

Analysis show that the quality of American corn is still far superior to that of Europe.

London has at present twenty-three paupers to every 1,000 inhabitants, which is the highest proportion since 1882.

According to recent statistics railroad accidents in this country kill more tramps than any other kind of people.

Chicago is very much interested in an attempt to crowd down the street car fares to three cents. The street car companies say that it would ruin them.

The British Consul at Tokio says that while the Japanese are making many very cheap goods in competition with British and American manufacturers, they are also very poor goods.

Dr. Albert Shaw, editor of the Review of Reviews, told the New York Assembly's franchise committee that in Europe he observed that cities were fully alive to the value of franchises, and were accustomed to get their full value for the benefit of the public.

If Her Majesty Queen Victoria called all the policemen of England, with their officers, to a review, an army of nearly 40,000 men would pass before her. Of ordinary constables there are 30,000, of detective officers, 611; there are 3,890 sergeants, 1,543 inspectors, 530 superintendents, and 167 borough head-constables.

Jealousy of American farm produce on the part of England has just broken out in a new spot, announces the American Agriculturist. This time it is directed against the importation of live sheep except under onerous restrictions. It is not so much fear of the introduction of scab among their own flocks as fear on the part of the politicians of displeasing the English farmer vote.

Says the Springfield Republican: German students of literature are much exercised over the decay of polite letters in the Fatherland. In scholarship it more than holds its own but neither in poetry, drama, nor fiction is there anything notable being done. It may be said the same is true of music. Germany no longer leads the world as she did in this art. It is quite possible that this decadence is due to the over development of the critical spirit and that greatness in scholarship is proving detrimental to art.

About 20 per cent of the Moslem pilgrims to Mecca perish in Arabia. Djeddah, the nearest port, is separated from Mecca by a desert, and the caravans on this route are constantly surrounded by bands of murderous Bedouins. These mounted bandits mercilessly kill and then rob any stragglers. Others are murdered "for profit" in Mecca or Medina, while thousands die every year of cholera and other diseases caused by the incredible filth and lack of all sanitary precaution, in the holy cities of the Mahometans.

It is said that women who go into business life have not only a greater chance of marriage than girls who stay at home, but greater prospects of happiness afterward. The reason alleged is that they make the acquaintance of the class of men who make, as a rule, good husbands—that is, industrious, intelligent, hard-working men of business. Moreover, adds the Atlanta Constitution, working with them day by day, each has a more than usually good opportunity of discovering the other's real character, so that there is less risk of disillusionment after marriage.

A railroad running across a lake on palm leaves, some of them twenty-five feet long, is certainly unusual. Such a railroad has just been completed on the wonderful Pitch Lake of Trinidad. This lake is situated near the village of La Brea, on the Gulf of Paria. At first sight it appears to be an expanse of still water frequently interrupted by clumps of trees and shrubs. On approaching it, it is found to consist of mineral pitch, containing numbers of crocodiles filled with water. The surface is not slippery nor sticky, and will bear any weight. It is about 100 acres in extent and occupies a bowl-like depression in a truncated cone on the side of a hill covered with tropical jungles. The cone consists of both asphalt and earth. A heavy stream of asphalt has overflowed to the sea, forming a barrier reef for a considerable distance. Some diggings have been pushed to forty feet below the surface of the lake without finding bottom. There is a steady outflow of asphalt to the sea through the side of the cone.

The Father of the Forest.

Now from these veins the strength of old,
The warmth and lust of life depart;
Full of mortality behold
The even that was once my heart!
Me, with blind arm in season due,
Let the aerial woodman hew.
For not through mightiest mortals fall,
The starry chariot hangs delayed,
His axle is uncoiled, nor shall
The thunder of His wheels be stayed.
A changeless pace His coursers keep
And halt not at the wells of sleep.
The South shall bless, the East shall blight,
The red rose of the Dawn shall blow;
The million-lilled stream of night,
Wide in ethereal meadows flow;
And autumn mourn; and everything
Dances to the wild pipe of the spring.
With oceans heedless round her feet
And the indifferent heavens above,
Earth shall the ancient tale repeat
Of wars and tears, and death and love;
And, woe from all the foolish past,
Shall peradventure hail at last.
The advent of that morn divine
When nations may as forests grow,
Wherein the oak hates not the pine,
Nor beeches wish the cedars' woe,
But all in their unlikeness blend
Confederate to one golden end—
Beauty: the vision whereunto.
No joy, with paintings, from afar,
Through sound and odor, form and hue,
And mind and clay, and worm and star—
Now touching goal, now backward hurried—
Tells the indomitable world.
—William Watson.

