Courier

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EARNEST LIVING.

Daily living seemeth weary
To the one who never works;
Duty always seemeth dreary
To the one who duty shirks.

Only after hardest striving
Cometh sweet and perfect rest;
Life is found to be worth living
To the one who does his best.

—*C. M. Sheldon.*

DR. TRIFULGAS.

JULES VERNE'S LATEST FANTASY.

The rising gale whistles. The rain comes down in torrents. Low sway the trees under the blast that sweeps the Volsinian shore, and dashes its fury against the slopes of the mountains of Crimma. The rock bound coast is rent and riven by the tempestuous billows that surge and foam along the vast Megalocrida sea.

In the depth of the bay nestles the little seaport town of Luktrop. It boasts a few hundred houses with greenish mirradors sheltering them from the winds of the main, and four or five steep streets that look more like the beds of a mountain torrent than public thoroughfares. Not far off smokes the Vanglor, an active volcano, which by day belches forth thick volumes of sulphurous vapor, and by night fitful floods of flame. The crater, seen fully one hundred and fifty kertses out at sea, answers the purposes of a beacon, and guides home to Luktrop the coasters—felzanes, verliches, or balanzes—that plow the troubled waters of theMegalocrida.

On the other side of the town are heaped up ruins of the Crimmerian era; while the suburb, of Moorish aspect, like an Algerian fortress, with its white walls, round roofs and terraces calcined by the sun, seems a huge pile of square stones thrown together at hap-hazard. The whole mass looks like a cluster of dice, the dots of which have been worn away with age.

Among other peculiar structures may be seen an odd-looking building, called the Six-Four, from the number of its windows, six in front and four behind.

A steeple rises above the town, the square steeple of Saint Philfilene, with its bells visible through the open stonework, and when these are swung (as they are at times) by the violence of the storm, it is accounted a bad sign, and the good people of the place are filled with fear at the omen. Such is Luktrop, with a few stray houses on the heath beyond scattered amid the broom and furze, as in Brittany. Luktrop, however, is not in Brittany. Is it in France? I cannot say. In Europe? I do not know.

At any rate it were useless to look for the place on the map.

* * * * * *

Tap, tap? A discreet rap is heard at the narrow door of Six-Four on the left hand corner of Messaglire street. A comfortable house this, if such a word is known as Luktrop, and one of the thriftiest of the place, if to earn on an average a few thousand fretzers a year be a sign of thrift.

A ferocious yelp, something between a bark and a howl, as from a wolf, has answered the rap, whereupon a window above the door of the Six-Four is thrown open.

A young girl, shivering in the rain, with a sorry cape thrown over her shoulders, inquires if Dr. Trifulgas is at home.

"He is or isn't—all depends."

"I come for my father, who is dying."

"And where is he dying?"

"By the Val-Karnious, four kertses from here."

"And what's his name?"

"Vort Kartif."

"Vort Kartif—the cracknel maker."

"Yes; and if Dr. Trifulgas would only——"

"Dr. Trifulgas isn't at home!"

And the window is brutally closed in the girl's face, while the wind and the rain outside mix their voices in a deafening din.

* * * * * *

A hard man, Dr. Trifulgas, with but little feeling for a fellow creature, and one who attends a patient only if well paid in advance for his services. His old dog, Hurzof—a cross between a bull and a spaniel—would have more hea than he. The door of the Six-Four remains invariably closed to the poor and open only to the rich. He has moreover, his scale of prices; typhoid fever, so much; brain fever, so much; so much for pericarditas and for as many more diseases as doctors choose to invent by the dozen. And Vort Kartif, the cracknelmaker, is a poor man, with a penniless brood. Why, then, should Dr. Trifulgas bedevil himself, and on such a night? "The rousing me from my sleep," snuffled he, as he went to his bed again, "is alone worth ten fretzers!" Twenty minutes had scarce gone by than the iron knocker again woke the echoes of the Six-Four. Grumbling the doctor got out of bed, and from the window growled:

"Who is there?"

"I am Vort Kartif's wife."

"The cracknel maker from Val Karniou?"

"Yes, and if you don't come he'll die."

"Well, then, you'll be a widow!"

"Here are twenty fretzers——"

"What! Twenty fretzers to go to Val Karniou, four kertses hence?"

"For God's sake, come!"

With an oath the window was again slammed.

