THE FAMILY STORY

LIFE FOR A LIFE.

WE sat together in the veranda at Shepheard's Hotel. Cairo lay beneath and around us—Cairo filthy, multi-colored, and malodorous, but always picturesque. Suddenly an Arab boy came around the corner, and with a salaam of the deepest, handed some mail to Grimshaw. Then he squatted down on the veranda boards, with his great black eyes fixed on my companion's face, waiting for further orders.

"Your boy, Captain?" I asked.

"Yes," replied Grimshaw, "but a good deal more than that. I should be buried in the Soudan now if it were not for Ibrahim yonder."

"Tell me about it, please," I asked, rather eagerly; for this small Arab in the clear, white tunic, and brilliant turban interested me mightily.

Grimshaw settled himself back in the bungalow chair and began:

"You know, of course," he said, "that I was in Khartoum with Gordon. I did not regularly belong to the General's forces, but I had volunteered as one of his aides-de-camp. Well, we were shut up in that death trap City of Khartoum, surrounded on every side by the forces of the Mahdi—myriads of fanatical Soudanese Arabs following that high priest of bloodshed. We English were but a mere handful of men; the auxiliary forces were wretchedly small. Our only hope was aid from Egypt; and, as the whole world knows, that never came. Poor Gordon was allowed to fall a victim to the Mahdi's sword, and most of the garrison were slain. With the exception of Slatin Bey, who became a Mussulman, I think I was the only European who got out of the doomed city with his life. That I did so was due to Ibrahim."

Here the Arab boy—hearing his name mentioned—looked up and smiled, showing a row of teeth exceptionally even and white.

"A few days after we entered Khartoum," continued Grimshaw, "I was patroling the town under Gen. Gordon's order, when we came across a great rabble of boys, hallooing and shouting at a deafening rate. I sent an Egyptian soldier to discover the cause, and he reported that the young 'fuzzy-wuzzies' (it is so that Private Atkins of her Majesty's troops denominates the Soudanese) were 'having fun' with one of their number. I was then, as now, intensely interested in native manners and customs. Halting my men, I entered the boisterous cordon of boys to determine the reason of their tumult.

"The little rascals were teasing one of their number. 'Teasing,' indeed, in this case, is too mild a word. They were beating and stoning the lad, who lay bruised and half-blinded in the gutter. His turban was off, and his already scant clothing had been torn to shreds. I sprang into the middle of the mob and demanded the cause of such brutal treatment. At first they affected not to understand my Arabic, and went on beating their victim, but when I had soundly cuffed one or two and summoned my interpreter to my aid, I succeeded in making them answer.

"'He is the renegade's son,' said a ringleader—'Hassan, the renegade's son. Stone him, in the name of the prophet.'

"Then I understood. The poor boy's father had taken service with Gordon, leaving his offspring to suffer all the cruelties which the Khartoum children, egged on by their elders, were sure to inflict upon him. I lost no time in calling up a few men and sending that pack of youthful fanatics to the right about. They went away, vowing dire vengeance on the 'renegade's brat,' and I raised my protege from the dust. He had fainted from pain and loss of blood, but one of our surgeons soon brought him to. When he opened his eyes and saw me he smiled like a little coffee-colored angel and wanted there and then to give me his best salaam. Of course I made him lie down again, but he blurted out his gratitude for preservation so vigorously that he came near fainting again.

"Next day his father, Hassan, one of Gordon's servants, came to see him. The two had a long talk, and finally Hassan announced that for his son's sake he had decided to leave the General and go back to his cobbler's stall in the bazaar. Ibrahim—for the lad whom I had helped to rescue was the same one now sitting before you—soon recovered, thanks to his native, tough constitution. He left my hut, absolutely refusing to touch any of the money which I offered him.

"'Protector of the poor,' he said in his quaint, grandiloquent Eastern way, 'you have saved your servant's life. Did not the mouse once repay the lion that had been his benefactor? Lo! I am the mouse, effendi; and you are the lion. Perhaps some day I may repay you. Salaam, friend!' Then he backed out of my hut, and I saw him not for many days.

II.

"One evening, while hurrying through the bazaar on my way to Gen. Gordon's quarters, a boy sprang out of a cobbler's stall and handed me a tiny bundle—slipping away into the darkness before I had time to do more than recognize him as Ibrahim, son of Hassan. I carried the bundle to the General, and together we undid its fastenings. Have you ever deciphered an Oriental object letter? I mean a letter which is not written upon paper, but of which the sense is conveyed by objects—flowers and the like. The bundle handed me by Ibrahim was just such a communication. It contained a queer collection of articles. They were: A piece of broken knife blade, a scrap of green cloth, two flowers (marigolds, I think) with only the heads remaining, a brick from the walls, and, lastly, an iron affair, which I at once recognized as the point of one of those sticks with which camels are urged onward.

"Gen. Gordon lost no time in unraveling the mystery of this missive. 'The green cloth,' he said, 'means the Mahdi, because his sacred flag is green. The knife blade stands for a sword, and the decapitated flower means that our heads are going to be cut off. The brick, I take it, hints of treachery inside the walls. The camel-spike advises you to fly from Khartoum immediately. Where did you get this?'

"When I told him the source of my information he was inclined to pooh-pooh Ibrahim's letter. 'It is a boy's fear and fancy,' he said. 'We shall be relieved in a few weeks.'

