

GOSSIP FOR THE FAIR SEX

ITEMS OF INTEREST ON THE FASHIONS.

Petticoat for Walking—An Erudite Heiress
—She's Skillful at Chess—Symbols of Personality.

PETTICOAT FOR WALKING.
It is advisable that one should have one petticoat to be used exclusively for walking, and this may be faced some distance from the bottom with waterproof cloth. There will then be almost perfect protection for the feet and ankles in wet weather. It is the swishing of damp clothes about the feet that constitutes most of the discomfort of a rainy-day expedition, and the waterproof lining does away with this.

AN ERUDITE HEIRESS.
Miss Elsie Clews, the daughter of the millionaire banker, has just finished a post-graduate course at a prominent woman's college, which offered her, it is authoritatively stated, a professorship in Greek. She is a scholar of rare erudition, and would have preferred a Greek professorship to a social debut, but she has, nevertheless, taken up her social responsibilities very graciously.

SHE'S SKILLFUL AT CHESS.
Probably the most brilliant woman chess-player in the world is Mrs. Showalter, of Kentucky. She was born in 1872 at Donerall, Ky., and is a direct descendant of Chief Justice Marshall. She was married in 1887 to Jackson W. Showalter, who taught her to play chess. She will leave Kentucky for Brooklyn in a few weeks to take part in the cable chess match between the women of England and America, to be held in New York.

SYMBOLS OF PERSONALITY.
The tendency to choose visible little signs and symbols of our personality is growing daily. In place of monograms or crests it is the mode for a woman or girl to choose some special flower; or, more original yet, some bird or sign which must appear on her little objects of "bigotry and virtue." For example, a very well-known society girl in New York decorates her writing paper, her silver articles, her hankerchiefs, and even, it is asserted, her more intimate lingerie, with a tiny owl. Even at night when she sleeps this bird of Minerva rises and falls on her pretty robe de nuit right over her heart, in sheer batiste. Another girl prefers a ram's head, and wears a ram's-head ring and pin and drinks from an old ram's-head cup; and all because her initials spell R. A. M.

MUFFS AND NECKLETS.
Chinese bear is being used in cape necklets. It is found in buff, brown and white.
The furrier, chemist and dyer, not to say the sailor, hunter and trapper, are trying very hard to make furs and fur ornamentation beautiful for the women this season.
A large velvet purple pansy forms the muff of an up-to-date actress, who says she is so fond of pansies that she is bound to have them around her, even if they are not real.
A dainty muff is made of white ermine trimmed with black velvet with gold X's on the back and front, serving as center pieces. In these X's can be engraved a scroll, branch of flowers or initials.
A long, slender, white blonde neck has its beauty heightened by the addition of a sable necklet. This should be made à la Medici, and it will be sure to accentuate the proud, beautiful curves, which are a part of the expressions of a distinguished carriage.
If you do not like fur about the neck, face and chin, and are blessed with a good circulation and can keep warm in winter without it, a velvet and chiffon necklet made of rosettes is the daintiest adjunct to a winter toilet.

FOR A LOVELY BLONDE.
A beautiful blonde woman, whose name I do not know, attracted a deal of attention at the opera the other evening, writes a correspondent. Her costume was a combination affair of rich China silk in pompadour design and plissed mousseline de soie. The skirt, sleeves, and smart little basque were of flowered silk, while the body was of the mousseline. The ground color of the silk was a deep prune color of the richest possible shade, and the flowers were in great blurred masses of various colors. The mousseline de soie was a still darker shade of prune color, almost purple.
The skirt was of elaborate fullness, having masses of deep godets crowded together all round the sides and back, so that they stuck out stiffly with their own voluminousness. It was untrimmed.
The bodice was a chic affair, with a little set-on basque. The body was covered completely with the accordion-plated mousseline de soie drawn down smoothly. It was cut with a square décolletage, very low, to show a superb throat and bust, and was bordered by a puff of pale heliotrope mousseline de soie, which looked very lovely against the white flesh.
The waist, above where the basque was set on, was finished by a twisted belt of pale heliotrope velvet with a bow at one side.

