

If Spain had fully realized the intense friendship of European powers for the United States, it would no doubt have become discouraged sooner.

There is both wit and philosophy in Mrs. Shaw's remark in the New York World that "log cabins are getting so scarce that it's hard nowadays for a great man to know where to be born." America is outgrowing her log-cabin days, but not, let us hope, the habit of producing great men.

A Canadian who was injured in getting off a railroad car at a station before the train had come to a stop obtained a verdict of \$1000 damages against the company, and the verdict has been sustained on appeal, the court holding that the plaintiff was acting as a reasonable man would in getting off the train, although it was in motion.

The coronation will be a brilliant affair. But it will leave a sad lot of social Jezebels behind it. The wives of the gentlemen who carved the roast beef at the banquet will be almost sure to assume superior airs over those whose husbands merely cleared away the dinner things. These little distinctions of caste are subtle, but fearfully potent.

Pittsburg now ranks third among American cities in respect to the value of stock exchange privileges. The highest price ever paid for a seat in its Stock Exchange was recorded the other day, when one was sold for \$9000. New York City, of course, is first, with Boston second, its highest recorded sale being for \$22,000, and Philadelphia, Baltimore and Chicago follow in the order named.

In a handbook for travelers in the Sudan issued by the Egyptian Government, referring to the currency, it is quaintly observed that "in the more unadorned parts of the country" beads and bracelets are current. In the section on shooting there is a pleasant reference to the sporting tourist, who is warned that only crocodiles may be shot at from steamers, and even this practice is deprecated as being "more dangerous to the riverain population than the crocodile."

The Dowager Empress, in tears, apologizing to an American woman for the attack made by the Boxers and imperial troops on the foreign legations at Peking, was something new in Oriental politics and imperial customs. The report of the incident made interesting reading for the American people, but it is safe to say that all knowledge of the extraordinary scene was carefully excluded from the Chinese people, lest it might impair the popular belief in the sacredness of the imperial family.

Many of the terrors of navigation in stormy or foggy weather are likely to be removed with the adoption of the submarine signaling system now being tested on our Atlantic coast. Bells are anchored under water and rung by electricity. By the use of a receiver, let down into the water from a ship's side, the sound of the bells has been heard at a distance of fourteen miles. It is also possible to tell from what direction the sound comes, so that the system should enable a navigator easily to determine his position in a fog.

The United States is a land of experiment. Foreigners were disposed to smile at Americans for spending so much money in equipping cable lines for street cars. Cable cars were used in Birmingham, England, before they were adopted in America, and were abandoned as cumbersome and uncertain at critical times. The American idea is to use the best that is available until something superior can be employed. It costs considerable to do this, and only people in a rich country can afford it, but it is the sure way to progress, reflects the Baltimore American.

H. G. Wells, in a lecture delivered recently before the Royal Institution, London, made some statements which have aroused widespread interest. He claims that if the amazing searchlight of inference which has brought out so much from the remotest past were cast upon the future, by seeking for operating causes, we might tell with certainty what will happen. The man of science, he says, will believe that the events in A. D. 4000 are fixed and unchangeable, with the exception of man and his children. He believes that the orbit of the earth will change "until the tidal drag hauls one unchanging face at last toward the sun." He holds, also, that great men are only instruments taken haphazard by incessant and constant forces—"the pen which fate uses in her writings."

COMPENSATIONS.

He found success most sweet
Who, having tried and failed,
The lesson of defeat.
Upon his standard raised,
Then straightway bade his soul
Take up the task begun,
Nor paused until the goal
Of his desire was won.

For joy the keenest seems
Where grief has been before:
After night's troubled dreams,
Trance, at the open door,
Thrice glorious she stands—
Dawn, with her roses gay,
And in her outstretched hands
The shining gifts of Day.
—Youth's Companion.

AT THE POINT OF THE UMBRELLA.

By Helen M. Palmer.

This was the second stop the train had made since leaving Trieste and no one had got into the carriage; Beatrix congratulated herself that Uncle George's fee to the guard had worked so well, and opened another roll of shawls and rugs in pursuit of a missing novel.

Suddenly an uproar of tongues arose on the platform; the door was jerked open and a stout woman stumbled through it, followed by another lugger a big basket, behind came a drove of children, all screaming, pealing, and smeared, as to mouth and fingers, with some sticky black compound which they were devouring greedily.

