

SOMEWHAT STRANGE.

ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS OF EVERYDAY LIFE.

Queer Facts and Thrilling Adventures Which Show that Truth is Stranger Than Fiction.

Two subjects for Miss Mary Wilkins live at Peterboro, N. H., says the Providence Journal, Elvira and Elmira Fife, who probably are the oldest twins living. Next August they will be 83. At the age of 14 they entered the employ of a local manufacturing company, and for sixty years they remained on its pay roll, the maximum wages earned being 99 cents per day, and the minimum 71 cents for three days' labor. They have never ridden on a railway train, although the Boston and Maine road runs its cars within ten rods of their door. They have never been separated more than seven hours at any one time in their lives, and cannot endure the thought that death will summon them singly. Although living in the same house and eating from the same table, they have always lived separately; that is, each has cooked her own meal. If one had a boiled dinner the other had a boiled dinner, and it was not cooked in the same pot either. If one had a turkey the other would have a little larger one, and so in everything they vie with each other to see who would live the best.

Mrs. CLAUDIA HERRERA died in San Francisco recently at the remarkable age of 120 years. She was a Mexican, and for some time had made her home with her friend, Mrs. Pedro R. I. Richeri. Mrs. Herrera was born in 1774 at Rial de Jesus Maria, Mexico. When Mrs. Herrera came to San Francisco at the time of the gold excitement she was even then a woman of 75 years old. She had no means, and her husband being dead, she had her own way to make in the world. But with the spirit of a young girl she set about the task; she never wavered, but all through the long years that followed she earned her living by doing day's work about the city, especially among the Spanish, for she could speak English but poorly. She continued to work to within twenty days of her death—washing, ironing and carrying buckets of water with ease. Mrs. Herrera talked very little of her early life to her friends, but she occasionally spoke of incidents that happened 100 years ago. She knew Santa Ana when he was a boy and afterwards when he was President of Mexico.

PHYSIOGNOMISTS will do well to study an article in Blackwood's Magazine. The compressed lip so loved and so often misinterpreted by novelists, says the writer, is a sign of weakness rather than of strength. It tells of perpetual conflicts in which the reserves are called into the fray. The strong will is not agitated into strenuous action by the small worries of the hour, and the great occasions which call for its whole forces are too few to produce a permanent impress of this kind upon the features. The commanding officer, assured of his men's obedience, does not habitually keep his lip muscles in a state of tension. Look at the sea captain, the most absolute monarch on earth. He carries authority and power in his face, but it resides in his eye and the confident assurance of his easily set mouth. Whoever saw a man commanding a man-of-war or driving a locomotive with the contentious lip of a school usher.

THE absent-minded man is at it again. He had been reading the egg story and decided to try the trick. The first thing to do was to boil the egg. How many minutes? he asked himself, and going to the stove with an egg in one hand and his watch in the other, he dropped the latter in the hot water. Then placing the egg on the table, he sat down to read till the time was up. At the end of five or six minutes he was surprised to find the egg lying there before him, but supposing that he had himself taken it from the kettle and cooled it, he proceeded to crack and peel it. The consequence may be imagined. Finally he missed his watch. The house was searched high and low, and it was not till the following morning that the cook found it in the kettle, where it had been boiling for hours.

"I HAVE a horse at home," said a North Dakota farmer, "that has developed a great fondness for eggs, and who loses no opportunity to gratify his appetite in this direction. During the winter he has a comfortable stall in the barn all to himself, and by his kind treatment of the hens, is often enabled to secure for himself a freshly laid egg. To begin with he makes a cosy-looking place in the hay with his nose, and when a hen comes near he lifts his head out of her way, stands very still and by his quiet behavior invites her to come into his manger and lay her eggs. If she accepts his invitation he is always sure to get the egg, and it is immensely funny to see the look of extreme satisfaction in his face when he has eaten the egg.

