

The closing of the century promises to be one of unexampled slaughter.

Librarians say that people who read novels and nothing but novels are about 70 per cent. of readers in the public book institutions.

Mexico in the past nine years has doubled its revenues, doubled its exports, doubled the number of its factories, and multiplied by three its banking capital.

A Maryland woman has instituted an original and profitable industry. She scours the rural districts of Virginia and the Carolinas for pieces of colonial furniture, which she buys at small cost, has renovated and afterwards sells in Baltimore at a large profit.

When Europe gets through wondering at the build, endurance and skill of our athletic college men, understands that they are but a type of millions of other young men in the United States, she will also understand why it is that the American army, in personnel at least, has no superior on the face of the globe.

It may not be commonly known that New York state has a law which requires that cities of the first and second classes shall erect and maintain free public baths. A bill was introduced in 1895 making the establishment of baths compulsory upon cities of the first and second class. The provisions, briefly are that such a number of free baths shall be established as the local board of health may deem to be necessary. Each bath is to be kept open not less than 14 hours each day, and hot and cold water are to be provided. Buffalo and Rochester have already complied with the law, and Albany and New York City have the work under way.

The force of habit is indeed strong, as those who think to revolutionize the world in a day discover. Buttons are still put on the back of men's coats, though the sword-belts they were meant to hold up have been out of use many generations. Now the builders of automobiles are struggling with the same sort of bondage to tradition. They put dashboards on their vehicles as if they expected them to kick up a lot of mud in front, they even adorn the tops of the dashboards with a fancy metal rail on which to rest the reins; and so on throughout. It will probably be many years before automobiles will cease to look like ordinary vehicles with the horses missing.

Is bravery an ideal which is reached by cultivation? In other words, is it an intellectual conception? If it is not, how does it happen that real bravery is so common among boys? Impulsive acts of courage, such as jumping into the water to save a drowning comrade, are not uncommon among boys, but they belong to the emotional conduct of our species. Cool, determined facing of odds is not often seen among boys. On the contrary, cowardly conduct, too often prompted by vindictive feelings, is altogether too common. One sophomore never goes forth to haze a freshman, and when the youthful mind conceives the idea that a National wrong should be avenged, the outcome is generally an assault by a crowd of boys on some one or two inoffensive persons. Such performances do not encourage belief in the natural bravery of our species.

Our cities seem destined to spread out, until the concentrating of municipal life, as it now is, will be practically ended. Electricity will co-operate in other ways, by making transit much more rapid and supplanting steam power. As a consequence manufacturing will be carried on less and less in huge factories and congested centers. We may fairly foresee a new sort of city as well as a new sort of country—a city disseminated or thinned out over a vast territory. This will be hastened on by the fact that the coal famine has come sooner than expected; and the coal age will carry with it the steam age. The use of steam power began about 1830; and, according to Professor Orton, it will barely last till 1930. He tells us that the known coal deposits of America are rapidly nearing their exhaustion. The exhaustion of European beds began last winter to be felt with revolutionary force. The draft on American coal will as a consequence be much more serious and will shorten the steam age. We have harnessed electricity none to soon. The full consequences cannot be estimated; but we do not count ourselves among the prophets when we say that we are sure that country life will hereafter not mean remoteness from the best evolution of the age, thinks the New York Independent.

The Bride That Changed Her Mind

"You say you don't believe in fate," you fellows," said young Fred Julian, as he entertained a party of boom companions in his bachelor rooms. "Well, that's because, at present, you haven't had an opportunity of judging from personal experience."

"Well, and have you?" asked a chorus of voices.

"Rather! It was a little incident that occurred about six months ago, interesting—to me, at least—and if you like I'll tell you all about it."

"Do," said his friends, and the young man lounged back in his chair, and with his eyes on the fire commenced his narrative without more ado.

