

William Ewart Gladstone has, he says, "mastered" the bicycle. There isn't much in this world he cannot master.

The deaths in France in 1895 exceeded the births by 7000. In many of the departments the population is steadily dwindling, whole districts being almost stripped of their inhabitants.

The breach between the South African republic and Great Britain is rapidly widening, and only great forbearance on the part of each can prevent hostilities between them, declares the New York Tribune.

A distinguished Frenchman has contributed to current literature a bold essay which treats of the tendency of modern civilization to cowardice. He says very plainly, and arrays some pregnant facts to prove it, that men are no longer brave.

The Boston Congregationalist says: It is noteworthy that, while bequests to the missionary societies in nearly all denominations have fallen much below those of recent years, bequests to colleges and other benevolent institutions have been unusually large.

The French government proposes to construct forty-five large warships and 175 torpedo boats at a cost of \$160,000,000 within the next eight years. "If our government would expend one-third of that sum what a grand navy we would have," observes the New York Herald.

The Chicago Inter-Ocean soliloquizes: What things a man can see if he picks the right place to see 'em in! Benjamin Emerson, just dead, Chicago's first milkman, who came here in 1835, saw Chicago grow from a mudhole to a metropolis of nearly 2,000,000 people. One man saw all this.

A present of some deer from Queen Victoria is said to have brought to the French colony of New Caledonia a pest similar to that of the rabbits in Australia and the mongoose in Jamaica. The deer have multiplied with great rapidity, and now invade the plantations, causing great loss to the farmers.

The New York Advertiser exclaims: The conflict for world leadership in regenerating Asia, in largely shaping Africa, in determining the bent of civilization in Europe, lies today between the Slav and the Anglo-Saxon. Great Britain alone offers to Russia the one great barrier as she presses southward.

A Russian baptism under the ritual of the Greek church is a curious ceremony. A large wooden bowl is filled with water, and the priest takes the child in his arms, stuffs wadding into his ears and nostrils, and then plunges the little head under the water three times, during which period he repeats prayers for the imperial family.

It is fast becoming conspicuous to walk, maintains the New York Tribune. Everybody, or nearly everybody, rides a bicycle, from the small boy or girl whose wheel must be made to order to the grandfathers and grandmothers. The news that Gladstone is learning to ride, at the age of eighty-seven, surprises no one. This ever-increasing popularity of the wheel is by no means a bad. The bicycle can never go out of fashion, because it saves time, saves money and gives health—three considerations which will recommend it as a means of locomotion. Moreover, it has already worked radical reforms in society. It has done more to bring Americans out of their indoor, sedentary life than any other form of outdoor exercise.

"The day of retrenchment, or the day of ruin, for this government is awaiting the people of the United States in the not remote future," predicts ex-Secretary of Agriculture J. Sterling Morton, in the Forum. "We shall very soon step from the nineteenth into the twentieth century. We shall carry with us either the germs of dissolution and decay or of life and conserved energy. To avoid the former and secure the latter, the American people should begin at once in the household, in the factory in the counting-room, in the management of great lines of transportation, and in all other incorporations of capital, to practice something of the economy and frugality which characterizes our New England ancestors. The cost of local governments must be lessened. Administration of county and city and village affairs must be made more and more businesslike and economical. In the charges of American government must be cut down."

Long Ago.

There's a fair, enchanted valley that my
homosiek fancy fills.
I can see each waving grass blade growing
there between the hills.
Hear the stream go chaffing, fretting
through the rapids of the glen,
While the mountain brook laughs loudly,
flinging echoes back again.
'Tis a song that, gathering sweetness,
through the vistas of the years,
Still repeats its far-off cadence in my ever
listening ears.
I can see the foam bells floating on the cur-
rent of the stream,
And the oars of life grow dimmer than the
shadow of a dream.
See the river pale in silver, reddish in re-
flected glow
From the skies that bend above it, as I saw
them long ago.

