

THINGS WORTH KNOWING

The territory of Alaska extends to 370,000 square miles.

Two centuries ago not one person in a hundred wore stockings.

The Strasburg cathedral clock was built in 1570 by Isaac Habrecht.

The frost in the winter of 1799 lasted 84 days; and in 1785, 115 days.

The Queen has four personal aides-de-camp and 41 ordinary ones.

There are now two millions of children in the temperance organization.

Seventy-eight per cent of the population of Ireland profess the Roman Catholic faith.

The average annual payment to British soldiers in pensions for wounds is £16,000.

In 1740 South Carolina imposed £100 penalty on any person teaching slaves to write.

Gibraltar fell into the hands of the British in 1704, during the war of the Spanish succession.

Hong Kong, at the mouth of the Canton river, in China, was taken by the British in 1839, and formally ceded in 1841.

During the last 100 years 385,000 patents have been issued by the United States. There have been 600,000 applications.

Printing from metal types cast in moulds was invented by Peter Schoeffer; but no work was produced from them till 1459.

The great fire of London, which raged four days, destroyed 87 churches, 13,200 houses, and laid waste upwards of 400 streets.

The principality of Wales has an extreme length of 135 miles, and a breadth varying from 35 to 95 miles; area, 7,378 square miles, or 4,720,000 acres.

The London county council was constituted in common with county councils all over England and Wales, under the local government act of 1888.

Of 4344 strikes in separate establishments in the United States (1881-86) for "reduction of hours" as a single issue, 1055 succeeded, 966 partly succeeded, and 2323 failed.

The gothic style of architecture became prevalent in the twelfth century; but its rise dates from the ninth. Its great peculiarity is the pointed arch, whence it is sometimes called the "pointed" style.

Italy holds the evil pre-eminence in mortality from malaria fevers and small-pox, Austria and France coming next; but Italy can boast of the lowest average of deaths from general tuberculosis and from drink.

The hot-air blast used in the manufacture of iron was invented by James Neilson, of Glasgow, in 1828. This improvement effected enormous saving of fuel, as the cold-air blast greatly reduced the heat of the furnace.

Eleven kings of England—viz., William the Conqueror, William Rufus, Henry I., Stephen, Henry II., Richard I., John, Henry III., Edward I., Edward II. and Edward III.—are said to have been unable to sign their own names.

Robert Raikes, founder of Sunday schools died 1811. He said he was led into the work by seeing so many children destitute of all education, profaning the Sabbath, and utterly regardless of all good things. The word "try" occurred to him; so he tried, and succeeded in doing a great work.

The Phœnicians (natives of Phœnicia, on the sea-coast of Syria) were the most eminent traders and navigators of ancient times. They planted several colonies on the shores of the Mediterranean, the chief of which was Carthage, fifteen hundred years before the birth of Christ.

The quarrel with the Chinese respecting the sale of opium began in 1839. Capt. Elliot, superintendent of the British trade in China, and several merchants, were arrested by the Chinese government, and were detained in custody until opium to the amount of £3,000,000 was delivered up. This led to the war with China.

No unmarried lady in Holland can dream of going to church, concert, or any other place of public assembly without the escort of parents or male members in her family. She cannot take a walk, pay a visit, or go shopping unaccompanied by her mother or other chaperon. Until the betrothal of the young lady has been announced, she remains the sole charge of father or mother, and she makes acquaintances only in the presence of a third party. Unmarried daughters are chaperons to all places of amusement.

English bids fair to become the universal language; it is more widely spread and more freely spoken than any other tongue. In Europe it is regarded as the language of polite society. On the vast Australian and North American continents it is the one tongue; and in the east fully 15,000,000 of Hindus, Mohammedans, Buddhists, and others read and speak English. In point of numbers, at the present time it is exceeded by the Chinese alone.

In 1890 the eggs imported into Great Britain represented a sum of over \$3,000,000. France and Germany between them sent over 714 millions; Belgium, 200 millions; Russia, nearly 75 millions; and Portugal, 2 millions. From Egypt, Italy, Norway, Malta, Morocco, Sweden, Turkey, and the Channel Islands came smaller quantities. Australia has even begun to send eggs to the British market. They must be at least six weeks old before they reach there.

