

# The Orphans' Friend.

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## Economical Value of Insects.

The *Massachusetts Ploughman* has had a series of articles on the "Habits of Insects" from one of which we take the following, in regard to their uses:

"The Hottentots always rejoice in the arrival of a swarm of locusts, eat them in great numbers and make soup of their eggs. They are brought in wagon loads to Zez, in Africa, and are preserved by salting or smoking. The Moors prefer them to pigeons, and a person may eat two or three hundred without feeling any ill effects. They are usually boiled in water half an hour, after throwing away the head, legs and wings, and then fried with a little vinegar. Their use as food is alluded to in Scripture, where the food of John the Baptist is said to be locusts and wild honey. The ancient Greeks considered grasshoppers as a great luxury, and the Chinese, who are unwilling to waste anything, after unwinding the silk from the cocoons of the silk worm, send the insect to the table. The Hottentots again parch the white ants and eat them as we do corn. Mr. Smeathman tells us that they taste like cream and sugar, or almond cakes. There are many other instances of insects which serve for food to different nations, though with the exception of a few individuals, as Lalande, the great astronomer, who was fond of spiders, their use is generally discarded by those whom we consider the most refined. We say generally, for one species, the cheese mite, is often considered a luxury even among these.

"Formerly a great variety of insects were used in medicine, and were considered infallible cures for many diseases—powder of silkworm was considered excellent for convulsions, ear-wigs to strengthen the nerves, fly-water for afflictions of the eyes, ticks for St. Anthony's fire, lady birds for the colic and measles, beetles for hydrophobia, ants for deafness and weevils for the toothache. These notions are now left to the uneducated, where some of them are still in force; and a very disgusting insect, vulgarly known by the name of the sow-bug, was, within the memory of many, and perhaps still is, occasionally prescribed. Some of them, however, are still used, or at least their productions. Spider-webs have been lately recommended for the ague, and we could spare almost anything better from our materia medica, than the various species of blistering flies. They are quite important as supplying various articles of domestic economy, or ornament. Some in some countries yield soap; and other oils. In China the ladies embroider their dresses with the wing caps of several brilliant beetles, and in India fire-flies inclosed in gauze are used as ornaments for the head.

"But these are small matters, and there are others much more important; one of these is the gull, or nut gull as it is commonly called, used for the manufacture of ink and black dye, and for which no good substitute is known. These gulls are the habitation of a species of insects, which live

upon the oak of Turkey in Asia, from the ports of which it is exported in great numbers. Another dyeing article, cochineal, is an insect of South America. The quantity of these annually exported from South America is said to be worth there, upwards of 500,000 pounds sterling, or over two millions of dollars, and the Directors of the English East India company offered some years since a reward of £6,000 to any one who should introduce the most valuable species into their settlements. Another important article in the arts, which is the manufacture of insects, is lac, which is used in the making of sealing wax, spirit varnishes and Japan ware, the cementing of cracked china and in dyeing, in which art it is found to be a good substitute for cochineal.

"There is still another article for which we are indebted to insects, which is yet more valuable; it is silk. This is the staple article in many large provinces of the world, gives employment to tens of thousands of the human race, in its first production and transportation, and furnishes subsistence to hundreds of thousands more in its final manufacture, thus becoming one of the most important instruments in the circulation of national wealth. The method of procuring this valuable article was known to the Chinese and Indians some thousand years ago, but was never introduced into Europe till about 550 years after the Christian era, when the eggs of the silkworm were brought by some monks from India to Constantinople, where they speedily multiplied, and were thence introduced into Italy and afterwards into France. The common use of it is comparatively late in Great Britain. Queen Elizabeth was among the first who wore silk stockings in England, and James her successor, when king of Scotland, was obliged to borrow a pair of the earl of Mar, to appear in before the English ambassador; exclaiming when the Earl hesitated "Ye would not, sure have your king appear as a scrub before strangers." When we consider the abundance and common use of silk at the present, we are apt to consider ourselves far in advance of those times, and it is not improbable that future generations will find themselves as much in advance of us in some similar matters."

There is an old story of an oarsman who taught a couple of belligerent divines a good lesson. Their controversy upon the real merit of works and faith, as reliable means of salvation, was renewed every time they crossed the river in his boat. One day they found he had scrawled "Works" on one oar, and "Faith" on the other. They smiled at his whim; but when they found out what he meant, when, in the middle of the stream, he dropped "Works" and pulled only at "Faith" going round and round; getting on never a rod. Then, taking "Works" alone, he had no better success. Finally, with "Faith" in one hand, and "Works" in the other, he shot across the shore.

## Origin of Classical Phrases.

### PUNICÆ FIDES.

Punic faith. This phrase was used by the Romans to denote the treachery of the Punic, or Carthaginians. It now means bad faith in a national sense.

### RECTUS IN CURIA.

Upright in the Courts. When any one came into the courts of justice with clean hands, he was said to be "rectus in curia."

### P'S AND Q'S.

The origin of the phrase, "Mind your P's and Q's," is not generally known. In ale houses where chalk scores were formerly marked upon the wall, it was customary to put these initial letters at the head of every man's account, to show the number of pints and quarts for which he owed; and when one was indulging too freely in drink, a friend would touch him on the shoulder, and point to the scores on the wall, saying: "John, mind your P's and Q's." That is, notice the pints and quarts now charged against you and cease drinking.

### NOVUS HOMO.

"A new man." A man who arises to distinction without family aid by his own efforts. Cicero uses *novi homines* the plural of the above, to signify, "the first nobleman of their families." A man springing out of an obscure family and becoming famous, would be called by the Romans *novus homo*. The *novi homines* of America are quite numerous.