"Twenty fretzers," muttered he; "what an idea. Run the risk of catching a cold or a lumbago for such a sum, when one has to attend to-morrow morning the gouty—but wealthy—Edzingov, at Kiltrens, whose ailment is worth fifty fretzers a visit."

With this pleasant prospect, Dr. Trifulgas sought his bed and went to sleep as soundly as ever.

* * * * * *

Rap, rap, rap!

Three blows from the knocker, struck with a firm hand, have this time added their rattle to the noise of the storm. The doctor, startled from his sleep, got up in a towering passion. On opening his window the hurricane came in like a whirlwind.

"'Tis for the cracknel maker—"

"What, again that wretch?"

"I am his mother."

"May his mother, wife and daughter, all die with him!"

"'Tis a fit—"

"Ay, and a tight one, no doubt," chuckled the doctor.

"We have a little money," said the old woman, "an installment on the old house sold to Dautrup, the drayman of Messagliere street. If you don't come, my grand-daughter will be without a father, my daughter without a husband, and myself without a son!"

It was heart-rending and horrible to hear the old hag's voice, and to think that the wind froze the blood in her veins and drenched the very bones under her skin.

"A fit, say you? The fee is two hundred fretzers," rejoined the heartless leech.

We have but one hundred and twenty.

"Good-night, then!" And once more the windows were closed.

On second thoughts, however, he came to the conclusion that, for an hour's trot and half an hour's attendance, one hundred and twenty fretzers made sixty fretzers an hour—one fretzer a minute! It was small profit at best, but not quite to be despised.

So, instead of getting into bed, the doctor slipped himself into his velvet suit, hurried down stairs in a pair of thick water-proof boots, muffled himself up in a large overcoat, put on his gloves and sou'wester, and, leaving the lamp lighted on the table near his Codex opened at page 197, pushed open the door of the Six-Four, and appeared on the threshold.

The old crone was there, leaning on a stick, her frame emaciated by eighty years of misery.

"The money," said he.

"Here; and may God return it a hundred fold!"

"God? the money of God? Has any one seen its color?"

The doctor whistled Hurzof, put a small lantern in the dog's mouth, and bent his steps toward the sea. The old hag trudged on behind.

* * * * * *

Good heavens, what weather! The bells of Saint Philfilene sway to and fro under the headlong fury of the storm, an ominous portent, as we know. But Dr. Trifulgas eschews all superstitious notions. The fact is, he believes in nothing at all, not even his own science—except for what it brings him in. What weather, to be sure, and what a road! Nothing but shingle and slag—the shingle slippery like seaweed, and the slag crisp as clinker. And no other light to see by than a tremulous flicker from Hurzof's lantern. At times strange, fantastic figures seem to toss in the flames that swell from the mouth of the Vanglor. There is really no telling what lies at the bottom of those inscrutable craters. Perhaps the souls of the underworld, that volatilize on reaching our atmosphere.

The doctor and the old hag follow the line of coast that runs in and out of the small bays along the shore. The sea is of a livid whiteness and sparkles as its billows hurtle the phosphorescent fringe of surf that seems to pour wave on wave of glow-worms upon the beach.

Thus both rush on till they reach a bend in the road between two swelling downs, where broom and sea rushes clash their blades together like so many bayonets.

The dog has drawn nearer to his master, and seems to say:

"Well, what think you? A hundred and twenty fretzers to place under lock and key in the safe! That's the way to build up a fortune! 'Tis another piece of ground added to the vine enclosure! Another dish added to the evening meal! Another bowl of food for faithful Hurzof! Nothing like attending rich patients and loosening their purse-strings!"

At this point the old woman stopped. She directed a finger, which shook like age, toward a red light some way off in the gloom—the house of Vort Kartif, the cracknel-maker.

"There?" laconically put in the doctor.

"Yes," responded the crone.

Just then the Vanglor, vibrating to its foundations with a noise like thunder, threw up a mass of fuliginous flame, that mounted to the zenith and rent the clouds. Doctor Trifulgas was thrown to the ground by the force of the concussion. Regaining his footing, he looked around. The beldam was gone. She must have fallen through some deep crevasse in the ground, or taken flight on the floating fog-clouds of ocean. The dog, however, was still there, upright on his haunches, his mouth wide open, and the light of the lantern blown out.

