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The sugar beet industry is being rapidly pushed in Australia.

There are 68,900 postoffices in the United States, and of these 67,000 do not pay the expenses of operating and maintaining them.

The countries of the world where women already have some suffrage have an area of over 18,000,000 square miles, and their population is over 350,000,000.

Ex-Secretary of the Navy Tracy is quoted as saying to a friend that in addition to the work and worry his cabinet life cost him \$30,000 every year above his salary of \$8000.

Says Texas Sitings: Seven out of every ten railroad accidents are settled with an annual pass. Some men would be run over by a whole freight train for the sake of a few free rides.

As the result of statistics showing a large increase in the number of youthful criminals, the German Ministry of the Interior is discussing a reorganization of the system of compulsory education.

The New Zealand farmers are the most prosperous in the world. Within the past ten years the agricultural resources have been developed until the dairy and frozen-meat industries have attained enormous proportions.

If the inheritance tax law, just enacted in England, had been in force in this country at Jay Gould's death, his estate would have paid to the Government \$5,000,000. Mr. Rockefeller's estate would have to pay \$10,000,000; William H. Vanderbilt's estate would have paid \$16,000,000.

An English passenger recently bought a ticket from London to Vienna. After twenty-four hours' traveling without having had a chance to get any food, the traveler stopped off at Dresden rather than continue his journey for the remaining twelve hours in a state of starvation. The German railway company cancelled his ticket, which contained no stopping privilege, and he was forced to buy another.

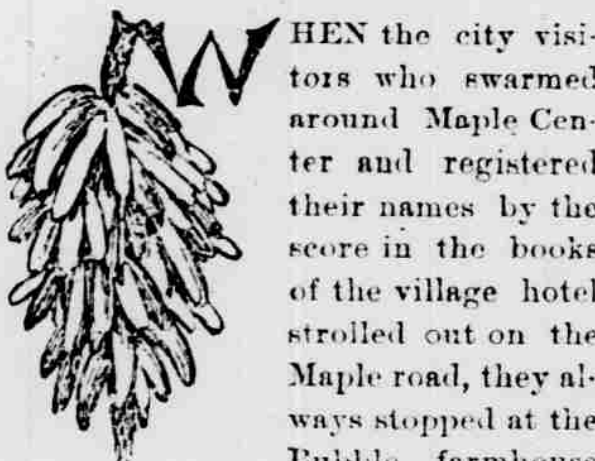
Yale students do not seem to care much for prizes, which take work to get. The Yale News says that the competition this year for the John A. Porter prize, the most valuable offered by the university, is very poor, and that the competition for the Thacher prize had to be postponed for lack of competitors. The students, however, show undiminished interest in prize fights, boat races, football, etc.

The New Orleans Prevue says: "The cotton interests have had much to complain of during the past few years in the way of shrinkage in the price of the heavy staple; but the decline in price for the Southern product by no means compares with the great shrinkage which has taken place in wheat. Wheat has declined fully fifty per cent in value, while cotton has not lost more than a third of its value in the same time, if that much. And yet there is no discouragement in the West, nor is there any report that the wheat growers have been driven to bankruptcy. The secret of the success with which the wheat growers of the West are able to resist the ill effects of such a heavy shrinkage in value as their cereal experienced is to be found in the system of diversified, or rather intensified, farming which prevails there. The Western farmer does not depend entirely on a single crop, but diversifies his products and makes himself self-sustaining as much as possible. Wheat thus becomes merely his cash crop, and a shrinkage in its value only means the curtailment of his luxuries and comforts, without threatening bankruptcy and ruin, as a drop in cotton prices so often does for the Southern farmer. This system of crop diversification and intensified farming is what is needed in the South, and if more energy were devoted to this, rather than to continual extension of cotton acreage, the South would be more independent of fluctuations in cotton prices."

