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WEEKLY MISCELLANY.

Devoted to the Intellectual and Moral Improvement of the Young.

Vol. 1.

Halifax, N. S. Thursday, October 1, 1863.

No. 15.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY, AT \$1 PER YEAR

IN ADVANCE, BY

W. Gunnabell, 155 Upper Water Street.

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HALIFAX, N. S. OCTOBER 1, 1863.

In the article on Minerals, in our last number, there is a typographical error in naming Galena *Sulphurite* of Lead. Read *Sulphuret* of Lead.

THE FORESTS OF NOVA SCOTIA.

Our forests are far below comparison with the extensive forest lands of Canada and New Brunswick. Neither can we equal the large sized pine of these provinces—especially the latter. But the *quality* of our timber is equally as good, some say superior, being closer in the grain, and well adapted for the manufacture of deals, battens and planks.

The trees important to our commerce, manufactures and ship-building are comprised under the two denominations of *hard* and *soft* woods.

Of the former the most useful are the white and black sugar maples, the white or soft maple, rock maple, the red and striped maples, the mountain maple, the white and the black or swamp ash, the elm, the white and red beech, used for treenails, carpenters' tools, &c, red oak, serviceable for wheel-spokes and general use, the white and black oak, the hazel, the yellow, black, white, canoe, or poplar leaved birch. Of these the rock maple may be classed in the first rank, from the superior quality of its timber. There is a beautiful variety called bird's-eye maple, much used in the manufacture of furniture. The ash is a valuable wood; durable, flexible, and free from knots. The white ash is useful for making farming tools; the yellow and black ash for fences and basket making.

The birch woods are used in ship-building, and for making carriages and furniture. The black birch, when polished, resembles mahogany; and the outside bark of the white birch is used by the

Indians for covering their canoes and wigwams.

Of the soft woods the most important are the white, yellow and red pine; the hemlock, the black, red, and white spruce, the fir, and the haematac. The other species are of little value.

The black cherry tree and the sarsaparilla are esteemed for their medicinal properties.

Specimens of eight three varieties of woods, indigenous to Nova Scotia, were forwarded to the International Exhibition, by Mr. Amos Fales jr. of Wilnot; all remarkable for durability and beauty, and each accompanied by the peculiar leaf or cone of the tree. Of these we may notice the following in particular:—

White poplar, used for chair bottoms and carriage seats; balsam of Peru, useful for ornament and shade. Its buds are considered medicinal. Horn beam, a hard tough wood, used for rake-teeth, &c. Wild and black cherry, useful for cabinet manufacture; red and white willow, used for making charcoal; haematac or juniper, durable and adapted for ship-building; yellow pine, excellent for boards and planks; white cedar, excellent for durable fencing, and for the manufacture of musical instruments; hemlock, timber durable, bark used for tanning; white fir and silver fir, wood used for timber, boards and fencing; white spruce, the timber most valuable for the manufacture of deals.

The fruit trees will be noticed in a future article on Horticulture.

We have several varieties of ornamental trees—the sumach, wild pear, rowan or mountain ash, the wild hawthorn, wild red cherry, willow, the aspen, the tree poplar, and white leaved poplar.

There are many wild plants in Nova Scotia, bearing beautiful flowers. The pond lily is one of them, which is also remarkable for its fragrance; the Indian cup, the wild rose, Solomon's seal, the pigeon berry, the tree gooseberry, Indian hemp, medlar or wild pear, starflower, violet, and the fragrant Mayflower, the floral Emblem of our Country.

The principal *fruit-bearing* plants are the strawberry, raspberry, blackberry,

blueberry, whortleberry or huckleberry, and the cranberry. All existing in the greatest abundance.

THE BOY FARMERS.—A Maine paper tells a good story of two boys, one thirteen, and the other eleven, who on account of the sickness of their father were left to work on the farm. They thoroughly plowed and crossplowed three acres of rather rough ground, which they sowed, and then harrowed it three times over. They also assisted in clearing one acre of new land, which was sown with wheat. It grew well, especially that first sown, but at harvest time the father being still sick, there was none to gather the grain but these two little lads. Having neither strength nor skill to use the cradle, they grasped the sickle with resolute hand, and reaping what they could each day, persevered until the whole four acres were thus harvested by them alone. The produce of this crop would command in market \$135, and they did a good deal of business on the farm besides. This shows what boys can do if they really set about it, and make work of work, and play of play—not trying to do both at once.

TO AGENTS AND SUBSCRIBERS.

Those who have not as yet conformed to our terms, will oblige by doing so without further delay—as our preparatory outlay has been considerable, and the publishing expenses, which are weekly incurred, render the required advance indispensable. Small sums that cannot be remitted in paper currency may be sent in postage stamps.

It has been suggested, that if the *Miscellany* was published at a later period of the week, it would be more accommodating to subscribers generally who receive their papers by mail; we have therefore concluded to issue the succeeding numbers on *Thursday*, instead of *Tuesday*.

We would also state here, that although the subscription list is so far encouraging, an additional number of subscribers is still requisite to enable us to carry out several contemplated improvements; and if each of our readers could send to the office of publication, or introduce to the nearest agent, one new subscriber, it would contribute materially towards that object.

LITTLE ANGEL'S MINISTRY.

It was not the name given her at her birth, and I cannot tell how the child came to be always called "little Angel." She was not so fair as many children, nor had she the graceful form, the rich waving hair, that we always associate with angels. But sometimes, when she lifted her eyes suddenly, there was a deep, far-off light shining through them; a light that made us almost start to look into their depths, it was so clear, so pure; a light that had in it so little of earth, that involuntarily we murmured, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven."

