

Jute.

The jute plant is an annual, varying in height from four to twelve feet, the stems being from three-quarters to an inch and a half in circumference. Its leaves are alternate, elongated, and serrated at the edge, the two lower serratures being lengthened out into a slender thread. The flowers are small, and have five yellow petals. The fruit consists of a capsule, containing numerous seeds. It is sown in April or May, and flowers in July or August, when it is ready to be cut, if its fibres are to be obtained. Jute is largely cultivated, especially throughout the Bengal Presidency, where its domestic manufacture occupies almost all classes of Hindoos. It has been estimated that the annual weight of jute manufactured in India is not less than 118,000 tons. Not less than 50,000 or 60,000 tons of jute fibre are annually exported to Great Britain, and the total production in India is estimated by Dr. Forbes Watson at not less than 300,000 tons. This is, therefore, a very important staple in the commerce of India.

The great trade and principal employ of jute in India is for the manufacture of gunny chuts, or chuttees, for making bags. These gunny bags are the common coarse bags in which Indian produce is brought to the English market, and are even more familiar to most than the fact that they are called "gunny-bags," and are made of jute. This industry pervades all classes in Lower Bengal, and penetrates into every household. Men, women and children find occupation therein. Boatmen in their spare moments, husbandmen, palankeen-carriers, and domestic servants—everybody, in fact, being Hindoos—for Mussulmans spin cotton only—pass their leisure moments, distaff in hand, spinning gunny twist. Its preparation, together with the weaving into lengths, forms the never-failing resource of that humble, patient and despised of creative beings—the Hindoo widow—saved by law from the pile, but condemned by opinion and custom for the remainder of her days literally to sackcloth and ashes and the lowest domestic drudgery, in the very household where once, perhaps, her will was law. This manufacture spares her from being a charge on her family—she can always earn her bread.

There is scarcely any other article so universally diffused over the globe as the Indian gunny-bag. All the fine and long-stapled jute is reserved for the export trade, in which it bears a comparatively high price. The short staple serves for the local manufactures, and it may be remarked that a given weight of gunny-bags may be purchased at about the same price as a similar weight of raw material for spinning and weaving. The stems or stalks of the jute crop are of almost equal value with the fibrous portion.

A man rushed breathless into a lawyer's office in St. Paul, and, approaching the legal luminary, excitedly remarked: "A man has tied a hoop to my horse's tail. Can I do anything?" "Yes," replied the attorney; "go and untie it." This was good advice, and only cost the man five dollars.

A California Wonder.

The tract of country known as the State Range Valley is probably one of the most curious that Southern California can boast of. It is there the immense deposits of borax were discovered something like a year ago, and at that time the whole lower or central part of the basin was covered with a white deposit, breaking away in some places in large soda reefs, in others resembling the waves of the ocean, and still others stretching out for miles in one unbroken level, from which the sun reflected its rays with a glare almost unendurable. But one of the most singular features in connection with this section was the absence of rain or moisture; the days were ever sunny and hot, the nights without dew, and generally warm. For more than five years, it is said by those who claim to know, there had been no rain there, until some three months since the spell was broken.

Suddenly, and with scarcely any warning, rain commenced to fall, and for thirty hours came down steadily and unceasingly, unaccompanied by wind, but yet a thorough drenching rain. For two or three days it remained pleasant, when a huge waterspout was seen winding its ways through the valley. It came in a zigzag way across the upper east side, and coursing rapidly along them. The cañons and gorges were soon filled with water, which poured from them in a fearful volume, and spread itself out upon the bottom. In a short time it was over, and the denizens of the place now look for another dry season of five years.

Thompson and Simms lived opposite each other in a narrow street up-town. They were going on a fishing excursion the other day, and as they wanted to be sure to wake in time to catch the early train, they ran a bit of clothes-line across the street, in the second-story windows, and each tied an end to his leg, so that if one awoke the other would immediately feel a pull. The scheme was an excellent one, and we know of no reason why, under ordinary circumstances, it should not have worked well. But about five o'clock that morning, some laborers stopped in front of Simms's for the purpose of erecting a telegraph-pole. When the hole was dug they began to put the pole up on end. But unfortunately it slipped, and came down with tremendous force upon the clothes-line. Mrs. Simms was very much surprised to see Henry go over the foot of the bed and shoot feet foremost out of the window; but even she was not more amazed than Mrs. Thompson was when Archibald performed the same feat. They met in the middle of the street, clustering, as it were, around the pole, each with a leg broken. They wake themselves now with alarm-clocks. It is safer and less exciting.

