

POOR DOCUMENT

Great Grape Industry.

The management of the vineyard is an interesting study and one which to be successful requires technical knowledge. In the large vineyards, as a rule, the owner himself gives personal supervision to every detail. Sometimes a manager or overseer performs these duties. One of the largest growers in this section tells me that the most successful grower is the foreigner, who, with his family of eight or ten, comes and leases or buys 25 or 50 acres of land, each member of the family having his or her part in the work to perform from spring until picking time, while the winter is devoted to the making of the baskets. There is no outside expenditure incurred, and when the grapes are sold the proceeds return to the family as the profit on the individual labor of each member, quite in contrast with the large owner, who is compelled to hire help to do each little thing in addition to buying his baskets. The Concord grape is the only variety of any consequence raised in this region, and some idea of the magnitude of the business carried on may be had when it is known that the shipments for one year from Chautauque county alone will amount to 3,500 carloads, 3,000 baskets of 10 pounds each in each car. These are taken from the grower by someone of the numerous growers' associations, whose business it is to find a market. Strange as it may seem, it is nevertheless true that three-fourths of them go to points west of Chicago, while the other one-fourth travels eastward.

The making of baskets is an important item. Many factories are employed. The price ranges from 2 to 2 1/2 cents per basket. Thus the grower who would find his business in any way profitable must, in addition to the cost of the basket, realize at least 1 cent per pound for his grapes, while today it is a common thing to find a ten pound basket on the retail market to sell at 10 cents. Thus we find that the utmost care must be taken in the management of the vineyard to make it profitable.—Chautauque.

A Puzzling Paris House.

One of the greatest curiosities of Paris is the house with the double staircase. It does not figure in the guidebook and is not among the places of interest that are photographed, but, for all that, it is of greater interest than many of the things that come within this class.

This house has entrances at 35 Rue Radzivil and at 18 Rue de Valenciennes. It is in the quarter of the Palais Royal—that palace now given up largely to restaurants and cheap jewelry shops, and once the residence of the most licentious French princes, the regent d'Orleans. The quarter is one of the most central in Paris, and all Americans who have been in Paris know it, but the house, which is a few steps from the Palais Royal, the Rue de Rivoli and the Louvre, escapes general attention because it faces on dark and narrow streets.

Each staircase begins on opposite sides of the central space of the house and is continued separate right up to the roof. They are in a graceful spiral form. The house is nine stories high, a very considerable height for one so old. As you look up to the wall you can hardly realize that there is more than one stairway.

The result of this arrangement is that to ascend take you to the first floor straight on the right, the second floor to the left, and so on. The other stairway takes you the first floor on the left, the second floor on the right, and so on. You must be very careful to choose the right stairway when you are going to an apartment, otherwise you may mount as far as the sixth floor and find yourself on the wrong side of the house. It is just as well then to go to the top and come down by the other stairway.

It is difficult to describe the puzzling effect of this contrivance on those who see it for the first time. No more ingenious contrivance for exciting profanity and causing confusion was ever designed by architect. The beauty lies in its simplicity, which gives it an advantage over secret doors and such laborious devices.

It is a favorite trick with those who know the house to take moderately intoxicated friends to see it. The man who knows tells his friend to go up stairs. Then he goes himself by the opposite stairway. When he has gone up about two stories, he lays over the banister and tells his friend to join him. The inebriate endeavors to do so, running up and down stairs, but never able to catch the other.—New York Journal.

The Sultan and Electricity.

The Sultan seems to have a curious mingled liking for and a dread of electricity. Some years ago he caused to be erected in the grounds of Yildiz Kiosk, a small theatre lighted by incandescent lamps. One day he saw the workmen trenching the walls in order to bury the wires leading from the engine-room to the theatre and stopped the work, insisting that the wires should all be placed in sight on poles, as he feared that otherwise they might be used to predict an explosion. He has also an electric boat on a small lake, an English dog-cart driven by electricity, and a tiny electrical train-car, upholstered in satin and gold, which runs in a circle. It is said that he has never yet ventured inside any of these vehicles; and also that he has forbidden the use of telephones in Constantinople, lest murderous conspiracies should be devised over the wires.

How Gunpowder is Made.

