

## THINGS WORTH KNOWING

COLLECTED AND CONDENSED FROM  
MANY RELIABLE SOURCES.

Short Bits of Condensed Information for the Busy Merchant, the Tired Employee, the Eager Student—The Habits of Men and People, and Some Curious Customs.

Cats were originally brought into England from Cyprus.

A match-making machine cuts and shapes 10,000,000 matches in 10 hours.

Some of the largest ocean steamers can be converted into armed cruisers in 30 hours.

Crows were anciently employed as letter carriers, as carrier pigeons are in modern times.

It was James I. of England who first used the style of "sacred" and "most excellent majesty."

There was last year a decrease of nearly 4,000 in the number of marriages in France as compared with 1888.

Among every 1,000 bachelors there are 38 criminals; among married men the ratio is only 18 per 1,000.

In Australia, spring begins August 20, summer November 20, autumn February 20, and winter May 20.

The insurance of houses and goods against fire began in London in 1667—the year following the great fire.

Great Britain used the first postage stamps in 1840. Brazil followed in 1845, and the United States in 1847.

"To kick the bucket." A bucket is a pulley. When pigs are killed they are hung by their hind legs on a bucket.

There are some 50 millions of capital sunk in submarine telegraphs, and the whole electric coil stretched out would reach a length of over 120,000 miles.

Women possess the full suffrage, or public rights of voting the same as men, in only three places in the world, viz.: Iceland, Isle of Man, and Pitcairn Island.

The first pineapple grown in England is said to have been forced by Charles II.'s own gardener, and to have been cut with great glee by the Merry Monarch himself.

It is expected that next year's census will show for the whole of India a population of 270,825,116, all kept in order by a British force about twice the size of German army corps.

Homburg drives what may be called a roaring trade in wild beasts. Lions and tigers can be ordered at 1900 fr. apiece. A good rhinoceros, however, will fetch from over 8000 fr. to 23,000 fr.

Good Friday is one of the best and most musical of the forms which the name of this day in Holy Week has assumed. In Bohemia it is called "Great Friday," in Southern Germany "Black Friday," in Denmark "Long Friday," and in Wales it is "Friday of the Lesson of the Cross." In some places also on the Continent it is called "Still Friday."

"Pig-iron" is a mere play upon 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. Sow has nothing to do with swine, but is from the Saxon "sawan," to scatter. Having sow for the parent channel, it required no great effort of wit to call the lateral grooves little pigs.

A scapular consists of two small squares of woollen cloth joined so that one hangs in front of the body and the other behind. Legend tells us that the Virgin Mary promised that she herself would deliver from purgatory on the first Saturday after death those who, besides wearing it, should recite daily the offices of Our Lady and abstain from flesh-meat on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

The word "census" is derived from the ancient Romans, and signifies a declaration made before and registered by the censors, containing an enumeration in writing, given by the several subjects of the empire, of their respective names, places of abode, estates, quality, wives, children, domestics, tenants, slaves, etc. In the United Kingdom the census is now taken at decennial periods. The next census will take place in 1891.

There is no name for the cat in Hebrew, or any mention of it in the Bible; nor does it exist on the Babylonian and Assyrian monuments. Greek writers mention the aialuxos (a beast carrying its tail like a plume) as an animal to destroy for its skin. The cat was only known as a domestic pet in Egypt, and these people shaved their eyebrows as a sign of mourning when the house cat died. The Romans only received the animal into their houses to any considerable extent about the fourth century, and from thence "pussy" spread over Europe.

Degrees such as are now given in our Universities probably originated with the incorporation of Universities in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The term "Master" is believed to be the oldest among those of graduation. Pope Gregory IX. (1227-1241) is said first to have instituted the inferior rank of "Bachelor" and "Bachelors." The degrees of "Bachelor and Master of Arts" were conferred in Oxford in the time of Henry III., and the degree of "Master of Arts" probably much earlier. The degrees for Laws are said to have come into use in 1149.

