

**SOMEWHAT STRANGE.**

**INTERESTING NOTES AND MATTERS OF MOMENT.**

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

The smallest woman living to-day is said to be Mlle. Pauline, of Holland, of a respectable family, who is 18 years old, weighs ten pounds and is 1 foot 9 inches tall.

The driest part in the world is said to be that part of Egypt between the two lower falls of the Nile. Rain has never been known to fall there, and the natives do not believe travelers when told that water falls from the sky.

MAINE is justly proud of the fact that only a native can pronounce the names of her lakes trippingly on the tongue, but the names of Maine are easy besides these and others from the Canadian Province of Ontario: Lake Misquabish, Lake Kashagwigamog, and Lake Kahwahambejagomog.

The conservatory of Washington Park, Chicago, boasts of what is affectionally called "goose plant." It is composed of growths that look like three or four big geese and over a dozen goslings. The plant is a rare native of South America, known properly as the *Aristolochia Gigas* Sturtzevianii, and is said to be the only one of its kind in the United States. It was on exhibition at the World's Fair, but was so small at the time as to attract little attention.

DURING a continued dry spell in south Florida, reptiles often are obliged to resort to unique methods for obtaining fresh water. One need not be surprised while pumping water, to see little frogs issue from the pump, and one man was rather startled while pumping to see a snake two feet long issue from the spout, and upon striking the ground quickly crawled under a house. The reptiles crawl into the pump to enjoy the water held up by the valves.

In 1867 Dr. W. H. Richardson, who had been in the Confederate army and afterward in Mexico, and hadn't seen his wife for five or six years, heard that she was dead. He remained in Mexico until the present year, when he came to Kentucky to look up relatives. In tracing a claim to land he wrote to his wife's relatives in Texas, and learned that she was living and had for twelve years been remarried. Husband No. 2 gracefully retired, and the pair were reunited after thirty-two years.

A GASTROGRAPH, for recording the movements of food in the stomach of a patient, was recently exhibited in action before the Medical Society of the County of New York by Dr. Max Einhorn. The apparatus records the motions on a traveling band of paper by means of electricity from a dry battery. The patient swallows a little ball of brass connected to the instrument by electric wires, but no details of the mechanism are given. The apparatus is expected to be useful in diagnosing catarrh and other ailments of the stomach.

The death of "The Blind Woman of Manzanares" has attracted wide attention in Spain, where she was known from one end of the country to the other. She was a poet and had a remarkable talent for writing beggin' g verses, describing her misery. Many of the poems are beautiful, and the author enjoyed a large income. She was said to be one of the best reciters in Spain, and many of the most famous men in that country made pilgrimages to her house to hear her. Queen Isabella gave her a pension years ago. She left about \$60,000.

PROF. PEAL, the ethnologist, recently described to the Asiatic Society the condition of the head-hunting Nagas on the borders of Assam. The women are to blame for the continuance of the practice; they taunt the young men who are not tator, and the latter go out and cut off heads to exhibit to them, fully half of which are those of women and children. The area occupied by the tribe is not more than twenty miles square, but in it during the past 40 years more than 12,000 murders have been committed for the sake of these ghastly trophies.

A STRANGE incident in connection with the work of clearing away the debris of the recently wrecked bridge at Louisville is related of the submarine diver whose duty it is to descend to the bottom of the river and fasten chains about the heavy iron work, besides placing dynamite charges in spots where the most desirable results may be had. One day he remained beneath the surface for more than an hour. There was no response when signals were made, and there was uneasiness felt. At length the diver who goes on as a relief reported for duty, and he was at once sent down to ascertain what was wrong. In a few minutes both men came up. The diver was found seated on a pile of iron fast asleep.

Two queer cases of telepathy: A lady in Maine, whose daughter was a missionary's wife in India, dreamed of her on the 18th of May last. She thought the girl called "mother" as if in agony. Long after the slow mail came, saying that on that night the daughter was supposed to be dying, but had recovered. A lady in New Orleans fell to the floor during a social gathering, crying, with hand at side: "Oh, I'm stabbed!" She wasn't; but she felt that way. Shortly after she bore a child marked upon the side as if by two stab wounds. Next day came a cablegram

saying that her twin brother had been stabbed to death in New Zealand. Later it was learned that the hour was the same as that of the woman's hallucination, and the place of the wounds the same. These stories may be taken with salt, if preferred.

