

HIS BEST DAY.

"I know a boy likes Chris'mas best
Cos Santa Claus comes then;
He likes to hang his stockings up,
An' take it do - n - a - a - a,
An' count his presents out - but I -
I'd rather have it Fourth July.

"That other boy likes Chris'mas best
Cos o' the Chris'mas trees
To Sunday schools - an' things to eat,
An' when they's been a freeze,
He likes to slide and skate, but my!
What's that longside o' Fourth July?

"Chris'mas is good, but Fourth July!
That day's the best of all -
O my! I wish could be the Fourth
All summer an' all fall!
No other time begins to be
So good as Fourth July to me!

"I hope 'ar when the Fourth is here
My mother'll think it's right
To let me creep down stairs an' fire
My crackers off 'fore light,
I'll blow my horn, and shoot my gun!
An' wake up pa! an' have such fun!

"At dark I'll fire my shooting stars,
An' let my rockets glare,
An' set my Roman candles off -
Whizz! Kuss! Buzz! Bang! Pop! Flare!
Chris'mas is good 'nough, but my!
I'd rather have it Fourth July!
I wish 'twas always Fourth July!"
-Womankind.

A Fireworks Capture.

TROUBLE raged on the irrigation ditch. The upper gang and the lower gang were at odds. The former had lost a horse and the lower gang was supposed to include the thief.

"It just means a fight," exclaimed Mack to Simpson, as the two members of the lower gang rode over the plains one summer night. "There can't be any horse stealing around these parts and not have fighting."

"No, and the feeling isn't any too good already," added the other.

The ponies loped easily, and turning down the trail went swiftly into the thick sunflowers of a ravine. It was nearly sunset and the tall weeds seemed to be almost like young saplings. Suddenly the horses stopped, ahead was an unusual sight, a white-topped prairie schooner.

"A one-horse rig, too," exclaimed Simpson, looking at the thills that were on the front of the wagon.

"And deserted, too," and Matt drew nearer to the strange outfit.

"Well, what do you think of a man that will do this?" He pulled the curtains aside and showed the sleeping form of a boy perhaps 7 years old. The little fellow looked peaked and helpless and the sympathies of both the men were aroused by the sight.

"Well, he's a rascal," was the reply at last and the curtain was dropped.

"He ain't a rascal," came from the inside of the wagon. "My papa is good to me."

"Hello, there, what are you doing here?" asked Matt.

"Waiting for fireworks; papa has gone after them. He always gets them for me on the Fourth July."

"What did he say?" asked Matt.

"Says his father has gone after fireworks - a likely story. The boy's hungry; that is what is the matter with him."

"Well, let's feed him. I'll go over and get him something from the camp. And, say, I'll bring him some fireworks, too. I'd forgot it, but to-day is the Fourth of July, and the boss has a lot of rockets and things ready to fire off. All the men are out hunting for the horse thief and they have forgotten all about it. I can steal a few."

Away rode Matt in the gathering darkness, and although the pony went very fast, and the man did not stay in camp more than a few moments, the wait seemed a long one to the watcher in the ravine with the boy. The child was hungry and nervous and confided to the man that he had been "awful sick." Simpson felt exceedingly sorry for the little one, and was more and more indignant at the actions of the man who had forsaken such a precious charge.

"Here he comes," he said at last, when the rattle of horse's hoofs was heard on the prairie sod. Matt came down the ravine and had some difficulty in finding the wagon hidden in the sunflowers. At last he opened the package of food and laid the fireworks on the grass beside the boy.

"Supper first," was the order from Simpson, and the three ate the generous supply that had been brought.

"Good thing not to take the kid to the ranch," said Matt. "The men will have a rough time there to-night, and they wouldn't spare the boy."

"Now for the fun," and away went one of the rockets into the darkness, scattering its splendor over the level plains that spread from the edge of the ravine. The jack rabbits and the prairie owls saw it and wondered what it could be.

Somewhere else saw it, for away off to the south, where its light was visible only as a faint glimmer, there was a company of horsemen, and they turned their animals in that direction.

"Hark!" said Matt, as the fun was at its height. "Somebody's coming."

The light of the last rocket had given a passing view of a man on horseback at the crest of a ravine. In a moment the man was near them and he was accompanied by a large number. In the midst of the party, with his head bound in a large red handkerchief, was seen the figure of a man tied on a horse.