The First Class Passenger.

The midnight train was due to start in five minutes. The night was bitterly cold, a hard frost having set in shortly after dusk. The guard of the train appeared to feel the cold keenly; yet, instead of pacing the platform or bustling about to keep his blood circulating, he stood shivering in front of a first class carriage, looking miserable and dejected in the extreme.

His restless eyes had fixed themselves on the entrance to the platform, and a moment later, without any cherry "This way, sir," he silently, and in a manner which even at that time struck Mr. Yorke as peculiar, held up his arm as a signal. It was a signal which had been expected, for it was answered by a similar gesture from a tall, slender man, who came hurrying down the platform, pushing in front of him a bath chair.

The guard's agitation had visibly increased upon the arrival of this passenger, but the latter was cool, rapid in his movements, and as dextrous in his actions as if he had rehearsed them when he came to assist the guard in lifting the occupant of the chair into the carriage. Mr. Yorke saw that the invalid was a lady, well wrapped up in cloaks and shawls and heavily veiled.

The ride was without incident until five minutes after passing through Goodridge tunnel, the shout of a man instantly followed by another, which might have been the echo of the former, but that it was a distinctly different voice, interrupted the monotonous rattle of the train, and the driver shut off steam in response to a summons by the communication cord. At that instant the up express rushed quivering by.

The cries had both come from the off side, and putting his head out of the window, Mr. Yorke, as his eye grew accustomed to the darkness, found that the guard had already gained the footboard of the carriage from whence the alarm had presumably emanated. There were shouts from the guard to the driver, much giving of arms, and then the train backed slowly for a few hundred yards. There the guard and the passengers dismounted. Mr. Yorke followed suit. He saw at once that there had been a ghastly occurrence. The trunk of a woman was lying across the up line, and the head had been completely severed from it by the engine wheels of the up train.

Mr. Yorke's momentary view of the lady of the bath chair was sufficient to enable him to identify her as the victim of this midnight horror. The wraps were easily recognizable. Looking closer, he imagined there was very little blood about for a mutilation so terrible, and stooping to touch the hand, in spite of the protest of the tall passenger, he found something which aroused his journalistic instincts to their fullest activity—something which sent him running up and down the train for a doctor; something which exasperated him strangely when all his exertions failed to find one. Obviously there was no medical man living near.

Mr. Yorke next turned to the tall stranger and introduced himself as a newspaper man. The tall man who had been scowling bleakly over Mr. Yorke's intervention, looked greatly relieved upon hearing that gentleman's profession, and readily consented to give his version of the matter for publication. But first of all he desired that note should be taken,

before the guard went on with the train, that that official admitted the accident was due to the negligence of the railway engineer.

"That's right, Mr. Gresswell," said the guard with bloodless lips.

"Well, just tell this gentleman about it," responded the passenger sharply, and in a tone of annoyance.

The guard recovered something of his composure, apparently, as the effect of his asperity, and proceeded: "A few moments before—the fatality, I happened to look along the train, and I noticed that the handle of this gentleman's compartment was not fastened."

"How did you know it was this gentleman's compartment from that distance?" interjected Mr. Yorke.

"Of course, he didn't know till he got there," put in Mr. Gresswell, hastily.

"No, of course I didn't know till I got there," repeated the guard. "I suppose, looking back now it's all over, it would have been wiser to have stopped the train, but we were slacking down our speed passing Evesham Woods, as we always do, and the carriage was not far from my van, so I started out to turn the handle. The lady fell out just as I was about to reach the door. With another step I could have prevented the accident."

"Did she fall out backwards or face foremost," asked the journalist.

"Oh! backwards, sir," was the answer.

"No, I think you're wrong, guard," again interposed Mr. Gresswell with a snap.

"Let me think a moment," said the guard, placing a shaking hand to his clammy brow. "Yes, she fell face foremost, of course. I can see her now."

