

TALLYING PINEAPPLES.

Quick Work Done in Handling the Fruit on the New York Wharf.

The pineapple season lasts from about March 1 to about Aug. 1. New York gets pineapples from the Florida keys, from the West Indies and from the Bahamas. Some come in steamers, some in sailing vessels. Pineapples from Havana by steamer are brought in barrels and crates. Pineapples brought in sailing vessels are brought mostly in bulk—not thrown in loosely, however, but snugly stowed, so that as many as possible may be got into a vessel.

On the wharfs here pineapples brought in bulk are handled with great celerity. Men in the hold of the vessel fill bushel baskets with them and hand the baskets up on deck, where they are passed along and set up on the string-piece of the wharf. The trucks in which they are to be carted away are backed down handy. A box of suitable height, and which is as long as the truck is wide, is placed at the end of the truck. A man standing near on the wharf lifts the baskets from the string-piece and sets them up on this box. Two men stand at the box, each with a basket of pineapples in front of him, to count the pines and throw them into the truck, which has racks at the sides; lengths of board are placed across the end as the load rises. Two men stand in the truck to level the fruit as it comes to them.

The two counters are experts, and they work with great rapidity and steadiness, keeping pineapples going all the time. Each man picks up two pineapples at a time, one with each hand, and gives them a toss into the truck, both men counting as they go along, one after another, "one," "two," "three," "four," "five," and so on up, each count meaning two pineapples. When they strike "one hundred," the tallyman makes a straight chalk mark on the end of the truck; that stands for 200 pineapples. While he is making the chalk mark the other counter keeps right on, and he may have got up to "two" or "three" again, for it takes a second or two to make the chalk mark, but by that time the tallyman is at it again chiming in with "four," and away they go together again, counting up rapidly toward another hundred. If a man on the load finds a specked pine, he drops it over the side of the truck into a basket that stands there, and says: "One out." The tallyman tosses in one without counting, to keep the count good.

As fast as the counters empty the baskets they push them off the box, and the man at the string-piece sets up a full one in its place and the counters keep the pineapples going without cessation. At the fifth hundred the tallyman makes a mark diagonally across the four he has already made, in the commonly used method of tallying freight; but these five marks here stand for 1,000 pineapples. On a double truck there are usually carried from 4,500 to 5,500 pineapples; on a single truck, from 2,000 to 3,500.—New York Sun.

LAUGHTER.

Has It Evolved From the Brutal Yell Over a Tortured Enemy?

Just as the hoof of the horse is the remnant of an original five toes, just as the pineal gland in man is now said to be the survival of a prehistoric eye on the top of the head, so, perhaps, this levity in regard to particular ailments (in others) may be the descendant of an aboriginal ferocity in man. It is a well known theory that what we call humor arose from the same source; that the first human laugh that ever woke the astonished echoes of gloomy primeval forests was not an expression of mirth, but exultation over the misery of a tortured enemy.

There is to this day something terrible in laughter. The laugh of madness or of cruelty is a sound more awful than that of the bitterest lamentations.

By means of that strange phonograph that we call literature we can listen even now to the laughter of the dead, to the hearty guffaws or cynical titterings of generation after generation of bygone men and women, and if we are curious in such matters we can probe into the nature of the changes that have passed over the fashion of men's humor. For it has been said, not without the support of weighty cumulative evidence, that, as we penetrate further into the past, we find the sense of humor depending always more obviously and solely upon the enjoyment or embarrassment of others. The sense of superiority was the sense of humor in our ancestors; or, in other words, vanity lay at the root of this, as of most other attributes of our bumptious species!

Putting ear to our phonograph, we catch the echoes of a strange and merry tumult; boisterous, cruel, often brutal, yet with here and there a tender cadence from some solitary voice; and presently this lonely note grows stronger and sweeter, as we travel slowly toward our time, until at length, through all the merriment, we can hear the soft under-murmur of pity. Does the picture not seize the imagination—the lone laughter of the ages which begins in cruelty and ends in love?—Westminster Review.

If oil is spilled upon a carpet, immediately scatter cornmeal over it and the oil will be absorbed. Oil that has soaked into a carpet may be taken out by laying a thick piece of blotting paper over it and pressing with a hot flatiron. Repeat the operation, using a fresh piece of paper each time.

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