

San Francisco is the financial center for the western half of the American continent.

It is a very inconsequential town indeed that has not either a homicide mystery or an exposition on hand.

Now that petroleum has been discovered in Egypt, the phrase "Egyptian darkness" may become wholly reminiscent.

European governments are sometimes in doubt as to the exact purport of the Monroe doctrine. They can always get an official and authoritative interpretation by applying to the United States.

Wireless telegraphy may yet rob fog-bound coasts and the graveyards of the deep of their haunting terrors. It may keep the ocean traveler in touch with the world's events. It may be the means of saving vessels from disaster and their passengers from death.

The Brooklyn woman who married a former convict in order to make sure of his reform believes in heroic measures. If she is disappointed, she will get a precious little sympathy any where. For if there is one thing absolutely established by some centuries of experience it is that reformation, to be genuine and safe, should precede marriage, not follow it, remarks the Seattle Post-Intelligencer.

Trade between the United States and all South American countries is seriously handicapped for want of satisfactory transportation facilities and by excessive shipping rates. The transportation companies operating between the States and South American ports, as well as between Europe and South America, are none of them controlled by American capital, and, as a result, it costs about one-third more to ship a ton of freight from the States than it does from European ports.

An industrial arbitration law, modeled on the New Zealand plan, has just been placed upon the statute books of the commonwealth of Australia. It recognizes only registered industrial unions of both employers and employees. The president of the court must be a judge of the supreme court. Every care has been taken to make the court an independent and dignified tribunal. Its powers are very large and no appeal lies from its decision. The compulsory provisions of the New Zealand law are of course retained.

That the world in general is advancing toward temperance is the belief of John G. Woolley, a prohibition leader, who just has returned to his home in Chicago from a seven month's trip around the globe. His expedition was taken for the purpose of studying the condition of the liquor traffic in foreign lands. He addressed more than 90 temperance meetings, speaking against rum in Australia, whiskey in Scotland and kava in Honolulu. Mr. Woolley says that "among all the greater nations I feel sure that America is at present the farthest advanced in the struggle for prohibition."

The supreme court of North Carolina in a recent decision held that as a trolley car cannot go around a vehicle, a wagon must turn out for a car whether going in the same or opposite direction. Another reason that is given for the superior rights of the car is that the public demands it shall travel at a greater speed than an ordinary vehicle. At crossings, however, the rights while not equal are greater in the case of the wagon than they are between corners. The right is reserved for pedestrians, with the exercise of reasonable care to cross the track at any point that is convenient.

The temporary weakness of the authorized legal authorities, when opposed to reckless lawlessness, was curiously illustrated recently at Penitentiary prison, in England. A convict who managed to elude the warders, established himself on the roof of the prison, and for thirty hours baffled all attempts to dislodge him. Thousands of spectators showed their sympathy for what was in the end the under dog by giving him a timely warning of the movements of his would-be captors. Ladders placed against the walls were promptly thrown down by the occupant of the roof. He collected a large pile of slates and hurled them at the heads of the officers who attempted to scale the ladders. The lame and impotent conclusion was that he surrendered for a mess of pottage. Hunger accomplished more than the representatives of organized society were able to accomplish.

The geologists have discovered soap springs in Arizona. They should next dig up some petrified laundrymen.

A Chicago woman writes books in her sleep, but the despatch doesn't state whether they are sweet dreams or literary nightmares.

The telegraph messengers of Chicago have been inspired to speed and activity by a change in the method of payment, from monthly wages to a fixed fee of 1 1-2 cents per each message delivered during the day. Since the new rule became effective, some of the boys have been seen to run.

According to the Naval Register for 1902 Uncle Sam has now afloat and available for service 225 war vessels of all sorts, with no less than 60 in process of construction. Of the latter eight are battleships, six are armored cruisers (a type in which the United States navy is strikingly deficient) and nine are first-class protected cruisers. These 23 vessels alone would constitute in an emergency a most formidable fleet for offense and defence.

