Paralyzing the Barber.

It has been taken for granted by all practical jokers that the barber was the man who had the privilege of asking the innocent under his razor all the questions he could think of, and, by the way, what the regularly ordained barber don't know about the weather, the crops and politics would make a pocket edition that would feel lonesome in an ordinary pocket. Saturday night, however, a reporter, when taking his semi-weekly shave, overheard a series of questions which decidedly reversed the order. It was in a basement barber shop, one well known, and the shaver and the shaved were in positions to look up into the street.

"Why don't you put a carpet on your stairway?" asked the customer.

"It would freeze fast and be spoiled the first day," replied the barber.

"Why don't you use ashes, then?"

"Ashes would track the floor up."

"Then use salt."

"That wouldn't pay. It wouldn't thaw the ice off till noon, and by that time the sun gets around this way and the ice disappears."

"What makes you have such queer paper on the ceiling for your customers to look at? Why the stars and moons and all those queer designs make my head dizzy. I fancy some people who have stared at them for a half hour go out and fancy they have had an attack of the "jim jams."

"Don't the paper suit you, sir?" modestly queried the astonished barber.

"Suits me well enough, but it might not some people."

"You're next," yelled out the barber to a youth who had just come out of the bath-room.

"What is he next for?" asked the interrogation point in the chair.

"That's our rule," said the barber.

"Queer rule—all right, though, I suppose," remarked the customer, in an undertone.

"What do you call a fair day's work for a barber? How many men can a barber shave in a day?"

"That depends."

"Depends on what?"

"Why the kind of a barber he is. A fast man might shave fifty or sixty men in a day."

"Not more than that."

"Not many more, I guess," answered the petrified barber.

"Poor business, isn't it? Why don't you get out of it?"

"I can't get out of it very well."

"Why can't you? Don't you know any other business?"

"No."

"Now there is one thing I can't understand," began the man in the chair, "and that is why you barbers always comb a man's hair up at the sides and slick it down so that he looks like a two-cent chromo. Why don't you comb it the way a man combs it himself."

"Why, I don't know how they comb it themselves," protested the barber.

"Then why don't you comb every man's hair different? You fix every man's hair just so, and a man who has any shame at all has to go to the glass and fix it over himself."

"We never complain of that," said the barber, mildly.

"O, but don't you? Don't you look cross enough to eat a man when he does that? Don't deny it."

"I don't think I do."

"O, yes you do. Now, when I get up and take down all those bangs and ruffles and spit curls you have fixed, and all those little devices to cover the bald spot, you will scowl and will want to kick the boy for brushing off my coat. Say!"

"What is it?" answered the barber.

"What are you barbers in such a consternation about my head for?"

"I didn't know they were."

"Well, they are. Every time I come in here to get shaved they run their fingers through my hair and ask me if I wouldn't like to have a shampoo. Well, when I say no, they take their thumb nail, dig it along my scalp, and after they have taken off some of the skin they show it to me and tell me my head is in a fearful condition and to look out for 'scaldhead.' What do they do that for?"

"Because there is money in it for them, I suppose," mildly replied the barber.

"How much do you get out of it?"

"Why, that depends."

"On what?"

"Why, what kind of a contract they make with their employer. Most of them charge thirty cents and keep ten for themselves."

"Do you know what I am going to do the next time a barber tries that on me?"

"No."

"Well, I am going to wrestle with him and hang his hide on the fence."

"Have some bay rum?" queried the barber.

"No, strictly temperate."

"Sea foam?"

"Not any, thank you; no meerschaum in mine."

"Borax on your face?"

"How did it come there?"

"I mean do you want some on to keep the skin smooth?"

"Why, is my skin rough?"

"Not particularly. Do you use chalk?"

"No, but if you will tell me how much it all is I'll chalk up."

"It's only ten cents, but I ought to charge you ten dollars."

"Why?"

"For answering your questions."

"How much would you give me to answer your questions? The next time I come in you ask the questions. Good night," and he winked at the boys who sat waiting, and after pulling his ears to get the lather off walked out.—*Buffalo Courier.*

A Bad Place for Chinamen.

