UNCLE JOE'S HORSE TRADE.

IT BEGAN AT A GLUE FACTORY AND ENDED IN A CANAL.

An Equine Wonder Swapped For a World Beater That Was Picked Up at a Bargain for $10—Both Parties to the Deal Surprised—Dispute as to Which Lost.

"Speaking of horse trades," said the man with the chin whiskers, tilting his chair back to the wall of the hotel office and rolling his cigar around in his mouth, "that one my daughter was reading me the other night out of 'David Harum' reminds me of one my Uncle Joe Benson put through some years ago."

"Didn't hear any one pass any remarks about trading horses," said the man with the red face, "but if you've got anything on your mind that's looking for a vent, why, I suppose, you might as well let it out."

"Well, you needn't listen if you don't want to," said the man with the chin whiskers, "but I think my Uncle Joe's trade lays away over that Harum feller's, and what's more, it's plumb true, every word of it."

"Having nothing to do, and being somewhat wakeful," said the man with the slouch hat, "let's have it."

"Well," said the first speaker, "my Uncle Joe used to live up the State, in Oneida, which, as you gentlemen probably know, is on the Erie Canal, which noble stream provides, or used to provide, a living for the inhabitants of those parts, in one way or another. He was a well-to-do farmer, and in no way connected with the horse business, and a quieter, more easy-going fellow you never saw, and the last man in the world to do another man in a trade, or try to get more than was coming to him in any way. Nevertheless, he always took his share.

"Well, he had a little horse that had been in the family going on thirty years, and had got to the stage where he had to lean up against the side of the stall to eat his fodder, and my uncle decided that he had to do violence to his feelings and let him go. My aunt wanted to have him taken to the S. P. C. A. and chloroformed, but my uncle, being of the saving kind, said he thought he had better take him to the glue factory and try to realize something on his carcass. So one day he hitched up the young horse, who, by the way, was upward of fifteen years old, to the runabout, and putting a leading strap on the old plug, set off down the canal road to the factory.

"Old Malachi, that was the patriarch's name, didn't die on the road, and the old man made a dicker with the factory inspector for $3.75 cash money, and thought he had done well. While he was getting ready to go back home, a man came into the yard leading a horse, and started to talk to the inspector. The horse he had was a pretty fair looking animal, and my uncle, always having an eye out for bargains, thought he was worth more than the glue people would give for him, so he up and says to the farmer:

"'What you going to do with him?' pointing with his thumb at the fellow's horse.

"'Git what I can on him,' says the man.

"'Seems a pretty good piece of meat to make glue out of,' says my uncle.

"'Ain't good for nothing else,' says the farmer.

"My uncle looked the horse all over, and the more he looked the more he liked him. He was a fine, upstanding bay with a good eye and not over nine years old.

"'Runaway?' says my uncle.

"'Never in his life,' says the man.

"'Seems sound,' says my uncle.

"'And is,' says the man.

"My uncle looked the plug all over again and decided that that animal was going to breathe the air of freedom a few years longer, so he says,

"'Give you $10 for him.'

"'Put the halter on him,' says the man; 'he's your horse.'

"'Sure there ain't anything wrong with him,' says my uncle, as he counted out the ten plunks.

"'Nothin' much,' says the man, tucking the money into his hind pocket.

"'What is the matter with him?' says my uncle.

"'Staggers,' says the man.

"'Gee whiz!' says my uncle, and climbed into the runabout."

"Did you say your uncle was well-to-do?" broke in the man with the red face.

"As good as any round there," replied the man with the chin whiskers.

"Have his money left to him?" returned the questioner.

"Made it all himself," replied the story-teller.

"Beats all how some fools get along!" said the rubicund gentleman, under his breath.

"Well," continued the speaker, "the horse went along all right, and when he got home my uncle was so tickled with him that he hitched him up to a light wagon and took him down to the village to see how he acted on the road. He went along a kitin' and did the two miles from the house to the village in considerable better than seven, and my uncle just grinned round his head. He stopped at the hotel to get a little nourishment in honor of the occasion, and who should be standing up at the bar but Wes Yale.

"Now this Wes Yale was just about the sickest article in the horse line that ever did without grease, or thought he was, and when my uncle came down the street he was watching out of the door.

"'Ben buying a new horse, Joe?' he says as my uncle came up the porch.

"'Jest got him this mornin',' says my uncle, after giving his order.

"'What did you give for him?' says Yale.

"'More than that,' says Uncle Joe.

"'S'pose you think you've got a bargain?' says Yale, kinder sneerin'.

"'You win,' says my uncle.

"Well, they had another drink, and then went out to look at the horse. Yale looked him all over, felt of his legs and chest and grunted and looked solemn, and then says:

"'Dear at fifty.'

"'How'd you guess it?' says my uncle, in a sarcastic tone of voice. 'He came the two miles in better'n seven, comin' down, without half tryin'.'

"'Yes, he did?' says West,

"'Git in, an' I'll show you,' says my uncle.

"Well, they went up the road a piece, and the horse stuck his feet out like the real thing. Wes asked all kinds of questions and got answers to suit, and my uncle could see he was a nibblin' at the bait. He never asked him point blank if the skate was subject to staggers and my uncle wasn't volunteering any remarks, just keeping quiet and answering questions. Coming along back Wes says:

"'Seems a half-way decent sort of a plug, good enough for light farm work,' he says. 'Tell you what I'll do. I've got an extra horse I don't know exactly what to do with, that I'll swop for him, good strong puller, and just the thing for a lady to drive; will guarantee him not to shy at anything.' He sort of grinned when he said this, but Uncle Joe never noticed anything. He was too busy attending to the world beater and wondering when the next fit was due.

"'Come over to my place,' says Yale, 'and take a look at the animal; it's on your way, and maybe we can fix up a trade.' Uncle Joe had no objection. He was thinking how Wes Yale was eternally blowing about how wise he was trading horses, and just let him dig his own pit, as he seemed so set that way.