"Never mind; let's go on," mumbled Doctor Trifulgas. The honest man had pocketed the one hundred and twenty fretzers, and must needs earn them.

* * * * * *

A solitary light is alone visible in the distance half a kertse away. It is, doubtless, the lamp of the dying, or, perchance, dead man, and yonder must be the cracknel-maker's house. There can be no mistake, the old hag pointed it out. And so saying, with the noise of the storm in his ears, Dr. Trifulgas hurried on toward the house, which, standing alone in the midst of a wide heath, is more distinctly perceptible as the wayfarer approaches.

It is a singular and noteworthy fact to observe how much the house of the cracknel-maker looks like the doctor's Six-Four, at Luktrop; there is the same arrangement in the front windows, and the little vaulted door at the side. Doctor Trifulgas strides on as fast as the driving gusts of wind and rain will permit. He reaches the door, which is ajar, pushes it open, enters, and the blast closes it behind him with a bang. The dog outside howls, or is silent, by turns.

How very strange! One might almost be led to suppose that Dr. Trifulgas had come back to his own house. But this cannot be. He took no wrong turning on the road, nor did he lose his way. No, he is certainly at Val-Karniou, and not at Luktrop. Yet how comes it his eye dwells on the same low, vaulted corridor, the same winding staircase and the same massive wooden railing, hand-worn like his own? He ascends and stops on the landing. A faint light comes from under the door, as at the Six-Four.

Is it a snare or a delusion? By the weak glimmer of the lamp he vaguely recognizes his own room—there the yellow sofa; there, on the right, the old oaken chest; and there, on the left, the iron-girt safe, in which he had thought of placing his one hundred and twenty fretzers. Yonder is his arm chair with its leather tassels, his table with its convoluted legs, and upon it, by the flickering lamp, his own Codex, open at page 107.

"What ails me?" murmurs the doctor. What ails thee? Why, thou art palsied with fright. Thy eyeballs start from their sockets. Thy body contracts and dwindles in size. An icy sweat chills thy skin, on which nameless horrors seem to creep.

Quick, or the lamp, for want of oil, will go out, and the sick man die. Ay, the bed is there—his own, with its pillows and baldachin—a bed as long as it is broad, and the closed curtains with their large inwrought flowers. Can this indeed be the bed of a poor cracknel-maker? Trembling, the doctor draws near, pulls the curtains aside, and peers within.

There, outstretched on his dying bed, lies the sick man, with his head outside the counterpane and motionless, like one about to breathe his last. The doctor bends forward—

Ah! what ghastly scream is that which rends the air, and is taken up by the dog outside with his sinister howling? It is not Vort Kartif, the cracknel-maker, who is the dying man, but he, the doctor, Dr. Trifulgas himself!—he who is smitten down with brain fever—he, and no other. Full well he knows the symptoms. It is cerebral apoplexy, with sudden accumulation of serosity in the cavities of the brain, and partial paralysis of the body on the side opposite that where the lesion exists. Ay, it was for him assistance was besought, that one hundred, that one hundred and twenty fretzers were paid! He who, in the hardness of his heart, had refused to attend the poor cracknel-maker! It is he now that is dying.

Dr. Trifulgas raved like a maniac. The symptoms increased every minute. Not only were all the functions of relation dead in him, but the beatings of his heart were nearly gone, like the breath of his lungs. Yet he had not lost all consciousness of his desperate strait.

What shall he do? Diminish the mass of the blood by bleeding? There must be no hesitation, or Dr. Trifulgas is a dead man. Phlebotomy was still practiced in Volsinia, and there, as here, the doctors rescued from apoplexy all those who were not to die from its effects.

Dr. Trifulgas seized his case of instruments, took his lancet, and punctured veins on his duplicate self. No blood, however, spurted from the wound. He rubbed with all his might the chest of the dying one, but he found that the pulsations of his own heart diminished; he burnt the other's feet with hot bricks, but felt his own feet growing cold.

Suddenly his duplicate starts up in his bed, struggles wildly in the last throes of suspended breathing, a rattle is heard in his throat, and Dr. Trifulgas, with all his science, falls back dead in his own arms.

* * * * * *

The following morning a corpse was found in the house known as the Six-Four—that of Dr. Trifulgas. He was placed in a coffin and conveyed, in great pomp, to the cemetery of Luktrop, after the manner of the many he had already sent there.

