

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Efforts are being made in this country to wrest from England her big coal trade.

Spain, relieved of her colonial incubus, is making rapid strides toward prosperity.

The Electrical Review declares that lightning-rods of every sort and kind are useless.

In the past ten years the Italian nation has descended from the third to the seventh place as a naval power.

The funeral of the dead railroad king again recalled the Spanish proverb, "There are no pockets in the shroud."

It is possible to say at last that the popularity of the so-called "coon song" as a means of entertainment has begun to wane.

Men may yearn to wear shirt-waists as commonly as women, but they will never enjoy discussing shirtwaist fashions with equal zest.

The Gazette of Cologne is in favor of a policy of terror in China. Fortunately other nations will have to be consulted in this matter.

An apparatus for condensing sea fog into drinking water has been invented by Professor Bell. It will be welcomed as a desideratum by ocean voyagers.

Another proof of the fickleness of the public. The kissing-bug is fully as industrious as he was last summer, but he doesn't attract the same interest.

If a Yankee met the Empress Dowager in Peking it is odds that his first remark would be to remind the old lady that the Chinese invented gunpowder.

According to the latest report of United States Consul Ingersoll at Copenhagen, Denmark, the popularity of American goods is rapidly increasing in that country.

Among other signs indicating that a man is insane, it has been recently discovered by specialists in nervous disorders that irregular eyebrows are cutlified to consideration.

A scientist who has made a study of electrolysis is now in a position to enlighten trolley-car conductors and motormen who have not been able to discover just why they died.

All buildings belonging to the Chinese Government are yellow, and it is a capital offense for any private person to use that color on the exterior of his dwelling or place of business.

Professor William R. Harper, head of the great University of Chicago, declares that the small colleges will have to materially change their plans, and that eventually they must unite.

A German surgeon recently cut off a patient's second toe and sewed it to the stump of a missing forefinger. It proved a very good substitute, and can be moved by the owner, as an artificial finger could not be.

In a paper which he recently read before the British Medical Association Dr. Pye-Smith prescribed a remedy for most nervous disorders that is within the reach of the poorest. This cure is steady hard work.

Bicycle road races have been bad enough. Automobile road races would be an intolerable outrage. The public highways are for the common and ordinary use of the public, not to be turned into private racetracks for steam engines at fifty miles an hour.

The Government is about to pay the final half million and take over the Eads jetties. It is still claimed that the jetties are a success, but it will be well to defer judgment until the first report after they are Government property.

The late C. P. Huntington was not a believer in college training for men who are to follow a business career. And a Western paper, moralizing on his career, asks: "Had he played football at college until his bearded days would he have been so successful?"

During the recent French naval manoeuvres the squadron under Admiral Gervais succeeded in slipping through the Straits of Gibraltar at night without being noticed by the British observers on the Rock. So at least the French newspapers assert.

Experts who have examined rye straw are of the opinion that a very high grade of paper, suitable for books as well as for newspapers, can be made from that material. Louisiana produces thousands of tons of rye straw which are now disposed of as a waste product.

An orderly in South Africa who happened not to know the Commander-in-Chief, for whom he was bearing a dispatch, asked another orderly in a loud voice, "Where's 'Bobs'?" In reply the cheery voice of Lord Roberts

answered: "Here I am, my lad. What can I do for you?"

The West has plainly ceased to grow materially faster than the East. Providence is outstripping St. Paul and Minneapolis. Buffalo and New York are growing relatively almost as fast as Milwaukee, which ranks next to Chicago in the Western list, and much faster absolutely.

M. Metschnikoff, of the Paris Pasteur Institute, has communicated to the Academie de Medecine his discovery of a lymph which regenerates the red globules in the blood of lepers. He thinks that when he has improved his serum he may be able to rejuvenate the organs of the human body.

Falcon Island, in the Pacific, which was thrown up some years ago and gradually washed away till in 1898 it could not be seen, has been discovered again by the British cruiser Porpoise. It now looks like a whale's back and stands nine feet out of water, with the sea breaking over it so that it forms a serious danger to navigation.

The French saw declares that no one is ever so happy or so miserable as he thinks he is. The half-hearted way in which this truth is accepted shows all the difference between the pessimist and the optimist. The optimist accepts the latter half and scoffs at the former, and the pessimist rails at the latter half and praises the former.

Says the Baltimore Sun:—"South America promises to be the scene of international plotting after China is disposed of, and a pamphlet just published by Alejandro Garland, of Peru, on 'South American Conflicts and the United States' shows that Peru will welcome our interference in the disputes of the South American States."