An unusual summons was received over the telephone not long ago by Dr. David Birney, of the University of Pennsylvania, from a wealthy man in New York, who wished him to go to Long Island. Dr. Birney endeavored to find out something about the nature of the case he was expected to treat, but the man, after securing his promise to go, refused to talk further over the phone. The doctor packed a case of instruments at random and met the man in New York. After dinner at the Waldorf they took the train for Long Island, but not a word was said about the operation. When they arrived the man thanked the doctor and paid him \$50; then in response to the look of wonder from the astonished surgeon, he said: "I saw my sister bleed to death in a railroad accident for want of a physician, and since that day I have never traveled without one."

BECAUSE Captain Bray was moonstruck and made totally blind, the logwood laden schooner *Nettie Langdon*, from Falmouth, Jamaica, for Philadelphia, was compelled to put into Key West in distress. The *Langdon* drifted about in helpless condition for days after Capt. Bray's sad plight, and finally drifted toward the Florida coast, where a pilot boat was sighted, and Pilot James Sinclair was taken on board, and he navigated the vessel to Key West. The unfortunate skipper's eyesight is believed to have been caused by the reckless manner in which he spent his nights. Instead of sleeping in the cabin, he invariably slept on deck in the moonlight. The rays of the moon totally destroyed the sight. In the tropics this occurrence is not rare, but it is seldom heard of so far north as the latitude of Jamaica. In Demerara many cases occur, especially when the moon is in its strongest phase.

The Louisville Courier-Journal says that a few years ago a Kentucky Grand Jury brought in the following indictment: "Lawrence Criminal Court, Commonwealth of Kentucky, against \_\_\_\_\_, defendant. Indictment. The Grand Jury of Lawrence County, in the name and by the authority of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, accuse \_\_\_\_\_ of the offence of malicious mischief, committed as follows: The said \_\_\_\_\_ on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, A. D. 18\_\_\_\_, in the county and circuit aforesaid, did unlawfully, wilfully and maliciously kill and destroy one pig, the personal property of George Pigg, the said pig being of value to the aforesaid George Pigg. The pig thus killed weighed about twenty-five pounds, and was a mate to some other pigs owned by said George Pigg, which left George Pigg had of pigs, and thus ruthlessly tore said pig from the society of George Pigg's other pigs, against the peace and dignity of the Commonwealth of Kentucky."

"In the neighborhood of Cuba," says a recent visitor to that island, "a most peculiar method of securing turtles is pursued. They train, or at least take advantage of the instinct of a certain species of fish. The fish is called by the Spaniards *reve* (meaning reversed), because its back is usually taken for its belly. It has an oval plate attached to its head, whose surface is traversed by parallel ridges. By this plate it can firmly adhere to any solid body it may choose. The boats which go in quest of turtles each carry a tub containing some of these *reves*. When the sleeping turtles are seen they are cautiously approached, and as soon as they are judged near enough a *reve* is thrown into the sea. Upon perceiving the turtle, its instinct teaches it to swim right toward it and fix itself firmly upon the creature by its sucking disk. Sooner would the *reve* allow itself to be pulled to pieces than to give up its grip. A ring which was attached to the tail of the fish, in which a string was fastened, allows the fisherman to pull in his prize. By a peculiar manipulation the *reve* is pulled off and returned to the tub to be ready for use again when the next turtle is sighted."

