

THE SCOUT.

F. E. CASE.
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The *Drovers' Journal* figures that the daily mileage made in cities of the United States by cars supplied with electric motors is now more than one hundred thousand miles and is growing rapidly.

People who live in San Francisco congratulate themselves that earthquakes are not altogether objectionable, since they prevent the erection of high blocks of buildings, which keep air and sunlight out of the streets.

Switzerland keeps the 600th birthday of her Confederation next year. In 1291 the "Forest Cantons"—Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden—formed the first league for mutual support and defense against the House of Hapsburg.

The number of cattle in Indian Territory is now found to be only 500,000 head. This is a great falling off from former years, and shows, argues the *Boston Cultivator*, that hereafter the consumers of beef must depend on stock fed with cultivated forage and grain, instead of relying on the product of pasture costing nothing. It will be much better for all branches of farming in all parts of the country when the demoralization of ranching has finally had its day.

An Ohio clergyman surprised his congregation on a recent Sunday by making the following announcement: "Nearly every member of this church is either wealthy or well-to-do, although no one would think so from an inspection of the collection plates, which are burdened principally with nickels. I would remind you, brethren, that the collection plate is not a nickel-in-the-slot machine, and that a few bills would come in very handy in the work of the church."

The *American Agriculturist* notes that "twenty-five separate agricultural institutions in Great Britain receive Government aid for the purpose of assisting in providing general agricultural teaching, special practical instruction in dairy work, lectures on forestry, and the carrying on of agricultural experiments. Scotland also receives a substantial annual Government grant of nearly \$300,000, distributed among eleven institutions, of which the University of Edinburgh receives the largest appropriation, of \$250,000. This looks picaresque to Americans, for most of our States give more for such purposes."

The *Chicago Herald* says that "Florida and California are each making a strong bid for winter visitors by sending out cars filled with tropical and semi-tropical fruits attractively displayed. There is a car of this kind known as 'Florida on Wheels,' which made the tour of the Eastern resorts and did good missionary work during the summer months. A train of cars known as 'California on Wheels' and containing a superb exhibit of fruits, is now en route for the East for the purpose of booming Southern California as a winter resort, and will undoubtedly influence many people to cross the continent the coming winter."

Several California papers recently contained a matrimonial appeal, signed by "a young and beautiful Hungarian maiden, an orphan without means, but well educated and with domestic tendencies, who seeks a companion for life." The answers were directed to Paris, where the young lady was employed as a nurse. Incredible as it may appear a dozen offers from marriageable young "Frisconians" came over the sea. A lively correspondence ensued, and finally each of the wooers received an exquisite photograph and an affirmative answer from the beautiful Hungarian maiden, with a request that the lover should send the necessary cash for a transatlantic ticket. The swiftest of the syndicates of swindlers netted 6000 marks in all by the trick. And now the prospective bridegrooms, among whom are some well-known names, dare not whisper their misery.

The experiments in the cultivation of plants under the electrical light, recently made by the botanical department of the Cornell University, at Ithaca, N. Y., have given some curious and interesting results, and results which are in some respects confirmatory of somewhat similar experiments not long ago reported from Russia. The first and most noticeable effect of the treatment is an enormously increased rate of growth. The plants which are lighted seem to work day and night and to "run very much to leaf." Vegetables shoot up very quickly, and peas in a few weeks are two or three times as tall as those planted at the same time in daylight. In the case of seeds and fruit of any kind, however, the results are entirely different, and the plants which had grown slowly and by daylight were ahead. It was observed that in every instance the reproductive powers of the plant were strongly affected, being sacrificed to mere foliage and rapidity of increase in general size.

TO A LITTLE BROOK.

You're not so big as you were then,
O little brook!

I mean not so big as you were then,
When boys roamed, full of awe, beside
Your noisy, foaming, tumbling slide,
And wondered if it could be true
That there were bigger brooks than you,
O little brook, O peerless brook!