Gunpowder has steadily developed as mechanical skill constructed better and better weapons in which to use it, until today it has reached a perfection of manufacture for various purposes which allow its effects to be foretold in any weapon, even to the time it takes a grain to burn and the distance it will drive a shot.

Roger Bacon's gunpowder was made of saltpeter, sulphur and charcoal. Saltpeter is chemically called niter and is a natural product found bedded in the earth in different parts of the world, chiefly in India and Ceylon. Sulphur, too, is found in a natural state in many volcanic countries, like Sicily, while, as is well known, charcoal is made from wood or woody substances by heating them almost to a burning heat in an airtight vessel, then driving off everything in them but carbon.

Saltpeter, sulphur and charcoal are still the only ingredients of the gunpowder in common use, although a new gunpowder made of different materials is undergoing successful experiment. A mixture of saltpeter and charcoal alone would form an explosive, and sulphur is added chiefly to make it plastic or capable of being pressed into cakes and shapes. All three ingredients have to be purified by the most careful chemical skill before they are combined. Then the exact proportion of each has to be measured out according to the kind of powder to be made.

For the gunpowder generally used you would find in every 100 pounds, if you could separate the ingredients, 75 pounds of saltpeter, 15 pounds of charcoal and 10 pounds of sulphur, but it would be almost impossible to separate the ingredients, for they are not merely mixed together as you might mix pepper and salt, but they are ground and rolled and stirred and pressed together by special machines until they are almost sufficiently united to form a single new substance.

This mixing process is called trituration, and the powder is thus made into the form of flat cakes, called press cakes, and then broken up and screened into grains of special sizes, or ground to the fine powder used for shot-guns and revolvers.

The large grained powders are still further stirred together until the grains become highly glazed, and these are called cannon powders. A lighted match may be held to a grain of cannon powder and it will be found almost impossible to set it on fire, but once ignited it flashes off very suddenly and violently.—Lieutenant John M. Elliott in St. Nicholas.

Home and Foreign News.

Robert Burns' "Jolly Beggars," first edition, a pamphlet of sixteen duodecimo pages, uncut, was sold recently for \$100 to a Glasgow collector.

A sensible plan proposed for marking Queen Victoria's longest reign on record is for every little community to establish a garden, park or playground in her honor.

Peppermint lozenges, which all good Scotch Presbyterians have hitherto sucked in kirk, are being supplanted throughout Scotland by chocolate drops filled with whiskey.

Ulysses' tale of the Cyclops lying close to the Sicilian coast near Aciacastello, has been presented to the University of Catania by the Marchese Gravina, its owner. The island is a basalt rock rising 300 feet above the sea, and will be used as a biological station, the University establishing extensive laboratories on it.

According to recent French statistics, France lost 136,000 men by death through wounds, sickness, or accidents in her war with Germany, while 139,421 men were disabled on the field of battle. Germany's losses were 79,153 dead and 18,543 wounded. The monetary loss is more evenly divided, that for France being 12,666,487,522 francs, while for Germany it was 8,000,000,000 francs.

The Parson's Blessing.

In one of the rural districts a Georgia minister was invited to dine with a citizen who, though wealthy, furnished his table poorly. When they were seated the host said: "Times are mighty tight, parson, and we ain't got nothing much ter set before you, but, such as it is, you are welcome. Will you ask a blessin' on what you see?" The parson, observing the scant repast lifted up his voice and said: "Lord, make us thankful for what we see, and may we be able to find it when we reach for it. Let it not escape us and prove a snare and a delusion. Amen. Thank you for the greens."

West African Colonies.

