

**IN THRIFTY BELGIUM**

**LAND WHERE THERE ARE PRACTICALLY NO PAUPERS.**

**How the Government Has Aided Prosperity—Always a Little Something Put Away for Days of Old Age.**

Across a narrow sea from England is a little country which, though densely populated, has practically no paupers, nor do the people emigrate. This is thrifty Belgium, where there is thrift of the individual, thrift of the family, co-operative thrift, national thrift, and prosperity in the face of the keenest competition of its powerful neighbors, England, France and Germany.

The government, instead of paying old age pensions and dispensing charity, has machinery for the encouragement of thrift and thereby for the prevention of dependence. It pays the individual interest on his savings, it insures his life and it will give him an annuity if he saves to pay for it.

In the government savings bank deposits may be made in every post office of the kingdom and in all the branches of the National bank. The minimum deposit is one franc. There is no maximum. The government provides in a special way for those who cannot put aside so large a sum as a franc at a time. It authorizes smaller deposits by postage stamps in order to encourage school children, farm laborers and the like; and rural postmen carry with them the necessary forms for this purpose, and urge the public to make use of the savings bank in this way.

Life annuities may be contracted for at all branches of the savings bank, at all branches of the national bank, at all post offices, and at the offices of all tax receivers. The minimum payment that may be made is one franc, and the smallest annuity paid by the fund is one franc, while the largest is 1,200 francs. The annuities become payable at the end of each completed year from the age of fifty to sixty-five.

In addition to the annuity fund there is a government insurance fund, the management of which is under government guarantee. Life or endowment policies may be contracted for, the latter payable at the end of 10, 15, 20 or 25 years, or for a period ending at the ages of fifty-five, sixty or sixty-five.

This policy has instilled ideas of thrift in the minds of the school children, it has driven thrift into the household where the income of the husband, or of wife and husband combined, is rarely spent, and in most cases a liberal margin is left for the future. The people live within their incomes. "Our income," they say, "is so much a year; we must live within it and put away something for our old days."

Among English speaking people, this is the habit: "We must have this and that and go here and there, and so we must bring our income up to that mark at all hazards."

But the Belgian household enjoys contentment and awaits with patience a larger income before buying this and that and before going here and there; and they do not try to keep the pace set by those whose means are greater. The observer sees on every hand men and women still with the freshness of youth, who have retired from active, bread winning work and are enjoying life on the capital saved by reasonable economy. They have lived wisely—neither slaves nor prodigals—and their declining years are provided for.

**Use of Olives and Olive Oil.**

The use of olives and olive oil is becoming so country wide that any new uses of these articles are received in all quarters with an inconceivable degree of acclaim. The housewife has learned to know its healthful qualities far better than many of the people that are natives in the countries where the olives are grown. In cases where the olive oil is used for frying of meats or vegetables if the piquant tang is desired to be modified it is best to let the oil come to a boiling point before putting in the materials which you wish to fry.

This will keep the oil from penetrating the meats, etc., and thus there will be less of the taste which it takes time to acquire, but which when acquired will be a hard matter to "discarnate" or discarnate as the Latins are wont to say.

**One Tie That Binds.**

"In some cases the tie that really binds is the same pet superstition," a woman said. "Since last Thursday my maid and I have had a much keener appreciation of each other's virtues. Sadie went shopping. When she had been gone half an hour she telephoned that she had left behind the carefully compiled list of things she wanted to buy and was afraid to cross her good luck by coming back for it. Would it be too much trouble to look it up in her room and send it by the janitor's boy to the store where she was waiting?"

"My heart throbbed with sympathy. Sadie had always seemed rather a taciturn person, but that message showed that she was very human after all. She felt just as I did about going back for a forgotten article; therefore no service I could perform for a fellow sufferer could be too much trouble. The janitor's boy was out, so I spent time and money to take the list to the store myself. But I do not regret it, for are not Sadie and I friends for life?"

