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TORONTO'S BIG CLOCK.

Facts About One of the Largest Time Pieces in the World.

The four dials are 20 feet in diameter and are made of half-inch ground glass set in iron frames. In the centre of each dial is a circle, containing four hinged sashes, through which it is possible for a man to crawl, if it is necessary to work on the outside of the dial. The dials weigh about fifteen tons, and the steel braces that provide against the enormous wind pressure on the glass weigh six tons.

The hands are of copper. They are hollow and counterbalanced on the inside. The large hands are nine feet six inches long and the small hands five feet six inches.

The three bells weigh, roughly, six tons, a ton and a half, and one ton respectively. The motive power for the clock and bells is furnished by three weights, wound up by electricity once a week.

The pendulum of the clock is 14 feet 8 inches long, and weighs 500 pounds. Once started, it would swing for ten hours without any other power than its own momentum. If the length of the pendulum shaft should alter, through contraction or expansion by cold or heat, the clock would run fast or slow accordingly. To overcome this the shaft is made of iron and zinc, the expansion of one being compensated by the contraction of the other.

The clock is 280 feet above the ground.

Out of 100 European emigrants 570 go to the United States, 230 to South America, and 105 to British Colonies.

PROFIT IN GROWING CURRANTS.

Every farm and village garden should contain as many currant bushes as possible, says Mr. S. E. Brandis. I have been cultivating this useful fruit for several years and find that it is not only desirable for home use, but pays a fair profit when marketed. Last season I gathered 65 gals. from two bushes and sold the crop readily at 40c per gal.

I often see currant bushes that are given no attention whatever after the fruit has been gathered. Treated in this way the crop the following season cannot be a paying one. A little attention to the bushes will more than repay the time expended. After trimming out all the dead wood, the soil about the bushes should be freed from weeds and grass. When this is done, scatter about one gallon of wood ashes around each bush and over the ashes spread well-rotted stable manure to a depth of two or three inches. This will give the bushes much-needed plant food, and the following season an extra large yield will result.

The Cherry currant is a valuable variety in this vicinity, but it must be set in a rich soil and well cultivated. Currants are propagated by cuttings of new wood. The best time to plant these is in Sept. Oct. or Nov. They should be about a foot in length. All the buds on the lower part of the cutting should be taken off. Plant these cuttings about six inches deep in a bed of sandy loam, pack the soil firmly about them, scatter some dead grass over them and by the following spring they can be transplanted into rows.

The Home.

STEAMING PLANTS.

A woman famous among her friends for thrifty house plants ascribes her success to her practice of steaming them. "Whenever they begin to droop and look as if they needed 'toning up' they get a treatment," she said recently. She has a row of hooks arranged on the bathroom wall over the tub and from these suspends the pots by strings to within two feet of the water, the plants having previously had a thorough watering. The door and window are closed with the exception of a narrow crack left at the top of one of the latter, and the tub is filled with water hot enough to allow a gentle steam to rise and pervade the atmosphere. In this position the plants are left for an hour, and the operation is repeated until they are restored to health. This, of course, can only be done in a room with painted walls, as the constant steaming will loosen paper.

If the cause of blight is a worm at the root, the steaming will not avail, and, according to this successful gardener, an investigation is a simple matter. A plant of average size can be removed from the pot by turning it upside down, holding the base of the plant firmly, and letting the ball of earth fall into the hand. A gentle tapping on the side of the pot will facilitate this. Usually the worm will be found near side of the pot.

If, however, it cannot be seen, another test can be made. A round stick with rough edges—or, better yet, a round file—pushed into the soil close to one side of the pot, and gently turned so as to produce a soft grinding sound, will after several minutes drive the worm to the surface. The experiment is one sure to entertain children. "There! Tell me a worm doesn't think!" said a woman the other day as a long slender angle-worm wriggled out of the pot to the floor. This method is not unknown to boy fishermen, who employ it in the soil to call forth the bait.

