

THINGS WORTH KNOWING

France is the best cultivated country in Europe.

The best brushes used in hair-brushes come from Russia.

A London omnibus carries over 2,500 passengers a week.

The Presbyterian clergy of Scotland number about 3000.

The average height of the clouds from the earth is one mile.

On an average, thin people live 7½ years longer than fat ones.

People utter about 143 words a minute in ordinary conversation.

A needle passes through 80 operations before it is perfectly made.

The heart of a male adult is considerably larger than that of a female.

Only 1 person in 12 in England is a regular church communicant.

Three and a half millions of people are always on the seas of the world.

Westminster Hall is the largest room unsupported by pillars in the world.

There are more public holidays in Honolulu than in any other city in the world.

The motto of the city of Paris is, "Fluctuat nec mergitur"—"It floats, but never sinks."

The printing of newspapers and pamphlets was prohibited by King Charles II. in 1680.

The people of the United States consume, it is said, 200,000,000 bottles of pickles annually.

Allowing 4 persons to the square yard, St. Peter's, Rome, will hold 208,000 persons.

The Queen sleeps on a small wooden bedstead, and the window of her room is always open.

The Persians were the first to use coffee as a beverage. The tree was introduced in the West Indies in 1726.

Thomas Coryatt, a traveller, introduced into England the use of forks at table in 1608, having met with the custom in Italy.

The Sahara, the largest desert in the world, is about 3000 miles in length, average breadth about 900 miles, and area about 2,000,000 square miles.

The history of witchcraft is one of the most amazing chapters of human folly. From first to last the number of those put to death for witchcraft in England is put down as no fewer than thirty thousand. As late as 1716 a Mrs. Hicks and her daughter, aged nine, were hanged at Huntingdon for selling their souls to the devil and raising a storm by pulling off their stockings and making a lather of soap.

The cowslip derives its name from a very old and fanciful, but now exploded, idea—that this flower was generated from the saliva of the cow's lip; to corroborate which, it has been stated that it is only found in pastures where milk-cows have grazed. It is, however, known also as the yellow-bell, and is classed with the blue-bell, and has made its appearance where the cow was never known to have been. Genial weather at the commencement of the year dresses the meadows and pastures with this favorite of Flora.

The origin of the phrase "Mind your P's and Q's" is not generally known. In ale-houses where chalk scores were formerly marked upon the wall or behind the door of the tap-room, it was customary to put these initial letters at the head of every man's account, to show the number of pints and quarts for which he was in arrears; and one may presume many a friendly rustic to have tapped his neighbor on the shoulder when he was indulging too freely in his potations, and to have pointed to the score and exclaimed, "Giles! Giles! mind your P's and Q's." This is the explanation generally accepted by antiquarians.

On the walls of a tomb at Thebes, belonging to a priest of Ammon, the love of caricature is indulged in even in the sacred subject of a funeral. One of the boats following in the mournful procession across the Nile to the sacred necropolis has grounded, and, in being pushed off the bank, strikes a smaller one laden with sacerdotal offerings of cakes, fruit, etc. The table on which these dainties are arranged has upset, and the good things are falling like a hailstorm on the heads of the astonished rowers underneath. The more we learn of the habits of the ancient Egyptians the less we cherish the old impression of their being a gloomy people of serious character. Human nature five thousand years ago was much the same as it is today, altered simply by climate and custom.

The royal observatory at Greenwich is the largest and most important in Great Britain. The Greenwich observatory was founded in 1675, and stands upon the hill named after the first astronomer-royal, Flamsteed. It was expressly built for the aid of astronomy and navigation, for promoting methods of determining longitude at sea, and more especially for the determination of the moon's motions. All these imply, as their first step, says a report of the astronomer-royal, the formation of accurate catalogues of stars, and the determination of the fundamental elements of the solar system—which objects have been steadily pursued from the foundation of the observatory. In addition to the main pursuits, photo-lithographic, spectroscopic, meteorological, and magnetic investigations are carried on, and the system of correct time is well maintained throughout the country by means of time signals and clocks, electrically controlled by the standard clock in the observatory.

The musket is said to have been invented by the Spaniards, and to have been first used at the battle of Pavia, 1525.

Persia still holds the position of owning the smallest number of merchant vessels. It owns just one, a steamer of 838 tons.

The five vowels appear in alphabetical order in "abstemious," also in the word "facetious," and "facetiously" gives us the y.