The ten architects recently selected by the directors of the World's Fair are to receive 10,000 dols. each and expenses.

The State of Washington will send a 400ft. tree to the World's Fair, and a 50ft. flag-pole will be placed above it.

In France and Italy the usual dinner hour is 4 or 5 p. m., a custom that has remained unchanged for hundreds of years.

The one part of the world in which no native tobacco-pipes and no native smokers have been found is the Australian mainland.

San Salvador was the first point of land discovered by Columbus (on October 11, 1492), and was so named by him in acknowledgment to God for his deliverance.

In 1825 Captain Johnson was awarded £10,000 for making the first steam voyage to India in the *Enterprise*, which sailed from Falmouth to Calcutta.

Signs of shops originated when people in general were not able to read. A representation of the article sold was used at each shop to attract customers.

The discovery of a sea passage to India was made by Vasco di Gama in 1497. He established the first European settlement in India at Cochin five years afterwards.

In 1889, in the United Kingdom, dissatisfaction with condition of work, hours, material, etc., caused 139 strikes. Of these, 62 were successful, 31 were partially successful, and 42 were unsuccessful, and the results of 4 were unknown.

Before the great revolution in France it was customary, when a gentleman was invited to dinner, for him to send his servant with his knife, fork, and spoon; or, if he had no servant, he carried them with him in his breeches-pocket, as a carpenter carries his rule.

The name tram-road is said to be a corruption of Outram-road, from Mr. Benjamin Outram (father of Sir James, the Indian general) who in 1800 made great improvements in the system of railroads in England. Clumsy wooden and imperfect iron railroads had been in use, chiefly in connection with mines, long before Outram's time.

Hats and caps seem to have been the subject of legislation at various times, for we find that, in 1571, a law was enacted that every person above seven years of age should wear on Sundays or holidays a cap of wool, knit made, thickened and dressed in England, by some of the trade of cappers, under the forfeiture of three farthings for every day's neglect.

The use of the side-saddle for women riders is traced to the time of Anne of Bohemia, eldest daughter of the Emperor of Germany, who married Richard II. of England. Previous to this date, all Englishwomen bestrode their horses in manly fashion; but, on account of a deformity, this German bride was forced to use a side-saddle, and the custom became general.

The army under the Duke of Wellington at the battle of Waterloo consisted of 49,608 infantry, 12,402 cavalry, 5,645 artillerymen with 156 guns; but of this total of 67,655 troops scarcely 24,000 were British, the rest being Hanoverians, Brunswickers, Dutch, Belgians, and others in British pay. Napoleon commanded 48,960 infantry, 15,765 cavalry, and 7,232 artillerymen, being a total of 71,947 men with 216 guns.

The salvation army is one of the most recent religious denominations, and one of the most successful. In October last the number of officers was 9560; of enrolled soldiers, about 500,000; of corps, 2865; outposts, 895; of junior soldiers' corps, 719; cadets in training, 700. The number of counties occupied, 32, and of languages used, 35. The number of meetings held during the year, 2,300,000, and of houses visited about 3,000,000.

A curious verbal relic of the use of horns, says Grant Allen, as drinking-cups survives in the Greek word *keramic*, still commonly applied to the art of pottery, and derived from *keras*, a horn. As to skulls, not only were they frequently used as drinking-cups by our Scandinavian ancestors, but there still exists a very singular intermediate American vessel in which the clay has actually been moulded on a human skull as model, just as other vessels have been moulded on calabashes or other suitable vegetable shapes.

Of accidental deaths Italy has fewer than England and Switzerland, and has far fewer from suicide than Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Belgium and England. On the other hand, it is Italy's misfortune that she has the largest number of homicides. From 1876 to 1883 there was no capital punishment in Italy; in 1884 three soldiers were executed, and in 1885 two. The highest number of accidental deaths occurred in 1883, when the earthquake in Casamicciola happened, killing in all the island of Ischia 1890 persons. Excluding suicides, the accidental deaths in Italy in 1888 were 12,946. In the same year 112 men and 66 women are reported to have died in Italy of cold.