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**SELECTED QUEER PETS**

**GRIZZLY BEAR CUBS TRAINED BY TRAPPER.**

**Amusing and Playful After Their Capturer Had Conquered the Call of the Wild—As Easy to Train As Any Dog.**

One day while wandering in the pine woods on the slope of Mount Meeker I came upon two young grizzly bears. Though they dodged about as lively as chickens, I at last cornered them in a penlike pocket of fallen trees.

Getting them into a sack was one of the liveliest experiences I ever had. Though small and almost starved, these little orphans proceeded to "chew me up" after the manner of big grizzlies, as is told of them in books. After an exciting chase and tussle I would catch one and thrust him into the sack. In resisting he would insert his claws into my clothes, or thrust them through the side of the sack; then, while I was trying to tear him loose, or to thrust him forcibly in, he would lay hold of a finger, or take a bite in my leg. Whenever he bit I at once dropped him, and then all began over again.

Their mother had been killed a few days before I found them; so, of course, they were famished and in need of a home; but so bitterly did they resist my efforts that I barely succeeded in taking them. Though hardly as large as a collie when he is at his prettiest, they were nimble athletes.

At last I started home, the sack over my shoulder, with these lively Ursus horribilis in the bottom of it. Their final demonstration was not needed to convince me of the extraordinary power of their jaws. Nevertheless, while going down a steep slope one managed to bite into my back through sack and clothes, so effectively that I responded with a yell. Then I fastened the sack at the end of a long pole, which I carried across my shoulder, and I was able to travel the remainder of the distance to my cabin without another attack in the rear.

Of course the youngsters did not need to be taught to eat. I simply pushed their noses down into a basin of milk, and the little red tongues at once began to ply; then raw eggs and bread were dropped into the basin. There was no hesitation between courses; they simply gobbled the food as long as I kept it before them.

Jenny and Johnny were pets before sundown. Though both were alert, Johnny was the wiser and more cheerful of the two. He took training as readily as a collie or shepherd dog, and I have never seen any dog more playful. All bears are keen of wit, but he was the brightest one of the wild folk that I have ever known. He grew rapidly, and ate me almost out of supplies. We were intimate friends in less than a month, and I spent much time playing and talking with him. One of the first things I taught him was, when hungry, to stand erect with arms extended almost horizontally, with palms forward. I also taught him to greet me in this manner.—From the Spell of the Rockies, by Enos A. Mills.

**Splitting Paper.**

Here are two good ways to split a piece of paper: First, lay the paper on a piece of glass, soak it thoroughly with water and then press it smoothly over the glass. By using care, the upper half of the sheet can then be peeled off, leaving the under half on the glass. When dry it will come off easily. Be sure that the glass is perfectly clean.

Second, paste a piece of cloth or strong paper on each side of the paper to be split. When it is thoroughly dry, suddenly and violently pull the two pieces of cloth apart. Then soften the paste with water and take the two halves of the sheet from the cloths.

**Overwork a Waste of Time.**

Overstrained faculties can never bring out the best results. Overwork is always a waste of time, and though it may not seem to be so at first, eventually the sad truth is always manifested. To cut off needed recreation, to curtail the hours of sleep, to postpone a holiday indefinitely, to refuse to take a rest and ease and change, under the impression that thus time is saved, is always a short-sighted policy and often a fatal mistake. The time arrives when the poor, abused faculties take their revenge and refuse to serve altogether, or do so feeble a fashion as to show their deterioration.

**Cooking the 'Possum.**

Mayor Bryan Callaghan of San Antonio, Tex., is very fond of 'possum and is particular about the way it is prepared for the table. He gives the following directions:

"Never plunge a 'possum into boiling water. That hardens the flesh and makes it tough. First bleed the 'possum, and after it is drawn immerse it in a pot of cold water and bring the water to a boil. After being parboiled for a reasonable time, take it out, put some laurel leaves, a little oil and some chilli peppers inside it and pack in ice and put aside for a day or two.

