportion of three parts of the former to one of the latter.

The lineage of Queen Victoria is traceable directly back to William the Conqueror.

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The studied hypocrisy of men has driven me to doubt everything but man's simple ignorance.

Stops the Cough and Works Off the Cold Laxative Bromo Quinine Tablets. Price 25c.

He who despises mankind will never get the best out of either others or himself.—Tocqueville.

Suggested Others.

A New York broker, who boasted acquaintance with J. Pierpont Morgan, wrote to the multi-millionaire asking for an invitation to view the yacht races on Mr. Morgan's yacht Corsair. The magnate answered, regretting that he had loaned his yacht to a friend, adding: "If you think you would care to go on the yacht of either Mr. Gould, Mrs. Golet, Colonel Astor or any of the others that may be going down the bay, I will try and get an invitation for you, and will assure whoever may take you that they will have the honor of entertaining the cheekiest man I ever heard from."

Piso's Cure is the best medicine we ever used for all affections of the throat and lungs.—Wm. O. ENDSLEY, Vauclaire, Ind., Feb. 10, 1902.

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