The measure of a "poor devil" (outpost of some 250 "Krommen and Krommen") commanded by British consuls, agents and traders, has brought the development of West African colonization before the public under most lamentable and unfortunate circumstances. Although the event is nearly three weeks old information is meagre and uncertain, and doubtless the reality will not reach the public until interest in the event has died out. Officers and officials of the Royal Niger Company, are required to sign an agreement not to divulge, on penalty of £1,000 any facts which may have been learned "to the newspapers of Great Britain or to any outside person." This agreement is binding "during the currency of the agreement and for a period of ten years after its expiration." The policy of secrecy seems to have taken hold not only of the great territory operated exclusively by the Royal Niger Company, but of the coast country covered by the British protectors. The official report that has reached telegraphic channels states that the expedition was inaugurated to persuade and reason with an uneducated and ignorant people, the King of Benin, and to induce him to open his country to the trading corporations. It would seem from the result that his antipathy to foreign labor was quite as marked as his fear of an influx of foreign goods. The expedition started from Bonny, in the Niger Coast protectorate, about the first of January. The Pall Mall Gazette on January 13, before the published news of this disaster had reached the coast, discussed expeditions of a similar nature in a broad but somewhat critical spirit. The news then to hand was to the effect that a river expedition on a large scale had been organized by the Royal Niger Company. It was shrouded in the usual mystery, but the definite statement was made that it would consist of some 700 Hausans led by 23 British officers, the commander being a man under 30 years of age. There were also two gunboats, with a number of nine-pounders, seven-pounders and Maxim guns. The Royal Niger Company has been granted a territory of 500,000 square miles, as vast and, with the exception of the precious metals, far richer than Rhodesia. Its members have sovereign and exclusive trading rights over a population roughly estimated at 20,000,000. In appealing for more light on their operations, The Pall Mall Gazette argues that "in the event of the company's forces being defeated, by no means an impossible hypothesis, British troops will have to be called in and his British taxpayer will be requested to put his hand into his pocket." Not only the actual operations but the general lines of policy pursued by the company are concealed from the public.

The free navigation of the Niger River, guaranteed when the territory was ceded to the company is practically denied, though nominally granted, and the agreement regarding freedom of trade is virtually disregarded. The company has protectionist leanings almost as strong as those of the royal assassin of Benin. It has operated under its charter for ten years, and, although there are evidences of financial success, the public know absolutely nothing of its operations. "What is going on out there?" asks The Pall Mall Gazette. "We are perpetually hearing of petty wars and disturbances of villages, being shelled and destroyed; ugly rumors reach us from time to time of oppression, of facts concealed, of huge importations of spirits, of wide-spread disaffection among native races." These may be merely rumors and no doubt the secrecy maintained has magnified many trivial events and set lively imaginations agog in manufacturing news. The Royal Niger Company was chartered ten years ago, when every European man of letters, being shell-shocked by Cronwell's bit what the hell he had in mind when he wrote his will.

The Care of Farm Manures.

In caring for farm manures, the main object to prevent the loss of compounds containing nitrogen, potash and phosphoric acid. From what has been said in connection with the sources of loss of fertilizing materials in farm manures, it can be seen that the sources of loss can be avoided by absorbing the liquid manure, by regulating the process of fermentation, and by protecting the manure from leaching. The use of litter of the dry matter of the food consumed, to some extent from immediate decomposition, and also holds more or less of the ammonia produced by fermentation thus preventing its escape into the air. Of the materials in common use peat has the largest power of absorbing and holding liquids; peat moss comes next; spent tan and sawdust follow, then comes straw and similar materials. It has been given as a safe rule to follow that the litter should, at least, be equal to one-third of the dry matter of the food consumed. The following daily amounts for different animals have been suggested: Sheep, three-fifths of a pound of litter; cattle 9 pounds; horses 61 pounds. In addition to using litter, it is wise to use some other material for absorbing and preserving the manure. Among such materials are gypsum (and plaster) kainit, acid phosphate, etc.

Gypsum (and plaster) has the power of holding ammonia and preventing its loss. It must, however, be moist in order to be effective. The best way to use gypsum is to sprinkle it on the moist dung or urine. Stables in which the excrements are probably treated by this means, are noticeably free from offensive odors, as a rule.

Kainit sprinkled upon manure tends to check fermentation and also to attract and hold moisture. One presentation should be observed in the use of kainit it should be kept from under the feet of animals, since injury may result to the feet of animals treading on it. It is therefore, best applied to fresh manure and covered with litter.

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When a mixture of superphosphate and gypsum is used, take one-half or one-third of the amounts indicated above. One great advantage in using acid phosphate or kainit is that one is adding to the manure an important form of plant food, in which the manure is naturally deficient. The price at which one can get these materials must determine whether their use is economical or not.

Mixture of different manures, such as cow and horse manures, is advantageous, since one undergoes fermentation slowly and the other rapidly. When mixed, the conditions of moisture are more easily controlled.

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A Joke on Uncle Sam.