"We have got the thief," said the leader of the newcomers.

"Well," replied Matt, "what are you bringing him here for?"

"We kind of lost our way and we thought this was the camp. But we are going to settle with the rascal right here, anyhow. It might not be best to take him to the camp, after all."

"Sure it is the man?"

"Bound to be - got the horse."

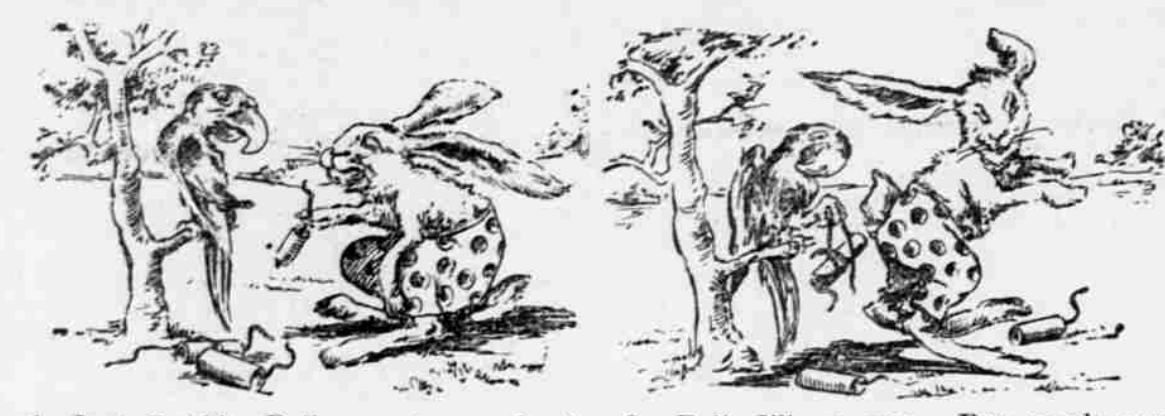
In the dim light of the little fire of sunflower stalks that somebody had kindled the prisoner was brought forth. He presented a pitiful appearance and the men almost felt sorry for him. Still, they knew the unwritten law.

"What have you there?" remarked one of the newcomers, pointing to the boy who stood by, looking with open-mouthed astonishment on the weird scene.

"Nothing but a kid that we picked up," answered Matt. "Let him alone, will you?"

"Say, fellows," went on the visitor, "what's the matter with letting the boy fire some of his rockets and make a respectable illumination for this proceeding?"

The others agreed, and the child was placed in position at the head of the two lines that had formed and had in his hand a big rocket that was to be fired at the



1. Jack Rabbit - Polly, want a cracker? Polly - Not on your life, Jacky. I've sworn off smoking.

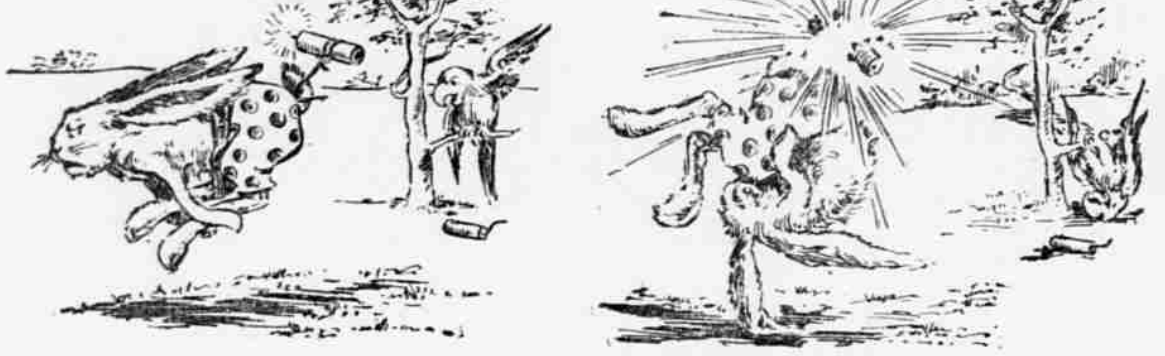
2. Polly - I'll go you. But won't you have a cracker, Jack? Do have one on me.

Jack - Then let's have a Fourth of July race. I'm a regular crackerjack at spring-riding.