Beatrix gave one glance of horror and began to gather up her scattered belongings.

"You must find me a place," she said to the guard. "You were paid for this carriage."

"I cannot help it," he muttered; "it is a carriage for ladies alone; behold, these are ladies alone—the train is going, there is no time."

For answer Beatrix cast her rugs and bags upon him, and snatching up her umbrella, books and dressing case, made her way through the scrambling children, who were fighting for places at the windows, and dashed out upon the platform. The whistle was sounding; evidently there was no time to lose; the guard opened the nearest door, threw in the bags, and gave Beatrix an impulse that propelled her the entire length of the carriage. Another jolt and the train was off.

Beatrix was aware that she was being steered upon her feet by a strong arm, the arm of the man whom she had caught a glimpse of sitting at the further window, and upon whom she and her traps had descended after the manner of a whirlwind. Stammering "Mille pardons, monsieur!" she sank upon the opposite seat and endeavored to regain her composure, her natural color and the dignity which befit a young lady traveling alone. There were three other persons in the carriage; two elderly looking women, past whom she had shot without apparently doing them any damage; and the gentleman opposite, who was now reading, holding a large book quite close to his face.

This gave her a chance to examine him. He was tall; not too young—Beatrix was thirteen—and distinctly "nice" looking, she decided. His gray tweed clothes looked English; the scarlet fez he wore by way of a cap suggested the East. His luggage! Yes, there was the bag of golf sticks and the folding bath-tub—he must be English.

Beatrix had just reached this conclusion when the book was dropped and the stranger said in a very agreeable voice—

"I beg your pardon, it is—very warm here, don't you think? Perhaps you would like to have your window raised."

Beatrix assented with thanks, thinking she would like to ask him how he knew that English was her native tongue. She stole a glance at his face; it was a delightful face, with a grave, kind smile that showed very white teeth, and a nose that might have been supercilious but for a little irregular ripple in the middle of it. But what a pity that one of his eyes was injured! It was closed and the eyelid drooped. She wondered if he were in the army and had lost an eye—perhaps under "Boha."

Presently she began to collect her belongings, scattered by her violent entrance; and again her *vis-à-vis* came to her aid so naturally and simply that it would have been impossible for the greatest stickler for the proprieties to take offense. Before her various parcels were recaptured and reduced to order, they had laughed heartily over her misadventure.

She buried herself in a book, resolved to be very dignified in the future.

A shower had arisen; the rain was beating in and it was necessary to close the window; he seemed glad of the interruption, and seized upon it to make some remarks upon the country they were passing through. As she lay down her book and gave him her attention, she noticed that his right eye was no longer closed; it was almost as wide open as the other, although it still drooped a little, as if it had been hurt. It suddenly flashed upon her that she must have hit him when she made her violent entry—that was what he meant by his speech about the umbrella.

"Your eye—she stammered, the image of remorse. "Did I? Did you mean, oh, I hope I didn't hurt you very much?"

"It was nothing, really nothing; I scarcely feel it now," he hastened to assure her for her eyebrows were drawn together and her lips were quivering, and altogether she looked as if she were going to cry.

"But I might have put your eye out," she gasped.

"You might have done many things with that deadly umbrella. But you didn't—please don't think of it again," he pleaded.

"How good of you!" she murmured, going at him with admiration.

"May I ask," he resumed after a moment, "whether you were at Shepherd's some weeks ago with the Van Duzers?"

"Yes," she said. "Mr. Van Duzer is my uncle; I went up the Nile with him and my aunt. Were you in Cairo?"

"Unfortunately I reached there just as your party was leaving. I met Mr. Van Duzer, whom I have often seen at home, in—England, but I only had a glimpse of the rest of his party. I was sure, though, that I remembered you—am I not?"

Beatrix added after a pause, "I don't suppose Mr. Van Duzer will have mentioned me."

"But of course he did!" she cried. "He talked a lot about you, and was so sorry that we missed you as we did. Isn't it odd that I should happen on you in this way?"

"It is uncommonly pleasant—for me."

"But supposing I had put your eye out with that wretched umbrella? Uncle George would never have forgiven me."

