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VOLUME XI. HOPKINSVILLE, CHRISTIAN COUNTY, KY., FEBRUARY 8, 1889. NUMBER 12

PUBLISHED TUESDAYS AND FRIDAYS,
—BY—
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THEO. E. BARTLEY, Business Manager

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WONDERFUL INSECT.

Romance of the White Ant Which, Though Blind, Accomplishes Wonders.

One portion of Prof. Drummond's recent book, "Tropical Africa," reads like a fairy tale. It is the wonderful romance of the white ant. It is a small insect, with a bloated, yellowish-white body and a somewhat large thorax, oblong-shaped, and colored a disagreeable oily brown. The termite lives almost exclusively upon wood, and the moment a tree is cut or a log sawn for any economical purpose, this insect is upon its track. One may never see the insect, possibly, in the flesh, for it lives under ground; but its ravages confront one at every turn.

The white ant is blind; it has many enemies, and can never procure food until it comes above ground. How does it solve the difficulty? It takes the ground out along with it. I have seen white ants working on the top of a high tree, and yet they were under ground. They took up some of the ground with them to the tree-top, just as the Esquimaux heap up snow, building it into the low tunnel huts in which they live; so the white ants collect earth, only in this case not from the surface, but from some depth underneath the ground into tunneled ways. Occasionally these run along the ground, but more often mount in endless ramification to the tops of trees, meandering along each branch and twig, and here and there debouching into large covered channels, which occupy half the girth of the trunk. Millions of trees in some districts are thus fantastically plastered over with tubes, galleries and chambers of earth, and many pounds' weight of subsoil must be brought up for the mining of even a single tree.

Peering over the growing wall one soon discovers one, two or more termites of a somewhat larger build, considerably longer and with a very different arrangement of the part of the head, and especially of the mandibles. These important-looking individuals saunter about the rampart in the most leisurely way, but yet with a certain air of business, as if, perhaps, the one was the master of works and other the architect. They are posted there as sentries, and there they stand or promenade along at the mouth of every tunnel, like Sister Ann, to see if any body is coming. Sometimes somebody does come in the shape of another ant—the real ant this time, not the defenseless Neuropteron, but some valiant and belted knight from the warlike Formicidæ. Singly or in troops, this rapacious little insect, fearless in its chitonous coat of mail, charges down the tree trunk, its antennæ waiving defiance to the enemy and its cruel mandibles thirsting for termite blood.

The worker white ant is a poor, defenseless creature, and, blind and unarmed, would fall an immediate prey to these well-drilled banditti, who forage about in every tropical forest in unnumbered legion. But at the critical moment, like Goliath from the Philistines, the soldier termite advances to the fight. With a few sweeps of his scythe-like jaws it clears the ground, and while the attacking party is carrying off its dead the builders, unconscious of the fray, quietly continue their work. To every hundred workers in a white-ant colony, which numbers many thousands of individuals, there are, perhaps, two of these fighting men. The division of labor here is very wonderful, and the fact that besides these two specialized forms there are in every nest two other kinds of the same insect, the kings and queens, show the remarkable height to which civilization in these communities has attained.

The great ant mounds are built in a mesh work of tunnels, galleries and chambers, where the social interests of the community are attended to. The most spacious of these chambers, usually far underground, is very properly allocated to the head of the society the queen. The queen termite is a very rare insect, and as there are seldom more than one, or at most two, to a colony, and as the royal apartments are hidden far in the earth, few persons have ever seen a queen, and indeed most, if they did happen to come across it, from its singular appearance, would refuse to believe that it had any connection with white ants. Her one duty in life is to lay eggs, and it must be confessed she discharges her function with complete success, for in a single day her progeny often amounts to many thousands.—*Baltimore American.*

TRAINING FOR TO-DAY.

How to Develop the Minds of Children in a Rational Manner.

Major-General F——, whose son was a child during the civil war, found on his return home that the boy had been trained by his mother according to the highest code of military ethics. The little fellow usually wore the uniform of a Lieutenant. But when he was greedy, or untruthful, or rude to a servant, his uniform was taken off and he was forced to go back to the clothes of civilian boys.

"You are not fit to go into the service of your country," he was told.

The wise mother skillfully used the military fervor which glowed in the atmosphere about the child to elevate and help him. The father of Montaigne began, when his child was an infant, to search for and train the servants, nurses and tutors who were to have charge of him.

"It is from the people who surround him, his boot-black, his tailor, the beggars at his gates, that a lad learns lessons of life rather than from books," he said.

It is a question if parents and teachers make enough use of this unconscious education of passing events. How many of them, for instance, have improved the excitement of the presidential contest to make their pupils familiar with the machinery of republican government, or with the great question at issue in the election? The tariff, for example, studied from a textbook, is but dry chaff for a child's mind; but when it influences the election to office of a man whom he knows, or the running of mills at the end of the village street, it becomes a real, live subject of interest to him.

