

The Boston Transcript hears from Vermont that the temperance instruction in the schools is making rather poor headway there. The rustic young idea does not readily seize upon the physiological facts and assumptions which it is occasionally required to master in advance of its capacity to comprehend them. The Rural Vermonter of Montpelier has some answers to questions from examination papers in this branch of instruction which are instructive in a sense. In reply to the question, "What is the brain?" one Vermont youngster produced this answer:

"The is all the time sinang minches on the nevers and is the you of body thinks."

Who could possibly interpret this? The teacher was nonplused at first, but managed at length to get a very coherent reply out of it, thus:

"It is all the time sending messages over the nerves, and is the part of your body that thinks."

Another answer to the same question was this:

"The brain is a bony cage [case]. It has the most brain work to do of anything. The nerves are all white cords which run all over you if you had no nerves you could not have the toothache or burn you but you could not feel your mother's warm hand."

Here are some answers that the questions regarding the physiological effect of tobacco produced:

"You hadent ought to chue tobacco becaus it cripples you in every way and stunts the growth."

"It heartis the bones and the boy who chews it is not so, that is not so plite as if he had not chewed attall and does not remember his lessons so well."

Papaeto will make the bones weak and it will stump the groth."

"Tobacko is an emmerinne [enemy] to the bones."

The gem of the collection, however, is an evidence of the effect produced on the mind of the rising Vermont generation by the questions regarding the distillation of alcohol. This process seemed to be very easily grasped by the children on the whole, and this answer is given as an example of the average work of a large class:

"Alcohol is made by distillation. The following is an experiment: Fill a teapot with a fermented liquid and place in its spout a piece of rubber tubing about two feet long, and put the other end of the rubber in the neck of a bottle which stands on ice or in water. Place a lamp under the teapot and light it. Before the liquid comes to a boil, nearly all the alcohol in it will have passed as vapor into the tubing and dropped as water into the bottle, because of the coldness of the ice or water. On a much larger scale, regular distilleries are carried on."

At this point of the lesson a bright little girl got up and asked plaintively: "Why don't we all make our own alcohol?" It was evident that the precise object of all this instruction about intoxicants was quite lost upon this pupil. The young Vermonsters are of course at home on the subject of cider, and one of them compressed a great deal of information, including some that was possibly likely to get his parent or guardian into trouble, into this answer:

"Cider is made out of apples and stood until it sours, then they sell it."

Toothpicks from Japan.

A well-known New York firm recently tried the experiment of importing 70,000 toothpicks from Yokohama. These "ure-dents," as they are described in the invoice, come in natty little boxes containing 1,000 each, in bundles tied round with green silk. They are cut from hard wood, have a point at only one end, and cost 35 Mexican cents a thousand.—*New York Evening Sun.*

There are sixty thousand colored Knights of Labor.

Tale of a Poodle.

A well-known lady guest of Congress hall occupied one chair and her fussy poodle sprawled over another at the crowded Congress hall last evening. A weary-looking woman approached the "owner of the poodle," saying: "Is this chair occupied, madame?" "Yes (sharply,) my poodle is occupying it, madame," was the cold reply, and femininity in the vicinity of the poodle mistress drew up its nose a peg or two.—*Albany Journal.*

Gen. Boulanger's latest honor is to have a soap named after him.

Rough on the Chaplain.

Gen. N. P. Banks tells a story about one of his army chaplains which never fails to "bring down" the G. A. R. camp-fires. The chaplains of the regiments during the war had charge of the mails for the regiments to which they were attached. The mail for the regiment of this particular chaplain had not come to hand for many days. The regiment was out of the line of communication. Every day from one-half to two-thirds of the soldier boys filed up to the chaplain's tent with such stereotyped inquiries as these:

"Any mail yet, chaplain?"
"Have you heard from the mail?"
"Do you know when the mail will come?"

"What do you think is delaying the mail?"

The good man was so pestered with inquiries that he had no time to prepare his weekly sermon. He was obliged to spend all his time in explaining that he had no mail, that he had heard nothing about the mail. It occurred to him that he might put an end to his troubles by a sign. Procuring the bottom of an old hard tack box he marked it with charcoal and nailed it on a tree in front of his tent so that all might see this notice:

THE CHAPLAIN DOES NOT KNOW WHEN THE MAIL WILL ARRIVE.

The next anxious inquirer who came along was a reckless young wag. He gazed for a while at the notice, and, discovering the piece of charcoal which the chaplain had dropped on the ground at the completion of the sign, he seized it and added these words:

AND HE DON'T CARE A D—N.

The chaplain took in the sign and never put out another one.—*New York Tribune.*

Oatmeal Not Easy to Cook.

