

It is estimated that the United States has fully 2,000 separate railway companies.

The State of Georgia has developed greatly since the war, the estimate now reaching the total of \$251,963, 124.

London can boast of more parks and commons than any other city in the world, and the number is being constantly augmented.

Max Meyer, a Bavarian writer, estimates that investment in electrical improvements paid a profit of from 8 to 15 percent in the years 1893-94.

"Hunger" says Carroll D. White, the labor expert, "has caused more men to commit petty crimes than anything else. Of 6,958 homicides in 1890, 5,000 had no trades."

There are half a million Swedes in the country, and they are said to be richer on the average than the Americans. The Swedes, as a rule, are sober, industrious and extremely economical.

Francis Willard wants to know why men are not more beautiful, and, according to the New Orleans Picayune, a good many young men, and old ones, too, spend hours a day trying to solve the same problem.

The railroad companies have ordered 25,000 freight cars this year at a cost of \$10,000,000. If the crops turn out well even this re-enforcement will hardly meet the demands of receiving and expanding business.

J. Pierpont Morgan has given \$20,000 to erect a stone sanitarium at Liberty, N. Y., for consumptives. Soon there will be many hospitals of this type, where the best way of treating tuberculosis can be put in practice and no doubt many lives saved by timely use of the best medicine, food and regimen.

It's a far cry from the Montana gold mines to the gold fields of South Africa, but the latter seem to be attracting much of the attention of miners at the former. The railroad and steamship companies are extensively advertising in Montana "excursions" to the Cape for goldseekers. Whether or not many miners are making this long prospecting trip is not apparent.

Some of the sealing schooners that abandoned seal fishing because of the unsatisfactory condition of the business in recent years have engaged, during this and last season, in hunting sea otters along the northern Pacific coast. This is more uncertain of results, perhaps, than sealing, but in the event of success it is vastly more profitable. One schooner was very successful this year, some of the single skins it secured selling for from \$250 to \$350 each.

Franklin, who drew the lightning, was a professional politician, not a professional scientist. Morse, who invented the telegraph, was merely an amateur. Watts, who invented the steam engine, was not a professional machinist. Nearly all the great discoveries in photography have been made by amateurs. And so in nearly all lines, remarks the New York World, it is the man who loves the work, not the man who lives by it, through whom progress comes.

War in these modern days is not necessarily very dangerous to human life, it appears. During the ten months' fighting with China, Japan lost just 628 men. The Elbe went down with over half that many, and it was all over in twenty minutes. We are accustomed to slumber at the horrors of war, but a vessel goes down, a theatre burns, a mine caves in, killing dozens and scores and hundreds of people, and the whole is soon forgotten. The value of human life depends largely on the stress that is laid on that life.

Hard times seriously depressed the marriage market in the Northwest during the past twelve months and the fact has been attested in a curious way, relates the New York Sun. It is stated by the public school authorities of the state of Washington that fewer vacancies of teachers' places occurred during the year than during a number of years past. Vacancies usually occur through the teachers getting married, and very few were married last year. In a number of cases it was related that young women who were engaged to be married during the year had been compelled to assume unexpected responsibilities through the hard times, and so had postponed the event; while the inference is that the hard times also influenced lots of young men to continue courting another year or so.

### The Two Maidens.

Long years ago, it seems to be  
A little maiden played with me;  
Her soul was full of mirth and joy,  
And a hearty, healthy boy.  
Through all the golden summer days  
I teased her in all sorts of ways;  
One day I caught her in the snow,  
She cried, "Oh, don't be foolish now!"  
I put my arms around her waist,  
Her lovely lips I longed to taste;  
She said the while my fun to mar,  
"Now quit, or I will call papa."  
Long years have passed: upon my knee  
Another maiden plays with me;  
A little girl one-third her size,  
Yet still she has her mother's eyes,  
Her mother's voice, her mother's wail—  
The same red lips I longed to taste.  
And now through all the dewy hours  
Of rapid scenes and scentless flowers  
A voice comes gently from afar,  
"Now quit, or I will call papa."  
—Chicago Dispatch.

