

# The Useful Instructor.

VOL. I.

HALIFAX, APRIL, 1887.

NO. 1.

## The Useful Instructor.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY.

OFFICE: 104 GOTTINGEN ST., HALIFAX, N. S.

### Subscription Rates.

Per annum.....50 cents ) Post free to  
 " 6 months.....25 " ) all parts  
 " 3 ".....12 " ) of the world.  
 PAYABLE IN ADVANCE.

### Advertising Rates.

Our next issue will have a circulation of 500,000 copies. We propose to keep the circulation of the Useful Instructor up to at least 5,000 per month, with a large issue about every three months of ten thousand or more. Advertisers making contracts will get the benefit of these special editions—transient advertisers will be charged double. It is therefore to the advantage of every advertiser to contract for at least three insertions of his advertisement, so that at least one special edition may be included in the contract. Our rates for advertising are, until further notice, as follows:

Per line, Nonpareil type.....\$0.05.  
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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:—This is to certify that we have printed ten thousand copies of the initial number of the Useful Instructor, and have orders from the publisher to issue five thousand of number two.  
 NOVA SCOTIA PRINTING CO., HALIFAX, N. S.

All communications, subscriptions, advertisements, etc., must be addressed to  
 PUBLISHER OF  
 THE USEFUL INSTRUCTOR,  
 BOX 185, HALIFAX, N. S.

THE LONDON  
 RUBBER STAMP CO.  
 217 HOLLIS ST., HALIFAX, N. S.  
 MANUFACTURERS OF ALL KINDS OF  
**RUBBER STAMPS.**  
 Write for circulars, naming this paper.

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 GENERAL STATIONERY,  
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 ARTISTS' MATERIALS, &c., &c.  
**125 Granville St.**  
 Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Name this paper when you write for Catalogues.

**THIS PAPER** is sold in Philadelphia at the Newsagent Advertising Agency of Messrs. N. W. AYER & SON, our authorized agents.

### PHONETICS.

If people were to write our language as carelessly as many speak it, the result would be something strange. The clipping of familiar words, and particularly the huddling of as many together in a bunch as we can find breath to speak, make a curious language, as this will show!

Specimens of boys' conversation like the following may be called short-hand talking:

"Warejego lasnight"  
 "Hadder skate."  
 "Jerfind the toe hard'ngood"  
 "Yes; hard'nough."  
 "Jer goerlone"  
 "No; Bill'n Joe wenterlong."  
 "Howlate jerslay"  
 "Pastate."  
 "Lemmeknow wenyergoin', woncher? I wanter go'nshower howto skate."  
 "H—n! Ficoodnt skate better'n you, I'd sel out'n-quit."  
 "Well, we'll tryerace 'nsofyercan."

### WRITTEN ALMANACS.

The history of written almanacs dates back to the second century of the Christian era. The Greeks at Alexandria, in the time of Ptolemy (100—130 A. D.), constructed almanacs. Prior to the written almanacs of the Greeks there were calendars or primitive almanacs. One of them was found at Pompeii cut upon a square block of marble, upon each side of which three months were registered in perpendicular columns, each headed by the proper sign of the zodiac. There is in the Savilian Library at Oxford, England, a manuscript copy of an almanac published in the year 1300 A. D., but the first almanac positively known to have been published in England was "Shepheards Kalendar," translated from the French and printed by Richard Payson, in 1495.

HE—"I was discussing tobogganing with your friend Miss Smith, last evening, and I was surprised to learn, Miss Ethel, that she considers the sport silly." She—"Yes, dear Clara's nose turns red upon the slightest exposure to cold."—*New York Sun.*

"Look here," said a man this morning, going into his grocer's, "those eggs you sold me New Year's were bad." "Well, that wasn't my fault." "Whose was it then?" "Blamed if I know. How should I tell what was inside of them? I'm a groceryman, I'm no mind-reader."—*Washington Critic.*

### NEWFOUNDLAND STAMPS.

1857—3d. triangular, 10c. 5d. 20c. 1858—4d. 15c.; 6d. 20c.; 6d. 25c.; 8d. 25c.; 1s. 40c. The seven for 21.50. 4 varieties present issue, 12c. 6 varieties P. E. Island unused, 30c. 6 var. Nova Scotia, 81.80. 6 var. New Brunswick, \$1.00, all unused.

HARRISON L. HART,  
 71 Gottingen St., Halifax, Nova Scotia.

### COINS! STAMPS!

24 pp. Catalogue, 10c. Birds' Egg List, 3c. Agents wanted to sell scarce stamps from sheets on liberal terms. NOVA SCOTIA STAMPS WANTED.

W. F. GREAVY,  
 827 BRANSHAN STREET, San Francisco, Cal.  
 \*Mention "Useful Instructor."

### J. A. PIERCE,

DEALER IN POSTAGE AND REVENUE STAMPS,  
 ROOM 8, NO. 70 STATE ST., CHICAGO, ILL.  
 New Lists, just issued, sent Free. Approval \$200 to responsible parties. Stamps for exchange. NOVA SCOTIA STAMPS WANTED.  
 \*Mention "Useful Instructor."

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(Published punctually the 15th of every month.)  
 36 cents per annum, post free to any part of Great Britain, Europe, Canada, Egypt, United States, Persia, Algeria and India. 75 cents per annum, post free, to Australia, Cape Colonies, etc. All other countries, 25c. per annum. C. H. WILSON, Bury St. Edmund's, Eng. \*Mention "Useful Instructor."

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 The highest price paid for above in good condition.  
 CONSIGNMENTS SOLICITED.

\*ALWAYS MENTION "USEFUL INSTRUCTOR."

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 ARE THE BEST

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 Halifax, N. S.

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United States, South and Central American  
Stamps, and U. S. Envelopes a specialty.

☞ Rare U. S. Stamps and Envelopes bought.  
Always mention this paper.

**Wanted.**—GOOD Agents in every city to sell stamps from sheets. 30 p. c. commission. We offer the following bargains: 2 Chili, 2c; 3 Ecuador, 1c; 4 Honduras, 25c; 4 Venezuela, 8c; 3 Perla, 7c; 4 Suriname, 12c; 10 Norway, 10c; 10 Japan, 15c; 7 Bosnia complete, 60c; 4 Congo, 50c. We wish correspondents in all countries, and will exchange scrap picture stamps.  
AMERICAN STAMP CO., 2025 South Park Avenue, Chicago, Ill.  
☞ Name this paper.

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114 Nassau Street, - N. Y. City.

☞ PRICE LISTS FREE.

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MITCHELL & CO.,  
50 N. Sangamon St., Chicago, Ill.

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Box 1955, N. Y. CITY, U. S. A.

CHAP. SERA.—7 Venezuela Notes, 4 Domingo 10 cts., 2 Turk's Island 10 cts., 4 Curacao 10 cts., 10 Mexico 14 cts., 6 Caylen 7 cts. List free.

☞ Foreign Correspondence and Exchange desired.

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IS open to receive approval sheets of rare and high-priced stamps from dealers wholesale rates, and will send in exchange genuine Peru surch'd, Arequipa high values, and other S. A. stamps. Will also be glad to ex. with the better class of collectors; rare stamps only. No transaction desired under 5 Dollars, and no inquiry answered unless 11 postage enclosed. Send all registered.  
Importing Stationers store at Lima.  
Business Cards sent and references if required.

☞ Always name this paper when you reply.

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65 HIGH STREET, FITCHBURG, MASS.

10 different Foreign Coins.....	\$ 25
10 " U. S. Dollars, 1750.....	6 00
10 " U. S. large cents, including 1801.....	75
10 " U. S. half-cents, 1825.....	65
10 " U. S. three-cent pieces.....	75
10 " Confederate Notes.....	1 25
10 " pieces of fractional currency.....	3 00
10 " Jackson cents.....	60
10 " unused postage.....	25
10 " used stamps, well mixed.....	1 00
100 " " " common.....	60

☞ Stamps and coins sent on approval, to responsible parties sending deposit.

**SEND** for a sample copy of the **TAG WORLD**.  
A paper for Tag Collectors.  
FRANK L. WILLCUTT, 1114 Woodland Ave., Cleveland, O.