"INDIANS do not take scalps through cruelty," said Col. E. K. Grimshaw, a retired army officer, to a St. Louis reporter, "but just as civilized soldiers fight for and preserve the captured battle-flags of the enemy as trophies and proofs of prowess in war. During the years I spent on the frontier I was forced to witness many such sickening scenes. The scalp is taken by making a rough circle of slashes around the skull, and then tearing off the broad patch of skin and hair by main force. It is a dreadful operation, and one never to

be forgotten by those who have once seen it. The scalp is supposed to contain many magical powers, and is cured with the greatest care by him who takes it."

SOME extraordinary but well authenticated stories of the Bank of France are related. One day a sheep ate up a hundred-franc note belonging to a butcher. The butcher ran into the house of a friend, seized a gun and shot the sheep. He had no sooner done so than the owner of the gun rushed up. "That was an expensive shot of yours for me," he said. "What do you mean?" asked the butcher. "Well," said the other, "I had seventy francs in bills hidden in the barrel of that gun." The sheep's carcass was pretty thoroughly searched, and enough of the pieces of the notes recovered so that the bank redeemed them all.

A PORTLAND (Me.) woman boasts of a cat with a propensity for playing in the water, and tells how it bothers her when she is washing dishes, by trying to get into the pan. The other day, after repeatedly driving the animal from the sink, it climbed up and balanced itself on the two faucets, close together, and amused itself by patting with its paw the rapidly issuing stream. It frequently drinks directly from the faucet, plunging its nose into the current regardless of its force, and has often plunged into the bathtub when it was half full of water. So far from fearing the contact of water, as cats usually do, this unique Portland pussy fairly revels in it.

LONDON Tid-Bits publishes a wonderful story of the achievements of a boy at the old German town of Zeltz. This boy owns a dog which he taught to pronounce thirty-one words, twenty-four German and seven French. The words are spoken one at a time, and only at the dictation of the young teacher. The "talking dog of Zeltz" is the wonder of Europe, and nothing similar has ever been known, except the dog which was exhibited in Holland in 1718. This old-time canine wonder could pronounce all the letters of the alphabet, except "i," "m" and "n."

MISS SOPHIA BEHRENS, a young lady well connected in Minneapolis, has been adjudged insane and taken to the asylum at Independence. Her mania was that she was engaged to several young men of the city, whom she threatened with suits for breach of promise unless they came to time. Her letters became so frequent that it was decided to bring her before the Commissioners of Insanity. It is a peculiar case. She even went so far as to have her wedding trousseau made.

NEAR Yankton, N. D., is the most remarkable family on this continent, perhaps in the world. It consists of father, mother and twenty-four children, and the mother of the brood is not yet 30 years old. She is a Norwegian woman and her husband is a Hoosier. The children were born triplets and the oldest of the lot is under 12 years of age. All of them are boys but three, one set of triplets being girls.

PETER GRUBER, of Oil City, who calls himself the greatest snake catcher in the State of Pennsylvania, had twelve live rattlers in a paper bag and was carrying them home, when they burst from the bag. One of them got around his neck, but in trying to strike at the man bit its own body and died. Gruber saved eleven of the reptiles.

ONE of the quaint reminiscences of Robert Louis Stevenson's South Sea life is that of his Honolulu mouse. A small shelf hung over the couch where he used to lie when ill and trying to forget his pain in playing on the flageolet. On this shelf the little mouse would venture, and soon became so tame as to delight in the novelist's caresses.

LONDON has a feminine drum and file corps. It is made up of charming girls who meet at one another's houses and practice under the guidance of a drum major from a Guards Regiment. What with these fair drummers and Miss Ethel Stoke's women volunteers, there seems to be no lack of martial spirit in the English woman.

A GRAND HAVEN (Mich.) man says that in 1875 he marked the backs of three turtles, cut off their heads and set them free. He asserts that a few days ago he caught one of the same creatures which had a fully developed head and only showed the result of the decapitation in an abnormal ridge around the throat.

