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THE OLD LINE FENCE.

Do you remember the old line fence? Divided the farms of Jones and Bence, Staked and ridged and ran ten high, That outline could leap what couldn't fly?

Joe Bence, as deacons only can, Sing hymns in church—go first of man, Who'll be deacon, he do a care about "Th' meetin's was good enough without."

Well, Jones, he bought a brindle steer, An' kep' 'im, too, fur more'n a year. He had an ugly, crumpled horn An' banker'd arter Bence's corn.

That steer was slow in learnin' tricks, So when 'it fence got out of fix, He'd throw it with that horn o' his, An' mostly 'fore 'it sun was riz.

Th' deacon's wrath run high an' hot Until, poor man, he quite forgot His rasher pious "vims" an' "vows," An' rally swore at Jones' cows.

One day 'it steer was in 'it corn, An' Bence, he rode the critter's horn; I rec't he did't 'tend 't dew it, He found the steer, was mad, an' threw it.

Then Jones, he shot at Simpson's hog, He said, 'it killed 'it deacon's dog, Then Bence put pison out fur rats, An' killed Ben Jones' best an' cut.

One day they fought with rake an' hoe, Bence back'd at Jones an' Jones raked Joe, They claw'd an' tore each other's shirt, But otherwise they war't much hurt.

The quarrel went from bad to wuss, Th' deacon leared to swear an' curs, An' so fur more nor thirty years, Joe Bence an' Jones war't by 't ears.

The fence? Well, wen 'it farms was sold, They tore it down, 't is not told, Where's Jones an' Bence? They're cold an' still In yonder graveyard on the hill.

Chicago Inter Ocean.

Worms That Eat Steel Rails.

For the last two years the German government has been making inquiries into the life, history and ravages of one of the most remarkable worms known to exist.

This wonderful creature, whose gluttonous appetite is only satisfied after a feed on common steel, was first brought into general notice by an article in The Cologne Gazette in 1887.

For some time preceding the publication of the account mentioned the greatest consternation existed among the engineers employed on the railway at Hagen by accidents which always occurred at the same place, proving that some terrible defect must exist either in the material or the construction of the rails.

The government became interested and made a commission to the spot for the purpose of maintaining a constant watch at the place where the accidents—one of them attended with the loss of life—had occurred. It was not, however, until six months had elapsed that the surface of the rails appeared to be corroded, as if by acid, to the extent of three-quarters of an inch.

The rail was then up and broken, whereupon it was found to be literally honeycombed by a thin, threadlike, gray worm. The worm is said to be two centimeters in length and of about the bigness of a common knitting needle.

It is of a light gray color, and on the head it carries two little sacs of glands, filled with a most powerful corrosive secretion, which is ejected every ten minutes when the little demon is lying undisturbed. This liquid when squirted upon iron renders it soft and spongy and of the color of dust, when it is easily and greedily devoured by the little insect.

There is no exaggeration, says the official report, in the assertion that this creature is one of the most voracious, for it has devoured thirty-six kilograms of rails in a fortnight.—Chicago Tribune.

Furnished.

New England farmers are proverbial for their liking for pie. It is a staple article of food with most of them, and they know how to keep these without it. And indeed it is hard to get along without anything to which we have all our lives been accustomed.

An old lady went from New Hampshire to visit city relations on whose table pie never appeared. Her visit had been understood to be for a month, but at the end of two weeks she announced her intention of returning home on the following day.

"Why, auntie," said her niece, in a tone of great surprise, "we thought you had come to spend at least a month, and I can't think of letting you go so soon."

"I think I must, Mattie," replied the old lady, firmly.

"But we haven't taken you to half the places we want to see, nor done half what we want to do for your pleasure. Surely you're not tired of us so soon?"

"Oh, no, no," protested the old lady. "I've enjoyed myself very much, dear; you have all been so kind and thoughtful. I can't thank you enough for it all."

"Then stay longer, auntie. Why should you go so soon?"

"With the frankness and simplicity of many aged persons, the old lady said:

"Well, Mattie, if I must tell you, I will. I simply can't stay where folks never have pie, and I don't want any extra trouble taken to make it on my account, so I'd better go home where we have it common."

"She did not go home for some weeks, and pie appeared upon the table at every meal as long as she remained.—Youth's Companion.

Steel and Iron Boilers.

In 1857 I made about 125 steel and about 125 iron boilers; in 1888 about 270 steel and 25 iron, and this year, out of nearly 300 boilers, I will only turn out 2 of iron. Of 132 boiler plate mills in this country, but two are making iron plates exclusively.