"When ready to be cooked, put it into a bako pan and surround with sweet potatoes, brown to a turn and you have a dish that is about as delicious as any that can be prepared."

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**CHANGES IN FLOWERS**

**MODERN TASTE AS COMPARED WITH OTHER YEARS.**

**Gardens of Today Would Be Things of Wonder to Our Ancestors—All Countries Called on for Beauty of Color.**

It is a truly astonishing thing to reflect that Shakespeare, for all his love of flowers, would have been able to name scarcely a single bloom in a twentieth century garden, says the Strand. He would hardly have been able to distinguish the queen of flowers itself, so greatly has the rose changed in the last three centuries.

As for the begonias, the chrysanthemums, the dahlias, the geraniums, the fuschias and carnations; these were unknown even to our great-grandfathers. Many of our most beautiful flowers are purely modern productions.

Three centuries ago there were no flower gardens in England. What were then thought of as gardens were herbaria, places where rosemary, mint, rue, thyme and sage grew, and perhaps a few primitive blooms, such as violets and primroses, were suffered to exist, much as poppies and cornflowers do today.

Many well known plants have been developed from specimens discovered in various parts of the world, and there is no doubt that a number of charming novelties are still lurking undiscovered in remote spots. The chances of valuable finds are, however, becoming unfortunately less every year. A small army of collectors is always at work in every corner of the world searching for new treasures to enrich our floral store.

From South America came many years ago the recently unfashionable fuschia; from the hills of northern India and Tibet have been brought many useful varieties; from China we have had among other things many new primulas; Japan has yielded wonderful irises; Africa many varied plants, usually of most brilliant and gorgeous coloring; while numerous charming members of the narcissus family have been discovered in the Pyrenees.

But this cannot continue indefinitely, and even in the realm of orchids, for which perhaps the most systematic search of all is made, there is not much left to be explored. For our future novelties we shall have to rely then chiefly on the skill of our hybridists, who are constantly engaged in mating different species of the same family of plants, and our cross fertilizers, who are doing similar work with different varieties of the same species. The flowers of today are the result of cross-breeding, stimulated by electricity, drugs and hot water baths.

**Worse and Worse.**

"Did you ever notice," said Walter Grimes, "how a fellow, when he once gets 'balled up' and says the wrong thing, has a tendency to get in deeper and deeper?"

"A friend was first telling me of his experience in attending a reception in Indianapolis some time ago. During the progress of the function an elaborately gowned woman sang for the guests. Her voice wasn't anything to brag on, and my friend, who is very plainly spoken, turned to a meek-looking little man at his right and asked in a low voice: "Who was that old hen who has just squawked for us?"

"That," replied the man addressed, "is my wife."

"My friend gasped. 'Oh, b-b-beg your pardon,' he stuttered. 'She's really a rather nice-looking woman, and I know she'd sing better if she made a better selection of his music. Who do you suppose ever wrote a rotten song like that?"

"I am the author of that song," replied the meek looking little man.—Louisville Times.

**Prehistoric Art.**

On the side of a steep down in the old town of Cerne Abbas, Dorset, England, a huge figure of a man appears cut deeply in the hard turf. It is a creation of a period hidden in the mists of antiquity. The body resembles that of the simian, the arms are unusually long and outstretched, as are the legs. The right hand grasps the handle of an enormous club, and the general attitude suggests pursuit of game.

The head seems sunk between the shoulders, and the face, which is roughly cut, exhibits an uncanny leer. Students of types attribute "the giant," as the Dorset figure is called, to the bronze age. The figure has been cared for throughout the centuries of its existence. Originally it is supposed to have been regarded as bringing good luck to the people during the Celtic and early English epochs. It receives attention now on account of its quaintness and age.

