

Real Magic Number.
 "I often hear of the magic number," said one. "What number is it?"
 "Why, nine, of course," replied some one else. "There are nine muses, you know, and you talk of a nine days' wonder. Then you bowl at nine pins and a cat has nine lives."
 "Nonsense," broke in another. "Seven is the magic number; seventh heaven, don't you know, and all that; seven colors in the rainbow; seven days in the week; seventh son of a seventh son—great fellow, and?"
 "Tush, tush," remarked a third. "Five's the number, you mean. A man has five fingers on his hand and five toes on his foot, and he has five senses, and?"
 "Three is undoubtedly the magic number," interrupted another, "because people give three cheers and Jonah was inside a whale three days and three nights, and if at first you don't succeed, try, try again—three times, you see!"
 This was received with some contempt by the company, and a soulful youth gushed out:
 "Two, oh, two is the magic number. One self and one other—the adored one! Just as two!"
 A hard featured individual, who had been listening to the conversation hitherto unmoved, here remarked in a harsh voice:
 "The magic number is No. 1 in this world, and if you want to succeed never forget it."
 An interval of deep thought on the part of all followed, after which they went in silently to supper.—Brooklyn Citizen.

Jean Richepin's Career.
 The story of how he came to adopt a literary career is sufficiently picturesque. For some time he had picked up a precarious livelihood by doing "odd jobs," including such prosaic occupations as that of bootblack and casual porter on the Quai Marseilles. One day he was engaged by a gentleman to carry to the railway station a heavy trunk. Arrived at the station, there was an instant mutual recognition. They were old college chums. "What are you doing here?" asked his friend. "Carrying your trunk, I believe," said Jean. "Why do you do this?" "Because I must." "Where do you live?" "Come and see," replied Richepin.
 The future dramatist took his friend to his dwelling—a miserable room in an attic in the poorest quarter of the town. Upon the table lay scattered heaps of manuscripts—Jean's incursions in the realms of poetry when the more prosaic duties of the day were over. Looking through them, his friend was astounded at their quality. "Why do you carry trunks and blacken boots when you can do work like this?" he asked. Richepin had never given the matter a thought; he had never deemed these products of idle hours worthy of publication. Published they were, however, in a very few weeks and created an immense sensation. From that moment Jean Richepin has never looked back.—Westminster Gazette.

The Widow's Opinion.
 In one of the suburban towns near the capital lives a widow well endowed with worldly goods, whose husband, with a sort of posthumous jealousy, has guarded against her re-marriage by providing that she shall lose all her property if ever she takes another husband. She has been receiving attentions for several years from an elderly Grand Army of the Republic veteran. She has been very good to him too. Once when he wanted to parade with his comrades she bought him an expensive blue suit with brass buttons on it. He wanted to marry her, but the will of the selfish dead man stood between. So after a time he married somebody else. The widow was broken-hearted. She recalled the suit with the brass buttons. She recalled a hundred kindnesses shown the old soldier. She bewailed his perjury to her friends.
 "Why," said one of them, "what did you expect? He wanted a wife to make a home for him. You couldn't marry him. So why do you complain?"
 The widow wiped her eyes.
 "I know I couldn't marry him," she said. "I didn't really want to marry him anyway, but, you see, it was such a heap of comfort to have a steady beau."—Washington Post.

Peculiarities of the Potato.
 The opinion has prevailed among housekeepers that it is the good potato which breaks open when it is boiled. A scientist who has made potatoes a study insists that the good potato is the one that remains quietly in its coating of brown during all of the processes of cooking. Instead of the swelling and bursting of the skin being caused by the presence of starch it has been ascertained that albumen is the substance that causes this breaking open. An ordinary potato is made up of three-fourths of its weight in water, two-tenths in starch and one-fiftieth of nitrogenous matter. If it cracks and falls to pieces during the process of boiling, it is deficient in albumen, and therefore lacking in the most important constituent.—New York Ledger.

A Damas Story.
 Damas the elder was rarely spiteful to her about his fellow men, but one day, when he happened to be in that mood, a friend called to tell him a piece of news. "They have just given M. X. the Legion of Honor," he said. Then he added, in a significant tone, "Now, can you imagine why they should have given it to him?"
 "Yes," answered the great dramatist promptly. "They have given it to him because he was without it."
 "How are you getting along with your housekeeping?" asked the young wife's mother.
 "Oh, splendidly!" she answered. "I have almost got so I can do things to suit the hired girl."—Washington Star.

