

PLEASANT HOURS

PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK.

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THE DOUM PALM.

"THE doum palm differs much from the ordinary palm. Its stem grows up a little distance, and then branches in two, and these two limbs each branch in two; always in two. The leaves are shorter than those of the date-palm, and the tree is altogether more scraggy, but at a little distance it assumes the dome form. The fruit, now green, hangs in large bunches a couple of feet long; each fruit is the size of a large Flemish Beauty pear. It has a thick rind, and a stone like vegetable ivory, so hard that it is used for drill-sockets. The fibrous rind is gnawed off by the natives when it is ripe, and is said to taste like gingerbread. These people live on gums and watery vegetables and fibrous stuff that wouldn't give a northern person strength enough to gather them."

The picture represents a characteristic view in Upper Egypt.

LET NOTHING BE LOST.

GRASS, timber, sawdust and other products that were once rejected as useless are now saved and put to practical use. The Hollanders have even discovered how to convert the peat from bogs into soft wools which can be spun into cloth, rugs and blankets at half the cost these goods can be made from wool grown on the sheep's back. Such a discovery ought to open before Ireland and some other countries the prospect of a great industry which will increase their prosperity and commercial importance. A generation ago there was hardly a mill of any kind that was not troubled with a heap of rubbish or waste material that it did not know what to do with. Silk manufacturers saw the rise of this heap with annoyance, and they took it as a favour if anyone would cart it away and use it as a fertilizer. An English inventor guessed at the possibilities in this pile of refuse and set about inventing machinery to utilize it. And to-day as a result of his foresight and genius 5,000 persons are employed in making the finest seal plushes, ribbons and velvets from the refuse piles of silk mills, and the inventor has grown rich. The cotton-seed oil industry is a better illustration of economizing waste, but the dimensions to which the industry has grown are not so generally known.

The annual product in oil, cake, lint and hulls from cotton seed, which a generation ago was allowed to rot, is \$27,000,000, and it could be made greater if there was a market for the product. The great decrease in the price of paper comes

from the discovery that nearly everything that grows can be turned into this useful article. Cotton stalks, tobacco stalks, the stalks of the sugar cane, corn husks and sawdust, that used to cumber the ground, are now made into water pails, car wheels and even buildings for temporary purposes.

and firebrick, and when pulverized becomes a base for paints. The refuse from woollen mills, which has contaminated so many streams, has been found to be valuable for the oil it contains, and its extraction will not only profit the inventor but do away with a nuisance. The progress made in

in the crudest way, and that in a mastery over these forces lies the advancement of the human race.—*Truth.*

LEARN A TRADE, BOYS.

I REMEMBER, years ago, when I was a very young man, writes John Coates, meeting John Roach, the great shipbuilder, in his shipyard at Chester, Pa. I remember, too, what he said then about the value of a trade to the average boy.

"Young man," he said, laying his great broad hand on my shoulder, and looking at me earnestly with his keen, steel-blue Irish eyes, "next to a clear conscience, a trade is as good a thing as any young man can have in this country. You can carry it with you all your life long; you have to pay neither rent nor taxes upon it, and it will help you around a sharp corner when most other things will fail."

I have never forgotten that utterance from a man who started in life—after landing in New York from Ireland—as helper to a machinist, who became the leading shipbuilder of his time, and who, up to the hour that he was stricken with a fatal illness, could take the place of any of his workmen, whether it was a man driving rivets, or an expert putting together the most delicate parts of a steamship's machinery.

Something very like what John Roach said I heard another great man, who is now dead, say. This was Peter Cooper, a man of whom American boys cannot know too much, and whom they certainly cannot too much admire.

"If I had my way," said the venerable philanthropist, on the occasion to which I refer, "I would give every boy a trade. Then I would have him stick to it, love it, and be good to it. If he does, it will be good to him."

How forcible is the fact, that almost everywhere the leading mechanical positions are filled by men of foreign birth.

Why is this? Is it because our boys are less able? Is it because there are no facilities for learning trades in this country? To the last question the argument may be advanced that the trades unions lay too many and too heavy restrictions regarding the number of apprentices who will be employed or allowed. Argument admitted, and the point taken granted. But the bottom cause is Young America's "don't want to." He would rather stand behind a counter in some store, or canvass for some agency, or work in some factory at piece-work, where he can earn more money, at first, per week than if put to learning a trade.



THE DOUM PALM.

The once despised sawdust can be used in still other ways. From it can be extracted alcohol, acids and dyes. The extraction of dyes from coal-tar and the refuse of refined petroleum have for a dozen years been one of the wonders of the chemist's art, but they are not the only things that are obtained from coal, and science is constantly widening the list. The slag of furnaces is now turned into asbestos, cement, pottery

utilizing waste material is probably only a beginning of what will be done in this way. There should, in fact, be no waste, and invention may yet realize that wish. It should be an instructive lesson to those pessimists who imagine that the facilities at the command of man have been put to their best use and that no further development is possible. It is more probable that the resources of nature are as yet only understood

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