

OUR BLUENOSE CLUB.

The writer was sitting in the room where we generally held our meetings waiting for the rest to arrive. In a few minutes the doctor strolled in. "Have you seen Rod or Caga this week," he said, "they have each got an apprentice whom they wish to introduce into our circle. What do you think about it?"

"I see no objection," I replied. "I know both the young fellows, and as they are quiet, gentlemanly boys, they would gain some benefit and do us no harm by being present. Young learners sometimes ask questions that bring out useful information, when their seniors would not like to show their ignorance by doing so."

"Test-tube is going to set up a testing laboratory again. You know he was a good many years in that business in England."

"I thought he was an amateur."

"No. He was educated as a chemist and physician, and practiced his profession with great success for a good many years; he then retired, and as you know has been employed latterly in scientific researches. Now he thinks he may as well resume business here."

Just then Mr. Caga entered with his apprentice whom he introduced to the doctor as Mr. Trip, and a little later Mr. Rod arrived, accompanied by his apprentice Mr. Stevens. Lastly came Test tube.

"Has there ever been any calculation made of the amount of power a man consumes in walking and running," asked Caga.

"A recent calculation shows that a man weighing 140 pounds and running a mile in six minutes performs work about equal to that of a half-horse engine; while a walker sustaining five miles an hour for a long day does work equal to that of a quarter-horse engine, and consumes only one-twentieth of the weight of food or fuel," replied the doctor.

"I see it is claimed that almost absolute exactness has been obtained in a straight-edge 12 feet long," remarked Rod.

"I should very much like to see it," said Caga. "Where did you see the notice?"

"In the *Engineering Review*. Here it is," replied Rod, and he read the following:

"An absolutely exact straight edge of more than 36 inches is a wonder of mechanism. One of 6 feet was not recently believed possible, although several had been made on different plans of web-like and truss construction. It has been claimed, however, that almost absolute exactness has been secured by a straight-edge 12 feet long. The appliance looks like an arched truss, the highest spring of the arch being only 20 inches in a length of 12 feet. The space between the chord and the spring is filled with diagonal lattice-work. The whole is a casting on which no peening with the hammer is allowed. Such a tool is invaluable in testing lathes and planer beds."

"Here is an account of a curious experiment with hyacinth bulbs," said Test tube, drawing a newspaper clipping from his pocket and reading it.

"An English experimenter planted a hyacinth bulb in October, 1882 and as soon as it commenced to sprout removed it to a perfectly dark but well-ventilated place. In March, 1883, a stem of dark purple flowers was produced, the leaves of the plant being totally colorless. In October, 1883, the same bulb was again planted, and was grown in the light through the winter. It has flowered again this year, and the flower cluster is smaller and less deeply colored than that which came forth last year in the darkness.

And here is an account of the necessity of watering the leaves of plants. Prof. Wiessner has pointed out that the moistening of a plant increases the transpiration of its leaves and accelerates the flow of its sap. This effect is beneficial if the soil is sufficiently moist to supply the increased demand of the roots, and injurious if the ground is very dry. The foliage of plants, therefore, should only be watered when the roots are quite well supplied with moisture."

"Here is rather a good joke from Puck," observed the doctor.

"Now, my dear," said the candidate's wife, "I don't wish to throw the slightest obstacle in the way of your election, and if you choose to turn the house into a beer garden and have all the loafers in town tramping on my carpets and filling my curtains with pipe smoke and drinking whisky out of my best teacups, I shan't say a word. But I want you distinctly to understand that if another of those woman's rights delegations comes to know if you are going to take a manly stand for down-trodden womanhood—well that delegation has got to be twenty years older and keep its veil down, or I will interview it myself. That's all, dear."

"Please give me a recipe for liquid shoe polish, Test-tube," said Caga.

"The following recipes are given for a nice polish for ladies' and children's shoes, that will dry quickly and leave a good gloss.

Kilner recommends: Vinegar 2 parts, soft water 1 pint, glue (finely broken) 4 ounces, logwood chips 8 ounces, powdered indigo 2 drachms, potassium bichromate 4 drachms, gum tragacanth 4 drachms, glycerine 4 ounces. Boil, strain, and bottle.

"The *Scientific American* gives the following formula for preparing a dressing for kid leather shoes: Gum shellac 2 ounces, water of ammonia 1 ounce, water 8 ounces, aniline black (ingrosino) sufficient to color. Heat all but the last ingredient slowly together till near boiling point, and the shellac dissolves. (It may be necessary to add a little more ammonia.) Then add the aniline and enough water to make the whole measure one pint."

"Have investigations been made as to the effect of electric light on the health," asked Stevens.

"Investigations concerning the effect of different forms of artificial illumination on the health have shown that the tallow candle is the most unwholesome agent, and the electric light the best. The incandescent electric lamp produces only about one-thirtieth as much heat as the tallow-candle, while it gives out no carbonic acid or water," replied the doctor.

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