Strange to say there has been a Chinaman here for two or three days and nobody has objected to his presence. He has expressed the intention of establishing a novelty store, which will doubtless have for an adjunct the opening of an opium den. For the purpose of purchasing the necessary equipment and wares he will depart for San Francisco in the morning. It is reasonable to expect, however, that his entire outfit will be confiscated when he returns. Chinamen have never been tolerated here, and his escape from formal notice to quit the country can be explained by the fact that only a few confirmed opium fiends knew he was in the city. There is a grim tradition connected with the early history of the camp, which tells of the midnight murder of a Celestial, who refused to leave when informed of his danger, and the lonesome burial of his remains on the ridge lying between California gulch and the Arkansas River. In 1878 two Mongolians came in on one of Barlow & Sanderson's stage coaches. They were instantly surrounded by a clamorous mob that forced them to walk out of town instanter. The intense hatred which is felt here for the moon-eyed washee-man was engendered in 1878, when Stevens & Woods, the owners of the hydraulic ditch and the iron mines, proposed to import an army of them to take the places of rebellious miners. The miners not only threatened to kill every Chinamen who came to the camp, but were making preparations to lynch the men that would cause them to come. It was owing to the menaces of the miners, it is said, that Woods sold out his interest at a sacrifice to Leiter, of Chicago, who realized from an investment of $400,000 several millions.—*Leadville Cor. Denver News.*

—A colored boy weighing 112 pounds was recently received at Galveston, Tex., from the interior by express. The charges on him were $9.75.

The "Important Year" Man.

Almost every style of fiend has been written up, at one time or another, except what we call "the most important year" fiend. We refer to that misguided fellow creature who, not satisfied with having compiled the most important events of the past year, actually causes patience to quit being a virtue, by endeavoring to worry the editor into publishing his statistical rubbish. He is usually an old man and has been engaged in his nefarious business from his youth up. This retrospective genius turns up with a tally sheet early in January of each and every year, which is his only redeeming trait. He only blooms once a year, and then he fades away for twelve calendar months. He is not liable to happen in every day as is the exchange fiend, or the man who wants to give you the points of a funny story that he wants you to publish. While we propose to be a little severe with the most-important-year man, at the same time we will be just.

Like most bores he selects the precise moment when the editor could dispense with his presence. He prefers the occasion when the editor is writing an article on the tariff question, and there is a pressure of one thousand pounds to the square inch on his brain; or when he is absorbed in disposing of an eleven o'clock lunch, or an irate subscriber who had not received his copy of the paper last week. Just at this crisis the door opens and the important-year man enters with a bundle of manuscript and a sigh, the former being under his arm.

He takes a seat and spreading out his tally-sheet, begins to manipulate his augur about as follows:

"I would like, sir, to call your attention to the importance of the year through which we have just passed. It may not have occurred to you, sir, but this last year was a most important year. The year that has just rolled away into eternity was one of the most disastrous, one of the most peculiar in its freaks of heat and cold, that the world ever knew. Never, sir, since the retreat of Napoleon from Moscow, was such a winter experienced."

"What kind of coal do you use?" asks the editor, yawning, as he resumes his literary labors on the ham sandwich.

"It's not only the cold that was peculiar," resumes the bore, "but, sir, note the death of prominent people, elopements of well known and highly respectable parties, murders, floods, fires, backward spring."

The editor wishes his visitor would take a backward spring out through the door, but represses the inclination to say so, while the depraved old scoundrel continues, pointing to his tally-sheet."

"Here we have the fruit crop destroyed. We also had the hottest summer that had been known for years. And here, you see, is a withering drouth, chilly winds, damp, unpleasant——"

"Yes," mighty unpleasant," interrupts the editor; "it's mighty unpleasant to tell you so, my dear sir, but I'm very busy just now," and he begins to disembowel the exchanges with a large pair of scissors.

"Yes, I know, but I'll not detain you a minute, and here we have snow and the death of that great man, General Goodlegrub."

"That's a fact. His death supplies a long felt want. By the way, who the mischief was Goodlegrub?"

"Why, you surprise me. I can vouch for the correctness of my compilation. General Goodlegrub is actually dead. Last year was a most important year."

"Did Goodlegrub owe you any money when he died?"

Sarcasm fails on its mission, for the important-year man feels it about as much as a cow suffers when you pinch her horn. He keeps right on, referring to his tabular statement.

"And here we have a coal mine disaster."

"I tell you that I—"

"And—"

"Now, my friend," replies the editor, rising on his seat: "I don't want to hear any more of that stuff."

The eyes of the visitor protrude.

"W-h-a-t! Don't you want to publish these valuable statistics?"

"No I don't. And now let me tell you something else. You said last year was the most important year on record. Let me predict that it will be regarded as a year of plenty, compared with this year, as far as you are concerned, for if you don't indulge in that backward spring out of that door, I'll retire you from circulation altogether. You will not be here next January to record the events of the past."

"Then I'm to understand that you are not desirous of securing this invaluable compilation?"

