THE ADVERTISER.

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AFTER THE BURIAL.

BY JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

Yes, Faith is a goodly anchor;
When skies are sweet as a psalm—
At the bows it lolls so stalwart,
In bluff, bread shouldered calm.

And when over breakers to leeward
The tattered surges are hurled,
It may keep our head to the tempest,
With its grip on the base of the world.

But, after the shipwreck, tell me
What help in its iron thews,
Still true to the broken hawser,
Deep down among seaweed and ooze?

In the breaking gulfs of sorrow,
When the helpless feet stretch out
And find in the deeps of darkness
No footing so solid as doubt,

Then better one spar of memory,
One broken plank of the past,
That one human heart may cling to,
Though hopeless of shore at last!

To the spirit its splendid conjectures,
To the flesh its sweet dispair,
Its tears o'er the the thin-worn locket
With its anguish of deathless hair!

Immortal? I feel it and know it,
Who doubts it of such as she!
But that is the pang's very secret—
Immortal, away from me!

There's a narrow ridge in the graveyard
Would scarce stay a child in his race,
But to me and my thought it is wider
Than the star-sown vague of space.

You logic, my friend, is perfect,
Your morals most drearily true;
But since the earth closed on her coffin
I keep hearing that, and not you.

Console if you will, I can hear it;
'Tis a well-meant alms of breath;
But not all the preaching since Adam
Has made Death other than Death.

It is pagan; but wait till you feel it—
That jar of our earth, that dull shock,
When the plowshare of deeper passion
Tears down to our primitive rock.

Communion in spirit! Forgive me,
But I, who am earthy and weak,
Would give all my income from dreamland
For a touch of her hand on my cheek.

That little shoe in the corner,
So worn and wrinkled and brown,
With its emptiness confutes you,
And argues your wisdom down.

A QUEER CHINESE TALE.

A Story that Might Have Been Told in the Arabian Nights.

From the London Telegraph.

A correspondent forwards the following illustration of superstition amongst the Chinese with reference to a very ancient and widespread belief that the fox has the power of assuming the human form to lead mortals to their destruction. The same power is also ascribed to the badger by the Japanese. In this case the sto y is given as a true one, and the facts are stated to be well known to every one living in the great street outside of the Chien Men (Front Gate), at Pekin, where the affair is supposed to have occurred:

A certain Ningpo man kept a druggist's shop at Pekin. Having made a good deal of money by it he determined to commence a wholesale business as well as the retail one. He therefore bought a warehouse for storing drugs, and put it in charge of a nephew. His venture proved eminently successful, and he grew richer daily, principally for the extraordinary reason that the drugs stored in the warehouse were less liable to get damp or moldy than anybodys else. As the nephew was at work in the warehouse, he used constantly to notice the prett'est girl he had ever seen passing by the door. Though he sorely longed to try to make acquaintance with her, he was restrained by her modest and retiring demeanor. Time went by, and one day an old gentleman with a long beard, and leaning on a staff, called at the uncle's shop. In the course of conversation it appeared that he came from the borders of Sheuai and Kansu, and had originally fled to Pekin to escape from the Mahometan disturbances in the west. Finally he said that he had often remarked the nephew at work in the warehouse, and had been struck by his steadiness and diligence, and he would like to marry his only daughter to him. He had sufficient money to make liberal arrangements with regard to the trousseau and wedding presents and would not quarrel about terms. The young man, being so far from his home at Ningpo, was not betrothed to anyone. His uncle, therefore, gladly accepted the proposal. As both parties were strangers in Pekin, everything was settled and the marriage ceremony performed without any unnecessary fuss or formality. When the time came for the bride to unveil, the bridegroom, who had never yet seen her, was most anxious to see what she was like. At the first glance, what was his joy to discover that she was the girl he used to see walking past the warehouse. The marriage was a happy one. He was the fondest of husbands, and she the most loving and dutiful of wives. Before long the young man's father in Ningpo, wishing to see his new daughter-in-law, wrote and told his son to bring her home on a visit. The son accordingly made preparations to start off as soon as possible. For the last day or two before his departure, the uncle, who had not been home for many years, was constantly coming to his house, as he had a thousand things to talk about—reminiscences to recall, messages to be delivered and the like. When the moment for them to commence the journey actually arrived, the uncle went across for the last time to say good-bye, but, to his astonishment, neither nephew nor niece could be found. After a fruitless search he went to the girl's father to see if he could learn anything there. But there was no house standing, merely two or three wretched little rooms in ruins, without doors or windows. He made enquiries among the neighbors, but none of them knew anything of the old man or the house. Everything was then plain. The old man and his daughter were foxes, and had made away with the young husband. But stranger than anything else was the fact that from that day forth the drugs stored in the warehouse became just as subject to mould as those kept anywhere else.

Lincoln and Douglas as Lawyers.