3. Humph! This looks like one on me.

4. Tut! tut! What's this? I smell powder.



5. Polly - How's that for a cracker, Jack?

6. Zip! Kerzoom! End of the Tale. -San Francisco Examiner.

signal, and then the bands were to be taken from the prisoner and he could be hit by any one who was quick enough. It was thought that he would get enough punishment to prevent him from ever returning to that section again. He evidently thought so, too, for he was trying his best to escape.

"All ready," called Matt. "Go!"

The bandage was dropped from the man's eyes and the ropes came from off his feet and arms. A dozen whips were raised to strike, but before they could be used a dramatic scene followed. The boy who was to fire the rocket dropped the signal in the grass and the bunches of fire went skurrying away in the tall sunflowers. For himself, the little fellow made one leap, and before a whip descended he was clinging to the man's neck with both arms around the same in an embrace that meant a great deal.

"Oh, it's papa!" he cried, and the man, instead of running, stood holding the child to his breast.

"Well, this is a go," said Matt. "What have you men been doing?"

"Make him run," called one of the more excitable ones among them. He raised his whip again, but Simpson stood between and would have received the blow on his own shoulders.

"You have captured the wrong man," said the stranger.

"But you didn't say so."

"How could I when you had put a yard of cotton over my mouth? I was looking for something to eat, and you made a rush and got me tied before I could get word to you. I tried not to let you get me, though."

"Yes, you fought like a tiger."

"My boy and I are traveling back east," went on the man. "One of our horses gave out back here a ways, and we had to get along with one. The boy's mother died in the mountains, and I must take him to my folks. We are very poor, but we are honest."

"Then how did you get the horse that belongs to the gang?"

"I did not get the horse. This is my own horse."

"We'll see about that. Come on, boys," said the leader, and they went toward the rancho house, where the men had their headquarters.

"Bring little fireworks and his playthings," called one of the men, and they gathered up the remainder of the rockets. On the way the boy fired several, and their path was thus marked with fire and shouting, for the men enjoyed the sight as well as he.

As they came into camp they saw all the upper gang men and the remainder of the lower gang employes gathered there. This

unwonted sight made them afraid that trouble was in the air.

"We have got your horse," called Matt, as they drew nearer.

"So have we," came the strange answer. "Sure enough, as they entered the camp there was brought a horse with a piece of picket rope tied to his neck, and when they stood him beside the horse ridden by the stranger the two animals looked like as twins."

"But this is the right one," explained one of the men, pointing to the rope. "He had been in the tall weeds and was tangled by his rope."

"Seems to me that we owe you an apology," said Matt, addressing the stranger.

"Let's celebrate it," added the happy Simpson. "If it hadn't been for the boy we would have given the man pretty bad treatment. Let him fire his rockets."

So the remainder of the fireworks went into the dark and illuminated the scene that was so unusual on the plains.

"While we are about it," went on Simpson, "let's shake hands and be friends again."

The men of both gangs liked the suggestion and spent a happy evening together.

When the boys and the migrant drove on east a few days afterward they were seated behind two horses, and the good wishes of both camps went with them. -Chicago Record.

Racing Tern.

"They're off in a bunch."

The Modern Casabianca.

The boy stood on the backyard fence, whence all but him had fled; The flames that lit his father's barn shone round him o'er the shed. A bunch of crackers in his hand, Two others in his hat. With piteous accents loud he cried, "I never thought of that!"

He flames flew wide, flew thick, flew hot, They lit upon the hat; They fired those crackers in his hand, And e'en those in his hat. There came a burst of thunder sound - "The boy! Oh, where was he? Ask the winds that strewed around His fragments on the sea!"

A top, a knife, three marbles and Some fish hooks and some yarn - The relics of that dreadful boy Who burnt his father's barn! -Vim.

HURRAH FOR THE FOURTH!

-Minneapolis Journal.

