

THE HOUSE OF CLAY.

There was a house—a house of clay, Whose inmates sang all day, Merry and poor...

A MARVELOUS STREAM

Wherein Elders and Heasts are Caught and Hopelessly Held Captive. At a distance of thirty miles south of the river Diamante our route passed by a natural object of considerable interest...

Plaster Decorations.

A Broadway dealer says that the house-decoration mania runs chiefly to plaster now. Busts, statuettes, plaques, relief, antiques, urns, and vases are a few of the things sold every day by the dozen...

A Cheap Home Zoo.

Little Bob—Oh, pap, won't you take me to the Zoological garden? The Pap—I am too busy, my son, too busy. "Well, ain't there any menagerie near your office?"

Decrease in the Size of Farms.

The average size of farms in the United States has decreased from 200 acres in 1850 to 134 acres in 1880. The percentage of unimproved land increased 61.5 per cent.

THE "COON BELT."

A District in Indiana Where Justice Was Queerly Administered. The state library should secure, if happily it yet exists, the docket of an early Sharpville justice of the peace, with its simple entries...

When the day of trial came the 'squire (his name was Wilson) would hear plaintiff's testimony, and, addressing the defendant, would say: "Maybe you have some kind of a lie to tell about this, but I know you owe the man, just as he says, and I shall give judgment in his favor..."

It was a rude era that endured until the end of the 60's in central Indiana. A man was an honest one. If a farmer had looked at his door he would be laughed at; the idea of burglary had not entered the rustic mind...

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Mr. Frelinghuysen, as the chatty gossips have learned, is going to plant on his place at Raritan, N. J., a branch from the willow at Mount Vernon, where the bones of the great George lie. Years ago some persons who did not realize the yawning gulf between Washington, the liberator, and Napoleon, the enslaver, brought a branch of willow from St. Helena, Napoleon's island, and the Mount Vernon tree is the Bonaparte branch grown big.

The Blind Statesman.

Any future edition of Samuel Smiles' "Self Help," which is generally regarded by the Stanford and Merton school of social philosophers as eminently encouraging to the youth of England and elsewhere, will be quite incomplete without an extended biography of that eminent example of self help, Henry Fawcett, who has just passed away in the very prime of his life and usefulness...

Among the salmon now coming to market are a large number having long hooked noses and ferocious-looking mouths armed with large and sharp teeth. These fish are all males, and with them are a few females, apparently young chinooks, plump, clean, silvery-looking fish. It has been thought that the hooked-nosed fish mentioned above were a separate species, but from the fact that they are all males, are caught in company with the females of the chinook species, it is evident that they were not a variety...

I knew a delightful lady who was wont very frequently to engage a hospitable board for a little circle of pleasant people, tinged with Bohemia. We always begged her to have turkey, for we liked to see her husband carve that bird. He used to get so mad about it, that he would not touch the knife during the dinner. We allowed him to get the carving fork well into the "bosom," and when the light flashed in the gas-light rays, serene and clear, one by one we would diverge of conversation, until the dead silence reigned and every eye was fixed upon him. Like the peculiar warning of the typhoon, he grew sultry, warm, then hot; little puffs of annoyance grew into thunder-claps and finally, amid a yell of laughter, he would dash the carving fork down and sink helpless into a chair.

The lowest round of the ladder of political organization is occupied by the Swiss half-canton Nidwalden. It has no bankrupt law, no written law, no criminal code, no property law, no criminal procedure and no regular law of criminal procedure. The administration is omnipotent and does as it likes. The free-born Nidwalden, if he becomes suspect, is simply put into prison, and a very dark and filthy hole at that. Many persons under accusation confess themselves guilty in order to escape the torture of a long imprisonment previous to trial, bread and water being the only sustenance allowed to prisoners. An indemnity to persons innocently incarcerated is out of the question.

The relation of the microscope to cholera is at present an interesting and close one. And when another potent servant of man, electricity, is summoned to aid the microscope, the power of the latter is increased to an astonishing degree. Recently in London such an apparatus threw upon a screen the image of a cholera germ, magnified 2,000,000 times, and in which these long, hidden and minute organisms appeared the size of the human hand. The motto of the modern microscopist seems to be: "There is nothing hidden that shall not be revealed."

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Truth after all wears a different face to everybody, and it would be too tedious to wait till all were agreed. She is said to lie at the bottom of a well, for the very reason, perhaps, that whoever looks down in search of her sees his own image at the bottom and is persuaded not only that he has seen the goddess, but that she is far better looking than he had imagined.

BOARDING-HOUSE CHILDREN.

A Boy and Girl Who Are so Self-Possessed that They Will Die Early. We were seated at a round table in the middle of the dining-room, where covers were laid for five. Three seats were vacant. The door was opened by the attendant and two children, a boy and girl exquisitely dressed walked in side by side, followed by their mother, a hard-featured and aggressive looking woman, who bowed on either side as she walked up the aisle between the tables with great frigidity and solemnity. She swept to her place in the middle of the three vacant seats at our table, and the children were lifted into their chairs by the waiters. I was conscious that the little girl eyed me curiously, and glanced down at her. She showed gravely with an air that said plainly, "I don't know you, but I consider it only proper to look to strangers at our table."

