

## BRINGING DOWN RAIN.

NOT BY ANY MEANS AN IDEA DUE TO AMERICAN GENIUS.

The Strange Ceremonies in Serbia and in Other Foreign Countries—How the Chinese Get Mad at their Rain Dragon—The Poetry of a Wet Black Cat.

In many parts of the country the question is beginning seriously to be considered whether some one or other those enterprising gentlemen who have of late years, in the United States, claimed to bring down refreshing showers by exploding heavy charges high in air, should not be afforded an opportunity of showing their powers here, says an English paper.

As things exist at present, the majority of civilized men look upon the weather as the product of a concatenation of natural phenomena entirely beyond human control. Not so was it believed amongst the ancients, nor even now is it thought by semi-civilized or savage races at all impossible to bring down "the gentle rain from Heaven upon the place beneath."

For instance, in Serbia the villagers are accustomed, when a severe drought has long tried their patience, to choose from amongst their young girls one pre-eminent for virtue and beauty, whom they strip and cover from the crown of her head to the sole of her foot with flowers and grass. Then they call her the Doodola, and she, escorted by a troop of maidens, goes through the village; she stops before every house and dances, while the girls form a ring round her and sing a song which, being interpreted, runs somewhat in this fashion:—

We go through the village,  
The clouds go through the sky;  
We go faster, faster go the clouds;  
They have overtaken us  
And wetted the corn and the vine.

Then the mistress of the house throws a pailful of water over the Doodola, and the party passes on to the next house. The use of water occurs in nearly every performance resorted to for inducing rain amongst Aryan people. Thus in Transylvania, when the ground is parched with drought, an old woman calls to her several maidens. They all strip, and then search till they find a wooden barrow unprotected. This they steal and take to the nearest stream, where they set it afloat with a rushlight burning at each corner; they leave it in the water and depart to their several homes.

In the Punjab there is a somewhat similar practice; naked women drag a plough across a field by night, sprinkling it the while with water.

When the farmers in Georgia want rain very badly they run to the priest of their village to perform the traditional rite. He chooses a couple of marriageable maidens, puts an ox-yoke on their shoulders, seizes the reins, and drives them before him through the streams and marshes, praying, weeping, laughing, and screaming.

In some parts of Russia, if anything of a drought is vexing the souls of the peasantry, it is decidedly awkward for the unoffending stranger who chances to come amongst them, for the women of the place fall on him in a body and throw him into the river, if it is handy, though a horse pond is considered equally in order if no river is within convenient distance.

In China, or, at any rate, in some parts of that loosely-jointed empire, they try to frighten the rain god into providing the proper quantity of rain. They make a big dragon out of wood or paper to represent the god; then they carry this in procession with much pomp, to put the deity into a good humour and politely to remind him of his neglected duty. A reasonable time is allowed him to wake up and do his duty, but that respite passed without the wished-for showers, the indignant people rush at the dragon and tear it to pieces with curses and reproaches. This reminds one of the way the West African negroes treat their fetiches when they have not responded sufficiently generously to repeated prayers.

In Battambang, a province of Siam, where a spurious kind of Buddhism is the prevailing religion, if the rice begins seriously to suffer from drought, the Provincial Governor, acting on the request of the community, goes in great state to a certain pagoda, where he beseeches "the great God Buddha" for rain. Then, accompanied by his suite and an enormous crowd, he repairs to a neighboring plain, where a figure has been dressed up to represent Buddha. Then crackers are let off and the local band begins to play. This, as nobody who has heard a Siamese band will wonder at, excites the elephant in the procession, and they, goaded also by their divers, rush at the image and trample it to pieces. The insult to his image is confidently believed to be enough to engage the serious attention of the god, and by giving him a sample of the treatment he might expect if rain should not fall, to ensure a plentiful supply of it.

In Sumatra, when rain is wanted, the women wade into the river and splash each other with water. From the bank someone throws a black cat into the midst of them, and they keep it swimming about for some time, and then let it escape, while they all splash it vigorously. Their idea is that as the black cat appears, stays a little, and then disappears amidst the splashing of water, so will the dark clouds come and depart when the rain splashes down.

The Zulus employ a rain-charm which is very remarkable, considering their usual fierceness and cruelty. They catch a bird, and after the tribal wizard has consecrated it, and made it a "heaven-bird," they throw it into a pool of water. In spite of their own indifference to the sufferings of animals, they believe that the sky, which they conceive to be a personality, will be full of woe at the death of the bird, and drop sympathetic tribute in showers of rain.

