

moment to the prospector's heart, and that of the Blue Bird had been evolved only after long and labored thought.

"I was thinkin'," the old man replied, with the same thoughtful slowness—"of it's all the same to you, pardner—of consolidatin' the names likewise into 'The Blue Bird's Last Chance,' and so-a-lettin' of Silver Mountain know this here thing betwixt me and you and Jimmy and Sam is done settled, now and fur good."

As the old man concluded he extended his hand to Uncle Jimmy. The "shake" that sealed the compact then went round. And so, despite the torn trees and drifted devastation, the sun set in peace on Silver Mountain.—*Youth's Companion.*

### The "Toddy Palm."

"When I was down in Washington the other day," remarked a Western politician at the St. James, "they showed me a wonderful Indian palm in the botanical garden. They call it the caryota urens, and it cuts a bigger figure in the world as an intoxicant than all the distilleries of the United States." Just in proportion as the followers of Brahma and Buddha in India are far more numerous than the Christian population of the United States, in the same proportion does that palm tree surpass all our appliances for making an intoxicant. It is a beautiful tree, with a trunk something over a foot in diameter, grows to the height of about sixty feet, and is surmounted by an elegant crown of gracefully curved leaves. The flower spikes are ten or twelve feet long, and issue from the trunk at the base of the leaves, hanging down like a horse's tail. They are not produced till the tree has arrived at its full period of growth; and the manner in which the numerous spikes succeed each other is rather singular. The first spike issues from the top of the tree, and after it has done flowering another comes out below it, and so on, a flower spike being produced from the angle of each leaf stalk, or from the circular scar left by leaves that have fallen away from the trunk, until the process of flowering reaches the ground, when the tree is exhausted and dies.

"The English in India gave it the name of Toddy Palm, because they traced a kinship between their old home toddy and the juice of the tree. The natives work it in this fashion: When the spikes are in the bud they cut them off, and the sap that would have flowed into the bud is caught by them in a gourd and used as a liquor. It's very powerful, and produces a fine crop of delirium tremens in India. They expect this Oriental distillery to flow some time this fall. Yes, it's the only Toddy Palm in this country."—*New York Sun.*

### Things Seen in Paris.

Economical country in point of wrapping paper. No clean paper bags in grocery like ours. Old newspapers used to wrap your sugar, etc., in. French printing ink very strong of tar, turpentine and other stickiness. Your butter and cheese wrapped in bits of old ledgers. No tramps. Beggars authorized somehow by law. Carry a bundle of checks or colored slips of paper. Give one a penny, and he or she gives you a check. For services rendered somehow. Very common and cheap coffee. When sold poured out of a black bottle. As black as the bottle. Tastes like shoe blacking warmed over. Only a counterfeit of coffee. Gingerbread abundant. No ginger in it. Exclusive lotteries and fairs for selling gingerbread. Made in chunks two feet long and three inches thick. Ditto in molds of gingerbread kings and queens two feet long. Bend like India rubber. Tastes like ditto. Is carried all over France from fair to fair. Piled by the curb in the sun. Exposed to various weathers. Stale if not mouldy. Sometimes stuffed with boiled chestnuts. Which makes it worse. Kept at grocery stores. Set out in front, along with tubs, pails and brooms. Dogs smell of it. Children finger it during their age of stickiness. Cats run over it. Mice nibble it. Dust works through it. Should see the old feather broom the shopman sweeps it which every morning. Gingerbread king held by the foot very pliable. Will bend nearly double. Saw one so carried by lady in street car. Gingerbread auctions and lotteries. Lottery man attracts crowd by baiting hook and line with hunk of gingerbread. Sweeps it over crowd of small boys who must catch it in their mouths. Marks each piece with chalk to correspond with lottery ticket dealt out. When won hands it to winner, first rubbing off chalk on aged pair of pantaloons.—*Ohio State Journal.*

## A QUEER ALBUM.

### WRITING AUTOGRAPHS ON A HUMAN SKULL.

#### A Texan Lady's Odd Fancy—Some of the Conceits of the Contributors to the Collection.

An El Paso (Texas) letter to the San Francisco *Chronicle* describes a young lady's queer autograph album. The album in question is a human skull. It was originally the property of a Mexican, who died on the Rio Grande without the benefit of a benediction or a boot jack, and probably, in its time, wore a jaunty sombrero and held an unnumbered quantity of cigarettes between its glistening jaws. At present it is simply a polished white dome of bone, with a brass standard screwed into its medulla oblongata attaching it to a slab of black marble. The pieces are held in place by wire pins at the sutures. A taxidermist fixed it up for \$5, or some such trifle.