"Uncle George?" he queried with a quizzical expression, and they joined in a light-hearted burst of laughter.

"You see he thinks so much of you," she explained.

"Well, then you ought to feel that I am properly presented, and you'll let me take you out to get some luncheon. Here's where we stop for food—such as it is."

"And you won't think I'm one of those dreadful American girls who keep 'mommies' and 'poppers' in the ground and are just strolling around having a good time regardless?" There are a few specimens left, but not nearly so many as your novelists would lead you to suppose."

"I won't tell you that I mind telling Uncle George."

"The long hours flew by in discussions of books and people—for they found some acquaintances in common—and the exchange of what Beatrix called "views of life." Together they laughed over the queer dishes of their makeshift dinner, and when Sir Hugh returned from a smoke at the next stop, he found Beatrix pensively watching the rising moon.

"Please," when you next discuss Americans," said she—"you do discuss us now, you know; the time has gone by when you confounded us with the outer barbarians—do not say that the American girl on her travels is in the habit of talking a dozen hours on a stretch with the companions. Heaven sends her! They are not all so spoiled as I am; I confess I am apt to do what I like."

"I don't think I shall judge the American girl by you," said Sir Hugh. Then, after watching her a moment, "Since you are speaking of yourself, don't you think you are rather a perverse little person? Even your dimples is in a place where no one else has dimples."

"It is!" said Beatrix. "Do tell me more about that delightful Political Reform club; I am so interested in it!"

It was amazing how much they found to talk about; one stout old lady got out and another got in, but as no tourists appeared to interrupt their tête-à-tête, and as the night fell and the train climbed the heights of the Semmering Pass they were left alone. The full moon was flooding the deep blue spaces of the sky and filling the valleys with a mystery of silvery light and deathlike shadow.

Sir Hugh drew the green silk curtain over the impertinence of the glimmering lamp, and looked only by the soft radiance they gazed into the shadowy depths that unrolled below them.

A slip on the ice may fracture a leg but a slip of the tongue may fracture a reputation.

WOODS RARE AND COSTLY

HIGH-PRICED LOGS IN NEW YORK LUMBER YARDS.

Sticks of Mahogany Worth as Much as \$2000—Other Lumber Even More Expensive—Fine Woods Hard to Get—Snake-wood Dearest of All.

In the lumber yards fronting on the East River, between Fifth and Tenth streets, there lie piled up in rough, unsymmetrical heaps large numbers of coarsely hewn logs. An ignorant observer might take these to be supplies for a kindling wood factory, and certainly would be surprised to learn that the dirty sticks of timber are the most valuable woods in the world in their rough form, for that is what they are.

There is mahogany there, any quantity of it, cheap; Black Sea walnut and costly mahogany, but it is all less than what you see. An ignorant observer might take these to be supplies for a kindling wood factory, and certainly would be surprised to learn that the dirty sticks of timber are the most valuable woods in the world in their rough form, for that is what they are.

"That one big log that those workmen are carrying is worth \$3000, and I have seen a log of mahogany only a little larger than that which was sold for \$5000. It was twenty-eight feet long and five feet thick, and was the finest piece of the wood that I have ever seen."

"Pretty good price for a single stick, isn't it? It was a perfectly sound log, though, and its coloring and marking were remarkable. That is why it brought such a high price."

"Mahogany is like diamonds," he continued. "The value of each stick is determined by its marking and freedom from flaws. When the logs are sold in the rough, as you see them here, there is a big element of chance in their purchase."

"The expert can judge them only by outward appearances, and must be able to tell by the general look of the logs whether they are sound and whether the marking which shows on the outside is apt to continue through the piece. After a good deal of experience one is able to size up a piece of timber pretty correctly, but we are fooled once in a while and that is one of the uncertainties of the business."

"Someone once said that mahogany was the king of woods, and he was not far wrong. It is certainly the most durable on account of its hardness and the polish that it takes gives it a right to the title. It isn't what it used to be, though."

"Thirty years ago all the best of the wood was designated as San Domingo, from the place in which it grew. It was the best that was ever cut and attained a great reputation, but it is almost impossible to get now. The choice wood is all gone, and there is not enough to be had now to supply one-hundredth part of the demand for it."

