CLOUD CHIEF.

L. THOMAS, Publisher.

CLOUD, - - NEBRASKA

THAT AMATEUR FLUTE.

Hear the fluter with his flute—
Silver flute!
Oh, what a world of wailing is awakened by its toot!
How it demi-semi quavers
On the maddened air of night!
And defieth all endeavors
To escape the sound or sight
Of the flute, flute, flute,
With its tootle, tootle, toot—
With reiterated tooteling of exasperating toots,
The long protracted tootelings of agonizing toots,
Of the flute, flute, flute, flute,
Flute, flute, flute,
And the wheezings and the spittings of its toots.

Should he get that other flute—
Golden flute—
Oh, what a deeper anguish will its presence instoot!
How his eyes to heaven he'll raise,
As he plays,
All the days!
How he'll stop us on our ways
With its praise!
And the people, oh, the people,
They don't live up in the steeple,
Where he visiteth and plays—
Where he plays, plays, plays—
In the cruelest of ways,
And thinks we ought to listen,
And expect us to be mute,
Who would rather have the earache
Than the music of his flute,
Of his flute, flute, flute,
And the tootings of his toot,
Of the toots wherewith he tooteleth its agonizing toot,
Of the flute, flewt, fluit, floot,
Phlute, phlewt, phlewght,
And the tootle, tootle, tooting of its toot.
—*Pittsburgh Commercial-Gazette.*

CHINESE MYTHS AND STORIES.

Similarity Between Chinese Myths and Stories and Those of Western Europe.

A very remarkable fact concerning Chinese folk-lore is the strange similarity between Chinese myths and stories and those of Western Europe. Here is a tale the analogue of which is found almost everywhere in Western folk-lore. The Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, the mediæval romance of Ogier le Danois, and the old Gaelic legend on which that romance is based, of Oisin's sojourn in the land of youth, are a few of the many forms which it takes in the West. The Chinese story is as follows: "Two friends wander among the mountains culling simples. At a fairy bridge, the azure bridge, they find on guard two maidens of more than earthly beauty. 'Come across the bridge,' cry the maidens. This done, the friends are fed on huma (hemp, the Chinese hasheesh), and falling deeply in love with their hostesses, spend with them in the Jasper City what seems the short though blissful period of a few days. At length they are seized with a desire to visit their earthly home, and on getting back they find that seven generations have passed, and they have become more than centenarians." The story is given in the Liao chai chih yi, with the date A. D. 60 to 70, and the names of the two friends!

Another equally circumstantial tale records how Wang Chih, one of the patriarchs of the Taouist sect, was one day gathering fire-wood in the mountains of Ku Chow, when he entered a grotto where some old men were deep in a game of chess. He laid down his ax and watched them; whereupon one of the old men handed him what looked like a date-stone, telling him to put it in his mouth. No sooner had he tasted it than he ceased to feel hunger and thirst. By-and-by one of the players said, "It is long since you came here; you should go home now." Wang Chih went to take up his ax, and found the handle had moldered into dust. Undismayed, however, he went home, but found that centuries had passed since he went out wood-cutting. No vestige of his kinsfolk remained. The end of this tale is certainly un-European; for Wang Chih retreats to a cell in the mountains, and devoting himself to religious exercise, finally attains immortality.

Sometimes the mischievous fairy is almost identified with one of the monkey tribe. Thus a man with a very pretty wife, traveling near Chang-tih, was warned that hard by lived a shen who was given to woman-stealing. He hid his wife in an inner room; but in the fourth watch of the second night she was carried off. He sought her high and low, his romantic and perilous adventures being described in "The History of the White Monkey," by Kung T'sing. At last he came to a stone door in the face of a mountain. Some women, who were passing in and out, told him his wife was there. "Get us," said they, "ten dogs, two barrels of spirits and a quantity of hempen rope, and we will try to deliver her for you. After all these things had been provided the shen came in, and drank the spirits and ate the dogs, and while he was gorged and helpless the women bound him to the bed. They called in the husband, who found that he was an enormous monkey. He straightway killed him, and set free, not his own wife only, but many other women who were held in captivity. Talking of monkeys, we may remark that they, as well as men, are supposed to have ghosts. A man in Canton, named Ling, had had a yuan monkey in his family forty years. This species is supposed to grow to a very large size if it is allowed to drink plenty of water; and as Ling preferred a small monkey, his pet was kept on short water allowance. One day the monkey snatched a cup out of the hand of Ling's youngest son and drained it off. The father gave him a good whipping, whereupon the monkey sulked, refused food, and died in a few days. Soon after his ghost began to haunt the house; strange noises were heard, food unaccountably disappeared, and at last a fire broke out. Ling moved into another house, but the ghost moved, too; and at last he was compelled to take refuge in the temple of the five hundred worthies. Here the ghost did not dare to follow him; and not many years ago the family might be seen housed in the temple, everybody in the quarter knew for what reason.

Ghosts whom nobody owns, spirits of poor men who have died at street corners, and such like, are, not unnaturally, malevolent. They cause epidemics, and have to be driven off by firing crackers; or, if people prefer appeasing them, they set out plates full of cakes, with invitations to "the honorable homeless ghosts." The ghosts of suicides are particularly difficult to be appeased; their sole aim in life (or rather in death) seems to be to induce others to do as they have done. If you sleep in the room where any one hanged himself or herself, you are sure to receive during the night a pressing invitation to commit *felo de se.* At Hangchow, by the north gate, was a house so haunted by demons that it was to be had at a bargain. A scholar named Ts'ai bought it, and since none of his family would go with him, went to sleep there alone. He lighted a candle, and kept watch. At midnight a woman came slowly in with a red silk handkerchief round her neck, saluted him, tied a rope to a beam, and put her neck in it. Ts'ai watched her, but did not change a muscle. She then fastened up another rope, and invited him to put his head in likewise. He laughed, and lifting up his foot, put that into the noose. "You're wrong," said she. "No," he replied, "you were wrong years ago, or you'd never have done what you did." The ghost gave an exceeding bitter cry, bowed to Ts'ai, and departed; and from that time the house was no more haunted. Ts'ai afterward rose to great distinction, as he deserved to do, passing all his examinations, and becoming Provincial Councillor.