### THE MONTANA TURNIP.

"That's a good-looking diamond you are wearing," said a Far Westerner to a waiter in the restaurant at the North-western Depot.

"It's a two-karat stone," said the waiter, leaning over the counter.

"What did it cost?"

"Two hundred dollars."

"I've got something here myself," said the enter, going down into his pocket and pulling out a big gold nugget.

"What do you call that?" asked the waiter, with a short breath.

"No karat about that stone," said the Western man, weighing the nugget in the palm of his hand. "That sir, is a Montana turnip."—*Chicago Herald.*

With stealthy hand he strove to clip,  
One golden ringlet from her head  
"Ah, don't!" Then, with a smiling lip,  
"They are my sister Jane's," she said.  
—*Harper's Magazine.*

### SEND AT ONCE.

TEN CENTS will secure to all lovers of Nature a fine specimen, and lists of

### MINERALS, FOSSILS & GAME!

Will pay cash for fine Minerals.

W. S. BEEKMAN,  
West Medford, Mass.  
Box 105.

"Charles, is it true that all brokers are unhealthily?" asked a stock-broker's wife of her husband. "Well, not all of them, I reckon," was the reply. "And do they all die suddenly at about the age of forty?" she continued. "The paper stated so the other day," replied the broker, who, thinking that his wife might swoon at the idea of his being suddenly snatched from her, assured her that he was perfectly healthy, and likely to live many years. "Well, I suppose it is a peculiarity; but, Charley, you are thirty-seven, and don't you think you had better increase your insurance policy to ten thousand pounds?"

A FRENCH banker expressed the wish to write a play with Scribe, the dramatist, which play he would bring out regardless of expense, provided his name figured on the bills with Scribe's as his collaborator. Scribe declined the proposal in a note, in which he said that an ass and a horse never worked well together. He had his little joke, as he thought, until he received the banker's reply, which was: "What do you mean by calling me a horse?"

**GUEST:** "Who owns this hotel?"  
**Waiter:** "Mr. Blank am de proprietor, sah."  
**Guest:** "Glad to hear it. I thought from your actions that the waiters owned the hotel." **Waiter:** "Oh, no, sah. We don't own nuffin' but de guests."

We have a little piece of advice to offer gratis: Don't sit down on a toboggan slide unless you have a toboggan under you.—*Burlington Free Press.*

### South & Central American Stamps,

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☞ Mention "INSTRUCTOR."

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Wanted, all sorts of revenues and rare stamps, for which the best price will be paid—cash or exchange.  
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50 VARIETIES FOREIGN, 5c.; 75 varieties, 10c., 100 varieties, 15c.; 125 varieties, 20c.; 150 varieties, 25c.

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**POOR CLIMATE FOR SPRING POETRY.**

He had written a song on the "Gentle Spring,  
Full of purring streams and the gentle zephyr,  
And the joyous songs of the birds that sing,  
And the gambolling pranks of the playful beaver.  
Of the flocks that graze, and the "dainty bass,"  
And the "perfect days" and the "vernal rays,"  
And every phrase used by bards since Chaucer,  
And just then the cold snap came on, and while  
chopping his morning kindling wood his  
left ear was frozen, and swelled up as large  
as an old-fashioned snout.—*Pitt. Riv.*

**VALUE OF SMALL THINGS.**

Husband—"What are you going to take that scrap of lace along for?"  
Wife—"Scrap, indeed! That's my handkerchief."  
"Oh, that's it."  
"Yes, and by the way, I forgot to give you yours. It's up stairs on the—"  
"Never mind, dear, I've got a postage stamp."—*Omaha World.*

**OF COURSE THEY ARE.**

"Misers are very discerning men," said the Stamp Editor.  
"How do you make that out?" asked the Horse Editor.  
"They are so penny-traitive."—*Pittsburgh Chronicle-Telegraph.*

**AMY DISMISSES HER BEAU.**

"Algernon Fitzpercry does not call upon you as frequently as formerly, I believe," remarked the High School girl to her friend.  
"No, Mildred," replied Amy, "in fact, I gave him his walking papers."  
"You mean, dear, you presented him with his pedestrianizing documents."—*Pittsburgh Chronicle.*

STIGGINS was passing a watchmaker's establishment, and looking in the window he noticed a very pretty girl at the counter.  
"Ha!" he soliloquized, "I'll go in and take a look at her under some pretext or other."  
He entered, and was waited on by the young lady's father.  
"What can I do for you?"  
"I want to get a key for my watch," he stammered, feasting his eyes on the young lady.  
"Let me see your watch," said the watchmaker.  
As if in a dream he took out his watch. The watchmaker examined it, and said, with surprise:  
"Why, your watch is a stemwinder."  
He doesn't remember how he got out, but he does remember that the young lady laughed.—*Texas Siftings.*

"I don't mind giving up my neckties before they're half worn out," said a society young man yesterday, "because they look pretty in crazy quilts. But I'm going to draw the line on my married lady friends hereafter."  
"Why?" asked a friend.  
"The last lot of scarfs I gave Mrs. —, her husband has been wearing ever since. Do you blame me?"—*Buffalo Courier.*

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with your stamp dealer if he does not suit you in price or quality, — let him slide, and send your order to me. It will have prompt attention. Sheets of stamps on approval for reference or deposit.

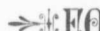
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37 Always name this paper. 32

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Poor Tired Eyes, v.....	Hosfeld	10
Love comes like a summer sigh, v.....	Spencer	15
Dress Parade March.....	Wynnan	10
My Favorite, my Queen, v.....	Winter	10
Leave your burden at de bottom of de hill.....	Bristow	10
Remember boy you're Irish, v.....	Scanlan	10
Why Paddy's always poor, v.....	Scanlan	10
Give me back my heart again, v.....	Sim	10
Four Country Dances.....	10	
Adirondacks Galop.....	Meyer	10
Falling Blossoms Polka.....	Kinkel	10
Courting where the sweet magnolia blooms, v.....	Leonard	10
Gathering myrtle with Mary, v.....	Scanlan	10
Emancipation March.....	Martin	10
Call me back again, v.....	Hendrickson	10
White Winter, v.....	Winter	10
Its for money, v.....	Adams	10
Peek-a-booo, v.....	Scanlan	10
Pretty Fond Lillies Waltz.....	Stuart	10

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**E. R. MARSHALL,**  
 Wyoming, Iowa.

*The Useful Instructor.*

HALIFAX, APRIL, 1887.

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**THE RIDDLE OF LIFE.**

BY J. W. DONOVAN.

THE Greeks believed that life was given to man as a privilege to talk; that the highest enjoyment of the race was reached in a gathering of friends at table; while the greatest intellectual treat was in listening to oratory—an art in which their most gifted speakers seem to have excelled, not only all previous ages, but all that have so far followed. The events that call forth and create true oratory are now rarely witnessed—in Greece they were of daily occurrence.

Among the nations of the earth that have flourished and fell, that have built cities and monuments of their greatness, and stamped the impress of their character on succeeding ages, the Greeks were the foremost in art, learning, eloquence, oratory, mental and physical perfection; and hence their words of wisdom and counsels of good living are excellent authority. They began in childhood to train men and women with fine forms and bright minds with a capacity for enjoyment.

The Spartans were braver in battle, but war was their highest ambition. The Romans gloried in the arena, and the desire of conquest reached into their sports and amusements, and their monuments attest the transient character of such personal glory. The Persians enjoyed the chase, and pictured their kings in the attitude of riding in chariots drawn by fleet horses, engaged in killing lions by the wayside, and counted it a glory worthy to be engraved in marble that a king of men could slay a king of the brute creation.

The English have long been engaged in the problem of rulership, and crimsoned many a page of their history with deeds of treachery and collusion to acquire power and control of lands or titles of distinction.

The Americans alone seemed possessed of the united elements of Oriental greatness, combining the warriors of Persia, and the arena admirers like the Romans; the imitators of English landlords and nobles, with the lovers of art, music, and oratory, like the Greeks. A glance at the habits of these nations, in such an infinite range and variety of motive, is all we can hope to give, and brief as it is, the picture recalls the ideal of a world that seems, after all, a deep, dark riddle to the wisest.

