

## BRITISH FIRE LADDIES.

The Appliances They Have, and the Causes of Fires.

The great city of London had within its corporate limits in 1891, 4,231,431 persons and about 2,000,000 in territory immediately contiguous; 557,134 is given as the number of brick and stone buildings in 1891, and the city has no wooden buildings. The number of fire alarms given in 1891 was 4,164, of which 1,029 were false alarms, 242 chimney alarms and 2,893 actual fires; 2,000 of these fires were confined to the floors where they originated and 184 extended beyond such floors, only six fires extended to adjoining property and only three extended beyond adjoining property. The London fire department consists of forty-seven land steam fire engines, ninety-five land manual fire engines, nine steam fire engines on barges, eight steam tugs, 105 hose carts, thirty-six miles of hose, with ladders, trucks, fire escapes and an abundance of alarms, telegraphs, telephones, etc., to render the service of its 706 firemen very efficient. Nineteen million gallons of water were used during the year at fires, one-third of which was taken from the river, canal and docks. The causes of fires are curious: Fifty-nine came from airing linen, 150 from candles, thirty-nine from children playing with fire and sixty-two from their playing with matches; sixty-one were caused by swinging gas brackets, sixty-nine from escape of gas, thirty-seven from curtains or blinds coming in contact with lights; 104 originated from hot ashes, 290 from spirit lamps (206 of them being from upsetting such lamps); 100 came from sparks of fire and thirty-eight from improperly set stoves.

## WALKING IN CIRCLES.

Why Is It That Lost People Invariably Do This?

The fact that people lost on a desert or in a forest invariably walk in a circle is due to a slight inequality in the length of the legs. Careful measurements of a series of skeletons have shown that only ten per cent had the lower limbs equal in length, thirty-five per cent had the right limb longer than the left, while in fifty-five per cent the left leg was the longer. The result of one limb being longer than the other will naturally be that a person will unconsciously take a longer step with the longer limb, and consequently will tend to the right or to the left, according as the left or right is the longer, unless the tendency to deviation is corrected by the eye.

The left leg being more frequently the longer, as evidenced by measurement of the skeleton, the inclination should take more frequently to the right than to the left, and this conclusion is quite borne out by observations made on a number of persons when walking blindfolded. Further, on the measurement of the arms, it is found that in seventy-two per cent the right arm is longer than the left, while in twenty-four per cent the left arm is the longer, showing that a considerable majority of persons are right-handed and left-legged. The inequality in the length of the limb is not confined to any particular sex or race, but seems to be universal in all respects.

## Oysters on Trees.

Lymax Belding, the naturalist, has returned from a long hunting trip in the vicinity of Murray's camp, California. Speaking about an article which was published recently concerning the claims of Halfmoon bay, which live in rock, he said: "That's nothing. I've seen oysters growing on trees. That is not an uncommon sight in Lower California around La Paz bay. A dwarf tree called the Maule tree grows at the water's edge. The trunk is always a foot up on the trunk and at high tide the tree is covered. Oysters grow on these trees, and when the tide is out you can see scores of them on the branches."

## The Health Food People.

It is hard to follow all the advice which the health food people are in the habit of giving. "Be sure and boil milk and water before drinking them" is the exclamation of one wing. "When milk and water are boiled their most valuable nutritive properties are destroyed" retorts the other wing. "Melt butter to the boiling point before eating it," said the London Lancet recently, "for there may be more bacilli in a piece of butter than there are inhabitants in Europe." "Don't eat butter that has been cooked," it is a deadly poison in the system," earnestly exclaims a health food journal.

## Quail Are Easily Tamed.

Peter Landin has been in the habit of throwing out feed near his house for a flock of quail. When a late storm commenced he put the feed under a box up against the house. The quail took shelter under the box, when Mr. Landin took them into his house, where they enjoyed the warmth to the full. One remained in the house for several days, refusing to go out and join the others till the storm was over. These quail are the special pets of Mr. Landin, and were unto the person that molests them. He pets them so they will clean the dishes from his farm.

## Traced Her in a Dream.

Through a dream, or sort of second sight, John Russel, a Brooklyn navy-yard employe, is said to have located and brought to her home 18-year-old Florence Berry, of 19 Fulman street, Brooklyn. The girl disappeared from her home a month ago, after quarrelling with her mother. No trace of her could be found till Russel in a dream, saw her in Newark. Going to the spot he traced her to New York, found her and restored her to her home. He claims to have accomplished many similar feats of second sight.

