

### BASKET FISH.

When Dried, the Quercus Arms Closely Resemble Plaster of Paris.

At its marine residence, away down in deep water, the name on the door plate would be "Astrophyton," and it belongs to a species called ophiurans. It has a well marked central disk, not unlike a clam, but has no shell. From this central body radiate arms, five in number, like those of the familiar starfish, and these arms are divided into minute branches, like the twigs on a tree, until they number in some cases a thousand separately defined hairlike tentacles. While the body is not large, the branches when extended measure about eighteen inches in diameter. The creature has the power of incurving these branches until it closely resembles a shallow dish. This it does when caught and about to die, remaining in that shape when dried.

It has been given the name of basket fish. It frequently (when caught by a dredge, for that is the only way it can be taken) throws off these arms or parts of them, so that a perfect specimen is hard to be procured in its natural condition.

These arms and their subdivisions are almost white when dried and closely resemble plaster of paris. They are very brittle, easily broken and cannot be repaired. The fish live among the roots of seaweeds and are supposed to feed upon these, moving about by wriggling and clambering with their arms or fastening upon the roots and pulling themselves along.

Most of the knowledge regarding their habits is conjecture, for none have been taken alive and kept for sufficient time to give them proper examination and study.—St. Nicholas.

### HOW TO KEEP YOUNG.

Be Hopeful, Avoid Worry and See the Amusing Side of Life.

Women more than men are possessed with a dread of growing old, not realizing that maturity has its charms and compensations. We wish young people of ever had it impressed upon them that they may provide for a happy old age by laying up a reserve of sound health and a store of happy memories as well as by cultivating tastes and resources which will outlast youth. As for those who are already approaching middle age, there is no surer way to grow old prematurely than to dread the future. It is essential, if we wish to keep young, to cultivate that hopeful habit of mind so characteristic of youth—the hope which makes one able to say with Browning, "The best is yet to come," and with Lucy Larcom, "Every year life is larger and deeper and more beautiful in its possibilities." Allied with this attitude of expectancy must be the ability to see the amusing side of life. Worry and vexation over what would better be laughed at result in disfiguring wrinkles. Above all, if the years bring us, as they should, a better understanding of ourselves, a broadening of active human sympathies, a firmer faith in Providence, we shall find life abundantly worth the living, no matter what may be the number of our birthdays.—Western Review.

### The Heart of a Child.

That which disparages us and quickens revolt is no less a factor in a child's emotional life. But there is this difference—we have the better opportunity to defend ourselves and to obtain reparation. So there is a certain pathetic pleasure in standing with humanity where its joys, its longings, its embarrassments and its disappointments are simplest and newest, and, perhaps, where impotency is absolute. Give me this most uncommercial, this divinest of enterprises for my own! Give me a child to be at home with, to be in absolute confidence with! If I cannot refashion my warped, wrinkled and discolored old soul into the unbiased graces and the ethereal purity of the spirit of the child, let me now and again open that little door and shut myself in that little heart, just for the sheer delight of it.—Patterson Du Bois in Success Magazine.

### Had For Tall Hats.

New Year's eve, which is sacred to St. Sylvester, is celebrated in Berlin by the blowing of tin horns, the ringing of bells and all other devices for making a noise. The only horse play indulged in is at the expense of the wearer of the silk tile. Any one on the street is privileged to bring his cane down on the crown of the offending headgear as hard and as often as he can. When the man with the dilapidated hat complains to the police the only consolation he gets is, "It serves you right for wearing it on Sylvester night."

### Low Down.

"You are anaemic," says the physician after thumping and prodding. "You should practice deep breathing." "Deep breathing!" retorts the patient. "Why, doctor, that is just what I do all the time. I work in a subway cellar sixty feet below the street level."—Judge.

### Insincerity.

Be honest with yourself, whatever the temptations. Say nothing to others that you do not think and play no tricks with your own mind. Of all the evil spirits abroad at this hour of the world insincerity is the most dangerous.—J. A. Froude.

### One Kind of Tanning.

"Pop!" "Yes, my son." "What kind of wood do they use most in tanning?" "Well, when I went to school, my boy, they used birch."—Yonkers Statesman.

Do not borrow trouble. The interest is too high.—Dallas News.

### THUNDER.

Odd Beliefs That Used to Exist in Days of Old.

