By a curious coincidence the number of lives lost at sea during 1896 in British merchant ships is returned as 1897.

The reading of gas meters by the school children is referred to by the New York Journal as the introduction of fiction in the public schools.

Governor Mount of Indiana, has inaugurated a movement for teaching the science of agriculture in the public schools. He says: "Thousands of dollars are annually expended in research among Greek and Latin roots, and comparatively nothing is expended in telling how to translate through planted roots the elements of soil fertility into abundant harvests and delicious fruits."

Only seven per cent. of those persons who entered the Klondike region during the past year have been able to earn a living; no new discoveries of placers have been made during the eight months preceding November 2 last; all old claims have been taken up; there is no chance for employment for any large number of people in any capacity; there is not now, nor likely to be within twelve months, any adequate means of supplying food and shelter for the people now in Alaska or in the northwest territory, and the lawless characters are banding together for the purpose of robbery—such are the reports received by special courier from Captain Ray, the representative of the war department at Dawson City. And yet a rush has already been begun for that country, where there is nothing to eat, no work to do, and no security for life or property.

It is a curious fact that the retention of McLeavy Brown in charge of the customs service of Korea and the checkmating of the plans of Alexieff, the Russian who had been chosen to oust the British official, was due to an English woman living in San Francisco. She is Mrs. Emma Endres, correspondent of the London Times. Alexieff came through New York and Washington without attracting attention, but when he reached San Francisco Mrs. Endres found his name in the personal columns of the papers. She knew his position as Russian financial agent, and promptly cabled the fact to the Times that he was in San Francisco, and had secured passage to Yokohama and from there to Korea. The fact that he came secretly by this roundabout way excited her suspicions, and she suggested investigation. The Times conveyed the news to the government, and thus by liberal use of the cable Great Britain was able to checkmate the Russian's design of ousting McLeavy Brown.

There can be no doubt of the fact that great alarm exists in the public mind of Great Britain over the rapidly growing industrial prestige of the United States. One of the most conservative of British journals, The London Economist, accounts for the marked falling off in exports from that country during the past year on the ground that American competition is yearly becoming more dangerous to the interests of Great Britain. While recognizing the harmful effects of the Indian famine and other disturbing influences this representative newspaper observes: "Yet we attach more importance still to a new factor which has made itself very manifest during the past twelve months—we refer to the competition of American iron both at home and abroad. Twelve months ago this competition was felt, but only to a limited extent, and it was generally assumed that it was due to the exceptional depression which was experienced in the United States, and that so soon as this had passed away prices in America would rise to such a point as would make it unprofitable to continue shipments. The total exports from the United States, which in 1896 were about 100,000 tons, are estimated to reach over 500,000 tons in 1897. The principal items are pig iron and steel rails. The former comes mainly from the state of Alabama and is shipped from southern ports in cotton ships. Being able to carry iron in addition to a full cargo of cotton, it is taken at a comparatively low rate of freight, and in this way it can be laid down at a price to compete with pig iron of British production. Steel rails have been shipped largely to Canada, Mexico, India, Australia and Japan, and have come into direct competition with British manufacturers." What the London Economist is thus candid enough to admit, other discerning newspapers of Great Britain cannot be slow to recognize. There is no country on the globe which can compare with the United States in the industrial strides which it has made during the past few years.

Great Britain has forty-nine vessels ready for business in the far East whenever there is anything for them to do.

The sudden changes of climate encountered by soldiers when troops are moved from one quarter of the world to another are estimated as increasing the annual mortality of Europe by 50,000 men.

Le Matin of Paris states that there exists in France exactly 71,200 Jews in a population of nearly 38,000,000. These Jews are divided as follows: Paris 42,000; Bordeaux, 3000; along the eastern frontier, 19,000, making a total of 64,000. The remaining 7200 are scattered all over the territory. The active capital of France is estimated at $16,000,000,000. Of this, according to Le Matin, the Jews possess $4,000,000,000.

