

## A PRODIGY IN FIGURES.

### WONDERFUL POWERS OF AN ILLITERATE MISSOURIAN.

Without Any Book Education What-ever He Performs the Most Difficult Problems With Unparalleled Ease and Accuracy.

Every age has its wonder, and the wonder of this age is Reub Fields, of Warrensburg, Mo., the greatest mathematical prodigy in the world. Though he can neither read nor write, nor has the least conception of the form of a figure, his reputation as a master of mathematics has extended to every State in the Union. Those who have not seen an exhibition of his mathematical powers are slow to believe he possesses the wonderful and seemingly miraculous ability that has made him famous throughout the whole country.

He is 41 years of age and is a native of the State of Kentucky. In person he is above the average height, rather heavy, sluggish in movement and somewhat ungainly in appearance. He is often standing on the streets of Warrensburg with his hands in his pockets, appearing indifferent to everyone and everything around him. He is, at times, morose and very unsocial, often wholly ignoring his friends who address him. It is more difficult to secure an interview with him than the President of the United States. He is very superstitious and claims to be under the especial guidance of the Almighty.

Prior to a year ago a dram of whiskey would induce him to talk, but now he says God has directed him to use no intoxicants whatever, and so far he has obeyed this visionary command. When disposed he will now talk and calculate for a pecuniary consideration, but if he notices any levity or incredulity manifested on the part of those with whom he is conversing, he instantly becomes as silent as the tomb, and no consideration, however great, could induce him to say another word. After several ineffectual attempts the reporter of the Republic succeeded in getting him to have his photo taken. This was the first time that he could ever be induced to have a negative struck.

There is no problem in any branch of mathematics that he cannot correctly answer as soon as the problem is stated. Problems that have taken expert mathematicians days to solve Reub has correctly answered in less than fifteen seconds. Though this may seem incredible to many readers of the Republic it nevertheless has been verified hundreds of times. When asked to add 784,675,675 to 86,534,671 and multiply the answer by 64 he instantly replied 11,060,064,662. He can add a column of any number of figures as fast as they can be called. It does not matter how complicated or full of simple or complex fractions the problems may be he will solve them as readily as if they were simple sums in addition. While invoicing goods he sits like a statue, keeping as many as twelve clerks busy, and at the close of the day he will give correctly the invoice of the day. He has never been known to make a mistake.

He also possesses the peculiar ability of telling the standard and local time of the day or night without consulting any time-piece. As a correct time-keeper he is more reliable than the Seth Thomas clocks. He not only can tell the correct time, but without seeing one's watch will tell exactly how far it is from being correct.

Yesterday the reporter of the Republic made an agreement with him for one hour's interview, and when the time was up Reub stopped suddenly while telling an anecdote about himself, and said: "I've talked an hour."

"No, Prof. Fields" (he takes great delight in being called Professor), "you said it was 1 o'clock when we commenced talking, and it is not yet 2 o'clock by my watch." Without having any possible means of seeing the watch, he replied, "Your watch is three minutes and a half slow." This proved to be the case. Travelling east or west he is conscious of how many degrees of longitude he has passed through and of the difference of time between the place of starting and where he is at that time. When given the year and day of one's birth he will, with lightning-like rapidity, tell the day of the week on which the person was born.

Notwithstanding he can do all these wonderful things, he acknowledges his utter inability to explain the process of reasoning by which he arrives, always, at correct answers.

In his early youth he showed no signs of his remarkable talent. The only characteristic peculiarly noticed in his boyhood was his absolute power over venomous reptiles and vicious animals. A mad bull would not notice him and a wild and unbroken colt would be tame and docile in his hands and ready to obey his every command. Gentle persuasions or severe chastisement could not get him to attend school, but he would often stroll into the woods, capture a number of rattlesnakes, put them into his pockets, where they would lie quietly coiled, and just before noon would make his appearance at the school house and without a moment's warning turn the poisonous reptiles loose in the school-room. This never failed to frighten the teachers and pupils away, leaving Reub in full possession of their midday meals, which, having an insatiable appetite, he never left until all was consumed. When he was between the age of 7 and 24 his appetite was never satisfied. He would often eat raw rabbits, squirrels, chickens or anything else he could devour.