If the steel boilers cost more, I suppose the demand for them would increase less rapidly, but the price of steel and iron plate is so nearly equal, and the steel boilers are so far superior in every way that it may be said that iron boilers are out of date. Iron plates lack what boiler makers call homogeneity—that is to say, evenness of tensile strength or equality in the matter of expansion and contraction. That quality, which makes the steel boiler valuable, and the lack of it makes the iron one unreliable. The wrought iron boiler must go.—Manufacturer in St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Close to the Truth.

A boy with a sled on Cass avenue was waiting for a "hitch" on a carriage, when the driver of the vehicle called out:

"Boy, you keep away!"

"Can't I hitch?"

"No, sir."

"Just a block?"

"No, sir."

"Ten feet?"

"No, sir."

"Say I know what's the matter!"

shouted the lad. "You're afraid the horse will die and fall over on me, and you'll have to pay pa \$1 for damages!"—Detroit Free Press.

THE VALUE OF MINUTES.

Different Views Regarding the Interesting Question of Wasted Time.

There are many different and more or less conflicting views as to what constitutes a waste of time. Severe people consider every moment wasted that is not devoted to productive work or necessary sleep or rest.

They would make of a man a mere machine, to be fed with fuel and machinery, and allowed to perform a certain number of hours to sleep a limited number of hours to prevent wear and out, but would have him devote all his other hours to work of some kind.

Other people, a little broader in their views, recognize the need of intellectual culture and would permit a certain amount of time to be given to reading and study without counting it a waste.

The leisurely recognize another need of humanity, and allow some hours for recreation and amusement. But there may be waste of time under any of these limitations, and they may be to some extent violated without waste. Time is wasted that does not produce benefit of some kind to the individual, but the benefit to which he is susceptible are so many and the needs of different men so various that there is an almost infinite variety of ways in which time may be usefully employed.

The test as to whether time is being wasted is, therefore, to be applied in individual cases, and the only question is whether it is being beneficially employed.

At that time devoted to recreation or amusement is not wasted is expressed in the old proverb: "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy."

A cheerful disposition is such an important factor in energetic work that to deprive a man of the enjoyments of life is to curtail his working power. If, however, a due proportion is maintained between work and play there is a waste of time in the opposite direction. Too much amusement promotes a distaste for work.

The hours devoted to reading and study are beneficially employed, not wasted, when the line of study is such as to promote the welfare of the individual, but time may be wasted in reading that which is of no benefit to the individual, which distracts one's thoughts from necessary occupations. Time may even be wasted in productive work if it should be of a kind that degrades or that is less beneficial than other available kinds of work.

But by far the greatest waste of time comes from want of method. It is constant hopping by hour and the constant dropping of water on the stone, producing an effect apparently out of all proportion to the cause.

Every one has noticed that in a well ordered household or shop every tool has its place and work proceeds systematically. One thing is no sooner done than another is ready at hand, and the tools are always in order and ready to be taken up.

On the other hand, in a disorderly household or shop, working without method, there are frequent interruptions or delays while the question is being considered what to do next, or while search is being made for tools that when found have to be put in order before the main work can be begun.

A few minutes of this kind of waste in such delays, but in the aggregate they amount to a total that shows this to be one of the most common and almost unnoted sources of the waste of time.

In large establishments employing thousands of men the employer has to look after the possible waste of time, by as many individuals as he employs, and his proper care is to direct attention upon this simple question of a waste of time.

In such a case the loss by the individual is so greatly multiplied that in a single day it may amount to enough to offset the profits of a close business. This is the reason for the attention given in manufacturing establishments to methods of doing work and for the strict rules governing the admission and departure of workmen.

To the individual it sometimes seems unnecessary to close the doors at 7 o'clock and compel a man who is one minute late to lose a quarter of a day, but a little calculation shows the necessity for such a rule. It is not only the individual who would lose time if such rules did not exist. The whole establishment would be demoralized if they were not established and enforced, thousands of dollars' worth of machinery would lie idle, along with the workmen, and it would be impossible to keep the work moving from department to department so as to avoid further waste of time.

In a workshop employing 3,000 men five minutes' waste time by each man in a day would mean the loss of the labor of twenty-five men for a day of ten hours, besides the incidental losses due to idle machinery and the difficulty of keeping the whole establishment constantly employed if there should be uncertainty as to the output from any department. The extreme case of a large establishment only serves to point out what takes place on a smaller scale in smaller factories and workshops where there is lack of method or disregard of rules as to the hours of labor.

