

"The ladder of fame" is out of date. The young fellow of today can get there quicker by taking the elevator.

Statistics published by the geological survey show that the output of coal in 1899 was an increase of 17 per cent. over that of the preceding year, or about 259,000,000 short tons. Along with this increased production was a rise in price which is unusual.

With the aid of liquid air and a vacuum pump Professor Dewar of the Royal Institution, London, a few days ago succeeded in solidifying hydrogen gas, which was until recently counted among the elements that were thought to be hopelessly gaseous.

The English people think that the proposed new ninepenny coin will enable them to get the better of the French, who, it is assumed, will accept it as the equivalent of a franc. At present British travelers in France frequently have to pay a shilling in exchange for an article valued at a franc.

Borchgrevink, who had charge of the Antarctic expedition outfitted by Sir George Newnes, has attained the farthest point made by any explorer in the southern hemisphere. He reached 78 degrees and 50 minutes south latitude, which is 40 minutes south of the lowest latitude reached by Sir James Clark Ross in 1842.

The necessities of modern times have no respect for sentiment or tradition. As an illustration of this fact the great chalk headland at Dover known as Shakespeare's cliff, one of the landmarks of the English channel, is to be leveled to broaden the field of the rapid-fire guns mounted on the batteries erected for the defense of Dover harbor.

An effort is made to introduce the American sweet potato in Europe. It would seem there ought not to be much difficulty in doing so. It is the most easily grown of American vegetables, and in the matter of cooking, does not require an expert, and the individual who would not consider a well-baked sweet potato, buttered and seasoned with pepper and salt, just to point, a delicate morsel, surely deserves to be turned out to starve.

The venerable Judge Jackson of the United States circuit court at Wheeling, W. Va., expressed a pessimistic view of the state of the public morals in charging the jury the other day. "My experience on the bench," he said, "has not been a limited one, and I regret to say that crime in this country is on the increase. I am unable to determine whether it is a result of increasing population or of the lowering of the standard of public morality."

Penologists universally recognize that the use of violence as a punishment is neither a deterrent nor a corrective of crime, and nearly all forms of punishment for offenders against law are now intended to be reformatory. In the face of all this it is astonishing that such an influential paper as the London Times should berate Parliament for not returning to the barbarous methods of the past in the treatment of any class of criminals. No doubt that many offenders against society richly deserve the application of the cat, but its use is against the spirit of the age and would have the old-time effect if administered of making criminals worse instead of better. The civilized world cannot afford to reform backward.

The disappearance of the birds would be an irreparable loss to agriculture. Professor Forbes, state entomologist of Illinois, estimates that at the end of 12 years, without the birds, the farm lands of that state would be carpeted with insects at the rate of one for every square inch of ground. Professor Beal of the United States department of agriculture calculates that in the state of Iowa alone the birds of a single species, the tree sparrow, destroy 875 tons of noxious weeds every year. Hawks and owls help to keep the wheat and corn free of rodents. In many Southern communities the buzzards do more efficient work as scavengers than the men who get paid for it. The woodpecker rids trees of insects that would otherwise destroy them, and many a peach orchard would be unproductive but for the protection of its growing fruit by insectivorous birds. So that, even if it has accomplished nothing beyond reminding us that the birds have a definite and important function to perform in the economy of agriculture, the agitation against their destruction has served a useful purpose.

FACES IN THE STREET.

They lie, the men who tell us in a loud, deliberate tone
That what is here a stranger, and that misery's unknown;
For where the nearest suburb and the city proper meet
My window sill is level with the faces in the street—
Drifting past, drifting past
To the beat of weary feet—
While I sorrow for the owners of those faces in the street.

And cause I have to sorrow, in a land so young and fair,
To see upon those faces stamped the look of Want and Care;
I look in vain for traces of the fresh and fair and sweet
In sorrow, sunken faces that are drifting through the street—
Drifting on, drifting on,
To the scraps of restless feet:
I can sorrow for the owners of the faces in the street.
—Henry Lawton.

THE SOLDIER.

One dreary, drowsy afternoon toward the end of June, having nothing particular to do, I sauntered in the direction of the Chelsea College gardens. This shady little nook holds the home of some of our old soldiers. There they sit in solemn rows of fours and fives on the wooden benches in the cool, green avenue, dreaming away the long summer afternoons, while they watched the children play on the grass before them.

