

THINGS WORTH KNOWING

London has 20,000 families living on £1 a week.

Britain daily consumes eight matches per head of the population.

The average family consists of five: husband, wife, and three children.

The liquor trade of the United Kingdom employs nearly 900,000 persons.

The normal expansion of the chest from the sixth rib is two to three inches.

The United States has 360 universities, 4240 professors, and 69,400 students.

No fewer than 1326 editions of the Bible were published in the sixteenth century.

A hawk can fly 150 miles per hour, an elder-duck 90, a rook 60, and a pigeon 40.

One per cent. of carbonic acid in the air is injurious to health, while ten per cent is fatal.

Gold coin loses 1 per cent. of its weight in 50 years; silver coin 1 per cent. in 10 years.

Salt water contains five per cent. of salt, rock-salt eighty per cent., and brine thirty-five per cent.

The entire value of all the mineral produce of the British Islands for 1890 was £93,200,980.

The London Times uses two and a quarter millions of types every morning for its daily impression.

The Laplanders are the shortest people in Europe. The males average 59 inches, and the females 57 inches.

Tin is peculiar to England, like arsenic and jet; while Scotland alone yields antimony, and Ireland bog ore.

In the German universities the students are 89 per cent. Germans, and 11 per cent. of other nations, Americans being 1 per cent.

A Russian astronomer has calculated that 57 tons of meteoric dust fall daily on the earth, or more than 11,435 tons a year.

A human kidney is about four inches long, two-and-a-half broad, and one-and-a-quarter thick. It weighs from four to five ounces.

Lifeboats were established in France by the Empress Eugenie in 1866, and are now in use at about 49 exposed points of coast.

During 1890 England produced 131,738,000 tons of coal, Wales 25,495,000 tons, Scotland 24,278,000 tons, and Ireland 102,267 tons.

By far the greater part of the accidents that occur in mills, etc., happen during the last two hours of work, when workpeople are tired and careless.

A lady with a good endowment of flaxen locks, combs out and disentangles, each morning she performs her toilet, between 70 and 90 miles of hair.

Ireland has a wider variety of minerals than Scotland, and stands almost on a level with Wales in this respect, but is, unfortunately for herself, very much poorer in the quantity lying in the strata.

According to the official report of the inspectors of mines for 1890, the only portion of the United Kingdom which figures under the heading of gold is Wales, where £434 worth was extracted last year.

The Finns call their country "Suomenmaa," that is, "Land of Fens," and very appropriately so, for Finland is a granite plateau, about 400 feet high, abounding in morasses and lakes filled with water.

The present membership of benevolent beneficiary orders in the United States and Canada is estimated at 1,250,000, paying out annually in claims \$2,400,000, of which the oddfelloes alone paid \$1,500,000.

The ratio of names in England per 1,000 shows: Mary 68, William 56, John 62, Eliza 61, Thomas 39, George 36, Sarah 36, Anne 33, James 31, Charles 23, Henry 21, Alice 19, Joseph 18, Jane 17, Ellen 16.

The locust tree, called also the carob or algarroba, covers 19,000 acres in Cyprus, averaging 30 trees per acre. Average crop 25,000 tons, worth £75,000, most of which goes to Scotland to be made into whisky.

The tasting of human blood, for the purpose of sealing or cementing solemn engagements, appears to have been among the most ancient customs of barbarous nations. It is said to have originated with the Scythians.

Columbus landed in the West Indies in 1492, and was therefore the discoverer of the New World; but the first to set eyes on the North American continent was Sebastian Cabot in 1497. Columbus did not come in sight of the mainland till the following year.

War-cries were intended to terrify the enemy, to occupy the soldiers, and prevent them from hearing the shouts of their opponents. Froissart says "that at the battle of Cressy 15,000 Genoese archers began to yell in a most frightful manner to terrify the English."