As for old Hurzof, I am told the faithful beast may still be seen, with his lantern relighted, scouring the heath and howling for his lost master. If this be true or not, I cannot say. Yet so many strange things do occur in this Volsinian country, especially round about Luktrop that I see no reason to doubt the statement. At any rate, let me ask of you once more not to look for this town of Luktrop on the map. The best geographers are still uncertain as to its exact position in latitude—and even longitude.

—*Paris Figaro, translated for The Argonaut.*

Russians and Serfs.

Dr. A. Wright, in his "Adventures in Servia," tells this story: Savrimovitchf Mouravioff, and I were silently smoking under the shelter of our hut, when a bullet whistled between us and passed out through the leafy wall behind. We started to our feet and rushed outside. A number of soldiers were standing or sitting about engaged in cleaning their rifles, cooking, etc. Mouravioff demanded furiously who had fired the shot. A heavy, stupid-looking fellow was pointed out as the culprit, whereupon our friend strode up to him, and seizing him by the collar, asked him sternly what he meant by discharging a loaded rifle in camp. The soldier sulkily answered that he had only fired his piece in the air, and did not know there was any harm in that, whereupon the rough-and-ready Mouravioff replied: "Idiot! Don't you know that when you send a bullet into the air it is likely to come down again, like this?" and striking him on the head with his clenched fist knocked him over. This severe treatment caused some murmuring among the soldiers, who were already beginning to tire of Russian discipline. A sinster rumor that many Russian officers had been treacherously slain in battle by some of their own men whose ill-will they had incurred was current in camp, and it was undoubtedly true that Russian officers frequently treated the Servians with great harshness, but considering the rawness and inaptitude of the material they had to deal with and the absolute necessity of enforcing discipline, I do not think that the kicks and cuffs that I often saw them bestow upon their men were unmerited. Again, although the unwarlike Serbs murmured at being dragooned into discipline they seemed very soon to regain their equanimity. They are naturally too good natured and easy-going a race to be vindictive, and therefore I believe that the heavy losses among the Russians were due to their reckless valor and not to Servian treachery. Nevertheless, many Russians I met firmly believed this rumor in spite of the indignant denial given of it by the Servians.

Cleaning Brass.

The government and railway method of cleaning brass is to dip the article in a mixture of one part common nitric acid and one half part sulphuric acid in a stone jar, and then into water, and rub them with sawdust. They at once take on a brilliant color. If the brass is greasy it should first be dipped in a strong solution of potash and soda in warm water, which so cuts the grease that the acid is enabled to act.—*Philadelphia Press.*

TRYING TO RIDE A CALF.

MRS. MULKITTLE'S YOUNG HOPEFUL GETS A FALL.

And His Mother Has a Falling Out with Sister Caroline Patterson—A Visit Spoiled.

Mrs. Mulkittle had promised the boy that if he would be good, he might accompany her on a visit to a friend in the country. The youngster remembered the promise; and sometimes at night when he said his prayers, he would interpolate the protocol of "Now I lay me down to sleep," and throw in a few suggestions of reminder concerning the visit. When the day arrived, Mrs. Mulkittle decided that the boy had been good. The excitement of a buggy ride, the objects of interest along the road—a rabbit jumping among the briars and a squirrel that crossed the road and ran up a tree, made him shout in merriment. Sister Caroline Patterson, whom they visited, was delighted to see them, and her son Avery, when he saw young Mulkittle, took a "duck fit," as his mother expressed it.

"Now, Willie," said the anxious mother, you must not go near the horses."

"Nome."

"And you must not go down to the creek."

"Nome."

"Come on, Bill," shouted Avery.

"You Avery!" said Mrs. Patterson.

"Well, why don't he come on?"

"Because his mother is talking to him."

"Don't go in the mud," continued Mrs. Mulkittle.

"I ain't."

"There now, run along and be a good boy."

The two youngsters went out to the lot.

"That's a fine calf," said Mulkittle.

"You bet he is," Patterson replied. "Wish I had thought about it and brought my saddle. We would ride him."

"Who ever heard tell of anybody ridin' a calf!"

"They might not ride town calves, but a calf like this here is better than a hoss. Don't need a saddle, only its easier. Don't need a bridle, either. Want to ride him around the lot a time or two?"

"No, not this time. Wait till I come next time."

