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Cato learned Greek at eighty. Sophocles
Wrote his grand Oedipus and Simoneses
Bore off the prize of verse from his competitors
When he had numbered more than fourscore years.
And Theophrastus at fourscore and ten
Had but begun his characters of men.
Chaucer at Woodstock with the nightingales
At sixty wrote the Canterbury Tales;
Cicero at seventy, falling to the bed,
Completed that which eighty years were past.
These are indeed exceptions, but they show
How far the usefulness of our youth may flow
In the Arctic region of our lives
Where little else than life itself survives.

For age is opportunity, not loss
Than youth itself, though in another dress,
And as the evening twilight fades away,
The sky is filled with stars invisible by day.
[LORDSWORTH.]

ONE NIGHT OF HORROR.
Bill Nye Goes Back to Early Youth and Tells Tales.

Much loss and annoyance might be avoided in this world by reasonable care in securing our property in such a way that it would be perfectly safe, and, while such precautions do not cost much, the neglect may be productive to us of serious loss. How often are we led to regret the oversight of some trifling duty in this direction, the performance of which would have saved us many and bitter regrets.

Many years ago, when I was a student in the law office of Bingham & Jenkins, there were two of us, young law cuts, who not only labored in the office days but camped in a back room adjoining during the night. This room was one of the suite to which the office belonged. So we had to do up our beds lounge daytimes, and put our blankets, etc., in some place where they would be out of the way. Folding beds that look like an upright piano were not very common then, so we had to do the best we could. I favored putting the blankets in one end of the fire-proof vault doors, so that they would be out of sight, but more especially because they would be perfectly safe there in case of fire. If the city should burn down and everybody left homeless and homeless, I maintained that we could go to our fire-proof vault when it got cool and take our bed out in good order, while others looked on and envied our foresight.

Bob, my room mate, agreed to this, and, as he always made up the bed, I didn't try to learn the combination of the lock on the vault door. My duties consisted in keeping up the fires and sweeping the room on legal holidays if it needed it. Sometimes holidays came so close together that we would let them go by without celebrating in the above manner.

Every evening Bob would go to the vault about ten or eleven o'clock, reverse the little knob on the lock three or four times to the left, then two or three times to the right, stopping on a certain number, then back three or four times to the left, and so on till the handle turned, its bolts shot back and the door would swing open. Then he would get the bedding and make up our lovely couch. After that we would lie down in the haughty slapping our clothes as we chatted each other through the other rooms, and when we got tired we would sing some little simple song that would reduce the price of rent for half a mile in every direction. Then we would go to sleep.

One day Bob had to go away for a week between Christmas and New Year's, so I got him to tell me the combination of the vault. At the usual hour that night I got sleepy and lonesome, and as the fires had all gone out, I thought I would make up the bed and retire. It was about the coldest night of that extremely cold winter in a very cold state. I took the lamp and began on the combination. I got to sixty-six on the second turn and carelessly allowed the knob to move a little to the left. Then I went back to place of beginning and reversed the thing back and forth till I got to where the lock is supposed to click and the door swing open, but it did not do so. A wild feeling of doubt and uncertainty came over me, and my fingers got stiff with the great wealth of cold that pervaded the apartments. I went through it again, slowly and carefully, warming my hands every now and then in my capacious mouth. I did this till the clock in the steeple struck 12. Then I put on my overcoat, kicked the vault door with my remaining strength, and went to the Central Hotel. The clerk woke up and told me that it was Christmas time the house was plumb full and I could not be accommodated. I went to the Waltman House, and they told me the "Yule tide yarn" and there, and

rejected me from the place. It was then I o'clock A. M.

I went back into the office, lit the gas and began again on the combination. I knew that there were only three or four million permutations and combinations of numbers, and so I thought I would run through them all it would not take long, and one of them of course would be the right one. Winning up the dial on a fireproof safe, I was all night with the thermometer 45 degrees below is exciting but the excitement does not repay one for the nervous exhaustion and resultant fatigue. Well, I screwed that North American dummy around to right and left as long as I can remember, and when the senior partner came down at 9 o'clock he said I sat there with a small lamp in my hand mechanically turning the knob back and forth and yearning for my bed clothes.

When we opened the vault we found the bedding in there all right and perfectly safe. I never saw anything so safe as that bedding was. It seemed to me that it was almost too safe. When a thing is so secure you can't get it yourself, you naturally think that the matter of security can be overdone.

The foregoing incident, as I give it, is absolutely and entirely true, with one exception. Bob was the hero of the whole thing instead of myself. I told him I was going to give it to the public, and he consented on condition that I would make myself the victim, and he was so sensitive about it that I put it in that way. People can laugh at me all they please. I am used to it and I don't care.

Hudson, Wis., April 7. BILL NYE.

