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"THREE IN CHARGE."

A Story of the Sea.

BY W. CLARK RUSSELL.

CHAPTER I.

It is an episode of ocean life, now a good many years old: but human nature was the same then as it is now, and, indeed, the older I grow the more I find human nature the same now as it was then.

Business had carried me to the East Indies. I had visited Madras, whence I had proceeded to Calcutta, and from Calcutta I had made my way to Rangoon. I stayed in that place a month, by which time my health had suffered so greatly from the climate that I made up my mind to return to Europe in a sailing ship that I might spend many long weeks among the fresh breezes of the sea and get all the benefit I could out of the incessant changes of climate which a voyage down the Indian Ocean and round the Cape of Good Hope and up the Atlantic provides you with.

There was a full-rigged ship lying at Rangoon, called the Biddy McDougal, I heard, that would suit my convenience, and as she looked a comfortable, stout ship, I inquired the name of the agent, called upon him and asked if I could get a passage to England by his vessel. He answered "Yes." She was bound to London; she was not a passenger ship, but the captain would no doubt be glad to accommodate me with a cabin. The charge would be so much. I forget the figure, but recollect that it was moderate, something short of £40. For this money I was to live on such provisions as were served up at the captain's table, but the spirits and wine I might need I must myself lay in.

Next day I went aboard the Biddy McDougal to inspect her cabin accommodation. On climbing over the gangway I was received by a tall, rather good-looking man, with a face remarkable for its expression of sternness. His skin was blackened by exposure to the sun and weather, and another shade of dye would have qualified him to pass for a native. He frowned as he surveyed me, and inquired my business on board.

"I am going to England in this ship," I said, "and I have come to see what sort of a cabin I am to sleep in."

"Oh, I beg pardon!" he exclaimed, but without relaxing his stern expression. "I thought"—he broke off and muttered behind his teeth.

"Who are you," said I, "the mate?"

"No, sir, I am the captain."

"Oh, indeed!" I exclaimed. "Pray, what name?"

"Mr. Wilson," he answered. "It is a fashion among the merchant seamen who obtain command to style themselves captain. It is a piece of impertinence. The only captains at sea are in the royal navy. A merchant skipper is a master mariner. All merchant captains are misters. I am plain Mr. Wilson, at your service, sir."

He spoke with considerable heat, but I was willing to attribute his temper to the weather, which was certainly very trying. And then, again, his men might have given him trouble, for numerous and deep are the worries and anxieties of the British shipmaster. Much is expected of him and little is given. His crew is slender and ignorant; it charges upon him every outrage that is perpetrated by the owner, and often would the men be glad to cut his throat before the land is out of sight; he has no professional prospects, and when at last he runs his ship ashore or loses her in a gale of wind or by fire and is compelled by a court of inquiry to withdraw from the vocation which he has pursued, if not adorned, man and boy, for perhaps forty years, there is no other port under his lee for him to bring up in than the establishment at Belvedere, which, I regret to say, is always in want of funds and always inconveniently full.

Therefore it was that when Mr. Wilson spoke with heat about ship-masters styling themselves captains I made "allowances," as the phrase goes, and, after briefly aquiescing in his views, requested to be allowed to see the cabin the agent had offered me. I viewed that cabin, and found it small and ill-lighted, but, on the whole, it was a better cabin than I had expected to find on board such a ship as the Biddy McDougal. The stateroom, in which the meals were taken, was a tolerably cheerful interior, very plainly furnished, with a large skylight over the table, a stove for cold weather, a lamp, a clock in the skylight, and a big telescope in the companion-way. There were three cabins forward and two cabins abaft. My cabin was forward, on the starboard side.

Mr. Wilson and I went on deck, and we stood conversing a while under the shelter of an awning. I inquired as to the number of the crew, the time the ship had occupied in making the outward passage, and so on, and then went ashore, understanding that the vessel would not sail for another week.

Three days later I paid a second visit to the ship, for by this time I had purchased what I needed, and I wished to see where the cases and parcels had been stowed. On stepping on board I beheld an immensely stout, red-faced man with a white straw hat on his head, dressed in white drill, seated in a chair with poles attached to it under the short awning, which sheltered a portion of the quarter-deck. Two or three sailors were lounging in the fore part of the ship. There was no work apparently doing. I looked for Mr. Wilson, the master, and seeing nothing of him, I directed my eyes in search of any man who might resemble the mate.