All up and down this ready place
Where lives the brook,
We angled for the future dace;
The reeling-blackbird hid his nest
To make us think he'd built his nest
Hard by the stream, when like as not,
He'd hung it in a secret spot.

And often, when the noontime heat
Parboiled the brook,
We'd draw our boots and swing our feet
Upon the waves that, in their play,
Would tug us last and scold away;
And thought we never would be slow
What burnt our legs and caked our shoes.

But father guessed it was a trick,
And fished for us
The good old way,
And when we rowed with him,
He'd tell us of the good old days,
When he and I were boys,
And he'd be telling us of you,
O little brook, O peerless brook!

For you, my brook—
Come Cousin Sam along that way;
And, having lived a spell out west,
Where creeks aren't counted much at best,
But with superb indifference, steep
Across that brook—our mighty brook!

Why do you scamper on your way,
O little brook,
When I come back to you to-day?
Is it because you fear the grass?
That langes at you as you pass,
As 'I, in playful mood, it would
Tickle the trout if it could,

You chuckling brook—our saucy brook!
Or is it you no longer know—
You sly little brook—
The honest friend of long ago?
The years that kept us twain apart
Have changed your face but not my heart—
Many and sore those years, and yes
I fancied you could not forget

That happy time, my playmate brook!
Oh, sing again in artless glee,
My little brook,
The song you used to sing for me—
The song that's lingered in my ears
So soothingly these many years;
My grief shall be forgotten when
I hear your tranquil voice again
And that sweet song, dear little brook!
—Eugene Field, in *Chicago News*.

A LAST CHORD.

Madame Langelot, a comely, smiling woman of thirty-six, was humming merrily as she went to and fro in her dining-room, and giving the last glance, the careful housewife's glance, to the family table. Whatever the season might be, there was always a bunch of flowers to enliven the board and testify to the delicate touch of woman.

Suddenly Madame Langelot stopped, as she recognized the music that came from the room she had just entered. She exclaimed: "What is the matter? You look upset."

"I have reason to be, darling," he replied, "when a man hears at the same moment of the failure and the death of his only brother."

"You mean, oh, my poor dear!" cried Madame Langelot.

"His marriage, as you know, was an unfortunate one," continued the husband, "he was an artist in heart and soul, and forgot everything in his love for an Italian lady, who had a madonna-like face and wonderful musical talent. Her gaze bewitched him, and in spite of my entreaties, and our father's opposition, he married her. He was utterly incapable of managing his business, and was made reckless by the death of his adored wife. Yesterday, in despair, he took his own life, and on me devolved the task of settling his affairs in an honorable manner. I must do this dear, for he was a Langelot."

"Of course," was the reply, "it is your duty."

"There is something else, said Monsieur Langelot slowly, and his wife, startled by his hesitation, exclaimed anxiously:

"What do you mean?"

"My brother has left a son, he is twelve years old, but delicate and deformed, and will never be able to provide for himself."

"And you think it is our duty to adopt him?"

"My dear—perfectly right," cried the young woman, kissing her husband fondly, "how good you are, dear! Bring the poor boy home, and he shall be our Clairette's elder brother."

And thus the orphan's fate was settled by these two simple loving souls.

THE HOUSEWORK.

Housework is healthy, and many physical ailments are due to women who need it. It is a good thing to have a long exercise, while dusting and sweeping. Many girls take more interest in their homes if encouraged by the care of them.

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STRANGE PENSION CASES.

A Cavalryman Whose Fate Was Like Enoch Arden's—Soldiers Wrongfully Braided as Deserters.

