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GRAVES.

A mound, a stone and violets;
  A bird-song in the air;
A child that gathers flowers and lets
  The wind play with its hair;
A field of wheat across the hedge
  Rippled by fairy hands;
A silver stream that downward runs
  To cheer the lower lands.

No mound, no stone, no violets—
  A blue sea overhead;
A sobbing wind, that ne'er forgets
  Its chanting for the dead.
Beneath the stars on summer nights,
  That deep blue grave how fair!
The while upon the shore the waves
  Beat low, as if in prayer.

No mound, no stone, no violets;
  No bird, nor wave, nor star;
A spot where Memory forgets
  What spring and summer are;
Deeper it lies than deep-sea graves,
  From land and sea apart—
O grave so sad and desolate!
  O grave, within the heart!

—*The Continent.*

PERILS OF TELEGRAPH LINE-MEN.

To pursue the vocation of a telegraph repairer one must not be a weakling. He must possess a strength which will cope with great bodily labor. He must have an endurance which enables him to resist the stormy elements. He must have nerves firm-braced as steel, strong as the wires he climbs among, and from whose coigne of vantage he surveys the earth, eighty feet below his perch. The clear-eyed young fellows who nimbly swing themselves about in the net-work of wires which span the city streets are all this. Their profession makes athletes of them. It is a school of physical training unsurpassed by any bookish methods. They are natives of the pure open air. They are walkers, lifters, climbers, carriers. Not a muscle in their bodies but is nurtured and developed by their work. Symmetry of form, grace of bearing, lightness of step follow naturally. The boon that thousands seek in vain—health, robust, bounding, magnificent health—is theirs; the concomitant of a splendid strength, which defies and dissipates the terrors of the wintry tempest. There are in Chicago, employed by the telegraph and telephone companies, about two hundred repairmen. Beginning with the laborers, who are employed from day to day, they range through various degrees of skill, till the first-class line-man is reached. He is a combination of trades. He can walk with a professional pedestrian, unlike the latter, carrying a weight of heavy tools and wire, over rough ground, through all weathers, at a pace and for a distance which calls for the expenditure of more physical force than the hippodrome walker puts into his spurts. The first-class line-man is something of a carpenter, also. He carries an auger, a saw and a hatchet, tools simple enough, but sufficient for his work. With them he can splice a piece onto a broken pole, or, if it be leveled, improvise a new one out of a convenient tree. In the belt about his waist is a pair of plyers, clamps, a wrench, and some binding wires. With these he reduces the troubles which interrupt his aerial lines of communication. His vigilant eye quickly detects the "cross," or "swing," or "escape" for which he is searching. These difficulties are usually caused by a wire being torn from an insulator. Two hundred feet of iron wire is a heavy weight, but to the line-man's strong arms it is a trifle. He climbs the pole, hauls up the swinging truant, pulls in its resisting length to a tension, and fastens it to its proper insulator. This he can do unassisted. It is the simplest part of his labors. But when the wind has torn bunches of wire away from their fastenings and stretched them on the ground for miles, and when sometimes the rain and the frost have incased them in sheathings of ice, then the arduous part of his profession comes into play. Buffeted by the snow and the rain he must dig the wire out of its frozen coverings. With the thermometer far below zero, the line-man must toil through the day smashing the ice with his hatchet, climbing swaying poles, splicing and resetting. The wind howls around him. Hurtling arrows of sleet pierce his face. Like angry serpents, the wires tug and pull as with his strong hands he fastens them to their insulators and again connects those cities whose commerce pauses when he works.

Of necessity, the experts at this trade are located in the larger cities. A beginner cannot weave new strands into the woof-like wires which climb roofs and in themselves are, in some streets, almost a roof. The city line-man must know something of telegraphy. He must be able to set up intricate and delicate instruments. In Chicago his territory covers a circle which touches Englewood on the south, Evanston on the north and Hinsdale on the west. He must know every foot of ground within this area. Each one of the innumerable wires crossing and dividing it must be labeled in his mind, its destination, number and particular use fresh in his memory. This most involved of maps soon becomes simple to him. By familiarity and use he gets to know every gracefully waving line as well and as thoroughly as the artist knows his handiwork, however hidden.

