

The Russian Peasants.

The Russian Commune or Mir, is the most prominent among Russian institutions. It constitutes a sort of democratic government. The "Assembly" which is composed of the heads of families, makes all the laws, directs all during the harvest, manages the labor, punishes those who do not pay their taxes, etc. It elects the elder, (a sort of mayor), the collector, the watchman of the night, the burglar of the village. At certain periods the central administration reviews all the male peasants of the Commune, from the latest born to the Centenarian, and each Commune pays to the government an annual sum proportionate to this enumeration. All families are collectively and individually responsible for the payment of this sum. It is important, therefore, that every one should work, as idleness does not prevent the payment of individual taxes, and they must be borne by others. The system of corporal punishment still remains in use against those who do not pay their dues.

The Commune distributes land between its members as it judges proper, according to the resources of the applicants, or, rather, their ability to work; besides which every family owns a house and garden, which is its hereditary property, and is never disturbed by the other periodical redistributions. Many peasants go to work in cities, and remain there a large portion of the year, and some permanently; but this does not prevent their title to their rural homes, or exempt them from the tax. The women and children remain in the villages. When work fails, or old age or sickness arrives, the Russian peasant retires to his country home, and the law preserves his cabin, his agricultural tools, his horse and household furniture when he becomes helpless or involuntarily.

There is a wonderful aptitude in these peasants to support heat and cold. You see coachmen seated on their boxes, at the doors of theatres and grand establishments, in the most excessive cold; you see the same men as placidly supporting the heat of vapor baths. In most of the villages there is a public bath, of this description, but instances are common where peasants take their vapor bath in the lakehouse where the family bread is baked. The operation is always pushed to the most extreme limit that man can endure, and often in winter the peasant leaves this excessive heat and rolls in snow. Capable of resisting all temperatures, habituated to live on little, workers, and disciplined, the Russian peasants possess all the qualities to make good soldiers.

How to be Handsome.

Most people would like to be handsome. Nobody denies the great power which any person may have who has a handsome face and attracts you by good looks, even before a word has been spoken. And we see all sorts of devices in men and women to improve their looks. Now, all cannot have good features—they are as God made them—but almost any one can look well, especially with good health. It is hard to give rules in a very short space, but in brief these will do:

Keep clean—wash freely. All the skin wants is to be free, and it takes care of itself. Its thousands of air holes must not be closed. Eat regularly, and sleep enough—not too much. The stomach can no more work all the time, night and day, than a horse. It must have regular work and rest. Good teeth are a help to good looks. Brush them with a soft brush, especially at night. Go to bed with cleansed teeth. Of course, to have white teeth it is needless to use tobacco alone. All women know that. Wash the teeth with a very simple Acid. Acid may whiten the teeth, but it takes of the enamel and injures them.

Sleep in a cool room, in pure air. No one can have a cleanly skin who breathes bad air. But more than all, in order to look well, wake up mind and soul. When the mind is awake the dull sleepy look passes away from the eyes. I do not know that the brain expands, but it seems so. Think, and read, and read novels, but books and papers that have something in them. Talk with people who know something; hear lectures and learn by them.

Men say they cannot afford books, and sometimes do not pay for a newspaper. In that case it does them little good, they feel so mean while reading them. But men can afford what they really choose. If all the money spent in self-indulgence, in hurtful indulgence, was spent in books or papers for self-improvement, we should see a change.—Men would grow handsome, and women too. The soul would shine out through the eyes. We were not meant to be mere animals. Let us have books and read them, and sermons and heed them.

To Pickle Cucumbers Green.

The object is to pickle them in vinegar without first brining them. Pick your pickles, selected to taste, fresh from the vines, with half an inch of stem, cut with scissors or knife; handle carefully, not to rub off the little prickles or spines; with a feather, brush off any and all dust; lay them carefully in the jar, or pickle tub, and pour over them scalding hot vinegar, spiced or otherwise to taste, with a tablespoonful of salt to a gallon of vinegar; a little alum, say a piece as large as a walnut, to a gallon of vinegar, will improve them for the taste of some. Let the pickle tub be an opaque one, and be kept in the dark and cool; spread a muslin cloth over the top of the pickles in the vinegar, and see that the vinegar covers the pickles well. The vinegar may need refreshing or renewing after a week or two, which must be left to the good judgment of the housewife.

Our best-class churches, public halls and school rooms are now furnished with means for changing the air as fast as it is corrupted. But two persons in ten hours will infect the air as much as ten persons in two hours; and a few in a small room as much and as soon as many in a large one. Hence, where bedrooms and sitting-rooms are not furnished with ventilators, the air in them should be fully changed by a strong current through the windows and doors at least once or twice every day.

