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1888.

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THE PUMKIN BLOW.

Uv all the posies I ever see,
Th' nicest lookin' uv 'm all t' me
Is th' pumkin blow.
Ets yeller es butter, jist churned new,
Er golding pippins ripe clean through,
En ets all aglow.

Et smells es sweet es a honey pail
With th' bees a settin' onto th' bail
En gazin' down in.
En et hes a smilin' 'n open way,
En one posy makes a hull bokay,
En et's bright es tin.

I see et a bloomin' down in th' vines
'N laffin' 'n cutin' up ets shines—
Leatwise et looks so—
En I laf back, 'n et's plain t' see,
T' onst, th' very best friends air we—
Me'n th' pumkin blow.

Th' hollyhock et grows perk 'n' tall,
Agin th' palin' er nigh th' wall,
But 't ain't no use.
'N th' daisy, et spiles th' meader grass,
'N th' marigol' be'nt no makin' uv sass,
But jist t' look spruce.

Et makes me think, does my han'some blow,
Uv a big golding bell a hangin' low
'N ringin' for me;
'N I fancy th' sound's like a meetin' tune,
Er th' horn a blowin' fer twelve et noon,
'N what kin sweeter be?

—S. B. Macmanus in Boston Transcript.

THE KISS OF DEATH.

I awoke in darkness—darkness so intense that for a moment I thought I was blind.

I remembered, presently, that I had been ill for a long time—typhoid fever. I had grown weaker day by day, until, one summer afternoon, while the bright sunshine streamed gloriously through the window, while the soft wind, perfumed with lilac and honeysuckle, rustled the broad leaves of the magnolia by the door, lulled by the song of the mocking bird hidden in the cool shade of a cypress down by the plashing fountain, I fell asleep. I was very, very tired. My last recollection was of my wife, whose anxious face, pale with long and weary vigils at my bedside, bent over me, her golden hair sweeping my feverish brow, and her beautiful eyes filled with tears. She kissed me, and I smiled upon her with a heart full of love and gratitude. Her lips moved, but I did not hear what she said. A delicious languor took possession of me—a feeling of unutterable rest. Rest! The sunlight faded from my eyes, my poor wife's pitiful face grew dim on my sight and passed away, the song of the mocking bird grew fainter in my ears, and I knew nothing more until I awoke in that awful night.

It was strange, I thought, that they should have extinguished all the lights so. But perhaps the taper that usually burned at my bedside had gone out. This puzzled me, too, for somebody always watched in my chamber at night—the nurse, a friend sometimes, or my devoted wife, my darling whom no fatigue could keep long from my side. Perhaps whoever had watched to-night had fallen asleep. I could not find it in my heart to blame them—human endurance has a limit, and exhausted nature must rest some time. Was it necessary, though, to draw the curtains so close? Not a single gleam of light, not the faintest glimmer—darkness blacker than the darkest midnight I had ever seen.

And silence! I listened for the ticking of the clock in the next room, but I listened in vain. Some one had suggested that the monotonous sound annoyed me, and it had been removed. Yes, that explained it.

But I must have been asleep a long time. The sun was shining when I lost consciousness, and now it was night, perhaps nearly morning. Why had they allowed me to sleep so long? Why had I not been awakened as the doctor directed, to take my medicine—the teaspoonful every hour, and the powder, in half a wine glass of water, every three hours? I could not answer this question, and it worried me. Were they neglecting me, or had the doctor changed his method of treatment? At any rate I was now awake, and surely I ought to have my medicine. Besides, a terrible thirst parched my tongue and my lips burned with fever.

But was I awake? Was it not possible that I dreamed all these thoughts—that I dreamed the intense darkness, the silence, and——

My God! What odor is that? Where had I breathed that damp, earthy atmosphere before? I filled my lungs again and again, and a dumb terror began to oppress me—a vague apprehension which I could not account for. The odor was unnatural—it was like the air of caves and mines. Certainly I must be suffering from nightmare induced by a brain disordering disease.

