

CENTRAL AMERICAN PESTS.

The Innocent-Looking Fly and Its Egg—The Bold Garrapotas.

[Fanny Brigham Ward's Letter.] One may prepare for mountain lions, jaguars, liza-constrictors, alligators, centipedes and tarantulas—but to be totally vanquished by ticks is defeat too inglorious for Christian resignation!

Not only is the earth infested with fleas—so large that I dare not describe them and so numerous that our donkeys, wading for days through the hot sand, became literally black with them—and gnats, mosquitoes and stinging insects abound in incredible numbers; but the venturesome traveler is obliged to protect himself from a thousand before un-

heard-of burrowing and crawling creatures by wearing a thick veil, so closely tacked inside that no spot on face or neck is come-at-able, long leather gauntlets, and the tallest of rubber boots securely tied at the tops.

Betsy and I did not pride ourselves much upon style, as we sallied forth on mule back thus caparisoned—than which "even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these," and I decline to take a Bible oath that we entirely escaped despite all precautions.

There is a tiny, innocent-looking fly (or rather there are billions of them) which comes singing along in the wildest and most absent-minded manner, and goes by without causing you to suspect that he has so much as noticed your existence.

But the little wretch manages to get in his work by probing you unawares with a long, invisible lance, and leaving under the skin an infinitesimal egg, which at first produces no pain or other sign of injury.

The Queen of Madagascar.

[New York Tribune.]

Lieut. Shufeldt, of the United States navy, who recently crossed Madagascar was presented to the queen, whom he thus describes: "She is a young woman of medium height, of lithe figure and graceful movements, and distinguished by majestic bearing, though girlish in appearance. She has dark wavy hair, light complexion, and black lustrous eyes. She dresses in modern Parisian female costume. Her husband is the prime minister, and is 69 years old."

According to royal custom, she never left the palace without a large retinue and much ceremony. When royal property was carried through the streets, the people were expected to keep themselves within their houses. If anybody was met in the street who had no time to run to his house he had to prostrate himself upon the ground until the queen's goods had passed.

Weather and Temper.

[Harper's Bazar.]

One must, indeed, be either very happy or well-disciplined to thoroughly enjoy the keening of the wind, the pelting rain and murkiness of stormy days, or too young to have known suffering; but even the sorrowing may find a melancholy alleviation in the gilded atmosphere of fine weather, which, like a good natured person, is welcome everywhere. Everything looks uglier and more portentous in the storm and darkness; pain is more painful, disappointment more bitter, regret more poignant, poverty more biting; but when the sun returns all the vapors dilute like ghosts at cock-crow, poverty and pain and annoyance become more endurable, borrow some luster from the day, and masquerade in its colors.

Two Cattle Kings.

[Chicago Tribune.]

Two cattle kings of the coast, Messrs. Miller and Lux, are rated at \$8,000,000 to \$10,000,000, and were poor men twenty years ago. They have about 90,000 head of cattle and 115,000 head of sheep, of which latter they kill 6,000 per month. They own an irrigating canal worth \$1,000,000, fences 300 miles in length (a fortune in itself), in California 600,000 acres of land, in Nebraska 10,000 acres, and 15,000 acres of alfalfa grass.

Strange Discoveries.

[Philadelphia Record.]

Discovered among the ruins of the Zuni and Aztec cities are spindles and wheels remarkably like those employed by the Highlanders in Scotland. The position of some would indicate an antiquity of at least 2,000 years.

Dangerous Adulteration.

The use of bitter willow in flavoring and coloring tobacco is vehemently denounced by Professor Deschamps, of Paris, as causing softening of the brain.

THE RUSSIAN AT HOME.

Interior of a Russian Home—Suites and Reception-Rooms.

[New York Star.]

The interior of a Russian house is not familiar to all, so, under favor of the Lares and Penates, we will enter the sacred domicile, first premising that a well-kept house in St. Petersburg or Moscow is exceedingly comfortable. A tall, portly suisse (house-porter) admits you, when a footman ushers you up a most spacious, handsome staircase, often of marble; and after passing through the usual double doors, you are introduced into an ante-room, where you leave your inevitable garment—your fur cloak. The reception rooms are then entered, and these often seem interminable, eight or nine in number in the house on the Palace or English quays are not uncommon, generally opening into one another. The initial parquets of the rooms are often very beautiful—the floor polisher is an important institution in Russia; of course some rooms are richly carpeted, and do justice to the looms of Turkey and Persia. The silk or damask curtains, wall hangings and coverings for the ottomans are superb. All is luxurious; vases of lapis-lazuli, porphyry and malachite, pictures and objects of art in general are in profusion.

