CASTORIA

For Infants and Children

Bears the signature of Chas. H. Fletcher. The Kind You Have Always Bought

In Use For Over 30 Years

CASTORIA

THE CENTAUR COMPANY. NEW YORK CITY.

THE AGE OF A HORSE.

—:o:—

[From the New York Sun.]

To tell the age of any horse,
Inspect the lower jaw, of course,
The six front teeth the tale will tell,
And every doubt and fear dispel.

The middle "nippers" you behold
Before the colt is two weeks old;
Before eight weeks two more will come;
Eight months, the "corners" cut the gum.

The outside grooves will disappear
From middle two in just one year;
In two years from the second pair;
In three the "corners" too, are bare.

At two, the middle "nippers" drop;
At three, the second pair can't stop;
When four years old, the third pair goes;
At five, a full new set he shows.

The deep black spots will pass from view,
At six years from the middle two;
The second pair at seven years;
At eight, the spot each "corner" clears.

From middle "nippers" upper jaw,
At nine the black spots will withdraw,
The second pair at ten are white;
Eleven finds the corners light.

As time goes on the horsemen know
The oval teeth three-sided grow;
They longer get project before
'Til twenty, when we know no more.

WHITE LILACS.

—:o:—

BY LIZETTE WOODSWORTH REESE.

—:o:—

From the Independent.

"I got here all right," cried old Mrs. Holt, quaveringly. There was an exultant expression on her small face. She grasped her bandbox and half dozen bundles more tightly. The Haversham stagecoach, which had just set her down at the corner of Church Lane, was already halfway up the pike, and whirling mountainward. Clouds of dust followed it.

All the trees in Church Lane stood up filmy and illusive in the late sunshine. The hearty odors of April were everywhere. The frogs were croaking.

The old woman went slowly along under the greening boughs. Everything looked the same. The steeple was pointing black as ink against a strip of mellowing sky. Two panels were hanging loose in the churchyard fence. She sniffed the air; it smelled good and herby. She knew that the dogtooth violets were purpling by hundreds the marshy spaces back of the church. She felt safe as she toiled along. She felt free. The graves companioned her all the way. One side of the winding road was thick with them. Behind the palings, weather-burned a warm gray color, the grayer stones rose up out of the curving young grass. They had a friendly attitude.

"*Elias Barton, aged seventy-two,*" she read out, in her thin, sweet voice.

She herself could count as many years; but she had a feeling she was too young to die. Presently she stood still in the middle of the lane. "I'm going to shut my eyes," she spoke, softly, "and walk along and come on them sudden. I know they're all there, and I know they're just as white!"

A little later she found herself standing opposite a small and square brick house. The upper windows, which were shutterless, blazed like copper in the sunset. Running from the gate to the front door were two rows of lilac bushes; white as ghosts, they gave a haunted look to the deserted garden. The next minute Mrs. Holt was in the midst of the mysterious bloom, stretching up on the tips of her toes to inhale the fragrance of the highest growing ones, and burying her face in those that grew lower down. Her bundles in a heap on the weed-grown little path. The moments passed.

"Is that you you, Mis' Holt?" An old man and an elderly woman stood out in Church Lane. The scarlet worsted hood the woman wore brought a color almost like that of August into the delicate spring landscape. "Is that you, Mis' Holt?" repeated the old man.

"Yes, it is, Father," said the woman.

"Why, Mis' Holt, how'd you get back in these parts again?"

Mrs. Holt slowly approached her gate. "I just come a little while ago. I come in the stage."

"Just on a visit, I guess," said the other.

"No," said Mrs. Holt—"no, no. I've come to stay. I'm never going back to Haversham any more." Her voice broke like a child's.

"I always thought your sister Sabilla was good to you, Mis' Holt."

"Good as gold."

The old man took a step forward. "What made you come back, Mary Ann?"

"It was things, just *things*." She swept a comprehensive arm around—"*things*. Last fall when the chrysanthemums were out I thought I'd go wild for thinking of mine. I knew they were all here, standing up in rows, and bitter and yellow and clear copper color. I used to see them growing out in the street. And now, when lilac time come, it just set me to going. I said. 'Mine's out;' and I felt as if I'd rather be dead than not see them."

"I never knew anybody as fond of blooms as you," said the old man.

"And here I am, and here I'm going to stay." She began to move back to the lilac bushes.

"That house has been shut up for six months; you'll get your death, Mis' Holt," said the younger woman.