"When they got to Yale's place they drove around to the barn and he brought out his extra horse. He never would have taken a prize in a beauty show, but he was strong and big, over sixteen hands, and looked as if he could haul a church. He had a sort of far-away look in his eyes and seemed to meditate a good deal, but he was not a bad looking horse for a worker, and from Uncle Joe's end of the line, he was a cinch for a trade. In fact my uncle was so busy trying to keep from laughing in Yale's face, he didn't examine the horse quite as close as he might.

"'Where's the mate?' says my uncle to Yale.

"'Mate to what?' says Yale, surprised.

"'Why, you don't expect you're going to get a horse like mine for only one like him, do you?' says my uncle.

"'You be darned,' says Yale. 'That horse cost me forty-five and a plow harness.'

"'Nothin' doin',' says my uncle, starting to walk back to the wagon.

"'Hold on a minute,' says Wes, 'seein' as you must get the best end of this deal, I'll throw in the pony,' and with that he goes back in the barn and brings out the worst-looking piece of crow meat you ever looked at, just about able to stand up, the dead split of the 'No Time Here' picture you used to see on the fences. 'There,' he says, 'you can have the two of 'em.'

"Well, my uncle was so full of laugh he thought he'd split, but he made believe to hang back and played shy, until after considerable talk they made the trade. Uncle Joe turned over his horse to Yale and hitched up the oldest plug to the wagon, tied the big horse on behind and drove off. When he got out of sight, Wes Yale just sat down on the ground and roared.

"Uncle Joe jogged along up the road running alongside the canal until he got to a bridge leading to the road to his farm. The bridge was just like a hundred others along the canal, made of wood, about ten feet wide, with no guard rails, and approached by an inclined plane parallel with the water, with a sharp turn at right angles just before you get to the top. Thinking everything all right behind, the old gentleman drove right up and made the turn. Then he heard the strap that the new horse was tied by snap, and the next minute, with a big splash, the nag was floundering around in the water and was drowned as dead as Pharaoh's Red Sea brigade before anything could be done to rescue him.

"Gentlemen," said the man with the chin whiskers, looking solemnly around at his auditors, "no wonder 'Wes' Yale warranted that horse not to shy. He was as blind as a mole, that steed was, and when he came to the turn just before you go on to the bridge, he naturally fell overboard. With the help of some neighbors, Uncle Joe fished his mortal remains out of the canal and continued on home, with nothing but the crow meat to show for his trade. You can just believe when my aunt saw him coming back driving that specimen of the equine race she did not inform him that she considered him the hottest thing going. Not by a long shot, she didn't. Uncle Joe didn't answer back. The iron had entered into his soul, and conversation seemed superfluous.

"In the meantime Yale was fairly gloating over his bargain. Every point about the new horse seemed perfection to him, seeing as he had got him in trade for a no-account blind plug worth about $10 in open market, and he couldn't hardly wait until the harness was on him to take him down the road. With a big flourish he started out up the canal road where there was a good level stretch about three miles long without a turn, as fine a speedway as you want to see. He had not got more than a mile away from the house before the equine wonder stopped dead short and proceeded to throw the fit of his life. Gentlemen, staggers is not a mild disease, even in its mildest form and the line of staggers that horse displayed on the occasion was calculated to open the eyes of a Mammoth Cave eel.

"Yale was all alone and couldn't begin to hold him, so over into the canal rolled the horse, still struggling. There was nothing to be done but let him drown, which he did with neatness and dispatch. History fails to repeat the remarks made by Yale on the occasion, but knowing him as I do I guess you could bake bread with any one of them.

"Next day Uncle Joe went into town and you can just bet he was feeling pretty glum. After doing a few errands around the village he stopped over to the hotel and stood in the office talking to Jeff Hainey, the proprietor. While thus engaged, Wes Yale came up the front steps and went around to the bar.

"'There's a man I don't want to see,' said my uncle to Hainey, pointing to Yale.

"'What's the matter?' says Hainey.

"'Well,' said my uncle, 'I rung in a dead one on him in a horse trade yesterday, and if he has found it out, I guess he's dead sore.'

"'What!' says Jeff, commencing to laugh, 'why dod rot my soul, that's just what he told me he had done to you, not over an hour ago.'

"Well of course it all came out then and both Uncle Joe and Yale looked pretty foolish, but the old gentleman always said afterward that he got the better of Yale on the deal anyhow, as he had the crow meat to show for his $10, while Yale only had the experience."

"Did you say that story was true?" enquired the man with the red face.

"Every darn word of it," replied the man with the chin whiskers.

Without making any audible reply beyond a grunt, the red-faced man slowly arose from his chair and led the man with the slouch hat and the man with the chin whiskers around to the sanctuary of delight behind the swing doors.

VIRGINIA REPUBLICANS DORMANT.

Curious Policy of Abstention Practiced By the Party in That State.

The relation which the Republicans of Virginia bear to their political brethren elsewhere is peculiar. In the Presidential election of 1872 the Republicans were beaten in Virginia by only 1,800 votes. In 1880 the majority against them was 12,000. In 1884 the majority against them was only 6,000 and in 1888 it was only 1,500. In 1896, with the support of the combined Democratic and Populist parties in the State, Bryan's vote was 154,000 to 135,000 for McKinley, and yet in the present Virginia Legislature there are only eight Republican members out of a total of 140, and at the last State election, that of 1897, many of the Republicans refused to participate in a convention for the nomination of a State ticket. In 1898 the Republicans nominated no candidates, but let the State go Democratic by default, and this year, though the election is for legislators only and not for Governor, one of the most active Republicans in the State, Gen. James A. Walker, a member of the Republican Executive Committee, has expressed the opinion that his party will make no nominations for the Legislature. He thinks it is their policy to let the Democrats fight this campaign out by themselves, and that the bitterness among the members of that party may result in some important developments at or before the Presidential election of next year, when the Republicans of the Old Dominion will resume their party activity.