The particular ways in which time should be employed (always assuming they are not positively harmful) are really of less importance than that there should be method in the use of time and avoidance of the smaller items of waste that result from carelessness in preparation, thoughtlessness and a neglect of system.—Baltimore Sun.

How Far Can We See?

Simple Rules by Which to Calculate the Range of Vision.

There is absolutely no limit to the normal vision, if the sight be unobstructed. Yet we can see the stars, which are trillions of miles away, while we cannot see a tree twenty miles distant. Why? It is true that all objects diminish in apparent size in a direct proportion to distance, but that is not the only reason. The chief reason is that our vision is obstructed by the curvature of the earth.

A writer in Popular Science News gives some figures to show how great this curvature is.

It is often a matter of interest and importance to know how far we can see from any given height, or, conversely, how far one must be above the earth to see an object at a given distance. The exact calculation of these figures would require the use of very complex formula, but for practical use, two very simple rules will suffice.

The distance in miles at which an object upon the surface of the earth is visible is equal to the square root of one and a half times the height of the observer in feet above the surface, and conversely.

The height in feet to which an object is equal to two-thirds the square of the distance in miles. For instance: The observer is in the rigging of a ship 100 feet above the horizon, how far distant is the horizon?—that is, how far could an object floating in the water be visible before being hidden by the convexity of the earth? One and one-half times 100 is 150, and the square root of 150 is, approximately, 12.25, therefore the horizon is 12.25 miles distant.

As the deck of smaller vessels, like pleasure yachts, is rarely more than ten feet above the water, it follows that the limit of vision from that point is less than four miles in every direction.

An illustration of the second rule may be given as follows: A building is 32 miles away; how high a hill must one climb in order to be able to see it? As the square of the distance equals 1024, and two-thirds of that number equals 726, it follows that we must climb a hill 726 feet high before we are able to see the building, even with the most powerful telescope.

Usually, however, the height of the object is well as that of the observer, must be taken into consideration, but this simply requires the duplication of the problem. For instance: The Washington monument is 552 feet high; at what height must an observer fifty miles away be in order to see the top of it? Supposing the observer to stand upon the ground, we find that the height to which he could just see the top 25 miles away, and to overcome the remaining 25 miles, due to the convexity of the earth, he would by rule second have to climb to the height of 294 feet.

If we apply similar calculations to the Eiffel tower, the highest artificial structure in the world, we obtain some interesting results. Assuming the height to be just 1,000 feet, we find that standing at the top, we enjoy a circle of vision bounded by a horizon 39 miles distant, and that if another similar tower should ever be erected, it could be placed over 78 miles away before the rays of the electric lights on their summits would be eclipsed by the intervening tower.

From the summit of Mount Everest in the Himalayas (27,000 feet) one could see nearly 200 miles, provided the air was clear enough, which would rarely be the case.

Publishers' Woes.

We have often heard of the wail of the authors. Here is the wail of the publishers. A number of capricious, tyrannical and utterly spoiled set of people never existed than the book buying public. The merest trifles give offense. A price a few cents too high, a cover of the wrong color, too thick or too thin paper, too small or too large a type of type, publication a few days too late, two volumes instead of one, these things are quite sufficient to kill a book and leave its unfortunate maker with nothing but so many pounds of paper stock and old metal to turn into cash. Not one book in twenty calls for a third thousand, for the "book buying public" will not buy old books.

Every season the makers are besieged by this horde of unkind spirits, apparently doomed to walk the earth and cry: "Give us new books" without deigning even to intimate what sort or kind of books it wants. It may possibly—that is, there is a slight possibility—that it may take a fancy to some of the new ones; but, as for the old, it does not want them at any price. The result is that these bookmakers go on from year to year piling up their store of paper stock and old metal. After all, why should these bookmakers expect to be freed from the operation of fixed principles which control other makers, such as coat-makers, hat-makers, shoemakers, etc. What are books? Simply manufactured products, which in all civilized nations have a certain value and then pass "out of fashion."—American Bookmaker.

Green House and Window Plants.

The plants are now all indoors, and, whether in green-house or window, take care that the insects do not get a foothold early in the season. If the plants were not properly cleaned before, make a job of it as soon as may be, in smoking with tobacco for the whole, then giving each individual plant its needed separate treatment. Smooth leaved plants, like ivy, should have a weekly washing with soap and water, applied with a soft cloth. Follow this with water only.

Forced plants—Keep up a succession of bulbs in flower by bringing in pots from the cellar, also, hardy plants put in for this purpose.