Upon opening a car laden with hay in a Chicago freight yard the other day the consignee was astounded to find two valuable horses inside, while nearly one-third of the hay had been devoured. How the animals had gotten into the car and how long they had been there no one seemed to know. Their stomachs were so much distended from overeating that both animals had to be killed.

In a New York Police Court the other day a Boston man who had been arrested at the instance of his wife on the charges of desertion and non-support presented a novel defense. He alleged that his wife had consulted an astrologer, who told her that she was destined to be married at least twice. "I was her first husband," said the accused man, "and I saw that it was up to me to get a move on. I had to either die or skip again, and I preferred to skip." The Court, however, declined to follow that line of reasoning, and put the man under bonds to support his wife, regardless of the astrologer's horoscope.

And the mystery of the origin of a cold is not deeper than the mystery of its cure. While every one is perfectly competent to cure his neighbor's cold, no one has ever succeeded in curing his own cold. His choice among the thousand and one infallible remedies is hampered by the condition that it "must be taken in time," and no one ever discovers that he has a cold until the time is up. What is needed is a remedy which will cure a cold at any time, and such a remedy is badly needed in the interests of good feeling and a higher morality. The man with the cold is not merely a victim of the injustice of Providence but a sufferer from the heartless indifference and even derision of his fellow-man.

Bruce Benner, of Coffeyville, Kan., has made a small fortune during the past few months by exhibiting a so-called "feathered dog" in various parts of the Sunflower State. So far as the feathers were concerned the animal was, of course, a fraud, as has just been discovered through the enterprise of a country newspaper. The dog had been completely covered from nose to tail with a tight fitting coat of Canton flannel on which pigeon feathers had been so skillfully sewn as to seem like a natural growth. A reporter who had been detailed to visit Benner's show plucked a handful of feathers from the animal's back unobserved, and the dog never winced. The fraud was thus exposed, and Benner fled from the Kansas jurisdiction.

Battens On Back of Cost.
An American, so the story goes, was once questioning a Chinaman as to the reason for many of the customs which seem absurd to us. At length, after long endurance, the Chinaman replied:

"And now, my dear sir, I would like to ask you a question which has puzzled me greatly. Will you kindly tell me why Americans and Europeans wear two useless buttons on the backs of their coats?" Unable to answer the American raised the question at home. Investigators set to work, and what do you think they discovered? Long ago, when every gentleman wore a sword and had to hang it from his belt, these two buttons held the belt to the coat. Years passed, and men left the sword to soldiers' use; the belt went out of fashion, but the two buttons were left to this very day.

NEWS FOR THE FAIR SEX

NOTES OF INTEREST ON NUMEROUS FEMINE TOPICS.

Kimona Breakfast Parties a New Fad—A Prize Shopping or Work Bag—The New Cloaks—Where Men Fail as Lovers—Etc., Etc.

Kimona Breakfast Parties a New Fad.

Kimona breakfast parties are a lark. Most of the summer girls are as frolicsome as kittens. They lie awake nights planning fun. But for the kimona spree a certain house fete would have been voted by five of the liveliest souls ever cabled in healthy bodies as dull as ditch water. Every girl of the five might lay claim to being a beauty. A handsome woman manages to have things pretty much to her liking. The breakfast freak was started by the prettiest girl of the five.

The quintet agreed. To the shop the mischievous set went on their way, and soon had a little brown-skinned fellow, as courteous as a French dancing-master, almost standing on his sleek head.

Kimonas for five, giddy cotton crepe affairs in blue, scarlet and green; some showered with perky storks, some with crick-necked dragons, some with wickenshemums as big as cabbage heads.

The almond-eyed merchant hunted for cherry blossoms for blonde heads and brown; for fans to match each robe and for the gayest of gay slippers.

The morning came when the foreign robes were to make their debut. The first gong sounded. There was a great scurrying from room to room, five girls comparing notes. The second gong sounded. Then came a scamper of tinsel feet down the broad oaken staircase and a bevy of gay creatures, looking like rare tropical birds, tipped in to breakfast.

The summer men stared hard, their manly hearts beating a wild drum-tum to their emotions. The kimonas had won the day. Such a picture as they made about the breakfast board!

Madame, the hostess, deliberately left her breakfast urn and went from one dainty soul to the other, giving each girl a hearty kiss. The men looked on enviously, sighed as dolorously as a north wind, and each man determined then and there to join forthwith the lead of the girls. They will all own kimonas before they are a week older.—Philadelphia Inquirer.

A Prize Shopping or Work Bag.

