

MAIDENS OF YUCATAN.

FAMOUS FOR THEIR BEAUTY OF FORM AND FEATURES.

Their Lot is Seldom a Happy One—Making Cigarettes—Visit to the Lace Makers—A Tale of Woe—Refinement and Amiability.

The meztiza women of that interesting country are famed for their beauty of form and features, abundant silky black tresses, large dark eyes and easy, graceful manners. Generally they are as good as they are pretty; but their lot is seldom a happy one; perhaps they are too numerous to be justly appreciated.

About one in eight enters the state of matrimony, and these appear to be the least happy. Owing to a great excess of female population—the consequence of many revolutions and war with hostile Indians—a large number of women depend entirely on their own exertions, and their field of labor is limited.

A few are wonderfully clever at making most beautiful fruits and flowers of sugar, but cannot earn a living by it, the time and care needed in the manufacture entailing so much expense that only the wealthiest give an order to nature than these vegetables, fruits and flowers of sugar can be imagined.

The making of cigarettes affords employment to hundreds of girls, because men, women and children there indulge in the use of tobacco. In city, town and village pretty señoritas sit behind the prison like window gratings deftly wrapping up tobacco in small pieces of the outer covering of maize, which, when toasted, imparts a delightful flavor to the cigarette.

Dressmakers are numerous. Others anxiously solicit orders to embroider in silk, thread or worsted. Pillow lace was formerly manufactured in Merida, but being expensive, there was no demand for the article. Less costly laces are largely used.

Being directed to a family of girls who supported themselves, we made our way along a broken narrow sidewalk to house No. 4 in a row of dwellings, each consisting of three rooms, and an out-house that served as kitchen.

Yes, they could make all the lace we desired, if we could advance money to buy net and thread; they had none, even to buy medicine for their sick mother. We asked them to resume the work that our arrival had interrupted.

After our order was given a tale of woe was poured forth, with an appeal for money in advance. A few days later a messenger came from our lace makers with an earnest petition for another small installment, and so on, every few days, the full price being paid long before the lace was made.

"Indeed!" said the minister's wife, calmly. "I am surprised to hear it, as all these buttons were found in the contribution box. So I thought I might as well put them to some use, so I—what! must you go? Well, be sure to call again."—West Point Alliance.

"Well, good-by," said she as she finally turned to go. "Well, if you must go, good-by," replied the other. "Sheshnuts!" called the Italian who keeps the stand on the corner.

THE BEST EDUCATION.

That Which Trains Hand and Brain Together—A Great Mistake.

Each year brings to the general public, as well as to the educators, the conviction that the present system of education is inadequate to the demands of the day. The great public, which is more directly interested in school methods than the educators themselves, are waking to the conviction that there is much useless expenditure of time and effort in putting the boy and girl through the course of study in the schools.

It has long been a great mistake of the rich to educate their children in the efflorescence of knowledge, and to teach them to view manual labor as lowering in its influences. But self preservation is one of the first laws of nature and there are comparatively few people who would rather starve to death than work with their hands.

If society is to be compactly built and enduring we must all contribute our labor, not only to make it so, but to keep it so. We have now as much of the disintegrating elements as we need. These are the criminal classes, the paupers, the insane, the bed ridden, the homeless, the aged, the firm.

If all members of society were producers as well as consumers there would be less necessity for poorhouses. Practical education might, and undoubtedly would, lessen the tendency to crime.

College bred young men are without experience on the practical side of life. The pushing, alert business man is not particularly impressed with the value of a college degree in forecasting the market or determining the value of "job lots," because he knows business is not a theory at all, but a hard fact.

Take the young fellow who left school as soon as he had mastered the rule of three, and entered upon the struggle for existence. His mind was open to all impressions—he learned business without knowing he was learning, as a child learns to talk.

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A CURIOUS PRODUCT.

INTERESTING FACTS CONCERNING SACCHARIN AND ITS USES.

The New Sweet Manufactured from Coal Tar—Used Now in Cake, Candy and Champagne—What an American Chemist Says—Medical Uses.

The curious product from coal tar known as saccharin was introduced by a French chemist two years ago, since when a factory for its production has been established in Westerhausen, near the old historic town of Magdeburg, in Prussia. Saccharin has become so formidable a rival of cane and beet root sugar for many manufacturing purposes, that the producers of these look upon the new material with great disfavor.

It has been found that in its pure state it is difficult to solution, but this defect is corrected by the addition of an alkaline bicarbonate that is added by small portions to the saccharin mixed in the water. No heat is employed, as under the influence of heat soda will transform saccharin into salicylic acid.

Saccharin is used now in cake, candy and champagne. Its sweetening power is 300 times greater than that of sugar, and it has neither the latter's nutritive nor injurious properties. It does not ferment, and is in no way altered by the action of yeast and other ferments.

Saccharin is really in many ways a remarkable product. It is the sweetest substance known. One part of it in 70,000 parts of water will give the water a perceptibly sweet taste equal to one part of cane sugar in 250 parts of water, and a solution of one in 10,000 is intensely sweet.

"Curiously enough, saccharin is in no way related to the class of sugars (carbohydrates), either chemically or physiologically. It is not only unfermentable, but it possesses an anti-yeast action; that is, it retards the ammoniacal fermentations in certain secretions. It is indigestible, inert and non-poisonous, when taken into the stomach, and passes out unchanged.

"It is a harmless and effective sweetening agent for bitter medicines, and chemical combinations of it with several alkaloids, such as quinine, strychnine and morphine, have been employed with marked success. It is also given with other remedial agents, or in pure solution as an anti-fermentative medicine in various gastric and intestinal disorders.

"Besides these medical uses, saccharin is largely employed in France as a substitute for sugar in confectionery and liquors. One part of it to 1,000 or 2,000 parts of glucose (grape sugar) makes an equivalent to cane sugar for confectioners' use, and one part of saccharin to 8,000 parts of fruit is considered sufficient for making sweet liquors.

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The Production of Petroleum.

In the Revue de Deux Mondes H. de Tchihatchef, whom it would probably be safe to take for a Russian, has a striking article on the sudden rise of Russia as a competitor of the United States in production of kerosene. Some abatement may perhaps be made from his confident predictions on account of the unaccountable partisan bias with which he writes; and his figures leave something to be desired on the score of entire self-consistency and recency, but what he has to say is nevertheless well worth the attention of our oil producers.

It is more than satisfied with the results of my trip. I have thus far succeeded in placing our full line in the hands of a No. 1 dealer in every point I have visited." He goes on to say, "This is a retail about double the prices which the most of the retailers are charging their customers at present."

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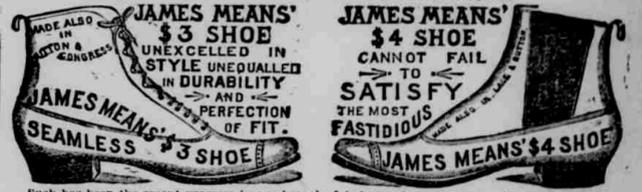
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