"It was one lovely day in the July of last year," she began, "and I was starting jubilantly off for a month's holiday at Scarborough. Knowing my luxurious habits as you do, my friends, you will not be surprised to hear that when I reached King's Cross I selected a corner seat of a first-class smoker, and provided myself with plenty of cigars and magazines. To complete my anticipation of a pleasant journey, just as I had settled myself comfortably and the guard gave his whistle, the door opened and a pretty, excited young lady came bustling in. She seemed relieved at having caught the train and sat down in a state of breathless and smiling exhaustion.

"I looked over at her from my corner, so did a loudly dressed, boudoirish looking young man from his, for she was an extremely pretty girl, with brown curly hair, small features, and the daintiest little figure in the world. I frowned at the loudly dressed young man, and he frowned at me, and just then the girl looked up and caught my glance of admiration. She stiffened, and then her eyes fell upon my cigar, which I had left smoldering in my hand, and a look of severe displeasure came into her face.

"Are you aware, sir," she said, au-



terly, "that this is not a smoking carriage?"

"Isn't it?" I answered, looking up at the window. "Why, goodness me, they must have forgotten to take the label down."

"The girl followed my glance, and at the sight of the partially obliterated letters, half concealed by the blind, her face crimsoned with mortification, and, biting her lip, she took up a paper hurriedly to hide her confusion.

"I have made the same mistake, my dear," said a kindly matron on her right. "It doesn't matter much; a little smoke won't hurt us, will it?"

"No; I must change at the next station," she returned sweetly.

"Excuse me," I broke in, "but this is an express train."

"Do you mean to say it doesn't stop at Peterborough?"

"It doesn't stop at all," I said, "until we get to York."

"I'm so sorry," I murmured, turning to the girl. "Can I assist you in any way? If it is a case of necessity, you know, we can communicate with the guard."

"O, no—that is—I mean I don't think it would be considered so," she stammered, her face suddenly suffused with blushes. "You see, I was going to a wedding."

"The elderly matron smiled. I had all I could do to repress my amusement, while the loudly dressed young man in the corner sniggered audibly.

"O, well, I shouldn't let that worry me, if I were you," I said soothingly. "It's disappointing, but they will be able to fix it up all right without you."

"The blushes deepened and the girl hung her head.

"I'm afraid they—I mean, I—"

"She broke off in confusion, and the old lady bent toward her.

"I quite understand, my dear," she said. "It wouldn't be a wedding without the bride. I'm sorry for you, but you mustn't fret. It can't be helped now, and you must send a wire directly we get to York."

"This seemed to raise the girl's spir-

its, and she began to laugh, a little hysterically perhaps at first. Then she thanked me prettily for doing nothing, and begged me to smoke, and declared she really didn't mind the smell at all, but rather liked it. When the train rushed through Peterborough she laughed more merrily still, and was so charming and unaffected that long before we reached York we were chatting together like old friends. We found out then that we had mutual acquaintances, that our respective homes were situated but a few miles from each other, and many other interesting facts.

When the train drew up, I proposed to assist her in finding out the telegraph office, and thither, therefore, we went.

"I don't think I'll send a wire after all," she said hesitatingly, as we found the place.

"Why not?" I said, in some surprise.

"Because—because I think I'll go straight home."

"But think of the anxiety of the poor chap," I said feelingly. "Why, he may be thinking all kinds of dreadful things have happened to you."

"She stood irresolute for a moment; then she picked up a form and wrote, and, for the life of me, I could not resist looking over. All that she said was:

"I have changed my mind.—Phyllis."

"Of all the cool cheek, that is the coolest," I thought.

"But I stepped back and pretended to be much interested in the company's time-table.

"Now we must find out the next train back," I said, as she turned again to me; and then we will have some tea. You must want some badly."

"But your train—you will surely lose it," she murmured.

"York is my destination," I said untruthfully.

"After that I found out there was no train for half an hour, and we took our way to the tearoom, where my pretty companion made me her willing and sympathetic confidant. She was unhappy, very unhappy, at home, and in an ill-guarded moment, had agreed to a runaway match without the knowledge of her parents. Now she was thankful, very thankful, that she had been prevented. It seemed like fate. That was the summary of her remarks.

