A METAL EATING PLANT.

ONE OF THE STANLEY EXPEDITION MAKES THE DISCOVERY.

Fire Will Not Consume It—Good for Fences. Africa Adds a Phenomenon to the Vegetable World Which Will Be of Great Commercial Value.

Professor Schelwisch, the well known naturalist of Bavaria, while traveling with the Stanley expedition in the heart of Africa for the purpose of studying the flora and fauna of the dark continent, was the first white man to discover this strange plant.

One day while resting at a small village near the foot of Mount Milosis, in the Umbopo region, Professor Schelwisch noticed a plant with a peculiar steel colored foliage, and on examination it was found that the shrub, although growing like other plants from the soil, was practically composed of iron. The leaves, though very thin, were bent with great difficulty, and the twigs and branches resisted pressure with a force about equal to the same amount of iron, and to secure a leaf it was found to be necessary to separate it from the bush with a file.

While Professor Schelwisch was digging at the base of this plant for the purpose of making an examination of its roots, the natives crowded around him in great numbers, gesticulating in a menacing manner. The professor desisted from his work and the interpreter was sent for. He explained that this was a holy tree and worshiped by the natives in their fetich religion as a God plant, and that to dig one up would bring ruin and desolation upon the whole village and surrounding country.

Professor Schelwisch offered to buy the plant, and, taking out a handful of copper coins, gave them to the savages, who gladly accepted the money and distributed it among themselves. The professor then returned to the work of digging up the unique plant, but had not made any great progress when the natives again set upon him. Through the interpreter the professor informed them that he had legally bought the plant and intended to remove it. As soon as this message was made known to the savages every one who had received a coin came and dropped it in the hole at the base of the shrub. Professor Schelwisch allowed the coins to remain in the hole and walked away toward the mountain to hunt another specimen.

ITS STRANGE PROPERTIES DISCOVERED.

Next day, as the party were preparing to continue the march, the professor was curious to know if the coins had remained undisturbed during the night by the superstitious natives, and on approaching the metal plant was astonished to find it had changed its color completely. Instead of being a beautiful steel color, the stem, leaves and what was exposed of the roots presented the appearance of newly coined copper coins and glittered in the morning sunlight like polished gold. Upon examination it was ascertained that during the night the strange plant had absorbed nearly all the copper coins, with the result of completely changing its color. What was left of the coins in the hole showed that they were more than half eaten away or absorbed by the roots of the metal plant. Not only was the color changed, but the texture of the plant had undergone a similar transformation. It was found that the thin ivy shaped leaves were now easily bent around the fingers, would retain any shape given them and could be readily cut with an ordinary pair of scissors.

Professor Schelwisch succeeded in surreptitiously securing several branches of this wonderful metal eating plant, and was also successful in obtaining a good photograph of it. No further trace of the existence of the metal plant was found until the expedition reached the Uniamesi country, when at the base of the Nkomabakosi mountains a perfect forest of this curious plant was found. This being an uninhabited region no difficulty was encountered in securing specimens to take back to England.

FIRE DOES NOT AFFECT IT.

While in this locality ample opportunity was afforded the members of the expedition to make an exhaustive study of the habits and peculiarities of this most remarkable of all species of the vegetable kingdom. By a series of carefully conducted experiments it was found that this plant would feed on any kind of metal placed at its roots and in a few days take on the characteristics of that metal, and in the case of the softer metals often but a few hours were required to effect a complete metamorphosis of its fiber and color.

Being curious to know how fire would affect a growing plant of this species, preparations were made for the test. Large quantities of seasoned wood were procured and piled in a long row covering about thirty of the metal plants and a fire kindled at the windward end. Stanley and his entire party watched the experiment, and had the satisfaction of demonstrating that, beyond the blackening of the foliage by smoke, the intense heat to which the metal plant had been subjected had done no harm to the plant itself. At the expiration of a week it was found that the rain had removed nearly all traces of the fire and the plants were apparently as healthy as ever.

The roots present peculiarities not found in other plants. They branch out from the trunk on all sides like a vine and are usually from six to eight inches beneath the surface of the soil. Regularly at every seven or eight inches the root branches and at this juncture grows a peculiar pair of round, slightly concaved discs, hinged together like the shells of a clam at the point of juncture with the root. These discs leave their convex sides outward and usually remain above half open until they encounter metal or metal ore, when they gradually close around it and a process supposed to be similar to electro-plating goes on, the metal being rapidly absorbed by the plant.—Philadelphia Times.

