

Killing Time.

Considering how fond we all are of life, and what a transient gift it is, does it not seem odd that *emui* should ever cross our path, or that we should ever be put to it for means with which to consume time? When the universe offers so many riddles to be solved—when there is so much to see, so much to know, so many thoughts to be thought out—is it not strange that we should ever have a spare moment lying unemployed on our hands, rather than that we should be constantly seeking and inventing devices for getting rid of the surplus hours? Not that we should never step aside from the serious pursuits of life, but in our sports how often are we ponderously sensible of the lagging minutes, and heartily glad when they are passed? Fortunately for most of us, a certain portion of each day is necessarily devoted to the labor of earning our daily bread; but after the merchant has closed his ledger and the shopman has put up his blinds, after the artist has turned his easel to the wall, and law and order has been established in the household, and the gardener has left Nature in undisturbed possession, there yet remains a respectable remnant of the day, pliant and ready to be moulded to our uses, but which we usually make haste to employ in the most shiftless and profitless manner, or not to employ at all, merely animated by the desire of passing time, as though we did not know that it is the material with which we build for eternity; and if we waste the material, will not the structure be incomplete? For the surer annihilation of time we form conspiracies to help each other out of the difficulty, and then turn round and complain of the brevity of human life. Think you that in three-score years and ten we might not find leisure for every elegant accomplishment and every solid acquirement if we knew how to economize the precious stuff, or cared to learn the method, and did not fritter it away as if it were of small account and utterly inexhaustible? Consider what profit might accrue even from the average life if no moments were "killed," not merely unoccupied, but unfruitful of thought; for each of us is aware that the idle hand is at time a necessity of nature, but the mind that is busy entertaining lofty ideas is too well pleased with its company to wish the hours away, and that it is only the sick or vacant brain that complains of tedium, and urges its owner to fill the vacuum with empty gossip and a thousand trifles with which we could dispense. How many novels do we read which leave no more impressions than foot-prints on the sand, only because we have some hours at our disposal which we would fain strangle secretly, like the princes in the tower, with the hope of escaping conviction; how many rubbers at whist do we play without giving attention to the science of the game, only because it will while away an evening; how many after-dinner naps are undertaken in the same worthy cause; how many overeating, drinking, and dressing, not to mention gambling and lower methods to ease polite; how many abominations in worsted and work wear bear witness to the waste of "the stuff that won't endure;" how many intrigues have been begun and carried on in a mere spirit of *emui*; how many disputes and quarrels have killed the costly gift for which its possessor could find no better use; and how many flirtations and broken hearts are the result of this sad propensity of heedless minds? In truth, we work harder and more diligently at any trade of wilful murder than at any other, and while we hold upon existence with a most pathetic grip, the material of which it is made hangs heavy on our hands, and we are begging every passer-by to relieve us of it, while we estimate it at its true value only when there is an immediate prospect of losing it, when we would gladly barter all other possessions for a fraction of that which we lately found so burdensome. In fact, this matter of killing time lacks originality; the Romans killed it in their baths; at their gladiatorial sports, at their toilettes—the Pompeian lady devoting the entire morning to that pretty craft; and is the modern belle far behindhand? It has been accomplished through all the ages by kaiser and peasant, rich and poor; and with what *et al* was it dispatched at the Hotel de Rambouillet, at the charming retreat of Coppet, where Madame de Staël hastened the years of her exile with every brilliant device, or at the Rocks, where Madame de Sevigne abridged the absence of her daughter by every indolent employment—nor need we flatter ourselves that it is an exploded custom, or one that is losing adherents, when we meet people who commit the offence every day of their lives; people that sit through classical concerts and Italian operas, not because they enjoy them, but because they help to pass the time respectably; people who go to the seashore or the mountains not so much for change of air and prospect as to beguile *emui*; who go to church not for consolation, but for dissipation; who in short embrace every opportunity of abbreviating the time from the cradle to the grave, not reflecting that for every idle hour, as well as word, must we render account.—*Harper's Bazar.*

Geo. D. Prentice and Mike Walsh.

Prentice, notwithstanding his tumultuous career, his violent controversies, and bitter quarrels, was generous and forgiving, not amiable. Shamefully and persistently slandered—he admitted that he had faults enough to render malignant invention superfluous—he was ever ready to meet his enemy half-way in reconciliation, and he rarely remembered injuries where there was any disposition towards atonement.