"Pray, what's your business," called out the stout, red-faced man, without attempting to rise.

"I wish to see the captain," said I.

"Well; you are looking at him," he answered.

"I do not see him," I exclaimed, casting my gaze around.

"Why, he can't be as blind as all that," cried the stout, red faced man, in a noisy, roaring, yet greasy voice, which he followed on with a succession of hearty chuckles.

"I want to see the captain," said I, feeling much too hot and tired to be made a fool of by a rough, shapeless, red faced lump of a man such as he who gazed at me out of a pair of little, weak, moist, blue eyes, set in the midst of a countenance as round and inflamed as the newly risen November moon at its full.

"I am the captain," said he.

"What is your name?" said I, approaching him.

"Capt. Timothy Punch," he answered. "What is your business, sir?"

I informed him that I had taken a passage in the Biddy McDougal for England.

"Oh, you're the gent!" he cried, and his manner immediately became respectful. "You'll excuse me for not rising. I'm tied fast to the hatches with gout, and pain ain't going to improve the manners of a plain sailor. If I'm a bit rough in my speech you'll excuse me. What can I offer ye, sir?"

"Nothing, I thank you."

"A ship's fok'sle was my college," he continued, giving expression to his enjoyment of the matter of his speech by a succession of silly chuckles, "and I comes from a rough stock, sir. Ye may have heard of the famous Capt. John Punch. Him as was a terror to all wrong-doers down in the West Indian waters. He couldn't read or write, but he was a captain in the Royal Navy for all that, as you may hascertain by consulting the Admiralty lists of his day. His not being able to write was nothen; but his not being able to read was a bit inconvenient now and again, as, for instance, when he was sent away under sealed orders, or when he'd got an official letter marked 'confidential,' the inside of which he was to keep strictly secret."

He was proceeding, but I cut the garrulous, wheezy old man short.

"I may take it," said I, "that there has been a fresh captain appointed to this ship since I visited her a few days ago?"

"You may take it," he noisily wheezed, "that the captain of this ship is Timothy Punch. He brought the Biddy McDougal out and he's going to take the Biddy McDougal home."

I viewed him with astonishment, but held my tongue, never doubting that the "Mr. Wilson" whom I had met and who might have happened to be on board as a visitor or a sightseer when I arrived, had entertained himself at my expense by a deliberate falsehood.

Capt. Punch again apologized for not being able to rise, yet made an effort to stir in his chair for no other purpose, however, that I could see than to force a groan that sounded like an execration. He told me that my private stock of wine and the other matters I had laid in were safely housed in the berth adjoining mine, a berth that was unoccupied, and was, therefore, at my service, as well as the cabin I had paid for. Nevertheless, I went below to make sure. In the cabin I found a young fellow cleaning some glasses.

"Are you the steward?" said I.

"I waits upon the Captain," he answered.

"The Captain?" I exclaimed.

"Capt. Punch, sir," said he.

"Then it is all right so far as Punch goes," thought I, "and that fellow Wilson—if I should happen to meet him!"

"Is there a regular steward?" I asked.

"I does all the waiting at this here table," answered the young fellow.

On this I told him that I was the passenger, bade him see that my cabin was clean and comfortable and in readiness for me, slipped a few rupees into his hand, and, after looking at my purchases, returned on deck.

The captain told me that the ship would certainly sail on the following Wednesday, at some hour in the afternoon, and bade me be on board not later than nine.

"We ought to ha' got away three weeks ago," he exclaimed; "it's all along of the Rangoon port authorities, as they call themselves. Every sniveling creature whose dirty little soul is wrapped up in a white hide is a boss in this flaming country, and the more sniveling he is and the dirtier the little soul what's wrapped up in him the more aggravating does he go to work in his bossing jobs. Punch knows 'em. They've got Punch's hump up often enough, and lucky it is for those here port authorities that Punch ain't no longer the man he was," and here he looked at his immense, gouty fists, then fastened his eyes significantly upon his bloated, seemingly helpless knees.

CHAPTER II.