Few people meet with success in the care of fern balls, and this is probably due to two causes; either cheap ones are bought, or they are not kept wet enough. Once the roots suffer from lack of water the fate of the plant is sealed. Like all plants which are surrounded on all sides by the air, they should have a large quantity of water. A good plan is to arrange a hook over the shelf in the butler's pantry or some similar place, and every morning fill the sink with tepid water, plunge the plant in it and soak it for ten or fifteen minutes, and a longer time will not hurt it. Then hang it on the hook over the sink and let it drain thoroughly before returning it to the window. The fern ball wants plenty of light, but no direct sun. It should never, even in the summer, be hung out of doors, because it does not take kindly to draughts.

TESTED RECIPES.

Creamed Cod.—To one pint of hot mashed potatoes add one beaten egg, a gill of milk, and salt and pepper to taste; beat with a fork until very light. Tear one pound of boneless cod in pieces and scald it, put over a slow fire putting it on in cold water; when it comes to a boil, drain and repeat the process; drain again and press until dry. Make a sauce with a tablespoon of butter and two level spoonfuls of flour; add one pint of hot milk, and when it thickens season with pepper and add the fish. Butter a pudding dish, and line the bottom and sides an inch thick with the mashed potatoes; fill with the cod and white sauce; cover with the mashed potatoes and bake a nice brown.

Potato Puffs.—Boil and mash the potatoes, and while hot make into balls the size of a large egg. Butter a tin sheet, brush over the balls with yolk of an egg and brown them quickly in a hot oven, which will take from five to ten minutes. Slip them from the tin with a knife to a hot platter and serve at once.

Watermelon Cake.—This cake consists of two parts, the white and the red. For the white part take two cups of sugar and one of butter; beat them to a cream, add a scant cup of sweet milk, the whites of six eggs, two teaspoons of cream o' tartar, one of soda, or three level teaspoons of baking powder, and three and a half cups of flower. For the red part take one cup of red sugar, which may be obtained at a confectioner's or a drug store, and half a cup of butter, a third of a cup of milk, two cups of flour, the whites of four eggs, a teaspoonful of cream o' tartar, half a teaspoon of soda, two level teaspoons of baking powder, and one teacup full of stoned raisins. Take an oval pan, or if you have none a round pan will do, line it carefully with buttered paper, and pour in a little over an inch in thickness of the white cake. Line the sides with the remainder, making the thickness of the white cake uniform everywhere with the bottom. Pour the red cake in the centre. It is better to have two persons at work in filling the cake mould, as there is some difficulty in keeping the red and white layers apart at the sides. Baked in a melon mould and iced thickly with icings colored with spinnach green, or white icings, in which half a cup of finely chopped pestachio nuts have been stirred, this cake is very ornamental.

Soft ginger cakes are made as follows:

One cupful of molasses, one cupful of sugar, one cupful of butter, one cupful of sour cream, four eggs, one teaspoonful of soda, one tablespoonful of ginger, and flour to make a stiff batter. Bake in small pans.

IT HAS BEEN NOTICED—

That some cooks beat eggs on a soup plate, using a fork instead of a whisk.

That in making fish balls, croquettes, etc., an agreeable flavor is imparted by putting a whole clove in the article to be fried and removing it before serving, as it would be unpleasant to bite into the clove. Extract of clove may be used instead, but it does not impart quite so fine a flavor.

That butter or cream may be substituted for olive oil in almost any recipe if the taste of the oil is disagreeable.

That eggs can be beaten more quickly and will stand up better if a pinch of salt be added.

That a croquette mixture may be dropped into hot fat in small quantities from the end of a spoon and will be found nearly as nice as when moulded into shapes, which requires so much time and care.

In using gelatine great care should be taken that it is thoroughly dissolved. It is a good plan to strain it through cheesecloth.

Less gelatine is required, if it is to stand over night before using than if needed as quickly as possible.

If it is desired to cool gelatine jelly very quickly the dish which contains it may be placed in a pan of cold water, to which some rock salt has been added.