Annuals—If desired a good show may be made by a few pots of favorites of this kind. Sow some pots now, and others a month later.—American Agriculturist.

THE THIMBLE'S HISTORY.

St. Hildegard Was the First to Record Its Existence.

Like the origin of many useful inventions, which is lost in the darkness of past ages, the history of the thimble is shrouded in uncertainty. The first record of it is found in the Twelfth century. It is very brief, mentioning only its name. At that time lived St. Hildegard, a woman highly regarded, not only for her piety, but also her extraordinary learning. One of her writings contains a combination of 900 words, translated into a strange, unknown language, which today is regarded as the first attempt ever made to establish "the language of the world," or a universal language.

Among these words is found the word "fingerhuth" (thimble), called "zirzikanz" in this peculiar translation. This group of words mentions many articles of daily use, so that it is proper to infer that the thimble was well known to the Twelfth century.

The ladies of that age, upon whose tombstones the image of a pair of scissors was engraved, must have been exceedingly industrious. This custom was prevalent mostly in England, and to this emblem of womanly diligence should have been added the thimble in order to transmit to posterity its earliest shape. However, it is reasonable to presume that it was the same as that of the bronze cast thimble, which is preserved in the museum of Darmstadt. This thimble was found in 1848, during excavations made along the highway to the castle of Tannenberg. This castle had been destroyed in 1389 by reason of the depredations of the knights of Tannenberg, and, as it was never rebuilt, it is evident that the thimble of those days was not unlike in form to the thimble of modern times.

The city of Nuernberg, with its clever artisans, was the principal manufacturing place of the thimble. Its manufacturers, called "fingerhuth" (thimble makers), were mentioned for the first time in 1462, without, however, forming a guild of their own at that time. In 1534 they appear in history as an incorporated trade, which in 1537 received its degree.

In a book written in 1568 we find the illustration of a thimble shop by Jost Amman, the most famous German engraver of the second half of the sixteenth century. He developed great renown in illustrating all kinds of works of various contents.

While a number of the free cities of Germany enjoyed a democratic government, Nuernberg was under an aristocratic regime, which allowed the trades no independence whatever, but restricted them in the smallest details.

One of the most capricious of these makers of those days, constructed a turning-wheel to aid him in the making of thimbles. This he was by the laws of the city, because it was of advantage to him, and to the disadvantage of the other makers.—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

A Ground Hog Case.

We were comfortably seated around the hearth at Porter Lake, in Pike county, Pa., and the spirit of story telling was upon us, because the ground fishing had been unusually good and the supper bounteous. The flash and sparkle of wit filled the upper air of the room as with a fine aura, and a halo of calm bliss encircled the brow of each enraptured listener. But first the benevolent colonel drew us down gently from the great heights of a story of a cross plebeian, locally known as a catfish. Thus ran his tale: "A man and his dog went fishing in the Mississippi."

In a short time the man felt a mighty pull on the line, and he knew that a catfish had taken hold. The giant came along peacefully enough until he happened to change his mind, and then he decided to doable on his course and take the man along. The faithful dog, seeing his master's danger, rushed to the rescue bravely enough. The wily catfish, when he found the dog pursuing, turned upon him and terrified the dog, who incontinently turned tail and swam vigorously toward the dry land, leaving the fish to follow. Presently the dog gained the land and ran hastily, the catfish madly surging after him. The dog, sorely pressed and fearing a painful death, in his extremity climbed a tree, the catfish still pursuing."

"Hold on, hold on!" we cried in a chorus; "dogs cannot climb trees."

"Can't climb a tree?" responded the colonel, and then the catfish was close upon him, and this dog had to climb."—Forest and Stream.

Regulation of Temperature.

Another most useful system controls the automatic regulation of temperature. How much discomfort and indisposition would be saved in many a household if the temperature were constantly maintained in every apartment at the desired point, both in summer and winter, independent of irregularities of the season? So far this concerns our winters, this is quite within practicable limits, while in summer the temperature can always be moderated, if not actually kept uniform, by utilizing the controlling power of electricity.

Thus in winter time, whether a house be warmed by water, hot air or steam, it is only necessary to place in each room an automatic thermometer, which makes a contact as soon as the temperature reaches the desired point, and to arrange that the contact so made shall electro-magnetically cut off the supply of heat from that chamber. The subsequent cooling of the room below the limiting temperature causes the thermometer to break the circuit and readmit the heat, and it is only necessary to keep an abundant supply in reserve in order to obtain a practically constant temperature. Such a thermometer, generally called a thermostat, is made by riveting side by side two strips of different materials—generally brass and rubber—which expand differently at the same degree of heat.—A. E. Kennelly in Scribner's.

