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Planting Beans.

A few days since a reporter for the Free Press was listening to an anecdote that that inimitable story-teller, Bill Matson, was narrating, a voice broke in with:

"Why don't you tell him about the beans, Bill?"

Matson looked up, and so did the reporter. Within a few feet of them stood a tall, bronzed, bearded stranger, with the air and appearance of a man who had seen much of the world, and had baffled with it successfully. It needed no introduction to inform the beholder that the stranger was from the far West. Matson looked at him intently for a moment, and then, with a twinkle in his eye, exclaimed:

"Stranger, there ain't but one feller in the country that I know on, who's any business to know anything about that bean story, and that's Joe Brown, and the last I heard of him he was in jail for stealin' a mule."

"You appear to have retained that wonderful veneration for the truth which distinguished you from other boys, Bill," said the stranger, laughing and extending his hand. "Bill, old playmate, how are you?"

"Sassier than a tarrier pup, Joe, and able to take my corn juice reg'lar. How's yourself?"

Hand shaking and mutual inquiries as to worldly success followed, and then Bill, addressing the reporter, said: "You see, Joe, here, an' me was cubs together, his dad's farm and my old man's stump lot 'tween 'em, and many's the jacket warmin' he and I's taken 'bout the same time o' day. It's always been a question in my mind whether old man Brown or my old dad could handle a beech withe in the most painf'ul manner. Either one on 'em could satisfy any boy I ever got acquainted with. Well, Joe here once helped me to deserve the darndest lickin' ever a boy got, an' you bet that everything in the lickin' line that we deserved we got. When the ole man died, I never heard any of the boys complain that he had gone off 'owin' 'em anythin' in the way of thrashings."

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straight out through ther woodshed and started into the bean patch. He was taggin' along behind. Purty soon he stopped right aside of a stump and picked up a bran' new beech gad about four feet long that he'd been out and cut for that partic'lar occasion.

"Well, boys, what do yer suppose was up? Beans was up; more'n a million of 'em. I hope to never have a funeral if that that old holler stump didn't look like a 'spagin' basket of rummin' sky. Such a lot of bean vines as come out of the top out, and hung down most to the ground on all sides on't you never seed in yer life."

"What's them, William? sez he, a tightenin' up his grip on the butt end o' the gad."

"Look like beans, father, sez I, be ginnin' to feel as if I'd got the ager."

"Bout that time the beech began to circulate 'round, and boys, I've hated the sight of beans ever since. For more'n a week I found it convenient to sleep on my face, and eat my vittals a-standin' up. Boys, let us go over to Schneider's and get a glass of somethin' to take the taste of beans out of our mouths, and kinder change the subject."—[Detroit Free Press.

Suddenly Turning Gray.

Staff-Surgeon Parry, while serving in India during the mutiny, saw a strange sight. Among the prisoners taken in a skirmish at Chamba was a sepoy of the Bengal army. He was brought before the authorities, and put to the question. Fully alive to his position, the Bengalee stood almost stupefied with fear, trembling greatly, with horror and despair plainly depicted on his countenance. While the examination was proceeding, the by-standers were startled by the sergeant in charge of the prisoner exclaiming, "His is turning gray!" All eyes were turned on the unfortunate man, watching with wondering interest the change coming upon his splendid, glossy, jet-black locks. In half an hour they were of a uniform grayish hue.

Some years ago a young lady, who was anxiously awaiting the coming of her husband elect, received a letter conveying the sad tidings of his shipwreck and death. She instantly fell to the ground insensible, and so remained for five hours. On the following morning her sister saw that her hair, which had been previously of a rich brown color, had become as white as a cambric handkerchief, her eyebrows and eyelashes retaining their natural color. After a while the whitened hair fell off, and was succeeded by a new growth of gray. This case coming under the observation of Dr. Erasmus Wilson, shattered his unbelief in the possibility of the sudden conversion of the hair from a dark color to snow-white. No man knows more about the hair than Dr. Wilson; but he is at a loss to explain the phenomenon quite to his own satisfaction.

"If," says he, "it be established that the hair is susceptible of permeation by fluids derived from the blood—a fluid rich in iron, and containing the substance of the hair really occurs, the quantity and nature being modified by the peculiarity of constitution or state of health of the individual—it follows that such fluids, being altered in their chemical qualities, may possess the power of impressing new conditions on the structure into which they enter. Thus, if they contain an excess of salts of lime, they may deposit salts of lime in the tissue of the hair, and so produce a change in its appearance from dark to gray." Then he tells us: "The phenomenon may be the result of electric action; it may be the consequence of chemical alteration wrought in the very blood itself, or it may be a conversion for which the tissue of the hair is chiefly responsible." So many "may-bes" from such an authority prove that the mystery of the sudden whitening of the hair is unsolved. It is likely to remain unsolved, since the doctor—more modest than many of his brethren—owns that "the mysteries of vital chemistry are unknown to man."—[Popular Science Monthly for August.

