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The Baltimore Sun thinks that Professor Koch's alleged consumption cure was the scientific failure of the year.

There is more genuine physical culture in productive labor, avers the Detroit Free Press, than there is in a fancy gymnasium.

The ingenuity of the American people is shown from the fact that fully three-fourths of the entire manufacturing capital of this country, or \$6,000,000,000 is based upon patents.

A Russian city is trying a novel plan, to produce good servants, by giving prizes to every servant who can show a record of services performed to the satisfaction of her employers for the term of two years. The money for the prizes is raised by selling pass-books to the girls who wish to enjoy its benefits. In these pass-books are inscribed the testimonials of employers.

During the last session of the California Legislature, a law was passed making it the duty of the Country Board of Horticultural Commissioners to inspect orchards, nurseries, or other places in their jurisdiction where they shall deem it necessary. By said law it is also their duty, if such localities are found infested with the scale insect, the codling moth, or other pests injurious to plants or trees, to notify the owner of such a fact, and they shall request such owner to eradicate or destroy the said pests within a time specified.

The total fleet of Chile, including transports and all types, wood and composite, numbers thirty-four; but, excepting the Magellanes and O'Higgins, the fighting wooden ships, says Harper's Weekly, are nearly all "lame ducks," as the sailors phrase it. We have certainly fifteen effective wooden ships, including the two frigates Pensacola and Lancaster, which are in every way better built and equipped than any Chile could send against them; and as a reserve, on both coasts, a large fleet of merchant-vessels, from which blockaders, fighting, despatch, transport and torpedo vessels of an excellent character could be drawn.

Dr. Leslie E. Keeley, who has engaged in reforming drunkards by the bichloride gold cure, announces that he has discovered a specific for the grip. He says: "Assafetida, in doses of sixteen grains administered four times a day, will completely break up the worst case of grip at any stage of its development." Assafetida is very common and easy to procure, observes the New York Independent, and the value of Dr. Keeley's recommendation can be very quickly tested. If it should prove to be a sure cure he will be entitled to the gratitude of the world. At least of that large part of the world which has been subject to this very harassing disease.

Modern iron and steel works are to be introduced into China, a contract with an English firm having been made for the supply of a complete Bessemer plant, to include two five-ton converters with cupolas, blowing engines, cranes and other machinery. The contract also includes the supply of the machinery for a large rail mill, a plate mill, a bar mill, twenty puddling-furnaces, and two blast-furnaces of the Cleveland type, the whole being for an output of 100 tons of pig-iron daily. Those works are to be located near the city of Hankow on the slope of the Hanyang hills. It is further stated that a foreign technical staff for the conduct of these works has been secured.

The fire losses in the United States and Canada in the year 1891 aggregated the enormous sum of \$137,716,150, the heaviest annual losses by fire which the country has sustained since 1872, the year of the great Boston fire. The loss by that conflagration alone was \$80,000,000, while the loss by the Chicago fire in 1871 was upward of \$200,000,000. With the exception of the two years, 1871 and 1872, there has not been a year in the history of the country when the destruction of property by fire has been as great as in the year just closed. This does not speak well for the improvements that have been made in fire-proof construction, the provision of fire annunciators and automatic extinguishing apparatus, and the enormous annual outlay by the great cities for the increased equipment and efficiency of fire departments. There is evidently "a screw loose" somewhere outside of the fire plugs.

THE UTOPIAN FARMER.