I. N. Arnold's address before the Illinois Bar Association.

Lincoln and Douglas were both self-educated and each the builder of his own fortune. Each became very early the recognized leader of the party to which he belonged. Douglas was bold, unflinching, impetuous, denunciatory and determined. He possessed in an eminent degree the qualities which create personal popularity, and was the ideal of his friends. Both Lincoln and Douglas were strong jury lawyers. Lincoln, on the whole, was the strongest jury lawyer we ever had in Illinois. Both were distinguished for their ability in seizing and bringing out, distinctly and clearly, the real points in a case. Both were very happy in the examination of witnesses; I think Lincoln was the stronger of the two in cross examination. He could compel a witness to tell the truth when he meant to lie. He could make a jury laugh, and generally weep, at pleasure. Lincoln, on the right side, and especially when injustice or fraud were to be exposed, was the strongest advocate. On the wrong side, or on the defense where the accused was really guilty, the client with Douglas for his advocate would be more fortunate than with Douglas.

Lincoln studied his cases thoroughly and exhaustively. Douglas had a wonderful faculty of extracting from his associates, from experts and others, by conversation, all they knew of a subject he was to discuss and then make it so thoroughly his that all seemed to have originated with himself. He so perfectly assimilated the ideas and knowledge of others that all seemed to be his own, and all that went into his mind came out improved.

Gathering India Rubber.

Having passed fully three years on the southwest coast of Africa, as trader for an English firm, I will endeavor to describe the manner in which India rubber is procured in that country, as India rubber formed the staple product of the district where I was located.

The natives are in a very rude, uncivilized condition. They have no currency, and do all business by bartering the native products for manufactured stuffs. Their wealth consists chiefly in the number of slaves they possess, who fish, hunt and keep their plantations in good order.

When rubber has to be collected, from four to ten slaves get their flint muskets in order, each carrying, in addition, a long, sword-shaped knife called a machette, a number of calabashes or jars to collect the juice of the rubber vine, and a little food that has been cured in smoke, as they can find plenty of sustenance in the bush without carrying it about with them from place to place.

The vines are in some cases near to the towns, but generally the natives had to go several days' journey into the bush before they can sit down and commence business. The vine itself is of a rough, knotty nature, about as thick as a man's arm, and grows to a length of fully 200 feet. Its leaves are glossy, like those of the South American rubber tree, and a large fruit, much liked by the natives, is gathered from it. I have tasted it, and found it very palatable, being slightly acic. This vine (what its scientific name is I don't pretend to know) yields several grades of rubber, each of different commercial value, the best quality being taken from the highest part, and the poorest from the bottom.

With their knives or matchets, the natives slash the vine in several places, and put broad leaves directly underneath the wounds for the juice to drop on, and which, being of a strong, adhesive nature, none of it gets lost. When the top part of the vine is bled, calabashes, or jars, are placed with their openings to the wounds, so that none of it may drop on the branches of the tree, and so get lost; but it is not often they trouble themselves climbing, unless the vines happen to be scarce in the vicinity. The entire day they devote to cutting; next day they gather what was cut the day previous, and so on. Each evening, after collecting, they put all the juice they have into several iron pots, or earthen vessels of native manufacture, and boil it; at the same time they can greatly improve the lowest quality by adding a little salt, and the more they boil it the better it becomes. When sufficiently boiled the water is poured off and the juice is allowed to cool, when it is fashioned according to the grade—ball, flake, mixed or tongue—and it is ready for the market. In this way about twenty or thirty pounds a day is generally collected. It is then taken to the factory, and there exchanged for guns, cloth, rum, etc. When received at the factory it is carefully marked, classed, weighed and put into casks for shipment. It contains so much water that 20 per cent. is deducted from the weight of each cask, as that is about the amount of shrinkage on the voyage. This is, however, a loss to the native, as it is deducted from him when selling.

The Sea of Galilee.

Prof. Bartlett.

Riding by the foot of Hattin, over the place where, 700 years ago, Saladin annihilated the crusaders' power in Palestine, we at length reached a ridge where we looked out on the distant hills of Basham, and far below us on a dark blue pear or harp-shaped sheet of water, lying snugly in a deep inclosure of high brown hills. Though less than thirteen miles long and seven miles broad, yet, measured by the events it has witnessed, it is a kind of Pacific ocean. It was the sea of Galilee.