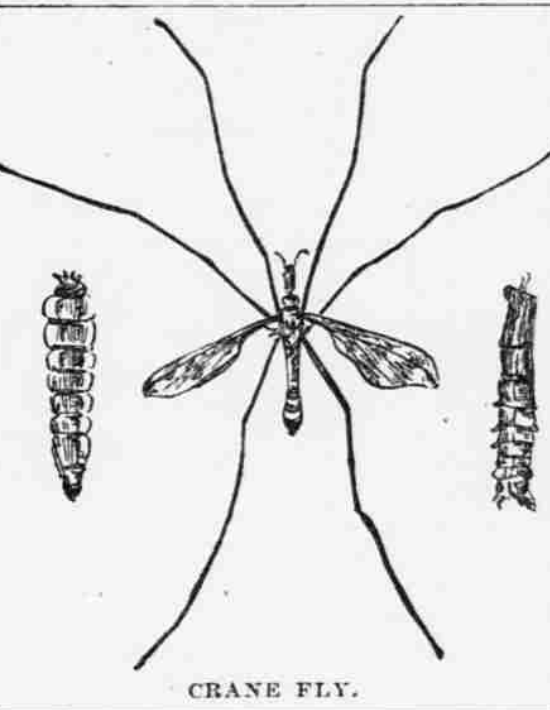
FARM AND GARDEN



Crane Flies.

A correspondent sends specimens of worms that infest his strawberry, raspberry and dewberry fields. He says: "They work on the roots and cut them off; cut off leaf stems and fruit buds of strawberries, and work similarly on dewberries; cannot see that they are injuring raspberries. Land was all in crop rotation before planting berries. Berry patches are one and two years old. What are they, and will they do serious damage?"

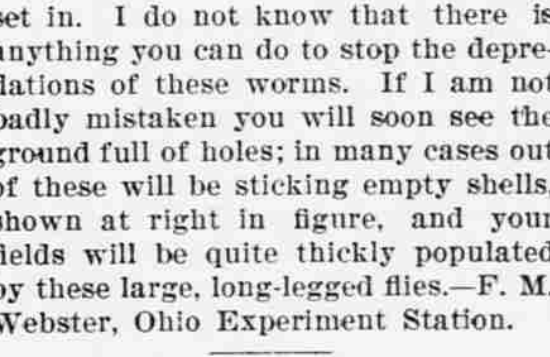
The worms sent are the young of what are known as crane flies, the long-legged, mosquito-like insects that are sometimes mistaken for Hessian fly, and are supposed by others to be the parent of cut worms. This is the first time that these insects have ever been reported as injurious to strawberries or dewberries, so far as known to me. In England they are called leather



CRANE FLY.

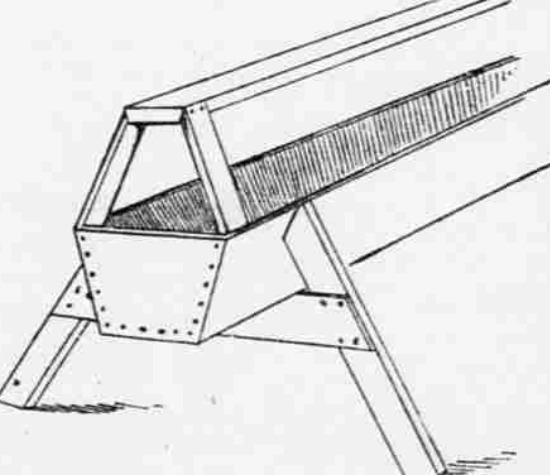
jackets, and are sometimes destructive in fields. I have known them to destroy fields of young wheat in Indiana in early spring, where the land had been devoted to clover the previous year, and the ground broken very late in the season and sown to wheat. There is but little doubt that they will destroy red clover and wheat in early spring under the conditions previously indicated.

If your ground was thickly shaded last fall, and especially if there was a rank growth of clover during the late summer, these insects, in all probability, laid their eggs among the clover plants, and these hatching to maggots, shown at left in the figure, became half or two-thirds grown before the winter set in. I do not know that there is anything you can do to stop the depredations of these worms. If I am not badly mistaken you will soon see the ground full of holes; in many cases out of these will be sticking empty shells, shown at right in figure, and your fields will be quite thickly populated by these large, long-legged flies. -F. M. Webster, Ohio Experiment Station.



A Sheep Trough.

A correspondent of the Iowa Homestead has a trough which he considers peculiar to his own view of what a sheep trough ought to be. It is so constructed as to be convenient for both sheep and lambs. No sheep will jump into the trough, and lambs will not lie in it as they will in larger ones. First take one six-inch board the desired length and bevel its edges a little for the bottom. Nail to this two more six-inch boards for the sides, so the tops will flare a little. Use a four-inch board for a guard rail with supports at each end at the middle of a long



END VIEW OF SHEEP TROUGH.

June Grass for Hay.

