

GOOD FRIEND OF THE FARMER

Valuable Work Done by Humble Earthworm Has Not Been Sufficiently Appreciated.

The humble earthworm is one of man's best friends. The farmer and the gardener could not spare him.

In burrowing through the soil the worms render it more porous and permeable to gases, not merely by virtue of the air spaces formed, but by reason of the fact that the soil is thus continually kept in gentle motion.

Further, worms breathe in oxygen and exhale carbon dioxide, and the latter gas, as is well known, readily dissolves in water, forming an acid solution which will render alkaline earths and metallic oxides—e. g., iron—soluble.

Worms materially aid in producing soluble salts of iron in the soil when other agencies—e. g., dilute mineral acids—fail. The iron is eventually given back to the soil in a more soluble condition, and presumably in one which can be directly absorbed by plant roots.

CLEARLY NOT AN IMMIGRANT

Parrot's Proficiency in American Profanity Settled the Question of Admission.

Mrs. Filippa Cartorio walked down the chute from the Italian steamer San Giorgio the other day. She had some Easton, Pa., clothes on, a Wilkesbarre bonnet and a parrot in a cage.

"No epik Anglesh, meester," said Mrs. Cartorio. "M—m—nah, nah, nah." She shook her head violently to and fro.

"That," said the inspector, "is very odd—very odd, indeed. You say you lived in this country for 24 years, and all the American talk you have is that you don't speak an Anglesh?"

Mrs. Cartorio shook her head more violently and in her excitement she kicked over the cage in which was the parrot.

"Hey, you," burst from the indignant bird, "wattia hell? Cut it out, kid."

Mrs. Cartorio smiled. She took the cloth of the cage and a large green parrot scowled evilly at the inspector.

"Beat it," said the parrot, with rising inflection. "Rotten."

The inspector said that he'd have to admit the smiling Mrs. Cartorio. He did not think it was possible to teach a parrot that sort of English in Sicily.—Cincinnati Times-Star.

Mercy an Arab Showed.

Abd-El-Kader, who died in 1883, is one of the noted patriots of Algiers. In 1833 when the Arabs rose up and tried to free themselves from the French Abd-El-Kader as sultan led his people against the French armies.

For fourteen years the war was waged, and though he had but few followers, his methods of attack and ingenious maneuvers, together with the wonderful power he held over his people, made it necessary for the French to send one hundred thousand soldiers into that country before they could conquer it.

"Now," said Mr. Hughes, "there was no harm in that. But listen to the second artist. He said, with a cruel, unyielding laugh: 'I painted a lump of pig iron once to look like a roast of beef, and my dog ate three-quarters of it before he discovered his mistake.'—Los Angeles Times.

Useful Article Missing.

Dr. William Tindall says that the published accounts of the reputed antagonism of a member of congress to the use of the toothbrush reminds him of an incident which occurred a number of years ago on a steamboat which ran from Galveston to Houston.

One morning, while the passengers were at breakfast, one of the travelers, who was somewhat belated in perfecting his toilet and who, obviously, was one of those who are somewhat unfamiliar with the etiquette of the toothbrush, appeared at the door of his stateroom, which opened into the hall that served as a dining room, and called out with a drawl such as might have been expected from a primitive denizen of the back country: 'Say, cap'n, whar I find the tooth-brush that belongs to the boat?'

Business Victim.

"Does you member dat dawg I used to have?" asked Mr. Erastus Pinkley.

"Yes," replied Uncle Raspberry. "You means dat mixed dog?"

"He was kind o' mixed; he was what I calls a black-an'-tan-dale terrier. Well, sun, dat dawg ain't brought me nuffin but bad luck. I sold 'im to a man for two dollars, an' de two dollars he slipped me were counterfeits."

"What you gineter do?" "What kin I do? If I shows 'im any way to prove de transaction was un-legal, he's gineter make me take de dawg back."

ADDITION TO WORLD'S METALS

Find of Extreme Value Is Credited to Recent Discovery Made in British Columbia.

A new noble metal has been discovered in British Columbia, which is apparently entirely distinct from any of the now recognized elements and perhaps of no small commercial significance. The new metal now found, called by the discoverer canadum, belongs emphatically to the group of noble metals. It is found pure in semi-crystalline grains and in short crystalline rods, and also alloyed with metals customarily found in company with platinum. It is stated that quantities up to three ounces per ton, probably from assay values, have been found in the rock. Its physical and chemical properties are interesting. It has a brilliant white luster, does not oxidize in the oxidizing flame of the blowpipe, melts at a little lower temperature than silver and gold, and is somewhat softer than platinum.