According to General Brackenbury and a return a few years ago, the British War Office cost £225,500, while the German War Ministry cost only £160,000. The British War Office had 693 officials of all ranks, and the German 503. In time of war the German General Staff would have to deal with the mobilisation of 1,750,000 men, the British Intelligence Department with 600,000, regulars, militia, and volunteers. The ordinary expenditure of the German army was \$19,300,000 and for that sum a million regular troops could be put into the field. The ordinary expenditure of the British War Office was £14,200,000, and owing to defective organisation it was scarcely able to put one army corps, or thirty thousand men, into the field.

The official census returns of the Transvaal place the population of the entire country at 119,128 souls, consisting of 64,493 men and 52,630 women.

In some parts of the east whistling is looked upon with ill-lavor as a practice full of ill-omen—just as English sailors used to imagine that whistling at sea brought on a storm.

Of the 11,000,000 square miles of Africa, only about 4,500,000 remain which have not been claimed by some European power and more than half of this area lies within the desert of Sahara.

The total area of bog in Ireland is estimated at 2,830,000 acres, nearly one-seventh of the surface of the island. Of these bogs there are 1,576,000 acres of flat bog, the remaining 1,254,000 are mountain bog.

According to Professor E. Lavasseur, the population of the world in 1887 was 1,483,000,000, and extent 52,550,000 English square miles. Another authority estimates the population of the globe at about 1,434,000,000.

The Saxons in the fifth and sixth centuries founded the heptarchy, meaning the seven states, though there were really nine; these were all subdued by Egbert, king of Wessex, who was descended from Cedric. He in 825 took the title of the king of England.

The Horse Guards is a building in London, at the east end of St. James's Park, in which some of the horse guards are garrisoned, and where the commander-in-chief has his offices. Two horse-soldiers, in full uniform, daily mount guard under two small arches at its gates.

The passion flower derives its name from an idea that all the instruments of Christ's passion are represented—viz., the five wounds, the column or pillar of scourging, besides the three nails, the crown of thorns, etc. Most of the passion flowers are natives of the hottest part of America.

According to recent statistics, 12,000,000 persons are now insured under the German accident and old age insurance scheme. During the present year 120,000 persons will become annuitants on the ground of age. About 123,000,000 marks will be contributed by the employers towards the funds.

Of the entire human race, 500,000,000 are clothed—that is to say, wear garments of some kind to cover nakedness; 250,000,000 habitually go naked; and 700,000,000 only cover the middle parts of the body; 500,000,000 live in houses; 700,000,000 in huts and caves, and 250,000,000 virtually have no place to lay their heads.

There has never been such a thing as a universal coin, but what comes nearest to it is the French franc. It is equal to the peseta of Spain. It is equal also to the lira of Italy, the drachma of Greece, the dinar of Serbia, the ley of Roumania, the leu of Bulgaria, the boliviano of Bolivia, the sol of Peru, the venezolano of Venezuela and Colombia, and the peso of the Argentine Republic, Uruguay, Chili, Ecuador, Guatemala, and Costa Rica.

The coldest spot on the face of the earth is Verchokansk, Siberia. The mean temperature at that spot last year was 2.9 deg. below zero, or 29.1 deg. Fahrenheit. For January and December it was 62.9 below zero, and in July it rose to 60.6 above zero. The lowest point in July was 39.2 deg. above zero, while in January the mercury at one time fell to 88.6 deg. below zero. Verchokansk is in latitude 67 deg. 34 min. north, longitude 133 deg. 51 min. east.

SERVANTS IN JAPAN.

When the Master is Well Bred his Domestic Treat Him with Consideration.

Japanese servants are excellent if you choose them with discretion and treat them with the established consideration of the country. There is a universal social compact in Japan to make life pleasant by politeness. Everybody is more or less well bred, and hates the man or woman who is yakanashu—noisy, uncivil, or arrogant.

People who lose their temper, are always in a hurry, bang doors, swear, and "swagger," find themselves out of place in a land where the lowest coolly learns and practices an ancient courtesy from the time when he wobbles about as a baby on his mother's back. Therefore to be treated well in Japan, as indeed elsewhere, you must treat everybody, including your domestics, well, and then you will enjoy the most pleasant and willing service.