The custom amongst the Guanches,

those mild-mannered aborigines of the Canary Islands whom the fierce Spaniards so ruthlessly exterminated, was much more in accordance with their national character. If the rain failed to arrive in due season, they used to lead their sheep to consecrated ground, and there separated the lambs from the ewes. The plaintive bleating consequent on separation arising to the ears of the gods from their own sacred inclosure, was certain to move those benevolent beings to tender tears, with, of course, the earthly counterpart of rain.

Even the practical Romans were not exempt from this curious belief that something done by man can alter the weather. Outside their city stood a stone, hard by a temple sacred to the Mars, which deity, be it remarked, was with the early Latins, before the influence of Greece had modified their beliefs, more the god of agriculture than of war; this stone was called lapis manalis, or the sweating stone, and in time of drought the priests used to drag this into the city of Rome, which was certain, according to popular belief, to effect the desired change in the weather.

But perhaps the most remarkable instance of this superstition is one which used to prevail in one of the islands of the South Pacific, called Nine or Savage Island. There dominion used to be exercised by a line of kings. But these kings were also, like Agamemnon and Ninus, high priests, and as such were responsible for keeping the gods in good humor. So, whenever rain failed and food grew scarce, the indignant subjects came to the conclusion that their king was not up to his work, and incontinently slew him. The not unnatural result was that the monarchy died of inanition, because nobody could be found willing to run the risks attendant on wielding so responsible a sceptre.

## WITH WOMAN'S EYES.

Nothing is to be Held Sacred When a New Style is in Prospect.

When the Washington woman unpacked her trunks the other day, she took out a fearful and wonderful looking garment made of heavy striped brocade—the kind our grandmothers used to describe as "able to stand alone."

"What is it?" I asked eagerly.

"It's a dressing-gown," she replied, stroking the rich folds in serene contentment.

"Won't you put it on?" I begged.

She threw it over her shoulders and turned slowly around to give me a complete view. There was a shallow yoke covered with bias folds, below which the gown itself, as well as the sleeves, was put on with a deep gauging, so exquisitely done that it seemed like the same material woven in a narrower stripe. The sleeves were larger than ever devised by mortal dressmaker, and there was about the ensemble an impressive air not usually associated with negligé gown of any sort.

"Where did you get the pattern?" I asked timidly.

"From the chief justice of the United States," was the answer, "and the gown was made by the soft-voiced old gentleman who makes all the gowns for the justices of the Supreme Court. It occurred to me one day when I was at court that the gowns worn on the bench would make the loveliest dressing-gowns in the world, so I hunted up the old lady and persuaded her as a special favor to copy the design for me."

I was telling a clever man about this unique wrapper and was surprised and displeased to hear his peals of laughter.

"You ought to see it," said I, reproachfully.

"It's the prettiest thing I've seen to wear for a twelvemonth."

"I dare say it is," he admitted. "I was not laughing at the gown, but at the additional light the incident throws upon feminine character. I believe a woman would wear anything she thought becoming, with indifference as to its suitability. She would copy the vestments of the Grand Llama for a tea gown if she thought they suited her style, and without compunction, too. I actually saw at a ball the other night a gown made of oriental embroideries, and the wearer was walking about the room unconsciously proclaiming with every swish of her skirts that 'Allah is Allah, and Mohammed is his prophet.' If religion is not safe from the incursions of feminine vanity, it is not surprising that the judiciary should have failed to escape."—Chicago Mail.

## PRIVATELY DISCUSSED.

Montreal Physicians Beginning Largely to Prescribe a New Remedy.

MONTREAL, July 15.—There is still a good deal of talk here among all classes over the recent despatches which appeared in so many Canadian papers, relative to the cure of Mr. G. H. Kent, of Ottawa, from Bright's disease. Although the merits of the case have not been openly discussed at any of the meetings of the medical society, there has been a good deal of private conference and the impression which the report of the recovery has made is evidence in the fact that a good many physicians have prescribed Dodd's Kidney Pills in their private practice. No higher testimony than this could be given to any remedy, the reluctance of medical men to admit any good in proprietary medicines being well known.