The earliest known complete printed book is a Latin Bible, printed by John Gutenberg and John Fust, at Mentz, in South Germany, in 1455, seventeen years after the invention of printing. A copy of this Bible is in the British Museum. It is called the "Mazarin Bible," from a copy found in the library of Cardinal Mazarin, who died on the 9th of March, 1661. This Bible, when perfect, fetches an enormous price. Sir John Thorold's copy sold in December, 1884, for £3,900; Earl of Crawford's copy in 1887 for £2,650; and the Earl of Hopetoun's which was sold in February, 1889, for £2,000, notwithstanding imperfections in volume IV.

Death by precipitation is one of the oldest modes of capital punishment. It prevailed widely over the earth in primitive times.

In olden times saint days were regarded as lucky days, and were marked on the calendar with red ink. From this sprang the term red-letter-day.

The Chinese have no word which will compare with our English "Amen;" they say instead four words meaning "The heart wishes exactly so."

"Gone to the dogs." This phrase is undoubtedly a perversion of the Dutch proverb, *Toe goe, toe de dogs*, meaning—"Money gone, credit gone too."

Milliner is a corruption of "Milaner," from Milan, which city at one time gave the fashion to Europe in all matters of taste in dress, as Paris in more recent days.

There is a custom in Germany that apprentices, after the expiration of their term of service, shall travel two years before becoming masters—hence *journey men*.

"Shell out" (*i. e.*, out with your shells or money) is probably derived from the fact that in Southern Asia, and many other parts of the world, shells are used instead of coins.

The Plymouth brethren are so termed because they first appeared at Plymouth in 1830; twenty years afterwards they only possessed thirty-two places in England and Wales.

The application of a key down the back for stopping bleeding at the mouth is an old plan. The stopping by the key is due to some nervous mechanism, which is not very well understood.

"Bravo!" ("Well done!" "Excellent!") is an Italian exclamation of praise, the superlative form of which is "bravissimo." It is commonly used in England without distinction of gender or number, but the Italians say "bravo" to a male singer or actor, "brava" to a lady, and "bravi" to a company of actors or singers.

There are over 80,000 stuttering children in the schools of Germany. The increase has been so great during the past four years that the defect is considered contagious. The famous Dr. Gutzman is authority for the statement that the increase is due to mimicry; that the young mimics who imitate stutterers soon become involuntary stutterers. The schools of the city of Breslau have a total of 2,400 stuttering children.

At Berlin and London the longest day has 16½ hours. At Stockholm and Upsala the longest day has 18½ hours, and the shortest 5½. At Hamburg, Dantzic and Stettin the longest day has 17 hours, and the shortest 7. At St. Petersburg and Tobolsk the longest has 19, and the shortest 5 hours. In Finland the longest day has 21½ hours, and the shortest 2½. At Wandorbus, in Norway, the day lasts from the 21st May to 22nd July, without interruption, and in Spitzbergen the longest day last three months and a half.

"Finding a mare's nest." What we call a nightmare was, by our forefathers, supposed to be the Saxon demon Mara or Mare, a kind of vampire, sitting on the sleeper's chest. These vampires were said to be the guardians of hidden treasures, over which they brooded as hens over their eggs, and the place where they sat was termed their nidus or nest. Hence, when anyone supposes he has made a great discovery, we ask if he has discovered a mare's nest, or the place where the vampire keeps guard over the hypothetical treasures.

Sporting Mortality.—It is generally supposed that football is a much more dangerous game than cricket, but, according to statistics compiled by an assurance company, the reverse is the case. Two months were taken—January and June, 1890—as representative of winter and summer sports respectively. The first-named showed claims as follows: Boxing, 4; skating, 1; football, 23; shooting, 28; hockey, 2; bowls, 2; hunting, 19; riding, 40; dancing, 5; billiards, tennis, dumb-bells, and golf, 1 each—total, 108. Summer sports worked out as follows: Bowls, 1; cycling, 31; riding, 40; cricket, 34; tennis, 17; rowing, 10; rinking, 3; wrestling, 1; swimming, 6; shooting, 2; polo, 3—total, 148.