Your cook will doubtless cheat you a little; your jinnickishman will now and then take too much sake; the musma and the boy's wife will gossip all over the place about everything you do; and the gardener and the coachman will fight cocks in the yard when your back is turned, but, if conscious of your own, you can forgive the little sins of others. You can hardly fail to become closely attached to the quiet, soft-voiced, pleasant people, who, as soon as they have learned your ways, will take real pleasure in making life agreeable to you.

A present, now and then, of a kimono to the maids, of toys and sweetmeats to the children; a day's holiday, now and then, granted to the theatre or the wrestling match, are richly rewarded by such bright faces and unmistakable warmth of welcome on arriving and of good speed on going as repay you tenfold. Respectful as Japanese servants are—and they never speak except on their knees and faces—they like to be taken into the family conversation, and to sit sometimes in friendly abandon with the master and mistress, admiring dresses, pictures, or Western novelties, and listening sometimes to the samisen and koto, as children of the household.—Edwin Arnold.

A Great Spelling Match.

The greatest spelling match on record is that offered by Our Homes Publishing Co., in which they will award the following magnificent Cash Prizes: One prize of \$300; one prize of \$200; two prizes of \$100; four prizes of \$50; eight prizes of \$25; twenty prizes of \$10; forty prizes of \$5; one hundred of \$2; and two hundred of \$1. These prizes will be awarded to the persons sending in the largest number of correctly spelled words found in the advertising pages of the February number of Our Homes, in which no letters occur but those found in the sentence: "Our Homes is Unrivalled as a Home Magazine." Special cash prizes will be given away each day and each week during this competition, which closes April 25th, 1891. Send 10 cents in stamps or silver, for a sample copy of the February number, with rules and regulations governing the competition. Address, OUR HOMES PUBL. CO., Brockville, Ont.—Advt.

MEN AND WOMEN TALKED ABOUT.

Mrs. Cleveland recently declined a request from a magazine, enclosing \$500, for her personal recollections of the White House.

Mme. Patti's illness in Bristol has disturbed financial arrangements amounting to more than \$100,000 for subscription concerts.

Only one member of the Bonaparte family is left in Corsica, the home of the great founder of the family. The wife of Lucien Bonaparte, the Princess Marianne, who separated from her husband, lives in the village of Ajaccio as secluded as a nun.

The Queen of Denmark is a fine pianist, and her daughter, the Czarina, is nearly as good. At the Danish court, chamber music is a daily occupation, generally a quartette with the queen at the piano. Beethoven and Brahms are the favorite composers.

The King of Spain is still a baby; the Queen of Holland is no more than a school girl; the Emperor of Austria has, owing to the death of Prince Rudolph, no son to fill his throne; Emperor William of Germany would, if he passed away, leave nobody as his successor to be Kriegs Herr, or War Lord, except a boy of eight. The Czarowitz of Russia is 23, but he is unmarried, and the Prince of Naples, heir to the Italian throne, is also childless.

Mrs. Houston has given us a graphic account of a Saturday evening at Theodore Hook's, where Tom Moore sang:—

"I can see him before my mind's eye now . . . a little man, with a head, as it appeared to me, slightly too large for his body. To describe the effect of his soft warbling voice as the words of his own sweet melodies thrilled from his lips would be impossible. It was music spoken (for 'voice,' in the received acceptance of the word, he had, as is well known, but little), and the 'whispered balm' penetrated with magic power to every heart that possessed the power to sympathize and to feel. The song he chose was that exquisite melody, 'I saw from the beach,' and when he came to the third verse, beginning,

"'Ne'er tell me of glories serenely adorning
The close of our day, the calm eve of our night.'
I heard the breath of one who stood beside me come thick and labored, as though the breast of the man—who was no other than Theodore Hook—had a burden laid upon it that was too heavy to be borne; and the remaining lines of the well known stanza—

"'Give me back, give me back the wild freshness of morning,
Her clouds and her tears are worth evening's best light.'"