Come here, my dear, I want to say a word or two to you
'Bout what I think's the proper thing for me 'n' you ter do.
Ye've gave me mighty good advice sence we was wed that day
Way back in sixt' one, 'n' now I'd like to have ye say
Ef you don't think I've got a right ter do as others does,
'N' sell the crops before they grows, jest like them Easterners.
Why, Meg, a man out in Noo York hez sold a lot o' corn
The't several thousand bushels more then what the country's borne—
'N' got his money too, I'm told, 'n' didn't have a peck
Of grain o' any kind in hand to back his little spec.
He cleared a hundrid thousand cash! 'N' Meg, that's more'n we
Have cleared at farm'n' all our days, or ever will, by gee!
'N' I can't say I sees the use o' work'n' day by day
'N' only sell'n' what we raise for mighty little pay.
When them as hasn't any grain can sell up there in town
A million packs o' wheat 'n' corn, 'n' git their money down.
The modern plan's a dandy, Meg, 'n' ef we makes it go.
I'll get you that planner, 'n' the trottin' horse for Joe.
We'll raise the mortgage off the roof, 'n' paint the old barn red,
'N' send the gals to Paris, France, and buy a rosewood bed.
We'll get new carpets for the floors, 'n' keep a hired man,
Ef only I can go to town 'n' learn to work the plan.
'N' mebbe, Meg, I'd make enough ter run for Governor,
Or get sent down to Washin'ton a full-fledged Senator.
I tell yer, gal, this is an age that beats creation. Say,
What would yer father've said, d'ye think, if he wuz here to-day,
Ter see folks sell'n' wheat and corn, and bull cars full o' rye.
'N' leventwelfths of all they sold nowhere 'n' but in their eye?
How he would yell ter think of us a-makin' of a pot
O' gold at sell'n' feller things we haven't really got!
What's that ye say? It isn't straight to sell what ye don't own?
'N' if I goes into the spec, I goes it all alone?
The music on the planny ye think would drive yer mad.
If it was bought from sell'n' things ye never rightly had?
Wall, have yer way; I'll let it go; I didn't mean no harm;
But what is straight in cities can't be crooked on a farm.
—John K. Bangs, in Harper's Magazine.

ALICE GUMBLETON'S CAT.

BY W. J. HENDERSON.

MUCH like Brer Rabbit was the village of Gumbleton in that it lay low. But nevertheless it boasted the proud possession of a hotel, seven churches, a wholesale store and a small steam fire-engine of brilliant appearance and undoubted utility. Stay, there was also a high school, the Gumbleton Free Academy as it was called, at which the youth of both sexes applied their ruby lips to the Pierian Spring with edifying results. The school prospered with a large and unctuous prosperity, and the number of its scholars increased and multiplied until it became necessary to engage an additional professor. He came from no matter where—it was over the hills and far away. And he looked it.
He was a wonderfully handsome man, and his name was Bartholomew Spunk. He was a chemist by profession, and he had become so fond of communing with nature in her secret moods that it was well nigh impossible to induce him to communicate with anybody else; especially if anything else had long hair and wore skirts. Professor Spunk had no fear of unmentionable chloride nor of indescribable oxides; but he was afraid of woman, lovely woman. She was not afraid of him, however; but, so far as she was of Gumbleton extraction, she spent much of her time in endeavoring to get a good look at the Professor's eyes, which were said to be very beautiful.
Bartholomew Spunk took up his abode in a moss-covered boarding-house, where the fried steaks and the coffee grounds sang together as morning stars, and the cold boiled ham came out on the eastern horizon as the sun slipped down the west. The Professor came and went in silence, and he lived his daily life in his own solitary fashion. Every evening he went out in the garden beside the house and smoked his big briarwood pipe, a relic of college days. The garden was pretty, and just on the other side of the fence was another still prettier. The Professor frequently peered through the fence at this garden and wondered who kept it in such exquisite order. If he

had known that every time he peeped through that fence he was watched closely and by a young woman, he would have sunk through the earth, if he could.

In the next house lived the remnants of one of the primeval families of Gumbleton. Even that isolated village had old families and blue blood, and when old Jonathan Gumbleton, after whom the town was named, had died forty years before, he left two young sons, who hastened to marry and extend the family.

The widow of one of these sons lived in the house to which belonged the pretty garden. She had a daughter, and that daughter's name was Alice Mary Gumbleton. Blue blood frequently declines to associate with beauty, but in this case it did not. Alice Mary Gumbleton was as beautiful a creature as one, or even two, could wish to see. Her hair was as black as the shades of night; her large eyes were a deep, soft brown, her complexion was like the bloom on a lily; and her mouth—well, there is no way to describe her mouth except by saying it was one of the most enticing features on earth. Miss Alice Mary Gumbleton resembled Professor Bartholomew Spunk in one thing—she was bashful. Not all the awkwardly expressed admiration which the swains of Gumbleton had laid so generously at her feet had ever been sufficient to inspire her with the smallest portion of that self-confidence which usually animates a belle. She was hopelessly shy, and her conversation was terribly monosyllabic—except to her cat.

