

## ORDER MADE SKELETONS

French Factory Has Been at Work 120 Years.

### BRANCH IN NEW YORK

Conducted Under Government Supervision and a Monopoly—Its Wares Supplied to Medical Schools and Similar Institutions in Many Lands—The Workmen.

Physicians, hospitals, museums and medical schools must have human skulls and bones, as well as completely articulated skeletons of adults and children. But whence do these come?

For reasons which need not matter here it is stated that France is the great skeleton producing country, and Paris the gay city of light, is the center of the traffic. The business is naturally conducted with secrecy. The ordinary inquirer would be able to learn but little of it, says the New York Sun.

The skeleton factory, according to the information obtained by an investigator with exceptional facilities, is under Government supervision and the proprietor is a rich man, this business being his monopoly. It is said that he has one branch in London and another in New York, with separate departments for ordinary taxidermy and the skeletonizing of animals and birds.

To this factory are sent the bodies of criminals from the dissecting schools, and also many specimen bodies of different races sent home by travellers and explorers. The first stage of treatment occupies several months, and the chemicals used in the various processes, and also for whitening and preserving the bones, are trade secrets.

The stock rooms are no place for a nervous person. Here are shelves full of skulls of all sizes, shapes and races, which by accident or in the interests of science have been broken into pieces and naturally put together again with brass wire.

You will see capacious drawers filled with small bones and heaps of ribs with still larger bones lettered and numbered. In an adjoining room dozens of workmen are piercing the bones and preparing them for the wires.

Passing through the laboratory and warehouse, where one sees stacks of wire of various thicknesses, with springs of all varieties and size, as well as stands for mounting the skeletons and tools for putting them together, you reach the rooms where the final work is done.

It is here the bones are united. Here is a man articulating hands or feet, while his neighbors are repairing skulls or fastening springs to various parts. Completed limbs and skulls are carried into an adjoining room, where the entire skeleton is put together and finally mounted on a stand or attached to an iron rod. Others, again, have a ring inserted into the skull so that they may be suspended from the ceiling.

Next comes the packing room where the skeletons are carefully boxed and despatched to their destination, while others are placed in stock for selection by intending purchasers. The showroom here is a fine, large, light apartment, lined with glass cases that show specimen skeletons of giants and dwarfs, negroes and yellow men, as well as criminals that have their name, date of execution and record of crime on attached labels.

There are skeletons of men and women and children of all ages. In great chests of drawers in the center of the showroom are skulls of every age and variety, as well as wired hands and feet.

Naturally strange stories attach to some of these things. One skeleton was that of a fine young fellow who had only been married a few months when he met with an accident and was taken to the hospital. One leg was amputated, but he had besides received very severe internal injuries that made his case hopeless.

On being informed that he could not live, he sold his body for \$50, which sum was handed over to his wife, who came from Brittany to say farewell, and after an affecting parting, left the hospital with the price of her husband's body in her hand. As a matter of fact this selling of bodies by the living is far more common than one might think.

In England, since the passing of the Anatomy acts of 1832 and 1871, the bodies of persons dying unclaimed in almshouses and hospitals are said to have proved quite sufficient for the needs of the medical and surgical professions. A skeleton factory or two existed some years ago in London, but little appears to be known of such institutions now. To all inquiries the evasive reply is returned: "We get our bones from abroad."

The French factory, by the way, is said to have been in existence more than 120 years, and all the workmen engaged there must have served at least five years in the dissecting schools of the French metropolis.

#### Pay for Stolen Coat.

The Honorable Mrs. Brestford, better known by her stage name, Kitty Gordon, recovered from an insurance company \$5,000 in an English court, the value of a fur coat stolen from her trunk when she was on her way from New York to England.

## His Admirable War Work in the Japanese Service.

It was in 1884 that a Prince of Sweden, whose name history does not reveal, visited Japan as a guest of the nation. A graduate of the military schools of Europe, the visitor was reputed to be one of the leading Princes of his time in skill as a military strategist and tactician. There was detailed as his escort a quiet-spoken staff officer of the Mikado's army, a man with the tactfulness of a Grant and the face of a Sheridan. As he was completing his visit, the Prince turned to his escort and said:

"I thought I had learned all that there was to know of tactics and strategy, but you have shown me that there was much more knowledge to be obtained on military matters than can be had in the schools of Europe. Taking your schooling from us you have greatly improved on everything that we taught."

The staff officer to whom the Prince paid this high compliment was Gen. Ite Kuroki, the now celebrated warrior who commanded the First Army Corps in the war with Russia, and who rendered such conspicuous service that Field Marshal Oyama referred to him as his strong right arm.

Born sixty-two years ago in Satsuma, the "Sparta of Japan," Kuroki at an early age entered the military service of the Mikado, and rose grade by grade from the lower ranks, attaining in 1894 the rank of Lieutenant General. This was the year of Japan's war with China, and in that conflict Kuroki commanded the Sixth Division of the invading army. It is related that his division had been scheduled to be the last one to be embarked for the invasion of China, and that Kuroki chafed so much over the inaction that he fretted himself into a state of illness. But immediately the troops were landed and the smoke of battle began to roll from the front, all of Kuroki's illness vanished and he joyously exclaimed: "Ah, this makes me well again."