Poor old China is slowly but surely breaking up, says a writer, and the nations of Europe are scrambling for the pieces. It is the oldest government in the world, but its people are so superstitious, and they have been oppressed for so many years by ruthless rulers that they have no spirit left to fight. Japan beat them in the war of a few years ago and took a big slice of their territory. Then Russia came and seized on a seaport. England has had a foothold at Hong Kong for many years, and only a few weeks ago the Germans landed and seized another seaport. France is thinking about getting possession of Formosa, and Japan will no doubt wish to increase her share. In the meantime the emperor of China, who thinks he is the son of heaven, and the ruler of the whole world, dares protest only feebly. No doubt all of our boys and girls will live to see China as a nation wiped off the map. We can't help feeling sorry that a once great nation should thus disappear, and yet every one knows that its people never will make progress until they come under the influence and control of the more civilized nations of the earth.

The incidents in the trial of M. Zola in Paris ought to go far toward explaining why Frenchmen write such remarkable books about America. If these incidents prove anything, they prove that Frenchmen are radically different from Americans in every conceivable way. For that reason Frenchmen find it difficult to understand us, our manners and our customs, just as we find it difficult to comprehend them and theirs. All over this country, it is safe to say, people are wondering how it is possible that such things could occur at a trial of national importance in one of the leading capitals of the world. Certainly nowhere in America, not even in the remotest frontier towns, could such a spectacle be seen as a body of lawyers going to a court to create a disturbance as two hundred barristers, in wigs and gowns, did in Paris. And if anything even faintly resembling that incident should occur in America, the Parisian newspapers would be the first to say that nothing better could be expected of a horde of ignorant barbarians like us. Yet the thing happened in one of the most venerable and cultivated centres of modern Europe.

The public has long been familiar with laws which are called dead letters. They have been statutes which were enacted long in the past, under conditions that have ceased to exist, and which gradually fell into "innocuous desuetude," until at last few people knew of their existence. Modern methods of legislation are developing a new kind of dead letter. A bill is introduced which goes through all the stages to enactment as though it were designed to be a real law, but it turns out afterwards that the legislators never took it seriously, and it was passed only to oblige somebody or comply with some request. In his annual message to the Legislature, Governor Wolcott of Massachusetts suggests that "it may fairly be considered whether legislation prescribing after some future date a uniform width of tire for the wheels of all vehicles carrying heavy loads would not tend to diminish the great cost of maintaining highways alike to the commonwealth and to cities and towns." The Hartford Times characterizes this recommendation as perfectly reasonable, but says it will make some people who know what has happened in Connecticut smile. What has happened is this: "A wide-tire law was passed in 1895, has been steadily ignored, and so far as we are aware, there has never been a prosecution under it, or an attempt to have one brought." In other words, a new law becomes a dead letter at once, and nobody sees anything strange about the development.

THE ROAD.

Pray, whither leads the road, fair heart?
Say, whither leads the road?
Across a rill, around a hill,
Beside a dell where rivers start,
Where bending nut-trees shed their load—
Oh, thither leads the road, dear heart,
Oh, thither leads the road.

What matter where the road may lead,
So thou and I together go?
Companionship is all our need,
Division all our woe.

The pine-tree tall on yonder hill
For years has watched the passer-by;
When he is dust we shall be still
Together, thou and I.

How hushed the afternoon! I dare
Not whisper love, but send the thought
In speechless message. All the air
In Silence' thrall is caught.

Oh, these are God-reared trees! How soft
The wind-dreams round their tall heads creep,
The drowsy leaves that doze aloft
Stir like a child in sleep.

Young Autumn's fire begins to burn
The brands to hurl at Winter's brow;
The sun-wooed leaves sigh low, and turn
To crimson on the bough.

Pray, whither leads the road, fair heart?
Say, whither leads the road?
Across a rill, around a hill,
Beside a dell where rivers start,
Where bending nut-trees shed their load—
Oh, thither lead the road, my heart,
Oh, thither leads the road.

—John Macy in The Chap-Book.

A Stolen Package.

From a yellow, faded pamphlet that lay for years on a bookshelf in an old-fashioned farmhouse in Tynedale in the north of England, the story given below is taken.