Oatmeal differs from the other cereals in cooking because it contains so much gluten. This substance is eighteen per cent. of oatmeal, and but ten per cent. of wheat flour and twelve per cent. of Indian corn. But these proportions do not fully express the difficulty in cooking arising from the presence of the large amount of gluten. Oatmeal does not leaven well, and bread made solely of it is generally unleavened. Loaves wet up with milk do better, and an addition of 25 to 33 per cent. of wheat flour still further improves the fermentation. Some of the peasants of Europe add a few potatoes to the oatmeal dough, with wheat and pea flour, milk, and a little pepper, cinnamon, nutmeg, and caraway seed, making a loaf greatly prized by the family. A lady, who has given the subject considerable attention, says that, to get a well leavened loaf, more than half the flour should be wheaten.

The art of making oat-cakes is one requiring a great amount of skill. It is said that very few cooks can bake oat-cakes properly. In beginning the work the best way is to wet up the dough with cold water in small quantities as required, and only enough for one cake at a time, kneading it out as quickly as possible, and then baking it with equal dispatch, so to have what is termed sweet, dry, crummy cakes, free from insipid and boardy toughness and hardness peculiar to them when otherwise done. Oatmeal has a saccharine flavor when properly cooked, both in bread and pudding, and the difficulty in preparing and baking is to get this.

There are buttered cakes, sugared cakes, seed cakes, sponge cakes, etc., in great variety, as well as plain bread, to be made from oatmeal. Suet is better than butter. The fat should be melted in the water for making the dough, and incorporated with the meal while hot. The kneading, etc., then follows as in the case of plain bread. These cakes are short and very palatable. When sugar is added, which is seldom, it is dissolved in the hot or cold water used in wetting up the meal. Caraway seeds, if used, should be mixed with the meal before the dough is made. Soda cakes are sometimes made, but eggs are seldom used.

In baking, a gridiron is used over a clear fire, generally baking the under side only, but sometimes the cakes are turned and toasted on the upper side before the fire. The preferred way, however, is to toast the cakes before the fire on both sides, or over it, on an open, slate-bottomed gridiron. The cakes cooked in this way are the best flavored. The cook who does not want to take all this trouble will use the oven, which is an allowable way to bake these cakes.—*Good House-keeping.*

Two Philosophers.

One of the most widely-known middle-aged citizens of Detroit was once in love with a young woman. It was in the period of his undisciplined youth, when the bloom was on the eye, and his nights (to say nothing of his days) were mainly given to rosy dissipation.

One day the father of the young woman with whom he was in love—a well-to-do merchant on Woodward avenue—sent for the young man. The latter, filled with a mixture of hope, fear, and gin, presented himself at the counting-house of his possible father-in-law. The shrewd and kindly old merchant met him with frank and reassuring cordiality.

"Sit down, sit down!" said he in a cheery tone. "Glad to see you!"

The merchant finished a letter he was writing, closed the door of his private office, and turned to his visitor.

"George," said he, lingering almost affectionately over the name (clever old blade!) "George, my boy, possibly you may have noticed that you are paying considerable attention to my daughter?"

The lover bashfully admitted that he had, at times, vaguely suspected himself of some such thing.

"Well, then, I want to say that you'll have to drop it. Now, truth to tell nothing would give me greater satisfaction than to see my daughter married to a son of your father, who was my friend and a square man, if ever one such lived. But—well, the long and the short of it is, my dear boy, your personal habits are such as to give little promise that you would make the right sort of a husband. I take a drink now and again myself. In fact, I get a little full sometimes; and being of the conviction that one drunkard in the family is quite enough, I have made so bold as to intimate that you had better not come in."

"My dear sir," was the young man's rejoinder, "you are quite right; and as an earnest pledge of my sincere and unconditional acceptance of your terms, suppose we go around to Matthews and take a drink now."

"All right! As Mickey Free was wont to observe, when O'Malley proposed a swig, 'I'm con-vay-nient.'"

And the two philosophers then and there settled the little matter over a glass of grog, and they have ever since been close friends.

The girl? Oh, she married a prosperous young wholesale merchant, reared a numerous family, grew stout, red faced, and unattractive, and can be seen any day in her carriage, "lolling back in her listless pride" as she airs her wealth and station.

As for her former lover he is the breeziest old bachelor in the city, still addicted to grog, and as youthful in his sports and feelings as he was a quarter of a century ago.—*Detroit Free Press.*

Washington's Nerve.

