

Peculiarities of Clams.

THEY HAVE BRAINS IN THEIR FEET AND ARE ADEPT SPINNERS.

The clam's body is completely enshrouded in the mantle, except for two openings, through one of which the foot can be pushed out. The other is for the siphon, or what is commonly known as the "neck" of the clam. In some respects the clam may be better off than we are, for he has a little brain in his foot and also a gland for secreting strong fibers. With this he spins a byssus, by which he can attach himself to whatever he likes. He does not even have to search for his food, but waits for it to come to him. He makes a burrow in the mud or sand, attaching himself to the bottom of the byssus. Then he thrusts his siphon up through the mud and water until it reaches the surface. The siphon is made up of two tubes, the water flowing in through one and out through the other. When the inflowing current, laden with minute plants and animals, reaches the gill chamber some of these are sifted out and retained for food, while the water and waste matter flow out through the other tube. The clam's eggs are carried by the mother on her gills. When there are fish in the water with them, the mother clams discharge the eggs, which soon hatch, but if there are no fish they carry the eggs until they decay. The reason of this strange behavior is this: When the eggs are set free in the water they soon hatch, and the little ones swim about until they find some fish to which to attach themselves. They live for some time on the mucus of the fish, and then drop off, sink to the bottom and form burrows for themselves. This curious semi-parasitic life is no doubt a reversion to the habit of some ancient ancestor.—Popular Science Monthly.

Chinese Obstacles.

If a house is to be repaired, wonderful forethought is necessary. The evil spirits which are supposed to occupy each dwelling that mortals have inhabited cause the carpenter no end of trouble and no trifling expense. First, an astrologer must be consulted with regard to the most lucky day for beginning the work; then a square suspended from the ridge-beam is a notification to the spirits of darkness that their dwelling place is to be disturbed, wherefore the square thing for them to do is to move out quietly and peaceably. Next, the carpenters make offerings to these unseen residents. These gifts seem to say, "If you please, spirits of darkness, accept this bribe and speedily take your flight." Next, the neighbors must be warned that these evil influences are about to be turned loose, perhaps to seek shelter under a neighboring roof. Every house upon that street receives a notice that upon a certain day and hour repairs are to begin on the dwelling of Ah Sin. Each household can then pay the imps not to enter their doorway, but to go to the next neighbor. Even the farmer cannot begin his work in the spring until after the national festivities are celebrated in honor of the special gods who are supposed to make it their particular business to look after the welfare of those who till the soil. In a land where more than one hundred million people are supported by agriculture, where many farms have been in cultivation for three or even four millenniums, we naturally expect to find skill in that line of work. In this we are not disappointed, for the Chinese farming is scientific handwork.—Dora K. W. Spratt, in Lippincott's.

Tiny Oxen.

One of the greatest curiosities among the domesticated animals of Ceylon is a breed of cattle known to the zoologists as the "sacred running oxen." They are the dwarfs of the whole ox family, the largest specimen of the species never exceeding thirty inches in height. One sent to the Marquis of Canterbury in the year 1891, which is still living, and is believed to be somewhere near ten years of age, is only twenty-two inches high, and weighs but one hundred and nine and a half pounds. In Ceylon they are used for quick trips across country with express matter and other light loads, and it is said that four of them can pull a driver of a two-wheeled cart and a two-hundred load of miscellaneous matter sixty to seventy miles a day. They keep up a constant swinging trot or run, and have been known to travel one hundred miles in a day and night without either food or water. No one knows anything concerning the origin of this peculiar breed of miniature cattle. They have been known on the island of Ceylon and other Buddhist countries for more than a thousand years.—Tit-Bits.

Microscopical investigation is said to prove that the pores of wood invite the passage of moisture in the direction of the timber's growth, but repel it in the opposite direction.

Raked Up His Latin.

AND SUCCEEDED IN UNEARTHING TERMS THAT STARTLED THE WAITER.