I am weary with mistaking piercing thorns for priceless flowers,
Weary, worn, one moment grant me vision of the Salem towers,
Let the splendor pierce the godlight of the dreamy river's flow
Till I see a boat that crossing anchored safely long ago.
With that vision clear before me, what shall matter storm or tide,
Since I know that in that country every heart is satisfied?
I have tried to learn my lesson in the good that I might do,
And my doubts have faded, melted, in the warmth of effort true,
'Tis the deathless, changeless lesson that whenever I may be,
With the Spirit of the Father, there is blessedness for me.
Answer, O my listening river, bend, oh, evening skies, above,
Speak the faith that rests undoubting cradled on the Unseen Love,
Swing, O years, your perfumed censor o'er the river's dreamy flow,
Till my senses taste the sweetness of the raptured long ago!
—Nelly Hart Woodworth, in Boston Journal.

Love and Art.

I took an early opportunity of congratulating them both when I heard that Maud Jeffries was engaged to Jack Meadows, for they were both old friends of mine and charming people—especially Maud. She was an artist and painted very zealously in oil colors. She was working at an unfinished painting, and so absorbed in it that at first she did not hear me enter. When she did she turned quickly:

"No, it is not Meadows; I am so sorry," I said sympathetically.
"O, but I'm very glad to see you," she answered. "And you are just in time to help me. Do tell me what is wrong with this thing," and she pointed to the canvas.

"That is Meadows' privilege," I said. I offered her my good wishes, and told her I was sure she would be happy.
She blushed prettily and said: "We are very happy now."
"But how have you satisfied your conscience?" I asked. "I understood you had vowed yourself to the service of your art."

"O, but I shall never give up my work," she protested earnestly. "Jack knows that. He wouldn't want me. I think it is so wrong not to use one's gifts, don't you?"

"He is really awfully good about it," she went on. "He is going to let me paint his portrait, and then we shall hang it in our dining room. Look, here are a few sketches for it. Don't you think they are like him?"

I recognized Meadows in spite of the varying expressions Maud had given him, and I said so at once. She was pleased, and just then Meadows came in.

"I am just admiring the studies for the great portrait," I said genially.
"Ah, yes, they are only rough sketches. The thing itself will be quite different, won't it, darling?" he said, with, I imagined, a shade of anxiety.

A fortnight or so passed before I saw anything of Meadows or Maud; then I met Meadows. He looked worried, and when I asked him after Miss Jeffries he said shortly: "I believe she is quite well, thanks."
"And how is the portrait going on?"
"Look here, Raller," he said, with a burst of confidence, "that wretched portrait is undermining my happiness. It's no more like me than that poster," and he pointed to a flaming placard.

"I'm not a vain chap, you know, but I do bar being handed down to posterity looking like a criminal lunatic."
"But it can't be as bad as that, Maud would never do you injustice," I said.
"Not intentionally, but she swears it is a good likeness, though I can't see how she can. When I suggested it was a bit unflattering she said she must paint what she saw and that she could not tamper with the truth of art."
"I should like to see it," I said.
"Come along, then; Maud is out this afternoon; her sister told me so; we will go to her studio, and you can give me your unbiased opinion."
The portrait, still wet, was on the easel. Meadows pointed to it in eloquent silence. I was silent, too. It was so painfully realistic that it verged on caricature.
"Well?" said Meadows. "Could you live in the same house with it if it was your portrait?"
"Yet, she is fond of you," I said.
"Surely, if you ask her to suppress it as a personal favor—"

"She would only say it was my vanity," he answered, gloomily. "There is nothing to be done; she must choose between me and my portrait, unless—"

"Unless what?" I asked, as he paused.

"You could persuade her. Tell her it doesn't do her justice, either of its justice. Do, there's a good fellow! She has no end of respect for you."

I could not resist his appeal and promised to do my best. "And surely that is she coming up the stairs now," said I, as we heard footsteps.

He left me alone in the studio as Maud entered. She greeted me with a weary smile and glanced directly at the portrait.

"You have been looking at it?" she asked mechanically, taking up her palette and brushes.