In separating eggs be careful not to let any of the yolk become mixed with the whites, as they cannot be beaten as well.

Moulds should always be dipped in cold water before the jelly is poured in.

JAPANESE SHIPYARDS.

One in Tokio Which Covers Nearly Sixty Acres.

The determination of Japan to become in every sense a modern nation is in no line of development made more plain than in the matter of ship-yards. The Tokio shipyard, covering fully 60 acres, is reported as employing 3,000 men, who have all the latest machinery, including pneumatic riveters, and six steamers of 180,000 tons are on the stocks, two of them for the Nippon Yusen Kaisha. The fact that the works are equipped with electricity is a further indication of the progressive spirit now ruling.

The ship-building yard at Nagasaki is also going ahead, but special interest attaches to the new Government steel works. Some 5,000,000 yens have already been spent, but 15,000,000 have been voted. The works are on the eastern shores of Kiushis, the most southern of the large islands, forming the empire, and it is, therefore, contiguous to China. The establishment, which covers 230 acres, is close by the coal fields connected with the railway, and a seaport having over 20 feet of water, will be convenient for the shipping of the finished products to the northern islands, and also to China which ultimately must become a large customer. The works are thoroughly equipped. In addition to blast furnaces there are coke ovens and in the steel department open hearth Bessemer furnaces, with a full set of rolling mills for ploughing, three bar mills as well as rail, sheet and plate rolls. There are steel and iron foundries, boiler shops, laboratories, testing and other departments. The work will soon be put in operation, construction being far advanced.

FIRE! FIRE!! FIRE!!!

The room was on fire, and at the window stood a fair and lovely creature. Frantic with horror, he pushed through the people and called upon the firemen to save her.

Stand back, roared a policeman, forcing him back into the crowd again.

Stand back, shouted the man, and see a fellow-creature perish before my eyes?

To his disgust the crowd gazed on in apathy. Wretches! he shrieked, pointing to the poor lady at the window. Are you blind? And with a mad rush he had dashed up the stairs and seized the lady round the waist and had borne her to the outer air in a few seconds. His agitation and the heat caused him to nearly faint, but he had just enough strength to place her in the arms of a policeman, amid the shouts of the crowd. But good gracious! What was that? Did his ears deceive him? Instead of a great cheer for him, a tremendous roar of laughter greeted the heroic act! He glanced at the lady he had rescued from a fiery fate, and the reason of their mirth was at once apparent, and amid the laughter of the unsympathetic crowd he fled. He had rescued the milliner's dummy!

A VENTILATOR.

To make a ventilator in a hay mow prepare a square box about five or six feet long and 16 or 18 inches square, of thin boards, and place it where a flue is to be made in a mow, and draw it up as the mow is built. The top of the ventilator should be left open. The tube may be kept from dropping into the flue by nailing a piece of board near the bottom when mow is done. Then pile hay around the tube until it will stand alone. By this means an efficient ventilator will be formed.

By thus letting cool air into the middle of a mow, or stack, hay that would otherwise "mow-burn" will be kept cool and save well. A barrel is sometimes employed for making a ventilating flue. The barrel must be drawn up a few inches at a time as the hay is stored around it.

CANADIANS IN WEST AFRICA.

Major W. C. Heneker and the Officers of the Third West African Force Enjoying a Meal After a Hard Day's March.

The West African expedition now progressing towards Benin City is of especial interest to Canadians, because its commanding officer, Major Heneker, is a Canadian son of Mr. R. W. Heneker, of Sherbrooke, Que., and the transport officer is Lieut. W. F. W. Carstairs, formerly a captain in the 55th Prescott Battalion Canadian militia. The expedition started from Old Calabar for Benin City early in February, and had, up to recent advices, a very hard time of it. Lieut. Carstairs, under date of Immertermiga, March 25, said: "For the past two weeks it has been fight, fight, fight, every day, but we have wiped the enemy out or nearly so. I was wounded on the 20th inst. in the right forearm and left leg, but am happy to say, that I am fast recovering." In another letter from Ekiaiga, on February 14, Captain Carstairs, said: "We have just captured this town of about 30,000 or 40,000, without a single casualty. We expect to add at least 4,000,000 people to the empire in this expedition."