It must have been because of this, and because the child's mind seemed drawn to holy things, untaught, unless indeed angels spoke to her at these times when her eyes looked intently away at something we could not see, and came back softer, deeper than before. It may be.

She was a happy, very quietly happy child, save when the one shadow of her life darkened and drew its thick gloomy folds about her. Ah me, it often did that! Little Angel's father was a drunkard. But she never spoke of this. Nor was there need that any should mention it to her. No one could doubt, that saw the light of her dark eyes grow so painfully intense, and the slender frame quiver with agony, that she felt and comprehended all. Yet she never wept, never shrank from him.

Mr. West was not a bad man, and very tenderly he loved his wife and child. But he was weak, irresolute, vacillating. There were those who said this was not his natural disposition, and that some time he might recover from his infatuation. He had tried to free himself from the grasp of intemperance, but so feebly, that it only held him more closely; as sometimes, when we make but a weak effort to shake off the worm that clings to our garments, it only tightens its hold upon us.

He came home one night, without having taken his usual stimulus of liquor. Possibly the influence of his little daughter's parting kiss had been with him all day, perhaps her spirit had in a measure gone with it. It is said that angels are often about us unseen. He entered the house, and called for little Angel, waiting her approach with a mixture of sadness and pleasure.

"Angel, my child," he said, as he lifted her to his knee, "you look happy to-night."

She leaned her head on his shoulder, stroking his hand tenderly as it lay in her lap. Then looked up at him with shining eyes. He looked into them a moment, and sighed. Only the night before—oh, that he could blot out the memory of many such nights!

"Angel, darling," he said, with sudden pain, "will you ever go away from me?"

"Not yet, father," she answered quietly.

Had she understood the meaning he hardly dared give his words himself? He could not doubt it, and her reply fell like a dark prophecy, sinking with a strange nameless fear into his heart, so vividly came up before him a foreshadowing of what might be.

What was it made him turn and listen so suddenly? Was it only a delusion of his brain, or was it really a sweet voice that came from afar, singing, "Suffer the little ones to come unto me?" He could not tell. He sat a minute in thought, then lifted the child as tenderly as if she had been an infant, and sought his wife.

"Mary, my wife," he said, "I am trying to be a man once more. I have taken a new step to-day." She looked up with eager, half doubtful countenance. "I have signed the pledge."

"Oh, God be praised!" murmured the happy wife, and she threw her arms around his neck. "We may be happy once more."

"And as God liveth, I will keep this pledge," and as Mr. West uttered the solemn words, he bent over his child, and looked at the tearful radiance of her soft eyes. There was a look there he did not like to see; a look that haunted him for hours after.

But it was a very happy household that night. Would that the shadow had never fallen again!

"Angel, dear, listen at the window for father." It was a week later; the day had been very dull, and night was setting in dark and stormy. The heavy autumnal rain sobbed mournfully at the windows, and the chill wind kept time to it in a low, far-off muttering. It was one of those nights in the late autumn, when the earth seems to gather up afresh her grief for the beautiful dead summer,

and break forth into passionate tears for the glory that was, and is not.

But Mrs. West thought not of this. A heavier darkness was settling within than without, and her frame shook visibly as the child came back slowly from the window, silent, for she had no words to speak her disappointment, and stood by her mother's side.

Ten o'clock passed, half-past ten, and the hand of the little clock on the mantel was fast travelling to eleven. Mrs. West buried her face in her hands and wept. Little Angel went softly from the room, and hastily wrapping herself in cloak and hood, left the house.

The storm struck a cold chill over her, but there was a purpose at her heart which the fiercest raging of the elements could hardly have caused her to abandon. Very still and swiftly the little figure passed down the street. But at the corner she was met by a policeman.

"Wait, little girl," he said, as she was gliding by him. "Can it be possible!" he continued, drawing her into the light of the street lamp, "little Angel! on such a night as this!"

"Let me go, please, Mr. Howard," and she looked up sadly in his face. "I am going for my father." The man's eyes filled in spite of himself.

"Do you know where your father is?" he asked, presently.

"I think I do. Only in the next street."

He let her go, following her slowly till she entered a well-known club-house.

And the child! With trembling limbs she mounted the stairway. For one moment only her resolution almost forsook her as she placed her hand on the door, then, inspired with sudden courage, pushed it bravely open, and entered.

The door had been inadvertently left unlocked, and her unexpected entrance was hailed with coarse expressions of surprise, not unmingled with bursts of inebriate laughter.

"Who are you?" at last cried one.

The child was silent for a moment, her eyes glancing round the room in search of her father. Then she brought them back gravely to the speaker's face—

"I am little Angel. I want my father."

"Angel, ha! ha! then you're in the wrong pew. This isn't heaven not by a long chalk!"

"Angel," cried another voice, and some one came up through the crowd. "Who said anything about angels?"

"Here's somebody says she's one, and I should think she might be, to get here this night. I say, West, don't you think so?"

West had just made his way opposite his child. Their eyes met. Without any sign of recognition, save the kindling of her eyes, she took his hand, and saying, gently, "come," moved to the door. He followed implicitly.

"You're a fool, West, to be led by that child. Let the mixx get home as she came!"

Mr. West was not much intoxicated, and his temper, naturally quick, was fired at once. With sudden impulse, he placed little Angel out of the way, and violently reproved the speaker; who instantly assumed a threatening attitude. But before there was time to retaliate, the door was thrown open, and the tall form of Mr. Howard appeared.

"Mr. West, come with me, if you please," said the policeman, laying a hand on his shoulder. "As for the rest, there are enough of my class outside to take care of you, if any more disturbance is heard." He took the hand of little Angel, and the trio moved away.