A camel has twice the carrying power of an ox. With an ordinary load of 400 lbs. he can travel twelve or fourteen days without water, going 40 miles a day. They are fit to work at 5 years old, but their strength begins to decline at 25, although they live usually to 40. They are often fattened at 30 for the butcher, the flesh tasting like beef. The tartars have herds of these animals, often 1000 belonging to one family. They were numerous in antiquity, for the patriarch Job had 3000. The Timbuctoo or Meharri breed is remarkable for speed, and used only for couriers, going 800 miles in 8 days, with a meal of dates or grain at nightfall. Napoleon conveyed 1500 infantry on camels across the desert from Cairo to St. Jean d'Acre.

The pillory was one of our humorous punishments. It was merely an uncomfortable form of the stool of repentance, still used, apparently in Syke, and in his day extremely familiar to Robert Burns. There was no great harm in the pillory, if the populace did not throw mud, rotten eggs, dead cats, cabbage stalks, and so forth at the criminal. The pillory was used in England till about the date of the Battle of Waterloo. Good men and bad have stood in it, De Foe and Titus Oates. Occasionally they were greeted with roses and myrtles, and had quite a triumph; at other times their ears were cut off and they were pelted. In 1814, Lord Cochrane, the naval hero, was ordered to be pilloried. Sir Francis Burdett said he would stand by Lord Cochrane's side, and the punishment was not inflicted. Owing to the limited number of reviewers in bygone times, authors were pilloried very frequently. Payne, of the "Historic-Mastix," was a noted instance. The stocks were merely a sedentary form of the pillory, and not uncomfortable, as in the old stocks remaining in some country places the curious may assure themselves. The cutty stool is an ecclesiastical form of the pillory, with a sermon thrown in.—*Daily News*.

France makes yearly 26 million pairs of gloves, and exports 18 million pairs. In 10 years ending 1880 Great Britain imported 15 million pairs per annum, valued at 1½ million sterling.

It is said that Whithred, King of Kent, used the sign of the cross (X) for the mark to his grants, he being unable to write his name; and that from him originated the custom of signing with the cross.

The title "Reverend" was, until the sixteenth century, addressed to many others besides clergymen, such as to judges and eminent writers; but from that time its use has been strictly confined to the clergy.

The largest Christian place of worship in the world is the church of St. Peter's, in Rome, which has a capacity for a congregation of 51,000 persons. St. Paul's Cathedral, London, will hold a congregation of 26,000.

The horse-shoe was superstitiously supposed to scare away witches. To shoe the cloven hoof was to subdue its possessor. Like a good many other superstitions, it lives long, but is surely dying out. Even Nelson had a horse-shoe nailed to the mast of the Victory.

An ordinary goat gives a quart of milk daily, and lives 10 years. The Turkish breed, known as Angora, produces a fine hair worth 2s. per lb.—say 2 lbs. per goat per annum. One-third of the goats in South Africa are of Angora or mixed breed, the first having been introduced from Smyrna in 1860.

The last Kings of the Isle of Man were the Dukes of Athol, who sold their rights of sovereignty in 1765 to the British government for £72,000, but they did not give up their manorial rights, etc., till 1825; since then only has the Isle of Man been an actual dependency of the British Crown. The government paid to the Athole family for their manorial rights, etc., £416,000.

In 1860 the numerical strength of the Russian army was almost equal (90 per cent.) to the military strength of Austria and the whole German union combined. But in 1890 the military strength of united Germany alone became superior, by about half a million, to that of Russia, not to speak of much better equipment and organization. That of Austria is just double the military strength of Russia. Thus, comparatively, Russia is twice as weak now as she was 30 years ago, though her population has increased from 71 millions to 113 millions (61 per cent.), whilst the population of Austria and united Germany have increased in the same period only by 2½ per cent. Their gain is evidently due not to numbers, but to better organization.

The "biggest thing in knives"—and what has long been the wonder of the world of cutlers—is a knife with blades, or instruments, to the number of 1821, now in the possession of Mr. Joseph Rodgers, of the well-known Sheffield firm. This unique article was invented and made by Mr. Jonathan Crookes while in Mr. Rodgers's employ, but now himself a master cutler of Sheffield. Probably the knife next in interest to this multiple marvel is one made in Germany to the order of a wealthy American hardware dealer of Cincinnati. This instrument—literally a chest of tools in itself—has 56 blades, comprising one for almost every imaginable variety of use, from a toothpick or cigar probe to scissors or a hand-saw. The handle is of tortoise-shell, and it weighs altogether 13 lbs.—scarcely a pocket implement.