The scene of the above illustration is laid in the Ubiom country to the north of Opebo, in Southern Nigeria. A truculent tribe had closed the mail route, and threatened to kill any white men and soldiers who appeared. Major Heneker was ordered to take two companies, one seven-pounder, one Maxim, and one rocket tube, and to proceed to the place, and there bring the tribe to its proper state of submission. This was achieved with twenty casualties only, after twelve towns had been attacked and destroyed.

While not as exciting in the way of sensational incidents as Sir Frederick Hodgson's journey to the coast from the Ashanti capital, this expedition, in which Canadians have figured so prominently, has been of great value to the Empire, and proves once more how capable the Sons of the Maple are to do any work that they may be called upon to do in behalf of the flag and the extension of the Empire.

IT IS NOT HEREDITARY.

DRUNKENNESS NOT TRANSMITTED FROM PARENT TO CHILD.

Evil of Environment a Strong Factor in the Spread of Drunkenness—Important Report on the Subject of Inebriety.

It is now eighteen months since the Society for the Study of Inebriety appointed a special committee to consider the relation of heredity to inebriety, says a London letter. The committee was composed of five physicians, two surgeons, a professor of bacteriology, an army surgeon, and five general medical practicioners. Eighteen months have been spent in investigation. The report of this committee has just been published and it is signed by nine of the fourteen members, some of whom have made comments, while one has sent in an independent report. The reference to the committee was in these terms: to investigate the conditions under which the tendency of drunkenness is capable of transmission to offspring. It does not appear to be contended that inebriety is in itself hereditary, but that a capacity or tendency to it is heritable.

The report declares that the inebriety of an individual depends upon three conditions—the first being an inborn capacity for enjoying the sensations which alcohol produces, and the second and third being acquired—personal experiences of the pleasures of alcohol and the increased delight which continued indulgence confers in the case of the inebriate. That one drunken generation often succeeds another suggests a hereditary taint. The committee adds that there is no evidence that acquired characters of any kind are heritable. This appears to have been a much debated question.

Popular opinion has taken for granted that the acquired characteristics of parents are likely to be inherited, and, of course, "temperate reformers," well-meaning, but often ignorant and misguided, have not been slow to urge upon the public that each man's drinking is pretty sure to produce for him a generation of children who will become drunkards. If this be not true the temperance reformer, who is generally in favor of entire abstinence rather than of temperance, must bear a heavy responsibility for the vast amount of mental torture which he has inflicted on the moderate drinking citizen.

INFLUENCE OF HEREDITY.

The last word of science, however, as declared by teachers of physiology, biology and botany, is a very definite assertion that no instance of the hereditary transmission of an acquired characteristic has ever been demonstrated either in the animal or the vegetable kingdom. If this be a fact a man can only transmit to his son the hereditary taint with which he was born, and if a man having no inborn tendency to excess yet acquires drunken habits his progeny are in no more danger than those of his neighbor, leaving out of consideration the effect of environment on youth. It is not denied that drunken parents who become thus mentally and physically weak are liable to have children who are degenerate—weak in body and feeble in mind; such persons, in fact, as under propitious circumstances tend to become paupers, criminals, epileptics and drunkards. The point which is denied is that the drunkard's child has the specialized tendency to become inebriate rather than vicious in some other direction.

It seems probable that the question of environment is of more importance after all than that of heredity, and a man of strong will is just as likely to exercise it in the gratification of his desire as in the contrary direction. If a man of powerful will finds that alcohol gives him pleasure he will take good care to repeat the experience. The habitual drinker is one to whom alcohol brings enjoyment, either as positive pleasure or cessation of pain, whereas the voluntary abstainer is one, who from constitutional peculiarity, finds little pleasure in alcoholic exhilaration. Alcohol weeds out from every race individuals who most enjoy and indulge in it. The races of Southern Europe, who have had the longest experience of alcoholic drinks are now more temperate than the British, the Scandinavians and the Russians.