The census taken throughout the German empire on the 1st of December last gives a total population of about 49,500,000, including Heligoland, being an increase of 266,123 souls, equivalent to 5.7 per cent, since 1885. Of this total the population of Prussia contributes about 30,000,000, or nearly three-fifths, the next order being Bavaria with 5,589,382, Saxony with 3,500,000, and Wurtemberg with 2,035,443. Alsace-Lorraine has 1,603,987 inhabitants and the Grand-Duchy of Baden has about the same number.

A cohort was a body of Roman infantry, consisting of 500 or 600 men, similar to our battalions.

The camps of ancient Britons were of an oval form, and composed of stakes, earth, and stones rudely heaped together.

According to ancient chroniclers, the bow was introduced into England by the Normans, who therewith chiefly gained the battle of Hastings.

The average weight of 22,000 men and women, weighed in Cincinnati in 1882, was men 154 lbs., women, 131 lbs. There was no account taken of age.

The New England States of the United States are Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and Massachusetts—six in all.

A man 50 years of age sleeps an aggregate of 6000 days, works away the same period, eats away 2000 days, walks away 800 days, and is ill 500 days.

Of iron ore the produce in England during 1890 was 12,589,000 tons, in Scotland, 998,800 tons, in Ireland, 160,600 tons, and in Wales 31,685 tons.

The death-rate in India is 2.05 per 1000 among the vegetarian population per annum, and only 1.89 among non-vegetarians, a difference of 8 per cent.

A grain of fine sand would cover one hundred of the minute scales of the human skin, and yet each of these scales in turn covers three hundred to five hundred pores.

The society for eating horse-flesh, founded at Paris in 1866, consumes over two million lbs. yearly, at a cost of 2½d per lb.—the average yield of meat being 450 lbs. per horse.

The human heart is six inches in length, four inches in diameter, and beats an average of 70 times per minute, 4,200 times an hour, 100,800 times per day, and 3,681,720 times per year. So in a life of 80 years the heart beats 300,000,000 times.

The word "news" is probably derived from the Saxon "new," which in Latin is rendered "novus," that is "new." Some say that the word is derived from the four initials of north, east, west, and south—the points from which intelligence is gathered.

From calculations recently made by the British Board of Admiralty, it is evident that the naval engagements of the future will be expensive affairs. It was estimated that one vessel, carrying two 110-ton guns, used in two ordinary engagements, use up guns and ammunition to the value of \$650,000.

The exact time when shooting with the longbow began is not determined; and chroniclers do not mention the use of archery, as applied to either one bow or the other, till the death of King Richard I. in 1196, who was killed at the castle of Chalus by an arrow, said to have proceeded from a crossbow.

One of the many curiosities now exhibited in the British museum is a Chinese bank note issued during the reign of Emperor Hung-Wu, A. D. 1368-99. This is the earliest specimen of a bank note known to exist in any country. It is 300 years earlier than the establishment of the first European bank which issued notes.

The following shows the heights of the principal obelisks: Wellington, Dublin, 205 feet; Monument, London, 202; Nelson, London, 177; Nelson's monument, Glasgow, 144; Nelson, Dublin, 125; Lateran, Rome, 105; Alexander, St. Petersburg, 84; Vatican, Rome, 83; Luxor, Paris, 76; Cleopatra, London, 68; Meidan, Constantinople, 50; Quirinal, Rome, 48.

The census returns of Scotland present a remarkable contrast to those of Ireland, showing, as they do, how the former country has increased in population and prosperity during the present century. Ninety years ago Scotland had 1,608,420 inhabitants; this year's census shows a population of 4,033,103. That is, the population of Scotland has nearly quadrupled, while that of Ireland is less by about 700,000 than it was in 1801. And yet Scotland is smaller in area, and contains extensive districts utterly incapable of cultivation.

The name of Jamaica is derived from the Indian word Xaimaca, which literally means a land of wood and water. Jamaica is one of the Greater Antilles, and is the largest and wealthiest of the British West India Islands. It is situated in the Caribbean sea, 89 miles south of Cuba, 118 miles west-southwest of Haiti, and about 570 miles north by east of the Isthmus of Panama. Its maximum length from Morant Point east to South Negro west is 145 miles, and its maximum breadth from Rio Bueno north to Portland point south is about 53 miles. Its aggregate area is about 4,250 square miles, and it possesses a population of over 600,000.