Resemblance of Married Couples.

It has been observed in the case of mature married couples who have lived together for a long period of years, harmonious in thought and feeling and subject to the same conditions of life, they acquire a strong facial resemblance.

The Photographic society of Geneva, Switzerland, took the photographs of seventy-eight couples to see to what extent this facial resemblance prevails. The result is that in twenty-four cases the resemblance in the personal appearance of the husband and wife was greater than that of brother and sister; in thirty cases it was equally great, and in only twenty-four was there a total absence of resemblance.—Exchange.

Very Plain.

Mrs. Binks (angrily)—Call that an argument? Oh, get out!

Mrs. Winks—Don't you say "get out" to me.

Mrs. Binks—I address the expression not to you but to your argument. I do not ask you to get out—to get out of the room, or the house, or the town, or the country, or the planet, or the universe. Do I make myself plain?

Mrs. Winks—You couldn't possibly make yourself any plainer than you are naturally. —New York Weekly.

A Romance from Maine.

Years ago the little village of North Berwick, that notable Quaker stronghold, was disturbed by the news that a dancing school would be opened in its midst. The worldly and vain among the young people had hired the master, and the school was organized in course of time. The master was a good looking youth, and naturally he touched with a thrill of longing and of love the heart of many a village maiden; but the dancing master's heart did not echo until one Sunday he attended Quaker meeting and peeped over the high partition into the "women's side."

There, seated demurely by her mother's side, he spied Elmira Stackpole. And ere long Elmira Stackpole spied John Lang. Love comes unbidden even when a dancing master is the object of maidenly affection and the maiden a Quaker. John loved Elmira and in due course of time and after various difficulties, the two discovered a mutual affection. But, as is ever the case, the course of true love was a rough one. Elmira's father stormed as fiercely as a mild Quaker may and Elmira's mother meekly "thee'd" and "thou'd" her and cajoled and wept over her until the poor girl 'twixt love and filial duty was nigh about distracted. Nevertheless she married John Lang, North Berwick's dancing master, and a true and noble wife she made him.

The elders of the church and the devout brothers and sisters consulted one with another and rubbed heads in solemn conclave. 'Twas hard thus to separate from the little flock one who heretofore so soberly and piously conducted herself in all church and worldly affairs. Yet duty was before them and in open meeting the flat went forth. In the ears of the mother softly weeping and of the father grim and pathetically stern sounded the words of the leading elder:

"Brothers and sisters, she that was Elmira Stackpole having wed outside our society, and having been united with one whose acts minister to the carnal lusts of the body, is hereby separated from us and is no longer a member of our church."

And so Elmira and her husband went their way, apart from the way of the Quakers. But not for long. Ere many months had passed, back came the loyal Elmira into the church of her fathers and she brought the erstwhile dancing master along with her. And a model church member he always proved.—Lewiston Journal.

The Secret of a Long Life.

You sometimes see a woman whose old age is as exquisite as was the perfect bloom of her youth. She seems condensed sweetness and grace. You wonder how this has come about; you wonder how it is her life has been a long and happy one. Here are some of the reasons:

She knew how to forget disagreeable things.

She understood the art of enjoyment.

She kept her nerves well in hand, and inflicted them on no one.

She believed in the goodness of her own daughters and in that of her neighbors.

She cultivated a good digestion.

She mastered the art of saying pleasant words.

She did not expect too much from her friends.

She made whatever work come to her congenial.

She retained her illusions, and did not believe that all the world was wicked and unkind.

She relieved the miserable, and sympathized with the sorrowful.

She retained an even disposition, and made the best of everything.

She did whatever came to her cheerful and well.

She never forgot that kind words and a smile cost nothing, but are priceless treasures to the discouraged.

She did unto others as she would be done by, and now that old age has come to her and there is a halo of white hair about her head, she is loved and considered.

This is the secret of a long life and a happy one.—Ladies' Home Journal.

Beating Out the Devil.

