

# THINGS WORTH KNOWING

Canada has about 25,000 telephones in use.

San Francisco gets her coal supply from Australia.

The salary of the infant King of Spain is £150,000 a year.

Life boats were invented by Adam Samuel Graves, who died in 1787.

The chances of life in England are 40 per cent greater than in India.

Nearly 25,000,000 copies of periodicals are sold every week in Britain.

Gold is 19 times, silver 10 times, and iron 7 times heavier than water.

There are upwards of twelve miles of shelving for books in the British museum.

In the reign of Queen Elizabeth milk was sold three pints, ale measure, for one half-penny.

Eighteen thousand doctors are required to guard the health of the inhabitants of the United Kingdom.

The highest inhabited spot on the earth is Galera, a Peruvian village, 15,635 feet above the level of the sea.

In the year 1336 it was enacted by Edward III. that no one should wear furs who could not afford to spend £100 per annum.

The moss-rose was introduced into England from Holland in the sixteenth century, and is supposed to be a shoot of the famous Provence rose.

Cardinal Wolsey was the first clergyman in England who wore silk and gold, not only on his robes, but also on saddles and the trappings of his horses.

The method of extracting fire by means of flint and steel is of Roman origin. In medieval times an iron stylus was used instead of steel. The Anglo-Saxon called the flint *fyr-sten* (firestone).

At Mont Del, in Brittany, the remains of about 100 elephants have been discovered, gathered on a small surface of about 1900 square meters. All the bones are broken, and it is thought that the animals must have been eaten by prehistoric men.

The first water mill ever built was erected on the river Tiber, at Rome, A. D. 50. Windmills were in original use in the twelfth century. Tidemills were operated in Venice about 1708. Sawmills are said to have been in use at Augsburg, Germany, about 1332.

In England and Wales, during 1889, the whole smallpox mortality was only 28 in a population of twenty-nine millions; among the nine and a half millions inhabiting the principal towns, only seven smallpox deaths occurred; and among the four millions of London only one death.

Greek, Roumanian, Swiss, German, Belgian, French and Italian workmen have decided to celebrate May 1 as a holiday. In Belgium the congress of miners and metal workers declared for a general strike on May 1. The number of workmen affected by this declaration is 200,000.

The "Breeches Bible" was so called from a misprint in the seventh verse of the third chapter of Genesis—"Then the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig-tree leaves together, and made themselves breeches." This bible was printed in 1561.

The fact that many of the houses of Portland, Oregon, and San Francisco are built of redwood is given as a reason for the destructive fires that occur in those cities. The wood is almost unflammable, and, though a fire will smolder in it, it never blazes. The great objection to the use of this wood in the eastern states is that it will not stand the alternations of heat and cold.

In connection with the equipment for fire protection it is recommended that a gallon pail filled with fine sand be always placed within convenient reach of each workman. This practice might well be followed wherever there is a possibility of fire starting in oils or oil soaked materials. There is nothing which will smother fire in its incipient stage more quickly and effectually than sand—and there are no afterclaps in the way of water damage, either.

The latest calculation of the African possessions of the European great powers is as follows: France, 7,400,000 square kilometers, with 24,000,000 inhabitants; England, including Egypt, 5,000,000 square kilometers, with 32,000,000 inhabitants; Germany, 2,300,000 square kilometers, with 7,800,000 inhabitants; Portugal, 2,200,000 square kilometers, with 10,000,000 inhabitants; Italy, 1,250,000 square kilometers, with 5,100,000 inhabitants.

At least one person in three between the ages of ten and forty years is subject to partial deafness. The great majority of cases of deafness are hereditary and due to the close consanguinity of the parents. Deafness is more prevalent among men than among women because the former are more exposed to the vicissitudes of climate. It is thought that telephones tend to bring on deafness when one ear is used to the exclusion of the other.

Hot water is now automatically supplied in Paris by penny-in-the-slot machines. Nine quarts are delivered for this sum, and the water is found useful by the poor and by cabmen for their footpans, or boudoirs. A coil of copper pipe inside the machine communicates with the street main and is heated by gas burners; the penny allows the tap to be opened on pushing in a "button." A glass of hot wine is also sold by similar machines in Paris.

Russian peasants will be prohibited by law shortly from selling or mortgaging their lands.

Five Turkish students, whose expenses will be defrayed by the sultan, have arrived at the university of Berlin.