The committee is of opinion that the continued abuse of alcohol tends to render a race less innately prone to inebriety than it would otherwise have been, this result being brought about by the elimination of the drunken unfit and the survival of those with a weak tendency to alcoholism.

NO PERCEPTIBLE CHANGE.

Josh—Don't you remember there was a doctor some time ago that found out how to take out your stomach without doin' any harm?

Silas—Well, I reckon his plan didn't work. As fur as I can see, there's just as many folks with stomachs as ever there was.

POLICE SPIES IN PRISON.

MOST MYSTERIOUS BODY OF OFFICIALS IN THE WORLD.

Scotland Yard's Staff of Detectives—Perform Difficult and Dangerous Duties—Elicit Information From Spies.

It might be thought that when the police have arrested a criminal and obtained for him a suitable term of imprisonment their interest in him lapses for at least so long as he is safely incarcerated. But such is not always the case. Sometimes the police arrest and get convicted a man who might be able to give them most valuable information concerning other crimes and criminals; and there is no time at which a felon is more frank than when in prison, and no person to whom he more readily confides his deeds in the past and plans for the future as a fellow-felon.

In France every advantage is taken of this, and detectives are sent to prison,—becoming for the time common gaol-birds—for the express purpose of meeting criminals and obtaining their confidence. It is also done, less frequently, in England, and from time to time the police secure in this way most valuable information which could not be obtained by any other means, says London Tit-Bits.

Scotland Yard has a staff of detectives who form one of the most mysterious bodies of officials in the world so mysterious that not one person in a thousand knows more about them than that they exist. They are employed in cases where absolute secrecy is required. They never make arrests, they never give evidence in any court—in short, they never do anything which would imply that they have the remotest connection with the police. Yet they execute most important duties. So close is the secret kept that none of the ordinary staff know by sight or name any of this mysterious body of detectives. They are totally unknown to each other; indeed, the probability is that the only person who is acquainted with them and could say how many there are is the head of the Criminal Investigation Department.

It is these man, who, among hundreds of other difficult and dangerous duties, have from time to time to become gaol-birds and worm themselves into the confidence of criminals whom the police believe could render very valuable information. For a famous thief-catcher to attempt to disguise himself in prison-dress and insinuate his way into the trust of thieves would, it is manifest, be the sheerest stupidity; prison-dress is about as bad a disguise as anyone could possibly assume, and clever rogues make it one of their first tasks to learn the personality of every Scotland Yard detective.

But the gaol-bird who at labour yearns to say something to someone else than the members of the prison staff, and blabs out that he wants a pal for a job he means to work when he gets out or some other equally interesting item of information, may, for all he knows or suspects, be whispering in the ear of a Government spy who is living like a felon simply on the chance of eliciting the information then being freely accorded him.

Detectives often have put before them clues and other matters the source of which they cannot conceive, and not a little of it is supplied to their chief by innocent men who wear prison-dress and eat prison-fare because it is a part of their duty.

It may have been noticed that some habitual criminals are arrested for crimes committed or contemplated shortly after being discharged from prison. The reason often is that in prison they have confided their doings or plans to fellow-convicts,—in the hope, perhaps, of getting pals for future enterprises, but generally from the boastfulness and love of talking—who have duly reported such conversations to Scotland Yard.