When the test operator discovers interruption on the wires and locates it within his territory, the duty of removing it becomes the line-man's. Strapping his simple kit of tools about him, he starts afoot and follows for miles the route the broken wire traverses. Often the brawny Western Union repairers tramp to Hinsdale before they find the cause which obstructs the current. Then they are ordered elsewhere, and continue to their new destination with the ease sturdy legs only know. A walk of thirty miles is not an exceptional feat among them.

In the country, at towns thirty and forty miles apart, is stationed the country line-man. His skill is not essentially so high as the city representative of the trade. He has no complicated office wires to run. In the country telegraphic appliances are simple. Sometimes the skies and the winds are propitious. Then the country line-man's even way has its tenor undisturbed. His days flow on in idleness. He may sit through the laggard hours smoking his pipe, ruminating on the mysterious giant-force which traverses the swaying steel cords above his head with a swiftness of thought and a power that might upheave a world. Observing the heavens, that great volume speaks to him. He comes to know the starry constellations bespangling the midnight arch. In the darkness of their track through the forest, through the valley, rounding mountains, leaping across the plains which is his walk, the stars guide and tell him the hours. The clouds make their significance known. In dreamy quiet, inaction grows irksome to his healthy organization. And thus, when the storm rides on the night winds and carries devastation to those wires he watches over, he goes out into its fierceness alone and fearless to curb and bind its anger toward his charge.

In severe climates these men perform deeds of bravery yet unsung. Frozen limbs, frames exhausted by exposure and deprivation of food, injuries from falling missiles in the forest, attest it. Their foes are not the elements alone. On the frontier the line-man often enters the region of human and savage enemies. While on the poles he is safe from arrows and bullets. Indians hold the wires in awe. Their humming is to them music from a far-off, unseen land. Some tribes call it a voice from the happy hunting-grounds. As such they fear to touch the strings on which it plays. The lineman, climbing among and boldly handling them, gains a reverence from the red men which protects him. But on the earth among them he is a man like themselves, and food for their barbarity. In Arizona and the southwest the line-men usually travel their beats in squads, well armed and safe, in small but determined numbers. Often, however, their walk is solitary. The sparse history of that young country fails not to record instances where watchers of the wire have departed alone to perform their duty and have never returned. The untold deeds of roving bands of Indians doubtless cover those missing line-men's fate.

Sometimes, on the few wires which link California to the outer world, breaks occur in great number and disheartening in their character. The snows of the mountains bury poles in their embrace, tear down their precious load of aerial carriers, and cover them deeply out of sight.

Some time ago, when all California was waiting for news of great events transpiring in the East, such a storm occurred, leveling communication. From his station in a little Nevada town a solitary line-man went out to the break. He caught the broken slender serpent and restored its entirety. Slowly and by gigantic efforts he lifted it to the poles remaining, and repaired those wrecked and splintered. The last pole was bereft of cross-arms, and its crowning insulator was torn away. The line-man did not hesitate. He knew the tremendous import and worth of the restored communication to San Francisco. Skurrying up the tottering pole, he fastened the wire with the only fastening he had remaining, his belt, part of his clothing he having torn to strips and used for that purpose. He grappled the line in his strong hands and clung to the pole holding it, a road for the current to traverse, for six long hours. When a relieving band of repairers reached the spot they tenderly brought down the martyr to duty and carried him home, stiffened and numb, to drag out years of weakness and invalidism.

In the deserts of Canada and the silent prairies, in the teeming settlements of the rich inland valleys, by the shores of the sounding sea, in every nook which the telegraph pierces, the lineman waits and watches in increasing vigilance. The stream of many-toned voices which mold and guard the daily existence of the world's populace pours over the wires day and night. But he hears them not. His is not to listen to these voices, but to the mutterings of the thunder cloud, to detect danger and destruction in the softly sighing wind. His duty is to be a sentinel and a guard. A simple soul, a type of duty, well he does his work.—*Chicago News.*

Mr. Jones Tries to Stop a Cat Concert.

Jones has bought a revolver. The way it happened was this: There had been a cat with a big bass voice serenading the neighborhood for the past week, making it impossible to sleep, and equally impossible to stay awake without becoming a raving maniac, and if Jones had said it once he had said a hundred times: "I'll shoot that cat," till finally Mrs. Jones reminded him that the bootjack was the only shooting-iron he possessed, and that had been fired long ago. So he went down town and bought a revolver.