"But the Mahdi's men formed an impenetrable circle around the town—a circle that grew narrower and narrower. Day after day we scanned the desert horizon for some sign of the expected relief, but without avail. Day after day the impression grew stronger upon each and all of us that we were doomed.

"During an early morning walk Ibrahim accosted me as suddenly as he had done before. 'Fly, effendi,' he whispered. 'The city is betrayed. My father and other Mussulmans have decided to let the Mahdi within the gates. Disguise yourself and fly before it is too late!'

"I shook my head, for duty kept me in Khartoum; and Ibrahim retreated with tears in those big, honest eyes of his.

III.

"The very next night his warning was fulfilled. It would be idle, my friend, to tell you over again all the horrors of the capture, or rather betrayal, of Khartoum. The Mahdi's soldiers were like fiends incarnate. Spent with fatigue and slender fare we could not stand before them. Gordon, poor fellow, was slain, and a remnant of us was driven, fighting for life, from hut to hut across the city. Finally, with empty revolver and broken sword, I found myself in the stairway of a rude minaret, waiting for the death which I felt would be inevitable. It is all very well to meet death boldly on the field of battle, with comrades and friends around one, but to sit down in a dark stairway and count the minutes until its coming might make the bravest man in the world feel uncomfortable. All around I heard the hideous sounds of slaughter and watched through a tiny loop-hole in the wall the red flames shooting across the sky (for it was midnight, and a starless midnight to boot). A sick feeling stole over me. To remain cooped up thus seemed intolerable. I had just resolved to rush into the thick of the Soudanese and sell my life as dearly as possible when a footfall on the stairs below arrested me.

"It was the sound of a naked foot, and as I peered, every sense on the alert, into the half-light by the minaret doorway, I vaguely distinguished a dark form and two shining eyes. Was it one of the Mahdis in search of human prey? I gripped my broken sword tighter and prepared for action.

"'Effendi!' whispered a voice, 'is it you, protector of the poor?'

"The voice was that of Ibrahim, son of Hassan. My heart gave a leap for gladness and I answered him that it was, indeed, myself.

"'It is good,' he exclaimed. 'My lord, I have come to save you. Hasten down and don these garments which I have brought you. They belong to the old blind priest who lodged with my father. He died last night, but nobody knows of it yet. You can pass as the old priest and escape. Make haste, sahib, make haste!'

"I saw the chance and seized it. Before you could have repeated the proverbial 'Jack Robinson' many times I had pulled those baggy Mohammedan clothes over my soiled and bloodstained uniform. A turban took the place of my khaki helmet, and around my face I draped the white hood which the Soudanese Arabs wear. Then, before I could protest, Ibrahim coolly seized a handful of mud and liberally daubed my face.

"'The sahib is too white,' he explained. 'The old blind priest was always black and dirty—so kick off your boots, sahib, and let me daub your feet.' Off went my boots; and in a minute or two my legs from the knee down were as brown (and as dirty) as they well might be.

"'You are all right, now, effendi,' said Ibrahim, 'let us make for the Cairo gate.'

"With all my heart I thanked the boy; but he would listen to no thanks. 'You saved my life; I'll save yours,' he said. 'Remember, effendi, the mouse and the lion. Let us hasten to the gate.'

"'But you are not coming—,' I began; when my protest was interrupted by a troop of black Mahdists surging into the little bystreet where we stood. Never shall I forget the sight they presented, in the false light of the burning city, with their huge piles of hair, their ferocious faces and their spears and scimeters a-drip with blood. I had given myself over for lost, when Ibrahim, gripping my hand, led me onward, calling in sing-song tones: 'Room for the blind priest. Room for Amed, son of Ali, the soothsayer. The light of Allah is upon the blind priest.'

"Taking the hint I plucked up courage enough to shout the war-cry of the Mahdi. The 'fuzzy-wuzzies,' entirely deceived, joined in my cry. 'Bide your time, holy father,' said one of them; 'we'll give you plenty of Christian heads later on.' . . . Then they left us—whooping like demons down the street, but Ibrahim plucked at my sleeve and mechanically I followed him. Many times we met parties of the Mahdists, but in the darkness our ruse succeeded beautifully, and we reached Cairo gate in safety.

"Around the gate, despite the confusion, a strong guard had been posted. In the open space without many scores of camels were sprawling.

"'A camel for the Mahdi's messenger!' cried Ibrahim in his shrill voice. 'Ho, brothers! A camel for the blind soothsayer, Amed, son of Ali, who bears the Mahdi's defiance across the desert.'

"A dozen dusky warriors surrounded us, and as many awkward camels were prodded to their feet. One of these ungainly beasts was made to kneel, while Ibrahim made a great show of helping the supposed blind priest to a seat upon his back.

"Just then a tall fuzzy-wuzzy—clearly an officer—rushed forward. 'Who is this?' he demanded. 'Where does this man go? The orders are that no man shall leave the gates before daybreak.'

"My heart sank, but fortunately for us the natural superstition of the Arab came to our aid. 'Have a care!' cried one of the soldiers. 'It is a blind priest—a soothsayer. He may curse you.'

The officer stepped back involuntarily, eying me with fear. 'Give us your blessing, holy father,' cried a dozen onlookers.