"Ho, you are afraid, that's what."

"No, I ain't."

"Yes, you are afraid. Bet your life if I waster to come to town an' you waster tell me that I was afraid to ride anything, I'd hop on him too quick. You wouldn't do to live in the country. You haven't got the sand. You are a coward, that's what."

"No, I ain't a coward. I rode a hoss by myself."

"Anybody can do that. Ho, a baby can ride a hoss."

"Well, if I had a bridle an' saddle I'd ride him."

"What do you want with a bridle an' saddle? That's the way girls ride. Do you want to ride like a girl?"

"Girls ride sideways, but I don't."

"Come on here 'an let's drive him up in the fence corner. Come up. You needn't ride him unless you want to. I ain't beggin' you to do it."

The calf, a lazy looking thing, was easily driven into the fence corner. Patterson went up to him and began to stroke his head.

"Git around there, Bill, an' climb on the fence. Now, don't you see how putty you could throw your leg over him. I wish I had a boy here that wasn't a coward. I believe you are a girl anyhow."

"I ain't a girl!" indignantly replied the visitor. "How can I git on him when he won't keep still?"

"Now he's still. There, I knowed you was afraid."

Mulkittle, still hesitating, stood with one foot on the fence and with the other on the calf's back.

"Why don't—now you got him! Hold him! Whoop!"

The calf lowered his head and with a "ba-r-r," darted across the lot. Mulkittle yelled, and the next moment his mother emerged from the house. Just before she reached the lot, the calf threw the youngster. With a shriek the frightened mother ran to him. He was not hurt, having fallen on a pile of leaves, but his mother seized him in her arms and carried him in the house.

"Why did you get on that calf; say?"

"Av-Av-Avery made me."

"Didn't do any such a thing, maw. He said that if he had a saddle he would ride him, an' I said that he couldn't if he had a saddle, an' he said he could ride him anyhow, an' when the calf went in the corner he climbed on the fence an' I tried to pull him off and he jumped on the calf and——"

Young Mulkittle could stand it no longer. Springing from his mother's side, he struck Avery in the face, seized him by the hair, jerked him down between a trunk and the wall and before the excited women could drag him away, he had kicked Avery and blooded his face. When the boys had been separated the women drew themselves up and looked at each other.

"Don't you say a word to me!" said Mrs. Patterson.

"Oh, don't be alarmed," Mrs. Mulkittle replied. "I have no desire to talk to a woman who has such a son. Tried to kill my poor child with a calf."

"My son is not a murderer, and yours is," snapped Mrs. Patterson. "If you don't like that Mr. Patterson will settle it with your husband."

"Oh, my husband, like my son, is quite enough to settle any of the Pattersons. Good day, madam, bowing with mocking grace. "I shall never enter your house again, and when you come to town to spend a few days, as you often do, I hope you will remember that we are not keeping house merely for the accommodation of country clod-hoppers. Good-day, madam."—*Arkansaw Traveler.*

The Bank of France has an invisible studio in a gallery behind the cashiers, so that at a signal from one of them any suspected customer will instantly have his picture taken without his own knowledge.

The largest mat in the world covers the circus ring in the Covent Garden theatre. It is made of unbleached cocoanut fiber, and has a soft pile four inches thick.

The True Friend.

A certain merchant had three sons. When the youngest came of age he called them together, and said to them in a voice husky with emotion:—

"Now, boys, you all go out into the world and acquire a knowledge of human nature. At the end of the year you will return, and the one who has acquired the best friend will receive this magnificent diamond ring."

The young men having taken the ring to a jeweler and satisfied themselves that it was not a California diamond, accepted the situation and started out. At the end of the year they returned, looking somewhat the worse for wear. The old man immediately issued his call for a mass meeting, and they gathered around him. He called for the reports from the various committees.

The first one lifted up his voice and said:—

"I had an affair of honor. I got into a quarrel and a challenge passed. We were to fight at ten steps. My friend came forward and took my place. He was badly wounded, but I believe he saved my life. I claim the ring, for having acquired the most self-sacrificing friend."

No. 2 then took the floor and addressed the chair:—

"I was on board of a ship. We had a collision. I found myself in the water. My friend was near me on a hen-coop. When he saw me he swam off and let me have the hen-coop. We were both picked up afterward, but he undoubtedly saved my life. I think my friend was the boss."

