

PROGRESS PUBLISHING CO.

There are fifty individuals and firms in New York City whose aggregate wealth is estimated by careful judges to aggregate fully \$1,000,000,000.

The question as to what is the exact mechanical equivalent of heat has long puzzled engineers. The latest experiments show that 1 pound of water raised 1 degree Fahrenheit is equal to 1 pound lifted 769 feet.

Colonel A. Andrews of San Francisco is the richest pensioner in the United States, being worth something like \$4,500,000. He is a veteran of the Mexican war and pays over his monthly stipend from Uncle Sam to a needy veteran who receives no pension.

The Texas Live Stock Journal says the general average in shrinkage of a steer going from Texas to Chicago is 100 pounds. The state furnishes an average of 400,000 steers, which makes a shrinkage of 40,000,000 pounds, or, as the average weight of a steer is 850 pounds, 47,059 head.

The estimated corn crop of 1887 in this country is about 1,300,000,000 bushels. The seven corn surplus states, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Iowa, Kansas and Nebraska, have during the last seven years produced an average within a small fraction of 1,000,000,000 bushels annually. This year all these states have suffered severely from drought.

In 1878 capital punishment, which had been abolished in Iowa, was re-established, and it was provided that the jury should decide in murder cases whether or not the death penalty should be paid, but that no convicted person should be executed until at least one year's confinement in the penitentiary. A wife murderer who was recently convicted is the first person condemned to death in the state under the new law.

The new dynamite gun, recently tested by United States authorities, bid fair to create a revolution in modern gunnery. An iron tube contains a fifty-pound charge of dynamite, and the latter can be safely delivered against the side of a ship at the distance of one mile, shaking or wrecking anything contrived by human hands. Of what avail, asks the Cultivator are the iron-clad navies of the world against the dynamite gun?

The new, the universal language, known as Volapuk, may never come into general use, but two gentlemen who have had the privilege of hearing it spoken emphatically testify to its irresistible melody. One says, "London Figaro" reports, that it sounds "like double Dutch spoken by a Choctaw Indian suffering from a chronic croup," while the other thinks that it breaks upon the ravished ear like the music made "by a Welchman trying to cough in modern Greek."

An American gentleman who has recently traveled through Japan, says that the Japanese will in a few years be the greatest railroad builders of the world. As yet there are only 370 miles of railroad in Japan, but many roads are projected. The Japanese are good railroad patrons: for even when they have no business to transact they will ride back and forth on the railroad until they have spent their last cent. And the beggars in the large towns nearly always spend the money which they get on a railroad trip.

The potato bug made two simultaneous appearances in Germany this year, one in Saxony and one in Hanover. The German Government at once had men at work, who carefully picked all the bugs and larvae off the plants. The stems of the vines were then cut off and placed in baskets lined with sack, which were thoroughly soaked in benzine oil and buried deep in the ground. After this the land was plowed 12 or 14 inches deep and well harrowed, and the surface picked over for any insects that might be on it. Finally the land was saturated with benzine oil. In one case eight acres and in the other three-quarters of an acre had to be treated in this way.

Very few people on this side of the Atlantic have any idea of how much is being done in Europe in the study of the food and nutrition of man. In the laboratories of the great universities, especially in Germany, experimental researches are being carried on which are really remarkable. Some of the most ingenious and costly apparatus, and the painstaking investigation which modern science employs are devoted to finding out how the body is nourished and how food works. Experiments are made with animals of many kinds, and with human beings also. The experimenters put a man inside the respiration apparatus and weigh and measure and analyze not only his food and drink, but all the products given off from his body, including even the air he breathes. —[Times.

As a profession the practice of medicine seems to be pretty lucrative, at least in large cities. The late Miss Wolf used to pay \$20,000 a year to her medical attendant. The late Mrs. A. T. Stewart paid an average of \$32,000 to three physicians. Mrs. C. Vanderbilt pays her doctor \$10,000 a year and Mrs. William Astor pays \$16,000. Mrs. Ellis, an American lady, physician to the Queen of Corea, receives \$15,000 a year. At a meeting of the New York County Medical Society two white-haired physicians with whom a reporter talked agreed in saying that at least one-half the practicing physicians of New York received incomes of \$5000 a year and upward.

