

SHAKE CHARMERS.

Shady American Indians Who Carry Deadly Rattles in Their Mouths.

It is generally supposed that the serpents exhibited by snake charmers have been deprived of their fangs, and this is doubtless often the case, while one instance at least is recorded in which the mouth of the snake had been sewn together to prevent it from biting, says the Westminster Review.

This, of course, required a large amount of cool courage, as well as great quickness of hand and eye, all which qualities must be doubly necessary in capturing and taming these deadly reptiles.

AN EFFICIENT ARMY.

Is the One Maintained by Little Switzerland at a Nominal Cost.

It has long been a matter of wonder that Switzerland should be able to maintain an efficient army for less than \$500,000. She could in a case of emergency put 100,000 troops in the field in two days, with 100,000 more in reserve, besides 27,000 militia.

LIFTING POWER.

A Statistical Estimate of the Average Man's Power at Varying Ages.

The muscles, in common with all the organs of the body, have their stages of development and decline; our physical strength increases up to a certain age, and then decreases.

The "lifting power" of a youth of 17 years is 280 pounds; in his twentieth year this increases to 320 pounds, and in the thirtieth and thirty-first years it reaches its height, 356 pounds.

After this period the strength fails more and more rapidly until the weakness of old age is reached. It is not possible to give statistics of the decline of strength after the fiftieth year, as it varies to a large degree in different individuals.

WHAT A DROUGHT COSTS.

A Bad One in New South Wales Means a Loss of Many Million Dollars.

What the drought of the last few years has cost New South Wales has been estimated, and the estimate makes up a bit of very doleful arithmetic, says Westminster Gazette.

That the colony has been able to survive these terrific losses is a striking proof of energy and resource. Translated into money the colony has suffered a loss of £12,000,000 to £20,000,000. For so much, when expressed in pounds, shillings and pence, do a few inches more or less of rainfall count!

A Singular Bequest.

It has been stated that John Walter, of the London Times, left a legacy to his daughter one of the advertising columns of the Thunderer. It brought the lady a steady income of \$150 a day—enough to keep her from poverty.

MUST BE REDEEMED.

Some Valuable Information About Theater Seats Not Generally Known.

The fact that a ticket bought for a theater and not used on the date stamped on it is always good for an admittance is not generally known, and probably theater managers would take very little trouble to spread knowledge of the fact; but it is nevertheless true, says the New York Sun.

RELIGIOUS CAT BACKSLIDES.

The Sensitive Animal Refuses to Attend Prayers After Murder of Her Offspring.

In Susquehanna, Pa., is a household made up of an old man, his housekeeper and their old cat. Family prayers are the rule each evening in the household, and the cat fell into the habit of regular and punctual attendance.

But in an evil hour there came a kitten that was deemed superfluous, and sentence of death was pronounced upon it. The head of the household undertook the execution of the sentence, and unknown to him, the cat was a witness of the scene.

WARTS AND THE DOCTORS.

Excuse Their Incompetence by Declaring the Nuisance Will Disappear.

The doctors excuse their incompetence by declaring that these nuisances disappear as a child grows older, says the Pall Mall Magazine. I profess to believe them. No one in the household remembers the historic case of Cromwell, fortunately.

And there is Cicero; not that he himself had warts to speak of, though I have seen that statement in a school-book recently. It was an ancestor of his who won distinction that way, astonishing the Roman public with an excrescence on the tip of his nose, of trefol shape. Wherefore they called him Cicero, vetch, and the nickname clung to the family.

It was rather comforting than otherwise to learn that the heroes and sages of old were afflicted with warts. Even the "godlike Greeks" had them, as Lucian tells us in passing, and their mothers applied to old women for charms. The doctors were as helpless then as now, of course, with more excuse.

BARREN, INDEED.

Such Would Be This World of Ours If Men Could Live Without Air.

Atmosphere is not alone valuable for breathing purposes. It prevents hailstones from falling with terrific velocity and killing us like bullets. It prevents the fierce heat of the sun from burning us up in the daytime by intercepting and storing it up, and gives it off slowly at night to keep us warm.