And my bed, how hard it was—could it be possible that I had fallen upon the floor? And yet my head rested upon a pillow, and I felt the ruffled edge of the bed curtains touching my forehead. As I lay there, flat upon my back, my hands clasped upon my breast, I smiled faintly at the incongruity of my surroundings, and mentally commented upon the strange stuff of which dreams are made. Then I recollected reading somewhere that the sense of smell is absent in dreams, and my apprehensions of evil, which had partially subsided, returned with renewed force.

At this moment the thumb of my left hand touched a button. It was a cloth button. My night robe was fastened with no such buttons. It was the button of a coat—somebody had probably thrown such a garment over me to keep me warm or to dispose of it until they should require it again. But that peculiar fœtid odor—where did it come from? My thirst was becoming intolerable—I must moisten my lips—and they must take that hard substance from under my knees. What was it there for and who put it there? But above all things, I must have something to drink.

"Julia!" How sullen and muffled my whisper sounded.

"Julia!" There was no echo to my guttural cry.

"John! Julia! Robert!" There was no reply. The nurse, my wife, my friend—none of them near me—or all sleeping so soundly that my voice did not awaken them. Half petulantly I resolved that I would try to serve myself. I would try to reach one of the glasses on the table at my bedside—I would disturb nobody. Some one would come presently and bring a light.

Slowly, and with a fear that I might overthrow some of the vials on the table, I raised my right hand. My elbow struck against a hard unyielding substance—the wall probably—the table must be at my left. And yet, if my memory served me, when I fell asleep my feet were stretched toward the north and the table was at my right hand. Why had they changed my position? I raised my left hand—my elbow came in contact with another wall. Thoroughly alarmed at this strange circumstance, I attempted to sit up—within six inches my head came in violent contact with what might have been a ceiling. With a half strangled shriek I made an effort to throw my body out of its cramped position—I drew my knees up and dug my heels into the floor upon which I lay—I turned upon my left side and hurled myself against the walls that closed me in. Horror! I could not move a foot in any direction! Howling like a caged beast I pressed my hands against either side of my prison and swiftly passed them from my knees to my shoulders. My maddening suspicions were only too true. That shape—narrow at the feet—widening at the elbows—narrowing again at the head—merciful God! It was a coffin! I was buried alive!

For a single instant I lost consciousness. During the interval of a single heart beat my faculties were benumbed as by a blow at the base of the brain. The blood in my veins receded from the surface of my body, and I was cold—frozen by the intensity of my terror. A clammy sweat began to ooze from my pores, and the blood that had collected about my heart rushed, a thousand tiny torrents, through arteries and veins to my brain—I was burning with the fever of fright and disease.

I was mad with despair. I threw myself to the right and to the left—howling, shrieking, cursing, frothing at the mouth. Upward I flung my clenched hands, and a dull crash followed their contact with the glass above my face. This circumstance diverted my thoughts into another channel. If I was buried, I argued, my coffin was inclosed in a strong wooden box, and over that was piled at least six feet of earth.

If I was buried! Oh, there was still a hope, and I smiled as I tried to picture a condition in which a living, breathing, reasoning creature ceases to hope. I thought of the doomed wretch ascending the scaffold, and hoping against hope for the pardon that can never reach him. I thought of the soldier sentenced to death by a pitiless court martial, standing against a white wall, his eyes bandaged, his grave yawning at his feet, awaiting and fearing the fatal word of command, yet hoping that the unforeseen was about to occur in his behalf. I thought of the castaway at sea, clinging to a wave beaten spar; of the miner imprisoned in the bowels of the earth; of the thirst maddened wanderer in the desert—all, all hoping. No, there are no circumstances so terrible, no situation so hopeless, that man may not endure, struggle and hope. And my hope? What was it? That my coffin had been placed in a receiving vault! This hope filled my soul as the dawnlight fills the shadowed aisles of a great cathedral, and I grew strong beneath its vivifying influence.

As I regained my wandering faculties something fell dripping on my face—something warm and noisome and slippery wet—something that fell like the first drops of a summer rain upon my closed eyelids, and trickled down the furrows of my cheeks to my lips—something that tasted salt.

It was blood! My hands and wrists were gashed by the glass through which I had thrust them. With that taste of my own blood my hope fled—fled affrighted, and in its place stalked the grewsome realization that I was buried alive—buried deep—entombed, lost, abandoned. Drip—drip—drip! abandoned by the whole world—abandoned by those I loved—abandoned by my wife. Abandoned! Never before had I comprehended the utter loneliness which that word conveys. Forsaken!