### THE WIDOW'S ARRIVAL.

It was "steamer day" at Sitka, and amid all the joyous stir and excitement that the monthly boat brought was one forlorn, unhappy man, Tom Douglas watched his friends as they eagerly opened their letters and listened with assumed interest to the bit of news they were anxious to share for at Sitka the population throngs to the wharf when the steamer's whistle is heard and waits the coming of the ship and the distribution of the mails. The people crowd into the tiny postoffices on the dock and wait impatiently for the longed-for home letters.

But Tom's home letter was not a comfort to him. "Well, she is really coming," he thought, "a month from to-day, if the steamer is on time. I will be a married man—worse luck. How can I ever tell Natalia, dear little girl! I wouldn't willingly hurt her tender feelings for a million dollars, as hard up as I am," and Tom whistled ruefully.

Tom Douglas was a naval officer, and before being stationed at Sitka he had been on duty a winter in Washington, where he plunged into society with that gay abandon that only a sailor knows, for after three years at sea a young fellow is quite ready for the rush and whirl of the city capital. All houses were open to the handsome lieutenant, but there was one where he was especially welcome. The hostess was a pretty widow of some twenty-six or twenty-seven years of age. Her husband, who had died soon after their marriage, seemed not to have laid a very strong hold on her affections, for after mourning him decorously for a year she blossomed into the gayest of the gay, and her house became a center for the young officers who had been the friends of her husband.

It was there that Tom spent most of his time. He dropped in during the morning and discussed the newest gossip or the latest magazines and came in for a cup of tea in the afternoon and remained till her cozy parlor was empty save for himself and her.

"Are you going to the assembly tonight?" he would ask.

"Will you be there, Tom?" Mrs. Deering had such a good-fellowship way of using her friends' first names.

"Yes, I presume so."

"Well, then, I am going," the little widow would reply.

And that was the way the winter passed—Tom running in at all hours, privileged to smoke or to read, to talk or listen, the most indulged of all her callers. When his orders came for his immediate removal to Alaska he put the document in his pocket and went, as usual, to the cheery home of Mrs. Deering. He told her the news and was really surprised and flattered by her reception of it. She took both his hands in hers, and the tears gathered in her bright eyes.

"Oh, Tom," she said, "I hate to have you go."

Now, it never had occurred to Lieutenant Douglas before, but at this moment the idea did come to him that he was in love with the widow. He drew her to him and kissed away her tears, and before he knew it he was engaged to Alice Deering.

He soon left, after arranging to have Alice join him later in the summer, but owing to the loss of a distant relative, the heir of whose modest estate she was, her coming had been greatly delayed. It was now more than a year since she and Tom had parted in Washington. In the meantime Tom had whittled away his leisure hours in the somewhat narrow circle of Sitka society, but in that narrow bound he had found a fair Russian flower that he knew bloomed for him. Though Tom had not made love to Natalia—he was too honorable for that—they had been together constantly, and each knew distinctively what was in the other's heart.

"I believe I'll go and tell Natalia all," Tom continued to muse, "right now, for, of course, as a gentleman and officer I am bound to keep my word, and my word is given to marry Alice, hang it! I wish I had never been born. She, too, poor girl, may discover that my love has somewhat cooled. If it ever was love it never was the same feeling I have for dear little Natalia, bless her loving heart."

So Tom went to Natalia and told her that he was engaged and another month would see him married.

Her delicate face whitened, but controlling herself, she said:

"I congratulate you, Mr. Douglas." Then bursting into tears, she turned away. The sight of her tears was too much for Tom. Embracing her tenderly, he said: "I love but you, Natalia, darling. Oh, that I had met you first! My fondness for Alice was but a fleeting thing, and my love for you will last forever."

Pressing warm kisses on her lips he held her close.

"Leave me, Tom. It is right for you to keep your word, but you should have told me of your engagement before. We had best part now. Good-by."

"But can't I come to see you, Natalia, as usual?"

"Why, certainly not, Mr. Douglas. It would only be painful, for we can never from this time forward be anything but the most formal of friends."

Tom was touched by the simple dignity of the young Russian girl, whose quiet life had been spent by the seashore under the shadow of the mountains, far from the noise of city or town, so he bowed to her will. Their parting was a heart-breaking one to both.

"Natalia, I can't bear to leave you. I must have you, dearest."

"There, go now. This is only foolish."

"Well, then, let me kiss you for the last time, darling," pleaded Tom.

Natalia put up her little tear-stained face, and Tom silently kissed her and went away.