From the very beginning of the war with Russia, Kuroki halted the world's attention by the display of his military skill. Then it was that people began to inquire more closely about this warrior whose military genius shone resplendent. Efforts were made to trace his origin, and although the inquirers found little assistance from the silent soldier, it was finally ascertained that he was of Polish origin. A nephew of the General, who was then pursuing his studies in Europe, wrote a letter in which he said that Kuroki's father was a Polish nobleman who had fled from Russia after the revolution of 1831. This nobleman, whose name was Kourowski, first went to Paris, afterward to Turkey, later joining the Holland troops in Borneo. From Borneo he went to Japan and there married a Japanese. From the union was born Kuroki, who because of the nationality of his father, was nicknamed "The Pole."

It is said that the General is very proud of his Polish origin, and that he has always cherished the dying wish of the father that the son would some day be able to take vengeance on the Russians for their cruel treatment of unhappy Poland.

Kuroki's part in the last great battle of the Russo-Japanese war, that of Mukden, was that of a fierce and vigorous attack upon the very strong position that was held by the Russian center, not with any hope of carrying it, but in order to force Kouratkin to carry out the movement which ultimately led to his destruction.

Heard His Voice Eighteen Miles. Eighteen miles is said to be the longest distance at which a man's voice has been heard. This occurred in the Grand canyon of Colorado, where one man shouting the name "Bob" at one end was plainly heard at the other end.

Smoking Among Russians. Every male in Russia over 15 years old smokes about 150 cigarette a week, according to a British consular report on Poland and Lithuania. One pound of tobacco suffices for 1,000 cigarettes.

Value of Cellulose. From the standpoint of industrial utility, says Professor Duncan, in Harper's Magazine, the subject of cellulose can only be characterized as stupendous. Take a pine tree, for instance. Standing it is worth \$10 a ton; cut and stripped it is worth \$15; boiled into pulp it is worth \$40; bleached it is worth \$55; turned into viscose and spun into silk is worth \$5,500.

Their Ability to Work. At Port Florence, on the shore of the Great Lake Victoria, which is the chief source of the Nile, there is a dry-rock cut out of solid rock by natives who had never before done much serious work. The dock is 250 feet long, 48 feet wide and 14 feet deep. It is 2,700 feet above the level of the sea, or nearly three times the altitude of Lake Chautauque.

## POSE FOR SONG PICTURES

A Work in Which Good Looks Bring Money.

### FEW HOURS, LIGHT JOB

Handsome Young Men Harder to Find Than Handsome Young Women—The Calling One That Does Not Afford Permanent Employment—The Slides Catalogued.

In response to an advertisement calling for "handsome young men to pose for pictures" there appeared young men to the number of five. Of these two could not have been by any stretch of the imagination considered handsome, says the Boston Post.

What they were wanted for was to pose for pictures to be reproduced on lantern slides to be used on the stage with illustrated songs. For an illustrated song there are usually required seventeen slides. As to its words, the song is likely to consist of two verses, with a chorus repeated after each verse, thus giving the song in sung four sections.

One of the lantern slides used with the song shows a reproduction of the title page of its sheet music, and this picture is first thrown on the screen; and then as the singer sings the pictures in illustration of the words are shown.

Most of the illustrated songs are love songs, and so of the men required for the illustration of such songs the greater number must be young. It is easy to say what would be the ideal requirements of a man who would make a completely satisfactory picture of a lover.

He must be of good stature, anyway, and then he would need to be of good figure and bearing, a fine manly, courageous young man, and withal handsome. As such a combination is tolerably hard to find in one young man, the lantern slide people have more or less difficulty in finding really suitable subjects.

In search then they advertise in the newspapers, and have recourse to theatrical agencies, where they may find actors engaged in minor parts or other young men who meet the requirements and are willing to pose.

Occasionally, from one or another of these sources, they get precisely what they want; more often, as happens in so many other pursuits, the must be satisfied to get as near to it as they can.

The young man who finds himself selected to pose for a series of pictures for an illustrated song may be taken to be photographed a little distance into the country or perhaps to the seashore, there to be posed and pictured, for many of these song pictures are shown with a nature background, and it is sought to make this true to the song. If a city background is required the subject would be posed and photographed in the city streets.

For this work of posing for illustrated song pictures the pay is \$4 a day, which may not seem like very large pay, but it isn't so bad when it is considered that the hours are short and the work easy; and really it is likely to be so much velvet for those who can fill the requirements and who have the time for it.

Frequently there may be required for one series of pictures more than one day's sittings, perhaps a day and a half, or it might be two days, making the work at the price paid fairly remunerative. It cannot, however, be followed as an occupation, but only as occasional work.

The lantern slide makers keep a catalogue of all the subjects that have posed for them, and in this catalogue are jotted down not only names and addresses but such personal characteristics as might serve as a guide in the selection of subjects to be called upon to pose in the future as occasion might require, but commonly, to avoid repetition in the pictures, once in say six months would be as often as subjects would be called upon, and so posing for pictures for illustrated songs is an occasional employment only.