Since he has grown up to manhood he has travelled extensively, but never pays any railroad fare? When the conductor

asks Reub for his ticket he says: "I am Reub Fields; don't you know me?" The conductor passes on only to return and give Reub some knotty problems or listen to him converse about his "wonderful gift." He fares equally as well at the hotels wherever he travels.

Though he has often been employed to invoice goods in the larger cities and towns of Missouri, he cannot be induced to appear before the public. A relative of his, about five years ago, made arrangements to have him appear before the public in Kansas City and St. Louis, but in giving an initiatory exhibition at Harrisonville, Mo., he became greatly enraged at his relatives, who introduced him to a large crowd as "the greatest mathematician in the world, though a natural-born fool," and since that time he turns the cold shoulder to any friend who tries to induce him to go again on exhibition. Reub is unmarried, and says he will always remain single unless he can get a woman that can calculate like he can, though he despairs of finding one of that kind.—[St. Louis Republican.]

## ZULUS IN SHAM BATTLE.

### Even the Imitation Warfare of the Savages is Horrible.

A sham fight among the Zulus is an impressive spectacle. The dusky warriors are fine, muscular fellows, athletic, and highly trained. The rank and file, untrammelled by ornaments and dress, move about with grace and freedom. The officers, chiefs and head men wear coronets of ostrich feathers, which rustle freely with every movement of the body; circling their brows are rolls of tiger skin, from which descend fringes of coarse hair; from the neck and shoulders to the knees their bodies are covered with the tails of monkeys and tigers and stripes of various hides strung together in girdles; their waists are girt about with tufts of lions' mane and cowhair. Forming into line, their variegated shields are so close and regular that they appear interlocked, whilst above them bristle rows of gleaming assegai heads. The foe is imaginary, as even among their own tribes they are roused to such a pitch of excitement that, had they any opponents, though only in mimic warfare, they would be so far carried away by their feelings that at close quarters bloodshed would inevitably result. At the word of command they advance in precise order, first slowly, then at a quick march, then double, and with a shout of "Chie!a!" (imaginary enemies) the battle becomes fast and furious. Brandishing their assegais, stabbing and lunging with strength and dexterity, each stroke accompanied by a fierce grunt of satisfaction, stamping, gesticulating, and gnashing their teeth, they work themselves into a mad frenzy, in which their features are distorted, and their eyes glare with a fierce lust of blood.

Suddenly the command is given to retire, and, as victors shouting triumph, they march from the field. Then appears upon the scene a horde of wild-looking creatures, running and leaping from place to place, screaming demoniacally, and frantically beating the earth with thick, heavy clubs. These are the women and they are engaged in the horrible atrocity of killing the wounded. After a sham fight the night is spent in feasting and revelry.—[Detroit Free Press.]

## The Meaning of "Illinois."

The true meaning of the word Illinois is now said to be "the plains," and that its Spanish original was llanos, pronounced el-le-ha-nos, the Spanish language deriving it from "Planus," the Latin for a plain, and corrupting it by pronouncing the letters pl as though they were ll. A recent writer who gives this theory for the origin and meaning of the word recalls having seen on old maps of government surveys the Spanish words "Llanos Estacados," meaning "The Staked Plains." An old map of the United States is also said to have been marked with the words "Llanos Indians" across the place where Illinois is designated on modern maps. The "Llanos Indians" were the Indians of the plains. There is but a very small transition from the Spanish pronunciation passing up, as it did, through the French, and then converted into English. The name of Illinois, if so derived, means "Plains," and the term is very significant, because there is no State in the Union that is leveler than the State of Illinois. Its vast inland prairies, inhabited by Indians, very properly gave to those Indians the name of the "Llanos" Indians. Hence, it is reasonable to believe, that the word Illinois is of Spanish-Latin origin, and has no derivation whatever from Indian languages.—[Boston Transcript.]

