

The Pall Mall Gazette, W. W. Astor, editor, says that the United States could save Cuba by purchase.

The existence of Germany's army system has been threatened by the outrages committed by officers upon civilians, states the New York Tribune.

Owing to the high prices charged by the gas companies in England, a number of large towns, as well as London suburbs, like Wimbledon, have been compelled to revert to oil lighting for street lamps.

The city of Mobile, Ala., expects to become the cheapest coal port in the world, by means of a new transportation company which promises to bring soft coal from the mines at Tuscaloosa and sell it at \$1.25 per ton.

The Philadelphia Times thinks that on the whole "it is a good thing that there are boys and chestnuts every year. The boys keep the chestnuts from going to waste and the chestnuts furnish the boys a lot of healthy enjoyment."

An excellent territory for settlement, says a writer in the Journal of Military Service, is southeastern Alaska. It has a mild climate, arable land and great quantities of fish and game. This writer recommends it especially to Norwegians and Danes.

New Orleans boasts of twenty-three electric car lines, costing \$13,000,000. The companies own 450 cars, employ 1,550 motormen and conductors, operate 195 miles of track and take in over \$6,000 in fares daily. The receipts are at the rate of \$2,300,000 per annum, or about \$7, per capita of population.

Count Okuma, the new foreign minister of Japan, is said to possess all the astuteness of Li Hung Chang without his sense of humor, for which he has substituted jingo seasoning of peculiarly Japanese strength and flavor. He foresees a time when Japan and the races of Europe will have to fight for the supremacy of the world, and fixes the site of the "scrap" as the plains of Siberia and the plateaus of Central Asia. Without any great stretch of imagination, it may be stated that the count will not be living at that time.

The popularity of bicycling in England is demonstrated in some measure by the fact that since the first of the year \$55,000,000 has been invested in new limited cycle companies. Up to the end of last year the capital of the cycling companies was less than \$30,000,000. It has thus nearly been doubled since January. This does not include capital invested in the numerous private concerns in different parts of the country. Nearly 2,000 patents for inventions connected with the bicycle or accessories were applied for during 1895. The value of the bicycles made in a year in Great Britain, at the present rate of production, is estimated at \$60,000,000.

A simple method of murder and robbery, with small chances of detection, devised by some Russian peasants on the Prussian border, has recently been brought to light. A fever for emigration has existed for some years in Poland, and people who could not obtain passports to leave Russia after selling all they had, would secrete their money upon their persons and hire these peasants to smuggle them across the frontier. As their departure had to be kept secret, and the emigrants were generally illiterate persons of no prominence, it was easy to lead them into out-of-the-way places, murder them, and strip them, with little probability of their being missed.

The New York Herald rises to remark that no element in the busy life of that great city has come more rapidly to the front during the last few years than the Italian. Only a short while back the "Jago" was chiefly engaged in selling peanuts or the more harmonious livelihood of organ grinding. Today, however, the native of sunny Italy is engaged in all the lower rounds of labor. He is a monopolist of the fruit trade and the bootblack industry, and is even reaching out into the restaurant business. The fruit stand Italians alone would make a small army in New York. Not alone those who have the sidewalks, but those who also run small stores that dot the streets and avenues of the big city. In developing this trade they seem to have gravitated to an employment American evidently considered too slow as a means of livelihood. He leaves the sweat-shop to the Pole and the Russian Hebrew, the laundry to the Chinaman, but in fruits and boots he is the modern king.

A GOOD STORY



WINNING A BRIDE.

"Give you my daughter? You!" A God-fearing man was this father. He had firm faith in a doctrinal institution, engineered by the synod of which he, Orville Manor, Esq., was one of the strongest pillars.

Was not this man entitled to the special beneficence of his Creator, and the respect of humble humanity? Yet here stands an audacious youth, who has apparently nothing in the wide world to recommend him but the testimonials which secured him the position of entry clerk in the wholesale house of Manor & Co., and a handsome face lighted up with a pair of dark eyes, glowing with energy and ambition. And this youth had asked him for his daughter. A just anger reddened the usually imperturbable brow of Manor pere, and a scornful curve shaped his lips as he adjusted the gold-rimmed spectacles on his nose and repeated:

"Give you my daughter! You! Truly 'fools enter boldly where angels fear to tread.' Have you any other request to make, young man?"