The riddle of life remains unsolved. It calls our attention to the curious inscriptions of the obelisk of old, where the wise related their limited knowledge. It points us to the caverns in the mighty pyramids, where the silent walls recount the deeds of kings so anxious to preserve their bodies for future remembrance, and yet so ruthlessly disturbed by the greedy hand of science in grasping for the lost arts of embalming. It carries us through the era of Crusade wars, that widened commerce by an interchange of nations even in the enterprise of killing each other. It points us to the slow progress of arts in the past, of feasts without plates, journeys without railroads, of relays of mail-carriers across deserts of desolation, of hunger and suffering, knighthood and splendor, and asks us to wonder, what, after all, is this race of nations, in a world of wonder, by chariot or car, in cabin or castle, at peace or in war—what, after all, is the end to accomplish? And the answer comes in the silence of reflection, a life worthy of our station.

The riddle of life has been nearest solution in the civilization of America. We may ignore it, but the highest happiness comes to the people as it comes nearest alike to the whole people. The classes of other nations has been the bane of their progress and discontent for ages, and in proportion as they distribute their enjoyment equally do they realize perfect and complete living.

In the home, the factory, the mill-works, and railway system; in the mines and stores and marts of labor, where the blessings of art, industry, learning and enjoyment are

distributed with a view of a general benefit, the highest type of manhood and womanhood is developed, and hope and cheer, and courage to do duty are strengthened and enlarged by a union of interests.

The riddle of life in our country is one of independence. We can count on our fingers the names of monarchs who have done their whole duty regardless of self-interest. We could match the kings of old with later rulers as wise and as worthy of honor. We can duplicate the valor of their generals, excel their arts, rival the splendor of their living, look out into a broader world than they ever dreamed of, show them an atlas with leagues and acres and curious countries beyond their seas. We could invite them to palaces of greater splendor and of more elegance than Grecian arts possessed; and, finally, we could point to a people free and proud and prosperous, who enjoy a world of fresh intelligence, with endless means of amusement that grows with our civilization; yet still the problem of life remains a riddle, slowly to be solved by coming ages.

The riddle is not solved, as far too many have been trying to solve it, by the savings of one overworked generation for the next one to squander. Every effort of this kind has ended in failure. It is not solved by the getting of great riches for personal ends, as the story of every miser's life will reveal. It is not solved by waiting for dead men's shoes, nor the inheritance of much money; for nine out of ten of the great and successful were made so by energy and effort. It is not solved by lands and buildings, for the property beyond use is a means to quarrel over by one's children; so that the nearest approach at the solution of this greatest of problems—good living—is by a daily practice of kindness, charity, and upright conduct to all who come within the range of our acquaintance, and in not omitting a share of the enjoyment in early and middle life; for yesterday as children, to-day as men and women, and to-morrow as gone from the scene of action, should remind us how swiftly the wheels of time are turning, and how brief are our lives at the longest.—*The Brooklyn Magazine.*

#### A PRINTERS' DEVIL.

A printer's devil was pierced to the heart  
With the charms of a dear little miss.  
Oath he to the lass: "My dear, ere we part  
Let us seal our lives with a kiss."  
But the maiden replied, as the imp she eyed,  
"Dost think I'd let you revel  
Where others before you have vainly tried?  
Nay, nay, 'I'll not kiss the devil!"

Years passed on, and the sweet little lass  
Became an old sorrowful maid;  
Riches had she, but then alas!  
Her beauty had all decayed;  
Once again they met, and fain the old maid  
Would recall the former issue;  
But the devil replied, as the old maid he eyed  
"No; the devil now wouldn't kiss you!"

—*Inland Printer.*

A TRIUMPH OF JERUSALEM.—We begin the publication of the Rocky Mountain Cyclone with some show difficulties in the way. The type founders whom we bought our outfit prior to this printing office pleased to supply us with any ophs or caxs, and it will be plour or plave weex before we can get any. The mistake was not plound out till a day or two ago. We have ordered the missing letters, and will have to get along without them till they come. We don't lique the loox or this variety or spelling any better than our readers, but mistax will happen in the best regulated phamilies, and iph the ph's and c's and x's and q's hold out we shall ceep (sound the c hard). The Cyclone whinding apher a phashion till the sorts arrive. It is no joque to us—it's a serious sphair.—*Rocky Mountain Cyclone.*

#### A FLOWER EACH FIFTY YEARS.

HERBERT BARTLETT.

NATURE, despite all scientific research and continued application of investigation, bears within herself mysterious forces, unknown and beyond mortal ken.

While sinuous graceful stems bear beautiful flowers, the Spiny Cactus, or Prickly Pear (by no means attractive to the sight) has many species whose flowers are themes worthy of the pen of poetry or brush of art.

Some time since, in exploring some mining property, we had observed that a species of Cactus that exceeding few had ever seen in bloom was promising soon to burst its calyx, and so we resolved to wait and watch it, and, if possible, see the magnificent flower in its perfection. The species was the *Cactus Grandiflorus*, or Night-blooming Cereus.

Of the entire number of varieties, sixty being known to the botanical world, we had found in this single locality fifty-seven. With no other help than that of nature, these plants grow untrammelled from the creeping stem to the Cactus of full growth, attaining the height of thirty feet. The sight of many of these varieties growing in close proximity is artistic, and to the lover of nature is highly interesting. All these, of course, are indigenous to the part of the country where we found them, but in no other part of the Republic have we seen so many varieties in the same neighbourhood.

Though the name is found in classical literature as descriptive of a small spiny plant of Sicily, many varieties here seem to be entirely unknown.

The peculiar structure of the Cactus consists of globular, channeled and many-jointed stems, usually leafless, and truly grotesque in their inclusions of spines and bristles, and though their appearance may be decidedly uninteresting, the same and exquisite color as well as delicious perfume of their flowers are really marvellous. Each and every variety is known to bloom, the flowers varying from a pure white to a rich scarlet and purple. These, by care and cultivation, are readily increased in size and brilliancy.

Among the tortuous spinous creepers here are Cacti that have attained their growth. Prominent among these is the Melocactus, the Lemon Thistle or Turk's Cap, in appearance similar to a green melon with deep ribs set with short thorns.

Here also was that *rosa oris* among cacti, *Cochinellifera* which supplies the cochineal insect with nourishment, and the *Cactus Wolffera*, the most valuable of the whole Cactus family. This latter was embedded in a composite soil consisting of sand and loam and rubbish of limestone. This plant, only two and a half feet in height, will flower in all its surprising beauty, but unlike its kindred plant, the *Grandiflorus*, blooms from the rising to the going down of the sun. Its leaves and bud evidenced that its time of blooming was near at hand, and we made our camp near, that we might the better be able to watch it. We were satisfied that it belonged to the family that is known to bloom every half century. After some days of waiting our patience was rewarded by seeing the beautiful petals of the flower beginning to show themselves, and in two nights it sprang into full bloom.

Only think, a flower of unparalleled beauty, every tint toned down to the most delicate shade, and still blended in one complete and harmonious whole, twenty-eight inches across, while its petals of variegated colors could not be surpassed for beauty!

The next morning this thing of beauty, that ought to have been a joy forever, was nearly closed, and in two days was far on the road that takes it to mature the seed, the plant of which, in fifty years will produce another flower.—*Davis' Literary Monthly.*

## BRIC-A-BRAC.

The Missal that accompanied, as a present, from Rome the Papal Bull proclaiming Henry VIII. of England "Defender of the Faith" is said to be the most magnificent manuscript in the world. It is executed with wondrous art in letters of gold upon purple vellum. The German Government paid the Duke of Hamilton £10,000 for it, and snapped it up while authorities at the British Museum were dickering for it, and trying to get it for a lower price, and loyal Britons mourn that it is lost to England forever. So far as is known, it is the most costly book in existence.

An interesting volume in the possession of the Nesbit-Hamilton family has a collection of dates written on the first page that are quite a history. It appears that a large-print prayer-book in 1760, belonging to Lady Robert Manners, was borrowed by Secker, Archbishop of Canterbury, whose sight was failing, for use at the marriage of George III. and also on subsequent occasions. By degrees a superstition arose connected with the use of the book—that it brought happiness to the married couple—and it has been, therefore, borrowed many times.