As we moved over the long way downward to its level—350 feet below the Mediterranean sea—we had time to fix and grasp its whole aspect and surroundings. It lacks boldness of outline, for its hills slope gradually back from the shore, or leave a narrow plain, as at Gennesaret and Buthia. But the lights and shadows lie sweetly on the hillsides at night and morning; the northern end is broken into pleasant little bays, and Hermon looms grandly up beyond, far off, yet seemingly near. The whole aspect of the lake is one that suggests the thought and the lack of beautiful homes. It was still a long ride to the lake. The region we were passing, once brimful of life and activity, was utterly forsaken now. The entire lake lay spread before us, and nearly the whole of its coast-line, along or near which once lay the cities of Tarichea, Tiberias, Hippo, Gamala, Gergesa, Bethsaida, Chorazin, Capernaum, Magdala and Beth Arbel. Of these cities, Tiberias once had its senate of 600; Gamala was able to resist and defeat Vespasian at the head of three legions, and when captured by Vespasian and Titus it lost 400 in the fight, and 5,000 who hurled themselves, or were pushed down the precipices; while Tarichea, according to Josephus, was able to furnish 16,500 for slaughter in a sea fight with the Romans, 1,200 slain in cold blood in the stadium, 6,000 captive youth to dig for Nero in the isthmus, and 30,000 to be sold into slavery. The only existing representatives of this strength and activity were the little cluster of huts called Medjel (Magadala) and the shrunken Tiberias with its 2,000 inhabitants. From our path not a vestige of the other places could be discerned. It was near sunset when we entered Tiberias. We followed the road through the gate, but could easily have passed through the rents in the walls. The now squalid city, mentioned but once in the New Testament, has been the chief home of Jewish learning since the destruction of Jerusalem. Here the Jerusalem Talmud was completed, and here is now what may be called the present theological school of the Jews.

Mr. Sharon Lost in the Capitol.

Washington Star, Jan. 29.

Senator Sharon rushed out through the senate lobby, yesterday, and seeing an employe, said to him: "Somebody wants to see me in the democratic club room; where is the democratic club room?" "It's the democratic cloak room you want senator," replied the employe. "Well, where is the democratic cloak room?" then asked the senator. Senator Sharon has been at the capitol so rarely during his six years of senatorial "service" that he has never got the hang of the place.

"Mother has Recovered," wrote an Illinois girl to her Eastern relatives. 'She took bitters for a long time but without any good. So when she heard of the virtues of Kidney-Wort she got a box and I has completely cured her Liver complaint."—*Health and Home.*

The Milky Way.

Light travels at the rate of 186,000 miles per second. Yet it is calculated that the light from the nearest star to us in the milky way occupies about three years in reaching the earth, and that the light of the most distant will not arrive at the earth in less than 1,500 years.

The milky way is a wide irregular ribbon of stellar clouds which crosses the sky in all its width. It is indeed nothing more, according to astronomers, than the greatest length of this immense lens of stars to which we belong. If the whole sky does not appear nebulous in every direction, it is precisely because the nebula to which we belong is not spherical, but of a lenticular form, and that in the thickness of the lens there is less depth and fewer stars than in the direction of the diameter. From the spot on which we are placed, if our sight pass through the greatest length it meets stars on stars indefinitely, because there is an immense expanse from the point where we are to the edges of the flattened nebula. But if our sight turn aside from the equatorial plane toward the sides, it meets with fewer stars as it gets farther distant.

All the stars which sparkle in the sky during a dark night belong to a single cluster, to a single nebula, the milky way marking its longitudinal direction. The stars are not isolated in an absolute manner, at random, in the deserts of space; they form part of a whole; the sun which lights us is one of them, and they are counted by millions in a gigantic group, analagous to the distant clusters. Instead of seeing a confused glimmer, an indistinct light in the milky way, the telescope separates the stars which compose it and shows that it is formed of an innumerable multitude of stars very irregularly connected.

The idea which we must form of the milky way is then very different from that which appearances present to us, and from that with which the ancients contented themselves. From the beginning of ages, from the first observations of an elementary astronomy, the semi-luminous train which crosses the sky was noticed, and the ruling mythology adorned it with images.

William Herschel, with the powerful telescope made with his own hands, resolved, toward the end of the last century, to count the stars comprised in this zone; he addressed himself to his task and divided his work into portions. His long perseverance was crowned with success. By a careful comparison of the parts where the condensation of stars attains its maximum, and by an examination of the extent occupied by these immense rings, the great observer found that the milky way did not inclose less than 18,000,000 of stars!

This is not the total number of which it is composed, as this does not refer to the lateral portions of this gigantic mass, and all the stars of the heavens situated on one side and on the other of the plane of the greatest condensation are not included in this enumeration. What is the real extent occupied by this collection of suns? The number of stars which compose it, and the relative distances from each other, comprises for this extent a number which the mind cannot well receive without being prepared for it, a number which it cannot appreciate without making great efforts to grapple it. We will not give the distance in leagues, because an immense continuation of leagues exceeds the limits of even the vision of the mind; it is better to take the measure used constantly for astronomical units. Now the extent of the milky way, at its greatest extent, would be measursd by a ray of light which, traveling 186,000 miles per second, would travel in a straight line, and without stopping, for 15,000 years.

Thus, as we are ourselves near the center of this nebula, when in the field of a powerful telescope we observe the little distant stars situated in the depths of the milky way, our retina receives the impression of a luminous ray, which started 7,000 or 8,000 years ago from a sun analogous to ours, and forming part of the same group.

