

Proposing by the Dictionary.

RUTH CULBERSON bought her dictionary at a fire sale. It was unabridged and contained eighty thousand words printed on one thousand two hundred and eighty-one pages of heavy white paper. There was no appendix of weights and measures and proper names, but then she paid only nineteen cents for it.

Ruth laid the dictionary on the small table that stood in the center of the room, a perfect monument of ugliness, and without unwrapping it or vouchsafing any explanation as to what it was she went into the alcove adjoining their little parlor and began to remove the dust and clinders she always carried home with her from the downtown district.

Her mother regarded the package on the table with increased curiosity. She felt it and lifted it and tried to tear off a corner of the paper covering, but she did not remove the wrapper.

Ruth came back into the parlor at length and sat down near the window. Mrs. Culberson looked from the package to her daughter and back again in silent agony. Evidently she could endure the strain no longer.

"What did you get to-day, Ruthie?" she asked, meekly.

Ruth turned round with a wondering air, as if not fully comprehending the import of the query. Her eyes followed her mother's to the ugly center table, and, "Oh, that," she said, with a smile, "that's a dictionary."

Mrs. Culberson's dismay could not have been more complete had she been informed that her daughter had brought home a box constrictor.

"And what did you get that for, Ruthie?" she asked.

"Because I needed it," returned Ruth.

"It must have been pretty expensive," hazarded her mother.

"Yes," sighed Ruth, "it cost nineteen cents."

Mrs. Culberson appeared relieved, but not entirely satisfied.

"It seems to me, Ruthie," she went on querulously, "that a girl who works for ten dollars a week, which is the only income two people have to depend upon, ought not to be spending her money for a dictionary. If you had nineteen cents to spare for books why didn't you buy three or four of those paper-backed novels instead of a dictionary?"

"Mother," said Ruth, quietly, "I wish you hadn't asked that. It makes it necessary for me to remind you of some things that would perhaps better be left unsaid. Whose fault is it that we have to live on ten dollars a week? Is it mine? Did I take what money my father had left us and squander it in dishonorable speculation? Is it my fault that I have had to work ever since I was ten years of age?"

"Am I to be blamed because you, in your old age and sickness, are obliged to sit here day after day in this cheerless, comfortless room which is all I can give you except the food that holds soul and body together? And, lastly, mother, is it my fault that my education was so neglected when I was young that I find it necessary to refer so often to the dictionary now? I am not complaining, mother, but you ought not to reproach me for indulging in just one expenditure in which your comfort was not considered."

In spite of Mrs. Culberson's keen disappointment in regard to her daughter's purchase, she derived unlimited satisfaction from dilating on the merits of the dictionary to the other boarders.

"If you ever want to look anything up," she said cordially, "just drop into our room and see what the dictionary says. You'll always find it on the stand in the front room."

The Culbersons lived in a boarding house where dictionaries were a rare commodity. Indeed, Ruth's was the only one about the house, except Mr. Winter's, which was an exceedingly small pocket edition, that contained only the words most in common use.

But somehow as soon as it became known that there was a large dictionary in Mrs. Culberson's room on the second floor, and that everybody had been given free access thereto, the desire for knowledge was given a wonderful impetus.

But the person who found occasion to refer to the big book most frequently was Mr. Winter. Mr. Winter was a grocer. Of course, in his business he daily met with many terms that required elucidation. Hitherto he had found the pocket edition perfectly satisfactory, but after the advent of the unabridged dictionary, the much-worn, green-backed little book suddenly lost its usefulness, and never an evening

passed that Mr. Winter did not rap at Mrs. Culberson's door and politely request to "come in and look at the dictionary a minute."

His prolonged visits annoyed Mrs. Culberson at first. His presence prevented her scolding at Ruth, and as he himself seemed deeply immersed in scholastic lore, thus forbidding opening a conversation with him, the poor old lady's evenings became seasons of exquisite torment.

"I don't know what makes him come up here so often," she said, petulantly, one night, after he had closed the dictionary and gone away. "He's an awful bore."

"It's your own fault he comes," said Ruth. "You invited him."

"Of course I invited him," retorted Mrs. Culberson. "I invited all of them. Doesn't he annoy you?"

"No," she said, softly; "I don't know that he does."

As the spring days took on the heat of summer Mrs. Culberson became more fretful, Ruth became younger and prettier, and Mr. Winter studied a little later hour each evening in blissful oblivion of the added heat of the gas jet.

Mrs. Culberson had long since ceased sitting up waiting for him to go, but bade him good-night and went to bed in the alcove.

One evening in early June, one o'clock passed and Mr. Winter had as yet made no movement toward going away. Ruth watched him closely, as she always did when he seemed engrossed with the words before him and she noticed that he had not turned a page for more than an hour.