"Yes," I said, and she seemed to expect me to say more.

"It's a good likeness, isn't it?" she remarked, presently.

"It is too flattering," I answered, sitting down opposite it.

"Jack doesn't think so," she said.

"But he is so absurdly vain," said I.

"Not more than other men, I suppose," she retorted.

"Yet you say he is not satisfied with that painting," I said. "What fault can he find?"

"Nothing definite, but he wants me to alter it."

"However painful it may be you must keep your art pure. It is true that in the noble cause of realism you have accentuated his worst points—"

"No, I haven't," she said with some heat.

"I honor you for it. Very few girls would have had the courage to treat the portrait of a lover in so bold a way, even to the suggestion of a caricature."

"But you said I had flattered him!" she cried.

"Truth is the highest flattery," I answered, sententiously. "And if Meadows is not high-minded enough to see it, you will regret his loss."

"His loss! What do you mean?" she exclaimed.

"I saw him just now; he does not appreciate your noble self-sacrifice; he said if you had really loved him you would not have pointed out his homeliness to the world. He seemed to feel it a good deal."

"Homeliness! He is beautiful!" she cried indignantly.

"Really, my dear young lady, you can't say that with that almost speaking likeness in front of us," and I pointed to the portrait.

With a sudden movement she smudged a brushful of paint over the face on the canvas.

I saw Meadows looking round the door and beckoned him in.

"Your portrait is done for," I said.

She threw down her palette. "Jack! Look at it!" she cried with a laugh that seemed to catch her throat.

There is now hanging in the Meadows' dining room a portrait of the master of the house. It is not at all a good painting, but Jack gazes at it with satisfaction. It is by his wife, and when her friends suggest that she has flattered her husband she smiles.

Once I saw her looking at it rather sadly and I asked her if she was regretting the one she had destroyed. She shook her head.

"No; sometimes I think I acted hastily, for it really was good," she said.

"But surely this one is, on the whole, better?" said I.

"Jack thinks so," she answered, and she sighed.—Westminster Budget.

QUAINT AND CURIOUS.

Portland, Me., claims a cat able to say "papa" and "mamma."

Two bites into an apple picked up in a store cost a resident of Portland, Me., three front teeth.

At Sebago, Me., is a collection of 240 cents, bearing date from 1800 to 1830, which a resident found buried on his farm many years ago.

An Auburn (Me.) man has devised a cook stove on trucks and has laid a track on which to move it between the summer and winter kitchens.

William Moore of Snow Hill, Md., on a wager of five cents, attempted to kiss a possum, and is now mourning the loss of a part of his nose.

Pennsylvania was the first state in the Union to restrict the sale of passenger tickets to the regularly accredited agents of railroad companies.

Guilming, Surrey, has a remarkable black and white cat, which, after being taken to Leeds by railroad, returned to its former home on foot, taking six weeks to make the journey of 200 miles.

In Lexington, Ky., there is a club the youngest member of which is eighty-nine years old. All the others are over ninety. The club meets regularly for purposes of mutual improvement and social pleasure.

To prevent a person from "accidentally" taking the wrong hat and coat upon leaving a public place a New York man has invented a coat and hat hook which locks the articles fast, the owner only being able to release them.

The largest sum ever offered or asked for a single diamond was \$2,150,000, which the nizam of Hyderabad agreed to give Mr. Jacobs, the famous jeweler of Simla, for the imperial diamond, considered the finest stone in the world.

Of the ten graves in the cemetery at Forest City, South Dakota, nine are said to be occupied by the remains of men that died with their boots on. Five were drowned, one was murdered, two killed themselves, and one got in the way of a bullet intended for some one else.

A very large Ceylon sapphire weighing 638 carats, of a dark milky blue color, perfectly transparent and flawless, is on exhibition in London. It is a star sapphire, displaying a beautiful opalescent star of six rays, the apex of which varies according to the changes in its position.