If such be the extent of the nebula of which we are an infinitesimal constituent part, are not the other nebulæ scattered in space also as rich and vast. The milky way is not unique; many of the nebulæ of the universe are so many milky ways, more or less similar to our own. Some may be less vast; others may possibly be vaster still, seeing that in the domain of the infinite, space goes for nothing. It is best for us, then, to take the middle course, and to think that the pale and diffused nebula which seem to tremble in the distance in unfathomable immensities, are milky ways peopled with as many suns as our own.

Horace Greeley at Church.

Lynchburg Virginian.

We can corroborate the statement that Mr. Greeley was a church nuisance, for, on a Sunday evening in May, 1865, that we happened to be in New York, we accepted an invitation from Mr. Greeley to accompany him to Dr. Chapin's church to hear a preacher of whose abilities he spoke in the highest terms. Mr. Greeley's pew, or that to which he conducted us, was in the upper tier, directly in front of the pulpit. After we had been seated a short time a large, fine-looking man entered from the rear and walked rapidly up the pulpit stairs. This was the noted preacher, who looked very much like an Englishman in his form and appearance. Scarcely were the preliminary services over, or the text announced, ere Mr. Greeley, yielding, sunk into the arms of Morpheus, and seemed to be utterly oblivious to all that was passing. He not only slept, but, horrible to relate, he snored so that he could be heard all around. Nor did he shake off the influence of the drowsy god until, the services concluded the shuffling of feet in that vast multitude admonished him that, having enjoyed the sermon in his way, it was time to be moving. If Mr. Greeley could know anything of that sermon, which was a very fine one, it would be a mystery to us; although we had heard before that he could quote passages from a sermon delivered while he seemed to be asleep. Evidently the great journalist had entire confidence in his pastor, and felt assured that he did not need close attention to keep him from preaching heresy.

The French Army.

George Merrill in Harper's Monthly for March.

Under the empire a man might escape military duty by furnishing a substitute, or by the payment of a certain sum annually fixed by decree of the minister of war; but by the law of July 27, 1872, it is declared that every Frenchman owes personal military service, the right of substitution being abolished. He is liable to such service from the age of twenty to that of forty, and forms part of the active army for five years, of the reserve of such army for four years, of the territorial army for five years, and of the reserve thereof for six years, making twenty years in all.

Any Frenchman, moreover, between the ages of eighteen and twenty-four, who has not been already conscripted, who is of sufficient height, able-bodied, unmarried, or a widower without children, and provided with a certificate of good conduct, may volunteer for five years' service in the army or navy.

A soldier may also re-enlist upon the completion of his five years of active service, for a further term of two, three, four or five years, during which period he is entitled to extra pay at the extravagant rate of eight centimes, or, if he be a non-commissioned officer, of ten centimes (two cents) a day!

As a further inducement to remain in active service, it is provided by the law of July 24, 1873, that certain civil and military employments are reserved exclusively for those who have been in the active army for twelve years, and during four of these years with the grade of non-commissioned officer.

The total effective force of the army in time of peace is 450,000, and in time of war 2,000,000.

We may add, in passing, that by the terms of a law passed August 1, 1874, horses and mules are duly enrolled and are liable to conscription for military purposes.

The Expansive Power of Water.

It is a well-known, but not the less remarkable, fact that if the tip of an exceedingly small tube be dipped into water, the water will rise spontaneously in the tube throughout the entire length. This may be shown in a variety of ways; for instance, when a piece of sponge, or sugar, or cotton is just allowed to touch water, these substances, being composed of numberless little tubes, draw up the water, and the whole becomes wet. It is said to *suck up* or *imbibe* the moisture. We see the same wonderful action going on in nature in the rising of the sap through the small tubes or the pores of the wood, whereby the leaves and upper portions of the plant derive nourishment from the ground.

This strange action is called "capillary," from the resemblance the minute tubes bear to a hair, the Latin of which is *capillus*. It is, moreover, singular that the absorption of the water takes place with great force. If a dry sponge be enclosed tightly in a vessel, it will expand when wetted with sufficient force to burst it, unless very strong.

Wood, which is a more unyielding material, acts with a tremendous force when wetted, and advantage has been taken of this fact in splitting blocks of granite. This process is largely adopted in Dartmoor.

After a mass of granite has been rent from the mountain by blasting, it is measured in every direction to see how best to divide it into smaller blocks. These are traced out by straight lines on the surface, and a series of holes are drilled at short intervals along this line. Wedges of dry wood are then tightly driven into the holes and wetted, and the combined action of the swelling wood splits the block in the direction required, and without any destructive violence. The same process is then carried out upon the other faces, and the roughly-shapen block finished with the hammer and chisel.

A Land Without Birds.