RACE.
Leave me, here, those looks of yours!
All those pretty airs and lures,
Flush of cheek, and flash of eye;
Your lips' smile and their deep dye;
Gleam of the white teeth within
Dimple of the cloven chin.
All the sunshine that you wear
In the summer of your hair;
All the morning of your face
All your figure's wilding grace.
The flower-rose of your head, the light
Flutter of your footsteps' flight,
I own all, and that glad heart
I must claim ere you depart.
Go, yet do not unconsol'd
Sometime, after you are old,
You shall come, and I will take
From your brow the sunken ache,
From your eyes the twilight haze
Darkening upon winter days,
From your feet their palsy pace,
And the wrinkles from your face,
From your locks the snow; the droop
Of your head, your worn frame's stoop,
And that withered smile within
The kissing of the nose and chin
I own all, and that sad heart
I will claim ere you depart.
I am Race, and both are mine;
Mortal Ace and Youth divine;
Mine to grant, but not in fee;
Both again revert to me
From each that lives, that I may give
Unto each that yet shall live.
—W. P. Howells in Harper's Magazine.

Miss Belinda's Beehives.

BY AMY RANDOLPH.



HEN the city visitors who swarmed around Maple Center and registered their names by the score in the books of the village hotel strolled out on the Maple road, they always stopped at the Bubble farmhouse and cried: "How exquisite! How picturesque!" And for the life of her, Miss Belinda Bubble did not know why. "It ain't as if I could afford a coat of paint to the old house," said she. "It's just a slate brown with winter-storms and summer-suns; and the grape-arbor's all a-tumbin' down for lack of a brace or two of solid timber; and the well-sweep ain't half as convenient as Mrs. Claghorn's new chain pump, no way you can fix it; and the stin wall's all overgrown with them pesky rummin' vines and briars! To be sure, the four-o'clocks and mornin'-glories are sort o' pretty by the fence, and there ain't no prettier hollyhocks in the country than them dark-red and cherry-colored ones just this side of the pear-tree. As for the beehives, I always did like beehives even if it wasn't for the honey. My mother set a heap o' store by them beehives, and there they've stood, nine of 'em, in a row, ever since I can remember. And there ain't no honey in all the county as has got the flavor of ours. I don't know whether it's Squire Carbuncle's buckwheat-field or that there clover-meadow of Mr. Darnell's as does it. But you can fairly taste the sunshine and the flowers in it!"

And it was a genuine sight, at swarming-time, when Miss Belinda issued forth into the black and booming clouds, all gloved and veiled and tied up in mosquito netting, with a tin pan and a skimmer in her hand. "I generally have first-rate good luck with the swarms," said Belinda. "I don't know when I've lost one, if only folks would let me alone. But it's the meddlin' people that come to offer their help, that upsets me and the bees. Squire Carbuncle, now, he's real sensible. He don't never come round interferin'. If he sees the bees makin' up their minds to swarm, he jest gets up off his garden-chair and goes into the house. For bees, they're dreadful sensible. They have their likes and their dislikes, jest as human creatures have—and they never could get along with Squire Carbuncle!" Squire Carbuncle was a quiet, grizzle-headed man of fifty, who farmed a model farm, with all the new machinery patents liberally oiled with gold, read the agricultural papers, and was always "just going to" write an article for the Gentleman Farmer. Miss Bubble herself was not much younger. She supported herself in a genteel way by vest-making for a factory in the neighborhood. "I s'pose," said Miss Bubble, "Squire Carbuncle 'll get married some day, and I hope he'll choose a sociable wife that I can take comfort with, exchanging patterns and chat-

ting of an evening over the garden fence." "Belinda Bubble is a sensible woman," said Squire Carbuncle, in his deep, sonorous voice. "To my certain knowledge, she has refused one or two shiftless fellows who wanted to marry her merely to be supported. She's a good deal better off single than married." Miss Belinda never said a word when Squire Carbuncle's superb liver-colored setter killed her favorite Muscovy duck—and the squire, on no part, condoned the offense, when Miss Bubble's chickens scratched up all his early lettuce and made havoc with his seedling pansies and pinks. "Neighbors orter be neighborly," said Miss Belinda. "And dog's nature is dog's nature!" "I must stop up the cracks under the fence," said the squire. "Of course, Belinda can't help her chickens getting through! No woman could."