A perfecting press, such as most leading newspapers are printed on, is an expensive and intricate piece of machinery. The cost runs up among the thousands of dollars and it consists of many delicate parts nicely adjusted. At the same time it exerts a tremendous mechanical force when in operation, and is not a thing to be trifled with. Imagine the sensations of a leading New York publisher one day recently, when he saw an iron wrench go crashing through his press, following the path designed for a single thickness of paper. It was the fault of a careless pressman, who had started the machine without removing the wrench, which he had been using. In an instant, so rapid is the motion of these presses, cylinders were broken, wheels twisted out of shape, thousands of dollars of damage done and, most aggravating of all, the wrench came out uninjured.

Consul Moffett, at Athens, reports to the State Department that within the past few weeks many applications have been made to him by young men for transportation to America. The report has somehow got abroad that there is a demand in America for Greek laborers; that money is to be had in abundance, and that the American Government will furnish transportation. Mr. Moffett has tried in vain to discover the source of this delusion. The people who make application are neither mechanics nor agriculturists, and would not make desirable additions to our population. They have no purpose to become citizens, but hope to acquire fortunes and return to live upon the interest in idleness. The Greek Government discourages emigration; the Greek Consul in New York has warned his countrymen of the sufferings they are likely to experience in New York, and the Greek press has spread the warning broadcast, but all without apparent effect.

T. C. Crawford writes thus from London to the New York World of suffering American workmen who have sought employment in Europe:

There is a large number of foolish Americans, who are continually coming to Europe to seek work. I hear most touching stories of want and suffering among people of this class. Consul General Waller said the other day that he had heard of more pitiable cases of suffering since his occupancy of office than he had ever heard of before in his life. The fact cannot be too widely published that Europe is no place for American workmen of any class. If they come over here with positions secured in advance they still run the risk of being exposed in the end to poverty and distress. Once their places are lost it seems almost impossible for them to get a foothold again. *** The competition in Europe among the workmen is so fierce and the wages are so low in comparison with those in our country that it is hard to understand how any intelligent workman would venture to come here without careful investigation. There are thousands of men in London out of work. For every vacancy there are hundreds and hundreds of applications. For three or four dollars a week you can command the services of a university undergraduate. Trafalgar square every night is filled with poor men and women who have no homes. They fill the benches, and in one of the lower corners, sheltered from the wind, they lie upon the hard pavement stretched out in long lines, two or three hundred in number. The majority of these people are tramps and vagrants, but there is a large percentage of well-educated and skillful workmen among this army of outcasts.

What She Would Say.
He was feeling his way. "If I were to tell you, Miss Smith," he said, in a low earnest tone, "that I am about to start on a long journey, even across the sea, and that it may be months, and possibly years, ere I return, what would you say?"

If the girl dropped it wasn't perceptible. "I would say, Mr. Sampson," she replied, "ta, ta."—[Harper's Bazar.

Potato Ivory.
Potato ivory is a new transformation for the lowly tubers. They are simply treated with sulphuric acid, bathed in it, boiled in it, and afterwards freed from it. The result is a hard white substance easily worked and colored. As the supply of tusks are limited, and the production of celluloid expensive, this may prove a valuable industry. —[New York World.

Joy and Sorrow.
Somebody's heart is gay,
And somebody's heart is sad,
For lights beam bright across the way,
And a door with crape is clad!
Sadness and gladness e'er
Are dwellers side by side.
A dear one on her bier,
And the wreathing of a bride.
Bright eyes are filled with mirth,
Pale faces bend in prayer,
And hearts beside the cheery hearth
Are crushed by stout despair!
Ah, sorrow and joy and hope
Are parted by thinnest wall,
And only on hearts which never ope,
No ghosts of shadows fall!

No thoughts of the funeral train
Come to the festive throng;
No hope that joy will dawn again,
To stricken souls belongs.
The future is e'er a sunny sea
To the children of joy and mirth;
But only the frost and its memory
Comes to stricken ones of earth!

Somebody's heart is gay,
And somebody's heart is sad,
For lights beam bright across the way,
And a door with crape is clad!
Sadness and gladness e'er
Crowd round us side by side:
A sunny smile and a scalding tear,
So close they are allied!