Slowly, very slowly, for in the face of the storm none could move quickly, and the step of the little girl grew more and more feeble. Presently her hand fell slackly from the policeman's, and as he lifted her in tender compassion, she fainted in his arms. So they reached home.

Concluded in next No.

VICTORIA REGIA.

British Guiana, lying within the tropics where a constant summer prevails, contains a vigorous vegetation. The grandeur of nature's efforts, displayed there in the vast size, varied forms, and extraordinary rapidity of growth of the vegetable kingdom, strikes the stranger, accustomed only to the less luxuriant aspect of colder climates, with astonishment and delight.

Only a small portion of the country is cultivated, and that portion embraces a strip of land which is separated from the coast by a belt of mangrove and Courida trees. Immediately back of the cultivated portion, and extending to the base of the

mountains, lie dense forests, and well watered savannas. In these primitive forest scenes, gigantic trees raise their lofty crowns to a height unknown in our northern latitudes. Clusters of palm trees, the most grand and beautiful of all the vegetable forms, rise majestically above the surrounding vegetation, waving pinion-like leaves in the soft breezes that play among their branches.

Such is the profuseness of vegetation here, that nature, as if not satisfied with the soil allotted to her, decorates with parasites the trunks and limbs of trees, and even the rocks and stones beneath them. The parasites, which interlace the branches and trunks of the trees, are called *Lianes*, or "bush ropes," and in many cases, after surmounting the highest limbs, descend to the ground and take root again.

The forests of Guiana are capable of affording supplies of timber unsurpassed in quality and durability for building purposes, or in beauty for household furniture or fancy work. Birds of brightest plumage, insects of remarkable instincts, and reptiles of the most dreaded natures, people the otherwise silent solitudes of these vast domains in inexhaustible variety. Yet it is emphatically a vegetable realm; even the surface of the water is covered with a carpet of plants, interspersed by magnificent flowers. The splendid *Victoria Regia*, the most beautiful specimen of the Flora found in the western hemisphere, grows upon the surface of the lakes and rivers here, in great profusion. In a work, entitled "Brazil and the Brazilians," the following graphic description is given of this flower.

"Of all the nymphææ, the largest, the richest, and the most beautiful, is the marvellous plant which has been dedicated to the Queen of England. It inhabits the tranquil waters of the shallow lakes formed by the widening of rivers. Its leaves measure from fifteen to eighteen feet in circumference; their upper part is of a dark, glossy green, while the under portion is of a crimson red, furnished with large, salient veins, which are cellular and full of air, and have the stem covered with elastic prickles. The flowers lift themselves about six inches above the water, and, when full-blown, have a circumference of from three to four feet. The petals, unfold toward evening; their

color, at first of the purest white, passes, in twenty-four hours, through successive hues, from a tender rose tinge to a bright red. During the first day of their bloom, they exhale a delightful fragrance, and at the end of the third day, the flower fades away and replunges beneath the water, there to ripen its seeds."

Naturalists and travelers become enthusiastic in their admiration, when they behold this plant for the first time. In 1845, an English traveler, Mr. Bridges, while following the banks of a river, came to a lake whose surface abounded with this beautiful flower. He was so carried away by his admiration of them, that he was about to plunge into the water for the purpose of gathering some, when he was prevented by his Indian guide, who pointed to the alligators lazily reposing upon the surface near. But the traveler was not to be thus easily baffled; such was his ardor that he ran a long distance to a village, procured a canoe and returned to the lake which contained the objects of his ambition. So enormous were the leaves, that only two of them could be placed on the canoe at once, and he was obliged to make several trips to complete a satisfactory harvest.

This wonderful flower was first discovered twenty six years ago, in the river Berbice, British Guiana, by Sir Robert H. Schomburgk, of England, on the first day of January, 1837. He named it, in honor of Queen Victoria, *Victoria Regia*.

SAGACITY OF THE ELEPHANT.

A few days before my arrival at Epon, a troop of Elephants came down, one dark and rainy night, close to the outskirts of the village. The missionaries heard them bellowing and making an extraordinary noise for a long time, at the upper end of the orchard; but knowing well how dangerous it is to encounter these animals in the night, they kept close within their houses till daybreak. Next morning, on examining the spot where they had heard the elephants, they discovered the cause of all this uproar. There was at this spot a trench, about five or six feet in width and twelve in depth, which the industrious missionaries had cut through the bank of the river, on purpose to lead out the water to irrigate some part of their garden ground, and to drive a corn mill. Into this trench, which

was still unfinished and without water, one of the elephants had evidently fallen; for the marks of his feet were distinctly visible at the bottom, as well as the impress of his huge body on its sides. How he got in it was easy to imagine, but how, being once in, he had contrived to get out again was the marvel. By his own unaided efforts it seemed almost impossible for such an animal to have extricated himself. Could his comrades, then, have assisted him? There appears little doubt that they had; though by what means, unless by pulling him up with their trunks it would not be easy to conjecture. And in corroboration of this supposition, on examining the spot myself, I found the edges of the trench deeply indented with numerous vestiges, as if the other elephants had stationed themselves on either side, some of them kneeling, and others on their feet, and had thus, by united efforts, hoisted their unlucky brother out of the pit.—*African Sketches.*

News of the Week.

His Excellency the Administrator of the Government, Gen. Doyle, will receive gentlemen on civil business, at his residence, Belle Vue House, on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, between the hours of 2 and 4 o'clock, P. M. The General, however, will be at all times ready to see any gentleman having urgent business to transact.

The City divisions of Sons of Temperance celebrated on Tuesday evening, at Temperance Hall, the 21st anniversary of their Order. The Sun says every available space in the lower hall was taken up. The Soiree, as a whole, was one of the finest ever given in the city.