A Pension Office clerk recently gave to a correspondent of the *Milwaukee Sun* some incidents out of many which came to his notice in that department. He said:

"A Michigan cavalry man has recently secured a pension after a great deal of trouble. He was reported as having been killed in action, but turned up a few years ago at a reunion of his regiment, like a ghost among his comrades, who had never heard a word about him since the memorable battle when he was shot. He rode in the front ranks during the cavalry charge in the second battle of Bull Run, was shot from his horse at the beginning of the charge, and the whole regiment passed over him. There was no doubt about his death and no surprise that his body was not found after the battle was over, because it was presumed that he could not be identified if found. There was no doubt in the minds of his comrades that he had been trampled to pieces. Well, he turned up among his comrades at the reunion of the regiment, and told the story that he knew nothing until two or three months after the battle, when he found himself out in Michigan, being cared for by some strangers who had taken him in. He was a complete physical wreck who had been twisted and torn out of all shape, as if he had been blown up by a boiler explosion and patched up afterward. He wandered about for several years, and finally visiting his former home found that his wife, believing him dead, had married again. He did not marry until he had been traveling about until he finally gained the friendship of a well-to-do man, and with him he made his home, finally marrying one of his daughters. After his appearance at the reunion of his regiment he brought his case before the department, had his military record corrected, and ultimately secured a pension."

"One of the strangest incidents, however," continued the official, "was the claim of the widow and mother of a colored soldier for a pension. The widow swore that her husband died in Tennessee in 1862 of smallpox, and that his mother was not living at the time of his death. The mother claimed that the man died in 1864 of smallpox in Tennessee, and that she had repeatedly seen him between '62 and '64, but that her son had never married. Both of the women were evidently swearing to the truth, so far as they understood it. The military record in the Adjutant-General's office showed that the man in question enlisted in that regiment and company, and died in Tennessee of smallpox in 1864. There was a great deal of strong collateral evidence to show that he had died in 1862 of smallpox. It was finally ascertained that the man did die in 1862 as claimed by his widow. In those times vacancies in colored regiments were speedily filled by Sergeants, who experienced little difficulty in filling the ranks with ignorant colored men who would take the place of the deceased, no matter what the name of the man who was originally enlisted died in 1862; a new man was put in his place under the same name, and he died of the smallpox two years later. There were really two colored soldiers, one of whom was mustered in and died in 1862, while the other was not mustered in, but served two years and died in 1864. Under the circumstances, of course, the widow of the man who died in 1862 got a pension. The mother of the man who died in 1864 got no pension, because her son was never really mustered into the service."

"There have been thousands of cases where men were not deserters, who never did desert, nor overtook the army. Thousands of fellows fell by the roadside, were taken into field hospitals, sent North, recovered, returned to their regiments and served through the remainder of the war, who are reported as deserters. The Sergeant of the company failing to account for a man who straggled from the ranks found it easier to put 'deserted' opposite his name than to look for him. At the end of the month his name would be taken from the rolls, a new Sergeant might be in charge of the company when he returned, and then the mark of desertion would never be corrected until years after the war, when he would apply for a pension and find this record staring him in the face, finally to his discredit and discomfiture."

"There was a young man in to see me this morning—he is yet comparatively a young man—who was taken sick in front of Vicksburg, in 1863, while on the march from Champion Hills. He was in hospitals for several months and was in a lunatic asylum for over three years. When he recovered his reason the war had closed, and he gave no attention to his military record until a few weeks ago, when he made application for a pension and found himself marked as a deserter. The poor fellow had fallen in line of duty, just as truly and heroically as though he had been in line of battle stricken down with a bullet. He is now engaged in procuring evidence to prove the truth of his story, the result of which will be that his military record will be corrected and he will get the pension which is due him."

Catching Rats With a Pot Snake.

Thomas Oxlley, a farmer of Lincoln County, W. Va., who lives near Pittsbluff, has a queer pet, says the *Pittsburgh Dispatch*. It is a huge black snake, eight feet six inches long. The snake has been an adjunct of the farm for twelve years and is considered by Mr. Oxlley as among his most valuable possessions.

It stays about the barn summer and winter, and is the most indefatigable exterminator of rats, mice and other vermin ever owned by Oxlley.