I sent my baggage to the ship on Tuesday afternoon, and at 9 o'clock the following morning I repaired on board the Biddy McDougal as she lay in the river of the town. On gaining the deck I perceived a number of seamen employed upon the ground tackle, and I seemed to catch sight of the man who called himself "Wilson" and "captain" standing in the ship's head and gazing down over the bows, but his face was but partially revealed, and the shadow of his wide straw hat darkened and obscured the little of his countenance that was visible. A man stood near the gangway, clothed in blue serge, with a white cover to his naval cap. He was a sullen looking fellow, with a reef of white beard and whiskers running down his cheeks under his throat, a sour mouth and a dry twist of face, which, rounding into one eye, made it look smaller than the other. As I had not yet met the mate of the ship, I supposed that this man might be the officer, and, approaching him I said:

"Are you the mate?"

"No," he answered, leisurely bringing his eyes down from aloft and fastening them upon me. "I am neither the mate nor the man that cooks the mate."

"Who are you?" said I, nettled by his brusque manner.

"Who are you, first of all?" he answered.

"I'm a passenger going home in the Biddy McDougal."

His manner changed. "I ask your pardon," said he; "I took you to be another gent; some one I don't want to have nothing more to say to. You're amazingly like him, surely."

"Are you the mate?" said I.

"No, sir," he replied. "I am the captain."

I eyed him steadfastly, and then looked around the deck, scarcely knowing as yet but that I had taken my passage aboard a ship full of lunatics.

"The captain," I cried.

"Ay," he answered, with an emphatic nod, "Capt. Parfitt."

"Pray how many captains does this ship carry?" said I, again looking around the deck in search of any signs of old Capt. Punch.

"Only one," said he, "and I'm that man."

"I have been aboard this vessel three times," said I, "and on each occasion have met with a new captain. The first time it was Capt. Wilson: there he is," I exclaimed, pointing to the forecastle, where the man Wilson who had called

"ARE YOU THE MATE?"

himself the master now stood looking toward me, and plainly visible. "Next it was Capt. Timothy Punch, a gouty, red-faced man, who sat helpless in a chair on this quarter-deck. And now it is you."

A sour smile curled the man's lips.

"They haven't been quite above board with you, sir," said he. "The long and short of it's this: Cap'n Punch was in charge during the outward voyage right enough; but he was took very bad with gout a month afore Rangoon was reached, and the command of the vessel was given to his chief mate—that there gent as you see forrards. The ship was to sail home in charge of Mr. Wilson, but the port authorities say, 'No; Mr. Wilson don't hold a certificate as master.' The ship couldn't be cleared till a proper master was had. I was asked to navigate the vessel home, and here I am. So ye may take it from me that I'm captain and nobody else."

"Well," said I, "if there's truth in the saying that there's safety in numbers, the passage should be comfortable and speedy," and with that I went below to look after my traps.

The ship sailed an hour later, but it was not until dinner time that I saw what we were to expect, more or less, throughout the whole of the long run to England. We were then at sea, the high sun burning over our masthead, a hot breeze blowing over the quarter and the ship thrusting along under full breasts of canvas and wide overhanging wings of studding-sail. A bell rang to announce dinner, and I quitted the quarterdeck for the cabin. On entering I found Mr. Wilson (as I still term him) seated at the head of the table. Capt. Parfitt followed me below and instantly exclaimed to Mr. Wilson:

"That's my place. You must clear out of that chair, please."

"I shall do nothing of the sort," said Mr. Wilson. "I am master of this ship by orders of her lawful captain. You are an interloper."

Capt. Parfitt turned pale and breathed short.

"I am captain of this ship," said he, "and you are her chief mate. You will go on deck, if you please, and keep a lookout whilst I eat my dinner."

Mr. Wilson did not offer to move—merely eyed Capt. Parfitt with his extraordinarily stern face. Capt. Parfitt clenched his fists.

"Gentlemen," said I, "there must be some remedy for this."

"So there is, by God!" roared Parfitt.

"IT'S MUTINY."

"It's mutiny. If ye ain't out of that chair in a jiffy, I'll clap ye in irons."

"You?" shouted Mr. Wilson, half springing from his seat.

At this moment the door of one of the after-cabins was opened, and two stout sailors appeared, bearing the immense shape of Capt. Punch in a chair, to which poles had been lashed.

"Is dinner ready?" he called out.

"Your chief mate is a mutineer. He refuses to obey my orders," cried Capt. Parfitt.

"Up ye get, Wilson; that's my seat," said Capt. Punch, taking no notice of Parfitt.

Mr. Wilson at once made way, and the two sailors, broadly grinning, with much pushing and shoving, hove, or rather pried, old Punch into the chair of honor. Mr. Wilson swiftly seated himself at the foot of the table.