Despair came to my relief at last. My hands were again clasped across my breast, the thumb of my left hand caressing the button that had excited my curiosity a few moments before. I lay motionless—thinking. And what queer, absurd, grotesque fancies thrilled through my mind—ghostly tatterdemalions of thought—spectral offspring of Terror and Woe. I was gratified that I had discovered one situation that was absolutely hopeless. It was as if I had made a discovery of great import in the realms of philosophical speculation. I experienced a hideous complacency in contemplating my utterly hopeless environment.

But my complacency was somewhat dampened for a moment by thoughts of my horrible loneliness. Why had my wife allowed my body to be so quickly disposed of? How selfish! Suppose the physicians had pronounced me dead, was that a sufficient reason for putting me away so soon? Why did she not wait until her own reason was convinced? Why did she not watch for palpable and unmistakable evidences of decay? No, my wife did not love me.

And I remembered the young man who sought to rival me in her affections—a handsome, dark haired, reserved young man who had quietly accepted her answer, and for three years waited patiently for this opportunity to renew his suit. A woman tires of a lover, and a wife may well tire of a husband. My darling had proved herself no exception. Not that she would have abandoned me living—her wifely duty and her virtue would have prevented that—but a husband dead is a duty done, and the grave swallows every obligation. And when the brief season of hypocritical grief shall have passed by, the dark haired, handsome young man with the earnest, pleading eyes, will once more take his place by her side—his arm will encircle her yielding waist, his lips will meet hers in the passionate kiss of a love that glows warm beneath the ashes of mine.

Thus did jealousy feed like a harpy upon the tenderest emotions of my heart. What a depth of despair had I reached, to lie there dying, bereft of hope, and suffering the torments of the damned, and yet find an abiding place in my horror haunted soul for such a grizzly guest as jealousy. My head ached, and my throat was strained as dumb sorrow strains it. I gnashed my teeth in impotent rage, and my fingers clinched that cloth button—I tore it from its fastening and I would have torn her heart out at that moment, and I held it tight clasped in my hand, half fearing that I would lose it, and wondering in a vague sort of way why I wished to keep it.

Tears! Oh, the solace of those tears at that moment of supreme agony. I wept like a woman, and I was filled with pity of myself—such pity as the soul of man has never felt. But at the same time I reproached myself. Why had I not insisted upon an autopsy in the event of my death? Why had I not pestered in my expressed desire that I should be cremated? Death would probably have resulted in either case, but certainly death in any shape was preferable to this death. But, aside from all this, the delay and preparation for the dissecting room or the furnace would have afforded some slight chance of ultimate escape. Had I not revived, as it was, would I not have manifested some sign of returning consciousness under the other circumstances—even at the point of the surgeon's knife—even at the door of the glowing furnace?

Thus do we cheat ourselves with hopes that never exist save as regrets. Suddenly my fancies ran another way. I saw masked grave robbers creeping at midnight through the cemetery in which I was buried. I heard their hoarse whispers as they approached my grave, and I waited, almost joyfully, to hear the sounding iron as it penetrated the loose soil to scarce for my coffin. Oh, how my ears strained through that awful silence for the dull, muffled blow that I had heard through the ear of my wild imagination. I calculated that these polluted saviors would sound my box three or perhaps four times before they were satisfied as to where they should begin their horrid work of resurrection. Horrid work? No; a glorious deed, for which I should bless them through eternity—beyond the second weeping, when my real corpse should repose, cold and rotting within its narrow home. But God forbid that I should ever lie here again. My body should be embalmed when real death came to claim me—no more agony of a living death.

Why don't they hurry? Surely they have had ample time to drive that rod down through the grave. Have they become alarmed at some unusual sound, and are they hiding behind some neighboring monument until the danger is passed? Why do society and the law so relentlessly pursue these ardent devotees of science—these brave scavengers of the battle field of disease? I am not the only man who has been buried alive; and what matters it if a thousand, nay, if ten thousand graves are desecrated, if one poor, despairing wretch is restored to life and light, and freedom? What sickly sentimentality, what puling cowardice, is this so called respect for the dead. Do we not forget our dead almost as soon as they are out of our sight? Is not the dust of forgotten billions blown in the faces of the living millions by every passing breeze?