French children, it is stated, saved their sous during the Franco-Prussian war, to help their country in her struggle. They not only understood that struggle better, but are closer economists and more loyal Frenchmen for life, for those few hoarded sous. Once each year, at least, Hebrew children are told the story of the miracles worked on their behalf—a trainer which, continued from generation to generation, has much to do with their coherence as a nation during years of persecution and wanderings. How many parents, as they read their morning paper, take the trouble to interest their children in the present condition of this country and Europe or in the men who are to-day wielding power in the world? Yet why should they go to school to make themselves familiar with the doings of Talleyrand or the Black Prince, while they know nothing of Bismarck and Boulanger and of the statesmen of our own country? Why should they not form an intelligent idea concerning Chinese immigration and the development of the South, as well as of Magna Charta and the Crusades?

The mind of a child is not an empty coffer to be packed with facts. It is a living force, to be trained and taught to see the meaning of facts, to grapple with difficulties as an athlete is shown how to wrestle and conquer. For this training the incidents and emotions of each day, if rightly used, are serviceable as well as the facts and rules to be found in printed volumes.—*Youth's Companion.*

SWISS EATING HOUSES.

Excellent Institutions Which Prevent Want in the Little Republic.

During my recent vacation I had an opportunity of visiting one of the "Cuisines Populaires" that are coming to be a peculiar feature of some industrial centers in Switzerland. In 1877, while a socialistic congress was in session at Chaux-le-Fonds, near Neuchatel, one of the speakers said: "All the arguments in the world will not have as much effect on the working man as a good plate of hot soup." These seeds were sown on good ground, for a month later the first popular kitchen was opened, and similar institutions are now to be found in other parts of Switzerland.

The one I visited has a capital of 10,000 ($2,000) francs, 7,000 francs of which has been paid in, and the shares are held by very nearly 7,000 persons. It owns the building it occupies, which, though by no means palatial, is amply sufficient for the purpose. On the ground floor there are two dining-rooms, large enough to accommodate from 600 to 650 persons, a smaller one for women, a sitting-room and an office. The establishment is run on a strictly cash basis, but instead of paying with money customers settle by means of checks, which can be purchased in any quantities, and it is not unusual for workmen to purchase these checks in sufficient quantities to last them a month. Three meals are served up in close succession, and as no one is allowed to remain at table after he has finished his repast the institution is able to feed about 1,800 people daily.

The prices charged are as follows: Soup, one quart, three cents; half quart, two cents; meat, boiled or roast, one-fifth of a pound if the latter, a trifle more if the former, five cents; wine two cents a glass, three cents per half pint or twelve cents for a quart; a ration of bread, one cent. So you see a person can have a square meal, composed of bread, meat, vegetables and a glass of wine (and I may add that this latter article is of a good quality and sold pure) for twelve cents. The institution not only supplies its customers with meals, but also sells them cooked food to carry away with them.

These cuisines populaires also furnish the public schools of the town with soup gratuitously and with bread at cost price. The managing committee are supplied with a certain number of checks that they can give away as they please and all food left over at the end of each day is distributed to the poor.—*N. O. Picayune.*

STORAGE OF APPLES.

A Few Points About Keeping Fruit During the Winter.

There are but a very few points to the secret of success in keeping apples during the winter. The critical time is not in the winter, but before the cold weather sets in. In the first place, the apples should be picked before they are perfectly ripe—about the time they begin to ripen is the best. Picked at that time, carefully sorted and put in barrels, they can be left in the orchard under a shed, or covered with boards and straw, until the weather begins to get quite cool. Then they are carefully sorted and removed to a dry, cold cellar, or, as many must do, placed underground in a dry, well-drained location. They are, however, not covered in the pits very deeply at first, considerable straw is used, and they are covered lightly with earth until the ground begins to freeze. A large number placed in a heap will not freeze very easily, but ventilation is always provided through the upper part of the pit.

The cellar should not contain any vegetables. After the perfectly sound apples are removed to the cellar in clean barrels, they should be so arranged as to allow free circulation of air all around the barrels. Now, if the cellar is kept dry and at a temperature just a little above the freezing point, it is all that can be done. To keep the cellar cool enough requires daily attention; during the cool nights and warm days the doors and windows should be kept open all night and closed perfectly tight during the day; you thus bottle up, so to speak, the cool air of one night during the day, to be renewed the next, accomplishing, at the same time, one of the most important objects—a thorough ventilation, which, during the winter, should not be neglected.—*Husbandry.*

—The quantity of sugar used in a Boston house suddenly increased, to the astonishment of the mistress. She began an investigation, which revealed that the servant used sugar to kindle the fire.

THE FREIGHT CONDUCTOR.

A Few of His Numerous Duties and Unavoidable Perplexities.