The noted Mike Walsh and himself had had fierce newspaper bouts, but had never seen each other until they met one day in Washington.

Walsh, eyeing him, approached and

said, "You are George D. Prentice, I believe." The Louisville editor responded in the affirmative, the *Subterranean* scribe continued, "You have skinned me like an eel, Prentice; but you did it so well that I do not particularly object to it. You're a man of genius and a good fellow, and I want to say that I admire and like you."

The Manhattan agrarian offered his hand, and the biographer of Clay cordially shook it, with the remark, "I think we'll have to toss up Walsh, to determine which of us is the eel."—*Harper's Magazine* for January.

The Skool Boy.

The skool boy is the victim of circumstances. If he lives in the country he has got to get up early enuff to punch the chickens from the roost, then start the fire in the kitchen stove and put on the tea-kettle, and then go for the cows.

After the cows have been milked, he hurrys down his hash and bukwhet cakes, and thrashes beans two hours with the old man out in the korn krib.

Now he walks three miles in a sno path to the distrikt skool house, and gits thare just in time to help split up some wood for the day's fire.

Skool opens and he takes' his seat on the flat side of a slab bench, and bends dubble over a Webster's spelling book, without onny cover.

For varyity ho stands up in a ro, and spells or scratches a greasy slate with the figures in a long sum or addishun.

Noon cums at last, and he cats up in one corner hiz two slices of rhi bread and hiz piece of pi krust, and drowns the dri dinner with a pint ov lukewarm water out ov the pine pail behind the stove.

The only fun he haz iz to slide down hill on a board, back ov the skoolhouse, and get licked when he goes home if he happens to wear the sole ov hiz boots enny, or tare the base ov hiz britches.

Night cums, and he haz had a day's skooling, and plods back home to sav wood enuff to last next day before he eats hiz puddin-and-milk supper, and slinks off up in the woodhous chamber, to bed, without even the ray ov a tallo kandle.

This waz skool-boy life in the country forty years ago. In the boys now daz had to skool it in this way, they would see the old man for damages, and enny kind ov a jury would bring in a verdict, too, in their favor.

But Daniel Webster dun it in this way, and bekum the most learned statesman we ever raised, and so did Josh Billings, but he didn't never amount to much. Josh Billings never could git the right hang ov a country skool-house; hiz spellin allwais waz band he will allwais hav and impeditment in it.—*Josh Billings.*

Attentive Brothers.

Not many Sabbaths ago, a stranger was standing at the door of a church in this city, talking to a member of the church while the congregation were gathering. A young gentleman came up with his sister and walked in. The stranger asked who that young gentleman was; the member told him; he then asked what young lady that was with him; he was told who she was. He then asked if this young man was in the habit of coming to church with his sister. The member told him that he never failed to do it morning and night when he was at home or when she wanted to attend church.

The stranger said,— "I would like to make his acquaintance, shake his hand, and tip my beaver to him, and congratulate his sister for having a true and noble brother."

He went on to tell what he had often heard his old father say about young men who consulted the interest, comfort and pleasure of their sister; that they invariably made good and affectionate husbands, and never objected to his daughter associating with such, but rather encouraged it, for he never knew one of that sort but what was a gentleman and made a good useful citizen, and done well in life.

There is more truth than poetry in the above. We know the young man alluded to, and know that the old man's prophecy holds true in his case, and will ninety-nine times in a hundred. The stranger said, if he were a young lady he would go for him very quick.

Too many young men neglect their mothers and sisters. They are seldom if ever seen with them unless it is at home. This is not as it should be. Nothing is more becoming in a young man than to be kind and attentive to them at all times, and not to go off and leave them to go and come the best they can, or stay at home. Some young men treat their sisters shamefully in this way. Young ladies, beware of all such. They would soon get tired of you and treat you as they did their mothers and sisters; nothing is more natural in such cases. It is human nature, and you know you stand a poor chance to change it, don't you?

It improves the looks and conduct of any young man to keep the company of his mother and sister; not only that, but it proves that he has some refinement about him, and will be a man.

A number of lady gymnasts are in regular practice at the rooms of the Olympic Club in Francisco. They do their contortions in slippers, striped stockings, loose pants, and other things, in which costume they are said to look sweetly pretty. They run, jump, swing, pull weights, and do lots of difficult things. The schoolmarmes are given to practise on the trapeze and horizontal bar, while it is noticed that the married women mostly devote their efforts to practise in swinging the heavy clubs.