Benefit of Laughter.

Probably there is not the remotest corner or little inlet of the minute blood vessels (life vessels) of the body that does not feel some wavelet from that great convulsion (heart's laughter) shaking the central man. The blood moves more lively—probably its chemical, electric, or vital condition is distinctly modified—it conveys a different impression to all the organs of the body as it visits them on that particular mystic journey, when the man is laughing, from what it does at other times. And so, we doubt not, a good laugh may lengthen man's life, conveying a distinct stimulus to the vital forces. And the time may come when physicians, attending more closely than at present, unfortunately, they are apt to do, to the innumerable subtle influences which the soul exerts upon its tenement of clay, shall prescribe to torpid patients so many "peals" of laughter, to be undergone at such and such a time, just as they do now that far more objectionable prescription, a pill or an electric or galvanic shock; and shall study the best and most effective method of producing the required effect in each patient.—[Good Health.

An attempt is to be made to run locomotives or rather trains through the St. Gothard tunnel by means of electricity. At present the product of combustion left in the tunnel makes travel very uncomfortable.

A Sharsburg, Penn., man, who used the telephone during a recent storm, is now at his home recovering from the shock, which caught him on the ear.

Mustapha, The Hunchback.

The following story is a favorite one among the Egyptians: Mustapha, an orphan boy who had the misfortune to have an ill-shapen back, was called Hunchback. His parents were poor, and after they died he was left without any home or friends; but a poor widow pitied him, and took him to be her son. When he grew up she sent him to Alexandria to sell some chickens. But the ignorant lad fell into the hands of bad men, who stole his poultry and even took away a part of his clothes. Poor Mustapha, finding himself robbed stood in the streets, crying. A witty wag saw him weeping, and having learned his story, took him home, fed him and clothed him again. He then gave him a case of something he called a cosmetic. A cosmetic is something to make the hair grow. "Take this," said the wag, "and go home to your village and sell it. Tell the people it will make both their heads and their wits to increase. The money you get for it you may keep for yourself and for your poor mother."

Mustapha thanked his friend, and, departing with the case, returned to his village, where he announced what he had for sale before the whole assembled population. To his surprise, they all burst out laughing, and made fun of him. He returned desponding to his adopted mother's house, and the world was black before him; but presently the sheikh sent privately to buy a small packet; and then the barber; and then the tobacco seller; and then the coffee-house keeper—all in private. In fact, before the evening, the whole of his merchandise was sold; and every man in the village went to bed with his chin steeped in the cosmetic, each believing that both his beard and his wisdom would have doubled in length next morning.

I wish I could reproduce the pantomime by which the morning scene was described; the sneerings, the grunts, the yawns, the impatience for the dawn; for it appears all the patients had been ordered to keep their jaws carefully wrapped up until daylight. At length the wished-for moment arrived. Then they all rose up, and hastily taking off the cloths, which had nearly suffocated them, they looked at their heads, came off likewise! They clapped their hands to their chins, and felt them to be as smooth as their knees; they jogged their wives, and were greeted by screams of laughter; they ran out into the streets, and learned the truth, that the whole population had been rendered beardless by ointment which the wag had given to Mustapha. As all were equally unfortunate, all laughed; and they resolved to punish the unlucky hunchback. He was called before the sheikh, where the elders of the village had assembled; and when he saw the circle of smooth faces, he could not help giggling.

"He laugheth, because he hath defiled our beards," exclaimed the sheikh. "It is necessary to put him to death. We are all friends here; let us thrust him into a bag, carry him to the river, and throw him in, so that no more may be heard of him."

This idea was unanimously accepted; and Mustapha was carried away in a sack, across an ass's back, toward the river. About noon, his guards stopped to rest, and, lying down, fell asleep, leaving the hunchback still in his sack. Now it happened that an old man, bent nearly two-double, came driving by an immense flock of sheep; and seeing these people asleep, he snuck standing up in the middle, was moved by curiosity to draw near it.

Mustapha had managed to open it a little, and to look out with one eye; seeing observing, the old shepherd marvelled, saying: "A bag with an eye did I never see before."