He looked up at length and their eyes met. Ruth felt her face flushing again, and with the realization of her weakness the flush grew deeper.

"It's a pretty knotty problem that I have been puzzling over to-night," he said, with a sigh.

"Couldn't you find what you are looking for?" she asked softly.

"I hardly know. I found the word I wanted. Whether it will ever mean to me what I would like it to mean I do not know. Here it is. I have been looking at it a good deal lately."

He turned the big dictionary around till she could read the line over which his finger rested. There was one word underlined with a pencil, and she knew it was the one he wished her to see. It spelled l-o-v-e.

"Is that ever to be for me?" he asked. The blush had deepened into scarlet then. For a moment a look of exceeding happiness transfigured her face, but a moment later the old troubled expression drove it away. She turned the leaves of the dictionary till she came to the word "mother."

"That's all right," he said, and nodded toward the alcove.

Away over near the back of the book her next answer was found.

"Ruth," called out Mrs. Culberson a quarter of an hour later, "what made Mr. Winter stay so late this evening?"

"He was looking at the dictionary, mother."

"Did he find what he wanted?" asked Mrs. Culberson.

"Yes, mother," said Ruth, "I believe he did."—Chicago News.

An Unnamed Hero.

Among the melancholy applications for "leave to presume death" in the Stella disaster was one touching in its revelation of a deed of heroism. The applicant was a Miss Baker, whose father, a major, had gone down with the vessel. Both were about to perish when the father made a piteous appeal to a boat load of passengers who were leaving the side to find room for his daughter. One man, of whose identity there is absolutely no trace, instantly stepped back to the ship and allowed the lady to take his place. As the boat cleared the side the vessel went down, carrying with it the girl's father and her unknown rescuer. How beautiful! how unutterably sad! His anonymity seems somehow to enhance the heroic grandeur of his death. Nothing would have been gained by knowing his name. A man capable of such a deed wants no mortuary honors, nor the local habitation of a monument. He belongs to the infinite of greatness, and his fitting grave is the sea.—London Daily News.

Stealing Diamonds.

A hole in his right heel enabled a negro workman in the diamond fields of South Africa to secrete and steal gems to the value of \$273,000. These he expressed in small parcels of fruits to a cousin in King William's Town, in the extreme south of Africa, from which place both recently departed for England.

When you are invited out to dinner, would you rather have a lot of style or a plenty to eat?

Some people do business just like clockwork—tick, tick.

FOOD OF A LIFETIME.

EDIBLES REQUIRED BY A MAN MAKE GREAT BULK.

In Seventy Years of Life He Eats a Herd of Cattle, and Drinks More than Would Fill the Heidelberg Tun—Interesting Comparisons.

A prominent scientist of a mathematical turn, having a little spare time on his hands, devoted some of it recently to computing the bulk of food he has consumed in the seventy years of his life. The resulting figures are surprising, and in the comparative details of his report the average man who eats and drinks will find much to interest him. The scientist says, in summing up, that if all the bread he has eaten could be duplicated and gathered together it would weigh fourteen tons. He has feasted on a good-sized herd of oxen, sheep and pigs, which, if represented in one animal of each of the kinds mentioned, would make the prehistoric mammoths look like babies in comparison. "If all the milk, tea, coffee, beer, wine, liquor and water

in a lifetime of seventy years. Assuming that the average weight of a man is 160 pounds, ten men's forms could be made out of the salt the septuagenarian has consumed so far. Of butter he consumes a ton, adding 250 to 300 pounds of cheese to aid digestion. The average man, he says, will eat apples in quantities to aggregate in size one big apple measuring fifteen to sixteen feet in circumference; the giant orange made up of the oranges he eats in a lifetime would measure at least ten feet in circumference, the pear five feet.

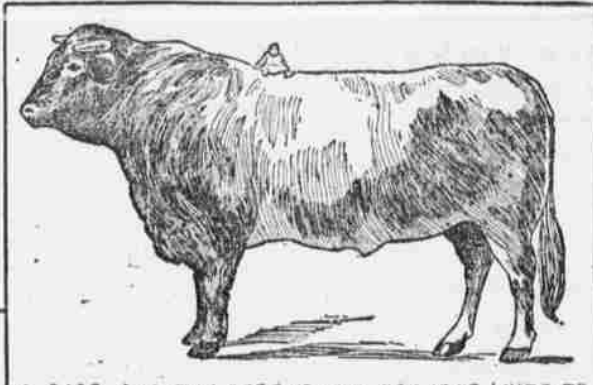
As to Consumption of Tobacco.