WHILE Arnold Landgraf was shooting at turtles in a pond near Rome, Jefferson County, Wis., one of his bullets glanced from the back of an intended victim and put out the eye of a little girl who was standing near. The shooting was regarded as an unavoidable accident, and Landgraf was not arrested.

The life of 5-year-old Mary Guseberry was saved by a dog. She had fallen into a pond, when a Newfoundland belonging to a neighbor jumped in and pulled her out. Now her mamma forgives the child for stealing tid-bits from the kitchen to feed Fido, whose friendship is at a premium in that family.

HENRY MARTIN, of Bonham, Tex., is said to own a horse that has an immoderate fondness for live chickens, catching them for himself and enjoying them as ordinary horses enjoy oats. He has destroyed the reputations of all the colored people in the neighborhood.

POLICEMAN Steel, of Manchester, N. H., weighs 150 pounds. During a

recent fire he carried down five flights of stairs a sick man who tipped the scales at 300. He was loudly cheered by the crowd.

WILLIAM A. HALL, of Worth, Ga., has a team of mules that are 27 years old. He has been driving them for twenty years, and they can be worked as hard as ever.

THERE are in the United States 30,554,370 women. Of those over twenty years of age, six per cent. are unmarried and fourteen per cent. are widows.

RIGHT-HANDEDNESS.

Odd Facts About a Peculiarity of the Human Race.

Professor J. Mark Baldwin, of Princeton University, has been performing a series of experiments upon one of his children with a view to finding the origin of right-handedness. There is no apparent scientific reason why a man should use one hand more than another, or why the muscles of one arm should be stronger than those of the other. A number of theories have been advanced to account for the phenomenon. One of the most plausible, according to the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, is that people become right-handed from the manner in which they are held and carried when small children. The mother carries the child in such a way as to leave its right hand free, and from this early experience the habit is acquired which runs through its whole life. It is also a curious fact that the observation of animals fails to show an uneven development of the muscles or limbs on one side of the body as compared with those on the other. Monkeys especially are known to swing freely by both arms equally well, although this is a point that Professor Garner might well have studied in the jungles of Africa.

The experiments made by Professor Baldwin, of Princeton, extended over a period of many months, beginning while the child was an infant. This, however, was only in regard to objects placed at some distance from the body of the child, and where it had to reach out for them. When objects were placed near the child it used both hands equally. More than 1,000 experiments of this kind were tried by Professor Baldwin, and when the objects reached for were near its body it used both hands about an equal number of times. In stretching out, however, it almost invariably used its right hand. From this he argued that the tendency is inherited. Left-handed children are, it is said, generally descended from left-handed mothers or fathers. Those that are right-handed learn to shake hands more easily than left-handed children, who have to stretch their arms across their body in an awkward fashion to perform the act. Professor Baldwin thinks that the right-handed function has some connection with the power of speech. They both belong in the same lobe of the brain, and before a child learns to speak it has been observed that it endeavors to express emotions with its hands. There are some people who are neither left nor right handed, but who can use both hands equally well, even in writing, the muscles on either arm being the same size.

Household Hints.

Grass stains may be removed from white goods and undergarments by rubbing with molasses or by soaking in sweet milk.

Equal parts of glycerine and litharge, mixed together until of the consistency of soft putty, make an excellent cement for mending crockery and most household articles.

Shedlan shawls should be washed very carefully. Dip in a lather of boiled soap, gently slipping through the hands. Gently plunge into clear water and pin on a sheet to dry.

Engravings and prints from illustrated papers and magazines may be effectively framed in ordinary blotting paper—in light gray, blue or pink, or in light colored Bristol board.

Tar spots may be removed from carpets by applying a generous quantity of spirits of turpentine, removing with a flannel cloth. To remove fly-specks from oil paintings, rub gently with a soft sponge wet in warm water.