"Do you want me to tell you so again?"

He looked at the editor as if the assertion was beyond all human belief; then he quietly folds up his statistics and replaces them, with a sigh, under his arm. There is no longer any wonder in his mind why so many newspapers collapse. He has had many a rebuff but this one is the most stunning. He leaves, not precisely heart-broken, but very much aggrieved. Finally the editor of some monthly paper publishes the stuff, and after this he subsides for a season, devoting himself once more to compiling fresh facts for another most-important year. He is not as much of a bore as the poet, or the village humorist, but so far as the public is concerned he may die at his earliest convenience without creating any great public bereavement.—*Texas Siftings.*

Racing in England.

The amount of money added to races run for upon the English and Irish turf goes on increasing. In 1880 it was £246,000; in 1881, £249,000; and last year, £263,000, while for the past year the total is no less than £268,000. Out of this total, £85,000 was given to two-year-old races and £126,000 to handicaps, leaving only £57,000 for distribution among the weight-for age prizes for three-year-olds and upward. This proportion is about the same as in past years; and it follows as a matter of course that the greater part of the £268,000 was devoted to short-distance races. Upward of £150,000 went to races of under a mile, while £74,000 was given to races of from a mile to a mile and a half, only £21,000 to races of from a mile and a half to two miles, and £18,000 to races of two miles or more. The total number of horses which ran during the past year was 2,070; and of these 859 were two-year-olds, 607 three-year-olds, 292 four-year-olds, and 312 five-year olds and upward. the proportion between the different ages being very much the same as it has been for the last ten years. It is instructive, however, to note that half a century ago, when there were 1,239 runners altogether, or little more than half the number which now run, there were almost as many four and five-year-olds running as now, while there were only one-fourth as many two-year-olds and one-half as many three-year-olds as at the present time. These figures, placed side by side, illustrate very fairly the difference between the character of racing then and now, though it is only fair to the Jockey club to point out that within the last three years they have abolished the half-mile races, which were up to that time allowed; and they will go perhaps a step further and make six furlongs the shortest distance for two-year-olds, and a mile and a quarter for four-year-olds.—*St. James' Gazette.*

Ida Lewis' Home.

Within a short mile of the quay at Newport, Lyme Rock rises out of the waters of Narragansett Bay. On this rock stands the old light-house which was tended for many years by the father of Ida Lewis, and of which she now, under the seal of the Government Commission, is keeper. Securing the services of the Captain of a diminutive boat I sailed on the waters blue to her abode for the purpose of paying her my respects. As we approached the rock an immense mastiff, with head and paws like a lion and a roar like far-off thunder, came to its extreme verge and disputed our landing. He was entirely successful until the heroine appeared, called him off in the lowest of tones, and locked him up in an outhouse. She then invited me into the little house on the top of which rests the beacon-light which has for so many years warned the navigator of hidden dangers, and at once entered into easy and unrestricted conversation. She said that she had for twenty-five years lived on that rock; that she used to be fond of going into the city once in awhile, but that she cared very little for it now; that she always had a great many visitors in the summer, a few years ago the number reaching thousands in one season. She showed me her medals, received from Congress, the State of Massachusetts, and the city of Newport, and a solid silver teapot from the officers at Fort Adams, all bearing suitable inscriptions in testimonial of her heroism in rescuing so many human beings from watery graves.

Miss Lewis is rather above medium height, of somewhat slender figure, good features and great, earnest eyes, between brown and gray. While she can not be called handsome, her face is one to interest and attract. Her style of conversation is piquant and vivacious, and although not educated she is very intelligent. Everything about her apartments bore the evidence of neatness, care and good taste. Her mother, a venerable old lady, with thick silver hair, was very talkative and discoursed on matters and things, personal and otherwise, at length. She informed me she had the rheumatism in her feet, and Ida insisted that it was because she had dyed her hair for so many years. She communicated the intelligence that her daughter was forty years old, at which Miss Ida evinced a slight tinge of annoyance and remarked: "Mother thinks she must tell every one my age." But she quickly added: "Well, I don't care; it don't make any difference. I don't object to getting old."—*Newport Letter.*

Old, But Always in Order.

"Who is this man?"

"The one who is rushing along, with his hat on the back of his head, and his eyes hanging out?"

"Yes."

"That is the man who warned the servant girl the other night to shut off the water so the pipes wouldn't freeze."

"And the good girl obeyed?"

"Not exactly. She meant to, but her beau came up and she forgot all about it. Consequently there was a freeze-up. Poor girl! She is very sorry. It tears would thaw the pipes she would shed 'em by the hundred."