The present area is remarkable for the development of among the civilized races of the world of kindlier feelings toward the brute creation, and it is certain that animals have never before enjoyed so much consideration as during the closing decade of the nineteenth century. It was only the other day that attention was drawn in these columns to the court-martialing of a German soldier for applying an insulting epithet to a government horse; to a suit against a Viennese editor for having libelled a racer; to the decision of the Belgian Government that a dog when once provided with his ticket had just the same right to a seat in a railroad compartment as a human being. And now there is the Austrian town of Baden, which has just voted a credit of \$10,000 for the rheumatic horses. The equine patients are to have sulphur baths erected for their treatment, in which it is hoped that wonderful cures will be effected. Elsewhere in Europe valuable racehorses are got into training by means of a course of Turkish baths in the shape of the old-fashioned cloth treatment, and if matters advance at the present rate the day cannot be far distant when every well-bred horse will insist like so many other devotees of fashion, upon an annual stay at Homberg, Carisbad or Vichy for the sake of recuperating his strength.

Tobe Wesley, of Twiggs county, Ga., came to Macon, recently to buy a coffin for his seven-year-old son, who was crushed to death by the field snake. The boy had gone to the field with his father, and while his father was at work wandered off a short distance and climbed a muscadine vine as was his habit. On being unable to find the boy when he had finished his work about sundown, the father went to the house expecting to find him there, but was informed by his wife that the boy had not been home since he left the house with his father. Feeling no uneasiness Wesley, knowing the habit of his boy, went back into the field, which was on the edge of a dense swamp bordered with muscadine vines, and began searching the vines where he had last seen the boy. By looking up in the vines he was not long in finding him, but when he called the boy failed to answer. After calling two or three times and receiving no answer the father shook the vine, and to his horror saw what he had supposed to be one of the branches of the vine that was supporting his son, begin to uncoil. Realizing that his son was in the coil of a huge snake Wesley stood rooted to the spot, and before he could recover his senses the snake completely uncoiled and the boy fell to the ground, a distance of some nine or ten feet. Wesley picked the child up and ran from under the vines to the clearing. There his worst fears were realized. The child was dead. On being carried to the house and further examination made, it was found that the child's breast had been crushed and that its tongue and eyes were protruding as though it had been choked to death. Wesley is of the opinion that the boy was asleep when the snake coiled about him and gradually crushed his life out. Wesley does not know what kind of a snake it was, as he did not see it after his son fell.

**A MINER'S ORDEAL.**

Lights Four Fuses of Giant Powder and Finds Escape Cut Off.

Frank Bagley, a miner, had an experience the other afternoon at 3 o'clock at the bottom of a 300-foot shaft in Little Jessie mine, which he never wants to go through again, and which no other miner would care to experience. His escape from instant death seems little short of a miracle.

He was engaged with a companion in putting in four blasts, and when the work was completed his companion climbed up a rope to a place of safety above, leaving him to apply the light to a fuse which was to explode the shots. He had an abundant length of fuse to give him plenty of time, as he supposed, to climb up the timbered part of the shaft out of reach of flying rocks from the shots. The distance was only about ten feet, but he had no ladder on account of the inconvenience of handling it while shooting, and the only means of escape was by climbing a rope.

He applied the light to the fuse and then started to climb the rope, but it was wet and slippery, and as soon as he made a few feet his hold would give way, and he would slip back to the bottom of the shaft, where four pieces of fuse were sizzling their way to as many sticks of giant powder. His first unsuccessful attempt did not alarm him much, as he had no fear of his ability to get away, but as he tried again and again, and each time to only slide back to the bottom, he began to realize that his position was a very critical one.

He had blown out his light and in the narrow confines of the shaft there was not a crevice or a projecting rock big enough to shield even his hand. The place was black as midnight darkness itself, and his only way of escape was through the agency of that slippery and treacherous rope. He knew about the time the explosion must inevitably occur, and as the time grew nearer and nearer the more desperately did he attempt to make the ascent, but all to no purpose.

The first shot went off, scattering rock in every direction around him, and hitting him in various places on the body. The second, third and fourth followed in rapid succession, but with less serious results to him. The injuries he sustained were mostly received from the first shot. He is lacerated and bruised from head to foot, although none of the wounds were deep. While they are serious and quite painful, they are not considered dangerous.—(Prescott (Arizona), Journal.)