"Jim," as the snake is called, is perfectly tame and docile, and answers to his name as promptly as the family dog or cat. He is fond of being petted by the family and seems to highly appreciate acts of kindness. Jim casts his coat at regular intervals of twelve months and every one of his skins have been kept by Mr. Oxlley as curiosities.

The big black fellow never attempts to harm any living thing except the rodents about the farm and them he keeps completely exterminated. Mr. Oxlley would not part with him for a large sum of money. This, it is believed, is the only instance where a huge black snake has been domesticated and become useful.

Imperial Hides in China.

The Emperor, Empress and Empress Dowager of China take daily rides in the handsomely furnished first-class carriages on the little railway round the Nan hai (Southern Sea), adjoining the new palace of the Empress Dowager. No locomotive is used, only coolies being employed to pull and push.

At the Kwanming Lake on the occasion of the late Imperial visit the Emperor got up steam in the little steamer launch, and in consequence a rowing barge had been ordered for his majesty.

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SELECT SIFTINGS.

The Mexicans eat salt with their oranges.

In Turkey, at the present day, the morning lark is violet.

One of the highest students at Cambridge (England) University is blind.

The music kept up at Irish wakes used to be for the purpose of driving away evil spirits.

Mrs. Maggie Ellis, of Chattanooga, Tenn., has given birth to the smallest child on record. It weighs thirty-one ounces.

Arctic whalebone sold recently in New York at \$6 a pound, the highest price known. The quotation for something is not above 100,000 pounds.

Hitch hark book covers are something new. They have a slip on the side in which the name of the book, written on a bit of card, can be inserted.

For the first time in seventeen years the island of St. Helena has a Governor, the British crown having been represented there since 1873 by acting Governors.

The poet Browning had a marvelous memory. He could always tell the exact place of any quotation or fragment of quotation referred to him, and was greatly vexed whenever he heard his own lines misquoted.

A rug valued at \$5000 was bought in London lately. It was about thirteen feet square and had about 256 stitches to the inch. The material was wool combed, not cut, from the animal, and worth more than its weight in silk.

When a child dies in Greenland the natives bury a living dog with it—the dog to be used by the child as a guide to the other world. When questioned about their strange custom they say: "A dog can find the way anywhere."

Naval expressions are generally noted for their peculiar aptness and brevity. There is, however, one nautical term which for length almost rivals the longest Greek expression. It is the "star-board-foremast-studding-sail-boom-topping-lift-jigger-fall."

There is a coal mine at St. Andre du Poirer, France, worked with two shafts of a depth of 2932 feet and 3083 feet. The latter is to be increased to 4000 feet. Contrary to theory, little increase of temperature has been met with as the shafts went farther into the earth.

George Fairbairn, chief of the Indian police at the Standing Rock (North Dakota) agency, is dead. He was the Daniel Boone of Minnesota, and a man of great influence among the Indians, being himself a quarter breed. He saved the lives of many whites during the Indian troubles.

The body of the Queen of Corea, who died June 4, is still kept in brine, the process of embalming being unknown to the people of that far-off land. The body will be kept four or five months, according to the custom of the country, and then interred with much pomp and ceremony.

In the Middle Ages the buckoo was thought to be a god who took the form of a bird, and it was supposed to kill him. The Romans were less superstitious and more practical. They taught him to kill him, and at him, and a bird no bird could be caught with him for any price of flesh.

Russian Soldiers in the Country.

One less of the military element in provincial Russia than might have been expected. There are camps at every good-sized town—a tented field for in Russia the army goes into camp all summer. But garrison towns are few and far apart, and it is only by bearing in mind the vast extent of Russian territory that one can come to accept as probable the numerical claims of its army.

It is curious to see soldiers in uniform working in the harvest-fields or mending the roads. The pay of the Russian soldier is only seven kopecks a month—less than Uncle Sam pays his boys in blue per day. As an offset, however, the Russians are permitted to hire out as laborers or artisans in the cities, and the garrison usually has the preference over others as supers in the theatres, and among them are often found amateur actors, singers and musicians of considerable talent. In the provinces they work at harvesting, plowing, ditch-digging or anything the large landed proprietors can find for them to do.