"There now, you fellows," broke off the narrator abruptly. "I needn't tell you much more; only that we each exchanged cards, agreed to see one another in London, and that we parted cheerfully at York."

"And did you fulfill those promises?" said one of the listeners, with interest.

"O, yes! We have seen some little of each other since then."

"And her name?"

"Will soon be Julian," said the young man promptly.—Penny Pictorial Magazine.

Babylonian Explorations.

Prof. Herman V. Hilprecht, the Babylonian explorer, who in the spring of this year went to the east to superintend the excavations in Assyria and Babylon in the name of the university of Pennsylvania, describes in a letter just received the important results of his journey. He says: "The results of our researches exceed everything that has so far been known about Babylon. We found the great temple library and priest school of Nippur, which had been destroyed by the Elamites 228 B. C. The library consists of 16,000 volumes, written on stone, and covers the entire theological, astronomical, linguistic and mathematical knowledge of those days. We also unearthed a collection of letters and biographies, deciphered the inscriptions of many newly discovered tombstones and monuments, and espied, finally, best of all, 5,000 official documents of inestimable value to the student of ancient history. The net result of our journey consists so far of 23,000 stone writings."

A Sparrow's Odd Experience.

An escape of a sparrow at the home of Mrs. Susan Fox of East 2d street on Thursday is remarkable enough to be worth recording, says the Oil City Derrick. The bird in some manner fell into the chimney and from there made its way through two elbows and several points of stovepipe into the back of the stove, through the damper and under the oven into the ashpan, where its fluttering attracted the attention of Mrs. Fox and she rescued it. There was a hot fire in the stove at the time, but the little bird seemed to be none the worse for its peculiar journey.

A WAR THAT MAKES 'APPY 'OMES.

Some persons look at the effects of the South African campaign in one way—some in another, says a London newspaper. One of the oddest is surely that of the widow of a certain Tommy who fell at Colenso. A lady visitor went to console with her, when she looked up with a smile and said,

with an air of mingled deference and confidence: "Oh, mum, do you trouble about 'im? 'E was always a bad 'un. I've got a nice lot of money from the newspapers and other kind friends—enough to keep me comfortable. Oh, mum, this 'ere war's made a lot of 'appy 'omes, it has."

WHOLE TOWNS MOVED.

Houses and All They Contained Wheeled into Neighboring Villages.

One of the most extraordinary spectacles in the world has recently been witnessed in Mix county, S. D. Six large towns, including Edgartown, Old Platte, Castalia, Academy, Colvin and Jasper, have been torn up by the roots. Every house and business structure in all these towns has been "snaked off" its foundation, mounted on wheels hitched to 24, and in some instance 40 horse teams and started on the long trek across the prairie toward Platte and Geddes.

There are new towns on the line of the Milwaukee railway, of which the Yankton and Tyndall branch, now in course of construction, is the first railway line the country has ever had. When the railway was surveyed, instead of biting any of the fine towns then in existence, it followed the rich lowlands in the middle of the country. The towns surveyed on the line of the road were named respectively Platte, Geddes, Lake Andes, Wagner and Avon.

People living in the old towns have been fighting hard to induce the company to change the route, but, falling in this, they decided to move bag and baggage, houses, business blocks and all, to the new towns. Within a week there have been villages of from 1000 to 2000 population there will be nothing but a lot of poles in the ground, surrounded by ragged stone foundations.

The growth of Platte within a week discounts any fairy tale. All the old buildings from the old town of Platte, many miles away, have been hauled in and set in lots in Main street.

Two churches are in course of erection, and an opera house was among the structures commenced. Three hundred men and teams are grading the streets. The impression created in the mind of visitors is that somebody has taken a contract to build a city in 24 hours. The town site company received the best corner lot in the place for any man who would set up a 60 room hotel, to be completed within 60 days.