"What sort of a friend have you got to show up on?" said the father of the third son.

"I was in a tight place," he responded. "I had been fooling with the tiger, and had lost all my money. My friend came forward and advanced me $500, and refused to take my note for the amount."

"To you belongs the ring," said the merchant. "Your older brother's friend was simply a better shot. In the case of the other brother, his friend was simply a better swimmer. They took risks, I admit; but your friend has sustained an actual, bona fide loss, for he will never get his money back. You gained the best friend, for he made actual sacrifices. Here is the priceless gem of the Orient."

—*Texas Siftings.*

Early Man in America.

According to Professor Brinton, of the Academy of Natural Science, many important traces of early man are to be discovered in the Mississippi valley. Near St. Paul begins the modified glacial drift of an intermediate glacial period. Fifteen feet below the surface in it are found stone implements and remains of workshops. In Patagonia remains of fires, tools and implements of bone were found. These things indicate a somewhat advanced stage of civilization and were left by men who lived here before the horse was extinct. From these things it is inferred that a race, with race types and characteristics, existed here as early, if not earlier, than elsewhere on the globe. The characteristics of the American race is color ranging from copper to white; stiff hair and little of it; foreheads retreating, compressed at the sides, and low; eyes straight; noses dissimilar; mouths large; chin round, small and regular; expression hard and unpleasant. The sexes are much alike in appearance when they do not wear garments fashioned for the purpose of distinguishing them. The higher the development of man, the more pronounced is the distinction between the sexes.

How to Get to Sleep.

It is generally true that public speakers are more afflicted with insomnia than most people. A New York newspaper man lately asked Mr. John B. Gough, usually one of the most excitable of nervous sleepers, how after one of his lectures he managed to obtain sleep. He replied: "On returning to my room I begin reading some interesting book, and in this manner fill my mind with other thoughts, and then I can sleep." public speakers find it very difficult to stop thinking after they have stopped preaching. Old Lyman Beecher, father of the Brooklyn orator, had a load of sand in his cellar, and after evening prayer he shoveled it from one side to other, and by this exercise toned down the fever of the brain, often finishing by playing the violin, which was one of his accomplishments. Bodily exercise is certainly very efficacious under such circumstances. Persistent insomnia is one of the first signs of insanity, and hence should at once call for treatment. As men advance in life, naps in the daytime become very useful. I know one brain-worker who takes two or three, and also sleeps well at night.

The Topography of the Brain.

Abundant proof has been adduced of the fact that the brain may be handled, irritated or partially destroyed without necessary damage to life. One of the latest developments of this method of investigation has been the discovery of those centers in the cortex which preside over voluntary motion, which have been, more especially by Professor Ferrier, differentiated and localized with great precision. This important knowledge has been arrived at by an extended series of experiments conducted on living animals, in which, by observing the several effects or destroying limited areas of their brains, the different functions of these localities have been determined. A topography of the cerebrum has thus been constructed, in which the various faculties have been mapped out.—*Nature.*

Beef With an Onion Taste.

A gentleman from the country brought in some fine beef not long since and sold it to several families. The next morning several households had steak for breakfast, and the several ladies were asked why they had put so much onion with the beef. Each one denied the charge in toto, and the cooks were hauled up for an investigation. The latter said the "sperets" must have done it, for they "knowed nothing about the ingerns." It was afterward ascertained that the cattle of this farmer had been feeding in a pasture where wild onions grew in great abundance.—*Washington (Ga.) Gazette.*

The surest road to honor is to deserve it.

SELECT SIFTINGS.

Many pianists now have the extensor muscles of the ring finger cut for superior freedom.

The present emperor of Russia is one of the strongest men in his empire of herculean individuals.

The oldest parrot inhabitant is owned by Dr. Bowman, of Mauch Chunk, Pa. The bird is seventy-five, but as spry as ever and a good talker.

The large Roman snail is still eaten by Continental epicures, and called a great delicacy. They are raised in snail houses and fed on common white paper.

An Englishman declares that soot is useful in absorbing the germs of disease and in preventing the spread of epidemics by its diffusion of carbon and sulphur.

A huge lemon was recently picked at Panasoffee, Fla. It measured twenty-four inches in circumference one way, twenty-two inches the other and weighed four pounds, thirteen ounces.