Now what Jones knows about revolvers is even less than what H. G. knows about farming, but when he came home to supper last Thursday night he called the family into the hall and took the revolver out of his overcoat pocket, and was about to hand it to Mrs. Jones for inspection, when the whole family shrieked in chorus:

"Is it loaded?"

"No," said Jones; "never has been loaded."

"Fly for your lives, children," said Mrs. Jones, and they rushed up-stairs and locked themselves in.

"Well, if I ever saw such idiots!" remarked Jones, looking down the muzzle of the pistol to see if it needed cleaning. It came near being the last remark he ever made on any subject. A bullet lodged in the ceiling as he spoke, and but for the screams that assailed him from upstairs, Jones would have been certain that he had murdered the whole family. As soon as they learned that the pistol was really loaded, they all came down smiling and cheerful. No one had ever heard of a loaded pistol doing any damage.

That night they prepared to slay the cat. Willie and Johnnie were allowed to sit up and see the fur fly, and they stood valiantly behind their pa as he framed himself in the window and waited. It was bright moonlight; Mrs. Jones sat with her head under the bed clothes and said: "Call me when it's all over," and they waited for the feline to take up the line of march along the back yard fence. It seemed a cruel thing to deliberately set out to murder a cat in cold blood, but like Macbeth it had murdered sleep and made itself disliked in that community. It came, it had struck the first note of its usual serenade, with the vigor and force which a love-sick cat is famed for, when pop—blaze—scat—shrieks—m-e-o-w in a grand conglomeration of sounds rent the air—the cat was safe on the wood-shed of the next house, the ball grazed the elbow of a policeman two blocks away, passed through the hat of an unoffending citizen, and buried itself in the sidewalk. The rest of the pistol has not yet been found. The cat still lives. —*Detroit Post and Tribune.*

"Transpire" or "Perspire."

"Have you a dictionary with you?" asked an innocent-looking young man of a Cleveland *Herald* reporter at the Union depot.

The speaker was one of a party of three gentlemen who alighted from train No. 8. The other two were neatly dressed fellows, whose sundry winks to each other at once gave them away as "pals."

The young man addressed did not happen to have his unabridged with him, but a commercial man standing near at once set down his valise, and from it fished up a small pocket edition of Webster.

The three bent over the book for a moment, till finally one of the two "pals," slapping the first young man on the back, said:

"You've lost your money."

"So it seems," was the quiet reply.

There was an exchange of currency between the two friends, and the young man who had first addressed the reporter explained:

"There goes five dollars. You see, I came along through the car and heard the two arguing about a word. It did not occur to me that they were friends and trying to work a racket. They were talking about the word 'transpire,' using it in the sense 'perspire.' One wanted to bet the other that it had that meaning. 'You would certainly lose,' said the other, 'and I don't want to take your money.'

"I became interested, and finally bet the fellow five dollars to ten dollars that transpire was never used in the sense of the word perspire, and I find I have lost."

* * *

—The receipts of the Presbyterian Hospital in Philadelphia for the past year amounted to $30,897.96, including interest on the John A. Brown fund. The disbursements were $29,467.74. The Ladies Aid Society of the hospital received during the year $2,167.49. There have been 666 patients treated a the institution.

The Bicycle.

Every one is familiar with the appearance of the bicycle and its rider, and yet it is scarcely five years since that instrument, in its present shape, first visited this country. The hasty craze of 1869, in which the "bone shaker" played the principal part, can hardly be said to have been more than momentary compared with the present interest in the two-wheeled vehicle. Bicycles probably owe their origin to a Frenchman or German named Charles de Drais, master of the forests of the Grand Duke of Baden, who invented a machine in 1817, composed of two wheels of equal diameter, one behind the other and connected by a backbone or perch, on which was placed a saddle for the rider. It was claimed that a traveler with this instrument could cover eight or nine miles an hour on a good road. The mode of propulsion required the rider, whose feet just touched the ground, to place his toes on the ground and push the machine along. It is said that considerable dexterity was necessary to prevent the rear wheel from striking the rider's heels, and that the toes were turned well forward to overcome the liability to such an accident. Baron de Drais, it seems, was imaginative as well as inventive. He was not satisfied to ride only in the manner described, but proposed to rig a sail, and under favorable weather to tack, go about, sail in the wind's eye, and adopt other nautical means of advance. The Germans called this instrument the *laufmashin*. It does not appear to have emigrated from the Baron's own jurisdiction. The boneshaker of fifteen years ago was a slight modification of this instrument, but never met with much favor in this country because of the unsuitable roads here. Exhibitions were given in halls and other inclosed places, but it never rose beyond the place of a curious toy.