People here all arm themselves for the winter. There can be no question as to its severity. Double windows are universal; they are an absolute necessity. For the admission of fresh air, one pane in each window is left so that it may be opened at pleasure. The rest of the window is so thoroughly secured that not a breath of the keen air can enter.

The stoves by means of which the houses are heated are very ingeniously constructed. One stove will heat several rooms. It is filled with wood, which is burned until calcined; it is then well stirred, the door of the stove is tightly shut, and it does not require to be replenished for several days. The injurious effects of the hot air are obviated by large jars of cold water being kept in the rooms.

The Russians are very fond of promenading through their suites of apartments, and ample space is left for this purpose. The winter being so long every conceivable means is used to shed around the charms of warmer climates. Trellises, along which various creepers are trained, are introduced; pretty baskets of plants (tulips, hyacinths and camellias in full bloom, while winter is raging outside), the constant warm temperature in-doors being favorable to their cultivation. The continental fashion of living in flats much prevails here. Sleeping rooms are not invariably numerous in proportion to the reception-rooms, but this state of things naturally improves with the increase of civilization. Sometimes now a servant brings with him into a house, bed and baggage, and settles down in a corner of some unfrequented corridor, other provision for himself and his effects being nil.

The picture of his saint has its place assigned on the wall above, a curtain is arranged in front of his improvised lodgment, and there he is comfortably established, or, at any rate, contentedly established. The uneducated Russians carry, to a great extent, their fanaticism for the pictures of saints, calling them bozhs (gods). These are painted in bright colors on pieces of board, and ornamented with silver or gold. When a Russian enters a room or shop, let his business be of the utmost importance, his first act is to salute the saint by bowing or crossing himself.

A Fortune in "Beeswax."

[St. Louis Globe-Democrat.]

"Did ye ever hear of the original discoverer of the Toughest mine at Tombstone? Well, he was a regular tenderfoot from 'way back, and was workin' with two pardners on the claim, an' one day he came up from the bottom of the shaft an' says he, 'Boys, said he, 'I'm played out, and I ain't got no more heart in this racket. I allow as long as I was striking anything like ore I'd stand it out here, but may ye spit on my grave if I ain't working beeswax,' an' he showed his pardners a piece of rock thickly covered with a brown substance as did look uncommonly like wax. 'Will ye take \$300 for your share?' said one of his pardners. 'Bet yer sweet life I will,' and so the stuff was handed over, the quitclaim deed made out, an' the tenderfoot lost a fortune. The thing he took for beeswax was chloride of silver, an' the rock went \$15,000 to the ton. Tell ye, stranger, it ain't every man's a judge of rock."

One Woman's Heresies.

[N. Y. Trib.]

Doubtless the late postmaster general of England owed his success largely to the ability, energy and devotion of his excellent wife. But there is no trait in the current story that she once had her finger crushed in the carriage door hinge as she was riding to the house of commons with him, and bravely endured the torture in silence rather than disturb him with the knowledge of it, and thus imperil the successful delivery of the great speech he was about to make. Such an incident did indeed occur, but Mrs. Benjamin Disraeli was the heroine of it, and but for her fortitude then her husband perhaps never would have become earl of Beaconsfield. The story was first told to the American public many years ago by the late N. P. Willis.

How Old the Trees Grow.

[Boston Herald.]

The eminent botanist, De Candoile, gave the age of an elm at 335 years. The ages of some palms have been set down at from 600 to 700 years, that of an olive tree at 700 years, that of a palm tree at 720, of a cedar at 800, of an oak at 1,900, of a yew at 2,800, of a taxodium at 4,000, and of a baobab tree at 5,000.

A Woman's Way.

[Philadelphia Record.]

An ingenious woman has devised a plan for getting satisfaction even from her spouse's sonorous snores. When he gets well under way she ties a mouth harmonicon under his nose, and she declares the music is lovely.

Whitehall Times.

If the son could pick up the stitches of experience that the father drops he would not be obliged to unravel his work so often.

Moonshining in Ireland.

The place selected for the operations of the distiller is usually some natural hollow, or a sheltered spot partially hidden by some overhanging rock. But occasionally there are much more habitable places prepared. A favorite example of this is an artificial cave dug out in the side of a high bank close to a stream, the proximity of which is always necessary for their operations. The entrance is generally concealed with great ingenuity by a luxuriant growth of furze and other shrubs. Inside, a raised seat of earth, on which some heather has been strewn, and a rudely built chimney complete the structure. The functions of the chimney are not by any means exhausted by being brought up to the natural level of the earth.