A useful form of hand bag, which obtained the first prize offered for an article of this kind best adapted to the purpose, is made as follows: Take a piece of cloth twenty-four inches square and baste to it closely a lining of firm silk. Fold over the corners until they meet in the centre. Carefully draw a circle four inches in diameter around the central point and cut away the cloth inside the circle. Join the meeting edges of the cloth in seams and press the seams flat, afterward featherstitch them on the right side. By gathering up the circular opening in the hand it will now be seen that a bag has been formed, with a drooping base decorated with four points formed by the joining of the seams. To hold the points in place, work a row of feather-stitching across the point at right angles with the one outlining the seam. Little tassels of the silk or button-holed rings may be next affixed to the points. Next sew to the circular opening a bias frill, joining in a seam at one side. Run a row of stitching a little way from the lower edge of the frill, to afford a casing in which to run a ribbon for a draw string, and decorate the casing with a row of feather-stitching. When the draw strings are in position a very shapely bag will be completed. It may be laid flat on the table to hold work, or it may be hung over the arm to carry parcels. For use as a garden bag work it may be fashioned of cretonne or denim, feather-stitched in white. For the street a heavy, black-corded silk or cloth lined with a contrasting color will be serviceable.

The New Cloaks.

Long lace coats unlined, save for an accordion pleating of mousseline de sole, are still a fad of the season. They were introduced in Paris early in the summer, and will be worn until late in the autumn. There is some little warmth in these very airy-looking garments because there is a lining across the shoulders and the upper part of the sleeves, but they are very thin, and are entirely a fad to be worn with the handsomest of gowns.

There are also cloaks in the old-fashioned circular shape, made of lace over mousseline de sole, but these have a yoke and short point of lace and hang loose, with long tabs of silk or jet passementerie put on at regular intervals around the yoke, in both front and back, which hold the lace down over the mousseline de sole.

Lace jackets, as they were worn years ago, are coming in again for house wear to take the place of the rather smarter separate waist. They are cut square in the neck and have elbow sleeves. They are made almost as long as a jacket, over a tight-fitting lining, and can be worn with or without a belt as desired. They have flat trimming around the neck, and

bands of flattrimming around the bow. They are quaint and picturesque looking, and best made in black; but they are as yet an extreme fashion, and it has not been definitely decided whether they will be popular. They have solved the problem, though, of what to do with black lace, for not only can points of lace on short capes be applied to this purpose, but flounces and strips of lace may be sewed together to make these jackets with a most satisfactory result.—Harper's Bazar.

Where Men Fail as Lovers.

"There are few girls who do not cherish the idea that they could manage the minor points of courting far better than the majority of men," says Christine Terhune Herrick, discussing the man's and woman's side of a romance. "In an engagement the feminine genius for detail comes out at its strongest. Perhaps the girl does not appreciate the man's lack in this regard during the weeks and days preceding the momentous hour when the great question is asked and answered. Possibly the flutter of uncertainty, the glamor of expectancy, render her oblivious to minor matters. But when the affair is settled, when the agreeable nimble of engagement that prefigures the jog-trot of matrimony is fairly under way, she has time to observe trifles. It is at this point of the proceedings that one man in one thousand scores the success of his life. The other nine hundred and ninety-nine put in their time, all unconsciously, in teaching their fiancés to get the better of their ideals; for an ideal of this period of life is an essential part of every young woman's equipment."—Woman's Home Companion.

A Whistle at the Belt.

A small silver whistle dangles at the belt of most mothers nowadays. It sounds as a signal of warning and summons, of anything, in fact, that spares the exercise of the vocal cords and lets the small boy know that he is wanted. When the small boy is big enough to be without a nurse the whistle all invaluable; at all times it is a convenience. The only trouble, indeed, is that since the mothers have provided themselves with whistles many small boys have equipped themselves in the same way. This, they say, is to "answer" the mother's call. Actually it is to call each other. Much confusion naturally ensues. Johnny may at any convenient season put off coming at his mother's call, upon the excuse that he supposed it, of course, was Tommy that was calling him. Some of the maternal victims of this confusion of whistles are ready with a substantial reward for the manufacturer who will put on the market two unmistakably different brands of whistles—one to be used only by mothers, the other for small boys.

Queens in Uniform.

Young Queen Wilhelmina's joy knew no bounds not long ago when the Kaiser appointed her colonel of the 115th Hussars, though it was not her first command. The Queen of Saxony is highly popular with her soldiers, and often displays her gorgeous uniform at the monthly drills of her corps, the Second Royal Saxon Queen's Hussars. The Queen of Greece gets much satisfaction and a fair amount of glory from being the only lady admiral in the world. Alexander III. was always extremely fond of his young relative, and knowing her Majesty's passion for the sea, gave her ships instead of troops.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

From the Beauty Doctors.