The reason why June grass or blue grass is not thought much of for hay is because it is never cut until its seed stalks appear, when the plant has lost most of the nutritive qualities that make it valuable for pasture. It may seem too much bother to cut and save a mass of leaves, but if cut before the seed stalk appears it may be cut often on rich land, and will make more hay in the form of cured grass than can be got from the land by pasturing it.

Non-Tuberculous Milk.

It seems that, after all, much of the public alarm as to the danger of the spread of tuberculosis through the drinking of milk is unnecessary. For some years the station officials at the New Jersey experiment station have been closely observing several tuberculous cows, formerly part of the sta-

tion's general herd. When the animals reacted under the delicate tuberculin test they were not slaughtered, but were segregated and studied. They find that the milk from these cows has been tested and analyzed again and again, but thus far no germs have been found in it. So that, from a scientific point of view, these cows have produced clean and healthful milk. One criticism of this achievement points out that, although no germs have been found in the milk, it is not safe to say that the milk had never contained any. The germs may be found in unsuspected corners, and in one milking and not in another. The testing apparatus, too, is not yet perfected. The general effect of these investigations, however, is to make the public much more comfortable as to its dairy milk supply.

Take Thought for Wife and Mother.

In a recent farmers' institute one farmer said: "Much of your success depends upon the good health and cheerfulness of your wife, doesn't it? Then why don't you take steps to lighten her labor and preserve her health? Most of you have good wells with windmills, and you have taken the pains to run pipes to your barns because the expense was not great, and it saved you the trouble of either carrying water to the barn or leading your stock to water. But I wonder how many of you have run water pipes to the house, thus giving your hard-working wife the convenience of stepping to a sink and drawing the fresh water whenever it is needed, without the labor of carrying it."

"I will tell you, fellow-farmers, we should take better care of our wives. Why, in the community where I live, three farmers have buried their wives within the last six months! And it is my honest opinion that two of them were just worn out with hard work, and neither of them past 50. The fine homes they had helped to build up are saddened by the absence of those mothers."

Educating Farmers.

No State has been more active in the education of its farmers in improved dairy methods than the State of Wisconsin. As a result of the education of the people of that State in this direction, the net gain in the manufacture of butter in ten years has been six and a half million dollars, and the net gain in the value of cheese manufactured in that time has been a round million dollars, making a total net gain in ten years for butter and cheese alone of seven and one-half million dollars. And the increase in the value of the dairy cattle has been many millions more, to say nothing of the saving of feed and labor that was formerly thrown away on poor cows that did not pay for their keeping, but were kept at a loss. This shows that the education of the farming classes adds to the wealth of the State, and is a benefit to all the people.

A Good Butter Record.

The cut herewith represents registered Shorthorn cow Sally, the property of the Lyndon Shorthorn Stock Farm, Lyndon, Vt. She has a butter record of 3 pounds 1.3 ounce per day, and transmits her dairy qualities to her offspring, as is shown by her three-



GOOD BUTTER COW.

year-old heifer's butter record of 17 pounds 11 ounces. During the butter test they were fed four quarts corn cob and oats ground and one pint cottonseed meal once per day. Sally represents an ideal dual purpose cow, great size being combined with good dairy qualities.

Suggestions for Matings.

Beginners will find in the following suggestions a help in selecting breeding poultry stock: "The male bird should be a model and exhibit the distinctive character of the breed to which he belongs. He should be good-sized, healthy and full of activity, with no constitutional defects. He should have a clear-cut profile, with smooth, glossy plumage and a keen eye. He should have a broad chest and carry himself with a proud, yet graceful air. The females should be chosen to combine good size, pure and even color, strong constitution and symmetry in form. When selecting hens for breeding we should look first for good layers and the most perfect in general appearance, and by this combination we are sure to obtain a superior offspring."

Thumps.

If the sow gets too fat when the pigs are quite young and they have not become used to exercising, then thumps will be most sure to follow. It can be avoided by driving the pigs about the pen after the dam has left the pen, and if the weather gets so warm so the pigs can go outside the pen, then make them follow the dam. The cause of the thumps is the fat that gathers around the blood-making machinery of the pig, and makes the blood flow slowly, and, of course, the pig gets sluggish, and if not attended to soon dies.

Washing Milk Pans.

It is always important to wash milk pails as soon as possible after their contents are emptied. If left to stand two or three hours, some of the milk dries on the wooden pail, and then the more hot water is put on it the closer it sticks. Always wash milk pails first with cold water to remove the particles of milk, and then scald with hot water to destroy any germs that may remain.