A WELCOME and interesting addition to the varied attractions of the British Museum has lately been made in the form of a quantity of Japanese wood-cut illustrations and picture-books, being a part of the collection purchased by the trustees from Mr. William Anderson, in the year 1882, for the sum of £3000. The present exhibition is confined to native reproduction of original designs, in which the complete collection abounds. The exhibits are unique. They are the finest of their kind ever taken in Europe; and neither in the present nor in the future would it be possible to match them at any price. Mr. Anderson started in life as an art-student, and subsequently adopted the profession of medicine. He resided in Japan for six years as professor in the Imperial Naval College at Tokio, where he also held the post of medical officer to the British legation. In that joint capacity, and aided by an artistic training, he enjoyed a rare opportunity of gathering together a magnificent and ample series of specimens of Chinese, Korean and Japanese paintings, penmanship and printing.

A NEW use of the photograph process is the preservation of manuscripts. It is an idea of the publishers of the *Century Dictionary*, the work on which involves so much handling of the sheets of paper containing the matter to be printed that they would soon be unreadable. Each of the 25,000 sheets of "copy" has been copied on a negative, reduced one-fourth in size. The negatives are kept in a fire-proof building. When a duplicate of a sheet of copy is wanted, one is produced from the negative of any required size. A great saving in the cost of insurance has been effected by the adoption of this plan, the value of the mass of copy to the publishers being not less than \$150,000, and the cost of the negatives being not more than \$300. And no money received from an insurance company in case of destruction of such property by fire could repair the loss of time consumed by the host of students who had contributed the original manuscript. The idea was borrowed from the custom followed in Paris during its siege by the Prussian army, when reduced copies of letters were sent by carrier pigeons.

"SOME people," said the tramp, as he sat in Washington Square and picked his teeth with a match, "make me tired with their ignorance of the English language. If I ask a man for a dime he's almost sure to ask me if I want work. If I wanted work, I reckon I've got sense enough to ask for it."

NEARLY three hundred divorces were granted in Philadelphia last week. Instead of the Quaker, Philadelphia is rapidly becoming the shake her city.

## A VERITABLE POEM OF POEMS.

MRS. H. A. DEMING, of San Francisco, is said to have occupied a year in hunting up and fitting together the following thirty-eight lines from thirty-eight English poets. The names of the authors are given below:—

- 1—Why all this toil for triumphs of an hour?
- 2—Life's a short summer, man a flower.
- 3—By turns we catch the vital breath, and die.
- 4—The cradle and the tomb, alas! so nigh.
- 5—To be is better far than not to be.
- 6—Though all man's life may seem a tragedy;
- 7—But light cares speak when mighty cares are dumb,
- 8—The bottom is but shallow whence they come.
- 9—Your fate is but the common fate of all;
- 10—Unmingled joys here to no man befall.
- 11—Nature to each allots his proper sphere,
- 12—Fortune makes folly her peculiar care;
- 13—Custom does often reason overrule,
- 14—And throw a cruel sunshine on a fool.
- 15—Live well, how long or short, permit to heaven,
- 16—They who forgive most shall be most forgiven.
- 17—Sin may be clasped so close we can not see its face—
- 18—Vile intercourse where virtue has not place;
- 19—Then keep each passion down, however dear;
- 20—Thou pendulum betwixt a smile and tear;
- 21—Her sensual snares, let faithless pleasure lay
- 22—With craft and skill to ruin and betray;
- 23—Soar not too high to fall, but stoop to rise.
- 24—We masters grow of all that we despise.
- 25—O, then renounce than impious self esteem;
- 26—Riches have wings, and grandeur is a dream.
- 27—Think not ambition wise because 'tis brave,
- 28—The path of glory leads but to the grave.
- 29—What is ambition? 'Tis a glorious cheat,
- 30—Only destructive to the brave and great.
- 31—What's all the gaudy glitter of a crown?
- 32—The way to bliss lies not on beds of down.
- 33—How long we live, not years, but actions, tell;
- 34—That man lives twice who lives the first life well.
- 35—Make, then, while yet ye may, your God your friend,
- 36—Whom Christians worship, yet not comprehend.
- 37—The trust that's given guard, and to yourself be just;
- 38—For, live we how we can, yet die we must.

1, Young; 2, Doctor Johnson; 3, Pope; 4, Prior; 5, Sewell; 6, Spenser; 7, Daniel; 8, Sir Walter Raleigh; 9, Longfellow; 10, Southwell; 11, Congreve; 12, Churchill; 13, Rochester; 14, Armstrong; 15, Milton; 16, Baily; 17, Trench; 18, Somerville; 19, Thomson; 20, Byron; 21, Smollett; 22, Crabbe; 23, Massinger; 24, Crowley; 25, Beattie; 26, Cowper; 27, Sir Walter Davenant; 28, Gray; 29, Willis; 30, Addison; 31, Dryden; 32, Francis Quarles; 33, Watkins; 34, Herrick; 35, William Mason; 36, Hill; 37, Dana; 38, Shakespeare.

## THE OLDEST CLOCK IN THE WORLD.

AN old clock, probably the oldest in the world, is now in the possession of Lewis Jones, the undertaker, at No. 58 Lagrange Street, Boston. It is called the "Mycall Clock," from having been brought over from London, in England, by John Mycall, who settled in Cambridge in 1740, and who about that time was editor of a Boston paper. In 1793 Mr. Mycall moved to Newburyport, and presented the clock to his intimate friend, Benjamin Dearborn, the inventor of the balance scales, if he would name his son John Mycall Dearborn. On the death of the elder Dearborn it came into possession of the younger, who in turn gave it to his son, Robert Chase Dearborn. In 1881 it was sold at auction, when Mr. Jones became its purchaser. This antique timepiece plays eight tunes, and is in perfect running order, keeping excellent time, the works being of hammered brass, and the case of rare fine woods. It cost when new 250 guineas, or almost \$1,800.

## THE CONFESSIONS OF A STAMP COLLECTOR.

With every oncoming generation the great army of stamp collectors is swelled by accessions to its ranks from every class and condition of men and boys. In fact, almost every other household would seem to possess an album belonging to some one of its members, either in the form of a common scrap-book, or in that of the album proper, resplendent in Russia leather binding, and imposing with its lock and key.

Regarding the collectors of New York, an enthusiast reports that their number is 30,000 and constantly increasing. "They call themselves philatelists," he goes on to explain, "a word that you will not find in any but the newest editions of the dictionaries. This has been my hobby for three years. I got started on it in a purely accidental way. I'll tell you how it was. One day, about three years ago, I was walking along Broadway, not far from Fourteenth Street. It was raining very hard and my umbrella wasn't of much service, so I stopped under an awning to wait for the rain to hold up. I happened to stop by the stand of a dealer in old books. One of those I opened was a large album of stamps. I had no particular knowledge of stamps then, but I saw at once that such a collection must have considerable value. I asked the dealer carelessly what he would take for the album. He said \$4. I took out \$4 at once and handed it to him. The book was carefully wrapped up, and I put it under my arm and carried it to a well-known dealer in stamps, coins, &c. I had an idea that the album was worth perhaps \$25. The dealer looked at the book and then looked at me. He evidently thought that I didn't know the value of what I was offering. He said he would give me \$20 for it. I at once made up my mind that it was worth \$100, and of course told him that I wouldn't take \$20. Finally he offered me \$60, but I told him the book was not for sale.

Then I got stamp catalogues, and set about determining the value of the collection that I had picked up at a mere trifle. I found that I had a treasure worth \$300. I have kept it, and have added to it from time to time, until I have a valuable collection. You may call the philatelist a crank or a mono-maniac if you please, but it is just as legitimate to collect old stamps as old paintings, or old armor or weapons. Their value depends upon their rarity and the difficulty of collecting them. Every collection of stamps is constantly growing more valuable, because the number of stamps is limited. The law of supply and demand is contradicting. Sometimes we come upon valuable stamps in quite unexpected ways. Not long ago I went to a friend of mine, a cigar dealer, and asked him if he had any old letters that I might look at to see if I could find some stamps. He said he had no letters that he knew of, but his wife suggested that there was a box up in the garret that she thought contained letters. The box was got out and on the letters, which were covered with dust and yellow by time, I found some excellent stamps. One was an odd one; I could find nothing like it in any of the catalogues. I took it to the dealer mentioned before. He at once asked if it were for sale. I told him no, but I wished to learn its value. He said it was a rare stamp and was worth \$16. He offered me \$10 for it, but I kept it, thinking it might be worth \$20 in a year.

