The Methodist Episcopal church in the United States increased its membership in 1896 by 67,467 souls, and in 1897 by 19,500.

Though the French are the greatest mushroom-eaters in the world, cases of poisoning very rarely occur, owing to the fact that almost all the mushrooms eaten are raised.

The decision of the Constitutional Convention of Louisiana to discontinue French as one of the official languages of the state will surprise many people who did not know that it has been an official language.

An Industrial Development com pany is being formed in Richmond, Va., with a capital of not less than \$50. 000, its object being to bring new business enterprises to the city and infuse new life into those already established by judicious loans of money when needed.

A pair of scales, much like those of the modern pharmacist, is among the multitude of objects discovered this year in the excavations about thirty miles from Thebes, and recently exhibited in London. The scales are finely finished, having a beam four and one-half inches long.

The Whitehorn (Col.) News has this item in its "society" column: "A lot of squint-eyed squaws held a powwow at Martini's Sunday night. Razzledazzle was the game. At midnight a kettle of dog soup was served, which was presided over by Dull Knife, Battle Ax, Ogama, Afraid-of-Work and Often Hungry."

The statistics of the National Guard of the several states of the Union, compiled by Adjutant-General Corbin. show that we have now a citizen soldiery of about 170,000 for national defense, maintained practically without cost to the nation in ordinary times. It is capable of almost indefinite expansion by proper encouragement, and it can be trained to a higher degree of proficiency by a judicious cultivation of the military spirit.

Of the many Armenians who have come to this country in the past ten years, the larger part have seemingly made their home in New England. They are successful as farmers and farm laborers, but have made their greatest hit as domestic servants. Their employers recommend them as being polite, silent, industrious and, above all, as being excellent cooks. The Armenians have a school of cook ing of their own which has modified that of Persia, Turkey, Greece and, apparently, that of Italy.

Hardly a day passes without adding to the list of benefits bestowed on mankind by the bicycle. The British Medical Journal cites a case of a lady who having been advised to take a fortnight's change of air to get rid of the effects of influenza spent her vacation largely on the wheel, averaging fifty miles or so a day. As a result she has no more influenza, but she has a heart which on the slightest exertion rises to 120 beats a minute, and if she could have her choice now she would rather have the influenza. Recent discoveries in Egypt show that the science of medicine had reached a high state of cultivation ten thousand years ago, but it is vain to hope that it will ever be well enough understood to prevent lovely woman from demolishing her system when drawn within the fascination of the wheel.

The Japanese cabinet has decided to pursue a passive policy, refraining from action in the present crisis in China.

The probability of a coalition of European powers as against the United States is given no credence wha'ever in diplomatic circles.

Not a case of lynching has taken place in Texas since the passing of the anti-lynching law, one chief featare in which is that no officer can ever hold office again in case a prisoner is taken from him.

When Governor Brady of Alaska was asked recently why he lived in such an out-of-the-way place, he replied: "I can get more of the good things of life in Alaska with a similar amount of effort than in any other place I have ever been in."

There were 1281 fires calling for the services of the fire department in Boston in 1897 and \$661.203 worth of property was destroyed. There were 157 false alarms in the same time. Eighty-six per cent. of the fires were confined to the buildings in which they originated.

England is not the only country in which the poorer classes of women work at starvation wages. In Australia, according to Miss Edwards, secretary to the Working and Factory-Girls' club at Sydney, "the condition of working-women and girls becomes harder every year."

The real estate exempt from taxation in the borough of Brooklyn, in Greater New York, includes 440 churches, 131 schools, 73 fire houses, and 28 police stations of the assessed value of \$85,000,000. The exempt church property in Manhattan and the Bronx amounts to \$60,000,000.

A French scientific journal says the consumption of tobacco is decreasing in that country, being at the present time about two pounds a head of the population annually, whereas in Holland it is seven pounds, in the United States it is five pounds, in Belgium and Germany three pounds, in Austria-Hungary two and one-half pounds and in Canada two and onehalf pounds.

