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FORTUNES FLUCTUATE.

Barra—Headquarters of the Fishing Fleet—The Matje.

Far out from the mainland, where the waters of the Minch and Atlantic mingle, lies the Island of Barra, where, says a writer in The Edinburgh Scotsman, the herring industry is vigorously prosecuted each year during the months of May and June. The beautiful bay, known as Castle Bay, on a rocky inlet of which the ancient, though long-ruined castle of the McNeills still stands, forms the headquarters of the fishing fleet during the season. Herring caught around Barra and cured on the island are known as "Castle Bay" herring. The Barra herring industry is of comparatively recent origin. Little more than half a century ago the quality of the Barra "matje," or maiden, herring first attracted attention, and annually since that discovery its pursuit has been prosecuted with amazing perseverance, and at very considerable cost.

The fortune of the industry during these years has undergone many fluctuations—sinking at times to the verge of extinction, and rising again to something like piping days of prosperity. Of late, after a spell of the worst, there has been a favorable turn, and the season which has just closed takes rank among the best.

The Barra matje's claim to the premier place against all comers among British herring has hitherto been ungrudgingly conceded, and rests both upon its size and flavor.

The theory among experts is that the sandy banks lying from twenty to fifty miles west and east of Barra, and forming the favorite feeding haunts of the herring shoals, provide the fish with food imparting this delicate flavor. Among such banks, especially those lying west-northwest of Castle Bay, the shoals seem to find more congenial quarters than elsewhere. There the herring attain more rapidly to maturity and greater weight.

When in prime condition the matje is oily, and readily absorbs the pickle in which it is cured, tingling it with a rich amber color, peculiar to the matje pickle, and due, it is said, to its fatty and full-fleshed condition. Some idea of the importance of the industry, and the heavy cost involved in its prosecution, may be obtained by the following figures, which are approximately correct: At the height of the season just closed the full strength of the fishing fleet numbered about 400 boats. This, averaging the boats at £600 apiece, with a drift of nets involving an additional cost of £160, brings the total aggregate value of the Castle Bay fleet fully equipped to a formidable figure, falling not far short of £250,000.

Then, if it be explained that a cran, containing, say, from 1,000 to 1,200 herrings, costing the season, from 1d. to 1 1/2d. per herring, is retailed in the best restaurants in Berlin, St. Petersburg, at 1s. or 1s. 6d., and the total catch of the season be some 15,000 crans, the full value of this rich harvest of our northern seas will be seen to work out to startling proportions. But a formidable rival, it is said, has been found on the northwest of Ireland, but whether the new rival will oust the Castle Bay matje from foreign favor remains to be seen.

The method of shooting and hauling the nets is not without interest. The crew of seven men work in pairs, with the seventh steering, and stretch for almost a mile behind the vessel. The "lie-to" is generally devoted to a few hours' sleep, and at an early hour the crew are again found at their respective posts. Then the first strain of the hauling-in rope begins. This hour brings the psychological moment, for it is fraught with the issues of the laborious venture. That it is an important hour in connection with the Castle Bay "matje" will be seen when it is stated that a single shot this season netted for £300. Still, the calling is beset by hazards, any or all of which may make their appearance in a single night. There may be sudden squalls, or provoking spells of calm, or fierce tides running inshore and apt to entangle the nets, or shoals of dogfish—that scourge of the fisherman's life—once in a while the great sunfish may wrap his bulky frame in the delicate nets and rend in a few moments what it may take the combined skill of the crew hours to set right; or the whole drift of nets, full of valuable fish, may be lost by setting too close inshore.

Painter and Baby.
Sir Frederick Leighton, the English painter, was as devoted to children as any mother of a family. One day he called at the house of a young painter, and announced, in his high, musical voice:

"I have come to see the last baby." The child was brought in, and Sir Frederick took it from the arms of the proud mother. He kissed it, and then said:

"I must see those feet!" The baby's socks were instantly taken off.

"Oh, what lovely pink toes!" cried the artist. "They are quite Greek! They are perfect."

