

# THINGS WORTH KNOWING

There is but one sudden death among women to every ten among men.

The broken and distorted foot of a Chinese lady is called a "golden lily" by the Chinese.

The census for 1890 places the number of Free Masons in North America at 673,643, and the number of Oddfellows at 647,470.

Ducks fly at an average rate of ninety miles per hour. With a fair wind it is believed that they can make 150 miles in the same time.

In the British army, in all parts of the world, there are about 25,500 horses, the average yearly forage bill of which may be stated as \$160 each.

There are 629,987 persons who go under the names of Muller in Germany. In other words, there is one Muller to every seventy-three Germans.

The seven champions of Christendom, so often alluded to by old writers, were: St. George, the patron saint of England; St. Dennis, of France; St. James, of Spain; St. Anthony, of Italy; St. Andrew, of Scotland; St. Patrick, of Ireland; St. David, of Wales.

Opium is the juice of the seed-vessels of the white poppy, *papaver somniferum*. This species of poppy grows wild in England and in the south of Europe, though it is supposed to be a native of Asia. It is cultivated for its opium in Hindustan, Persia, Asia Minor and Egypt, also in various parts of Europe.

The old Phoenicians are believed to have been the first to use a syllabic form of ideographic writing, which was the germ of an alphabet. The Egyptians improved upon it with their phonetic alphabet, which denoted both syllabic and alphabetical sounds by means of objects; thus, "Amon" being an eagle, the figure of an eagle stood for the A, and so on. This is what may be called an ideographic alphabet, and it seems to have been in use as long ago as 700 B. C.

The name applied to the British soldier, Tommy Atkins, arose from a little pocket-book, or ledger, at one time served out to British soldiers, in which were to be entered the name, age, date of enlistment, length of service, wounds, medals, etc., of each individual. The war office sent with each little ledger a form for filling it in, and the name selected, instead of the legal "John Doe" and "Richard Roe" was "Tommy Atkins." The books were instantly so named, and within a very few days after the soldier himself was dubbed "Tommy Atkins."

The phrase, "Robbing Peter to pay Paul," is supposed to have originated in an incident which occurred in London during the sixteenth century. About the year 1540 the Abbey of St. Peter in Westminster was elevated to the dignity of a cathedral, but ten years later was again joined to the diocese of London and its property appropriated to pay the expenses of some necessary repairs to the cathedral of St. Paul. It was evident that to do honor to St. Paul the estate of Peter had to suffer, and hence the expression which has become proverbial.

To ascertain the diameter of a star, it is necessary to know its distance from the earth. The distances of the fixed stars are ascertained by parallax. Instead, however, of taking two stations at different points of the earth's surface, the diameter of the earth's annual orbit, or about 183,000,000 miles is taken as the base. Even with this immense base-line, the parallax is so small that it can only be detected by the most careful observations and accurate instruments. In no case has it been found to exceed one second. If this be its value, the distance of the star must be 206,000 times that of the sun. The distance of a star being obtained, its diameter is ascertained by means of its apparent diameter, if such can be found; but the distances at which the stars are placed from the earth are so vast that even when viewed through very powerful telescopes they present no sensible disc or diameter, but appear only as luminous points.

Edible birds' nests of China are an imported article of commerce between the eastern islands and China, and a luxury in China. The nest is made by a species of swallow, being shaped like that of the common swallow, and adheres to a rock, large numbers being found together, often in absolute contiguity, in caves of the Eastern Archipelago. The nests themselves are formed of grass, sea-weed fibers, small leaves, etc., and are attached to the rock by a sort of bracket made of a gelatinous substance, which is the part really eaten. This was formerly thought to have been made of seaweeds, but is now known to consist of saliva, which the swallow exudes from the salivary glands under the tongue. The nests are collected by means of ladders, and often by ropes. The gathering of the nests takes place twice a year—after the young are fledged. They are rated as a great delicacy, sometimes selling as high as \$50 a pound.

The maelstrom is situated on the Norwegian coast, southwest of the Lofoden Isles, and is the most remarkable whirlpool in the world. It runs between the Island of Moskenes and a large solitary rock in the middle of the straits. The strong current rushing between the Great West Fjord and the outer ocean through the channels of the Lofoden Isles produce a number of whirlpools, of which the maelstrom is by far the most dangerous. During severe storms from the west the current runs continually to the east at the rate of six miles an hour without changing its direction for rising and falling tide, and the stream will boil and eddy in such mighty whirls that the largest steamer could hardly contend successfully with the waters. The depth of the maelstrom is only twenty fathoms, but just outside the straits soundings reach

from 100 to 200 fathoms. The great danger to vessels is not of suction into the heart of the whirlpool, but of being dashed to pieces against the rocks. A great many vessels have been lost in this way.