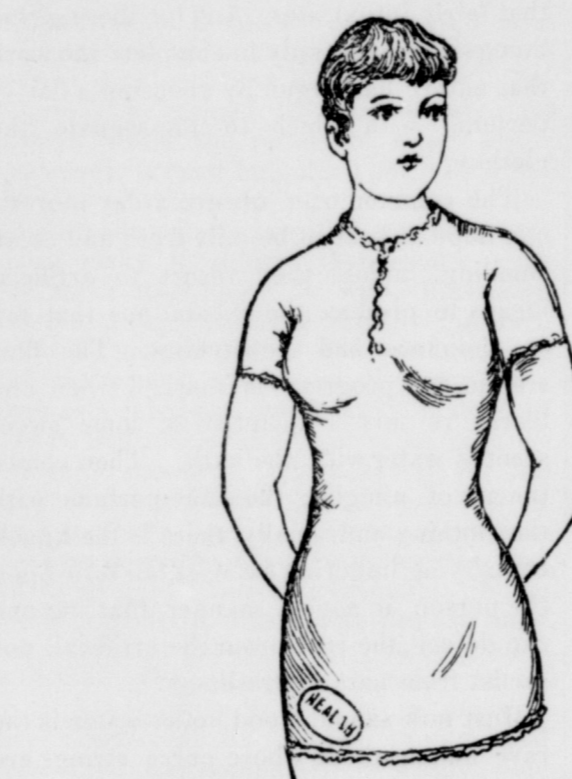
Napoleon called Tallyrand a silk stocking filled with filth, and on occasion addressed the same epithet directly to him. Chateaubriand said of him, "When Monsieur Tallyrand is not conspiring, he is making corrupt bargains." Carnot said, "He brings with him all the vices of the old regime, without having been able to acquire any of the virtues of the new one; he has no fixed principles; he changes them as he does his linen, and takes them according to the wind of the day—a philosopher, when philosophy is the mode; a republican now, because that is necessary in order to become anything. Tomorrow he will declare for an absolute monarchy, if he can make anything out of it. I don't want him at any price." Mirabeau called him "this vile, base trickster," and again wrote, "It is dirt and money that he wants. For money he has sold his honour and his friend. For money he would sell his soul—and he would be right, for he would be trading muck for gold." The very member of Assembly who secured his recall from exile, Chenier, wrote of him:—"This letter of the Abbe Maurice proves to me after having been an anarchist and Orleanist, and not having been Robespierreist only because Robespierre wouldn't have him, he has now become a partisan of the Directory. This limp-foot, without respect for bishopric, is like a sponge, which makes up every liquid into which it is dropped, but, unlike the sponge, he never gives anything back. Here he is, recalled from exile yesterday, and proposing proscriptions for tomorrow. If the directory wants blood, look out for your head; Maurice will not refuse it."

Century.