The United States have in the last five years enjoyed such wonderful prosperity that it finds no parallel in the record of any other people. In a period measurable by months and days we have marched forward into the foremost rank of commercial nations, and also at a single bound have taken our rightful and acknowledged place as one of the powers, with whom in the international questions other great peoples must consult, remarks the New York Tribune.

The advocates of the project of electing the president and vice-president by popular vote and not by the intervention of electors chosen in the several states are again exerting themselves through petitions to congress and the adoption of resolutions and preambles in meetings which they have held in some of the states. Such a radical change in the method of electing a president as they propose, could be obtained only by a constitutional amendment, which after adoption, by congress, would have to be ratified by the legislatures of two-thirds of the states, a slow proceeding since, with six exceptions, all the states have now biennial sessions.

A curious story of English naval discipline has just found its way into print. When the Ophir, with the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall on board, was nearing St. Helena, the signal was made to the attendant cruisers St. George and Juno, as it was desirable to reach port before night-fall. "Can you steam another knot?" and the Juno replied, "Yes, four if you please." This answer was regarded as impertinent, and when the vessels reached Portsmouth, as a mild form of punishment the Juno was ordered to lie up the harbor, while the more respectful St. George came alongside the dockyard. And the Juno, at last accounts, is lying at her moorings still.

A Chicago horse-dealer was in Washington the other day, selling a couple of fancy saddle-mares to a prominent young Washingtonian the other day. He spoke of President Roosevelt's objection to the custom of docking tails saying: "That is all right, but why does he not go after the practice of branding government stock? I have sold 3000 horses to the government during the last year. They have all had to be branded as soon as accepted. The horses suffer agonies when the hot iron is slapped upon the flesh of their haunches. I have seen a horse jump five feet into the air and cry out in pain. It would be just as effective to brand on the hoof. They would not feel it, and it would last for months or years before needing to be renewed."

There are many things which cause the Americans to be objects of particular interest to the English. We are talked about and written about much as would be a newly discovered people. Indeed, there has been a recent discovery of America by the English. The invasion of England by the American Trust, the successful rivalry of American enterprise in the markets to which Great Britain has paramount claims, the marriage of American heiresses by British noblemen and the increasing numbers of the American colony in London, as well as the buying and renting of famous English mansions by the Yankee millionaires, combine to center public interests there in the "kin beyond the sea." Even the personal characteristics of the American are described much as would be the appearance of an unfamiliar tribe of Africans.

The Writing on the Wall.

By Thomas C. Harbaugh

Brant Durivage was in the neighborhood of 40 when he came back to the home of his ancestors. He was a bachelor, very tall, and dark of feature. He had been abroad 10 years, and as I, a young physician, had but lately settled in the adjoining town, I had never seen him. I had heard, however, that he had visited many countries, civilized and savage, and had concluded that he was tired of roughing it and glad for a chance to settle down beneath the roof of his fathers.

His old acquaintances did not see much of him after he came home. He nodded to his former friends, or passed them by without so much as a bow. Not long after his coming home we learned that he was courting Annie Kimball, the prettiest girl of the neighborhood, already engaged, as we believed, to Steve Morgan, a young man of steady habits, but without a tithe of the wealth possessed by Brant Durivage.

Old Kimball, Annie's father, was dissipated, and, just then, financially embarrassed, and the truth is that he sold his child to Brant Durivage, forcing her to break her engagement with young Morgan, who denounced the bargain in bitter language whenever he could find anybody to listen to him. At times he swore that he would "get even" with the man who had come between him and Annie.

For several weeks matters drifted along quietly. If Durivage heard of Morgan's hot words and threats, he said nothing. He seemed perfectly contented with the conquest he had won, the wedding day had been set, and Annie had become resigned to the fate from which there seemed no escape.