From the chemical standpoint it is electro-negative to silver, is precipitated from its solution by zinc, and may be separated by cupellation from lead. It is easily soluble in hydrochloric and nitric acids, is not precipitated by chlorides or iodides. It does not tarnish in damp air, sulphuretted hydrogen or alkaline sulphides. This somewhat extraordinary combination of properties raises questions of great interest as to the character and position of the new metal. Its easy solubility separates it from the known metals which generally accompany platinum, and its melting point, as stated, is at least 500 degrees C. below that of any of the platinum group.

WISE SAYINGS OF CONFUCIUS

Great Chinese Teacher Worthy the High Place in Which He is Held by His Race.

Some of the sayings of Confucius, which are to the Chinese what the Bible is to us, are:

"Not to withdraw after making an error is in itself an error. 'Knowledge is when you know a thing to hold that you know it; and when you do not know a thing to allow that you do not know it. That is knowledge."

"Sincerity is the end and beginning of things. 'To see the right and not to do it is to be a coward. 'Four of the marks of a superior man are: In the conduct of himself he is humble; in serving his superiors he is respectful; in nourishing the people he is kind; in ordering the people he is just."

"The difference between the great man and the ordinary man is that the great man has a fair mind and sees all sides, and the common man has a mind which is partisan and one-sided. 'At a funeral it is better that there be deep sorrow than a minute attention to ceremony."

"Whatever the mind may attain to, unless the goodness within is powerful enough to keep guard over it, is assuredly lost even though it be gained."

He with whom neither slander that gradually soaks in nor statements that startle like wounds in the flesh are successful may be called intelligent indeed. Yes, the man with whom neither soaking slander nor startling statements are successful may be called far-seeing."

Achievements in Art. Brian O. Hughes, whose practical jokes so often delight, said at a recent dinner: "I don't mind practical jokes on human beings, but when it comes to animals I draw the line."

"Two artists were once bragging to each other. 'I painted up a lump of pig iron to look like cork,' said the first artist, 'and, by jove! when I threw it into the East river it floated.'"

"Now," said Mr. Hughes, "there was no harm in that. But listen to the second artist. He said, with a cruel, unyielding laugh: 'I painted a lump of pig iron once to look like a roast of beef, and my dog ate three-quarters of it before he discovered his mistake.'—Los Angeles Times.

Speech Strangely Restored.

While attending a picture show in Melbourne, Victoria, recently, his speech and hearing began to return to a young man who, during the previous harvest season, had lost both these faculties through fear. While engaged in harvesting operations in the Horsham district, he trod on a big black snake, which immediately coiled itself around his leg. He was not bitten by the reptile, but was nevertheless greatly alarmed, so much so that he went into a fit, under the influence of which he remained for some time, and then lost the powers of speech and hearing. The scenes depicted at the picture show were of a thrilling character, and on the following day he could utter a few words. Subsequently his speech was restored completely.

Professional Pride. A local pugilist was brought before a police magistrate charged with assault. Said the magistrate: "Prisoner, complainant says that you willfully and maliciously knocked his hat off."

Up spoke the accused, pride in his voice: "No, your honor, I didn't knock his hat off; I knocked him from under his hat."

Mixed Membership.

"This man who tamely allowed himself to be put into the Ananias club—I fear he must be a hopeless falsifier."

"No. His passive attitude shows that he isn't so much a falsifier as a mollicoddle."

FIRST OF THE WHITE RACES

Population of Russia and Its Provinces Shown by Recent Census to Be Over 163,000,000.

We gather from the "Russian Year Book" that on January 1, 1910, the population of Russia amounted to 160,748,400, and together with the Finnish provinces the total population amounted to 163,778,800 people. In 13 1/2 years, from the autumn of 1897 to January, 1911, in spite of war, cholera and famine the Russian population has increased by 33,199,000 souls—an annual growth of 2,732,000. In point of numbers Russia is first of all the white races.

The vast population is not entirely of Russian race; the empire counts 10 per cent. of Tartars, 6 per cent. of Poles and a considerable number of Lithuanians, Letts, Finns and Jews. In territorial extent Russia is the largest country in the world. It is 44 times as big as France.

