

The yearly income of France from investments in foreign countries amounts to about \$180,000,000.

For the first time in the history of the Republic, Mexican bonds were quoted at par the other day on the London Stock Exchange.

Statistics show that this year's crop of honorary college degrees is unusually large. At the present rate of increase those classic ornaments will soon be as plentiful as military titles in Kentucky.

Says the Baltimore American: To the honor of ex-Librarian Spofford be it said that he was the father of the plan to build the new Congressional Library, at Washington, which is pronounced by competent judges to be the finest structure of its kind in the whole world.

Seeing that the new tax in Pennsylvania of three cents a day on all un-naturalized foreign laborers is to be paid by the employer, the question has been raised whether, in the case of a Chinaman, the man who sends his shirts to be laundered will be compelled to pay the three cents.

Observes the Crookston (Minn.) Times: "Within the past year 150 private savings banks have failed in the country and tens of thousands of depositors have been swindled out of their earnings. Countries as backward in civilization as Russia and Japan have government postal savings banks, but it seems that the bankers here too much to say about the government of the United States for the reform to be adopted here."

Cycling is the sport of sports, and it is continually broadening its sphere of usefulness, says the New York Tribune. The reasons for its ever-increasing popularity are manifold, the principal one being that there is no other method of locomotive that is at once so practicable, cheap, speedy and pleasurable. To many the bicycle is necessary; to all it is a continuous delight. The father will cut down his expenses, the wife will curtail in conducting the household and the children will sacrifice anything to get a bicycle, and generally the machine proves a blessing to all concerned in its ownership.

Indications point to a decided falling off in the number of immigrants landing upon our shores during the present fiscal year, notes the Atlanta Constitution. Up to this time only 195,000 immigrants have entered our ports, whereas for the corresponding months of the year preceding, something like 325,000 immigrants landed upon our shores. One reason for this marked diminution is, of course, found in the stringency of our immigration laws. Within the past few years these immigration laws have undergone decided modification, and the result is not only that thousands of pauper immigrants are yearly sent back to Europe, but that thousands are deterred from crossing the water. In view of this explanation it is evident that while the number of our foreign immigrants has fallen off considerably during the past year, the loss has been restricted almost exclusively to illiterate and pauper immigrants. Instead of operating to our detriment, therefore, the stringency of our immigration laws has operated to our National benefit. There is still room for improvement, however, as the country is not yet free from the contaminating influences of European pauperism and illiteracy.

The New York Post states that a blow has been struck in Maryland at one class of fraternal insurance associations—the class misnamed "fraternal," which trades for profit on the favor shown the real fraternal organizations. Maryland has a good law on this subject, requiring all fraternal beneficiary associations to have "a representative form of Government," and to be "carried on for the sole benefit of its members and their beneficiaries and not for profit." The so-called International Fraternal Alliance did not comply with these requirements, and on a suit instituted by the Attorney-General its charter has been forfeited. The Alliance had no separate funds or accounts for its different forms of business, conducted a direct life insurance in addition to the assessment insurance, and had no representative form of Government for the certificate-holders. Worse than all else, it conducted an endowment business and failed in it signally, as did its numerous predecessors. On one class of endowment policies, the terms of which guaranteed a payment of \$700, a note assessment of \$650 was levied in the last year of their existence. This was a clear confiscation of the policy, as well as an abuse of the principles of the corporation.

OUR LATTER DAYS.

A cloudy morning, and a golden eve.
Warm with the glow that never lingers long—
Such is our life; and who would pause to grieve
Over a tearful day that ends in song?

The dawn was gray, and dim with mist and rain;
There was no sweetness in the chilly blast;
Dead leaves were strewn along the dusky lane
That led us to the sunset light at last.

Taught by His love, we learnt to love aright;
Led by His hand, we passed through dreary ways
And now how lovely is the mellow light
That shines so calmly on our latter days!

—Sarah Doudney, in Sunday Magazine.

'Tis an old tale, beloved; we may find
Heart stories all around us just the same.
Speak to the sad, and tell them God is kind;
Do they not?—at the path through which we came!