Between 3 and 4 o'clock on Saturday morning a fire was discovered in the third story of Kenny's Saloon, in Granville Street, (opposite the Province Building); which spread to the roofs of the adjoining houses. The members of the Fire Department were promptly on hand, and having a plentiful supply of water the flames were speedily subdued. The damage to the buildings is estimated by the Reporter as follows:—

The Acadian Hotel, owned by the Hon. W. A. Black, is not insured, and will require about \$1000 to put it in good repair. The building occupied by Messrs. Diery & Kenny, are owned by the Hon. Joseph Howe, received damage to the amount of \$1500, but the loss is covered by insurance. The premises adjoining, now leased by J. D. Nash from Mr. Heffernan, are also insured, damage about \$150.

We learn from the Express that the up-train to Windsor on Tuesday morning was thrown off the track about 3 miles this side of Windsor, having come in contact with a train laden with gravel.—The cars were consequently delayed a short time in reaching Windsor.

The City Council, it is said, have decided to erect a building for fire hose and reel, with a belfry and bell, at the north end of Freshwater Bridge; and also to place an engine and alarm bell on the premises of the late Hon. H. Bell, at the extreme north end.

A correspondent writing from Wine Harbor on the 17th, says that the Caledonia Company have lately received 113 ozs. of gold from two tons of quartz, and that for the last three weeks, their claim has yielded from \$50 to \$100 per day, clear of all expenses.—*Journal.*

A correspondent at Canning, Kings Co., writes to the *Chronicle* as follows: Messrs. Gilliat & Chase launched a fine barque of about 400 tons a few weeks ago, called the *Prince Albert*; Jonathan Steele, Esq., launched, last week, a barque of 568 tons, called the *J. Steele*. There is on the stocks and will be launched during the next month, a barque by J. Lockhart, Esq., of some 800 tons; a ship by E. Bigelow, Esq., of between 800 and 900 tons; C. Barteaux, Esq., a barque of some 700 tons; Huntley & Jackson, a barque of 700 tons, and a schooner 150 tons; E. West, Esq., a brig of 250 tons; Messrs. Simpson, a brig of 250 tons; John Northup, Esq., a schooner of 135 tons, besides several smaller crafts.

The *Eastern Chronicle* states that tomatoes have been grown in the Garden of Dr. Johnston in Pictou this season, four of which weighed three pounds, and one measured 15 inches in circumference.

The Inmates of our Asylum for the Insane were treated by Major de Havilland and a few friends, to an excursion in one of the Dartmouth Ferry steam-boats on Wednesday last. They had the Artillery Band on board. The Sun informs us that its "sweet strains had a very enlivening effect on most of the patients. Several hours were spent in steaming up and down the harbour, visiting the principal points of interest, during which fruit and cakes were freely distributed among the patients of the institution, and their mute visitors. The lively music of the Band appeared to have considerable effect on many of the patients; in a short time several of them, apparently delighted, commenced dancing on their own account, while others formed themselves for cotillions, the male patients choosing their lady partners with all the grace imaginable. The various figures in the dances were passed through in the best possible time, and with great correctness.

Mr. Hutton, Principal of the Deaf and Dumb Institution, and several of his assist-

ants, accompanied by a large number of his pupils, were present, at the solicitation of Dr. Dewolf."

They were by the same friends treated to a drive in omnibusses to Downs' Gardens on the Saturday before. The services of the Band were gratuitously given.

These acts of generosity and benevolence deserve public notice and acknowledgement.

H. M. S. Medea arrived here yesterday, from Portland, Maine, whence she conveyed Lord Lyons a few days since.

A little child, infant son of Mr. Edgar Goudey, came to its death, on the 15th inst., by drawing upon itself, during the temporary absence of its mother, a pitcher of scalding water which stood upon the table. It survived the accident only a few hours.—*Yarmouth Tribune.*

A Chatham, N. B. paper says that fearful disease, diphtheria, is rapidly spreading up and down the Miramichi river, and in numerous instances has proved fatal. A man named Murdock, who lives a mile or two below Chatham, lost within the space of two weeks, three of his daughters, and has other members of his family lying in a precarious state.

On the 3rd inst., five Indians were struck dead by lightning at Portage La-Prairie, Canada. A man and girl were also hurt by the same stroke.

We learn from the Newfoundland Express that the mail steamer, Merlin grounded on the night of the 20th ult., in a dense fog, a little to the westward of Cape Pine, when the engines were immediately reversed, which, though it did not prevent the vessel striking, was yet the means of preventing her going ashore. On being got off, it was found she leaked considerably, but she succeeded in reaching St. John's on the afternoon of the 21st.

AMERICAN INTELLIGENCE.

Washington, Sept. 23 —A number of soldiers, substitutes, of the first army corps, having been convicted of desertion, are sentenced to be shot to-day.

It is reported that the Vanderbilt was at Bahia on the 22d August.

The trunks of two trees have been sent from the battle-field of Gettysburg, one for the Pennsylvania Historical Society, the other for the Historical Society of Massachusetts. The trees were growing in a part of the field where the fiercest encounter took place, as shown by the fact that one of them has two hundred and fifty bullet holes in the trunk within the space of twenty-one feet; the other one hundred and ten bullets in about the same space.

The New York Herald says a gentleman just arrived from Richmond, where he has been in a position to learn the facts.

stated by him, writes that Louis Napoleon in November last, proposed that he would co-operate in establishing the independence of the South, with his whole fleet and an army of three hundred thousand men, on condition that the whole of the trans-Mississippi region—Texas, Arkansas and Western Louisiana—should be ceded to France. And it is further stated that the mission of Stephens, the rebel Vice President, is to conclude a bargain on this basis.

