

FACTS FOR THE CURIOUS.

Dr. Pettigrand, of Paris, seeing the eyes in the head of a decapitated pirate fixed upon him, moved off in a quarter circle, and the eyes turned and kept looking at him as he went back and forth.

Daniel Selford found a ruby in Clay county, N. C. He sold it for \$15. The purchaser sold it for \$3,000, and it was next sold to a lapidary for \$6,000. He cut it and polished it and sold it for \$18,000.

Some of the wealthy Romans had as many as 10,000 slaves. The minimum price fixed by law was \$80, but after great victories they could sometimes be bought for a few shillings apiece on the field of battle.

According to the Medical Times, the ashes of the late Professor S. D. Gross weighed seven pounds. They were enclosed in a marble urn about three feet high, without ornament or inscription, and placed beside the coffin of his deceased wife in Woodlawn.

Under the empire, male Romans wore black, and Roman women wore white mourning. In Turkey, at the present day, it is violet; in China, white; in Egypt, yellow; in Ethiopia, brown; in Europe and America, black; and it was white in Spain until the year 1498. The mourning worn by sovereigns and their families is purple.

The largest delivery of United States notes in one day to the United States treasurer from the bureau of engraving and printing was \$91,000,000, \$60,000,000 of which were in five-thousand and ten thousand dollar notes, and were carried in a small-sized hand-valise from the bureau to the treasurer's office. The bureau was at that time in the treasury building.

The whole number of captured British vessels during the war of 1812-13 in this country, on the lakes and on the ocean, including those taken by privateers (of which there remained forty or fifty at sea when peace was proclaimed), and omitting those recaptured, was reckoned at 1750. There were captured or destroyed by British ships forty-two American national vessels (including twenty-two gunboats), 133 privateers, and 511 merchant vessels, in all 686, and manned by 18,000 seamen.

Nicknames of Generals.

From an article by George F. Williams, the well-known war correspondent, on "Lights and Shadows of Army Life," in the Century, we quote the following:

Every general of prominence had a nickname bestowed upon him by his troops. Some of these names were of a sarcastic nature, but usually they indicated the confidence of the men in their leaders or their admiration for them. General Grant was commonly known over the watch-fires in the Army of the Potomac as "Old United States," from the initials of his name, but sometimes he was called "Old Three Stars," that number indicating his rank as lieutenant-general. McClellan was endeared to his army as "Little Mac." Meade, who wore spectacles, was delighted to learn that the soldiers had named him "Four-eyed George," for he knew it was not intended as a reproach. Burnside, the colonel of the First Rhode Island regiment, rose to the dignity of "Rhody" when he became a general. Hooker never liked the sobriquet of "Fighting Joe," although he always lived up to it during his career in the field. Pope was saddled with the title of "Saddle-bag John," in memory of his famous order about headquarters being on horseback. His men used to say that their headquarters moved pretty rapidly at times. Sigel, the German general, was known in the other corps as "Dutchy." Hancock won the brevet of "Superb" from a remark made by General Meade at Gettysburg, when the second corps repulsed Longstreet's men. Humphrey, being a distinguished engineer, was invariably styled "Old Mathematics." The Pennsylvania Reserves used to call Crawford "Physics," he being a surgeon at the beginning of his military career. Logan, with his long black hair and dark complexion, was "Black Jack" with his men. Sheridan, the cavalry leader, was "Little Phil," and Sherman's troops spoke of him as "Old Tecumseh." The sterling nature and steadfast purpose of Thomas earned for him the significant and familiar name of "Old Reliable." Alexander McDowell McCook, like Hooker, was called "Fighting McCook." The New York city regiments in the Fifth Corps changed Sykes to "Sykesey." Halleck was derisively nicknamed "Old Brains," and Rosecrans had his name shortened to "Rosey." Lew Wallace was "Louisa" to the soldiers under his command; he was a great favorite for his fighting qualities, and the soldiers adopted that inappropriate name for want of a better. Kearney, who had left an arm in Mexico, was invariably known in the ranks as "One-armed Phil." Butler was styled "Cockeye," for obvious reasons. Kilpatrick was nicknamed "Kill," while Custer was called "Ringlets," on account of his long flowing curls; and so the catalogue might be prolonged indefinitely.

Among the Confederates familiar nicknames were not so common as with the Federals. The soldiers of the Army of Northern Virginia usually spoke of General Lee as "Bob Lee." Little Mahone was best known as "Skin and Bone." Early was called "Bad Old Man," and Jackson will live in history as "Stonewall."