**Habits of the Walrus.**

Although the walrus is a formidable-looking animal, especially when he rears his huge head and gleaming tusks out of the water within a few feet of your boat, Mr. Elliott says he is not only timid, harmless, and inoffensive, but not even given to fighting in his own family. His tusks, which vary in length from twenty to thirty inches, and in weight average from six to eight pounds each, were given him to dig clams with, and are of precious little use to him either in fighting or defending himself from attack.

He sleeps comfortably in the open sea, floating bolt upright in the water, with his nostrils out and his hind flippers hanging a dozen feet below. Nature purposely built him in the shape of a buoy, so that when sleeping or resting at sea the buoyancy of his huge, blubber-cased forequarters bring his nostrils out of the water without the slightest effort on his part. He grunts and bellows a great deal, solely for his own amusement, apparently, and many a time have vessels been warned off dangerous rocks in thick, foggy weather by the grunting of the walrus lying upon them.—[September St. Nicholas.

**WALLS OF PEKIN.**

**PIERRE LOTI DESCRIBES HIS JOURNEY THROUGH THEM.**

**A Wondrous Word Painting of This Early-World Metropolis, with its Walls Upon Walls, its Grotesque Architecture—Etc., Etc.**

The crowning ambition of Japanese patriotism since war was declared against the Celestial Empire is to emulate the prowess of the French and English and march to Peking. The ancient and gigantic Chinese capital is likely, therefore, to occupy the attention of the onlooking world for some time to come.

Its sights have often been depicted by travelers who had the fortune to visit it in its normal, workaday state in the piping times of peace, but by none more graphically, more picturesquely than M. Pierre Loti, French naval officer, litterateur, and Academician.

Subjoined is a translation of M. Loti's experiences.

En route for Peking! Clic! Clic! "Ta, ta, ta, ta!" cries our pigtailed coachman, and our two thin mules start off with a trot.

bright, raw colors against the gray walls of the houses; they poise themselves awkwardly on feet that are too small, in the pretty poses of little firescreen figures.

These images defile rapidly on each side of us; they disappear, and we again encounter an interminable series of deserted streets.

We are in the Yellow, or Imperial town, and all these old, dead districts bear an aristocratic character. Walls, walls without end; walls all crooked with age, all carpeted with moss and ferns. Behind them are immense parks, where a nature artificial and whimsically Chinese has been fashioned at great expense.

Occasionally entrances are opened—entrances with heavy oaken doors worn by time, and enormous pillars. They have extravagant roofs, these entrances, yellow roofs whose extreme angles are raised skyward in capricious crooks, in grimacing forms of dragons and monsters. All are guarded by two marble beasts, half lions, half chimeras, which, with one clawed paw posed on a ball, regard the passer-by with a mysterious rictus.

And over all this the neighboring desert has placed its mark; a layer of gray dust, effacing the ancient

out of breath, carrying lanterns in broad daylight, at the end of long staves with red pennants, halberdiers; lictors dressed in black and puffed out doublets and breeches, and lofty hats bedecked with plumes, shaking, with frantic gesticulation, whips, weighted cat-o'-nine-tails, chains and instruments of torture; and then, advancing in the same headlong manner, people carrying green dragons, red screens, chimeras and monsters stuck on the end of long poles.

Finally the great personage thus escorted appears on a splendidly caparisoned horse. He is Li-Hung-Chang, the Viceroy of Petchili, who is going in state to visit Kong, the Prince-Regent. He is tall and thin. His bony face, with goatee and long mustache, has a ruse and sanctimonious expression. The peacock feather of China's great man floats behind the rose-colored ball which surmounts his high official coiffure.

All this flies past very quickly; the people afoot run; the riders trot, a joltrot which makes all their bells jingle, shakes the long disheveled manes of the horses and makes the men's pig-tails dance. The gold badge of the Order of the Pheasant bobs up and down on the breast of the powerful seignor; the cloaks of



THE MAZE OF WALLS IN THE CITY OF PEKIN.

Our vehicle is mounted upon two enormous wheels, and covered with a blue awning to protect us from the dusty north wind. Our mules are imbued with unshakable principles, which preclude them from going over forty li an hour (about three and one half miles).

The landscape which meets our eyes consists of a cloud of dust, come expressly from Mongolia to vex us. It envelops everything. Do not take the trouble to look outside, for in opening your mouth you will swallow pounds of dust. Just keep quiet.