FROM MEXICO AND JAPAN.—San Francisco, Sept. 19.—The steamer Golden Age arrived last night with dates from the City of Mexico via Acapulco to Aug. 10th only. The substance of the news is that the guerrillas, who occupied the main road to the Capitol, had captured several French trains, causing much suffering from scarcity of provisions.—Communication with Vera Cruz was constantly interrupted. The guerrillas occupied Jalappa and Orizaba. Saligny, the French Minister, has been poisoned and was dangerously ill in consequence.

The ship John Kay had arrived from Kanagawa Aug. 10th. Japan continued in a state of disquietude. A British fleet of 12 vessels had sailed from the western shores of Japan to finish the punishment of the Dumois, who had recently been taken to task by the American and French squadrons.

By Telegraph to Morning & Evening Papers.

St. John, Sept. 25.—Mr. Shanks, correspondent of the New York Herald, arrived from the field of battle. He says that official reports from Washington are mainly false; that really the army of Cumberland met with a defeat which must put it on defensive for time to come.—Gen. Thomas saved Rosecrans from annihilation. Rosecrans now in no danger.

Sept. 26.—The Tribune's despatch says that the President has directed measures to secure the right of colored prisoners captured at Charleston. Retaliation will be had for their treatment. Retaliatory measures have already secured the release of Col. Straight and officers from a Georgia dungeon.

Sept. 28.—General Rosencrans is still unmolested in his present position. Gen. Burnside is also entirely safe, and can repel any force by concentrating at Cumberland Gap. A letter from Memphis says that a formidable expedition is on foot against Mobile. Four Confederate blockade runners captured off Ship Island. General Heron has cleared Mississippi between Red River and Port Hudson of guerrillas.

Sept. 29.—The New York Sunday papers gave sensation rumors that Meade was falling back on Washington, a portion of his army going to Rosencrans; Northern Georgia to become the battle ground of Union, also that another portion was going to Charleston. Govern-

ment has 700,000 stand of arms in Arsenal, and 2400 cannon.

Sept. 30.—Herald's despatch says rumors were afloat last evening in Washington, that Union forces in Georgia and Tennessee met with serious disaster, but nothing definite ascertained from War Department. Another woman's bread riot occurred at Mobile.

Sept. 30 (P. M.).—All quiet in front of Army of the Potomac. United States Steamer Connecticut reports that on 23d she drove on shore and destroyed the Confederate Steamer Phantom, loaded with arms, &c., intending to run the blockade at Wilmington. She was built in England, and supposed was intended for a privateer. Russian officers are to have a grand reception at New York tomorrow, promising equal to that of the Prince of Wales.

EUROPEAN NEWS.

By recent arrivals at New York, English dates have been received to the 13th ult.

Application was made to the Marseilles tribunal of Commerce, by the owners of some cargo in the ship W. B. Nash, for authorization to seize the Florida at Brest, until the claim for 100,000 francs is settled. The authorization was granted.—Sfidell has gone to Brest to arrange the affair. A Paris letter asserts that a legal decision will be adverse to the claim.

The London Herald of the 12th says: "We are informed that Earl Russell, on Wednesday, despatched, by a written message, a positive order to Messrs. Laird to prevent these vessels, the iron-clad rams, leaving their yards without an ample explanation of their destination, and a suitable reference to the owner or owners for whom they are constructed.

It is reported that Lower California is to be ceded to France.

Liverpool Sept. 13.—The Tribunal of Commerce of Bordeaux have tried an insurance case involving the question—Is the Alabama a pirate or a privateer? The decision was that the Alabama has not exceeded belligerent rights, nor incurred the reproach of piracy.

LATEST INTELLIGENCE.

The R. M. Steamer Europa arrived this morning, bringing English papers to the 19th ult.

The Queen has arrived safely in the Highlands. Her Majesty left Windsor Castle on Monday evening, and reached Balmoral on Tuesday afternoon. The Court will return to Windsor on October 9.

The semi-official Observer, of Sunday, says that the Government is justified in retaining the Birkenhead steam rams on suspicion.

The preliminaries for restoring telegraphic communication between Ireland

and North America have been satisfactorily settled, and the contractors are pledged to lay the cable down next summer.

The Federal corvette Bainbridge, one of the West India fleet, foundered at sea on the 24th of August; and of the crew, numbering about 100, only one man was saved.

Two Federal cruisers are on their way to Brest to watch the Florida and prevent her escape.

The social state of Spain is now represented as greatly improved, in consequence of the introduction of railways and the enlargement of its commercial transactions with the adjoining kingdoms; as a result of this improvement and prosperity there is a growing desire to wipe off the stain of national insolvency, to establish Spanish credit, and to open the foreign markets now closed to it.

That something serious will ere very long transpire in Italy appears to be the impression on the minds of most men, and those who live in what may prove the very centres of action think that the period of preparation has nearly passed, and that the hour of strife is at hand.

It is much suspected in France that the party of action in Italy has some intention of disturbing the peace. M. Drouyn de Lhuys has written a despatch on the subject to the Italian Cabinet, praying it to do all in its power to suppress a threatened movement which, if allowed to come to a head, may give Austria an excuse for military interference.

A war is likely to break out between Spain and Morocco unless the latter makes the reparation which has been demanded for injuries received.

The visit of the Grand duke Constantine to Vienna is attributed to a political motive. Naturally he has an aversion to the place, the people, and their policy; and the only assignable reason which can be given for his visit is that he has a desire to enlist the wavering sympathies of Austria on the side of the Czar against the Poles.

The India and Pacific mails have arrived. The identity of the man supposed to be Nana Sahib still continues very doubtful. Affairs in New Zealand are assuming a very serious aspect. Auckland is threatened by the 5000 natives who have taken the field against the Government.