Steve Morgan had given up his trade, but not his daily habit of cursing Brant Durivage. He had lost flesh, and his eyes had a wolfish, vengeful look. In common with others, I fully expected a tragedy of some kind, and I went so far as to share my opinion with the constable, who nodded approvingly.

The tragedy came, but not in the manner expected. At ten o'clock on the night before the day set apart for the wedding a man whom I knew to be Brant Durivage's factotum, threw open my office door, and rushing in, startled me with the intelligence that his master had just been shot.

Thinking immediately of Steve Morgan, I promised to repair to the house at once, and in a short time I crossed the threshold for the first time. I was conducted to an upper room, where I found the dark-faced man lying unconscious on a bed, having been carried to his chamber by a servant who, standing by me, said "at Durivage had been shot through the open window of the library, which was on the ground floor."

"I pulled this out of the wound," continued the man, taking an arrow from the table, "but I'm afraid there's a bit of it left. He's shot under the left shoulder and from behind; a bad wound, I'm thinking." And the servant shook his head.

I fell at once to examining my patient, and discovered that while the barb had not gone deep enough to touch a vital organ, the wound was dangerous, especially if the shaft had been poisoned. I found also that the servant was right about a piece of the arrow head remaining in the hurt, for I removed it with my forceps and laid it alongside the weapon on the table.

Meantime the people attached to the estate were looking for the person who had attempted Durivage's life. The town constable had been summoned and the town itself was already in an uproar. I remained with Durivage until I could leave him to the care of a nurse, and with arrow and the detached head, I went back to my office. I was clear to me that the shaft had come from some distant land. I had seen many savage weapons in collections, but never one like it. The shaft proper was a light reed, very straight and hard. One end had been cut off transversely and the other notched in order to receive the bow string. Next came a piece of bone nearly three inches in length. One end of it had been passed into the split, or open end of the shaft, while the other end of the bone was slipped a short piece of reed, over which, in turn, a strong wrapping of intestine had been placed. All this formed a socket for the true head of the arrow, the one merely giving the shaft proper weight. I saw this much by the light of my office lamp; but I saw more.

The "head" was the piece I had extracted from the wound. It was of ivory, and I now saw that it had been attached to the bone weight in such a manner as to loosen itself when anyone attempted to pull it from the victim's body. Under the microscope I saw that the head of the singular shaft had been coated with a substance resembling glue, but which I decided was some deadly poison. It was bitter and nauseating when applied to the tongue, and I had no doubt that its virus was then spreading itself through out Brant Durivage's system.

I went back to the estate again before daylight, and found my patient raving in delirium. I administered opiate after opiate, and a long time passed before the medicine produced the slightest effect. The servants said he had not spoken rationally since the shot, not even during his quiet moments, and this gave me small hopes of pulling him through. The next morning Steve Morgan

was arrested on suspicion. This did not astonish me after what the pig-headed constable had said the night before. Nobody believed the young man guilty, though he did not express any sympathy for Durivage, and after a hearing he was discharged. He was strangely non-committal during the examination, and when it was over he came into my office and took a chair. "Doctor," said he, leaning toward me with a smile, "they didn't ask me to tell what I saw, did they?"

"I believe they did not, Steve," I answered, wondering what he knew.

"I saw the man that did it!"

I looked strangely at him, wondering if he was not losing his wits. "I saw him, but not till after the shot," Steve went on. "I was up to the house last night. I went there to ask Brant Durivage to listen to me for a minute, though I don't expect he'd have done it. Just as I was entering the garden, for I knew I would find him in the library with the window up, I heard a sharp cry, and the next moment there passed a little man carrying in one hand a box. This is as true as gospel, doctor! He never saw me though I could have touched him while he was passing; but I would not because I thought he had finished Durivage."

Morgan then went on and described the man with a minuteness that astonished me. He did it so well I thought I could see him before me, and at the end of his story he declared his intention of repeating his adventure to no one else, not even in the interests of justice.