A glance at the present perfected bicycle gives very little idea of the wonderful skill in construction, or the delicate relation of parts that really exists. Neither pains nor expense have been spared in order to make a machine absolutely without objection. The metallic portions are constructed of steel, yet for the different parts, subjected as they are to varying degrees of weight and strain, the metal selected is either rigid or yielding as will best suit the object desired. The wheels are composed of light but strong rims, with from fifty-four to sixty spokes of number nine or eleven wire, firmly attached to the hubs. Around the wheel is stretched a round circle of rubber held in place by cement. This is the principal feature of the modern instrument, and is, indeed, the point of greatest difference between it and its predecessors, removing almost all of the jars caused by inequalities of the road. It is not too much to say that without the tire the bicycle would be useless in this country. The rubber tire is an American invention, and is owned by a company, which exacts a royalty of ten dollars on all English machines brought here. Another great advance was made when ball bearings were adopted. This arrangement provides for the turning of the journals upon the surfaces of hardened steel balls, thereby reducing the friction. One company claims that the front wheel of their machines has been made to revolve eleven minutes from one impetus. Nor are these the only decided improvements. Every portion of the machine, from the bolts and nuts to the wheel, has been carefully studied with the view of reducing friction and weight and advancing the possibility of speed.

The results of these inventions permit almost marvelous speed. At Cambridge, Eng., H. L. Cortis rode a mile in two minutes, forty-one and three-fifths seconds; Hon. Mr. Falconer, two miles in five minutes, thirty-six and two-fifths seconds, and five miles in fifteen minutes, thirteen and two-fifths seconds. Ten miles were covered in thirty minutes and forty-five seconds; twenty-five miles in one hour, nineteen minutes and twenty-three seconds; fifty miles in three hours and five minutes, and one hundred miles in seven hours, eighteen minutes and fifty-five seconds. In six minutes less than twenty-four hours W. S. Britten rode 212 miles, and at an exhibition given in London 1,404 miles were covered in six days. These records have not yet been beaten by American riders. The present superiority in England is probably due to the fact that bicycles have been in active use there since 1870 or 1872, while with us they date from the latter part of 1877.—*National Republican.*

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Claims in the Pension Office.

To see the various stages through which a pension claim passes from the moment of its reception in the office until its consummation is reached, would astonish the claimants and render them less clamorous, and would also be a surprise to the general public. It is briefly this: When a claim is filed its receipt at the office is acknowledged to the claimant, and the claim, before starting on its rounds, is stamped and jacketted, and the jacket briefed in the Mail Division; after leaving the Mail Division it goes to the Record Division, where it is numbered and forwarded to the Adjudicating Division to which it belongs, this point being determined by the geographical location in which claimant originally enlisted, thus: All cases coming from the New England States go to the Eastern Division; from the Southern States, to the Southern Division, etc., and it is during its progress through the Adjudicating Division to which it has been sent that the merits or demerits of the claim are tested. When the evidence in a case is completed it is briefed and submitted by the Examiner, either for admission or rejection, and goes thence to the Board of Review, where the work of the Examiner is reviewed, and his recommendation reversed or concurred in as the case may be. If the claim proves to have been improperly submitted it is returned for adjudication; otherwise it is rated at a certain sum per month, according to the disability found to exist, and then goes to the Division of Certificates and Accounts, and the certificate of payment is there issued, and the claimant notified of the result. It only requires then that the signature of the Commissioner of Pensions, followed by that of the Assistant Secretary of the Interior be affixed thereto to make it a valid document, and place the claimant on the rolls as a pensioner of the United States. If it appears during the progress of a claim through the Adjudicating Division to which it has been sent that the testimony therein is of a doubtful or conflicting character, or that there is probable cause for suspecting fraud or an attempt to impose upon the office, the claim is at once sent to the Division of Special Examinations, with a brief statement of the reasons for sending it there, and from thence it is forwarded to such employe of that division as may be located in the vicinity of the claimant in the case.