Ghosts are often introduced into Chinese plays, and in one farce the ghost turns the tables on his would-be exorcist. The priest comes in with big gong, robes, and miter, etc., but the ghost catches hold of the gong, and beats the devil's tattoo on it, claps the miter on his own head, strips the priest of his robes, and vows he'll exorcise his reverence. "Oh, your Excellency," whimpers the priest, falling on his knees, "had I known you'd really been in the house, I'd never have come near the place. I only came to try to earn a few cash." The ghost, however, exorcises him without mercy, and he has to decamp minus his paraphernalia.

Ghosts of gods are not uncommon, and are often highly serviceable. A few years ago the following was gravely related in the Pekin *Gazette:* "When the Mohammedans were besieging Channwei, they suddenly halted and run away. The fact was, they had approached the temple of Ta-pi-peh (god of the planet Venus), and there they saw an awful vision: gods in golden mail, numerous as forest trees, and armed with sword and shield, were drawn up in battle array along the city wall, and red lamps innumerable lighted them up. The enemies' hearts failed them, and a sudden discharge of cannon put them to flight."

Here is another class of superstition, which reminds us of some weird German and Sclav legends about building a living man or woman into a bridge or tower, which could, on no other conditions be completed. "When the bell-tower of Pekin was built," says Mr. Stent, in a paper on Chinese legends, "the Emperor Yung-lo, of the Ming dynasty, ordered a great Mandarin, named Kuan-yu, to cast a bell big enough for such a noble building. Time after time Kuan-yu and the cleverest workmen in the country tried to cast a bell, and failed; the casting was always honey-combed, and the Emperor said that if there was one more failure, Kuan-yu's head should pay the forfeit. Now, Kuan-yu had a daughter, a lovely girl of sixteen, named Ko-ai; and when she learned what was to be done, she went to a celebrated astrologer and asked the cause of her father's failure! Some demon, she was told, required a maiden's blood to be mixed with the metal, and unless this was done, the next casting would be a failure like the others. Ko-ai at once took her resolution. She got leave from her father to be present at the casting; and amid the dead silence which prevailed when the taps were drawn and the molten stream poured down into the mold, a shriek was heard, and crying out, 'For my father,' Ko-ai threw herself headlong into the seething metal. One of the workmen tried to seize her, but only succeeded in getting hold of a shoe, which came off in his hand. The father had to be held back by force from following Ko-ai's example. He was taken home a raving madman; but the bell was perfect in make and tone, and when struck, its sonorous boom is to this day followed by a low, wailing sound like the wail of a woman in agony, and when people hear it they say, 'There's poor Ko-ai calling for her shoe.'"

Where did those tales come from which we call the Arabian Nights? Some of them, we know, tell us about Chinese Emperors and Princesses—Badroulboudour, to wit. Of others, Chinese legends give us other forms. Thus "Open Sesame" finds its parallel in the story of a cave near which lived a poor young herdsman, who bore the not unusual name of Chang. One day, as he was passing, he heard a voice say, "Stone door, open; Mr. Kwei-ku is coming." The cave opened, and the invisible speaker entered; and by-and-by the same voice said, "Stone door, shut; Mr. Kwei-ku is going." Whereupon the cave closed so that no one could see where the entrance had been. Chang at once determined to see what was inside; so, one day, taking care that Mr. Kwei-ku was gone out, he used the formula, and at once gained an entrance. Chinese legends are often unpractical, so we need not wonder that there is no hint of any treasure inside. It was simply a vast romantic cavern. He came out, shut the door by using the proper form of words, and then told his only living relative, his grandmother. She must needs see it too; but, wandering inside, they got separated, and Chang, fancying she had left first, came out and closed the cave's mouth. Not finding her at home, he rushed back, horror-stricken, to seek her; but now all his efforts to obtain an entrance failed. The magic words had lost their power; and he felt that his grandmother must be either starved to death or devoured by Mr. Kwei-ku. Just then this dreaded personage appeared to him, and told him that the fates had taken his grandmother; the cave demanded a victim. Let him marry and take comfort in the thought that his children would have power over demons. And so it was; Chang's son became the master of heaven," the first holder (A. D. 25 is about the date assigned to the story) of an office which has lasted on to the present day.

Stories of magic tombs are found among most peoples, nor are they wanting in China. Kungming was a sort of Chinese Michael Scott; and one day the Emperor Hung-wu and his chief councillor, passing near his tomb, were seized with a wish to visit it. The Emperor and his courtier wore suits of iron mail, after the fashion of those days; so, breaking through into the antechamber, they read an inscription that whoever visited the tomb should have his hands tied—a prophecy fulfilled by their hands getting for some time fast wedged into the passage through which they squeezed themselves. Breaking through the second door, they found several figures, toward which they began to be attracted by an irresistible force. Full of terror, they flung off their armor and fled, noting as they ran out another inscription, which may be rendered thus:

> "I'll strip off the skin
> Of whoso ventures in
> To open this my grave."

Of course the figures were of loadstone, which in the legends of mediæval Europe, as well as in the Arabian Nights and in Chinese stories, was credited with very mysterious powers. When Confucius died, one of his disciples cased his coffin in loadstone; and thus the Emperor Chin was baffled in his attempt to open the sage's tomb—the workmen's pickaxes and spades lost their heads, the armor of the soldiers on guard was stripped off their bodies; altogether things took such a strange turn that the attempt was given up.