As is well known, burning peat has an easily recognizable odor, and if this drew attention to a wreath of smoke ascending in the midst of a field, the chances of a long life for the still-house would be very small. Instead, therefore, of being directly brought out, every conceivable artifice is employed to render the smoke invisible. Sometimes it is led into a drain; at others, it is carried through a narrow passage, and allowed to make its escape in such small quantities as to be practically imperceptible. In one case of which we know the still-house was underground, in the vicinity of the owner's cottage, and advantage of this was taken to convey the chimney up the earthen fence and effect a junction with the flue of the kitchen.

In some cases a dwelling-house is chosen in such a locality as to defy suspicion. An example of this occurred in a market town, where distillation was carried on for many years in the main street within a hundred yards of an important constabulary barrack, and the owner in this case was said to have amassed a considerable amount of money. For ought that is known, many similar instances may still exist, as the shrewdness shown by the choice of such a hiding place renders detection, except through treachery, a most unlikely event. It would be well, per-aps, to add that in the case just related the proprietor of the still was a bachelor.

How Love Makes Fools of Men.

[New York Letter.]

A good while ago one of the cleverest men in America paid a lady of my acquaintance a deal of attention, and she was delighted at the ordinary routine of love-making, and thought the introduction of the new element of brains might make this affair more tolerable than its predecessors. There were several charming evenings in mixed company, when very tender things were said in very bright fashion, and the lady began to think there was a good deal of fun in a flirtation after all.

The dear man got on well, but before fate granted him the opportunity of a tete-a-tete with his flame, it called him to a neighboring city, and in a mad hour he wrote, and he began his letter in this style: "Does my pretty one ever think of her absent sugar-plum?" That settled the whole business. That nice plum might have gone on and distanced ingersoll and Everts for wit and wisdom. She never read out sentence more of that long letter. She gazed transfixed at that first greeting, and she laid the closely-written sheets on a blazing grate, and when that man who had so good a chance arrived in town and called promptly, the servant told him her mistress had left word for Mr. S. Plum that she wouldn't be at home before the early part of 1887.

"But my name is not Plum," said the bounced.

"That's what you're called here," returned the bounced. "You're the man." So "they never speak as they pass by," and the lady will never forget that sentence; "Does my pretty one ever think of her absent sugar-plum?"

Future of the Interview.

[American Journalist.]

Ask a man to write a book and he ceases to talk and begins to lecture. The means have not yet to be discovered by which some part of the talk of the best men may be conveyed to the great body of the intelligent public. Or, have not the means already been discovered? Are they not to be found, we make the suggestion with all humility, in the interview? As yet, no doubt, that form of publication is much maligned, and let us admit, also occasionally abused. But it has a future before it. For newspapers can do with ease and propriety what books can never do as well or so naturally. They can act as a telephone through which the widest public may be present at the conversation of our best men.

Fox Hunt Delayed.

[Philadelphia Call.]

Young Finks—Ah! m'deah fellah, so delighted to see you. Bay the way, when does the aw fox-hunting season open this year?

Master of Hounds—Can't give the exact date, but it will be early.

"Glad to hear it, I'm suah. Just dying for a wun. But why cawnt you fix the date now, bah Jove?"

"Well, you see, the whipper-in got sick and did not start for England until last week."

"Aw, we have to wait until he gets back, eh? Too bad, too bad. Bah the way, what did he go to England for?"

"For a fox."

Letter Writing Extraordinary.

[Kinderhook Rough Notes.]

Mrs. Blinker asked Matilda, the house servant, a few nights ago: "What dreadful scratching is that out in the kitchen? It must be the dog trying to get in. I never heard anything like it in my life."

"Dat's no dog scratching the doah. Dat's de cook writtin' a lub letter to her honeysuckle, who works ober in Ghatnam."

Not Quite Enough.

There are about 40,000,000 silver dollars in circulation in this country—not quite one apiece all around. Some people can now see why they haven't got one.

For Hiccoughs.

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1 pound best Coffee 17
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Scaled Herring, per box 35
Loose Valencia Raisins 09
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Bloater Herring, per doz 20
2 lbs Canned Corned Beef 30
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TEAS—Young Hyson, 60c, 80c, \$1 per pound. Imperial, 60c, 80c, \$1 per pound. Gunpowder, 60c, 80c, \$1 per pound. Oolong, 60c, 80c, \$1 per pound. Mixed green and black, 60c, 80c, \$1 per pound. A very fine Assam, 60c, 80c, \$1 per pound. Also, a good bargain in Young Hyson at 40c per pound.
CHEESE—Finest full cream cheese at 16c per pound.
VINEGAR—Pure old vinegar made from white fruit. One gallon of this grade is worth two of the inferior two gallons of common vinegar.

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