

Golf is recommended as a sure cure for degeneration, especially that which accompanies old age.

There is a growing impression that most of the wealth in Alaska was brought there by people desirous of getting rich.

St. Louis, Mo., has issued instructions through superintendents to the principals and teachers that there is to be no more home work that shall involve the study of text-books.

In an article in the Revue des Deux Mondes M. Fouille declares that, while the modern Greeks are not descended wholly from Slavs, as some have maintained, they certainly are not lineal descendants of the great peoples who made Greece famous.

Propos of the anti-vaccination crusade going on in London, it is interesting to note that in Norway and Sweden and Denmark vaccination is enforced in a novel way. People cannot be married without each producing their certificate of vaccination. Without this the minister cannot perform the ceremony.

Professor Mommsen's complacent prophecy that the British empire will soon disintegrate, and that in the process France will get Egypt, Russia will take India, and Germany will appropriate South Africa, is redolent of the perfume of the cloister. He seems to forget that across the northern frontier of India nature has stretched almost impregnable fortifications that guard the border; that Egypt will be quite as difficult to take and keep today as when Napoleon tried the experiment, and that Germany in South Africa is helpless against British sea power.

St. Petersburg dispatches indicate that Russia may again require American wheat and corn to eke out her needs. In many provinces, contrary to expectations, the crops have proved a total failure, and famine is impending. This will tend to arrest decline of prices for wheat and other cereals consequent upon the heavy crops in the United States, for the Russian government is already taking steps to purchase large quantities of these staples abroad. American farmers should not forget that it is chance and not their own foresight in this instance that will have enabled them to realize fair prices for their products.

A pathetic commentary on the esteem in which the world holds the memory of Prince Bismarck is to be seen in the fact that hardly a word in the vast flood of messages of condolence that flowed upon Friedrichsruhe spoke of human pity or human love for the dead, observes the Christian Register. It seemed that even Germany had ceased to remember that Otto von Bismarck was at any time a man, but regarded him as a fallen political colossus whose impassive brow had reached far above the lightning and the clouds; a sort of modern Zeus, at whose imperious nod united Germany had arisen out of chaos; a divinity whom human malignity might and did reach, but who was beyond the love of man. Germany laid her legendary hero into the grave with vaunting upon her lips, but the scalding tears that were shed by the world when Gladstone was committed to earth were wanting at the cold and formal obsequies of Prince Bismarck.

An interesting example of how nature accommodates herself to circumstances, is related by a resident of the arid section in the western part of Texas. It was in connection with an experiment in coaxing plum trees to grow. In a portion of this arid region near Alpine, a stream of water runs from thirty to forty feet below the surface, too far for the roots of trees to reach it, and the country, therefore, was treeless. But an emigrant from Ohio thought out a way to force a tree to bore for water. He selected a hardy plum, cut off the small roots, leaving only the tap-root, and planted it deep. He fed the root with water daily, through a hole in the ground, and by cutting off the sprouts as they appeared, he concentrated the growth of the tree on the tap-root. He proved his theory. In time that tap-root reached the underground water supply, and no further care of the tree was necessary. Other trees were treated in like manner, and the result is a thrifty orchard in a region where rain seldom falls. Another unique development is that trees grown from the seed of the Ohio man's stock need no education. They bore for water as soon as they are set out, and there is little or no growth above ground until the water is reached.

Spain's diplomats seem to be hoping for an unforeseen mine explosion under the peace negotiations.

The value of American manufacturers sold abroad last year was \$288,871,499, an increase of 100 per cent over the figures for 1888.

The returns show that in the war with Spain twelve men were killed in the navy—not quite one-twenty-second of the number killed on the Maine in a single instant of peace.

According to returns published by the British board of trade, the imports of American pig iron into Great Britain during the first six months of 1898 aggregated 30,231 tons, valued at \$382,155, and of American steel, unwrought, 12,832 tons, valued at \$325,980.