Even the judgment of Solomon finds its parallel in China, only the mandarin who plays Solomon orders that the child shall be taken away from both women, and brought up as a Government official. He judges that the real mother will eagerly accept so good a chance for her offspring, while the woman who only wanted to sell the babe, or to use it in begging, will clamor for its restoration. He therefore hands the little one to the claimant who, though with tears and sobs, had accepted his proposal. The story is said to be historical, but we may suspect that it was derived from Indian or Semitic sources. That is just the difficulty in all these cases. The myth may have traveled eastward in the wake of the earliest caravans, or with the other teaching of those Nestorian Christians who penetrated into the heart of China long before the Tartar conquests, and whose influence on Buddhism has not yet been adequately taken into account. When we know more of Chinese literature, we shall see what stories really do date from pre-Christian times, and are therefore presumably home-grown.—*Harper's Weekly.*

Humors of Congregational Singing.

Years ago some of the incidents arising out of the slovenly and ignorant manner in which the "congregational singing" was managed, was so ludicrous that it was impossible to resist laughing. I remember being asked one fine Sunday morning to assist at a village Sunday-school. The "superintendent" was a gardener, and the way in which he read out of Dr. Watts' "Divine and Moral Songs" for the children to sing was very droll—the separation of "verses" of four lines into couplets of two, without reference to the context, making the greatest possible nonsense of some. One occurs to me now, which made me smile aloud. Fancy the following read gravely, as though it were a complete sentence:

> Birds in their little nests agree
> *And 'tis a shameful sight!*

But on the same day, when we attended the service in the chapel, it was still worse. The old gardener having to read out the lines:

> God is His own interpreter,
> And He will make it plain.

read the first line:

> God is His own *intrumpeter!*

Sometimes even in the Established Church, the ignorance of the "clerk" gave rise to amusing contretemps. I remember an old man who was clerk at St. Mary's at Leicester, forty years ago, who alwas boggled at one word in a favorite hymn of the vicar. The hymn was the well-known one—

> We've no abiding city here

and one of the verses commences thus:

> We've no abiding city here,
> This may distress the worldling's mind.

That word *worldling* was indeed a *pons asinorum* for the poor old clerk, and the congregation were all in a titter when he came to it. "This ma-ay distress the wor-rul—wor-rul—wor-ruld—wor-ruldin' moind," was generally about what he made of it, and the organist, the clever Mrs. Wood, always played the organ its very loudest at that line, to drown the tittering of the congregation. The greatest fiascoes, however, arose from the selections of inappropriate tunes. One in which the words "And bow before the throne," were rendered thus:

> And bow-wow-wow, wow-wow-wow-wow-wow wow,
> And bow-wow-wow before the throne.

I have been looking through some letters lately, and am able now to give a few more specimens. There is a hymn—I forget in what collection—in which the line "With Thy benediction seal" occurs. I have a memorandum that this hymn was sung at a chapel in Cheshire, to the tune of "Aaron, 7s," and this is how the above line came in the music:

> With Thy benny—
> With Thy benny—
> With Thy benediction seal

Another favorite tune in those days was called "Job," which was made to do duty for all sorts of "long meter" hymns. Two singular specimens of its inappropriateness are appended. The line in one was, "Stir up this stupid heart to pray," and this was the way it was sung:

> Stir up this stew—
> Stir up this stewpid heart, etc.

The other was—"And love Thee better than before" —which was sung—

> And love Thee bet—
> And love Thee better, than, etc.

There is a tune—' Miles' Lane"—in which, when sung to its own hymn, "Crown Him Lord of all," the repetition of the words "Crown Him" has a very fine effect. Unfortunately in the days I am speaking of the people in charge of the singing thought more of the music they had to sing than of the words, and the following three examples show how "Miles' Lane" was made ludicrous. In Dr. Watts' collection the hymn 32 in the second book concludes—"And see salvation nigh." "Miles' Lane" made it thus—

> And see sal—see sal—see salvation nigh.

The hymn 104, first book, same collection, has the lines—

> We would defile our hearts no more,
> No more pollute our hands.

The last line being sung to "Miles' Lane" became—

> No more poll—more poll—more pollute our hands.

The 126th hymn, second book of Dr. Watts, has—

> Gilds the whole scene with brighter rays.
> And more exalts our joys.

"Miles' Lane" translated the final line into—

> And more eggs—more eggs—more exalt our joys.

There is another tune called "Boyce," of which I will give an example from No 17 hymn, in Dr. Raffles' Liverpool collection, and the line is "And learn to kiss the rod." "Boyce" makes this—

> And learn to kiss—
> And learn to kiss—
> And learn to kiss the rod.

—*Bradford* (*Eng.*) *Observer.*

A Stray Billet-Doux.

Three ministers sat in the pulpit of an East Liberty church on Sunday evening. A rising young artist who has a comfortable studio—if studios are ever comfortable—on a street running from Water to Liberty—who is one of the workers in said church, walked bravely to the pulpit before service and gave one of the ministers a notice to read before benediction. The services were about being closed, when the young artist again went forward and reminded the minister that he must not forget the notice of the temperance meeting down town. The minister begged pardon for his remissness, took the slip of paper from his vest pocket, read it, looked dazed, rubbed his eyes, then smiled. He passed the note to a brother minister. He smiled. Then passed it to the other minister, and he smiled. Then all smiled. Then No. 1 remarked that he would like to speak to the young artist. The latter advanced to the pulpit, received the notice, looked at it, colored very red, and looked as though he would like to jump through the window. He had given the pastor a notice of a temperance meeting which read something like this:

DEAR JOHN—I am so sorry I can't let you come to see me as frequently as usual, but papa and mamma think I should not receive even my very dear friends during the Lenten season. It's awfully disagreeable, if not positively cruel; but then you know we Episcopalians can't go back on Lent. I shall see you oftener than usual, I hope, when the holy season is gone where the woodbine twineth. Yours with friendship.