This curious method of dealing with political conditions in a State strongly inclined, for many reasons, in favor of Republican candidates, has never yet been made entirely clear. Virginia is governed in the political action of the voters generally by the same conditions as prevail in the neighboring States of Maryland and West Virginia, both of which gave substantial majorities for President McKinley three years ago. Virginia more than either has another ground of friendliness to the Republican party in respect to its large manufacturing interests, the development of which has made Virginia almost a protection State. The interests of Maryland are shipping and agricultural for the most part, while West Virginia, as a great producer of lumber and coal, has not yet, outside of the city of Wheeling, taken a very active part in the development of manufactures. All the conditions seemed to operate rather in favor of Republican success in the State of Virginia than among its two neighbors, but an obstacle to Republican success is found in the plan adopted by the local Republican leaders of abandoning all contests except in each fourth year.

The practical result of this voluntary abstention is as follows: The State offices of Virginia are in Democratic hands. The local offices, of which there are a very large number in Virginia, a State of more than a hundred counties (New York has only sixty-one), are in Democratic hands and the Democratic party has control of the shaping of legislation, of the establishment of conditions of voting, and of the election machinery, and also administers the laws in nearly every department. The next Congress will have nine Democratic members from Virginia with one contested case. If settled in favor of the Republican it will give one Republican member, otherwise all ten will be Democrats. Both Senators are Democrats, and the Republicans enter into each Presidential fight under disadvantages which it would be difficult to overrate. Yet notwithstanding these disadvantages they come each four years so near to carrying the State that a difference of a comparatively few votes would change the result entirely and give the Republicans the Virginia electors, twelve in number. This year there is a hot fight in progress in Virginia for control of the Legislature between two factions of Democrats, and it had been thought generally that the Republicans would be glad of the opportunity to increase their membership through conflict; but if advices are credible, the contest of 1899 is another which the Virginia Republicans will let go by default.

BIG PROFITS IN GINSENG.

CHINA WILL PAY AMERICAN DIGGERS $1,250,000 THIS YEAR.

This is the Height of the Ginseng Season—Danger That the Industry May Be Ruined Through Ignorance—Wide Range of the Plant and its Great Value—Its Use in the Chinese Pharmacopeia.

BOLIVAR, N. Y., Sept. 9.—The ginseng diggers of the United States will earn $1,250,000 this season, thanks to the Chinese belief that the root of this plant which grows wild in the forests of fourteen States is a specific for all the ills of mind and body. Practically no ginseng is used in this country. About all that is dug is exported to China. The roots bring six dollars a pound this year, the highest price ever received by diggers, and the demand exceeds the supply. The export trade is controlled absolutely by a Chinese syndicate whose profits are enormous. Years ago the wholesale drug firms exported ginseng; but within fifteen years Chinese in New York have secured a monopoly of the business.

This is the height of the ginseng season, and from the woods of Canada to the Georgia line the ginseng digger is at work. Some of the diggers earn $5 a day, but the average is about $3. They walk from ten to twenty miles a day in their rambles through the forests. The digger carries a small steel pick with a hatchet blade and a handle eighteen inches long, with which he loosens the ginseng root and cuts away the tree roots that encircle it, for if it can be avoided ginseng roots are never broken. The roots are gathered up and carried in a cloth sack slung over the shoulder. The successful digger must possess a certain amount of forest lore, and strength and willingness to tramp many a weary mile out of the beaten path, for ginseng hides away in deep ravines and dense forests.

The Indians on the New York reservations and the Indians of Minnesota earn a great deal of money every year by digging ginseng; but, unfortunately for them, the plant is fast becoming extinct within the boundaries of those States. The most picturesque diggers are found in the Cumberland Mountain region in Kentucky and Tennessee. There the women and children join the men in the hunt for the root, which for short is called "sang". Every storekeeper in the backwoods of the Cumberland Highlands buys ginseng, and it readily passes for currency. In that region a queer superstition prevails among the diggers. They believe that if the location of a patch of ginseng found at nightfall too late to be dug is marked by a blaze on a tree, or in any other way, the ginseng will disappear before the next morning.

For many years western Pennsylvania was a paradise for diggers, many of whom came from miles away to dig the root every season. In 1880 a party of four ginseng diggers found $10,000 worth of roots in one county in northwestern Pennsylvania. They discovered a mountain stream that ran back into a dense hardwood forest. Both sides of the gully were covered with ginseng and they kept the secret so well that they secured about all of the patch. Many other big patches were found in that region, but few exist now, though several thousand pounds of roots are dug every season. Every acre of the woods has been tramped over many times.

The ginseng diggers have only themselves to blame for the partial extinction of the valuable plant, though many of them assisted in maiming the goose that laid the golden egg through ignorance. The ginseng plant comes up in the spring as soon as the frost leaves the ground. The stock of the mature plant has three prongs with five leaves on a prong and closely resembles the very common sarsaparilla plant. It thrives best in hardwood timber, on the east and northern slopes of the hills. The signs that guide old diggers are bloodroot and crow foot, which always grow near a ginseng patch. In the centre of the fork a stem appears that bears a white blossom about the first of June. Green berries follow the blossom and at the end of August the berries turn scarlet. The frost turns the stock yellow and the berries drop off. Ginseng should never be dug until the berries are scarlet and the berries should be planted in the forest mould to insure another crop. This the ginseng diggers have seldom done.

The rule has always been to begin digging as soon as the flower appeared, thus exterminating the plant. Kentucky, realizing the folly of diggers, has passed a law prohibiting the gathering of roots before the berries are ripe. The Province of Ontario has passed and enforces a similar law. In West Virginia a law prohibits the digging of ginseng without the consent of the owners of the land.