I went into a store one day kept by a Turk, and after buying a trifle, I asked him if he had any Turkish stamps on hand. He said he had, and gave me a handful. Among them was one that, I found by the catalogue, was worth \$1; I got it for nothing. Some of the Turkish stamps are very fine, but they are not rare, as a rule, because there is so much trade in Turkish tobacco and other things. The East India stamps used for domestic purposes are difficult to obtain."—*Select.*

## OLD POSTAGE STAMPS.

In 1857 a school teacher in Belgium, in order to give his pupils an object lesson in geography, offered a prize to the scholar who would first make a collection of one or more postage stamps from each stamp-issuing country of Europe. The collections were placed on exhibition, and the idea was eagerly seized upon by the public generally. In 1859 J. W. Scott, of Brooklyn, began his famous collection, being in all probability the first of Americans, although at that time there were several hundred collectors in Europe. At the present time there are probably not less than 600,000 collectors in the whole world, of whom 375,000 are in the United States, 200,000 in Europe, and 25,000 scattered through the rest of the world.

There are in the United States twenty-four firms, with capitals ranging from \$25,000 to \$500,000, engaged solely in selling stamps to collectors, which issue monthly catalogues of prices and keep their customers informed of each new stamp issued by any government. England has eight firms, and on the continent of Europe there are over thirty firms of the same grade. In addition to these there are at least 1,000 dealers having from \$1,000 to \$5,000 invested in the business. So profitable is it that about \$1,000,000 has been invested by swindlers in the counterfeiting of cancelled stamps, one firm in Germany engaged solely in counterfeiting cancelled American stamps having a capital of \$200,000, and another in Boston having \$150,000 invested in counterfeiting foreign stamps.

The periodicals devoted exclusively to this pursuit number about 700, one collector in New York having made a collection last year of 537 published in the United States alone. As a rule these are small, published monthly, and contain only from eight to thirty-two pages; but there are a score or more of high grade. In Europe these periodicals are fewer in number, but of the best kind. There is a National Philatelic Society in the United States; each State has a State society, and there are over three hundred minor organizations for the exchange of duplicates and protection against fraud.

There must be something pleasant and useful in this taste for collecting postage stamps, independent of any fashion, which has made it grow to such large proportions. It is not a mania. It has lasted for thirty years, has grown yearly, and will continue to grow. The child who begins a collection remains a collector so long as he lives; as he grows old his children join the ranks as they know something of the world, of geography, and of the different countries. To them it is the long-sought and never-before-found royal road to learning. To the old it is an ever fresh revelation of humanity in its broadest and widest sense.

There are, or have been, 349 stamp issuing countries, colonies, and towns in the world. The first object of every collector is to get one specimen from each government. Some of these, like Naples, Rome and Sicily, are no longer in existence; some, like Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and certain German States no longer issue them. These stamps are rare and usually hard to get, but the collector learns all about them, and when he meets one he knows its value and why it is valuable. His next object is to arrange his stamps, as he gets them according to the year of issue. He must know the money of the country, the ruler, the coat-of-arms, population, the flag and many other things concerning it, and this information he gets from his album and catalogue. A boy of twelve who begins collecting will in a year's time tell by a glance at a stamp the country, date of issue, the value (uncancelled) in American money, the name of the ruler, when he was crowned, and whether it is common or rare. He has a better idea of the world, of the different countries and of current history than many a man who has just been graduated from Harvard or Yale. He has acquired it unconsciously and without effort. His Spanish stamps are an object lesson in the history of Spain, and though he may not know who became President after



Lincoln he knows when Isabella was kicked out; how long the head of Amadeus remained on the stamps, the year of the republic and of the Carlist insurrection; when Alfonso was crowned, when he died, and when the regency stamps were issued. As with Spain so with other countries.

In a certain grammar school in New York the principal was bitterly opposed to the "stamp foolishness" and crushed it out. Fortune brought to him a sixth-grade teacher, wise in her generation, who was a collector. She started the boys to collecting; half a dozen had been collecting and these resumed the pursuit they had been frightened into dropping. When the half yearly promotions were made she was advanced one grade, retaining the pupils. From the beginning she had a struggle with the principal, and only by superior obstinacy and backbone contained her encouragement of the stamp collecting, which was done entirely out of school hours. One day, when the principal was in her room, another teacher came in, asking, "How many British colonies are there in the West Indies?"

"About half a dozen," said the principal.

"I think there are more," said the teacher, quietly. Turning to her class she asked the question. Twelve hands were raised.

"Answer, Winters."

"Sixteen," replied Winters, rolling off the names in one breath. "Antigua, Bahamas, Barbadoes, Bermuda, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Montserrat, Nevis, St. Christopher, Santa Lucia, St. Vincent, Tobago, Trinidad, Turk's Island and Virgin Islands."

"Thanks," said the inquirer; "that's one of your stamp boys, I know."

"Yes," said the teacher, "Is there anything else you would like to know about them; their capitals, size, population?"

"No," said the other, with a smile and glance at the principal, "not now; but I know where to come for such information when I want it."

The principal said nothing, but that afternoon he had a long talk with the teacher, which was followed by a special examination of her twelve fifth-grade "stamp-boys." "There are no boys in the first grade who can compete with them in geography, and no twelve teachers in any one school who can compete with them in general and useful information so far as they have gone," was his verdict.

There is now in that school a regular stamp exchange, presided over during the noon hour by one of the teachers; there are two hundred collectors instead of twelve, and the principal's monthly presenter of an album is the most hotly-contested prize. Once a week each class has a rare stamp offered as a prize to the boy who can tell the most about it, and the result is that the school has obtained a high reputation in two years for turning out bright boys.

It is difficult to explain to a skeptic, who understands nothing of the method of collecting, how these results are obtained unconsciously and without effort by the young; but a boy will learn the Russian alphabet, the Turkish numerals, and the money tables of foreign nations in preference to the revised rules of base-ball, and consider it greater "fun." The old order is passing away and a "new order cometh" in education as well as government. The much-ridiculed stamp mania is one of the humble methods used to give it form and expression. Teachers are beginning to see this, and in the public schools of New York there are over one hundred who consider it the strongest helper they have.

—T. E. Wilson, in the *American Stationer*.

#### A FRANK CONFESSOR.

"Hark! the chimes, the music swells,"  
Cried Frank, "give me a ring of bells!"  
Kate whispered while the music rolled,  
"I'd rather have a ring of gold."

#### PHILATELIC NOTES.

The *Hilafic Philatelist* is now sixteen pages, and very neatly printed.

ATTENTION is called to the stamp advertisements in this issue. Please name this paper when you reply to advertisements.

WE desire a correspondent in every foreign country to furnish us reliable information regarding new issues.

Is our next number will be found a record of all new stamps, surcharges, etc., that have appeared since the first of March.

WE have recently been shown by Mr. D. A. King of this city, a dark brown variety of the two cent registered stamp. We can vouch for the genuineness of the misprint.

The *Philatelic Gazette*, Altoona, Pa., the *Stamp*, Denver, Col., *Cumberland Collector*, Nashville, Tenn., are the only stamp papers that have so far reached us, although we had mailed a card to most of the publishers asking for sample copies.

The highest price will be paid for good articles on philately. Twenty dollars will be paid for the best written history of the "Postage Stamps of Canada," the same to include the stamps of all the provinces separately, as they were before confederation, and then continue to the present date.

#### TALK ABOUT WRITING MATERIALS.

Let us now for a moment consider the materials used in the infancy of writing, as well as in its progress towards its maturity.

The writing of the ancient Hebrews and the Egyptian hieroglyphics were cut in stone with bronze chisels. The arrow-headed inscriptions of the Babylonians, Medes, Persians and Assyrians, when carved in rocks, were cut with bronze chisels. The same characters on bricks may have been made when the material was in a plastic state.