## FROM AN OLD CABINET.

Some Quaint Recipes Handed Down From the Eighteenth Century.

They had excellent dishes in the eighteenth century, methinks, where nothing was stinted in the way of generous adjuncts. The stewing of a carp required "three half-pints of good port wine." Haunch of venison, jugged hare, mock turtle, and every stew and hash demanded their libations of wine. Some of the sauces worthy of note, such as vine-leaf sauce with roast pigeon; but who wants now to make frumenty, mead, shrub or carnation sirup? There is in this same book the recipe of a sauce which by some other name—for its own is too shocking—might prove, if tried, a rival to that of the "deceased Worcestershire nobleman." It is called "Quin's Blood" and is simply as follows: "Take two dozen of anchovies, two dozen of shalots, a pint of walnut pickle, a pint of mushroom pickle, a pint of port wine and one teaspoonful of cayenne pepper; boil it together, strain it off and bottle for use."

Was the name-giver of this sauce, I wonder, Quin, the actor who taught George III. elocution, and who, when he heard that the monarch had delivered his first speech from the throne very gracefully, exclaimed: "Ay, it was I who taught the boy to speak." Poor boy! they had not taught him much in his young days, as he had good cause to feel afterward. Quin lived some years in Bath and died there in 1766. That town being the social capital of the West and the center of fashion, the country ladies went there to remodel their clothes and pick up such novelties as they could find in culinary and other recipes, and most probably this one came from there.

A prescription for a cough accompanied by weakness ends up with the injunction that the patient should "be merry and keep from sad apprehensions." Thus recommendation evidently suggested the insertion of a doggerel couplet.

"Joy and temperance and repose  
Slain the door on the doctor's nose."

## SIXTY YEARS AGO.

The Same Complaint Was Made Against Large Hats at the Theatre.

"There is nothing new under the sun." Liven to this masculine wail which was printed in the New York Mirror, February 12, 1831. Sixty-two, and its echo is still resounding in the newspapers of to-day:

"The women! They come to the theatre with hats on their heads big enough to overshadow a little German principality. Nobody that has the misfortune to sit behind one of these need ever expect to see the stage, or, indeed, anything but feathers and bows, and unpronounceable fripperies. If they would only keep this prodigious concentration of incongruous matter still, it would be something; one might occasionally get a peep by moving from side to side, or dodging under the disk of the prodigious luminary. But this seems quite impossible—the majestic object is perpetually in motion—shaking, and nodding, and nodding this way and that; so that all attempts to avoid it are as futile as those of some unfortunate mariner trying to get round Cape Hatteras in a gale. I have such trials of skill with these hats as would amaze you, but all in vain. They form a perpetual screen between me and the stage, of which I have not had a full view since the invention of these unbecoming, unlaiklike appendages. —"Laurence Lonesome."

## Inappropriate Remarks.

"Some day," said the benignant old gentleman from abroad who was visiting the Sunday school and had been invited to talk to the children, "many of the bright and smiling faces I see before me will have become sobered with grave responsibilities that life brings to us all. There may not be a future president of the United States among you, children, but other positions of honor and trust may await you, and I venture the prediction that some of the boys to whom I am now talking will live to become members of the legislature." There was a moment of horrified silence, and then the superintendent said in a strained voice:

"I beg your pardon, sir, but you forget you are now in the state of New York."

## His First Opportunity.

In an Eastern city, recently, two physicians were walking together on the street, when one of them lifted his hat to a lady whom they met. "A patient?" asked the other. "Oh, in a way," answered the first doctor; "I treated her the other day for a small difficulty." "What was it?" "A wart on the nose." "And what did you prescribe?" "I ordered her to refrain absolutely from playing the piano." The other doctor was astonished. "Ordered her to leave off playing the piano—for a wart on the nose! Well, I can't understand your treatment." "If you knew the circumstances, you would," said the first doctor; "she occupies the flat just under mine."

## At Bull Run.

For the first time since the war period, a squadron of cavalry is now quartered near Washington, on the old Lee estate, "Arlington." Since their arrival in the East, the troops have been sent in turn to various Virginia battle-fields. Recently one of these troops, on the march, halted near a farm-house, and the captain, in conversation with the owner, remarked that he was going to the Bull Run battlefield and would remain there over Sunday. The farmer's daughter, seated near by on the piazza, began to laugh, and when asked for an explanation, said: "Well, captain, yours will be the first union soldiers who have stayed there that long."