Woolens should never be rubbed on the washboard, as this process destroys their soft pliability. They should be squeezed or pounded, after having been washed in strong suds, and rinsed in warm water. Mulsins should be washed in a lather of cold water, and should never be put into warm water, not even in rinsing. In washing black and white muslins, use a very small amount of sugar of lead. For green muslin, add to the rinse water a wineglass of vinegar, and for lilac and lavender a wineglass of ammonia.

Skipping-Rope Danger.

The announcement of the death of a little girl in New York from excessive exercise with the skipping rope calls the attention of parents to a real danger. This exercise in moderation is healthful to the child and encouraging to the shoemaker, but exceedingly dangerous when it comes to trials of endurance or when little girls exhaust themselves in an effort to achieve a record and make a great number of jumps. Deaths from this cause have occurred before, and in many cases where the result is not fatal the health of the child may be greatly impaired. It would be well, therefore, for parents at this season of the year to exercise some watchfulness in this regard.—[Baltimore Sun.]

HOME IN THE COUNTRY.

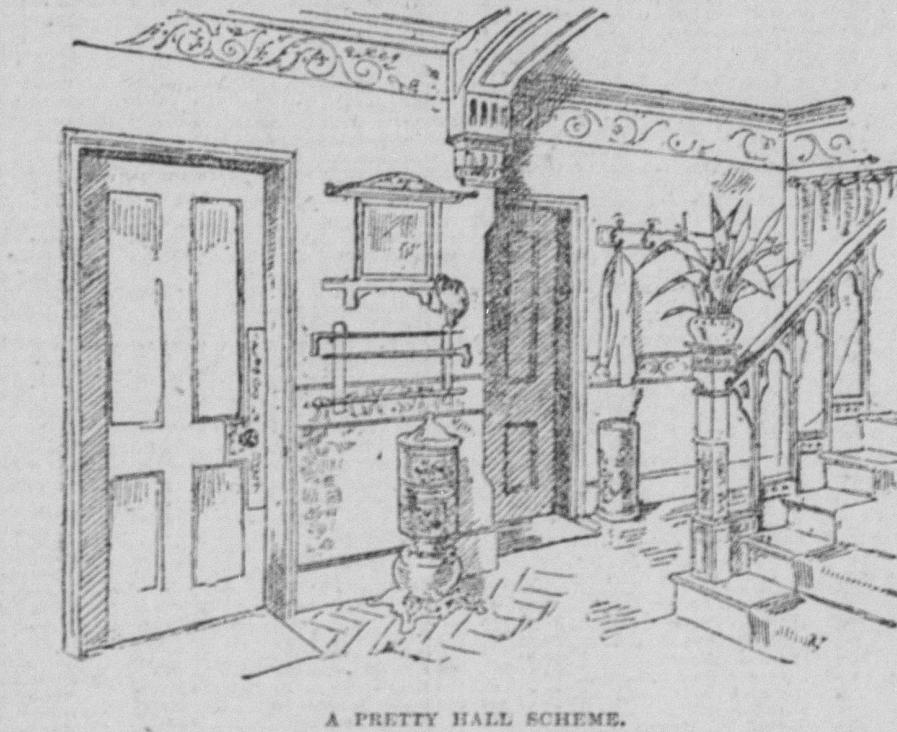
MADE BEAUTIFUL BY A DAINTY COLOR SCHEME AND A SEA VIEW.

Hints on Window Draperies and Furnishing a Narrow Hall.

"It seemed most discouraging to think of spreading the contents of a seven-room flat over a ten-room house, I must confess," said my friend.

She had lately moved to the country, and one day, shaking the dust of the city from my feet and resolutely closing my eyes to the unfinished manuscript and unedited copy that littered my desk, I had gone to her for a breath of country air and a day's rest.

The parlor was so dainty and so pretty that I could not help expressing my admiration. It was a mite of a room, too, not more than 11 by 13 feet, not counting a circular bay window opening into a huge circular porch with a view of the Sound that somehow suggested Florida. There were such cunning little inlets, making, at low tide, numbers of tiny islands, on some of which grew trees not unlike the palmetto. One would



A PRETTY HALL SCHEME.

have been quite contented had the room contained no furniture beyond the circular cushioned window seat.