The number of fishermen and boys engaged in sea-fishing in Scotland in 1889 was 47,943, the smallest recorded, there being 675 less than in 1888, and 3154 less than in 1885. The total number employed in sea-fishing industry was 99,857.

"He killed the goose to get the eggs." He grasped at what was more than his due, and lost an excellent customer. The Greek fable, says a countryman, had a goose that laid golden eggs; thinking to make himself rich, he killed the goose to get the whole stock of eggs, but lost everything.

The machine employed in match-making factories to cut the matches to finished size is capable of cutting 10,000,000 splints per day, and the machine which places the splints into the frame used in dipping the points into the various solutions can undertake as many as 1,000,000 per day. The filling of the boxes with the finished article, however, is still accomplished by hand.

The convocation of Canterbury consists of two houses—the upper is confined to the bishops; the lower is composed of the dean of every cathedral, the archdeacons, with proctors elected from every cathedral chapter, and two more elected by the clergy of every diocese. In York there are two houses, but the bishops, deans, archdeacons and proctors sit together. A fresh election of proctors is made with every new parliament.

In 1885 the number of members of the British house of commons was finally fixed at 670 (elected by 642 constituencies), as against 658 in previous years; England returning 465, Wales 30, Scotland 72, and Ireland 103 members. The previous distribution had been—England 469, Wales 30, Scotland 60, and Ireland 103 seats. There are now 377 county members, as against 283; 284 borough members, as against 360; and 9 university members, as against 9.

Some interesting statistics have been published with regard to the Jews of France. Inclusive of Algeria, they number about 130,000, and they are officially divided into twelve circumscriptions, having as many consistories, viz.: Paris, with a population of 50,000; Marseilles, with 5300; Nancy, 4500; and Vesoul, with 3550; Bordeaux, with 3000; Lille, with 2800; Besancon, with 2600; Bayonne, with 2500; and Lyons, with 2200; while three provinces of Algeria have 49,000 Jews, of whom 25,000 are in the province of Oran, 15,000 in that of Algiers, and 9000 in that of Constantine.

The most profitable inventions are, as a rule, the improvement in simple devices, things of everyday use and that everybody wants. The rubber tip at the end of lead pencils, for instance, has yielded £20,000. In a recent action at law it transpired in evidence that the inventor of the metal plates used to protect soles and heels of boots from wear sold upwards of 12,000,000 plates in 1879; and in 1887 the number reached 143,000,000, producing realised profits of a quarter of a million of dollars.

Iron tubes rolled from the solid by the Mannesmann process, recently perfected and now being vigorously worked, are credited with extraordinary tenacity and great closeness of texture. The absence of any weld or seam enables them to stand the very roughest treatment without fracture, while the nature of the manufacturing process gives a slightly fibrous structure in a spiral direction; thus enormously increasing the strength to resist rupture. Tubes, it is said, have been made which withstand an air pressure of 4500 lbs. per square inch.

In the year 1352, wages paid to haymakers in England were 1d. a day. A mow of meadows, 3d. a day, or 5d. an acre. Reapers of corn in the first week of August, 2d., in the second, 3d. a day, and so on till the end of August, without meat, drink, or other allowance, finding their own tools. For threshing a quarter of wheat or rye, 2½d.; a quarter of barley, beans, peas, and oats, 1½d. A master carpenter, 3d. a day; other carpenters, 2d. A master mason, 4d. a day; other masons, 9d., and their servants, 1½d. a day. Tilers, 3d., and their "knives," 1½d. Thatchers 3d. a day, and their knives, 1½d. Plasterers, and other workers of mud walls, and their knives, in like manner, without meat or drink; and this from Easter to Michaelmas; and from that time less, according to the direction of the justices.

The following is a list of the presidents of the United States:—Declaration of Independence, 4th July, 1776: General Washington, first president, 1789 and 1793; John Adams, 1797; Thomas Jefferson, 1801 and 1805; James Madison, 1809 and 1813; James Monroe, 1817 and 1821; John Quincy Adams, 1825; General Andrew Jackson, 1829 and 1833; Martin Van Buren, 1837; General William Henry Harrison (died 4th April, 1841; John Tyler (previously vice-president), 1841; James Knox Polk, 1845; General Zachary Taylor (died 9th July, 1850), 1849; Millard Fillmore (previously vice-president), 1850; General Franklin Pierce, 1853; James Buchanan, 1857; Abraham Lincoln (assassinated 14th April, 1865), 1861 and 1865; Andrew Johnson (previously vice-president), 1865; General Ulysses S. Grant, 1869 and 1873; Rutherford Birchard Hayes, after long contest with Tilden, 1877; General Garfield (shot July 2, died September 19), 1881; Chester A. Arthur, vice-president, succeeded September 20, 1881; Grover Cleveland, 1885; General Benjamin Harrison, 1889.