"There's a stove in the kitchen. Sabilla said it was too old to take; and there's a rocking chair. I'm going to light a fire in the stove to-night and go to sleep in the chair. I'll get along all right."

The other looked helplessly at her father.

"Come home with us, Mis' Holt," said the old man.

"I'm going to stay just here," said Mrs. Holt. "You and Lizzie are real kind, Mr. Barton; but you needn't worry."

It was dusk in the garden and turning dusk in the lane. All the sunset was toward the roofs and the tops of the trees. The graves seemed to come nearer.

"I thought may be you'd be afraid," hazarded Lizzie Barton.

"You mean Josiah? He's been dead six months. I buried him on Monday, and on Tuesday I packed up and went down to Haversham to live with my sister Sabilla. No," she ended solemnly, "Josiah never troubled anybody when he was living, and he ain't going to now he's dead."

She watched them going homeward, two distinct figures under the fading boughs, then turned and walked slowly toward her front door. She unlocked it; the odor of long-closed rooms reached her. She glanced about her with an air of satisfaction. The floors were as white as a two-days' course of scrubbing could make them. The little brass handles on the cupboard drawers still kept somewhat of their ancient polish. There, in that space between the mantel and the stairway, had lain Josiah in his coffin. It was only yesterday, and yet half a year had come and gone. She passed through the first room and into the kitchen, setting the yard door there wide open. She drew the dilapidated rocking chair out of its corner and sat down in it. A step sounded on the brick walk without.

"Is that you, Sabilla?" she called, trembingly.

"It's me, Mis' Holt." Old Mr. Barton appeared in the doorway. "I've got some hot tea for you, Mary Ann, and a bowl of soup. Lizzie says she don't want you to think you haven't any neighbors."

"Set them things down on the stove," said the old woman. "There's sugar and butter and most half a ham and some bread in that bandbox yonder. Well, you can hand me the tea; I guess I'll drink it now."

The old man stood and looked down upon her as she sipped the savory liquid out of its tin kettle.

"I guess you feel's if you had something to live for," he remarked at last.

"I have back all my *things*," she said.

"I don't believe anybody in the whole world cares for lilacs like I do. I always felt that way about blooms. They almost set me to bursting. I guess there's lots of violets back of the church."

"Millions," said the old man.

"Sabilla don't think any more of flowers than if they were stocks or stones. Josiah din't either. Sabilla hadn't one green thing in her yard, except once in a while a tiny bit of grass, and then she'd go out and pour b'iling water on it. I used to get so lonesome."

"I expect she'll come up here to-morrow," said her neighbor.

Mrs. Holt looked uneasy.

"I waited till she went on an errand, and then I got ready, and wrote a note, and came"—she flashed up a moment—"and here I'm going to stay."

"Mis' Trench is mighty headstrong," he said, doubtfully.

Mrs. Holt set the kettle down with a nervous clatter. "I won't go back!" she said, vehemently. The little stripped room was solemn with the last of the sunset. The wind blew distantly. The shouts of children at play came plainly to the two old people. "I'll save the soup for later, Mr. Barton. It was real good in Lizzie to think of sending me something."

The sun had long gone down when she stepped out into her garden and stopped before the lilac bushes. She stretched out a hand toward them, and drew it back again. Several times she did the same, then suddenly began breaking off the white blossoms. She made a strange picture as she toiled across to the churchyard shortly after. The lights had died out everywhere, except in the sky. A pearly glimmer in the upper air caused the tall trees to look more illusive than ever.

Mrs. Holt laid the lilac blooms down upon a grave that seemed to make a deeper blackness near the church door. Josiah had been a kind, but dense soul, with no recognition whatever of the more passionate material of which his wife was compounded. One whiff of his old pipe had been more to him than all the green and growing things on the round earth. Some remembrance of this passed mistily through the old woman's mind. She wondered if in that other world an added faculty now made him keen to see things to which he had once been blind.

"I guess I'm giving him these, because I'm so glad I'm home again. Josiah," she called softly, in the soft darkness—"Josiah, you may have these instead of your pipe."

The next morning a tall old woman came up Church Lane. She was stout as well as tall, and her air was militant. Her stride was almost that of a man. She opened Mrs. Holt's front gate; it clanged behind her like a call to war. She was so large, and so full of dominant vitality, that in spite of her gray head, she seemed to take possession at once of the whole. "Mary Ann," she cried, authoritatively, "you get ready and come on back with me."

The house rose up before her like a block of stone.

"I saw you peeking out that upstairs window as I come up the lane. You're there now, hiding. Mary Ann, get ready and come on back with me."