So much for the album. The ghastly trinket is regularly sprung upon the young lady's friends, with the request that they write something appropriate upon it. The surface is smooth as glass, and a little manipulation of an India-ink bottle and a lithographic pen does the work. The frontal regions are pretty well covered now and the rear expense is left for the back counties not yet heard from. Some of the inscriptions are worthy of chronicle. Between the eyes is this verse:

Where is the patter?  
Where is the clatter?  
Where the gray matter,  
The vitalized spark?  
Science erratic,  
Religion dogmatic,  
Are both quite emphatic  
And both in the dark.

Behind this a disgruntled observer of human nature has penned:

You mind me of Macchiavelli—  
A great head and no backbone.

A sentimentalist leaves his tribute in a line above the ear, or rather where the ear was:

A shell from which  
The pearl is gone.

Something in the same vein is another inscription not far away:

Empty scabbard: where's  
Thy sword.

Directly beneath this another hand has penned the terse rejoinder:

It has soared.

On the broad, level space on top, as free from bumps, vicious or intellectual, as a billiard ball, are these two stanzas:

Do the thoughts fond, foolish, wise,  
That ran wild once in your brain,  
Ever come in spectral guise,  
And hold revel there again?

Do they whisper, soft and low,  
Through the empty chamber here,  
Songs you loved long ago,  
Names you once held very dear?

Away over at one side somebody who had evidently taken in the contour of the skull expressed himself in the following unkind proposition:

I'll wager there is more on the outside of your head than there ever was on the inside.

A famous oarsman who passed through Texas not long ago on his way to the Pacific coast, was led unwillingly up to the depository and finally expressed himself thus:

I have a weakness for skulls.

An old gentleman, who declared that the skull never belonged to a man, but was once part of the effects of a senorita and had worn a mantilla many a time, placed this line above his autograph:

A chatter-box, minus the chatter.

A studious friend to whom the autograph album was suggestive of Yorrick, drew on the bard of Avon for his sentiment and wrote:

Sans hair, sans eyes,  
Sans teeth, sans everything.

It will be observed that he quoted *ad lib.* Near this effort is a reflection that it probably suggested:

I believe now that  
Beauty is only skin  
deep.

The last one is in a cavity that marks where a fine bump of veneration is turned inside out, and is brief and to the point:

A bone of contention.

"I have lots of fun with my skull," said the fair collector of signatures, for the Mexican has to her mind lost all proprietorship in it, "and I use it to get rid of silly people who always write such foolish things."

"How do you do that?" asked one of her victims.

"Easy enough. You see I have an autograph album also, and I produce them both. A bright person prefers the skull, because there is a subject right away. But, on the other hand, one of the sort who write: 'Last but not least,' and 'When this you see remember me,' get frightened and turn to the book with an absolute sigh of relief. So in that way I keep the skull tolerably select. Would you like to look at the book?"

"Spare me," said the unhappy man.

#### Ancient Mode of Banishing Vermin.

In 1749 appeared in the canton of Berne, Switzerland, an enormous number of grubs; and it was feared that the whole crop would be destroyed; therefore the Council of the Commonwealth sent a deputation to the archbishop of Lausanne, with the petition to banish the obnoxious creatures from the canton. Of course it is not stated that the neighboring cantons had agreed to receive the grubs, but the Archbishop seems not to have considered the incongruity of said petition. He gave an affirmative answer, and authorized the priest at Berne to impose the banishment of the grubs, providing for strict observance of the customs and laws. After a prayer, an advocate for the people was chosen. He notified the court of his appointment, and proposed the citation of the grubs. On a certain day some of the grubs were brought before the court, and their advocate chosen. The priest, followed by a large crowd of pious people in a solemn procession, went to the cemetery, to the fields, to the vineyards, and to the banks of the river, to serve the summons on the defendant. He delivered the following—at that time probably courteous—address, as a warning and as citation to the felons:

"Ye hideous and degraded creatures, ye grubs! There was nothing like ye in the ark of Noah. By orders of my august superior, the Archbishop of Lausanne, and in obedience to the holy church, I command ye all and every one to disappear, during the next six days, from every place where food grows for man or beast. If not obedient, I enjoin ye to appear on the sixth day, at 1 o'clock, afternoon, at Willisburg, before the Archbishop of Lausanne."

As some righteous people objected because the citation was not exactly made in the manner provided by law, the case was postponed, and, after a lawful citation, another day was named. Then the process began. The advocate chosen for the defendant was Jean Perrodet, a well known dogmatical and obstinate disputant. Perhaps it will appear somewhat doubtful if the nomination of this advocate fulfilled exactly the demands of the law and custom of the time, as it is stated that Mr. Perrodet died a short time before his nomination. Nevertheless, the case and the complaint were read; and, as no defender appeared, the judgment was given for the plaintiff.