A Hindoo mill hand, named Ramji Daji, had for some time been suffering from swollen knee joints and pains in various parts of the body. He went to the mill to get some wages due to him, and on his return was taken ill on the road. He was brought home on the back of a friend in an almost unconscious state, and was placed in a sitting posture, being held up by his father. A man named Deo, who was present, suggested that he was possessed of a devil, in order to expel which Deo swayed himself about in front of the sick man, seized hold of his hair, and demanded of the devil who he was.

Not receiving a reply he struck the deceased violently with a rattan, when the latter fell back in a dying condition; but before his death another friend took the rattan and beat the deceased, both men swaying their bodies to and fro and professing to be possessed with the spirit of a god. The flogging was intended to drive out the devil. Daji died almost immediately without a complaint. The widow narrated all these facts to the coroner and described both floggings as being very violent. The medical evidence showed that there were several bruises on the back and an abrasion on the right hip, but that the cause of death was hemorrhage from rupture of the spleen, which was probably not due to the flogging. The jury found a verdict accordingly, adding that there was no evidence to show how the spleen became ruptured.—London Times.

Use of Chloroform.

A commission of experts of the highest standing, employed by the nizam of Hyderabad to investigate the use of chloroform as an anæsthetic, has just made a report, in which it declares that the danger from the chloroform is not to the heart, as is generally supposed, but to the lungs. It says: "However concentrated the chloroform may be, it never causes sudden death from stoppage of the heart. Chloroform has no power of increasing the tendency to either shock or syncope during operations. The truth about the fatty heart seems to be that chloroform per se in no way endangers such a heart, but, on the contrary, by lowering the blood pressure, lessens the work that the heart has to perform, which is a positive advantage." The practical conclusions of the commission are that the safe administration of chloroform depends on careful attention to the respiration. Care must be taken that it is not interfered with, and if by any accident it stops artificial respiration must be instantly begun. Rules on this subject are given, by constant attention to which the commission asserts that chloroform can be given with perfect ease and absolute safety. —New York Sun.

Color for Preserved Peas.

At the Liverpool police court lately, Mr. Kirkland Mole, fruiterer, 21 Tithebran street, was summoned for selling a bottle of green peas in which there were three grains of sulphate of copper. Dr. Hope, medical officer of health, stated that this was a very large amount of copper, and might prove injurious to the persons eating the peas. The defendant said he had received a guarantee from the wholesale dealer that the peas were good. There was a law in France some time ago which prevented a manufacturer of preserved peas putting more than a certain amount of sulphate of copper in, just sufficient for coloring purposes. That law, however, had been rescinded, and during the last five or six months the manufacturers had been allowed to put in any amount they thought proper. A fine of forty shillings and costs was imposed. Edward Shaw, Berry street, was fined a like amount for selling a bottle of peas containing two and one-half grains of sulphate of copper, and Henry Atkinson, 56 Old Hall street, twenty shillings and costs for selling a bottle containing two grains of similar deleterious matter.—Pall Mall Gazette.

A Head in a Case.

In the Holy Trinity church, in the Minories, is preserved in a glass case beneath the pulpit a human head. The vicar, the Rev. Samuel Kinns, has recently issued a book containing details about this caput mortuum. It is supposed to be that of the Duke of Suffolk, father of Lady Jane Grey, who was beheaded in 1554, shortly after the execution of his daughter. There is a tradition that the executioner did not, as was usual in such cases, hold up the head of the duke to the people, but simply let it drop into the basket, the supposition being that he was bribed to bring it secretly to the church and place it in the vault where it was found by the Earl of Dartmouth. This story is doubted by a former vicar, who writes to say that it is more probable that "the head belongs to some unknown person of later times."—New York Sun.

HOW TO JUDGE.

"Judge the people by their action"—'tis a rule you often get—
"Judge the actions by their people" is a wiser maxim yet.
Have I known you, brother, sister? Have I looked into your heart?
Mingled with your thoughts my feelings, taken of your life my part?
Through the warp of your convictions sent the shuttle of my thought,
Till the web became a Credo, for us both, of should and ought?
Seen, in thousand ways, your nature, in all act and look and speech?
By that large induction only I your law of being reach.
Now I hear of this wrong action—what is that to you and me?
Sin within you may have done it—fruit, not nature, to the tree.
Foreign graft has come to bearing—mistletoe grows on your bough.—
If I ever really knew you, then, my friend, I know you now.
So I say, "He never did it," or "He did not so intend,"
Or "Some foreign power o'ercame him"—so I judge the action, friend!
Let the mere outside observer note appearance as he can,
We, more righteous judgment passing, test each action by its man.