"Here was a new predicament. I could not remember enough Arabic at the moment to give the desired blessing; but a whisper from Ibrahim recalled to my mind a simple form of words, which, eked out by discreet mumbling, on my part and the loud responses of the boy, suited the Arabs well enough. They prostrated themselves—the officer with the rest—amid a great cry of 'Allah Ackbar.' Then Ibrahim smote our camel soundly, and away we went, through the outposts, speeding fast from the gory City of Khartoum.

IV.

"The perils and adventures of the journey were too numerous to be told at one sitting, but it was nearly a month after that awful night that our camel limped into Cairo, carrying on his back two emaciated fugitives who had once been an officer of the line and an Arab boy.

"Ibrahim has been all around the world with me since, and will probably continue to be my comrade until one of us twain departs this life forever, eh, Ibrahim, old friend?"

The Arab lad smiled and spread out his hands. "My fate is thine, effendi," he said, "you saved my life."

"On that score, Ibrahim," answered Capt. Grimshaw, "I think we are quits. Remember Khartoum."—Atlanta Constitution.

THE POLO BROTHERS.

They Wandered Into the Unknown Lands of Cathay.

Many hundred years ago, in the year 1295, let us say, before Columbus discovered America, or the art of printing had been invented, a strange thing happened in Venice, Italy. Three men, dressed in outlandish garb, partly European and partly Asiatic, appeared in the streets of that city, making their way to the gates of a lofty and handsome house which was then occupied by members of the ancient family of Polo. The three strangers, whose speech had a foreign accent, claimed admittance to the mansion, saying that they were Maffeo and Nicolo Polo, brothers, and Marco, son of Nicolo, all of whom had been absent in the wild and barbarous countries of the far East for more than twenty-four years, and had long since been given up for lost.

In those days nobody in Europe knew much about the regions in which the three Polos had traveled; and what little they did know was from vague and few reports. Two friars, Plano Carpini and William Rubruquis, it is true, had reached the borders of Cathay, or Northern China, and had brought back accounts of the wonders of that mysterious land, of which they had heard from the subjects of the Great Khan, who reigned over a vast empire. But nobody among the learned and most traveled people of Europe knew exactly what manner of people lived, or what countries lay, beyond that western boundary of Cathay. None knew aught of the inhabitants (or if there were inhabitants) of the regions that we now know as India, Sumatra, Japan, Corea, and the eastern coasts of Asia and Africa. It was supposed that the farthest extreme, or eastern edge, of Cathay ran off into a region of continual darkness, a bog or marsh where all manner of strange beasts, hobgoblins, and monsters roamed and howled. And it was not surprising that when the three Polos, for these were they, came back from that desperately savage country and claimed their own, they were laughed to scorn. It seemed reasonable to believe that the three, having been gone so many years, had wandered off into the Sea of Darkness and had perished miserably or had been destroyed by the wild creatures of that terrible region.

How the three Polos so far convinced their relations, who were in possession of the Polo mansion in Venice, that they were willing to let in the newcomers, we do not know; but John Baptist Ramusio, who has written an entertaining history of the Polo family, sets forth what was done by the three Polos to prove that they were what they claimed to be, after they had taken possession of their house. They explained that they had been in the service of the Great Khan, or Emperor, of the Mongol Empire, and that they had amassed wealth while in the region variously known as Cathay, China, Mongolia, and the Far East.—St. Nicholas.

Chinese Treatment of Children.

However little liked the Chinaman may be by his white neighbors, I have at all times found that the Chinese had at least one good and praiseworthy quality—the kindness shown by all of them toward their children. The poorest parents always seem able to save enough money to array their little ones in gay garments on New Year's day or other holidays. The children in turn seem to be remarkably well-behaved and respectful toward their elders, and rarely, if ever, receive corporal punishment. They seem very happy, and apparently enjoy their childhood more than most American children. On almost any sunny day the fond and proud father may be seen at every turn in Chinatown carrying his brightly attired youngster in his arms. Other little tots, hardly old enough to feel quite steady on their legs, toddle about with infants strapped on their backs. They do not appear to mind this, and it does not seem to interfere with their childish pastimes. About the time of the Chinese New Year Chinese children are particularly favored, and the fond fathers deny them nothing. The little ones always appear to be well provided with pocket-money to buy toys and candies.—St. Nicholas.

Statues of Corpses.

The pleasing possibility of transforming the dear deceased into a marble-like statue that may be set in a niche or on a pedestal was suggested to the members of the Academy of Sciences of Paris recently by Mr. Mortin, who read a paper detailing his discovery of a process of converting animal matter, before decomposition sets in, into a substance resembling marble, being sufficiently hard to allow of its being sculptured. He called the attention of the society to the possibility of his invention, which he has taken the precaution to patent, being utilized to preserve human bodies after death. Inasmuch as this marble-like substance can be sculptured, it is possible to remedy little physical defects that, unnoticed or at least not obtrusive in life, might detract from the attractiveness of a statue. This process is a step ahead of the St. Louis silver-plater who for ten years has been experimenting upon a plan to succeed embalming by hermetically plating in gold, silver or nickel the ancestors of such people as are willing to undergo the expense of having them decorated for future inspection.

Gold Ring in a Sturgeon's Nose.