Women are posed for pictures for illustrated songs as well as men, and, of course, handsome women are far more numerous than handsome men; but still it is not so easy as it might seem it would be to find handsome young women exactly suited to the requirements of this work. The young women required are found among artists' models, and sometimes, as in the case of young men, through theatrical agencies.

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## Three Men And a Letter.

By Jewett Brown.

### THE MOST POPULAR PLAY

are in Cultivation of the Most Useful Vanilla Bean.

The best variety of vanilla comes from vanilla planifolia, which requires a mucky, porous soil. The plant thrives up to a height of about 100 feet above sea level and as its roots do not penetrate deep into the soil it requires only a proportionately thin layer of soil. The plant bears merchantable fruit in the third year, sometimes even in the second year, which requires from seven to eight months to mature, and the harvest takes place from April to June. Five to seven harvests are made from the same plant before it is exhausted. New plants must not be planted in the same place of the old.

Protection against wind, also, shade, is of great importance for the growth of the plant, and therefore the beds must be surrounded by trees and hedges. Grubs and snails are enemies of the vanilla plant; the former eat the roots and the latter the young sprouts and beans. While in the third year only about one tenth part of the plants blossom, the percentage increasing from year to year up to the seventh. The cultivation of vanilla in German East Africa is impeded by the absence of insects which are instrumental in fructifying the vanilla blossoms. Each separate flower has therefore to be fructified by human hands, the cover of the stigma being raised by means of a thin little rod and the pollen, which is just above the cover, is pressed against the stigma.

When the young beans have grown to the length of a finger they must be closely inspected and all defective ones must be cut off. The beans mature from seven to eight months after the fructification process. The ripe beans have a yellowish green color. The way of preparing the beans varies, but an ever increasing temperature is required to dry them and obtain the well known brown black color. In this way the thin skinned bean with its fine aroma is produced. If hot water is used for heating the beans they are placed in baskets and immersed in it. The water has a temperature of 50 to 54 degrees Reaumur. Afterward the beans are packed into wooden boxes, which are lined with wicker cloth and closed. The next day they must have a shiny appearance. They are then again wrapped in dark wicker covers and laid in the sun to dry. If the weather is rainy they must be dried in a dry room at a temperature of 54 degrees Reaumur, but an after drying in an airy room of from two to four weeks is necessary. After that the dry beans are packed in boxes.

A TRYING EXPERIENCE. Through it all the Butler kept a dignified attitude.

The talk had turned on British butlers—most solemn and majestic of functionaries—and a lady present related her experience as a girl at a dinner party in London. Her neighbor at table was a famous man, of whom she stood so much in awe that she found herself unable to converse with him and sat silent and uncomfortable, vexed at her own shyness, yet unable to overcome it. Dinner was half over, says the Youth's Companion, when she chanced to lift her eye to a tilted mirror on the wall and beheld a spectacle otherwise invisible to the guests.

Half-way down the long table sat a very great lady, aged and deaf, the grandmother of the hostess and a little beside and behind her stood a portly butler, whose duty it was on such occasions to repeat to her trumpet such scraps of conversation as she could catch and answer her questions concerning anything that was going on.

She was far too deaf for conversation at table with strangers, but deep familiar tones, even when whispered, she could understand.

At the moment when the young American looked up Mullins, to the eye of the company, seemed as a composed and stately being, respectfully bent toward the trumpet of Lady Blunk. But the treacherous mirror reflected a rear view of different effect.

A very young and charming puppy had somehow slipped into the dining room, and with futile but distracting ferocity was worrying first one and then the other of poor Mullins's dinner calves.

With surreptitious kicks and shakes the fortunate man cleverly preserving his dignified appearance above the level of the table, would endeavor to fling aside the joyous enemy who would roll away a leg, foot, tummy and gleefully return to the attack. At last in a specially vigorous effort Mullins shed a shoe, which the puppy promptly seized and ran away with.

The American girl, shaking with mirth, quietly called the attention of her distinguished neighbor to the scene in the looking glass and they watched it together with breathless interest to its close.

Her shyness was banished by the time they had laughed out their laugh together and the great man, recovering his breath pronounced the issue a drawn battle.

"The enemy is driven from the field," but he departs with a trophy.

Children are natural, but their acts are often to be explained by themselves and their natural impulses.

Neither male nor female convicts in English prisons are permitted to see a mirror during the period of incarceration.

"Now write me a long letter and tell me all about your affairs. I hate to get married, for then I can't have so much fun in flirtations, but I suppose I shall have to before long. I feel almost sorry for the three, for they professed such love, but of course they will get over it. When next I write I shall probably be able to tell you of my new engagement."

"Lovely," "Minute Morse."

The three young men shook hands in silent congratulation.

"The fair May undoubtedly lost the letter," remarked John Lane. "It is a blessed thing she did so. I know the Mr. Jones to whom she refers, and I vote that this letter be sent to him without comment."

"And we second it," said the others.

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