A great longing came over me to learn something of their lives. If I could come across one alone, I thought, there might be a chance of it; so, with a lingering, backward look at the old fellows, I walked on till I came to a more secluded part of the gardens, where the pensioners cultivated little plots of ground, and sold flowers and ferns to the nurses and children, the proceeds of which enabled them to buy tobacco and rum and other small luxuries.

It had been intensely hot, but now a refreshing breeze was tossing the lilac and laburnum trees, and in the cool of the day the old men were hard at work, watering, weeding and raking away, while they smoked and changed opinions as to their respective nurseries.

Crossing the gravel path, I came upon a bed composed entirely of mignonette. Its fragrance was delightful, and I paused a moment to enjoy the scent.

This little garden excited my curiosity and I looked with interest at the gardener. His face was thin and lined, with an expression of settled melancholy on it, but there was something in the large, dark eyes and sensitive mouth that took my fancy.

"Here is an opportunity," I thought. "He looks a nice, approachable old man, and I daresay would be glad to have a chat."

At that moment, as if by some sudden transition of mind, he glanced up and fixed his speaking orbs on me.

"What lovely mignonette!" I exclaimed, by way of opening fire.

He smiled, but it was such a sad smile. I wished he hadn't—it somehow made me feel sick and sorry.

"Let me cut you some, madam," he said, gravely. "I will in a moment, if you can wait."

"Please, oh, I should like nothing better," I answered, seating myself and looking contentedly, while my new friend went to work with a long pair of rusty scissors.

His face interested me, strangely, none the less when I noticed that the Victoria Cross adorned his breast. How could I get him to talk?

"May I ask why you cultivate only one flower?" I inquired with sudden inspiration.

He looked at me again, in that intense way of his, for at least a minute, without speaking, then said irrelevantly:

"You have a good, kind face, lady, and—"

He paused.

"Thank you for saying so," I rejoined, somewhat tamely, feeling baffled and wondering what was coming next.

"You asked me just now why I only grew one flower. I will tell you if you care to listen."

"Yes," I replied, eagerly, "I am all attention."

"It happened so long ago, yet it seems only like yesterday. Mignon, Mignon!" he half-murmured to himself.

I coughed softly, to remind him of my presence.

"Lady, did you ever love anyone very dearly?" he asked abruptly.

"Have I?" I returned, somewhat taken aback by this unexpected question.

"Well, yes, I have been fond of several people I have met at different times of my life," was my discreet rejoinder.

"Those two were the only ones I cared for in the world—Mignon and Ralph Stanley."

"Who was Mignon?" I queried, gently, for the old man's face was full of emotion when he spoke her name.

"Always called her Mignon, and so did he," he continued, without heading me; "the name suited her so well. She was never without a slip of this," touching the flowers in my lap, "in her belt or gown. She had a passion for mignonette, that is why we called her Mignon, and she was as sweet as the flower itself, with her blue-bell eyes and nut-brown hair."

"Who was this other?" I ventured to ask, after a pause.

Again the veteran seemed to forget my existence, as he sighed, and said, musingly:

"To think that I never guessed it, and they were such a bonny pair, too. She could not help loving him, the genial, handsome laddie—men and officers alike in our regiment simply adored him."

"He served with you then?"

"Yes, but I was only in the ranks while he held a commission."

"Yet you were friends?"

"Friend—aye! that we were; for our schoolboy days we were chums! When Ralph was sent to the Crimea war I threw everything to the winds, enlisted in the regiment and went, too, and we fought in many a fierce battle together, but one thought kept us up through all, dear little Mignon, the vicar's daughter. Ah, what happy old times they were at the vicarage!"

"Mignon was an only child; her father, our coach, Ralph's and mine. What merry little tea parties we had—just we four; the scent of mignonette everywhere; the garden, the windows and the rooms of the old house were full of mignonette, all mignonette!"

My glance wandered to the flowers blooming at my feet, as I tried to picture the little scene put before me.

"And Ralph loved Mignon as well as I," he pursued, "though neither of us knew the other's secret. Well, those happy days came to an end. Young Stanley left us to study for the army, while I remained to stagnate in my father's office in town."