—[L. G. Riggs in St. Louis Magazine.

A BUNCH OF BANANAS.

BY WALLACE P. REED.
I.
"She will be a princess, if—"
Juan Valdez leaned forward eagerly to hear what the wrinkled old hag had to say.

The fortune-teller again scrutinized the innocent baby face before her, and looked at the pink little palm extended in her brown, leathery hand.
"She will be a princess, if—"
Again she paused with evident reluctance.
"Speak!" commanded Senior Valdez. "Surely the power of your evil art has not deserted you. If you can look into the future, tell me what is to befall my daughter, the last of her line."
The fortune-teller threw her head back with a proud air. She was a very old woman. There were people in San Blas who remembered her when she came to the village three score and ten years before, and even then her hair was gray and her face was wrinkled. She claimed to be considerably over a century old, and no one disputed her word.

"Senor, Valdez," said the brown-faced sibyl, turning her fierce black eyes full upon him. "I knew your father, and his father before him. For three generations I have been at the cradle of every new-born babe in the village. I have foretold whatsoever there was of good or evil in their lives. Has any one ever said that Perdita made a mistake or made false predictions?"
"You misunderstand me, Perdita," was the humble reply. "It has unnerved me to gain a daughter and lose a wife, all in one bitter-sweet hour. My heart is filled with mingled grief and joy, and I am impatient to know the future of my last hope, the heiress of the most magnificent estate in Mexico. Will she live or die? Will she bring joy or sorrow to my house?"

Perdita dropped the tiny hand of the pretty child, and shaded her eyes with her hand.
"I see," she murmured, "the proudest beauty that ever brought our gallant cavaliers to her feet. Her gifts of mind and person are the wonder and delight of her father and all who behold her. Something tells me that she will be a princess if she lives to see her 18th birthday. My eyes have followed her through her infancy and childhood, and down to the night before her fateful day. Beyond that I cannot see. I know that she will be a princess, if she is alive on her 18th birthday. But I know nothing more."
Sorely puzzled, and uncertain whether to be hopeful or despondent, Senior Valdez gave Perdita a purse of gold and dismissed her.

II.
Seventeen years had rolled away. A republic had gone down in a sea of blood and an empire had risen. Maximilian was on the throne; the beautiful Carlotta had surrounded herself with an imperial court, rivalling the brilliancy of the one at the Tuilleries; Bazine's legions covered the land, and it seemed the usurpers had come to stay.

Among the Mexican hidalgos who rallied around the imperial standard, the wealthiest and most influential, was undoubtedly Senior Valdez.
"The prediction is coming to pass," the senor would frequently say to himself. "The republic is dead, and we have a court swarming with princes. Rita is the most beautiful woman and the richest heiress in Mexico. Why should she not be a princess? Old Perdita told the truth."

Rita was presented at court, and even the empress looked at her in delighted admiration.

"Your daughter will be a princess!" she whispered to Senior Valdez, who at that moment was looking at his gold-laced coat tails in a mirror.
"She has the noblest blood of old Spain in her veins," replied Valdez proudly.

"That does not need to be said," answered the empress, taking the girl by the hand and leading her to a quiet corner of the salon.
The Senorita Valdez had been educated by the best European tutors that her father's liberal offers could secure. She was mistress of every accomplishment Carlotta made no secret of the fact that she liked her better than any of the ladies around her.

"She will be a princess!" old Valdez would repeat a hundred times a day.
The senor moved to the capital, and established himself in a palace. He raised regiments for Maximilian, loaned the government money, and lived on a lavish and extravagant scale.
In his round of pleasure and excitement Valdez came near forgetting a very important matter. One night it came upon him with a shock.
"By all the saints!" he exclaimed, leaping from his bed. "In one week from to-day Rita will be eighteen! What did the old witch say? Her words all depended upon an if. My daughter will be a princess, if. Ah, that if! I must see to it at once. If any danger threatens Rita it is during the present week."

The senor hastily dressed himself and ran into his daughter's room.
Rita was sleeping quietly, and her face wore the glow of health.
Valdez examined the fastenings of the windows, and then retired locking the door and taking the key with him.
The next morning he told Rita of his fears, and secured her consent to remain indoors for several days.