The best ginseng comes from Pennsylvania, New York, Minnesota and Canada. Southern root is quoted at $1 a pound less than Northern root. It takes four pounds of green root dug in the spring to make one of dry. In the fall it takes only three pounds of green for one of dry. Only dry root is exported. The average mature ginseng plant is ten inches high and the average root weighs an ounce. Stocks four feet high have been found and roots weighing thirty ounces have been dug, but they are very rare. One peculiarity about ginseng is that many of the roots are forked and resemble in form the human body with spurs for arms and legs. Such roots, if they are extremely old, bring their weight in gold in China. The Chinese believe that the root of a plant that thus expands into the human form in dark forests and thickets must be intended to alleviate the sufferings of the human race.

In color the ginseng root resembles the garden parsnip. It has a pleasant, aromatic taste. Nearly every digger chews it and regards it as a specific for stomach troubles, at the same time poking fun at the Chinaman who gives up good money for it. Ginseng is a plant of slow growth and long lived. Every fall the dying stalk leaves a wrinkle that is as plain as the rings by which the age of a tree is told, and old diggers say that they frequently find roots fifty years old.

The process of preparing the roots for market is simple. The digger washes them in spring water to remove the earth and dries them in the sun. When cured he carries them to the country store and trades them for cash or goods. All over the ginseng country buyers are many and competition so lively that the digger gets a good price. The country dealers ship the roots to the city dealer for whom he buys in bags or barrels. One firm in Lexington, Ky., handled $60,000 worth of ginseng last season, and one shipment by express from a Kentucky mountain town to a commission firm in New York was valued at $10,000. All the ginseng root dug in the United States finally reaches New York city.

There are twenty firms in New York city that buy ginseng from country and small city dealers. When the shipments reach New York they are sorted and the roots placed in heaps on the floor ready to be inspected by the Chinese exporters who make daily rounds. The Chinese pack the roots into wooden casks that hold 200 pounds and ship direct to Hong Kong. The commission men know little more about the Chinese end of the ginseng question than the diggers in the backwoods, for the Chinamen are reticent. Some diggers are not unlike these honest farmers who put the big apples in the top row when packing a barrel. Commission men frequently find ginseng roots filled with lead and other metals, and often cheap Southern roots are found mixed with shipments from as far north as Canada.

A good idea of the value of wild ginseng may be secured by a visit to one of the New York commission houses late in September when business is brisk. On the floor will be seen a little pyramid of roots, perhaps a bushel in all, that the dealer asks $500 for. Such roots have been assorted, are of good size and perfect in every way. One commission man says that the Chinese exporters make a strong effort every season to learn the names of the country buyers so that they can deal direct with them and save the commission man's profit, but the commission men guard their list of dealers carefully. Even when approached by a Chinaman, as they occasionally are, the country dealers are shy and prefer to deal with Americans. Three or four years ago an American went to Hong Kong with a big shipment of ginseng, but the Hong Kong branch of the Chinese syndicate blocked his efforts to dispose of it so cleverly that he lost money and gave up the idea of being an exporter. Even the commission men are shy about giving out any information about the business.

American ginseng ranks third in China. The finest ginseng grows wild in the forests of Manchuria and is rare, choice roots selling readily for $400 an ounce. The Chinese believe that ginseng is endowed with the power of concealing itself from capture and that heaven has appointed the wolf, tiger, leopard and snake to guard over its safety in the dark wooded glens. They firmly believe that it has the power to ward off disease and evil spirits and that its use will prolong the life of a dying man for days. The roots are on sale at all the botanic stores in China and are universally used. The Manchurian ginseng is reserved for royalty and the very rich. The poorer classes use cheap grades and broken roots.

There are three ways of taking ginseng: in pills, in confection and by infusion.

Ginseng has been an important article of export from this country since 1718. A letter from a missionary in China describing the wonderful plant attracted the attention of a Jesuit priest at Montreal who made a search in 1716 and found it growing in the forest of that locality. The French at once began digging it for export to China and for years enjoyed a monopoly that brought rich returns. In 1750 ginseng was found in central New York and later in Vermont, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Massachusetts, the Carolinas and Georgia. Every year some new diggings are found. In 1862 the export trade reached 700,000 pounds, the average price that year being 74 cents a pound. This was high tide. Since that year the amount exported has annually decreased and the price increased. Last season 250,000 pounds were exported and the average price was $4 a pound.

One reason why Chinese ginseng brings a higher price than the American root is due to the care exercised in preparing it for market. American diggers simply wash the roots and dry them in the sun or in an attic. In China the roots are scrubbed clean and macerated for three days in water in which rice has been boiled, then placed in a covered vessel and slowly dried over a fire until hard and brittle. When the drying is finished the roots are yellow and semi-transparent. American consuls in China have often informed the State Department of the manner in which American ginseng reaches the Chinese market and have advised greater care in preparing.

The faith of the Chinese in the ginseng root has not wavered in centuries and is likely to continue for ages to come. One of the presents given Li Hung Chang on his recent visit to New York was a fine collection of ginseng roots, and it is doubtful if any gift could have pleased him more. If America is to continue to profit to the extent of a million dollars or more a year, the extinction of the wild plant through the ignorance of diggers must be stopped by laws such as Kentucky has passed; but such laws it must be admitted are hard to enforce. The Department of Agriculture has taken a hand in the matter and a systematic effort will be made to show the diggers the folly of digging the plants before the berries are ripe and the necessity of planting the berries.

The ginseng diggers are not a distinct type. In New York and Pennsylvania many of them are farmer boys who spend a month in the woods after harvesting. Five young fellows near here earned money to visit the World's Fair by digging ginseng. Another young fellow has paid all the expenses of a normal course in the same way. In every community there are two or three men who spend their time in hunting, fishing and finding bee trees. These men always hunt ginseng and are usually experts. Nearly all the mountain people in Kentucky and Tennessee dig ginseng and rely on it to furnish the food to tide them over the winter months. Ginseng is growing scarcer every year and unless great care is exercised this profitable industry will be destroyed.

$2,000,000 WORTH OF COAL IN DANGER.

Leeches Eating Out the Caulking of the River Barges at Pittsburg.