"No, sir!"

Orville Manor, Esq., turned his back upon the daring young man, and resumed his reading; his face was again dispassionate. The other remained standing, but the fine face changed color, his breath came hard and fast, the exquisitely-curved nostrils of a decidedly aristocratic nose showed the spirit of emotion, not unlike the temper of a thoroughbred animal under the bit of a trainer. With an effort truly admirable the "rising ire" was controlled, and the lips beneath his soft and luxuriant mustache became firmly set.

Ten minutes this silence lasted. The young man stood his ground as if he had become an automatic statue.

The old gentleman began to show restlessness again, and after a vain endeavor to command the emotion ruling him, he turned abruptly, exclaiming:

"Have you nothing more profitable to employ your mind than staring at my back, sir? What are you waiting for?"

"Your answer."

With slow and majestic mien, and a countenance beaming with patience, this father of a daughter walked to the door, opened it, and, pointing to the outer entrance, remarked:

"This is my answer. Is it comprehensible?"

The young aspirant for a rich man's daughter bowed. His face was ghastly pale, but his step was firm, his head haughtily erect, and the indignant parent was somewhat impressed with the nobility characterizing his humiliation as he turned from the door so cruelly closed upon himself and his hopes.

A perfect gem of a room was this apartment. The floor was covered with a Turkish velvet carpet of deepest crimson, the furniture was of carved walnut and embossed velvet of crimson on gold-colored satin, the windows were draped with softest lace under the luxuriant wealth of red and gold brocade, held to the richly-frescoed ceiling by heavy gold-mounted lambrequins. Mirrors and paintings lined the walls on every side, and marble busts and statues were reflected everywhere. Tables in rare mosaic were covered with late magazines and books. The air was perfumed as if each article exhaled a fragrance of its own, and the first sensation on entering was almost a feeling of sensuous languor, especially to one unaccustomed to the perfumed warmth of this semi-darkened atmosphere.

The young lady reclining on one of the crimson lounges seemed a part of its natural belongings. Her features were of the American type, but her eyes, covered by their blue-veined, black fringed lids, were orientally large and of a deep violet blue. And this lovely creature, in her white silken and pink satin-lined wrapper, reared to breathe indolence and make circumstance subservient to every caprice,

this favorite of the gods was the daughter to whom her father's clerk aspired.

A servant in blue livery entered noiselessly with a letter on a gold-lined salver, presented it to the young lady and retired again.

With a flush of pleasure she pressed the little document to her lips and read:

My Beautiful Treasure: The contemplated interview is over. I shall not distress you with particulars. It was not at all romantic and did not end in a tragedy or partake of the farcical "Bless you, my boy; take her and be happy," but your father hinted rather strongly that it was advisable for my presumptuous self to journey the pathway of life without—his daughter. I differ from him in his views on that subject, and I want your permission to call and talk the matter over at the earliest possible moment. I wish no clandestine meeting. My love is honest, my motives worthy of respectful consideration, and the assurance of your love makes me bold. Oh, my beautiful darling! the rapture of this conviction fills me with joy too blissful to be human, but it is true, sweet, for I have held you to my throbbing heart. I have felt your thrill in answer to my passionate kisses, and my pleading heart has listened to the melody that whispered of the love you have blessed me with. Give you up, sweet! No ice, nor metal, nor heaven nor hell shall keep me from you, if my love save me! SIDNEY HARRISON.

There was a fire of determination in the young beauty's eyes as she went to an escritoire of ebony and gold and took therefrom a dainty, cream-tinted scented sheet of paper, and wrote thereon one magic word, "Come!" inclosed and sealed it, rang a tiny silver bell, which brought a servant, to whom she gave directions about delivering the letter to its address without delay. Then she went down the elegantly furnished hall and stairway into the library, where her father was engaged with his papers, and gliding up to him, in a most childlike, winning manner, she bent over him and kissed his cheeks and mouth, and then perched herself laughingly upon his knees.