Our youth went by in recklessness and haste,
And precious things were lost as soon as gained;
Yet patiently our Father saw the waste,
And gathered up the fragments that remained.

THE MAGIC BREASTPIN.
By L. E. Van Nooman.

WHEN I saw that it was likely to rain all day I determined to visit my friend Azral, who keeps the vertu shop on Wardour street. I had several holidays on hand and knew of no more delightful way of spending an idle hour than in looking over old Azral's collection of vertu, which had a great fascination for me. The old man, who had taken quite a fancy to me—probably because I could appreciate his love for the bizarre and antique—and who even became quite chatty at times, was a venerable Hebrew who boasted descent from David. Contrary to the traditional characteristics of his race, he was frank and open-handed—I had found him even generous.

A fine old fellow he was, tall, majestic, with a long white beard sweeping his breast; stately and slow in speech, polite, but not cringing, with that self-respecting courtesy which Dickens gives us in Riah, the "Godmother." I cannot say why, but he was my mind picture of Aaron—he had a sort of silent eloquence about him. Without kith or kin, he lived in the love of his relics, his children he called them. And a rare and exquisite, but decidedly diversified, family he had.

The shop, which was wedged in between a jeweler's on one hand and a second-hand book-dealer's on the other, was narrow and low, but extended back some distance. On shelves in the walls, on tables, in drawers were spread the objects of his passion in the most enchanting disregard for the conventional modes of arrangement. Here a shelf of old Dutch faience showed stout burgomasters in blue and yellow. Next was a shelf from which gleamed arms and cutlery, swords, real Damascus blades, of so magnificent a temper as to admit of being bent in a circle. Here was a bureau drawer full of exquisite ivory carvings, crucifixes and amulets of rich and varied workmanship side by side with diminutive Persian narghiles and squat Chinese josses. In the next was agate from Japanese lapidaria, along with wood fretwork from Geneva and jet from Cornwall. Here hung a painting of Cimabue, here one of Guido, there one of Benjamin West.

To examine such a curiosity shop was my delight, and I often resorted there. He had lately bought a stock of Moorish jewelry, and asked me to examine it. I eagerly complied, and while looking it over saw a curious breastpin that immediately attracted my attention. A delicate little golden heart held together two swords crossed. The swords were each about three inches long, one a Scotch claymore of pure green gold, the basket-hilt of the most beautiful lace-like arabesque tracery of gold interwoven with silver.

At the end of the handle sparkled a tiny topaz, scintillating like an imprisoned sunbeam. The other was an Eastern sinitar, with broad, slightly curving blade and an edge of some white metal, possibly silver. At the cross-piece of the handle there was a ruby, and at each end of the cross-piece a diamond of the purest water. The heart bore two inscriptions, one in Arabic and one in Latin.

The Latin was "Gladii duo, cornu." The whole thing had a rich exotic look about it that stimulated my curiosity. I asked my venerable friend if I might buy it.

"No," he said slowly—"no, that is not for sale; but if you like it I will tell you its history."

I replied that nothing would please me better.

"That breastpin," said he, "is a trust confided to me. Last year I was in the Holy Land with my mother, in Jerusalem. Once on a journey to visit my kinsman, Javan, at Damascus, I came upon a poor Turk half dead by the wayside. He had been attacked and beaten by robbers so that he was dying. I got off my beast, and went to him and tried to lift him up. He attempted to speak. Bending close, I caught the question in Arabic:

"'Art thou a Jew?'"

"'I am.'"

"'I had some faint hope that thou wert a Christian, a European, perchance an Englishman.'"

"'I live in England, in London,' I said.

"'The dying man clasped his hands. 'Allah is good,' he whispered. 'Do thou lift my head up. I have a trust. I will confide it to thee.' Here his breath came thick and I could scarcely hear the words. 'My father—made me promise—to get this—to—James—called Thurs—by—Lon—it—nay, by the beard of the Prophet, I will tell thee,' he cried, starting up 'it is—but the spark of life was almost out. It flickered, and he had only strength to put his hand into his bosom and

partly drew it forth again when death began to glaze his eyes. 'Allah Akbar!' he murmured faintly, and the spark went out.