No disgrace attaches to suicide among the Japanese. The result is that an average of 4000 men and 3000 women kill themselves every year. Hanging is the favorite method, next to that is drowning, with the use of knives or swords as a good third. July is the favorite month for hari-kari.

Mrs. Lorana K. Hinkley of Pea Cove, Me., at the age of ninety-four is able to read and write without glasses. She is American all the way through. Her grandfather fought in the Revolution, her father and her husband in the War of 1812, and four sons, four sons-in-law, and six nephews in the rebellion.

The exact height of Joan of Arc has been determined. By mere chance the famous suit of armor presented to the Maid of Orleans by Charles VII, and which would exactly fit a girl of five feet four inches, has been found in the galleries of a chateau in Aisne, where it was placed many years ago by the celebrated collector of the late Marquis de Conrval.

Woodchuck Bit His Big Toe.

Elias Stanton, a farmer of Great Bend township, Pennsylvania, recently ran a race with a woodchuck. He saw the woodchuck nibbling the turkeys and he sprinted his best to reach the woodchuck's hole first and succeeded.

He stuck his heel in the hole, with his foot toward the scampering animal. There wasn't room for both the heel and the woodchuck, and so the woodchuck stuck his teeth through Stanton's boot and into his big toe. That made Stanton remove his heel from the hole with a great deal of celerity, and the woodchuck then slipped out of sight in a twinkling.

Pig Does Some Banking.

A peasant named Galibert, living in the neighborhood of Milan, in Germany, recently bought a pig. A few days ago he killed the animal, and found in its stomach a small metal matchbox containing two banknotes of the value of \$250 each. The honest bumpkin at once took them to the mayor in order that they might be returned to their owner if he could be found.—Boston Globe.



RED PARASOLS AND FRECKLES.
The red parasol is a preventive of freckles. The rays of the sun will have no terrors for the summer girl with a supply of red parasols on hand.

MAKE YOUR OWN PERFUME.

You can easily make a delicious violet perfume for yourself by putting half an ounce oforris root, broken into small pieces, in a bottle with two ounces of alcohol. Cork the bottle tightly and shake well. After it has been standing four or five days, a few drops on the handkerchief will leave the scent of fresh violets.

GREEK WOMEN'S CONGRESS.

There will be a congress of Greek women at Athens at which some important resolutions regarding the reform of women's education and dress in Greece will be discussed. There is a strong agitation on foot to revive the ancient Greek dress in preference either to the costumes of Paris or the Albanian costume now worn at all festivals.

A PRINCESS RIDES ASTRIDE.

The Salon-Blatt, a society paper of Vienna, is responsible for the statement that the hereditary princess of Saxe-Meiningen has been seen frequently bestirring her horse man fashion in the Berlin Tiergarten, which answers to our Central park. Princess Charlotte is the eldest daughter of the Empress Frederick and just 18 months younger than her brother, the kaiser. She is the mother of Princess Fedora, who has reached an age when she can be betrothed to her cousin, Prince Alfred of Saxe-Coburg.—New York Press.

WOMEN'S CYCLE SKIRTS.

Skirts that are soiled with bicycle grease should be cleaned in this way: Dip a piece of woolen material into turpentine and rub the spots gently but firmly till they disappear. Brush the skirt and hang it in the air until the smell of the turpentine has disappeared.

The newest cycling skirt from Paris has a double box plait at the back and machine stitching round the bottom. The jacket is single-breasted, and can, of course, be worn open or closed—a great advantage during the somewhat treacherous spring months. The orthodox shirt, high collar and the complete dress, which is to be seen in light covert coating and dark cloth. The length of the cycling skirt is at the option of the wearer, but for the most part it reaches some two or three inches above the ground, showing neat cloth gaiters and well cut shoes. I should add that the coat is furnished with two and sometimes even three pockets, and is cut low at the neck, with a wide, turnover collar.

As to cycling hats, it is needless to say that, as usual, they fit closely to the head and are in soft felt, with indented crown, or of fine straw, with a crown broader at the top than at the base, the trimming being of ribbons and quills.—Woman.