The juice of the curious ink-plant of New Grenada requires no preparation before being used for writing. The color is reddish when first applied to paper, but soon becomes a deep black, which is very durrble. The ink is now used for public records and documents.

Crocodile farms are becoming common. The largest animals are killed and skinned, their flesh being used to feed their hungry descendants. That these breeding places are of no mean dimensions is shown by the fact that the owners of one of them supplied a tanner at St. Louis during the current year with no less than 5,000 alligator skins.

The "Tulchan" was an artifice employed by the milkmaids of North England and Scotland, some hundreds of years ago, in order to obtain the milk from new milch cows. It was a calf skin, stuffed out to resemble a calf, with head bent forward. This rude similitude of a calf was brought out at milking time, and while the cow stood quietly gazing around at the supposed calf beside her, the artful milkmaid on the other side was securing the milk which the unsuspecting cow was reserving for her calf. The "Tulchan" is long since obsolete.

A fish found nowhere else in the world is the golden trout of Kern River, California. Its flesh is hard and sweet, but it is noted particularly for the beautiful color which flakes its sides, looking as though they had been submitted to a coating of gold foil. The Inyo *Independent* says: "This peculiarity of color and their distinct species is preserved by a natural barrier existing between them and the other varieties which are found in this creek. A series of high and rocky falls prevent other fish from ascending and mingling with them, and so, from generation to generation, they have, by a natural barrier, been able to preserve their distinct character. At times some of them have descended into the lower course of the stream, and a mixed tribe, combining the speckled and golden trout, has been formed, individuals of which are often caught."

Eggs from the Old World.

It will no doubt be news to very many otherwise well informed housewives to learn that a by no means insignificant percentage of the eggs used in America are not laid by American hens. While the United States is annually sending more meat and larger quantities of breadstuffs abroad, the increased importation of eggs has been correspondingly great.

The business was started some four or five years ago. Eggs have long been an export article of Denmark. The importations for the first year was not large, and a ready market was found. The prices realized were higher than those obtained in England. For this reason the number sent to New York was larger than the following year. The increase has annually been more marked.

Not only Denmark, but Belgium, Germany, Hungary, and even Poland have contributed to the supply. Eggs from Denmark, however, are held in greatest favor and command the highest price. They are received here during the entire year, with the exception of the hot summer months. They are imported, ordinarily, ten months in the year, the great portion during the period from October to the middle of March. The importations are greatly affected by the weather.

It is said that the eggs prepared in lime on the other side of the Atlantic are superior to the "limed" eggs of this country. Therefore the first importations of "limed" eggs brought within three to five cents of the price of fresh domestics. Now the difference is much greater. As the Lenten season approaches the prices are not very wide apart. The supply of fresh eggs is smaller and the demand greater. European "limed" eggs sell alongside domestics, and in some instances the former have the advantage in price. This is in part due to quality, but mainly to the fact that those from some foreign countries, especially Denmark, are sorted and graded according to size. This is not done in America. The prices thus far have ranged from sixteen to twenty-two cents per dozen at wholesale.

But it is not alone in "limed" eggs that importers deal. Large quantities of fresh eggs come over during the colder weather, and are brought into sharp competition with the domestic article. Eggs have been free of duty for many years. They were on the free list of the '74 tariff and remained so on the '83 revision. The foreign eggs are easily distinguished in the wholesale trade, as they come packed in cases of fifty dozen each, larger than those in use in this country. But there is nothing to denote the difference in the retail trade. It is claimed that the European eggs are used almost exclusively for cooking purposes.

—*New York World.*

Fond of Ornaments.

All the people in Ceylon, from the babes "feeling their feet" to old men and women, their steps tottering on the brink of the grave, wear gold and silver ornaments. They even invent new places for carrying them, and it is no uncommon thing to see a Cingalese belle with the tops of her ears covered with gold plate or wire, a large pair of rings pendant from the lobes of the ear, a gold or silver circlet around her hair, her nose adorned with rings, bracelets on her wrists, rings on her fingers and silver plates on her toes.

THE SONG OF THE GOSSIP.

One old maid,
And another old maid,
And another old maid—that's three—
And they were gossiping, I'm afraid,
As they sat sipping their tea.

They talked of this,
And they talked of that;
In the usual gossiping way,
Until every one was as black as your hat,
And the only white ones were they.

One old maid,
And another old maid,
For the third had gone into the street—
Who talked in a way of that third old maid
Which would never do to repeat.