PITTSBURG, Pa., Sept. 13.—River leeches are endangering $2,000,000 worth of coal now lying in the Pittsburg harbor, the stretch of water that extends from the city down to Davis Island dam, six miles below the junction of the Monongahela and Allegheny rivers. Coal men have been annoyed for many years by the prevalence in the New Orleans harbor of the teredo, an insect whose boring propensities are the chief cause of the prosperity of the coal-barge builders along the upper Monongahela. Barges must often be broken up on account of the ravages of the teredo, which has plenty of opportunity to honeycomb the woodwork of the vessels during their frequent long stays at New Orleans while waiting for a remunerative coal market. Lately, however, a new and even worse danger has confronted coal barges at this end of the river route. The teredo honeycombs the barges slowly, and inspection of the bottoms is so frequent that no coal has ever been lost through the work of the teredo. The leeches, however, bore directly through the oakum-caulked seams, and constant pumping is necessary to prevent the barges from sinking.

Scientists have been consulted, and they offer various explanations. Some assert that the leech has found in oakum a nourishing and appetizing food; others think the low water in the harbor has become contaminated by sewage, and that the leeches bore into the oakum in their efforts to escape. Still others contend that the contaminated water is responsible for the enormous increase in the number of leeches, and that the creatures, led by some instinct, find their way between the planking to enjoy the still greater corruption of the bilge water in the barges. Another group of scientific minds is satisfied that the little bloodsuckers find oakum-burrowing a satisfactory avenue of escape from some enemy which the theorists are now striving to identify.

The owners of the coal are taking but little interest in these speculations. They are, however, losing sleep worrying about the damage to their property and the expense they have already been compelled to undergo. Every barge and "coal boat," the latter being a flat-bottomed, square-sided, cheaply built vessel holding twice as much as the barges and intended to be broken up and sold for lumber at New Orleans, is fitted out with one or two pumps. Usually the work of one man is sufficient to keep the whole fleet of barges and boats afloat, only an occasional spell at the pumps being required, but since the leeches began to work there came a change. First the regular crews of pumpers found that an occasional spell at the handles was insufficient to keep the boats on top of the water and that hard work was necessary. Incessant pumping being back-breaking exercise, and all labor traditions on the river containing no record that pumpers had ever been obliged to do hard work, the men protested. Since their protest more hands have been put at the pumps relieving each others in shifts, like sailors on a sinking ship. The owners have paid out thousands of dollars, and constantly fear that the barges may sink, as it is impossible, of course, to do fresh calking while the boats are full of coal and lying in the river. The only salvation for the $2,000,000 worth of coal is a rise in the river, which will enable the owners to float their product to the lower markets. Meantime, the scientists are seeking the natural enemy of the leech. It is intended, if he be found, to petition the War Department, which controls the navigable streams, to enter upon artificial culture and distribute him in the river in the manner observed by the Fish Commission.

Free Education for Russian Nobles.

From the Pall Mall Gazette.

The nobility of Russia in each and every province, who form a kind of corporation in the eyes of the Government with a marshal at its head, are to be allowed to establish special boarding-houses or homes for those of their children who attend the middle-class schools, but quite separate from such schools.

The Government undertakes to pay the full cost of establishing these institutions, which will come under the supreme control of the Minister of Public Instruction, and in which the pupils are to receive board, lodging, clothes, linen, boots, schoolbooks, pecuniary assistance, and, if necessary, personal help in doing their home-lessons after school hours. The Government also engages to pay half the yearly cost of supporting them. The preference in accepting boarders as well as gratuitous maintenance will be given to the children whose fathers hold any official post in the corporation of their class or in the zemstvos, or who have formerly held any such post for not less a period than nine years. The nobility are also granted the right of founding scholarships for their boys in the higher and intermediary establishments of education, for which the Government likewise provides half the necessary funds. At the same time an annual sum of 186,7?0 roubles will be paid out of the Imperial Exchequer for the free education of 415 boys in two of the new military cadet schools.

This curious piece of class legislation will give the landed nobility of Russia a far cheaper education for their children than any that is put in the way of the other antiquated social categories into which the Russian population is still divided.

A PORTRAIT OF THE DEVIL.

THE PHOTOGRAPH OF WHICH NO COPY WAS TAKEN.

It Was Printed on the Body of a Mysterious Old Man in the Rocky Mountains by the Flash That Killed Him, According to the Story of the Guide Who Saw It.

"As a contribution to the scientific knowledge of the unseen world, this story has no authoritative value," said the man from the West, "but it may nevertheless be true. I cannot give it as direct testimony, and it cannot be backed with affidavits. When I heard it I was at least compelled to look as if I believed it, for it was told to me by a cross-grained Rocky Mountain guide who was known to be a dead shot and was reputed to have a private grave yard. He told the story with a quiet dignity that was not customary with him when spinning yarns for the benefit of tenderfeet, and it made such an impression on my mind that I do not think I have forgotten a single detail.

"Five years ago I secured a job as mining expert for a company that was developing claims in various parts of the Rocky Mountains and made many excursions into the wildest parts of the region. On one of these trips I made up my mind to get a photograph of a golden eagle in its native haunts and I succeeded, and my success made me talkative. While returning down the mountain side I talked to my guide and perhaps boasted a little about feats I had performed with a camera. He listened with polite interest, but offered no comment until the last night of our trip. We were smoking our pipes beside the fire. After the conversation had dwindled down to occasional remarks my guide suddenly startled me by asking:

"'Do you believe in the devil?'

"'Sometimes,' I replied.

"'Well, I believe in him all the time, and if I had that camera of yours once and knew how to use it I could have clicked off a picture of the old boy for you.'

"'Did you see him?'

"'No, but I saw his picture once.'

"'O, there have been lots of pictures of him but none of them was a photograph. They were made by artists who imagined what he looked like.'

"'I know, but this wasn't made by any artist, and if it wasn't a photograph I'd like to know what it was. But it wasn't a photograph that I could get a spare copy of.'