## "PROGRESS" PICKINGS.

Featherstone—What did you break off your engagement with Miss Yardley for? Ringway—Her father sold his yacht.

He rose at early dawn one day. And hastily began to dress. Because his wife was going to catch The afternoon express.

"Your next door neighbors appear to be very quiet people." "Yes, the walls are very thin, and I suppose the mean things keep quiet to hear what we say."

Bandmaster—But how can I play a wedding march? I have nothing here but military music. Manager—Oh, give 'em the double-quick—that's good enough.

GRAVITATION. A pair of in a hammock Attempted to kiss. And in less than a jiffy "This is the end of the world."

Daughter (blushing)—"Papa, Alfred has just been with you for an hour. What did he want?" Papa—"He asked me to lend him 500 francs—the idiot."—Le Figaro.

Manager (proudly)—"This theatre has existed 100 years." Baron—"Very good, but don't you think the ballet ought to have been renovated in the interim?"—Fliegende Blätter.

Chatfield—"I sat back of your wife at the play the other night." Hatfield—"How did you like it?" Chatfield—"I thought it was very becoming from the rear."—Puck.

Rev. Dr. Primrose (stumbling in the hall): "Your father seems to be sparing of his light." Little Johnnie: "Yes, sir. He's always that way the day after the gas bill comes in."

"Oh, dear," sighed Henry, whose clothes are all made of his papa's old ones, and who does not like it. "Papa's had his moustache shaved off, and I suppose I've got to wear it now."

A Sure Sign.—Farmer Huber (reading a letter from his son at college): "My greatly beloved and esteemed parent—" "By Jove, the scamp has run through his money again!"—Der Ulk.

Dottie—Are you going to wear your red and white blazer at the seashore again this summer? Lottie—No indeed. I hadn't been there a week last year before I was proposed to by three barbers.

"Mrs. Struckit affects the antique in her house decoration." "Yes, she told me the other day that she was heartbroken because she could not get the shades of her ancestors for the parlor windows."

Mrs. Billus: "John, the doctor says I need a change of climate." Mr. Billus (absorbed in his newspaper): "That's all right, Maria. The chances are it will be twenty degrees colder tomorrow."

Mr. Manhattan—"You understand the language of flowers, of course, Miss Winona?" Miss Winona (of Minnesota)—"Oh, yes! Four X's is the best quality, made from selected winter wheat."—Puck.

The Rector—My dear young lady, I hope I am mistaken, but I thought I saw you talking during the sermon yesterday. Stray Lamb—You certainly are mistaken, doctor. Why, I never talk in my sleep!

Superintendent of Sunday school (who has talked for half an hour, in a last appeal): "Children, what more can I say?" Wearied Tot (in the front row, eagerly): "Pleathe, thir; thay amen and thid down!"—Puck.

Bicycle Dealer: "This machine will be better for your boy than a pony. It doesn't eat anything." Frugal Parent (not entirely convinced): "No, it won't eat anything; but I'm afraid it'll give the boy a thundering big appetite."

She—"I never loved any one until I met you." He—"And I never kissed a girl before in my life." And little Johnnie, who had been behind the portiere, tripped softly away whistling. "I am something of a liar myself."—New York Herald.

"I think I have the most tender-hearted husband in the world," remarked Mrs. Glim. "He can't bear to beat his children, even when they need it ever so bad." "That's nothing," replied Mrs. Glanders, "my husband is so tender-hearted I can't get him to beat the carpet."

Mrs. Gadd—"Wouldn't it be grand if science should discover the moon to be inhabited, and hit on some way to talk with our lunar neighbors?" Mrs. Gabb—"Indeed it would. They would be near enough to talk to, yet not near enough to be running in at all hours of the day, you know."

Miss Pinkerly (before the good night)—"It's raining so now, Mr. Tutter, that you had better take my umbrella." Tutter—"Thanks, Miss Pinkerly, I don't know but I will. But (brightly) I will try and bring it back with me tomorrow night." Miss Pinkerly—"Oh, you needn't trouble yourself, Mr. Tutter, you can just as well send it."—Cloak Review.

Frederick—What's the matter, Cholly? you look bothered. Cholly—I am, me boy—troubled. "Ovah what?" Why, don't you know? I have just been chatting to Miss DeTrop for an hour or so, feeling devilish blue, don't you know. Just awfiah a little silence, you know, I said: 'Don't you know me thoughts are very painful, Miss DeTrop?' She looked up and said: 'I have always found them so.' And now, by Jove, what did she mean by that, now?"

## MEN AND WOMEN TALKED ABOUT.

Mrs. Edison prefers candles to any other form of household illumination.

Count Herbert Bismarck, who is still referred to as a wild young man, is 43 years old.