Three-quarters of the population are, it is said, engaged in agriculture, 10 per cent. in various industries, 4.6 per cent. in private service, 3.8 per cent. in trade. All other occupations do not engage more than 7.5 per cent.

Although in Russia agriculture is generally the predominating occupation the largest proportion of people employed in this pursuit is found in Central Asia, about 83 per cent.; the second place is taken by Siberia, over 80 per cent.; followed by the Caucasus, about 79 per cent., and Poland, with only 56.6 per cent. On the other hand, industrial pursuits, mining industries, etc., are more developed in Poland, which engages 15.4 per cent. of the population employed; then comes European Russia, about 10 per cent., the last places being taken by the Caucasus and Central Asia.

ALL HAD STARVED TO DEATH

Fishing Colony in the Far North, Left Without Provisions, Succumbed to Last Individual.

The Russian minister of marine recently received advices of a terrible occurrence in the far northern island of Nova Zembla. Some time ago the head of an Archangel firm founded a fishing colony in Nova Zembla, the members of which were employed to fish solely on his account. A steamer was recently dispatched thither, but when the crew landed they found not a single living person. No provisions had been supplied for the ten months during which communication with the island had been impossible, and the entire colony had perished of hunger. The luckless fisherfolk, to judge by penciled notes left by one of the victims, a man named Chenoff, underwent terrible experiences before death overtook them. Chenoff seems to have been the last man left alive, and saw all his companions die one after the other. This is his own account of his impressions: "We are at the end of our provisions and we can get nothing, not even the tiniest fish. A ship appears; it is a fresh delusion, for she does not come our way. It is terrible to see our children dying of hunger. Driven by necessity, we are taking the wool of our clothing and eating that. The children are all dead. Only four fishermen and two women are left alive. We are suffering horribly. Two fishermen ate the flesh of the dead, and they have died as the result. I, Chenoff, am the only living person remaining, and I am tracing these lines. My hands shake, my eyes are growing dim, and I feel that the end is near."

Foreign Hothouse Grapes.

Exportation of English hothouse grapes from Liverpool to the United States, in which there was formerly a fair trade, has been greatly reduced by Belgian competition. The chief hothouse grape producing regions of England are Sussex and Kent.

Thence the fruit is sent to the wholesale dealers at Covent Garden market, in London, and thence to the Liverpool dealers. The season extends from April to December, during which time prices range from 16 to 36 cents a pound.

Fresh grapes first appeared as a separate item of declared export from Brussels, Belgium, to the United States in 1908, at which time the shipments of fresh grapes totaled \$18,532. In the following year these shipments rose to \$48,761, and in 1910 to \$58,757. The exports in 1911 were valued at \$48,427.

Peculiar in Veterinary Annals.

A peculiar case came under the notice of a surgeon at Molong, N.S.W., recently. A valuable horse had been staked near the shoulder with a hook, and immediately began to swell all over in an amazing manner. The doctor found that from its nose to its hoofs the horse had swollen to almost twice its normal size. Apparently wild had got in between the flesh and the skin and blown it out like a football. When the surgeons tapped the animal in several places the wind escaped with a hiss. The doctor says it is the first case of its kind that he has met with in connection with animals, though he had met with similar cases in human beings.

Life's 34 Days After Death.

Some years ago Dr. Alexis Carrel, an English scientist, showed that the various organs and tissues taken from a living organism can be maintained in a live state for a more or less prolonged time by placing them in a suitable medium at the right temperature, and that such tissues may even grow for several days. His results have been contradicted by other authors, but more recently Dr. Carrel has achieved even more striking results. By taking the preparations out of their nutritive medium at the right time and transferring them to another medium consisting of three parts of the normal plasma of the animal in question and two parts of water, and repeating the operation at proper intervals up to as many as nine times, he finds that the connective tissue shows great activity, even as long as thirty-four days after its removal from the body.

Successful Woman Farmer.