Maine is again to enter the list of copper-mining states. The deposits, which are numerous and valuable, were worked more than twenty-five years ago, but a sudden decline in the price of copper made them unprofitable; improved and cheapened method of production is the cause of resumption of work.

A San Francisco court has just decided that couples wedded at sea are not legally married. This ruling brings consternation to many families in that city. Some months ago a romantic pair hired a tug and steamed out to the Pacific to be united in the holy bonds. The idea caught the fancy of young people, and since then there have been forty or fifty marriages of that sort off the Golden Gate.

Here are some of the conclusions that English experts have arrived at concerning the naval features of the war: Fast battleships are everything; have big batteries aboard; teach the men to shoot well; as for personnel, the Anglo-Saxon can beat anything that floats. These specifications cover the ground pretty well, though it might be well to mention the importance of personal heroism, says the Boston Herald.

The only significance in the small increase in railway mileage in the United States last year is that pretty nearly every available section of the country is now fully accessible by railroad. The railway mileage will of course continue to increase in the future, but not at such a rate as in the past. With improvements that have been made in engine power and carrying capacity of cars, moreover, the present lines are able to accommodate more traffic. This means that fewer railroad lines are likely to go into the hands of receivers hereafter and at the same time that demands of traffic will be met.

The prune industry in California has had a remarkable growth in the last decade. In 1888 there were about 11,000 acres of bearing prune trees, and about 6000 acres more of young orchards. Between 1890 and 1894 about 40,000 acres of prune orchards were planted. Since then the growth has proceeded in lesser degree, but the total bearing area is now estimated at 55,000 acres, with 10,000 more to come into bearing within the next year or two. The investment in lands, trees, irrigation systems, agricultural tools, and packing houses is estimated at \$25,000,000. This year's production of green fruit will amount to about 84,000 tons, and growers anticipate a crop of 100,000 tons within a few years. Of this year's yield, about one-fifth will be shipped east as green fruit; the remainder will be dried, making, with the water evaporated, about 24,000 tons.

A writer in the Scientific American seems to have taken careful note of the lifeboats on ocean steamers. He says: "Any one who has traveled to and fro a few times can but notice the paucity of lifeboats and the fact that the davit room is not all utilized. The examination of fifteen photographs, representing as many liners, showed an average of seven boats on each side; one ship only showing an interrupted line of ten large boats on each side. What does this average of fourteen boats to the ship represent? The fact that only those on the lee side can be used in rough weather reduces the total to seven; two must be considered as sacrificed, smashed or capsized during launching. Five are left, with a capacity of about 140 persons—less than the ship's crew. Lifeboats? If they are lifeboats, why do they fill and sink with such rapidity? What use are rafts and life preservers in such calamities as that of the Elbe and the Bourgoigne?" These are alarming statements, and they are evidently made by somebody with knowledge of his topic.

MOTHER'S VOICE.
A mother sang to her child one day
A song of the beautiful home above;
Sung it as only a woman sings
Whose heart is full of a mother's love.
And many a time in the years that came
He heard the sound of that low, sweet song;
It took him back to his childhood days:
It kept his feet from the paths of wrong.

MISS UPTON'S FIRST "ASSIGNMENT."

As the Uptons were in that condition of respectability and limited means which involves much sacrifice of comfort to appearances, Letty Upton had resolved to do something that would add to the family income and bring to her the satisfaction of being self-supporting.

Miss Upton was a trim, bright little body of 20 years; pretty, in a fresh, winning way, and naturally vivacious and engaging. It had seemed to her that this personal equipment was a qualification for newspaper work. She had not the training necessary to secure a teacher's position; the drudgery of typewriting was ungenial, and to go into a shop as a saleswoman was only to be thought of as a last resort.

Letty had seen in the Sunday papers long accounts of very wonderful experiences to which were affixed the names, real or assumed, of women writers. She thought she might become, in time, a writer of such signed articles and obtain high pay for them. Could she not write as well as those women? From the "stories" in the papers things seemed to come their way easily enough.