"Well, Pearl," said he, tenderly caressing this idol of his heart; "does this mean some new-fangled gow-gaw, or do you really love your old father?"

"My old father, indeed! Stop slandering him, sir, or I'll bite you! No, I do not come on a money-begging expedition. I want to talk sense."

"Bless me, child, what new novel have you been reading? Imagine yourself come to the sense-talking season."

"I have not been reading novels. I am studying Herbert Spencer."

A frown darkened the benign countenance, and he replied coldly:

"More heterodox nonsense! Pearl, I do not approve—"

"I know you don't, pa, and I'll give it up to oblige you. But there is something you can give me, pa, now I come to think of it, and you will oblige me greatly."

"I never refuse my pet anything, do I?"

"No, but this once you might, dear pa, just because it is such a very ordinary, every-day affair that I want."

"What is it, you trifler?"

"Only a husband," she replied meekly.

"My dear Pearl, you do not know what you are saying. A husband!"

"Yes, sir."

"And, if I may ask, have you picked out the unlucky individual?"

"Oh, yes, pa, he is already cut and dried, ready for use."

"My child, you are jesting on a very serious matter."

"But, pa, I am not jesting. I do not care about having the husband all in a hurry today or tomorrow, but I want you to promise him some future day, when you get tired of my teasing and extravagance, and so forth, you know, pa."

Pa began to act restlessly. His face became very dark and unpromising. In fact, a great light dawned upon his mind, and as it broadened his brow darkened more and more. He looked keenly into her eyes, until her gaze drooped beneath his hard scrutiny, and she whispered appealingly:

"Pa, do not be so cross with me—but—but—he will be here directly."

"Who, girl?" was the excited exclamation.

"Sidney Harrison."

At this instant the library door opened and the gentleman himself entered.

The young lady was at his side in a

flash, and placing her hand on his arm and lifting her head proudly, defiantly, said:

"In life or death, father, this is my heart's choice."

There was sublime adoration in the look given her by the young man as he advanced to the thoroughly nonplussed and outraged father and exclaimed:

"Give her to me! Fall well I realize my own unworth—"

"Silence! 'Tis well that you have still enough of manly spirit to acknowledge your unfitness to become the husband of my daughter. You, a clerk in my employ, on a salary scarcely commensurate with the requirements of a beggar?"

"Why hot increase it, pa? One might be led to imagine it was a disgrace to be in my dear old father's employ, from the way you emphasize the fact," Pearl remarked, with a touch of roguish bravery.

"Oh, heavens, why am I thus tried?" the old gentleman cried in feeble desperation. Then suddenly growing wrathful again, he pointed sternly to the door.

"For the second time, young man, I command you to depart—and be pleased to take notice—let it be the last time. I have forborne to treat you as you deserve; forbearance may cease to be a Christian virtue, remember."

"Father, do you know aught against his character? He has been in your employ a year. Has he proved inefficient or unworthy of the respect due an honorable gentleman?" The girl's noble face was grand in its pleading yet dignified womanhood.

"I have no complaint against him."

"Then for once my father has fallen short in his judgment and his duty to one of God's creatures, like himself, inasmuch as he refuses to him an opportunity to state his case, before a judgment shall be spoken."

"Pearl, you are insolent. Do you forget whom you are addressing?"

"Forgive, forgive me, but oh, father, do not forget that in turning this man from your door you also close your heart and home against me. We have plighted our troth, and through good and ill fortune I shall cling to him, so help me God!"

Solemnly the closing words were uttered. A long silence followed. Then the old gentleman said calmly, icily:

"Go to your room, ungrateful, thankless child."

"Not until you have given Sidney a hearing. Father, dear father, be just."

"Go. I will send for you when you are wanted."

"Now, Mr. Harrison, I will hear you. Be brief."