Alice Mary Gumbleton had a Maltese cat upon which she lavished the treasures of her heart and her intellect. Every one who ever saw that cat said it was the wisest looking animal in the world. And it ought to have been wise; for Alice Mary talked to it by the hour and gave it the choice results of her long periods of silence and meditation. The name of the cat was Jane. And the cat was as beautiful as its name. Yet in spite of Alice's devotion to this animal she was obliged one day to speak to the Professor, or I should say that it was because of her devotion.

A few doors away from the home of the fair Alice dwelt a hideous youth whose favorite companion was a large bull-dog. This bull-dog was like unto the rest of his kind. He loved not man nor beast. His soul was filled with perpetual gloom, and he went about the world with a depressed—I might say hang-dog—look which boded no good. One day Alice was aroused from a deep meditation by a series of heart-rending shrieks followed by a dire discord of hissing and spitting, which she at once recognized as being the product of the energies of Jane. Rushing to the window she beheld the dear cat mounting the fence with less dignity than haste. At the foot of the fence stood the obnoxious bull-dog, looking very angry.

"Oh, my beautiful Jane!" screamed Miss Alice. She rushed from the house with a broom in her hand prepared to meet death in the defense of her pet. But when the dog wheeled round and prepared to resist her onslaught, she paused and changed her tactics.

"Go away, you nasty beast!" she said. But the dog failed to catch the idea, and remained where he was, still keeping a watchful eye on the cat.

"Oh, dear!" said Alice, "what shall I do?"

At that moment the Professor entered his garden by the front gate, having just returned from school. His eyes fell upon Alice, who was a lovely picture of despair, as she stood gazing at the ferocious dog and the unhappy cat. The Professor was speechless with admiration. He stared at Alice as he had never look at a woman before. Then his scattered senses began to return to him, and he felt the blood mounting to his forehead, while his heart was going like a steam fire-engine. He gazed about him and finally perceived the cat, but not the dog.

"Can I—shall I—that is—I beg pardon—but—do you want the cat?" he stammered.

"Yes, sir; if you—if you—p—please, sir," was the reply.

The Professor advanced slowly and hesitatingly toward the fence. Suddenly he heard a low growl. He paused and looked around; but, seeing nothing, again advanced.

"Oh!" exclaimed Alice; "take care—there's a h-hole in the fence; he can get through."

The Professor stooped and peered between the pickets. Then he saw the bull-dog. The next moment the Professor had vanished into the house.

"Ah-h!" screamed Alice; "please to come back and save Jane."

She had miscalculated the Professor's gallantry. In another moment he reappeared, bearing in his hand a huge navy revolver.

"Please go into—the house," he said; "I might hit you."

But Alice remained transfixed with breathless anticipation. The Professor advanced cautiously toward the fence. When he had reached a position from which he could see the dog, he pointed the pistol carefully, turned away his head, shut his eyes and pulled the trigger. There was a tremendous report; splinters flew in every direction and a cloud of smoke obscured the Professor's view. The astonished dog laid back his ears and fled down the street as if he thought the end of the world had come. No sooner had he gone than Alice rushed forward, seized the unhappy cat,

and, pressing the animal convulsively to her bosom, rushed into the house. When the Professor got the smoke out of his eyes, and found that girl, cat and dog had all disappeared, he marveled greatly at the extent of his own prowess; and had he not caught a glimpse of Alice through the window, would certainly have gone and surrendered himself to the town constable. The next day the Professor rose early and robbed his landlady. He stole a saucer of milk and went out to look for—the gray cat, of course. He found Jane basking in the sunlight. As a basker in the sunlight there was no cat that could surpass Jane. The Professor stole through the opening in the fence and set the saucer of milk under Jane's whiskers. At that instant a window flew open, a fair head popped out, and a timid voice said:

"Thank you."
Then the window shut with a bang, the Professor jumped clear over the fence and disappeared. When he returned from school that afternoon he found a note on his table. It said:

I meant "thank you" for saving Jane, not for milk.