The Dorset giant is incised in the turf after the manner of the Long Man of Wilmington and the White Horse of Berkshire and elsewhere. The turf is so hard that the outlines of the figure have been preserved intact for many centuries.

**A Nice Point.**

"Every student of history knows that our Christmas customs are a development of the Roman Saturnalia." "O, surely not all!" "I think so." "No, no! There's no reason to suppose, for instance, that the Romans were all the time being hunched to do their Saturnalian shopping early." —Puck.

Give us your job work.

**THE INFLUENCE OF BEAUTY UPON THE MORAL AND MENTAL NATURES.**

**S. H. Edmunds—Superintendent City Schools.**

I can think of no better way to introduce this subject—The Influence of Beauty upon the Mental and Moral Natures—than by a quotation from the Republic of Plato: "Surely the art of the painter and every other creative and constructive art are full of the graces and harmonies. In all of them there is grace or the absence of grace. Ugliness and discord and inharmonious motion are nearly allied to ill-words and ill-nature, as grace and harmony are the twin sisters of goodness and virtue and bear their likeness. We would not have our children grow up amidst images of moral deformity, as in some noxious pasture, and there browse and feed upon many a baneful herb day by day, little by little, until they silently gather a festering mass of corruption in their own soul. Let our artists rather be those who are gifted to discern the true nature of the beautiful and graceful; then will our youth dwell in a land of health, amid fair sights and sounds, and receive the good in everything; and beauty, the effluence of fair works, shall flow into the eye and ear, like a health giving breeze from a purer region, and insensibly draw the soul from earliest years into likeness and sympathy with the beauty of reason. And when a beautiful soul harmonizes with a beautiful form, and the two are cast in one mould, that will be the fairest of sights to him who has an eye to see it. And the fairest is also the loveliest." These are abstract truths—deep and far-reaching; but the soul in its essence is abstract and complex and we deal with the deepest truths when we study the soul in the abstract. Beauty of soul, however, is the resultant of myriads of forces and these forces fortunately are concrete, and in studying them we need not deal with the abstract and thus need not be quite so dry and tedious.

A former State Superintendent of Education was fond of giving in substance the following illustration:

In one of the up-country schools a sewing department was established. It fell to the lot of one of the girls to make a beautiful white apron—an apron so resplendent in its whiteness as to make the school surroundings appear dull and dingy. Life in such an atmosphere of contrast was intolerable. The demand was made for paint and whitewash and the old schoolhouse fairly glistened in its snowy whiteness. The whiteness became almost blinding and to soften its glare the schoolyard was planted in green shrubs and varicolored flowers. It did not stop here. The father of the girl with the apron noticing the marvelous change in the school house and its surroundings, and fairly oppressed with the whiteness of that apron, continued to remodel, repair and rewrite until his premises were gleaming likenesses of their former selves. The whiteness of one little apron wrought a transformation in that whole community. A little thing to produce so great a change, but after all the little things in our lives determine their conduct and career. A single beautiful flower demands the presence of other beautiful flowers; a single noble impulse produces other noble impulses, whose resultants are generous deeds and beautiful characters.

The essence of beauty is harmony, and the result of harmony is rest—not that rest that is but a euphemism for idle inactivity, but that rest that results from the harmonious exercise of all the faculties. To attain unto rest in activity is to be in love with one's work and to this end one's surroundings should be beautiful. We have said that the mind and the soul are complex, that is they partake of the nature of those things upon which they feed. How important then that the mind and the soul of the child should feed daily upon the beautiful and harmonious. The Greeks, noted for their beauty and their grace, realized so keenly the potency of the influence of the beautiful that the Grecian matrons looked only upon pictures and statues whose every lineament was the quintessence of beautiful and graceful harmony.

