

In September twenty-five years had elapsed since Switzerland got its first railway—from Zurich to Bern.

The value of the churches and the land on which they are erected, in this country, up to July 1, 1897, is estimated at \$289,000,000.

Previous to ten years ago titled men in England would not act as Mayors of towns, but at the recent elections over a dozen members of the nobility were elected, chief among whom is the Duke of Devonshire, who is Mayor of Eastbourne.

A medical authority asserts that "so long as a scorcher breathes through his nose instead of his mouth there is no danger." But how is a pedestrian to know when a scorcher bears down in his direction at top speed whether the fellow is breathing through his nose or not?

After giving to the world of letters a small volume of travels that no one ever heard of, Ira Nelson Morris, of Chicago, has abandoned literature and plunged into pork packing. As the elder Morris of many millions sneeringly remarked: "A million men can write books; few have the opportunity of my son to pack pork."

The London Chronicle questions the wisdom of erecting a statue of George Washington in London. D. C. Murray, the novelist, is proposing a National subscription to erect the statue and Messrs. Bayard and Hay have approved of the scheme. In discussing the matter the Chronicle says: "Like all near relatives, England and America quarrel now and then. Perhaps some day it might occur to a boisterous jingo to make the statue of the father of his people the subject of an unedifying demonstration."

A story is in circulation at the Court of the Hague concerning the young Queen of Holland which is destined to illustrate that she fully shares the pronounced aversion of her subjects for Germany, and prefers in every respect the French. It seems that on the last occasion when she met Emperor William she insisted on responding in French to the remarks which he addressed to her in German, and on his asking her why she did not speak German, she tartly replied that it was merely because she preferred French.

The cost of the last census as far as computed is stated at an aggregate of \$11,553,462.50, that amount of money having been appropriated for expenses by Congress. It is pointed out by the Philadelphia Record that "this was at the rate of nineteen cents per capita for the whole population in 1890 of 62,622,250 persons. If the statistics obtained had been of reasonable accuracy, and if they could have been tabulated and given to the public in reasonable time, the expenditure would not have been deemed excessive. But doubt of the verity of the statistics and delay in the publication have gone far to bring the propriety of such large expenditure into question. Either inquiry should be less elaborate or more scientific."

While there is no doubt, states the New York Observer, that dissatisfaction with the pretensions of the emperor and with his methods of government is a potent cause of the prevalent discontent in Germany, the fact remains that the chief cause of unrest is economic rather than political. It is not so much the suppression of political liberty and the reactionary legislation which the Junker following of the emperor is trying to push through the Prussian Landtag and in turn through the Reichstag, that excites discontent, as it is the poverty of the people, the fact that there is not enough wealth to go round. The internal development of Germany and the expansion of German trade since the formation of the empire have been so great that it is difficult to realize that the empire rests upon an inadequate economic basis, and that the brave front which it shows serves to hide a poverty in some sections approaching that, though without the squalor, of the English industrial districts seventy years ago. But statistics taken from the tax returns of Prussia seem conclusive on this point, showing, for example, that although the limit of taxation is drawn at the low income of \$225, but 8.46 per cent. of the population of the kingdom pay an income tax, leaving more than ninety-one per cent. who must make ends meet in some way on less than \$225 per year. Only one person in every 550 of population has an income of \$2400 a year, and only 37,000 of the 32,000,000 of Prussia possess wealth representing an income of \$7500 a year.

SNOW-BIRDS.

Wide wastes of glittering snow,
The fields and the lanes and the
Will winds that frequent blow,
Gray clouds that remove and shift,
And swift from the ground uprising
The snow-birds tiny and wary,
Blown hither on restless wing
In January.

Packed close in the barren hedge
With white and shining wall;
The wind cuts like a wedge
Deep-driven by oaken maul;
And up from the feed-lots rise
The snow-birds agile and merry,
Under the lorn steel skies
Of January.

The sun burns sullen and red;
The woods are as black as night
The pulse of the world is dead,
And sudden, to left and right,
Brown-spots in a whirling maze,
The snow-birds over the prairie
Weave out through the snowy ways
Of January.

—Ernest McGaffey, in Woman's Home Companion.

AN INCONSEQUENT EPISODE.

BY ELEANOR FOSTER.

HERE was a big crush at Mrs. Sinclair's "at home," and people were making slow progress through the rooms, looking cynical or bored or interested, as the case might be.

For vivid, frank enjoyment, there were few faces to compare with one girlish one—a little flushed, with shining blue eyes, and soft curly brown hair clustering about it.

She was a little country mouse, having a peep at the enchanted fairyland of London, and at her pleasure the grave face of her companion relaxed, and he forgot, for the moment, to find it all a weariness to the flesh and vanity and vexation to the spirit.

