

## THE SPHINX.

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Address all communications for this department to E. R. Chadbourne, Lewiston, Me., U. S.

## NO. 39. THE LATEST RACE.

Two darkies (1) near a certain place (2),  
The other day had quite a race;  
And our reporter, who was there,  
Has thus described the place and pair;  
The race-track (3) was smooth and nice  
And driven snow or frozen ice;  
A place that filled a long-felt need  
For testing time and rate of speed.  
Around its edge a two-railed fence,  
With three-score posts (4), served as defence,  
While near the centre of the ground  
A cool spring (5) gently wound around.  
The stand the "judges" occupied  
Was stationed on the highest (6) side;  
A rail concern it surely seemed,  
It stayed by uprights and well cross-  
beamed,  
It furnished ample room inside,  
Where full a dozen (7) might abide.  
And from this stand a wire (8) was drawn,  
To mark the time a race came on,  
While on a bell prepared below  
Was signalled when or not to go.  
But we will not take time nor space  
To write in detail of the place,  
For most of you have seen the same,  
And language to describe is tame.  
The racers were as ill-matched pair  
As ever ran at county fair;  
And furthermore, "to cap the sheaf,"  
The one was blind, the other deaf,  
Yet when they entered in the ring  
They seemed like old hands at the thing.  
And pretty soon commenced the fun,  
Those two darkies start to run.  
At last a warning (9) to prepare  
Was sounded on the gentle air,  
When, like a deer before the hound,  
The first was off with sudden bound  
Before the other could reach  
The starting point (10) most fair for each;  
And, though the bell (11) struck loud and  
clear,  
The darky was too deaf to hear,  
And as the other one was blind,  
He could not tell which was behind.  
And so they ran, nor slackened pace,  
Each one intent to win the race.  
Twas thought at first that number one (12)  
Was gaining ground, so fast he ran;  
But number two, though further back,  
Had somehow got the inside track, (13)  
And of the numbers (14) that were there  
Not one would bet on the affair.  
Before two or we came away.  
Who beat? Well, those who watched it say  
The tall one swiftly kept ahead  
For half the distance as they sped,  
But toward the last he got behind  
The one described at first as blind,  
And as the bell (15) called in the race,  
They both together reached the place (16).  
B.

NO. 41. A WORD OF FIVE SYLLA-  
BLES.

[Entered for Prize.]

(My first and my second)  
Is the name of my darling;  
Or, if you like better,  
It found in a Starling.  
My third's a condition  
That when it is chronic  
Lends every medicine,  
Be it laxative or tonic.  
Now my fourth doth apply  
To my country cousin,  
Or to all creation  
When everything's "buz-z-z-z."  
What's my last, by its sound,  
Belongs to all sinners;  
Or, by a change of thought,  
Still, hearts and good dinners.  
Now my whole is a word  
Of just syllables five,  
And many an actor  
Could skin him alive.

S. J. R.

## NO. 42. AN ANAGRAM.

Our word, I wandered and dolefully I  
pondered  
About the small wonders of yore,  
The beasts and the birds, and the many  
long words

That tell us their names in strange lore;  
Those animals queer that for many a year  
The plains and the hills wandered o'er,  
In the days of old Noah, perhaps long be-  
fore,  
And now to be seen nevermore.

The ichthyosaurus, the plesiosaurus,  
The droll trilolite, the encrinurus,  
The gigantoceras, the megatherium,—  
Their number was legion in the mystical  
region

That scientists love to explore;  
At a very rough guess I should put it no  
less  
Than seventeen thousand score;  
Those vanished old races have left fossil  
traces,  
And footprints in rocks on the shore;  
We mourn not their loss, because we feel  
cross  
About the long names that they bore.

NELSONIAN.

## NO. 43.—A CHARADE.

Among invisibles I rank;  
I'm in the orbit of a crank.  
There in two places I reside,  
And nowhere else am found beside.  
My first is motionless indeed,  
Although in whole it moves with speed,  
And very plainly tells us this,  
That second without motion is.  
Yet 'tis apparent to the view  
That second moves in orbit true,  
Traveling either fast or slow,  
Just as a crank may chance to go;  
And just two wholes, no more no less,  
Can any moving crank possess.

NELSONIAN.

## NO. 44.—OLD ADDITION.

To quarter of a year, not more,  
Add just two quarters of an hour;  
And, if my ciphering be true,  
The product is exactly you.

AN.

## PRIZES FOR CONTRIBUTIONS.

1. A cash prize of five dollars will be pre-  
sented for the best original contribution to  
this department before the close of 1885.  
2. A prize of two dollars will be awarded  
for the best variety of contributions fur-  
nished during the same time, the winner of  
prize No. 1 to be excluded from trial for  
this premium.  
Favors should be forwarded early, ac-  
companied with answers.