"Sit ye down, sir; sit ye down," cried old Punch to me. "Who's got the lookout on deck?"

"The ship's watching herself," sulkily growled Capt. Parfitt.

"Hadn't ye better go up and look after her?" said Punch to Parfitt.

"What am I to understand?" shouted Parfitt.

"Why, this," interrupted Capt. Punch: "that this is a ship as could very well ha' found her way home without ye. You wasn't wanted, but since ye've made up your mind to come, why durn my eyes, ye'll have to take things as ye find 'em. Mr. Wilson's the captain-elect by my authority, and whilst I've got lungs to blow a breath of air out with I'm the gorromighty of the Biddy McDougal, understand that."

Without answering a word Capt. Parfitt flung his cap down upon the locker and took his seat at the table abreast of me. On this Capt. Punch bade Mr. Wilson tell the ship's carpenter—who it seems acted as second mate—to keep a lookout until he was relieved from the cabin.

"Seeing that I have paid for my passage aboard this ship, and that it is highly desirable—absolutely essential, in a word—that I should have some head to refer to, some person in supreme authority to complain to and appeal to in case of discomfort or difficulty, I should be glad to know, gentlemen, which of you I am to consider as captain of the Biddy McDougal?" said I, hoping by this stilted but nevertheless resolutely uttered address to clear the air somewhat and do some good.

"I am captain," said Punch, with his mouth full of beef.

"Yes, and I am in charge," said Capt. Parfitt.

"You mean I am in charge," cried Mr. Wilson.

"I am captain of this ship and the supreme head, sir," cried Punch, addressing me; "but Mr. Wilson represents me while I'm off duty through illness, and so long as he represents me he is master-elect, as I aforesaid, and there's no man aboard this ship who's going to say contrairy."

"Yes, there is," said Capt. Parfitt; "but I don't mean to waste no words on either of ye. You know where my authority comes from. I'm master of the Biddy McDougall till I've berthed her in the dock she's bound to, and if this here mate of yours interferes with me I'll log him for mutiny, break him, and send him forrards as ye both know I've got the power to do. And if that don't answer—" he interrupted himself by exclaiming, "But I don't want no words." And so saying he rose, having eaten little or nothing, and went on deck.

Well, as may be supposed, this was but the first of a long series of uncomfortable quarrels. I cannot positively say that Capt. Parfitt did not log Mr. Wilson for mutiny and order him forward into the forecastle to work before the mast. This I cannot say, but it is certain that Mr. Wilson did not go forward; on the contrary, he remained very much aft, giving instructions without regard to Capt. Parfitt's orders, and acting in all ways as though he, and he alone, were master of the vessel.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

QUEEN VICTORIA'S DOGS.

An Aristocratic Trio in Very Comfortable Quarters.

Dogs were first admitted to the court of England in the reign of Henry VIII., says the Sportsman's Review. Under the present reign three dogs have been elevated to the highest canine dignities on account of their aristocratic families and their own peculiar merits. The names of the aristocratic trio are Marco, Roy and Spot. Marco is the Queen's favorite, and he used to be very jealous of John Brown. His ancestry can be traced back to the crusaders. He is what they call in England a Pomeranian, and at one of the recent dog shows he won the first prize, the mug of honor. The other favorite, Roy, is a collie, and Spot is a fox terrier with a record of twenty-two rats in a quarter of an hour.

These canine lords have their residences with their special names. Her majesty's dog place is divided into three parts, the queen's veranda, collie court, and umbrella court. The veranda is the principal one. It is a covered gallery around the kennel, and the queen likes to walk there.

Each kennel has a dining-room and a bedroom. The floor of the dining-room is separated from the veranda by an iron grating. It is paved with red and blue bricks, and the furniture consists of a trough, always full of fresh water. The bedrooms have two large windows, generally kept open for the purpose of ventilation, and in a snug corner in each room is a very low bed with a mattress of fresh straw.

Umbrella court gets its name from the big umbrella in the middle of it, under which the dogs can shelter themselves from the sun and rain. A host of servants wait upon the canine nobility, and the queen is very severe with the officials who do not pay proper attention to her dogs. A chief is provided for them, and his instructions are to vary the menu of the dinners of her majesty's pets, and to consult their tastes.

OUTCASTS FROM SOCIETY.

Queer People That Live on the Rivers of China.