An American and an English war steamer have destroyed the town of those Japanese who recently committed a gross outrage on foreign shipping. The British lost two men and the Americans five.

The negroes of St. Domingo have risen in rebellion against the Spaniards. A disastrous fire has occurred at Callao, and property to the extent of \$10,000 has been destroyed. A similar calamity has occurred at Valparaiso.

CHINESE PECULIARITIES.

The Chinese are a singular people.— They are industrious and ingenious. They have made very considerable advances in the arts and sciences, in some of which they have shown ingenuity and skill far beyond that of Europe. If they had been willing, since the opening of European commerce, to learn from "outside barbarians," they might have added largely to their stock of knowledge, and so have kept up in the race of improvement. Their self-conceit and jealousy of foreign ideas have been as effectual a barrier against the invasion of a higher civilization from the south and east, as the Great Wall has been against the irruption of barbarism from the north. They are exceedingly ingenious and nice in small matters of fancy, and will spend years of patient industry over some trinket of gew-gaw, whose only merit will be to excite the wonder and admiration of the curious. But they have no fancy for labor-saving machinery or useful inventions. Even their agricultural implements are of a truly patriarchal simplicity. The plow, the hoe, and the harrow, all of the rudest construction, are almost the only instruments used. The spade is seldom seen. The plow is usually drawn by buffaloes, but often by men and even women. In a country so over-peopled as China, it is not strange that they do not desire our machines for saving labor, manual labor being very abundant and cheap, and many millions depending upon it for subsistence.

Not only are men employed to draw the plow and the harrow, but as carriage horses, to convey the magistrates and the nobles from place to place. The *mandarins*, who are a sort of inferior magistrates, are not allowed to walk in public. It is strictly forbidden as inconsistent with their official dignity. They never go out, except in a sedan chair, with a proper retinue of attendants. They are also prohibited from participation in the common amusements of the people, as unfitting them for the more serious duties of their station. They are not permitted to entertain their friends with theatrical representations except at stated periods. Gaming, private visits, and assisting in public meetings are all prohibited to them, while they remain in office. They indulge in no amusements, except such as

they can enjoy in the privacy of home.— Such is the law, but, as in other lands, the law is often evaded. The mandarins of all ranks are elected for three years only, and then are appointed by the government to some other place.

Vast numbers of the Chinese live in boats or floating houses, having no houses on the land. The water population of Canton is estimated at two hundred thousand. The men go on shore in the daytime, and get what work they can; the women, in the meantime earning a little money by carrying passengers in their floating houses, which they manage with great dexterity.

The male children are very early taught to swim; and until they can manage themselves in the water, they always wear a calabash suspended round their neck, to buoy them up, in case they should fall overboard.

The boats on the canals, as well as on many of the rivers, are drawn by men. The drawing of the government barges is a sort of tax on the people, who are pressed into the service by order of the magistrates. Every district is obliged to furnish a certain number of men for the purpose. Even the wealthiest farmers are not exempt. They must either do the work themselves or find substitutes, and pay them. It is a cruel system, and productive of much misery, and the men often desert during the night. The officers are then obliged to send to the nearest village, surprise the men in their beds, and drive them off the yachts. If they attempt to escape, or plead old age or infirmity, as an excuse, they are whipped in, and compelled to work, till their keepers are caught napping, when they are sure to run away, to be caught again by the next yacht that comes along.

A REMARKABLE NUT.

Only a small portion of British Guiana is cultivated; probably all the towns, plantations, and settlements are within less than fifty miles of the sea coast. Beyond that are dense and almost impenetrable forests, abounding in inexhaustible treasures of rare and valuable woods. This region is seldom visited by travelers, and not even by the inhabitants of the cultivated portion of the country, save for the purpose of obtaining the rich woods for exportation. As there are no roads nor

footpaths through the forests by land, excursions into the interior are made with boats upon the rivers. Indians are employed, on these inland voyages, to propel the boats, and, when a landing is made, to cut away, with their machete, the underwood, vines, &c., which render the forests impassable. It is usual for the voyaging party to encamp on shore at night.

Among the great variety of trees, nuts, and fruits that abound in this productive region, there is a nut, the seed of a tree, which is more remarkable and curious than all others. This wonderful nut slightly resembles a bitter walnut in external appearance, yet it often attains to the size of an English walnut. It grows with a smooth husk of rind covering a thin shell. When dried, the outside of the shell is of a dark brown color, while the inside is whitish, with a beautiful pearly surface. The kernel of the nut grows in the form of a snake, as it lies coiled upon the ground. One end is large, resembling the head of the snake, and from this it gradually tapers, in coils to the other extremity. The entire length of the kernel, if uncoiled, would be from six to eight inches, according to the size of the nut. When fresh from the tree, the kernel may be thus uncoiled, and if suspended in a bottle of spirits, it appears like a miniature snake.

While the nut is green, the kernel is white, and fills the shell; but when it ripens, and has been kept for a long time, the kernel becomes shrunken, hard, and of a dark, woody appearance, more nearly resembling a dried snake than any thing else with which we can compare it. The serpentine form of the embryo may be distinctly observed, on first opening the shell, although it is entirely covered by a thin, brownish, silky skin. This skin may be easily removed, and then the perfect form of the snake appears, with coils more distinctly separated than in the snake. The spaces within the coils of a green nut are filled with a downy, or silken substance, which hardens when drying, yet it is easily removed. When vegetating, its root-germ springs from the small end of the embryo. Under a microscope, the appearance of the interior of the kernel is very much like that of a piece of coarse grained maple sugar.