"How I envied Ralph's luck. Not that I grudged him any good luck, but my lot in life did seem hard in comparison to his. As the time passed my restlessness and discontent increased. Despite my attachment to Mignon, my humdrum, monotonous existence was so hateful to me. So, when the war broke out and Ralph was ordered abroad I made up my mind to go, too, in the ranks of the same regiment. Here was an opportunity not to be lost of leading a more glorious life; to fight for my country, my people and for the love of 'old England.'"

"How I dreamt of the home-coming after the work was done. Death had no place in my mind. How I anticipated the meeting with Mignon, with the love light that I—poor fool—imagined she felt for me, shining in her soft blue eyes. I thought I would pour out my heart and tell her I had come back to claim her, never to part any more. Ah! if I had but known!"

He smiled again in his melancholy way, and continued:

"Yes, if I had only known that she cared for Ralph I should have been spared many a heartache in after years."

The old soldier gazed abstractedly at his mignonette, and, doubtless, lived over again that memorable campaign, while I wondered if the cross on his breast had anything to do with history. He answered my glance.

"I am coming to that now, lady. One bitter November night, or rather morning, we awoke to find the enemy bearing down on us in overwhelming numbers before our camp was astir. The men, however, soon roused and fought shoulder to shoulder amid the roar and din of cannon, which maddened alike man and beast. After while I became conscious only of one thing—a figure a few yards ahead of me fighting for dear life. I can see the look on his face now! It was transfigured, shining with dauntless courage that quailed not before the onslaught of the Russians. I believe, at that moment, Ralph lived in every fiber of his being. He gloriied in a fight—no one more. He was surrounded and cut off from the rest of us by six or seven of the enemy, double his size. Suddenly he staggered and fell; then I found myself struggling and crushing through countless forms and brandishing steel, until I reached the stricken figure. There he lay, so white and still, with his brave young face upturned to the leaden sky. My arms went instinctively round him, and as I turned and faced the lot of them—perhaps it was fancy—but a change seemed to come into their eager, glittering eyes, as they involuntarily fell back a space or two. It was only for a moment. They again pressed forward, and no doubt the pair of us would have been quickly cut into mince-meat, but for an unexpected diversion created just then by the arrival of the Inniskilling Dragoons. With their aid the Russians were completely routed, and in the confusion of their retreat and flight I managed to carry Ralph back safely to camp."

"And you escaped unscathed?"

"No, unluckily, lady. I received some very bad cuts on my head and back, which brought about my discharge from the army as being unfit for active service. When I had somewhat recovered Ralph told me that Mignon had promised to become his wife, and six months later they were married."

"Did Mignon ever know that you cared for her?" I asked rather huskily.

"Yes; many years after, when they came to see me here, I think, as they carried away some of my mignonette, they both guessed it for the first time."

A bell near by clanged out the tea hour as he finished speaking, so, with a close clasp of the hand, my old man and I parted.

A Glass of Water at Bedtime.

The human body is constantly undergoing tissue changes. Water has the power of increasing these changes, which multiply the waste products, but at the same time they are removed by its agency, giving rise to increased appetite, which in turn provides fresh nutriment. If you do not accustom yourself to drink water regularly you are liable to have the waste products form faster than they are removed. Any obstruction to the free working of natural laws at once produces disease. Great weakness and languor on rising in the morning are generally due to a large secretion of these waste products, and the remedy is to drink a tumblerful of water—either hot or cold—just before retiring. This materially assists in the process during the night and leaves the tissues fresh and strong, ready for the active work of the next day.

CHILDREN'S COLUMN.

A Rain Song.

Don't you love to lie and listen,
Listen to the rain,
With its little patter, patter,
And its tiny clatter, clatter,
And its silvery spatter, spatter,
On the roof and on the pane?

Yes, I love to lie and listen,
Listen to the rain,
It's father—Pert and Plucky,
Nip and Nibble-toes and Lucky,
Trip and Thimble-nose and Tucky—
On the roof and on the pane!

That's my dream the while I listen,
Listen to the rain,
I can see them running races,
I can watch their laughing faces
At their gleeful games and games,
On the roof and on the pane!

—Clifton Scollard, in St. Nicholas.

A Humble Bee on Wheels.

