

USEFUL AND CURIOUS.

The Queen's favourite flower is the lily of the valley.

The first English steel pens were sold at thirty shillings each.

It is a curious fact that there has never been a Duke or Lord of London.

A foot of newly-fallen snow leaves only an inch of water when melted.

Perambulators are not permitted in the chief shopping streets of Berlin.

It takes from six to eight years for the antlers of a stag to attain their full size.

In New Zealand two persons working together constitute a factory in a legal sense.

Deafness is more common in cold countries than in warm climates, the ear being very sensitive to atmospheric changes.

One test for distinguishing diamonds from glass and paste is to touch them with the tongue. The diamond feels much the colder.

Among female Moors birthday celebrations are unknown. A Moorish woman considers it a point of honour to be absolutely ignorant of her age.

A Frenchwoman may become a doctor, a lawyer, or a member of the Board of Education. She may even be decorated with the Cross of the Legion of Honour; but she may not witness a legal document.

The Moors are usually inveterate coffee-drinkers, and a medical writer states that their sight usually begins to fail at the age of forty, while many are blind at fifty. Excessive use of coffee is always given as the cause.

Animals have a language composed of signs or sounds expressing sensations, passions, but never ideas. So this language excludes conversation, and is limited to signs of joy, grief, fear, anger; in fact, all the passions of the senses.

The sea cucumber, which is composed of a curious jelly-like substance, can effectively conceal itself from danger by squeezing the water out of its body, and forcing itself into a narrow crack—so narrow as to be invisible to the naked eye.

Every morning, on rising, a person should go to the window and breathe the fresh air as deeply as possible, then slowly exhaling it. This is one of the best ways of expanding the chest and keeping in health, according to a famous doctor.

The holly attains its greatest beauty in Britain. Though it is found in all parts of Europe, in America, China, and Japan, and stretches right away to the southern Caucasus, it is only a shrub in these countries; while with us it is a tree.

Bloodhounds are usually credited with being savage in disposition. This is a wrong idea, for bloodhounds are not, as a rule, cruel. They are simply trained to follow a scent, and their mission is to track, not to injure, a fugitive. Escaping people are rarely injured by the pursuing hounds.

The sowing of railway embankments with poppy seeds is strongly advocated by experts, as, when once established, this prolific plant covers the soil with a network of roots that prevents it from being washed during heavy rains, or from upheaval in spring, when frost has affected the ground.

Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman is one of six members of the House of Commons—five Conservatives and one Liberal—who began their Parliamentary career in the year 1868, and have sat continuously ever since.

The corporation of Nottingham had decided to spend £10,000 in restoring Nottingham Castle. The fortress is associated with many outstanding events of English history, and is to be preserved as a national monument.

An English barrister, arguing before the criminal court, says "Answers," remarked with much solemnity to the presiding justice: "My Lord, there is honor among thieves." The justice looked at him severely. "There is gold in sea water," he replied, "but it can not be extracted in profitable quantities. Go on, sir."

HEALTH AND HOME HINTS.

"One of the greatest purifiers," said the careful housekeeper, is "whitewash." "Yes," answered the cynic, "it is good for anything from a damp cellar to a tainted bank account."

Always allow cold water to run over sardines before using them for sandwiches or serving them whole. The oil used to cover them is rarely of the best, and sometimes it is positively bad. The delicate flavor of the fish is not affected by the cold water.

Fig Sandwiches—Remove stems from figs and chop finely, or force through a meat chopper. Put in double boiler, and a small quantity of water, and cook one hour. Season with lemon juice, cool, and spread between slices of buttered bread.

Potato Border—Place a buttered egg cup on small saucer, build around it a wall of hot mashed potatoes, and garnish with potato forced through a pastry bag and tube. Remove cup, fill potato border with creamed fish or chicken, and garnish with parsley.

Always dry potatoes well before frying them, and see that the dripping has a faint smoke rising from it before putting them in. They must be drained on paper, when a nice bright brown, and dusted with salt and pepper. They are always great favorites, and make a nice change from the everlasting boiled potatoes, cooked, alas! so often badly.

Ginger Custard Sauce—Mix half a teaspoonful of cornflour with two table-spoonfuls of ginger syrup, add a well-beaten egg and one and a half gills of sweet milk; stir constantly over a slow fire until it thickens.