The Latest Polar Expedition.

Dr. Augustus Patterson, the celebrated German geographer, has recently addressed a letter, on the subject of past explorations of the arctic regions, to the British Royal Geographical Society, which is of timely interest in view of the present fitting out of another English expedition to that unknown quarter of the globe. Dr. Peterman believes, from the results already arrived at, that with appropriate steam vessels, making use of the extensive experience gained, the central area will be penetrated as far as the North Pole or at any other points. He also states that the disputed question as to the proper route is clearly settled in favor of passage through Smith's Sound.

Through the individual labors of Dr. Peterman, continued since 1866, seven small expeditions have been sent out. The details of the explorations conducted have not been made public; but generally, from the interior of Greenland, in 30° W. longitude to 50° E., east of Spitzbergen, a width of about ninety degrees of longitude has been surveyed. Besides this, it is now known that the Norwegians, in frail fishing smacks, have circumnavigated Nova Zembla, and have proved that the Kara and Siberian seas are for five months in the year open. The most important information, however, communicated in Dr. Peterman's letter, lies in the extracts from reports by Captain Gray, of Peterhead. From observations made in 1868, this navigator concluded that no difficulty would be found in carrying a vessel to the Pole, by taking the ice at about the latitude of 75° (where generally exists a deep bight), sometimes running in a north-west direction upwards of 100 miles toward Shannou Island, thence following the continent of Greenland as long as it is found to sound in the desired direction, and afterward pushing northwards through the loose fields of ice which will be encountered. Captain Gray penetrated northward again during the past summer as far as 79° 45'. At that latitude, in August, the ice was broken up, whereas "down to 77," he states, "the floes were lying whole in the sea, clearly showing that the ice in 80° must have been broken up, by a swell from the north; beyond the pack to the north (which I could see over) there was a dark water sky, reaching north until lost in the distance, without a particle of ice to be seen in it."

If two thoroughly equipped steamers be despatched, one up the west coast of Greenland, by way of Smith Sound, and the other up the east coast of the same continent, there is not much question but that one or the other would ultimately reach this open water near the pole, the existence of which so many have accredited. It has been the misfortune of late arctic expeditions that all have been projected on too small a scale; and although they have performed excellent service as pioneers, they lacked the completeness in organization and equipments necessary for the endurance of so long and arduous a voyage.

The preparations for the British expeditions, we understand, are already under way, and the command has been given to Captain George S. Nares, late of the "Challenger." We may conclude, therefore, that the long-sought problem of reaching the pole is at length to be met by all the resources of engineering skill and scientific knowledge, in presence of which the solution cannot be far distant.

The Age of Suicide.

The London *Medical Record* says:—"The influence of age upon suicide is a study of more than speculative interest, on account of its practical bearings and of the ease and precision with which it can be demonstrated. By age is meant the critical periods of life. Those periods having many components besides the mere facts of years, it is apparent that we have to examine in a many-sided phenomenon, including together with it the advance in life, the workings of physiological, mental, and sociological causes. It has been lately examined by Dr. O'Dea, and it appears that the maximum of suicides of both sexes occurs between the ages of twenty-five and fifty-five. Previous to the twenty-fifth year there is a sudden increase from two suicides between the ages of five and ten, to one hundred and thirty-six between twenty and fifty-five. After fifty-five the tendency to suicide declines, but more gradually than it rose, except at sixty-five, when the number increases from eighty-one to eighty three, a rise so slight, however, as to be little worth considering. There are, therefore, three suicidal periods in life; those of organic and mental growth, organic and mental completion, and organic and mental decline. In the first the chart shows eighty; in the second nine hundred and forty-two; and in the third three hundred and eleven. Comparing the periods in round numbers, it may be said that they are as one for childhood and adolescence to twelve for adult life, and to four for the years of bodily and mental decay. The influence of sex and its attendant circumstances upon suicides at the different periods of life is shown upon the charts. With females, as among males, there is a sudden and abrupt rise until the twenty-fifth year is reached. This rise is continued until the thirty-fifth year, at which time the maximum of suicides occurs among women. The period from the twenty-fifth to the thirty-fifth year corresponds to that of the greatest pressure from domestic troubles and responsibilities, and also with the greatest activity of the maternal functions. The line then descends abruptly to the forty-fifth year, whence it rises to the fiftieth, the critical period of mature female life, and then goes down, until it reaches the level from which it started. There are, therefore, two culminating points, and while the line on the male chart is undulating and sustained, that on the female chart is vertical and abrupt. The lower of the male culminating