A French novelist somewhere says of the Englishman, "Let us go out and kill something!" This is his idea of the Englishman's practice. But he forgets his own countrymen. We have still kept our birds, though many have been destroyed by cold and hunger during these latter winters, and many more by shooting and battues. Still our birds are the glory of the land—gloria in excelsis! But in France the fields are mute. There is no music from the skies. The larks have been netted and eaten. The birds of gay plumage have been shot and their wings put in ladies' bonnets. All over the country sparrows, finches, robins and nightingales have disappeared. All are killed and eaten. But now comes the punishment. The trees are eaten bare; the vine is destroyed by phylloxeræ; the leaves of the shrubs are devoured by catterpillars. They ars seen hanging in bunches from the trees. The birds have been killed that destroyed the grubs and phylloxeræ. Hence destruction is spreading over France. The crops are eaten up at the roots, and the vine is, in some districts, entirely fruitless. This inhumanity, like curses, comes home to roost. Waterton has calculated that a single pair of sparrows destroy as many grubs in one day as would have eaten up half an acre of young corn in a week. And the London *Times* says: For the matter of birds, France is a dark and silent land. The eye searches in vain; the ear listens in vain, for nature there sits lamenting her children that are not. Whatever may be said of republican institutions and proprietary, they can claim no partnership with nature, who clings rather to her old friends, feudalism and aristocracy. If there were reported anywhere in France as great a number of birds of gay plumage and trilling song as can be seen and heard almost anywhere a few miles from the metropolis, populations would turn out in fancy costumes, carrying guns and large bags, followed by nondescript dogs, and ready to watch whole days for the chance of a victim within easy range.

In Italy birds are used for the amusement of children. A string is tied to a bird's leg. When the bird tries to fly, it is pulled down by the string. When its powers of flight are exhausted, it is generally plucked alive and dismembered. The children do not understand that a beast or a bird can be a fellow-creature. When expostulated they answer, "Non e Christiano"—it is not a Christian.

Best Time For Brain Work.

Dr. Foote's Health Monthly.

A writer for the London *Lancet* in enumerating the advantages of early rising, lays special stress on the statement that the early morning is the best time for mental labor, that the brain having had a few hours of rest during sleep, is at its best. He says: "Those who do not feel thus on awakening are either the subjects of some morbid state, or the slaves of a habit which, however common, is essentially unnatural."

The subjects of some morbid state are so common that they MAY include all those who do not find their brains most clear, ready and useful in the early morning, but we have another explanation to offer for them, one which will account for it in those who are not willing to acknowledge a morbid state or unnatural habit. Our explanation is, we think, physiological, natural and sufficient. It is this. As a rule our bodily organs are at their best when "under way," as is said of a steamer. A pedestrian cannot do his best till warmed up to his work. Racing horses are not started in a race until they have been "speeded" once or twice round the track to limber their muscles. Though sleep rests our muscles, we are not likely to wake in the morning in best condition for athletic contest. It takes the muscles some time to wake up and get accustomed to their regular business. Sleep affects brain even more than muscle, and to hurry the brain from a state of absolute repose to its condition of greatest activity is neither an easy nor a good thing to attempt. Most persons find their brains at their "best" towards the latter part of the day, when that organ is not only better prepared for work by a few hours of exercise, but also because the blood circulation is then more free, rapid and forcible than it is at early morning, and active blood circulation is very necessary to good brain work. The early morning is a good time to use for awakening the muscles and blood circulation with a little exercise, thus awakening an appetite for a good solid breakfast. When all the bodily functions are invigorated and refreshed, the brain will, like a well-fed horse that "feels his oats," be ready for whatever it may be called upon to do.

Use aqua ammonia for the stings of bees.

The public are cautioned to ask for Dr. Bull's Cough Syrup, and take no other. Price 25 cents.

The Homes of America.

From the Boston Advertiser.

It is not a mere accident that the homes of America are the most comfortable and comforting on earth. Nor are these home comforts due simply to mechanical skill or economic judgment. A country which has limited the powers of its government stimulates society, and highly moral society produces the most perfect homes which human eyes or poetic vision can behold. No one knows the American system well who does not know the American home. Our political system is publicity itself; American society has never been fully characterized; while the best result of both, the perfect home, has been praised in general terms, but not described and explained in its true fullness. The novel writers, from whom such descriptions might be expected, have failed ignominiously in their attempts at showing the maturest results of our social system. Yet this system is unique, and it is a marked advance upon all European models. The English home approaches the American home, while the German home approaches the English; but the ideal American home, not rarely realized, has a comfort, a character and a dignity all its own. It may seem to be wanting in the graces, traditions and responsibilities peculiar to the best English homes; it surpasses them in moral dignity; it differs from all the others in being the result of a highly refined civilization; it is the best and purest outcome of our etherial and ethnical system. There has been much pleasant banter about the great American novel that is to come. Let it not dwell too much on politics; British politics are larger than ours. Let it not tell too much of busy people; the French are as industrious and industrial as we. Let it not confine itself to analysis of character or sentiment; other nations have both in abundance. Let it describe the purest and sweetest of American homes, and let it describe, not an ideal, but that reality which distinguishes the American home from all others, and shows it to be the best outcome of our history, our political institutions and our social system.

Zero's History.