A Michigan man accepted the offer by telegraph, and his advance guard is now at work. The hotel is to be of brick and stone, electrically lighted and thoroughly modern. An artesian well, sunk 800 feet deep, is throwing a stream big enough to supply a town of 5000 people. The immediately available supplies of lumber, stone, brick, steel and building materials were exhausted recently, and telegrams were rushed everywhere giving orders.

In one instance a four-story frame structure 60 feet by 40 was hauled 11 miles on an ordinary wagon, with the gearing ingeniously arranged by a 40 horse team. The building will be placed on a foundation in the new town, and the plastered walls were not cracked in transit. Gamblers and other questionable characters have made their appearance in large numbers, but the town has already organized a police force, and there is little disorder.—Cincinnati Enquirer

There Were Ten.

Until recently every person who crossed a certain bridge over the Seine in Paris had to pay a small toll, and an old pensioner was stationed at the entrance to the bridge to collect the money. Constant objections were raised on the toll, and all possible tricks were resorted to in order to avoid payment.

One afternoon a band of 10 students came up to the bridge; but before they started to go over a man drew near and said:

"You walk across, and I'll see what I can do about getting you through free."

The little company walked along together until they reached the pensioner's box, when the man went up to the toll-collector, and taking out a handful of coins, began counting the students in a somewhat loud tone of voice.

"There are nine," he said, after counting very deliberately.

"I beg your pardon," replied the pensioner. "There are 10."

"No, no, my friend, I'm sure there are nine," persisted the other.

Then he proceeded to count them again, even more slowly than before. By the time he had finished the students had reached the other end of the bridge, and were disappearing from view. Then the man said to the collector:

"Certainly, you are right. There are 10. But I don't know them, so what does it matter to me?"

He then laid his coin and sauntered across, calmly whistling the "Marsellaise."

Discovered by Small Telescopes.

It is more often than not that the smaller telescopes startle us with the sudden discovery of some new celestial body. Indeed, the instrument by which the German astronomer recently discovered the new planet Eros at the Urania observatory in Berlin cannot be described as one of the gigantic ones. Before the discovery of Eros the nearest planet to the earth was Venus, which at certain times approached our globe to within 25,000,000 miles. Eros, however, our nearest neighbor in space, is about 13,000,000 miles distant. With only a six-inch refractor Dr. Swift has also discovered some eight comets at the Lowe observatory.—Boston Globe.

Odd Numbers in Slam.

The number of rooms in a house, of windows or doors in a room, even of rungs on a ladder, in Slam, must always be odd. Even numbers are considered unlucky.

KEYSTONE STATE NEWS CONDENSED

PENSIONS GRANTED.

Washington County Banker Found Guilty of Embezzlement—Shelby Tube Co. Plant to be Rebuilt.

Among those granted pensions last week were: John Slater, Etna, \$12; Mary E. Wordell, West Brownsville, \$8; Mary E. Lawrence, Sharon, \$12; Alison N. Squires, Eldred, \$6; David Blair, Salsburg, \$10; William Stewart, Port Royal, \$10; Abraham Goss, Philipsburg, \$8; Thomas F. McCarty, Conneautville, \$6; Lindsey Currie, Chewick, \$12; Alexander C. Miller, Apollo, \$10; Aaron Eakman, Export, \$10; James Stitt, Natrona, \$6; David A. Coons, Galitzin, \$10; Mary A. Rose, Oakmont, \$8; Mary E. Linsinger, East Freedom, \$8; Edwin Girish, Beaver, \$6; James A. Morrow, Pitsaun, \$10; Lenuel P. Worden, Meyersburg, \$17; Eden Hutchison, Philipsburg, \$8; Mary J. Odell, Mansfield, \$12.

After the refusal of the supervisors of South Stralane township, Washington county, to build the sample road near the county home, under the direction of the government, George W. Cameron, C. M. Berry and W. M. Davis, farmers of the same township, met and agreed to accept the proposition of the government for a sample road, the expense to be met by private subscription. Arrangements have been completed for the removal of three sheet mills of the Republic Iron and Steel Company from Sharon to Vandergrift.