THE TRAGEDY OF A VAIN YOUNG GIRL.
A foreman in a factory, named Monisset, living in the Rue de la Sante, Paris, had a young daughter, fourteen years of age, renowned for her beauty and pretty ways. The father, a passionate Frenchman, encouraged her in her dressy propensities, with the result that the young lady became vain,

in addition to acquiring a more than ordinary notion of her own importance. Yesterday M. Monisset took a friend home to lunch, and, wishing for a glass of vermouth to stimulate an appetite, asked Mademoiselle to run across the street and purchase the desired liquid. But the young lady's hair was not curled, and her pride was wounded at her father suggesting that she should go out in such a condition. She refused point blank, and then the parent endeavored to force her. The little lady lost her temper and cried: "You beat me before a stranger. You have dared thus to humiliate me. I have no wish to survive this affront," and snatching the word to the action, she took up a knife from the table and plunged it twice into her breast. Mademoiselle was taken away to the hospital, where her injuries are reported as not over serious. She has been put to bed, but, like a good girl, has already asked her father's forgiveness, and promised not to disobey him in future.

NO GUM CHEWING IN CHURCH.
A very interesting case was heard recently in the Police Court in Cumberland, Penn., in which two young and pretty girls figured as prisoners before the bar of justice. Rev. Mr. Gillum, pastor of a church at Cresap-town, a village six miles from that place, swore out a warrant against the girls, charging them with disturbing public worship. They were brought to this city and committed to jail, when they were taken before the public judge for trial.
Rev. Mr. Gillum was placed on the stand, and stated that he had been conducting a revival, and that the girls had a habit of taking a front seat in the church and chewing gum in such a noisy manner as to disturb his congregation. He also stated that he told a brother of one of the girls about it, when his sister came dancing up the aisle and made a mouth at him. The minister remonstrated with the young woman, when the other girl interfered, and he placed his hand on her shoulder and told her to go out and never come back again.
The girls went out and dared him to come on the outside. He went out, when a regular scene took place. One of the girls shook her fist in his face and called him a liar. Several other witnesses were examined who swore that the girls had disturbed public worship by chewing gum and laughing and talking. The magistrate imposed fines and costs amounting to \$27, which were paid.

FASHION NOTES.
Not in years have the beautiful jet garnitures been as varied and attractive as they are this season.
A jet-black gown trimmed half way down the skirt with rays of steel and jet spangles is about as rich in effect as a gown may be.
Beaded velvet and printed velvet are high in favor. Military-looking cuffs, à la Tribby, are often seen upon walking jackets, with big buttons and frogs.
The ideal of the skirt of the short jacket is that it should stand straight out four or five inches from the figure, and in this it is materially aided, in extreme instances, by padded hips.
The long shoulder seam is working another onslaught on the citadel of fashion, and may yet win an unquestioned victory. It goes with the queer, bunched sleeves in the middle of the upper arm.
If one does not care for fancy waists, but wishes her gown to be "sincere"—and, doubtless, this is in better taste—it is a favorite device to have the sleeves of the same material as the skirt, the bodice in sharp contrast.
Many new tailor costumes will have a coat or cape matching the waist and skirt.

Changeable or chameleon effects in silks, fancy satin and silk and wool mixed fabrics, will continue to be very largely represented among spring importations.
Nearly all of the latest coiffures show the hair dressed low, very much like the Langtry knot of former days.
The tendency everywhere in fashion's domain is toward bright, conspicuous colors for trimming on hats and bonnets, as well as on gowns.
A stylish model of nuns' gray cloth, edged simply with gold cord, has a cream satin vest wrought with tiny bouquets, outlined with jewel beads.
Capes and coats promise to be equally favored as spring wraps. It will be merely a matter of choice between a loose, flowing garment and one trimly fitted.

The fancy for elaborate neck-dressing continues, and many very attractive designs are shown. A collar and star-shaped yoke of embroidery is finished with a puff of velvet at the throat, and very wide loops of velvet set under each point of the embroidery. These loops are long enough to extend well over the sleeve-tops and down over the bust at either side of the front of the waist.
A jacket shown at a recent exhibition of imported garments is made of velvet, with applique of very thick silk embroidered down at the edges. The silk covers at least one-half of the surface of the garment, the patterns being laid on in stripes from the collar down. A high rolling collar of fur and a pair of cuffs make a very handsome trousseau.