Why do not these men begin their work? There is no danger, my friends. Hurry! The air in this horrible prison is tainted and poisoned with my own breath. I shall suffocate if I am not released. Hurry! It will soon be too late. My case is a peculiar one. You know that I ought to be dissected for the benefit of science. It is true that you do not know that your labors will result in naught so far as scientific research is concerned, but what does that matter? Hurry! You have certainly heard of the mystery surrounding my death, as it was called—you know that all the physicians were unable to account for this unexpected result, else why have you come to take me out of my tomb? Then, why do you not make haste to secure the valuable knowledge you are seeking?

Silence—utter silence! My God, is there indeed no hope? No hope! No hope!

Ah! It is no longer dark. A ghastly, nervous, tremulous light dances to and fro, up and down before my staring eyeballs. It is a thread like, yellowish light, crossed with beams of a crimson hue tinged with a purple that sometimes changes to a deep blue. It is a segregated, misshapen light that wriggles and swims before me like a corpse light—the miasm of a place where the dead have long lain unburied. The air grows more foetid. There is a horrible pressure on my chest. The lights dance before my staring eyes with brighter radiance and more definite form. My imagination can shape them at will, and faces have begun to peer at me out of the wall of darkness against which these lights play. I feel that insanity is lurking behind all this horror. I can see the beginning of the awful end. The climax will be something frightful.

There is still one chance, one avenue of escape, one hope—death! My bleeding hands remind me that suicide is within my reach. Strange contradiction—I am afraid to die; I am afraid to live. On the one hand, I fear the horrors of the unknown; on the other, I fear the horrors of the reality.

Still the faces peer out of the darkness, growing more distinct every instant—the faces of the living, the faces of the dead, the faces of those loved and remembered, the faces of those long forgotten. And they are all the faces of demons. They sneer and grin at me, and their lips are silently gibbering. They gloat upon me and exult over my helpless, hopeless despair. I would shut them out by closing my eyes, but the distorted countenances become more apparent and I begin to hear the hisses of their sneering lips.

The weight upon my chest becomes so oppressive that I can scarcely breathe. There is a roar in my ears, and my brain whirls round and round. I have lost the button I tore from my shroud. I no longer think; I see and I hear.

Oh, what a vision; what hideous discord. There, bending over me, I see once more the sweet face of my wife, but its expression changes, and it becomes the face of a fiend. It is seamed with hate as with vitriol. Her thin lips curl in cruel scorn, and her eyes are living flame. The flesh shrivels and tightens until I can see the contour of the death's head beneath.

She is bending closer—that horrible, earthy odor emanates from her nostrils. Gaunt skeleton fingers clutch my throat, a skeleton knee crushes my breast. The skull bends closer, and I shudder as I gaze into the sockets where the eyes were, now filled with crawling, twining, slimy worms, out of the entanglement of which gleams a greenish, phosphorescent light.

Closer, still closer the hideous, grinning thing approaches; tighter, yet tighter the bony talons clutch my throat; heavier, and still heavier the skeleton knee presses upon my chest. My face is black and distorted as the face of the dead who die on the gibbet. I struggle with the strength of a hundred maniacs; my shrieks may reach beyond the confines of hell, even to the throne of God—in vain.

The fleshless lips of the death's head are pressed in unholy joy against mine that are wet with the foam of despair.

It is the kiss of death!—E. H. Clough in Argonaut.

A Sealed Letter Is Sacred.

"The sanctity of a sealed letter is so well secured in this country," said Mr. Nash, the superintendent of the railroad mail service, "that if a letter were received at the city postoffice in Washington, or at any other postoffice in the country, that was absolutely known to contain the evidence of fraud, the proof of the improper use of the mails, the postmaster general himself would not dare to break the seal. A letter passing through the mails cannot be opened by anybody until it reaches the dead letter office, after every effort has been made to deliver it in vain."—Washington Post.

A New Advertising Dodge.