"Zero," on the common thermometer, like the fanciful names of the constellations, is a curious instance of the way wise men's errors are made immortal by becoming popular. It may be worth while to say that the word itself (zero) comes to us through the Spanish from the Arabic, and means empty, hence, nothing. In expressions like "90 deg. Fahr.," the abbreviation "Fahr." stands for Fahrenheit, a Prussian merchant of Dantzic, on the Baltic sea. His full name was Gabriel Daniel Fahrenheit.

From a boy he was a close observer of nature, and when only 19 years old, in the remarkably cold winter of 1709, he experimented by putting snow and salt together and noticed that it produced a degree of cold equal to the coldest day of the year. And that day was the coldest day the oldest inhabitant could remember. Gabriel was the more struck with the coincidence of his little scientific discovery, and hastily concluded that he had found the lowest degree of temperature in the world, either natural or artificial. He called the degree zero, and constructed a thermometer, or rude weather-glass, with a scale graduating up from zero to boiling point, which he numbered 212, and the freezing point 32—because, as he thought, mercury contracted the thirty-second of its volume on being cooled down from the temperature of freezing water to zero, and expanded a 180th on being heated from freezing to the boiling point.

Time showed that this arrangement instead of being truly scientific, was as arbitrary as the division of the Bible into verses and chapters, and that "from Dan to Bersheba" expressed the exact extremes of Palestine.

But Fahrenheit's thermometer had been widely adopted with its inconvenient scale, and none thought of any better until his name became an authority, for Fahrenheit finally abandoned trade and gave himself up to science.

The three countries which use Fahrenheit are England, Holland and America. Russia and Germany use Reaumar's thermometer, in which the boiling point is counted 80 degrees above the freezing point. France uses the centigrade thermometer, so-called because it marks the boiling 100 degrees from freezing point. On many accounts the centigrade system is the best, and the triumph of convenience will be attained when zero is made the freezing point, and when the boiling point is put up 100 or 1,000 degrees from it, and all the subdivisions are fixed decimally.

If Fahrenheit had done this at first, or even if he had made this one of his many improvements after the public had adopted his error, the luck of opportunity, which was really his, would have secured to his invention the patronage of the world.

How Sister Hayes Shakes Hands.

From a Washington Letter.

The days of Rutherford are nearing their end so rapidly that white house events are spoken of in a farewell tone. The last levee will occur next week, and Mrs. Hayes will stand in line and shake the hands of the multitude but three times after this week's "drawing room," as they are attempting to call her Saturday afternoon affairs. The cheery "How do you do?" which she prefixes to the names that are given her, the smile and the cordial grasp of the hand, are peculiarly her own in the way of official receiving. Concerning that hand-shaking there is a little art in it that few know of. When Mrs Hayes first entered the white house she let every one shake her hand until her fingers would be cramped and bruised, and her whole arm aching and swollen, after two hours of it. It was no uncommon thing at her first winter's receptions for the fingers of her gloves to fall apart at every seam by the end of the evening, the constant rubbing and grasping wearing out the whole lines of stitching. Now by a clever strategy she seizes the approaching hand firmly, catching it close up between the thumb and knuckles in such a way that the stranger is unable to return the grip. Every one exclaims over this genuine, hearty hand-shake, and, unconscious of the little trick, wonders how she can keep it up for a whole evening.

Mrs. Mackey's Dinner Party.

The London *Court Journal* describes at length a dinner party recently given by Mrs. John W. Mackey, of San Francisco, at Paris, which it pronounces the most superb ententainment of the kind ever given in that city. The toilets worn by the ladies present were extremely elegant. The fair hostess appeared in a cream satin, brocaded with rosebuds in faint hues of blue and pink, and opening in front on an underskirt of dark blue velvet.

The floral decorations of the table were arranged in a most novel and artistic style, masses of white lilacs, many-colored camelias, etc., being placed on beds of moss in a seemingly careless, but most effective manner. The centre of the table was adorned by a mimic fountain, decorated with pearly tropical shells, in the basin of which swam living goldfish. The floral plateaux were also adorned with stuffed tropical birds of brilliant plumage, and with tall and graceful reeds and striped grasses. The whole of this exquisite decoration was due to the artistic talent of the master of the house, he having sketched all the designs for it. The fruit, that filled to the massive silver epergnes, was of phenomenal size and beauty, the grapes in particular, being perfect marvels.

An Irish Romance.