The lot of the counterfeiter is not a happy one. Hounded as he is by the "minions of the law," there is really no safe place for him to carry on his business unmolested. He has even been tracked into his lair in the solitude of the government penitentiary at Leavenworth. The lynx-eyed officers of that institution have just discovered that a gang of daring counterfeiter have been operating for some time within the walls of the prison. It is said that exceptionally clever \$5 certificates were turned out with tools kindly furnished the convicts by the government. Just how long this work has been going on is not known by the officers, but it is believed that Leavenworth is flooded with these spurious bills. That the joke is decidedly on Uncle Sam there is no doubt. Still, since there is so much talent in the various prisons of the country, why not employ it in turning out legitimate money? Possibly the convict labor question might be settled by converting all government prisons into mints or bureaus of printing and engraving. This would entirely do away with the dangerous gangs of counterfeiters that now infest our prisons and at the same time turn their service into account for the government.—Kansas City World.

His Grandmother's Gift.

A good story comes from Berlin. At a ball given there not very long ago a pompous colonel ran up against a young officer evidently fresh from the military schools, whose only decoration was a large medalion set in brilliants.

"Her Majesty Queen Victoria of England," said the lieutenant, whose face was dancing with merriment by this time. It was Prince Albert of Schleswig-Holstein. The colonel got very red in the face and with drew, with a profound bow of apology, to take a back seat for the rest of the evening. Prince Albert has been making merry over the incident ever since, and even grandmother herself had a good laugh when she was told of it.—New York Commercial Advertiser.

A Good Month's Salary.

An exchange says:—A smart young man in Kansas employed his father to work for him during December, promised to pay him one cent the first day, two cents the second and so on doubling the amount each succeeding day, and that at the end of the thirty days the boy was surprised to find he owed his father \$10,737,307.

According to actual figuring the smart boy owed his father \$5,339,989,112, at the end of the thirtieth day and likely owes it yet.

Mrs. Sniffles' Patent Cure.

Sniffles brought his two weeks' spree to a close on Thursday night. He lay on a lounge in the parlor, feeling as mean as sour lager, when something in the corner of the room attracted his attention. Raising himself on his elbow he gazed steadily at it. Rubbing his eyes he stared again, and as he stared his terror grew.

Calling to his wife, he asked hoarsely: "Mary, what is that?" "What is what, John?" "Why that—that thing in the corner." "The frightened man, pointing at it with a hand that shook like an aspen. "John, dear, I see nothing," replied the woman.

"What! You don't see it?" he shrieked, "then I've got 'em. Oh, heavens! Mary, I swear never again to touch another drop of whiskey!" Here, catching another glimpse of the terrible object, he clutched his wife and begged in piteous tones: "Don't leave me—don't leave your John," and burying his face in the folds of her dress, he sobbed and moaned himself into a troubled sleep.

Then his wife stole gently to the corner, picked up the toy snake, and put it away reverently for another time.—Spurs Moments.

Some German Proverbs.

Even the smallest hair throws a shadow. Science is a treasure; labor the key to it. To sow is not so laborious as to harvest. We generally take men for more dangerous neighbors than they are. By observing what appears ridiculous to a man we may best judge his character. Difficulties increase the nearer we approach our goal.

Write insults upon sand, benefits on marble. Who bears my faults is my master, though he may be my servant. From the superior qualities of your neighbor there is no escape but love. He is a happy man who can bring the end of his life in connection with the beginning.

A man who lives for a high idea and brings sacrifices for it is a superior man. A perplexing will. Joshua Hendy, a resident of San Francisco, died in 1888, leaving a large estate and a will, and ever since the lawyers have been trying to divide the fortune as nearly according to the provisions of the latter as due regard for their own interests would allow. There are several heirs, and more that would like to be, and no opportunities for delay that ingenious minds could devise have been neglected. One problem has proved a particularly knotty one. It is furnished by a clause that bequeaths to Charles Manner, an old employee of Mr. Hendy's, a "one-fiftieth part of the testator's stock, in the Hendy machine works. Mr. Manner and his counsel really pity anybody who cannot see that "fiftieth" is a slip of the pen for "fifth," while the relatives are almost amused at the absurdity of supposing that anything else than "fiftieth" was meant. To complicate matters, letters in which Mr. Hendy wrote both words correctly have been found, and the chances are that before the matter is settled it will be a matter of a bit what the hell he had in mind when he wrote his will.