This was in a tone of rapture, and later he said to the father impressively:

"Johnny, you must paint those dear little legs and feet. Work hard all day at drawing, modelling and painting, and at night dream of your art. You must concentrate yourself in your work. You must live in it. That's why those grand old boys, the old masters, were so great."



Love is unequally yoked with sickness.

Labor is lightened by love, but love cannot lighten pain or relieve it. Many a man looks on at his wife's suffering willing to do anything to aid her and able to do nothing.

Sometimes, however, the husband's attention is directed to Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription and its remarkable cures of womanly diseases. He may not have much hope of a cure, but he is led to try the medicine, with the result that in almost every case there is a perfect and permanent cure. Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription cures regularly. It dries the drains which weaken women, heals inflammation and ulceration, and cures female weakness.

As a tonic for women who are nervous, sleepless, worn-out and run-down "Favorite Prescription" is unequalled. In answer to your letter I will say, my wife commenced to complain twenty years ago, writes Lewis A. Miller, ex-Chief of Police, of 33 Prospect St., Westport, Pa. "We have tried the skill of twelve different doctors. She took gallons of medicine during the time she was ill, and I wrote to you and you told us what to do, she has taken eight bottles of Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription and six of the Golden Medical Discovery. She can do her own work now and can walk around again and is quite smart."

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Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets invigorate stomach, liver and bowels.

THE PAINTER-ENGRAVER.

His Work More Difficult Than That of the Translator.

Let it be admitted that the work of the "painter-engraver" is very different in artistic character from that of the faithful translator; let it be admitted also that it is higher in artistic rank. Those limitations once stated hardly need to be forced on our notice because each kind of art is so noble in itself. See Cole interpreting a Paul Veronese, would, you not say: A loving student of nature at work upon a study of sky and mountain? What are masses of colored light and shade but one object of the artist's study in either case? And what has he to do in either case but to express them as best he can in gray shade and white or pale gray light?

As is usual in such cases, the new school when it is examined minutely does not differ in inch by inch so radically from the best work of the old school as one might suppose. The triumphant march of a new art is never without reminiscences of the step that had been learned and of the music that had set the time for the now disregarded professionals of the past. The splendid glow and profundity of Krull's portrait of William Hunt, the painter; the gentle and subdued harmonies of Frank French's engraving from the picture of F. D. Millet, a Greek girl tying her sandals; the indescribable harmony, like that of a mezzotint by Turner's own hand, of Elbridge Kingsley's landscape, the large, oblong one with a river running slowly between low banks covered with trees and with a black boat on the extreme right (known as the Split Block) are all the result of such devotion to the wood block and to the right use of the tools which carve its surfaces.

You have a worthy subject to begin with; you try to render some part of its beauty or its significance upon a medium which is notoriously limited in certain directions; you submit to those limitations like a sensible workman, and you find that they yield insensibly here and there; your instincts as an artist in black and white guide your skilled and constantly more skillful hand, and without knowing it, until after awhile you produce one of the admirable compositions alluded to or something of correlative importance.—Scribner's Magazine.

Is Loubet an Irishman?

President Loubet's visit to London recalls the Irish people's claim to regard him as one of themselves. Loubet, they hold, is merely a Gallicized form of Loubett, a name which is quite common in the south of Ireland, and that the president's ancestors hailed from Ireland they entertain not the slightest doubt. France swarms with the descendants of Irish rebels from Elizabeth's time down to the days of Napoleon, and the Irish do not forget that President MacMahon was descended from a Hibernian Jacobite family. Thus Ireland claims to have provided two presidents of France within twenty-six years. To preserve a sort of balance in such matters the Scottish people advance claims to every president of the United States whose name smacks of a northern clan, and if the pedigree is not promising on the paternal side the maternal progenitors can generally be relied on to provide the necessary link.

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Strength of Insects.