"I waited for him to tell his story and shall give it here chiefly in his own words, though I shall not attempt to reproduce his dialect or his slow tones. It was entirely picturesque, for he was a thorough mountaineer and uneducated to an interesting degree. The fact that he was entirely without education makes it less probable that he fabricated the story he told.

"'In the early sixties,' he said, 'I was doing some prospecting on my own account and did a lot of wandering over the mountains in these parts. One day after I had worked my way up a particularly wild gorge I came out on a little table land where I thought I would camp for the night. I gathered a lot of wood and built a fire before it got dark, and was starting in to broil some venison when I heard something stirring behind me. I grabbed my gun and turned round and there, standing looking at me, was one of the darndest looking men I ever clapped eyes on. He looked as tall as a telegraph pole and as lean as a snake. He had no hat and only a little fringe of hair, but his whiskers were long and came down to a point on his chest. It was the eyes of him that caught me, though, for they were like the eyes of a mountain lion.

"'Good evening, neighbor,' says I to him.

"He didn't say a word for a minute, but just stood looking at me. Then he raised his hand and pointed down the way I came. 'Go,' says he.

"'What for?' says I.

"'Go, go, or it will be worse for you. No man ever comes here,' he says.

"'Well, there's one come now and he is going to stay until he's ready to go,' I says.

"The fellow let a laugh out of him that fairly raised my hair, but not seeing any gun about him I didn't budge. Then he turned and walked off. He had given me a little turn, but I hadn't time to think of that, for a storm began to rumble along the mountain side. In a few minutes it was pitch dark and the awfullest lightning I ever saw began to flash and sputter from the clouds. I shifted my pack to the side of a solid looking rock that would be some protection to me, and did some cursing at that old duffer. I knew he must have a cabin of some sort nearby, and if I could have found it that night I would have slept dry, even if we had to fight for it. Well, the rain just pelted and poured all night, and I was wet and savage when I got up in the morning. After I got some breakfast I waited around till the weather cleared a bit and began to examine the rocks. I found some that struck me as being the right thing, and forgot all about my old crank until I was building my fire for supper again. He came back just as he did the night before.

"'Go,' he said, 'haven't you had your warning?'

"'I had a wetting,' said I, 'but if I could have found your roost I would have bunked with you last night. Where do you sleep anyway?'

"'Go, lest a worse thing befall you. This mountain is mine and the storms are mine,' he said.

"'Well, I must say you keep a good brand of both mountain and storm,' I said. 'Does there happen to be any gold in your mountain?'

"'He didn't answer me, but walked away as he did on the night before. And just the same as on the night before a storm began to gather. But it came from another direction and my rock was no use for shelter. I picked up my pack and was starting to hunt for another place by the lightning flashes when I happened to look up to the top of a cliff ahead of me, and there was the wild man standing against the sky waving his arms. I stood as if I was rooted there, for I have heard lots of queer stories, and a fellow never knows what's true or what isn't. What struck me as queer was that every time he waved his arms the lightning blazed and the thunder rolled nearer. Of course, I only saw him when the lightning flashed, but the flashes always came and went while his arms were going up and down. The rain just spilled down, but it seemed as if I couldn't move, and the thunder deafened me. At last the flashes came so fast that the whole mountain side was lit all the time, and there was that man waving his arms up and down like mad. Just as I thought the end of the world was coming, there was an awful blaze that covered him with blue flame, and in a second the whole place was dark. Before it got dark I thought I saw him fall; but what happened next was so strange that I was too scared to think of that. The clouds rolled away and the stars came out. There wasn't another thunderclap or lightning flash, and if it wasn't that I was soaked to the skin and the ground was covered with puddles, I couldn't have been sure that there had been a storm at all.

"'Of course I couldn't light a fire and I couldn't sleep, so I just sat there and shivered until morning. When the light came at last I looked up to where I saw the man standing, and saw what seemed to be one of his arms hanging over the side of the cliff. When the sun came out I saw that it was a man's arm, and as I got over my scare in the daylight I started to climb up to where he lay. After some hunting I found a path that I had not noticed before, and soon reached where he was. He was sprawled out on the rock stone dead. I looked around and for the first time saw the little cabin where he lived. As the door was open I looked in and saw nothing except a rough cot on the floor, a table made from a slab and a shelf with three or four big leather-bound books. But I didn't stay long to look at things for it didn't seem right to leave him lying dead out there on the rock, whatever sort of a man he might be. I climbed down and got my pick and shovel and dug a grave in a corner where there was some earth, and then started to fix him up to be buried. Say, have you ever seen a man that has been killed by lightning?'

"This was the first question he had asked of me since he had begun to tell the story, and I felt somewhat relieved at having a chance to hear my own voice again, for the darkness and his monotonous tones affected me. 'No,' I replied. 'I never have.'

"'Well, I suppose you have heard of people killed that way having pictures of a house or tree or something that was near by on them?'

"I admitted that I had.

"'Well, when I turned that fellow over I saw on his breast, burnt right into his yellow skin, a picture of the devil that had been photographed there by the flash of lightning that had killed him. If I had that camera of yours I could have taken a picture of it.'

"The ghastly possibilities of such a photograph were beyond anything I had ever dreamed of, and I shuddered involuntarily. But my guide was watching me with a suspicious air that suggested that any incredulity on my part would be regarded as the deadliest insult. I thought it wise to show some immediate interest, and asked:

"'What did he look like?'

"'Not like anything I ever saw. He looked to be swooping down from the sky just as you see a vulture come down.'

"'I know,' I replied. 'I have a picture of a vulture that I got by putting a dead horse at the bottom of a cliff a thousand feet high and then waiting till a vulture fell from the sky near enough for me to get a snap at him. It is the best picture in my collection.'

"'It wouldn't be if you had that picture.'

"'Indeed it wouldn't; but can't you tell me more exactly what it looked like?'

"'I don't want to. It gives me the shakes whenever I think of it, and I'll have nightmares for a week after thinking of it now. I don't see why I was such a fool as to tell you about it.'

