

SCIENTIFIC.

Why is the vaulted sky so blue?
And why the rising sun so bright?
All-sapient Science, surely you
Can set this ponderous question right?

THE WONDERFUL LAMP.
The Perronnet family—composed of M. Jules Perronnet retired hat-seller, Mme. Leontine Perronnet, his wife, and their daughter, Amelie Perronnet, a young woman who had just reached marriageable age—had finished his evening meal.

Amelie Perronnet following the wise precepts of housekeeping that her mother had inculcated in her, aided the little servant-girl to remove the cloth, with an eye on the fragile dishes Mme. Perronnet brought forth her ledger, to inscribe in it the expenses of the day, and M. Perronnet, after having looked over the real-estate sales had installed himself at the corner of the fire to devour the political news.

It should not be imagined from this that the Perronnets were avaricious. They were, on the contrary, worthy people who had come to San Francisco in the early sixties, and had thriftilly amassed a comfortable fortune in the hat trade.

Three times already they had been asked for the hand of their daughter—but she had brought her up in the good old French way, and Amelie was too obedient a child to have ideas of her own—but they had declined.

Amelie had not been consulted, and to tell the truth, the wonderful lamp had made no great impression on her; but she always found some pretext to go down-stairs at the precise moment when the lodger on the third floor was coming in—he came in very regularly, not having the money to seek amusements—and she found his air, as he saluted her, very elegant.

Amelie went to bed happy and dreamed the most rosy dreams. This first family evening was soon followed by a second, then by many others. Amelie and John learned duets, and played at the same piano; they even went to the theater once, and John presented Mme. Perronnet with a bouquet and gave Amelie a box of boubons.

However, M. Perronnet made inquiries as to the commercial standing of his lodger, and learned that John was as exemplary in his business as in private life, and that to secure a very good place, he needed only a little capital. All the friends consulted found the young man charming.

During all the preparations, during the buying and making of the trousseau, the very night before the ceremony, the lamp still burned. "This is too much!" cried M. Perronnet, "now he no longer has the right to compromise his superb health."

After the marriage, which was gayly celebrated, the young couple left on their wedding journey, and M. Perronnet was at last free to enter his son-in-law's room. There he discovered, to his stupefaction, very few books, a simple box of note-paper, a rusted pen and in the inkstand, some ink half dried up.

get it this evening" and he walked briskly away, without a glance back. If he had turned around he would have seen a brown little head at Mlle. Amelie's window; and if he could have heard what Mlle. Amelie's red lips said, he would have been very proud for they murmured: "My, ain't he nice looking!"

He worked all day, with no thought but of his duties, only saying to himself, as he had said it many a time before, that if it was a good year, they would probably raise his salary. It was, just then, his sole ambition.

He was introduced into the parlor, which was brilliantly lighted for this event. M. and Mme. Perronnet, who were already there and Mlle. Amelie, who was listening behind a portiere, decided that he made a very graceful appearance.

He was closely interrogated as to his life, his family—who lived in the country—all his work. M. Perronnet complimented him on his ardor as a student and Mme. Perronnet counseled him not to abuse his health.

At the end of a month the curiosity of the Perronnet family had reached a climax. They spoke openly of him before Amelie. The student's lamp had given John Chappell a marvelous reputation.

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They came back, happy, enchanted, she a little fatigued by the journey, he still fresh, still handsome. After a pleasant family evening, the young couple retired, and John went to find his lamp.

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WITNESSED A MURDER.

YET COULD DISCOVER NO TRACE OF THE TRAGEDY.
A Gambling House Murder in Pioneer Days That Was Hidden Beyond Detection—American Saw the Man Killed.

"My experience on one occasion in early days in the city led me to believe that among the rough classes they had a very expeditious and thorough way of disposing of murders by doing away with the victims," said a pioneer of San Jose, Cal., to the Cincinnati Enquirer reporter.

"I had not been in the habit of frequenting such places, but as I had a little time I thought I would look around town and see what I would find in the way of excitement. I was rather foolhardy those days and I pushed my way into this little adobe hut that was crowded with drunken Mexicans all engaged in gambling.

"I made my way to the table where they were playing a game of cards. I never knew what kind of a game it was for the instant I looked on the table there happened a startling incident which completely disconcerted me and made me rush from the place in alarm. The report of a pistol rang out, and a Mexican, who was seated on a bench next to the wall, dropped dead with a ghastly wound in his head.

