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One of the most disagreeable features of a protracted illness is the more or less close confinement to which the patient is subjected. If he is compelled to keep his bed, his discomfort and impatience are of course greatly intensified. Even in health a life spent in bed would soon become intolerable to the most ardent sluggard; and we can well pardon one whose nerves have been made irritable by long confinement, for showing at times a dissatisfaction with everything around him. A little skill in the arrangements of the bed, however, will at least render the patient's condition endurable.

First of all, we must have a mattress which presents a firm, even surface; one stuffed with curled hair will exactly meet our wants. Feather beds are a constant nuisance to both patient and nurse. The mattress should be turned and shaken at frequent intervals. In order that it may not become compacted at any point.

The sheets and linen should be soft and kept as spotless as possible. If the sick person is very restless, it is better to change them often, as the accumulation of wrinkles is extremely irritating. It is better to be over-particular in this respect, since during a long confinement the skin becomes exquisitely sensitive, and predisposes the patient to bed-sores.

The coverings of the bed should be warm, but not so weighty as to be uncomfortable. The top spread should either be of spotless white or of some fancy figure which may be changed at intervals, and so give relief by pleasing the eye.

It is not necessary to urge the propriety of taking the whole bed to pieces every morning, and thoroughly exposing the mattress and each piece of bedclothing separately to the action of fresh air.

There are many other things which will suggest themselves, if only we are sufficiently impressed with the importance of making as comfortable as possible those who are condemned to

GREATLY CONDEMNED GARS.

Not at All Beautiful, but These Fish Have Good Sense.

Nearly all the inland waters of southern and middle America are infested by the long-snouted and toothful, though not toothsome, gar. In the Mississippi it occasionally reached a size that makes it hurtful to adult swimmers and dangerous to children.

Gars have been taken from the Mississippi which measured eight feet in length and weighed nearly 200 pounds. These sullen monsters are not afraid of anything and are more apt to attack a swimmer than are many kinds of sharks. Plenty of people living along the big river bear scars on their arms or thighs from gar teeth.

In the small lakes, however, they do not often attain a greater weight than six or eight pounds and measure in length from eighteen to thirty-six inches. These are not big enough to hurt human beings, but play smash with the angler's bait.

The gar's jaws are as formidably armed as those of the muskallonge. It has row upon row of teeth, some as sharply pointed as needles and others having slicing, cutting edges to them. These jaws are nearly half as long as the fish's body and work like a pair of scissors, as certainly and more rapidly.

The gar is the only one of our fishes able to cut a silk line of any size, no matter how small, and it does this with a quietness and precision highly exasperating. There are many waters, good bass waters, which fishermen have been compelled to desert, fishing them with success being rendered impossible by the gars.

The gar has sense. It is almost impossible to hook it in the usual way even when it takes the attached bait, which does not happen often.

The interior of the snout is a hard, bony substance with a thin stretching of skin over it, and the hook will not sink in sufficiently to hold. In general, however, the gar, which is exceedingly wise, will not seize the bait.

Instead it swims near, makes a survey, carefully locates the line, swims nearer, opens its jaws, makes a snip, and then eats the minnow or frog at leisure. All that the angler feels is the merest twitch of the tackle.

He may think that it is a bass gingerly taking hold, or he may recognize the wily and fatal work of the gar. In any event, he has nothing to do save to reel in swiftly, find hook, bait and swivel gone, and bend on new ones.

A prejudice exists against the gar as edible, yet it is not wholly bad. It is a cleanly fish in feeding, living on minnows, frogs and such things, and not touching decaying matter. In this respect it is better than the catfish, which will eat anything it can swallow, taste being something of no value to it. The flesh of the gar is in alternate strips of white and dark meat, the white lying along the sides and the dark near the backbone.

THE FIVE-CENT CIGAR.

Its Average Life Has Been Figured at Five Years.

"The average life of the nickel cigar is five years," said a prominent tobacco man, "and it is curious to note the differences which have enabled cigar men to arrive at this general average of the five-cent cigar's life. Many cigars of this class run through a long series of years.

"There are some brands now that have been running for more than a quarter of a century under the same name, and they are really the same cigars, made in the same way, having the same flavor and all that sort of thing. In this connection I have been impressed by the remark which we often hear about certain brands of cigars that a man had been smoking for two years, or longer, but that the cigar was getting so bad that he had concluded to quit buying it at all. 'It is nothing like the same cigar,' he said; 'the taste has changed, and it tastes like a mixture of cabbage leaves.' Now, he was altogether wrong about that. I know the cigar, know how it is made, and all about it, and I know that no sort of change has been made in the process of manufacture. The trouble is that a man's taste changes. He may get up feeling badly, his stomach may be in bad shape, and, of course, the cigar will not taste as it did when his system was in better condition. The cigar is blamed, and he simply dashes the thing into the street, and quits buying it. Instances of this sort are very common. Mind you, I do not mean to say that some of the brands do not change. There are tricks in the cigar business, just as there are tricks in other trades. But in nine cases out of ten the trouble is with the smoker. But, recurring to the age of cigars, the average to which I have referred has been settled upon by tobacco men and is accepted throughout the country. It is reached by taking the two extremes—the good and the bad five-cent cigar, and figuring back to the middle. Some five-cent cigars close with the first lot made. They are failures, having nothing in them to recommend them to the public. The material out of which they are made would not make decent cigars with as much skill as the cigars that are sold at a higher price, and I do not mind saying that many of them are really far superior in material, flavor and method of manufacture. So many of them, however, are of the cheap kind that the average is lowered to five years, while the average life of the higher priced cigars will run to a much higher figure."—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

THE DANCING WINE GLASS.



Take two wine bottles of even size and close them with corks, as shown in figure. Cut the top of the corks in wedge shape. Take two table knives with heavy handles and place them on the edges of the corks, as shown in figure, their points touching each other. On the points of the knives place a thin glass filled with so much water that it balances on the tips of the knives.

Then carefully let a small metal ball or piece of money attached to a string down into the water without touching bottom, and you will see the glass sway down, and then up again, as soon as you remove the ball from the water.

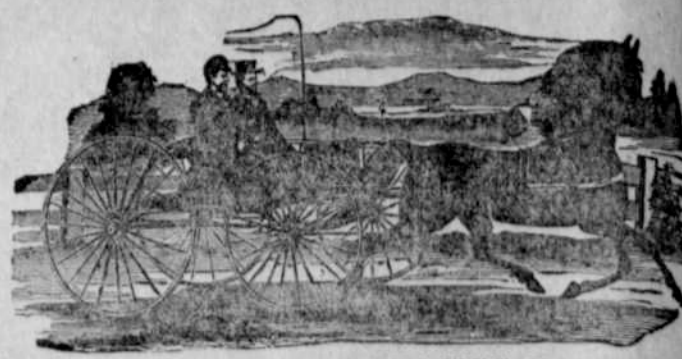
This experiment is best done with music, as the glass will appear to be dancing to the tune that is played.

Church from a Single Tree.

In Santa Clara, Cal., there is a church constructed from the wood of a single oak tree. The building is 30 feet wide and 70 feet deep, yet when its construction was completed 1,200 feet of lumber remained unused.

When a wise man hears a husband and wife quarrelling it's him to the tall grass.

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