That was all. Day after day the Professor fished vainly for an opportunity to see that girl again; but he could not. He had vague suspicions that she watched him from behind half-closed blinds and half-drawn window curtains; but he could not verify his suspicions. They were true enough. Poor Alice! She was in a miserable state of mind on account of her own dreadful forwardness in sending that note. But the damage was done now.

The Professor sought consolation in the society of Jane. With stolen saucers of milk he enticed the cat through the fence, and finally up to his room. There he used to pick the purring animal up, walk about the room with her in his arms, and mumble ridiculous nonsense in her dun-colored ear.

"She's the mos' boofulest lady in world, Kitty. Yes, s'e is. Don' you wag you' ear 'n' s'ay s'e's not. An ole p'fessor, he jus' lubs her—um-m-m-so much. But you musn't tell, Kitty."

And Jane didn't. She never said a word about it. It's strange, too; because when she went home, her mistress used to seize her and embrace her, and say: "Oh, Jane, darling, you've been to see him! And I'm sure he mus' have kissed you, because you're so lovely. I wonder where. Oh, it must have been right there on your beautiful forehead! There, there, there!"

It was strange that Jane held her peace after that; but she was a wise cat, and knew that time works wonders. Perhaps if Jane had known what wonders time had in store for her—but no matter. One day Jane went to the Professor's room when he was out. Jane waited some time, and then, becoming restless, she began to wander about the room. Over in a corner she saw a lot of bottles. She decided to examine them. She did so. One of them felt over against another. There was a flash, a report, a yell of anguish; and Jane rushed from the house—a sad and growling sight. Hairless, black, and feeble, the once glorious Jane went home and lay down at her mistress's feet. A quarter of an hour later, Professor Bartholomew Spunk, entering the gate of his plain and substantial boarding-house, was confronted by the figure of a weeping maiden.

"It's all your fault!" exclaimed Alice. "If you had let my darling Jane alone, and hadn't coaxed her into your house, it would have been all right. Now—now—she's gone—and gone—and got herself—all—all—blown up—and she'll die—and, oh, and oh—oh—I h-h-hate you!"

Bartholomew Spunk turned deadly pale.

"Alas!" he said; "and is Jane—blown up! But—but—what can I say? Perhaps—that is—Miss Alice—may be—well—will you take—me instead of the cat?"

She looked up into his eyes. Then she decided that a gray cat was not the help that was meet for her.—Puck.

Is Snow a Fertilizer?

The query is snow a fertilizer? is often asked. There cannot be a better reply, perhaps, than this one by the Country Gentleman: It was common many years ago to give much credit to snow as the "farmer's fertilizer," but later investigation proves it as of very slight value at best. The amount of nitrogen which is absorbed and brought down in rain and snow in one whole year is only about one-sixth part of the amount required for the growth of crops, and it is therefore quite insufficient to feed a growing crop, even if it remained long enough in the soil to prove in any degree effective. But the snow can secure only a small portion of the yearly supply, and therefore it is safe to make no account of the snow as a manure.

To go a little more into detail, the results of careful examinations by eminent scientific men show that the total amount of ammonia brought down in a whole year in the rain, dew and snow is about eight pounds to an acre of surface, varying somewhat with seasons and localities; while in a crop of twenty-eight bushels of wheat there were forty-five pounds of nitrogen, in two and one-half tons of meadow hay there were fifty-six pounds, and in two and one-half tons of clover hay there were 108 pounds.—New York World.

Two centuries and seven different men claim the invention of gunpowder.

LARGEST AMERICAN DEER.

HUNTING THE ELK IN THE WILDS OF THE FAR WEST.

A Magnificent Animal—Shooting Two Bull Elks While They Were Engaged in Deadly Combat.