## WHY HE DISLIKED HAM.

He Was Surfeited With It During the Johnstown Flood.

"If there is one thing on earth that I can't eat it's ham," said Charles A. Morton of Pittsburgh. "And I used to be a great lover of it, too. I'll tell you how I came to take such a dislike to it. It was during the Johnstown flood excitement. I was in the newspaper business at the time, and, with the other boys, I was sent up there. For the first couple of days, when there was nothing to eat, it was pretty tough, and we all swore to eat everything we could lay our hands on if we ever came within the sight of food again."

"Well, the first day the relief train got up there it was laden with ham sandwiches, and the way we put them out of sight was a caution. You'd see a man coming away from the train with a sandwich in each hand and another in his pocket. The next day it was the same way."

"On the third day the ham sandwiches began to pall a little, and on the fourth they had become absolutely tiresome. We had had more of it than we could stand. Still, we must eat, and there was nothing else to eat, and we had to stuff the ham into us. It got so that it was an awful dose, and many of us went without ham sandwiches until we got so hungry that we were compelled to eat. When we got away from Johnstown and got to where we could eat something we thanked God sincerely. Since that time I have never been able to compel myself to eat a ham sandwich, and I think the sight of one would sicken me. There is such a thing, you know, as being surfeited even with food."

## THE GROWTH OF AN OYSTER.

Each Overlapping Layer of Shell Means a Year of Age.

The oyster at the commencement of its career is so small that 2,000,000 would only occupy a square inch. In six months each individual oyster is large enough to cover half a crown, and in twelve months a crown piece. The oyster is its own architect, and the shell grows as the fish inside grows, being never to small.

It also bears its age upon its back, and it is as easy to tell the age of an oyster by looking at its shell as it is that of horses by looking at their teeth. Everyone who has handled an oyster shell must have noticed the successive layers overlapping each other. These are technically termed shots, and each one marks a year's growth so that by counting them the age of the oyster can be determined.

Up to the time of its maturity—that is, when four years of age—the shots are regular and successive, but after that time they become irregular and are piled one upon another, so that the shell becomes bulky and thickened. Fossil oysters have been seen of which each shell was nine inches thick, whence they may be guessed to be more than 900 years old.

One to two million oysters are produced from a single parent, and their scarcity is accounted for by the fact that man is not the only oyster-eating animal. The starfish loves the oyster and preys upon it unceasingly. A variety of whelk is also very fond of young oysters, to get at which he bores right through the shell and sucks the fish up through the hole thus made.

## A WORK ROOM.

Every House Should Have Such an Apartment in It.

No matter how large or how small your house may be, there should be one room set apart for a sewing room where all appliances for work should be kept, and which may be shut against all of the outside world.

If ever such a room is appreciated it is when the dressmaker comes on her half yearly or quarterly visit, and where together you plan and work without danger of interruption.

The room need not necessarily be large, but it should be light and sunny, and should have a large closet, fitted with plenty of roomy drawers. If there is a carpet on the floor, cover it with linen, so that the threads and scraps may be easily gathered up. Place the sewing machine to the right of the window, and have a good-sized table upon which cutting may be done. Have low, comfortable chairs, and a big family work basket. The darning bag and all the conveniences for work should be kept in this room, and not be allowed to overflow in any other part of the house.

In this way all evidence of labor will be kept out of sight of the men of the family, who are not over and above fond of seeing too much of the domestic machinery.

Once such a room is established, you will wonder how you ever got along with out it, and the positive luxury it affords you will more than repay you for what trouble and expense you may have had in fitting it up.

## His Father Not a Worker.

In one of the grammar schools in New York is a boy who has a great admiration for his father. His father's word is law to him, though he pays not the slightest attention to anything that his mother may say. This bright young one was very much disgusted by the question put to him by his teacher when he first entered the grammar school. After giving his name to the teacher he was asked: "What is your father's occupation?" "What's that?" was his reply, in a mystified tone.

"What is your father's business? What does he do?"

"Do? Why he don't do nuthin'. He just bosses, see?" the boy answered in a most aggravated way.

The boy's father is a foreman in Superintendent Brennan's street cleaning department, and his son had seen him directing the men under him and so considered it an insult that any one should suppose that his father worked like ordinary mortals.