"He went surlily to his blankets and not another word could I get from him on the subject that night. In the morning I ventured to ask him what had become of the books in the cabin. He turned on me savagely.

"'Why won't you let me forget it?' and his sallow face became pale. 'A landslide caused by the storms buried the cabin and almost buried me, and I was mighty well satisfied to get away from there. I dreamed that he was swooping down on me last night just as he was in the picture. Don't talk to me about it.'

"Of course there are many explanations that suggest themselves, a tattoo mark that had been scorched by the lightning flash, for instance; but I am thoroughly convinced from the actions of the narrator that he saw a picture, and one calculated to freeze him with terror. Of course, it seems incredible, and yet more incredible things are believed on every side. For myself, I do not venture an opinion. I simply tell the story as it was told to me."

TACKS IN A BICYCLE PATH.

Ingenious Contrivance by Which the Foes of Tires Were Removed.

BINGHAMTON, Sept. 16.—For the first month after the new bicycle cinder path between this city and Union was opened the bicycle dealers here did a rushing business in tires. The number of punctures ran into the hundreds, and the strange thing about it was that the new path was supposed to be a perfect riding ground, thousands of dollars having been expended by the county to make it the finest path in the State. It was noticed that almost all the punctures were caused on the first 200 yards of the path, but an inspection of this section failed to reveal the cause of it. Riders became superstitious about it, and for nearly two weeks have been using the dusty roadway instead of the cinder path for the first quarter of a mile of the trip to Union. The mystery was revealed in a peculiar way and the trouble removed by a remarkable contrivance, hastily invented by Frank J. Root, an amateur electrician and enthusiastic wheelman of this city.

Ex-Alderman Brandt has been using the cinder path a great deal lately, getting in trim for a week's trip through the Catskills. Before starting on his tour he made a careful examination of his wheel. In the front tire he found seven tiny tacks, so small that they could scarcely be seen. They hadn't punctured the tire, but the mystery of the many punctures along the cinder path was revealed at once. Mr. Brandt reported the matter to W. H. Hecox of the State Side Path Commission, who immediately sent a squad of men armed with magnifying glasses to clear the path of tacks. The men worked one whole day and only collected nine tacks. They reported that it was utterly impossible to see the tacks, even with the glasses. They were so small and so much like the cinders in color that they could not be detected. A shoe factory at Lestershire had furnished the cinders for the first quarter of a mile of the path, and when the head of the factory was questioned about the matter, he admitted that there were probably thousands of the tacks in the cinders. The matter had never occurred to him before, he said, and he generously offered to share with the county the expense of laying fresh cinders.

Apparently there was no other course to take, but in the emergency Mr. Root came forward and said he thought he could get every tack out of the path in one morning without removing a cinder. Commissioner Hecox was skeptical, but told Mr. Root to go ahead. Mr. Root made a framework of wood about three feet square, fitted it with rollers and a long handle, so that it could be operated like a carpet sweeper, and then placed six large and powerful magnets in it. The magnets were so arranged that they would almost scrape the ground when the machine was operated. With this simple contrivance Mr. Root started to work the dangerous end of the cinder path. He hadn't done ten yards before his magnets were so covered with tacks that he had to clean them off. Before he had finished the work he had to scrape his magnets nearly fifty times, and when he was through he had filled a quart can to overflowing with the wickedest looking lot of tacks and sharp-pointed scraps of metal that ever decorated a cycle path. As a precaution Mr. Root went over the path several times, but got nothing after the first trip. There hasn't been a puncture along the cinder path since, and more grateful wheelmen than those of Broome county it would be hard to find.

Clock Golf.

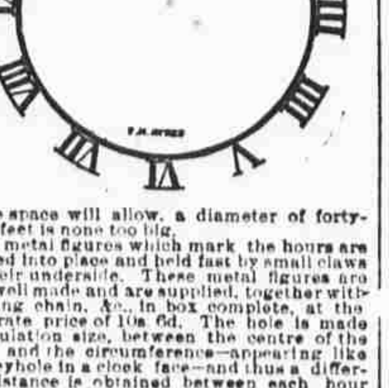
From London Golf Illustrated.

"Clock Golf" is an excellent game, and one which is sure to prove a most useful subordinate to the great game itself.

The illustration which we give shows the clock face as it should appear when marked out upon the green, or private lawn.

The circle should be marked out clearly with white chalk, and may be of any convenient diameter. The clock circle is not merely ornamental: it acts as a boundary; and should a ball be struck while putting so as to cross the circle, it must be brought back and played from the point where it crossed the line, with a penalty of one stroke.

A clock with a diameter of twenty-four feet makes a very good game for a small lawn. But,



where space will allow, a diameter of forty-eight feet is none too big.

The metal figures which mark the hours are pressed into place and held fast by small claws on their underside. These metal figures are very well made and are supplied, together with marking chain, &c., in box complete, at the moderate price of 10s 6d. The hole is made of regulation size, between the centre of the circle and the circumference—appearing like the keyhole in a clock face—and thus a different distance is obtained between each hour and the hole. Players hole out from each of the hours successively, commencing with I.

The rules supplied with "Clock Golf" state simply how the game may be won by strokes or holes, and are comprehensively summed up thus: "All rules which apply to putting and playing with partners in ordinary golf may, so far as applicable, hold good in the game of Clock Golf."

Patriotism First.

From the Richmond Times.

If it be true that the responsible representatives of Democracy, in Congress assembled, clamored for war with Spain and pushed the country into it, then Democrats should bide the results in cheerful loyalty and lend the Government the patriotic support due it from all good citizens in time of war, whether they agree with all its methods of procedure or train with it in partisanry or not. Democratic precedent supports this view also.

Democrats who would hold to the proud record of their party's service to the country should not lightly be led to discard the virtue of patriotism because allies may be made by the sacrifice.

CITY PEOPLE ON A FARM.

HAPPY LIFE OF A MECHANIC WHO LOST HIS JOB.