"If he gets well, he'll marry Annie," said Morgan, savagely, "and if he dies, let him rot without being avenged!"

I watched Durivage closely for ten days. I could see that the secret poison was at work, and the case was a queer study that opened up to me a new field for investigation. During those ten days the wounded man seemed to suffer a thousand deaths.

On the afternoon of the eleventh day I was hurried over to the house by the butler, who said that Durivage was writing on the wall before his cot. At the foot of the stair we were met by the nurse, who with blanched face cried that all was over.

Bounding up the flight two steps at a time, I rushed into the bedroom and found Durivage lying on his face on the floor.

"You should have seen and heard him," said the frightened servant. "He awoke and called at the top of his voice for a pencil. I ran and got him one, thrusting it into his hand when I came back. As his fingers closed on it he laughed like a fiend, and rising in bed, wrote what you see on the wall yonder, and then fell back and writhed till he pitched out upon the floor."

Before this I was at the cot and with burning eyes was looking—nay staring—at the writing on the wall.

"K'AA—K'AA—K'AA."

Here was another mystery. "What did he say after that?" I asked, turning to the two servants, while I pointed to the writing on the wall.

"He pronounced three times something that sounded like 'kile' or 'Kala haetwe,'" was the nurse's answer. "Before I could reach him he was dead."

I was more than ever mystified. I have never heard of the written or spoken words. They were all "Greek" to me, but I felt that they were connected with the awful death Brant Durivage had died. During the next few days there ran through my mind nothing but "K'aa, K'aa, K'aa." I had the nurse repeat "Kala haetwe" until I had mastered it, and until I left the Shropshire village and located in London, an event in my career which took place a year later, I did not let the singular words escape me.

During this period Steve Morgan did not go back to Annie. He wrote me that he would not do so until the mystery connected with Durivage's death was solved, and I felt that the solution would never come and bring the two young hearts together.

One evening I was called to attend a man who had been run over by a butcher's cart near the Strand. He had been carried to his lodgings nearby, and lay bloody and gasping on a pallet of dingy rugs. The moment I saw the man a strange thrill took possession of me, and I recalled Steve Morgan's description of the owner of the poisoned arrow.

When I had dressed the wounds made by the heavy wheels of the cart, and had my patient sitting up, with a hot drink before him and his long dark fingers encircling the glass, I asked him who and what he was.

"I'm a Bushman," said he with a chuckle, and then, seeing the look of disbelief that I exhibited, he went on: "You don't think so? I can prove it. Look here."

He leaned toward his pallet, and to my utter astonishment took from beneath the pillow of rugs a bow and two arrows. I could not repress a cry of amazement, and did not try. The dark-faced little man was holding the arrows toward me, and I could see that they were exactly like the one which had killed Brant Durivage.

"I had three, but I lost one some time ago," continued my patient. "Where did I lose it? Never mind that, doctor. I could go back to the spot, but I will not. Ho, ho. He knew what it was all the time. My little arrows are more dangerous than

they look. I prick your hand with one, and all your skill cannot save your life. The marum tree grows nowhere but among the Boesmen, the little men of South Africa. It looks like your elm, but it has many thorns. Its leaves are the homes of the grub that builds houses like the silkworm. When we want poison for our arrows we take a grub between thumb and finger, and make it shed its greenish fluids upon the ivory head of the shaft. That is all. The marum grub is death. How does the victim die, eh? He writhes in agony. He becomes a giant in his madness. He has few lucid intervals. It is terrible, do, ho!"

I was holding one of the arrows in my hands.

"What do you call your poison?" I asked, looking up into his face, which had the leer of a fiend incarnate.

"K'aa, answered the little man, with a laugh. Some people call it N'gwa, but K'aa is its name."

I was calm now.

"And its antidote?" I said.

"We seldom tell that it has one," grinned the stranger. "But I'll tell you, doctor. The antidote is 'Kala haetwe,' the product of a small plant that in our country beats little star-shaped flowers."