William Tarbot was a lawyer at Hexham, in the north of England. Having to attend the assizes at Alnwick and probably spend some days there and Mrs. Tarbot's parents residing eight miles from that place, Mr. Tarbot arranged that his wife and their daughter, a girl of 16, should accompany him and stay with their relatives until he was ready to return home. The family traveled on horseback, as was customary among country people in those days, and reached the abode of Mr. and Mrs. Norman, the wife's parents, after a pleasant ride of a few hours. Mr. and Mrs. Norman were plain, old-fashioned people, owning their own farm and accounted wealthy. The next morning Mr. Tarbot rode on to Alnwick and was soon over head and ears in business.

On the last day of the court one Wray of Bamborough paid over to Mr. Tarbot 2350 pounds in bank of England notes in settlement of a suit. Wray had the money in a brown paper parcel, which he opened in Tarbot's bedroom in the inn where they were both staying. The two men counted the money, and Wray wrapped it up in the same way in which he had produced it and laid the package on the table, at the same time saying:

"Now, Tarbot, you should stand something, so ring the bell."

"Why, of course I will, with pleasure," Tarbot said, and thereupon Wray playfully turned him toward the bell pull, which hung by the side of the mantelpiece.

After the men had drunk together they parted with mutual expressions of good feeling, Tarbot putting the package into his pocket buttoning his coat over it. An hour later he changed his coat for a traveling one and laid the package on a chair by a window, leaving it there while he went out upon the gallery and called the boots to bring him his saddle bags, which he had been cleaning. Having stowed away his things in the bags, he put on his traveling coat, placed the package in his inside pocket and buttoned the coat over his breast. Then he mounted his horse and started for the dwelling of his father-in-law.

It was an unusually hot day in September and a thunderstorm was raging over the Grampians. Fearing that he might be hindered by the swelling stream if he attempted to ford it, he rode two or three miles out of his way to cross it by a bridge. It was well he did so, for, though he rode right into the storm and was wet to the skin, he got on the safe side of the water, and the rest of his road was unobstructed. Nevertheless so heavy was the storm that he took refuge in a smithy on the outskirts of a hamlet and waited there until the blast had spent itself. When he reached Squire Norman's dwelling, it was past 9. A roasting fire soon tried his clothes and a hearty supper speedily put him to right internally. As he sat by the hearth smoking the squire said:

"We have a curious visitor here to-night—not here exactly either, as you'll see. When the storm was at its height, a tall, gaunt man, dressed like a drover, came here for shelter. We gave him all he could eat and drink, and he is now asleep, I suppose, in the hayloft. He told us a very strange story. He said he had been east with a drove of cattle and was returning afoot when the rain caught him. He managed with some difficulty to ford the stream, and was making his way along the bank when he heard a cry for help. It turned out, so far as he could learn, that a man, in attempting to cross, had lost his footing and was clinging desperately to the exposed roots of a tree, while the rushing flood was too strong for him to resist so as to get a hold of the root or anything else with his feet. It was impossible for the drover to reach him, and he shouted that fact across the flood. Then the man cried:

"I have a package of money here which will be washed away if I lose my grip. If you'll take care of it for me, I'll share it with you.'

"'Throw it this way,' the drover said 'I am John Cotter and you can hear of me at the Green Man at Carlisle any day.'

"With this the stranger hurled a package toward the drover, which he luckily caught," continued the squire. "He showed us the package and opened it before us all. It contained 2350 pounds in England notes."

"Great Lord!" exclaimed Mr. Tarbot, clapping his hand to his breast. "Can it be possible—No. I feel it. The package is all safe."

He opened his coat and drew forth a brown paper package from the inside pocket.

"I tell you what, squire," he said. "I burst out into a cold sweat all over when you told me what the drover's package contained, for I have a package of money for a client amounting precisely to the sum you named."

"Why, the drover's package is the very picture of yours," said the squire.

"Outside perhaps; outside," said the lawyer as he opened the package.

Inside there was nothing but a lot of sheets of worthless paper cut into the size of Bank of England notes. Tarbot was for a time struck dumb.

"I've been robbed," he said savagely, but restraining his voice. "The package containing my client's money has been stolen and this worthless package put in its place. Your drover, squire, is the thief."

"Well, it looks like it certainly," said the squire. "But what would induce the man if he were a thief to come here and show me the money, and desire to stay here all night? Wouldn't he have got so far away with it as possible and just as quickly as he could?"