At Wrangell there are a few tracts of land which have been cultivated and which yield the more common and hardy vegetables, and one farm in particular which has been worked by the mission-school Indians, has made a most creditable showing. At Taneum, a new and very fagged looking village around which are the largest and most even broad small gardens surrounding the different houses, in which such vegetables as cabbage, beans, and potatoes are raised with more or less ease in considerable abundance. The greatest difficulty, so far, has been that the underground carrots, absorb too much of the moisture which the soil contains. But this trouble, as I have often been assured, can easily be obviated by a system of drainage.

The children sat there with their bright eyes roaming about the room and conversed steadily with their mother, who was gorgeously arrayed in evening dress, but who nevertheless looked comfortably at the lady who trotted down the room. "I never see Mrs. Dash come in here that I don't think of her last winter in Rome. Don't you remember the day she fell out of a cab, mamma? She always seems so blind. She holds her nose in the air and her eyes half closed, and just rushes right ahead without looking where she is going. There! There she goes now!"

Two narrow beds with fresh hair or straw mattresses are the best. These beds are easily moved, and thus the patient is not compelled to look constantly at the same tracks in the wall, or at the same spots in the corner. You can move him, now into a shaded corner, now to the western window to see the sun go down, again in front of the fire, that he may look at the cheerful blaze, and anon into the most secluded corner that he may rest and sleep. All this is an immense gain, and is sure not only to comfort the patient, but to shorten his sickness.

The original and universal first meridian belongs to France, and as far back as 1632 a decree, signed by Louis XIII, and proposed by Cardinal Richelieu, established a universal meridian on the island of Ferro. This meridian was ultimately abandoned by "assimilation" to gratify Louis XIV's pride, and the Paris one was retained by the metric commission in 1793 under the pretense that an arc of this meridian had been measured for determining the length of the unit of measure.

Three eminent celebrities sat together to consult at the sick-bed of General X. After they go, the general rings for his man-servant. "Well, Jacques, you showed those gentlemen out; what did they say?" "Ah, general, they seem to differ with each other. The first one said that they generally have a little patience, and at the autopsy—whatever that may be—they would find out what the matter was."

The language of crows has evidently received considerable attention from Dr. C. Abbott, the avian expert, who has twenty-seven distinct cries, calls, or utterances, each readily distinguishable from the others, and each having an unmistakable connection with a certain class of actions.

Gardening in Alaska.

So called and from an agricultural point of view Alaska at present does not present a particularly attractive appearance. Not only are its towns few in number, but they are far from being attractive or thickly populated, and one cannot but feel that a prolonged existence at any of the settlements would be a hardship compared with which almost any other would amount to nothing. As an agriculturist, an earnest statement must be that there is none now, while an equally honest opinion must admit that there may be farms and gardens and products if land is ever properly tilled and a proper attention is ever given the business of gardening.

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THIBET'S TWO LAMAS.

A Description of the Principal Temple at Lhasa. Politically dependent on China, Thibet's two Lamas are religiously independent, and the veritable popes of a system based on Buddhism, which was introduced early in the fifth century of our era, and mingled with the Christianity of the Nestorian missionaries, serpent worship, and magical superstition. Its curiously jumbled doctrines are taught in a bible over one hundred volumes. Of the chief cathedral at Lhasa we have the following description:

The entrance is through a large hall, where holy water and rosaries are sold, and in which stand four statues of the archangel. The walls are covered with rude paintings of scenes from the life of the Buddha. The church itself is a long nave, divided by rows of pillars from each side, and by rows of screens of open trellis work from two large chandeliers. Into the aisle on each side open fourteen chapels. At the end is the holy place, containing fifteen jeweled tablets, with mystic symbols of Buddhist metaphysics, and in the farthest niche is the magnificent golden statue of the now defunct Gama Buddha. On the left is the throne of the Dalai Lama; on the right, that of the Panchen Lama; and in order on either side, and descending in height and splendor, the seats of the Chetuktus, the abbots, and the eighteen orders of inferior clergy. In front of the idol is the high altar, or table of offerings, with images of gold, silver and clay, bells, stupa, censers, and other vessels used in the holy service.

The service begins by the entrance of a procession, with the living Buddha as its head. When he is seated on his throne, the monks, in robes of blue, red, and yellow, chant the sutras, and the bell is rung, and all murmur the three Refuges, the ten Precepts and other formulas. After silence has been restored, the bell sounds again, and the priests sing in chorus from the sacred books. The church is filled with the incense from the censers. A monk with a pitcher pours water mixed with sugar and saffron over a mirror, which another wipes each time with a silk napkin. Another holds a mystic symbol of the world, on which the water drops from the mirror, to be caught in a cup. Thence the holy mixture is poured into another pitcher, and a drop or two is allowed to trickle upon the heads of each of the worshiping monks, who marks the crown of his shaven head, his forehead and his breast with the sacred liquid. He then reverently swallows the remaining drops, and believes himself imbued with the mystically swallowing part of the Divine Being, whose image has been caught in the mirror over which the water has passed.