WASHINGTON'S LAST SLAVE PEN

Most of the Old Inhabitants Had Forgotten that It Was Still Standing.

Washington's last remaining slave pen has lately been demolished. Many old residents admit that they did not know of its existence until they heard that it was to be destroyed.

The city formerly had two "nigger" pens. One was over on what is now known as the Smithsonian reservation, and the other was the building in the center of the block between Four and a Half street and Sixth, and between Louisiana avenue and C street.

No one appears to be able to say when this slave pen was erected, but it is supposed to have been put up in the forties. When it was in use it was the only building in the block, and occupied a central place. It was 50 feet long and two stories in height.

The work upon it was of the most durable character. The brick work and joiner-work defied the efforts of strong men to separate them, the beams being large and still sound, the yellow pine of which they were made having turned gray with age, but still defying rot.

When slave dealers arrived in town with gangs of slaves, they would take them to this or the other public pen and leave them there to be safely housed until the dealer could run out and hunt up customers.

The slave pens were also used to confine low criminals. To be locked up in the pen with slaves was considered extremely vexatious and humiliating by all well-raised criminals. As there was no other jail in town at one time, there was always a number of slaves and criminals in the pen together.

When owners of slaves found their property incorrigible, the "chattels" were sent to the pen to await the pleasure of the owner, who might have them held in the pen as prisoners until a good offer was obtained for the property, either to serve some other Washington master or go with other negroes suffering transfer to Carolina or beyond. -New York Times.

THIRTY-EIGHT MULE TEAM

And the Little Busy Bee Raised Great Confusion in Its Ranks.

Without a capable man in control, it would hardly be possible to use the big reaper that, according to the San Francisco Chronicle, was employed last summer on a ranch near Corning, Cal. Thirty-eight mules furnished the power for handling nearly a million pounds of wheat. The grain was cut from the stalks, the chaff threshed out, and the residue placed in sacks, which were sewed and piled ready for the mill - all by the huge machine, which acts with almost human intelligence.

As for Frank Johnson, the driver of the team, his fame as an "animal-trainer" went far and wide. He controlled the two leaders with the lines in his hands, and taught the others to move with them. An eighteen-foot lash assisted him in the direction of the nearly two-score mules.

On one occasion a bee, busy as usual, came near causing a serious accident to the team. They were descending the side of a very steep hill, when a mule in the center of the string became provoked by the bee, which lit on his ear, and left its sting therein.

The sufferer reared and kicked his follower, who retaliated on his tail mat, and so the kick was passed along until it became the turn of the last five to assert their strength. This they all did together, to the discomfort of Johnson, whose reins became entangled, so that the mules and machine began to roll down the slope.

Through the driver's presence of mind, no damage was done. He leaped off and ran to the heads of the leaders, whom he subdued in a minute.

Why They Swapped Fines.

Travelers in Europe are limited by the railroads to a small quantity of baggage carried free, usually about fifty-six pounds. In a train in Belgium recently two fellow travelers got into conversation and came upon the subject of free baggage, when one asked leave to measure the other's trunk. The result was that the measurer said:

"Your trunk is seven and a half centimeters too long and has no right to be in the compartment of free luggage. I am a railway inspector and must fine you 5 francs. Please give me your name and address."

The proposed victim of misplaced confidence was, however, equal to the occasion.

"Kindly lend me your measure that I may satisfy myself on the subject."

Then, with a polite smile, "I am a director in the royal weights and measures office. To my great regret I notice that your measure is not stamped, as is required by law; so that, firstly, your measuring is not legally valid, and, secondly, it is my painful duty to subject you to a fine of 50 francs. Please give me your name and address." -New York Press.

An Odd Su to of Furniture.

Perhaps the oddest suite of furniture in the world is owned by Joseph Berger, an hotel-keeper in Budapest, the Hungarian capital. For many years he has made it a business to collect match-boxes from factories in various countries. His collection aggregates 4,000 boxes. He ordered a skilled cabinet-maker to equip a room with furniture made of these boxes. The outfit consists of a writing table with smoking apparatus, a fire-screen, a cabinet, a chair, and other smaller articles. Though the boxes are empty, they are adjusted so ingeniously that the pieces are fully as strong as the ordinary furniture.

Truth lies at the bottom of the well - and anglers never go there to fish.

The noblest remedy for injuries is forgetfulness.