The Pope has just given instructions as to his funeral, and in order to save his successor the expense of erecting, according to custom, a monument to his predecessor from his private means, he has chosen his grave inside the wall of the Tribunal of the Lateran, which is covered with costly marble.

Gladstone buys so many books that he invariably demands a discount of 10 per cent. from his booksellers. The story is told that when a dealer in the Strand refused to give the discount to the G. O. M. because he was not a bookseller, the premier replied: "I buy books and I sell them when they have served my purpose; I ought to have the discount." But the bookseller refused to give it.

Sam Squal has come before the public under several different names. In his old unregenerate days, when he wrote for the newspapers, he was "Si Small." Then he gained a wide notoriety as "Sam Small, the evangelist." Next he became president of a Methodist college and blossomed out as the "Rev. Samuel Small, D. D." And now that he is going into politics he is to be known as "Col. Small."

Few of the many readers of Pierre Loti's charming stories know that while he was still best known as Julien Viaud he was dubbed Loti (the Japanese for violet) by his fellow officers in the French navy, on account of his modest and retiring disposition. He therefore assumed Loti as a surname when looking about for a pen name. His first story, The Marriage of Loti, Madame Adam claims to have christened.

There is a custom in the marriages of the royal family which is not generally known. Each of our Princes on his marriage adopts a *faisanerie* of his bride's wedding ring, and he wears it on the fourth finger of the left hand—the marriage hand. Thus the Duke of Connaught wore a plain gold hoop, with the name "Marguerite" engraved on the inner side; his Duchess's marriage ring being exactly similar, with the name "Arthur" on the inside.

In the published journal of the celebrated English preacher, Frederick Robertson, occurs the following singular passage: "If I had not known a certain person I never should have given up the profession of arms to become a minister; if I had not met a certain lady I never should have known that person; if my dog had not disturbed that lady's invalid child at night I never should have met her. It is true, then, that if my dog had not barked on that particular night I should now be in the dragons, or fertilizing the soil of India."

The Duchess of Albany will for all time be known at the Women's Home in Marylebone Road, London, as "the Princess who turned the mangle." The Duchess paid a visit of inspection to the institution and went thoroughly into all the departments set apart for the work carried on by the inmates. In one of the rooms was an inmate busy mangle clothes. Her Royal Highness immediately stepped forward and took the handle of the mangle herself, and finished the piece of work which was being done. Needless to say, the spontaneous action of the Duchess was greatly applauded.

Bishop Walker, of North Dakota, who visited St. John, and preached in the Mission church, a year or two ago, in making the rounds of his diocese, often holds service while on the railroads in what he calls his "cathedral" car. One morning recently the good bishop won the hearts of the people of a back country settlement by sweeping and dusting out his own car and arranging for the reception of his audience. The place was crowded to suffocation when the services began. A young gentleman, who helped the bishop to make the audience comfortable, turned out to be the Earl of Caithness.

Alexander I. King of Serbia, is not handsome, but, by the way of compensation, he is said to be one of the most serious-minded princes of his age (he is only sixteen) in Europe. The performances of his father, ex-King Milan, and of his mother, ex-Queen Natalie, to say nothing of the critical situation of his kingdom, would suffice to make him grave if he were given at all to habits of reflection. His only associates are old gray-haired diplomats and politicians. He never goes out driving save with some aged instructor. He has no young friends, and does not seem to care to have any. He bids fair to distinguish himself as a linguist, if in no other way.

Mr. Clark Russell, the novelist, entered the realms of fiction, like many another famous writer of today, through the portals of journalism. But the penchant for novel-writing was strong upon him, and after a brief experience of journalism, he turned aside into the paths of fiction. Mr. Russell having been a sailor himself, does not write of the sea second-hand. He has sailed round the world, and was so good a sailor that, before his career ended, he held a mate's certificate. Mr. Russell produces copy with indefatigable industry under the most painful conditions. He is a chronic invalid, and is almost continuously in pain. Yet he holds out like a hero, and works far harder than many men in the flush of health and vigor would care to do.

The majority of the novels of today are written by ladies. Of these one of the best known and most successful is Miss Braddon. A romantic story is told of her first book, "Lady Audley's Secret." A magazine called "Robin Goodfellow," a feature of which was to be a new novel, had been started. At the last moment a difficulty arose in regard to this story, and it was feared that the publication of the periodical would have to be postponed. What was to be done? Miss Braddon heard of the difficulty and offered to write the story. "There is no time," replied the publisher. "How long could you give me?" asked Miss Braddon. "Until tomorrow morning." "At what time tomorrow morning?" "If the first instalment were on my table tomorrow morning," he replied, indicating by his tone and manner the utter impossibility of the thing. "It would be in time." The next morning the publisher found upon his table the opening chapters of "Lady Audley's Secret."

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