Another method, more fatal, but performed less frequently, is in the use of the milk of the "ava" tree. This tree yields, when tapped, a white liquid very much resembling the juice of the Indian rubber tree. It is used similarly to the varbaso, and blinds as well as kills the fish instantly. Fish killed by the "lache de ava" have to be used immediately. In neither case is there any visible sign of how they are killed.

When you rise in the morning determine that you will make some persons happy during the day. It is easily done. If you are young it will be when you are old; and if you are old it will help to smooth the road down to the bottom of the hill. By the most simple arithmetical calculation look at the result. Suppose you live forty years after you commence this course of medicine, and you make one person a little happier that they would have been every day; that is 365 days in the year, which, multiplied by forty, amounts to 14,600 persons which you have made happy—at all events for a time."

A young girl has just died in the asylum at Hamburg, who possessed the peculiar gift of changing the color of her hair according to the state of her mind. In "periods of sedateness" her hair was naturally blonde, when she became excited, it became red; and her anger was indicated by a blonde color. Three days were generally required for the change to be complete, and her complexion also varied in the same periods and in the same direction.

M. de Lesseps shows his ten children to play freely outdoors without wrapping of hands, arms and necks. His neighbors think that he is careless of their health; but only one of the ten is delicate, and he is a twin. The rest never suffer with colds. From his fathers and mothers, as a rule, are careful not to expose to the weather their children's arms and necks, and they do not understand the De Lesseps family.

Taking a Chinaman Home.

After Ching had been buried two years a party of Chinese officials who were on route home stopped in Omana to get his body and take it with them. The grave was opened and the remains taken out, but they were not in shape for shipment, and were reburied. Sexton Medlock, at the request of the mandarins, took from the casket at that time a hand mirror, an empty wallet, and about 89 cents in money, which had been buried with the corpse. The three suits of clothes in which Ching was dressed were also taken off and planted under a tree in another part of the cemetery.

The other morning Ching's grave was opened the second time. Five or six of the deceased's countrymen were present, and a singular explanation of the number of Americans watched the ceremony from a respectable distance. After considerable bowing and scraping, a basket of eatables was produced, and a goody dinner spread about the head of the grave. A table was placed with the head on occupied the post of honor, flanked on either side by large pieces of boiled pork and liver. Tea was made in a curious little Chinese caddy, and with coffee poured out and placed on the ground. Then, after more bowing and scraping, several packages of cigarettes were strewn over the grave, and innumerable sticks of incense lighted. More incantations by the "holy" man followed, and upon the mourners bowed themselves tired the casket was opened and the remains shoveled out. The bones, which were free from flesh, and perfectly dry, were rolled up in a piece of coarse silk and seven up, and which they were placed in the valise. While Mr. Medlock was busy packing Ching's remains for shipment two of the Chinamen jumped into the grave and pawed over the earth at the bottom with their fingers in order to make sure that nothing belonging to the deceased's anatomy was left behind.

Satisfied that they had secured all of Ching's bones, the Celestials drank the tea that had been standing about the grave, gathered up the eatables, and came back to town, chattering like magpies and smoking the cigarettes they had offered up to their dead countryman. The valise was taken by a journeying Celestial to his lodging and put under his bed, where it remained until the custodian started with it for China.

George II had a master of the revels named Heidegger who was an eccentric person. When in an intoxicated condition a model from his face in plaster of Paris was taken, and in this a mask was made. A person of the same stature and similar features was provided with the mask, and admitted to a masquerade at court.

As soon as his majesty was seated Heidegger, as usual, ordered the music to play "God Save the King." About the time he was no longer than the false Heidegger ordered them to play "Over the Water to Charley." It was a great offense to play the latter tune. Whenever Heidegger left the masquerade the tune was changed to the command of the false Heidegger to the objectionable one. The scene now became truly comic before the king. Poor Heidegger stared at his likeness in another man. Then he started, grew pale and could not utter a word. The duke of Montague ordered the counterfeiter to take off his mask, and here the frolic ended. Heidegger declared he would never attend any public amusement until the mold was broken and the mask melted down before his face.

A committee has been formed at Lucerne with a view of erecting what is called a "universal column." It is to measure 300 feet in height, and is to contain in its interior relief portraits of all the celebrated men and women of the present era on bronze tablets. Another project of the committee is the building of a "museum of the nineteenth century," to be dedicated to art, science, inventions, commerce and industry, and to contain the busts and statues of all distinguished persons of these domains. The cost is estimated at 7,000,000 to 8,000,000 francs, and is to be met by subscription, lotteries, etc.

Eulalia (sentimentally)—O, no! I have no desire for great wealth. I should be happy, very happy, as the wife of a noble bread-winner. George (practically)—And I should be happy, very happy, as the husband of a good bread-maker. She concluded to learn. What Carlyle Lacked. He lacked the Ch enago Express. He lacked the love element, without which the greatest intellect must be barren of lasting results. His brain dazzled Europe and America with its wonderful glaze, but it was the glitter of the iceberg; there was no vivifying influence in it; on the contrary, it chilled both near and afar.