Thus matters were, when Miss Belinda's cousin, Fannie Halkett, came to visit her—a plump, peach-cheeked young woman who was cashier at a glove store in the city. "Cousin Bubble," said Fannie, "why don't you marry Squire Carbuncle?" "La, Fannie!" cried the elderly dame, starting back so suddenly that she stepped on one of the velvet white paws of the pet kitten. "Yes, truly, why don't you?" said Fannie. "He needs a wife: And it would be very nice for you to have a husband. Now wouldn't it?" "Go 'long," said Miss Belinda. "I never thought of such a thing! Nor him neither. Go 'out, Fannie, and pick a mess o' white Antwerp raspberries for tea, and don't let me hear no more such nonsense."

"Nonsense!" echoed Fannie, laughing, as she went off with a blue-edged bowl in her hand. "But I think it isn't nonsense at all!" And among the Antwerp raspberries she talked the matter over with Julian Hall, Squire Carbuncle's nephew, who had come to the farm for a week's trout fishing, and who had developed a very strong propensity for reading novels under the old pear-tree that overshadowed Miss Bubble's garden fence. "Wouldn't it be nice?" said Fannie. "Splendid!" Julian answered, leaning over to put a handful of raspberries into the blue-edged bowl. Whether he leaned too far and lost his footing or how it happened he did not know; but certain it is that, just at that moment, one of the beehives fell—crash!—over among the raspberry bushes. Fannie fled in wild fright, and Julian himself, recovering his balance as best he might, was driven to ignominious flight.

"Who did that?" said Squire Carbuncle, issuing out of the door. "I'm afraid I did, sir!" confessed Julian. "And what am I to say to Miss Belinda Bubble?" sternly demanded his uncle. "I'm sure, sir, I don't know!" answered Julian. "Such a thing never happened before in all the years that we have lived as neighbor to each other," said Mr. Carbuncle. "Of course, the bees have got away and the glass honey-boxes are broken?" "I am very sorry, sir," said Julian. The squire, an eminently just man, hopped up his gray pony and drove towards the next day. That evening he called at the Bubble Farmhouse with a square package, neatly done up in brown paper, in his arms. Fannie Halkett came to the door. "My dear," said Squire Carbuncle, "is your cousin at home?" "Yes, sir!" said Fannie, fluttering all over and showing the way into the best parlor, where the blue-paper shades were down and the stuffed owl on the mantel transixed the chance visitors with its eyes of glittering green glass.

"Tell her I've called on very particular business," said the squire, sonorously. "Yes, sir?" said Fannie, and away she ran. "Cousin Belinda, take your hair out of those crimping-pins at once," said she; "and let me fasten this blue-ribbon bow at your throat. He's in the parlor. He's come to propose."

"Nonsense, Fannie!" "But he has! He as good as told me so!" cried Fannie, standing on tiptoe to kiss Miss Belinda's withered apple of a cheek. "Do made haste! Don't keep him waiting. Men don't like to be kept waiting." And she fairly pushed Belinda Bubble into the best room. "Miss Bubble," said the squire, solemnly, rising to his feet, "I have called to ask if you will accept—"

"Yes, Seth," cried Miss Belinda, flinging herself into his arms. Luckily he had bethought himself to lay the square package down on the table. "Yes, dear Seth, I will. Fannie told me you was going to propose to me, but I didn't believe it. And I'll be as good a wife to you as I know how. And oh, Seth, I've always loved you ever since we were young people and went to singing school together." The squire opened and shut his mouth as if it were some curious piece of machinery. "Eh!" said he, staring mechanically at the owl.

"I hope," faltered Miss Bubble, "you don't think I've been too hasty in accepting your offer?" "No, Belinda, no," said Mr. Carbuncle, swallowing down a lump in his throat. "I am much obliged to you for saying 'yes,' and I am quite convinced, my dear, that you will be a good wife to me." And so this autumnal couple became engaged; and the squire never told Belinda that it was the colony of Italian bees he had brought her, not himself, to lay as an offering at her shrine.

"But it's just as well," said the squire to himself. "I ought really to be settled in life, and Belinda is a most worthy woman. It is best at times to abandon oneself entirely to circumstances."

"Didn't I tell you so, Cousin Belinda?" said Fannie, exultantly. One wedding makes many, and neither of the elders was surprised when Julian and Fannie became engaged shortly after. "The humming of bees will be the sweetest music in all the world to my ears after this," said Julian, fervently. "I always was partial to bees," reiterated Miss Belinda.—The Ledger.