TO my mind, says Civil Service Commissioner Roosevelt in the New York Sun, one of the most attractive sports of the West is elk hunting. The elk used to be found over almost the entire United States, but it now exists, in any numbers, only in the great mountain chains of the Rockies and the coast ranges in Oregon and Washington. It is without exception the lordliest of the deer kind, and in size is second only to the moose. Nothing can surpass the grand beauty of an old bull elk bearing his twelve-tined antlers aloft with easy grace as he roars out his challenge to all rivals. In some parts of the West afar from the settlements the elk is still plentiful. He offers to the hunter not only the grandest of trophies in the shape of his magnificent head and horns, but also an abundant supply of the best possible meat. There is no venison upon which one can live so long without tiring as elk meat, the only drawback being that it must be eaten hot, as the fat turns into regular tallow as soon as it cools. During the summer, while their horns are in the velvet, no true sportsman will shoot the elk, nor will he shoot cows and calves at any time save when absolutely in need of meat; but in September the velvet drops off his horns, and then each of the master bulls begins to collect a harem of cows, from five or six to twenty or thirty in number. He keeps all the small bulls afar from this herd, and wages furious war against every rival of the same size and antler growth as himself. At this season the bull has a very extraordinary and peculiar note. The frontiersmen call it whistling, but it is not like a whistle at all; it is more like a bugle, consisting of a bar or two of music on a rising scale, and then another bar or two on a falling scale, followed sometimes by three or four flute-like notes. It is most exciting to creep up to a bull when he is whistling in this way.

Once I shot two bulls while they were engaged in deadly combat with each other. I had been lying out in a high alpine valley over night with a companion. We had no blankets with us, nothing but our jackets, in which we had slept by the side of the fire all night. Before dawn we were off, threading our way through the cool, dim archways of the pine forest, and just at sunrise we heard, half a mile in our front, the clatter of horns and the savage squealing which marks an elk fight. Stealing up softly, we were soon within 125 yards of the combatants, two powerful and evenly-matched bulls. They fought by charging each other like rams, the shock being tremendous as the great beasts, with bristling hair, flashing eyes, and lowered horns, crashed together. Once the antlers were interlocked, each strove by sheer strength and address to force his opponent back, and they stood for minutes straining with their haunches; gathered under them, squealing fiercely at times; then they would separate, retire some little distance, fronting each other with glaring eyes, and then come together. The great object of each was to catch the other in the flank. The hair and hide on the neck and shoulders of the wapiiti, as the elk is more properly called, offer a nearly impenetrable shield; but the skin is softer on the flank and haunches, and almost the only serious damage that is ever done in a fight is when the victor is able to catch the weaker animal in the flank as he turns, or overtake and punish him as he flees. I have never known a horn to go through the hide around the neck, although after a conflict the flesh will show great bruises there under the skin. In this particular instance, however, I interrupted the conflict long before it had time to come to a fatal conclusion; killing both combatants—one by a shot in the shoulder as they wrestled together, and the other by a bullet in the flank as it ran. We had had no breakfast that morning, and the first thing we did was to cut out a strip of steak from alongside the loins, build a fire and roast on willow twigs little kabobs of luscious meat.

If taken in the open, an elk can be run down by a good horse. I have never myself tried the experiment, but three years ago, near my ranch, a cowboy, with whom I have often worked on round-ups performed the feat. He was up the round-up, and was driving some cattle out of a brush patch at the bottom of a coulee when an elk sprang up directly ahead of him and went off at the swinging trot characteristic of the species. A trotting elk can go all day, but if it should be forced to gallop, though it goes very fast for a few hundred rods, it speedily tires. The cowboy on his speedy, wiry little pony instantly dashed at the elk, forced it to gallop, and kept it on the run for nearly a mile; then it began to flag. He then came alongside and threw his rope over the horns. With the utmost exertions, however, he was unable to master it until another cowboy rode up and shot it with a revolver.

Seals when basking place one of their number on guard to give the alarm in case of danger. The signal is a quick clap of the flippers on a rock. Rabbits signal with their fore paws and have regular signals and calls.