"'He had taken from his breast that jewel; the parchment around it said: 'James Thursby, Singleton Cross, London, England,' and I must deliver it to James Thursby.'" The old man paused.

"'My wife's father was James Thursby,'" I exclaimed, excitedly. "He has been dead these ten years, and Singleton Cross is our home."

"'Then if thou art really his relative thou hast been blest of fortune. Mine eyes would rejoice to behold thy wife.'"

The next day I brought my wife with me to see the venerable Hebrew.

"'Daughter,'" said he, after we had presented indisputable proof of our connection to James Thursby, and given documentary evidence of my wife's genealogy—for the old man, friendly as he had been, was cautious about giving up his trust, and in that he was, of course, justifiable—"and so, my daughter, thy sire was James Thursby. Then I have fulfilled my trust," and he handed her the beautiful jewel.

Once at home we were all burning with eagerness to examine it more closely. I held it up to the light. As I did so the handle of the sinitar pressed against my hand, and click—the swords un-crossed. They had been set at angle of about twenty degrees, and now they were at right angles. I was astonished, perplexed. I tried to get them back to their original position, but they were firm. What did it mean? I turned the pin around in every conceivable way, pressed every part for secret springs, but no solution of the puzzle offered itself. Much disappointed I laid it down, and my wife took it and began to examine it.

In picking it up the point of the claymore pressed against the table, and her finger rested on the hilt of the sinitar. Immediately there was a click as before, but—mirabile dictu!—the jewel did not assume its original form, but the sinitar opened like a box split lengthwise. That is, there were now two scimitars precisely alike, each one half as thick as the first one, joined by a most perfect but entirely invisible hinge, and inside was a tiny piece of very, very fine parchment.

Trembling with eagerness I opened the parchment. Hat—something written but in Arabic. What a shame! But no; I would show it to my friend the Jew. He would interpret it for me.

I looked longly at the claymore and tried to open it. I set its point on the table and pressed its hilt. No result! Then I remembered that when the sinitar opened the point of the sword touched the table and my wife pressed the hilt of the former weapon. I believed I had found the secret. Setting the points of the Saracen weapon on the table I touched the basket hilt of the tiny claymore. Magic! Open flew the sword. In it was a paper or parchment like the other, but—triumph!—in English. And this is what it said (I had to use a magnifying glass to read it):

"'In the Name of God, Amen!'"

Then followed the regular legal formula of an English will, bequeathing to James Thursby or his heirs the sum of \$90,000 sterling, to be found deposited in the Bank of England. It was signed "Noureddin Aga," and witnessed with long Turkish names. Then followed the name of a prominent London business house as agent of Noureddin, and in whose name the deposit had been made.

To say that I was utterly dumb-founded is to put it very mildly indeed. It read so much like a fairy tale that I almost looked to see the pin take wings and fly off. As for my wife, she acted as though she was bewitched. We sat staring at each other in silence. She was the first to speak.

"Stephen," she said, "I think—" but here there came a voice from the door. "Where's Sue?" it said, and my wife's elder half-brother appeared. No sooner, however, had he glanced at the table than he stopped short and cried excitedly: "Where did you get that?"

"We are just recovering from the surprise it gave us," said I, laughing.

"Look at it!"

But he had it in his hand before I had spoken, saying as he picked it up, "This is worth a fortune to you."

I looked at Sue in surprise.

"What is it, Arthur?" she asked eagerly. "Tell us about it; we don't understand."

"As I thought," he said, as he scanned the document in English.

"Arthur," said his sister, fretfully,

"how can you keep us in such suspense?"

"Well," replied Arthur, "it's rather a long story, but you shall have it as I got it from your father. The Thursbys, you know, are a very old family. They date back further than the Conquest. The Earl Malise Thursbigh, for so it was originally spelled, is said to have been a Norwegian, who came to Scotland some time about the year 1000 A. D. His grandson Magnus was a knight in the First Crusade. He fought under Hugh of Vermandois at the battle of Antioch. During a desperate charge Magnus' heavy Norman horse stepped on a wounded Turk and crushed his foot.