Starved linen collars are condemned by beauty doctors, because it is claimed that they make the neck stringy and otherwise take from its comeliness. Nothing, however, seems so appropriate with the new waistcoats as a manish collar, and the latter are likely to have a new lease of life. Finger nails are at last to be cut to conform to the shape of the finger tips and made reasonably short. Talons are out of fashion. No coloring is now added to nails by up to date manicurists. The tendency to overcoloring has put the ban of vulgarity on the hitherto popular practice.

The Daughter of Duse.

Elizabeth Duse, daughter of the famous actress, is a girl of nineteen, who has just completed her education in Munich. Her desire is to become a teacher, and she has an aversion to the theatre, in which her mother strengthened her.

Tiger Killing From a Train.

Writing from Ootsi, a correspondent of the Bulawayo Chronicle states: "As No. 1 train was going its usual patrol to Lobatsi, a tiger ran across the line, and it was noticed that it had a trap on its foot. The train was stopped, and several of us jumped off and followed the spoor. Eventually we came up to the tiger lying on the grass. He gave a growl and then got up to run away, but one of the men—Bell, a son of the R. M., who is a trooper on the train—fired at and killed the beast. The tiger gave a big roar before he died. The body was carried back to the train in triumph."—London Globe.

The varieties of stamps now current in the world number 13,811.

WARRIOR MARK'S ANT CITY

MOUNDS COVER THOUSANDS OF ACRES IN THE VALLEY.

Some Fifty Stories High—A Town So Ancient That Many of Its Structures Have Been Abandoned—Still Increasing in Size—Wonders of Ant Construction.

Perhaps there is no district in the State of Pennsylvania of which there is so little known as the beautiful Warrior's Mark Valley in Huntingdon County, says the Philadelphia Record. It is bounded on the northwest by the Bald Eagle ridge and on the southeast by the Sandy Hills, known as "the Barrens." This is the most productive of the various farming districts of the county.

It contains the largest city of its kind in the United States, perhaps, the largest in the United States, and its inhabitants may be numbered by the hundreds of millions. This is the mammoth ant city and it is situated on the north side of the barren hills which separate Warrior's Mark from Spruce Creek Valley. This great ant city is situated on a belt of sandy soil extending along the eastern base of the Allegheny Mountains, from Bedford County in a northeasterly direction to a point near the State College in Centre County. All along this belt there are communities of ants to be found varying in numbers from a few scattered hills, or mounds, to the thousands to be seen in the metropolis. The area comprised in this particular city would aggregate several thousand acres. This remarkable city is also mostly situated in an open wood, consisting of chestnut, red oak, white oak, with a few pine, dogwood and other trees interspersed.

The existence of such a large area of ant hills is due to the fact that much of the land they occupy has been in the ownership of the Shoenbergers for upwards of a century, who were not disposed to clear it. Hence these little children of the woods have never been disturbed. In this city may be seen at least two distinct types of ants—the reddish-brown and a smaller creature of a dull black color, and they dwell together in apparent harmony.

The ants have not only manifested great wisdom in the choice of their location so as to secure healthful conditions, but in the arrangement and construction of their mounds they have exhibited a degree of intelligence that approaches in some measure the wisdom of the human race. The hills, or mounds, are mostly conical in shape. In size they vary from a mere cluster of sand with apparently a single story on the ground and covering a very small space, to the great sky-scrapers—from an art point of view—perhaps fifty stories, and measure from two to five feet in circumference. Each one or hill, from the smallest to the largest, is apparently a kingdom in itself, and although the ants from the various mounds occupy a portion of the same territory, they get along very harmoniously. A magnifying glass reveals some remarkable facts in connection with these ant structures. The exteriors are very neat and tastefully constructed. The tops and sides are covered with a material that is so durable that it resists rains, floods, snow and frost. Thousands of openings lead into the interior of the larger mounds, and galleries rise above one another from the base to the top. These ant-mounds are to be found mostly in groups of three and four and sometimes a considerable space will intervene between the groups.

Tradition says that this mammoth ant city was regarded by the Indians with a remarkable degree of veneration, and was frequently visited by them. The Indians learned by observation that these little creatures could discern the approach of a period of rain with unerring precision, and that when they were seen to be active in the removal of their eggs a rain was coming. It is also said that the Indians would throw over the mounds their robes and blankets which had become filthy from long usage, and the ants would clean these articles perfectly without any apparent injury to the material.

The name of the valley originated from the fact that not far from this ant city were located certain oak trees having a crescent, or half moon, cut upon them with hatchets. Only one of these trees is now standing, however. These marks were originally so deep that traces can still be seen of them. The significance of the marks was known to the Indians alone, but it is evident some meaning was attached to them, for during the Revolutionary War every time a band of savages came into the valley one or more warrior warks were put upon the trees.

