

WHY MAN WEARS A HAT.

Exposure of the Head Endangers the Evolution of the Human Race.

Perhaps no article of clothing has been more freely criticised in respect to its utility than that which lexicographers describe as "a covering for the head."

From pole to pole we find that man, if he dresses at all, dresses his head. Even if bootless and guileless of such minor trifles as waistcoat and collar, he covers the head with some form of clothing.

There is a clearly conscious need which exists not merely in imagination. It is thus practically admitted that though the head, like any other part of the body, may, after having suffered the attrition of atmospheric variations, become inured to their action, it still loses somewhat in the process.

Foremost among the sanitary principles which ought to control usage in this matter are two—the avoidance of any but the lightest pressure and the admission through the tegumentary or by special apertures of sufficient air for free ventilation of the head.

IMPOSSIBLE CLASSIC HEROES.

The Characters of the Old Writers Not at All True to Life.

Some of the older novelists in dealing with old Rome, the feudal days in France, Germany, or England, or with pioneer life, make their characters belong simply to another time in the new world, instead of to another race and world of their own.

Their old Romans and barons and highway robbers, stall through the scenes of the past with "sentimental" words, and by quite certain that they are people themselves chiefly by cheating, lying, cringing, stealing, scheming, dining, drinking, dissipating, working, gossiping, gaming and talking about just as men are doing in the streets, markets, public offices, theaters, etc., of Paris, London and New York today.

Incomes of Prussia.

Out of a population of 60,000,000 in Prussia only 2,435,858 persons possess an income of over 900 marks a year, which is equal to about \$235. This fact is shown by the first year's results in the new income tax in Prussia.

An Ideal Wife.

A well known banker who had not expressed his opinion was asked what his idea was of what might be termed an ideal woman.

DEFENSE OF THE PEACOCK.

It Is Not True, as Some Have Said, That It Is a Perverse and Unpleasant Creature.

"Who says the peacock has ugly feet?" remarked Taxidermist Wood, of the Smithsonian Institution, to a Washington Star reporter.

"I have heard and read that piece of nonsense ever since I was a child, and I understand that it is recorded as an ornithological truth in Cassin's Greek and Latin. You will come across mention of it even in fables.

"It is a curious thing to observe that the male peacock in courting his chosen mate approaches her not with the brightly colored fan of his feathers, but toward her back.

AN ANCIENT SAYING.

How the Phrase "Beaten to a Mummy" Originated.

"The phrase 'beaten to a mummy' has been familiar to me from my youth and up, and I have always understood it as 'beaten to a jelly,'" says a writer in Verney's Magazine.

"Penicher, in his Traite des Embaumemens, gives directions for the composition of mummy from human flesh expressly for medicinal purposes. He recommends certain parts of the body to be used, and these to be dried, macerated and spiced out of a likeness to their natural condition."

Not Want They Ate.

It is customary for the railroad companies to treat witnesses well when they are subpoenaed to court. When a witness for a railroad company has to leave his work to testify, says the Philadelphia Press, the company pays him fully for the loss of his time in case the legal witness fee is not so much as the witness would have earned in his usual occupation.

How the Romans Got It.

The Romans in the time of Cicero and Augustus took an early breakfast, from three to four o'clock in the morning, a luncheon at twelve to one, and at about three o'clock the cena, or principal meal of the day, corresponding with our dinner.

Fairs in North China.

A writer in the North China Herald describes the fairs in northern China. There are but two months in the year when the people do not hold large fairs at convenient centers, at which all imaginable wants of all customers are supplied.

How the Pig is Raised.

The word "pig" as applied to iron is a mere play on the word "sow." When iron is melted it runs off into a channel called a "sow," the lateral branches of which are called the "pigs." Here the iron cools and is called "pig iron."

A PLEA FOR "HARVEST."

"Fall" Not an Americanism, But an Old English Term.

I have been reminded by several friends that the word fall is not exclusively American, but that it is used for autumn in some parts of the country to this day, says a writer in the Queen.

I had learned this fact before, though I cannot remember ever to have heard the word used by any country people.