Like many a reader of such "stories" Letty did not stop to reflect on the labor and time expended on them, nor did she know anything of the trials and disheartening rebuffs which have been encountered in "working them up."

She was fortunate enough to obtain, through the influence of a friend of her father, a position on the staff of writers for the Sunday edition of the Daily Investigator, one of the prominent New York papers.

The quarters of these writers seemed to Letty smaller and more "cluttered up" than she had expected. There were three or four small rooms with roll-top desks in them and one or two chairs. The editor of the "Woman's Page" had her office in one of these rooms. She was a woman of about 40, with grayish hair and rather sharp features. Her glance was keen, her manner of speaking brief and to the point.

Letty, when called before this editor to receive her first "assignment" or subject to be written up, obeyed the summons with eagerness and some trembling. What would she be sent to do? Oh, that her subject might be one on which she could be brilliant with ease!

"Miss Upton," said the editor of the Woman's Page, holding a small slip of printed matter in her hand, "here is a report that Mrs. Harmon's daughter is going to marry a distinguished foreigner. Mrs. Harmon and the girl have been traveling in Europe for a year and are just back. The girl may have caught an English duke or something, as these Harmones are so rich. See her, find out who the man is, and write up all you can get about it. If it's true, the woman will be glad enough to talk about it."

"Where does Mrs. Harmon live?" asked Miss Upton, taking the "cutting."
"Oh, I don't know," replied the editorial lady with a touch of impatience, as she snipped out another paragraph marked with a blue cross from the paper before her, giving four quick clicks with the office shears. "You'll have to get that from the directory or the 'Social Register.' Miss Jameson!" she called, sharply, taking the freshly cut slip in her hand and looking past Letty with an air of totally dismissing her from her mind.

Letty withdrew, got the directory and looked for "Harmon." There were so many Harmones that she concluded she had better try the "Social Register." The "Mrs. Harmon" whose daughter was to make a brilliant marriage would be there, and several of the directory Harmones would not. She took down the names of half a dozen Harmones, with the addresses.

She very much wished to ask the society editor which "Mrs. Harmon of this city"—that was all the slip said—was the Mrs. Harmon of her list; but she felt it would be more creditable to find that out herself. So she arranged her list in the order of their residences as she would have to take them on her way up-town and sallied briskly forth.

Miss Upton had determined that she was not going to be a "lady journalist" or "a lady who writes for the papers," but a "newspaper woman." This title seemed to her honest and direct and dignified. A "newspaper woman" would get sooner to writing those long, illustrated, signed "stories" in the Sunday paper than either of the other kinds of writers would!

She called at the first place on the list and sent in her card by a maid who returned with the request that Miss Upton would state her purpose there, as Mrs. Harmon was very busy. Letty did not wish to announce herself to a servant as a "newspaper woman"—she could convey that information with better results if she did it personally. Some people had a prejudice against "reporters." Now she said simply, "I am from the Daily Investigator."

A mother spoke to her child one day
In an angry voice, that made him start
As if an arrow had sped that way
And pierced his loving and tender heart.
And when he had grown to man's estate,
And was tempted and tried as all men are,
He fell; for that mother's angry words
Had left on his heart a lasting scar.

MISS UPTON'S FIRST "ASSIGNMENT."

"I should like you to tell your mistress that this is about something which she is interested in and that I will not detain her long," said Letty, with aggravated dignity.

The maid reluctantly obeyed, or at least disappeared for a short time. Then she came back and said, "Mrs. Harmon begs to be excused."
Letty was a little crestfallen. She did not believe the maid had been near her mistress again. How very mean in a rich woman with plenty of leisure to refuse even a reception to a girl seeking to earn a living!

"Has Mrs. Harmon been abroad this year?" Letty asked the maid. In case this was the Mrs. Harmon these would be no object in calling on the other unimportant bearers of that name.

"No," said the maid, as she closed the door in Miss Upton's face.
"Then she isn't the one I want," said the newspaper woman to herself, "and I have no more desire to see her than she has to see me."