Stone, lead, brass, ivory and wood were all writing materials, and required pens with sharp and hard points. In later times, leather was used by the Jews; linen, silk, skins of serpents and fishes by the Greeks, and parchment by the Romans.

Papyrus was in early use by the Egyptians, and eventually found its way among the European nations, where it continued in general use until about the end of the seventh century, and was then superseded by parchment and vellum, except that for a time it was used for correspondence. Its use continued by the Popes until the twelfth century.

Parchment is said to have been used by Emmeus, King of Pergamos, two and a half centuries before the Christian era.

From the beginning of the eighth century until a comparatively recent period parchment and vellum were most highly esteemed, and oftentimes difficult to obtain in sufficient quantities by the nations of Europe as well as portions of the East.

The natives of India, at the present day, write on the palm-leaf with a stylus resembling a long darning-needle. In writing they use the forefinger of the left hand as a writing-desk, around which they fold the leaf upon which they write.

The Arab uses a similar instrument, with which he inscribes his signature on the shoulder-blade of a sheep.

Of pens we may enumeate in the order of their use the chisel, the reed, the quill, the gold and the steel pen.

The mode of using the chisel was but little like that of the modern pen. The stylus was a dangerous instrument, not unworthy of its progeny, the Italian stiletto. It was by the order of the Emperor Julian that Cassianus, a refugee bishop who had set up a school at Rome, was

martyred by his scholars with the stylus, and Cæsar, in full senate, seized and pierced the arms of Cassius with his stylus.

The monks of the Middle Ages employed both rod and quill pens, as they had need for broad or narrow lines.

The calamus, or reed-pen, is still used in its native place, Egypt, but better reeds are found on the Persian Gulf, where they are gathered in the month of March and immersed in fermenting manure for a period of six months. This coats them with the yellow or black varnish for which they are prized.

The first mention of a quill pen is by St. Isidore, of Seville, who lived about the middle of the seventh century. It gradually came to be the principal instrument of writing, and its use continued to be general until superseded by the steel pen about half a century since.

The first metal pen, properly so-called, mentioned in history, was the gold pen of the famous writing-master, Peter Bales, of Queen Elizabeth's time.

The first steel pen was manufactured in 1803, since which time constant improvements have been made until now its use is nearly universal. In China a hair pencil is used with india ink.

The diamond-pointed pen, although usually ranked as a modern combination, seems to have been known away before the memory of the oldest inhabitant, for the prophet Jeremiah uses the expression, "written with a pen of iron and with the point of a diamond."

Of ink a poet has said :

"Hard that its name it should not save,  
Who first poured forth the sable wave."

The most ancient ink, sepia, has been found in the solid rock where it had remained for a hundred thousand years, and yet possessing all the qualities of the cuttlefish of to-day.

The Spartans used sepia for making inscriptions on sarcophagi.

The ink of the ancients was usually a preparation of lamp-black and a gum. Dioscorides gives the proportions 3 of soot to 1 of gum. This was formed into cakes or rolls, and tempered with water when it was to be used.

In the excavations at Herculaneum an inkstand was unearthed which contained an ink perfectly preserved.

The Roman emperors used a very expensive red ink in writing signatures, and its use was prohibited to all others except that their sons if of adult age could use it; otherwise they must have recourse to green ink. The ancient Romans frequently complained that their ink did not flow freely, and they sometimes gave vent to expressions closely bordering on profanity, in consequence.

Charlemagne signed his charters and ordinances by "dipping the thumb of his dexter glove into a fluid resembling blacking, and dabbing it boldly on to the royal sheepskin."—*Selected.*

#### A HUMMING BIRD'S NEST.

A NEW JERSEY paper says: "Recently a humming bird's nest was found by some persons who had sufficient natural curiosity to overcome their compassion, and who captured the nest, two young hummers and the old one, took them home and had them stuffed. They are to be sent to a museum of natural curiosities in London. The nest is built on a small twig, and is scarcely the size of half an English walnut. Both nest and twig are covered with little patches of lichen, until it is almost impossible to tell one from the other, and the nest looks like a kind of natural excrescence on the twig. The nest is pliable; like a tiny cup of velvet, and the inside is lined with a white substance as rich and soft as white silk. The little birds are about the size of bumble-bees, very pretty, and they sit on a little perch just outside the nest, with open bills, while the old bird hovers over them to feed them."

#### ART IN OUR COINAGE.

It must indeed remain a dream, as Mr. Stillman expresses it, that modern coinage can ever become, like that of ancient Hellas, a chief vehicle of the expression of art. It is not, however, too much to hope that it may come at least to reflect the contemporaneous attainment of art. Greek medalists were untrammelled by the requirements of regularity of contour, and thickness, and excessive flatness of relief, which are in this practical age demanded in money for the greater convenience of its use as a medium of exchange. Our power presses too, are, in truth, necessary to secure swiftness and economy of manufacture; but they can never produce the artistic effect of the blow struck by the hammer of the ancient coiner, deftly modulated and directed, as it always was by experienced workmen, so as to bring out the full value of any particular die. Moreover, perhaps we cannot expect the designer of to-day, whose mind is free from all mist of mythological illusion, to work with quite the inspiration of Evainetos and Kimon, and their great unknown brother-artists. But after every allowance has been made, the fact remains that, with a few exceptions, the coinage of the modern world is unnecessarily inartistic. And none will gainsay Mr. Stillman that, among all, the products of the United States mint are the most barbarous, the most contemptible in the weakly grotesque design of their eagles, in their illdrawn and commonplace liberties, and in the vulgarly staring lettering of their legends.

Modern coinage must, of course, always conform to modern conditions of evenness and regularity. But living art—and to see that art is not yet dead, we need look no further than to the work of French sculptors, and to that of some we have among ourselves—makes light of such restrictions. The Parthenon frieze proclaims for all time what can be done within fixed lines, and in the extreme of low relief. It rests simply with the Treasury department to consign to oblivion when it will own gawky fowls and disjointed goddesses, and to set an example to the world by the issue of a series of coins bearing for each denomination independent designs—the most meritorious obtainable. Such series, renewed at fitting intervals, and presenting, within the possible range, the best contemporary conceptions of personified civic virtues and the best portraits of our great men, would surely exert a potent educating influence upon the eyes and thought of our people, and would emulate even if from afar, the interest of ancient coinages as an enduring record of history and art. The administration which is the first to adopt this reform, will win for itself high and deserved honor, and will at the same time give to the medalists an impetus greater than it has enjoyed since the day of its generous patrons of the Renaissance.—*The Century.*

#### COINAGE OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF ENGLAND

BY D. A. K.

NUMISMATICS, since its beginning as a science, has been most interesting in its nature to all who engage in its study, either as historian, antiquarian, or amateur collector.

Every numismatist feels himself drawn to the study of some particular issue or country, and in consideration of its rapid improvement in coinage, and general historical interest, we plead guilty of the commonwealth as the period of which numismatically we would speak.

After the dethronement of Charles I., the commonwealth, under its energetic head, Cromwell, proceeded to effect great changes in its coinage. The Royal Arms and Latin mottoes were thrown aside, and the simple cross of St. George, placed within a palm and an olive branch, with the motto, "The Commonwealth of England" was adopted. The reverse bore two joined shields one bearing the cross of St.

George, and the other the harp of Ireland, with the motto "God with us." One noticeable feature of this change was that both mottoes were in English. Sir Richard Harleigh who had been master of the mint under Charles I., and who was re-appointed by the Commonwealth, refused to carry into effect this change in type of the coinage, but he being dismissed and Dr. Aaron Guerlain being appointed in his place, under his direction the change was effected.

The new issues were crowns, half crowns, shillings, and half shillings, and pieces of two-pence, one penny, and one half penny. The larger pieces all bore the same device, with the exception of being marked above the double shields with Roman numerals to denote the value. The two penny and one penny bore no inscription on them, and the half penny had simply the cross on one side and the harp on the other.