The aggregate production of coal in 1883 in Great Britain, the United States, Germany, France and Belgium was 381,000,000 tons in round figures. In 1882 the corresponding production was 356,000,000 tons; in 1881, 332,200,000 tons; in 1880, 315,100,000 tons; and in 1879, 285,600,000 tons.

FARM AND HOUSEHOLD.

A Test of Tomatoes.

Dr. E. Lewis Sturtevant, at the State Experiment station, Geneva, N. Y., subjected to careful test nearly all the tomatoes offered by seedsmen, and the result is published in a recent bulletin, doubtless obtainable upon application by any reader desirous of seeing full particulars. A point of general interest appears in the wonder expressed "why so many undesirable kinds are retained," since it surely costs as much to raise the poorest as the best. The lists of sorts which, judging from the outcome of this trial, "might as well be dropped from consideration" includes twenty-seven; and of the numerous red kinds worth cultivating the slight variations in color and flavor are of only secondary importance so far as family use is concerned. The desirable features are earliness, smoothness and regular form. Acme is referred to as badly affected in sections where rot prevails. Several varieties under different names are found to be almost identical. Among sorts of interest to the amateur or as curiosities are: "Currant, Cherry, Plum, Pear and Apple tomatoes." A practical lesson from the foregoing is that when a gardener has a kind which does fairly well for him he can hardly hope to secure better results than by selecting for seed year after year the best specimens of his own production, with respect to season of ripening, symmetry and uniform size. This course will certainly give more satisfaction in the long run than frequent change to something new, which is always experimental, and less often an improvement than otherwise.

Farm and Garden Notes.

It never pays to overstock. If one has too many, sell some and buy feed, and do it promptly.

Break over the tops of onions when full-grown, to cause them to fill and prevent scullions.

The apple worm may be diminished by picking up and destroying fallen fruit or allowing pigs to do it.

One of the most frequent causes of colic in horses is the drinking of cold water when the animal is heated.

Plant bush-beans for late crops. Pinch off the end of vines of limas when they reach the tops of the poles.

Crude petroleum makes a good, although unsightly, protecting coating for farm machinery exposed to weather.

Always keep cattle, sheep and hogs ready to sell, and then if a drought comes the butcher will buy them at a fair price.

Don't work the horses a whole half day without water. Some in a cask could easily be taken along to the field for them.

Trees should be trimmed high. Low-headed trees are an abomination, and they present hardly any advantage over high tops.

Pack vegetables for winter keeping in sand. Shriveled turnips were restored to natural firmness and color by burying in the garden.

The horse should drink before eating, otherwise the water will carry the food from the stomach to the water stomach or caecum, undigested.

It does not pay to put a strong horse beside a weak one. The teams should be well matched in strength, as neither, then, is so liable to be injured.

It is said that the development of flavor of cheese can be hastened by subjecting the cheese to a strong current of air. If the cheese is kept in too close air during the process of curing it will be likely to be deficient in flavor.

A Western bee-keeper thinks sugar the best bee feed, as the honey from such has the advantage of not being mixed with pollen, which he believes causes dysentery among the bees in the winter. Glucose, however, should be avoided.

Salt is used freely by New York nurserymen in pear nurseries to prevent blight. Iron filings and coppers in solution have been used for same purpose. If these remedies do not prevent the disease they at least correct a disposition to blight.

Corn is the staple food for fattening hogs in this country, but it does not ripen early enough to get the best use of it while the weather is warm. Feeding liberally with fallen apples, boiled potatoes or pumpkins and other refuse will make a little meal go far toward fitting hogs for the butcher.

In many localities potatoes are a favorite crop for young orchards; but corn is generally better, since all the stirring which the soil receives in growing this crop comes at a time when it is most desirable to encourage the growth in the trees, and gives them plenty of time to ripen their wood before winter.

An English writer says that nitrate of soda in liquid form, containing about one pound of nitrate to twelve gallons of water, acts as a powerful stimulant to pot plants, imparting a luxuriant appearance to the foliage, and is particularly beneficial to dahlias and chrysanthemums. The number of applications must depend on the nature and condition of the plants. It is not to be given to plants at rest.

Beans are not usually a good crop to precede wheat. They take from the soil the nitrogen and phosphoric acid that the winter grain requires. It is beside very difficult to get the land in the right mechanical condition. Pulling beans leaves the soil too prous, and unless heavy rains follow soon the wheat will come up poorly. The best use of bean ground is to plow or harrow, sow rye to be plowed under in spring, then follow with oats or barley and that with wheat in the fall.