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No Hope for the Men.

Big sleeves are going out, they say. And yet we see them every day. Where've we go. It's plain that the millennium. Although, perhaps, its bound to come. Is coming slow.

And when it does, and sleeves grow small. What will the women do with all the cloth they've got? Will all the wooden mills shut down. While the stone men fall, and tailors frown? Man knoweth not.

One thinks is sure. Men's pocket-books. However lovely woman looks. Will not grow fat. If cloth is plenty, what they save Each one to spend at once will have On a new hat. Somerville Journal.

WIT AND WISDOM.

Magistrate—"What is your nationality?" "Witness—"Well, sir, my father was Irish, my mother was American, and I was born in a Dutch brig sailing under French colors in Spanish waters.—Magistrate—"That'll do, my man; you can stand down."

"She had long wanted him to give up smoking. He had readily and steadily promised that he would—some time. "John," she said, "I've been thinking of you for some time. If you don't stop smoking before death you certainly won't after."

Any way that he looked at that remark it displeased him.—Chicago Post. Teacher—"Now Thomas, the square of the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle is equal to the sum of the squares of the other two sides. Do I make myself plain that way?"

Thomas—"I guess so—ma says too much education is what makes you so homely.—Judge. Banjo—"From the West, eh?" "Yes sir, from Chicago." "An, indeed! I spent seven months in Chicago. Been there long?" "Yes, sir, I am a member of the City Council."

"You don't say so? What street is your saloon on?"—New York Weekly. "Yes," said the army officer, "I can recall two occasions when I was most terribly frightened. "Oh," exclaimed the romantic young lady, "do tell me about them. I suppose it happened when you were fighting the Indians."

"No," he replied, "one time was when I was married and the other time was when we had our baby christened."—Cleveland Leader. "Now that you have bought and paid for the horse, said the man with a satisfied chuckle, "I want to tell you in confidence that it has only got two faults."

"Well, what are they?" "When he is in the field he is very difficult to catch." "Oh, I don't mind that; I'll soon catch him. What is the other fault?" "Why, when you have caught him he is not worth anything."—Tit-Bits.

Miss Karson—"I suppose that you dominies take a great many notes for your sermons, do you not?" "Domine—Well, when the notes can't pay the cash we sometimes have to take them or else go broke. "Brown—"What! you and your wife never quarrel?" "Jones—Never. "Brown—How do you account for that?" "Jones—"We don't live together."

"Physician—"You see, your son is feverish, madam. Notice the coating on his tongue." "Mrs. Anxious—"I don't see any coating on his tongue, but I see an ulcer in his throat, and his pants are dreadfully short."

"I understand you were punished in school to-day, Thomas," said Mr. Bacon to his 12-year-old boy. "Yes, sir," promptly replied the juvenile. "For what?" "For telling the truth, sir."

"Your teacher said it was for some reflections you made upon her age." "That's the way she took it, father. You see she drew a picture of a basket of eggs on the blackboard, and while she was out of the room I just wrote under them: 'The hen what made these eggs isn't any chicken.'—Yonkers Statesman.

His New Star.

"What we need," said the manager, "is a new star." "Old attractions getting worn out?" asked the agent. "Yes, they don't draw as they used to," answered the manager. "As a matter of fact the public is getting very particular and somewhat blasé. It takes absolute novelty to raise it to a point where there is really any money in catering to its wants in the amusement line. We must find a new variety star."

"Woman, I suppose," suggested the agent. "Of course." "French preferred." "Naturally. We must have a 'café chantant' on the bills or it wouldn't draw any kind of a house. "Well, I think I know where we can get just what we want," said the agent. "I've seen her, and she's right clever." "That's good, but not absolutely essential," commented the manager. "She has an excellent voice, too." "Well, that won't do any harm." "Sings with fine expression." "That's better. A great deal depends upon the inflections of the voice and the gestures." "And dances well." "Better yet." "She has a pretty face." "That'll help a good deal." "And a splendid figure." "Now you're getting to the really important features. Under a real good French name, properly advertised, she ought to make a hit." "That she dresses beauti—"