He demanded, in a low voice, what was the meaning of this. The eye became a mouth, and replied: "I am the unfortunate Mustapha, whom these people are taking by force to marry the Sultan's daughter."

A Lover's Unsuccessful Ruse.

A story about which there is a fascination which it is impossible to resist when you hear men tell it is that of the "Home of Gold." Somewhere in southwestern New Mexico, in the Sierra Madre, it is said there is a wonderful valley. Small, enclosed in high rocky walls and accessible only by a secret passage, which is known to but few, is this extraordinary place. It is about ten acres in extent, has running through it a stream, which waters it thoroughly and makes it a perfect paradise, with its exquisite flowers and beautiful trees. In it are thousands of birds of the most beautiful plumage. Running across it is a ledge of pure gold about thirty feet wide, which glistens in the sunlight like a great golden belt. The stream crosses this ledge, and, as it runs, murmurs around blocks of yellow metal as other streams do around pebbles. The ledge of gold is supposed to be solid gold and to run down into the center of the earth. The legend is of Indian origin and around it cluster a number of Indian stories, in which the name of the ill-fated Montezuma occurs frequently. The descendants of the Aztecs believe firmly that the day will come when Montezuma will return and free them from the domination of the descendants of the Conquistadores. They believe that the money necessary for this work will be taken from the Madre d'Oro. The secret of the entrance into the valley is carefully guarded by a tribe of Indians living near it, and among them it is only communicated to the oldest men, amid the solemn ceremonies of the medicine lodge. Having such a story to work upon there is little wonder that the vivid imagination of the Mexicans should have built upon it tales of men who have found this wonderful place.

One is that a certain Jose Alvaraz, while wandering through the mountains in search of game, saw the valley from the top of the wall. Finding that he could not hope to enter by climbing down, he took his abode with the Indians who guard the canyon leading into it. The daughter of the chief fell in love with him and betrayed the secret to him. Exactly how she found it out they do not tell. Having been shown the entrance, Jose went in and would possibly have gotten away with some of the gold had he not weighed himself down to such an extent that he could not get up the declivity at the end of the passage. He was discovered and the Indians sacrificed him on the golden ledge with all the terrible ceremonies of the old Aztec religion. She, in despair at losing him, threw herself from the high walls into the valley below. Hundreds of prospectors have spent months of toil to find the Madre d'Oro, but it is scarcely necessary to say, without success.—[Las Cruces Republican.

Only the Manager.

At a station on one of the railroads leading out of Detroit, the train had arrived and departed the other day, when the station agent, who had been in the place about three weeks, and was looking for a call every hour to come to Detroit and take charge of the line, was approached by a quick, well-dressed man, smoking a cigar, who asked:

"Keep you pretty busy here?"

"Yum," was the jerky reply.

"Business on the increase?"

"Yum," again.

"Do you run this station?" asked the quiet man, after taking a turn on the platform.

"Nobody else runs it!" growled the agent. "Have you got a patent car-coupler?"

"Oh no."

"Want special freight rates, I suppose?"

"No, sir."

"I don't give you passes."

"I don't want any."

"Waiting for the next train?"

"No, particularly."

"Want to charter a car?"

"No."

The agent left him on the platform and entered his office and busied himself for half an hour, when the quiet man looked in on him and asked:

"What's the salary of a position like this?"

"That's my business," was the prompt reply.

"What's the income from this station?"

"Ask the baggageman."

"Your name is—, isn't it?"

"Oh, nothing much—only I'm the general manager of the line, and I'd like to exchange cards with you!"—[Detroit Free Press.

A fable. While an old goose sat fanning herself on the side porch, along came a fox who was lame and dirty and badly knocked about. Trying to look as humble as he could, and throwing all possible pathos into his voice, he began:

"Madam, for heaven's sake take pity on me!"

"La, sakes! but what a distressed object you are!" she replied with swelling heart.

"I am lame and hungry and desire relief," continued the fox.

"And you shall have it, my dear animal. Mr. Goose has worked hard all his days, and has managed to get a few dollars ahead. It is my duty, therefore, to divide with you. I shall not ask for your past. You may have been a lazy loafer all your life, but that is nothing to me. You may have received that lame foot and black eye, while trying to enter some farmer's hen-roost, but that is none of my business. Charity says I must succor you."

"Yes'm."

MORSKLS OF GASTRONOMY.