Good Progress.
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Biting Finger Nails.
 The chief finger nail chewers of the world are the French, and it was recently stated upon reliable authority that nearly two-thirds of French school children are addicted to the habit.
 Even for grown people there is hardly any habit, aside from the confirmed abuse of narcotics, more difficult to overcome than the habit of biting the finger nails. It requires a strong mental effort and constant vigilance to do this, for once a person has become thoroughly addicted to the habit he does it unconsciously, and is only reminded that he is marring himself when he gets one of his nails gnawed down to the quick. All manner of remedies have been advanced for the cure of the finger nail biting habit, including the placing of injurious and bitter compositions on the ends of the fingers, but none of the remedies amounts to much.
 The only way to stop biting the finger nails is to stop. The Americans are next to the French in the finger nail biting habit, probably because the Americans, as a whole, are an exceedingly nervous people. A man who accomplishes his determination to knock off biting his finger nails may, by incessant manœuvring, get them to look fairly well within a year or so, but finger nail biting, if long persisted in, ruins the shape of the ends of the fingers, and the nails can never be brought to look as well as those of the persons who permit their nails to grow as they were intended to grow.—Washington Star.

Too Much For Watson.
 Only once did Watson, when a captain, never fail to punish a man for intoxication. This was in the summer of 1898 at Boston, when the San Francisco took the Massachusetts naval militia on its first practice cruise. Among the regular crew was old Alexander Parker, sailmaker's mate, who was never known to remain sober when there was liquor to be had. When the naval militia came on board a witty boatswain's mate, while no officer was near, sang out in an authoritative tone:
 "All you men having whisky on board lay below and turn it in to the sailmaker's mate for safe keeping."
 Many amateur sailors took the bait, and in a few minutes old Aleck, sitting down below decks in his sailroom, was surprised to have a vast collection of flasks passed to him. He received all these as gifts with many thanks. He was found a day after sound asleep in his sailroom, literally covered with empty bottles of every size and shape. He was finally taken before the captain, to whom was told the circumstances. "Parker," said he sternly, "I have no words with which to discuss your case. Go forward."—New York Times.

Asked For a Shirt and Got a Wife.
 During the civil war there was a certain young lady in Georgetown who found it in her power to do a great deal for the Confederate soldiers confined in prison at Washington. Young, beautiful, cultured, popular, of a wealthy and prominent family, she was frequently allowed admission to the prison, whither she always took her maid with a well stocked basket of good things for the poor boys behind the bars. One day as she was passing through a group of men in the common prison she stopped and said to them:
 "If there is anything you would like to have that I can bring you, wouldn't you let me know? I shall be very glad."
 One man stepped forward promptly. Bowing most courteously, he said:
 "If you will be so kind, I should like very much to have a clean shirt."
 He was a young lieutenant from Louisiana, one of the handsomest and most elegant men I ever met, and when that young lady looked up into his brown eyes she found it in her heart to give him much more than a clean shirt, for she married him as soon as the war was over.—Philadelphia Times.

Corn Bread.
 There is no more wholesome, palatable and strengthening article of food in the whole catalogue than corn bread. It is truly the staff of life of the rural laboring classes in the south from year's beginning to year's end. Among the bravest, toughest men in the country are the hands who work on the turpentine farms in Georgia. Their regular rations consist of one peck of cornmeal, five pounds of bacon and a pint of molasses per week. These articles constitute pretty nearly if not quite their whole bill of fare during the time they are in the woods cutting or chipping boxes or dipping turpentine, yet they are always well conditioned, hard of muscle and in good spirits.—Savannah (Ga.) News.

He Understood.
 After she had studied the French bill of fare for a moment Mrs. Porkebanth of Chicago turned to the waiter and asked:
 "Does oo understand Eengles?"
 "Oh, yes, I talk it almost like a native," he replied. "I was born and brought up in Indiana."
 After that she had no appetite.—Cleveland Leader.

And Not James.
 "Why," asked the lay figure, "do you call it a jimmy?"
 The burglar shook his head sadly.
 "Well," he answered, and his regret was apparent, "I suppose I am rather more familiar with it than I ought to be. Yes."—Detroit Journal.

The dead heroes of the Buena Vista battlefield, where 6,000 American volunteers under General Zachary Taylor defeated 20,000 Mexicans under Santa Anna after a desperate and bloody battle, lie in a neglected and unmarked spot near Matillo, Mexico.
 There is a flywheel in Germany made of steel wire. The wheel is 20 feet in diameter, and 250 miles of wire was used in its construction.