One of the most singular facts about the growth of London is its regularity. It may be roughly taken that every month about a thousand houses are added to it.

Whalebone is not bone, neither has it any of the properties of bone. It seems to be a sort of feather or hair in the whale's mouth, which serves the substantial purpose of straining the water which the fish takes up in large mouthfuls.

Here are some figures as to the comparative values of fuel-heat generated by the consumption of:

1lb of charcoal of wood.....	melts 50lbs of ice
1lb of good coal.....	" " 90lbs "
1lb of coke.....	" " 90lbs "
1lb of wood.....	" " 32lbs "
1lb of peat.....	" " 19lbs "

The cawing rook is the smallest of the crow tribe. He is a true insect-destroyer. The corn, or red crow, will kill young lambs or pigs by picking out their eyes. A buzzard will destroy 6000 mice annually. One owl will destroy a dozen cats in the field, barn, or granary. Blackbirds, thrushes, robins, starlings, and larks are worm-eating birds. The goldfinch eats thistle-seeds. A swallow will devour 9000 insects in a day. The cockroach deposits 100 eggs at one time, and the wheat-fly 130 eggs, and the aphid is still more prolific.

A curious observation has been made in experimenting with the phonograph. The wax cylinders used in Edison's latest improved instrument are so smooth that they appear highly polished, but when the stylus is pressing against this smooth surface before it actually enters on the indented impression which is to be reproduced, it appears that the noise heard in the ear-tube is, as an observer has noted, simply tremendous, being far louder than the volume of sound given out when the indentations are entered on and the record is being reproduced. No explanation of this has yet been given.

There must be added to the already numerous applications of photography that of an agent in medical diagnosis. A Berlin lady was having her photograph taken. The face in the first negative came out covered with spots. Examination showing nothing abnormal in the sitter, a second was taken with the same result; so it could not be the fault of the plates. What was it? In a week the poor woman died of small-pox. The cleverest physician could have perceived nothing, but the sensitive film of the photographic plate had detected an actinic alteration of the skin where the pustules were to develop.—*Courrier de l'Europe*.

Summarising a lengthy and most exhaustive review of marine engineering developments and progress during the past 15 years, delivered before the iron and steel institute, Mr. A. E. Seaton, of Hull, declared that in 15 years the speed of steamships carrying passengers has been increased from 30 to 40 per cent.; the consumption of coal per horse-power has been decreased from 20 to 30 per cent., or, say, an average of 25 per cent.; the cost of horse power has been decreased by almost a similar amount, and in some cases is but a half of what it was in 1875; and the safety, comfort, and convenience of the travelling public have been enhanced instead of sacrificed.

A singer with a powerful voice singing strongly into a wine glass or tumbler on a note in unison with that of the glass can break it to atoms by this means. The waves of sound set up vibrations in the glass which increase in amplitude until its molecular cohesion is overcome and it flies into fragments. Many bragues of glass in course of transport may be owing to vibratory movements rather than to direct shocks, and the well-known effect sudden explosions, such as discharges of cannon, &c., have in breaking window panes within a radius which is often very extensive, is a result of the violent vibrations set up in the glass. *La Nature* points out that much breakage of glass may be prevented by the very simple means of pasting or glueing bands of paper crossing each other in various directions on the glass it is desired to preserve. These bands check the spreading of the vibrations, and keep them from acquiring an amplitude which would effect disruption. A very useful application of this principle is recommended for cutting the very thin cover-glass used in preparing microscopic slides. If the glass is gummed to strips of paper—the edging of postage-stamps, for instance—it may be cut with a pair of scissors into any desired shape without fracturing.

Mr. Horace Sweet, Worcester city and county analyst, has been examining so-called "pure snow," and finds it anything but pure. The fall of snow appears to act as a most effective filter and purifying agent on the air, sweeping out all its impurities. The result of the analysis of a sample taken away from houses and about two inches deep from the surface of a brick wall was solid matter per 100,000 parts—11.43, consisting of organic matter, 3.21, and mineral matter, 8.22; free ammonia, 4.36, organic ammonia; oxygen required to oxidise organic matter, 1.93. Raised to 220 degrees it emitted a small like burnt leather, and the deposit was opaque black. Melted snow cannot accordingly be recommended as a drinking water. Of course it is well known that rain has a purifying influence on the atmosphere—everything is freshened up, and the air appears clearer and sweeter—and the purest natural water is that collected in the free open air away from houses; but probably snow acts as a still more efficient filtering agent—germs, soot, and other impurities being entangled in the meshes of the crystal network of the flakes. The matters carried down by snow and rain are useful as manure to the ground, and doubtless many harmful microbes are killed by frost succeeding a fall of snow.