"I'm going to stay right here, Sabilla," floated down to her in a strained voice.

"You're going to do what I say," declared Mrs. Trench. "The idea of your running off just like a child, and all on account of a lot of old lilacs. I've a great mind to git an ax and chop them down!"

"Oh no, don't, Sabilla!" There was downright agony in the appeal.

"They're not worth an ax," proclaimed Sabilla Trench, with a distinct sniff. "I never could see anything decent about green things except if they were good to eat. Now cabbage is different, because you can bile it with a piece of nice fat bacon, and a handful of herbs always goes with a pot of good strong soup. Mary Ann, you come on back with me."

"I'm going to stay right here, Sabilla."

"I made a solemn promise to take care of you when Josiah died. Josiah always did; but now he's in glory, and he has no occasion to take care of anybody except himself. I hope the Lord ain't so hard on him that he's allowing Josiah to keep somebody else in tow. He needs a good long rest. I said to myself, 'Mary Ann's a widow, and I'm a widow, and we can both of us live together. I'm going to set her down to three square meals a day. If I don't, she'll go brooding around in her garden all day long among roots and things, and in all kinds of sloppy weather, and she'll think a scorched-up herring and a cup of cold tea good enough for her. I hope you're listening to every word I say, Mary Ann!"

"I'm not going back, Sabilla," came weakly from the upper window.

"Well, then, I'll stay here till you do. I guess I'm as smart at holding out as you. You needn't be afraid I'll break your door in. The front steps are good enough for me. I'll just set here and stare at them lilac bushes."

She sat down, perspiring and confident. A small and half-scared face appeared an instant overhead, then disappeared. Presently the small body to which it belonged tiptoed across the empty chamber and downstairs into the empty kitchen. The door was softly opened, there was a flurry of skirts, and the old woman was hurrying along the path that led down to her back gate and the meadows beyond. Once in the fields she began running, a little fluttering figure, all gray and childlike out in the warm spring sun. At last she stopped, panting. She could see one chimney of her house through the tall-stemmed trees; a mass of swaying white further down proclaimed her lilac bushes. She went on again, her breath coming in gasps. Past the meadows and beyond the lane, that lay, a winding strip of red-colored earth just in sight, the church steeple thrust up out of the April boughs.

Once more Mrs. Holt looked back. She had left the houses behind her now; a stretch of solitary land lay before. She reached the fence that divided it from the Church Lane. The graves drew closer and closer. Soon she was among them and at the church door. It was half open; she made a sudden plunge into the dim, cool, dark-raftered place and sank down upon one of the cushioned seats. This was sanctuary, indeed. Outside lay Josiah in his last slumber. The recollection of this made her feel safer still. God and the dead would take care of her. She settled herself more comfortably in the dust, and leaned her head against the carved back of the pew. She seemed to be in an upper chamber, barred away from the fret and noise of the outer life. The shadows and furniture began to melt together and fade away; she sighed once or twice; her lids drooped; she was fast asleep. It was long past noon when she awoke. The windows were blazing in scarlet and gold. She sat there in a world of light. Down the luminous aisle sounded a cautious foot. Old Mr. Barton was coming toward her.

"She's gone, Mis' Holt," he whispered.

She stared at him, the sleep not yet out of her eyes.

"Was she real mad?" she whispered back to him.

He nodded.

Mrs. Holt rose up and moved forward. Bareheaded, quivering a little, her hair falling loosened and gray about her shoulders, she stood before him.

"I—I wasn't afraid of her," she said, in the same tone; I—I was afraid of myself."

He waited until they were both out of church, and then broke forth, garrulously:

"I saw Mis' Trench coming this morning, and I saw you leave the house' and I watched, and you come here. Mis' Trench sat and sat, and at last she saw me round there, and she told me to tell you she was too proud to burst in your door, tho she felt's if she ought to, and carry you off anyhow; and she was going home, and she guessed she'd never come back any more."

"She didn't—she didn't cut down them lilac bushes, did she?" quaked Mrs. Holt. He shook his head. "Sabilla'll keep her word," said she. "Well, *I'll* have to do all the visiting." A few feet away a mass of dogtooth violets were blossoming. A light leaped up in her eyes. She pointed toward them. "Just look!" she said, almost reverently.

They *are* pretty," said Mr. Barton. "'Liza used to think a good deal of them, too. She's been gone a year."

"And Josiah's been gone just six months."

The two old people gazed at each other with a sudden sense of kindship.