President Eliot of Harvard in his aunual report, makes some significant remarks regarding college athletics. "It is very unlikely," he says "that a student who takes an active part in athletic sports can win good standing as a scholar, but, on the other hand, a smaller proportion of the athletes get put on probation at Harvard college than of other students. This remark is not true of scientific students. The evil of excessive training has not been cured. The baseball team of last spring was distinctly overworked and half the crew gave out in the fourmile race. In all probability the nervous strain resulting from prolonged training, many exciting contests and an anxious sense of responsibility has not been sufficiently considered.' President Eliot is not a prejudiced critic of athletics, but believes in a sensible amount of outdoor exercise and field games. Yet in common with the educators, he is coming to believe that the physical practice of college undergraduates must be judiciously regulated by the college authorities.

The scientific world awaits with interest another expected eruption of the great volcano of Kilauea. in Hawaii, which, it is prophesied, will equal the unusual outbreak of ten years ago. The lake of molten lava is now only about 300 feet below the rim of the crater, and it is rising at the rate of about 100 feet in a week. If it rises above this rim the lava will pour over the surrounding country in a river of molten matter making its way through the forest and down to the sea. It is only within the last month that any clear view has been possible of this lake of fire in the crater. Before the dense smoke arose in great masses from the bottom of the crater, estimated to be seven hundred feet below the rim. This smoke wa so stifling that one could get no view of the working of the hidden forces below. But when the bed of the crater began to break up and the masses of lava were fused by the inner heat. then the smoke was dispelled and the lake of fire was seen. This was a won derful transformation scene, the smoke vanishing, the fountains of flaming lava beginning to play. These spurting lava fountains, shooting up 50 or 100 feet, have been playing periodically for the last three weeks. At night all the ridges heated to a bright red are plainly visible, and when the fountain plays, the scene is one of nature's fireworks, unparalleled by any fire inventions of man.

20

My Love went berrying Where brooks were merrying, And wild wings terrying Heav'n's amethyst; The wild fowers blessed her, My dearest Hester. The winds caressed her, The sunbeams kissed.

I followed, carrying Her basket ; varying Fond hopes of marrying With hopes denied ; Both late and early She deemed me surly, bowed her curly Fair head and sighed.

"The skies look lowery; It will be showery; No longer flowery The way I find. No use in going! "Twll soon be snowing If you keep growing Much more unkind."

***** COUSIN

BERRYING.

'To awaken at a second-rate London hotel with a splitting headache, knowing you have come to the end of your resources through folly and extravagance, is not a pleasant reflection. And Morris Seymour sighed, but could blame none but himself.

He was an American, well educated, 28 years of age, a sturdy, good-looking young man, whose chief fault was too much generosity, which his London acquaintances took every advantage of as long as his money lasted. After a light breakfast Morris proceeded to a newspaper office. One of the clerks (with whom he

was slightly acquainted) advised try ing advertising. This suggestion wa ing advertising. This suggestion was not only exceptable, but put to the test, and it did not take Morris long to write out the following: "Situation Wanted — By capable newspaper clerk, whose many qualifi-cations include honesty of nurpose and

cations include honesty of purpose and strict attention to business where em-ployer's interests are concerned. Apply_____." The clerk affixed the number T 830.

Punctually at noon the next day Morris presented his ticket at the newspaper office, receiving one answer. Judge of his astonishment when he

read the following: "X Y Z: Meet me tonight at 8 o'clock at the entrance to St. Cather-

ine's docks. Fail at your peril. This is to our mutual advantage." Examining the envelope he discov-ered that it was addressed "T 320," but the figure 3 looked more like an 8. So it was a mistake; he had been given some one else's letter. Out of mere curiosity he made a copy and, procuring an envelope, correctly re-addressed it, putting it in the basket on the counter.

Looking through the personal col-umns of the paper, he came across the following:

X. Y. Z.-Where can I see you? Answer at once to T 320.

So here was the solution. Morris had been so preoccupied reading this communication that he had not noticed a young lady standing by the counter, who was visibly surprised when she noticed the envelope he had placed in the basket; she then pro duced a ticket and this same letter was safely placed in her pocket, while now, standing unobserved in an is-olated part of the office, she was watching him in a peculiar and expressive manner.