"I've thought of a new advertising dodge," said a gentleman recently, "that I wonder has not been hit upon before. Now if Stockton or Howells or some other of those important writers should take the opportunity, just as they are letting their hero or heroine die of typhoid fever, to let it be known privately that for value received they would permit her to be brought back from the gates of death by whatever patent medicine should make the highest bid for the distinction, I believe they would make more money than by all the rest of the story put together."—The Epoch.

DECADENCE OF THE DIAMOND.

Why It Grows More Marked—A Badge of Vulgarity—No Longer Unique.

The decadence of the diamond daily grows more marked. It has long been a badge of vulgarity when worn by men, and its indiscriminate use by their own sex has brought it into disrepute with women who are really fastidious. With anything else except an object which confers distinction on its possessor, the greater its popularity, the greater its triumph, but the diamond—once the most princely of gems, and the possession of which was almost the unique privilege of royalty—has lost its ascendency through its very popularity as an article of adornment. In our day it is in no sense unique, nor are its associates such as to give it distinction. It thrusts its glitter on the eye in the street, in the railroad car, in every public and unsuitable place, and usually with a background of fatness and ugliness which it only serves to bring into unpleasant prominence.

When a human being makes one thing an ambition and turns every effort to the realization of that ambition it is pretty certain of accomplishment. With many women the possession of a pair of solitaire diamonds is the one thing in life desired and to be secured. The realization of the ambition may come late, but young or old, the woman who has compassed her object is so proud in that fact that she does not propose to hide the light of her diamonds under a bushel with the result that she brings discredit on herself and on what she considers her most valuable possession.

The love of the gem itself, although savoring of childishness and of the barbarous tastes which still survive in civilized humanity, is one thing; the love of displaying the diamond in public, another. There are women, and men, too, who have a mania for diamonds almost like that of the miser for gold. They love the glitter and sparkle and delight to feast their sight and touch on the precious baubles. But these are not the people who flaunt their treasures in the gaze of the public. It is the better half of the lucky speculator, the matrimonially promoted shop girl, the gambler's "lady" and the obese wife of the retired pawnbroker, who never feel entirely clothed unless somewhere on their person scintillates the ever present diamond. The wearer may be somewhat down at the heel and out at elbow, and a thorough acquaintance with soap and water may never have been included in her experience, but the diamond atones for all. In our time the burden of vulgarity is too great for the queen of gems, and in cultured estimation she sinks beneath the weight.—New York Commercial Advertiser.

Soup in a Public Restaurant.

One day some years ago I tried to tip a waiter. I failed. He declined to accept the tip with an air so courteous and so dignified that I feared I had unintentionally succeeded in wounding the feelings of a foreign nobleman in disguise. He may not have borne a title, but I was not at all surprised when he told me a few weeks later that he was about to leave the restaurant forever, as he had received some money from abroad. One day last week I again met my old friend. Of course I remembered him. No one could forget the face of a waiter who would not stoop to take a tip. He had the dress and bearing of a well bred man of the world. He had been in Europe, he said, and was now in this country on a visit. Beyond that he vouchsafed no information concerning himself, but in the course of our talk he did say something which not only interested but startled me.

"My dear sir," he said, "take the advice of a man who knows, and never eat soup in a public restaurant. There is not a hotel or restaurant in all Brooklyn where I could be induced to eat soup. If you but knew what I was compelled to carry to you in the old days when you ordered soup from me you would never wish to look upon my face again." This was said quietly and mournfully. I have enough confidence in the man who said it to believe it was said honestly. The place in which he served was a restaurant of considerable pretension, where stiff prices and good service were the rule, and I now look back to the dainty soups they served there with anything but a pleasant feeling. Hereafter soup to me shall rank with the "weal pie," which the younger Mr. Weller immortalized when he said, "It is werry good wen you know the lady as makes it."—"Rambler" in Brooklyn Eagle.

Didn't Object at All.

But there's an old man in Mexico who very genially deplores the decadence of the age in matters generally considered reprehensible. He is 100 years old, he says. This is probably a lie, but he is old enough to be excused for lying about his age. He speaks of the good old times of his youth, and relates with lively satisfaction his part in several exciting murders, for which it does not seem to occur to him he ought to have been hung. But the adventure he is fondest of relating is how he obtained his wife. He may, perhaps, be believed when he states that the mother of the senorita he loved objected to him as a son-in-law. It was natural if his methods of amusing himself were truly stated. She absolutely forbade the marriage.