points is the higher of the female, and, contrawise, the lower of the female is the higher of the male. These charts do not show the relative frequency of suicides among the two sexes. The ratio of suicides to population in the United States is (for the period covered by the last decennial census) 25 to 100,000 among males, and 3 to 100,000 among females. The only periods at which suicides are nearly equal for both sexes is from fifteen to twenty years, during which the number of boy suicides was thirty-four, of girl suicides, thirty-two. After this the number of suicides among males is much greater than among females.

Giving Help to the Heathen.

A man about thirty years of age, wearing a battered plug hat and seedy clothes, looking as hungry as a man who had been wrecked on an iceberg, softly entered a Gratiot avenue saloon last week, and leaning over the bar whispered to the proprietor:

"My dear sir, I am canvassing for subscriptions for the benefit of the heathen."

"Is that so?" replied the saloon keeper, raising a glass.

"Yes, my friend, that is so," continued the man, taking out a very greasy passbook. "Yes, I am collecting money for the benefit of the poor heathen, who are living in a state of vice and ignorance. Some put down ten dollars—some five—some one, all give something. Here is the book, and you can subscribe such a sum as you think best."

"Is that a bet to dem gommon gommon?" inquired the saloonist, as he looked at the book.

"No, sir, you do not understand my object. I am collecting subscriptions for the benefit of the heathen, and you can write your name and give me such an amount as your conscience directs."

"Vere ish dem heathens?" inquired the beer seller, looking coldly at the stranger's battered hat.

"In Africa," replied the agent, "in distant Africa, where all is gloom and loneliness, because the heathen has no education."

"And vat country is dat Africa in?" inquired the saloonist.

"My dear man, Africa is a country—a great big country, far over the deep blue sea. Is it possible that you never heard of Africa?"

"I had lived in Toledo and Chicago but I didn't hear some one ever say a word about Africa."

"Well that is neither here nor there. I am authorized to collect subscriptions for the heathen, who is running about in a state of nakedness and sinfulness, and who must have bread for his mind and be brought to realize that he should live for something besides this life."

"Yah, dat is so," replied the saloonist in reflective tone.

"You contribute whatever sum you may think best, and I will forward it to Boston by first mail, where it is turned into bibles, and the bibles shipped to Africa. Most people think it a privilege to be allowed to contribute to the fund. Will you write your name down?"

"I think I will," replied the man, and he hunted up his pencil, and after much labor wrote his name on one of the pages and handed the book back with the remark:

"I dunno if you can't read it."

"That is all right; but you have neglected to mark down the amount of your contribution. Let's see—will you say a dollar?"

"Vat?"

"Will you give the sum of one dollar for the heathen?"

"Ha! Vat you speak about?"

"Will you give me a dollar to forward to the poor, benighted heathen?"

"Money—gif you money?"

"Yes—for the heathen!"

"Gif you von dollar?"

"Yes, a dollar for the benighted race who are dwelling in darkness."

The saloon keeper looked at him for a half minute, and then reaching for a club said:

"You'd better go out by dat door! I sign dat pook to get dat heathen some close by de poormaster, and dat is plenty! If you staid here some little while more I will hit you mit dis glub on de head!"

"My dear—"

"Go us mit dat door! right away! gwick!" yelled the saloon keeper running from behind the bar, and the canvasser had to go.—*Detroit Free Press.*

"There was an old family feud between them," was what a witness in a Chicago murder case said to the jury. The Judge asked her if she didn't mean to say "feud" and she wanted to know who was telling the story.

A ball in Santa Fe, Texas, was attended by the members of the best society in the place, but an incident showed that border usages are not confined to border ruffians. George Stone, the son of the leading lawyer, and John Collier, the son of the leading physician, were among the dancers; and Miss Townley, regarded as the handsomest young lady in Santa Fe, was there too. She is a coquette, and that night she accomplished the common feminine exploit of making each of the two admirers believe that he was most agreeable. At last their attentions clashed, and, without a word of controversy, Collier drew his revolver and fired at Stone, the bullet making a terrible wound in the shoulder. The wounded man at once shot his assailant dead. As both lay on the floor unconscious, Miss Townley dropped the coquetry that had made the deadly trouble, and revealed her preference for Collier by throwing herself wildly upon his dead body. Stone will recover.