## Danger in Canned Goods.

That there is a danger attached to the use of improperly canned goods is demonstrated by the numerous reports of poisoning due to the use of these articles.

Many cases are reported each year, and in an article on foods Dr. John B. Hamilton, of the United States Marine Hospital Service, gives the following advice for the guidance of consumers of canned goods:

"Examine the cap of every can, and if two holes be found in it, don't use it, for only one hole is necessary to let out the air before final sealing. Two holes show that the can had begun to swell on account of the decomposition, and had been punctured and resealed. If decomposition is commencing, by pressing up the bottom of the can the tin will rattle as the bottom of the oiler of a sewing machine does. If the goods are sound, it will be solid, and there will be no rattle of the tin."—[Mail and Express.]

Vegetation in the Alps recedes downward from year to year.

## BUILDING THE FAIR.

### BUSY SCENES AT THE SITE OF THE CHICAGO EXPOSITION.

#### A Fence Six Miles Long Encloses the Buildings—Hundreds of Workmen Erecting Big Structures of Wonderful Transformation.

It takes a fence six miles long to enclose the World's Fair buildings in Chicago. All these structures are to be of extraordinary dimensions, but the largest of them, on which the foundation work has just been commenced, will be something stupendous. It is the hall of Manufactures and Liberal Arts. The site for this vast building is a broad, highly situated plateau overlooking the lake. A railroad track runs through its center, and on each side rise tremendous piles of lumber, iron and all sorts of construction material.

A similar scene is witnessed at the other great buildings, on which further progress has been made. Within the enclosure the Exposition site resembles one vast work-ground, surrounded by freight cars and lumber yards. Looking out towards the lake, the breakwater, the long pier and foundation for the naval exhibit present the appearance of a mammoth dockyard.

Changed, indeed, is Jackson Park, and those who visited it three months ago would not know it now. A world's workshop, employing an army of builders, environed on three sides by the foliage and flowers of the south parks, and on the fourth by the infinite expanse of the lake.

The exposition site has undergone a wonderful change since last spring. Then it was a soft marshy ground shelving in irregular stretches to the water line. Now it is a firm level, a smooth sandy surface upon a clay subsoil. A perfect and admirably improved building site. The hundreds of visitors who view the grounds cannot immediately appreciate the immense difficulties that have been overcome and the great labor involved in the earthwork accomplished on this lake shore site. It is now a level surface to the line of the lake, a surface a mile and a half in length and, at its southern extremity, nearly a mile in width. This has been created, graded and leveled by constantly employing a small army of men and now, within the six miles of fence that surrounds it, the work of constructing the great buildings is being pushed with ceaseless activity.

From the slight eminence already known as "administration hill," which the lofty administration building is destined to effectively crown, the observer can even thus early gain a realistic sense of the distinctive features and general magnitude of this stupendous undertaking. At this point he is practically in the center of the sites allotted to the principal buildings and the system of terrace work which will surround them. He is also in the center of a complex network of railway track, 50,000 feet of it extending in every direction and connected with the trunk lines by fifty switches, all of them in constant use. This system of railway is laid upon what, four months ago, was wild park land untouched by the first improvement. The tracks are covered with cars, loaded with lumber, iron and every description of building materials. These roll into the grounds unceasingly and are switched up to the buildings to which the materials belong. Gangs of men take hold with a will and as if by magic towering piles of material rise in every section of the grounds. Mounted superintendents ride from point to point urging things forward. The word is "rush" in every department and branch of construction.

The big buildings are beginning to rise. Already some of the principal structures are not only in evidence, but progress on them is marked from day to day. Looking northwest from the administration building the visitor sees the Woman's Building, already so far advanced that it looms up imposingly against its background of park trees. Rising in the vista are the Electricity and Mines and Mining buildings, on which the foundations are already completed. Upon the sites of the Horticultural and Transportation buildings all preliminary work is completed, and hundreds of tons of material are ready to be placed in position.