"We won't be long after them" said he; "and I think folks might let us live in peace. I'm glad Mis' Trench is going to leave you alone. She says she'll send you every stick of your furniture to-morrow."

They went away together between the graves, like two children. The wind was making a certain soft but distinct sound all about them. Somewhere, perhaps in Heaven, a thrush was singing.

The Exact Center of the Population of the United States.

No man in the country feels more proud of his peculiar distinction than does Henry Marr, just a plain farmer, who resides near Columbus, Bartholomew county, Indiana.

By referring to a bulletin issued by the Census Department it is found that the exact center of population is located at latitude 39 degrees 9 minutes and 36 seconds north, longitude 85 degrees 48 minutes and 54 seconds west. If a person is desirous of visiting the spot a better idea of its location can be secured by asking any resident of Columbus. Almost invariably the answer to such a question will be: "Five miles southwest of Columbus, in Hen' Marr's barn lot."

Marr is the person who enjoys the prominence of being the center man of population of the whole United States. It is quite a distinction, too, and, according to the "Cincinnati Enquirer," Marr fully appreciates it. The pivotal stone is merely a small, flat slab sunk into the ground in the barn lot, leaving only the top surface exposed to the central atmosphere. On it is carved this simple inscription; "1900." The marker, while not extraordinarily pretentious, is a more elaborate affair. Several hundred farmers and other visitors were present the day the stones were placed in position.

How to Color Meerschaum Pipes.

The *Scientific American* gives the following information relating to the "coloring" of meerschaum pipes after they have been smoked for a while. Ordinarily, the pipe is boiled for coloring in a preparation of wax which is absorbed, and a thin coating of wax is held on the surface of the pipe, and made to take a high polish. Under the wax is retained the oil of tobacco, which is absorbed by the pipe, and its hue grows darker in proportion to the tobacco used. A meerschaum pipe should at first be smoked very slowly, and before a second bowlful is lighted, the pipe should cool off. This is to keep the wax as far up on the bowl as possible, and rapid smoking will overheat, driving the wax off and leaving the pipe dry and raw. A new pipe should never be smoked outdoors in extremely cold weather. Fill the pipe and smoke down about one-third, or to the height to which you wish to color. Leave the remainder of the tobacco in the pipe, and do not empty or disturb it for several weeks, or until the desired color is obtained. When smoking, put fresh tobacco on the top and smoke to the same level. When once burnt, the pipe cannot be satisfactorily colored, unless the burnt portion is removed, and the surface again treated by the process by which meerschaum is prepared. The coloring is produced by action of the smoke upon the oils and wax, which are superficially on the exterior of the pipe, and are applied in the process of manufacture.

Not a bird that comes to the country but earns its living from the people. In some way or another they earn their right to live. Most of the song-birds are insect eaters. It is a question whether we could live on this earth if insects were allowed to multiply in the numberless forms and myriads of progeny that Nature provides. Certainly man could not alone keep the insects down without the help of the birds. Even the hawks and owls live mostly on field mice and gophers, and Mr. Crow will eat almost any old thing, which, if allowed to pollute the air, means disease and death.—Pembina Pioneer Express.

Here is a tip to any sweet girl graduate who has not chosen a subject for her oration. Instead of saying "Beyond the Alps Lies Italy" say, "Beyond the Altar Sits the Wash Tub,"

To detect dampness in beds first have the bed well warmed with a warming pan, then, the moment the pan is taken out, introduce between the sheets an inverted glass tumbler. After it has remained there a few minutes, withdraw it. If the glass is found dry, you may go to bed without any apprehension of chill or rheumatism. If the glass is covered with drops of wet or damp steam, the safest plan is to take off the sheets and sleep between the blankets, as a second pair would probably be no better than the first.

The measure of success of some farmers is that of the number of acres they own. Others are rated on their red barns, fine houses, bank stocks and the size of their herds. Now and then a man will be measured by the miniature race track he has built on his farm. Honesty and integrity should be the measurement of every good citizen, and let him own just such property as he deems necessary for carrying on his vocation.

She—"Gertrude says she'll never marry until she finds her ideal."

He—"What is her ideal"

She—"Oh, any man who will ask her."

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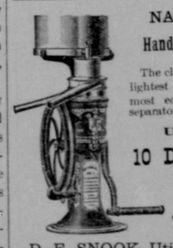


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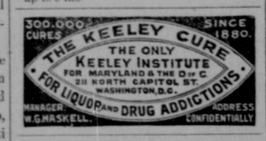
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