A Seminole War Reminiscence.
MR. EDITOR: For some time I have been thinking I would write some reminiscences of the Seminole Indian war in Florida during the years 1836 to 1843, also in 1849, and again in 1856 to 1859. The one I propose to relate now occurred in 1838. There was a lot of Georgia Volunteers lying in camp near the town of Newnansville in Alachua county, Fla., in which there was a surgeon who was continually murmuring because the troops were not in active service. He wanted to have an engagement with the redskins; he wanted to kill and scalp an Indian to take home to Georgia. Unfortunately for him there was a lieutenant who had some doubts of his prowess, so he laid a plan to test his courage. About one mile from camp there was a duck-pond, on one side of which there was a "hummock" or thick woods—a nice place for an ambush. He arranged with eight or ten men to go to this thicket, while he would take the Doctor out on hunting (which was a very common pastime). The Doctor readily consented. When they arrived at the pond, they made a circle around. When rearing the thicket the Doctor said: "Lieutenant, there may be danger in going around." "I think not," replied the lieutenant, "we have scouts out." So, when they reached the thicket, the men hidden there fired a volley of bank cartridges. The lieutenant fell, and called to the Doctor that he was a dead man, and begging him to shoot the redskins. About this time the concealed men gave the war whoop. "My" said the lieutenant, when relating the story afterward, "How the Doctor did run—jumping logs and tree-tops like an old buck." When the valiant surgeon got out of sight, the lieutenant and ambulance rolled about over the prairie adjoining the pond, actually suffering with laughter. The Doctor had thrown down his gun, and was fairly flying when the lieutenant called to him. He ran to the public road about a quarter of a mile, and to every one he met he would yell, "Indians!"

This cured the Doctor, and I was told that he finally resigned rather than face the continual camp-jests—E. A. TUCKER in Nashville Advocate.

Idaho officers are awaiting a requisition from Gov. Moody, says the News, for Peter Withers and Albert Furman, two notorious characters charged with horse stealing in Eastern Oregon. Withers was captured and detained last week, and a few days ago Furman was taken in tow in Alturas county. He promptly expressed his willingness to go with the officer, but en route induced him to accept a bribe of a short gulch where he had, he said, two horses which he wished to take along. When the officer advanced with him Furman drew a revolver and compelled him to test a hasty retreat. He gave the alarm so soon however, that Furman was speedily recaptured and held in \$1,000 bail.

Native Hardwoods.
The Evening Telegram gives information furnished it by Mr. S. A. Clarke which contradicts the impression generally entertained that the hard woods of Oregon are inferior to the hard woods of the eastern and western states, and of small value for the purpose of general manufacture. Mr. Clarke cites many examples of the durability of Oregon woods under severe and long continued use, and points out particularly two wagons built of native timber which after constant hard usage in a lumber-yard for twenty years are still as good and strong. Neither has ever required repair through the wearing or breaking of timbers, and are still, apparently, good for many years, more service. An eastern wagon of celebrated manufacture employed in precisely the same work during the past seven years has had frequently to be repaired. The test, though a mere accidental one, has been perfectly fair and has proved beyond question, not only the value of Oregon timber for heavy wagons, but its superiority to average eastern timber.

Mr. Clarke claims that wherever Oregon woods have been tested fairly they have proved sufficient in all respects and that the idea of their uselessness where strength and durability are required grows out of their improper use when fresh cut and unseasoned. There has never been, he says, a fair and deliberate trial between Oregon and eastern timbers where the former has had equal advantages of age and preparatory treatment. The wagons which he cites were made of oak and ash thoroughly seasoned. One was built at Sheridan, in Yamhill county, and the other at Salem. They were originally excellent pieces of workmanship, but were not designed for competitive use, or, indeed, for any special service. They illustrate the excellence not of a particular job, but of Oregon materials when properly prepared and properly put together.

No timber grown in the moist climate of western Oregon or Washington is fit for use in its fresh-cut or "green" state. Our hard woods particularly are liable to warp and shrink and their use before they are thoroughly seasoned is never satisfactory. With age and exposure to the air their qualities change and they become hard as flint and strong and durable as iron. The change is not a rapid one nor can it be artificially accelerated. Not a stick of Oregon oak should be used in a wagon till it has lain exposed to the air four years at least. Most of the eastern hardwood which comes to this market is prepared in this way and it is not reasonable to be expected that Oregon timber will harden with less exposure.

There is practically no limit to the supply of hard wood in the mountains and hills of western and southern Oregon. There are hundreds of thousands of acres heavily timbered and easily accessible. It would not be a bad investment for farmers through the country to store by oak and ash logs to be sold four or five years from now when there is certain to be a fine demand at good prices. It seems a shame that we import many thousands of dollars worth of timber every year when by a little forethought and enterprise it might be supplied through home production.—Oregonian.

Bill Nye on Vesuvius.
One thousand eight hundred and eighty-four years ago the Romanographer and weather crank, Strabo, spoke of Vesuvius as a burnt mountain; but it had not at that time turned itself wrong side out. Quite a forest grew where the crater now stands. For fifty years Vesuvius had billious spells, but kept on drawing its salary without loss of time, but in A. D. 79 it turned itself loose and tore up the ground a good deal. Real Estate went to an astonishing height, but became depressed at once. The south half of the mountain was jerked loose, as Pliny has it, and knocked gully-west. This was followed by a shower of hot, wet ashes, which completely obliterated Pompeii and Herculaneum. These two towns have been exhumed lately, but, owing to the delay of the authorities in doing so, no lives were saved. These cities are not covered with lava. Scientists say that the ruins were found under a deep layer of volcanic tufa. I do not know what tufa is, but presume the term is perfectly proper and safe to use in good society. I have heard of the tufa cigar, which is sold at the rate of tufa for 5 cents, but am comparatively ignorant of the general appearance of volcanic tufa.—Inglesid.

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