On the restoration of peace Cromwell being determined that the coinage of England should be second to that of no other country, invited to England a Frenchman named Pierre Blondeau who had carried to perfection the most approved modes of stamping by the mill and screw. On his arrival Blondeau produced patterns of half crowns, shillings and half shillings coined by the new process, and by this means a legend was for the first time produced on the edge, one of these patterns of the half crowns bore the inscription "Truth and Peace," "Petrus Blondeau, 1851," another had "In the 3rd year of freedom restored." The shilling and half shilling were beautifully grained on the edges and were brought to their weight with great exactness. None of these devices were ever adopted however, and an engagement was entered into with Blondeau to work the new process with the usual devices of the Commonwealth, but as they were never issued, can only be considered as patterns and are accordingly rare. The officials of the mint were very jealous of Blondeau, and tried to destroy his credit with Cromwell. Their opposition at length frustrated his schemes and he was prevented from carrying into effect his reform. The screw process was, however, in the end adopted, though without the aid of Blondeau, who was undoubtedly illused in the matter. The gold coins bore the same devices and mottoes as the silver ones, and were simply 20, 10 and 5 shilling pieces.

The coinage made more progress under Cromwell's rule than ever it had done before. These coins were the best that up to that period had been issued by the English or perhaps any other mint. The issues being, comparatively speaking, not rare can be easily procured from dealers. The only rarities are those of the dates 1658 and 1660 they being scarce, especially the half crown of the last.

#### THE GERMAN PRINTING-OFFICE.

The Imperial Printing Establishment in Berlin at present employs no fewer than 95 skilled artisans, besides 770 male and female workers and apprentices. The extent of the work carried on may be judged when we say that the quantity of printed matter supplied yearly to the various authorities amounts to 120,000,000 sheets, of which the post and telegraph offices alone take 13,000,000 and 60,000,000 pieces in books, &c. Postage and revenue, etc., stamps are dispatched to their various destinations during the year in 20,000 boxes, having a total weight of one million kilograms. Post cards and official forms are annually prepared to the number of 12,000,000. Altogether the establishment turned out last year over 1,173,500,000 pieces of the different sorts of money paper, having a nominal value of nearly 1,060,000,000 marks, equivalent to an average daily production of 3,500,000 pieces, to the value of nearly 7,750,000 marks. As the work-people are not allowed to leave the establishment until the end of the day's work, a building had to be constructed to serve as a dining hall. This erection is maintained by the work-people themselves, each of whom contributes a yearly sum of 2½ marks.—*Selected.*

#### A DYAK CLIMBER.

The Hill Dyaks of Borneo are expert climbers. Mr. Hornaby, while collecting specimens of natural history, saw a Dyak ascend a large tapang tree, five feet in diameter at the base, straight as a ship's mast, and without the smallest limb or knot for a hundred and twenty feet up.

The man went up the tree to secure a bees' nest hanging from the under side of the lowest limb. The nest was simply a large, naked, triangular piece of white comb.

A Dyak "ladder" had been put up the previous year, and reached from the ground to the branches. It consisted of seven twenty-foot bamboo poles held almost end to end alongside the trunk by sharp pegs driven into the soft wood about two feet apart.

The pegs were driven first on one side of the poles and then on the other, and to them the bamboos were lashed by rattans, which held them firmly about eight inches from the tree. These pegs served as the rungs of the ladder.

The builder must have been a bold man, with nerves of steel. He was obliged to let the ends of the poles overlap a few feet in order to build the ladder with safety to himself.

The completion of the ladder was most difficult. Clinging to the slight bamboo pole, a hundred feet from the ground, he hauled up the last bamboo, twenty feet long, drove in the peg, lashed the lower end of the pole to it, and then ascended that shaking bamboo to fasten it at the top.

The Dyak honey-hunter fastened to his back a basket to receive the honey. Making up his torch-wood, with which to smoke the bees out of the nest and away from himself, he ignited it, slung it by a cord from his neck, so that it would hang below his feet, and started up the slender "ladder."

Hand and foot he went up, peg after peg, with a nonchalant ease which would have done credit to the most daring of sailors. Even that sailor would have been pardoned if he was a little shaky, while climbing a tall factory chimney by the lightning rod.

On reaching the lower limb, one hundred and twenty feet from the ground, he took his torch in one hand, waved it to and fro, until it smoked freely, and then crawled out along the bare branch until he was in reach of the coveted nest.

Examining it first on one side, and then on the other, he shouted down as cheerfully as if his climb had been nothing, "No honey."

Leaving the comb untouched, he descended, with a smile, and reached the ground without the least tremor.—*Selected.*

#### PREHISTORIC AFRICA.

##### THE REMARKABLE RUINS FOUND AMONG THE HUTS OF SAVAGES.

THE readers of Mr. Haggard's new story "She," will remember that when his little party of adventurers passed in their boat from the sea into an East African river, they found on the bank a wall of stone that had evidently been a solidly constructed wharf in some remote period. In a foot note he justifies this conceit by alluding to the ruins of a very ancient city on the coast at Kilwa, south of Zanzibar. It happens that 500 miles nearer the region in which he has placed his story there are evidences of a past civilization that are incomparably greater than those he mentions.

Some way south of the Sambesi River there is a large region extending from the sea nearly 400 miles inland, and 300 to 400 miles toward the south, in which ruins are constantly being discovered, proving that in prehistoric times the country was inhabited by civilized people. To-day only the rudest black tribes inhabit this land, save in a few places where Portuguese have established stations. The little bee-hive huts of the natives are seen among massive ruins betokening a degree of architectural skill which rivals

that of the Aztecs. Our knowledge of these ruins is still far from perfect. Our earliest records of travel and trade on the east Africa coast, extending back to the beginning of the Christian era, do not mention them. Only in recent years have the travels of Selous, Erskine, Mauch, Baines, Mohr and O'Neill revealed to us the monumental evidence this country contains.

The coast town Sofala is shown on all maps of East Africa. Near that town Carl Mauch found extensive ruins remarkable for their enduring nature and strange shapes. There are partly ruined walls, still thirty feet high and twelve feet wide at the base, built of small hewn blocks of granite. In these walls, sometimes fifteen to twenty feet from the ground, are embedded one end of blocks of stone eighteen to twenty feet long, which were evidently used to support galleries. Here and there, built in the walls or standing by themselves, are round stone towers which evidently rose to heights of thirty to fifty feet. Similar masses of masonry are found as far as 350 miles inland and a little north, near the coast.

It is not positively known yet who built these ancient structures. No trained archaeologist has visited them, and no search has yet been made for inscriptions, though O'Neill says he has no doubt from what he has recently heard that there are numerous inscriptions on the ruins about Manica. All these ruins are surrounded by surface gold mines. It is believed that all this country was occupied some time before the Christian era by a great colony, probably of Phœnician origin, and that its chief occupation was gold mining.

Mr. O'Neill says that those numerous ruins are nearly as well preserved as those of ancient Egypt, and better than those of Assyria. Some day, no doubt, they will be systematically studied. Their existence shows conclusively that a large region in inner Africa, now given up to savage men and wild beasts, was subject many centuries ago to the control of a people who were considerably advanced in the arts of civilization.—*New York Sun*.

#### INDIAN HISTORY.

If we could only get at the facts of the history of the savage tribes, it would be of interest to compare these with what is related as the fortune of most civilized nations. It is only in tradition that the history of the Indian lives, and only one version of the story is ever heard. Sometimes this is so true to nature that no room for doubt can be found. Such is the following chapter from the annals of the Beaver tribe, which lives in the northern part of the British possessions.

One day a young chief shot his arrow through a dog belonging to another brave. The brave revenged the death of his dog, and instantly a hundred bows were drawn. Ere night had fallen eighty warriors lay dead around the camp, the pine woods rang with the lamentations of the women, the tribe had lost its bravest men.

There was a temporary truce; the friends of the chief whose arrow had killed the dog yet numbered some sixty people; it was agreed that they should separate from the tribe and seek their fortune in the wild wilderness lying to the south.

In the night they began their march; sullenly their brethren saw them depart never to return. They went their way by the shores of the Lesser Slave Lake, towards the great plains which were said to be far southward by the banks of the swift-rolling Saskatchewan.