The Sharon works of the National Steel Company is engaged on the contract of turning out 4,000 tons of steel blooms for Germany. A movement is on foot to increase the size of the town. Allegheny College, Meadville, is to have an observatory, the gift of Mrs. Mary M. Newton, of Batavia, Ill., whose husband was a student there in the '40s.

Joseph Kelly, who lives on the farm of the late Sabina Beer, near Madison, Westmoreland county, in whose house was found \$16,000 in cash in an old chest a week ago, made another find of about a half peck of gold, silver and paper money which was secreted in an old chimney and which will aggregate as much if not more than that found a week ago in the old chest.

Collins Hamilton, who has served half of his 40 years in prison and who was recently released from the Western Penitentiary, has again run afoul of the law, having just been arrested for robbing and beating an aged farmer, William Rinkle, who lives on Laurel Hill, above Laughlinstown, Westmoreland county, where Hamilton has lately been living, close to his old haunts.

Mable Walder, of Pymatuning township, Mercer county, was awakened the other night by a peculiar noise in her bed. She awakened her father and upon investigation discovered a garter snake about 14 inches long coiled up in one of the springs. It is supposed the reptile crawled up the vines at the side of the house and then dropped into her room.

State Treasurer Barnett's report for August shows a balance of \$5,527,108.43 in the general fund and \$2,252,455.09 in the sinking fund. Col. Barnett has already paid out about \$15,000 of the school fund appropriation for the current fiscal year, and he will begin next week to distribute the fund at the rate of \$1,000,000 a month.

A company of farmers has been organized for the purpose of developing coal lands in the vicinity of Georgetown and Hookstown, Beaver county. Several test holes have been sunk, and coal found which is said to be almost if not quite as good as the Pittsburgh coal seam in such depth of vein as to amply justify its development.

A sensation was created at Breedtown, Venango county, by the arrest of Rev. C. E. Porterfield, pastor of the Baptist Church, on a serious charge on the information of a 16-year-old girl named Goehring, a member of Rev. Mr. Porterfield's flock. Porterfield is about 30 years of age and has a wife and two children.

It has been announced that the plant of the Danville Bessemer Company, of Danville, has been purchased by the Lake Superior Iron and Steel Company, of Sault Ste. Marie, Canada. The steel rail mills will be dismantled and the machinery shipped to the Canadian works. The purchase does not include the plate mill.

Dr. F. M. Clark, of Erie, has removed a lizard from the stomach of Mrs. Mary Saurborn, aged 65 years. Nearly a year ago, after swallowing some water, Mrs. Saurborn felt the presence of some foreign substance in her stomach, which at intervals has caused intense pain. The lizard was three inches long.

Officials of the Shelby Tube Company, whose plant was destroyed by fire some weeks ago, have decided to rebuild. It is the purpose of the company to expend from \$200,000 to \$300,000 in the new plant, which will be used in the manufacture of novelties and specialties.

Marion Christy, the 16-year-old daughter of Frank Christy, of Greenville, has the distinction of being the only woman who has swam the Conneaut lake. The daring feat was watched by a large crowd of people. For 30 minutes she battled with the waves.

The new mining community of Ellsworth has been made a borough by the court, being carved out of part of Somerset township, Washington county, the decree of the court being filed in the office of the clerk of courts Tuesday.

Mrs. Grestner has brought suit against Alexander McClain, late mine boss at the Pittsburg Coal Company's mines at McGovern, Washington county, charging him with criminal negligence in causing the death of her husband early in July.

Towns along the Kiskiminetas river will be connected with Greensburg and other Westmoreland county towns by a trolley line from Apollo to Jeannette, the right of way for which has been secured.

"Guilty in manner and form as indicted." This was the verdict returned by the jury against Samuel Hazlett, of Washington. For the second time the aged banker is found guilty of embezzlement as a banker.

The Commissioners of Warren county have decided to collect no bicycle tax this year, nor hereafter until the constitutionality of the State sideway law, which levies a tax of \$1, is established.

TO A STAR.