I was conversing with a gallant member of the Army of Northern Virginia and a member of the late Gen. Robert E. Lee's staff last week, and Maj. Andre and Gen. Washington's iron will and immovable resolution were the subjects of his remarks. The family of the officer referred to and that of Washington had been very intimate in the past, and he had, therefore, peculiarly good opportunities for information. "I cannot," said he, "fail to admire, and yet—if I might dare to say so of so unapproachably great and good a man—occasionally to wonder at and possibly question the wisdom of his iron resolution and absolutely inflexible will when it was once thoroughly made up on any subject. His set mouth, firm chin, and iron jaw by no means belied his character. The man, so far as mortal man could know or weigh his mind and heart, was simply marble. History reveals, in part at least, the superhuman efforts that were made to secure a mitigation of Maj. Andre's sentence by powerful friends on both sides; and how the great general could withstand the influences brought to bear upon him by those of his own party provoked much criticism at the time. The same French general, Lafayette, who sat on the court-martial which sentenced Andre, had handed to Gen. Washington a commission from King Louis as lieutenant-general in the French army and vice-admiral of the French fleet and afterward commanded the Continental troops and raw Virginia levies in the campaign around Richmond and along the Rappahannock during the raid on Virginia by the traitor Arnold. I wonder what would have been thought in our day if during the late war an accredited

agent of Louis Napoleon had brought a commission in the French army and navy to Jefferson Davis or Gen. Lee, and if such an agent or foreign general had been given a seat upon the confederate court-martial trying a French spy! But then, times have greatly changed, and an American at Victoria's jubilee could gaze with equanimity upon the costly marble tomb of Andre in Westminster abbey, beneath which England sought to hide the gibbet at Tappan."

"In private affairs," the major continued, "the same characteristics are equally noticeable. You know it was the fashion in those days for people about to make a journey to pack up their movable valuables, such as plate, jewelry, etc., in the heavy lumbering traveling coaches of the day. Marshall, then owner of our present Marshall's Landing, on the Potomac below Washington and the estate so named, was about to make a journey, and the family coach was for some reason packed over night. A slave of Gen. Washington's from his Mount Vernon estate—a blacksmith, worth from \$1,200 to \$1,800 at the prices of those days—broke into the packed-up vehicle and committed a heavy robbery. The severest penalty, I believe, to which the robber could be sentenced, under the slave laws of Virginia, was that the condemned man should receive "licks" or blows from every slave—man, woman and child—upon the estate to which he belonged. From the number of human chattels then belonging to Mount Vernon the execution of such a sentence meant certain and cruel death, and yet Gen. Washington, unhesitatingly passed sentence."—*Washington Cor. N. Y. Tribune.*

A. Bronson Alcott has kept a journal ever since he was a boy, and, as he was born in 1797 and has known distinctly nearly every man of distinction in New England from that time to the present, it ought to be most interesting reading. This journal fills sixty volumes of neatly written manuscript, which will be given to the world after his death. Mr. Alcott is still a helpless invalid, and spends most of his time on a couch, asleep or looking over his books.

A Girl Snake-Catcher.

She lives in Malden; she is 17 years old, or thereabouts, and she is an ophologist—that is to say, her speciality is snakes. Very often, in pleasant summer weather, this young girl, with hands clad in high buck gloves and armed with a bottle of chloroform, lurks about the fens, and pools, and thickets watching for snakes, a girl fair to look upon, sauntering, one might imagine, with eyes upon the ground, in maiden meditation, fancy free. She is in maiden meditation, indeed, but not fancy free, because her fancy is bound to snakes and she is searching intently for some variety not yet added to her collection of several hundred. Presently she stops; with an eager gleam in her eye she crouches along a step or two, her glove-clad right hand drawn back as if to clutch some object; she springs forward toward the ground with a swift motion, and then stands erect with the body of a snake writhing about her arm in desperate throes. She has it by the neck and proceeds calmly to thrust its head into the neck of her bottle of chloroform.

Not many days ago this young scientist, after a rather desperate contest, captured in the fells a black-snake so large and powerful that when it wrapped itself in the mad-grasp of its body about her arm it strained her cords and muscles so severely that she was lame for a week. It did not prevent her, however, from sallying forth again, and when she happened to perceive, at the margin of a pool, a big water-snake of a variety which she had not secured for her collection, she lay in wait for it. As the snake pounced upon a frog she pounced upon the snake; but the reptile was in its element, and escaped her. Was she to be baffled in that way? Not at all. She managed to anchor a frog in some way upon a stone at the edge of the pool, at a spot where the bank was overhanging with bushes. Then she stealthily laid herself flat upon her face under the bushes at the brink of the water, and there she lay in ambush for a long time, while the snake curiously eyed the frog. At last the snake, with sudden resolution made bold to seize the frog; but as he did so a gloved hand, swift-er than his own sinuous motion, darted from the bank, and he was a prisoner, splashing the water of the pool in his vain effort to escape. The girl has one grief—she has not been able to capture with her own hands a rattlesnake.—*Boston Transcript.*