And now but one
Dame sat alone,
For the others were both away,
"I have never yet met," she said with a groan,
"Such scandalous talkers as they."

Alas! and alack!
We're all of a pack!
For no matter how we walk,
Or what folks say to our face or back
It's sure to breed gossip and talk.

—*Harper's Young People.*

HUMOR OF THE DAY.

A great wag—a dog's tail.

A rolling mill—a rough and tumble prize fight.—*Boston Star.*

A musical journal tells how violin practicing may be enjoyed By becoming deaf, we presume.

"There is no place like your home," says the poet. Right! unless it's the home of the young woman you're after.

A cow at Moline, Ill., got drunk on distillery grains and made an interesting display of corned beef.—*Chicago Sun.*

Marriage promotes longevity among men notwithstanding its tendency to produce premature baldness.—*Boston Courier.*

The camel is the only bird we yearn to hear warble, after listening to a man learning to play the violin.—*Fall River Advance.*

A Cincinnati editor claims to have seen a petrified girl. She probably discovered that some rival belle had a bonnet exactly like hers.

Pearl necklaces are down so cheap this year that a fine one can be bought for $12,000. Everything seems to favor the poor man.—*Free Press.*

"The best thing to give your enemy is forgiveness," remarks a philosopher. This is particularly the case if your enemy happens to be larger than you are.

The dress-coat is generally worn by the groom at the city wedding; "but for the elopement," says the Boston *Transcript*, "there's nothing like the cutaway."

President Arthur goes out of the White House with a deep, dark secret in his bosom. No man knows who sews on Mr. Arthur's suspender buttons.—*Courier-Journal.*

"When will your mistress return?" asked the caller—informed that madam was out. "Can't say, sir," said James. "When she sends me down to say she's out, I can never be sure."

Everything in its place—A patch on the face is thought to enhance one's beauty, but a patch on the pantaloons of the small boy is an ever-present mortification.—*Boston Transcript.*

An article in a New England paper is headed, "How to Reach Young Men." The father of several marriageable daughters in this city have adopted the plan of reaching them with their boots.—*Puck.*

—"Tis sweet to sit by the banyan tree,
And play on the scented lutes;
And feel the wasps, so joyous and free,
As they play hide and seek in your boots.
—*Gorham Mountaineer.*

London proposes to hold a world's fair a couple of years hence. It is safe to predict that the managers will not clamor for Philadelphia's old liberty bell to place on exhibition.—*Norristown Herald.*

A boy, digging for a skunk, in Lancaster County, Penn., found a lump of mineral which old miners aver to be gold. That's just a boy's luck; any other person would have found the skunk.—*Omaha Republican.*

A prudent man advised his drunken servant to put by his money for a rainy day. In a few weeks his master inquired how much he had saved. "Faith, none at all," said he; "it rained yesterday and it all went."

He had hired a new servant when he went down to the office in the morning, and on his return home at night asked: "Well, dear, is the new girl going all right?" "Going? She went two hours ago," was the prompt answer.—*Boston Post.*

What is life but wishing?
What is life but sorrow?
What is life but waiting
For to-morrow?

Thus waileth he, grief-burdened,
Heart-broken, lone and sad;
Thus waileth he who's lost his
Liver pad.

—*Merchant-Traveler.*

The First Newspaper Illustration.

According to a book on the subject just published in London, it appears that the effort to illustrate important or special current events was much earlier made than many are aware. The first attempt to illustrate the news of the day seems to have been made in 1607, when a tract on "Woeful News from Wales" curiously illustrated a flood that occurred in Monmouthshire.

Another tract, in the same year, pictures floods in Somersetshire and Yorkshire. There were others, in 1612 and 1613, illustrating among other things the burning of Tiverton and "The Wonders of the Windie Winter." Favorite subjects with those early woodcutters were murders, battles and floods, with now and then a supernatural flight, whether of ghost or meteor. There were some very good cuts in 1641 and 1643, one or two being accounted worthy the pages of a modern illustrated paper. The first paper that attempted regularly to illustrate features of its news was the *Mercurius Civicus*, published in London during the civil war. War maps were published as early as 1701, when the London *Post* gave an outline drawing of the seat of war in Italy; in 1746 the Dublin *Journal* gave a plan of the battle of Colloden.

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