If the mind of the child is to be made beautiful let it look at every turn upon beautiful things; if his moral nature is to be in perfect harmony with graceful sweetness let it learn to despise hideous immorality by contrasting it with the beauties that daily influence its life. Can you estimate the power of life's silent influences? Can you tell how a single beautiful flower gazed upon each day by a child may affect that child's after life? Tompison, with the poet's true appreciation, realized the potency of all that is wrapped up in a flower, when after deep contemplation he sang:

"Flower in the crannied wall. I pluck thee out of the crannies

Hold you here, root and all in my hand

Little flower—but if I could understand

What you are, root and all, and all in all

I should know what God and man is."

And Ruskin, that poet who chose to write in prose, realized it, when in one of his finest passages he exclaims:

"To dress it and to keep it! That then was to be our work. Alas! what work have we set ourselves upon instead! How have we ravaged the garden instead of kept it—feeding our war horses with its flowers, and splintering its trees into spear-shafts! 'And at the East a flaming sword.' Is its flame quenched? and are those gates that keep the way indeed passable no more? or is it not rather that we desire no more to enter? For what can we conceive of that first Eden that we might not yet win back, if we chose. 'It was a place full of flowers,' we say. Well: the flowers are always striving to grow wherever we suffer them; and the fairer, the closer. There may, indeed have been a Fall of Flowers as a Fall of Man; but assuredly creatures such as we are can now fancy nothing lovelier than roses and lilies which would grow for us side by side, leaf overlapping leaf, till the earth were red and white with them, if we cared to have it so. 'And Paradise was full of pleasant shades and fruitful avenues.' Well: what hinders us from covering as much of the world as we like with pleasant shade, and pure blossom, and goodly fruit. Who forbids its valleys to be covered over with corn till they laugh and sing? Who prevents its dark forests, ghastly and uninhabitable, from being changed into infinite orchards, wreathing the hills with frail-floretted snow, far away to the half lighted horizon of April, and flushing the face of all the autumnal earth with glow of clustered food? 'But Paradise was a place of peace.' The world would yet be a place of peace if we were all peace-makers. But so long as we choose to contend rather with our fellows than with our faults and make of our meadows battle-fields instead of pastures so long will the Flaming Sword turn every way and the Gates of Eden remain barred close enough, till we have sheathed the sharper flame of our own passions and broken down the closer gates of our own hearts."

Let us not cheat ourselves by declining to accept the lessons of beautiful harmony that the flowers silently teach, but let us see to it that our children, not understanding or realizing what it means, may nevertheless come daily within the field of these holy influences. Their minds will work better because they are affected by the eternal harmonies; their souls will be better, because they will learn to despise deformity in all of its phases.

"Scatter diligently in susceptible minds

The germs of the good and beautiful

They will develop there to trees, buds, bloom,

And bear the golden fruits of Paradise."

The salutary effect of the beautiful is found not only in flowers; but in form. The harmony of form with symmetrical lines is a potent silent force in its effectiveness. The perfect rectangle suggests rectitude; the square suggests uprightness; the triangle, stability; and the circle, perfection. These Geometric figures prosaic enough in their skeleton outlines, have all of the poetry of influence when they coalesce to form a perfectly artistic creation. Why is it that landscape gardening gives to the sense that feeling of rest? Why is it that architecture is poetic thought crystallized? If not because in them we have these lines perfectly planned? Need I suggest that the susceptible mind and the impressionable soul that look daily upon perfected form will learn not only to paint things as they see them, but to see them as they are. And this gift of vision that sees with exactitude will become introspection and the soul asking itself the question—how do you measure up to the demands of the rectangle or rectitude, of the square or uprightness, of the triangle or stability, of the circle or perfection—may yet obey the command of puzzled ages: Know thyself.

Far-fetched, you say: I reply, it is unsafe to dismiss as far-fetched any outward influence that tends in any way to beautify the mind and soul.

