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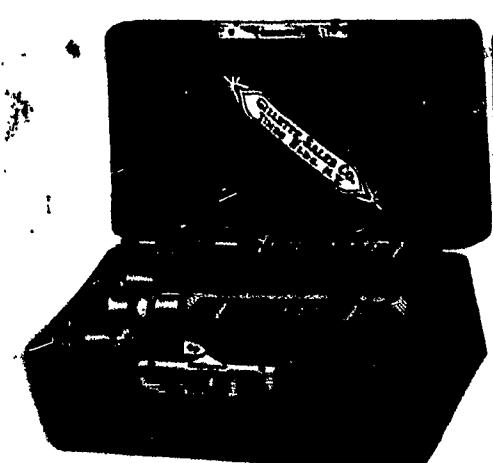
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GLOVES IN EARLY DAYS.

Took the Man's Place and Was Made to Represent Him.

In the early days everything was not regulated for the people, as it is now, by the Government and the law courts. Europe was still young then, and people had rough and ready means of dealing with one another, of buying and selling or giving goods and property and settling disputes. A glove, as it was very close indeed to a man's hand, came in course of time to be looked upon as taking the place of the hand itself, and some times took the man's place and was made to represent him.

For example, to open a fair it was necessary then to have the consent and protection of the great lord in whose country it was going to be held. Those who wished to open the fair would come to the nobleman and petition him to be present. He might be very busy, or bored at the idea of having to go, yet he would know that it must be opened or his people would be discontented. So he would say to the leaders of the people: "No my trusty fellows, I can't open the fair in person, but I will send my glove to do it. You all know my glove Nobody has one like it in the country. It is the one my lady mother embroidered for me in colored silks and silver wire, and it has a deep violet fringe. You can hang it above the entrance of your fair grounds as a sign that you are acting with my permission. If anyone disputes your right or touches his master's glove I will attend to him; that's all!" So the glove would travel in state to open the fair.

In the Nitrate Country.

In his Commercial Traveller in South America, Frank Wiborg writes: "We stopped at a number of the nitrate towns, Pisagua, Iquique, Antofagasta, and I visited some of the mills or oficinas in order to see something of the industry. Deposits of the crude nitrate of soda, called here 'caliche,' are found in the pampa or rolling plateau beyond the first range of foothills. In some places this plateau is but ten miles from the coast, in others as far as fifty miles. The pampa is an utterly barren desert. On the surface there is nothing to tempt the heart of man, but a few feet down lies the nitrate stratum. This presents much the appearance of rock salt and varies in color, according to the purity of the deposit, from a whitish tint to a dark gray. The upper earth is blown away with dynamite and then the caliche is dug out with pick and shovel, loaded on iron carts and carried up to the mills.

Here the caliche is first broken into small pieces by heavy crushers and then put into large boiling vats. Inside these vats are coils of steam pipes, by means of which the temperature can be regulated accurately. Sea water is poured in and the caliche is boiled for a certain time. The liquid solution that results is drawn off into settling vats, which are exposed to the open air and the sun. Evaporation is rapid and the pure nitrate of soda soon begins crystallizing and settling to the bottom. After this has gone on for some time the remaining liquid is drawn off and the crust of nitrate is scraped from the sides and bottom of the vat and thoroughly dried in the sun. Then it is graded according to quality and packed for shipment in 100-pound sacks.

Most of the nitrate exported is used as a fertilizer, but a part goes to the manufacture of powder and high explosives. The nitrate towns are even barer and drier and less inviting than most of the other arid, dry towns of the coast. To some of these fresh water is brought in pipes from a distance of more than 100 miles. Before the day of these pipes it used to be sold in the streets by the gallon. That water even now, though not scarce, yet is not plentiful. It perhaps some excuse for the awful dust that blows everywhere."

Sir Walter Scott's Books.
Of all the modern writers Sir Walter Scott has the largest place in that gigantic work, the British Museum catalogue. Scott has a larger number of entries under his name than any other author save Shakespeare, who has two volumes devoted exclusively to him.

Valuable Animal Skins.
Barcelona is an important market for the supply of sheepskins. The finest skins are collected in the province of Catalonia. Not only are they of good quality, but they are, as a rule, more carefully fayed and stacked than those obtained in other parts of Spain.

Withstanding Temperature.
Men and dogs are the only kinds of living creatures that can stand an instantaneous change from Arctic cold to tropical heat without losing their health or suffering deterioration.

Vessels Lost at Sea.
Two thousand vessels of all sorts disappear in the sea every year, never to be heard from, taking 12,000 human beings and involving a money loss of \$100,000,000.