That curious aboriginal race—the Aztecs—attained quite a high state of art in wood-working, though they knew nothing of steel. Their tools were almost wholly of glass, in the manufacture of which they seemed to have been highly skilled. They used flint axes to chop trees, and for rough hewing of logs; but in the accurate fitting-in of the hewn timber they handled glass knives, chisels and saws very deftly, and with beautiful results. The best collection of their tools is in the city of Mexico, but the Smithsonian institution at Washington also contains several interesting specimens. At the latter place there is a cana-wood post with carved hieroglyphics and faces all done with glass, and upon it can still be seen bits of the original chisel sticking where they broke off three centuries ago under the hand of the workman. When the edge of their glass tool became blunt with use they broke it from the end, instead of sharpening it, and thus procured a new cutting line.

Cork, as is well known, is one of the very best non-conducting mediums, and would have been greatly used years ago for covering steam pipes for the difficulty of bending it to suit different diameters and curves of pipes without breaking. A system, however, has now been introduced by a Liverpool company, by which cork in strips, backed by specially-prepared canvas, can be easily wrapped round pipes of any diameter or shape, from one inch and upwards. The company have already applied it with marked success to a large number of steamers, including some of the largest vessels afloat. Besides its outstanding characteristics of great lightness and compressibility, cork has other advantages for this purpose. Amongst these are its incombustibility, in lightness, its imperviousness, which defies equality heat, frost, and water,—its great durability; its resistance of shocks and vibrations of all kinds, and its absolute non-injuriousness to the pipes. As to its lightness specially—perhaps its highest recommendation for ship work—the weight per square foot of this cork covering is only 8 to 9 oz. for the thickest size, and 4 oz. for the thinnest (for 1½-in. pipe), while the lightest of other compositions now largely used has an average weight of 2 lbs. per square foot. The advantages of cork in respect of weight-saving will, therefore, be evident, especially in its application to torpedo and other swift vessels of war, and to speedy passenger steamers.

## Stand Your Ground.

When you make up your mind to take Hood's Sarsaparilla, do not be induced to buy some other preparation instead. Clerks may claim that "ours is as good as Hood's" and all that, but the peculiar merit of Hood's Sarsaparilla cannot be equalled. Therefore have nothing to do with substitutes and insist upon having Hood's Sarsaparilla, the best blood-purifier and building-up medicine.

## SHE WORE PLUMBERS.

Here's a New Wrinkle in Feminine Devices For Thin Girls to Consider.

"Never hear of plumbers?" asked a lady friend of mine the other day. "No," said I. "What new feminine device is this, for goodness sake?" "Well," she replied—we were calling, at the time, at the house of a mutual friend—"just you notice Miss—when she comes down stairs and tell me if you notice anything strange or remarkable in her appearance."

The Miss—referred to, be it said, is a tall and somewhat angular young woman of uncertain age, but who is possessed of a considerable degree of personal vanity and a more than ordinary desire to appear at her very best upon any and all occasions. In a few moments she appeared and, after greeting us cordially, we entered into a general conversation. Nothing very remarkable about her, thought I.

"Well," said I to my lady friend after our departure. "I have scanned Miss—pretty closely but failed to notice anything worth commenting upon in her appearance. She talked as if she had something in her mouth—"

I was interrupted at this point by a peal of laughter.

"Why, what on earth are you laughing at?" said I. "And, by the way," I asked "did it not strike you that Miss— is growing somewhat stouter? Her face seems to be somewhat plumper—"

"There," interrupted my friend, "now you have it. Miss—had 'plumbers' in her mouth." To my look of inquiry and astonishment she responded:

"Plumbers you see, are small round shaped affairs like a doll's saucer. They are made of rubber, and when held in place in the mouth they cause a woman's cheeks to become plump and round. When ladies have lost some of their teeth plumbers come into play; prevent their jaws


from appearing lantern shaped or their features from being angular." "Heaven and earth!" said I. "What will the feminine mind conceive next?" "Oh," she responded, "there are lots of things about feminine attire that you have not yet heard of."—*New York Herald*.