Babies' Legs.

Bow-legs and knock-knees are among the common deformities of humanity, and wise mothers assert that the crookedness in either case arises from the afflicted one having been put on his or her feet too early in babyhood. But a Manchester physician, Doctor Crompton, who has watched for the true cause, thinks differently. He attributes the first mentioned distortion to a habit some young-

sters delight in, of rubbing the sole of one foot against that of the other; some will go to sleep with the soles pressed together. They appear to enjoy the contact only when the feet are naked; they don't attempt to make it when they are socked or slippers. So the remedy is obvious; keep the baby's soles covered. Knock-knees the doctor ascribes to a different childish habit, that of sleeping on the side, with one knee tucked into the hollow behind the other. He has found that where one leg has been bound inward more than the other, the patient has always slept on that side, and the uppermost member has been that most deformed. Here the preventive is to pad the insides of the knees so as to keep them apart, and let the limbs grow freely their own way. All of which is commended to mothers who desire the physical uprightness of their progeny.

Where to Get Illustrations.

In the mind itself—in a trained habit of thoughtful observation. As one has said:

"Where shall I gather illustrations for my class?" On the source from which they are drawn depends, in a great measure, their value. Good bank-notes come from the banker, not from the counterfeiter. No one has any right to have counterfeits, so no teacher has a right to use spurious illustrations. Instead of relying on encyclopedias, etc., go into the street with open eyes; pick up the dead broken branch which lies at your feet, and convert it into an illustration of a faithless Christian life. Be wide awake, be discriminating; or, if the expression may be allowed, possess sanctified gumption. The Savior preached the gospel in the trees, in the fields, in the roads. Why not we? An illustration is to be used to gain attention and to carry home the truth. Employ such as are within the comprehension of the child. Let Greek mythology alone. Take God's illustrations, scattered on every hand, in the fields, the gardens, the lanes. Look at the flowers, the grass, all nature, and pray God to open your eyes. An excellent help is to have a Bible with a wide margin, in which to note down, as you find them, such illustrations as bear upon any particular passage. After a while you will have a book which money cannot buy. Use always the best material you can find, and if possible, that drawn from your own experience. Do not labor to find great things. Take the little things. Be plain, consistent, concise.

Not Alone.

Sages of old contended that no sin was ever committed whose consequences rested on the head of the sinner alone; that no man could do ill and his fellows not suffer. They illustrated it thus: "A vessel sailing from Joppa carried a passenger who, beneath his berth, cut a hole through the ship's side. When the men of the watch expostulated with him, 'What doest thou, O miserable man? the offender calmly replied, 'What matters it to you? The hole I have made lies under my own berth.'"

This ancient parable is worthy of the utmost consideration. No man perishes alone in his iniquity; no man can guess the full consequences of his transgressions.

Prayer in Public.

In "Aunt Jane's Hero," a Sunday school book, by Mrs. Prentiss, a word of counsel on public prayer is given which is worthy of attention by every superintendent or teacher who leads the devotions of his Sunday school. Says Aunt Jane to Horace, who has just commenced to pray in public:

"But I want to take a mother's privilege, and suggest one thing, that it would not be amiss to do to every young man who prays in public. You all repeat the name of God too often; and if no friend has courage to tell you of it at the outset, the habit becomes fixed. I know it is a very difficult matter to criticize a prayer; but I do it in tenderest affection, I might say pride. For when I think of what you were aiming at a few years ago, and what you love and are aiming at now, I could cry for joy."

Daniel Webster's Guidance.

A lawyer in Milwaukee was defending a handsome young woman for stealing from a large, unoccupied building in the nighttime, and thus he spoke in conclusion: "Gentlemen of the jury, I am done. When I gazed with enraptured eyes on the matchless beauty of this peerless virgin, on whose resplendent charms suspicion never dared to breathe; when I beheld her radiant in the glorious bloom of lustrous loveliness which angelic sweetness might envy but could not eclipse; before which the star on the brow of night grows pale, and the diamonds of Brazil are dim; and then reflect upon the utter madness and folly of supposing that so much beauty would expose itself to the terrors of an empty building in the cold, damp depth of night, when innocence like hers is hiding itself among the snowy pillows of repose; gentlemen of the jury, my feelings are too overpowering for expression, and I throw her into your arms for protection against this foul charge, which the outrageous malice of a disappointed scoundrel has invented to blast the fair name of this lovely maiden, whose smile shall be the reward of the verdict which I know you will give!"

The jury convicted her without leaving their seats.

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