The bulk of the soldiers in the Russian army are taught a trade and allowed, when off duty, to earn money by it.

Tuft-hunter, says "Halliwell" is a cant term in English universities for a hanger-on to noblemen or persons of quality; so called from the tuft in the cap of the latter.

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.

The classical ancients used wooden lattices at their windows, doors, and boundaries of fields. In the Middle Ages they were applied instead of windows to shops and dairies; when painted red, to ale-houses.

"Gerrymandering" is arranging the political divisions of a county so that in an election one party may obtain an advantage over its opponents, even though the latter may possess a majority of votes in the county.

According to Herr Japing, the hourly rate of water falling over Niagara Falls is 100,000,000 tons, representing 16,000,000 horse-power; and the total daily production of coal in the world would just about suffice to pump the water back again.

The nickname "Plon-plon," by which Prince Jerome Napoleon was known, was given him in the Crimean War, and was derived from the expression "plon-plon," which is the French equivalent to the "ping" or "whis" of a bullet.

"The older the goose the harder to pluck." Old men are unwilling to part with their money. The reference is to the custom of plucking live geese for the sake of their quills. Steel pens have put an end to this barbarous custom.

The supply of hair sent from China to Europe amounted to 80,000 lbs. during the year 1890. It was exported from Canton, and, if Consul Alabaster may be credited, it came from the heads of "beggars, criminals and dead persons."

Europe's population on Jan. 1 was 380,200,000. The population of each of the other continents was estimated to be as follows: Asia, 850,000,000; Africa, 127,000,000; Australia, 4,730,000; North America, 89,250,000; South America, 36,420,000; polar regions, 300,000. The total would then be 1,787,600,000.

A great difficulty is called a Gordian knot. Gordius, a peasant, being chosen king of Phrygia, dedicated his wagon to Jupiter, and fastened the yoke to a beam with a rope of bark so ingeniously that no one could untie it. Alexander the Great was told that whosoever undid the knot would reign over the East. "Well, then," said the conqueror, "it is thus I perform the task," and so saying he cut the knot in twain with his sword.

"Glacial period" is a geological term applied to a period when the greater part of Europe, including the British islands, was covered with ice in the form of glaciers, similar to those now existing in Switzerland. This occurred prior to the appearance of man on the earth, and succeeded the European deluge. The result of glacial action may be seen in the smoothed, scratched, and eroded surface of many of the slopes and valleys of mountains, also in the foreign masses of rock and stones which are to be found in many districts, and which was transported thither on glaciers. The glacial period also extended to America and other parts.

One of the most singular facts about the growth of London is its regularity. It may be roughly taken that every month about 1000 houses are added to London. In August of 1889, 765,577 houses had to be supplied by the water companies with water; in September that number had increased to 766,797. In August of last year, 754,464 houses had to be supplied or 11,113 below the number in the same month of 1890. In September of 1890, the companies had to supply 10,976 houses more than in September of 1889. This extension is not confined to any one portion of the capital, but a preference is still being shown for the north and north-west suburbs.

The files of the United States corporation bureau make the following exhibit of new corporations incorporated in the United States during the month of March: Mercantile and manufacturing companies, 667, \$116,785,520; gold and silver and other mining and smelting companies, 105, \$95,032,000; coal and iron companies, 37, \$8,807,550; banks and investment companies, 12, \$6,376,000; municipal light, heat, power and transportation companies, 106, \$36,059,500; building and loan associations, 85, \$213,156,000; miscellaneous, 393, \$75,403,785; total number of corporations, 1,563; total capitalization, \$541,020,753.

On view at the carpet exhibition at the Commercial museum in Vienna is a large silk carpet, the property of the imperial court, of considerable historical and artistic interest. The carpet, a marvel of its kind, was presented to the Emperor Charles VI. by Czar Peter the Great, and is a magnificent specimen of old oriental carpet-weaving. It is unequalled for the richness and purity of its colors, and the hues and tints of its silken fleece change kaleidoscopically according to the position in which it is exposed to the light. This remarkable piece of tapestry represents in brilliant colors a picture of the chase at the Persian court, while the border is adorned with strange representations of feathered genii and flying dragons.

A remarkable large polar bear, with bright pink fur, has been captured in Siberia and will be sent as a present to the czar.