ROMANCE OF A BUG.

An Insect Immigrant That Is Saving California's Orange Industry.

An entomological romance You never heard of such a thing, perhaps. And yet the bug bureau in the department of agriculture has one to tell. Just listen, and see if you do not find it awfully interesting.

"For some years past," said Mr. Howard, of the bureau, "the great orange industry of California has been threatened with destruction by an insect that sticks its beak into the tree bark and sucks the vital sap, giving forth a sort of exudation which has procured for the pest the name of 'white scale.' It attacks not only oranges and lemons, but all the citrus tribe, trees of many other kinds and even weeds, hence the hopelessness of the complaint since, though the fruit trees were cleansed of it, the scale would immediately infest an orchard again from neighboring plants or grasses. So bad was it in California that orange growers there within a year have been digging up their orchards and going into other sorts of farming. Twelve months ago it looked seriously as though the state would shortly cease altogether to produce oranges. It was high time that something should be done."

"And what was done?" asked the reporter, interested.

"Something entirely new to science and human knowledge. It was noticed that when the scale first appeared, a few years ago, it tackled, to begin with, the acacia tree, imported from Australia. Naturally, the inference was that the scale had come from Australia with the acacia, and the most distinguished entomologists of the island continent were written to about the matter. They all said that the white scale was plentiful in Australia, but that it did not amount to a pest. The orange orchards were attacked by it, but did not suffer. Why? Of course there must be some good reason for this, and an entomologist it was very plain. Clearly, the scale insect in Australia had an enemy that preyed upon it and kept it down, and this enemy had not been imported with the scale itself into California. May be, being more delicate than the scale insect, it had not survived the voyage. So much having been determined, the next thing was to find the enemy. The Australian entomologists were asked about it, but they all said that they had never heard of such a thing, save one expert. This man replied that he had found a very small fly that was a parasite of the white scale. Eureka!"

"Do tell!" echoed the newspaper man.

"So then we sent an expert of our own from this bureau to Australia to make a study of the scale in that country and find the fly as represented. It was a very good sort of a fly, and it fed on the scale for all it was worth, but the trouble was that it did not breed fast enough to be of much practical use. However, our agent found a number of other insects that were also parasites of the scale, among them several kinds of ladybird beetles, closely resembling the ladybug, so called in America. Hundreds of these parasites of various sorts were shipped by him to California in wooden boxes, on ice, every steamer for four months carrying a consignment of them. Meanwhile other agents of ours at Los Angeles, in the midst of the winter district, had made preparations, including a number of orange trees under gauze tents, and on receipt of the boxes the insects that had survived the voyage were liberated under the tents. The drawback about the little fly, which does not multiply its species with sufficient rapidity, was soon found to render that small friend unavailable for the purpose in view, because the species of ladybird beetle on the other hand, was discovered to be astonishingly prolific. It has since been estimated that one of these beetles of the proper sex will become grandmother within six months to seventy-five billions of her kind, all of them surprisingly voracious; so much so, in fact, that a single individual will destroy on an average 100 of the scales."

"And what did they do next?"

"Well, a few of the ladybirds escaped from the tents to neighboring orange orchards, and going right to work had several hundred trees cleansed entirely from the scales by the time that our agents were ready to send around specimens to the orange growers. They sent a few to a consignment of a large number of orange farmers in various parts of the state in little boxes, and the farmers put them on the limbs of the trees and left them to multiply by themselves. This they did with such speed that orchards of 3,000 trees were altogether freed from the scale within six months. Already the state of California is practically freed from the pest and the orange and lemon growers can once more look to the future of their industry with confidence in its superb prospects."

"But what will become of the ever multiplying vedalists?"

"When they have destroyed the scales, on which they are having so glorious a feast at present, they will turn and feed upon each other until all are destroyed, save only the few necessary to keep the scale from becoming a nuisance again. This is a pleasing little provision of nature. It is worth mentioning that the credit of this wonderful achievement is due to Professor C. V. Riley, the chief of the entomological division of this department."—Washington Star.

Another Mathematical Puzzle.

A friend asks me to multiply \$5 by \$5. I do so and announce the result as \$25. Now multiply 500 cents, give the answer in cents, pure and simple, not as fractional parts of a dollar. I do so and am surprised to see the figures \$25.00. As \$5 and 500