### LABOR OMNIA VINCIT.

"Labor conquers all things." There are few difficulties which will not yield to persevering labor. Continuous toil surmounts every difficulty. It makes the wilderness of nature blossom as the rose.

### HURRAH.

The original of this Slavonian word, used from the coast of Dalmatia to Behrings Straits, belongs to the primitive idea, that every man dying heroically for his country, goes straight to Heaven. It is derived from *Hurrah*, which means Heaven, *Hurrah*, i. e., "to Paradise" you will go, if you fight bravely. In the shocks of battle, the Turks cry "Allah," which has a similar meaning. Hurrah has degenerated to mean no more in common use than to hurry, or an exclamation of joy or triumph.

### ESPRIT DE CORPS.

"The spirit of the body," is a French term meaning that brotherly feeling, which pervades professional bodies, such as the gentlemen of the bar, soldiers of an army, clergyman, &c.

### NIL DESPERANDUM.

"Let us despair of nothing," is an expression found in the book of Horace and often used as a matter of heroic determination.

M. M. Pomeroy, editor of *Poincrot's Democrat*, has proved himself a prophet. He predicted before the close of last year that 1875 would be remarkable for the number of its disasters on land and sea, murders, suicides and other startling events.—With the earthquakes, storms, floods, pests, deaths by violence and otherwise, this prophecy has been singularly fulfilled.

## Mother.

A few years since in a large prison, the convicts were gathered for Sabbath morning service in the chapel, when a clergyman, who was provisionally in the city, occupied the chaplain's place. In his appeal to their hearts, he mentioned the case of a wayward boy whose pious mother was in heaven, and who, after the successive steps of early depravity, was arrested by the Spirit of God recalling the hallowed counsels and the prayers of the departed parent. He became a Christian, and entered the gospel ministry. The preacher added, "And I am that wicked son, Oh, how much I owe to a mother's prayers."

The religious exercises closed, and the convicts went to their cells. In the afternoon, the chaplain walked, as was his custom, along the corridors, and looking through the grated door of a cell, saw a prisoner sobbing as if his heart were broken. Several minutes passed before the prisoner looked up and discovered the chaplain. When he was kindly asked what was the matter, he answered, "Oh, it was the story that minister told us about his mother. I had just such a mother, and it brought her memory back." Then, falling down upon his face again, with convulsive grief he said, "It has almost killed me! I had just such a mother!"

There, within the cold walls of a prison, unaffected by sermons or prayers, the outcast became as a weeping child before the imaginary presence of a pious mother—coming with her familiar tearful face, and voice of maternal love, to his dismal abode. Mothers! you exercise a solemn responsibility. The influence of your example and prayers may be felt long after you are laid in the grave.—*Church Union*.

## Watching One's Self.

"When I was a boy," said an old man, "we had a schoolmaster who had an odd way of catching the idle boys. One day he called out to us, 'Boys, I must have closer attention to your books. The first one that sees another idle I want you to inform me, and I will attend to the case.'"

"Ah!" thought I to myself, 'there is Joe Simmons, that I don't like. I'll watch him, and if I see him look off his books, I'll tell.'

"It was not long before I saw Joe look off his book, and immediately I informed the master."

"Indeed!" said he, "how did you know he was idle?"

"I saw him," said I.

"You did? And were your eyes on your book when you saw him?"

"I was caught, and I never watched for idle boys again."

"If we are sufficiently watchful over our own conduct we shall have no time to find fault with the conduct of others."

There are but three ways of living, as some one has said, by working, by begging or by stealing. Those who do not work, disguise it in whatever pretty language we please, are doing one of the other two.—*Exchange*.

## FOOLSCAP PAPER—ITS ORIGIN.

The term "Foolscap" to designate a certain size of paper, no doubt has puzzled many an anxious inquirer. It appears that Charles I. of England, granted numerous monopolies for the support of the Government, among others the manufacture of paper. The water-mark of the finest sort was the royal arms of Eng. The consumption of this article was great, and large fortunes were made by those who purchased the exclusive right to vend it. This, among other monopolies, was sent aside by the Parliament that brought Charles I. to the scaffold, and by way of showing contempt for the king, they ordered the royal arms to be taken from the paper, and a fool with his cap and bell to be substituted. It is now over two hundred years since the fool's cap was taken from the paper, but still the paper of the size which the Rump Parliament ordered for their journals bears the name of the water-mark placed there as an indignity to King Charles.

The new twenty-cent silver piece is now ready for distribution at the Mint. The obverse is similar to the quarter dollar, with the exception of the word "Liberty" is raised and the design is smaller in proportion to the size of the coin. On the reverse is an eagle holding in his talons the olive branch and three arrows. At each end of the inscription, "United States of America," is a six-pointed star. Beneath the star are the words "Twenty Cents." The edge of the coin is not milled, as in the case of all other United States silver coins, this difference probably being intended to distinguish the new piece from the quarter dollar. The words, "In God We Trust," which have appeared on most of the national coins of late years are omitted.

## "Tote."

The word "tote" (carry), so universally in use at the South, has a classic origin claimed for it.

The other day a Georgia paper said that Mr. A. H. Stephens could not have made a certain remark, because he understood the English language too well to make use of such a slang word as "tote." We resent the indignity cast upon "tote." We cling to "tote" as the Anglo-Saxon nations cling to Magna Charta. It reminds us of our descent from a liberty-loving people, and preserves the memory of justice. The writ by which a peasant aggrieved in the Baron's Court was unable to carry (*tollere*) his case up to the County Court was known as the writ of *toll*, pronounced commonly *tote*. This privilege which the humble farmer had of toting his case up from his own landlord to a less prejudiced court was dear to every Englishman. The people of the South will not surrender that word. It is as dear to our yeomen as the common law itself.—*Mobile (Ala.) Register*.

The integrity of the upright shall guide them; but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them.