As the result of the first census, in 1801, it was found that the population of England and Wales was 8,892,536, which in 1881 had risen to nearly twenty-six millions.

The dust collected by a small patch of snow between Nov. 27 and Dec. 27 last indicates that 1,000 tons of soot settle monthly on the 110 square miles of London.

The *North China News* says the Chinese write most insulting remarks about foreigners on the backs of notes circulated by foreign bankers which come into their possession.

Grasse is celebrated for its manufacture of scents, using up per annum in the manufacture 1200 tons of orange blossoms, 800 tons of roses, 200 tons of jasmine, 100 tons of violets, and 50 tons of tuberose.

The Australians have been having a very cold summer. Last year at this time a hot wave swept over the country, and for weeks the temperature was between 90 and 100 degrees in the shade. This year there have been only three or four hot days.

A curious scarf-pin worn by a Nashville man is a petrified human eye, set in a gold frame. The present owner of this singular ornament found it in Peru while he was on an exploring tour in the land of the Incas with a party of scientists.

The term of copyright in various countries is as follows:—The United States, twenty-eight years, with the right of extension for fourteen more—in all, forty-two years; Mexico, Guatemala, and Venezuela, in perpetuity; Colombia, author's life and eighty years after; Spain, author's life and eighty years after; Belgium, author's life and fifty years after; Ecuador, author's life and fifty years after; Peru, author's life and fifty years after; Russia, author's life and fifty years after; Tunis, author's life and fifty years after; Italy, author's life and fifty years after—the full term to be eighty years in any event; France, author's life and thirty years after; Germany, author's life and thirty years after; Austria, author's life and thirty years after; Switzerland, author's life and thirty years after; Hayti, author's life, widow's life, children's lives, and twenty years after the close of the latest period; Brazil, author's life and ten years after; Sweden, author's life and ten years after; Roumania, author's life and ten years after; Great Britain, author's life and seven years after his decease—to be forty-two years in any event; Bolivia, full term author's life; Denmark and Holland, fifty years; Japan, author's life and five years after; South Africa, author's life—fifty years in any event.

## The Greatest Smokers.

The Hollanders are, perhaps, of all the Northern peoples, those who smoke the most. The humidity of their climate makes it almost a necessity, and the very moderate cost of tobacco renders it accessible to all. To show how deeply rooted is the habit, it is enough to say that the boatmen of the trekschuit, the aquatic diligence of Holland, measure distances by smoke. From here, they say, to such and such a place, it is not so many miles, but so many pipes. When you enter a house, after the first salutations, your host offers you a cigar; when you take leave, he hands you another, and often insists upon filling your cigar case. In the streets you see persons lighting a fresh cigar with the burning stump of the last one without pausing in their work, and with the busy air of people who do not wish to lose a moment of time or a mouthful of smoke. Many go to sleep with pipe in mouth, re-light it if they wake in the night, and again in the morning before they step out of bed. It really does appear that smoking is for the Dutchman a necessary vital function. Many people think that so much smoke dulls the intelligence. Nevertheless, if there be a people, as Esquiroz justly observes, whose intellect is of the clearest and highest precision, it is the Dutch people. Again, in Holland the cigar is not an excuse for idleness, nor do they smoke in order to dream with their eyes open; every one goes about his business puffing out white clouds of smoke with the regularity of a factory chimney, and the cigar, instead of being a mere distraction, is a stimulant and an aid to labor. "Smoke," said a Hollander to me, "is our second breath." Another defined the cigar as the sixth finger of the hand.—"Holland and its People," by E. de Amicis.

## A Tale of a Skull.

A remarkable anecdote is told of the performance of the *Fair Penitent* in the town of North Walsham, Norfolk, in 1788.

In the last act, where Calista lays her hand on the skull, a Mrs. Barry who played the part was seized with an involuntary fit of shuddering, and fell on the stage.

During the night her illness continued, but the following day she sent for the stage keeper and inquired whence he procured the skull.

He replied, "from the sexton, who informed him that it was the skull of one Norris, who twelve years before was buried in the churchyard."

The same Norris was her first husband. She never recovered the shock, and died in six weeks.