Like most so-called Americanisms, it was doubtless taken over by emigrants and spread. I think that most Americanisms come from the strong New England stock. They were the stoutest and sturdiest of the English race, therefore the stoutest and sturdiest people in the world.

It is a pretty word; but those who use it contemplate, as we said before, the season as a time of decay and decline and approaching death. Those who speak of autumn think of full barns and granaries overflowing.

I am sorry we have not kept our own old English word. Could we not revive it, and speak of the season as that of harvest? Spring, summer, harvest, winter. These are four names—all good Anglo-Saxon words.

Nay, the word "harvest"—harvest is actually the Anglo-Saxon for autumn. September is harvest month—the month of harvest. Let us abolish autumn—it can go back to the Latin dictionary—and speak henceforth of harvest.

JAPANESE STATISTICS.

The Population of Japan Is Rapidly Increasing.

Mr. Ono, a Japanese statistician, has just published some interesting figures concerning the remarkable increase of population in that country during the present reign, and especially since 1872. In January, 1872, the population was 23,111,000; in December, 1893, it had increased to 41,074,000.

STOCKADES OF TUKU.

A Certain Supply of Ivory Heaped Up in the Interior of Africa.

"The ivory trade shows a most remarkable increase," Commercial Agent Mohun writes from the Congo to the state department. "Ivory is the most valuable article exported. It all comes from the high Congo, both north and south of the river. Steamers bring it as far as Stanley pool, and from there to Matadi (two hundred and fifty miles) native carriers bring it on their backs.

ANOTHER IDOL SMATTERED.

The Immortal Death Blow at One of Our Most Popular Fables.

Countess Guiccioli, Byron's innamorata, has her reputation for beauty sadly impugned by the author of "Gossip of the Century." That literary iconoclast says that several people he had known the countess told him that she was anything but beautiful.

A Singular Palm.

The Parapee palm is cultivated by the Indian aborigines of the Guianas for its fruit which they use largely as food. They plant it about their settlements, and where it is found apparently wild in the forests examination will show that such situations were formerly occupied by the Indians.

A Tree on a Pig.

Seeds of trees taken by birds, or by winds, frequently lodge in some denaying, mottled, crack on the tops of high buildings, and will grow out and make white large trees. One of these is in the city of Ulica, N. Y., where on the top of a city church tower is a mountain ash, which about fifteen or sixteen years ago probably sprouted. It still continues to grow, and has now reached a height of about seven feet.

Know to the Ancients.

The cat-tail of the American swamps is almost exactly the same plant as the Egyptian bulrush. It is no longer used for making paper, as it once was, but from its root is prepared an astringent medicine, while its stems, when prepared dry, are excellent for the manufacture of mats, chair-bottoms and the like.

LONDON'S COAL CONSUMPTION.

With Less Waste Children and Pets Would Not Have to Be Fished.

Some 18,000,000 tons of coal are burned in London yearly. About 6,000,000 are utilized by the gas manufacturing companies; 9,000,000 are burned in household and industrial fire grates, says the National Review.

Each ton contains sufficient ammonia to produce, if treated with sulphuric acid, twenty-two to twenty-eight pounds of sulphate of ammonia. The total loss of this fertilizing agent is, therefore, say 9,000 tons. As the price of sulphate of ammonia is 9 pounds and 10 shillings per ton, the monetary loss is 84,000 pounds every year.

It is agreeable to learn that the nitrogenous matter in the 4,000,000 tons of coal which are used every year by the gas manufacturing companies is now being made a considerable source of revenue. The value of sulphate of ammonia as a fertilizer is now beyond dispute. Where nitrogen has been deficient in the soil the application of 450 pounds of sulphate of ammonia to each acre gave an increase of nearly four tons of potatoes. Sulphate of ammonia, although not quite so active a fertilizer as nitrate, is held in the soil with greater tenacity.

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INATTENTIVE HOUSE MEMBERS.

A New York Congressman Thinks Their Work Should Be Taken Away.