"And why does the man rush?"

"He is on his way to the plumber for consolation."

"And what will the plumber do?"

"He will show the man 14,678 calls which were booked before he came in, and which must be attended to in rotation."

"And will there be any swearing?"

"There will, my boy! There will be swearing and stamping and growling and blasting, but it won't be on the part of the plumber. He will preserve his serene smile through it all. When the other man gets out of wind he will retire."

"To his office?"

"Oh, no! He will go off and buy himself an alcohol lamp, have a druggist fill it for him, and he will return home to thaw out the pipes for himself. He can thus make a saving of several thousand dollars, saying nothing of the personal satisfaction of getting ahead of a plumber."

"And will he succeed?"

"Not by a John Rogers! He will crawl under the house, scalp himself on the joists, fill his knees with rusty nails, choke himself with the smoke, and finally crawl out and give it up."

"And wait for a thaw?"

"No, sir-e-e! He won't wait for anything. He'll skip down town for a furniture van and move into another house. That's where his head is level. It's cheaper to move than to thaw out frozen water-pipes."—*Detroit Free Press.*

Stumbling Horses.

The Pittsburgh *Stockman*, in a recent issue, says: "Some good horses are addicted to stumbling while walking or moving in a slow trot. A well-versed veterinarian states that there are two causes that would tend to produce this faulty action; one, a general weakness in the muscular system, such as would be noticed in a tired horse; the other, a weakness of the exterior muscles of the leg, brought about by carrying too much weight on the toe. To effect a cure, he adds, lighten the weight of each front shoe about four ounces; have the toe of the shoe made of steel instead of iron, it will wear longer; have it rounded off about the same as it would be when one-third worn out, in order to prevent tripping; allow one week's rest; have the legs showered for a few minutes at a time with cold water through a hose, in order to create a spray; then rub dry, briskly, from the chest down to the foot. Give walking exercise daily during this week for about an hour twice a day. When you commence driving again omit the slow jog, either walk or send him along at a sharp trot for a mile or two, then walk away, but do not speed for at least several weeks. By this means the habit of stumbling from either of the above causes will be pretty well overcome."

—The Duke of Calvino, who was captured by brigands on the evening of the 4th of November in the neighborhood of Trapani, Italy, has been released by his captors on payment of a ransom of 150,000 francs by his family, who never expected to see him alive again, he being very obese, advanced in age, and afflicted with a nervous malady. He had passed thirty-five days with the brigands, and, strange to say, the treatment he had received, though by no means pleasant, has had the effect of completely curing him.

—Not long ago the Atlantic cable man sent over the report that Mary Anderson, actress, was to marry the Duke of Portland, Englishman. Last night the following dispatch was received by the Associated Press from Portland, Ore.: "The engagement of Mary Anderson to Lieutenant Dukes, of this place, is denied. No such person is known to exist."—*Chicago Tribune.*

—In cooking food for animals do not waste the juices any more than you would waste the juices of your own soup or stew. Add a little coarse meal or bran to the watery part, and the strength will be absorbed and eaten.—*Boston Transcript.*

—"I'm all wool and a yard wide!" shouted a cow-boy, as he gave his sombrero an extra side hitch, and looked around for a foe. "That may be," replied an undaunted female, "but you won't wash."—*Philadelphia Call.*

HOME, FARM AND GARDEN.

—An Indiana gardener puts moles among his strawberry vines so that they may catch the grubs.

—A very pretty and most easily made lap robe for the small child's sleigh, is made of a square of honey-comb flannel. Make a border around this with split or single zephyr, about one finger deep, crochet a handsome scollop on the edge. The entire border to be crocheted of course.—*Troy Times.*

—We have had hens which ate the seeds of red-peppers and also pecked at the skins. But in order to have fowls get pepper it is best to put it in their cooked feed. We use both black and red, sometimes in thick milk, which they love, and for which they lay eggs. Put a little salt in chicken feed.—*N. Y. Herald.*

—To cure a dog that howls: We know of no means but the whip. If this is applied liberally and judiciously your dog will soon learn that it's for his own good to keep quiet. The punishment must not be applied at random, but should be so connected with the act of howling that the dog will not be mistaken as to its cause.—*American Field.*

—As a test for impure air take a pint bottle full of water into the room to be examined, and pour out the water. The bottle then is, of course, filled with the air of the room. Then put in a spoonful or so of lime-water and shake it. If the lime-water remains clear the air is fit to breathe, but if the lime-water becomes milky there is too much carbonic acid in the air, and you had better hoist the window or ventilate the room in some other way.—*Exchange.*