"Thank you, Mr. Manor. Two years ago I met your daughter while on a visit to a mutual friend of ours in St. Louis. I was charmed at the first meeting, and fell desperately in love before she returned home. She had honored me with her confidence and friendship before she left, and also became acquainted with my parents and sisters, and there seemed to be a general expression of mutual happiness in this intercourse. We corresponded for several months, and your daughter consented to receive my addresses if I would make your acquaintance in the manner that I have, by accepting a position in your employ and win your regard from that humble office. My father is fully cognizant of and approved of the plan from the beginning, and I have his letter to show you that if I succeed, he will not only be happy to welcome my wife, but establish me in business of my own, or give me fifty thousand dollars to invest as I may see fit. This is my story in brief. Time will develop everything satisfactorily to you. My father retired from active business some time since, and contemplates taking my mother, who is an invalid, and my sisters, to Europe shortly, and they will be in the city the latter part of this week to await what my sisters are pleased to term the result of my romantic exploit in winning a wife. I have failed only in winning your consent. Will you reconsider your disapproval?"

Various changes had passed over the listener's face during the recital, leaving it strangely flushed as he rang the bell and told the servant answering it to "request Miss Pearl to come to the library."

She stood in the open door one moment, then, with a joyous cry, she bounded into her father's arms. The old gentleman led her to the waiting lover, and with tremulous emotion said:

"Here, take her, and forgive an old blind fool;" then hastily left the room.

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CRUISING FOR SEAL.

Exciting Work Which Only the Hardy Can Endure.

The Seals Ambushed and Then Clubbed to Death.

In the latter part of February the great herd of about half a million seals has come south as far as the latitude of the Straits of Belle Isle. The region between these narrows and Notre Dame Bay is the seals' habitual breeding ground. The seals produce their young upon the ice floes, or "pans," within a few miles of the shore. The parent animals swim about in pursuit of fish, and contentedly follow the ice wherever it drifts. The young grow with surprising rapidity. At the age of three weeks they have attained about the size of a bulldog, and replaced the white fur of infancy with the dark coat.

Seal ships from Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and the neighboring coasts sail early in March. By that time the ice is well on in the process of breaking up, or "spawning abroad," and navigation has become possible. About the middle of March the killing begins. As the ships approach the sealing grounds the final preparations are completed. The long watch is begun, which is not relaxed until the active cruise is over. This watch, lasting from dawn till dark of every day, is kept up by one man alone. His importance is recognized in his rank which is next to that of the captain. From the shape of his station of observation at the masthead, this individual is known as "the barrel man." He is provided with as fine a telescope as can be procured, and skill in its use is one of his most important essentials.

Another part of the preparation is the division of the ship's crew, 200 or 300 in number, into four watches. Each is put under command of a master of watch, and is organized into boats' crews and other small divisions for the performance of the various duties aboard ship.

When at length seals are sighted the word is passed down from the masthead as quietly as possible. Old seals may be disturbed by a shout at a distance of miles; further reason for caution exists if the observer is within hearing of other ships. In the latter case the first ship edges around toward the seals by a circuitous route, intending to throw others off the track. Meantime orders are issued forbidding anyone to show his head above the rail. The slightest carelessness will cause the game to disappear into the water. Perhaps the "pan" of seals is sighted by a rival ship. In that case all roundabout tactics are dropped, and a race ensues. The four watches armed with gaff tipped clubs "stand by" for directions. At the instant the ship gets among ice too closely packed for her to proceed further all hands are overboard.

Away they run, each master of watch picking a path for his command, which hurries after him in single file. It is a rough chase; now a climb over a washed-up ledge of broken ice; again a leap across a black strip of water. Occasionally some unfortunate fellow falls in, and is fished dripping out on the gaff of a companion. His clothes are frozen stiff in a few seconds, but he doesn't stop. The seals by this time are thoroughly alarmed, and it is important to reach them as quickly as possible. A seal's vital point is his nose. One blow of the "bat" usually kills; sometimes, however, an old animal offers a hard and dangerous fight. The men hurry about their work of execution with energy, abated only after the last of the living seals has escaped into the water.