Banana pie is now included among the alleged delicacies of the season. It is now the proper thing to see how many fish can be served at one fish dinner. So-called esthetic youths at the seaside make a breakfast of iced tea, fruits and oatmeal. Sheephead, pompano, sea bass, red snapper are now the fish in highest favor. Woodcock is now in season, and tastes fine enough for any game-lover, whether on toast or not.

There were eighteen courses and ten wines at the dinner in Paris to open the Hotel de Ville. Now the epicure rises and says that salt pork ruins any article of food with which it is cooked. Young duck, with apple sauce, would seem to be a favorite course at Newport dinner parties just now. Some of our world-bee epicures now have Madeira with the fish—or what they declare is Madeira. Among the good soups of the hour should not be forgotten puree of crab and bisque of crawfish.

Pigeon Shooting.

It is not generally known that pigeon-shooting is due to Spain, and that for more than two centuries this miserable slaughter of tame birds has been in vogue in that benighted country. Pigeon-shooting is not a sport, for, as the word is understood, a sport means something where endurance is called into play. The birds in a great many matches are subjected to a great deal of cruelty. It is a well-known fact that pigeons are doctored on certain occasions to meet the requirements of the so-called sportmen. To make a bird turn to the right the left eye is put out, or to cause an unsteady flight half the tail feathers or portions of the pinions are plucked. The greatest rascality takes place in pigeon matches, which the knowing ones take advantage of. In England some years ago ladies were sometimes present at pigeon-matches, but of late public opinion has been so strong that they have been excluded out of witnessing such cruelties. Rat catching as an amusement is coarse and degrading enough, but if a comparison be possible between it and pigeon-shooting; the first is by far the nobler sport, for though the man sets on the dog to catch the vermin, in pigeon-shooting it is the man and not the dog that undertakes the business. A bill to put a stop to pigeon-shooting in Great Britain is to be presented to Parliament by Mr. Anderson, and consists of two provisions. In the Cruelty to Animals Prevention act, Mr. Anderson wishes that the word animal should "mean and include any vertebrate animals, whether of domestic or wild nature, kept in confinement or captivity," and that in the definition of cruelty, "the shooting of birds liberated from any trap or other contrivance or from the hand" should be included. When the skill of the marksman with his hammerless gun can be conclusively shown by the shattering of glass balls or clay pigeons, why should the word animal be understood to include the deencies of life wish to inflict death and torture on poor birds? Can there be any pleasure in going to a coop full of pigeons and cutting the throats of the birds? Such a nasty business is delegated to the poultry man, who is paid for his trouble.—[N. Y. Times.

The Little Boy who Lacked Faith.

"Pa," said a little boy, "what makes people pray?"

"Why, my son, they pray for—they pray for—that is, they ask the Lord to save their souls."

"And if I pray will the Lord save my soul?"

"Yes, when you pray with faith your prayers will be answered."

"How with faith?"

"Why, if you pray, believing at the time that your prayer will be answered."

"But how can I pray that way if I don't know. If I knew that I could get what I pray for, then I could believe that I would get it and could pray with—what do you call it, pa?"

"Faith."

"Faith," repeated the child. "If I was to believe that by praying for a goat that I could get him, and he was to pray, would I get him?"

"No."

"But I want a goat, and if I was to pray I'd have to pray for one. Pa, what makes men groan when they pray at church?"

"They groan as a kind of amen."

"Do they like to groan?"

"I don't know."

"Do you groan?"

"Sometimes."

"Do you like to groan?"

"No."

"Then what makes you groan? You don't have to, do you?"

"That'll do now, hush."

"But if you didn't want to groan, they couldn't make you, could they?"

"I'll box your ears, sir, if you don't hush. Go on away now. I'd rather be questioned by a prosecuting attorney."—[Detroit Free Press.

On her wedding day an Indiana girl wrote something sealed in an envelope and gave it to an intimate friend. "If I am alive six months from now," she said, "give it back to me unopened. If I am dead, read it." On the day that the half year expired the bride committed suicide, and the inclosure was found to be a statement that she expected no joy from the marriage, but was willing to give it a trial before deciding to take her own life.

Teachers in the public schools of France are very seldom paid more than \$5 a week, and as the expense for salaries is a little over \$15,000,000, the Minister of Public Instruction refuses to add to this amount and thus increase taxation.

A communication from Mr. W. Thomas, of the Meteorological office, Sicily, narrates a curious disturbance of the sea on the morning of July 13. Within half an hour the water ebbed and flowed rapidly about three feet. The "tide" the second and third time was not as high as the first.