—Plum Pudding: Chop, if possible, in a mincing-machine half a pound of raisins, half a pound of sultanas, two ounces of candied peel and half a pound of apples; mix with half a pound of beef suet, one pound of bread crumbs, a quarter of a pound of sugar, a little spice and a pinch of salt; put in sufficient new milk to make the mixture stiff, butter a basin, put in the pudding, and boil for six hours. This quantity will make a large pudding.—*Western Rural.*

—A nice breakfast for one who is not equal to hearty fare is made of toast and eggs prepared in this way: Put a lump of butter in a saucepan, and then drop three eggs into it, stir briskly and constantly, so that the eggs will be smooth and not lumpy. Have two thin slices of buttered toast ready, and when the eggs are done lay them on one piece of the toast and lay the other lightly over it; do not crowd it down and make the egg run over the edge of the toast.—*N. Y. Post.*

Education for the Farm.

When we consider the immense number that belong to the agricultural class in this country and the fact that three-fourths of all our exports are agricultural products, and that our prosperity as a nation is so intimately connected with its agriculture, it is surprising that no better system has been devised for the education of this great class—the very foundation of our national wealth.

The farmer's occupation leads to regular habits and steady industry; but unlike those engaged in mechanical and mercantile pursuits, who are mostly located in towns, and are brought into close business and social relations, the farmers are scattered over the country, and have little daily intercourse with each other. They do not have the advantage of the friction of society, in which new ideas are suggested and developed by association. This is, no doubt, the reason why the farming class is so conservative, so prone to follow traditional routine and to resist all innovations.

The inertness of the agricultural class is plainly shown in this, that they seldom or never make any improvement in their processes or modes of culture. Of all the great labor-saving machinery introduced into agriculture during the last forty years, not two per cent. of it has been invented by those raised and engaged upon the farm, but has been invented and adapted to its work by amateur farmers, or by outsiders who have observed the need of such helps in farm operations.

The farmer, therefore, sorely needs some stimulant to cause him to use his brain as well as his hands. He should understand the principles that underlie his practice. He ought to be an accurate observer, and this would make him a discoverer. He should experiment, and carefully note and compare experiments. But, instead of this, very few farmers think there are any fixed principles in agriculture. They regard the whole business as quite independent of rules, and in no way to be brought into subjection to order and reasonable certainty. This is why there is so little definitely settled in agricultural practice. Yet we know that agriculture is as capable of being reduced to system and order, and as capable of being taught as other applications of the natural sciences.

All will admit that farmers' sons should be taught, at least, the rudiments of the sciences that underlie agriculture; but where shall this scientific education begin? There is really but one place where this instruction can be given, and that is in the common schools.—*National Live Stock Journal.*

Snow as a Protection.

However disagreeable it may be to have the ground covered with two feet in depth with snow, it is one of the best protectors which the farmer has, considering how little it costs. When the land is covered in the autumn, and it lays all winter, it serves as a great protection to the grass roots and all creeping vines. Strawberry plants that have been covered all winter with snow, come out in the spring fresh and green, even though they have not been mulched.

The snow not only protects the vegetation which it covers up, by sheltering it from the cold winds and sudden changes of weather, but it prevents the frequent freezing and thawing of the ground, which is so destructive to small roots that are near the surface, and which are often lifted entirely out of the ground by the action of the frost. When the land lays open and exposed all winter, it not only injures the grass and small plants, but it injures the land itself, by blowing away the finer particles of decayed vegetation from the surface, and when thus exposed, there is a chance for the frost to enter the ground to a depth of several feet, thus cooling the earth to a great depth, requiring many warm days in the spring to thaw it out, and warm it up sufficient to start vegetation; but when a deep snow covers the land until spring opens, as soon as the snow melts, the ground being free from frost, will soon be in a condition to cultivate, and for plants to grow.

As a rule, the season comes forward earlier when the ground has been covered with snow the entire winter than it does when there has been but little snow. In our climate, no doubt, it is best to have plenty of snow, and have it lay on the ground during the period of cold weather. This year we have started with a good covering of snow; should it be replenished as fast as needed to keep the land covered we may look for good crops of grass next season and a spring that will be favorable for planting farm-crops; keeping this in view we can dig our paths with more cheerfulness, and resort to rubber boots to keep the snow out, with a feeling that there is a bright side to a snow-storm, without resorting to merry sleigh-parties, or mingling with the jolly coasters.—*Massachusetts Ploughman.*