Trying to keep up her courage by this reflection, Letty made her way to the next house on her list, and there— affecting a slightly haughty air as being likely to impress the servant and thereby, possibly, the mistress—she said, "I should like to see Mrs. Harmon for a moment."

The servant looked at her with some surprise. "Mrs. Harmon is dead this two years," he said, deliberately.
"Oh, really!" replied Letty, her haughty air suffering a sudden collapse. "Perhaps I have made a mistake. This—isn't—Mrs. Nugent Harmon's?" This was the next Mrs. Harmon on her list. Letty was proud of her finesse.

"No. This is Mr. Thomas Harmon's; but Mrs. Nugent Harmon is dead, too," replied the man, regarding her with increased curiosity.
Letty blushed furiously and felt a wild desire to laugh. This would certainly not have enhanced her standing in the servant's eyes. Then, since this man seemed so acquainted with the Harmones, she was tempted to ask him if he knew which was the Mrs. Harmon whose daughter was to marry a foreign nobleman.

But Letty could not quite bring herself to glean the news she needed by friendly, confidential talk with men-servants. So she only said, nervously, "There must be a mistake somewhere. Thank you," and hurried down the steps, feeling as if the man's inquisitive eyes were burning into her back.

All this wasn't very nice. In those "stories" of the Sunday papers there had been no preliminary failures to find the person. The reporter had always called at Mr. Whoever's and had "been cordially motioned to a chair," and then Mr. or Mrs. Whoever had proceeded to tell him all he wanted to know in the most friendly, considerate way.

However, to be discouraged would never do, so Letty, after a little sigh as she saw two young girls of her own age roll by in an elegant Victoria, went to the next Mrs. Harmon, wondering whether she were dead, too.

But she would have no mistakes here. She wrote on her card, "Will Mrs. Harmon please see Miss Upton of the Daily Investigator for a moment in regard to her daughter's engagement?"

Ah! Here was the reward of industry. The servant said, "Mrs. Harmon will be down in a moment, miss. Will you please sit down and wait?"

In a few moments Mrs. Harmon came in. She looked like a wealthy society woman, though younger than Miss Upton had expected to find her. She had a pair of keen, black eyes, her face was a sharply pointed one, and her lips were rather thin.

She bowed to the reporter pleasantly enough, but did not offer her hand. What could she do for Miss Upton? She knew the Daily Investigator very well. There was a slight accent on the "very."
"There is a report, Mrs. Harmon, that your daughter is to marry a foreigner of title, whom you met during your travels in Europe this past year," said Miss Upton, with her most ingratiating manner. "Won't you tell me some of the particulars?"
"Do you want to publish what I say in the Investigator?" asked Mrs. Harmon, quickly.
"Why, of course, I want to print all that you are willing should appear about the matter. The public, naturally, has a great interest in the subject and wants to know about Miss Harmon's fiancé?"
Mrs. Harmon's eyes twinkled, and she drew in her lips a little strongly. She seemed amused.
"She's tickled to death over it and will tell everything there is," thought Miss Upton, with an approving reflection on her own diplomatic tact.
"Well, you must ask me what you want to know," said the lady, good-naturedly.
"Is the engagement announced yet?" asked Miss Upton, affably.
"No," replied Mrs. Harmon, with an air of being very pronounced. "I can truly say that it is not announced yet. I can't imagine how the report that my daughter is engaged could have got out. What wonderful people you newspaper folk are!"

"I understand that the engagement is not announced," Letty went on, with a smile that seemed to say to Mrs. Harmon that she could appreciate her way of not telling a thing. "Can't you tell me who the young man is? I suppose I ought to say the young lord?"

"Oh, how did you know it was a lord?" Mrs. Harmon cried, smiling with artless enjoyment over the newspaper woman's acuteness. "I didn't say it was a lord. The next thing you'll be asking me is where the duke's country-place is!"