In the meantime the tall passenger—or, as the guard called him, Mr. Gresswell—told the journalist the story he desired to have published. His wife, he said, had suffered from a painful illness, which he specified, and had been under the care of Dr. Steinway, of Victoria street. He was taking her down to the seaside at her own wish. Certain suspicions which had been forming in Mr. Yorke's mind took definite shape from the moment of this lame explanation. If he now became an apparently more sympathetic listener, it was by dint of the simulation which discretion suggested as a cloak to the hostility which began to take possession of him.

"My wife rose to see if it was raining," proceeded Mr. Gresswell, "and looked out of the window."

An obvious lie, reflected Mr. Yorke, for the person who was lifted into the carriage in the helpless condition of this invalid could not rise and go to the window unassisted. But he said nothing.

"As I looked around," continued the bereaved husband, "I saw her falling forward. I clutched at her, just caught the edge of her dress, and it came away in my grasp as she disappeared through the door which had been so negligently left unfastened. Here is the piece of material which was left in my grasp, and here is the place from which it was rent."

Now Mr. Yorke saw the reason for that contradiction of the guard by Mr. Gresswell, and the necessity for the story that the lady fell face foremost. The rent was exactly in the center of the back, in the edging.

Before he had finished his interview with Mr. Gresswell the journalist was confident that he was treading upon the heels of a murder. He was not surprised that there had been no feminine cry of terror. He felt confident that the lady had not met her death on the line at all, but that she had been murdered and then thrown in front of the express train, in order that her body might not remain available for the proof of the guilty means which had compassed her death. For when he had suddenly stooped down and touched the lifeless hand a minute or two after the alarm had been given it was cold and stiff. It had been held in the grasp of death for some hours.

Hence his chagrin at the absence of medical evidence to prove this all-important point. By the time the country doctor arrived the coldness of the body and the rigor mortis were symptoms quite compatible with death in the manner the tall passenger related. The bitter coldness of the night, said Dr. Truefit, would have led him to expect similar appearances about the corpse even had he arrived considerably earlier. Nor did the doctor's inspection of the scene where the mutilated body had been found suggest to him any want of reconciliation between that which he saw, and that which he had been told by Dr. Gresswell. He saw no occasion, he said, to conduct any necropsy before the coroner's inquest was held.

Mr. Yorke rapidly wrote out a guarded report of the incidents of the night, scribbled a letter of instructions to a colleague in London, and prepared the packet containing these two manuscripts for carriage by the next train. His next step was to telegraph to Superintendent James, the head of the railway company's police, to send down his smartest detective. Upon the arrival of Inspector Waring events began to move rapidly. Gresswell, truculent and abusive, was arrested; the Coroner was communicated with, and a post-mortem examination was ordered. The inspector, like the journalist, felt confident that he was upon the trail of a diabolical murder.

But both, as events proved, were wrong. They had discovered a crime, but it was not murder, as the post-mortem examination subsequently proved by showing that death had been due to natural causes. The whole story came out when the guard was arrested.

"Murder!" he repeated, wildly, when the charge was made in the station master's office at the terminus. No, before God, it wasn't murder. I'll make a clean breast of it. Listen! Gresswell has been the curse of my existence. I once placed myself in his power by a foolish act, which I committed at his instigation. I gave him the slip in Brisbane, came to England and had worked faithfully for the company and forgotten his evil face almost until one day I met him near the Elephant and Castle. I haven't known a happy moment since. Jail would be a relief, so long as it helps me to keep out of his way. He was at me for weeks before he could get me to consent to go in for this thing with him. He lent me a book—I forget the title, but I've got it at home with his name in it to prove what I say. It was about a murder and the agony of the murderer when he came to dispose of the body.

"Gresswell used to discuss this story with me. He brought every conversation around to the one topic, the stupidity of the murderer in not seeing that the corpse, so far from being in the way, was really a valuable possession. He illustrated this by saying that his wife was dying rapidly; that he expected to make thousands out of her body. 'How?' I asked, and then he went on to explain that if he threw the body out of the train and proved that she fell out through the company's negligence, there would be a grand haul for compensation. I resented being asked to join in this scheme. I told him it filled me with horror. But he talked me down. It was not so much the share of the gain he promised me. On my oath it wasn't. But he seems to have a control over me. I can't explain it, but if he wanted to make me put my arm on the line in front of a goods train, I believe he could do it. He said there was nothing horrible in the affair; that I was as sentimental as a school girl, and that, as far as mutilation of the body was concerned, his wife had always intended to leave her corpse to some hospital to the dissecting room. In short, the villain! he got me to agree to be a party to his scheme, and then he hurried me along so fast that I never could put the brake on. He got me to explain spots where there were no dwellings, and, therefore, no doctors; he got me to lock the carriage for him, and to give him the signal, when the express was approaching, and he got me to prove that the carriage door was not secured through negligence on the part of the company's servants. He drilled me thoroughly, and—well, you know what happened!"—Black and White.