—*Pittsburgh* (*Pa.*) *Dispatch.*

The Bicycle in Practical Use.

A resident of Salem, Mass., reports that in fifteen months past he has ridden the machine constantly between house and place of business, twelve hundred times, at a saving of one hundred and eighty hours in time, and a reduction of shoe bills from eighteen dollars to four and a half dollars. Packages are habitually carried. One rider took a piece of timber four by two inches and twelve feet long half a mile; this was done for convenience, not for sport, and the same person regularly carries packages of hardware weighing fifteen pounds or more. In a five months' trip as agent for a firm dealing in manufacturers' supplies, through parts of five of the New England States, he has traveled on his bicycle, carrying his bundle of samples, over three thousand miles, averaging thirty miles a day, frequently going ten miles without dismounting, and visiting all mills and manufacturing concerns on the route. He claims that he accomplished this distance in less time than he would have done by rail, besides penetrating districts which he could not otherwise have reached.

13-15-14.

The Gem Puzzle Epidemic—The Whole Truth About the Tantalizing Thing—What Can Be Done with It, and What Cannot, and Why It Cannot—Secret of the Solvable and Unsolvable Combinations, Etc.

The Gem Puzzle may fairly be said to have gained a popularity that is phenomenal. Beginning in Boston, a few months ago, it has become literally an epidemic, and is raging from the Atlantic to the Pacific. No child is too puerile to be beneath its entertaining powers, and no man is too vigorous or in too high station to escape its fascination. At first he looks on it with contempt, and thinks it unworthy his attention; but let him hesitate, eye it, and push a few blocks around, and he is lost. Whole cities are distracted, and men are losing sleep and going crazy over it: and if this state of affairs continues long the public mental condition will be seriously deteriorated. The *Inter-Ocean* is therefore performing a great general good in telling the whole truth about the thing, what can be done with it, what cannot, and why it cannot, so as to put a stop to the haggard anxiety of the spell-bound victims who cannot let it alone.

As is well known to nearly every one by this time, the puzzle consists of fifteen blocks of wood, set in a small box just large enough to hold sixteen blocks. The blocks may be three-fourths of an inch square, and the box three inches square and half an inch deep. When the fifteen blocks are in, there is one vacant space remaining. The blocks are each given a number, from one to fifteen inclusive, and are put into the box at random. The puzzle consists in getting them in consecutive order by pushing them around, and without lifting them from the box. When the puzzle is solved, the blocks will stand as shown in the following

DIAGRAM NO. 1:

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15	

The first three rows are easily obtained. The trouble begins when the last row is reached. The number of combinations possible is equal to the continued product of all the numbers from 1 to 15 inclusive, that is 1,307,674,368,000, of which one-half can be solved, and the other cannot. The solution is determined by the way in which the blocks are first placed in the box, and the chances are just equally divided that the player will strike a solvable or an unsolvable combination. It is as if the bottom of the box were divided into squares to correspond with the size of the blocks, and one-half the squares were colored—as on a checker-board—and in putting the blocks in at random the player should place on black squares blocks which should go on white squares, and on white squares some blocks which should go on black squares; if the number of these misplacements were odd the puzzle could not be solved, for the reason that at the end there would still be one uncorrected, and the player could not reverse it without reversing some other one to get it around.

The number of permutations given above is possible when the four rows are used. In three rows the number is 39,916,800, in two rows 5,040, and in the last row, which contains but three blocks, the number is six. When the blocks in the last row are Nos. 13, 14 and 15 the positions which they may assume is shown in the following

TABLE OF COMBINATIONS:

No. 1, 15—14—13.
No. 2, 15—13—14.
No. 3, 14—13—15.
No. 4, 14—15—13.
No. 5, 13—15—14.
No. 6, 13—14—15.

The last is of course the solution of the other five, and the player in the end is therefore reduced to the problem of solving five combinations. Now, of these five, Nos. 2 and 4 can be solved and Nos. 1, 3 and 5 cannot be. Any one of the last three can, however, be changed into either of the remaining two, and the moves by which Nos. 2 and 4 are solved, and by which Nos. 1, 3 and 5 are interchanged, are the same. To show how this is, let the player divide the bottom of his box into sixteen squares, and number them from 1 to 16, inclusive. As the first three rows are easily obtained, it will be assumed that they are in order, and the beginning will be made from the desired combination in the lower row. The moves to be made are shown in the following:

TABLE OF MOVES.

No. 1. Changes, 15, 14, 13 to 13, 15, 14 Leave No. 16 blank.	No. 2. Solves, 15, 13, 14 Leave No. 13 blank.	No. 3. Changes, 14, 13, 15 to 15, 14, 13 Leave No. 16 blank.	No. 4. Solves, 14, 15, 13 Leave No. 16 blank.	No. 5. Changes, 13, 15, 14 to 14, 13, 15 Leave No. 16 blank.
12	9	12	12	12
11	10	11	11	11
13	15	15	13	14
14	13	13	15	15
15	14	14	14	13
9	12	9	9	9
10	11	10	10	10
11	15	15	13	14
11	10	11	11	11
12	9	12	12	12
14	13	13	15	15
15	14	14	14	13
13	15	15	13	14
10	11	10	10	10
9	12	9	9	9

EXPLANATION.

The explanation of one of these columns will explain all. No. 1 changes, as indicated at the top, 15, 14, 13 to 13, 15, 14. Arrange the last row, leaving space No. 16 blank, and push the blocks whose numbers are indicated in the column. The board will show for itself which way any block is to be pushed, as there is but one way in which it can go.

To change 13, 15, 14 to 15, 14, 13 leave space No. 13 blank, begin at the bottom of column No. 1 and go up.