Mrs. Harmon paused a moment as if thinking deeply. Then she said, absently, "Do you know if there were any Americans at Grantham Court last autumn?"
"I'm sure I don't know," Letty replied, cheerfully. The way Mrs. Harmon was "letting things out" was interesting. Miss Upton was getting "points" for her story. Engagement not announced yet—duke—Grantham Court—splendid!

"When do you suppose the wedding will take place?" she asked, with piquant directness.
Mrs. Harmon burst out laughing. "Why, the engagement is not announced yet, and you want the date of the wedding? I can assure you it will not be before next fall. That is sure," Mrs. Harmon seemed to find pleasure in coming out strongly on a point when she could, even if it were only a negative one.

"Did you get Miss Harmon any things while you were abroad?" continued Miss Upton. Mrs. Harmon's diamond brooch must have cost a pretty penny.

"Oh, a few little things, yes. Things I knew she had to have."
Mrs. Harmon had recourse to her handkerchief for a moment.
"How old is Miss Harmon?" asked Letty, with interest. The mother was so young and girlish! She took the matter so lightly, and it seemed so amusing to her!

"Don't look young enough to be spared having to tell my daughter's age?" that interesting lady laughed back; "but Miss Harmon is not 17 yet. Don't press me too closely."
"Will it be a church wedding? And will you make the gown?"
Miss Upton felt that Mrs. Harmon was willing enough to have the facts come out, but did not wish to have told them.

"You are a perfect inquisitor," laughed the lady. "I am going to send you away," she added, rising. "You have led me on so and made me talk when I told you that the engagement wasn't even announced yet. Remember that I haven't told you a thing. I can't imagine how the newspapers find out everything. Will it be in tomorrow's paper? I mean are you going to write anything about it? I shan't see another person from a paper. It's too dangerous."

She was evidently putting an end to the interview to keep herself from telling a quantity of things more which the wily Miss Upton would worm out of her.
The young "newspaper woman" was pretty well content. She had learned enough in this indirect way to embellish her information into a most interesting story.

This she did and thrilled with pride when she saw it in the next day's Investigator with a head-line of great prominence. The Search-Light, The Investigator's bitterest rival, hadn't a word about the thing.

The editor of the Woman's Page had asked her why she did not get a photograph of Miss Harmon. Letty had not thought of it. Well, she could try and get that later, and they could print it on Sunday. Miss Upton was sure she could get it from Mrs. Harmon.

In her story Letty said that "the young fiancée of the proud English title is a graceful, sweet girl verging on her 17th birthday. During the past year abroad she had received the finishing touches to her education, and the wedding will probably occur next autumn. The family are extremely reticent about the engagement."

On the day following that on which Letty had glowed over her own periods in all the dignity of type, she came to the office bright and early, thirsting for more Mrs. Harmon. Newspaper work was fascinating!

Her enthusiasm was dampened by a little note on her desk. She read in consternation that her resignation was requested!

She hurried to the editor of the Woman's Page and showed the note. "Oh, what does this mean?" she almost wailed. "I don't understand."
"It means that you made the paper perfectly ridiculous and let a woman get even with The Investigator for a past story about her," said that lady with untempered severity. "There," and she handed Letty a slip, "is what The Search-Light has this morning!"

"I don't suppose you have read the daily papers," she added, sarcastically. "The Mrs. Harmon that the paragraph I gave you was about lives in Orange, as you should have found out. That is the picture of the 'Miss Harmon' about whom you wrote your story."
It was the woodcut of a dear little baby girl in long clothes, labelled "Mrs. Harmon's Only Daughter."—Youth's Companion.

HELPS FOR HOUSEWIVES.
To Take Out the Creak.
A creaking door or hammock hook which makes a hideous noise at times can be silenced by rubbing brown hard soap upon hinges or where the hooks rub together.

To Remove Fly Specks.
Fly specks upon oil paintings can be removed by dipping the fingers in warm water and gently rubbing the canvas. After the specks disappear, wash the whole picture with warm water. Cover with cheap tarlatan in summer. All valuable pictures should be covered. Put away fine looks if you value their appearance.