Learn Your Business Thoroughly.

The great army of the "incapables" is large enough; we should none of us willingly join its ranks. The half-informed, half-skilled in every business outnumber the others, dozens to one. It was a good suggestion, worthy of being remembered, which Daniel Webster made to a young man who asked him if there was any "room in the legal profession." "There is always room in the upper story," said the great statesman.

The better you know your business, the better your chance to rise. If you drone through your allotted tasks, without keeping a wide-awake lookout on all that goes on about you, your progress will be needlessly slow. You can gather much information by making a wise use of your eyes and ears, and, perhaps, be able to surprise your employer in an emergency by stepping into the "next man's" place and discharging his duties satisfactorily.

Ex-Gov. Morgan was once a clerk in a store in Waterford. A trip to New York was an event in those days, but the young man had proved so faithful that he was allowed to make the journey, and was entrusted with several commissions, among them being one to buy corn. He came back in due time with me in the old stage-coach, and inquiries were made about the corn. The price was very satisfactory, but the old gentleman was afraid it could not be sold at so low a price. A handful which the young man pulled from his pocket convinced him, but what was his amazement to find that he had bought two cargoes.

"Why, Edwin, what shall we do with it?" he asked in consternation. "I have disposed of all you don't want," said Edwin, "at an advance, I stopped in stores as I came along. I could have disposed of three cargoes if I had had them."

The profits were clear, and his employer said the next morning, "We will let some one else do the sweeping," and Edwin was made a partner though under twenty-one. If you have a talent for business, it will be found out.

The Man's and Woman's Way of Saying Things.

Look at the ridiculous way in which a man takes it granted that a woman will be interested in his sayings and doings. If his wife has a long story to tell him, she is filled with misgivings lest it might tire him, she leaves out many little picturesque touches that she may not take up his time, and even on the hand-gallop she has not arrived within call of her conclusion when he asks with confusing directness, "well, how did it turn out?" But the man has never a misgiving that he will be hurried, or that life has anything better to offer than listening to him. He begins his story at its earliest morning stages and hopes leisurely to its close, or if it is rapid he gives it rapid transit, but he never omits anything on his wife's account. He tells what he said and what the other man said and what the other man might have said, and what he would have said had the other man said what he might have said. And the worst of it is—the fatal point is—that his confidence is justified. The woman is interested. The man's talk takes her out of her own into a larger life, and she not only tolerates but enjoys it, and what are you going to do about it?—Gail Hamilton.

Female Society.

You know my opinion of female society. Without it we should degenerate into brutes. This observation applies with tenfold force to young men and those who are in the prime of manhood. For, after a certain time of life, the literary man may make a shift, a poor one I grant, to do without the society of ladies. To the young man nothing is so important as the spirit of devotion, next to his Creator, to some amiable woman, whose image may occupy his heart and serve to guard it from pollution, which besets it on all sides. A man ought to choose his wife, as Mrs. Primrose did her wedding gown for qualities that "wear well." One thing, at least, is true, that if matrimony has its cares, celibacy has no pleasures. Newton or a mere scholar may find employment in study; a man of literary taste can receive in books a powerful auxiliary; but a man must have a bosom friend and children round him to cherish and support the dearer of old age.—John Randolph.

How He Startled Her.

A whoop-bang sort of a boy, with feet as broad and flat as a pie-tin trotted along the Central Market yesterday till he reached a stall kept by a single woman about thirty years old. Halting there, he yelled out: "Say! say! Your little boy has been run over and killed up by the City Hall."

"Oh! oh! Heavens—oh! oh!" she screamed as she made a dash for the counter, came up on the outside, and started to follow the boy. After going ten feet she halted, looked very foolish at a lot of a sudden, and remarked: "What a goose I am! Why, I ain't even married!"

The aggregated exports of petroleum oil this year are 121,000,000 against 81,000,000 gallons last year. Over a million gallons are daily exported from New York.

During the fifty-eight years which have passed since American Odd Fellows was established, over 900,000 have been collected, and which amounts to \$22,000,000 have been expended for the relief of those entitled to it. Some 723,000 brothers have been aided.