## ANSWERS.

28.—S-p-h-i-n-x.  
29.—Wiston-wish.  
30.—N-in-ev-el.  
31.—1. Score, core, ore. 2. Start, tart,  
art. 3. Relate, clate, late. 4. Scowl, cowl,  
owl. 5. Strain, train, rain. 6. Trice, rice,  
ice. 7. She, he, e. 8. Bleas, less, esa. 9.  
This, his, is.  
32.—High-land-man.

## Handkerchiefs and Noses.

The gradual decline of the human nose is  
the result of the introduction and general  
use of handkerchiefs. The Romans never  
used handkerchiefs, and their noses, as we  
all know, were the largest and finest type.  
Moreover, they were less liable to colds in  
the head than are people of the present  
time, and their noses enjoyed almost a sine  
cure. As civilization spread northward  
from Italy the inhabitants of the cold and  
variable climate of Northern Europe found  
that there noses were constantly called into  
activity, and as a consequence the average  
European nose fell below the Roman stan-  
dard. Within modern times the handker-  
chief was invented, and a new and potent  
factor in the reduction of noses came into  
existence. Constant friction will wear away  
the hardest stone, much more the soft and  
cartilaginous nose. Under the friction of  
handkerchiefs the noses of the present cen-  
tury have steadily diminished, until small  
noses are worn almost as much as specta-  
cles.

Spend your time in nothing which you  
know must be repented of. Spend it in  
nothing which you could not review with a  
quiet conscience on your dying bed. Spend  
it in nothing which you might not safely and  
properly be found doing if death should sur-  
prise you in the act.

## "Venice, the Bride of the Sea."

How many are there, I wonder, who know  
how Venice drove this proud title? Well,  
it rose in this manner. Away back in the  
Middle Ages, when Frederick Barbarossa  
and his army invaded Italy, the Pope Alex-  
ander III. was obliged to leave Rome and  
fly to Venice for protection. The Doge, as  
the ruler of Venice was called, received him  
kindly and sailed out against the enemy,  
whom he completely defeated. This was  
considered a great victory, and the Pope  
feeling thankful wished to express his  
gratitude to the Doge in some way, so tak-  
ing from his finger a ring he gave it to him  
saying, "Take the ring, use it, O Doge, to  
retain the sea henceforth in subjection of  
this city Venice. Yes, capouse the Adriatic  
with this ring, and let the marriage be  
annually performed until the end of time."  
Thus the custom of the wedding of Venice  
to the sea originated about 1177, though  
some say it can be traced as far back as the  
year 995.

In the arsenal at Venice may be seen a  
model and some of the remains of the  
famous "Bucentaur," the grand old ship  
of state, in which the Doge and his followers,  
accompanied by the nobles and their ladies,  
went forth every year on Ascension Day  
to wed the sea.

This magnificent boat, one hundred feet  
long by twenty-five wide, was built of wood,  
the outside decorated with carved emblem-  
atic figures all covered with the brightest  
gold. She carried no sails, being rowed by  
one hundred and sixty-eight men with gild-  
ed oars, four being to each oar. There was  
a large mast, however, from which always  
floated the sacred banner of St. Mark. The  
main cabin extended the entire length of the  
ship, and was most richly furnished, the  
outside being covered with a piece of crimson  
velvet, the finest produced in Venice. In  
the stern was the Doge's private cabin  
around the outside of which ran a little  
balcony where he could stand and watch  
the glittering throng of boats that followed  
in the wake of the "Bucentaur."

As the boats would leave the shore, the  
church bells would ring out suddenly their  
most joyful strains, while sweetest music  
would be heard from the thousand of state  
gondolas that formed part of the procession,  
which now slowly proceeded to a small  
island named the Lido, a few miles from the  
city. Never did the sun shine on a more  
brilliant scene.

One who played an important part in this  
gay assemblage was the "Anti-Doge," as he  
was called. This man was chosen from the  
people, and was usually the best gondolier  
in Venice. He was rowed in an old hulk by  
a number of his friends wearing masks, and  
was followed by hundreds of gondolas be-  
longing to the poor. His office was to excite  
mirth and laughter, which he was sure  
to do by performing all manner of funny  
tricks.