Mysterious Cavern Discovered.

Great excitement has been caused in the vicinity of Bristol, Ind., by the discovery of a cave. In digging a well Henry Oswald came upon a solid bed of brick and mortar at a depth of eighteen feet. The earth was cleared away for a space of two feet square, when the discovery was made that the brick formed a solid wall. With pick and ax Oswald succeeded in removing a number of the square blocks, and was mystified to find a large opening below. A closer investigation disclosed the presence of a large cave, and the brick had been used in closing up the mouth. The dirt thrown upon it had completely hidden the cavern from detection. The cave is located in the rustic hills north of the village, and may have been made the hiding place for valuables during the war. The presence of brick in a good state of preservation would indicate that the opening had been closed by white men, but the older residents of the neighborhood have no recollection of its existence. A party has been organized, and the cavern will be investigated. The belief is general that the cave has been the headquarters of the band of horse-thieves whose operations have established a veritable reign of terror.—St. Louis Republic.

A New Mississippi Bridge.

The Southern Pacific Railroad Company's bridge to be built across the Mississippi River at New Orleans, La., will, it is believed, be the largest steel railroad bridge in the world, considering the quantity of metal used in its construction and the length. It will be about 12,500 feet long. The approach spans will vary from twenty-five to 150 feet in length, according to the height of the towers. The main river bridge will be built on the cantilever principle and will be 1070 feet in length, with spans of 608 feet on either side. The largest railroad bridge completed is over the Fifth o'orth in Scotland. The main structure is 5339 feet long, but the approaches are said to be shorter than the New Orleans bridge.—Manufacturers' Record.

A TINY TERROR.

AMERICA'S DEADLIEST SNAKE IS THE PICHU-CUATE.

It is Found in the Southwest, and Even Indian Snake Charmers Fear It—It is Tiny and It Kills Very Quickly.

VENOMOUS things are more plentiful in the Southwest than in any other area in the Union. In the burning deserts, in the inhabited but arid expanses of New Mexico and Arizona, the rattlesnake abounds, and in several varieties, including the strange and deadly "sidewinder," crotalus cerastes. The so-called tarantula—really only a gigantic bush spider, but none the less dangerous because of the misnomer—is decidedly common. Scorpions are none too rare in the southern portions of the Territories, and in all parts centipedes of seven to eight inches long are frequent and neighborly. But the chief distinction of the region in this respect is the presence of the pichu-cuate, the deadliest snake in North America.

The pichu-cuate matches the worst serpent of India. Not only the most highly venomous, but the tiniest and most treacherous, he would be also the most dangerous—but, luckily, he is the rarest. He is the only true asp on this continent; and in the United States is never found outside of New Mexico and Arizona. That he was also known to the ancient Mexicans is apparent from his name—pichu-coatl, an Aztec word, which was brought up to our territory by the Spanish conquerors.

My first meeting with one was in Valencia County, New Mexico, in June, 1890, on the sandy flanks of the Cerro del Aire. I was out hunting jackrabbits, in company with some Indian friends, and had dismounted to stalk, leading my pet horse by the bridle. My eyes were on a small chapparero bush ahead, when suddenly Alazan snorted, and reared backward so violently as almost to unhinge my arm. I looked about in surprise, for Alazan was too good a horse to mind rifles. As there was nothing to be seen, I started to pull him forward. Again he protested and with evident terror, and, chancing to look at my very feet, I understood his fear, and felt very grateful that his senses were better than mine, for in another step I should have walked upon my death.

The only thing visible was a tiny object, not nearly so large as a good stag beetle—merely a head, and perhaps an inch of neck. But it was the most frightful object in its kind that I had ever seen. The head, certainly neither so broad nor so long as my thumbnail, had a shape and an air of condensed malignity impossible to describe. It seemed the very essence of wickedness and hate, fairly bulging with deadly spite, and growing upon me until it looked several times its actual size. The ugly triangle (which is the distinguishing mark of all venomous snakes, being formed by the poison gland back of each eye) told me at once that Alazan was keeping up his reputation—never did he shy at a harmless snake—and the tiny horns, which added a peculiar and grotesque hideousness, left no doubt that this was a pichu-cuate. He had buried himself almost to the head in the gray sand, against which his upper skin was barely distinguishable, and thus in ambush was waiting for something to turn up.