To change 13, 14, 15 to 15, 13, 14 leave space No. 16 blank, and begin at the bottom of column No. 2.

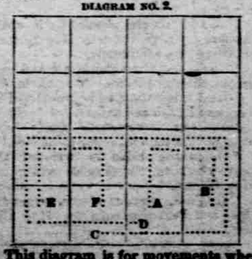
To change 15, 14, 13 to 14, 13, 15 leave space No. 13 blank, and begin at the bottom of column No. 3.

To change 13, 14, 15 to 15, 13, 14 leave space No. 13 blank, and begin at the bottom of column No. 4.

To change 14, 13, 15 to 13, 15, 14 leave space No. 13 blank, and begin at the bottom of column No. 5.

These are all the solutions and shiftings that are possible with the blocks 13, 14 and 15, and they are all alike, following one general plan, as here given:

DIAGRAM NO. 2.



This diagram is for movements when space No. 16 is left blank. There are, as will be seen, three motions, the first from A around to the right to B; from C around to the right to D; and from E around to the right to F. When space No. 13 is left blank the motions are simply reversed.

To prove that neither of the combinations, Nos. 1, 3 or 5, in the table of combinations given above can be solved, take one of them, and if it can be solved any other one of them can be, for any one can be changed into the other two, and to show that neither can be solved, it has only to be shown that one cannot be. Take 13, 15, 14; the point is to get the 14 between the 13 and the 15 without reversing any other two numbers. Leave space No. 15 blank, make the moves, 11, 12, 14, 11, and we have the lower right-hand corner of the board in this condition:

DIAGRAM NO. 3.

12	14
	11

If 14 could be put into the blank space, 12 and 11 be left as they are, and the remainder of the board be unchanged, the problem could be solved. To show this, pick 14 up and set it down in the blank space No. 15, and make these moves, 11, 14, 12, 11, 14, 12, 15, 10, 11, 14, 12, 15, 14, 11, 10. The difficulty is to get the 14 into the blank space No. 15. The difficulty might be stated in the terms of other numbers, of course, but the principle would be the same—and at the same time leave 12 and 11 in the same position that they are in now, and not to reverse any other two numbers on the board. The number 14 can be put in the blank space number 15, but in doing so the player will reverse 12 and 11, nor can he preserve their order without reversing some other pair on the board. The difficulty is therefore simply transferred from one part of the board to another, and is not removed. For which reason it is impossible to solve any of the combinations Nos. 1, 3 and 5. The principle is the same on the checker-board, where three men try to pen two, and are always one move too late, or are always lacking another man to stop just the right square.

The claim has been made by some that the puzzle would be solved with round blocks, but not with square. This is an error. What they call a solution is none. The way it is done is this: Suppose the combination 13, 15, 14 to be in the bottom row—the blocks can readily be arranged in this order:

DIAGRAM NO. 4.

4	8	12	
3	7	11	15
2	6	10	14
1	5	9	13

Now, if the blocks are round, each one can be turned one-fourth the way around—making the top of each block move to the left—and the box can be turned one-fourth the way round to the right, and the numbers will appear as they do in diagram No. 1 above. But this is evidently not the original puzzle, which was to have the box stationary, and to have the blocks move only in straight lines. Very often, too, players obtain the solution apparently, because in moving the round blocks about the six becomes substituted for the nine, and the number of moves is changed from an even to an odd one. In all cases, if the moves necessary are an odd number, the solution is possible, and if an even number it is impossible. Various other devices have been called solutions, and as this:

DIAGRAM NO. 5.

1	2	3	
4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15

Or this:

DIAGRAM NO. 6.

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	
12	13	14	15

Or this:

DIAGRAM NO 7.

13	9	5	1
14	10	6	2
15	11	7	3
	12	8	4

But a captious and unfeeling public has not taken kindly to these, looking on them more as evasions than as solutions, and ridiculing their defenders.

By taking the sixteen blocks a magic square may be made, in which every column, whether perpendicular, horizontal, or diagonal—it must be a straight line, however—when added up will foot 34. This is obtained by making the 15 change place with the 2, the 14 with the 3, the 12 with the 5, and the 8 with the 9. The board then stands:

DIAGRAM NO. 8.

1	15	14	4
12	6	7	9
8	10	11	5
13	3	2	16

It is possible to arrange the blocks in this manner, however, only when the combination is solvible.—*Chicago Inter-Ocean.*

THE poet Tennyson is worth $1,000,000, and we don't see what use there was in his writing "Come not when I am dead." They'll be on hand, every one of them, when the will is opened.—*Cincinnati Enquirer.*

A DOMINION paper asserts that Princess Louise can make bread, but admits that she does not do it regularly. That is where the most of the trouble arises. It is not so much what a person can do as what she does that counts with the general public.

HUMOROUS.

A CORN-DODGER—The man who wears big boots.

IT was a Chicago girl who once spoke of "setting" in a chair and then got such an education that she talked about the beautiful "sunsit."—*Boston Post.*

THEY were sitting together Sunday evening, with an album or two between them, when she pleasantly asked: "How would you like to have my mother live with you?" In just fifteen seconds he had his hat down half way over his face, and was bolting through the gate.

A FELLOW stopped at a hotel in Leadville, and the landlord charged him seven dollars a day for five days. "Didn't you make a mistake?" "No," said the landlord. "Yes, you did; you thought you got all the money I had, but you are mistaken. I have a whole purseful in another pocket."