Thaddeus Swizzle, an Eastern Shore fisherman, captured in his net on Thursday night last a sturgeon with a gold ring in its nose. The fish weighs about 60 pounds and the ring, which is fully 18 pennyweights, has evidently been in the strange resting place for several years, as the flesh was grown around it. Mr. Swizzle removed the ring with his jackknife and let the sturgeon go.

English Postal Orders.

More than 40,000,000 postal orders are now issued annually in England, and the amount thus sent through the post exceeds £16,000,000.

Lawyer—Do you think that you are capable of filling the position, young man? Boy—Capable! Why, my last boss said I knew more than he did. That is why I had to leave.—Vanity.

A woman never seems to have any good times until her husband dies, and she gets his life insurance.

Strengthening Iron.

It was formerly believed that cast iron, when subjected to long-continued shocks and jarring, became "crystallized" and brittle; but Mr. A. E. Outerbridge, Jr., of Philadelphia, has recently shown, by a series of experiments, that instead of being weakened, cast iron is really strengthened by repeated blows and concussions.

A Ghostly Cat.

An invention calculated to terrify mice and rats is described in Popular Science News. It consists of a metallic cat, which, being covered with luminous paint, shines in a dark room with a mysterious radiance which, the inventor thinks, will be more effectual than traps, or even genuine cats, in ridding houses of rodent pests.

Carnivorous Plants.

That such plants as "Venus' fly-trap" actually catch and squeeze to death flies and other insects alighting on their leaves has long been known, but the discovery is comparatively recent that the plants digest the softer parts of their prey by means of a peptic ferment secreted by the leaves. These, then, are real instances of plants feeding upon animals.

Marvellous Measurement.

At the recent "conversazione" of the Royal Society in London a pendulum instrument was exhibited, intended to record the slightest tilts and pulsations of the crust of the earth. It was asserted that this instrument would render observable a tilt of less than one three-hundredth of a second of arc. In other words, if a plane surface were tipped up only so little that the rise would amount to a single inch in a thousand miles, the instrument would reveal the tilting!

A Beach of Iron Sand.

On the western coast of the northern island of New Zealand immense deposits of magnetic iron sand are found. The sand is brought down by many streams from the slopes of Mount Egmont. The cliffs consist of a mixture of ordinary silica sand and iron sand, but the waves sweeping the beach carry the lighter silica sand away, leaving an almost pure deposit of iron sand fourteen feet in depth. Furnaces have been erected by which the sand is smelted and formed into pig iron.

Killed by Light.

Dr. James Weir, Jr., who has studied strange inhabitants of the Mammoth Cave in Kentucky, says that the celebrated blind fish from that cavern, when placed in illuminated aquaria, seek out the darkest places, and he believes that light is directly fatal to them, for they soon die if kept in a brightly lighted tank. The avoidance of light seems to be a general characteristic of the sightless creatures dwelling in the great cave. Doctor Weir has seen an eyeless spider trying to avoid the light, and animalcules from the waters of the cavern hiding under a grain of sand on the stage of his microscope. He thinks the light in these cases is in some manner perceived through the sense of touch.

An Air Tester.

An instrument for measuring the amount of impurity in the air of a room or shop was shown at the Zurich Industrial Exhibition recently. It consisted of a glass bulb containing a red liquid which turns white on contact with carbonic acid gas. The liquid in the bulb was kept from the air, but once in every 100 seconds a drop, drawn automatically from the bulb through a bent tube, fell upon the upper end of a stretched cord and began slowly to descend the cord. If the air was foul with carbonic acid the drop turned white at the upper end of the cord, and the purer the air the farther the drop descended before changing color. Alongside the cord ran a scale, like that of a thermometer or barometer, indicating the degrees of impurity of the atmosphere.

Queer Facts About Colors.

According to information given by a German officer to the Horse Guards' Gazette, an experiment was recently made in Europe to determine what color in a soldier's uniform is the least conspicuous to an enemy. Of ten men two were dressed in light gray uniform, two in dark gray, two in green, two in dark blue and two in scarlet. All were then ordered to march off, while a group of officers remained watching them. The first to disappear in the landscape was the light gray, and next, surprising as it may seem, the scarlet! Then followed the dark gray, while the dark blue and the green remained visible long after all the others had disappeared. Experiments in firing at blue and red targets, according to the same authority, proved that blue could be more easily seen at a distance than red.

Mausoleum in a Tree.

One of the most curious mausoleums in the world was discovered the other day in an orchard at the village of Noebdenitz, in Saxe-Altenburg. A gigantic oak tree, which a storm had robbed of its crown, was up for public auction. Among the bidders happened to be a Baron Von Thummel, scion of a family of ancient lineage that has given the world of literature one charming poet and the Fatherland many distinguished statesmen. The Baron, who lives on a neighboring estate, had ridden to the auction place quite accidentally. Finally the tree was knocked down to him for 200 marks. Upon his arrival at the castle he told an old servant of his purchase, describing the tree and its situation. The old servant said he remembered attending the funeral of a Bardon Thummel seventy or eighty years ago, and that the body had been buried in a 1,000-year-old oak, belonging to the parsonage. Investigation clearly proved that the orchard had once been the property of the village church, and that at one side of the old oak was an iron shutter, rusty and time-worn, that the people of the town had always supposed to have been placed there by some joker or mischievous boys. The iron shutter proved to be the gate to the mausoleum of Baron Hans Wilhelm Von Thummel, at one time Minister of the State of Saxe-Altenburg, who died in 1824, and wished to be buried "in the 1,000-year-old tree he loved so well." In the hollow of the tree Baron Hans caused to be built a sepulchre of solid masonry, large enough to accommodate his coffin. The coffin was placed there, as the church records show, on March 3, 1824, and the opening was closed by an iron gate. In the course of time a wall of wood grew over the opening, which had been enlarged to admit the workmen and the coffin, and for many years it has been completely shut, thus removing the last vestige of the odd use to which the old tree had been put.