Turning Alazan loose, I knelt at the safe distance of a yard to study the little creature, which fairly swelled with murderous rage. It not only struck madly at the chapparero switch I thrust out to it, but at last, evidently discerning that the blame lay back of the switch, actually followed it up, and with such agility that I had to ump up and back without loss of time. The idea of retreat never seemed to enter that flat head. Sometimes he would lie and puff out with impotent rage, throwing his mouth so wide open that it seemed the venom must start, and sometimes he guided toward me, his head an inch above the ground, with an attitude which seemed to say: "Stand still there and we'll see who laughs!" At last I killed him. He was neither large, round nor longer than an ordinary lead pencil; a cold, leaden gray

on the back, but underneath rosy as the mouth of a conch shell. The fangs were tiny, not much more than an eighth of an inch long, and as delicate as the tiniest needle. A wondrous mechanism, this mouth, with its two automatic needles, so infinitesimal yet so perfectly competent! I opened the agly little jaws wide, pressing upon the sides of the head; and when the recurring fangs had risen from their grooves in the roof of the mouth and stood tense, a stream so inconceivably fine that the eye could barely note it spurted from each, and in the space of two or three inches melted into invisible spray. Yet that jet, finer than a cobweb strand, was enough to give swift death to the largest and strongest animal that walks.

When the hunt was over I told my Indian chums of the pichu-cuate, and asked them many questions. They all knew of the snake, though several had never seen one, and all agreed that it is extreme rare. The crotalus ranks among the Pueblo divinities, and their charmers have no difficulty with that steady going and respectable reptile. But even among these people with whom the cult of the rattlesnake has such astounding features, and where until recent years every Pueblo kept a sacred rattlesnake in a sacred room, with special priests to attend him, the villainous little sand viper is accursed. Even those who have "the power of the snakes" can do nothing with him, the oracles to be tamed even by the dropping upon his head of the mystic pollen of the corn blossom.

And he was more dangerous than the rattlesnake? Oh, yes! A thousand times worse than ch'ara-ra-deh! No one ever got well if the pichu-cuate bit him. Even a medicine man once, who knew all the sacred herbs, and so was proof against snakes, brought a pichu-cuate in his blanket to the Pueblo to tame it. But when he let it out upon the floor and sang to it and went to take it up it struck him in the wrist, and he fell down and died in the time one could count fifty. All remembered, too, the fate of Cruz Abeita, a young man who had gone out to the llano to herd cattle. Clearly, he had seen a rabbit run down its burrow and had tried to get it out with a switch, for when they found him he was lying there, terribly swollen and black, with his arm still down in the hole; and in his other hand, clenched with the grip of the dead, was a crushed pichu-cuate. Hidden in the sand, it had struck him in the face while he was reaching after the rabbit, and both had died together. They had heard of other cases (and so have I) of the bite of the American asp, and always with fatal results.

"No! But there was a man, and he is the only one that was ever struck by the pichu-cuate without dying," said Francisco. "And he was a Mojuni that I know. He is of the snake men there, who make the rattlesnake dance, so he has the power of the snakes. But it was not for this that he escaped; and though he lives he can no longer weave—he who was before one of the best weavers of the People of Peace. He chanced to be coming one day from Ohus-tu, and, sitting down in the desert to rest, put his hand back and found himself struck in the knuckles. Thinking it to be a rattlesnake, he rose and turned to charm it, but when he saw it was pichu-cuate, against which even the medicine-men is no remedy, he took his hunting knife like lightning and chopped off his right hand at the wrist, afterward killed the snake. And for many weeks we looked for him to die. Since then he can no longer charm even the rattlesnakes, for when he sees any snake his heart dies in him, and the snake, being afraid that he is afraid, will not obey him, but always fights."—New York Sun.

A Newspaper Tramp.

Vyryan Grey, a Derby (England) newspaper man, who is making a tramp from Boston to Monterey, Mex., and return, passed through Pittsburg, Penn., the other day. He wagered with a party of fellows in England that he could do it. President Packard, of the London News Association, offered him \$5000 to make his boast good. One of the conditions is that Grey shall be at home within a year from March 17, when he started, and have \$5000 with him.