Hundreds of men are engaged on every possible sort of construction work. Laying water-mains, electric-light plant, modeling for the exterior decorative work and developing landscape effects around the ornamental waters.

A busy place indeed is the exposition ground, and soon it will be as busy by night as by day for the electric lighting necessary for night construction has just been arranged for.

From one end of the grounds to the other everything is pushed, and that, too, in all sections of the work. In the landscape system, which includes the lagoons, basins and ornamental waters, the breakwater and lake shore terrace, the great pier and casino; in fact, all principal departments and even their minor divisions are being pressed forward with a business-like ambition thoroughly in accordance with the impelling spirit of this gigantic enterprise.

HARRY WALTER and Benjamin Talbot, of Morgantown, Penn., caught a large turkey buzzard in a steel trap. They took the bird home, and after keeping it a few days by means of fine wire attached a small sleigh-bell to one of its legs and set it at liberty. They never heard of the bird until a few days ago, when they read in one of the newspapers of the capture of a buzzard with a bell fastened to its leg, in Bolivia, South America. From the description of the bell and the manner of fastening they have no doubt that it is the identical buzzard that was liberated by them.

## FIRST USE OF THE POTATO.

### Use by Which It was Made Popular—Origin of Foodstuffs.

There is much curious amusement to be had in tracing where the foodstuffs we use and the domestic animals we eat or use, originally came from. Prof. Max Muller, reasoning through his science of words, finds that the goose was domesticated very early, or at least some bird like it.

Goose in English, gans in German, dropping the g according to the laws of language, the word becomes anser in Latin and correspondingly in Greek, with the aspirate that marks the digamma dropped, and so back to ansa in the Sanscrit. Our prehistoric Sanscrit ancestors of the Indian fable lands had geese, Prof. Muller therefore concludes, or birds resembling them closely. Through thousands of years the name has remained, varying only according to the known laws of the change of pronunciation, and probably the thing stood throughout behind the name. Such is the antiquity of geese.

It is since Queen Elizabeth's time, only four and a half centuries ago, that tobacco, sugar and potatoes have been used, Sir Walter Raleigh being instrumental in establishing the use of all these in England.

The circumnavigator, Francis Drake, has the credit of introducing the potato to Europe, but the Spaniards had brought it with the tomato from the Andes some while before, and it was established there and in Italy, where they called it tartufoli, long before Sir Walter Raleigh shipped his cargo, in 1626, from Virginia to England. According to Humboldt it has been cultivated in England since 1684, in Saxony since 1728, and since 1738 in Prussia.

There was much difficulty in introducing the potato into France. It was only toward the end of the reign of Louis XIV. that it began to be used. The learned had opposed its introduction systematically, saying it produced leprosy; and the common people refusing to test it even on their live stock.

A trick at last established it. Fields were planted all over France with potatoes and carefully guarded till the tubers were ripe, it being given out that these fields were growing a new thing specially for the king, and that trespassers would be prosecuted. Now the laws at that time were severe. A man might be hanged when he hunted in the wild forest, for the game was the seigneur's, almost each one of whom kept his private galleys. Trespass against the king implied, therefore, terrible punishment.

The danger of the punishment proved itself an alluring bait. As the contriver, wise in human, had foreseen, the fields that were purposely left unguarded were pillaged right and left, the potatoes eaten, some kept and planted, and the tuber at last effectually introduced in France.—[New York Sun.]

## They Slept Under Snow.

The case of Mrs. Elizabeth Woodcock, who survived long burial under snow, may be known to many readers. This woman, forty-two years of age, of Impington, a village three miles north of Cambridge, lost her way in returning home from market on Saturday evening, February 2, 1799, and was buried seven feet deep in the snow. In this state she continued eight nights and eight days, when she was dug out alive on Sunday, February 10th. She retained the full possession of her senses all the while she was immured. She died July 24, 1799.

A somewhat similar case occurred in the snowstorm of November, 1890. A middle-aged woman, named Alice Jane Lowe, belonging to Wigan, was admitted into Spalding Workhouse in a very weak state, having been found by the relieving officer sleeping out in the snow in the Lincolnshire Fens, near Spalding. She was put to bed, and then stated that she had slept out for five weeks continuously, including within the last few days, the severest weather of the year, when the snow covered the ground to the depth of nearly a foot.