The traveler who discovered and named

the *Victoria regia*.—Sir R. H. Schomburgk.—also discovered and named this remarkable nut. He first saw it in Demerara, and gave it the name of *ophiocaryon paradoxum*, or paradoxical snake nut. The snake-nut tree, which bears this singular seed, is said to belong to the soap-nut family. Specimens of this remarkable vegetable production were sent to the exhibition at the Crystal Palace in London, in 1851; also at the exhibition in Dublin. A few of these nuts were recently brought to New York, by Mr. Bernhard Ries, who was a resident of Demerara for twenty years, and for several years the Venezuelan Consul in British Guiana. To him are we indebted for the possession of a specimen of this great curiosity, and for most of the facts pertaining to it.

The snake-nut is truly among the most remarkable, and seemingly paradoxical, productions of the vegetable kingdom. Why the kernel of a nut growing on a certain kind of a tree should invariably assume the form of a snake in a coiled position, is one of the mysteries of nature which she does not reveal to casual observers. Having made extensive, yet fruitless researches in the most complete works on natural history and botany for some account of this mysterious nut, we have come to the conclusion that its history has not been recorded.

The natives regard this nut as a warning of danger, because where it grows, there is found a venomous snake, the bite of which is certain death. While the voyagers into the interior are selecting a place for their night's encampment, should they chance to discover any of these snake-nuts upon the ground, they quickly abandon the site, return to their boat, and proceed to select another place where the nuts are not found. The coexistence of this nut and the snake in the same locality, is a subject which will be left for the imagination of our readers, as we have not been able to glean any facts which serve to explain why they are thus companions.—*N. A. Calkins.*

A. D. AND A. M.

There are certain letters often placed before dates with the meaning of which we should be well acquainted. Thus, the present year would be written A. D. 1862; the A. D. being abbreviations of *Anno*

Domini, two Latin words, which signify, in the year of our Lord, or the year of the Christian era. For the era, or the particular time and event from which we begin to reckon, as well as people in all other Christian countries, is the birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

We also frequently see the letters A. M. attached to dates. These are abbreviations of *Anno Mundi*, signifying, in the year of the world, and are reckoned from the creation. This era is sometimes employed, as A. M. 2513, the date of the Israelites' departure from Egypt; but in general the dates of events which occurred previous to the birth of Christ have B. C. (before Christ) prefixed to them; as B. C. 55, the date of Julius Caesar's invasion of Britain.

SUBSTITUTE FOR COPPER—A discovery is said to have been made in China, which, if true, must soon do away with the expense of coppering ship bottoms. The object of coppering as every one knows, is to protect the ship against the attack of worms, which prevail to a greater or less extent in all the seas; and it is now said that no worm will trouble wood which has received a coat of Gambia. It is estimated that \$50 will coat the bottom of a large ship; and it is said to harden and preserve the wood. The experiment has been tried in China on a small scale, and found to succeed admirably.

BEAUTIES OF TREES.

What can be more beautiful than the trees? Their lofty trunks, august in their simplicity, asserting to the most inexperienced eye infinite superiority over the imitative pillars of man's pride, their graceful play of wide-spreading branches, and all the delicate and glorious machinery of buds, leaves, flowers and fruit, that, with more than magical effort, burst from the naked and rigid twigs, with all the rich, and heaven-breathing delectable odors, pure and animating essences, pouring out spices and medicinals, under brilliant and unimaginably varied colours, and making music from the softest and most melancholy undertones to the full organ peal of the tempest. We wonder not that trees have been the admiration of men in all periods and nations of the world. What is the richest country without trees? What barren and monotonous

spot can they not convert into paradise? Nerves, in the midst of his most ambitious enterprise, stopped his vast army to contemplate the beauty of a tree. Cicero, from the tiring, and exertion, and anxiety of the forum, was accustomed, Pliny tells us, to steal forth to a grove of palm-trees to refresh and invigorate his spirits. In the Sceptan grove, the same author adds, Thucydides was supposed to have composed his noble histories. The Greek and Roman classics, indeed, abound with expressions of admiration of trees and woods, and with customs which have originated in that admiration; but above, as the Bible surpasses in the splendor and majesty of its poetry all books in the world, so is its sylvan ordorescent imagery the most bold and beautiful. Beneath some spreading trees was an ancient patriarch revealed to us, sitting in contemplation, or receiving the visits of angels; and what a calm and dignified picture of primeval life is presented to our imagination at the mention of Deborah the wife of Dapidoth, judging the twelve tribes of Israel, between Ramman and Bathal, in Mount Ephraim, beneath the palm-tree of Deborah. The oak of Bashan, and the cedar of Lebanon, are but other and better names for glory and power. The vine, the olive and the fig-tree are imperishable emblems of peace, plenty and festivity. David in his psalms, Solomon in his songs and proverbs, the prophets in the sublime outpourings of their awful inspiration, and Christ in his parables, those most beautiful and perfect of all allegories, luxuriate in signs and similes drawn from the fair trees of the east.

THE WEATHER.—When you wish to know what the weather is to be, go out and select the smallest cloud you can see, keep your eye upon it, and if it decreases and disappears, it shows a state of the air that is sure to be followed by fair weather; but if it increases in size, you may as well take your great coat with you if you are going from home, for falling weather will not be far off. The reason is this: when the air is becoming charged with electricity, you will see every cloud attracting all less ones towards it, till it gathers into a shower; and, on the contrary, when the fluid is passing off or diffusing itself, even a large cloud will be seen breaking to pieces and dissolving.

THE BOY'S SURPRISE.

A loving father once to his fair garden came,
And in the mould he traced his little
George's name;
Then in the letters made, some seed he
gently threw;—
And no one but himself a word about it
knew.