Without air there would be no dew, and plants would languish. There would be no twilight without it, and when the sun went down the change from brilliant light to perfect darkness would be instantaneous.

The beautiful colors of the sky would be nonexistent, as they are due to the decomposition of light by moist air. Without air there would be no sound on the earth. We could never hear a human voice, music or the song of birds. No fire could burn, no gas, no lamps, no factories, no ironware, no jams and marmalade, no sweets, no stiff collars and cuffs.

Sausage Day.

The butchers of Berlin have a curious way of informing their customers of the days on which fresh sausages are made by placing a chair, covered with a large clean apron, at the side of the shop door.

RUSSIA'S PLATINUM MINES.

A Great Many of Them Have Fallen Into the Hands of Foreign Syndicates.

Practically the whole of the world's supply of platinum comes from Russia. Nearly all the important mines have passed into the hands of foreigners. According to a St. Petersburg newspaper, there is a group of mines concentrated in the Verkhoturak district of the government of Perm, numbering about 70, of which 40 are being worked.

WITH A BROKEN ARM.

John E. Gordon Kept His Engagement to Lecture Despite a Bad Accident.

In Washington a few days ago Gen. John E. Gordon told the story of a remarkable experience he had ten days ago. Said Gen. Gordon:

"I venture to remark that I did something that not one of the youngsters, including Joe Wheeler, can do. I had an engagement to deliver my lecture on 'The Last Days of the Confederacy,' in a town near the border of Kansas and Nebraska. There was a foot of snow on the ground, and my only way to reach the place was by sleigh.

"We started and all went well for several miles, until the driver struck something, and out I went with the sleigh right on top of me. When I tried to rise I found that my left arm had been wrenched clear out of the socket, and pulled down to a remarkable and painful extent. I never thought of anything but reaching my engagement, where 1,000 people were waiting to hear me. By good fortune I was near the house of a surgeon and in a few minutes after the accident he was repairing my damage. While he was doing that I sent for another sleigh two miles away. It came on time, and with such a splendid pair of horses that I reached my engagement on the moment.

"The rumor of my fall and injuries had preceded me and I never had a more enthusiastic reception in my life. My arm was pretty sore, but I never missed an engagement in that snow-bound region. How many young men do you know who could do that?"

GOLD TEETH NOT ALL GOLD.

They Are Often Only Removable Shells, Which Are Worn to Make a Show.

"I'd hate to pay that woman's dentist bills," said a business man to a friend on a South side L train the other day. Across the aisle from the man was a woman who showed enough gold every time she opened her mouth to make a man want to leave home and try his fortunes in the Klondike. Two of her upper teeth had been replaced by pieces of burnished metal, and one of her lower teeth also had a 22 carat sheen about it. Her companion had only one gold tooth, but she kept it doing the work of three by a constant smile, says a Chicago paper.

"That's another case of the old adage, 'All that glitters is not gold,'" said the business man's friend. "One of the latest dental novelties makes gold teeth possible to anyone at a small cost and without even sacrificing a healthy incisor to make room for the metal. For a quarter you can get a shell that can be stuck over any front tooth and with an excuse to smile you can present a regular gold mine to the astonished public. Actresses first affected the gold tooth, and then the Yankee man got an idea. In a short time there was an epidemic of gold teeth. The novelty man came out with his plated shells and sold them like hot cakes. 'No one but the dentist has any kick against the imitation gold tooth, and as a dazzer it is hard to beat. That woman's teeth may be the real stuff, but I believe she can slip them off when she wants to and get them plated when they get tarnished.'

His Tomb Tells the Story.

A good many of us owe more than we are grateful for to a man who died in 1818, so many hundred years ago that one is afraid to count. The man is Salvino Arnot, who is stated to be the inventor of spectacles. On his tomb there is this epitaph: "Here lies Salvino Arnot de Armiti, of Florence, the inventor of spectacles. May God pardon his sins."

Leaves Fifty Feet by Twelve.

The largest leaves in the world are said to be those of the Inajpalm, which grows on the banks of the Amazon. They reach a length of from 30 to 50 feet and are 10 to 12 feet in breadth.