BAGGAGE OF AMERICANS.

Luxurious but Compact, and Suited to Their Every Want.

While the Englishman traveling may have six or eight pieces of baggage, the American, who prefers to have his luggage in a compact form, may have but one. Instead of carrying his belongings in a number of separate packages he puts them in a trunk in which there are separate compartments for all necessary articles. In this trunk there is a place for his dressing case and a place for his silk hat and a place for his shoes. There are compartments for a dress suit and for other suits, and for shirts, and for underwear, and places for neckwear and other articles. Such trunks are made of sole leather, of rawhide, and of canvas, and of various sizes. An American going on a journey of considerable extent and duration might get all he desired to carry into one such trunk.

He would have a number of traveling bags to meet different requirements, and he would have also a small trunk for use upon occasion, perhaps upon a yachting trip; though he might carry aboard a yacht a bag or a larger trunk. For trips of a day or two, perhaps, into the country, he has a dress suit case. These cases are made nowadays of various dimensions, some of them to hold a number of suits. There is one deep dress suit case that has at one end a compartment for a silk hat; the sale of these is increasing somewhat, but still it is small altogether, such a case being rather cumbersome. The man going on a short trip where a high hat would be required, as, for instance, for a coaching party, would usually carry a hat case. Hat cases are made to carry, besides a silk hat, a derby hat and a soft hat; and hat cases are made in which two hats may be carried—a silk hat and a pearl hat, as well as a derby and a soft hot—and such cases are not very much higher than an ordinary hat case, the additional room required for the added hat being not so great as might seem necessary.

If he goes into hunting and fishing he has a hunting trunk made conveniently arranged to carry his shooting and fishing clothing and equipment, and with a compartment suitably fitted for his guns; his fishing rods are usually carried, however, in a sole leather case made especially for that purpose.—New York Sun.

Folly of Forest Destruction.

The devastation of forests still goes goes on in various parts of the country, which, unlike New York, and a few of the Eastern and Middle States, do not appreciate the value of trees. Unfortunately, this appreciation, even in the East, has come too late. It is proudly announced in a Western paper that a large syndicate has acquired possession of 40,000 acres of timber land in Northern Idaho. It is estimated that this area will yield more than 40,000,000 feet of white and yellow pine, red and white fir, cedar and tamarack. The arid waste which it will also yield is not taken into consideration in this estimate. Americans have too long looked upon trees as in their way unless they could be used to build fires or for commercial purposes. This was true a hundred years ago in Germany, but now a man who cuts down a tree must plant one to take its place, or suffer a penalty.

Victor Hugo's Youthful Work.

Victor Hugo, the great French poet and novelist, is famous everywhere. He began his literary career at the age of 13. At 16 he drew up his first novel in two weeks! The Academy at Toulouse crowned two of his odes that he wrote at 17. At 20 his first volume of poems was so good that he received a pension of $200 from the French Government; and you are all aware how he came to be one of the greatest, as well as one of the most popular, of the French poets. His patriotism was as great as his literary gifts. His life is one of the most interesting in the literary annals of France. I saw his funeral in Paris, in May, 1885, when he was followed to the grave by a concourse of sorowful people. The procession was miles in length. Few emperors or successful generals have had a more imposing burial, nor was ever man laid to rest who was more deeply, truly mourned than this grand and gifted Frenchman.—St. Nicholas.

"The Woods of Shorne."

Leaving the highway by a pretty lane, we are presently in a most magnificent wood, a vast cathedral of nature. Its columns are tall dark trunks of elm trees, supporting leafy, intersecting arches of golden green; its nave and transepts are carpeted with the softest moss, in which a footfall is silent; its screens are of hawthorn and honeysuckle; its chancel is strewn with the growing violets; and its chapels are adorned with rhododendrons and ivy. Through and upon it all floods the softened sunlight; over our heads sings a vast choir of birds; and around us the melodious hum of the bees sounds like soft organ notes. Here and there in the woods we come upon handsome, russet-plumaged pheasants strutting about, rabbits hopping fearlessly across the clearings, and squirrels scampering from tree to tree.—St. Nicholas.

Cushing's Heroic Deed.

In 1861, at the very beginning of our civil war, a young lad named William Barker Cushing entered the navy as a volunteer officer, though he had previously been through the Naval Academy at Annapolis. He was only 19 years old, but a braver or more reckless sailor never grasped a cutlass or stood by a gun. Never a fight but he was in the thick of it, never a battle but Cushing's name was mentioned in orders. He dared do anything that man dared. One dark night, at Plymouth, N. C., he took a boat's crew and, stealing quietly away, he crept up beside the Confederate ram "Albemarle" and taking the chances of almost certain death, he sank her by a torpedo fired from his steam launch. Then he fought at Fort Fisher with great bravery, and, what is ever rarer, he used sound judgment, securing for his command all the fruits of the victory.—St. Nicholas.