That month passed only too quickly for poor Tom, who looked with dread toward the coming of the steamer. He studiously avoided Natalia, denying himself the regular afternoon walk to the Indian River, which is the event of the day to all the white people at Sitka. He kept close to his rooms when not on board ship, cursing the mistake of his life, which was soon to make an unwilling bridegroom of him.

To Natalia, whose soft brown eyes were red with weeping, life seemed a dreary blank now that the daily visits of Tom had ceased. There appeared in her mental horizon nothing for which to live. She wondered how she had existed before he came to Sitka. But then she had been busy with her lessons, and now, in the idea of her old fashioned father, her simple education was complete, and it was time for her to marry one of the Russian lads who sought her hand.

The next "steamer day" Tom Douglas was seen rushing madly to Natalia's home. The neighbors, who, of course, had noted his long absence, were greatly surprised.

"Natalia! Natalia!" he cried, as soon as she came into the quaint drawing room to receive him. "I've come to ask you to be my wife. Dearest, say yes at once."

"Why, Tom, are you crazy? What has become of Alice?"

"Well, by George, Natalia, she is married! Just think of it—married! And I am the happiest man on earth. A pardoned convict's feelings of relief are not to be compared to mine. You see, soon after she left Washington she met an old sweetheart whom she had cast off to marry Mr. Deering, whose position and prospects seemed better. In the mean time this fellow had made a fortune, and as he was on his way to Alaska for a pleasure trip they decided to make it also a wedding trip and break the news to me in person. Rather awkward, you might think, but I congratulated them with all my heart and thanked my stars for freedom. Come, little girl, put on your hat and I'll take you down to the steamer to see the bride, and I'll introduce to her my fiancée, because you say 'yes,' don't you dear?"

"I suppose so, Tom, but it's all so sudden. Shall I wear my leghorn hat?"—Chicago News.

Looking Backward.

"I'm afraid," said the bicycle girl, "that we are getting altogether too original in our ideas of costumes."

"It's worse than that, replied her mother. "We are getting positively aboriginal."—Washington Star.

In London and other large cities summer outings for poor children are more popular than ever this year.

### Strangest Insect in the World.

The aweto, as the Maoris, or natives of New Zealand, call it, or the hippitalis vireocens, as naturalists term it, is found in New Zealand, and is a vegetable caterpillar of from three to four inches in length, and so far as science has not been able to say whether it is a vegetable or an insect. It is always found at the foot of large myrtle trees that have beautiful red flowers on their stems, and a beautiful creeping clematis as white as the snow. The Maoris call this tree by the name of rata. The aweto buries itself among the roots of the rata, a few inches below the ground, and there lives until it is full grown, when it undergoes a most wonderful change. The spore of a vegetable fungus, termed by naturalists spheria robertsii, fastens itself to the neck of the caterpillar, just between the head and the first ring, and then grows upwards to the height of from six to eight inches. Many people assert that there is never more than one stem, but such is not the case, for some have been found with two stems, although very rarely. The stem shoots up out of the ground, above where the caterpillar is living, about two or three inches; below the earth it grows into the aweto, until it fills up every possible space within the outer skin without changing the form of the insect in the slightest way whatever, but simply substituting a vegetable matter for animal matter. As soon as this takes place both the plant and the caterpillar become dry and hard and die, but retain exactly the same form as when alive. The whole has a brown color, and the insect appears a wooden caterpillar, with a large horn standing up from the back of its neck. How the caterpillar manages to propagate its species no one can tell. Usually the caterpillar becomes a chrysalis, the chrysalis changes into a moth, the moth lays eggs and these eggs again become caterpillars, and so on without stopping. Many reasons are given why the plant shoots up from the back of the neck of the aweto. One is that the aweto has a sticky substance oozing out from its neck, which, while the aweto is boring at the foot of the rata tree for its only food, catches the seed of the fungus and holds it fast there till the latter begins to grow. When it has sucked all the vegetable life out of the aweto it must naturally die, for it finds no other nourishment. The aweto is often found in large numbers.