Thunder, just because it is a noise for which there is no visible cause, has always excited the imagination of the unscientific, so it is natural that the most outrageous superstitions about storms should date back to the time when everybody, more or less, was unscientific. One old writer explains the belief of his day that "a storm is said to follow presently when a company of hogs raise crying home," on the ground that "a hog is most dull and of a melancholy nature and so by reason doth foresee the rain that cometh." Leonard Digges, in his "Prognostication Everlasting" (1556), mentions that "thunder in the morning signifies wind; about noon, rain, and in the evening, a great tempest."

The same writer goes on to say, "Some write (but their ground I see not) that Sunday's thunder should bring the death of learned men, judges and others; Monday's, the death of women; Tuesday's, plenty of grain; Wednesday's, bloodshed; Thursday's, plenty of sheep and corn; Friday's, the slaughter of a great man and other horrible murders; Saturday's, a general pestilent plague and great death." After this the gay and lightsome manner shown by Lord Northampton toward these grave matters in his "Defensive" is most cheering. "It chanceth sometimes," he writes, "to thunder about that time and season of the years when swannes hatch their young, and yet no doubt it is a paradox of simple men to think that a swanne cannot hatch without a crackle of thunder."—London Chronicle.

### A STUDY IN MILEAGE.

Almost Every Country Has a Standard of Its Own.

English speaking countries have four different miles—the ordinary mile of 5,280 feet and the geographical or nautical mile of 6,085, making a difference of about one-seventh between the two; then there is the Scotch mile of 5,528 feet and the Irish mile of 6,720 feet—four various miles, every one of which is still in use.

Then almost every country has its own standard mile. The Romans had their mille passuum, 1,000 paces, which must have been about 3,969 feet in length unless we ascribe to Caesar's legions great stepping capacity. The German mile of today is 24,318 feet in length, more than four and a half times as long as our mile.

The Dutch, the Danes and the Prussians enjoy a mile that is 18,440 feet long, three and a half times the length of ours, and the Swiss get more exercise in walking one of their miles than we get in walking five miles, for their mile is 9,153 yards long, while ours is only 1,750 yards. The Italian mile is only a few feet longer than ours; the Roman mile is shorter, while the Tuscan and the Turkish miles are 150 yards longer. The Swedish mile is six and a half times and the Vienna post mile is four and a half times the length of the English mile.—Pearson's Weekly.

### Wonderful Monastery.

At Solovetski, in the Russian government of Archangel, is the most remarkable monastery in the world. The monastery of Solovetski is inclosed on every side by a wall of granite bowlders which measures nearly a mile in circumference. The monastery itself is very strongly fortified, being supported by round and square towers about thirty feet in height, with walls twenty feet in thickness. The monastery consists in reality of six churches, which are completely filled with statues of all kinds and precious stones. Upon the walls and the towers surrounding these churches are mounted huge guns, which in the time of the Crimean war were directed against the British White sea squadron.

### Too Energetic.

"Last Saturday," said the fat dweller, "I went out into the hall and saw a woman on her knees scrubbing the marble very well, making it a beautiful dead white. I thought to myself, 'This is a good scrubwoman; I'll ask her to scrub my kitchen and clean my windows.' I did. She scrubbed all the paint off the floor of my kitchen and washed the panes of two windows entirely out."

"I was glad I didn't ask her to wash my face," she finished.—New York Press.

### When Honeymoon Ends.

"How," said the young man who had been in the matrimonial game for nearly a week, "can I tell when the honeymoon is over?"

"It will be over," answered the man who had been married three times, "when your wife stops telling things and begins to ask questions."—Chicago News.

### Social Danger.

So long as we have at the bottom of our social fabric an army of vagabonds, hand to mouth livers and slum dwellers, half starved, dirty, foul mouthed, so long are we in imminent danger. And it is want of work which makes recruits for this army.—Mirror.

### Tart Retort.

"Young man, you are better fed than taught," said the professor angrily. "Quite right, sir. My father feeds me," answered the student.—London Tit-Bits.

### Generous.

"You said that when we were married you would refuse me nothing." "I'll be still more generous. I'll not even refuse you nothing. I'll give it to you."

The first English work on anatomy was by Thomas Vicary, in 1548.

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### COCHINEAL.

The Way the Tiny Insects Live and How They Are Gathered.