BLIND BICYCLIST.
He Rides 100 Miles Guided Only by His Sense of Sound.
A blind boy bicyclist of Oakland, Cal., performed a remarkable feat a week or so since by riding from Oakland to San Jose on his bicycle and back again, a "century run" along the highway, guided only by the sound of the bell on the bicycle of a friend who accompanied him. He has been stone blind for fourteen years. His name is N. L. Perry, and he is about seventeen years old. He was a student in the Berkeley Institute for the Deaf and Dumb and Blind, and while there was a leader in field sports and in the gymnasium. He graduated with honors, and is now a student in the State University. His loss of sight is compensated for in some degree by an abnormal sense of hearing.

When all the young men of his acquaintance began to ride the bicycle he became greatly interested in the machine, and was determined to own and ride one himself. He was confident that if he could once learn to mount and pedal and dismount his sense of hearing would enable him to ride with perfect safety and with great enjoyment. His first lessons proved a very trying experience, and he had one serious fall. But he persisted, and was soon able to mount, maintain his poise and pedal around the arena of the bicycle school with the ease and assurance of an expert. Then he gradually ventured out on the roads in the suburbs of Berkeley. He knew the road well, and his keen hearing enabled him to avoid collisions with pedestrians and vehicles practically as well as though he could see.

A week or so ago the notion of making the trip from Oakland to San Jose, a favorite "century run," occurred to him, and he made arrangements for the experiment. He got a fellow student, who is, of course, not blind, to accompany him and act as pilot. A code of signals on the bicycle bell was arranged to indicate various conditions likely to be met on the trip, such as unusual obstructions, the turns in the road and the like. The road is not one of the best, even for a rider possessed of all his faculties, but the blind boy, piloted by his friend, made the trip in safety with much pleasure.

In the fifty miles of the ride to San Jose the blind bicyclist had three falls from his machine, but they were not serious, and he remounted at once and continued the trip. The slipping of his wheel into deep ruts caused the fall in each instance. After resting a day in San Jose the blind rider made the fifty-mile run back again to Oakland piloted by his friend.

Precarious Healths of Princes.
Impossible heirs to thrones are in precarious health. The Archduke Ferdinand of Austria, who stands in the same position to the Austrian throne as the Duke of York does to that of Great Britain, is, like the czarowitz and the Prince of Naples, in ill-health. He has already traveled round the world in search of health, and he has recently stated on another prolonged tour in the East with the same view. At intervals a rumor is frequently set going in the Continental press to the effect that the Emperor of Austria desires to set aside the Pragmatic sanction and settle the crown on his younger daughter, the Grand Duchess Marie Valerie, married to her cousin, the Grand Duke Franz Salvador, of the Tuscan house. The consent both of the Austrian and Hungarian Legislatures, as well as of all in the male line of succession, would have to be obtained before so serious a modification of the Constitution could be effected.

Early London Housemaids.
When dawn begins you see the housemaids in London kneeling on doorsteps, with scrubbing brush and pail, all down a street, leaving a fresh whitened step to be dirtied by footmarks of another day. To my mind, they manage this business better in America, where it is done with a long-handled implement which saves the servant from having to go down upon her knees, often in the wet. Our custom sometimes creates a special malady from which she suffers. The "housemaid's knee" is a recognized infirmity. Common marble is cheap, and it would be well if more doorsteps were made with this, as it can be "washed" clean in a minute, and leaves a white surface better than that produced by hearthstone on a porous substance.

A Winking Star.
Dr. Chandler has discovered in the constellation Pegasus a little variable star which may fairly be said to wink. Two or three times in the course of a single night this curious star can be seen to fade and then brighten like a signal light. For about two and three-quarter hours it gets fainter and fainter; then comes a change, and at the end of two and three-quarter hours more it is bright as at the beginning. Unfortunately it can only be seen with a telescope. Yet it ranks among the suns; but what a sun!

A Wonderful Spoon.
Mention is made in the long-obsolete published memoirs of the Marquis de Villiers, of Paris, of a wonderful spoon once in the possession of his family. This spoon was reputed to be of gold, studded in every part with diamonds of the first water. Four inches in length only, yet the value of this article was stated to be \$75,000. Each diamond was the size of a large pin's head, and there were some hundreds of them.