J. L. Cloud, in Harper's Magazine for March.

When I arrived at Kilmurrey, one of those storms which come from the Atlantic, and in an instant envelop these islands in a cloud of wind-driven mist, made me seek refuge in a cabin. It was a crowded, busy peasant's home, and as I sat by the fire—the warmest seat being given me with the invariable hospitality of these people—I found abundant material for observation and reflection. Whatever cleanliness was possible in a family of eight occupying one huge room along with two pigs was carefully maintained; at least, the mother and children were neatly and comfortably attired, the hearth well swept, and the pigs were confined to the limits assigned them. An old woman was carding wool, a child rocking the cradle, and the mother spinning at a large wheel. The chickens, also driven in by the rain, one by one hopped up a ladder to their roosts among the rafters, from which they watched over their ruffled feathers the busy family and the blazing hearth with so much approval and satisfaction that I am sure, if chickens be susceptible to emotion, these were very tender ones indeed. A dog sneaked in, and seeing a stranger, went out into the rain again. The dogs, which are not numerous on the island, are of the most miserable and condemned aspect, and seem to feel their ignoble ancestry, as they invariably jumped over a wall or ran into some obscurity on the approach of a stranger. While drying my dripping garments, I saw for the first time, seated in a corner, as if to screen himself from observation, the figure of a young man clad in white flannel, the costume of the island. His face was thin and sad, and of the same color as the garments he wore, and he gazed at the fire with such a dejected and hopeless expression as led me to infer that he was the fated victim of some terrible disease—consumption, perhaps—and was feebly waiting through the long hours of the day and night the death he knew to be so sure and near. I spoke to him, striving in my pity to appear unconscious of perceiving his misery. Without answering, he rose abruptly and left the cabin. The looks of concern and inquietude in the faces about me told me of some unusual sorrow, which the mother, leaving her spinning-wheel, explained to me in a low voice. She told me that the young man, her eldest son, poor Owney, as she called him, had until a month before been the most cheerful and healthy member of the family; ready and prompt at work, and the life of the household, when a letter came from America to a neighboring family enclosing money to pay the passage thither of their eldest daughter. It appeared that the young man had long entertained a secret passion for this girl, and when he heard that he probably would never see her again, he declared his love to her, and besought her to remain. So far from being unmindful of his affection, she avowed her willingness to marry him at once, if he would accompany her to America immediately afterward. This was impossible; his own family were unable to assist him and the few people who possessed money on the island would not lend it without security. The practical damsel saw on the other side of the Atlantic every prospect of improving her material condition, and doubted not that husbands were as plentiful there as elsewhere; while, if she remained, she knew the drudgery and hopeless slavery that were the lot of all around her would be hers also. Therefore she told her suitor if he could not accompany her she would not listen to his suit. When the young man found his upbraidings useless, he gave way to despair, and had not worked or spoken since his cruel sentence had been pronounced. Every day he grew thinner and more wan, and he did not partake of sufficient food to support life. All the solicitude and tenderness of his mother had not succeeded in arousing within him his former self, and with tears running down her cheeks she told me she thought he had lost his reason forever.

Some weeks previously the schoolmaster had written for them to a priest, a distant relative of the family, who lived in Connemara; but they had received no reply, and she supposed he had neither help nor counsel to give. I pondered for a long while, as I sat by the fire, upon what often proves the unfortunate sincerity of men, and I could not refrain from deploring the no less frequent levity of my own sex. In passing through the village a week afterward I stopped to say good-day to these kind people, when I found the house a scene of bustle and confusion. My erewhile love sick swain was, when I entered, making himself a pair of pampootees, and as he bade me good day over a dangerously starched collar, his face glowed with health and energy. The now cheerful and happy mother informed me that since my last visit they had received a letter from the priest in Connemara, inclosing his blessing for her son, and the money to pay his passage to America. She had been very busy knitting him stockings and making him a white flannel suit to be married in, and which thereafter he would not again wear till his arrival in New York, so that he would make a decent appearance in the new world, as became the relative of a priest. He was to be married to the object of his choice the next day, and they were to start immediately afterward upon their long voyage. As I left, the damsel, whose month's delay to prepare her outfit had given such a fortunate respite to her lover, thrust her head in the door, and called upon Owney to be sure and wear the blue stockings she had knitted him to the chapel on the morrow; and then, with her little *retrousse* nose turned up to the sky, ran blushing away.

Always Idle.

The girls who, owing to their worldly prosperity, have nothing to do, are to be sincerely pitied. Safety lies in constant occupation; even "busy idleness" is better than nothing; for while at work on a worsted dog or cat, Amanda has no time to think of her woes or nerves. Young men are forced to get their living whether they like it or not, but a large number of young ladies in a family have absolutely nothing to do. They are above the necessity of following any occupation; they are often too many in a family to assist in domestic duties; they have returned home from school with some very poor accomplishments; their knowledge of French and German is not sufficient to allow them to converse in those languages; and just enough music to indulge in a doleful song, or badly play on the piano. They dawdle through the day in a lifeless way, and fall victims to a thousand little ailments which the doctor is supposed to put right by physic. And the most curious thing is that, should the instincts of the girl force her to put some of her energies into use, she is as likely as not to be thwarted by the mother, who insists upon it that her darling is overtasking herself.

The art of etching upon glass was discovered by a Nuremburg glass-cutter. By accident, a few drops of aqua fortis fell upon his spectacles. He noticed that the glass became corroded and softened where the acid had touched it. This was hint enough. He drew figures upon the glass with varnish, applied the corroding fluid, then cut away the glass around the drawing. When the varnish was removed, the figures appeared raised upon a dark ground.

Handsome calendars of Russia leather and gilt are set upon easels.

HUNG BY THE NECK.