At intervals articles appear in the papers recounting the prodigious strength of insects. Their muscular force is usually compared with their size by stating, for example, that a flea can leap so many times its own length and that an ant can drag so many times its own weight. Then it is stated that man, if he were strong in the same proportion, could jump so many rods or lift so many tons. These comparisons, we are told by M. Les Robida in La Nature (July 11), are misleading, to say the least. He writes:

"It is interesting to consider, taken from a mechanical point of view, these comparisons between the muscular strength of man and that of insects. Strictly from this standpoint, they are by no means extraordinary and are only one of the forms of what has been called 'the conflict of squares and cubes.' The law is well known—volumes decrease in more rapid ratio than surfaces."

The force that a muscle can exert depends on its section, that is to say, on its surface, although its capacity for doing work depends on its volume, as is logical. Here is the explanation of the astonishing strength of insects. Take an example: Compare two muscles, that of a man and that of an insect, the latter 100 times shorter than the former. It is evident that the insect's muscle will be 1,000,000 times lighter than the man's, while its section, and consequently the force that it can exert, will be only 10,000 times less.

The conclusion is that, since a man can lift 100 kilograms (220 pounds), the insect will lift 10,000 times less or 22 grams (3/4 grain), and we shall have the impressive spectacle of an insect lifting more than 100 times its own weight. In fact, the smaller the insect is the more it will astonish us by an appearance of extraordinary strength.

But it is no longer the same if we examine the mechanical work effected. The muscle of the insect supposed above to be 1-100 of a man's in linear dimensions, furnishes, when it contracts, a force 10,000 times less than the human muscle, exerted through a space 100 times smaller; the work produced will be thus 1,000,000 times smaller, which reestablishes the proportion between weight and strength.

Moreover, it seems (just as with machines, where the smaller are proportionally weaker) as if the insect's muscle, instead of surpassing man's infinitely, is notably inferior to it in quality. Take the flea's jump for instance. By its muscular contraction it gives to its mass a movement capable of raising it 30 centimeters (12 inches); man can raise his own weight to 1 1/2 meters (about 5 feet) by leaping. For equal weight, the human muscle thus furnishes five times more work than that of a flea in a single contraction, since the work is the product of the weight by the height to which it is raised. "Translation made for The Literary Digest."

Kicked the Insulter.

The Crown Prince and Princess of Greece were the other day the central figures in a singular incident at the theatre of Phaleron, where they were making a short stay. Their Royal Highnesses were occupying the only box in the house during the performance of a French opera, when suddenly a quietly dressed man entered and began a furious tirade against the Princess, whom he threatened to strangle. The Crown Prince sprang to his feet, and first flung the intruder violently against the partition, and then literally kicked him out of the theatre. When removed to the police station, the man proved to be mad drunk, and on sleeping himself he was ordered to be committed to an asylum where he had created. At the intervention of the Princess he was not prosecuted.

Colonel Schiel Dead.

Colonel Schiel, whose death was recently announced, was originally an officer of Prussian Hussars, but left the German army to emigrate to South Africa. He first found employment with the Natal Government, and in that capacity travelled over the better part of the British and Boer Colonies, where he married the daughter of a German missionary and entered the Transvaal State service. The Pretoria Government sent him on a mission to Dinuzulu, the Zulu chieftain, whose chief, induna, or councillor, he became. This was at the time of the Boer intrigues to evade the frontier stipulations of the London Convention. Acting under instructions from President Kruger, Schiel persuaded Dinuzulu to send him on a mission to the Boer capital, Pretoria, to persuade Prince Bismarck to intervene in the affairs of Zululand. Happily the promptitude of the British Government defeated this intrigue, and Schiel returned empty-handed to Pretoria. He was then appointed Native Commissioner for the northern province. Here he was very successful in pacifying the natives. His next post was that of Chief Friscons Inspector of the South African Republic. Later on he received the appointment of a Captain of State Artillery, and was sent to Berlin to perfect himself in gunnery tactics, to buy artillery and draw up plans for the fortifications of Pretoria and other towns. After the Jameson Raid Schiel's activity in organizing the armaments of the Transvaal received a new stimulus. The Johannesburg fort was built under his direct supervision, and he was its first Commandant. When the war with Great Britain broke out, Colonel Schiel was attached to the staff of General Joubert as Adjutant-General of the Boer forces. Assistant in the capture of German ex-officers, he drew up all the early plans of the Boer campaign. His period of active service at Elandslaagte in the early days of the war, his captivity was spent chiefly at St. Helena. On being released on parole he proceeded to Germany, where he had ever since resided quietly.