In 1889 515 wolves were killed in France, and the bounties paid for their destruction amounted to 36,040 francs, or nearly 70 francs per head. The reward varies, following the age, the sex and the "antics" of the wolf. Under the ancient regime the lieutenant for the destruction of wolves was an important functionary. Today he is the largest landed proprietor in the forest district chosen by the prefect, and binds himself to keep a pack of wolf hounds, etc., to hunt down the wolves in December and March. In return the proprietor is allowed two days' free shooting in the government forests. The wags say the lieutenants are the natural friends of the wolves, in order to uphold their sporting rights. It is difficult to run to earth an old wolf, because the animal can run its 100 miles at a pinch in a single night. The Prince de Joinville has the best pack of wolf hounds in France.

PROGRESS LETTER BOX.

All sorts of letters come to a newspaper. There is a very general impression in many quarters that a newspaper man knows all about everything, and there are a few people who think he has nothing else to do but answer questions. Again, there are many genuine requests for information that drift into a newspaper office which it would take too much time to answer by letter, and unless there is a column for them, can hardly find a place in the newspaper. We propose to give such seekers for information a column in PROGRESS, and will endeavor to answer all sensible brief questions. This, by way of introduction. Here are a few of the accumulated queries:

Give me some information and advice about pleasure tours, routes, expense, time required, languages necessary to know, etc. M. M. P.

We can't republish Baedeker's guide-books for you, and nothing less would cover that conundrum. A "personally conducted" tour around the world costs about \$2,200 and takes six months time; the return fare to Fredericton is \$3, and you can do the town pretty thoroughly, our beautiful river thrown in, in 36 hours. Does either of these pleasure tours find you? Or how about Niagara as a happy medium? Perhaps, though, you'd better reserve that for the wedding journey. If you want to explore a foreign country, one that hasn't been done to death by tourists, go to Mexico. Ten dollars a day from New York would be a very liberal allowance for a two or three months' trip, and if you can talk Spanish you can learn more than a whole library would teach. It's possible that you haven't seen half of your own province, yet. In that event, excuse us from directing you outside. It's money in a man's pocket to know his own land thoroughly; and foreign travel never does one much good unless he has gone to the bottom of things at home and established safe standards of comparison.

My friend the minister says that the word "square," in the sense of "honest," is slang, and I say it isn't. Which is correct? ALLEN, B. J., Halifax.

"Square" is old enough to be naturalized, one would think. In John Ford's play, *The Lover's Melancholy*, published in 1629, you will find this speech (Act IV., Scene 2):

"Then they fill Lordships; steal women's hearts; with them and theirs The world runs round; yet these are square men still."

Like a good many other words that pedants condemn, "square" has antiquity and very respectable literary authority on its side. Even had it not, we commend to you Minister James Russell Lowell's dictum, "Vulgarians are often only poetry in the egg." A slang expression is, at its worst, little more than a new application of an old word; and a language lives and grows because it is flexible, equal to emergency, and not necessarily because it has been put into a dictionary.

Which is the greater tragedian, Henry Irving or Edwin Booth?

Consult an Englishman and a Yankee, and let them fight it out. It's wholly a matter of opinion, and though we incline to Booth we don't urge our judgment. In the last analysis, a work of art, book or picture, song or impersonation, is worth much or little to an individual, according as it affects him. If Irving stirs and inspires you, and Booth doesn't, or does so in lesser degree, Irving is the greater—for you, anyway. You needn't hesitate to state your position, either; for "criticism," in our day and generation, amounts to little more than an assertion and defence of personal preferences.

Please recommend the best edition of Thackeray's works. C. M. T.

From a collector's standpoint, the first; but that is sacred to millionaires, even though in Dover, N. H., the other day, a shrewd book-hunter acquired the *Rose and the Ring* for 25 cents. The London edition of *de la Thackeray* in 24 volumes, costs \$350 on this side of the water, and the most expensive American edition, \$70, we think. If one doesn't care for the illustrations, he is sure to appreciate the beautiful 18 mo. edition published by Smith, Elder & Co., of London, at a shilling a volume. But McMillan here will probably show you a dozen styles, at as many prices.