Three Years in a Trance.

For three years Mrs. Anna Larsen has been in a cataleptic state at the Essex County Hospital for the insane at Newark. All this time she sat motionless, never speaking or paying the slightest attention to what was passing around her, and being fed from a spoon by an attendant. Long ago her husband went into the Orange Mountains and blew his brains out.

A day or two ago, when the dinner bell rang, Mrs. Larson got out of her chair and marched into the dining hall. She ordered the waiter to bring her more when her plate was empty, and talked to those who sat near her as though she had but just awakened from a dream.

She was slightly demented when taken into the institution, but her head appears to be clear now. The doctors are watching her closely, and are greatly interested in the case.—New York Journal.

A Brooklyn justice refused to accept a coroner's verdict in a trolley-killing case, and ordered a special investigation.

CHILDREN'S COLUMN.

THE LAND OF STORY BOOKS.
At evening when the lamp is lit,
Around the fire my parents sit;
They sit at home and talk and sing,
And do not play at anything.
Now with my little gun I crawl
All in the dark along the wall,
And follow around the forest track
Away behind the sofa back.
There, in the night, where none can spy,
All in my hunter's camp I lie,
And play at books that I have read
Till it is time to go to bed.
These are the hills, these are the woods,
These are the stony solitudes;
And there by the river by whose brink
The roaring lion comes to drink.
I see the others far away,
As if in fire-lit camp they lay,
And I, like an Indian scout,
Around their party prowled about.
So, when my nurse comes in for me,
Home I return from across the sea,
And go to bed with backward looks
At my dear land of story books.
—ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

A REMARKABLE DOG.

"I have a dog," said a minister, who had just heard a precocious crow story, "who is very sagacious. One Sunday he followed me to church and sat among the people and watched my movements in the pulpit. That afternoon I heard a terrible howling in my back yard, and of course I went to see what it meant. I found my dog was in a woodshed, standing on his hind legs in a dry goods box. He held down a torn almanac with one paw and gesticulated with the other, while he averted his head and howled to an audience of four other dogs even more sadly than I had done in the evening."—New York Mail and Express.

SHE SAT DOWN ON A BEAR.

Betsy Ransom, whose home was a small red farmhouse, built close up against the almost perpendicular side of Bald Mountain in New Hampshire, was one of the most indefatigable berry pickers in New England, and nowhere did she find such big, blue, luscious berries as on the southern slopes at the base of old Bald Mountain.

Here fire had laid waste acres of valuable land, leaving in its path many a blackened stump and tree trunk, mementoes of the fiery visitation; and here, too, the blueberry bushes, first of nature's children to respond to the soft influence of sun and air, grew luxuriantly.

It was in one of those fire swept patches that Betsy Ransom found herself one warm July morning, heaping the last pint of berries upon her second ten-quart pail.

For hours she had picked steadily in the shade of trees and bushes; but now the fiery rays of the sun shone directly down upon her, and were reflected with power from the rocks and ledges far above, on the mountainside, while, far below, the valley lay shimmering in the hot July atmosphere.

Looking about her for a comfortable place in which to rest and eat her midday lunch, she espied, at a little distance, a blackened log, and thinking it a more desirable seat than the ground, walked slowly towards it, fanning herself vigorously all the while with her sunbonnet, and sat solidly down. To her intense horror and amazement, there was a sudden convulsion beneath her, and with an angry snort, up rose a big, black bear.

With a shriek of terror, Mrs. Ransom leaped to her feet and fled for her life. She had not run far before some obstruction threw her violently to the ground, and glancing over her shoulder as she regained her feet, great was her relief at seeing that she was not pursued, but that bruin remained where she had found him, and was devouring her lunch with evident satisfaction.