"The coloring was the very finest and the texture superior to any other. We still get the wood from San Domingo, but it is all second-growth, smaller than the old mahogany and much inferior to it."

Russia and costs also a doubt? Rose-wood, which comes from South America, costs three to four times as much as mahogany, and is fully as rich in coloring. It is used but little, however, on account of its cost.

"Satin wood, a product of the West Indies, costs almost as much as rose-wood, too. This is a beautiful light yellow wood, which also takes a high polish."

"English brown oak is also fully as expensive as mahogany. At present it is scarce, as the supply is limited by laws restricting the cutting of it. It is also very defective, and this fact makes its cost mount up."

"It cost thirty cents a foot in the log, and the waste makes the real price amount to a great deal more. A builder told me recently that he put a large quantity of English oak in the new home of a millionaire, and that by the time the perfect pieces had been secured, the cost of the wood had amounted to \$1 a foot."

"It is one of the most beautiful woods we have when polished. At its best it has a rich deep brown color, and contains many very dark, almost black blotches."

"Ebony is all going out because it is so hard to get good specimens of it nowadays. Good ebony is almost all black, but that which is imported now is full of gray streaks which spoil it."

"Very little curly maple is used these days, and bird's-eye maple is comparatively cheap for a handsome wood. It sells in the rough for ten cents a foot and veneers cheaper than most of the others. Walnut has gone out of style, too, and has given way to maple, white and quartered oak, ash, cherry and birch."

"Chinese teak wood is another that is expensive and also very defective. Still it is used very extensively. The hulls of the battleships Indian and Massachusetts are made of it, and I happen to know that it cost the Government a pretty penny."

"The British Admiralty uses a great quantity of this wood for the decks of the British warships, and it is used commonly on the swell yachts for railings and hatch coverings, as it stands the weather excellently."

"What is the most expensive wood that I know of? Snake wood, I guess. It is imported from the northern part of South America in logs weighing from fifty to 200 pounds, and costs from ten to twenty-five cents a pound. It is very hard and when polished shows a grain much like the marking of a snake skin. It is used mostly for walking canes and for fancy turnings."

"Black Sea walnut costs a lot, too, from thirty-five to fifty cents a foot, so you see that mahogany is not so expensive, after all, and as I said before, it is truly the king of all woods."

Expensive a Fraud.

Distressed holders of accident insurance policies frequently put the companies' physicians to needless trouble by claiming damage for trifling hurts, which under the law entitle them to nothing. Some deliberately practice fraud, says a physician quoted in the Atlanta Journal, and pretend to have ailments when they are sound in every part.

A few days ago, says the physician, I was summoned to a hospital to examine a man who pretended to have had his hearing totally destroyed by the premature explosion of a blast. I had an idea from the start that he was shamming, but all the tests that I could apply seemed to show that he was stone-deaf. Still, I was not satisfied, and resolved to try a little strategy.

Coaching the nurse beforehand how to act, I entered the room hastily and cried: "Quick, quick! The fire-extinguisher! Where is it? Never mind the deaf man! Save yourself!"

Then we both rushed for the door, but the patient was quicker than we were, and got out before us. He had the good sense, however, to realize that the game was up, and he never appeared again.

Rivers Which Traverse the Ocean.

In the ocean the longest way round is oftentimes the shortest way home. For instance, if a United States transport were to leave San Francisco for China, the most logical course would seem to be straight across the North Pacific to the land of the Boxers.

But in reality the ship would be steered to the southwest along the equator and past the Philippines to the Asian coast. This course would be several hundred miles longer, but it would take the vessel to her destination much quicker than the straight course. In the one case she would be going with the current; in the other she would be going against the current.

The ocean is not a simple, pathless expanse, over which short cuts may be made, but a system of highways, crossways and even blind alleys, which have been surveyed and laid out by nature herself.—Ainslee's Magazine.

More Opinion.

It is the desire to beat the other fellow that makes men get along.

When a woman begins to grumble she shows her age.

We scold the rich man's son for doing nothing and we hate the rich man for working away instead of giving somebody else a chance.

Civilization may not always follow in hot pursuit of the fine-tuned comb.

After all, Croesus was only measurably successful. He never was called a "Napoleon of finance."

Pole is probably the oldest of athletic sports. It has been traced to B. C.