Man consumes five and a half pounds of solids a day, namely: One and a half pounds of breadstuffs, one pound of meat, half a pound of fish, two pounds of vegetables and fruit and half a pound of various other foods. That means nearly a ton a year, or fifty-four tons in sixty years. A man drinks at least a half pint of tea or coffee for breakfast, lunch, dinner or supper, and between times he has a full pint of something weak or strong, or both. This makes 550 pints, or sixty-nine gallons, per annum, equal to 4,380 gallons in seventy years. All in all, a man consumes 193,000 pounds of food and drink in seventy years, if his appetite is good. That equals 1,280 times his own

THE FOOD REQUIRED IN A LIFETIME.



THE DRINK OF A LIFETIME WOULD FILL IT.



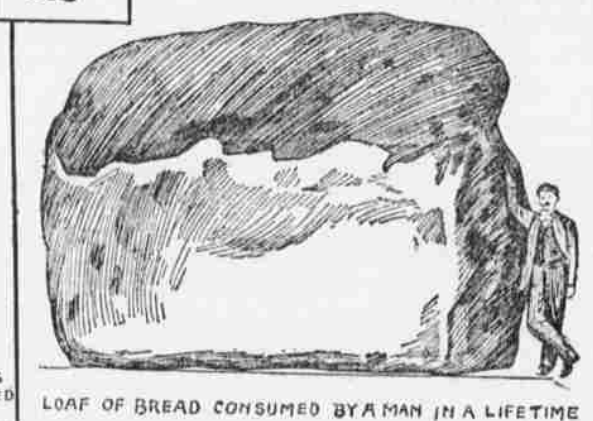
A BABE, AND THE BEEF HE WILL EAT IF HE LIVES TO BE SEVENTY.



PROPORTION OF MAN TO MASS OF NOURISHMENT CONSUMED IS 1 TO 1800



FIFTY YEARS' SMOKING MAKES A CIGAR LIKE THIS.



LOAF OF BREAD CONSUMED BY A MAN IN A LIFETIME

I have used or wasted in those years," he continues, "had been stored in a vessel of sufficient capacity its size would make the famous Heidelberg tun look like 30 cents. Being an ordinary man, without special likes and dislikes in the matter of food, bread was the staff of life with me, as it is with most men and women."

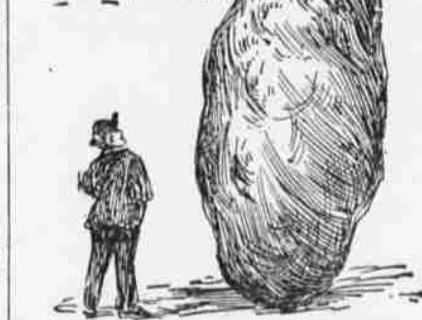
What a Giant Potato!

He reckons that he daily ate one and one-half pounds of bread, biscuit, cakes and crackers during sixty out of his seventy years of life, adding that as a boy under 10 years he probably consumed about half that quantity. This makes in seventy years 280,000 to 300,000 pounds of bread, etc., a quantity equal to 441 cubic yards. "A man eats on the average three potatoes a day, weighing in the neighborhood of one-quarter of a pound," continues this authority. "That isn't much per week and per year, perhaps, but amounts up in sixty or seventy years. Imagine twenty-one potatoes piled up week after week for seventy years, making due allowance for a lesser consumption during the first ten years. The giant potato evolved would fill two flat railway cars of the longest kind, and 100 men would be unable to move it. Carrots and turnips, though healthful vegetables, are not eaten in great quantities, yet if those consumed by the 70-year-old man in life were formed into one big donkey would look insignificant beside it. The rest of the vegetables he consumed would fill twelve farmers' big wagons."

The Baby and the Ox.

One of the illustrations printed herewith, showing an ox and a baby, gives the comparative size of the ox needed to supply all the beef he got away with in sixty years. The proportions are drawn accurately; the baby weighs twenty pounds, the ox 300,000 pounds. Most people eat fish of various kinds, besides meat and vegetables. Figuring one-half pound of fish as the average daily consumption, the total amount consumed by a man, if he lives to a ripe old age like our friend, the mathematician, is 10,900 pounds. The calculator asserts that he has eaten 10,000 eggs. Americans are great sugar eaters. The statistician quoted confesses to having eaten 6,000 pounds of sugar since his birth. To offset the sugar, a person eats twenty-five pounds of salt per year, or about 1,600 pounds

POTATO RATIONS FOR THREE SCORE AND TEN YEARS.



weight, assuming that he weighs not less than 150 pounds.