"In the heat of battle Magnus could not stop for one man, though he did remark the noble countenance of the Moslem over whom he had ridden. But after the Turks had been driven back, and he, like a true knight, was caring for the wounded scattered over the plain, he came across this same man. Magnus cared for him, nursed him tenderly, and they struck up quite a friendship. Noureddin, the Turk, was a man of affluence and nobility of character. Before they separated they exchanged weapons, Noureddin taking Magnus' heavy Scotch claymore, and Magnus the sinitar of the Moslem.

"They met again at Ascalon, this time Magnus being a prisoner. The chivalrous Moslem treated him like a prince and had two jeweled breastpins made by a Damascus artisan, showing a sword crossing a sinitar over a heart of gold. Each took one as a keepsake, and solemnly swore—a strange compact it was—that when the male line of either failed all the earthly possessions of that house should go to the last surviving member of the other's family. Where did you get this?"

I explained to him all I knew of it.

"I see," he said, "the Turk must have been the last of his house. I have no doubt he had all his property arranged in this way by bank deposit, in accordance with the oath of his ancestor made 800 years before."

There is nothing more to be said except that I went to the bank, and found everything all correct, and my wife heiress to \$90,000. My old friend the virtuoso I did not forget, but made him a present of the next stock of curiosities I came across. As for the pin, it is guarded with great care and veneration, and brought out only on state occasions.—Arthur's Home Magazine.

Societe of a Dog.

The tenants of Nos. 10, 12 and 14 Forsyth street, were badly frightened by a dog, which they thought mad. Henry Wastey, the janitor of No. 12, saw the animal first, and he says its eyes bulged, its mouth frothed, and its mouth snapped as it began to circle around him on the sidewalk. He picked up a child that was playing near and running into the house, darted into a room on the ground floor, just in time to save his life and that of the child. For the dog, a small brown cur, came with a bump and a growl against the door. Then the dog went up to the roof, the people in the house shrieking the warning to keep out of the way.

A few minutes later the dog leaped off the roof to a shed five stories below and broke its legs. A man in the shed was frightened out of it by the thud of the fall, but his wife from the window above shrieked to him to hurry back out of sight of the infuriated animal. A policeman came and shot the dog. Then a reporter arrived and began to inquire among the neighbors about the history of the dog's madness. It is possible he was mad, if despair, hunger, thirst and ill-treatment can affect the canine brain. For one of the women remembered that the dog had been seen on the roof for three days. Sometimes it had scratched at the doors for food or water, but it got none. The women drove it off with brooms and the men hurled at it the next thing at hand. It was a pretty clear case of animal suicide which the janitor might have prevented with a drink of water or a morsel of food.—New York Post.

A Sparrow's Gratitude to a Boy.

It is a rare occurrence for animals in a wild state to select a man for a companion and friend, yet well-authenticated instances when this has been done are a matter for record. The following incident is vouched for by a young woman who is a close and accurate observer:

"Last week my brother (a lad of twelve) killed a snake which was just in the act of robbing a song sparrow's nest. Ever since then the male sparrow has shown his gratitude to George in a truly wonderful manner. When he goes into the garden the sparrow will fly to him, sometimes alighting on his head, at other times on his shoulder, all the while pouring out a tumultuous song of praise and gratitude. It will accompany him about the garden, never leaving him until he reaches the garden gate. George, as you know, is a quiet boy, who loves animals, and this may account, in a degree, for the sparrow's extraordinary actions."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

For Poor Travelers.

Switzerland has always been foremost in the cause of charity. Recently a society has been formed which has most commendable objects. The State subsidizes and the police authorities assist the operations of this society, which has been founded for the purpose of aiding poor travelers. In the canton of Aargau refugees are now provided in intervals, where bonafide travelers on foot, who are seeking work or who are passing through the country for a legitimate purpose, can obtain refreshment and a night's lodging. The Berne Consul says the beneficial result of the scheme are likely to cause its extension throughout Switzerland.

WORK OF AMERICA'S HEN
HER VALUE IS NOT LESS THAN \$290,000,000 A YEAR.