### Varying Rainfalls.

Over parts of the great equatorial region of calm in the great oceans there is almost constant precipitation in heavy showers, rain falling on the average about seven hours out of the twenty-four all the year round. There are, however, some notable exceptions which qualify this broad general statement. At the Island of Ascension only two or three inches of rain fall in a year; and there are numerous islands in the Pacific, near the equator, which are practically rainless, as is evidenced by their possessing deposits of guano. The other chief rainy regions are those localities where moist winds meet mountain ranges, and are forced upward, parting with their moisture during the ascent—such as the Khasia Hills, the Western Ghats, the western coasts of the British Isles, of Norway, North America, Southern Chili, and of New Zealand, which are exposed to winds, blowing over extensive oceans and depositing their moisture on the first coasts they meet.

The rainless regions of the globe owe their aridity to the fact that they are shut off from the influence of moist winds by high mountain chains. The chief of these are Upper Egypt, the Sahara, the Desert of Gobi, and the coast of Peru. The driest place in the world is probably that part of Egypt between the two lower falls of the Nile. Rain has never been known to fall there, and the inhabitants do not believe travelers who tell them that water can fall from the sky. The great trade winds at the starting points of their paths are the cause of drought and barrenness, but where they cross land at the termination of their course they give out bounteous rain supplies. The contrasts thus offered are very striking. Thus, some parts of the Moroccan Sahara near the head of the northeastern Atlantic trade wind, do not experience a shower for perhaps twenty years at a time; while the same wind, when it reaches the coast of South America, produces a rainfall representing a depth of twenty feet of water in a year.—The Gentleman's Magazine.

The United States produced in 1890 over two-fifths of all the silver mined in the world, the next silver-producing country being Mexico.

### FOR THE HOUSEWIFE.

#### OLD VIRGINIA KETCHUP.

Take one peck of green tomatoes, half a peck of white onions, three ounces each of allspice and cloves, half a pint of mixed mustard, an ounce of black pepper and celery seed each, and one pound of brown sugar. Chop the tomatoes and onions, sprinkle with salt and let stand three hours; drain the water off; put in a preserve kettle with the other ingredients. Cover with vinegar and set on the fire to boil slowly for one hour.—St. Louis Star-Sayings.

#### APPE COMPOTE A LA FRANCAIS.

Cut up half a dozen sour apples, put in a preserve kettle with the juice and rind of a lemon and three cups of water; set over the fire to boil until tender; take up and strain, return the juice to the kettle with half a pound of sugar, and let cook for two minutes. Peel eight large cooking apples, remove the core carefully and drop the apples into the sirup. Let simmer gently until tender and clear; take from the kettle fill the centers with orange marmalade, lay carefully in a compote dish. Boil the sirup slowly until thick. When the apples are very cold and the sirup cold pour it over. Set on ice until chilled before serving.—New York Recorder.

#### SELF-RISING BREAD.

One cup of lukewarm water, one-half cup of corn meal and a pinch of salt. Mix and let stand over night in a warm place,—in summer a kitchen cupboard will do. In the morning strain the water from this (which should be foamy by this time if kept warm enough) and add enough warm water to half fill a quart bowl. Then thicken with flour and set the bowl in a kettle of warm water. About the right temperature at this season of the year is 105 degrees. In two hours it should be light enough to fill the bowl, although I have had nice bread when it took four hours. Two quarts of milk or milk and water, one tablespoon salt and a little sugar with your quart of rising must be stirred to a thick batter in a large pan, giving plenty of room to rise. This should be placed over your kettle of warm water and allowed to get very light. It should rise in an hour, but be sure it is light if it takes two hours. Mix into loaves. This makes four in my bread tin. Make them just stiff enough to handle easily and put in a warm place again to rise. This, if all the time it is not allowed to get below 105 degrees in temperature, should be in about forty minutes. When the loaves begin to crack a little at the sides they should be put in a moderate oven and baked three-quarters of an hour, or until the top and bottom are nicely browned. I have had excellent success with salt rising by this rule and hope it will be definite enough to suit Ray. The secret of this kind of bread is to keep it warm enough and out of all drafts.—American Agriculturist.

#### HOUSEHOLD TIPS.

Salt sprinkled around the edges of the room, is a preventive of the carpet bug.

The most economical way to carve a ham is to begin at the knuckle and slice upwards.

Ants dislike the odor of tansy or camphor. They will not frequent shelves washed in alum water.

The tea canister should not be left uncovered, as the tea loses its flavor and strength when exposed to the air.