The fireplace, a real one, was cunningly set in a corner of the room, probably because there was no other place to put it. It had a tiled hearth, in blue and cream, with a border of dull old red. There was a pair of wrought iron firedogs, and the day being a cool one, the most delightful wood fire burned on them.

The pretty little mantel was of imitation mahogany, like the rest of the woodwork, and it was entirely guiltless of millinery of any kind, but it was surely not by chance that its only ornaments were some exquisite bits of old blue debt, a plaster cast of Niobe's son with the flying veil, a bust of Donatello's *Femme Inconnue* and a graceful candelabra of wrought iron.

The walls were hung with a paper showing a broad design in dove color on a silvery ground. A wide frieze in pale olive had classic wreaths joined with flowing ribbons from which depended tassels in cream color, the ribbons in faint old red. An old red picture molding separated frieze and side wall. The ceiling gave a silvery effect.

The floor had a border two feet wide stained a warm olive, of which very little was seen, nearly the whole floor being covered with a Japanese jute rug in cream, olive, old blue and old red. This delightful rug, as thick as rich in its colorings as the finest Oriental rug and only lacking the sheen of the latter, cost but \$14.

The furnishing of the bay window was certainly an inspiration. A fluffy, tawny fur rug covered as much of the floor as could be covered by an oblong rug. Low, wide window seats of the rudest framework, built by my friend herself, ran all around under the windows and were so constructed that a single row of large books could be stored underneath. This saved the cost of a tapestry curtain falling to the floor, besides furnishing a storehouse for the overflowing books. The cushions on the seats were covered

Copying from Nature.

That the designer who copies from nature is the one who attains success most readily cannot be doubted. The days of copying from old designs are fast going, and now the designer who would keep up with the times must be as original as possible. This has been said many times before by many writers. The most unique method of designing from nature, thus assuring originality, is a way which your correspondent has had explained to him recently by one of the designers in a Lawrence mill.

This man has designed fancy figured effects for intricate shawl patterns for many years. Since the advent of the demand which calls for a closer imitation of nature in designing, this man has found it to be advantageous to copy from flowers. His ability to copy offhand from a flower model is deficient; so he does like this: He gets a bunch of roses or a twig of leaves and buds, and places these upon his design paper. A light pressure with the hands flattens the objects upon the paper sufficiently to permit a true outline to be made of each leaf or flower.

This outline he makes by the use of a pencil. Then he is sure of getting the correct forms of the figure.

with cluny tapestry in deep olive, olive and old red and harmonized beautifully with the tones of the rug and woodwork.

The pillows were many, of different sizes—Java squares, Persian prints and the like. An apparent piece of fretwork, stretched across the arch, proved to be only a moveable crane for curtains, and from this depended a curtain of Persian chintz.

In the centre of the floor stood a mahogany card table holding a lamp of golden glazed china, with rich reddish brown decorations. The lamp shade was of golden olive crinkled crepe paper, in whose folds nestled great feathery golden chrysanthemums.

There were only three chairs in this room—a great easy chair for the master of the house, which was covered to hide the wear and tear of age, with a Bagdad rug striped in deep cream olive, old red and dark and light blue. An old willow rocker had been stained deep terra cotta and was cushioned with plantation cloth in dull ole blue.

In the bay window stood the third chair, "a triumph of skill in patchwork," said my friend. Originally an old willow arm chair with circular

TALE OF A WINDMILL.

And How the Agent Sold it to the Meanest Man on Earth.

A number of years ago I was selling windmills in Southern Illinois, says a contributor to the Chicago Record. One day I struck a county where people despised windmills, and I did not sell a mill a week. I got mad at last and concluded to try a "bluff game." I inquired for the meanest man in the county.

My informant grinned, and pointing to a distant house, said—"Wal, b'gosh! Old Jo Larch over thar's the meanest man creation could git up."