"It seems so certainly," Tarbot answered. "Nevertheless the circumstances are so remarkable that I think steps ought to be taken at once by you as a magistrate to secure the drover if he hasn't shown a pair of clean heels already."

"I agree with you," said the squire, "and I will send for the constable at once and arrest him.

While a servant was quickly dispatched for the officer of the law, the squire and Tarbot, each armed with a pistol, quitted the house by the rear, and, being provided with a lantern, went to the stable over which was the hayloft where the drover was supposed to be. Ascending the ladder without noise, the lawyer threw the light of the lantern across the floor. There, sure enough, lay the gaunt form of the drover, with every sign upon it of a deep sleep. Nevertheless when the constable arrived the drover was aroused and, much to his surprise was informed that he was a prisoner. After he heard the explanation of the fact he laughed heartily and said:

"Well, now, isn't this some trick that you are trying to practice upon me? I vow, it's clever, but it isn't fair to wake a tired man out of his first sleep for the sake of a joke."

He was assured that it was no joke, and, being kindly advised by the squire to go quietly with the constable, he did so.

Next morning the body of a murdered man was discovered on the other side of the stream, about a quarter of a mile below the bridge. It was removed to the village lockup, and there Mr. Tarbot identified it as Wray's. The skull was fractured and the right arm broken. It was supposed that the arm was broken when raised to protect the head from a bludgeon, which was found near the body.

But this was not all. The overseer of the poor had in his charge in an outhouse of the village inn a man who had been found early that morning on the bank of the stream with a dislocated arm and some broken ribs.

Here was a nice complication of things, such, in fact, as had never before come under the notice of Squire Norman or his son-in-law, Tarbot. The man with the dislocated arm was soaked and mud stained and had evidently been carried away by the overflowing stream.

Tarbot naturally associated him with the person who had given the package to the drover for safe keeping. This turned out to be all right, for the drover, being quietly introduced to the place where the man was, said:

"Well, neighbor, do you want your package?"

The man, who had been lying for some time apparently unconscious, now bestirred himself and, looking around and seeing that only the drover was there, exclaimed:

"What! Are you the man I threw it to?"

"Aye, it is safe," was the reply. "When will you be ready to divide?"

"Don't say a word," said the man in a low tone. "Stay around until I am able to get away and then I'll make it all right with you."

After this all suspicion was removed from the drover, and he was taken into the counsels of the squire and Tarbot. In a few days the man was well enough to talk, and he was encouraged to do so by the drover, who assumed the character of a free rover looking around for what he could pick up or knock down. The man admitted that he had taken the package from a stranger whom he met on the highway. He was confronted with the club and Wray's corpse, but put on a bold front and denied all knowledge of them. Finally, however, he confessed to the drover that he had brained Wray and stolen the package from him, afterward taking refuge in a roadside inn, where he found an opportunity to examine and learn the nature of the plunder. Then he grew restless and ventured out in the storm, and in an attempt to cross the stream missed his ford and thus came to meet the drover.

There was nothing left to explain the abstraction from the custody of Tarbot of the genuine package and the substitution of the counterfeit except that Wray himself had designed the scheme and carried it out as he pushed Mr. Tarbot toward the bell pull, and that in making his way not toward home, for that was in a contrary direction, but to some place where he intended to conceal the money, he was met by the ruffian who murdered and robbed him. This wretch gave the name of George Rainton, and under that he was convicted of the murder of Wray. It was afterward commonly asserted that his real name was that of a distinguished Northumberland family, and that through their influence the sentence was commuted to transportation, and that he was allowed to escape punishment altogether on condition of his quitting the country.—A. Beckwith in Brooklyn Citizen.

FLORIDA'S POCAHONTAS.

A Romantic Story as Related by Governor Bloxham to the Fishermen.

Governor W. B. Bloxham incidentally related the following legend in his address welcoming the delegates of the recent National Fishery society to Tampa, Fla.