MANVILLE (to his widowed friend Chasuble, who has views on art)—"Is it true that you've broken off with Sir Henry's daughter?" Chasuble—"Alas, yes, I was forced to, although she is a charming woman." Manville—"Why?" Chasuble—"Incompatability of complexion. She does not suit my furniture."—*French Paper.*

A CERTAIN painter was bragging of his wonderful command of color to a friend one day. His friend did not seem to take it quite all in. "Why," exclaimed the painter, "do you know that there are but three painters in the world, sir, who understand color?" "And who are they?" at last asked the friend. "Why, sir, I am one, and—and—and—and—I forget the name of the other two!"

AN Arbroath man, overfond of a wee drop, having beaten his wife at night, and forgotten all about the domestic difference by the morning, looked at her damaged face, and anxiously exclaimed: "Guid-ness preserve s'! Lassie, whaur hae ye been?" Enlightened as to his part in the matter, he cried, as though he were the aggrieved one: "O dear! O dear! it's an awful thing ye winna keep oot o' hairm's way."

THERE!" she cried, in an excited voice; "I should like to know what's become of that ambril. I sot it up agin the counter when I come in, and afore I could turn round its gone—and it was only a Monday that I gin four and six for 't!" "What kind of an umbrella was it, ma'am?" asked the polite clerk, in his blandest tones. "A spick and span new gingham, young man," was the eager response, "with an iv'ry handle on 't, and a—" "Like the one in your hand, ma'am, for instance?" "Sakes alive!" she exclaimed. And one might have thought she saw a serpent rather than her own "spick and span gingham," with its "iv'ry handle" clutched fast in her hand. She colored up like a druggist's window, and went off amidst unintelligible excuses. She never felt so flustered in all her born days, as she told Jemima Ann when she got home.—*Boston Transcript.*

Light in the Home.

THE eminent English writer, Dr. Richardson, produces in one of our contemporaries, an article called "Health at Home," which is replete with wisdom. A most important point, and one on which he dwells, is the fact that so many people are afraid of the light. "In a dark and gloomy house you never can see the dirt that pollutes it. Dirt accumulates on dirt, and the mind soon learns to apologize for this condition because the gloom conceals it." Accordingly, when a house is dark and dingy, the air becomes impure, not only on account of the absence of light, but from the impurities which are accumulated. Now, as Dr. Richardson cleverly puts it, we place flowers in our windows that they may have the light. If this be the case, why should we deprive ourselves of the sunshine and expect to gain health and vigor? Light, and plenty of it, is not only a purifier of things inanimate, but it absolutely stimulates our brains. It is in regard to sick rooms that this excellent authority is particularly impressive. It used to be the habit of physicians in old times to sedulously darken the rooms, and this practice continues to some extent even to-day. In certain very acute cases of nervous diseases, where light, the least ray of it, disturbs in over exciting the visual organs, this darkening of the room may be permitted, but ordinarily to keep light out of the room is to deprive the patient of one of the vital forces. Children or old people condemned to live in darkness are pale and wan, exactly like those plants which, deprived of light, grow white. Darkness in the daytime undoubtedly makes the blood flow less strongly and checks the beating of the heart, and these conditions are precisely such as bring constitutional suffering and disease. The suppression of the light of day actually increases those contagious maladies which feed on uncleanliness. Dr. Richardson states: "I once found by experiment that certain organic poisons, analogous to the poisons which propagate these diseases, are rendered innocuous by exposure to light."—*Scientific American.*

Brother Gardner and the "Ile Paintin'."

"I HEZ accidentally l'arned," began Brother Gardner, of the Lime-Kiln Club, as the meeting opened, "dat de local members of our club am makin' up a shake purse to buy me an ile paintin' as a present. I hope the skeme will stop short. Not dat I wouldn't feel honored—not dat I wouldn't be grateful—not dat I wouldn't 'preciate de kind motives of de givers, but kase it would be money frown away. I lib in a humble cabin. We hez got some stuffed green cha'rs in de parlor, an' some chromeos on de wall dat cost two shillin's apiece, but it am no place dar fur an ile paintin'. It would be just as much outer place in my cabin, and wid my surroundins', as lace curtains ober a smoke house winder. My green cha'rs now harmonize wid my ingrain carpet; my chromeos doan' look bad 'longside of a plaster of Paris bust of Shakespeare; my three-dollar clock hain't any too gorgeous for de chintz lambrequins which de ole woman made. We are only ole slave-folks up dar, but we know better dan to w'ar seben dollars' worf of hat wid two dollars' worf of butes. If white women want to come down town wid a hundred dollar cloak on, an' go back home to carpets full of holes an' bakers' bread suppers, dat's no guide for my ole woman. If white men walk aroun' like lords, an' yit owe fur last winter's coal, dat's no guide fur me. No, gem'len, doan' upsot my house wid an ile paintin'. Doan' make up no present, nor nuffin, but keep yer change down in yer pockets, for sore froats, or a tech of fever."—*Detroit Free Press.*

A TENNESSEE man accidentally shot a dog, and in trying to explain to the owner how it occurred accidentally shot him. A Coroner thought he ought to explain how he shot the man, but couldn't get a jury that was willing to listen to the explanation; they were kind of shy of him, as it were.—*Boston Post.*

THE Cornhill *Magazine* has an article on "the possible age of man." There is little use discussing such a question as that. If it would take up something that had some matter of doubt or mystery in it some good might ensue; as for instance, that mystic problem that has baffled the world for years—"the possible age of woman."—*Detroit Free Press.*

FACTS AND FIGURES.

—On the 15th of June last the total population of Bosnia and Herzegovina amounted to 1,142,147 persons, of whom 599,026 were males and 543,121 females. Of the total 1,142,147 men, women and children, 442,500 are Mohammedans, 487,022 belong to the Greek Church, 208,950 are Roman Catholics, 3,426 are Jews and 249 belong to other religious persuasions.

—The total population of Greece is 1,679,000 souls, against 1,457,000 in 1870. The increase per annum has accordingly been 1.69 per cent. From 1860 to 1870 the annual increase was one per cent. The official report hence draws the conclusion that National prosperity is augmenting, but it is very probable that the later census was more thorough than its predecessor.