San Francisco Is Growing.

San Francisco is putting on city airs. The street committee decided last week not to permit the laying of plank sidewalks in the suburbs of the city hereafter. The walks must henceforth be of concrete or bitumen and at least three feet wide.

Speed at Which Blood Travels.

Human blood travels through the arteries from the heart at a speed of twelve feet per second.

Every man is more or less of a fool about some things.

AGRICULTURAL NEWS

THINGS PERTAINING TO THE FARM AND HOME.

Poultry and Egg Production Is Profitable—Influence of the European Wheat Crop—Working Horses Should Not Be Fed Grass—Farm Notes.

Profit in Chickens.

But few realize how profitable poultry and egg production can be made, provided as much time and attention is given to it as to many other less important vocations. Some one has decided that a hen can be kept for less than fifty cents a year, says Nellie Hawks in the Agriculturist. It is a poor specimen of a hen that will not lay ten dozen eggs a year. At the low price of 10 cents a dozen, this would leave a net profit of 50 cents. At this rate it will pay every farmer to keep a flock of hens and give them proper care. There is no danger of overproduction. As long as the United States annually imports millions of dozen of eggs, the market will not be glutted.

Fowls to be profitable must be given proper attention. Those running at large will almost take care of themseuves for a part of the year. They are our gleaners and economizers, for they every day convert into eggs what would otherwise go to waste. However, fowls in confinement need different treatment. Meat food must be supplied. The most satisfactory means of providing this is to secure a green bone mill and give them green-cut bone. This meat food, or at least some sort of a similar food, is almost an absolute necessity for yarded fowls. Tender green stuff is also valuable. Last fall I sowed a patch of rye for early spring "greens." Early this season a patch of oats was put into furnish green food after the rye had become too far advanced. Early each morning and every evening a basket of green stuff was cut with a pair of shears and given to them. The results have been most satisfactory. We have had lots of fertile eggs, and nice, thrifty, healthy fowls. It pays to raise chickens a d to attend to their wants and needs.

The Influence of the European Crop.

So far as this country alone is concerned the wheat situation would not justify the extremely low range of values which has been the rule of late. The winter wheat crop is certainly short, and the spring crop is not likely to be a large one on account of the reduced acreage. But in Europe the conditions are quite different, the outlook being very favorable for a good yield. We must remember, too, that in wheat production Europe means a good deal more than it once did. Even France has increased its production of wheat of late years, while Russia is an enormous exporter as compared with five or ten years ago. Evidently the abundance of wheat abroad, as reflected in our light export trade, is the chief influence which is keeping wheat prices in this country close to the low water mark.

No Grass for Working Horses.

It is a great temptation to cut some grass to feed either green or partly dried to the horses that have to work hard every day on the farm. It should be resisted, for grass will surely induce derangement in the digestive organs, which will make the horses too weak to do effective work. After the plowing is finished many farmers think the hardest work is over, but a horse cultivating all day will need good dry hay and grain no less than when plowing. The step is quicker in cultivating than in plowing, and requires quite as much muscular exertion to keep at it all day.

Late Peas for Home Use.

There is not generally a very good market for late peas, because after the first new peas have satisfied the appetites of lovers of this vegetable the price rapidly declines and it will not pay to grow and market it. But a fresh succession of peas until fall is very desirable, and it is easily in the power of every farmer to secure it by later plantings. The farmer ought always to have fresher vegetables and a longer season for them than the average city resident can expect. It is one of the advantages of country life that he should not only not forego but make the most of. It is hard work providing three palatable meals through the summer for men at work on the farm. A plentiful supply of green peas will furnish food that is not only palatable but nutritious.

Storing Apples in Boxes.

Square boxes with open tops and separated by cleats nailed across the corners so as to allow air to circulate over them are better than barrels to store apples in. We saw some recently in the fruit cellar of Dr. Fisher, of Fitchburg. The apples are put in these boxes in the orchard, loaded into wagons, and are then drawn to the cellar, where they are piled one above the other, nearly to the ceiling. The boxes are made to hold a full bushel each, and can be easily handled without disturbing the fruit. There is great injury to fruit even from the most careful handling. When the bloom is off, it can never be exactly what it was before. The square boxes take less room than the same quantity of apples would in barrels, and are much better than if put in bins, where the natural heating of the apples piled one upon the other induces rot, which once started quickly spreads. The boxes are made of solid boards, and are therefore heavier as well as more costly than the boxes used in harvesting potatoes.—Cultivator.

Horseless Carriages Not Yet Useful.

We once knew a man who worked for many years trying to solve the problem of perpetual motion, and he finally completed a machine that would run down hill. Those who have been working on horseless carriages seem to have met with a little better success, for their machines will run down hill and on the level, but on the up grade they are useless. A recent test in New York showed conclusively that these machines are not yet adapted to road work, as they cannot climb even moderate grades without the assistance of horses. There has been great improvement in them, however, and they may in time be further improved so as to be useful. But it does not seem likely that they will soon be made so good or so cheap as to displace horses, and the horse breeders who now go ahead as if they had never heard of a horseless carriage will probably not regret it.—Exchange.

Pigs, Not Hogs, Wanted.