A few bright days had passed, when
Georgie cried with glee,
And yet in wondering tones, "Oh, father
come and see
A most surprising sight!" With eager
haste he led
His father's willing steps to that mysteri-
ous bed;
And there inscribed in fresh and verdant
type was seen,
His name, **GEORGE WASHINGTON!**

With grave and thoughtful mien,
The father said, "Well, George, though
I must frankly own
That this seems rather strange, yet may
not plants have grown
In such a way by chance?"

"By chance? No, father, no!
How could the little seeds arrange them-
selves just so?"

How could the little plants spring up, and
join to make

The letters of my name, without the least
mistake?

Somebody, I am sure, the curious thing
has done;

Somebody must have sown the letters one
by one;—

Ah, father, I suspect that 'somebody' was
you!"

The father, with a smile, confessed the
charge was true.

"I wrote your name, dear child, with this
new-fashioned pen,

That you might be amused and pleased
with it, and then

I meant that it should guide your thoughts
to One above,

Who made this world of ours, and rules
it by his love."

"Yes, father, that is God: but tell me,
where is He?"

I often hear his name, but him I never
see."

"Nor did you see me, George, about ten
days ago,

When I prepared this ground in which
the seeds to sow,

Yet you believe that I was here?"

"I do, indeed,
Because I know that some one must have
sown that seed."

"Then look around, my boy, and mark
God's mighty hand,

In all the wondrous things which He has
wisely planned;—

The golden light of day; the calm sweet
rest of night;

The gaily-tinted flowers which yield us
such delight;

Cool water for our thirst, and yellow corn
for bread;

Ripe fruits which we may eat, soft grass
on which we tread;

The cows that give us milk, the busy
bees that bring

Nice honey from their stores: the birds
that to us sing;

The lambs with snowy wool that warm
attire provide;—

And all the precious things which we
enjoy beside,

Too many to recount—are proofs that
there must be,

A heavenly Father's care encircling you
and me.

Though hidden from our gaze, we know
that He is near,

For everywhere around his glorious works
appear;

Then let us trust in Him, and strive from
day to day,

To thank Him for his gifts, and his com-
mands obey.

MENTAL RECREATIONS.

Answers to the following Questions will be given
in next No. In the mean time we suggest to our
young friends to exercise their ingenuity in solving
them; so that they can compare the results of their
efforts with the published Answers, when their pa-
pers are received. All communications in connec-
tion with this Department of the Weekly Miscellany
should be sent post paid.

ENIGMA.

I am a character well known in Eng-
land, and there are few, either high or
low, rich or poor, that are not acquainted
with me. I shun cities and towns, and
take up my abode in the extremity of a
village. In respectable society I am ne-
ver admitted, but in a gang of gipsies
and beggars I am a principal character,
and without me smuggling would do
nothing. I never appear in day-time,
but in the middle of night, and late in
the evening, and always in disguise. I
am fond of gaming, and always end in
cheating, stealing, and plundering. It is
the opinion of some that I should be in
jail. I was certainly never there yet,
and from what I have said, you may sup-
pose me some thief or pickpocket; but
to prove that I am neither, I avoid a
crowd, and no sooner appear before one
than I am gone.

ARITHMETICAL QUESTION.

If 126 apples and 96 oranges cost 90d.
and 99 apples and 256 oranges cost 161d.,
what is the price of one orange and one
apple?

SOLUTIONS OF QUESTIONS IN LAST NO.

Charade.—Band-ago.

Arithmetical Question.—He had 48
oranges and 16 apples.

VARIETIES.

No person is so insignificant as to be
sure that his example can do no harm.

When is coffee like the soil? When
it is ground.

On being shown a portrait of himself,
very unlike the original, Hood said that
the artist had perpetrated a false-Hood.

A musician near Eccle, in Lancashire,
one George Sharp, had his name painted
on his door thus—G Sharp. A wag of
a painter, who knew something of music,
early one morning made the following
sign:—*Sharp*, undeniable addition—is *A flat*.

Employ thy time well if thou meanest
to gain laurels.

Patience is very good, but perseverance
is much better.

DON'T SCORN THE HUMBLE.—We ne-
ver yet knew a man disposed to scorn the
humble man, who was not himself a fair
object of scorn to the humblest. A man
of a liberal mind has a reverence for the
little pride that seasons every condition,
and would deem it sacrilege to affront, or
abate, the respect which is maintained
with none of the adventitious aids, and
solely by the observance of the honesties.

He that studieth revenge keepeth his
own wounds green.

Virtue is not to be considered in the
light of mere innocence, or abstaining
from harm, but as the exertion of our
faculties in doing good.

What is that which belongs to yourself,
yet is used by everybody? Your name.

A mixture of black lead and lard is a
good anti-friction compound for carriage
axles.

In the town of Bergen, in Prussia, is
an elegant church, capable of holding
1,000 persons, constructed entirely—sta-
tues and all—of papier-maché.

A man advertises a clock for sale
which keeps time like a tax-gatherer.

"Oh, dear!" said a fashionable girl,
when she first beheld a cucumber, "I al-
ways thought such things grew in alices!"

"Thomas, spell weather," said a school-
master to one of his pupils. "W-i-e-t-h-
e-r, weather." "Well, Thomas, you
may sit down," said the teacher; "I
think that is the worst spell of weather
we have had since Christmas."

"Willie," said a doting parent to an
abridged edition of himself, who had just
entered the grammar class at the high
school, "Willie, my dear, will you pass
the butter?" "Thirtainly, pa," said the
juvenile; "I can path anything. But-
ter ith a common thubthantive, neuter
gender, agreeth with cakth, and ith gover-
ned by thugar—thweeths of any kind
underthood."

The Halifax Directory.

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