However, our little trip will only last three days, and we shall have for distraction the view of our muleteer, who is as round as a pooshal under his seven or eight goatskin mantles.

Toward the evening of the second day we perceive in the horizon an old, gray, crenellated wall, with bastions situated at intervals of an arrow's flight from each other.

Behind us is the huge palace of the Son of Heaven; one perceives the top of its mysterious walls, within which no European has ever been. It still slumbers in its inconceivable splendor, and at its feet the Lotus

cess to the country, we now follow a great, straight artery, entirely bordered by palaces. As we advance the lines of monumental and imposing constructions emerge from the whirlwinds of dust, and the semi-obscure of the luminous mist; a double row of hear-frost covered trees stretches before us in endless perspective; and on either hand there are always the same great walls, the same grand entrances with their penthouses bristling with chimeras and monsters, the same marble lions squatting on the ground and grinding their teeth at the people who pass. These Yamen are academies, ministries, law courts, temples, bonzeries, convents of lamas.

As the hour advances the boulevard becomes animated; we meet vards, bourgeois on donkeys, cavaliers mounted on little Mongolian steeds, with large heads, and the ruse, knavish airs of a learned horse.

Now the boulevard begins to fill with people; it is becoming a perfect tumult. Riders come and go, preceded by Mafoos in livery. They are all of a heap in their long gowns, and look as though squatting on their

the mandarins flap in the wind like wing. They have passed. The suite comes along at full speed, like the advance guard; secretaries and scribes on horseback, all in official caps, with comical importance, their rolls of papers and documents slung over their shoulders. Then the valets, a sinister-looking rabble, dressed in queer rags, running with all their might. And that is all. We can continue our journey.

We arrive at a triumphal arch with three arcades, painted blood red, and surmounted by the inevitable roofing turned up with monsters' heads; it is the gate of the Red Town. Here everything changes; one would imagine it to be the entrance to one of those huge cities of bygone ages. The boulevard continues through the Red Town and loses itself in the distance.

We advance slowly and painfully through the maze of wagons and riders, while trying not to lose sight of the Mafo, who is clearing the way for us. Now and then, at crossings formed by other large boulevards, which cut ours at right angles, we are forced to stop to allow interminable files of camels to pass, enormous beasts with dusky muzzles and long, rough hair, which amble along on their comically jointed legs like machines out of gear.

The fellows leading them are Mongols from the Northern desert. Their large, flat faces have something jovial and hardy about them, which contrasts agreeably with the perpetual Chinese grimace. They are dressed in long blood-colored robes, with waist belts bristling with poignards, and are coiffed with a kind of curtained capelin of fur, surmounted by a red cone, ornamented with a tuft.