CENTURY OLD WAR CLAIMS.

The Congress Just Ended Settles Some Big Accounts of Long Standing.

In 1778, when France came to the aid of the colonies, the new republic guaranteed to the decaying empire, by solemn treaty, that the United States would make common cause with France in any war against Great Britain.

In 1793 war between France and Great Britain broke out. The United States did not aid France, and that country, justly taking offense, equipped a fleet of privateers which played disastrously on American commerce. In 1800 a settlement was reached. France gave up its claims against the United States and this country yielded the claims of this country for the damage done by French privateers.

It was a curious settlement, for the United States did itself of national claims of France by giving up a batch of individual claims against France. Of course it was expected this country would pay these individual claims, but it didn't.

The claimants lived and died and their descendants and assignees inherited their claims against the government. From 1802 until within a few years congress has refused payments. Now the claims are all in the hands of speculators and third parties of the third and fourth generation, and most members believe there is not an honest claim among the whole lot.

FOURTEEN TIMES WEDDED.

Many-Times Bride Tries for Nuptial Bliss Again—Holds the Record for Matrimonial Honors.

To have just successfully gone through her fourteenth marriage ceremony is the reputation earned by Polly, the present wife of William Owens. She is but 50 years of age and looks as though she would survive her fourteenth and at least a dozen more husbands. She is the mother of six children, the result of her former marriages. She was married the first time when she was 15 years of age, and was left a widow two years later. Since then she has averaged a marriage every two years. She has secured eight or nine divorces, while death has done the releasing in the other cases. She is part Indian, her mother being a half-caste. By marriage she has relationship with half the people of Hendricks county. There is no one in Indiana who closely approaches her record. There are two or three cases of marriage the sixth time, and one case where marriage was entered into the seventh time, but she discounts that record. Young Benson Eigers, of Hendricks county, however, is in a fair way to attain a similar distinction. He has just passed his nineteenth year and is preparing to contract his fourth marriage. He was married the first time when he was but 14 years of age and his wife but 12. The marriage was upon consent of parents. He treated his wife as a plaything, and when he grew tired of her he slung her around like she was a doll, and scared her to death by drawing razors across her throat and throwing her on the floor and holding a red-hot poker over her. She got tired of this and went to her home. The marriage was annulled. The next two were also terminated by his arbitrary bursts of freakishness.

HEAD OF A NUMEROUS FAMILY

John Chandler Is Father, Grandfather and Great-Grandfather to 103 Persons.

To be the head of a family of 103 persons is a record seldom falling to the lot of man. But such is the case with John Chandler, who resides in Allen county, Ky.

This gentleman is the father of 29 children, 21 of whom are now living, and have families. These 21 children have an average of five children to each family, thus making Mr. Chandler the grandfather of 106 persons. But this is not the full extent of his offspring. For he has 35 great-grandchildren. So it will be seen that Mr. Chandler stands paterfamilias of 162—an achievement rarely equaled.

Mr. Chandler is a remarkable man in several other respects. Although 75 years of age, and residing in the hills of Allen county, he reads current literature and keeps himself informed on the leading topics of the day. He is an expert rifle shot, and spends a great deal of his time squirrel hunting.

Was May 14 Specially Remembered.

The Fifty Memorial Association, with headquarters at Sioux City, Ia., wants May 14 set aside by all the public schools in the Missouri river valley for special services and addresses in honor of Sergt. Charles Floyd, the first United States soldier who died on the "New Louisiana purchase."

A President in Poverty.

Rafael A. Gutierrez, who five months ago was president of Salvador, is said to be living in dire poverty in Honduras. He brought about the greater republic of Central America and that proved to be his ruin.

ODD METAMORPHOSIS.

Man of Comeliness Grows Hideous in Appearance Through Disease.

Most Peculiar Affliction That Interested the Medical World—Was Afraid He Would Be Dissected After Death.