The tribe Beavers never saw again this exiled band, but a hundred years later a Beaver Indian, who followed the fortunes of a white fur-hunter, found himself in one of the forts of the Saskatchewan. Strange Indians were camped about the palisades; they were portions of the great Black-foot tribes whose hunting-grounds lay south of the Saskatchewan. Among them were a few braves who, when they conversed together, spoke a language different from that of the other Black-foot; in this language the Beaver Indian recognized his own tongue.

#### POISON PLANTS.

There are many species of these plants belonging to the Sumach family,—known to the botanist under the general name of *Rhus*,—widely scattered throughout North America. The most important are the Poison Oak, a shrub from one to three feet high, its leaves having three leaflets; Poison Ivy, which is, of course, a vine; and Poison Sumach, or Swamp Sumach, also popularly called Dogwood, and scientifically known as *Rhus Venenata*, or poisonous *rhus*. Each is well known where it is common. They are all similar in their poisonous character.

While many persons are wholly unsusceptible to their poison, many others are poisoned by handling the plants, and some even by the emanations from them. The suffering from these poisons is severe. There is an intolerable itching and burning, and if another part of the body is brought into contact with the affected part, it becomes equally affected, the whole body sometimes swells, and there are local inflammations, and pustules filled with an acrid fluid.

The question of a cure is one of much importance to the sufferer. Some of the remedies which have been suggested are useless; others painful; others dangerous. The *Medical Record* (September, 18, 1885), contains communications on the subject from several physicians, each giving his own experience, with remedies employed by him.

Dr. R. G. Williams, of Whitney, Texas, writes that a strong decoction of the common cup-oak bark, boiled to the consistency of tar, and applied by means of a camel's-hair brush, or an ordinary brush, or mop, two or three times, is very efficacious.

Dr. J. B. Kell, of Delphos, Ohio, had himself been poisoned six times, the last attack rendering his features barely recognizable. What sufferers generally want is an immediate relief of the smarting pain and intense itching. While he found the common remedies beneficial, he did not obtain the desired relief until he applied to the inflamed parts a saturated solution of potassium chlorate. The effect of this was exceedingly gratifying. The linen with which it is applied should be changed once an hour.

Dr. J. R. Flowers, of Columbus, Ohio, says of a severe case: "An old native Indian gathered a quantity of boneset, and after pounding the tops and leaves to a pulp, applied it to the parts affected during the night. The next morning the swelling had all disappeared. Since that time I have used the fluid extracts of the same for all my cases, and the result has been an immediate cure. Several of my medical friends have tried it, and the result has in every case been very satisfactory."—*Youth's Companion*.

A NATURAL SALMON-TRAP.—The salmon, the cousin of the trout, is famous for its methods of going up stream; it darts at falls ten or twelve feet high, leaps into the air and rushes up the falling water in a marvelous manner. So determined are the salmon to attain the high and safe waters, that in some localities nets are placed beneath the falls, into which the fish tumble in their repeated attempts to clear the hill of water. Other than human hunters, moreover, profit by these scrambles up hill. Travelers report that on the banks of the upper St. John river, in Canada, there was once a rock in which a large circular well, or pot-hole, had been worn by the action of the water. At the salmon season this rock proved a favorite resort for bears, and for a good reason. Having a special taste for salmon, the bears would watch at the pot-hole, and as the salmon, dashing up the fall, were thrown by its force into the rocky basin, the bears would quickly scrape them out of the pot-hole, and the poor salmon would be eaten before they had time to wonder at this unlooked-for reception. The Dominion government finally authorized a party of hunters to destroy the pot hole and thus break up the bears' fishing-ground.—*Ec.*

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**THE BARBER'S WOING.**

"Oh, Barbara!" the barber sighed,  
"This scissor time to speak;  
If you won't be my home true bride,  
I'll die without a squeak."  
"Oh, Dan Druff, don't," the po'made screamed,  
"Do such a wig-head act;  
It would be barbarous. I dreamed  
Of you," she smiled, with tact.  
"Look up and brush your tears;  
Oh, come and be a man;  
Let's soap I'll be your bride some day."  
"I will; but if," cried Dan,  
"Your razor you will dipel,  
Then I'll heard death, you'll see;  
And if there's scraepen n y door bell,  
My chair will empty be."  
"I do not shampoo follow," said  
Miss Barbara, perplexed;  
"Oh though when your first wife is dead,  
You'll quickly cry for 'Next!'"

**TWO FOR A CENT APIECE.**

A young editor, bright, poor and pun-  
strous, had won the affection of a rich  
man's daughter, and they fixed a day for  
him to call on the father; and on that  
day he was promptly in the old's gentle-  
man's office.

"Good morning," he said, confident,  
but ready to run, "I have called on you  
for a matter of —"

"We don't want any advertising to-  
day," interrupted the old gentleman  
looking up over his glasses.

"I am not on that business, sir. I  
came to ask for your daughter."

"What do you want with her?"

"Marry her."

"What for?"

"For better or worse."

"What does the girl say?"

"She says she will be my wife."

"Ugh! You haven't got a cent in  
the world, have you?"

"Yes, sir. She gave me assent, and  
if you will do the same, that will make  
two, and we can buy a postage stamp  
and write to you for the balance of our  
salary."

It was a wretched attempt, but he got  
the girl.—*California Philatelist.*

**A REAL BARGAIN.**

"Owing to ill-health," says Bill Nye,  
"I will sell at my residence in town 29,  
range 18, best, according to government  
survey, one crushed raspberry colored  
cow, aged six years. She is a good  
milkster, and is not afraid of the cars or  
anything else. She is a cow of un-  
daunted courage and gives milk frequen-  
ly. To a man who does not fear death  
in any form she would be a great boon.  
She is very much attached to her home  
at present, by means of a trace-chain, but  
she will be sold to any one who will  
agree to treat her right. She is one-  
fourth shorthorn and three-fourths hyena.  
Purchaser need not be identified. I will  
also throw in a double-barrelled shot gun  
which goes with her. In May she gen-  
erally goes away somewhere for a week  
or two, and returns with a tall, red calf,  
with long, wabby legs. Her name is  
Rose, and I would prefer to sell her to a  
non-resident.

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which good exchange will be given.  
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& Co., London, to exchange for coins,  
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DONALD A. KING, Halifax, N. S.

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change for stamps not in my collection.  
H. L. HART,  
71 Gottingen St., Halifax, N. S.

6.—WANTED, back numbers, vols., and  
sets of stamp and coin papers. Also,  
books and pamphlets on philately, numis-  
matics and natural history. Best exchange  
in books or stamps.  
JOHN R. FINDLAY,  
Halifax, N. S.

7.—WANTED, the following stamp  
papers, for which I will give cash or good  
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In a boat drifting idly, idly,  
Sat a youth and a maiden fair;  
The sunbeams played at hide and seek  
In the tangles of her hair;  
Before her he sat enchanted,  
Charmed by her magic spell,  
His dark eyes mately pleading  
The love he longed to tell.

"Beatrice, dear," he whispered,  
"Would it not be a beautiful dream  
To drift on thus forever  
Along Life's placid stream?"  
Beatrice played with the tiller ropes;  
"I shouldn't mind it, Ned,  
Drifting with you down the stream of Life,  
If I might steer," she said.

—Harvard Lampoon.

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This is the way he told it at police headquarters the other day:

"Vhell, I vhas in mine place, you know, and a feller comes in und says: 'Mister Blank I make a bet about you shust now.'"

"'Vhas dot so'?"

"'Yes; I make a bet dot you can write your name.'"

"'Of course I can write my name! Does somedy take me for a fool?'"

"'Vhell, you put him down on dis piece of paper und I make fife dollar.'"

"'Vhell, I write my name on his paper und he goes off und I doan' see him any more. Yesterday I get some notice from a bank dot a note for feefy dollar vhas due. I come down town und finds a note mit my name on der back. It vhas der paper on which I wrote my name.'"

"'Well?'"

"'Vhell, dot vhas all, except dot I vhas a fool, und if you catch him I gif one honnered dollar to keep my name out of der papers.'"

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Printer's ink may scorn,  
Or knit his brow, nor deign to bow  
To one so lowly born;  
But printer's ink has built its throne  
Where minds their tributes bring,  
And God's most gifted intellects  
Shout "Printer's ink is king!"

King of the world of thought refined  
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