QUEST.—1. Webster's Dictionary, advertised in this paper, will solve your "puzzle" very completely. If you have no dictionary, that "fine library" of yours is a hollow mockery. 2. Send it to "Astra." 3. Sarah Bernhardt is said to have been born in 1844, but we can't vouch for it. 4. Yes, Ada Rehan's real name is Ada Crehan. 5. Of course your story will be "considered," if you'll send it along. Editors everywhere just yearn for writers who can put original incidents into readable English, and stop when they get through.

PERPLEXITY, CANO.—The question belongs to "Astra's" department, but we don't mind saying that, if you're "not sure" you want to marry her, you should give the poor girl the benefit of the doubt and let her look for a man who is sure. 2. No. 1 of PROGRESS was dated May 5, 1888; so it was a mayflower, as you say—likewise a daisy.

BIOG., Halifax.—You know what you want, doubtless, but you don't take much pains to inform us what it is. This is probably the quotation you have in mind. "If I had but held my pen but half as well as I have held my bottle, what a charming hand I should have wrote by this time!" It is to be found, uncredited to any other author, in the title-page of *Tabé Wilkinson's Memoirs*, published in York, England, in 1790.

How They Vote in Japan.

The polls had opened at eight o'clock, and one by one the farmers had come straggling in from the surrounding country. The greater number gathered in the small meeting hall just outside the polling-room, whence arose a quiet buzzing. It was a reminder of the gathering in the churchyard on Sunday, in old times, between the morning and afternoon services.

There was a little laughter, less loud argument, and no angry disputing. Every now and then, like bees leaving a hive, a figure was seen to separate from the rest and move off toward the polling-room,

and anon another returned. One saw among them here and there the modern Japanese, with his imitation of foreign garments, in appearance seldom elegant, often awkward, and generally out of harmony with the surroundings. But chiefly there came the old-fashioned rustic, in his best silk robes, with square shaven crown and short queue caught up and tied—perhaps wearing the *hakama*, or divided skirt, of the old samurai. A gentleman in every act, he bows, as he enters, to the official at the door, carefully writes his ballot and affixes his seal, then with great deliberation folds it and places it in the oblong official envelope. For some of the voters it is necessary to seek the assistance of a special clerk in writing their ballots. It is not that they cannot write, for everybody knows the plebeian *kana* or syllabic writing. They prefer to see the ballots inscribed with the more elegant Chinese characters; and then, too, the *kana* is sometimes ambiguous (for some words have a dozen different meanings), and there is a natural perturbation and a desire to have their meaning clearly and correctly conveyed. When the writing is finished the long-sleeved voter walks over to the *tachiatin*, or inspectors. Here further effusions of politeness, take place, while the voter gives his name, number and address, and is checked off on the register. Then, with another gesture of courtesy, he turns to the ballot-box, and with a bow, perhaps in duplicate, to the kind old mayor who sits behind the box, he carefully deposits his ballot and quietly retires by another door.—*Scribner's Magazine*.

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Dissolution of Partnership.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the partnership heretofore existing between the undersigned, under the name and style of TURNER & FINLAY, was on the TWENTY-FIRST day of MARCH last, dissolved by lapse of time.

St. John, N. B., 2nd April, 1891.

ROBERT TURNER, ANDREW FINLAY.

TRUSTEES' NOTICE.

NOTICE is hereby given that ROBERT TURNER, of the City of St. John, Dry Goods merchant, has this day assigned all his estate to us, in trust for the benefit of his creditors. The trust deed now lies at the office of E. & R. McLeod & Ewing, Barristers, Ritchie's building, Princess street, Saint John, and all creditors wishing to participate in the trusts of the said deed are required to execute the same within three months from the date hereof.

Dated the third day of April, 1891.

SAMUEL C. PORTER, JAMES T. GILCHRIST, Trustees.

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