"We must run no risk," the old man said, as he stroked her head affectionately.
III.
On the morrow Rita would be eighteen. Valdez passed the day in a state of dazed illumination.
He refused to let his daughter come down stairs to breakfast, for fear that she would trip.
"No coffee, my dear," he said, "A glass of lemonade is more wholesome. Heavens!" he shrieked.

"What is it?" asked the astonished girl.
"There is a lemon seed in the glass," said her father. "You might have swallowed it."
Rita laughed. It was such a trifle, she told her father.
But Valdez would have his way. He poured out another glass, and examined every particle of food that came into the room. He prohibited meat, because it might produce fever.

He was just as particular about everything, and before the day was over Rita grew so nervous that she did not much care whether she lived or died.
Before night the windows were securely barred, the room was searched to see that no assassin had concealed himself, and finally at a late hour Valdez told his daughter that he was afraid to give her any supper.
"The truth is," he said, "I am afraid of poison."
"May I have a few bananas?" pleaded the senorita.
"Bananas," shouted her father. "Why of course. They cannot hurt you. Yes, you shall have a whole bunch."

He gave his orders, and in a few minutes the tempting looking fruit was brought into the room.
Valdez kissed his daughter, and locked her in. He did not tell her of his purpose but all night long he paced the hall in his stocking feet with a pistol in his hand.

The first glimmer of dawn came through the windows of the palace.
"Rita's eighteenth birthday!" said the happy father with a smiling face. "She is safe, and what is more, she will be a princess!"
Gradually the servants began to stir, and the bright sunshine bathed the walls in a flood of glory.
Senior Valdez quietly unlocked the door to the well-guarded chamber, and stole in on tip-toe.
In a moment the wildest shrieks and cries rang through the palace.

The servants rushed to Rita's room, and the unutterable horror of the sight before them struck even the boldest dumb.
Senior Valdez lay stretched on the floor in a death-like swoon.
On the bed lay Rita, her face whiter than the snowy pillow. There was a horrible, brown, hairy something on her throat!
One of the women approached gently, and tore the ugly thing away, and killed it with her slipper.

It was a tarantula, and it had done its deadly work only too well. Rita's throat bore the mark of its poisonous sting.
The servants understood it all when they saw the bunch of bananas in a chair by the bed. The tarantula had crawled out during the night, and had stung the lovely victim to death while she slept!
Valdez recovered consciousness, but it was only to be driven from the palace to the asylum. To the day of his death he remained a gibbering maniac, without the faintest gleam of sanity. Perhaps it was a blessing to have his mind so completely wiped out.

When the Empress Carlotta heard of

the death of her favorite she at once discontinued her court entertainments for the season. The empress felt the shock so severely that it is believed by many in Mexico that her subsequent mental troubles really dated from the death of the unfortunate Rita.—[Atlanta Constitution.

Mushroom-Growing in Illinois.

A company was recently organized in the city of Chicago which has leased five acres of the tunnels of the Utica Cement Manufacturing company for twenty years for the production of mushrooms. Tuesday, H. S. Weaver, superintendent of this new industry, left for France in the interests of the organization and will bring back a supply of mushroom spawn imbedded in rich compost, a handful of which spawn or seed would be sufficient to plant acres. There are several gentlemen interested in this new industry, which is surely a novelty in this part of the state, or probably in the United States, for that matter, for, as far as known, no such large company exists in this country. The method of raising this cryptogamic plant as proposed in the tunnels will doubtless be interesting to our readers. There are numbers of these subterranean chambers owned by the Utica Cement Manufacturing Company, but only a few of them will be used at first in the mushroom industry. The soil or manure will be brought from Chicago by the carload and made into beds in the tunnels and the spawn set therein.

A crop can be grown every twenty-four hours, and two crops if desired, as all that need be done is to clip off the head and the fringe will, inside the next twelve hours, produce another mushroom plant. The experiment of growing this delectable article of food has been tried in English mines, but with the impurities of the gas, air, etc., it was not possible to obtain success and the attempts proved failures. The air of the tunnels is not impregnated with foul odors, is of an even temperature, and the entire conditions are such that a failure cannot possibly result. The company at first proposes to put in sufficient beds to yield 100 bushels per day, which sell in the Chicago market for 30 cents per pound.—[La Salle (Ill.) Press.