Line all boxes, drawers and trunks in which woollens are packed with newspapers. Moth millers do not like the scent of printer's ink.

When anything boils over in the oven it should be allowed to burn to a char, as it then may be easily scraped off and brushed out. The oven should then be thoroughly aired.

If an ounce of alum is added to the water in which aprons and dresses are rinsed, they will be rendered almost inflammable, and danger of their catching fire, while at work over an oil stove is much lessened.

Save your empty spoons. For hooks they are much better than an ordinary nail. Slip a nail through the spoon, selecting one with a head large enough not to slip out of the hole, and then drive the into the place where the hook is wanted.

Buttons will fly off of active children's clothing. A good way to prevent this is to sew a small piece of cotton on the wrong side, with the same stitches used for fastening on the button, or a small flat button may be used in place of the cotton.

### SCIENTIFIC SCRAPS.

The sting of the black scorpion is much more dreaded than that of the gray.

One thousand tons of soot settle monthly on the 110 square miles of London.

Corals are not found within the range of rivers flowing into the ocean as fresh water is fatal.

Huxley's tables show that the human body is made up of thirteen different elements, of which five are gases and eight solids.

Sixty head of blooded stock have been killed on account of tuberculosis at the Massachusetts State College in the last year.

It is announced that two examples of the polar hare have just been added to the collection of the Zoological Society, London.

An enormous shark, weighing, it is said, about a ton, and measuring 15 feet in length, was recently landed by an Aberdeen, (Scotland) traveler.

A few days ago, at Helensville, Wis., near Palmyra, a number of crows attacked a turtle that was basking in the sun, and succeeded in killing it.

The white rhinoceros has become nearly, if not quite, extinct. There are two stuffed specimens in England, and one in the Cape Town (South Africa) museum.

Soda-propelled engines are now being used on some French railways. The invention is based on the principle that solutions of caustic soda, which have high boiling points liberate the absorbing steam, and work noiselessly.

An electric fire-alarm now being introduced in Switzerland acts automatically through the expansion of a metallic rod under heat. This makes an electric connection, and it is said that the alarm is so sensitive that it is put in operation by holding a lighted match near it.

Running sixty miles an hour, a train of 350 tons, with the full breaking weight of the train utilized, and the rails in the most favorable condition, could be brought to a full stop in 990 feet; at eighty miles per hour, in 1,600 feet; at 99 miles per hour in 2,025 feet; and at 100 miles per hour in 2,560 feet.

#### Large Catch of Turtles.

The sloop Waterwitch Captain W. M. Greenleaf, after a three weeks' cruise, returned to Jupiter laden with turtles of almost every description. Their catch consisted of twenty of the hawkbill variety, fifty loggerheads averaging from fifty to three hundred pounds, and three green turtles, the smallest of them weighing about fifty pounds, while the largest will weigh fully 500 pounds. This one will be kept alive at this place until Mr. Greenleaf can find a purchaser for him. Mr. Greenleaf states that this turtle at Key West would bring twenty cents per pound gross.

The sloop was anchored alongside the dock when the work of butchering the entire lot of turtles began. Several bushels of eggs were removed from these turtles. The meat was quartered up and a considerable quantity sold to the citizens who congregated in great numbers about the dock.

The remainder of the meat was put up in pickle, which, Mr. Greenleaf says, will sell readily at about eighteen cents per pound. The shell of the hawkbill turtle, which is taken off the scales from the back, sells from \$5 to \$10 per pound. About thirty-six pounds of this shell was procured from these twenty turtles.—Jacksonville Citizen.

#### A Horse Canning Factory.

The building erected just below Linton by the Western Packing Company for a horse abattoir is rapidly approaching completion. The foundations for the engines and boilers are all in, and the machinery is on the ground, and should be in place in a few days. The building and plant are on an extensive scale, and will probably be ready for operation soon. The first shriek of the whistle will sound the death knell of 8,000 cayuses now roaming the plains of Eastern Oregon and eating good grass, which might better be turned into beef and mutton. Mr. Switzer, who raised these horses, as he has many thousands before them, will now retire from the business, and has expressed his intention of buying a bicycle, and, if he likes it, will perhaps start a bicycle factory. He says that the bicycles have driven the horse to the slaughter house; but when something newer has run out the bicycle, it cannot be utilized for canning, as the horse now is.—Portland Oregonian.