Many millions of little beetles support the vast cochineal industries. Where the tiny cochineal insect comes from is something of a mystery, but he does come wherever the nopal plant grows and for a long time was thought to be a seed or a floweret of the plant. The living female insect is twice as large as the male, weighs one-tenth of a grain and loses much weight in drying, so that 70,000 are needed to make one pound. During the rainy season many millions of the creatures are drowned or washed off the plants, so that when the long dry summer comes there are but a few survivors on each plant. But these multiply so rapidly that before long the plants are covered. The last act of the female's life is to deposit a large number of eggs, on which her dead body rests, protecting them from the burning rays of the sun until the little ones emerge. In about six weeks after the beginning of the dry season comes the first harvest. The plantation laborers make the round of the nopalry and with a brush go over the entire plant, sweeping the creatures into a bag. They then are killed by immersion in hot water, by exposure to steam or by drying in hot ovens. The hot water or steam makes them a dark reddish brown or black cochineal. The hot ovens make them a red gray hue or silver cochineal. The females outnumber the males by at least 200 to 1, a fortunate fact for the planter, since the males are of no use to him whatever.

### THE CABS OF NEW YORK.

They Are Not an Integral Part of the Life of the City.

The cab is no integral part of New York life. Venice without the gondoliers were as unthinkable as a woman without hair. No little of London's compelling charm is in its swift rolling hansoms. These things we know. But one can't think of New York in terms of cabs. Once upon a time I was in exile. Only in memory did the great city rise before me, and what I saw was this: Huge canyons of stone and steel, filled with noise and darkness, through which great yellow worms crawled, one after the other, in mid-air. That is the picture of New York that haunts the exile, even as the outlawed Venetian is obsessed by slim black gondolas cutting across lanes of moonlight. Your true New Yorker is a steam projected, electrically carted person. Only in exceptional moments of gloom or gaiety does he ride "in a carriage and pair." He is carriage ridden to a funeral. He cabs it in winey moments, when the fear of God is not in him. There are only 2,000 licensed cabs and hacks on the island of Manhattan. Others there are, of course, plying piratically in the dark quarters, but even with these thrown in the reckoning is small. No; the New Yorker is not a cabby person.—Vance Thompson in Cutting Magazine.

### A College in Bokhara.

There lay behind the great arch and the domes and the minarets a retired precinct of ancient trees and shaded walks, a grove in the midst of a city, colonnaded in quadrangle by the pointed arches of the students' cells. Under the trees was a sort of summer house or pavilion. Two or three young men were walking in an avenue against the further colonnade, and on the stone steps of a wide, shaded pool sat several mollahs on their praying rugs. We visited a number of the students in their cells—monastic little brick walled rooms where they live the year around (there are no vacations in Mussulman colleges) and for years on end. It is not unusual for a student after passing the primary school to spend as much as fifteen or twenty years at his higher studies, though usually in such a long course he will go through several different colleges in the order of advancement. Quiet men, these students, mild eyed, patient, often middle aged.—Minneapolis Bellman.

### Girl Slaves in China.

A native writer in a Chinese publication remarks: "When a girl is sold in China she becomes the slave of her owner and a part of his property. She no longer retains her freeborn rights, but surrenders them all to the will of those who own her. She receives no compensation for her labor, but is obliged to accept such raiment and food as her owners may be pleased to give her. In cases of tyranny or gross cruelty she cannot appeal for redress. She may be resold, given away or cast off in the streets at the arbitrary will of her master. All freedom is denied her, and she remains a tool and chattel in the hands of her owner until she is sold again or until death releases her from her unwilling fate."

### Effects of Deafness.

An ear specialist insists that deafness affects all the senses. He says the reason for this is that the ear is only one servant of the sensory service of the human system. Loss of hearing is really a partial paralysis of the brain, but owing to the sympathetic connection of the various sensory nerve centers of the brain the others indirectly concerned have to combat for their very life the demoralizing influence of the affected center.

### Consideration of a Motorist.

We hold no brief for the motorists, says the Bystander, but "honor where honor is due." On a country road the other day we saw a motorist deliberately avoid running over an animal on the highway! To be exact, it was a circus elephant.—St. James' Gazette.

In the capital of Honduras all the houses in the poorer quarter are made of mahogany, which costs less than pine there.