When the Gulf of Venice was reached the  
"Bucentaur" would take a central position  
in a half circle of gondolas, and the Doge,  
stepping on the balcony around the prow,  
would throw a gold ring into the sea, say-  
ing, "I capouse thee, O Sea, in token of per-  
petual dominion." Next followed a prayer  
offered by the Patriarch of the city, after  
which the "Anti-Doge," amid great laughter,  
threw an iron hoop into the sea. At the  
close of the ceremony the procession would  
return home, and the day was given up to  
festivities of all kinds.

When the French occupied Venice in  
1797, they broke up the old "Bucentaur"  
for the sake of its gildings, from which they  
realized forty-four thousand dollars; she  
was then seventy-five years old.

Now shorn of all splendor, yet with some  
slight vestiges of her former beauty remain-  
ing, enough to give one a slight idea of what  
she must have been in her palmy days, the  
few remains of the old "Bucentaur" repose  
in the arsenal of the city whose glory, like  
her own, is a thing of the past.—*Demorest's  
Monthly for March.*

All laws are vicious and all tendencies are  
to be deprecated which increase the difficulty  
of discharging through every rank the refined  
and holy influences which are cherished by  
the domestic affections.

## How to Treat Frozen Apples.

It is the general opinion that an apple  
once frozen is of but little value, in fact,  
it will be soft and lifeless; but it is not so,  
if it does not thaw too rapidly, and it is not  
disturbed until the frost is entirely out.  
When it is discovered that a barrel of apples  
has frozen, the usual practice is to remove  
them to a warm place, and sometimes they  
are taken out of the barrel and plunged  
into cold water. This is all wrong. When an  
apple is frozen it should be left undisturbed  
until it is very certain that the frost is all  
out of it. If the apples are in an open  
barrel or box they should be covered over  
so as to keep them cool and in the dark;  
but in doing so, care should be taken not to  
touch the fruit, for whenever a frozen apple  
is touched it will make a soft place. In  
fact, the simple rolling of a barrel of apples  
over will ruin it. In freezing, apples shrink  
so much that a barrel will not be full by  
nearly a peck; in consequence of this, in  
rolling a barrel over it bruises every apple,  
and every bruise will show when the apple  
thaws, and will soon begin to decay.

When apples are frozen in tight barrels,  
if they are not started until entirely thawed  
out, it will not injure them in the least,  
unless they chance to be in the open air or  
where they will suddenly thaw out. When  
under cover in a tight room, or a cellar, it  
frequently requires several weeks for them  
to thaw out. The second time an apple  
freezes there is more danger of injury, but  
under favorable conditions an apple may  
be frozen and thawed three times without  
injury.

The danger of freezing apples to keep  
them is in having the frost leave them too  
suddenly. If one could have them kept fro-  
zen until Spring, there would be no loss by  
decay.

## The Chinese New Year Flower.

The "water angel plant," as the name is  
being interpreted, is thus called because of  
its manner of growth, its appearance, and  
its miraculous origin. In China it is found  
growing in running water, which keeps the  
bulb and the pebbles to which it attaches  
itself by its roots perfectly clean. When  
grown here a bowl is filled with clean peb-  
bles, the bulb is placed upon them, and the  
dish filled with pure water. This last must  
be changed every morning, as it is absolutely  
necessary to keep bulb and pebble free  
from slime and other impurities. The bulbs  
are thus planted about four weeks before  
the Chinese New Year and given fresh air  
and sunlight. Soon a multitude of white  
rootlets appear beneath the bulb, and find  
their way down among and around the  
pebbles, while a crown of lily-like green  
leaves shoots from the top. One can almost  
see them grow, they stretch up so fast, and  
then come the buds on a stem, and in a  
little, almost transparent sheath at first,  
which opens finally and displays a cluster of  
blossoms something like the narcissus in  
shape and size, but pure waxy white with a  
crown of gold, and very fragrant.

This event should occur at New Year's,  
and then John is happy. He stands near  
the plant and watches it with loving eyes;  
he shows it to his acquaintances and receives  
their congratulations, and often he cuts off  
the "ho-re-far," or blossom, and sends it  
as a choice gift to the friend he loves best.  
[Boston Globe.]

There is nothing nobler in man than cour-  
age; and the only way to be courageous is  
to be clean handed and hearted, to be able  
to respect ourselves and face our record.

If we truly believe that this life is but a  
preparatory state where we are being fitted  
to enter another and better, why should we  
shrink from the approach of old age? It  
but brings us nearer to the full enjoyment of  
that blessedness for which most are supposed  
to be striving.

We cannot too carefully guard youth and  
innocence from the pernicious influence of  
vicious companions. Yet, when we have  
secured this isolation, we have performed  
but a small part of our task. They need the  
positive contagion of intellectual and moral  
health, vigor, and strength quite as  
much as protection from the opposite in-  
fluences.