A Singular Korean Hat.
A singular Korean hat is a great round mat of straw worn by a mourner. The hat is bound down at the sides so as to conceal the head and face of the wearer. He carries in his hand a screen or fan, and when in the road anyone approaches him, he holds the screen in front of him, so that, together with the hat, completely conceals him.

A very rich and handsome opera cloak is made of cream-colored velour, elaborately embroidered with silk and pearl beads. A fringe made of ostrich plumes falls from the lower edge, and the shoulder cape is similarly trimmed. The hood is edged with this trimming, and enormous bows of sash ribbon are set on at the front and back.

Among the most fashionable fur garments is noted the trim, close-fitting jacket, with ripple back. This is usually made of Persian lamb. White furs are no longer good form, but do duty as rug and coverlet for baby's perambulator.

Fur trimming is added to gowns or hats whenever and wherever it will look well. The popularity of the "green and brown" combinations has given a special distinction to brown furs, which seem to be the vogue.

The boa has resumed sway, and is meeting with much approval. Short boas, fastened at the neck with a head and cluster of tails, are seen. They are not so graceful as the long boas, but have several good points to commend them.

Shades of yellow are in demand for evening wear. A very rich costume is of copper yellow satin, brocaded with small designs in rose color and foliage in natural tints. The trimming is of a very open jet passeramterie, with a full fringe made of extremely fine jet beads.

Waists of flowered silk vie in favor with those of silk applique with lace.

Oil of the Sunflower.
The oil of the sunflower is one of the best substitutes for olive oil, and is rapidly superseding olive oil for table use, and many other common oils for lubricating fine machinery, clocks and watches; and for mixing fine colors for the artist. Our cotton-seed oil has displaced the best brands of the fine olives of Spain and Italy, but the oil of the sunflower is even superior to the cotton-seed oil. The sunflower is for this reason raised extensively in Southern Russia and Southern Europe, and the industry of manufacturing the fine oil from the seeds is very important. So far in this country the work has not become as important as it deserves, although no better country exists than this for raising good sunflowers. The small-seeded variety of sunflower is cultivated for the oil more than the large-seeded kinds, as the former are much richer in oil. The large-seeded kinds are cultivated more for fuel, and for the cakes made out of the seeds when pressed and cooked. The sunflower oil is remarkably free from all injurious acids, and is harmless as food.—New York Independent.

Motorman Dread Cats.
"A motorman will allow his car to run over a dog without any compunction, but when it comes to a cat on the track it brings out what little superstition may be in the man, and most of the motorcars have a little," said a conductor. The car had come to a sudden stop, and all the passengers, who had noticed a little kitten in front of the car, stood up to see if its mangled remains were on the track. "Why, I've known my motorcar run his car back half a square at night to see if he had killed a cat," said the conductor. "The headlights on the car seem to attract them after dark, and they will stand in front of an approaching car and their eyes gleaming in the darkness like balls of fire. They seem to make no effort to get out of the way, and disappear from the motorcar's view under the end of the car, leaving him in doubt as to whether he killed it or not. I guess when they get out of range of the headlights they realize their position and scurry out of the way."—Columbus (O.) Dispatch.

The Swiss Pike.
The name of the Swiss is generally identified with the long pike of the 18-foot shaft; and most gallant attempts have been made by recent writers to prove that this celebrated weapon was a Swiss invention and employed by the confederates from the first. The point, however, is one that must remain uncertain, for the earliest mention of the long pike is found in an order addressed in 1327 by Count Philip of Savoy to the burghers of Turin, and no one can tell whether the Savoyards borrowed it from the Swiss or the Swiss from the Savoyards. The primitive weapons of all infantry seem to be the spear and shield. The Milanese fought with such spears, or pikes, eight or ten feet in length, at Legnano, the Scotch at Falkirk, and the Flemings at Courtrai; so that it is impossible really to predicate of any one nation that it added the requisite number of feet to the weapon's shaft in order to make a long pike. There is no mention of pikes in the battles of the Swiss until Sempach, and it is probable that in that action they were not above ten feet in length.