A Bed Pocket for Invalids.
A bed pocket is an acceptable gift to an invalid. It is made of cloth, silk or colored cretonne, in the form of a wall pocket, and if desired may have various compartments. It is hung at the head of the bed, and should contain the handkerchief, watch, brush and comb, hand-mirror and all the other etceteras which make the tedious life of the invalid comfortable.

Turkish Portieres.
A pretty portiere, if one does not mind taking a good deal of trouble, is made from the small embroidered Turkish squares sold for finger doilies. Select those in light colorings. The squares are put together with strips of pale yellow material, the fabric used being according to one's taste and purse. A lightweight satine does admirably, or a China silk of a cheap quality is still better. The whole thing should be lined with a thin yellow material, preferably the silk. When hung in a room done in light colorings, particularly a white and gold room, it is wonderfully effective. The same idea can be carried out in a size to cover a sofa pillow and can be made extremely beautiful by having the squares put together with a pale yellow or green velvet.

To Clean Ostrich Plumage.
The following method of cleaning white ostrich feathers is given by a Philadelphia reader:
Cut some pure white soap in small bits and pour boiling water on them and add a little mite of soda. When the soap is dissolved and the water cool enough, dip the feathers in and draw them through the hand. Do this several times, until the lather is dirty; then make a clean lather and repeat the operation. Afterward rinse the feathers in cold water, slightly blued. Put the feathers between the hands and shake them over the fire until they are perfectly dry. Curl them by drawing each fibre between the thumb and the dull edge of a silver knife. With a little care and patience the result will be all that can be desired.—New York Tribune.

To Can Corn.
Split the kernels lengthwise with a knife, then scrape with the back of the knife, thus leaving the hulls upon the cob. Fill cans full of cut corn, pressing it very hard. To press the corn in the can use the small end of the potato masher, as this will enter the can easily. It will take ten or twelve large ears of corn to fill a one-quart can. When the cans are full, screw cover on with thumb and first finger; this will be tight enough. Then place a cloth in the bottom of a wash boiler to prevent breakage. On this put a layer of cans in any position you prefer, over the cans put a layer of cloth, then more cans. Fill the boiler in this manner, then cover the cans well with cold water, place the boiler on the fire, and boil three hours without ceasing. On steady boiling depends much of your success. After boiling three hours lift the boiler from the fire, let the water cool, then take the cans from the boiler and tighten, let them remain until cold and tighten again. Wrap each can in brown paper to exclude the light, and keep in a cool, dry cellar, and be very sure the rubber rings are not hardened by use. It would be best to use new rings, as poor rings are the cause of much fruit spoiling. The corn in the cans will shrink by cooking, but do not, on any account, open them.

Recipes.
Fritters of Calf's Brains.—Scald and pick out any threads; beat up with pepper, salt, a little nutmeg, thyme, parsley and tablespoonful vinegar. Add the yolk of an egg and flour for batter. Drop into hot fat and brown. Serve at once.
Pop-Overs.—Take the yolks of two eggs well beaten, add two cups of milk and two cups of flour alternately and a pinch of salt. Flavor to taste; then add the whites of eggs, beaten light. Bake in high, old-fashioned teacups well buttered, only half full, one-half hour.
Mushroom Stew.—Put a tablespoonful of butter into a saucepan, add the mushrooms, cover and cook for ten minutes; then add half a teaspoonful of salt and a dash of pepper. Rub into a smooth paste three hard-boiled eggs, and add, gradually, a gill of cream. Strain into a saucepan, bring to a boiling point and serve either in patty shells or with a garnish of toasted bread.
Macaroons.—Take the whites of four eggs beaten stiff, a half pound of almonds are first blanched, cooled and pounded to a paste with a little rose-water, adding the latter as you pound them to prevent the almonds from oiling. Beat a cup of powdered sugar with the eggs, and add the almond paste, a tablespoonful of cornstarch and ten drops of essence of bitter almonds. Beat thoroughly, and drop by small spoonfuls on buttered paper laid in a baking pan. Bake in quick oven.