Miss Grace M. Putnam is said to be one of the most successful farmers in New Jersey. She was born and brought up in the city, never even visiting the country until after she was 15 years old. Her farm consists of about five acres and is planted exclusively in cantaloupes. She reports that she rented her farm for the first year. The second year she bought it, the third year she paid up every debt she owed and put \$3,000 in bank. She does all the work herself, after the first plowing, for which she pays a farmer \$12. Her seeds cost her \$1 an acre, fertilizer \$10 an acre and barrels for shipping one year's crop \$60. She sells her melons direct to dealers at \$6 a barrel. She thinks her success as a farmer is largely due to the fact that she loves the work better than anything else in the world.

Rejoices Over Returned Speech.

After being speechless for fifteen years, the wife of a rancher of Carpinteria, Cal., has regained her speech. The woman's voice returned to her just as suddenly as it had left her. She was sitting at the dining table when she felt a strange itching in her throat, and, surmising the truth of the situation, she rushed to the living room. Sitting at the piano, she startled the members of the family by singing a melody that was her favorite song when a girl.

New Musical Instrument.

A musical instrument new to English audiences was heard at Queen's Hall, London, recently, when the London Symphony Orchestra presented a Russian program. The timpietto, which was used in one of Ivanoff's "Caucasian Sketches"—consists of two earthenware jars of different sizes, bound together by thongs. Over their mouths is stretched a skin which is beaten with light wooden drumsticks, producing a sound like a child's rattle and a drum combined.

REACH HEIGHTS OF LUXURY

Good Reasons Why the Newest Ocean Liners Are Referred to as Floating Palaces.

While the first photograph of the new steamship Titanic received in New York shows a ship in most respects like the Olympic there is a pronounced difference in the deck, or what is on the Olympic the lower prower promenade deck. On this deck on the new ship there is no public promenade at all.

Instead the staterooms are brought out flush with the outside of the superstructure, and the rooms themselves made much larger. The sitting rooms of some of the suites on this deck are 15 by 15 feet, in fact, this deck is the most luxurious of the vessel.

The restaurant is much larger than that of the Olympic—and it has a novelty in the shape of a private promenade deck on the starboard side, to be used exclusively by its patrons. Adjoining it is a reception room where hosts and hostesses may meet their guests before going into the restaurant.

The biggest novelty is two private promenades connected with the two most luxurious suites on the ship. These suites are about the most expensive ever installed on a ship so far as the passenger is concerned. It will be possible for the occupants to be just as exclusive on shipboard as in their own homes.

POINTER FOR THE BATSMAN

Right Way of Hitting a Pitched Ball is Shown as a Matter of Some Importance.

Some of the grueling training of pennant chasers in southern training camps is indicated by Edward Lyle Fox in Outing. Here is what he says of the batting:

"A man steps to the plate. The ball comes sailing up, white and big, ridiculously easy to hit. The batter must think so, too. We see him hunch his shoulders, draw in his upper lip, act just as men do when they're going to kill it. Then he swings. The impact has the dull sound of a falling plank hitting the sidewalk on one end. High above second base the ball arches, wobbles and bolts in a shining arc. The batter looks sheepish."

"Hey!" cries the manager, and we see him rush toward the plate. "What do you mean by hitting a ball like that? Why, man, if you don't change your swing you'll be a fly-ball hitter all your life."

"What's the matter with it?" The voice betrays disappointment. "Matter!" roars the manager. "Matter! Why, you're hitting as if you were eating soup; coming up under the ball as if it were a piece of clam floating in a bowl of chowder and your bat was a ladle! Matter! When will you ever learn to meet a ball squarely on the nose—not hitting under it? Now try again."

He does, and this time we hear a ring, see a white streak that shoots not ten feet from the ground and brings up with a crash against the outfield fence.

Mr. Galworthy and Art.

John Galworthy has a fine imaginative piece of writing in the February fortnightly on "Vague Thoughts on Art."

"Art," he says, "is that imaginative expression of human energy which, through technical concretion of feeling and perception, tends to reconcile the individual with the universal, by exciting in him impersonal emotion. And the greatest art is that which excites the greatest impersonal emotion in a hypothetical perfect human being."

"What is this universe—that never had beginning and will never have an end—but a myriad striving to perfect pictures never the same, so blending and fading one into another that all form one great perfect picture. And what are we—ripples on the tides of a birthless, deathless, equiposed Creative Purpose—but little works of art!"

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Perils of Sea Service.