Queer Indian Customs in Brazil.

The Indian prayer-meetings in the country are rather a singular admixture of superstition and devotion. A doll is dressed in silk clothes, with candles on each side, a good bit of tinsel work about it and a ribbon tied about its waist. It rests on the table. Eight or ten Indian men stand around; one has a large drum, which he beats continually. The women sit on the floor, while the men sing prayers to the saint, the women responding. They commence praying about 7 or 8 o'clock and keep it up two or three hours. Then the women with their little children kiss the ribbons, asking favors of the saint. The men then go through the same ceremony. The saint is then locked up in a box, and dancing commences and lasts the rest of the night. Frequent potions of whiskey are imbibed by the men, coffee and wine by the women. When the men become too drunk to dance longer they retire to their hammocks and sleep until sober.—[Pittsburg Gazette.

Practice.

A Texas parent had a son who took piano lessons at Professor Zweibee's house, but was supposed to do his practicing on the piano at home. The parent had a suspicion that the youth did not practise much. One day he said:
"Tommy, do you practise regularly on the piano when I am down town?"
"Yes, pa."
"Every day?"
"Yes, pa."
"How long did you practise yesterday?"
"Two hours."
"And to-day?"
"Three hours."
"I am glad to hear that you practise so regularly."
"Yes, pa."
"And next time you practise be sure you unlock the piano. Here is the key. I locked the piano and put the key in my pocket a week ago."—[Siftings.

A Severe Mental Tax.

"Bobby," said his mother, "I told you not to forget to bring up three scuttles of coal before you went to school, and you only brought up two."
"I know, ma, but I forgot the third one. Three scuttles is a good many for a little boy like me to remember."—New York Sun.

Both Tired.

"I've been making mince pies," said a wife, as the after-dinner coffee was brought on, "and I'm very tired."
"And I've been eating mince pie," remarked her husband, "and I am tired, too," and he bowed his head upon the table.—[New York Sun.

A New Process.

Patron—It's astonishing what a number of new artistic designs have been invented lately.
Poor Artist—Yes, indeed, sir. I have often drawn on an empty stomach.—[Tid Bits.

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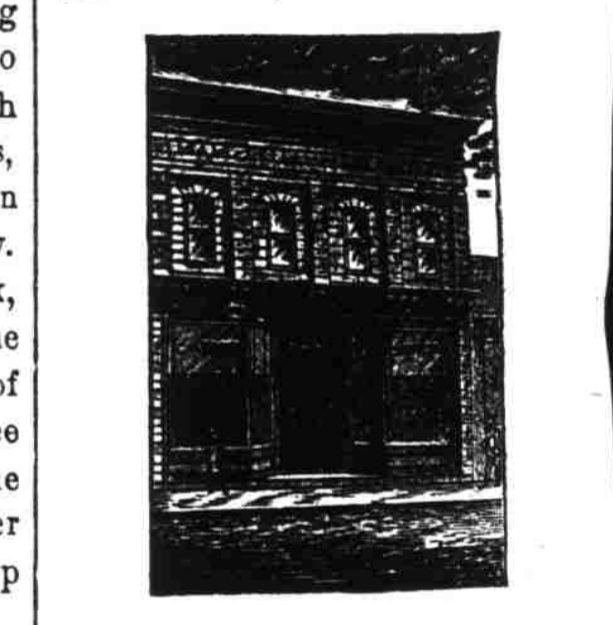
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A Doctor's Joke.
The celebrated French physician, Ricord, was one day walking along one of the boulevards in Paris, when he met an old gentleman who was very rich, but who was at the same time noted for his extreme stinginess. The old man, who was somewhat of a hypochondriac, remarked that he could get some medical advice from Ricord without paying for it.
"Doctor, I am feeling very poorly," said the old man. "Where do you suffer most?"
"In my stomach, doctor." "Ah, that's bad. Please shut your eyes. That's all. Now put out your tongue, so that I can examine it closely." The old man was told to wait for about ten minutes, he opened his eyes, and found himself surrounded by a crowd, who supposed that he was a crazy Doctor Ricord, in the meantime had disappeared.—Argonaut.