The victims are then skinned and the pelts heaped together in stacks, surmounted by the ensigns of their respective ownerships. These stacks, by the way, are another of the objects designated by the useful term "pan." A "pan" of pelts, like a "pan" of seals, is the supporting flat cake of ice. We have the same usage in "pan of bacon." It is seldom that a pan marked by a flag is molested; feeling on the subject is prohibitively strong. After stacking up the pelts as described, all hands hurry back to the ship to continue the search.

At dark the ship returns over her day's course to collect the "pans" of pelts. A storm may have arisen. It only becomes the more urgent that the prize be brought aboard without delay. At such a day's end one is justified in looking forward to a comfortable bed. But to the sealer this is denied. The bunks, limited in number, are allotted to the men who have been with that ship on various cruises. The remainder of the men are allowed the liberty of the ship, which offers two

alternatives—a berth in one of the boats on deck or a less frigid bed burrowed among the ice in the hold.

In the latter part of the season the seals, by that time well-grown, spend most of the time in the water. It then becomes a necessity to shoot them from boats, and the danger that a small boat undergoes in the midst of a field of grinding, broken ice, needs no explanation. Sometimes a storm cuts off a watch from its ship for a day at a time.—Baltimore American.

Women Live Longer Than Men.

There is a prevailing impression that men are not only less subject to ailments and illnesses but are longer lived than women, but an examination of life insurance companies' tables will show that the term of life of women is slightly longer than that of men. The difference in the mortality rates during the first few years of life is striking. During the first year the mortality among males is decidedly greater than among females. Though more boys are born than girls, the proportions are reduced to almost even terms at the end of the first year by the excessive male mortality. Even during the first four years the mortality among males exceeds that among females, notwithstanding the fact that there are practically no distinctions made in the management of the two sexes. Both are subject to the same conditions, are dressed virtually alike, and receive the same food. At about five years the comparative death-rate among girls begins to increase. This has been attributed to the fact that boys of this age are more in the open air. The mortality in both sexes diminishes from this time to the twelfth year, when it attains its lowest point. It then steadily rises, being larger in each successive year. Between the twelfth and sixteenth years the death-rate among girls increases more rapidly than among boys, but after the sixteenth year, for several years, the rate of increase is more rapid on the male side. The explanations that have been offered for these peculiarities are not wholly satisfactory, but one fact is clear, that during early years females possess a greater tenacity of life than do males.—New York Ledger.

Disappearances of Naval Vessels.

In modern times the loss of naval vessels at sea has been comparatively limited. The United States Navy has been singularly fortunate in this respect during the last half century, but this may be attributed to the number of ships in commission as to any skill or safeguard. The modern navy is built upon such different lines from the old class of war vessels that it is difficult to compare the two, but it is safe to assume that the cruisers of today could stand the elements much better than their prototypes of fifty years ago. The mysterious disappearance of a member of the white squadron would cause more general sorrow and comment than the loss of the Wasp. Insurgent or Saratoga did in their days. A naval vessel of our modern fleet carries a much larger complement of men, and her cost is several times as great. The Navy Department probably exercises more precautions than any private company in surrounding the war vessels with every safeguard known to science, and it is because of this discipline the war vessels are so seldom lost. The mysterious loss of only six war vessels during a period of one hundred years of active national existence is a record that the Navy Department of any nation might well be proud of, and when it is remembered that some of the strange disappearances recorded were only ordinary merchant vessels fitted up as warships the cause for pride is increased.—Detroit Free Press.

Which Is the Boiled Egg?

Boil an egg hard. When quite cold place it among a number of other eggs and ask your friends to tell you which is the boiled one. This they will, of course, be unable to do from appearance merely. There is, however, a way of doing so without holding them to the light, and that is by spinning them. Those that are unboiled and semi-liquid inside will spin with a sort of waddling motion while the boiled or solid egg will spin like a top and even go to sleep.—Chicago Times-Herald.

Man-Eating Crocodiles.

Crocodiles swarm in every river and lake of Madagascar. They are man-eaters, and the natives have a superstitious dread of them. Their eggs, about as large as a turkey's, are used for food to some extent. The giant tortoises, formerly numerous on the island have been rendered nearly extinct, and are now found only on the small and uninhabited Aldabra Isles to the north.