American Pearls.
A considerable business is done in fresh water pearls along the Big Sioux River, which empties into the Missouri. The first find was made several years ago, and a number of pearls were sold at that time for good price. Comparatively little attention was paid to the matter then, however, and not until last summer has the industry received the attention to which it was entitled. A number of men are now making good livings searching for the pearls, many of which have been sold not only to the local jewelers but to dealers in Chicago and New York as well. Many of the specimens are very fine ones, and bring from \$5 to \$10 to \$25.

THE WORK DIVIDED.

Just as the government of the city of New York is divided among the Mayor, Aldermen and boards and commissioners of various departments, so the administration of a giant steamship is divided into specialties, says Harper's Round Table. The Mayor is the chief officer of the city. The Captain is the chief officer of the ship. He is more than that. From the time she leaves port until she enters port he is master of the life and liberty of every person aboard the ship, as well as of all the property in it. He is an autocrat. Of course he must administer his authority wisely. Unwise autocrats don't last long, whether afloat or ashore.

The head of each department is responsible for all that goes on in it. The first officer is at the head of the crew, or navigating department. The chief engineer directs everything connected with the engines. The chief steward has full control of all that has to do with the comfort of the passengers and crew. Each of these chiefs makes a written report at noon every day. Thus the Captain is kept informed of everything pertaining to the ship's welfare.

Every one of the senior officers of the ship is a duly qualified master, capable of taking her around the world if need be. The day is divided into "watches," or tours of duty, of four hours each. One junior officer is on the bridge with each senior officer on duty. The senior officer directs the ship's course. He never leaves the bridge while he is on watch. Should he do so he would be dismissed at once. There is no excuse possible. It would be just as if he had died suddenly. His friends would all feel sorry, but nothing could be done to help him. Two seamen are always on watch in the bow of the ship, and two more in the forestep. Twice as many are on the lookout in thick weather. Observations are taken every two hours. In the good old sailing ship days the Captain was content to "take the sun" at noon every day. If the sky was cloudy for a day or two it really didn't matter much, for he could jog along on dead reckoning. But on an ocean greyhound, rushing over the course between New York and Europe at the rate of more than twenty miles an hour, it is highly important that the ship's position be known at all times. Fog may come down at any moment, observations may not be obtainable for ten or twelve hours. The positions of more than 100 stars are known. By observing any one of these the ship's whereabouts can be ascertained in a few minutes. Of course the "road" becomes more or less familiar to a man who crosses the ocean along the same route year after year. Yet this familiarity never breeds contempt or any carelessness. No man knows all the influences that affect the currents of the ocean. You may find the current in one place the same forty times in succession; on the forty-first trip it may be entirely changed. Sometimes a big storm that has ended four or five hours before the steamship passes a certain place may have given the surface current a strong set in one direction. There is no means of telling when these influences may have been at work save by taking the ship's position frequently.

JOHANNESBURG.
A Timely Description of the Transvaal Metropolis.
Johannesburg is a city of considerable importance. The city itself numbers about 40,000 inhabitants, besides the 30,000 and more men at work in the mines and prospecting for more mines in the country round about. Johannesburg has had a mushroom sort of growth, having developed from a mere mining camp in seven years. It is a story of the power of gold in turning an utter wilderness into a great, thriving, urban community. The figures of the aggregate yield of the mines are not at hand, but during the month of June last the output amounted to 206,941 ounces—say \$3,000,000.

Banks and mercantile houses of cut stone and brick, a great stock exchange, two theatres, hotels fit for millionaires, street railways—in short, everything for the convenient transaction of business and for the comfort of life is found there. Last of all has come a railroad, a monument to the perseverance and resolution of one man—President Kruger. The enterprise was fraught with many difficulties, but in July last regular trains began to run, and, with a market assured, agriculturists have been flocking to the region to take advantage of the rich soil of the Transvaal.