He was too much disappointed to notice anyone and felt like giving way to despair, so tried to walk off his depression and must have gone a con-siderable distance, for, looking around, he found himself in the vicinity of Russell square. While meditating Russell square. While meditating whether to return, a young lady who was passing gave a faint cry and half sunk to the footpath, evidently over-taken by illness. Morris hastened to her assistance.

Would you help me home?" she said, in a weak voice, indicating one of

the largest houses. "Certainly," and, taking hold of her arm, he half carried, half led her the square to the palatial mansion indicated, giving a vigorous pull to the bell. The door was immediatesion indicated, giving a vigorous pull to the bell. The door was immediate-ly opened by a footman, who called to a trim maid, requesting Morris to wait a few moments, ushering him into a small apartment. The room into a small apartment. was magnificently furnished, there being an abundance of old china, val uable curios and beautiful oil paintings. He was not left long in suspense. An old gentlemen entered quietly, care fully closing the door. He was trembling with excitement and, holding bling with excitement, and, holding up a warning finger, exclaimed: "Morris, why have you caused me all this trouble? I'm perfectly inno-cent. A few more weeks of this worry will kill me. No explanation now When I die you will not be forgotten. I never thought Ebenezer's only son "Two questions only for the pres-ent: When did you leave New York" ent: ent: When did you leave New Tork: And what steamer did you come by?" To say that he was astonished at being called by his Christian name would be a poor way of describing his feelings, but his reply was straightfor-

She said it tearfully; And I, all fearfully. Replied, "Right here fully Will I explain: I love you dearly, Yet look not cheerly When all says clearly I love in vain." Then smiled she graciously; Spoke out vivaciously;

Spoke out vivacious,, so I audaciously Did then decide. And, drawing tow'rd her, I there implored her— I, who adored her— To be my bride.

Ab. sweet simplicity, Charming rusticity, Sharming rusticity, Without duplicity, Whom love made kn In wooed and wooer, No world is truer, And berries—fewer i berries--rewer Than kisses grow. --Madison Cawein, in Judge.

MORRIS.

How lovely she looked as she shyly approached, saying in a low, musical voice: "I'm so pleased to meet you, cousin," holding up her sweet face in a

wodest, natural manner. What could he do under the circum-stances! He was almost intoxicated with the strangeness of the position and kissed her not once, but twice. He felt as though he could do anything for her sweet sake. How he had scoffed when hearing of a man falling suddenly in love, but here he had accidentally me to pure and beau-tiful women with large, wistful, blue eyes, who had spoken to him kindly. Her presence made him feel a differ-ent being, happier than he had ever been in his life before. She had a truly summathed a network and his truly sympathetic nature, and his heart went out to her at once with a passionate longing, an intense desire to do something for her sake, and Morris for the first time in his life knew what it meant to fall suddenly

There was an awkward silence on his part which was broken at last by her gentle voice: "You will come back tonight, Cousin

Morris, as father wishes, and do exactly what he desires by letting the past be forgotten?"

Before he could reply or think of an nswer there was a knock at the door, and a footman appeared.

"The carriage is waiting, Miss ice," he said, respectfully.

Alice," he said, respective, "Thank you, Reuben; consin, till the evening, here where to leave y. good bye, Tell the you, and in coachman where to leave you, and in the meantime I will practice some songs for your especial benefit," and gently pushing Morris she led the way to the front door, the old gentle-man warmly grasping his hand, giving him a significant glance to keep si-lent. lent.

In a half-dazed condition he en-tered the carriage, telling the coach-man to drive to Fleet street. Dismissing the missing the conveyance close by the Bank of England, he hurriedly walked to Holborn, entering the hotel and going directly to his rooms. "What did it all mean?" he solilo-

quized. "Evidently they have mis-taken me for some one else." "Cousin Morris"-how the name seemed to ring in his ears. Like a flash of lightning it crossed his mind that he had been taken for the person who had answered the advertisement to the personal, and, drawing from his pocket the copy, he again read it. "X Y Z: Mest me tonight at 8

o'clock at the entrance to St. Cather-ine's docks. Fail at your peril. This ine's docks. Fail at your point is to our mutual advantage." "That sounds like a threat. I will never believe that the old gentleman

and that beautiful young girl have ever done anything wrong. I will keep this appointment."