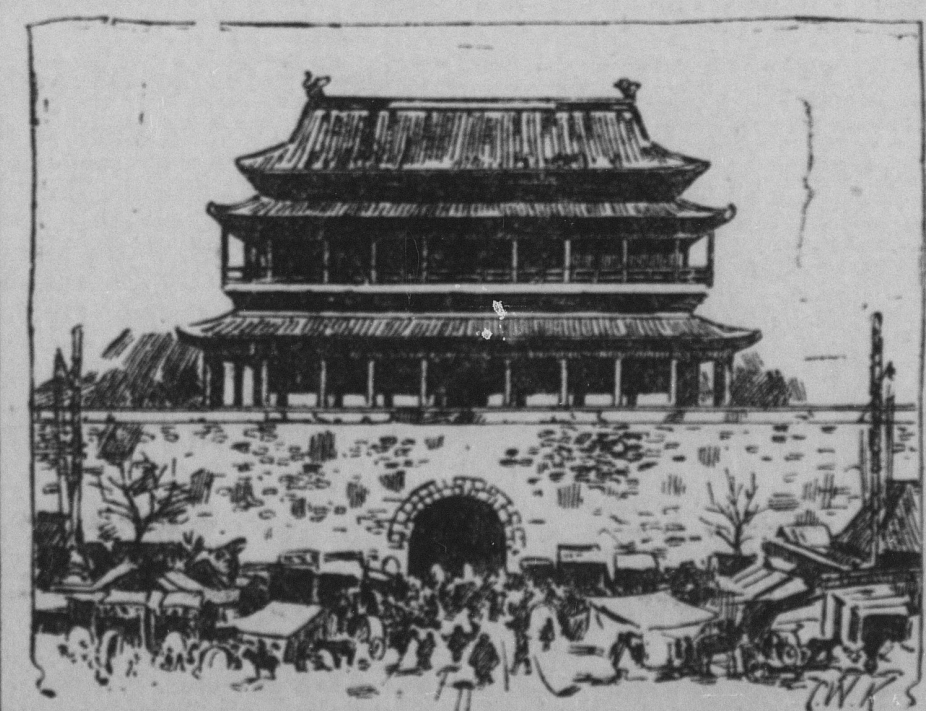
We trot along on a sort of high embankment, reserved for horses and vehicles, which occupied the middle of the boulevard, while on either side, on a lower level, is a road reserved for pedestrians. Around us still are rich cavaliers, befurred and begowned; blue carts without number; ladies of quality in black sedan chairs, shaped like street lamps, and bourgeois of placid mien, mounted on hired donkeys and followed by donkey boys, who flog the animals with sticks and shout: "Ta, ta, ta, ta!"

And shops upon shops, always gilded and splendid, wherein are sold Mongolian furs, gold and silver brocades, priceless stuffs embroidered with fantastic things in dreamy shades, enamels and beautiful pottery, all the relics of an inconceivable past, extravagant in richness and color.

Then there are fortune tellers grouping the people, acupuncturist doctors operating upon dummies laid on restles. There are also banking houses swarming with a whole population of sheep-faced employes feverishly manoeuvring the strings of balls on the calculating machines with the tips of their long, sharp, Chinese claws.

At last, at last, we come to a large donjon, perched on a high gray wall, and a black gull. It is Sitchemen, the direct western gate. Let us penetrate slowly and prudently into this cavern so as not to break our horses' legs between the old, disjointed flagstones, dating from the time of Khal-bai-Khan, grandson of Gengis-Khan, and founder of the Youen dynasty.

More camels, more tumbledown houses of an old sordid faubourg, and a great plain opens before us. We are in the open country.



PALACE DEDICATED TO THE "SON OF HEAVEN."

Lake lies tarnished and dead under the January ice.

One experiences a sort of indefinable uneasiness at the thought of the immensity of this city, awaking in the bright morning; one feels compressed, as it were, by this cramped, confused, inextricable dedalus one makes out around one, covering a greater extent than any of our capitals of Europe.

The dogs bark furiously at us and make menacing charges at the legs of our animals, whose movements are becoming restless and irregular. These dogs issue from all the allies, all the cloacae, and the troop pursues us, showing their sharp fangs, eager to bite.

The countenances of a few young Tartar girls, who have just got up, already appear at the doors of the little, low, gray-brick houses. Their broad, full-moon-like faces, bearded with white and vermilion, peep curiously after us, like a lot of kittens' heads; they have little airs of timidity; blankness and astonishment at the sight of the Western carnival passing by. Their large casques and bulging pantaloons stand out in

colors and gilt, the strange medleys painted upon these Yamen by the artist of long ago.

In the direction of Sitchemen, the Western gate, which will give us a high saddle. They are attired in garments of silk trimmed with precious furs, and black velvet boots turned up at the tips, with thick, immaculately white soles, made of layers of paper. Among them are physiognomies that, while very Chinese, are stamped with a kind of distinction peculiar to the upper classes.

Their eye us as we pass with a certain expression of astonishment, with an imperceptible shade of irony, though in their deportment there is nothing but benevolence and courtesy; but the Asiatic rictus is always there, even in the kind and distinguished physiognomies of the upper classes. There is an impassable abyss between this antique Asia, which still lives in spite of all, and us, who, born yesterday, have changed everything.

A cloud of dust; children scampering about and uttering cries as piercing as a steam whistle; dirty looking men beating gongs; people