Under the former practice of the office, examinations of this character were made almost entirely in secret and wholly ex-parte; and the special Examiners, or Agents as they were then called, apear to have been imbued with the idea that claimants had no rights in the matter, and that it was the Agents special duty to hunt up testimony against the claim, and pay little or no atttention to any that might be in its favor. Commissioner Dudley has changed all this, and under the rules and regulations prescribed by him it is the first and imperative duty of the Examiner to notify the claimant, in writing, that an examination as to the merits or demerits of his claim is be had at a certain time and place convenient to his home, and that he can be present in person or by attorney, or both, and hear the testimony of the witnesses and cross-examine them, and offer any additional testimony in the case that he may have. In other words, secret investigations and exparte methods in the matter of pension claims are entirely done away with, and the claimant is made to understand that the Government, in endeavoring to protect itself, is not attempting to crush him; and further, that if he has been wrongfully adjudged through some ambiguity of testimony previously offered, or from any other cause which he can make plain, he now has the opportunity presented of setting himself right.—*Washington Gazette.*

The Young Man of the Period.

Young man, I am quite aware that, in your own estimation, you know all that is worth knowing, but for all that, *I* know that there are certain truths which you can either learn from me now, or get your knowledge by sad experience in the future. In age, in stature, in appearance, you are a boy, but you are trying by all the arts in your power to make it appear that you are a man. To do this you are aping the manners of a certain kind of men. You are trying to be manly, but why on earth don't you adopt a higher standard of manhood? Look at yourself. In your dress you have selected as your model the dandy, the gambler, the fashionable butterfly; three creations which almost make us doubt the wisdom of Divine Providence when we seek for a reason for their existence. You are sucking poison into your system through a nasty weed rolled up in the form of a cigar, and you think this is manly. So it is. It is manly because it isn't beastly. The better instincts of beasts protect them from such vile habits. You swing a fancy cane, not because you need it for protection or support, but because some other worthless fellow does it. In fact, you have taken pains to hunt out the worst and the weakest attributes of human nature, and you have taken them as your standard of manliness. Shame on you! If you have no individuality of character and must have a model—something to copy after and imitate—why not select some man in the highest sense, one who is as far above the brute as the ones you have selected are below? Why not select as your model the man who has won a high and honored position in life, by his own talents, with habits of industry, perseverance and application, without which no life can be made a success?

Have you any plans or purposes as to the part you are to take in this busy, bustling world? You have, of course —in your way. I can read your desires in that direction. You want somebody to give you twenty or fifty thousand dollars to start you in some enterprise. What do you want of this capital? You want it for the advantages it will give you over others. On the same principle if you were going to engage in a pugilistic encounter with a boy of your own size, you would like to be supplied with a dirk, a club or a revolver! Shame on you! What a contemptible coward you are! You are afraid to go into the battle of life single-handed, depending on your own strength and skill. You want to entrench yourself behind the breastworks of capital which some braver one has built up. Your own father, no doubt, acquired the competence he enjoys by a lifetime of hard struggles with the world. He went into the conflict with his sleeves rolled up, with too much courage and manliness to ask anybody's help; yet you would not disdain to take the fruits of his toil, and continue through life to get your support through his exertions, just as you did when you were a helpless babe. Shame on you! Do you call that manliness? Do you call it bravery? Can't you see that it is the most contemptible cowardice? But if your father, as I suspect, has too much good sense to help you in making your life a nullity by giving you capital, you are wishing that by some fortunate chance some person would give you $20,000. Now the whole essence of this wish is that you want money without giving any equivalent for it. You would take $20,000 which represents somebody's hard labor, and not give a stroke of your own work in exchange for it. Shame on you! Do you call this honesty? Perhaps you don't care whether it is honest or not. Very well; we will put the case in another light. Would you be willing to stand on the street corner and ask 20,000 people to give you a dollar apiece? No, of course not, for that would be begging; but where on earth does the difference come in? If you get $20,000 without giving any equivalent for it, you are getting other persons' labor, and if there is any difference in the methods, it is only the difference between begging and craft. Suppose by some hook or crook you succeeded in getting your $20,000 without any particular exertion on your part, just tell me in what respect you are better than that convict in the penitentiary who was placed there for embezzling that same amount? He wanted to get something for nothing. So do you. But this convict tried to get the property without the consent of the owners. You want the owner of twenty thousand dollars to consent to give it to you for nothing, or to be compelled to. Shame on you! Where is your manliness, your pride, your honor? Young man you are commencing life with a stock of wrong ideas, and the worst one is that which leads you to suppose that it is not the highest type of manliness which is clothed in the garb of honest toil. There is no material prosperity that is not the fruit of well-directed labor. Take your place among the workers and be a man, or cultivate your present propensities and be a social leech, an excrescence which may Heaven take pity on the rest of mankind by quickly removing.—*Eben E. Rexford, in Western Plowman.*

A Wonderful Fish Pond.