"But," said the old man genially, "we removed her objections."

"How?"

"Very simply. She was taking a siesta one day and I stole up behind her and dropped a big rock on her head, and she never objected at all."

"I should say not. She was too late to object, I suppose."

"Ah, it was fun. We had the wedding and the funeral on the same day."

And the wicked old man chuckled. The story was confirmed by other people, too.—San Francisco Chronicle "Undertones."

The municipality of Vienna, after the strictest investigation, declares that Madeleine Pouka, of Vienna, has completed her 112th year, her birthday having been in the year 1775.

NOVEL GOLD MINING.

A NEW YORKER'S METHOD OF SAVING THE AURIFEROUS WASTE.

How "Ferocious Fred" Got Even with a Mining Company—Crawling into a Flume at Dead of Night—A Poetic Retribution.

Among recent arrivals from the west was that of a man whose name does not appear on any of the big hotel registers, but who is nevertheless pretty well known about town. He is part owner of a placer claim in Dakota, and is interested in several other mining ventures, notably one whose field of operations is not far removed from that of the great Homestake Mining company. This gentleman, whose surname is suppressed here at his earnest solicitation, has been nicknamed "Ferocious Fred" by his associates, principally because he wears mustaches of a kind that would have brought tears of envy to the eyes of the guardsmen of Louis XIV.

A WOEBEGONE APPEARANCE.

Fred arrived in the city and was met at the Forty-second street depot by a party of friends, who were very much surprised at finding him with one arm in a sling, with a strip of court plaster extending across his forehead just above his eyebrows and presenting a woebegone appearance generally. Fred explained that his injuries were received during an altercation he had had with a pack mule in his mining camp, and his statement was accepted as a matter of course. Most of his friends had read humorous paragraphs in reference to the foolhardiness of toying with the pedal extremities of mules, and Fred's condition did not excite so much sympathy as it would have done had his injuries been sustained in almost any other manner. Last night, however, it leaked out that Fred had deceived his friends. While in a convivial mood he admitted the true origin of his disfiguration, and this is the story of his latest adventure:

Once a year for the past four years Fred has paid a flying visit to the mining regions of Colorado and Dakota, ostensibly to look after mining property, but in reality to do a little mining of a very peculiar sort. Fred, in common with many other small placer owners in that neighborhood, has long cherished a feeling of resentment against the Homestake Mining company. It is alleged that the latter has gobbled up all the water rights in the vicinity of the mines, and refuses to rent them to such minor operators as have good paying claims, hoping thereby to force them to sell for a nominal sum.

AT DEAD OF NIGHT.

It was while casting about for a way in which to "get even" that Fred hit upon this plan: The Homestake flume, a covered wooden gutter about two miles in length, that carries off the water passed through the ore crushers, terminates on the edge of a bluff fifty feet high, down the sides of which the water gently trickles when the crushers are in operation. At a certain hour every night the flood gates above are opened, and for a short time thereafter the water rushes out of the flume in a perfect torrent. Once a year, for the past four years, Fred has crawled into this flume at dead of night with a "gunny" bag and a tallow candle and "cleaned it up" on his own account. The process, as described by him, consists in scraping out of the cracks in the flooring of the flume the gold amalgam that escapes the sieves at the crushers and settles there. The plan worked successfully the first three trials, each time netting him something like $1,500 for his night's work.

Quite recently he made his accustomed descent on the wooden gutter. Unknown to him, however, arrangements had been made to flood the flume on the very night he had selected for his annual visit. Fred scraped up a considerable quantity of gold amalgam and was crawling backward out of the flume dragging his bag after him, when suddenly he heard a roaring noise and a rush of wind extinguished his candle. A moment later a great body of water came down on him with irresistible force. Fred and his bag of amalgam were swept out of the flume, over the bluff and down into the rocky bed of a creek fifty feet below. His arm was broken in the fall, and his head came in contact with a rock so forcibly as to render him for a time oblivious of his surroundings.