## From Hand to Mouth.

"From hand to mouth," he gaily said; Then kissed her hand which quickly led From those white little finger tips To one upon her rosy lips. She blushed and turned extremely red.

She drooped her blonde and shapely head. The first one was a kiss well-bred; The second put it in eclipse.—*From hand to mouth.*

They married ere that year had fled. For then the future held no dread; For youth expects well laden ships To make wealth-bringing homeward trips. But dreams are gone; they live instead From hand to mouth.—*America.*



## WHAT DOES THE MICROBE KILLER DO?

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The Cash Interest Income shows an increase of forty-three per cent, and was more than sufficient to pay the Death Losses of the year.

Profits to Policy-Holders in matured Policies in EXCESS of the Company's Semi-Tontine Estimates.

Where is the Portrait?

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Large INCREASE in Premium Income.

Large INCREASE in Insurance in Force.

DECREASE in Losses.

DECREASE in Expenses.

DECREASE in the Average of Terminations.

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## NOTHING COMES UP TO THIS.

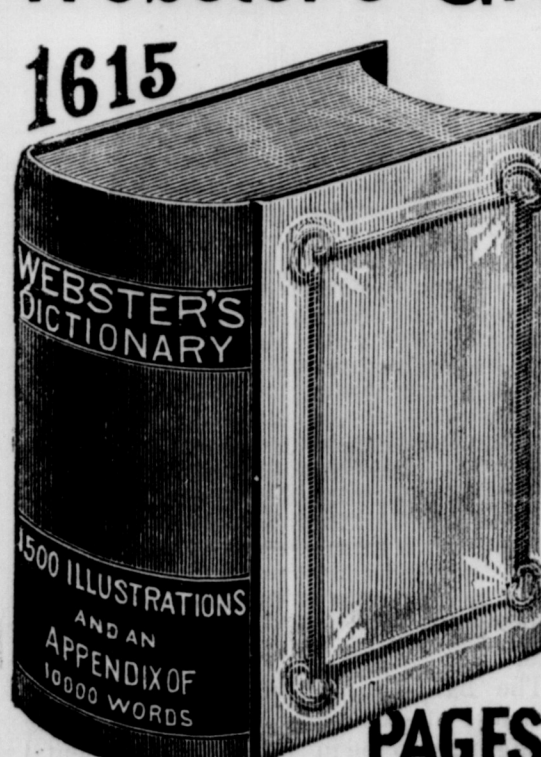
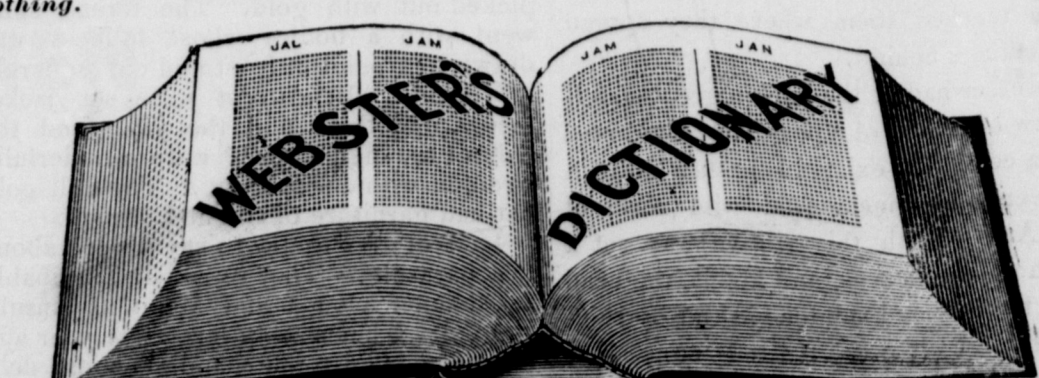
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