On an uptown cross street the other morning appeared the tiniest of riders on the most diminutive of wheels. She was a chunky little creature of perhaps three or four summers, just the build and age at which a tumble makes no perceptible impression. The wheel was so small as not to be worth mentioning, but it was a genuine bicycle.

The little thing sat there, one foot resting on the curb, until her father appeared. An immense throng gathered round her, but she heeded it not the slightest. When he was ready she shoved off and darted down the street by the side of her big papa. Whether by accident or otherwise the colors of the midget's costume were very like those of a bee. Her cap and jacket were a steely blue, and her skirts, of a bright yellow, were divided like a pair of wings. At a short distance she looked as she flew along all the world like a bumble bee and she was only a size larger.—New York Mail and Express.

A Clever Hen—A True Story.

One day in early autumn, when the sunflower seeds were fully ripe, I spied our hen, Speckle, pecking away on the brown stalk of one of the tallest bushes. My curiosity being aroused, I stood and watched her. To my surprise she pecked away with a will till a number of seeds had been shaken from the seed disc. Then she picked them from the ground until she had eaten quite a good dinner. Day after day I saw her do this.

Finally, the other chickens discovered that there would be seeds on the ground when Speckle went to the bush, and then she had a hard time of it. As soon as she would go to the bush, the others would flock around her and eat the seeds as fast as she could shake them down. Undaunted though, she would work away until the rest were filled, and then get a paltry share from their leavings.

Though the chickens knew perfectly well that there would be seeds on the ground when Speckle pecked the bush, still none of them caught Speckle's idea of shaking a bush for themselves—and there were plenty of them—so I concluded that Speckle was an exceptionally brilliant hen.—Every Other Sunday.

Japanese Toy Frog.

The little folks in Japan make some very interesting toys, and none is more interesting than the frog manufactured out of green paper. First cut a piece of paper into a square much larger than you expect the frog to be. Draw lines from the four corners of the square and from the middle of the diagonal lines, then turn it over on the other side and fold it along the lines from the sides. It will then form a kind of box which can be pressed together along the folds in the shape of an unequal diamond. Now seizing the paper below the ends of the cones, fold it backward so as to have two more regular equal points. When this has been done to each of the eight cones the result will be a perfect diamond with a smaller diamond in the center. Then each one of the cones must be folded again so as to get all the points around the center. Care must be taken to get the points as even and equal as possible.

To finish the frog turn the upper points out so that they spread and form the forelegs, and the lower points so that they form the hind legs. When it is finished a fine thread may be attached to the frog's body, and by careful jerks it almost seems to leap around on the floor or table. The paper used should be stiff enough to retain the folds as given to it, but not so brittle as to break under the handling. Do not be discouraged if the first frog you make is lame, for then it is certain that the points have not been folded evenly.

The American Boy.

In St. Nicholas Governor Roosevelt of New York tells "What We Can Expect of the American Boy." Of course, he says, what we have a right to expect of the American boy is that he shall turn out to be a good American man. Now, the chances are strong that he won't be much of a man unless he is a good deal of a boy. He must not be a coward, or a weakling, a bully, a shirk or a prig. He must work hard and play hard. He must be clean-minded and clean-lived, and able to hold his own under all circumstances and against all comers. It is only on these conditions that he will grow into the kind of American man of whom America can be really proud.

There are always in life countless tendencies for good and for evil, and each succeeding generation sees some of these tendencies strengthened and some weakened, nor is it by any means always, alas! that the tendencies for evil are weakened, and those for good strengthened. But during

HINTS FOR HOUSEWIVES.

To Take Grease from Blotting Paper.

Lay a sheet of thick blotting paper over the stain and then press a hot iron over it. As soon as the blotting paper becomes greasy move it; bring a clean part over the stain, and then apply the iron again. Repeat this until the stain has quite disappeared.

The Perfect Kitchen.

To provide perfect kitchen equipments requires a special intelligence gathered only by experience that shall enable one to meet the exactions of individual conditions. If the young wife lacks practical experience she cannot do better than apply to the elders of her acquaintance for advice as to limitations, rather than abundance of supplies. At every house-furnisher's shop she will be presented with a list of household vessels, including every essential for the kitchen, closets and dresser, but not one of the catalogues will tell her what she can do without and not be incommoded.

Edna's Reward.

"Instead of one corner of my brain for geography and one for arithmetic, both of them must be for arithmetic. Don't you think so, mamma?"