The man on the pallet allowed his gaze to wander from my face to the arrows. He seemed to be rejoicing in spirit over some stirring event.

"Your lost arrow is in my office," I said, fixing my eyes on the man. "I took the ivory head from Brant Durivage's back. I now know why he wrote 'K'aa, K'aa!' on the wall and died crying 'Kala haetwe.'"

The man from South Africa fell back, and regarded me with gaping mouth.

"Why didn't he let me alone in my love affair?" he exclaimed. I told him that if he took Mina away from me, I'd follow him all over the world with my arrow tipped with K'aa. He would not take my warning, and I was forced to keep my word. Did he die, doctor?"

The next day I wrote Steve Morgan down in Shropshire all about my startling discovery, and when I sent an officer to look after my patient he was found to have gashed his throat with one of his own arrows, and in an hour was dead. In course of time, I am pleased to relate, Steve and Annie became man and wife, but I am told that for many years on the wall of a certain room in Shropshire was to be seen this singular thrilling inscription:

"K'AA—K'AA—K'AA!"—The Home Magazine.

QUAINT AND CURIOUS.

A man should weigh 26 pounds for every foot of his height.

Mozart holds the record of having written 624 compositions.

A New York assemblyman has introduced in the legislature a bill making it a misdemeanor to "flirt on a public thoroughfare."

In 1882 the speed record on a high bicycle was 20 miles in an hour and 12 minutes. Behind a motor pacer a rider has recently covered 40 miles in an hour.

The skin of the muskox, which is a denizen of the "Barren Grounds" and the Arctic region of Canada, has taken the place of that of the extinct buffalo for sleigh robes. It varies in price from \$50 to as low as \$5 for a poor article.

An immense geyser has been discovered in Rotomahana, New Zealand. It covers an area an acre in extent and constantly throws columns of water to vast heights, some of them ascending 300 feet, with clouds of steam which go much higher.

The Iowa supreme court has again fixed the limit of value that may be placed on a man's leg at \$8000. In a similar case some years ago the Iowa supreme court decided that a verdict for \$12,000 was excessive, and that it should be cut down to \$8000.

The telephone exchange of Cleveland, O., has instituted an information bureau, from which subscribers may ask and receive whatever knowledge they wish that can be supplied from a large reference library. During the six months of its operation it is said to have demonstrated its value and to be a pattern that might be followed in other cities.

Seven miles west of Connelleville, Pa., a portion of an Indian mound has been uncovered and innumerable interesting relics have been found. A baby's remains had a necklace of beads, made out of curiously wrought deer horns. Strangely-shaped pipes, many arrow heads, sandstone wheels, which are supposed to have been used by the aborigines for the making of stone implements; marine shells and many other trinkets were also found.

The Longest Stone Arch Bridge.

The work upon the great stone arch bridge which is being erected by the Pennsylvania railroad across the Susquehanna river at Rockville, about five miles above Harrisburg, is rapidly nearing completion. The masonry work of the bridge, consisting of 48 70-foot spans, has been completed, and the contractors are now putting the asphalt covering over the arches. When this is completed the work of filling in, grading and ballasting will be begun and the four tracks put down.

Work upon this, the longest stone arch railroad bridge in the world, was begun less than two years ago.—Philadelphia Record

THE MYSTIC KINSHIP.

Not a thing that lives and moves! But the mystic kinship proves! In the deep, the blue above, All the mid-air ways along—Hark! the same eternal song Singing on the lips of Love.

Purl of stream and swirl of leaf—There the voice of joy and grief, Love's divine, undying art, Waving green and swaying tree, Swinging of the star and sea—'Tis the beating of thy heart.

—Thomas Hardy.

HUMOROUS.

Sillicus—All the world's a stage. Cynicus—And all the men and women merely kickers.

Bloobs—How did your friend, the weather prophet, lose all his money? Slobbs—Betting on his own predictions.