The submariner branch of the navy has undoubtedly risks and dangers of its own, as the sad tale of previous disasters plainly shows; and when a catastrophe such as took place recently unhappily occurs it is of a nature to make a profound impression upon the public. But in relation to the number of submariners in commission, and to the constant exercise they undergo, the picked officers and men who serve in them do not incur a risk out of all proportion greater than their comrades in other branches. Danger and risk are no peculiar prerogative of the submarine, they form the very foundation of naval character, and are a pledge, in no small degree, of the security upon which as a nation we repose. London Times.

HAVE THREE KINDS OF MONEY

Venezuelan Monetary Standards Must Be Extremely Puzzling to New-comer and Visitor.

There are at present in daily use in Venezuela three different systems of monetary standards. One is that based on the bolivar (equal to 193 cents) as the unit. This is in use by the government in its reports and transactions and is the official system, if it may be so called. Quotations in this system are in bolivars and centimos, a bolivar being divided into 100 centimos, although the smaller coin in this system has a value of 5 centimos.

The second system has the "peso fuerte" or "dollar" as its unit, the units being commonly referred to simply as "fuertes." This "fuerte" is taken to be equal to 5 bolivars and to be divided into 100 centavos.

The third system has the "peso macuquina," usually simply termed "pesos," as its unit. This "peso" has a value of 4 bolivars and is considered to be equal to 80 centavos, and to be divided into 8 reales, while the "fuerte" is considered to have 10 reales.

Some few of the mercantile houses keep their accounts with their customers in "fuertes," but most of the establishments render their bills in the "peso."

When accounts kept in the last two units are paid, they are transformed into bolivars by manipulating by five or four, as the case may be, payments being made by Venezuelan currency, coined gold and silver on the bolivar basis, or bank notes issued on the same system, although some foreign gold is in general acceptance at conventional rates.

Among the humbler classes making their purchases at the market, an article which would be worth 75 centimos of a bolivar, or 15 centavos of a "fuerte," will almost invariably be quoted at "a real and a half," or a purchase will be actually paid for by offering 6 bolivars, 62 1/2 centimos in coin, while the seller has stated the value to be "13 1/2 reales."

TOWERED OVER SHIP'S MASTS

Commanders of Vessels Supply New Information as to Height of Atlantic Waves.

It is very doubtful if the log of any naval vessel of the world contains records equal to those of the Roa. Lieut. Commander C. H. Woodward has stated that he never expected to bring his craft through the immense waves. The indicator on the bridge, which was at times the only part of the vessel out of water, showed that the little craft rolled 90 degrees, being at times clear over on her beam ends.

Just at the time when the commanders of the little squadron estimated that the gale was at its height and blowing practically 30 miles an hour the Roa's steering gear gave way and she dropped into the trough of the sea. This little vessel's masts are 32 feet high from the water line, says the Christian Herald, and although it has been stated that the highest wave yet recorded upon the Atlantic ocean was not more than 30 feet in height, Commander Woodward's estimate that the waves of the recent storm overtopped his masts by several feet has been borne out by the officers not only of the smaller ships but even of the battleship Delaware.

Sacredness of the Cow in India.

The killing of animals is abhorrent to the Hindoo. You may see the pious Jain, who carries the doctrine of the preservation of life to an absurd extreme, moving about on the Esplanade or near trees and fields with a packet of flour and sugar, in search of ants and other insects, that he may feed them from his store. In towns and villages you will occasionally come across the sacred bull, who roams about at will, and helps himself to grain and other foodstuff placed in shops as he pleases. He is a symbol of divinity. None will molest him; everybody will hold him in reverence. But in the case of the bull the reverence is limited to the one who, so to speak, is born in purple.

As for the cow, the entire species is sacred, and to kill it is a cardinal sin. Whenever the pious Hindoo passes by a cow, he touches it with his hand and salutes it.

Miss Fay Templeton.

Miss Fay Templeton, at a supper at the Ritz-Carlton in New York given in honor of her return to the stage, praised the American business man. "I have only one fault to find with him," she said. "He works too hard. Hence, of an evening, he is sometimes a little dull."

"But intelligent wives can soon cure their husbands of overworking. I know a wife—and her good man are in Egypt now—who came down to dinner one night in a sordid black robe."

"Her husband—a frightfully overworked millionaire—looked at her costume and exclaimed: 'Why on earth, my love, are you wearing a dress like that? It's positively half-mourning.'"

"Of course it's half mourning," she replied. "When you come home from the office, don't you always complain that you're half dead?"

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