When he regained consciousness Fred found that the bag containing the amalgam had been split open in the fall and the proceeds of his "honest" labor washed off in the flood. Disgusted with his experience, he dragged himself to the nearest mining camp, where he explained that he had fallen off a bluff while prospecting and managed to get his wounds dressed. Then he started back to New York, having made up his mind in the meantime that the resources of the Homestake were too great for him to cope with.—New York Star.

Statistics of Weight.

Quetelet obtained some weight records, but very little reliance can be placed on them. He concluded from such statistics as he could get that a new born infant was, on an average, one-twentieth in the weight which is acquired in middle life; that during the first year after birth the increment of weight is about one-tenth of all that is added subsequently, and that between the 15th and 20th years more is added to the weight than in any other five year period during life. But individual instances differ so widely from the average that very little reliance can be placed on such results.

That Quetelet's statistics of weight were incomplete and unsatisfactory is shown by the fact that he did not detect the interesting law recently recognized, according to which the weight increases slowly (or even diminishes) when the height is increasing rapidly, but increases rapidly when the height remains nearly stationary.—Richard A. Proctor.

Cowboys of South America.

Sometimes the Gauchos are descended from excellent Spanish families, but life on the boundless pampas has weaned them from the restraints of civilization as it exists in the Argentine Republic. That they are not altogether "wild" is shown by the fact that in almost every hut is found a small image or picture which came through the hands of the simple priests of Mendoza or Cordova. They will carry their children for miles across the pampas and face the dread pampero to have the little ones formally baptized, and in like manner they will carry their dead across a horse for burial in consecrated ground.—T. C. Harbaugh.

Our Largest Cities.

The census of 1880 gives these cities as most populous in order: New York, Philadelphia, Brooklyn, Chicago, Boston, St. Louis, Baltimore, Cincinnati, San Francisco, New Orleans.

"Charles Egbert Craddock."

Most persons who have seen Miss Murfree have formed three distinct conceptions of the author of the mountaineer tales. Reading Craddock's stories before the secret of the pseudonym has been revealed the writer of them might have been easily imagined as a thoughtful, poetic natured man. A southerner with tremendous possibilities and a tremendous earnestness. A man who had lived face to face with nature and the eternal verities, to whom the brawls and struggles of urban existence were of less meaning and import than the loud chatter of mountain brooks. A tall, lean, brown Tennesseean probably, with that indolent slouchiness of gait and carriage, under which many a southerner conceals muscles of iron. That was the ideal Charles Egbert Craddock, who was so real to one's fancy that when Miss Murfree revealed herself one couldn't quite concede that he had no existence.

Then with the advertisements of her books appeared a little wood cut of her, a vivid faced woman, with eyes and hair of intensest black, clear cut, vigorous features, and a certain masculine force in her aspect that accorded well with her bold, clear signature, and then at last one came to see her in the flesh, and behold! she was as unlike either of these Craddocks as they were unlike each other. A very small woman; so lame she can scarcely cross the floor unaided. Slight and yet square in figure. A small white face, with the withered whiteness of one whose health had always been delicate. Pale, neutral brown hair and eyes, and a formal primness of manner like that of a shy, clever woman who has lived much in retirement. The only hint one gets of the great author is in the impression she gives of seeing and noting of everything; of weighing and estimating every one about her, and having a marvelous strength and concentration of attention; but her reserve is infinite.—B. L. R. Dane in New Orleans Times-Democrat.

The Rats of Paris.

There are two species of rats in Paris: A black sort which infests garrets and old houses and a gray kind that is found in cellars and swarms in all the sewers. This sewer kind is the most voracious and dangerous, and its ravages cost the city a large sum annually. Wherever there is underground shelter there is a family of these rats and they multiply with astonishing rapidity. Cellars, sewers, catacombs are their abodes; they dig passageways through thick walls, undermine foundations and do a great deal of damage. Many attempts have been made to exterminate them in the sewers but always without success. Poisons of all kinds, phosphorous, arsenic, prussic acid and strychnine, have been set for them but they won't touch the bait. One inventor thought he had hit on the very thing when he proposed to fry pieces of sponge in lard and scatter them about, under the expectation that the rats would eat them and that the expansion of the sponges in their stomachs would prove fatal. His theory was all right except on one point—the rats declined to eat the pieces of sponge. As for traps they would perhaps answer if it were possible to set enough to catch all the rats in the sewers without bankrupting the city in their purchase.