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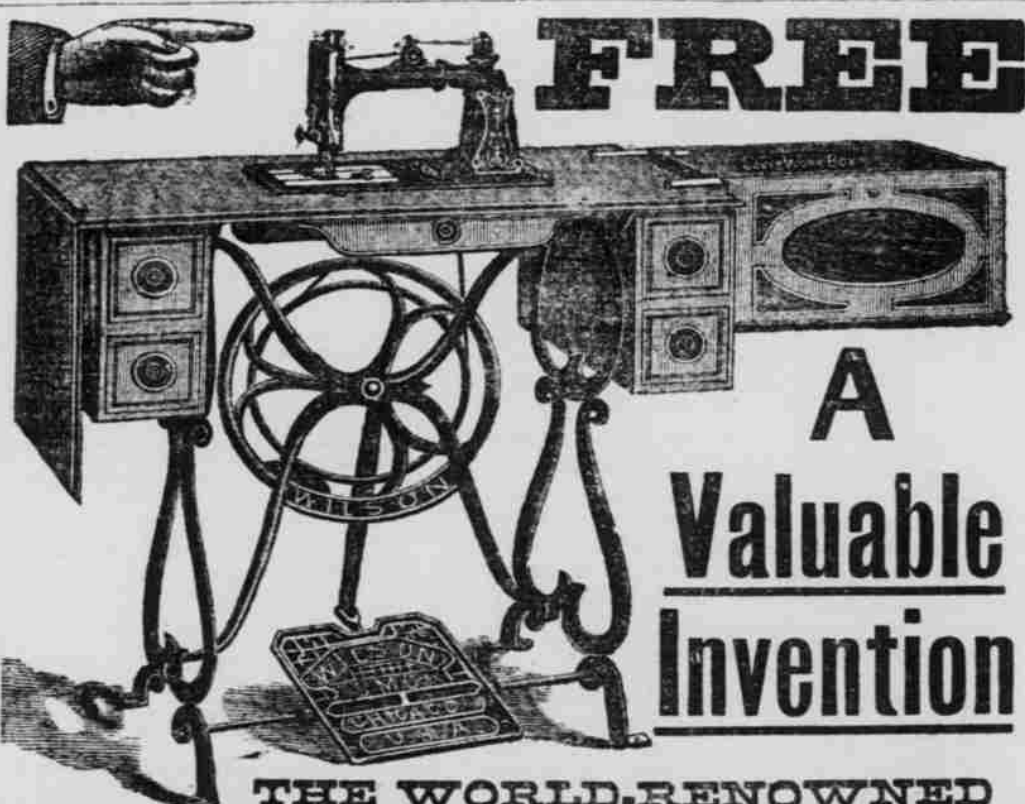
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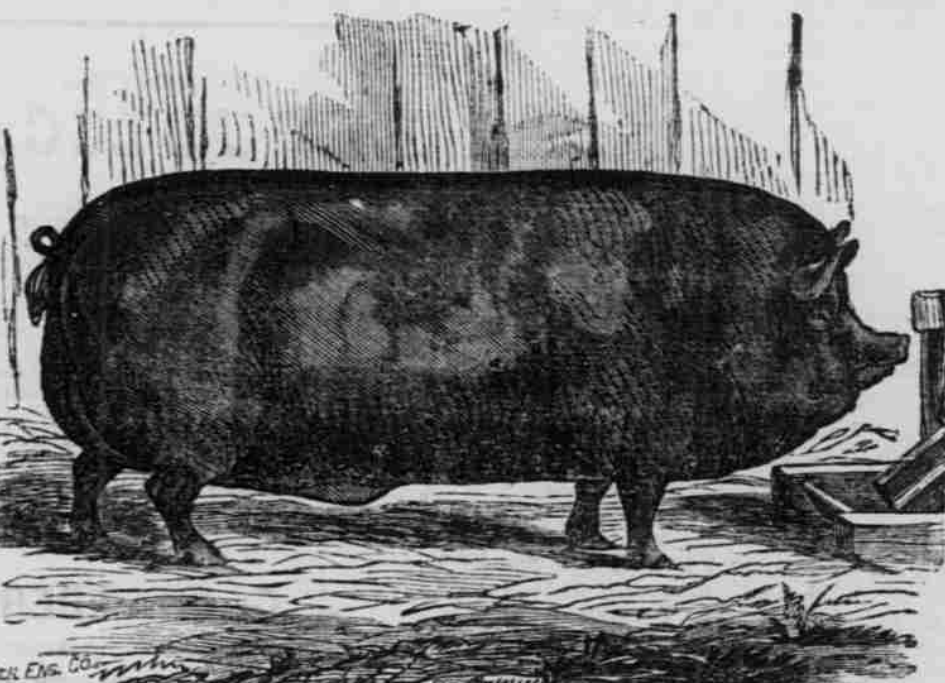
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