As to the climate, it is extremely trying. The men who lead active lives out of doors seem to thrive, but the women seem to suffer from the effects of the extreme altitude, and show it. Those who have been there over a year have lost all their rotundity and color. The city is 5,000 feet above sea level, and but for that would be unbearable to Caucasians, for it is in the heart of the tropics. This altitude makes comfortable living possible, but it is so extremely high and dry that the skin, hair and teeth suffer. Diseases of the heart develop, and during the wet season pneumonia is frightfully prevalent and often fatal. The sanitary conditions of the city are distinctly bad. Garbage and refuse are dumped on the outskirts, and the result is malaria, diphtheria and all other fifth diseases. Artistically Johannesburg is pleasant to contemplate. It is full of long, lovely avenues of big trees and beautiful gardens.

Future War Surgery.
It would appear probable that in a future war many of the wounds produced by the new projectiles will be surgically less severe and prove amenable to effective surgical treatment. Probably, also, the number of severe injuries will be very great, when we consider the enormous range of the new weapon and the penetrating power of the projectile, which enables it to traverse the bodies of two or three individuals in line, including bones, and to inflict serious or fatal wounds at a distance of 3,000 or 4,000 yards. It is impossible to say what the proportion between these two is likely to be. At near ranges the explosive effects will be much the same as before; but at long range the narrow bullet track, the small external wounds, which often approach the subcutaneous in character, and the moderate degree of comminution and fissuring of the bone will be surgically advantageous. These will form the bulk of the gunshot injuries of the future, for it would seem impossible with magazine quick-firing rifles to maintain a contest at close quarters without speedy mutual annihilation.

We may take it for granted that the number of wounded in proportion to the numbers engaged and actually under fire will be greater than before. The supply of ammunition will be larger, the facility for its discharge greater and smokeless powder will increase accuracy of aim.

I think we are justified in believing, although there is high authority for a contrary opinion, that the next great war will be more destructive to human life, "bloodier," in fact, than any of its predecessors, and that the number of injuries, and in many cases the severity of the injury, will be largely increased. But very many cases will remain less likely to entail future disablement, while improved sanitation and antiseptic methods will enormously increase the proportion of recoveries.

Culls Steal From Ducks.
Thousands of big white gulls and countless numbers of water fowl have been driven by cold weather to the South Jersey coast, where they find plenty of food during the wintry days. At the upper end of Sea Isle City, N. J., a bar juts out into Corson's Inlet, and this spot seems to be a favorite place with the birds. Sand crabs and clams form the principal food of the birds. The clams find little protection within their hard covering, for nature has taught the gulls a way of reaching the contents.

Catching a large clam in their talons, the birds rise skyward to a height of twenty or thirty feet and let the bivalve fall to the hard beach below. The method of clam-opening usually is successful at the first attempt.

The large Skua gulls are not altogether dependent upon themselves for what they eat. They are inveterate thieves, and not only will steal from one another, but they will rob the ducks of many a hard-earned morsel.

All winter long large flocks of ducks find a feeding ground on the bars in shallow water just beyond the breakers. The gulls will loiter near by, and when a duck dives down and comes to the surface with a bit of sea food in its beak it is pounced upon by the big white-winged rascals and forced to give up its catch.

Marry Young Men.
One of the most surprising things to American women in England is the number of English women who marry men from five to twenty years younger than themselves. The action of the Baroness Burdett-Coutts in taking so young a husband as Mr. Bartlett is by no means uncommon in all grades of English society, and a bit of a shock to the romantic-minded American, who prefers to let her husband have quite the advantage of her in point of years, at least. It was almost with a little gasp of horror a sentimental Little American was told of the first meeting between Mrs. Ritchie, Thackeray's daughter, and her present husband. His mother was a dear friend of Miss Anne Thackeray, who, one day when about twenty years old, dropping into the Ritchie home, received the interesting information of a brand-new arrival in the household. Proud Mrs. Ritchie herself placed the new Richard in Miss Thackeray's arms, as that young lady remarked with a laugh: "So it is another pink little boy come to make the Ritchie family happy." It was the same Richard Ritchie that in after years made Miss Anne Thackeray his wife.