"You meet here upon this historic ground where the footprints of some of Spain's greatest cavaliers and America's noblest captains can be traced. While it is not my intention to recur to their heroic deeds or to offer you a cup filled with the ambrosia of ancient story, yet there is one romance, based upon historic fact, associated with this very spot that I feel you will kindly indulge should brief reference be made thereto.

"Wherever the history of America is read the story of Pocahontas is known. The romance is most captivating, and some of Virginia's most honored sons trace back a lineage to this daughter of the forest. But the historic fact that a similar scene was enacted on this very spot three-quarters of a century before the name of Pocahontas was ever lisped by English lips is unknown to even many Floridans. It was here in 1528, twelve years before De Soto landed on Tampa Bay, that Juan Ortez, a Spanish youth of 18, having been captured at Clear Water, was brought before Hirrihugua, the stern Indian chief, in whose breast was rankling a vengeance born of the ill treatment of his mother by the followers of the ill-fated Narvarez. Ortez was young and fair, but the cruel chief had given the orders, and here was erected a gridiron of poles, and young Ortez was bound and stretched to meet the demands of a human sacrifice. The torch was being applied, the crackling flames began to gather strength for a human holocaust, when the stern chief's daughter threw herself at her father's feet and interposed in Ortez's behalf. Her beauty rivalled that of the historic dame 'whose heavenly charms kept Troy and Greece ten years in arms.' The soft language of her soul flowed from her never silent eyes as she looked up through her tears of sympathy, imploring the life of the young Spaniard.

"Those tears, the ever-ready weapon of woman's weakness, touched the heart of even the savage chief, and Ortez was for the time spared.

"But the demon of evil in a few months again took possession of Hirrihugua and his daughter saw that even her entreaties would be unavailing. She was betrothed to Mucoso, the young chief of a neighboring tribe. Their love had been plighted, that God-given love that rules the savage breast.

"Her loving heart told her that Ortez would be safe in Mucoso's keeping. At the dead hour of night she accompanied him beyond danger and placed in his hand such token as Mucoso would recognize.

"She acted none too soon. As the sun rose over this spot, its rays fell upon the maddened chief calling in vain for the intended victim of his vengeance. His rage was such that it dried up the wellsprings of parental affection, and he refused the marriage of his daughter unless Ortez was surrendered. But that Indian girl, although it broke the heartstrings of hope, sacrificed her love to humanity, and Mucoso sacrificed his bride upon the altar of honor.

"Ortez lived to welcome De Soto. Tell me—aye, tell the world—where a brighter example of nobler virtue was ever recorded! Where in history do you find more genuine and more touching illustration of 'love, charity and forgiveness'—the very trinity of earthly virtues, and the brightest jewels of the Christian heaven?

"What a captivating theme this Florida Pocahontas should present to the pen of imagination, picturing this spot then and today associated with romance rich in historic love."—Savannah News.

Fighting for His Own.

A short time ago two highway robbers (from Liverpool) attacked an old Scotchman on the Glasgow and Carlisle road, with the intention of robbing him of all he had. The Scotchman being a strong, powerful man, let out right and left, knocking the two ruffians about unmercifully; but, being two to one, he was soon overpowered and his money taken.

After they had got clear away, one thief said to the other,

"I'm blowed if he hasn't nearly broke my jaw."

"I reckon," said the other, "that he's broken one of my ribs at least; but never mind. How much did yer get off him?"

After searching among some buttons the reply came:

"Two ha'pennies!"

"Good heavens!" cried the other, holding his ribs. "How would he 'a' fought for sixpence!"—Answers.

A Newsboy at Eighty.

The oldest "newsboy" in the world has just celebrated his birthday at Joliet, Ill. His name is Orsanis Page, and he is 80 years of age. He is a local character and proud of the fact that after eight decades of life he can still get up at daylight to make his rounds with the morning papers, and spend the rest of the day in shouting the latest editions through the streets of the city.

THE CITY OF SLEEP.

Over the edge of the purple down,
Where the single lamplight gleams,
Know ye the road to the Merciful Town
That is laid by the Sea of Dreams—
Where the poor may lay their wrongs away,
And the sick may forget to weep?
But we—pity us! ah! pity us!
We wakeful; oh, pity us!
We must go back with Policeman Day—
Back from the City of Sleep!