The origin of the Chinese river population is shrouded in mystery. According to one version it originated from people who were convicted of treason, and who were declared unworthy of residence on terra firma. The people that live on the Canton river are said to be descendants of a certain Lu-Tsun, who was chief of a tribe and lived in the village of Namku, on the island of Homan, 2,000 years before our era. Lu-Tsun was said to have been a general in the Chinese army, and to have rebelled after acquiring power and authority. After many combats with the imperial troops he conquered Canton, where he maintained himself as an absolute ruler for 30 years. After his death his children were persecuted, and all of his descendants were considered accursed and soon compelled to take refuge on river boats.

Under the Yang dynasty the river people were persecuted and had to pay a per capita tax. During the reign of Hunguins, the founder of the Ming dynasty, all boatmen between the ages of 18 and 45 years of age were forced to enter the army. The Emperor Jungtshin, on the contrary, took a great interest in the river population, and issued a proclamation in their favor in 1730, granting them protection in every respect.

In spite of this proclamation, however, the river folk were, and are still, looked upon as pariahs. They are prohibited from intermarrying with the people living on land, and their sons are excluded from literary examinations. Their wives are contemptuously called "water birds" by landsmen, although they greatly excel the spouses and daughters of the latter in beauty.

In country districts, where wells, springs and cisterns are running low, the people should be careful about their drinking water. Typhoid fever cases are often traced to wells low in water. As a safeguard, boil and filter water that is intended to be used for drinking purposes.

GIANT NUTS.

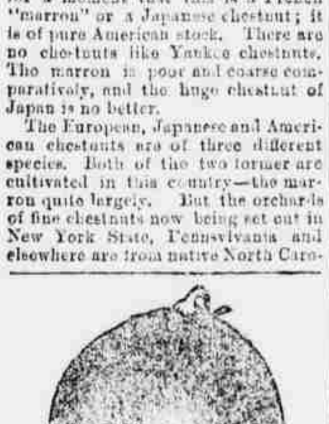
A NEW INDUSTRY FOR AMERICAN FARMERS.

Three-Ounce Chestnuts, Immense Pecans, and Walnuts Big as a Baby's Fist—Handsome Profits for the Nut Growers.

THE long-expected nut bulletin of the Department of Agriculture tells about the giant nuts of the future—chestnuts weighing three ounces apiece, pecans two and a half inches long, and English walnuts as big as a baby's fist, which will be grown by American farmers before many years have passed by. In the markets of the twentieth century such nuts as these will be commonly found. Nuts are only just beginning to be cultivated in earnest. Hitherto the wild crop has been relied on wholly for the supply, and that is the reason why the nuts of to-day are small and inferior in flavor.

Printed herewith you will see pictures of two chestnuts. One of them is an ordinary, everyday nut; the other is the chestnut as it ought to be—the cultivated and improved chestnut. Both are of natural size and copied from natural specimens. What a fine fellow the big one would be for roasting! He holds a good big mouthful of luscious meat. Do not imagine for a moment that this is a French "marron" or a Japanese chestnut; it is of pure American stock. There are no chestnuts like Yankee chestnuts. The marron is poor and coarse comparatively, and the huge chestnut of Japan is no better.

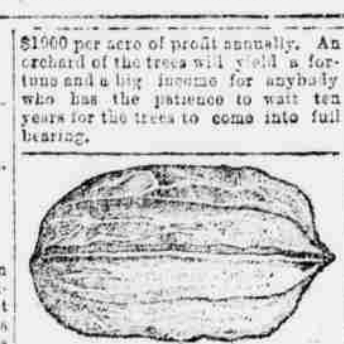
The European, Japanese and American chestnuts are of three different species. Both of the two former are cultivated in this country—the marron quite largely. But the orchards of fine chestnuts now being set out in New York State, Pennsylvania and elsewhere are from native North Carolina and Georgia stock. In these Southern States are found wild trees that bear chestnuts an inch and a half in diameter, averaging quite as big as the imported marrons. They are of delicious flavor, and are furnishing seed for new plantations in many parts of the country. Farmers are learning that there is big money in growing nuts, and they are going into the business on a considerable scale.



THE CULTIVATED CHESTNUT AND COMMON CHESTNUT.