An Old Fool and a Smart Waiter Girl.

(New York correspondence of the Boston Journal.)

Last summer a wealthy manufacturer of New England visited the White Mountains. He became infatuated with one of the waiter girls. He was seventy and the maiden was seventeen. He agreed to give her an education and adopt her, though he had several daughters of his own. She joyfully accepted the proposition, flung her white apron behind the door, and started on her new life. Of course the connection could not be very satisfactory to the family. The girl had a grain of shrewdness about her, and insisted that a formal paper of adoption should be drawn up. This was done, and the girl was sent to a well-known educational institution to receive a little polish. A correspondence was kept up between the parties. But to outsiders the matter was not satisfactory, and the principal refused to receive the young lady into the school after the vacation was over. Soon after the gentleman became crazy, and was removed to a lunatic asylum; removed, as the girl said, to get him beyond her reach. The remittances failed, and of course there was trouble in the new school into which the girl had entered. On the passing away of insanity, the infatuation of the old man seemed to go with it. He tried to break up the correspondence, without success, and the family exerted all their influence to recover the fatal bond of adoption; but the girl held on to it. She had, besides, a bushel of letters breathing, the most ardent affection. A pecuniary negotiation was set on foot, which at first the maiden repudiated. She professed to be devotedly attached to the old man and did not want money. But it was discovered that the document, as a legal claim, was not worth the paper it was written on. Then the young lady came to terms, and the sum of \$3,500 healed her broken heart and wrung from her an obligation that she would trouble the old man no more.

England and France.

Prominent engineers have satisfied themselves that the scheme of connecting France with Great Britain by means of a railroad line carried through a tunnel under the sea is quite practicable. They have made an estimate of the cost of the proposed tunnel, which they think can be completed at the expenditure of four million pounds. The lowest depth of the channel has been ascertained to be one hundred and forty feet, while the width of sea intervening between England and France is twenty miles. It is said that the railroad companies most interested in the project have resolved to begin the tunnel on each side of the channel, and to perforate it to the extent of one kilometer—something less than a mile—from each shore, believing that when the feasibility of boring for that distance is proved by experiment, the public will be satisfied that the entire work can be successfully accomplished, and that there will be no difficulty in raising the capital which will be required to carry out the design. Supposing the work completed, and the average Briton supplied with the facilities of reaching France in an hour, and at a trifling expense, it is evident that the rush of English people to France, and of Frenchmen to England would be immense. It is probable that the impetus to familiar intercourse between the two nations which would follow the establishment of such a railway line would have most important social and political effects.

Senator-elect Sharon, of Nevada is reported to have an income of \$5,000,000 gold; and many of his colleagues would like to be sharin'.

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Quacks Confounded.

Rheumatism and Gout have heretofore been considered the ordinary maladies of the elderly, and the cure has been pronounced, of what benefit to the sufferer is all that is pretended. Science, however, has shown that the long and tedious course of study—if they are obliged to attend when called on by their resources are of no avail, and that the cure is to be found in the prevention of the disease. The great trouble is that the patient is not cured, and the disease is perpetuated within certain boundaries and limitations, compelling the sufferer to tread in certain well-worn paths, or suffer in disgrace and excruciating pain from the highly respectable order of nuptials known as the *Medical Marriage*. How often genius has been curbed in the rights of investigation, for no reason whatever, but that they are innovations upon a stereotyped and time honored prescription. It was not so, however, with the proprietor of the

Diamond Rheumatic Cure.

for his high standing in the profession, and the learning and science of an able mind, quickly compelled the cure of rheumatism, and the cure has been pronounced, of what benefit to the sufferer is all that is pretended. Science, however, has shown that the long and tedious course of study—if they are obliged to attend when called on by their resources are of no avail, and that the cure is to be found in the prevention of the disease. The great trouble is that the patient is not cured, and the disease is perpetuated within certain boundaries and limitations, compelling the sufferer to tread in certain well-worn paths, or suffer in disgrace and excruciating pain from the highly respectable order of nuptials known as the *Medical Marriage*. How often genius has been curbed in the rights of investigation, for no reason whatever, but that they are innovations upon a stereotyped and time honored prescription. It was not so, however, with the proprietor of the

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