## Ornaments From Cows' Horns.

It is often the case that amateurs would like to make some use of handsome horns, but from the rigid and obstinate nature of the material are unable to do so. A simple process, carefully followed out, would enable anyone to make beautiful and useful articles. The inner part of the horn is scraped out, then it is thrown into water and boiled for an hour or so, when it becomes soft. It is then held in the flame of a wood or coal fire, being constantly turned. It should be kept in the fire for some time, care being taken that it does not burn, and be frequently moistened by being dipped in boiling water. The heat and steam will soften it to about the condition of molten lead. It is therefore very soft, and can be split lengthwise by a strong knife and piners. It can then be cut into thin layers by separating the sheets of which it is composed. By being pressed between dies it can be made to take almost any form. When the article is complete, it can be scraped smooth, then given a high polish,

## WOMEN ON THE WHEEL.

AN EXPERT TELLS THEM HOW TO CARE FOR THEMSELVES.

Drinking Should be Avoided on Rides and so Should the Cold Bath—How to Keep the Muscles in Order—Points for Both Fat and Lean People.

Cycling has taught many a woman how to take care of herself and of her health, and those who have just learned to manage their wheels well enough to get beyond the point of discussing how to mount and dismount, the proper ankle-motion, and dress, are now thoroughly interested in this subject also. A clique of girls who were feeling the effects of their first long run met in one of the academies, and each one had a different ache, pain, or bruise to tell about as the result of a seventy-five-mile jaunt taken the day before.

An ex-champion bicycle racer has the same fascination for the average wheel-woman that theatrical people have, and the used-up enthusiasts eyed Billy Murphy as he sat watching the beginners as it were an ancient god.

"He could tell us how to take care of ourselves if any one only dared ask him," said a little blowerite.

"You do it then," suggested an elderly woman.

"No, ask him yourself. You are worse off than I am," she answered, and after considerable wrangling as to who should approach Mr. Murphy a girl in an accented-plaited blower suit made of black silk volunteered to be the spokesman. The troop filed round to where he sat and go there just in time to hear a woman, weighing about 250 pounds—say to him:

"Can I reduce my weight if I go at bicycling the right way?"

Before he had time to answer an angular-looking girl stepped up and put in, "And can I get on flesh by riding?"

"Yes to both of you," he replied, "but wait till I correct this instructor and I'll explain my paradoxical statement."

"He talks like a patent-medicine man," commented the novice, as the ex-racer proceeded to correct an instructor for allowing his pupil, a man, to ride with his handle bars almost even with his neck. Strange to say the man objected to having his wheel readjusted, and said that he was perfectly comfortable, but finally he gave in, and when the bars had been lowered and the saddle raised he looked like a different person. As Mr. Murphy returned to the enthusiasts the little blowerite said: "Oh, Mr. Champion man, we want to ask you a question, too: Why is it that we feel so banged up after our run?"

"I'm going to answer all of these questions to-day," he continued. "To begin at the very start, you all saw how that beginner objected to having his wheel adjusted properly. There are many wheel-women just like him who will not heed the advice of those who know, and they go on riding incorrectly all their lives. Everything depends upon the proper adjustment of the handle bars and saddle, and a beginner should insist upon her instructor seeing that this is done before she mounts. A good instructor takes pride in his work, and points with satisfaction to his pupils, dwelling on their neat ankle motion or correct position, just as an artist does upon his masterpieces."

"Most people have an idea that a good rider makes a good instructor, but this isn't always true. A man's ability to teach women to ride well depends upon his ability to keep them informed in detail of what they are expected to accomplish, and he must also be quick to observe their individual needs and characteristics. In this way the work is rendered much easier for pupil and teacher. An instructor's work does not end when he has wheeled, pushed, or led a pupil around the academy floor until she is able to ride fairly well. She is learning an art that is to last her for all time, and should be taught all of the details most thoroughly and carefully; and when the first lesson is over the instructor should begin right there to tell the beginner how to take care of herself, or she is very apt to be absent from her lesson the next day, or else to report that she feels too stiff to ride."

"The nervous strain attendant on a first lesson makes one perspire freely, and it is natural to rush out into the air in this overheated condition, but it is an exceedingly dangerous thing to do. Then another thing that instructors should caution beginners about is riding too long at first. The exercise is new to them and an entirely new set of muscles is brought into play, and it is very easy to overdo the matter. A cramped or strained position in being placed too high or too low often has the same effect."

"There are many rules to be observed in caring for oneself, and common sense must guide you. In the first place, never even go on a day's run without taking a change of underwear, because more colds and muscular rheumatism result from sitting around in wet clothing than from anything else, except from plunge and shower baths. Authorities differ on the subject of baths, but most bicyclists avoid them after hard riding or racing as they would the most deadly poison, and I think myself that they are just about as fatal. A sudden plunge interferes with the heart action and often results in acute rheumatism or permanent injury to the health; a shower is little better. Refrain from both, but use a large sponge and water of about the same temperature as the body. Very warm water has a weakening effect. In drying the body rub it briskly with the towel, but not so harshly that the skin will be irritated. Racing men often have the skin taken off with the towel, and that is entirely wrong."