—The inspection returns at Memphis show that the city has a population of 30,659, an increase of about 26 per cent. since 1870. Of this population 16,705 are whites and 13,954 colored. The average mortality for the last five years was 34 per thousand, in epidemic years running up to 51 per thousand. The report of the Sanitary Committee states that excremental and malarial diseases caused about 57 per cent. of the deaths during the last five years, and that the mortality can be reduced to 17 per thousand with a good sewerage system and pure water supply.

—The cabbage grew wild in Siberia; celery originated in Germany; the potato is a native of Peru; tobacco came from South America; millet was first discovered in India; nettle a native of Europe; the citron of Asia; oats originated in North Africa; rye came from Siberia; parsley was first discovered in Sardinia; the parsnip in Arabia; the sunflower was brought from Peru; spinach was first cultivated in Arabia; the horse-chestnut is a native of Thibet; the quince came from the Island of Crete; the pear is supposed to be of Egyptian origin; the horse-radish came from the south of Europe.

—The Tokio *Times* publishes full statistics of the ravages of cholera in Japan during the past year, which show a terrible condition of affairs. From the tables it appears that from the outbreak of the disease last spring to the end of December there had been 168,314 cases in the Empire, of which 101,364 had proved fatal, 47,885 had recovered, and at the date of the publication of the returns the issue of 19,065 cases was doubtful. These figures show the number of cases in the country was five to every 1,000 inhabitants, and that of the persons attacked 60.22 per cent. died.

—There has been a falling off in bank deposits in Ireland for three successive years, amounting to £3,699,000. In the similar crisis in 1860-63, the falling off was less by over £600,000. There has been a further decline of over £1,500,000 of the bank note circulation, which shows that the savings of notes of those too poor to keep a bank account, or deposit receipt, have been encroached upon. It is a remarkable proof of the provident habits of the Irish people in better times that at the commencement of the present crisis they had much larger resources than at the beginning of the crisis of 1860-63. The potato crop in Ireland in a good year is about equal in value to all the other crops.

—Six million tons of coal are used within the limits of London every year; $50,000,000 are invested in the production of gas, there being no less than 54,000 street lamps; the price to consumers being only one dollar per thousand feet. The streets of London are well paved, most thoroughly cleaned, and kept in excellent repair. No less than 14,000 men and 6,000 horses are employed in removing the daily accumulation of dirt, nearly all of which is utilized. The cleaning is done at night, for in a city where the traffic is so vast it would be utterly impossible to accomplish it in the day time. The value of insured property reaches the enormous total of nearly $2,700,000,000.

—There are in the United States 422 colleges; of these 20 are in New England, while the State of Missouri has 23 and Pennsylvania 29. As to church or other control, there are 27 State Universities and 48 other non-sectarian colleges; the Roman Catholic institutions number 67; the Methodists of various kinds 65; while many less sectarian denominations have each a few. Michigan University has the largest total number of students, amounting to 1,397; but excluding the strictly professional courses, Harvard, with 836, Yale, with 753, far exceed all others. One hundred and eighty-three institutions admit both sexes, three are exclusively for women, and the rest admit gentlemen only.

The Strong Man of Nevada.

The strongest man in the world at the present time, so far as we are able to learn, now lives in Reno, Washoe County, Nev. A reporter recently witnessed the astonishing feats of this remarkable man, and was fully satisfied by what he saw, that he is really all that has been claimed for him. His name is Angelo Cardela, an Italian; aged forty-eight years; stature, five feet ten inches; weight, one hundred and ninety pounds; occupation, laborer; habits temperate, though he has no scruples against the moderate use of malt liquors and the light wines of this country. In personal appearance he is not remarkable; merely a good-natured looking son of Italia, with a broad, heavy face; a noble development of chest and shoulders, and large, fleshy hands. His strength was born with him, for he has had no athletic training. When "stripped to the buff," however, a marked peculiarity in his spinal column is at once aparent. His backbone is, we might say, double-jointed, with the vertebral articulations unusually large and prominent. Though he is not a man of unusual size, his spinal column is double the ordinary width and his other bones and joints seem made on a similar large and generous scale. After some solicitation, he finally consented to favor the reporter with an exhibition of strength, which proved to be such an astonishing exhibition of lifting power as scarcely to be believed. The reporter, whose weight is one hundred and fifty pounds, stood with one foot on the floor and arms outstretching, his hands being lightly grasped by two friends, one on each side, to preserve the balance of his body. This slight assistance, however, had no tendency to raise his body, being merely to keep him from toppling over. Cardela then stooped down and placed the third finger of his right hand under the hollow of the reporter's foot upon which he was balancing, and with no perceptible effort raised the reporter to a height of four feet, and deposited him, standing, on a table near at hand. This feat he repeated, and then grasped the reporter's ankles with both hands, raised him above his head, and gently lowered him to the table in a sitting posture. Cardela had a pipe in his mouth while lifting, and continued smoking, as much as to say, "Per Bacco, 'tis nothing; a way we have in our country!" On a former occasion he raised Mr. Lawson, a gentleman connected with the editorial staff of the Reno Gazette, in a similar way, with one finger, carried him across a room and left him standing on a table. He has also lifted by the same plan, using only his third finger (which seems to be his most reliable one) several Reno heavy weights, one weighing over 350 pounds. He can strike a blow with his fist with a power of 500 pounds, measured on a register. It is said that two Irishmen, near Verdi, started in to whip him one night, but concluded to give up the contract, so he grasped one in each hand and beat them together until the life was hammered nearly out of them. Many other tales are told of his extraordinary strength, and there can be no doubt that, in his particular specialty, he is unrivaled, and, indeed, a lusus naturæ, when the peculiarities of his physical "make-up" and his almost limitless power are considered. He states that his father could strike a blow equal in power to 1,000 pounds, so that his strength seems a direct inheritance. Cardela has not much education and an imperfect knowledge of English. He dislikes to show his strength and fails to realize his own value. If he were to give public exhibitions of his wonderful powers he would doubtless be recognized and acknowledged to be the most powerful man in the world in certain lines of strength.—*Cor. San Francisco Chronicle.*

The Upper Rhine.