"What's the matter, mother?" exclaimed her husband, as bareheaded, breathless, she rushed past him into the back door of the little red house.

"A bear!" she panted, as she took the rifle from its hooks; "he's eatin' all my blueberries!"

"Shoo! give me the gun, then; you can't shoot."

"Can't I?" she replied. "Come and see!" and she kept on with the weapon.

Picking up an axe he followed as fast as his rheumatism would permit, and was in time to see the bear quietly munching the berries, and his wife, partly shielded by a thicket, with the gun at her shoulder.

Crack! and the bruin rose to his haunches.

Bang! and the huge beast rolled over, dead as a stone.

"Well done, wife; you've lost your berries, but have gained a splendid bear skin. I'm proud of you."—Youth's Companion.

QUAINT AND CURIOUS.

Large quantities of turkeys raised on Connecticut farms are being shipped to Europe.

A black bear weighing 512 pounds was killed near Wilkesbarre, Penn., by two hunters recently.

A California lion, measuring six feet nine inches from nose to tail-tip was shot near Pescadero, Cal.

Dowagiac, Mich., with a population of 4,000 has twenty-four secret societies and twenty social clubs.

At Port Jervis, N. Y., couple were recently married while standing on the boundary rock where New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania join.

Some patriotic but mischievous youngsters in Lee, Mass., took a neighboring farmer's white horse one night recently and painted its head red and its tail blue.

An Indian known as Chief Bushey Joe died at Amber, Mich., a few days ago at the reputed age of 110 years. He was an expert hunter and trapper, and was out in the woods after game almost up to the day he died.

Six deer wandered into the village of Central Lake, Mich., trotted through the streets for a while, and took to the woods again before any of the startled inhabitants could quiet their nerves sufficiently to get a gun.

Rev. Joseph Powell, of Findlay, Ohio, not being an American citizen, registered as a voter to prove an assertion made in his pulpit that the registration laws were not enforced. He has found himself arrested for fraudulent registration.

Jake Gregory, an old colored man living near Waverly, Ky., traded his wife to a neighbor for an old mule, a pointer dog, and \$5 in cash. The woman was a willing party to the swap, and even borrowed the mule from her ex-husband to carry her to her new home.

The battle of the Rocks is another name for the battle of Falkenstein. In 1814 the French mountaineers posted themselves on the heights and let loose great masses of rocks and earth on the German attacking force. Whole ranks were overthrown by a single avalanche, and the attack was abandoned.

Thomas Frye, of Escatawba, Miss., is reported to have a "mad-stone," which he found some two years ago in the caud of a deer. He has applied it several times to wounds made by mad dogs, and snakes, and it has worked perfectly. Before applying to the wound, he soaks it for five minutes in warm milk.

A rich old Englishman recently had a painful experience with a tax gatherer. In order to avoid paying the death duties he had turned over all his property to his son. The son, however, died intestate and without children before his father, and, as his son's heir, the old gentleman had to pay death duties on his property himself.

The Dollar Still Missing.

William Bain, a coal miner of Stotts City, Mo., who believed that he had swallowed a silver dollar while asleep, and came to Kansas City several weeks ago to have the doctors search his anatomy for he will probably go down to his grave without the satisfaction of knowing whether he was the victim of an overheated imagination or whether he really swallowed the coin. After the doctors had cut him open and examined the corners of his stomach to see where the dollar was concealed, they concluded that he had not swallowed it and sewed him up, though William insisted that he knew he had gulped it down. Now has gone back to Stotts City and taken his dollar with him, as he believes.

However, the surgeons who searched his internal regions thoroughly and were unable to find a cent are inclined to believe that it is simply a case of strong imagination. Bain went to sleep in a chair with a coin in his mouth. A violent fit of coughing followed his awakening. He believes it was caused by swallowing the silver coin. His surgeons believe, however, that he must have coughed up the coin and in his excitement was not aware of the fact. Bain has quite recovered from the heroic surgical operation which he underwent in the hospital here.—San Francisco Chronicle.

The Number of Hairs in a Beard.

A Pottsville barber has found a new occupation for spare moments. He has counted the number of hairs in a man's beard whom he shaved. When the lather dried which had been used in shaving it was not difficult, although tedious, to count the hairs, which numbered 11,662.—Philadelphia Record.