## The Laborer's Song.

I can be happy, if any one can—  
I wrong no woman and rob no man!  
I have no riches—my only wealth,  
Is muscle producing, robust health.  
I never was in a condition to hoard,  
And yet I've a seat for a friend at my board,  
And a kindly welcome for all who come  
To my humble and poor, but cozy home.  
I am no man's debtor—I pay my way,  
And while my little ones round me play,  
I look at my wife so loving and true,  
And prouder than any prince I feel.  
I pity my foes and love my friends,  
And give God thanks for all He sends,  
And I would not change my earthly state  
For any dominion, however great.  
I have my trials and care, 'tis true,  
But has not the monarch his troubles, too?  
'Tis seldom that care deserts his brow,  
And I sing ten songs to his one, I know.  
My couch is rude, but my sleep is sweet,  
I have clothes to wear and enough to eat;  
I've a conscience clear and at least at ease,  
And where is the king that can boast of these?  
—E.E.

In advanced age the declining powers are wonderfully refreshed by Hood's Sarsaparilla. It really does "make the weak strong."

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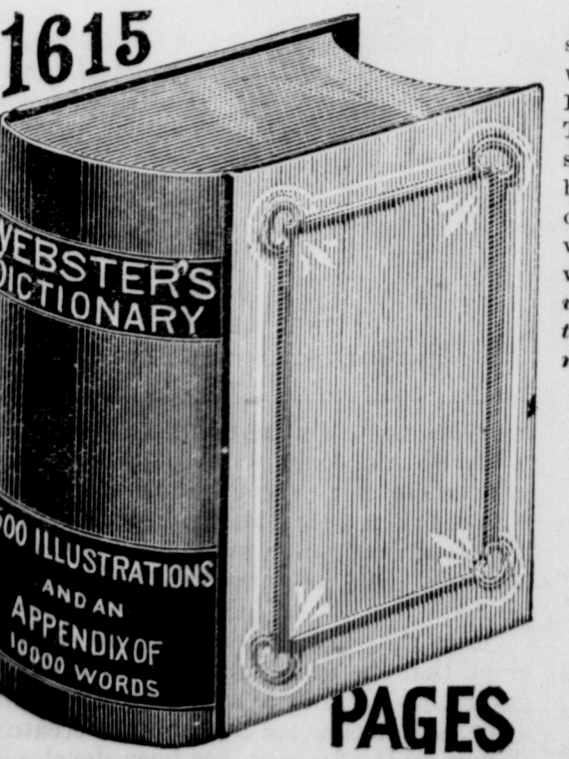
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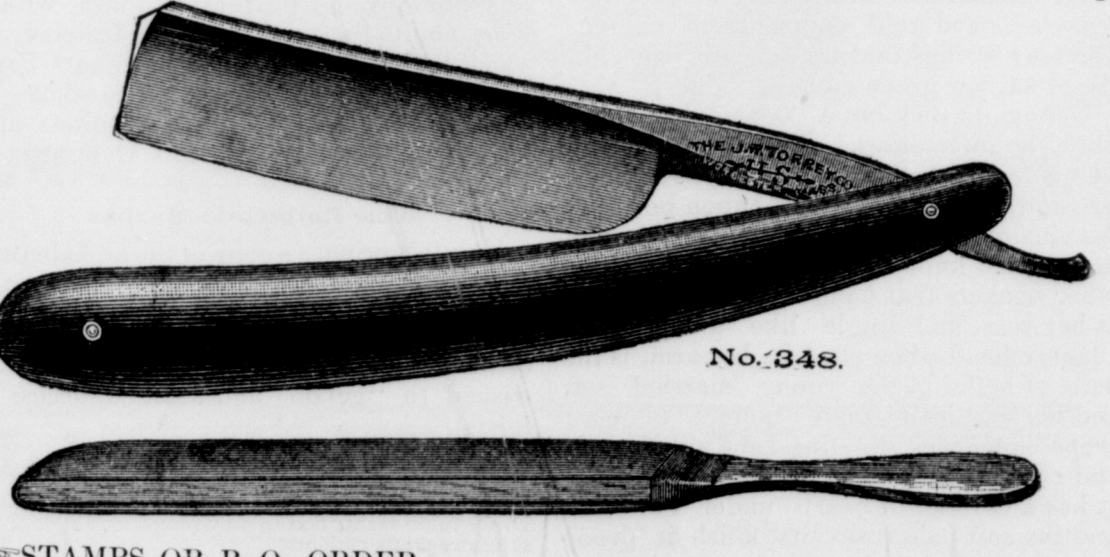
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