All From a Shark.
Sharks furnish quite a number of valuable products. The liver of the shark contains an oil of a beautiful color that never becomes turbid and possesses medicinal qualities equal to those of cod-liver oil. The skin after being dried, takes the polish and hardness of mother-of-pearl. The fins are always highly prized by the Chinese, who pickle them and serve them at dinner as a most delicate dish. The Europeans, who do not appreciate the fins of a shark as a food product, are content to convert them into fish glue, which competes with the sturgeon glue prepared in Russia. As for the flesh of the shark that, despite its oily taste, is eaten in certain countries. It is employed also along with the bones in the preparation of a fertilizer. The Icelanders, who do a large business in sharks' oil, send out annually a fleet of 100 vessels for the capture of the great fish.

Live Long and Prosper.
There is a family living near Macon, Ga., in which there has not been a death for fifty years. The head of the family is seventy-three years of age and his wife is seventy-two. They celebrated their golden wedding recently, and their ten children and twenty-one of their twenty-two grandchildren were present.

BLIND BICYCLIST.

He Rides 100 Miles Guided Only by His Sense of Sound.
A blind boy bicyclist of Oakland, Cal., performed a remarkable feat a week or so since by riding from Oakland to San Jose on his bicycle and back again, a "century run" along the highway, guided only by the sound of the bell on the bicycle of a friend who accompanied him. He has been stone blind for fourteen years. His name is N. L. Perry, and he is about seventeen years old. He was a student in the Berkeley Institute for the Deaf and Dumb and Blind, and while there was a leader in field sports and in the gymnasium. He graduated with honors, and is now a student in the State University. His loss of sight is compensated for in some degree by an abnormal sense of hearing.

When all the young men of his acquaintance began to ride the bicycle he became greatly interested in the machine, and was determined to own and ride one himself. He was confident that if he could once learn to mount and pedal and dismount his sense of hearing would enable him to ride with perfect safety and with great enjoyment. His first lessons proved a very trying experience, and he had one serious fall. But he persisted, and was soon able to mount, maintain his poise and pedal around the arena of the bicycle school with the ease and assurance of an expert. Then he gradually ventured out on the roads in the suburbs of Berkeley. He knew the road well, and his keen hearing enabled him to avoid collisions with pedestrians and vehicles practically as well as though he could see.

A week or so ago the notion of making the trip from Oakland to San Jose, a favorite "century run," occurred to him, and he made arrangements for the experiment. He got a fellow student, who is, of course, not blind, to accompany him and act as pilot. A code of signals on the bicycle bell was arranged to indicate various conditions likely to be met on the trip, such as unusual obstructions, the turns in the road and the like. The road is not one of the best, even for a rider possessed of all his faculties, but the blind boy, piloted by his friend, made the trip in safety with much pleasure.

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Early London Housemaids.
When dawn begins you see the housemaids in London kneeling on doorsteps, with scrubbing brush and pail, all down a street, leaving a fresh whitened step to be dirtied by footmarks of another day. To my mind, they manage this business better in America, where it is done with a long-handled implement which saves the servant from having to go down upon her knees, often in the wet. Our custom sometimes creates a special malady from which she suffers. The "housemaid's knee" is a recognized infirmity. Common marble is cheap, and it would be well if more doorsteps were made with this, as it can be "washed" clean in a minute, and leaves a white surface better than that produced by hearthstone on a porous substance.

A Winking Star.
Dr. Chandler has discovered in the constellation Pegasus a little variable star which may fairly be said to wink. Two or three times in the course of a single night this curious star can be seen to fade and then brighten like a signal light. For about two and three-quarter hours it gets fainter and fainter; then comes a change, and at the end of two and three-quarter hours more it is bright as at the beginning. Unfortunately it can only be seen with a telescope. Yet it ranks among the suns; but what a sun!

A Wonderful Spoon.
Mention is made in the long-obsolete published memoirs of the Marquis de Villiers, of Paris, of a wonderful spoon once in the possession of his family. This spoon was reputed to be of gold, studded in every part with diamonds of the first water. Four inches in length only, yet the value of this article was stated to be \$75,000. Each diamond was the size of a large pin's head, and there were some hundreds of them.

A Singular Korean Hat.
A singular Korean hat is a great round mat of straw worn by a mourner. The hat is bound down at the sides so as to conceal the head and face of the wearer. He carries in his hand a screen or fan, and when in the road anyone approaches him, he holds the screen in front of him, so that, together with the hat, completely conceals him.