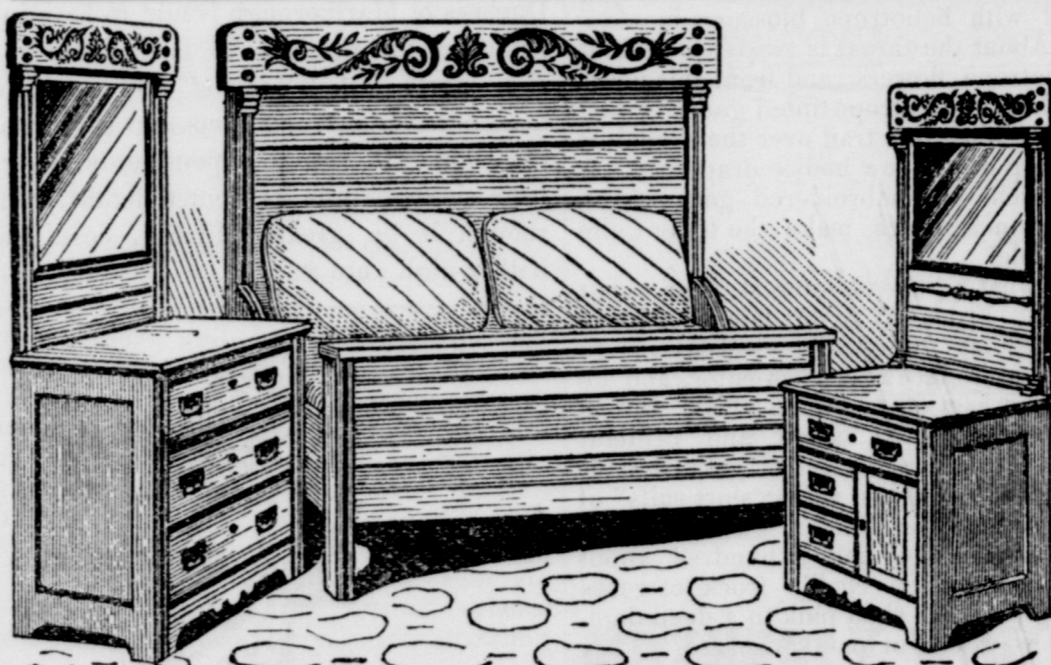
Bolingbroke was a literary man, and Bolingbroke was one of the greatest parliamentary orators and politicians England ever knew. Pulteney was a literary man—would in our times have been a newspaper man—and Pulteney was the first great leader of opposition the English parliament ever saw. Burke was a literary man, was even for a time a bookseller's back, and Burke was perhaps the greatest philosophical statesman in English political life. Sheridan was a writer of plays and the manager of a theatre, and he was likewise the orator of the famous Begum speech, and he held his own against Pitt, and was in friendly rivalry with Fox. Canning was a literary man; so was Sheil, and though Sheil now is not well remembered, yet it has to be said that Disraeli, who had heard both men, ranked him much higher as a parliamentary orator than Canning. No man ever filled the house of commons more fully than Macaulay did, although his voice and manner told heavily against him. Even the superb delivery and the magnificent voices of Peel and O'Connell—the two incomparable voices of their time—did not call together a greater audience than that which would stream into the house of commons when the word went round that Macaulay was "up." We have forgotten Macaulay's parliamentary eloquence in our days, but do we quite remember Peel, and has not O'Connell passed into a mere memory? The literary man has not much the worst of it, after all. Coming down to still later times, was not Mr. Disraeli a literary man? He declared of himself in his better days, and that was "a gentleman of the press," and that was his proudest escutcheon. Yet he was one of the very foremost figures in the political life of England. His friend the late Lord Lytton was a novelist and a dramatist, and was on his first appearance in the house of commons a curious and, it might have seemed, a hopeless failure. But he came back to parliament after many years of absence, and in spite of some most formidable difficulties, he became a great parliamentary success. He was rather deaf, and he could not effectively debate; he had to wait and read the speeches before he could reply to them. He had an articulation so imperfect that listeners unaccustomed to the tones of his voice found it at first hardly possible to understand him. Yet it is perfectly certain that he became a great success in the house of commons, and that in his case, as in the case of Macaulay, the news that he was about to speak would cram every bench, and keep all the benches crowded until he had delivered his last resplendent sentence. It was elaborate, to be sure—it was artificial—it was gorgeous; but its superb phrase-making kept the house alive.

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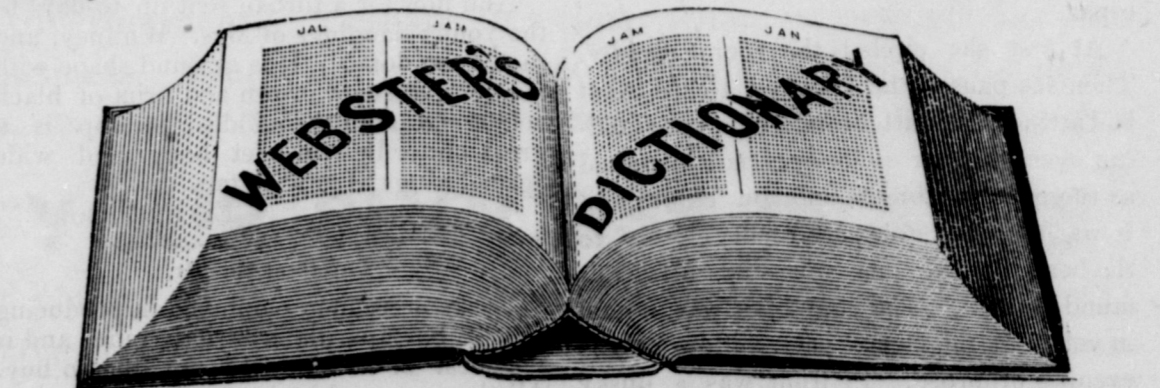
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