## TOP-STORY KITCHENS.

Servants Object to Them and Consequently They Must Go.

The plan of building houses with kitchens at the top, however advantageous it may be in keeping unsavory odors from the rest of the house, is not likely to become general in Washington.

When the Metropolitan club was built some six or eight years ago, it was the first building in town of any size to have the top floor given over to the uses of a kitchen. At the time the subject was discussed pro and con, and many prophesied that the new idea would be generally followed.

Time has proved the fallacy of those predictions, as the buildings which have since been constructed on a similar plan are few and far between, while in private houses there are no kitchens on the top floor, except in the handsome brown-stone residence erected by ex-Senator Palmer.

Last winter the property was leased by secretary and Mrs. Elkins, who, though otherwise pleased with the pleasant, sunny house, experienced no end of trouble because the kitchens are on the top floor.

The servants object, as they are cut off from all intercourse with their friends, who remain away rather than mount so many flights of stairs.

At the Metropolitan club the cooks, with their white caps and aprons, present a most attractive appearance during warm afternoons, when assembled for a chat in the balconies under the eaves.

Whatever may be said for or against kitchens in that portion of the house, they will certainly never be popular with the majority of servants who do not relish the opportunity thus afforded for looking down on humanity in general.

## A CURE FOR RHEUMATISM.

It Wasn't Intended as Such and Was a Caution to the Patient.

"Talk about sick men in a hotel," said a veteran hotel clerk. "Let me tell you of an experience we had with a fellow not long ago. He came to the house all right, but he took a heavy cold, and it seemed to go into a sort of rheumatism and settled in his shoulders. The poor fellow suffered awfully, and couldn't lift his hand to save his life. He sent for a doctor, and, of course, got a prescription which didn't do him a particle of good. One of the bell-boys heard that witch-hazel was a good thing, and seeing a bottle of it in one of the rooms, brought it in to the sick man. The fellow was glad enough to try anything, and the bell boy rubbed him with it manfully. About two hours after rubbing the sick man felt the thing begin to burn, and word soon came to the office that he felt as if he were all afire. I went up and found him in awful pain. I asked him the cause of it, and he pointed to the witch hazel bottle. I looked at it and found that it was an old bottle filled with furniture polish. There was a state of things. Finally the fellow in his pain, commenced to limp about the room, and as he did so he would throw his arms over his head. In about an hour's time the burning stopped, and his rheumatism was gone. He had a few blisters to take care of but he was so glad to get the use of his arms that he never made a kick. Funny cure, wasn't it?"

## UNLUCKY THIRTEEN.

It Wasn't the Toughness of the Beef, But Its Associations.

He walked into the restaurant with a yearning, half-famished look in his eyes. It was not the finest restaurant in the city, but he seemed oblivious of the fact as he eagerly scanned the bill of fare. "Bring me some mutton chops," he said to the obsequious waiter. "I can't," replied the waiter. "Why not?" "Cause dey's all gone any more!" "Then get me a beefsteak and be quick about it!" The beefsteak was a demoralized-looking specimen and of adamant consistency. The waiter watched him gleefully as he hacked off a corner and conveyed it to his mouth. There was a suppressed groan. Our hero had broken a tooth in an ill-advised attempt at mastication. "Is you superstitious, sah?" inquired the waiter. "No. Why do you ask?" "Cause you is de thirteenth pussop wot tried to eat dat erdential piece of beefsteak, and none of 'em couldn't do nuthin' wid it. I know sumfin' were agwine to happen, shuah!"

## The Artfulness of the Ant.

Like many other insects, the ant is very fond of sugar, to obtain which it employs a skill that is almost incredible. An observer thought he had protected his sugar basin from the attentions of a number of ants by placing it in the center of the vessel full of water. To his amazement, however, he found that they got at the sugar by climbing up the wall of the room to the part of the ceiling that was just over the basin. From this spot they allowed themselves to fall among the sugar. Several that were carried by the draught past the bowl fell into the surrounding water, and would all have been drowned but for their mates, who succeeded in rescuing them. The truth of this singular occurrence is vouched for by the witness of it.

## Tallahassee's Street-Car System.

The street-car system of Tallahassee, Fla., consisting of one car, is operated by a negro and a mule, both of whom live only to please the people. If the car happens to be going one way and a passenger wants to go in an opposite direction he has only to say so and the mule is immediately hitched to the other end and the car started in the desired direction.

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