"There is every indication of a growing passion for outdoor sports among women nowadays, and after any form of exercise has been indulged in they should receive a rub-down and thorough kneading of the muscles of the entire body. It does not follow that one must have an expert massage operator or a maid to do this, for a woman can readily reach any muscle in her

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body, and although the effect is not so good as when some one does the massage for her. The muscles are as much relieved and all liability or soreness removed. I do not approve of this slapping of the body until it is ready to bleed, but think a deep kneading, or, as athletes express it, making bread or mixing dough far preferable. After the massage treatment it is well to rub the body down with a liniment composed of equal parts of some good oil. Camphorated oil is one of the best for this purpose. You will be astonished at the exhilarating, revivifying effect that this treatment will have after a long ride, and if you women had tried it on your return last night you would not have been too tired to sleep and would have felt like taking another run to-day.

"To you stout women who wish to become thin I say diet. Don't starve yourselves, for I am opposed to the old theory of weak tea, toast, chop and eggs. An engine must be fed to be kept going. So I say eat plenty of vegetables and fruit, but avoid fatty substances and drink nothing with your meals and very little at any time. Knead the body constantly, and take long, hard runs systematically. Go on the road every day that the weather permits, and when it doesn't ride indoors and ride hard. Regularity is a great thing, and persistent dieting and exercise pull the flesh off and leave the body firm and hard."

"To you thin wheelers who would become rosy and buxom, I say do just the opposite. Eat starchy, sugary foods and fattening things, and drink plenty of sweet milk. Ride regularly in the fresh air, but do not overdo it. Avoid acids and things to eat and drink that make one thin; exercise systematically, but moderately, and your cheeks will soon begin to fill out and bloom and your bodies will take on pretty, graceful curves, instead of the sharp lines that you so hate."

"There is one thing that I wish to warn all sorts, sizes and shapes of wheelwomen against and that is quenching the terrible thirst that every beginner feels. I know that they want to stop at every well, spring and red house that you come to on a run to get a drink; but don't do it. The racing man when he starts into training experiences the same terrible thirst that you beginners do. This is simply the result of a fever brought on by the unusual exercise, and a five-grain quinine pill taken in the morning before starting on a run will keep the temperature down, and you will have only a thorax parched from the dust to contend with. Learn to do without liquids, and if you find this impossible drink a glass of vichy and milk, as it is less harmful than anything else, except to those wishing to reduce flesh. Spring water is also especially bad for them."

"To encourage you thin people I'll tell you of a man that I once handled in a six day race. After the terrible siege he tipped the scales at seven pounds more than when he started."

"How in the world do racing men keep from taking cold on those long races, lasting from twenty-four hours to six days," asked the novice, "when they don't wear any clothes to speak of?"

"They cover themselves with a thick coating of goose grease and slip their racing suits over it. That excludes the air, and they are not at all susceptible to changes in temperature."

"If we mustn't drink anything, how in the world are we to get cooled off?" asked a stout girl who always looks warm.

"Well, when you come to a spring instead of drinking dip your wrists in the water or allow it to trickle over the pulse and you will cool off gradually, and it would be well for you who make long runs to adopt a wrinkle much used by racing men. They carry in the palm of their hand a sponge saturated with deluted bay rum, which they rub across their faces occasionally. It has a very soothing effect, and isn't in the least harmful. When you stop to rest don't pick out a cool, shady spot, but stop in the sun, no matter how hot the day, and always put on your coat,

or better still, a sweater. Avoid draughts as well as drinks, and you will be apt to feel in good condition when your journey ends. Remember to carry out the suggestions that I've thrown out and you will be astonished at your own physical strength and endurance at the end of a few months."

—N. Y. Sun.

## HE WANTED THE PLACE.

The way he had figured on securing the Fair one of His Chances.

The independence of women is creating sad havoc among the young men who would like to marry, but whose finances are dependent on their own exertions. The question is no longer "Can you support me in the luxury to which I have been accustomed in my father's house?" but "Can you support me as well as I can support myself?"