Nell—She's so deceitful! Don't you think so? Belle—Well, I certainly hate to have to listen to her "voice of conscience."

Mrs. Muggins—Mrs. B Jones is always having trouble with her servants. Mrs. Buggins—Yes; they either refuse to stay or refuse to go.

Mr. Botts—I think, my dear, I have at last found the key to success. Mrs. Botts—Well, just as like as not you'll not be able to find the keyhole.

"Her little boy was such a manly way about him." "Yes, I noticed when I was there the other day that he found fault with what they had to eat."

"There is always room at the top," said the Good Adviser. "Indeed, yes," answered the Unfortunate Person, "but the elevator is not always running."

Hook—B Jones is the most melancholy fellow I know. Nye—That's right. He proposed to a girl once by asking her how she would like to be his widow.

"Is he a golf enthusiast?" "Oh, no. He pretends to be, but he isn't." "How do you know?" "Why, he gives up playing when the thermometer goes down to zero."

"He never washes his hands." "Nonsense!" "No; it's a fact." "Then he's a crank, eh?" Not at all. He says it would take too long. He employs 200 in his mill."

Tommy—Pop, a husband and wife are one, aren't they? Tommy's Pop—So we are told, my son. Tommy—Then it doesn't always take two to make a quarrel, does it?

Con. C. Tedboro—Really, I'm getting to be very absent-minded of late. Miss Kostique—I can hardly believe that. An absent-minded man is one who forgets himself, is he not?

Photographer—Look pleasant, general. Remember this picture is for your friends. The General—A soldier should have no friends, sir. This picture is for my enemies to look at.

Teacher—Why were you not at school yesterday? Willie Green—It was my birthday. Teacher—I don't stay home on my birthday. Willie Green—Well, I guess you've got used to 'em.

Miss Upton—Did you tell him that I was not at home? Mr. Servant—Yes, mum; but he didn't seem to believe me, bein' as I'm a stranger. Mebbe you'd better go, down and tell him yourself, mum.

"This is tough luck," said Ham, mournfully, as he leaned out over the side of the ark. "What's wrong now?" queried Shem. "Why, all this water to fish in," replied Ham, "and only two fishin' worms on board."

THE VANISHING LOBSTER.

In Spite of All Efforts the Dearth Still Continues.

The annual report of a dearth in lobster fisheries has made its appearance reinforced by the United States fish commissioner who reports that each year it becomes more difficult to obtain lobster eggs along the New England coast. This decrease is most noticeable south of Cape Cod. Measures for the protection or ostensibly designed for the protection of lobster fisheries are an established feature of annual legislation on the North Atlantic seaboard. In 1899 the Maine legislature reduced the penalty for the taking of "short lobsters" from \$5 to \$1 and New York diminished the penalty in the same year. In 1900 Massachusetts adopted a law prohibiting lobsters from being caught in the waters within or adjacent to that state by any one not having been a resident of it for one year, and the same legislature made it unlawful to sell, or to have on hand, a lobster of less than 10 1-2 inches long. Virginia adopted a law authorizing the board of fisheries, on petition of 50 citizens, to lay off shoals or rocks for crabbin grounds, and South Carolina adopted a statute for regulating the catch, sale export and canning of clams, oysters and lobsters. The two states which have adopted the most comprehensive and stringent methods for the regulation of deep water fisheries are Maryland and New Jersey. Massachusetts and Virginia have followed, while New York and Connecticut have fewer though New York is the great lobster consuming constituency of the United States and probably of the world.

Although 60,000,000 lobster eggs were planted in New England water the lobster dearth still continues in consequence of a constantly enlarging demand. High prices are the rule and recourse has been had to the waters of the Pacific coast as a source of additional supply and the propagation of lobsters there is said to have been attended thus far with great success.

A Klondike baker who has been burned out three times and lost whole cargo of coal has nevertheless cleared \$30,000 in three years.