keep this appointment." It was a cold, damp night, with plenty of mud and fog, but exactly at 8 p. m. Morris was standing close by the entrance to St. Catherine's docks. It was so dark that he could scarcely distinguish the faces of passest-by most of them faces of passers-by, most of them being sailors and dock hands, who had been drinking.

commotion. Cries of "Stop him!" "Runaway!" resounded on all sides, and a horse and wagon came thundering along. The man he was watching spraug forward, attempting to stop the terrified animal, but slipped and was dashed aside. It was so quickly done that no one noticed the accident, and Morris immediately went to his assistance.

examination of this individual's pa-

examination of this individual's pa-pers and effects. In an hour's time he had possession of the true facts of the case. This imposter was formerly a bank clerk, whose correct name was Robert Moore. The president of the institution, one Ebenezer Burton, had persuaded his brother to sign a bill of exchange for 415,000 as an accommodation. A for-gery had been perpetrated, the figure having been raised to £25,000. In the meantime the bank went into liquithe meantime the bank went into liqui-dation. The president committed sui-cide when he discovered that his son, Morris Burton, had committed the for-

gery. This young man then attempted to Framma Burton of m ke his uncle, Erasmus Burton of Russell square, London, pay the full amount of this forged bill. A number of the true facts coming to light dur-ing an investigation, the nephew ab-sconded to parts unknown, but wrote a letter charging his uncle with the

full offence. This communication was never sent, being in the possession of Moore, who in some manner secured all these documents and came to London to act the part of the nephew and endeavor to get a large sum of money from Eras-

mus Burton. In the morning Morris made very short work of this imposter, who, being threatened with speedy arrest, gave up everything. Later in the afternoon he drove up in a cab to Russell square. Alice met him at the door. She looked worn out, and there were traces of tears on her sweet face. "Cousin Morris, you never kept your promise. We had almost given

your promise. We had almost given you up, and father is seriously ill." "May I see him, Miss Alice? I could not come before." She glanced at him shyly and, with

out further comment, led the way to

out further comment, led the way to her father's chamber. The old gentleman was in bed, seemingly ill and careworn, but, seeing Morris, cheered up wonderfully. At last he had told his story, every minute detail was gone over and the

A this is had to the story, every minute detail was gone over and the papers handed to the old gentleman, and Morris prepared to depart. Alice was softly crying tears of joy, while the old gentleman grasped his hand in every story of the s

hand in a vigorous manner, more ex-pressive than anything he could have

Needless to say, Morris stayed the remainder of the day and in a few weeks secured a splendid position.

Six months later he married Alice, his first and only l laughingly remarked: love, who often l: "Ah, Morris, I examined you thoroughly in the news-paper office (the afternoon I fainted, you silly boy), and I told father that you were not a bad man; you were too good-looking and gentlemanly." — Chicago Daily News.

QUAINT AND CURIOUS.

All the land above sea level would not fill up more than one-third of the Atlantic ocean.

There are 110 mountains in Colorado whose peaks are over 12,000 feet above the ocean level.

Chocolate is still used in the interior of South America for a currency, as are cocoanuts and eggs.

A one-legged knife grinder in Phil-adelphia has taught a Newfoundland dog to turn his grindstone.

Sweden exports one billion boxes of matches yearly, and has the oldest match factory in the world.

The highest waterfall in the world is Cholock cascade, at Yosemite, Cal., which is 2635 feet high, or just half a mile.

Not within living memory has there been known so abnormally snowless a winter in European Russia as the past season.

New Jersey was the first state permitting the right of suffrage to women; this was done nearly one hundred years ago.

A curious fact has been noted by Arctic travelers - snow when at a very low temperature absorbs moisture and dries garments.

How great a havoe is created France among birds, is shown by the fact that during Christmas week, at the central market, 114,000 larks were sold

There is an immense garden in China that embraces an area of fifty thousand square miles. It is all meadow land, and is filled with lakes,

ARCADY.