For example, a week or two since a man was arrested in a West-end garden for being on inclosed premises with intent to commit a felony within a week of his discharge from prison, where he had been for a burglary committed at Norwood. Now, the fact about this affair which would strike most people as being stranger than any of the others is, that for three nights prior to that on which the man was arrested a plain-clothes officer was waiting in the garden without any apparent object. The simple explanation is, that the police were instructed that an attempt would be made some time after a particular date, that on which the criminal was to be discharged, to break into and a rob a certain West-end house, and someone should be ordered to see that the attempt failed and the burglar arrested. Thus the man found himself captured ere he could commence operations. He, of course, knew he had been "given away" by some prison pal, to whom he had told his plans, but he could hardly have guessed that his "pal" was one of the mysterious men hailing from Scotland Yard, which was the case. The "pal" was, however, not "doing time," for the purpose of discovering contemplated burglaries, but to endeavour to extract some information not from the prisoner, whose confidence he did obtain, but from one who was in gaol for crimes committed by him in company with other men whose identity the police desired to know. Many a criminal escapes immediate arrest only to be betrayed by an indiscreet and less lucky companion in crime, many more than the man in the street would suppose.

But it is not only to elicit information from prisoners that spies are put in prisons. There are black sheep in every fold, and not every prison-warder is incorruptible. Sometimes there arises in official minds vague suspicions that in certain prisons warders are smuggling food, tobacco or letters into cells for prisoners possessing means of paying for such favors. How are such suspicions to be confirmed or dispelled? Convicts can hardly be relied upon to betray warders who have rendered them services which the law forbids. Hence the imprisonment of a spy has to be resorted to as the only means of getting at the truth.

In such cases it is not infrequently considered expedient that the spy should go through the regular stages which lead to the prison-cell—arrest, trial, and committal—to obviate any suspicion in the minds of the warders of the prison he is destined to enter; and when this is done no one connected with the charge—excepting the innocent accused—is aware of the true character of the proceedings. But this course is never adopted when it can be safely left out, as it approaches a travesty of justice which the legal and police authorities very properly abhor. More often it is found sufficient to dump a spy down in a prison as if he were transferred from another prison for reasons best known to the authorities.

In the event of a spy being placed in a prison to investigate abuses of their positions by members of the staff of warders, the governor and deputy-governor of the prison are generally acquainted with the real reason of the prisoner's presence, so that he may be able to speak with them whenever he desires to do so; but no more liberties are allowed him than the duly convicted criminals. He is just what they are—except that he may, perhaps, have stronger desires to chew a bit of tobacco, get an extra half-loaf of bread at dinner, or send a letter to a friend outside the gaol.

TOLD OF THE MARINES.

A marine captain, desiring to reprimand some chronic growlers in his corps, arranged for complaints to be made after morning parade. During parade, having previously noted the grumblers, he ordered them to tighten their helmet chin-straps by four links. Of course they obeyed. When complaint time came the men could not open their mouths!

Faith, the cap'n's an aisy man intirely, said one, whose sense of fun was proof against tightened straps, givin' us ivrything we ast for the mornin'!

An orderly officer, on a day when chin-straps were loose, asked the stereotyped question;

Any complaints?

Yes, sir, the spuds ain't done, answered the marine.

What! said the subaltern.

The spuds, sir, repeated the man.

What does he mean, sergeant? asked the puzzled young officer.

Oh, he be ignorant, sir, returned the sergeant. He means taters.

DISHEARTENING.

Even the clergyman, noble and inspiring as his vocation is, has now and then his bad moments.

O sir, said a poor woman to a Scotch minister, who was by no means a popular preacher, well do I like the day when you give us the sermon.

Indeed, said the minister, flushing with pleasure, I wish there were more like you, my good woman; it is seldom I hear such words from any one.

Maybe their hearing's stronger than mine, sir, said the woman, promptly, but when you preach I can always get a good seat.

EPITAPH AND PUN.

One evening at a small party which included the two friends, Douglas Jerrold and Charles Knight, the author-publisher, the talk turned on epitaphs.

As they were walking home together, Knight, half lightly and half in earnest, asked the wit to write his epitaph for him. Jerrold made no answer, but when they came to the parting of their ways, he suddenly said:

I've got your epitaph.

Well, what is it?

Good Knight!

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