SELECT SIFTINGS.

There are twenty-nine kinds of Methodists.

Twelve average tea plants produce one pound of tea.

A pet dog in Paris, France, wears stockings and shoes.

Butler County, Penn., has a genius who dreams the correct location of oil wells.

Poor persons are supplied with spectacles free of charge by a Boston (Mass.) society.

The proportion of pure Anglo-Saxon words in the Bible is ninety-seven per cent. of the whole.

British horses were famous when Julius Caesar invaded the country. He carried some of them to Rome with him.

An old well in California which, for a number of years, has furnished excellent water, has suddenly turned into an oil well.

In the sleepy little town of Winborne, in Dorsetshire, England, is an ancient library in which all the books are chained to the shelves.

It is a common sight among the Esquimaux, according to a traveler's story, to see a nursing infant with a quid of tobacco in its mouth.

The National Library, in Paris, France with its 2,000,000 printed books and 160,000 manuscripts, is the largest literary storehouse in the world.

Late tests prove that the strongest wood growing in the United States is the "nutmeg hickory" of Arkansas. The weakest is the yellow or West Indian birch.

In a recent libel suit in Detroit, Mich., there was a diversity of opinion as to the verdict, ranging from six cents to \$60,000. A compromise was finally reached on \$11,000.

Bergen, Norway, boasts a paper church large enough to seat 1000 persons. The building is rendered waterproof by a solution of quick-lime, curdled milk and whites of eggs.

The Chinese make what is called "Chi-wah-hi," or grass cloth, from the fibre of the common nettle. It is said to make a splendid cloth for tents, awnings, etc. When made into belting for machinery it is said to have twice the strength of leather.

Walter S. Campbell, of Chicago, Ill., met his sister Alice at the general delivery window in the Indianapolis (Ind.) postoffice the other day for the first time in twelve years. The family lived Keokuk, Iowa, but Walter, at sixteen years of age, ran away, and had heard nothing of his old home until this meeting.

In the language of the millions of China and Japan there is no term that corresponds with our "God." Every student of missions knows well the abiding difficulty in China over the question of a term for God. Both the native Christians and the foreign missionaries are divided among themselves over this perplexing question.

The oldest rose bush in the world is at Hildersheim, in Hanover, Germany. It was planted more than one thousand years ago by Charlemagne in commemoration of a visit made to him by the ambassador of the Caliph Haroun al-Raschid. The bush is now twenty-three feet high and covers thirty-two feet of the wall. The stem is only two inches in diameter.

Roots in Drains.

Recently, in the yard of a public school in Philadelphia, a drain from the out-buildings was found to be choked, and on examination a little root of a maple tree had been found to penetrate a very small pore in the terra cotta pipe; yet so rapidly did these roots increase, after they found there was plenty of food at command in the drain, that although the pipe was eight inches in diameter, several bucketfuls of small fibrous roots were taken out, and which had completely choked all circulation through the drain.

It was a wonderful example of the increase of roots, under circumstances favorable through the abundance of food. It is said that in this case no trouble is anticipated in future years, as it is believed that a bucketful or two of salt brine, passed through the drain once or twice a year, will effectually scorch off any fibres that may attempt the same frolic in future. Where, however, this remedy cannot be applied, it will be a caution not to have drains in the vicinity of the roots of trees.—Mochan's Monthly.

Violets are Purple.

What would you say if you were told that there is no such thing in the world as a real blue violet? There isn't, asserts a botanist in the San Francisco Call. The fashionable sweet-scented violet, or viola odorata, "naturalized from Europe," and the viola cordata, or "heart-leaved violet," its near relative of American woods, are probably the species which have given rise to the popular superstition. But they are purple, as anybody may see who examines the spectrum. He who cannot distinguish a decided tinge of red in the petals must be color-blind.

The handsomest of all native American violets is the "bird-foot," or viola pedata. The centre is quite conspicuous by reason of its pretty white and golden eye.

When a violet is not purple it is either yellow or white.