A soft wind murmurs through the waving wheat, The lowing cattle gather on the lea, The peaceful bleatings of the gentle sheep, Wake the faint echoes of sweet Arcady.

Above, a heron slowly wings its flight, Slyly a fox slips from its hidden lair,— An antiered stag upon the mountain's

height. Raises his head, and sniffs the summer air.

The sun sinks down behind the distant hills; The shadows lengthen in the aftergiow; And with the sighing of the whip-poor-wills Comes curfew's tolling from the town be-low.

Nature has sunk into the arms of night, And in the lowlands over marsh and fe Will-0^{-the-wisp} displays his eifin light Hiding a moment to appear again.

The faint stars mirrored in the broad la goon Lighten the blackness of night's tombre.

shroud, As slowly o'er the mountain tops, the moon Bursts into beauty from behind a floud, —H. A. Webster.

HUMOROUS.

People who take offense usually find that there is plenty of it to be had. Ethel-You will not acceptihat con-ceited fop. Gladys-No; I love an-

other. "I thought Scribbler's detor for-""Well, he's only writing a society novel."

Miss Oldmayde-Jack Buteed made me a marriage proposal ast night. Miss Pert—When does the marriage take place?

Jack (sentimentally)-Ny love for you is as pure as the snow. Jennie (practically)—I hope it wil last a bit longer though.

Little Clarence - Pa, what is the difference between firmnes and obsti-nacy? Mr. Callipers-Mirely a matter of sex, my son.

Brown (reading the new from China) -How would you produce this name? Jones-Liao-Tug? I guess you don't pronounce tha-you yodel it.

Ned--I met Miss Up-to-Date yes-terday, and I didn't findher so incredulous. She swallowed everything I said. Jack-What didyou say? Ned -Ice cream soda.

Erie Central-Confidentially, Tom, how much does it costyou a year to live? Tom Ticker-Vell, my life insurance premiums cone to about two hundred dollars.

undred dollars. Bluster-What do you mean by eoming into my office uninvited and leaving the door wide open? Pedlar —I wanted to see if you want to buy a "please-shut-the-door" sign.

Bilks-Hello! where are you with that door mat Gilks-T with that door mat Gilks-Taking it to the assay ofice. A friend of mine, just returned from the Klon-dike, called on me aid wiped his feet on it on it. Mrs. Skinflint-Fere is a ha'penny

for you, my man; tell me how you came to be so poor. Mendicant—Ah, mum! I was like you—too fond of giving large sums of money to the

"Yes, grandma, when I graduate, I

write for money, you know." "Why, Willie, my dear, you haven't done anything else since you've been at college."

She-It is very good of you to say you will come so far to call, but be sure to send vord when, lest we should be out. Fe-Oh, Iassure you I shouldn't in theleast mind if I found

Mrs. Bowers angrily)-Before we Mrs. Bowers angrity)-Belore we were married yoi said you were not worthy of my love. Mr. Bowers (weakly)-Yesh, m' dear. Mrs. Bow-ers-Well, I see no necessity of your

Chollie-I cavn't understand why

Miss Cumlatelygot so indignant when I asked her to sing that song about— er-mawble halls, you know. Yabs-ley—You doleful idiot, her father used to drive a wagon for a stoneyard.

Papa—I did the Count an injustice. I thought he was a chump. Mamma —And you have changed your opin-ion? Papa—Yes, indeed! You should have seen him kick when I tried to work off some worthless railroad

work off some worthless railroad stocks as part of the marriage settle-

poor!

college.

you not at home.

trying to prove it.

ment.

The Louisville Courier-Journal says: Some interesting figures have lately been compiled by Mr. E. L. Powers of Chicago, showing the extent to which the system of illuminating towns and cities by means of the electric light has grown in recent years. We cite the figures for this section merely. In fifteen southern states there are at this time 401 electric plants operated by private corporations, firms and individuals. The capital stock represented amounts to \$34,752,225, while the power generated aggregates 141,450 horse power. Not less than 37 976 are lights and 996.770 incandescent lights are furnished. But these figures do not embrace the total number of electric light plants in this section. In addi tion to those operated by private cor porations, firms and individuals, there are also seventy electric light plants operated by municipalities. These represent 9890 horse power, and furnish 4256 are lights and 68,933 incandescent lights. Since barely twenty years have passed since the glare of the electric light first made i's idvent, these figures show that rapic p ogress during that time has been made in this section by Edison's wonderful incention.

ward. "I left New York, sir, three weeks ago today on board the B—; but I fear you are laboring under some un-fortunate mistake."