On sandy soil potash is nearly always

in demand for crops, and in some form it is valuable on heavier land. Wood ashes can no longer be had cheaply as formerly, and in many places coal has so largely taken the place of wood that there is no home production of potash. If it has to be purchased, the muriate of potash, though costing more per ton, is cheaper than the common form of German potash salts, which only averages twenty to twenty-five per cent. of pure potash.

In gardens farmers usually make the mistake of planting tomato plants on the richest soil and manuring heavily. They naturally like to see the young plants making a strong, vigorous growth. With most crops the stronger growth the better, but too much vine in the tomato retards ripening, causes the plant to rot on the ground, and the fruit will be much less valuable. Market gardeners have learned to grow tomatoes on their poorest land, and, avoiding stable manure, they ripen earlier and bring a much better price. Farmers can grow tomatoes on any land that is rich enough for corn, and they will bear more bushels per acre than can be got from an average crop of potatoes.

Recipes.

CANNED PEARS.—Over two pounds of pears pour just enough boiling water to cook them nicely. When soft add one pound of sugar. Boil five minutes and seal up tightly.

APPLE PANCAKES.—Two cups of sweet milk, one egg, four tablespoonsful of sugar, one half teaspoonful of salt, and flour enough to make a little thicker than griddles; two good-sized apples, pleasantly sour, pare and slice into the batter; drop into boiling lard.

BAKED TOMATO HASH.—Chop any cold lean meat very fine; peel and chop double the quantity, by measure, of tomatoes; crumb double the quantity of bread, soak it soft in cold water and drain off the water; if there is any fat on the meat chop it very fine; butter an earthen baking-dish, put all these ingredients into it in layers, seasoning each layer with salt and pepper, and distributing the fat of the meat equally throughout the hash; bake it for an hour in a very moderate oven and serve it hot in the dish in which it was baked.

STEWED CELERY.—After well washing and cleaning some celery heads, cut them into three-inch pieces and boil them in some good vegetable broth until they are perfectly tender. While they are simmering, prepare the following sauce: Half a pint of cream, the yolks of two eggs thoroughly beaten, half an ounce of butter, a little lemon peel, salt, white pepper and finely-grated nutmeg; heat this in a lined sauce pan, stirring it all the time and not allowing it to boil. Lay the celery in a hot dish, on toast dipped in the broth it was boiled in, and strain the white sauce over it.

Cost of Guns and Gunning.

"What does a shooting outfit cost?"

"I can sell you an excellent plain steel double-barreled breech-loader for \$15. Here is one. It looks well, but it has no gilding or ivory about it. It is a tumbler, and will last you as long as a gun costing \$375, and there is great comfort in the fact that if you injure it, lose it in a swamp, or leave it out all night in a leaky wood-shed, there will not be much loss involved in the transaction."

"How about ammunition?"

"That comes a little expensive, but still the sportsman who hasn't much money can have a good time on a small sum. Loaded cartridges that would be suitable for this \$15 gun cost from \$3 50 to \$4 a hundred, according to the grade of powder. It would be a poor sportsman who couldn't get \$4 worth of birds out of 100 shots, so that the ammunition part of it ought to be at least self-supporting. For \$2.50 a set of tools for reloading the shells can be got, and by using it they can be refilled at \$2 75 to \$3 per hundred."

"Are breech-loaders the only kind of guns sold?"

"Not by any means. Lots of grangers and backwoodsmen won't have anything to do with so new-fangled an idea. They stick to the muzzle-loader with its dozen different kinds of perils."

"What is the safest kind of gun?"

"The hammerless breech-loader. It is superseding everything. There are, of course, many different kinds, but the principle is the same. There is no hammer projecting from the gun and, consequently, no risk of its being caught in your coat or in a bramble and causing a premature discharge. The triggers are protected too, for there is a sort of brake which you apply when you're not going to shoot. Guns like that, handsomely mounted, cost from \$125 up. They save time and trouble, for they are self-cocking. Winchester rifles are as low as \$18.75 and as high as you choose to pay. Remingtons are from \$20 up, Ballards the same price and Frank Wessons from \$25. They are used in this part of the country for small game."

"They are making more ammunition in this country than they did. That big show case over there is a display of Ely's, the London cartridge manufacturer, which was shown at the centennial. At that time American cartridges were not equal to what they are now. Larger quantities are turned out by the gun makers of New England. The Engwads and caps still prevail, however." Philadelphia Press.

The etiquette of funerals in Mexico does not permit the female relations of deceased to attend. Only men attend the departed to the church and the tomb. Funerals are so expensive that they often ruin business men. All female relatives, even to cousins and children, must wear deep mourning for two years. During the mourning none of the ladies of the household must be seen in public. Bodies are buried in cases and decked with precious stones.