A western lawyer went into the Planters' cafe a few days ago. He had not always lived in the far west and in his college days in the east was well enough acquainted with the French bills of fare of swell New York restaurants. But out in his new home he had forgotten about soup au pot gras and pomme de terre a la duchesse. The fact that he could not read some of the delicacies on the menu exasperated him, and he proceeded to have fun with the waiter.

"Nothing here that I'd care for," said he to the claw-hammered attendant.

"We can serve you anything for dinner, sir," said the waiter, confident that he could please his customer before he got through with him.

"Have you sine qua non?" The waiter started.

"No-o-o, sir," he answered.

"What about bonmots? Have you any?"

"No, sir."

"Then let me have some nice ignis fatuus. That's good at this time of year."

"We haven't got it."

"Bring me some tempus fugit then."

"That's out, too, sir."

"You must have e pluribus unum."

This time the waiter looked bright.

"I've heard them speak about it in the kitchen. I'll go and see."

He came back empty handed and dejected. "We haven't got it," he stammered.

"Strange that I can't get any of these seasonable things. Try once more and find out if they have pro bono publico."

"I'll call Mr. Weaver," said the waiter, almost crazy by this time. "Perhaps he can tell what you want."

The guest from the west caught him by the coat-tails.

"All right," said he, "and in the meantime bring me some roast beef and fried potatoes."

"We have it!" yelled the waiter in his delight at hearing of something that was obtainable, and he flew off to the kitchen and came back with the beef and potatoes and Landlord Weaver in the wake.

The attorney and the hotel man had a good laugh at the expense of the unfortunate waiter, who confided to the chef in the kitchen that he had struck a man who must have been eating at Delmonico's all his life.—St. Louis Republic.

A Matter of Necessity.

"Look here, Potter!" demanded the able editor of the Hawville Clarion, addressing Dr. Potter, the urbane Coroner and likewise the proprietor of the Early Bird ice-cream parlor: "What under the sun caused you fellows to bring in a verdict of 'death from unknown causes' in the case of young Pettifish, whom everybody knows proposed to Miss Pearl Kinsabby in her mother's kitchen, which so offended the high-spirited young lady, who was already engaged to another gentleman, that she caught up a saucepan of boiling water from the stove and turned it wrong side up on his head, whereat he uttered a fishish yell and plunged headlong through the window without asking to be excused or stopping to open the window, and either caused his own death by cutting his throat on the broken glass or by breaking his neck over the saw-back which stood on the ground under the window and upon which he fell, or by a combination of both. I don't see how in the name of wonder the jury could make 'unknown causes' out of that."

"We considered that that was the best we could do under the circumstances," replied the Coroner, cheerily. "You see, the only blanks for filling in with the verdict we had left were for death from unknown causes or by shooting by an officer in discharge of his duty, and as we all liked the young fellow pretty well, we just drew straws to see which it would be, and the unknown causes won. We didn't have, and never have had, any blanks about hot water on the head or cutting the throat with window glass or breaking the neck on saw-backs, so it looks to me as if we did pretty middling well under the circumstances."

A Question of Age.

"Johnny," said a Jefferson county female teacher, whose age is concealed by the arts well known to women, "Johnny, how many Presidents have we had in the United States?"

"I dunno," said the boy.

"Why," replied she, "when I was your age I could tell at once the name of every President."

"Of course you could," replied the lad, "because when you was my age there had been but two or three Presidents."

"Johnny, take your seat, the lesson for to-day is ended."—Golden Globe.

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2. If any person orders his paper discontinued he must pay all arrearages, or the publisher may continue to send it until payment is made, and collect the whole amount, whether it is taken from the office or not. There can be no legal discontinuance until the payment is made.

3. Any person who takes a paper from the post-office, whether directed to his name or another, or whether he has subscribed or not, is responsible for the payment.

4. If a subscriber orders his paper to be stopped at a certain time, and the publisher continues to send, the subscriber is bound to pay for it if he takes it out of the post-office. This proceeds upon the ground that a man must pay for what he uses.

5. The courts have decided that refusing to take newspapers and periodicals from the post-office, or removing and leaving them uncalled for, is prima facie evidence of intentional fraud.