French chalk rubbed in lightly will remove grease spots from velvet; or the chalk may be dropped on and allowed to remain for twelve hours. To restore the pile on velvet hold it very taut over the steam from a pan of boiling water, keeping the right side on top and having some one beside you to brush the pile up with a stiff whisk until it looks as it should. If this part of the work is carefully done the results will be most satisfactory.

Health Food Bread.—One cup warm wheat mush, quarter cup brown sugar, half teaspoon salt, one tablespoon butter, one yeast cake dissolved in one-quarter cup luke-warm water. Flour. Mix ingredients in the order given, using enough flour to knead. Knead, cover, let rise, shape, put into buttered pan, cover, let rise again, and bake in a hot oven.

Winter House Plants.—With a smattering of floral knowledge, most people feel that without a south window and a deluge of sunlight it is impossible to grow plants with any degree of success. Experienced growers will not agree to this, for while they will admit that the light and sun through a south window are very desirable, they are quite willing to place their floral favorites in any available window, provided there is a fair amount of light obtainable. It is possible to do without sunshine for a long time in the plant window, but a good supply of clear daylight is essential.

A PRIVATE TRAIN THROUGH MEXICO.

A beautiful trip,—all the month of February in Mexico, the oldest country in the New World,—is being organized by the Grand Trunk Railway System leaving Montreal in special sleeping cars on the "International Limited," 9:00 a.m., January 29th, 1906. These cars will be attached to the private train leaving Chicago the following morning. Perfect arrangements. Rate includes everything. Train under special escort of the best authority on Mexico. Finest train in the world. Best and only thorough tour of Mexico offered. Particulars and descriptive matter from any agent of the Grand Trunk Railway System or from J. Quinlan, Bonaventure station, Montreal.

CRIPPLING SCIATICA

A Sure and Certain Way to Cure this Terrible Torture.

There is just one sure, scientific cure for sciatica, rheumatism, lumbago, neuralgia, headaches—you must drive the pain from your blood and nerves with Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. Liniments never cure nerve and blood diseases. Dr. Williams' Pink Pills strike straight at the cause because they actually make new blood. Through the blood they conquer the painful poison, soothe every ache and pain. Mr. Thos. J. Etsell, Walkerton, Ont., says: "When I began using Dr. Williams' Pink Pills I had been off work for three months. The cords of my right leg were all drawn up and I could only limp along with the aid of a stick. The pain I suffered was terrible. Only those who have been afflicted with sciatica can understand the misery I was in both day and night. I took six boxes of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills before they helped me, but after that every day saw an improvement, and by the time I had used fifteen boxes, every vestige of the pain had disappeared. I have no hesitation in pronouncing Dr. Williams' Pink Pills the best medicine in the world for sciatica."

Every dose of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills makes rich, pure, health-giving blood. That is why they cure headaches and backaches, indigestion, kidney and liver troubles, anaemia, heart palpitation, and the ills that afflict women only. But be sure you get the genuine pills with the full name, "Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People," on the wrapper around each box. Imitations are worthless—often dangerous. All medicine dealers sell these pills or you can get them by mail at 50 cents a box or six boxes for \$2.50 by writing The Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

SPARKLES.

An Englishman's attempt at the pronunciation of one of the places that want the Glasgow Corporation tramways to come to them was "Don't-touch-her." It was Duntocher he meant.

Orator (excitedly)—"The British lion, whether it is roaming the deserts of India or climbing the forests of Canada, will not draw in its horns or retire into its shell!"

Flannery—"What's the matter wid ye, Mike?"

Finnigan—"Tis near kilt I was be fallin' down an open coal hole."

Flannery—"Well, well, 'tis too bad they can't invent a coal hole that'll stay shut whin it's open."

"Yes, she's made a name for herself."

"In what way?"

"Why, she used to be Ellen Cummins Brown. Now she is Allen Comyns Browne."

Lady (at bookstore)—I want to get a good novel to read on the train—something rather pathetic.

Salesman—Let me see. How would "The Last Days of Pompeii" do?

Lady—Pompeii? I never heard of him. What did he die of?

Salesman—I'm not quite sure, ma'am—some kind of an eruption, I've heard.—Harper's Weekly.

"Oh, Johnny," said the Sunday school teacher, "you mustn't take money from the plate. Why did you try to do such a thing?"

"I thought you said it was for the heaven, and maw says I'm one."

"That umbrella of yours looks as though it had seen better days." "Well, it certainly has had its ups and downs."

A publisher advertises: "The Wives of Henry the Eighth. Third Thousand." Surely there is some exaggeration here.—Punch.