Almost everybody now agrees with the little girl who said that clean little pigs are nice, but it was such a pity they would go and make hogs of themselves. Nobody nowadays wants the large hogs even for pork. As the hog is fattened largely on corn his digestion is injured, and the body becomes feverish and unhealthful. This, of course, affects not only the palatableness, but the healthfulness of the pork that the animal makes. Pig pork is more generally fattened in a reasonable way, feeding so as to keep the pig growing and its digestion good. For this reason pig pork is generally sweeter and more tender than pork from older hogs. But let a pig be stunted on corn feed, so that it fattens without growing, and its flesh though fat will lack the fine flavor that the flesh of a thirftily growing pig ought to have.

Then and Now.

In an interesting article Mr. Ingham concludes that farmers might succeed as well as they did forty years ago if they would be content to live as plainly as they did then. We do not like the idea of farmers living as they lived forty years ago. Comparison should not be made that way, but between farmers and other classes of people then and now. We presume that forty years ago farmers lived as well as did other people of the same resources, and they should now. The luxuries of those days are the necessities and comforts of to-day. Farmers as a class do not and should not deny themselves these things, and when it is necessary for them to do so to a greater extent than those engaged in other industries something is decidedly wrong. Strict economy is now a necessity with a great many farmers, and other people, too, but it does not and should not extend to the plainness of forty years ago.—Farmer and Stockman.

What Kind of a Man Are You?

We were recently shown some replies from local banks received by a large manufacturing house that was inquiring into the condition of farmers' credits, in all parts of the country. Some of the comment carried with it a world of suggestion, as will be seen by these extracts: "Sensible farmer." "A good man, makes money." "These are all successful farmers." "Substantial man, interested in all that advances the community.' "These men all make money every year and could name 100 others who do the same," says a report from Warrenton, Ga. "This man never renewed a note." "He has a fine looking place, but heavily mortgaged, is a good deal of a blow." "This farmer's word is as good as his bond." Which of such opinions would be expressed about you?—Farm and Home.

Poultry Remedies.

A farmer's wife gives the following remedies for the worst troubles the poultry has to contend with—cholera, roup, lice and diarrhoea: Plenty of room, healthy food, and at first sight of disease, for cholera, give one teaspoonful of carbolic acid in a gallon of water; diarhoea, one teaspoonful of tincture of Jamaica ginger in a gallon of water; for lice, one teaspoonful of sulphur in four quarts feed or mash; for roup, mix boracic acid with water so that it can be poured down the throat, give teaspoonful, and they will be cured.

The Best Soil for Rhubarb.

It requires high manuring to make rhubarb growing profitable, especially as most of the money to be made is from the very early cutting, and these must be grown on warm, sandy land, which is not generally very rich. The plant is a great consumer of nitrogen, and this is not supplied early in the season by coarse manure. Either the manure applied must be well rotted, so that it will have available nitrates, or these must be applied in the form of commercial fertilizers. The rhubarb is easily grown with coarse stable manure, but its price is always very low.

Well-Balanced Ration.

About one-fourth sheaf oats run through the cutter with the fodder makes an excellently-balanced ration, and will make the latter keep better in bulk when cut a little green, and solve the problem of early gathering, says Western Plowman. In the spring this feed can be wetted and mixed with bran, and makes a feed equal to ensilage.

Odds and Ends.

White spots upon tarnished furniture will disappear if a hot plate be held over them.

Half a pound of broiled beefsteak twice a day is the best tonic for nervous or rundown women.

A hot bath taken on going to bed, even on a hot night of summer, is a better cure for insomnia than many drugs.

A little powdered borax added to cold starch tends to give the linen extra stiffness, and a little turpentine put into the boiled starch adds luster.

If an upper pie-crust is brushed over with a little milk or egg before placing in the oven it will brown quickly and have a better color.

A handful of carpet tacks will clean fruit jars or bottles readily. Half fill the jars with hot soap suds, put in the tacks, cover, give vigorous shaking and rinse well.

The correct way to drain a wet umbrella is to stand it handle down. If put the other way the dampness remains in the center, where all the water collects and very soon rots the covering.

A raw egg swallowed immediately will generally carry a fish bone down which cannot be removed from the throat by the utmost exertion and has gotten out of reach of the saving finger.

Some people suffer very much from their eyes when peeling onions. It is said that if a steel knitting-needle is held between the teeth during the operation this discomfort will cease or be very much reduced.

A heavy flatiron, weighing seven or eight pounds, will do better work if it is passed over the clothes once with a firm, steady pressure than a lighter iron hurriedly passed over the clothes two or three times.

A Pause in Battle.

When the English, under the Duke of Wellington, were fighting with the French, commanded by some of Napoleon's famous marshals, in the Spanish peninsula, an interesting episode occurred during the battle of Talavera, fought on a hot day in July, 1809. The soldiers at a critical moment in the engagement ceased their firing, and with one accord met at a stream midway between the lines of battle, where they quenched their thirst, and filled their canteens before resuming the conflict. The day was so hot that human nature proved stronger than discipline or the authority of their commanding officers.—St. Nicholas.

What "Niagara" Means.

Niagara is a corruption of the Indian words Neagara, meaning "across the neck," an allusion to the strip of land between the lakes. The name has been subjected to as many as thirty changes since the discovery of the cataract.

Sometimes a man who has been to hell, and looks all around, breaks out.

If a man likes a hat when he buys it, the other men soon make him despise it.