Betrothal Rings.
 Modern Greek peasants exchange a gold and silver wedding ring, and they drink wine from the same cup. But the regular ritual of the Greek church ordains that solemn betrothal precedes the actual marriage, in which are used gold and silver wedding rings blessed by the priest, the gold ring being given to the man, the silver ring to the woman. The form of the espousal is then repeated, and the rings are placed on the right hands and then exchanged that no inferiority may be betokened by the woman wearing the silver ring and also to indicate a common ownership of property.
 An Armenian mother usually chooses her daughter's husband. After all business preliminaries are settled between the families the bridegroom's mother, accompanied by a priest and two matrons, visits the bride and gives her a ring in token of espousal, and with this ring the couple are ultimately married. Among the fishing communities very ancient and elaborate rings are used, and they descend as heirlooms from generation to generation.
 In Japanese marriages arranged between very young people the girl receives a ring in evidence that the union is binding. In Malabar an old native custom seats both bride and bridegroom on a dais, and a relative washes the feet of the bridegroom with milk and puts a silver ring on the great toe of the right foot. He then hands a gold ring to his kinsman, and a necklace and chaplet of flowers are put on the bride's neck and head.—London Mail.

Korea's Seven Wonders.
 The seven wonders of Korea are: (1) The marvelous mineral spring of Kusshanto, one dip in which is a sovereign cure for all the ills that human flesh is heir to. (2) The double springs which, though far apart, have a strange, mysterious affinity. According to Korean belief, there is a connection underground, through which water ebbs and flows like the waters of the ocean, in such a way that only one spring is full at a time. The water possesses a wonderful sweetening power, so that whatever is cooked therein becomes good and palatable. (3) The cold wind cavern, whence comes a never ceasing wind so piercing that nothing can withstand it and so powerful that the strongest man cannot face it. (4) The indestructible pine forest, the trees of which grow up again as fast as they are cut down. (5) The floating stone, a massive block that has no visible support, but, like Mohammed's coffin, remains suspended. (6) The warm stone, situated on the top of a hill and said to have the peculiarity of spreading warmth and heat all round it. (7) A drop of the sweat of Buddha, for 30 paces round which no flower or vegetation will grow, nor will birds or other living things pass over it.—Brooklyn Eagle.

Saint Norah and the Potato.
 St. Norah was a poor girl, says the London Punch, who prayed St. Patrick for a good gift that would make her not proud but useful, and St. Patrick, out of his own head, taught her how to boil a potato. A sad thing and to be lamented, that the secret has come down to so few! Since the highest intellectual and physical life is dependent upon diet—since the cook makes, while the physician only mends—should not she who prepares our pies be as carefully trained as he who makes our pills?
 Certainly, whatever may be the knowledge or the ignorance of the servant in the kitchen, the mistress of the house, be she young or old, ought to be able, like St. Patrick in the fable, out of her own instructed head to teach Norah how to boil a potato or broil a steak so that they may yield their utmost of relish and nutriment.
 Until she can do that, no woman is qualified to preside over a household, and since few reach adult life without being called to that position in the household of husband, father or brother, the legend of St. Norah has a wide significance.—Youth's Companion.

The Northwest Indian and His Ways.
 The Indian of the plains is a far more picturesque individual than his brother or cousin of the coast. He does not erect totem poles and has no timber for the purpose if so inclined, but he is sufficiently spectacular himself without resorting to grotesque carvings and painted wood. His saddle, with its leather hangings and wooden stirrups, is in itself a remarkable aggregation, and when set off with his goods and chattels tied in bags, rags, strings and straps, the effect is remarkable. He wears the cast-off garments of his white brother in such original combinations that he looks like the personification of a secondhand store. Sometimes the adoption of a pair of gaiters as an external covering gives him quite an athletic appearance. He wears his hair in Gertrude braids, and prefers earrings about the size of half dollar coins. A mosquito net or handkerchief is his favorite head covering, and if he assumes a hat it is as an additional and purely ornamental appendage.—Detroit Free Press.

Buried at Santiago.
 "Few students of Napoleonic history," says the London Chronicle, "are aware that Dr. Antomarchi, who attended upon Napoleon I during his last illness at St. Helena, is buried in the cemetery at Santiago de Cuba. He had a brother living in that island, and after the emperor's death proceeded thither and lived at Santiago, exercising his skill as an oculist gratuitously among the poor. After his death in 1825 a public monument was erected to his memory in the local cemetery."
Love In Early Days.
 "Yes," said Adam to Eve as the twilight drew about the aged couple, softening their lineaments to a semblance of youth, "how well I remember the day we met! You wore a diffident air!"
 "That was all."—Indianapolis Journal.

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