The freight conductor is simply a high grade of brakeman. His work is almost wholly supervisory and clerical, and so, after several years' service, he becomes more sober and business-like in his bearing, the responsibilities of his position being sufficient to effect this change; but he generally retains his sympathies with his old associates who have become subordinates. His duties are to keep the record of the train, the time, numbers of cars, etc.; to see that the brakemen regulate the speed when necessary, and to keep a general watch. The calculations necessary to make a seventy-five mile trip and get over the line without wasting time are often considerable, and an inexperienced conductor can easily keep himself in a worry for the whole trip. Often he can not go more than ten miles after making way for a passenger train before another overtakes him; so that he must spend a good share of his time sitting in his caboose with the time-table in one hand and his watch in the other, calculating where and when to side-track the train. On single-track roads perplexities of this kind are generally more numerous than on double lines, because trains both in front and behind must be guarded against, and because the regulations are frequently modified by telegraphic instructions from headquarters. A mistake in reading these instructions, which are written in pencil, often by a dovenly penman, and on tissue paper, may and occasionally does cause a disastrous collision. These duties of conductors are especially characteristic of trains that must keep out of the way of passenger trains, so that in his particular line it will be seen that the passenger conductor has much the easier berth. The freight and "work-train" conductor must really be a better calculator, in many ways, than the wearer of gilt badges and buttons, though the latter receives the higher pay.

The *bete noire* of the freight conductor is an investigation at headquarters concerning delinquencies in which the blame is divided. A typical case of this kind is that of a freight train which has stopped at some unusual place and been run into by a following train, doing some hundreds of dollars' damages, if not killing or injuring persons. "Strict adherence to rules will avert all such accidents," the code says; but they do happen, and the inquiry as to whether the conductor used due diligence in sending a man with a red flag to warn the oncoming train, or the engineer of the latter was heedless, or what was the trouble, is the occasion of much anxiety.

Conductors, concerning whose life I have only noted a few of the duties and perplexities, are not so much subject to the vicissitudes of cold and wet weather, and therefore have in many respects better opportunities than the brakemen to avail themselves of the enjoyments of a trainman's life. The risk to life and limb from coupling cars, etc., is also somewhat less, though many a faithful conductor has lost his life in the performance of a dangerous duty which he had assumed out of generous consideration for an inexperienced or overworked subordinate.—*B. B. Adams, Jr., in Scribner's Magazine.*

AFFECTING PARTING.

Farewell Chat Between Two Fair Creatures, One of Whom Missed Her Car.

"Well, Mrs. Jones, good-bye!"

"Good-bye, dear. The car is waiting."

"You'll come and see us?"

"Next week."

"Well, good-bye."

"The car is waiting."

"I know. But have you got that pattern?"

"The one I spoke of?"

"Yes. The car is waiting——"

"Yes, I know it, dear." (To the conductor) "I'm coming." (To her friend) "Well, dear, good-bye!"

"You'll come to see us again?"

"I will, dear."

"There! The car has gone!"

"Never mind, there will be another one along soon."

"That's a lovely hat you've got on, Jennie."

"Do you think so? Well, there's another car gone past!"

"There'll be another one along by and by. How is Mamie?"

"She's getting along fine. Here's another car!"

"Stop it, please! Well, good-bye."

"Good-bye, dear."

"And you'll come and see me?"

"Sure! Have you got a pattern of that skirt?"

"Yes, indeed! Do you want it? Well, I declare, the car has gone!"

"Has that car gone?"

"It has."

"Ain't they awful!"

"Well, you must look out for the next."

"I will, dear."

"Well, good-bye."

"Good-bye, dear. You'll come and see us."

"Sure."

"Here's another car."

"Well, good-bye, then."

"Good-bye."

"Give James my regards."

"Why, certainly."

"And bring him with you when you come again."

"I will. Here's another car."

"Well, good-bye."

"Well, good-bye. Oh! There. Have you got the pattern of that wrapper you had on the other morning?"

"Why, yes! There, that other car has gone!"

At last accounts the two ladies were still on the sidewalk bidding good-bye to each other.

(To be continued in our next.)

Unless they have succeeded in bidding good-bye to each other.—*Boston Courier.*

—An elderly New York woman who for six months spent her time while riding to work in knitting a costly shawl, forgot the garment, which was almost completed, in the cars the other morning.

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Fine Cheviot, Corkscrew and English Worsted Suits.
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A large assortment of Astrican and Chinchilla Coats and Vests. A nobby line of Youths' Suits in Frocks and Sacks. Boys' and Children's Suits in great variety.
We bought a large line of SHIRTS which we will close out in half dozen lots at wholesale price—WHITE SHIRT, 25 CENTS. A fine line of UNDERWEAR, HATS, CAPS, GLOVES, HOSIERY, TIES, &c, &c.
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"In the spring of 1887 I was all run down. I would get up in the morning with so tired a feeling, and was so weak that I could hardly get around. I bought a bottle of Paine's Celery Compound, and before I had taken it a week I felt very much better. I can cheerfully recommend it to all who need a building up and strengthening medicine." MRS. B. A. DOW, Burlington Vt.

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LACTATED FOOD Nourishes babies perfectly. The Physician's favorite.

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Castoria is Dr. Sam'l Pitcher's old, harmless and quick cure for Infants' and Children's Complaints. Superior to Castor Oil, Paregoric or Narcotic Syrups. Children cry for Castoria. Millions of Mothers bless Castoria.
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