A very charming girl recently applied to General Diggs, an official in one of the government departments. She proved to be qualified for the position which she sought, and the general assured her that her chances would occur in a few weeks. She had not been gone ten minutes when the general's nephew entered the room.

"You should have been here just a little sooner," said the old gentleman, slyly. "I had a caller whom you would have been charmed to meet."

"Miss Studwell, you mean. I knew that she was coming here."

"Oh, she's an acquaintance of yours?"

"Yes. I wanted to see you about the place she is asking for."

"I see; but your influence is quite unnecessary."

"So you can set your mind at rest."

"Set my mind at rest! Good heavens! You don't mean to say you've gone and done it! I wanted that place myself!"

"Why, you artless, ungallant scamp! You ought to be ashamed of yourself for trying to injure the prospects of a young girl in this way!"

"I'm not trying to injure her prospects. I'm trying to make her happy for life."

"By taking the bread out of her mouth?"

"Not at all. I'll see that she gets bread, and charlotte russe, too, for that matter. If she has to earn a salary, she'll get to taking such interest in her work that she won't think of marrying, while if I get the place I'll be in a position to propose to her and make her happy for life."

And the general said that he would hold the matter under advisement, pending an investigation and a formal and definite report by Fred as to the young woman's sentiments.—Boston Journal.

## Nutrition and the Nerves.

Nervous exhaustion results especially from defective assimilation of food.

Anything that effects the general nutrition of the body will injuriously affect the nervous system.

So long as the digestive organs are not in a healthy condition the process of building up the tissues cannot go on as it should to ensure health.

Whoever, therefore, is suffering from nervous debility must first of all do something that will restore the digestive organs to their normal condition. The great merit of Hawker's nerve and stomach tonic is that it brings about this important change, and restores healthy action to the digestive organs. It cleanses stimulates and strengthens. Its effect upon the nervous system is very marked. The person taking a course of this remedy according to directions and with a due regard to regular habits will regain lost appetite, food will be digested without distress, restless sleep will be enjoyed, the nerves invigorated, and health fully restored. These are not "idle words." The happy experience of thousands is behind them. Be advised, therefore, and if your system is out of order

secure a supply of Hawker's nerve and stomach tonic. It is sold by all druggists and dealers at 50c. per bottle or six bottles for \$2.50, and is manufactured only by the Hawker Medicine Co. (Ltd.) St. John, N. B. and New York City.

## Silver Foxes in Cape Breton.

Many of you have read quotations of silver fox skins and black fox skins, but did you ever see one? The chances are that if you are not in the fur business you never did. Only 100 were taken in the whole world last season, and every year all of these go to Russia, where they are the fur of the royalty and the nobility. Hunnewell, the South Danville fur king, is a real Yankee at a trade, a hustling buyer, who has agents in Nova Scotia and in Cape Breton and all along the rich fur-bearing countries, and his transactions amount to \$50,000 a year and upward. Under his arm Hunnewell recently bore a package, which he tossed lightly to the floor of the reporters' room and disturbed the quiet of the several "decks" at work. "There," said he, "is something you never saw before—eight silver fox skins in one bunch. There they are—four of them beauties, four of them ordinary. The four first named were beautiful skins, pure deep black along the bases of the necks, silver tipped along the backs, while the tails were just shimmered with the silver white. The fur was soft and fine, beautiful to the touch."

"That skin," said Mr. Hunnewell, tossing out one, "is worth \$135. This one is worth \$150. If that one was as black as this and was as heavy and soft as it is now it would be worth \$300 easily. Considering that only 136 were taken last year, and that I got twenty-four of them, I think I got my share. These came from Cape Breton, and I never had so many in one bunch before."—Lewiston Journal.

## Very Neatly Said.

Lady (in a crowded street car).—Thank you, sir; but I don't like to deprive you of your comfortable seat.

Gallant Irishman (who had obligingly risen). Be th' powers ma'am, it was comfortable no longer when Oi saw you standin'.



Thomas A. Johns.

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AYER'S Sarsaparilla

"I was afflicted for eight years with Salt Rheum. During that time, I tried a great many medicines which were highly recommended, but none gave me relief. I was at last advised to try Ayer's Sarsaparilla, and before I had finished the fourth bottle, my hands were as

## Free from Eruptions

as ever they were. My business, which is that of a cab-driver, requires me to be out in cold and wet weather, often without gloves, but the trouble has never returned."—THOMAS A. JOHNS, Stratford, Ont.

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The Only Sarsaparilla  
Admitted at the World's Fair.

Ayer's Pills Cleanse the Bowels.