Is Prosperous Now and He and His Family Look Upon the Work as Fun—Has Plenty to Eat and Something to Sell and Isn't Worried About Employment—His Crops.

READING, Sept. 16.—Another year has been added to the experience of the city mechanic out of a job who moves into the country to begin farming on a small scale, whom THE SUN has already told something. Said he:

"Oh, yes, we still live. I have gained twenty pounds, we've another little boy, we're all as hearty as bucks; we haven't turned a gray hair, and I think we're slightly better off than we were last year. Of course, I ain't kicking against the low prices of wheat, because I ain't a wheat farmer. I buy my bread from a baker wagon and get it just as cheap as city people. I did raise a patch of rye, because I like the old style of rye bread.

"I'm raising chickens now, paying attention to 'em, and I'm getting eggs to sell. They're doing good all the year. We have another cow, making three, now. I'm a boss milker. I think nothing of taking in $5 a week for butter and eggs. The work is light and I like it. You see I'm my own boss, all the way through; don't need to rush through life, and wonder whether I'm going to be laid off, out of a job next week or month. I just finished putting away one hundred bushels of potatoes. I'm not going to sell yet. They're nice, too nice to give away for 35 cents a bushel. I'll have sixty bushels to sell, at least. You see, I've only got ten good acres, but you may be sure I make every square foot count. My sweet apple trees hang full. No, I did not sell an apple. Me and my wife and the girls had lots of fun in the afternoon under the shade, paring and slicing apples. You see, we dried them in the sun, and I have a market for them, at a good figure. A man who attends market will take all I got. We boiled seventy-five pots of apple-butter. Our family will need about twenty for the winter and spring, and I will sell the others at about seventy-five cents a pot. They're big pots, and the butter is fine. O, no! no cinnamon or sassafras flavor. It's just pure apples and cider.

"I raised about thirty-five bushels of white onions, enough to buy all our winter clothes. I have about 175 heads of nice cabbage. I have plenty of corn to fatten our four nice hogs. Next month I'll cut down a barrel of sour kraut. Up in the stable loft on a rye straw bed is where I'll have about forty bushels of apples for winter stored. Oh, no; we can't half eat all we raised. We'll have lots of pork, vegetables, fruits, and things to sell.

"I got clean out of debt this summer. I keep well, and once in a while, only, am I compelled to hire a little help for the work. I have plenty of hay, and enough oats and corn for the stock. I have a fifty-dollar horse, which I use for work and to drive to the store and to town when I want to go. But I keep away from the towns and taverns. I just finished cutting a half acre of seeding tobacco. It did well, but it takes work to keep down the worms. No, the worms don't come out of the ground. A north fly deposits the nits on the leaves. The worms grow rapidly. I hang the tobacco in the shed loft. A tobacco buyer gets around in December. I don't need to go hunting a buyer. No, I ain't made my winter cider yet. It's too early. I will lay up two barrels and preserve it with salycilic acid. It keeps sweet and pleasant, and is not intoxicating. Nothing better for health. Every night in the winter I eat an apple before going to bed. I'm up every morning at 5, in summer, if it don't rain, and I'm feeling all right. We generally get to bed by 9 o'clock. I sleep eight hours on an average.

"For breakfast, give me bread and good butter with a thin slice of cold bacon, a bowl of good coffee and plenty of cream, and I'm happy. Of course, I start off with fruit, but I eat that out in the garden. I thrive best on boiled dinners. We get fresh meat from the butcher wagon that passes three times a week. Of course, it takes money to keep up repairs. I worked twenty-three days for big farmers the past season. When I take up my pay I'll buy lime and fertilizer for my land. Some acres need it badly. You see, if you put nothing on the land, you can't get much off. I have plenty of turnips and beets for winter. One of my girls is old enough to teach school. I was a delegate in the convention that nominated our county school superintendent, and she may get a school. We can spare her, and she can board at home. It all counts in the treasury. We have got to provide for increased expenses. I want to put up a lot of barbed wire fence, and the price is much higher than last year. I'm glad to hear wages are up in the city and plenty of work. No, I would not think of moving back into town again. By the way, this is the greatest chestnut year on record. Come out in the nutting season. The children say they'll gather enough chestnuts to buy two pairs of nice blankets for winter. That's the way we get along. Lots of fun in it, too. Why, the girls can set rabbit snares, and they're lucky enough at it, too. I'm glad I moved out here. Had I not, I'd have no doubt gone to Manila with the army. By the way, have a Porto Rico cigar? A friend brought home a lot of them for me. I had two little New Yorkers for two weeks who came out with a fresh air fund. They worked in my tobacco patch and did right well. They want to be farmers when they're big. To-morrow I help to take care of teams at a funeral, and the next day I'll be cutting corn. Next day, I want to go fishing."

SELLING GOODS FOR CHRISTMAS.

Wholesale Trade in Some Lines Already Well Started.

In some branches of business at wholesale, as for instance in toys, the Christmas trade has already opened. It started, in fact, in August, in which month shipments were begun. It takes time to buy goods and get them in and sorted, marked and ready for sale, and time is required for their redistribution when sold by jobbers. Some goods are sent such distances that they must be bought early to insure delivery in the season, as for instance to Australia and the Sandwich Islands, whence buyers come for toys as well as other things, as they do from every State in the Union. Many a doll or other toy that will gladden some child's heart at Christmas time is already on the way to the purchaser.

ABSOLUTE SECURITY.

Genuine

Carter's

Little Liver Pills.

Must Bear Signature of

Brent Good

See Fac-Simile Wrapper Below.

Very small and as easy to take as sugar.

CARTER'S LITTLE LIVER PILLS.

FOR HEADACHE.
FOR DIZZINESS.
FOR BILIOUSNESS.
FOR TORPID LIVER.
FOR CONSTIPATION.
FOR SALLOW SKIN.
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Price 25 Cents | Purely Vegetable.

CURE SICK HEADACHE.