THE WORK DIVIDED.
Just as the government of the city of New York is divided among the Mayor, Aldermen and boards and commissioners of various departments, so the administration of a giant steamship is divided into specialties, says Harper's Round Table. The Mayor is the chief officer of the city. The Captain is the chief officer of the ship. He is more than that. From the time she leaves port until she enters port he is master of the life and liberty of every person aboard the ship, as well as of all the property in it. He is an autocrat. Of course he must administer his authority wisely. Unwise autocrats don't last long, whether afloat or ashore.

The head of each department is responsible for all that goes on in it. The first officer is at the head of the crew, or navigating department. The chief engineer directs everything connected with the engines. The chief steward has full control of all that has to do with the comfort of the passengers and crew. Each of these chiefs makes a written report at noon every day. Thus the Captain is kept informed of everything pertaining to the ship's welfare.

Every one of the senior officers of the ship is a duly qualified master, capable of taking her around the world if need be. The day is divided into "watches," or tours of duty, of four hours each. One junior officer is on the bridge with each senior officer on duty. The senior officer directs the ship's course. He never leaves the bridge while he is on watch. Should he do so he would be dismissed at once. There is no excuse possible. It would be just as if he had died suddenly. His friends would all feel sorry, but nothing could be done to help him. Two seamen are always on watch in the bow of the ship, and two more in the forestep. Twice as many are on the lookout in thick weather. Observations are taken every two hours. In the good old sailing ship days the Captain was content to "take the sun" at noon every day. If the sky was cloudy for a day or two it really didn't matter much, for he could jog along on dead reckoning. But on an ocean greyhound, rushing over the course between New York and Europe at the rate of more than twenty miles an hour, it is highly important that the ship's position be known at all times. Fog may come down at any moment, observations may not be obtainable for ten or twelve hours. The positions of more than 100 stars are known. By observing any one of these the ship's whereabouts can be ascertained in a few minutes. Of course the "road" becomes more or less familiar to a man who crosses the ocean along the same route year after year. Yet this familiarity never breeds contempt or any carelessness. No man knows all the influences that affect the currents of the ocean. You may find the current in one place the same forty times in succession; on the forty-first trip it may be entirely changed. Sometimes a big storm that has ended four or five hours before the steamship passes a certain place may have given the surface current a strong set in one direction. There is no means of telling when these influences may have been at work save by taking the ship's position frequently.

JOHANNESBURG.
A Timely Description of the Transvaal Metropolis.
Johannesburg is a city of considerable importance. The city itself numbers about 40,000 inhabitants, besides the 30,000 and more men at work in the mines and prospecting for more mines in the country round about. Johannesburg has had a mushroom sort of growth, having developed from a mere mining camp in seven years. It is a story of the power of gold in turning an utter wilderness into a great, thriving, urban community. The figures of the aggregate yield of the mines are not at hand, but during the month of June last the output amounted to 206,941 ounces—say \$3,000,000.

Banks and mercantile houses of cut stone and brick, a great stock exchange, two theatres, hotels fit for millionaires, street railways—in short, everything for the convenient transaction of business and for the comfort of life is found there. Last of all has come a railroad, a monument to the perseverance and resolution of one man—President Kruger. The enterprise was fraught with many difficulties, but in July last regular trains began to run, and, with a market assured, agriculturists have been flocking to the region to take advantage of the rich soil of the Transvaal.

As to the climate, it is extremely trying. The men who lead active lives out of doors seem to thrive, but the women seem to suffer from the effects of the extreme altitude, and show it. Those who have been there over a year have lost all their rotundity and color. The city is 5,000 feet above sea level, and but for that would be unbearable to Caucasians, for it is in the heart of the tropics. This altitude makes comfortable living possible, but it is so extremely high and dry that the skin, hair and teeth suffer. Diseases of the heart develop, and during the wet season pneumonia is frightfully prevalent and often fatal. The sanitary conditions of the city are distinctly bad. Garbage and refuse are dumped on the outskirts, and the result is malaria, diphtheria and all other fifth diseases. Artistically Johannesburg is pleasant to contemplate. It is full of long, lovely avenues of big trees and beautiful gardens.