THE LADIES OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

It was amusing to see African women at Constantinople, Turkey, with the thickest of lips, veiled. All the pretty faces were more or less painted, and the eyelids and eyebrows penciled. The quality of the paint showed the quality of the lady. Poor women daub themselves with horrid pigments. No Turkish gentleman goes out to walk with his wife; to do so would be counted in the highest degree absurd. At most she is followed by a slave. But wrapped up in the ugly black silk feridje, she can go where she pleases and alone. No man would dream of looking at a veiled lady in a feridje. Were a Giaour to see her face he would run a risk of being massacred. Shopping is a feminine pastime; another is holding receptions, which, of course, ladies only attend. Munching sweetmeats renders Constantinople belles grossly fat while still young, and rather spoils their teeth. All over the East teeth are even, white, and of medium size, and months well shaped. They are months made for laughter and gourmandiz-

ing. Eastern women are far better looking in youth than western. Those of Stamboul are the least graceful. They are seldom neat about the ankles. Their stockings are not well drawn up, their shoes are a world too big, and their gait is heavy and shuffling.—London Truth.

LACE FOR SUMMER GOWNS.

Russian laces are among the prettiest and most serviceable for trimming wash gowns for summer. The little Russian girl, Mrs. Polakoff, who is introducing the use of the Russian peasants into America, has a number of varieties of these Women's Exchange.

The making of this Russian lace is interesting, and, as the case with most laces, it means an immense amount of labor for an almost inconceivably small sum of money. The Russian product is the pillow lace, made with bobbins, of handspun linen thread. A single design of the pattern goes through an entire piece of lace, and to keep it running, sometimes as many as 300 of the little bobbins are in use on one piece. To make a yard of lace six inches wide of a close pattern will take a Russian woman four weeks, and the piece will sell in this country for \$2. The patterns are all quaint and interesting. They are designed and drawn by the peasants on paper, and then the pattern is pricked around the pencil drawing.

The peacock is a favorite design, and it appears in different forms in the lace, as well as in other decorative effects. A wide pointed piece of lace, with an exceptionally pretty pattern, is taken from another favorite model—the frosty tracery of the windows. A yard of lace of a pretty openwork pattern of insertion, two and a half inches wide, which will take one woman six days to make, is sold for 50 cents. There are colored insertions in red, blue and white, favorite colors of the Russian; pink and green lace in more delicate shades, and pretty unbleached lace of the color of grass lines. There is also heavy black silk lace made on the cushions like the guipure lace.

The Russian lace, being handmade and of the handspun linen, wears without a break for years, and never changes in appearance. The end of a towel in the collection has insertion and lace upon it which is said to be over 100 years old.—New York Times.

FASHION NOTES.
The new three-piece skirt has a very wide front breadth.
Tailor made pigmy costumes will form one of the very smart styles for afternoon wear this summer.
Pointed epaulettes, tressor jacket fronts and plain and banded girdles still lend great variety to spring costumes and house toilets.

Caustious, geranium, gladioli, tulips, lobelia blooms, roses, carnations and wild quince blossoms are among the brilliant red flowers that are used upon spring hats and bonnets.

There is something very smart in a suit of checked cloth in hussman's green and black, or dark red and black, and they are generally made with trimming of a plain color.

It can hardly be said that we have survived braiding; and if there were not many other forms of trimming in vogue now, it would seem to be quite conspicuous as it was a year ago.

The quite up-to-date evening gown is not so low as it was last season, and some gowns are finished with a narrow tuck of lace or chiffon inside. A dip fall of lace from the neck to the waist is a pretty finish for a low-cut gown.

One can only admire a suit of ecrusse cloth with an embroidery on the skirt of black braid, making a deep, apron-like point. The jacket bodice is elaborately braided, and shows a waistcoat of black cloth fastened with small gold buttons.

Small checks rival the smooth face of cloth and have the advantage of novelty and requiring little trimming. The check stuffs favored by the tailors are cloth, not wool, for a wool, with its looser, softer weaving, is not practical for their models.