

## CAT-TAILS.

"Twas a group of merry children,  
And, the marshes going by,  
One boy shouted— "See the cat-tails!  
See the cat-tails, nice and high!"

"Then a wee tot, from the city,  
Said, with brimming eyes of blue:  
"What a shame it was to drown them!  
Did they drown the kittens too?"

GEORGE E. COOPER.

## IN THE AZORES.

The community is eminently Portuguese—that is to say, it is slow, poor, shiftless, sleepy, and lazy. There is a civil governor, appointed by the King of Portugal; and also a military governor, who can assume supreme control and suspend the civil government at his pleasure. The islands contain a population of about 200,000, almost entirely Portuguese. Everything is staid and settled, for the country was one hundred years old when Columbus discovered America. The principal crop is corn, and they raise it and grind it just as their great-great-grandfathers did. They plough with a board slightly shod with iron; their trifling little harrows are drawn by men and women; small windmills grind the corn, ten bushels a day, and there is one assistant superintendent to feed the mill, and a general superintendent to stand by and keep him from going to sleep. When the wind changes they hitch on some donkeys, and actually turn the whole upper half of the mill around until the sails are in proper position, instead of fixing the concern so that the sails could be moved instead of the mill. Oxen tread the wheat from the ear, after the fashion prevalent in the time of Methuselah. There is not a wheelbarrow in the land—they carry everything on their heads, or on donkeys, or in a wicker-bodied cart, whose wheels are solid blocks of wood, and whose axles turn with the wheel. There is not a modern plough in the islands, or a threshing-machine. All attempts to introduce them have failed. The good Catholic Portuguese crossed himself and prayed God to shield him from all blasphemous desire to know more than his father did before him.

The climate is mild; they never have snow or ice, or chimneys in the town. The donkeys and the men, women and children of a family, all eat and sleep in the same room, and are unclean, are ravaged by vermin, and are truly happy. The people lie, and cheat the stranger, and are desperately ignorant, and have hardly any reverence for their dead. The latter trait shows how little better they are than the donkeys they eat and sleep with. The only well-dressed Portuguese in the camp are the half a dozen well-to-do families, the Jesuit priests, and the soldiers of the little garrison. The wages of a labourer are twenty to twenty-four cents a day, and those of a good mechanic about twice as much. They count it in reis at a thousand to the dollar, and this makes them rich and contented. Fine grapes used to grow in the islands, and an excellent wine was made and exported. But a disease killed all the vines fifteen years ago, and since that time no wine has been made. The islands being wholly of volcanic origin, the soil is necessarily very rich. Nearly every foot of ground is under cultivation, and two or three crops a year of each article are produced, but nothing is exported save a few oranges—chiefly to England. Nobody comes, and nobody goes away. News is a thing unknown in the Azores. A thirst for it is equally unknown.

## HE FILLED THE PITCHER AND THE "BILL."

Farmer Crane has some very unique methods of examining the men who apply to him from time to time for work.

One evening a tall, big-boned fellow, in his shirt sleeves, asked Crane if he had any work to do.

"I don't know," said the farmer. "Can you tend horses?"

"Yes, indeed. I've worked about horses all my life."

"Come around here to the pump," said Crane, and led the way to a common sucker rod pump near the barn. Going inside he got a long, narrow pitcher, and placed it under the spout. "There," said he, "pump that pitcher full of water." The big-boned fellow complied, carefully pumping the pitcher full without spilling a single drop.

"That'll do," said Crane. "Go inside and get ready for supper; I'll give you a job in the morning."

About a week later the big-boned fellow asked Crane what pumping the pitcher full of water had to do with his getting a job.

"Well, I'll just tell you. This is mighty dry weather, and water is getting scarce. You must have thought that far, for you didn't spill any water. If you hadn't pumped hard the water would have been spilled, and if you had pumped too hard the water would have gone over the pitcher. Now, the way I argue is this: If a fellow don't pump hard enough he won't work hard enough. If he pumps too hard he'll work too hard for a little while, and I don't want either kind to work for me. You pumped exactly right, and you got a job."

## WHAT NEXT?

The latest atrocity is the "sleep-fasting contest," in which a number of idiotic people try which can stay awake longest. A recent show of this sort at San Francisco ended in W. C. Woodford, the only competitor who remained awake, being forced to retire by the management, the physician having declared him in danger of losing his reason. Woodford had been without sleep for 158 hours and 48 minutes when finally compelled to close his eyes. For this performance he is rewarded by \$100 and the "championship" in this branch of sport, the previous record being 144 hours and 20 minutes, at Detroit. The men who took the second and third prizes (\$50 and \$25) had given in after 95 hours. It is said that Woodford will now, thanks to the interference of the management, continue sane, at least as sane as he could have been before.

## IN THE SCALES.

Professor Mosso, an Italian physiologist, may be said to have weighed thought. He has shown by experiment that thinking causes a rush of blood to the brain, which varies with the nature of the thought. Mosso proved it by balancing a man in a horizontal position so delicately that when he began to think the accession of blood to his head turned the scale. When the subject was asleep, the thoughts or visions which came to him in dreams were sufficient to sink his head below his feet, and the same thing took place when he was disturbed by a slight sound or a touch. The balance even indicated when a person was reading Italian and when Greek, the greater mental exertion required for Greek producing a greater flow of blood to the head.