Abroad chestnuts are an important item of food supply. They are utilized in a great variety of ways, being made into soup, employed as a stuffing for birds, boiled and dipped in syrup for a conserve, etc. Now and then a chestnut twig is found which has a series of burrs all along it, instead of the usual two or three that dangle together. The Department of Agriculture would be very much obliged to anyone who will send to it a freak of this kind. It means simply that all of the female blossoms along the "spike" that bears the burrs have been fertilized by the pollen. Ordinarily only two or three of them are fertilized. If some grafts of the unusual growth described can be secured, possibly the producing power of such trees may be multiplied.

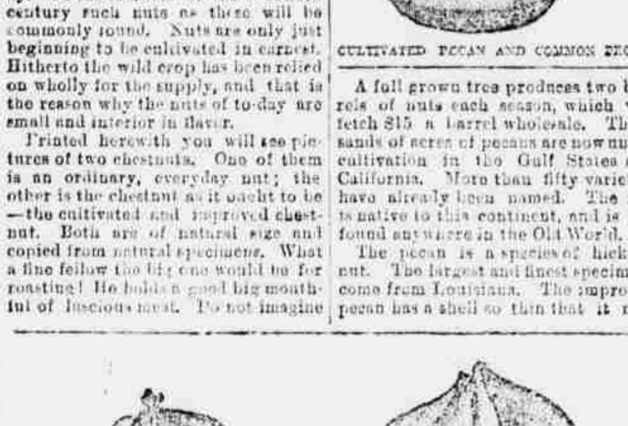
Wonderful things are already being accomplished in the cultivation of pecan nuts. It is predicted that the profits of plantations of pecans in this country will soon rival those of the orange groves of Florida and California. Pecans will yield from $300 to $1000 per acre of profit annually. An orchard of the trees will yield a fortune and a big income for anybody who has the patience to wait ten years for the trees to come into full bearing.



CULTIVATED PECAN AND COMMON PECAN.

A full grown tree produces two barrels of nuts each season, which will fetch $15 a barrel wholesale. Thousands of acres of pecans are now under cultivation in the Gulf States and California. More than fifty varieties have already been named. The nut is native to this continent, and is not found anywhere in the Old World.

The pecan is a species of hickory nut. The largest and finest specimens come from Louisiana. The improved pecan has a shell so thin that it may be crushed easily between the fingers. Hundreds of thousands of pounds of pecan nuts are fetched to New York annually, and here they are cleaned in revolving churns before being placed on the market. One concern in this city, engaged in the business of "furnishing" pecans for market, gives employment to fifty people.



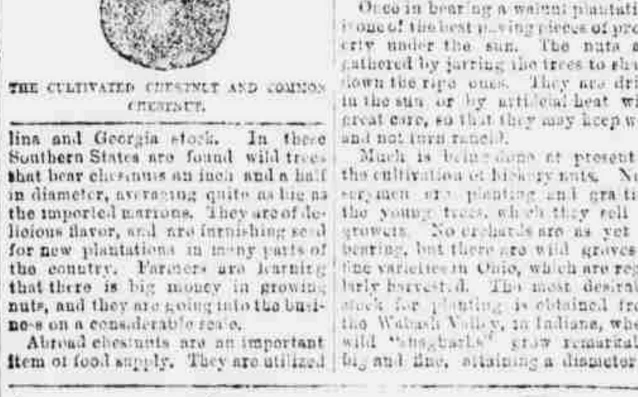
LARGE WILD HICKORY NUT. CULTIVATED HICKORY NUT.

The "meats" in great quantities are separated from the shells and sold by other firms, one of which disposes of 100,000 pounds of the kernels per annum. The work of cracking the nuts and picking out the meats is performed by machinery. The meats sell for fifty cents a pound, and are used extensively by confectioners. Pecan oil is excellent for table use. Clockmakers and gunsmiths use it also. It is a fine illuminant; a kernel when lighted will burn for a time brilliantly.

The raising of English walnuts has become an important industry in Southern California during the last few years. That State is producing 2,000,000 pounds of them for market annually. They fetch a higher price than those imported from Madeira and from Spain and Portugal, being of finer quality. They ought to be called Persian walnuts, because they came originally from that country.

Once in bearing a walnut plantation is one of the best paying pieces of property under the sun. The nuts are gathered by jarring the trees to shake down the ripe ones. They are dried in the sun, or by artificial heat with great care, so that they may keep well and not turn rancid.