The poor woman's hair was in such a matted state that it had to be all cut off. She stated that she had tramped from Lancashire, where she had formerly been in domestic service, and at the time she was found in the snow she appeared to have lost her way. The workhouse officials consider it most remarkable that the woman survived the exposure of the cold.—[Leisure Hour.]

## Coloring Malay Teeth.

Mr. Merrifield, a British officer in Tenasserim, says that the belief that the teeth of the Malays and Siamese are colored by chewing betel mixed with lime is an error. "The black color is produced by a special process employed for the purpose; for no respectable Siamese would like to have white dogs' teeth, like Chinese, Indians and Europeans. Coconut kernel is carefully charred and then worked to a stiff paste with coconut oil. When carefully and regularly worked over the teeth this produces the black varnish which is so much admired. Among some Malay tribes it is considered the proper thing not only to blacken the teeth, but to file them down to points like sharks' teeth."—[Boston Transcript.]

## Vinegar Dissolves Bones.

A gargle of vinegar will dissolve small bones quickly. When a large bone happens to lie across the windpipe or throat, a dexterous use of the finger will dislodge it when other means are lacking, provided both the operator and patient keep calm.

The honey crop this season will be the lightest California has ever known.

He Had a Grievance. In Boston, says Art in Advertising, lives a gentleman whose name the whole country has been made familiar with in advertisements of "the \$9 shoe." Now, this gentleman belongs to the Boston Club, an organization having among its members another man of the same name, but differing from him in this respect, that his aristocratic tendencies considerably exceed his financial strength—so much so, in fact, that every month his name appeared on the bulletin-board as posted for dues, etc. This very much provoked the moneyed man, whose friends lost no opportunity of twitting him on the fact that he was behind in his payments; and so he wrote to the gentleman really at fault to this effect: "I am tired of seeing my name displayed all over the bulletin-board, and will give you choice of one or two things; you must either resign from the club or allow me to pay your dues every month." To which our swell friend replied: "I am tired of seeing my name displayed all over the country on \$9 shoes, and will give you one of two things to choose from; you can either resign from the club or go to h—l."

More is Nerve. The Indian Territory is certainly entitled to the blue ribbon for an exhibit of unadulterated nerve. Two citizens of that highly original land engaged cars and then stole horses to put in them for shipment.

Every man has his price, but brides are given away.

## A Life Saved

Mr. Geo. Raymond, of Seneca Falls, N. Y., is a pump setter in the employ of Ramsay & Co., the well known pump makers of that place. He is a member of Ramsay Engine Co. He says:

"My wife without doubt owes her life to Hood's Sarsaparilla. A few years ago she was at death's door, due to blood poisoning, or as physicians say pyaemia. After everything else failed Hood's Sarsaparilla brought her out of this crisis all right. Since then she has suffered at times with numbness and headache, but continues taking

## Hood's Sarsaparilla

and is gradually getting over these troubles. She clings to Hood's, takes nothing else, and we believe it will effect a complete cure."

## "August Flower"

How does he feel?—He feels blue, a deep, dark, unfading, dyed-in-the-wool, eternal blue, and he makes everybody feel the same way—August Flower the Remedy.

How does he feel?—He feels a headache, generally dull and constant, but sometimes excruciating—August Flower the Remedy.

How does he feel?—He feels a violent hiccupping or jumping of the stomach after a meal, aising bitter-tasting matter or what he has eaten or drunk—August Flower the Remedy.

How does he feel?—He feels the gradual decay of vital power; he feels miserable, melancholy, hopeless, and longs for death and peace—August Flower the Remedy.

How does he feel?—He feels so full after eating a meal that he can hardly walk—August Flower the Remedy.

G. G. GREEN, Sole Manufacturer. Woodbury, New Jersey, U. S. A.

## DONALD KENNEDY

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