"I was not satisfied, and demanded that there must be some sort of an official inquiry into the affair. To this the officials acceded, and the next day half a dozen of those that I was sure had seen the tragedy were called upon to testify what they knew about it. To my utter astonishment, even under oath, all disclaimed any knowledge of any pistol having been fired or any one having been shot at the time I claimed or at any other time that day.

"On the occasion in question he had been doing some especially high-handed work and his end came. How the body was ever spirited away so neatly and completely in so short a space of time was a mystery that I could never solve. The gamblers never showed any feeling against me for my action in the matter. Some of my friends told me I might be in danger after that, but although for several months subsequently I was around among the Mexicans at all hours of the day and night I was never harmed or even threatened."

THE DOCTOR—The point is what kind of work do you do during the day?
PATIENT—Well, at the house of correction.
THE DOCTOR—What?
PATIENT—Yes, I'm a proof-reader.
—Truth.

A THUNDER-MAKER.

How a Band of Sioux Indians Were Surprised.
I have seen a good many scrimmages with Indians of various tribes, but the wildest and voracious of the whole copper-colored breed are the Sioux," said Major Dan Allen, one of the original "pathfinders" of the trackless West.

"Most Indians are born sneaks and cowards, who do their fighting from cover, but the Sioux fears neither God, man nor the devil, and would fight Napoleon's old guard in an open field. A bluff won't work on them worth a cent, and when they tackle you you can just make up your mind to do some killing or lose your scalp. I was out in the Southwestern part of what is now South Dakota a few years ago, with a hunting party, when we encountered a lot of bucks on the war path. There were twenty of them, while my party only numbered half a dozen. But the redskins had the old-fashioned muzzle-loaders while we were armed with Winchester.

"There wasn't a rock or tree for miles and we had to just stand up to the rack and take our fodder. One of the party was a mining engineer, who had been prospecting for pay rock and had with him several pounds of dynamite and an electric battery. He was a Yankee—one of those quick-witted people that would find a way to get out of perdition, though all Milton's terrors guarded the exit. He concealed the explosive in the grass, attached his wire and we retreated slowly about 400 yards and stopped. The redskins didn't waste any time maneuvering; the came and saw and expected to conquer in short order. On they came straight as the crow flies and we lay down in the grass with rifles cocked. I tell you it was an interesting moment for us.

"If the battery failed to do its duty we were gone to a man. But it didn't. The blue bellie had dropped his hat near his Vesuvius so that he could tell just when to touch the button. When the foremost horse had reached the hat he turned on the current. There was an explosion that made the very ground reel and the air forty rods was full of horse flesh and fragments of noble red men, saddles and rifles, blanket, and bookskin. Now's our time, boys," I called, and we ran forward and began pumping the lead into the terrified savages as fast as we could pull a trigger. The remnant of the party took flight, and I am known among the Sioux to this day as the thunder maker. The title does not belong to me but it is mighty good capital out in their country.

"The origin of the custom of burying people with their heads to the West is unknown. From ages back races in all parts of the world have buried their dead with their heads to the West; not invariably, however, but with great uniformity. Probably the remote origin lies in the belief of an immortality and a resurrection, typified by the return of the sun every morning. The dead are buried so that when the time comes they may face the sun, which will wake them. The first pastor of the church at East Hampton, N. Y., it may be remarked, directed that he should be buried with his head to the East so that at the resurrection he might face his congregation, but so general is the custom of burying with the head to the West that this direction is noted as an instance of the minister's eccentricity.

"A negro who was arrested at Albany, Ga., recently, for cow stealing, gave six different aliases.
A Pike county, Ga., man, aged 89 years, was married to a woman lately who was his junior by fifty years.
Ivan Karmitz died at Schenectady, N. Y., lately, of blood poisoning, caused by wearing colored hose on a foot which had blistered.
A Mr. Sorehead, of a small New Jersey town, aspires to political honor. If he expects to get it he should change his name immediately.

"The difference between the barbarous, semi-barbarous and civilized nations is quickly noticeable to a traveler. The barbarous peoples are the most polite.
Every man whose babies are grown-up men and women makes the claim that he took all the care of them when they were little, and his wife can't convince him he didn't.
Whittier was not afflicted with the proverbial poverty of poets. His will gives his homestead, valued at \$15,000, and \$45,000 in money to relatives, in addition to other bequests.
Don't throw a towel over the gas bracket carelessly and then go to sleep without waiting to see what happens. A man in Newark accidentally turned on the gas in this way and was nearly suffocated.
There are ex-military officers, ex-doctors, ex-lawyers, one lord by courtesy, one baronet, several honorables, one ex-member of parliament and a dozen bankrupt landed proprietors among the London cab drivers.
A large rat which allowed his hunger or curiosity to get the better of his discretion tried to explore the interior of the shell of a live oyster which had incautiously left its door open. The bivalve closed down on the intruder's paw and held him a prisoner till drowned by the rising tide.