Nobody knows why so many Rhine tourists—American Rhine tourists, at least—stop short at Mayence or Basle. It may be that they are too fond of comfort, though it must be admitted that the little boats that ply between the Rhine Falls and the Lake of Constance are not the equals of the boats on the Lower Rhine. As to the scenery along what might be called the Swiss Rhine, at least above the Lake of Constance, it is certainly much grander than that about which the painters, poets and tourists rave, as seen anywhere between Frankfort and the sands of Holland. Neither will the Upper Rhine be outdone in the way of castled hills and rocks, picturesque towns and strange legends of fierce knights and fair damsels.

There is half a notion prevalent that the navigable possibilities of the river end somewhere just about Bingen. At least we usually get off there, jump into the cars, and whirl away from the classic stream before we have become half acquainted with it.

There is a legend that the Rhine has its source in an unapproachable cloud that hangs somewhere over the Via-Mala. Tourists seem to have accepted the legend—at least, few tire their legs in looking out the real source of the stream that was once believed to be blessed of the gods.

What a strange source it has, in fact! To be exact, however, there are three sources to the baby Rhine; they are born triplets, but before getting far down the mountains they clasp arms and wander as one

"Down, down to the weary sea."

One of these baby Rhines is born in the tiny Lake of Toma, about a dozen miles above the old mountain convent of Disentis. This dark green lake is surrounded by dreary rocks and ice-clad mountains. It is seven thousand six hundred and ninety feet above the sea level.

Between it and the Disentis convent and village there are pleasant pastures, and the traveler may feast on the best cheese of the Alps and a most luscious white honey. As a corollary to the honey, bears abound in the woods skirting the valley. So do the chamois and the mountain fox. The people are extremely poor. They are all good Catholics, and here is spoken that queerest of modern languages, the Romansch. It is, in fact, the original Latin, as spoken by the Roman peasantry. The ancestors of these villagers came from Tuscany.

The habits of this pastoral people are singular, and such as will not be met with elsewhere in the whole course of the Rhine.

Drippings of glaciers and snow-fields and wrecked avalanches unite themselves in little brooks, and skip across the meadows to join the river in its hurry to the sea. At Disentis the little stream known as the Medelser, or Middle Rhine, leaps and laughs to join its sister down one of the prettiest and wildest valleys of the Alps. There are cataracts and falls and rapids all the way, while on each side the mountains are superlatively grand. Even the well-known Via-Mala is not considered so strangely picturesque and romantic as is this unvisited valley of the Medelser. In these Upper Rhine regions existed the strange republics known as the Gray League, the Ten Jurisdictions, and the League of the House of God. They were founded as long ago as 1396, and were later united as one republic, intended to protect their people against the tyranny of a great number of petty lords and noblemen, whose ruined castles still ornament almost every eminence of the Upper Rhine.

These stern old republicans had the beautiful town of Ilanz for their capital. They were a heroic set of men, and history nowhere records greater sacrifices than were made by these people to preserve their liberty. At the little town of Truns a few people met in 1396, and swore a solemn oath, as their Swiss neighbors had done at the Rutli fifty years before, to devote their whole lives singly to the attainment of liberty. They succeeded, and the republic lasted four hundred years, when it was allied with Switzerland. Through what strange countries, and by what changing kingdoms, the beautiful Rhine flowed in all those centuries after leaving the free land of its birth! Ilanz, their old capital, still stands, a novel and picturesque picture of past ages. The views of the Rhine, both up and down, are very fine from Ilanz. One may enjoy between Ilanz and Truns the most varied scenery of the Alps—bright meadows, dark forests, lofty mountains, snow-fields edged by smiling villages, ruined castles, and, sweeping along through its bed of dolomite, the winding Rhine. There is no more interesting picture on the whole Rhine road to Holland.—*S. H. M. Byers, in Harper's Magazine for April.*

Litigation About a Pint of Cherries.

A case was tried in Judge Lindley's Court yesterday, says the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat*, which aptly illustrates the beauties of litigation and the weakness of human nature. One day last summer Mr. J. Wertheimer, while on his way to his axle-grease factory, stopped in front of a fruit stand, tempted by the luscious appearance of a pile of ripe cherries lying on a table. He asked the young man in attendance if the cherries were sweet, and, on being invited to try them, he tasted a few, inquired the price, and finally ordered ten cents worth. The boy emptied a pint of the fruit into a paper bag and handed it to Mr. Wertheimer. The latter looked into the bag, and thinking the measure was short demanded a remeasurement, and refused to take the cherries. The young man resented this, and getting hold of the umbrella of the customer broke it over his head. Mr. W. called upon a policeman and the cherry vender was arrested, but escaped punishment because Mr. W. could not spare the time to appear against him. The owner of the stand, Mr. Thomas McEvilly, thereupon instituted a suit against Mr. Wertheimer for the sum of fifteen cents—ten cents for the pint of cherries, and five cents for the cherries consumed in the process of tasting. The trial came off before Justice Mullery, and judgment for ten cents was rendered against Mr. W. The latter appealed to the Circuit Court, and in the trial yesterday swore that he had eaten only two of the cherries, and refused to pay for the pint because he believed the measure was not full. The jury gave a verdict for the plaintiff for ten cents. The costs amount to about fifty dollars, and the fees of the lawyers will be at least fifty dollars more.