Weary they turn from the scroll and crown,
Fetter and prayer and plow—
They that go up to the Merciful Town,
For her gates are closing now.
It is their right in the baths of Night
Body and soul to sleep;
We—pity us; ah! pity us!
We wakeful; oh! pity us!
We must go back with Policeman Day—
Back from the City of Sleep!

Over the edge of the purple down
Ere the tender dreams begin;
Look—we may look—at the Merciful Town
But we may not enter in.
Outcasts all, from her guarded wall,
Back to our watch we creep;
We—pity us; ah! pity us!
We wakeful; oh! pity us!
We that go back with Policeman Day—
Back from the City of Sleep!

—Rudyard Kipling.

HUMOROUS.

He—Will you give me a kiss? She—No; but I will lend you one for just a second.

He—You must take me for a blamed idiot. She—I never blamed you for anything, did I?

He (apologetically)—I suppose you think I'm a regular bear. She (bravely)—No, I don't. Bears are said to hug—at least sometimes.

"Is papa strong as Samson, aunty?" "Why, no, Willie; of course not." "Well, mamma said he had you on his hands for two months."

"I fear," said the manager, as the living skeleton sat on him and intermittently hammered him, "I fear my curiosity has got the best of me."

"My pop don't ride no wheel," said the bad small boy, rubbing the seat of his little bloomers after the interview; "but he's a scorcher all the same."

"Now, would you call Dauber an impressionist?" "No," replied the other. "From my knowledge of his work I should call him a depressionist."

Laura—I wonder why it is that so few of these pictures in the nude show any character in their faces? Aunt Maria Ann—They ain't got no character.

Kicker—When I was alone with Miss Smith in the parlor I proposed. I told her she was the light of my life. Bocker—And she—— Kicker—Oh, she went out.

Fillen—By the way, your wife has discontinued her pink teas. Follen—Well, yes. We've got a little pink tease at the house now that is occupying all her time.

The One—Oh, how I wish I had married a man who never drank. You don't know how I envy you. The Other—N—no, he doesn't drink, but he smokes cubeb cigarettes.

"Charley is the most bashful fellow I ever saw. He can't even read a book." "What has bashfulness to do with reading books?" "Why, the poor boy can't get over the introduction without blushing till his collar smokes."

Everett Wrest—I understand you an' Wayworn is boyhood chums. Perry Patetic—Naw. I never met 'im more'n five years ago. "What did he mean, then, by saying that you was brought up together?" "Oh! Before the judge."

Grandmother—Oh, Thomas! Thomas! How can you bear to be all the time fighting? Thomas—Why, 'cause I keep in training, of course! If you want me to, I can put you into jest as good physical condition as I am in thirty days.

Bronco Pete (thoughtfully)—Wonder wot ever become uv Tarantula Jim? Grizzly Dan—W'y, don't you remember helping to lynch him last July? Bronco Pete—W'y, uv course I do!—but I wonder wot ever become uv him finally.

Young Poet—You read my litt poem, Mr. Sheerce? Editor—Yes. It w quite pathetic. It excited consid able comment in the office. The l who attends to such matters infor me that it was the first poem he burned which was so full of tears to put the fire out.

Getting Even With Him.

Revenge is sweet.

"Papa," said the little girl, do you love best in the world?'

Of course she thought sh what he would reply, and he k she thought she knew it. Co ly he decided to tease her.

"Daisy," he replied.

Daisy was her sister.

She thought it all over, and climbed up in his lap.

"Papa," she said, "I wish you ask me if I love you or mamma.

"Very well," he returned, "D love mamma or me best?"

Revenge is sweet; but, even so tender-hearted bit of humanity not like to be too harsh.

"You won't feel very, very bad I tell you, will you?" she whispe

He promised that he wouldn't.

"Well," she said, "then I gu love mamma best."

Yes; revenge is sweet.—Ch Post.

Singing on the March.

All the military authoriti Europe are now paying great att to singing on the march. The I army has of late permitted its to sing while marching. A li of soldiers' marching songs w lished in London, with Gener ley's words printed big on to the effect that men marc and arrive fresher when the than when they don't. Cu enough, most of these songs are can, words and all.