Would Scarcely Pay.

Prospective tenderers for the great work of carrying the railway across the Australian continent, from Oodnadatta to Pine Creek, have lately been over the ground, and from what they have seen the prospects of the scheme do not look the least promising. It is estimated that the construction of the line between the two points named—a distance of nearly 1,200 miles—would cost over ten millions. The Adelaide Government proposes paying for the work by a land grant, giving eight acres of land for every mile of railway. At the general opinion seems to be that this country could be worked only by Asiatic labor. It is hardly likely that any syndicate could be found willing to take up such a heavy project on the terms proposed.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

At the Chatham Grand:—
The Goding Comedy Company—Sept. 14-19.
Henrik Ibsen's drama, "Ghosts"—Monday, Sept. 21st.
Perry O'Dell & Dee—Sept. 22, 23 and 24.
"Quincy Adams Sawyer,"—Sept. 29.

Last night's presentation of the Mansion of Acting Hearts by the Goding Company was the strongest number of their repertoire yet produced. It was well staged, excellently costumed and splendidly presented. The company deservedly grows in popularity each evening, and the audience last night were thoroughly pleased. The Goding Company give a strong show for the prices charged.

(Supplied to The Planet by Press Agents.)

"GHOSTS" ON MONDAY.
Of all plays produced in the last five years, none created such a profound sensation as has Ibsen's play, "Ghosts." Into every modern language it has been translated and the mirror held up to nature as Ibsen sees it. The strange, quaint old genius, from his far away Norwegian home, sends forth through his works his peculiar ideas of life and man, and the universal world pays him homage. His plays grip his audiences and hold them in the grasp of his weird philosophy. "Ghosts," one of his most fascinating dramas, is to be seen at the Grand next Monday evening. Edith Ellis-Baker and Donald Robertson will appear in the leading roles. Probably Ibsen has no better exponents of his dramas than these artists, who have made a deep study of the Scandinavian Shakespeare, as he is called. In all the large cities the play created a furor last season. Its presentation here will be an interesting literary as well as dramatic event.

Perry, O'Dell & Dee's Comedians and Vaudeville Company will appear here on Fair Nights. This company enjoys the reputation of a splendid evening's entertainment. Speaking of their appearance in Guelph the Daily Herald says:—Perry, O'Dell & Dee's Comedians opened a four nights' engagement at the Royal Opera House, and by the applause of the artists received, went to show that the audience was more than pleased with the performance. Among those taking part was Ruby Bonnie Dee, the cleverest young actress on the stage to-day. W. H. Abel who is without doubt unequalled as a performer on the slack wire; and several new and excellent views on the kinetograph. Also some beautifully illustrated songs. The Three Dees have a singing and dancing sketch which is intensely interesting and very clever. The balance of the company goes up to a very high standard, and all the acts brought forth loud applause. The entertainment is one of the best and cleanest of the kind that has ever visited this city, and should draw large houses. The press all over the country seem to have nothing but praise for the performance given by the Perry, Odell & Dee Company, and a most satisfactory engagement is looked forward to upon their appearance here.

EXCURSIONS TO LONDON DURING WESTERN FAIR.

For the 36th annual Western Fair, the Grand Trunk Railway have arranged special low rates of single fare for round trip, good going Sept. 12th to 18th inclusive, and a very low rate, good going Sept. 15th and 17th. All tickets valid returning until Sept. 21st. Splendid train service and good accommodation will make this an enjoyable visit, and the many attractions and features of this great Fair promise to make it the best yet in point of excellence. Further particulars and tickets from agents.

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