A PRECIOUS SUBSTANCE.

Ambergris, Found in Sick Whales—A Lump Worth \$18,000.

A substance called ambergris, which has been known for about a century, is found at rare intervals floating on the sea in the hottest latitudes and also in the intestines of the sperm whale. Its history has never been properly explained. Various theories have been advanced, but all specialists have contented themselves with quoting some predecessor's words concerning its origin and composition, and to-day it affords an ample field for the scientific enthusiast, as it is an extremely valuable commodity, and if the latest appliances were brought to bear upon the subject all unsettled questions undoubtedly could be answered. It was at first supposed to be of vegetable production for the most part, and analogous to amber; hence its name, ambergris, or gray amber. It is dark gray in color and is formed of concentric layers. It feels like hard rubber. The sailors found it in the whale's intestines near the stomach, and developed the theory that it was a petrification, and that as a natural course of events the whole whale might turn into the substance. In a short time sailors were multiplying who had seen amber whales.

During the spring of last year the Sea Ranger, a whaling ship owned by F. H. Bartlett & Sons, of Massachusetts, which had sailed from New Bedford in June, 1879, for a four-years' whaling voyage in the South Atlantic, took a sperm whale while cruising to the south of St. Helena. After the usual operation of hooking, hoisting and cutting off the blubber and baling out the "case," the most interesting part of the work was begun. At this point all on board eagerly watch while the long spade is pushed into the intestines in order to ascertain if there is any ambergris in the stripped leviathan. In the present instance the men were rewarded by finding the finest specimen of ambergris that has been captured during the last ten years. It was about the size and shape of a watermelon, weighed seventy pounds, and was worth \$18,000.

The price of ambergris has been as high as \$290 per pound. The piece found by the Sea Ranger was regular in shape and of the best quality—compact and solid. It was a very pleasant task for the captain to put the little \$18,000 lump under his arm and take it ashore and forward it by a freight ship to the owners of his vessel, into whose hands it came on the 31st of last May, and was sold the same day to Messrs. Weeks & Potter, of Boston, who had received news by cable of the great "find." Whenever a large piece of the substance is found, the more prominent chemists and druggists of the world are promptly notified—and there is spirited competition for the control of the market. The supply is extremely small. There are about 175 whaling ships in the world, all are constantly looking for the precious substance, and the entire amount taken by all these ships (including the 140 American whalers, the twenty-five ships that go to Baffin's bay from Dundee, and the few stragglers from Norway and Sweden) is not more than fifty to seventy-five pounds a year. This amount is exclusive of whatever some firms may be lucky enough to secure secretly. It was used for many years in medicine and is now prescribed in some parts of France, but its great and important present use is in the manufacture of perfumes. It consists chiefly of a peculiar fatty matter, similar to cholesterol, and is readily dissolved in alcohol, ether, or the volatile or fixed oils. The most widely accepted supposition is that it is a hardened piece of biliary matter formed in the stomach of a sick whale, and perhaps in some other fishes also, for the sperm whale is known to feed upon cuttle fish, whose tough, indestructible beaks are to be found in the ambergris, a fact arguing that the ambergris is a cause or result of indigestion, and might occur in the stomachs of other extremely voracious fishes that are known to devour at certain periods anything they meet. They are sick during the presence of their Jonah-like visitors and get well again after the visitors have taken their departure. The Bartletts have been in the whaling business for forty years, and the specimen here described is the first piece of ambergris ever found by them, which will illustrate the scarcity of the article. Not only has the origin of ambergris been enshrouded in mystery, but there has been a widespread disposition to count the discovery of a piece as a sign of good luck aside from its commercial value. The lucky star of the crew of the ship was then in the ascendant. During the last ten years there have only been a few large pieces found. A little schooner from Martha's Vineyard got a good-sized piece three years ago, and a New Bedford whaler found a piece weighing 150 pounds in 1882, but it was of poor quality. Many adulterations are attempted. The spurious stuff, however, can readily be distinguished from the genuine by standard tests.

Ambergris is now found floating in the water near Sumatra, Molacca and Madagascar, also along the American coast and Brazil, China and Japan, and along the west coast of Ireland. Experiments are now being carried on in France with a view of definitely determining its composition, and it is hinted that they may result in the invention of a compound that will to a certain extent take the place of ambergris in the manufacture of perfumery.