HIDDEN BY A CORAL WALL.

Natives Found on the Plateau of an East Indian Island.
A curious discovery has been made on the island of Kitaba, one of the Trobriand group off the northeast coast of New Guinea. A great many sailors passing this little island have imagined that it had no inhabitants because they saw no evidence of human occupation.

"Sir William McGregor, the administrator of British New Guinea, says the island has an area of only five or six square miles. On all sides it presents a low and sloping margin, usually about a quarter of a mile broad, covered by heavy timber. Within is a precipitous coral wall which can be ascended only at a few places. The bank rises to a height of 300 to 400 feet. Once at the top the visitor finds within this wall a plateau which occupies the whole of the center of the island and is from 50 to 100 feet below the coral wall surrounding it.
There about one thousand natives live and till their gardens. The rich, chocolate colored soil yields them an ample supply of food. They are completely protected from the wind by the rocky rim that incloses their plateau. The island seems to have been an atoll which was lifted above the sea several hundred feet, so that the atoll ring now forms the coral wall surrounding the plateau. On this elevated and almost inaccessible plain are thirteen villages, each of which contains over twenty houses. Sir William McGregor says the natives gave him a most pleasant reception. He found it difficult to travel through some villages on account of the yams cocoanuts mats and other articles that were laid down before him for his acceptance. There are no inter-tribal hostilities, and it is not possible for the natives of other islands to oppress the people, because on their plateau, naturally fortified as it is, they are inaccessible to hostile tribes. The drainage of the plateau is excellent. There are great cavities in the coral wall, through which the rainfall filters and makes its way to the sea.

MATCHES AND PINS.

Little Things, But They Play an Important Part in Life.
Matches and pins being among the most common things in daily use, it is seldom that any thought is bestowed upon them. Matches that are ignited by friction were first used in 1829, before which time they were made to catch fire from a spark struck from flint or steel—a very inconvenient method. It is hard to say how many millions of matches are made in a day, but when the number of people that use them is reckoned, the total sum is appalling. Probably in the city of New York alone over 20,000,000 matches are used every twenty-four hours. But matches are such little things that no body ever seems to think of them. From an ordinary three-inch plank 186,000 matches may be made yet even at that rate the lumber used in the match business attains enormous proportions.

Pins are mentioned as far back as 1483, but not until the beginning of this century were they manufactured by machinery. The old way of making each pin by hand must have been very tedious, and it is not likely that people were so careless with them then, as they were much more expensive than now. It has often been wondered what becomes of pins that are lost, but it is hard to say. There are fourteen distinct operations in making a pin and lots of trouble attached to the process. Pins are made of brass, and then tinned and bleached, and millions of them are manufactured daily. As a pin can be used more than once the number used does not equal that of matches, but still miles upon miles of wire are used annually in their manufacture. Like matches they are little things and not much thought of, but when you need a pin or a match, and there is none to be found, then you realize what an important part they play in daily life.—Harper's Young People.

GIANT AND DWARF.

It Was a Stander on the Intelligence of the British Public.
Tom Thumb when first taken to England, lodged at the same hotel with Labache, the great singer. A Russian lady was very anxious to see Tom Thumb and went to Egyptian hall for that purpose, but found that the exhibition was over. However, she found out his hotel and went there, says the Argonaut. She knocked at a door, which was opened by a man of colossal proportions. She started back in some alarm, but was reassured by the amiable and gracious manner of the man, who was Labache. "I must have made a mistake," said the lady, "it is Tom Thumb I wish to see." "Very well, madam," said the giant, "I am he." "You monsieur? Why, I had been told that he was so very little." "Oh!" said Labache, "that is for the public, but when I come home I make myself comfortable by resuming my natural size." The lady again stammered her astonishment when Labache said: "Madam, your supposition is not very flattering to the British public. Do you suppose they would go in crowds to look at a man for the mere reason that he was very little? The interesting thing is the transformation; it is that which attracts people." It is lady admitted that the remark was very reasonable.

Her Many Children.
A colored woman residing at India Springs, Ga., has been the mother of fifty-three children. One of her sisters had thirty children and another has nursed twenty-seven.
A Coincidence.
Miss Lightfoot—Hard times makes money scarce.
Mr. Fierocman—But 'good times' makes money scarcer.