—James Freeman Clarke.

Jimmie's Opinions.

Interested fathers and mothers are often anxious to see their children's school reports, but possibly they might gain a deeper knowledge of the childish mind if they also perused Tommy's or Dicky's examination papers.—

One child brought two of his papers home for inspection, because, as he indignantly declared, he "saw the teacher laugh when she was correcting 'em."

"I knew they were mine," he protested, "because both times she looked at me and said: 'O Jimmie, Jimmie, what shall we do with you?' Now, you look at 'em, ma, and tell me what's the matter?"

"Ma" looked and made two choice extracts, over which she herself could not forbear smiling.

"Mountains have a great effect on the rainfall. They are very useful at such times, because when it rains people can take to the mountains for shelter."

"The reason you can't boil eggs at a high altitude is because there is not enough pressure of the atmosphere to harden the yolk."

"Did you understand exactly what you meant by these answers?" asked his mother, mildly.

"P'raps not," said Jimmie, with an air of indifference, "but that's what the book said, anyway!"—Youth's Companion.

Wear and Tear.

One of the annoyances to which a popular restaurant, as well as hotels, are subjected, is a continual curse of petty thieving by patrons. If soap of good quality is used in the wash rooms, it disappears as fast as it is put out. Hair brushes and combs are carried away every day, and, strange as it may seem, every day finds a restaurant doing a big business short on its knives, spoons, forks, cups, butter dishes, saucers, and even plates. The cruets in the casters and salt and pepper shakers also disappear. In the hotels the loss in fine glassware in which drinks are served is considerable annually, and towels are carried away by the score. There are hundreds of people who were never known to buy matches, but they always fill their boxes from the public supply. This is all annoying and quite expensive, but it is one of the items of wear and tear in business.—Interview in St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Pumps for New Cruisers.

Naval engineers are much pleased with the auxiliary air and circulating pumps for the cruisers Concord and Bennington. A recent test of these pumps showed that 100 strokes per minute can be made on seventy pounds of steam, and that if necessary this steam pressure can be increased to 140 pounds. It has been furthermore shown that the pumps, when working 150 strokes per minute, can perform work equal to that accomplished by 123 strokes per minute of the Yorktown's pumps. But to obtain the 123 strokes the Yorktown's pumps required a steam pressure of something like 135 pounds.

The superiority of the pumps in the Quintard cruisers over those in the Yorktown is a matter of no little satisfaction to the officers of the navy, inasmuch as the Yorktown's pumps are of English design, while those put in the Concord and Bennington are American in design and manufacture. The work of getting aboard all the machinery of the Concord and Bennington has been effected. Within two weeks after the cruisers are launched it is calculated that steam can be gotten up. —Washington Star.

Sunflowers and Malaria.

In a recent issue of the Russian medical journal, The Meditzina, a contributor draws attention to the common sunflower as an excellent and cheap substitute for quinine in the treatment of malarial fevers of all possible forms. The remedy has been from time immemorial used for the purpose in the Russian, as well as Persian and Turkish popular medicines, and that mostly after the following plan: A flask is filled loosely with finely cut dry or recent flowers and stems, and then with vodka aqua vitæ. The hermetically corked vessel is left to stand under sun rays, or at some warm place, for two or three days. The tincture is then ready for use, and should be given as a small wineglassful three times a day. In recent cases, complete and permanent cure ensues in from one to three days; in most obstinate and inveterate cases, not later than a week. The remedy proved successful, even in such cases where quinine and other anti-malarial means failed.

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Jas. R. Rossiter, John Rick,
C. L. Cooke, Henry Rick,
Lewis R. Willis, Arthur E. Harris,
Bailey M. Barksdale, G. Raimey Harris,
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Marion Yarbrough, B. F. Poston,
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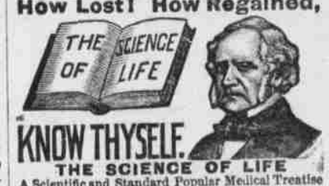

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