In making perfumery there are two general classes: the animal odors, such as those from the musk and civet; and the vegetable odors, such as those from the rose and the cassia. In the case of the animal odors, they can be dissolved in alcohol with the aid of heat, and the odor is taken up by the alcohol. With the vegetable, as for example the rose, alternate layers of lard and roses are

pressed and allowed to stand, when the lard will take into itself the entire perfume of the roses, and afterward the perfume can be transferred to alcohol from the lard. When the alcohol is thus saturated with the odor, more alcohol is added until the mixture is of the required strength. Then the ambergris is used. If the perfumed alcohol were used as scent for the handkerchief the spirits would soon evaporate and the odor would not remain. But the ambergris is added and acts as a base to build upon. Like bodies of this kind undergoing a slow decomposition and possessing little volatility, when it is mixed with fleeting scents it gives permanence to them. It acts as an infinite number of small reservoirs which prevent the perfume from escaping fast. In consequence of this quality it is indispensable to the perfumer. It contains a substance which clings pertinaciously to woven fabrics. No ambergris has been found, as far as is generally known to perfumery manufacturers, since the splendid specimen spoken of above.—San Francisco Call.

Relation of Fairies to Religion.

The meaning given to the word "fairy" in the dictionaries is so vague, and the use made of it both by poets and prose-writers so much vaguer, that it is well at the outset to explain what is really meant by it here. The English fairy is derived immediately from the French fee or faerie, and remotely from the Latin fatum, fate, destiny. At first, it sometimes signified illusion, enchantment; sometimes the land of fairies, or the earthly paradise of the days of romance; but, as a rule, it was applied to the Melusinas and Morganas, medieval representations of the classical fates. Later, the name was given to the little elves of Northern mythology, and finally it became a class designation for the hobgoblins, dwarfs, gnomes, kobolds, and all such other bugs, as Reginald Scott, in his scornful skepticism, calls them, who, though born of paganism, long remained rivals of the Christian saints. In its largest and most extended sense, it includes the whole race—no matter in what part of the world its different branches may be found—of minor supernatural beings, who have been ranked as entirely different in nature, substance and attributes from the supreme spiritual hierarchy, and yet have been placed much higher in the scale of life than man; being supposed to possess power vastly superior to his, and able in fact, to exercise a large influence in shaping his destiny. They stand midway between humanity and divinity.

Men must have defined his belief in one supernatural world and in one species of supernatural beings very clearly before he could conceive of two such worlds and two such species. Fairy mythology is really the product of a somewhat advanced state of religious thought, when the ideal of Deity is so high and scientific knowledge so small that the lesser natural phenomena and accidents of daily life cannot be accounted for, without the introduction of the unseen sphere of action of a second order of conscious agents. While, then, there are fairy-like creatures in all mythologies, there are genuine fairies only in a few. It is true that it is difficult at first to distinguish Greek dryads from medieval Elfe maidens, or the sirens of Hellenic waters from the Lorelei of German streams. But the latter are as distinct from the former, from whom, however, they are descended, as civilized man is from cave-dwelling progenitors.—Atlantic Monthly.

Sunken Treasures.

The list of treasures lost in the sea would indeed be a long and melancholy one; instancing, for example, the Madagascar, from Australia, which, in the early days of the gold fever there, having on board the precious yellow dust in enormous quantity, was never heard of and left not even the faintest clew to speculation as to her fate. And in later years the Thunder steamer, from Calcutta to China, with some £300,000 worth of silver, destined never to reach the expectant consignees, was supposed to be lying abandoned among the awful sandbanks at the mouth of the Hooghly, but, in spite of many rumors, never to be seen there. These are instances out of many, of treasures never heard of. The wreck of the Royal Charter steamer from Australia, lost in a frightful gale on the Anglesea coast in October, 1854, with some £800,000 of gold on board, will doubtless occur to the reader's mind coupled as it was with such lamentable loss of life. In this case, happily, a great part of the treasure was recovered subsequently, but there is still a fortune left at Moelfra for the fortunate being who can find it. In old days Vigo bay had always an attractive sound to treasure seekers, from the reported wealth on board the Spanish fleet destroyed there by Sir G. Rooke in 1702; but the infinite pains, money and patience expended over its recovery have been thrown away, the silver (even if it is there, which is somewhat doubtful,) obstinately refusing to make a reappearance in the world.—Belgravia.

Groaning and Crying.

A French surgeon has published a long dissertation on the beneficial influence of groaning and crying on the nervous system.

He contends that groaning and crying are the two grand operations by which nature allays anguish, and that he has uniformly observed that those patients who give way to their natural feelings more speedily recover than those who suppose that it is unworthy a man to betray such symptoms of cowardice as either to groan or cry. That some patients often have a great satisfaction in groaning and that hysterical patients often experience great relief from crying, are facts which no person will deny.