"We, Benedictus, of Monferrand, Archbishop of Lausanne, condemn and excommunicate ye obnoxious worms and grubs, that nothing shall be left of ye, except such parts as can be useful to man."—*Swiss Cross.*

#### The First Banjo Player.

The first man who ever played a banjo was Joe Sweeney, and his instrument was an excavated gourd with four strings. Joe gave his first tunes in public in a circus tent. He was a deck hand, working on a canal going from Richmond to Lynchburg. He afterward was with negro minstrel companies, and was a great feature both in this country and Europe.—*Baltimore American.*

#### Wanted.

A hat for the head of a fountain,  
A glove for the hand of fate,  
A shoe for the foot of a mountain,  
A link from the chain of detente.

A spoke from the wheel of fortune,  
A chip from the "pole" of the South,  
A drink from the fountain of knowledge,  
A word from the river's mouth.

A drop from the cup of sorrow,  
A look from the face of the storm,  
A stroke from the arm of justice,  
A ring for the finger of scorn.

A knock at the door of repentance,  
A throb from the ocean's heart,  
A glance from the eye of a needle,  
From Cupid's bow a dart.

A piece of the Rock of Ages,  
A plume from the wings of Time,  
Some milk of human kindness,  
And I have done my rhyme.  
—*Ellen M. Nace, in Boston Herald.*

#### THE LESSON OF LIFE.

Drop follows drop and swells

With rain the sweeping river.

Word follows word and tells

A truth that lives forever.

Flake follows flake like sprites

Whose wings the winds dissever.

Thought follows thought and lights

The realm of mind forever.

Beam follows beam to cheer

The cloud the bolt might shiver.

Throb follows throb and fear

Gives place to joy forever.

The drop, the flake, the beam

Teach us a lesson ever.

The word, the thought, the dream

Impress the soul forever.

Day follows day and brings

Manhood and its endeavor;

Year follows year on wings

That sweep right on forever.

Night follows night, we rest

Till fate our slumbers sever.

Morn follows morn, the test

Of life that lasts forever.

Deed follows deed, we cheer

The art and artist eever.

Friend follows friend, and here

We meet no more forever.

To-day, the night, the morn

Depart, returning never.

Souls of the Spirit born

Will live and live forever.

—*George W. Bungay.*

## PITH AND POINT.

In the bright lexicon of speculation there is nothing so uncertain as a sure thing.

Man reaps what he sows; but women often reap what she sews.—*Commercial Bulletin.*

Some men find fault because they are never lucky enough to find anything else.—*Lowell Citizen.*

"I've got myself in an 'ice-box!'" as the butcher remarked when he found himself locked up in a fresh-meat refrigerator.—*Goodall's Sun.*

Johnny's sitting in the corner;  
Pensive is his mien,  
Don't disturb him, he's a mourner  
Cause the fruit was green.

—*Merchant Traveler.*

At a Restaurant—"Waiter, this sal mon isn't fresh?" "How can that be, sir? It's just off the ice, sir." "Then it's your ice that isn't fresh, waiter."—*Judge.*

A two-story house fell on a Chicago reporter, and when they dug him out of the debris he had a two-column article written about the accident.—*Newman Independent.*

They were discussing art matters. "Have you ever been done in oil, Mr. Smith?" she asked. "Oh, yes," he replied. "Who was the artist?" "He wasn't an artist; he was a broker."

"Guibollard" visits an insane asylum: "I hear that you sometimes incarcerate people here who are not insane." "Oh, yes; but that don't matter—they invariably become insane in less than a week here."—*Paris Charivari.*

If you drop your collar button, there is one sure method of finding it. After you have hauled the bureau across the room to look under it, then replace the furniture and put on a pair of heavy shoes. Start to walk across the room, and before you have taken three steps you will step on the collar button and smash it all to pieces.—*Danville Breeze.*

He sat him down on the circus seat  
Beside a girl he had not seen before;  
He thought himself and his style "complete,"  
But she only deemed him an arrant bore,  
And he bought him a fan of the palm-leaf style.

He fanned himself and he fanned her, too;  
And gently the ambient breeze did wile;  
While bolder and bolder the fellow grew—  
"Now, what do you think of the case?" said the bore.

He meant himself, did this silly fool;  
"Considering we have not met before,  
I think your fanning's decidedly cool."  
—*Goodall's Sun.*

Some of the trees of Arkansas have peculiar properties. The fruit and root of the buckeye are used by Indians on their fishing excursions. They put the fruit and roots in a bag, which they drag through the water. In an hour or so the fish rise to the surface dead. Cattle die after eating of the fruit or leaves. Man eats the fruit of the pawpaw, but hogs won't. Ropes and mats are made of its bark. The fruit and bark of the bay trees are supposed to be a cure for pneumonia and interm tent fever.