

OUT OF THE ORDINARY

Ode to the Prune.

(The California prune crop this season is 150,000,000 pounds.—News note.)

Fair fruit, though greater bards refuse
To chant your praise; although they scorn ye,
This is the acme of good news
From California.

Great poets do not care to tune
The lyre to such a lowly ditty,
And pity 'tis, 'tis true (O prune,
'Tis true you're pitty).

Perchance the pruning knife should cut
That pun we made the verse above
this.
Perhaps, we say, it ought to, but
We simply love this!

The punishment must fit the crime,
As Gilbert said in "The Mikado,"
But, O to make it fit a rhyme
Of El Dorado!

Oh, prosy prune, they've done you wrong,
Who never yet have been so tuneful
To chant your sweetness in a song,
Bah! They were prunefull!

Esulent prune, we have a hunch,
As sure as we're a luckless sinner,
We'll have you now for breakfast, lunch
And maybe dinner.

But, welcome, prune, by pint or peck,
We're glad your crop is so extensive,
We're tired of you, but—by heck!—
You're inexpensive!
—New York Mail.

Did Not Know House Was Burning.

For more than a week the family of John Agoston lived in a house that was on fire, and not until shortly after midnight the other night did it become aware of the danger that threatened it. The Agostons live in a double frame house, in Phoenixville, Pa., and it was in the board partition between them and their neighbors that the fire smoldered. Over a week previously they noticed that, despite the cold weather, the house was comfortable with a low fire in their heater. They supposed it was due to an unusually hot fire next door, and paid no attention to it. The neighbors also noticed the unusual condition and thought the Agostons had a big fire. The rooms getting warmer, both families allowed their heater fires to burn out, and as they were discussing the phenomenon Agoston saw a tiny flicker curl around the wall paper in a corner and then a flame shot through. The mystery was solved. A bucket brigade soon extinguished the flames, and it was found that the fire, which had smoldered in the wall for days, had charred the inside of the partition.

Colombian Rain Tree.

A novelty in the vegetable kingdom has recently been reported as native to the United States of Colombia. In the woods adjacent to the city of Moyobamba grows a tree which the natives call "rain tree." It is about fifty feet high when it reaches maturity and about three feet in diameter at its base, and has the property of absorbing an immense quantity of humidity from the atmosphere. This it concentrates and subsequently pours forth from its leaves and branches in a shower and in such abundance that in many cases the ground in its neighborhood is converted into a veritable bog. It possesses this curious property in the greatest degree in the summer, when the rivers are at the lowest point and water is scarce. It has been suggested that this tree be planted in the more arid parts of Peru for the benefit of the farmers.

Tooth as a Life Saver.

A Mme. Leveque, now on her trial in Paris for attempting manslaughter, is the wife of a dentist. He brought divorce proceedings against her. Thereupon she armed herself with a revolver and discharged it point-blank at him. Luckily for the dentist, he looks after other people's teeth but neglects his own. The bullet went into his mouth, found a convenient nook in a hollow molar, and settled itself therein comfortably. The man was unhurt, and even the tough old

tooth seems to have stood the impact well and not to have budged. The revolver ball, indeed, is still in it, so that while the molar stopped the bullet, the bullet has also stopped the molar. The dentist had a providential escape, but it is a bad advertisement for dentistry. If he had had that tooth filled he would be a dead man by now.—London Telegraph.

Oyster, Aged 25, a Foot Long.

A wholesale oyster dealer was sizing up a new invoice yesterday. "There are some old fellows in that lot," he said, as he shoved to one side some abnormally large ones. He picked out one and measured it. The shell was eight inches long. "The age of an oyster has absolutely no effect upon its quality," he said. "It doesn't get tough with age, like the higher order of animals. How long does an oyster live? Well, I couldn't say exactly. I have known Maurice river oystermen to claim that an oyster undisturbed in a neglected cove would live for twenty-five years before it finally died of old age. And an oyster of the Maurice river type keeps on growing all the time. I have seen some myself that measured nearly a foot in length.—Philadelphia Record.

Turned Round by the Sun.

A large granite ball, weighing two tons, in a cemetery in Ohio is slowly turning on its axis. During the last five years the ball has turned 13 3/4 inches. When the ball was placed in position an unpolished spot 6 inches in diameter was left in the socket of the pedestal on which it rested. A year ago it was noticed that the unpolished spot was turning upward on the south side of the monument. The revolution of the huge polished ball, which it would require a derrick to lift, is supposed to be due to the sun's heating one side of it, the south, and causing it to expand, while the north side, which rests most in the shade, does not expand to the same extent, and thus the ball gradually shifts its position by turning.

Long-Lived English Family.

Do modern records contain anything to equal the following entry in the parish register of Old Whittington, Derbyshire: "Thomas Ashton, son of Mr. Arthur and Mrs. Jane Bulkeley, was baptized July 1, 1744. Godfathers: Edward Downs, esq., great-great-great-great-uncle; Dr. Charles Ashton, great-great-great-uncle; Joseph Ashton, gent., great-great-great-uncle. Godmothers: Mrs. Wood, great-great-great-great-aunt; Mrs. Wainwright, great-great-grandmother; Mrs. Green, great-grandmother. Registered at the request of Joseph Ashton, of Landon, gent., who nominated the godfathers and godmothers, believing they are not to be paralleled in England."

Alligator Farming.

It is reported that several French dealers have recently visited America to purchase stock for an alligator farm which they purpose starting in the south of France. Alligator skin has become so highly prized throughout France that the animal dealers believe it will pay well to raise the alligators on this the first farm of its kind in the world. Not long ago President Loubet received a present of a hunting suit of alligator skin. This is said to be growing scarcer yearly, and there is always a great demand for it for boots, shoes, handbags, writing pads, portfolios and toilet articles.

Old Landmark Burned.

An old house in Sunset Park, one of the landmarks of Brooklyn, N. Y., has been burned. It has been thought the house was used as a hiding place for "Charley" Ross immediately after he was kidnapped in Philadelphia. The house was a relic of revolutionary times, and recently had been used by a park watchman as a shelter. Mischievous boys skating on the park lake snowballed the old watchman, and when he gave chase one of them crept up to the house and set it on fire.

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