Man must have his cigar, his pipe, his cigarette, or all three of them. Our mathematician says he began smoking in his twentieth year, and that he averaged one dozen of cigarettes a day. Up to the present time he has smoked 210,000 cigarettes, which in the aggregate would fill a wrapper sixteen feet long and eighteen inches thick. He smoked also six cigars a day, which, made up in one wrapper, would weigh about two tons and measure sixteen feet three inches, and two feet thick. "I never used to smoke more than an ounce of tobacco a day," he adds. A little figuring will show that the insignificant ounce a day means 1,150 pounds of tobacco in fifty years.

Affected by Men.

Men have their little affectations, as well as women. Among the latest is that of turning the toes in. It is very impressive. With feet shod in the extra-heavy and extra-big boots so fashionable just now, and accompanied by the popular peg-top trousers, the turned-in toes are at their awkwardest. It is all on account of the game of golf. Much golf makes one pigeon-toed, as is proved by the devotees of the game. Instinctively in driving and swinging the feet veer inward, and before long they point that way off the links as well as on them. This principle once established, the next step was that all ambitious to become golfers should turn their toes in. Then everybody who hoped to be taken for a golfer began to turn his toes in, and finally all those who blindly do a thing just because everybody else is doing it, and no matter how ugly and senseless the thing may be, became pigeon-toed.

"Do Not Grasp at the Shadow and Lose the Substance."

Many people are but shadows of their former selves, due to neglect of health. Look out for the blood, the fountain of life, the actual substance; keep that pure by regular use of Hood's Sarsaparilla, and robust health will be the result. Be sure to get only Hood's, because

Hood's Sarsaparilla
Never Disappoints

Making Sure of Him.

"I think," said the thoughtful mother, "that you ought to object to young Brown paying so much attention to our daughter."

"Why?" demanded the thoughtful father. "He impresses me very favorably."

"That's just it," returned the thoughtful mother. "We must do something to make his ambitious mother or think we regard ourselves a little above them socially if we are to make sure of him."—Chicago Post.

He Hoped Not.

The other day when it was raining very hard, four or five men were having a few glasses of beer in a village beerhouse, when one man said to the company:

"It's a drop of nice rain this. It should stir things up in the ground." One curious old man, who was known to have been henpecked during his wife's lifetime, replied:

"By Jove, I hope not; I only buried th' wife yesterday!"—Spare Moments.

The Irony of Fate.

"Do you see that pale young man calling out 'Cash!' at the ribbon counter?"

"Yes."

"Fate's awful funny sometimes. Ten years ago, when we were boys together, his one ambition was to be a mighty hunter and catch lions with a lasso."—Tit Bits.

An Ocean of Tea.

It has been calculated that something like 1,250,000 pints of tea are imbibed yearly by Londoners, and that the teapot necessary to contain this amount, if properly shaped would comfortably take in the whole of St. Paul's cathedral.—N. Y. Sun.

The police arrested a man the other day with a pocket full of skeleton keys, but released him when the man explained that he lived in a haunted house.

One trouble with this world, says the Atchison Globe, is that the fool-killer is gallant and when he meets some women he raises his hat instead of his club.

In nearly every street in Japanese cities is a public oven, where for a small fee, housewives may have the dinners and suppers cooked for them.

At present England sells Colombia nearly 70 per cent of the cotton cloth used by the latter, and the United States only about 11 per cent.

C. A. Dewey, a Kenosha, Wis., hardware merchant, recently ordered a ladder from a Chicago house, and after waiting a reasonable length of time wrote to inquire why he had not received it. He was informed that the ladder had been shipped by mistake to Admiral Dewey at Manila. A tracer was sent after it and it was overtaken just as it was about to be placed on board of a steamer at San Francisco.



An Excellent Combination.

The pleasant method and beneficial effects of the well known remedy, SYRUP OF FIGS, manufactured by the CALIFORNIA FIG SYRUP CO., illustrate the value of obtaining the liquid laxative principles of plants known to be medicinally laxative and presenting them in the form most refreshing to the taste and acceptable to the system. It is the one perfect strengthening laxative, cleansing the system effectually, dispelling colds, headaches and fevers gently yet promptly and enabling one to overcome habitual constipation permanently. Its perfect freedom from every objectionable quality and substance, and its acting on the kidneys, liver and bowels, without weakening or irritating them, make it the ideal laxative.

In the process of manufacturing figs are used, as they are pleasant to the taste, but the medicinal qualities of the remedy are obtained from senna and other aromatic plants, by a method known to the CALIFORNIA FIG SYRUP CO. only. In order to get its beneficial effects and to avoid imitations, please remember the full name of the Company printed on the front of every package.

CALIFORNIA FIG SYRUP CO.
SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.
LOUISVILLE, KY. NEW YORK, N. Y.
For sale by all Druggists.—Price 50c. per bottle.