"Way I drove for old Jo Larch's." He was filing a saw on the back porch and paid no attention to my greeting. I went on—"Sir, I am selling the best windmill in the world, and—"

"Git out o' that gate. When I want ye I'll send for ye."

"I smiled. 'All right, sir; but can't I get some supper? I'll pay well for it.'"

"No!" he yelled. "We've been to supper."

"Can I speak to your wife?"

"Won't do no good."

But I did, for I offered her \$5 for a supper, and after a whisper to her husband he growled: "Wal, go in; she'll feed you."

After supper I said—"Mr. Larch, I'll give you \$2 to feed my horse. And I got it fed."

At last he said I could stay all night, and I told stories and gave him cigars, until he promised to let me put up a mill for one month, and I signed an agreement to remove it in thirty days.

It was put up with every kind of tank and pipes to carry water through the yards and house.

The neighbors watched with astonishment and envy.

When the time was up I drove around with my men and began to take down the mill. Out stormed Mr. Larch.

"Hold on; I sorter like that jim-crack; ma'b' I'll buy it."

"Oh," said I, "this is only an advertisement. Keep at work, boys."

The old man stormed, and his wife appeared. It was so handy, made her work so easy, and she thought Jo ought to buy it.

At last he offered me full price and pay for my time. I was sorry, but this mill was sold to Mr. Smith, whom Larch cordially hated. He stamped and raved and begged me to leave the mill alone.

I sat down and began figuring on a board.

He watched me for a moment, and then whispered, excitedly—

"You think I'm goin' to let that dang Smith beat me? Not much. Here's \$50 extra. Go away and keep yer mouth shut."

He gave in with such a humble air that, after appearing to consider for some time, I agreed. The boards were all replaced, and we drove off, hearing the old man chuckle to himself—"By J'hosiphah, it takes a mighty smart agent to git ahead of me."

Tobogganed Down a Mountain.

A short, compactly built man with a heavy blonde mustache took a toboggan slide down Lookout mountain the other afternoon. He went via the incline, and made the trip from the Point Hotel to the engine house, a distance of 4,500 feet, in three and one-half minutes, which is just one-third the time that it takes a car to descend, remarks the *Chatanooga Times*. Fully 100 people saw him make the lightning-like descent, and all were greatly excited. The nervous coaster, however, was as cool as the proverbial cucumber, and, upon reaching the foot of the mountain, walked away as coolly as though it had taken him an hour to descend. About 4 o'clock the coaster appeared at the Point Hotel with what appeared to be a block of wood about eight inches square under his arm. On one side of the block was a steel horse shoe, in the curve of which was a small flanged wheel. The other side of the block was slightly concave. The block was put on the outside rail of the incline, the wheel fitting close, and the horns of the horseshoe were on either side. Then the man put a heavy glove on his right hand, and, sitting on the block, started down the mountain without more ado. He held his feet crossed straight before him, and rested them on the iron rail. For a few feet the little one-wheeled car moved slowly, and then the speed increased, until it and its human freight were going down the mountain at a rate that made the spectators hold their breath. When a curve was reached the coaster slowed up slightly by pressing his heels against the rail and steadying himself by touching the cable with his gloved hand. Finally, when he reached the very heavy grade, just above the engine house, he took off all his brakes and came down like a shot out of a gun. Arriving at the bottom he put on the "heel" brakes and gently came to a stop just in the depot. Coolly rising from his queer vehicle he placed it under his arm and walked quietly away before any of the astonished spectators had a chance to recover their breath or ask any questions.

The preservation of the carcasses of 12,000 sheep for eleven months on shipboard is the extraordinary achievement in refrigeration claimed by the ship *Wellington*, which sailed from Pictou, New Zealand, May 12, 1898, and arrived at Plymouth, Sound, April 6, 1894. She passed through terrible storms, narrowly escaped destruction at Rio, struck an iceberg, had two men killed and one drowned, but landed her mutton in good condition.

Georgia sends out every year about 1,000,000 bales of cotton.