Traveling men tell an extraordinary story of a fish pond on the land of Hon. George W. Hurt, six miles from Albany, Clinton County, Ky. The pond covers three or four acres, and was not known to contain fish until a year or two ago, when it was accidentally discovered to be swarming with catfish from four to eight inches long. They say that the fish are so numerous and so unsuspecting that they may be taken without the use of hook and line. You may tie a piece of mutton or chicken to a string, lower it into the water, and draw it out immediately with several fish clinging to it. This may be repeated as often as desired, and a few minutes are sufficient to secure as many fish as you want One man, prompted by curiosity, stuck his finger down into the water; it was at once seized by a fish, which he promptly drew up and took off, but the bite brought blood from his finger, and he does not recommend this method of taking them. Mr. Charles M. Phillips, of Spurlington, having some doubts as to the truths of these stories, wrote to Hon. George W. Hurt with regard to them, and received an answer to the effect that they were substantially true. Mr. Hurt does not allow strangers to fish in the pond. The fish have been regularly fed since their presence was discovered.—*Louisville Commercial.*

—We shall have to be pretty civil to the Hawaiian Government, as King Kalakaua has an army of forty-eight men besides the musicians, and great powers are apt to be bullyish.

RELIGIOUS AND EDUCATIONAL.

—During the past year the Baltimore Conference of the M. E. Church South received $153,000 for missionary work—the largest contribution since the war.

—The Sacramento Board of Education has done a good thing. It has ordered that the doors of all its school houses and school rooms shall swing outward.

—The schoolmasters of Scotland, in a recent meeting at Aberdeen, concurred in the belief that "present educational demands are prejudicial to the health of children."

—Miss Hulda B. Loud, of Rockland, Mass., attended the recent town meeting of the town and asked that the salaries of teachers be raised $500. She made two speeches, one in reply to an opponent, and the meeting unanimously voted $1,500 additional to these wages.

—Bishop Keener, of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, gave expression, at the meeting of the Baltimore Conference at Charleston, W. Va., to the fear that the clergy of his denomiination are leaning too much to bookishness, and that wealth is exerting a ruinous influence upon the church.

—The Jews of Toronto are moving to have certain reforms introduced into their religious service, including the seating of both sexes together instead of separate. The matter has been referred to the Chief Rabbi in England, but should his decision be adverse a secession and independent movement will result, it is said.

—Secretary Teller has forwarded plans for the erection of a Government Indian Industrial School near Lawrence, Kan. Three hundred acres of land south of that place have been purchased for the site, and the erection is to be immediately commenced. The school will accommodate about five hundred pupils, and will be the largest institution of the kind in the United States.—*Chicago Herald.*

—The Episcopalians propose to establish a Divinity School in Colorado. It is said to be almost impossible to get pastors from the East as the field is a hard-working and underpaid one. They have a frame building to begin with, but want at least $20,000 endowment, the immediate funds to be devoted to furniture and other items. The Rev. W. C. Bishop, a Fellow of Emanuel College, Cambridge, has been engaged as President.

—Two school teachers of Lynn, Mass., have shown the world how to administer an artistic whipping to a scholar. One of them held him, an eight-year-old boy, and the other pounded him "up and down, all around," with a sharp-edged ferule, until his body bore a striking resemblance to a barber pole. For this piece of amusement the young ladies have been invited to seek new worlds to conquer.—*Boston Herald.*

A Unique Study in Vital Force.