Women and Newspapers.

Frances Willard's advice to women to read the newspapers is pertinent and forcible. She says: "Women are a set of passivities on that subject, as a class; and I am never more annoyed for my 'sect' than when the newsboy goes trotting through at full speed if he finds that the car contains chiefly women, never dreaming that they want a paper. I clutch his sleeve with a vim and buy one of every variety he has, and ask him what he is thinking about to lose patronage in that way. Gossip is nothing but small news—the nickles, pennies and dimes—while the newspaper deals in dollars and V's and X's; so it widens the mind more to read the newspapers than to gossip about the neighbors."

MEN AND WOMEN TALKED ABOUT.

The Princess Louise, whose talent for painting has already been cultivated and whose productions are well known, is taking up the study of sculpture, and in the year since she began to model in clay she has shown much aptitude for the art.

The Mikado of Japan is to visit Wiesbaden next summer partly for the waters and partly for the spectacle "of innocent merriment." Six villas have been engaged for the Emperor and his suite, which will comprise at least sixty persons. No Mikado has ever before left his own dominion.

The mad king of Bavaria sometimes smokes as many as a hundred cigarettes a day. For each cigarette he uses an entire box of matches, touching off the others to see them burn after he has used one to secure a light with. He has a new suit of black broadcloth made for him twice every week, but he never uses a handkerchief, towel or napkin. He refuses to go near water, and never bathes.

Jean Ingelow, now considerably more than 55, has never married. She has always been devoted in a marked degree to her mother, and while the latter lived the two dwelt together. Miss Ingelow is much given to works of charity, and among other beneficent acts is in the habit of giving regularly at her lovely Kensington home to the poor, old and young, what are known as "copyright dinners," from the proceeds of her own books.

Julian Hawthorne, the novelist, is a living refutation of the oft-repeated statement that great men's sons are nobodies. In appearance, Mr. Hawthorne is like the modern edition of his renowned father, is six feet high, broad shouldered, genial man of four and forty, very fond of salt water, and especially of yachting. His home is in Sag Harbor, and he has a large family of daughters, who wear aesthetic costumes. Mrs. Hawthorne is a sister of George Parsons Lathrop.

Robert Louis Stevenson has a mother who almost idolizes him. Mrs. Stevenson is a little Scotch woman who is revered by her neighbors in the town of Bournemouth, where at present she lives. Robert is her only son, and years ago, with her keen Scotch insight for character, she predicted that "Louis," as she calls him, would be heard of all through the world. "Just wait," she would say to her Scotch neighbors, "wait for Louis's turn. He will be a great man yet, and I shall live to see him famous." The mother's great enjoyment is a scrapbook of immense size, in which she religiously keeps everything that is written of her literary son. He sends all the newspaper scraps which he sees about himself to her, as also does his wife. On the title page of the scrapbook she has inscribed the following lines:

Speak well of my love,
Speak ill of my love,
But say he's speaking o' him.

Mrs. Spurgeon, the wife of the great London preacher, though an invalid, is a fairly godmother to poor ministers. She sends gifts of clothing to their wives, which a small society under her supervision have fashioned, and to the pastors themselves she makes gifts of books. During the past year 6,916 volumes, making a total of 115,262 volumes given since the book fund was established, have been distributed among 560 ministers of different denominations, including 152 clergy of the Church of England; 6,565 have been distributed in England and 7,000 in foreign lands. The remarkable part of the work is that it is carried on single-handed by this invalid lady.

The Pope was 81 years old, Monday. A description of him as he is today is given by Jean de Bonneson, who interviewed the Holy Father some weeks ago: "The first impression," says Bonneson, "is remarkable. The pope is already more of heaven than of earth. Life appears to have left the ascetic body that might be taken for the ideal of a clothed soul. The old masters, the mystic painters, often represented the saints so that the elongated bodies appeared to have lost the human form. One of them must return to earth if a correct portrait of Leo XIII. is to be painted. The triumphant smile that played over the features in the jubilee days—the human smile—is gone. The thin lips are closed tightly, and are so pale that the mouth seems merely a line across the face. The great deep-set eyes shine like Oriental pearls of an indescribable hue. With three bendings of the knees I come to the Holy Father, and I feel a hand, heavy with blessings, laid on my head. During the audience of seventeen minutes this hand is not once lifted, but presses heavier and heavier, upon my whole being, whether words of pardon are falling from the Father's lips or comments on contemporary affairs in France."