Am I the only child awake
Beneath thy midnight beams?
If so, for gentle slumber's sake,
The brighter be thy dreams!

But shouldst thou then, travelling the deep,
The silent angel see
That puts the little ones to sleep,
Bright star, remember me!
—John B. Tabb, in Youth's Companion.

HUMOROUS.

Tommy—Pop, what is an optimist?
Tommy's Pop—An optimist, my son, is a man who lends money.

Johnny—Paw, when a man expresses an opinion, can he collect express charges on it? Paw—He can—if he is a lawyer.

Hoax—Despite his great wealth, old Gotrox isn't an interesting conversationalist. Joax—Well, he talks in money syllables.

Passenger—Guard, have I time to say good-by to my wife at the barrier?
Guard—I don't know, sir. How long have you been married?

Wagon Customer—Will arsenic whiten the complexion? Druggist—Yes; and it will be permanent if you take a large enough dose.

Blobbs—Even the working man may climb up in the world, Blobbs—Certainly. The laborer who carries a hod is always worthy of higher.

"What is your idea of an intellectual woman?" "One who can say good-by to a friend without holding the screen door open 20 minutes."

She—They say if you cast bread on the water you will find it. He—If you should try the experiment with any of your brand you could only find it with a dredge.

"Isabel, you are careless; you ought to have a place for everything and everything in its place." "I do have a place for everything, Harold; but somehow or other when I get to the place the thing isn't there."

"I suppose people very seldom cross that desert?" "Interrogated the tourist. "Only absconding bank cashiers, stranger," responded Amber Pete. "But how can they stand the boiling sun?" "Well, you see, there is generally a cloud over them."

"How much will your opinion in this case be worth?" asked the prospective client. "I can't tell you how much it'll be worth," answered the lawyer who is accustomed to make fine distinctions, "but I can tell you how much I am going to charge you for it."

HER ONE EXPERIENCE.

The Official Didn't Think Her Entitled to a License.

"Is this the place where you get a license to run an automobile?"
"Yes, madam."
"Well, I would like to get one, if you please."

"What experience have you had in running an automobile?"
"Oh, a little."
"Indeed!"
"Yes, sir; I run one once."
"Did I understand you to say once, madam?"

"Yes; but I am quick to learn and I picked up a good many points that one time."
"What was the motive power, madam?"

"Gasoline, I think."
"Are you not positive?"
No, sir; I climbed right up without looking under the wheels."
"How did you proceed?"

"Well, Henry turned the power on and I just held the wheel."
"Did everything work smoothly?"
"Yes, until I attempted to slow up."
"What happened then?"
"Why, it increased in speed."
"Then you had lost control of the vehicle?"

"Yes, but it would never have occurred if there had been horses in it."
"And how far did it run before you stopped?"
"Four blocks."
"Did an officer stop it?"
"No, a truck. But the damage was very slight."
"Indeed?"

"Yes, only a wheel off the automobile and the driver of the truck thrown from his seat. But I gained a good deal of experience that one time and I think I am entitled to a license."

But the official thought differently and told her so.—Chicago News.

A Very Old Church Edifice.

The oldest Protestant church edifice now standing, I would say in reply to an inquiry, is that of St. Ethelburga at the little village of Lyminge, near Canterbury, Kent county, England, and was erected in the year 633 by the daughter of the Saxon king Ethelbert of Kent. Her mother was the Christian Princess Bertha, daughter of King Charibert of France, and through her influence Ethelbert and his court were converted to Christianity. Ethelburga married King Edwin of Northumbria in 628. After he was slain at the battle of Heathfield the widow returned to Lyminge and devoted the remainder of her life to works of piety and benevolence—among others the building of the church, in which she was buried in 647. Her grave is still pointed out. The church was nearly destroyed by the Danes in 965, but was rebuilt by Archbishop Darcan of Canterbury. It has been restored several times since with the same materials and without altering the plans; so that it now stands almost exactly the same as when first erected nearly 1300 years ago.—A. E. Curtis, in Chicago Record.