"Hush; not another word," said the old gentleman, producing a roll of banknotes, which he thrust into his hands. "Put these in your pocket quickly. Some of the servants might overhear us. Ah, here comes Alice," and the young lady entered the room, looking none the worse for her slight

faintness. "Alice, my dear, kiss Cousin Morris; to evening to he is coming back this evening to stay with us." "Are you much hurt?" he said, helping him to his feet.

He groaned and in a dazed manner said: "My arm is broken; help me to a cab; there's a good fellow. But who are you?" he gasped, suspicious-ly. "I had the pleasure of your com-pany on the steamship about three weeks ago."

"I remember you now. I wish now that I had never left New York city.

Morris hailed a cab, and they were driven to a boarding house at Black Heath, and it was found that a severely sprained arm was the full extent of his injuries. "Supposing I stay for tonight.

"Supposing 1 stay for tonight. There are two beds, and you and I are not strangers, both hailing from New York," said Morris. His offer was thankfully accepted, and after half an hour's chat the band-

ages were carefully arranged, the sleeping draughtadministered to allay the pain, and Morris had the pleasure of seeing him sink into a deep slumthe

This is just what he desired and thought it no harm to make a

ponds and canals.

A French journal states that among the recent uses which have been dis-covered for acetylene gas is a motor which has special advantages for use an automobile vehicles.

The leaf of a creeping moss found in the West Indies, known as the "life plant," is absolutely indestructible by any means except immersion in boil-ing water or the application of a red hot iron.

The biggest rope ever used for haul age purposes has just been made for district subway in Glasgow, Scotland it being seven miles long, four and one-half inches in diameter and weight nearly sixty tons.

Argentina's farmers, encouraged by ne improved prices for wheat, in-Argentina's infinites, encoded, in-creased their acreage enough to have 40,000,000 or 50,000,000 bushels of wheat to sell this year, an increase of 75 to 100 per cent, over recent years.

It is said that half the gold fish kept in glass vessels die because they cannot endure the light. This can be avoided by so screening a part of the vessel with plants or otherwise that the fish can hide their heads in the shadow.

shadow. Moscow, Prussia, has a hospital large enough to hold seven thousand persons. It was founded in 1764, and at present takes in children at the rate of forty a day, or about fifteen thou-sand a year. There are twenty-six physicians and about nine hundred nurses.

The Elephant-You impudent little scamp! You ought to be an organgrinder's cashier instead of a circus performer. The Monkey-Well, the manager doesn't seen to think so. You'll notice that my name on the cir-cus posters is in larger type than

"Here," roared the old judge to his "Here," roared the old judge to his son, studying law with him, "you told me you had read this work on evidence, and the leaves are not cut." "Used X rays," yawned the versatile son; and the judge chuckled with de-light as he thought what a lawyer the box would make. boy would make.

A Suggestion.

A suggestion. A professor of philosophy in a cer-tain Rhenish town received a large parcel a few days ago containing six boxes of cigars, accompanied by the following note: "We beg leave to send you six boxes of our excellent cigars. We have no doubt that you will be pleased with the parcel and will recommend us to your friends. Kindly remit us the amount of the in-yoice-6 marks per box-by postal kindly remarks per box-by postal order." To this the philosopher re-plied immediately: "I have the order." To this the philosopher re-plied immediately: "I have the honor to send you herewith a dozen dissertations, which will no doubt please you. Should you desire any more I hold them at your disposal. The price is three marks per copy." By neturn post the professor received the The price is three marks per copy." By return post the professor received the following laconic epistle: "Kindly return our cigars. Inclosed find cost of carriage and packing. We are send-ing back your dissertations," -- London News.