A Mystery Connected with Blue Eyes.

Just before Gen. Custer and Guerrilla Mosby had that tilt about retaliation down in the valley, a captain belonging to a certain Michigan cavalry company under Custer, played the fool-hardy and paid the penalty with his life. His taking off was probably put down on the roll as: "Killed by guerrillas," but there are two or three men living who beg to differ with the reports.

During the particular week I write of the armies of Sheridan and Early were about five miles apart. Our pickets a full mile beyond camp, and scouts and videttes overlooked at least another mile. Half-way between the camp and the reserve picket was a farm house. The inmates comprised a grandmother at least 80 years old and so feeble that she could not walk without assistence, a child about 3 years of age, and a girl about 20 whom the little one called "Aunt Katie." This aunt had blue eyes, blonde hair, white teeth and a handsome face. She had every bearing of a lady, and half a dozen officers at once fell in love with her. Our captain was one of the number. In a little time he made such an impression that he had the field to himself, and one Wednesday evening, as he was riding out to talk sweet nonsense, he met your humble servant, who was returning to camp from a lone foraging expedition, and was ordered to fall in behind and act as his orderly.

When the captain dismounted at the farmhouse gate, he gave me his rein, with the remark that he expected to be absent about two hours, as he was on a bit of a scout to pick up information regarding Early's movements. I swallowed the assertion with that due respect which a private should exhibit toward a captain; but I had seen and heard, and knew his errand perfectly well.

During the first hour I heard snatches of song and an occasional laugh from the house, and twice the young lady had played for five minutes at a time on a guitar. Two hours slipped away—and another—then another. It was now 1 o'clock in the morning, and the house was as still as the grave. Tying the horses to the fence I plumped down on the ground for a nap, and I was yet enjoying it when a patrol came along and routed me up. It was broad daylight, and where was the captain? Both horses were at the fence, and I explained that my officer must have made up his mind to breakfast with the family.

"I'll see about that," said the officer in charge of the patrol, and he walked to the house and gave a thundering knock on the door. There being no response he knocked again and again, and then the door was burst open. Some of the men ran out again as soon as they had entered, and in a trice the house was surrounded. When we came to search it the old woman was found fast asleep in a bedroom. She was too feeble to get up without help, and her talk showed that she had but little mind left. The child and the blue-eyed girl had departed. In the parlor, hanging by the neck in a noosed rope, was the captain. His face was as black as ink, his tongue out and the body was cold. He had been dead for hours.

Now, then, as to the mystery. The rope was a new one, and was passed through a hole in the ceiling and floor above. The captain's arms were tied behind him, and his ankles lashed fast, and he hung a clear foot above the floor. The house was in perfect order, a lamp still burned upon the table, and there were no indications of a struggle. The old woman could shed no light on the affair, and the others were gone. No men had been seen about the house, and if men had hung the captain there would have been a struggle and a row loud enough to reach me at the gate. The captain was armed, but his sabre and revolver were hanging on a hook in the room.

We had a score of theories, but none of them could explain the whole situation, and a change of base caused the affair to be forgotten in a few weeks by all save those most directly concerned.

A Russian Cheat.

A short time ago some Russian peasants were drawing water from a well in Gadiatch, when one of them spied a picture of the virgin floating on the surface of the liquid. They were soon joined by two village girls, who, the picture being pointed to them, declared that, only two hours previously, they had seen it flying about in the air, and watched it as it gently descended into the well. This story spread throughout the district of Gadiatch like wildfire, and as soon as it came to the ears of the landowner, upon whose property the "holy well" was situated, he lost no time in building a chapel over the spring. To this chapel the population of the district has since repaired in daily increasing numbers, leaving the churches empty of their congregations even on Sundays and saints' days, so that the local clergy eventually applied to the police authorities for an official investigation of the alleged miracle. In compliance with this requisition, the stanovoi of Gadiatch forthwith betook himself to the chapel, seized the miraculous picture and deposited it in the police office. Subsequent inquiry has brought to light the fact that the virgin's counterfeit presentment was purchased of a traveling peddler by the speculative landowner above mentioned, who had utilized it, with the assistance of his peasantry, for the creation of a sacred shrine upon his estate, and had already cleared a handsome sum by appropriating the money offerings of the pilgrims who had flocked to the "holy well" from all parts of the surrounding country. This ingenious gentleman is safely in prison awaiting his trial for sacrilege.

The Regulation of the French Press.

The laws which regulate the press continue to be very stringent, though some modifications of a liberal character have been introduced since the fall of the empire. Thus all attacks on the constituted authorities, or on the religion of the state, or on either of the religions whose establishment is recognized by law, as well as all attacks upon the sovereign or other head of a foreign state, all publication of false news, all writings which excite to the commission of crimes or misdemeanors, or incite one class of citizens to hatred of another class, and all defamation of individuals, are punishable by fine and imprisonment, while the publication of insulting or abusive articles, not specifying any matter of fact, to the detriment of private individuals—*i. e.*, a simple