Much is being done at present in the cultivation of hickory nuts. Nurserymen are planting and grafting the young trees, which they sell to growers. No orchards are as yet in bearing, but there are wild groves of fine varieties in Ohio, which are regularly harvested. The most desirable stock for planting is obtained from the Wabash Valley, in Indiana, where wild "shagbarks" grow remarkably big and fine, attaining a diameter of two inches or more. There are shagbarks in Iowa also of large size and with such thin shells that they can be cracked easily by grasping two together in the hand.



CULTIVATED ENGLISH WALNUT. COMMON ENGLISH WALNUT.

In Ohio has been discovered a new kind of black walnut which probably is destined to be highly prized in the future. By a freak of nature one-half of its shell is not developed, nor the kernel on that side, the result being a pear-shaped nut filled with a single meat somewhat the shape of a peanut, though bigger.

The important objection to ordinary black walnuts is that they are divided in the middle by a wall of shell so constructed that it is almost impossible to get the kernel out whole. This new variety has only to be cracked in order to yield the meat entire. The black walnut has been said to be among the nuts what bacon is among meats—strong and greasy. However, some choice wild varieties have been found with white kernels of delicate flavor, and much may be accomplished by cultivating them.

The hazel nut will be introduced largely before long as a commercial product. There are now millions of acres in this country of wild hazel brush, which is a shrub about as high as a man's head. Recently a new species of hazel nut has been discovered in the State of Washington. It grows on a tree sixty feet long, which, because the stem is too slender to hold itself upright, runs along the ground like a vine. In every pod it bears two nuts in place of the usual one. Grafts have been taken from it for planting.

In England hazel nuts are largely cultivated. When newly harvested they are dried in lofts, after which they are packed in casks with a sprinkling of salt. In parts of Europe they are used, like the chestnut, for making bread, and an oil is expressed from them.

Grant's Headquarters Mess.

In "Campaigning With Grant" by General Horace Porter, in the Century, occurs the following: A cold lunch was then eaten off a pine table in the dining room of the deserted house. Later in the afternoon our tents arrived and were pitched near the house, and a little before dark the "mess" sat down to dinner. The table had been laid under the fly of a large tent of the pattern known as the "hospital tent." Perhaps no headquarters of a general in supreme command of great armies ever presented so democratic an appearance. All the officers of the staff dined at the table with their chief, and the style of conversation was as familiar as that which occurs in the household of any private family. Nothing could have been more informal or unconventional than the manner in which the mess was conducted. The staff officers came to the table and left it at such times as their duties permitted, sometimes lingering over a meal to indulge in conversation, at other times remaining to take only a few mouthfuls in all haste before starting out upon the lines. The chief ate less and talked less than any other member of the staff, and partook only of the plainest food.

TO MOUNT A WHEEL.

Here is an Important Lesson in Bicycling.

To mount a wheel with real ease one needs to be a man or knickerbockered woman. But a goodly part of the wheeling army is neither. This part may learn to mount with comparative ease and with grace by the exercise of will power, by practice and by common sense. In mounting the great difficulty is to balance the wheel. Balancing to mount is governed by the

PROPER WAY TO MOUNT.

same principles that govern balancing in riding. The front wheel is turned by the handle bar in the same direction in which one seems to be falling.

The pedal on the right side should be raised to a point from which it is easy to spring into the saddle. When it has been turned to that height the right foot should be placed upon it, the hands holding the bar. A spring into the seat should be made simultaneously with a revolution of the wheel, which will enable the left foot to reach its pedal. Practice and the proper kind of skirt will enable the rider to dispose of her draperies evenly on each side of the saddle.

Somersaults for Fatness.

Except the common cold, against which thousands of years of scientific inquiry have been ineffective, there is scarcely a disease which has not its patent cure. Many inventions come from Sweden, where massage establishments are more common than public houses, and where there is hardly an ill, from headache to heartburn, which cannot be cured for you by the ministrations of ingeniously contrived punching machines. But the strangest of Sweden's inventions for the bettering of the health of humanity has only just been brought into publicity.

It is a cure for corpulence, and its main principles are that the sufferers should turn somersaults. There are some who might object that any lady or gentleman capable of turning a somersault cannot, strictly speaking, be regarded as corpulent, and most people, unless very corpulent indeed, would certainly prefer their present state to this eventful and inconvenient method of changing it. Even the most particular of us would surely prefer that our elderly relations, especially if feminine, should prefer their present appearance rather than descend to such an alarming sacrifice of dignity.—London Graphic.

The Salvation Army's industrial farm in California for discharged convicts is a 212-acre tract in San Roman valley.