Mamma looked at Edna's first sixth-grade report card and read, "Geography, 67; arithmetic, 95."

"This is worse than usual, Edna," she said. "Now I believe myself that you have a corner for geography, but that it is, we might say, a vacant corner. We must build on it. If you can get 75 next week, we will go to see with our own eyes some fact of geography. I think we will go to see how the men quarry building stone."

Lessons went about as usual the first day. Edna tried to remember how Asia looked on the map page, but there were so many scallops along the coast she could not remember where they all belonged. The next day each member of the class was to bring five original questions, the questions and their answers to be written out to pass in. Before she went to school Edna read hers to her mother.

"What is the direction of Java from Japan?" was the first.

Mamma was to answer.

"Southeast," she replied.

"No, southwest," said Edna, with eyes fairly dancing.

"I hope you are right, dear," said mamma. "But let us look it up."

It was southwest, they found, both looking carefully at the map; and Edna went to school feeling sure her paper was all right.

Strange how things happen! When the books were closed and the geography class was ready to recite, Miss Johnson said:

"Before we take up the advance work, you may ask a few of the review questions you have prepared."

Edna was looking at her intently, and wishing she herself had blue eyes and wavy yellow hair. She had even gone so far as to hope she would grow up to look like Miss Johnson—which was unlikely, as Edna had black eyes and black hair—when she was suddenly called to attention by hearing Mary Milliken ask:

"What is the direction of Java from Japan?"

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"Right!" said Miss Johnson, and a second question was asked.

Edna could hardly believe her ears. She had never known Miss Johnson to make a mistake, but there was the fact that mamma had looked it up with her only two hours before. Miss Johnson must be wrong for once; no, she must be wrong herself! Oh, dear! it was so perplexing.

The papers had not been passed in, and Edna could easily change her answer to "Southeast."

"I am, I'm going to change it, and then I won't lose on my rank," decided Edna.

The pencil almost touched the paper when Edna thought:

"Mamma wouldn't change it, and Miss Johnson wouldn't, either. I know I'm right, and I'd rather be right"—Edna hesitated a minute—"than have a hundred."

The next day, when Miss Johnson returned the papers, Edna opened hers slowly, with a dismal feeling that there would be a blue pencil mark against "southwest." Of course, she could show Miss Johnson her mistake; but Edna's devotion to her teacher was such that she had a queer idea that the mistake should be kept from her. There was the mark! What? It wasn't a cross! Instead, in Miss Johnson's pretty handwriting, was an underlined "Good." Edna feasted her eyes on the word.

"Java is southwest of Japan, children—not southeast, as recited yesterday," said Miss Johnson. "I am glad to say one of us knew the right answer yesterday." And she looked straight at Edna.

Edna blushed and smiled. Everything was all right. What if she had changed the word? It wasn't a pleasant thought, and Edna peeped into her paper again to see the beautiful "Good." Proudly she carried the paper home at noon.

"Miss Johnson's own writing, mamma!"—Sunday School Times.

Calaveras Pines.

California has several groves of mammoth pine trees, the most celebrated of which is located in Calaveras county. Some of them reach a height of 320 feet and are 30 feet in girth. Their age is computed to be 2300 years, and they are a great object of interest to tourists. Congress donated this grove to the state of California, the stipulation being that it should be retained as a public domain. The state accepted the grant, and a board of commissioners now has charge of it. Mariposa county has a similar grove, which is also much visited by tourists.

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Chicken Livers—Clean, remove bag and green liver adjoining; cut small slices. Dredge with salt, pepper and flour and saute in butter.

Potato Soup—Take six good potatoes and four onions (or less strong flavor is disliked), dice them and put on to boil in two quarts water. When cooked soft put through a sieve, add half a cup milk, stir in a tablespoonful of smoothed in milk just enough "lard" the puree—add a tablespoonful of butter in small bits and pepper to make palatable, leaving opportunity for individual season at table.

Indian Bannock—This is a very old family recipe book marked "A delicious breakfast dish. It is equally good for luncheon, nice with milk for those who do the beverage. One pint cornmeal, quart milk. Boil half the milk, scald the meal with it; mix with white hot a piece of butter the size of an egg and a little salt; beat it up, add three and three-quarters cold milk. Bake in shallow pan.