Scattered here and there throughout this ant world are mounds that are entirely depopulated. All the entrances are closed or are covered over with grass and seem to be marked with the same degree of undisturbed solitude that prevails in the deserted structures of some abandoned city that had been inhabited by human beings.

These mound builders have never been known to encroach upon farmers and others living in their vicinity. Their little world is limited to within a few feet of their mounds, where they are to be seen toiling day after day with characteristic diligence.

They are slowly increasing in numbers, and each year a few mounds are added.

Although the ants have not interfered with the interests of mankind in this section, they have been doing a useful and valuable work for the soil in the years they have been laboring. They have been enriching the soil by exposing it to the action of sun, air and rain; with the quantity of leaves with which they are filling their store houses and by mixing the soil with both vegetable and animal matter. They have also perforated the ground to a considerable depth. Some of their subterranean galleries have been traced down fifteen feet and found to go still lower.

OPPOSED TO M.A.L. VALVES.

An Old Detective Tells How One of Them Figured in His Prisoner's Escape.

"I never had but one prisoner escape from me," said an old railroad detective, "and that was under very peculiar circumstances. In 1882, when I was working for the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe road, I captured a fellow near Trinidad, Col., and after securing the requisition papers started East with him for Kansas City. Lake was a little, consumptive chap, as frail as a woman, and I didn't consider it necessary to even put the handcuffs on him. With one twist I could have broken him in two. Besides, I didn't care to cause him needless humiliation by exhibiting him before the other passengers in the role of a prisoner, so we simply sat side by side, like two fellow tourists, and nobody in the cars had any idea he was under arrest.

"Naturally we did a good deal of talking, and at about dusk of the first evening out Lake turned the conversation to curious mechanical contrivances and described several remarkable machines he had seen. He had been a skilled engineer earlier in life, and, being a good talker, soon got me deeply interested. Among other things he told me about an air pump with a singular ball valve. 'The ball lies in a socket,' he said, 'and the greater the air pressure behind it, the tighter it sticks.' To illustrate, he twisted an old envelope into a cone and dropped a paper wad into the mouth. 'Now, when I blow,' he continued, 'you'll see that the wad stays right where it is.' Like a fool, I stared at the thing and he blew violently into the little end. At the same instant I felt as if a raging furnace had suddenly belched its flames right into my face. I couldn't see, I couldn't breathe; for a moment or two I could not even move. My throat and nostrils were on fire and I felt sure my eyes had been burned literally out of their sockets.

"What had happened was simply this: The envelope was full of red pepper and I had received the charge, point blank, at about a six-inch range. While I was gasping the scoundrel ran to the other end of the car. 'My friend has a fit,' he shouted; 'I'm going after water!' Of course he jumped off, and that was the last of him. He was never caught. The other day a man tried to sell me a lawn sprinkler. 'It has a patent ball valve,' he said, 'I don't want it.' I replied.—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

Liability of Beekeepers.

At Bastingstoke County Cork, yesterday, Judge Gye dealt with a case affecting the liability of bee keepers. John Butter, a wood dealer, sued the village postmaster, Mr. Longley, for the recovery of part of the value of an old mare which the defendant's bees stung to death, also 10s. on account of pain from bee stings suffered by plaintiff, 10s. for loss of use of part of a field adjoining the postmaster's garden, where the plaintiff's laborers could not work owing to the bees, and 20s. for extra labor through having to make a hayrick in another position.

It was suggested on the defendant's behalf that some other person's bees were at fault, but the plaintiff and his witnesses established to His Honor's satisfaction the fact that the bees came from the defendant's hives. Judge Gye, in giving judgment for the amount claimed, said that a bee keeper kept bees at his own risk, and if they did damage he was liable.—London Times.

The Telegraphone.

In the Revue Generale des Sciences, M. Louis Olivier gives some further particulars of Poulsen's "telegraphone," which is attracting attention at the Paris Exhibition. He describes several devices for increasing the volume of sound, or "intensifying" the record, to use the language of the photographer. The steel band with the consequent poles, which forms the original record, is made to pass between the poles of an electro-magnet, which transfers the record to another band. This may be done several times over, and the record taken simultaneously from all the bands. In another arrangement the record is intensified by passing it very rapidly through the second magnetic field, which, as we know, has the effect of increasing the induced currents, and therefore also the intensity of the secondary record. Nature.

India-rubber heels on shoes, decreasing the fatigue of marching will be adopted, it is said, by the French army.