A writer in the *Country Gentleman* discusses the question: How much vital force does a hen consume in hatching an egg? We guarantee that there is no merely mortal man in the United States that can answer this question off-hand. Of course, Prof. Sumner, of Yale College, can. The proceedings of the American Association for the Advancement of Science make no mention of it, nor, so far as we are aware, has it ever waked to ecstacy the miscellaneous muse of Walt Whitman. And yet, now that the question is asked everybody will be impressed with its interest and importance and fall to wondering why it did not come to the forefront of discussion long ago, with the tariff, the open Polar sea, the coeducation of the sexes, the limit of consecutive quail-eating and other of humanity's leading problems. It has frequently been suspected that too many hens have been addicted to the consumption of an inordinate amount of vital force in hatching eggs. On no other plausible theory can the presence of so many tough hens in the market be accounted for. Of course, the only sensible way to check this waste and thus prevent hens from undermining their constitutions, is to determine precisely what amount of force goes to hatching, and then hit upon some scheme to prevent hens from expending more than the determined amount. It ought not to be difficult to mature such a scheme. A modification of the current bell-punch, so arranged that it would ring just as soon as the hen had reached the force limit, would appear to be the thing. Of course, it would be the duty of the man who owned the poultry-yard just as soon as he heard the bell ring to walk up to the hen and request her firmly but kindly to contribute no more of her vital force to the business in hand. If the hen declined to obey after being reasoned with, the man might find it necessary to fling a patent incubator at her. After the incubator had mangled ten or a dozen hens beyond recognition the man could safely count upon having the force limit respected by every one of his fowls engaged in hatching.

It only remains to state the result of the investigations pursued by this writer in *The Country Gentleman* in the field of applied hens. Starting with the undisputed proposition that "heat can be measured by force and force by heat," he logically concludes that it is possible to learn the mechanical force used up in hatching a chicken from an egg by measuring the consumption of heat by the egg during the process. So far so good. But his next step is not so satisfactory, for he introduces not a hen but a pine-wood incubator. Now a pine-wood Indian is perhaps a more agreeable gentleman than a human Indian. But when it comes to incubators the hen is so greatly to be preferred to any other variety that it is positively amazing that this bold investigator should have discarded her. But barring this serious error in judgment, he performs his task in a most commendable manner. After determining the loss of heat inside of his pine-wood incubator he loaded it up with twenty eggs and placed it behind the chimney, "where the temperature never varied from 80 degrees." The experiments that followed convinced him that the vital force employed in hatching eggs "would be sufficient to raise about 1,400 pounds one foot high every minute during the period of twenty-one days."

This is considerable vital force, and the student of political economy may well ask himself if a hen or other incubator that can raise about 1,400 pounds one foot high every minute, and keep repeating the feat for twenty-one consecutive days, has not mistaken its vocation in devoting itself to hatching eggs. Judiciously used, that much vital force ought to be equal to knocking out Sullivan or performing some handsome feats of barn-raising or pile-driving. We are living in an uncommonly scientific age.—*N. Y. Tribune.*

The Monumental Lazy Man.

Louisa Normoul, a colored woman, accused her husband Matthew, in the Jefferson market police court the other morning, with beating her.

"Jedge," said the accused, "dis woman beats me, she does; my legs is all sore now."

"I tole yo onah how dey got sore," said the woman. "He got mad las night an put him legs on de stove, an bekause I wouldn't move de stove away nor lif him legs off he lef dem dere till dey got all burnt. Dis man is jes too lazy ter draw him breff. All him wants am a pedistel ter be a stator." Mr. Normoul was held in $300 bail to answer a charge of assault.—*N. Y. Mail.*

USEFUL AND SUGGESTIVE.

—Kerosene will make your tea-kettle as bright as new. Saturate a woolen rag and rub with it. It will also remove stains from the clean varnished furniture.

—It is well to give horses a double amount of feed on the evening preceding a long journey, and only half rations of grain or a little hay on the morning of starting.

—Remember to give the pigs a little charcoal occasionally. It corrects acidity of the stomach and insures a healthy condition. If it is not easy to procure charcoal give charred cinders of stove coal.

—The cooking and canning of rabbits is one of the industries of Australia. Here is a hint which should be acted upon in those sections of country where rabbits are so plentiful as to become a nuisance. A can of cooked rabbit in the summer time would alternate very nicely with pickled pork and corned beef.

—The staining of bricks red is effected by melting one ounce of glue in a gallon of water, then adding a piece of alum as large as an egg, one-half pound of Venetian red, and one pound of Spanish brown; redness or darkness is increased by using more red or brown. For coloring black, heat the bricks and dip in fluid asphaltum or in a hot mixture of linseed oil and asphalt.

—Angels' Food Cream: Dissolve half a box of gelatine in one quart of milk. Beat together the yelks of three eggs, one cup of sugar, juice of one lemon; stir it into the gelatine and milk and let it just come to a boil, in a farina kettle. When nearly done, whip the whites of the eggs stiff and stir through the custard. Pour into the molds, and set near the ice to cool. Flavor with vanilla.