In every village are young men who have returned home from their three years' military duty. The Russian peasant dreads going to the army, but when heretofore is immediately proud of his service. He then considers himself far superior to those whom three years before he would have given an ear to change places with in order to remain at home.

The secret of exaltation is that while in the barracks he has received a very meagre education and knows a thing or two more than the rustics about him.

The military burden, apart from the expenses of keeping up the army, seems to sit lightly enough on the population. Neither the eldest son nor a son on whom depends the support of his parents is required to serve. The young man who can pass a certain examination is required to serve only one year in the regular army as a volunteer recruit.—*New York World*.

"KNEE DEEP! KNEE DEEP!"

"Knee deep! knee deep!" I am a chilly again!

I hear the cowbells tinkling down the lane,
The plaintive whippoorwills, the distant call
Of quails beyond the hill where night
hawks fall
From lambent skies to fields of golden grain;
I hear the milkmaid's song, the clanking
chain
Of plowman homeward bound, the lumbering
wagon,
And, down the darling vale 'mid rushes
tall,
"Knee deep! knee deep!"

We're all at home—John, Wesley, Little
Jane—
Dead long ago!—and the boy-soldiers twain
That sleep by purring stream or old stone
wall
In some far-off and unknown grave—we're
all
At home with mother!—heartache gone and
pain
"Knee deep! knee deep!"
—Henry J. Stoddard, in the *Cosmopolitan*.

HUMOR OF THE DAY.

Goes into tea without being asked—
Milk.
Society leaders are in the
where but at the—
Arbitration gives two parties the
halves of a pretty state and bitter loss—
Puck.

Ladies' change—that found in the
pockets of husbands at night.—*Boston
Courier*.

It may be said of a man who invests
in a quarry that his lot is a hard one.—
Yankee Gazette.

Some men stand on principles, others
trample on them. The latter, naturally,
make the most noise.

Silver is said in France by the "lillo."
In this country it comes in quartz.—
Commercial Advertiser.

A man must necessarily have a sharp
eye in order to cast a piercing glance.—
Biographical Republic.

A good lathering is the first requisite
of a good shaver. "It is also the best
thing for a bad shaver."—*New York
Herald*.

"Do you dictate to your typewriter?"
"I used to do so, but I married her and
now she dictates to me."—*Boston
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There is reason in all things. Few
never call their wives "old hens" until
they become broilers.—*Commercial Ad-
vertiser*.

Deduced—"Say, doctor, what kind of
medicine will cure my cold?" Doctor
Smart—"The kind I prescribe."—*Yan-
kee Blade*.

An uptown man recently left his
family and has not since been heard of,
although his nose turned up.—*Philadel-
phia Times*.

If money could be borrowed as easily
as trouble, the world would be full of
round-shouldered people.—*Indianapolis
Dem's Horn*.

Waggin' Their Tongues—"Did you
ever know that a vagon spoke?" "Yes,
I heard one complain about being too
long."—*The Bostonian*.

"I love you more than when I was
young." "Will you marry me?" "Will
you?" "Yes, I will."—*Washington Star*.

"You'll be a President, perhaps."
"I'd rather be," the boy replied.
"The man who plays first base."
—*Washington Post*.

"The new assessor is a very honest
man." "You don't say so! What has
he been doing?" "Why, he told me he
often taxed his own memory."—*West
Shore*.

"Judge," said the prisoner, who had
robbed an art store, in a pleading tone,
"there ain't no law to prevent a man's
taking photographs, is there?"—*Chicago
Tribune*.

Brown—"Hello, Smith, have you
changed for a V. Smith?" "Yes, here
you are." Brown—"Thanks, I'll bring
the five-dollar bill next week."—*Detroit
Free Press*.

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