The recent death of Meissonier has revived in the London papers, which are just at hand, some incidents connected with the trouble between Mrs. Mackay and the great artist. While the latter was at work on Mrs. Mackay's portrait, for which he got 70,000 francs, she was taken seriously ill and could not give the artist the necessary sittings. Meissonier, who was always on the alert for francs of any and all denominations, became frightened lest his patron should die before the picture could be finished and thus endanger the loss of his work, and worse, the loss of 70,000 francs. To avoid this difficulty the painter went to work with a will, procured a model to sit in lieu of Mrs. Mackay, and finished the portrait in short order. The result was not satisfactory. Mrs. Mackay has very small, pretty shaped hands, while those of the model were huge and ungainly. Mrs. Mackay asked the artist to make the necessary change in the picture, but he flatly refused, in terms lacking in courtesy. She paid the bill, and the picture was carefully wrapped up, is in the vaults of Mackay's Paris

bankers, and has not seen daylight for several years. Its alleged destruction was a pure fabrication. Meissonier, a few years afterwards, married the model whose tremendous paws caused all the trouble.—*Truth*.

Professional Posing.


One of the foremost women artists of New York is emphatic in insisting that a majority of studio-models are modest, clever women. She says the ordinary price paid is \$1 a morning, or thirty-three and one-half cents an hour, posing thirty and resting fifteen minutes. It is tremendously trying work, necessitating considerable training to make a subject available for an artist's purposes. Prettiness of form and feature are strong recommendations to favor, but women of heroic mould with characteristic and marked faces, are prized above beauties, and are often able to command very high rates. As an instance of the possibility of the profession, she told of two little Italian boys, brothers, who support a family of nine members solely with money earned in this way. They are charmingly handsome chaps, with lustrous southern eyes. They sit for pictures of fruit-vendors, acrobats, boy princes, etc. So easily and surely do the young foreigners make a living, that with the abandon common to their race, both parents have resigned labor, and with five other children subsist upon the studio profits of their two eldest sons.—*Illustrated American*.

Facial Expression.

A man's occupation has a great deal to do with making his facial expression. Studies or scholarly professions, intellectual pursuits, when coupled with moral habits, brighten the face and give a superior look. An unselfish nature, or love of study or arts, will make a bright pleasant face; but, on the contrary, a man may have a face that does not please any one, because of pure selfishness. It may be noticed that soldiers get a hard, severe look; laborers look tired; reporters look inquisitive; mathematicians look studious; judges look grave, and a man whose home life is unhappy looks all broken up. The business often makes the face. How often we think this man is a butcher, this one a lawyer, that one a minister, the other a doctor, and so on. It is seldom we are mistaken, for the calling shows through the faces. And who fails to recognize the genuine farmer the minute one sets eyes on him?—*New York Ledger*.

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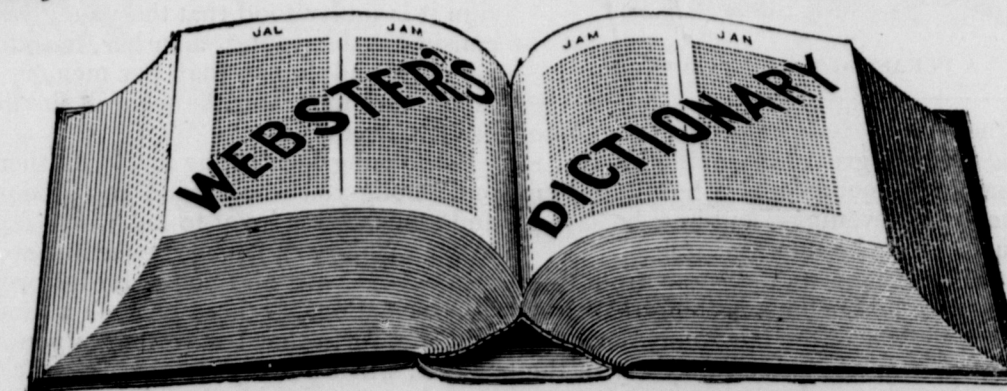
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