There died in Penobscot, Me., last week a man whose peculiar affliction attracted the attention of the medical world. His name was William Howard. As a young man Howard was a skillful carpenter, and being steady and industrious, he laid by a little money. Among his acquaintances he was popular. He was of good appearance, and a genial nature, coupled with his industry, made him a welcome visitor in every household in the community, and especially where there were marriageable daughters.

But gradually a change came over him. His hands grew large and slowly lost their cunning with tools. His feet, too, were growing out of all proportion to his body. Then the change began to show in his features, which expanded into unusual proportions and transformed him into an object of horror. Then the terrible deformity attacked his body, and his chest grew until it was more than twice its normal size.

But before the disease had reached this stage Howard lost the ability to work, and, shunned by and shunning his neighbors, he lived in solitude in a houseboat which he had built and moored to a place on the shore apart from the habitations of men. As if not sorely afflicted enough already, a stroke of lightning partially destroyed his eyesight.

Several years ago eminent physicians summing in Maine saw Howard and became intensely interested in his case. From that time he was visited frequently by learned men of the medical profession, who pronounced his case one of the very few similar ones known, and medically considered the most interesting of any that had come to their attention.

Howard was offered a large sum of money and a generous income during life for his body after death, says the Boston Globe, but the idea of "being cut up" was repugnant to him, and he refused to entertain any such offers. A few years ago he deposited what remained of his savings with the town authorities for them to care for him during his remaining years and to see that he had a decent burial, where his body would be undisturbed by medical experts.

A LITTLE FORTUNE ON EGGS.

One Train Load from Kansas Brought the Enormous Sum of \$67,000 in New York.

Six thousand cases of eggs, that would have more than filled a train of 17 cars, were placed on the New York market one morning recently by a commission company of Fort Scott, Kan., during the almost unprecedented dearth of eggs all over the country, and while New York people were eating Kansas eggs at 45 cents per dozen the people out in Kansas were at times unable to get enough to make a batch of pancakes.

An ordinary freight car will hold 350 cases of eggs. There are 30 dozen in a case. The commission company happened to have 6,000 cases on the Gotham market on a day when they were the scarest and refused 38 cents per dozen upon order by telephone from the manager in Fort Scott to hold them for 40 cents, or \$72,000 for the train load. The market suddenly declined and the eggs were finally sold for about \$5,000 less. Those shipped by freight were laid down in New York for about 25 cents per dozen, but many of the 6,000 cases were shipped by express on account of the enormous demand. The 180,000 dozen eggs which sold at such an unusually high price were from southeast Kansas and their value almost represented the value of the hens in the corner of the state from which they were brought. The scarcity of eggs in Kansas was caused by the tremendous draught on the agricultural country by the eastern market.

FOX OUTWITTED BY A CAT.

Feline Crawls in a Hole That Is Too Small for Reynard to Enter.

William H. Woodhead's large gray cat, Pete, when the thermometer was 12 degrees below zero and the wind blowing 40 miles an hour, struck for a swamp to look for mice. Mr. Woodhead lives in the town of Foster, near Putnam, Conn., over the Rhode Island line.

A fox was in the swamp looking for his supper. The fox chased the cat home, and Pete crawled into a hole in a stone wall. The hole was not large, and Pete is a fair-sized cat. The hole was pretty well filled. The hungry fox could just reach Pete with his paw.

When Mr. Woodhead went to the barn in the morning the fox, which had stood guard all night, retreated for the swamp. For 30 and 40 feet on each side of Pete's prison the snow was trodden hard, while blood and fur were in evidence, showing that Pete bit and scratched every time the fox made a reach with his paw.

Both of Pete's ears were frozen, but otherwise he was quite in the game.

Unproductive Money in London.

It is estimated that fully two-thirds of the whole amount of public money held by the London banks does not bear interest.

No Beggars in Melbourne. Beggars are unknown in Melbourne. The poorest part of the city is the Chinese quarter.

FEEDING THE BIRDS.

How a Thoughtful Sportsman Did Good Work During the Cold Spell.