There is another beauty whose influence is so effective as to make its omission unwise—the beauty of sound—that concord of sweet sounds which we call music. To quote for the second time from the Republic of Plato:

"Therefore I say that musical training is a more potent influence than any other, because rhythm and harmony find their way into the inward places of the soul on which they mightily fasten, imparting grace, and making the soul of him who is rightly educated graceful, and also because he who has received this true education of the inner being will most shrewdly perceive omissions or faults in art or

nature, and with a true taste, while he praises and rejoices over and receives into his soul the good, and becomes noble and good, he will justly blame and hate the bad, now in the days of his youth, even before he is able to know the reason why; and when reason comes he will recognize and salute the friends with whom his education has made him long familiar."

You will recall that charming moonlight scene from Shakspeare's M. O. V. where the sentimental Lorenzo says to his lady love:

"How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!

Here will we sit and let the sound of music

Creep into our ears: Soft stillness and the night

Become the touches of sweet harmony.

Sit, Jessica, Look how the floor of Heaven

Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold.

There's not the smallest orb which thou beholdst

But in his motion like an angel sings, Still quiring to the young eyed cherubim;

Such harmony is in immortal souls; But whilst this muddy vesture of decay,

Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it."

Can it be that we are so blinded by ambition, greed, and rank materialism, the muddy vesture of decay—that we cannot hear the harmonies that are forever sounding in our immortal souls? The effect of music is so universally recognized that even a reference to it seems trite; but do we realize after all in our heart of hearts how powerful and how salutary are its influences? If amidst its martial tones worn-out soldiers rush with mad eagerness to the belching cannon's mouth; if to its intoxicating strains tired feet move on with unabating zeal in the mystic mazes of the dance; if the tottering feet of old age will irresistibly beat with perfect rhythm its tuneful cadences; if the wearied, drooping spirit strains its ear to hear and hearing receives surcease from sorrow—there must needs be after all within the soul such music as is made by the rhythmic motion of the spheres. Cultivation and care may result in obtaining from the soul musical echoes whose timbre indicates that the vibrations of that soul respond only to perfect harmony. If a child may be taught to see things as they are, why is it not possible for him to hear things as they are? If the mind may see with exactitude why may it not hear with precision? If the soul may perceive the truth, why may it not ring true to those notes that are true?

The beauty of flowers, of form and of music—and their silent influences—such has been my theme and it seems to me that it is within our province to foster with tender care all things that may make our schools more beautiful in color, form, and music and I trust that we shall not lose sight of the deep and abiding truth that these beauties exert so potent an influence that it will make us work with renewed zeal and inspiration; for we are dealing not with the material alone, but with the spiritual; not only with the transitory, but with the eternal.

If fault be found with the apparent pantheism of these sentiments, I wish to deny all pantheistic belief; for I love to think of God's working with, in, and through all second causes to make the soul a more beautiful sanctuary—filled with thoughts of Him in whom we may see the quintessence of harmony—the perfection of beauty—the One altogether lovely.

Professors J. B. Latimer, of Oswego and Parks of Wedgfield, were visitors to the city Saturday.

**Anticosti.**

Anticosti, an island in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, is about 140 miles long, by 35 miles wide. Its soil is not considered to be productive, and the few settlers there subsist upon the fisheries. In 1886 M. Meunier, the French chocolate manufacturer, bought the island and is making a game preserve of it. He is especially interested in breeding black and other valuable sorts of foxes.

**Electric Power for Housework.**

The total cost of power for sewing, washing and wringing, mangle ironing, chopping meat, grinding coffee, and polishing silver would be a sum that almost any housekeeper would be willing to pay for a few hours more to call her own, or for being able to take a more independent stand on the servant question. Electricity has advanced far enough now to give her the opportunity she has longed for.—Electrical Review

**Just a Mere Trifle.**

A. B. Fowler of Watertown, N. Y., was petting a prize white Leghorn hen at the Ailenton (Pa.) poultry show, when she began pecking at his shirt front. In a few minutes she had loosened and swallowed his valuable diamond. He declined to allow the owner to kill her, saying he had lots of diamonds at home.

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