Gems in a Diadem.
The gems in the diadem of the Russian empress are worth \$20,000. They comprise 2,636 diamonds and a massive ruby.

In the Sahara Desert.
In Sahara the temperature rises to 150 degrees in the daytime and sinks below the freezing point at night. There is no such variation in the great American desert.

HOW ANTS MAKE THEIR TOILET.

Movements Carried On During Sleep and Waking Hours.

During sleep the ant's body is quite still. Occasionally may be noted a regular lifting up and setting down of the forefeet, one leg after another, with almost rhythmic motion. The antennae also have a gentle, quivering, apparently involuntary movement, almost like breathing. The soundness of slumber was frequently proved by applying the feather end of a quill. The feather tip is lightly drawn along the back stroking "with the fur." There is no motion. Again and again this action is repeated, the stroke being made gradually heavier. Still there is no change. The strokes are directed upon the head, with the same result. Then the feather is applied to the neck with a waving motion intended to tickle it. The ant remains motionless. Finally the sleeper is aroused by a sharp touch of the quill. She stretches out her head, then the legs, which she shakes also, steps nearer to the light, yawns and begins to comb her antennae and brush her head and mouth. Then she clambers over her sleeping comrades, dives into an open gangway, and soon has said "Good morning" to another tour of duty. Be it well noted, however, that she has gone to work, as she and all her fellows always do, not only rested, but with her person perfectly clean.

WHY FRUITS COOL THE BLOOD.

Due to Large Amount of Citric Acid They Contain.

In health the temperature of the blood is constant, and even when spots and rashes appear on the skin, there is no departure from the normal temperature unless there is a cause for fever, such as blood-poisoning, the invasion of some microbe or serious disturbance of the nervous system. In fevers, when the temperature of the blood is raised, vegetables are never given, as they would not cool the blood, but might help to heat it.

Some fruits have cooling properties, as they contain citric acid, and this forms citrates in the blood and increases the perspiration. In serious fevers, however, it is much safer to give measured quantities of citrates to produce this effect than to trust to the uncertain action of fruit.

Fruit and vegetables are anti-scorbutics that is to say, they are opposed to scurvy. The primary cause of this disease is not clearly understood, but it is immediately due to an absence of these wholesome constituents from the diet. The flushing of the skin, with spots and rashes, popularly called "beating of the blood," is relieved and effete matter is eliminated by their use. Hence the popular phrase that "they cool the blood."

Heads By Light of a Sausage

Professor Hans Mollisch of Prague, according to the London Mail, has been able to read a newspaper by the microbic glow emanating from a sausage.

All meat beef as often as in fifty-two cases out of 100 and veal in fifty out of 100 contains the microbe, which projects a greenish-white light. With sausages it is not so frequent, but is, when present, stronger. When the fat on the luncheon sausage was scraped away it immediately ceased to give forth light, but as soon as the surface had again been covered by the fat oozing from the interior the light re-appeared.

Professor Mollisch asserts that the presence of these microbes in meat is no sign of decay, but rather the contrary, as in no case have they been found in meat unfit for human consumption.

A King's Remarkable Crown.
King Charles of Roumania, wears a remarkable crown. It was fashioned, in accordance with his wish, of steel from a Turkish gun captured at Plevna, as a remembrance to all time of the achievements on the battle fields of Bulgaria, and of the fact that the new kingdom was not hampered by traditions. At his coronation, when he took the crown in his hands King Charles said, "I assume with pride this crown, wrought from a cannon sprinkled with the blood of our heroes and consecrated by the church. I accept it as a symbol of the independence and power of Roumania." The queen's golden crown is also without jewels or ornaments.—London Exchange.

The Shah's Museum.
The Shah of Persia has an extraordinary museum in Teheran, his capital. It is supposed to contain the presents his majesty has received from foreign potentates, but the exhibits include a hand-glass marked "Price 3s." and some fans ticketed "64d." Probably these were purchases made by the Shah when in Europe, but they must give the Persian rather a curious notion of the generosity of European sovereigns.

Loneliest Railway Station.
The loneliest railway station in the world is situated on the Sudan Military Railway, in the heart of the great Nubian Desert. It consists of a couple of mud huts, a signal box, a well, and one or two outhouses. A train is only seen at this station twice a week.

World Supply of Elderdown.
Most of the world's supply of elderdown is produced by Iceland, the annual sale amounting to a little over 7,000 pounds which is shipped to Copenhagen and sold for about \$2.50 per pound.

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RAILROAD NOTE.
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References: Dr. E. L. Scharf, Prop., The Catholic News Agency.

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