The plan which works the best is to hunt the pests with dogs trained for rat killing. Every now and then gangs of men go down into the sewers, and by following several converging galleries manage to drive whole armies of rats toward a single point, where these dogs are let loose and great slaughter follows. The men who keep these rat dogs are paid one cent for every rodent destroyed. Another class of rat catchers operate on the streets after nightfall, but their aim is to capture the animal alive, so as to sell it to the owners of terriers. These fellows receive ten cents a dozen for live rats, and are permitted to keep the dead bodies, which have a market value of from three to four cents, the skins being excellent for kid gloves, while the bones can be made up into toothpicks and ear cleaners.—Paris Cor. New Orleans Pleayune.

Glaciers in British Columbia.

Pushing on, small glaciers are visible on all sides, winding their way down through the mountain ravines. Ahead of us one of the grandest glaciers of the Selkirks is visible, pronounced by some to be several hundred feet in depth—a sea of ice slowly working its course to the valley below, doing battle with and conquering huge rocks on its way. Here we see enormous slabs of clear, green ice, as big as the side of a house, tumbled together, some standing upright, like immense gravestones. Now we are startled by a sharp cracking sound, which resounds through the mountains, as some large bulk of ice topples over, or settles deeper in its place. One may read a lifetime and form no conception of such scenes as here present themselves; cold type cannot reproduce them or do them justice. Turning from the impressive grandeur of this enormous field of ice, the eye wanders off to the "snow masses" of the wild mountains, noting the ever changing effect of light and shadow on these snowy peaks and the great white amphitheater. We stand and gaze on the silent, lonely, but entrancing scene.

This is the home of the big horn sheep, the mountain goat and the bear, while deer and wapiti are found in plenty further down. Far below on the mountain trail a band of Indians are jogging along on snow shoes over the deep snow, swaying, in their usual shuffling gait, with the uniformity of a single man. In another direction we have a faint glimpse of the small but turbulent glacier fed Illecillewaet river, the glacial mud tinging it a peculiar pea green color; high above and beyond are glacial mountains heaped against the sky.—H. Erskine Smith in New York Post.

Industries We Owe to the Shakers.

The Shakers have a keen appreciation of the necessity and dignity of labor. Every one of them has some useful work to do, according to age, sex and strength. Perhaps no class of people has done more for the country than they, when it is remembered how few they are in number. They originated the drying of sweet corn for food more than fifty years ago, and suggested the modern improved kilns for that purpose. They were the first in this country to institute the raising, papering and vending of garden seeds in the present styles. They originated in this country the botanic practice of medicine, and first dried and prepared medicinal herbs and roots for market. They were the first to make brooms of broom brush, and, in fact, originated the entire broom business: The first buzz saw was manufactured by the Shakers at Harvard, Mass., and used both there and at New Lebanon. The Shakers first invented and used the planing and jointing machines for dressing flooring and ceiling lumber. They were the inventors and manufacturers of cut nails. The first machine for cutting and bending card teeth and punching the leather for setting was invented and used at Mount Lebanon, and for years the Shakers had a practical monopoly of all the above named trades and forms of business.—New York World.

Valuable Hint to Secretaries.

Recently I had occasion to look up some old association records that dated back a number of years, and it occurred to me, much to my surprise I must confess, how some of the most commonplace data is overlooked by men who hold high and responsible positions as secretaries or clerks of institutions. Take for instance one item: The association had during the course of several years made changes in its quarters, and it was important to know the exact date that certain buildings were occupied. There was nothing on record, not even in the minutes, to show where the meetings were held. Almost invariably the record would open "The association met in regular session, president so and so in the chair and the following members present." Well, of course, some of the members had to be hunted up, and in four or five cases a dispute would arise as to whether any particular meeting had been held. It looks strange, but let some of our secretaries look over their minutes and see if they have not neglected just this very important notation.—Cor. Cincinnati Commercial-Gazette.

Patrons of the Cosmeticians