Worth More Than the Entire Wheat Crop of the Country—Not So Far Behind the Earnings of the Railroads—Could Easily Buy Several States of the Union.

H. W. Collingwood, of the Rural New Yorker, says in the New York World:

Mrs. American Business Hen is one of our most useful citizens. She is a shrinking, unassuming creature, too modest at times even to cackle over the birth of her own egg, leaving that celebration to her husband; and yet Mrs. American Hen has been quietly paying off mortgages, driving wolves from the door and hatching out nest eggs for thousands of featherless bipeds.

In 1830 there were in this country

\$90,626,296.84. We can pick out 50,000,000 of our best hens that will cover every dollar of this outlay in one year.

The net earnings of the railroads in 1895 were \$233,196,454. The railroad dividends paid amounted to \$81,375,774. The American Hen paid nearly twice the profits earned by American railroads.

The total earnings from passenger traffic amounted to \$261,640,598, or less than that of the hens. It cost in 1895 slightly over two cents to carry one passenger one mile, .0184 of a cent to carry one ton of freight one mile, and ninety-one cents to run the average train one mile. One single hen, laying 150 eggs per year, could have 215 days of vacation, and would still be able to pay for carrying one passenger 100 miles, or for hauling ten tons of freight 10,000 miles, or for running an ordinary train two miles. One hundred and forty such hens would pay



258,871,125 chickens and 26,738,315 other fowls. In that year the American hens laid 9,836,674,992 eggs. There are now 350,000,000 chickens, which will lay this year 13,750,000,000 eggs. These eggs are worth \$165,000,000, and the poultry meat sold during the year will bring \$125,000,000, which gives \$290,000,000 as a very low estimate of the earnings of Mrs. American Hen for one year of the great depression.

The 350,000,000 hens are worth \$105,000,000 of any man's money, but we will not consider that, but take simply the earnings of the hen. The average length of an egg is two and one-half inches. The 13,750,000,000 eggs will, therefore, make a chain 542,218 miles long, while the total weight of this production of hen fruit is at least 853,125 tons.

Does any reader of the World realize what this immense production of eggs and meat means to the country? Here are a few figures for comparison:

Value of silver production.....	\$72,510,000
Value of wool clip.....	\$8,146,459
Value of all sheep.....	\$5,167,725
Value of all swine.....	\$36,329,745
Value of mules.....	\$103,204,457
Value of horses.....	\$60,140,186
Value of petroleum products.....	\$2,388,403
Total of school expenditures.....	\$78,984,901
Value of tobacco crop.....	\$5,574,220
Value of cotton crop.....	\$29,164,640
Value of oat crop.....	\$163,636,068
Value of wheat crop.....	\$27,395,998
Imports of coffee one year.....	\$4,793,124
Imports of tea one year.....	\$2,704,440
Total pensions.....	\$139,280,078
Total of school expenditures.....	\$78,984,901
Total interest on mortgages.....	\$6,728,077
Cost of Postoffice Department.....	\$6,628,296
Net earnings of railroads.....	\$233,196,454
Dividends on railroad stocks.....	\$81,375,774

The value of all gold produced in American mines in 1895 was \$46,610,000, and all silver \$72,051,000. The value of all minerals, including iron, gold and silver, taken out of American mines in 1894 was \$208,168,768. Americans are given to bragging about our immense mineral resources, and yet you will notice that the hens paid for it all one year and had enough left to just about pay the interest on all mortgages!

Mrs. Hen will earn enough this year to pay the entire State and county tax (which in 1890 was \$143,186,007), and have enough left for every cent of pensions that are paid to old soldiers.

The average cow weighs 130 times as much as the average hen, and yet all the milk cows in the country have a total value of but \$263,955,545. Mrs. Hen in one year will earn enough to buy every cow, and put the entire tobacco crop in her pocket as well. She could pay out of her year's earnings for all the tea and coffee imported in one year and all the petroleum products, and have enough left to buy all the tobacco grown in 1896. The total assessed valuation of the following States fall below the hen's yearly earnings:

New Hampshire,	Nebraska,
Vermont,	Alabama,
Delaware,	Mississippi,
Arizona,	Idaho,
West Virginia,	Louisiana,
North Carolina,	Arkansas,
South Carolina,	Montana,
Utah,	Oregon,
Florida,	Wyoming,
North Dakota,	Colorado,
South Dakota,	New Mexico,
Nevada,	

In other words, Mrs. American Hen could buy any of these States from one year's egg and chicken money. She could buy in this way New Mexico, Arizona, Wyoming, North Dakota, Idaho and Montana all put together.