"There is but one way in which this can be made a decent legislative body," said a member from New York to a Washington Post reporter as he surveyed the house and heard one man speaking while one hundred and sixty-six others chewed gum or ruffled papers, "and that way is to take from the members no opportunity to write while legislative business is on tap. If placed upon straight, hard benches with nothing to do save talk or listen they would know more of what is going on. Long, long ago the English realized this fact. In the house of commons there is never disturbance of any kind unless an extremely heated and factional debate is on. Everybody in the chamber hears what the man who has the right of way is saying. If the members wish to write or read the newspapers or swap yarn that used to be fanny many years ago they go into a room provided for that purpose. I am not much of an Angli-maniac myself. In fact, I think that ordinary immigration ought to be permanently barred. But there are things other than trousers that we might copy from England and be nothing the worse for it."

A British Lad.

There is one Belfast (Mc.) youth who will make a general some day, if he properly develops his natural traits as they appear at present. He is but three years and eight months old, but showed engineering skill in getting out of a scrape last week that few big boys would have equaled. While at play in a camp with some other boys he was accidentally locked in, and his comrades all went off to school. Finding himself a prisoner, instead of sitting down and crying our youngest first built up the articles in the room until he could reach a window, which he promptly smashed. Next he threw out the various articles which he could lift until the pile outside was within safe dropping distance from the window, when he climbed out and dropped to the pile. He was nearly two hours doing the work, but says he wasn't going to take any chances of breaking his neck by jumping from that high window.

BISMARCK'S WIFE.

The Cause of Many of the Iron Chancellor's Troubles.

Although But Little Known to the Outside World the Princess is a Power. Among German Nobles Her Antipathy for the Emperor.

Bismarck's sorrows are crowding hard upon him. These last years of his life are not happy ones.

What few people know is that Princess Bismarck is in reality responsible for many of his misfortunes. The outside world is almost unconscious that she exists, for she keeps in the background, but when she does speak she is likely to show little of that diplomacy which has made her husband famous.

The occasion will be well remembered—indeed it can never be forgotten—by those who were privileged to be the guests of the prince at his official farewell reception. There were present several members of the cabinet (among them poor Von Bötticher, who had been forced to act all along as a buffer between emperor and chancellor and who not seldom got abused on both sides) and the whole staff of the foreign office and a large number of dignitaries of state.

Bismarck was unusually silent and apparently in a mood of grief rather than resentment. The princess, on the other hand, was almost beside herself with rage. She exclaimed in a loud voice: "It was I who advised my husband to bear no longer with the emperor's petty interferences in matters which he does not understand. But to accept my husband's resignation was an act of infamy which the brave shall repent to me. He shall recall my husband on his knees. To dare to treat Germany's greatest man like that! Woe upon a hint!"

The word translated for want of better interpretation with knave was "Tübe," the most offensive term in the German language if applied in the sense of anger to a man, and the threat against the emperor was conveyed by the following words: "Das soll mir der Tübe büssen."

There was a moment of awful silence and then followed a stampede led by the ministers, who rushed out of the palace as if a pestilence were upon them, and in an incredibly short time the Bismarck family found themselves alone in the brilliantly lighted saloons. I do not believe anybody has dared to repeat the princess' dreadful words of import to the emperor, though, no doubt, the fact of something very shocking having been said by the princess was probably reported to his majesty. Whoa people talk of the mere possibility of a reconciliation between the emperor and Bismarck they are ignorant of the conditions under which they parted.

Many men have, after all, been more fortunate than Bismarck. He has been well paid; not a man's own money. He has been raised to a nobility of a Prussianian "Imperial Order" with an immense estate and only enough worldly possessions to see out a bare living to the dignity of a prince of the empire, and the duke of Lauenburg, under which a magnificent estate in the Saxonwald, the ancestral estate of Bismarck, purchased for him by the nation, and the estate of Varzin, four of mortgages. To put it in plain figures, Prince Bismarck enjoys now a competency closely estimated at fifty thousand pounds a year, and, better than all, he is still the idol of a large part of Germany's population.

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