A Baltimore sportsman who has sent to his country friends clippings from the Baltimore Sun in reference to the feeding of partridges has received a letter from one of them, Robert Peach, showing the work that is going on at Mitchellville, Prince George's county, Md. The writer says in part in his letter: "All game is in immediate danger. The storm has been terrible here and the snow lies 14 inches deep on a level. I have just returned from a round in supplying our feeding stations. It takes 1 1/2 bushels of wheat and ground chump to supply them. My father said the other day: 'Boys, there is my granary. You do the rest.'

"We are doing our part, but on the rounds I saw some sad sights. In one place was a covey of 15 partridges walking in a branch beside the frozen stream, while nearby were two dead birds. The covey flew up, but I do not know where they went, but with safety. In another place were seven huddled in a hollow tree. The storm was so sudden and the weather has been so severe that the birds and rabbits will be unable to stand it.

"Our stations number six. They are box-shaped, 10x14 feet, with the snow cleared away and the ground dug up afresh. While we are spreading the food, lark, dove, sparrow, crow, Jay, blackbird, and sometimes a robin, are hovering near to get the first bite. We try to get around the partridges and direct them to the spot, but must rely in the main on 'Hob White's' good sense. "We locate our birds first and then establish a station, and we shall have more of the stations. Many of the neighbors are taking up the work. I have posted a notice in the railroad station, with the Sun clipping attached, calling attention to the necessity of caring for the game."

BOSTON REPORTER NOW KING.

Newspaper Man Who Was Carried Off as a Sailor, Rules as Island.

Capt. Shurtleff, of the bark Gerard Tobey, just arrived at Tacoma, Wash., from China, tells how a Boston reporter has risen within a year by the force of circumstances to be assistant king of the Yapa islands, which are classed as belonging to the Caroline group. Just before the Tobey was towed out of New York harbor last year several intoxicated sailors were brought aboard by boarding-house masters. Among them was a Boston newspaper man, whose last name Shurtleff has forgotten. On the ship he was known only as "Charley."

Becoming sober, he was greatly surprised to find himself on the Atlantic ocean bound for China. He made a fair sail, except that Capt. Shurtleff thought him lazy. At Singapore he went ashore, got into a row and was put in jail. He was released and went to Hong-Kong by steamer, reaching there before Shurtleff. He soon fell in with King O'Keeffe, of the Yapa islands, who had arrived at Hong-Kong in his yacht to attend the annual races. They liked each other, with the result that O'Keeffe invited "Charley" to become assistant king and the ruler of his second largest island, on which O'Keeffe is opening new plantations. They left together, with the understanding that "Charley" should be installed as sub-ruler, with proper ceremonies.

O'Keeffe has a large income from his plantation. Fearing his islands might be seized by some nation, he made overtures last year to sell them to the United States.

CHINAMAN SERVES ON JURY.

With Five Negroes the Oriental Helps Adjust a Singular Suit in Kansas.

Sam Wah, the only Chinaman in Fort Scott, Kan., was the other afternoon compelled to act as a jurymen with five negroes in a case brought by Mary Epps to recover \$100 from Ben Bruce on a contract for removing "spooks" from two of the defendant's houses. Both parties are negroes and the attorneys agreed to try the case before a jury of negroes and the one Chinaman.

When summoned Sam Wah refused to go and an attachment was issued for him. The orders of the court had the effect of compelling the defendant to go to court. He asserted his right under the constitution not to take an oath except after the manner of swearing in his native country, and the court was compelled to order a Chinese form of solemnizing an oath, which satisfied the Chinaman, who took his seat with the other jurors, but refused to remove his cap.

The unnaturalized juror took much interest in the case and seemed unwilling to return a verdict for the defendant upon instructions from the court that her contract to perform the work was not legal.

Prize for a Picture.

Some time ago the pope offered a prize of \$400 for a well-painted picture of the Holy Family. Consequently a large number of the Italian painters who exhibited at the exposition of sacred art at Turin chose this subject for their pictures, but none was judged to be good enough to deserve the prize. The pope has therefore decided to reopen the competition and to make it international.

Quakers in Great Britain.

There are over 68,000 persons in the United Kingdom connected with the Society of Friends.

More Blind Men Than Blind Women.

Blind men outnumber blind women by two to one.