The total cost of conducting the Postoffice Department last year was

REMARKABLE PEAR TREE.
Trained to Grow at the Side of a House in a Wonderful Way.

One of the most remarkable of old trained pear trees that we are acquainted with is the splendid specimen of Uvedale's St. Germain at Weston House, Shipston-on-Stour, the residence of the Countess of Camperdown. The accompanying illustration is published in the Gardener's Magazine. Mr. Masterson, the gardener at Weston House, writes that "the tree is admired at all times of the year, but more especially when covered with large handsome clusters of flowers. In autumn, when laden with quantities of big fruits, it also presents an attractive appearance, and there are many who also admire the tree when the stems are bare, and certainly at this season it is interesting, as the training is very remarkable. The tree seldom fails to ripen a heavy crop of fruits, cropping right down to the

OMAHA'S IMMENSE UMBRELLA.
When Raised It Will Be 250 Feet Above the Earth.

The last Paris exposition had its Eiffel tower, Chicago had its Ferris wheel, Nashville has its giant see-saw. The department of concessions of the Omaha trans-Mississippi exposition of 1898 has also received an application for space for the erection of a novel mechanical device. It resembles the framework of a gigantic umbrella more than anything else which might be mentioned. The part corresponding to the stick of the umbrella is an immense cylinder, thirty feet in diameter, constructed of steel plates, firmly riveted, making a standpipe which rears its head 250 feet above the level of the ground. At the extreme top of this cylinder are fastened twelve long arms, resembling the ribs of an umbrella. These are steel trusses, reaching almost to the ground. At the lower end of each of these ribs is suspended a car for carrying passengers, each car having a capacity for twenty persons.

These monster ribs are raised by hydraulic power, acting by means of steel cables operating through the cylinder, aided by a mechanism greatly resembling that portion of an umbrella which comes into action when the umbrella is opened. By means of this mechanism the gigantic arms are raised until they are horizontal, the cars in the meantime being carried outward and upward until they reach a point 250

feet above the ground, the diameter of the huge circle formed by the suspended cars being also 250 feet. When the highest point has been reached another mechanism comes into play and the suspended cars are swung slowly around in a circle, after which they are lowered to the ground. The sides of the cars are of glass, so that the passengers may secure an extensive view of the surrounding country.

An octogenarian vagrant was lodged at a St. Joseph (Mo.) police station one night.

WINTER VIEW OF THE PEAR TREE.

as the tree is so vigorous as to be capable of carrying very large crops, and yet the fruits weigh from half a pound to one and a half pounds each. The total weight of the crop last year was two hundredweight. Many first prizes have been won from this tree, including firsts at the Crystal Palace in 1894 and 1895."

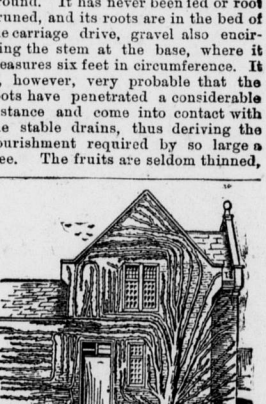
The First Prepaid Post.
According to M. Piron the idea of a postpaid envelope originated early in

the reign of Louis XIV. M. De Velayre in 1663 established a private post, placing boxes at the corners of the streets for the reception of letters wrapped in envelopes, which were to be bought at offices established for the purpose. And it is said that a Swedish artillery officer, in 1823, petitioned the Chamber of Nobles to propose to the Government to issue stamped envelopes for prepaid letters.

In most parts of Asia where coffee is used, the "grounds" are drunk with the infusion.

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GIGANTIC UMBRELLA FOR THE OMAHA EXPOSITION.