—A good way to cover a straight-backed chair which is in use in the common sitting-room is to cut a piece of cretonne the exact size of the back; hem it with a narrow hem, and then with a sharp steel crochet needle put on a narrow border of worsted; pin this to the chair-back with long black-headed pins. This is a useful and pretty covering, and is easily removed and kept in place also.

—Here is a suggestion of value for a small family, say of two persons. Bake a cake in a long tin, cut it in two parts, and put in any filling you choose. You will have two nice layers, and the cake will probably all be eaten before it is too dry to be enjoyed. A good recipe for this cake is: the whites of two eggs, one cup of white sugar, half a cup of milk or water, one cup and a half of flour, half a teaspoonful of baking powder. If made with care, the butter and sugar beaten to a cream, and as much pains taken as if it were an expensive cake, this will be delicious.

Thousand-Dollar Compost-Heaps.

Please give me a little space to again urge upon the *Tribune's* thousands of farmer readers the great value of the compost heap. I do not urge it as a theory, but as the result of many years of actual experience. I have tried, in a moderate way, one and another of the commercial fertilizers, and while I have no complaint to make as to their value, it seems to me that our farmers as a rule can do better. I commenced hauling for my compost heaps last spring, throwing into them all the coarse refuse, whether it was coarse manure, street sweepings, fish refuse, pig manure, weeds from the garden, potato tops, pea-vines, in fact, anything and everything that I supposed would be of value. At times, when they seemed to be getting too hot, I had water thrown upon them in sufficient quantity to cool but not to drain from them. During the fall they were worked over. They have been heating a very little all winter, about sufficient to keep them from freezing. We are now working the largest one over again, after which it will be ready for use. I am aware that it may be urged against this that it will cost time, labor and some money; yes, my farmer friends, it does; and so do all of the good things that I know of in this world. I can not tell what the two heaps have cost me, as they have been gathered at such times as we could spare men and teams from other work. I am now paying twenty-five cents per cord for working over, and will have, after this is done, not less than one hundred and seventy-five and perhaps two hundred cords, and in splendid condition for immediate use. As near as I can judge, the cost will be from $300 to $400. How about their value for the coming season's crops?

I shall also have an immense amount of good stable and barnyard manures, much more in bulk than these heaps, and I believe that no man values them higher than myself, but when and where I want my land to give me the largest possible crops, and those of the greatest value, there goes my compost manure. Why? Simply because many years' experience tells me that crops will start up more vigorously, and grow up more rapidly with this manure than with an equal amount of the best stable manure. It is reasonable that this should be the case, as it is more nearly ready for plant food than any coarse or unprepared manure could be. I can not give your readers the actual value of these heaps, but if any man should come to-day and say: "I will deposit $1,000 to your credit in the bank if you will allow me to haul away your compost heaps," I should answer: "My friend, I have lately been purchasing some property, and my bank account is unusually low, but I do not need money bad enough to make such a sacrifice as that would be to obtain it." I have never used these manures upon any crops where they did not tell the same story. I will not pretend that the mingling of the different materials makes each and every one of them more valuable than they otherwise would be. It is possible that if each was taken in its crude state and plowed under, its value to the land might be as great as when in its present condition. But I should be years instead of a few weeks or months in getting my returns. Merchants think "small profits and quick returns" best in the long run. With me this plan of fertilizing has never failed to give quick returns and large profits, or at least large crops.—*J. M. Smith, in N. Y. Tribune.*

How to Feed Stock.

The *Massachusetts Ploughman* says that some farmers have an idea that any boy can feed stock as well as a man, but the more observing believe that to feed stock so as to secure the best condition on the smallest amount of fodder, requires quite as much skill as any operation on the farm, and it is a work which requires both study and practice; study to learn the nature and requirements of each class of animals, and the nutritive qualities of each kind of food; practical experience so that the particular wants of each animal in every class may be thoroughly understood. While the farmer should endeavor to have his boys feed the stock a portion of the time, he should always be with them to give directions and to see that the work is properly done. The knowledge of how to make cattle eat up the coarser fodder without waste, is fully possessed by some farmers, while others do not even know how to make them eat up clean the best of hay, but keep large quantities before them the most of the time. For economy there is nothing like keeping a clean crib, giving cattle only as much as they will at once eat up clean. This will apply to all farm animals as well as cattle.

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