FACING A GRIZZLY.

A Boy Kills an Angry Bear with a Blow of an Ax.

It was in September—and the Colorado sun had done its duty and made Phil as brown of face and stout of limb as any of us—that the geology class consisting of the professor and ten pupils, made an excursion into the range with the object of taking a practical lesson among the limestone beds at the back of Lincoln Peak.

Away we went—feeling very hilarious at the idea of making an independent expedition, even with Blinkers for a general—scrambling over rocks and fallen trees, chasing squirrels and chipmunks, throwing stones at birds and rabbits, and behaving generally just like what we were—a parcel of schoolboys.

Presently we emerged from the trees and came out upon another little open, park-like stretch of ground. Half-way across it our attention was suddenly attracted by a stir among some high grass, and out jumped a little, dark-colored, short-legged animal, which looked like a woolly pig—if there be any such thing in nature.

Away it scuttled, and away we all went, with a shout, in pursuit.

Phil happened to be some distance behind at the moment, being busily engaged in digging a tarantula's nest out of the ground with his knife; but as soon as he saw what we were doing, he came racing after us, shouting, "Look out! Look out! It's a——"

We did not hear what, we were making so much noise ourselves.

But the little animal, whatever it was, was too quick for us and disappeared into some willows, while we were still twenty yards behind. The next moment the willows waved and bent and out bounced a great she-bear—a grizzly!

With a yell of dismay we all turned and, scattering like a flock of sparrows when a cat jumps into the midst of them, fled for the nearest trees. Blinkers, quite forgetting that he was the general of the little expeditionary force, made such use of his long legs that he was safely up a tree before any of the rest of us had reached one.

As for me, I never reached one at all.

In turning to run I tripped over the ax, and though I was up again in an instant, the check made me the last of the fugitives.

The chase was soon over. In six jumps, it seemed to me, the great beast caught me, and, with one blow of her paw on the middle of my back, sent me, face downward, to the ground, with every atom of breath driven out of my body.

This last circumstance was a good thing for me; I could not have moved a muscle if I had wished to. Consequently the bear supposed that I was dead, and instead of tearing me up into small pieces, as I expected, she began sniffing me all over and turning me about with her claws.

Suddenly, however, she ceased and began to growl, and I heard Blinkers up in his tree call out, "Go back! You can't do any good. You'll only get yourself killed, too." From which I concluded that Blinkers and the bear had one thought in common; they both supposed me to be dead.

I was beginning to recover my breath a little by this time, and in my anxiety to see what was going forward I made a slight movement with one arm, and in an instant the bear had that arm between her teeth. It hurt me so horribly that I fainted, and all that happened afterwards I gathered from the other boys.

Phil, when he saw me knocked down, instead of climbing up a tree like the rest, ran back to where I had dropped the ax, and, picking it up, advanced to my rescue.

It was a mad thing to do, there is no doubt about that; but Phil did it—and without a thought of his own danger. It was in vain that Blinkers called to him to go back; he did not seem to hear, but kept coming on slowly, with his eyes fixed on the bear, and the ax held in readiness to strike.

The bear dropped my arm and advanced a step, standing across my body, growling and turning up her lips until all her great white teeth were exposed; but still Phil came on. At six feet distance he stopped. The bear took a step forward, and then another, and then, with all the strength of his body doubled by the intense excitement of the moment, Phil struck at her with such force and precision that he split her skull clean in two.

But, even in dying, the bear succeeded in doing some mischief.

With a last convulsive effort she struck out, and, with her great claws, tore away the front of Phil's coat, vest, and shirt, and made three deep cuts all across his chest from the left shoulder diagonally downward. Another inch and Phil must certainly have been killed. As it was, he stood for a moment swaying to and fro, and then fell forward upon the dead body of the bear.—St. Nicholas.

Imitation Seed Packages.

There seems to be no end of trouble to the Agricultural Department from the distribution of seed this year. The department has learned that requests have been made on commercial seedsmen for seed put up in papers similar to those used by the Government and printed in simulation thereof. Acting Secretary Dabney has sent out notices to a large number of seedsmen in regard to the matter, stating that the department cannot permit the Government seed contractors or any seedsmen to sell seeds in packets bearing the name of the Department of Agriculture, or any words which might cause the receiver of the packet to believe that it was a part of the Government seed distribution. No seed can be distributed free of postage through the mails except that delivered upon the orders of members of Congress by the Department of Agriculture, or sent out directly from the department. The act of March 3, 1875, confines the franking of seeds by members of Congress to those seeds which they receive for distribution from the Department of Agriculture.

A Chinaman Sees a Piano.

A Chinaman, lately returned from a trip to Europe, treated his countrymen to the following description of the piano:

"The Europeans keep a four-legged beast, which they can make sing at will. A man, or more frequently a woman, or even a feeble girl, sits down in front of the animal and steps on its tail, at the same time striking its white teeth with his or her fingers, when the creature begins to sing. The singing, though much louder than that of a bird, is pleasant to listen to. The beast does not bite, nor does it move, though it is not tied up."

Flower Perfumes.

It is claimed that the perfume of flowers disappears as soon as the starch in the petal is exhausted, and it may, it is said, be restored by placing the flower in a solution of sugar, when the formation of starch and the emission of fragrance will be at once resumed.

Every thoroughbred is able to make his own salad dressing.