The girl wanted to know who every one was and all about them; she thought them charming, and regretted that she did not live in London.

"Father hates it so," she said.

"Your father had a long spell of it," the man said. "But"—and he smiled very pleasantly—"we shall very soon have you among us, I hope, for more than a flying visit."

The girl blushed and grew shy, and then uttered an exclamation.

"Who is that?" she asked eagerly.

"Look at her, there! That woman with the beautiful face and dark hair."

"That is Miss St. Quentin. She writes you, you know. Writes well, too; her new book is an immense success, being neither cheap nor nasty."

"Oh! I've read it," Hilda Carson said, the pink flush deepening in her cheeks. "And I liked it ever so much. I read it out of doors, too, and it interested me all the time!"

"Do you consider that a severe test?"

"Very! And I am glad to have seen her. She is wonderful, with that clear, colorless skin, and those great eyes. I think—I think—" She hesitated a little.

"Well?"

"I think she is a woman nobody could help loving, if they knew her."

He laughed. Her fresh enthusiasm was amusing, and he rather enjoyed it for a change, but before he could speak again two or three people joined them, and he lost sight of Hilda for a little.

A good many people admired Miss St. Quentin, but very few even dimly guessed that, while writing the stories of others, her own life hid one away in an inner and very sacred chamber.

She said she was "not a bit impressionable," and, for all her beauty, very unlikely to break her own heart or any one else's.

There were just two or three people—of whom Mr. Sinclair was one—who doubted this dictum, and wondered if the delicate coldness of her manner did not hide at least as much of her nature as it revealed.

But even those who had so much discernment did not know—nobody knew—of that summer, eight years ago, when she and Jack Tremain had met in the old Suffolk mansion. Nobody knew of the long, long mornings in the orchard, talking over everything and anything, or sometimes sitting in the silence that is only possible between friends.

And nobody knew of the afternoons on the river, or the evenings in the moonlit garden, or the sudden, sharp ending to it all.

He was wrong and she was right, and they were both very proud, so she let him go, forgetting how hard a thing it is to be forgiven.

And there had been times when success had seemed a small thing to her, and life a very desert of loneliness, because she missed one voice in the chorus of praise that greeted her and one face in the many friendly ones that smiled upon her. For Mary St. Quentin had the virtue of her defects, and she was terribly faithful.

Six months ago Major Tremain had come home, but society had seen very little of him so far, thought it was eager to lionize him and raved over the deed that gained him that coveted V. C.

Miss St. Quentin had not seen him at all, though she knew he was, for the moment, in town, and scanned the faces in park and street, and party, in the hope she was half ashamed of—that of seeing his.

She was always a centre of attraction, and had not been many minutes in Mrs. Sinclair's rooms before she was surrounded with a little crowd. She resigned herself to the inevitable, and was trying to forget her one insistent desire when her hostess came up with a bronzed, dignified man at her side.

"Miss St. Quentin, may I introduce Major Tremain to you?" she said, and then there was a little exclamation of mutual recognition, and ten minutes' ordinary chat, and—that was all.

Ah, yet not all. Who could say where it might end—the story began in the Suffolk garden, and, interrupted there, resumed in a London drawing-room, and to go on—perhaps?

No; certainly, certainly, her heart cried. Fate could not be so cruel as to mock her with a mere will-o'-the-wisp of a hope after all these years—these lonely, lonely years!

A man's voice broke in upon her thoughts. He was the same who had been talking to Hilda Carson in the evening, and Miss St. Quentin entertained a very kindly feeling for him. She made room for him beside her, and they began to talk.

Presently Hilda passed by, looking so sunny and animated that Miss St. Quentin paused in her talk to look at her.

"What a dear little girl!" she said. "Who is she? Mr. Cresswell? I saw you talking to her just now."

"Little Miss Carson," he said, following the little white figure with his eyes. "She is General Carson's only daughter, and a very nice girl. A great admirer of yours, by the way, Miss St. Quentin."

"You must introduce us, by and by," Miss St. Quentin said, smiling. "She looks so fresh and nice. I don't think I ever saw her before."

"No; but I suppose she will be more in town after her marriage."

"Oh, is she engaged?"

"Why, yes. Didn't you know? She is engaged to Tremain—Major Tremain. It seems he went to stay with the Carsons, and that was a case of love at first sight. All the other fellows in his regiment thought him a regular, hardened old bachelor, so it has been a good bit talked about."

Miss St. Quentin leaned back and frowned herself slowly.

"You know Tremain, I suppose?" Mr. Cresswell continued, not looking at his companion, as he spoke, but watching Hilda Carson as she stood talking to some one, with her sunny smile.

"Slightly," she said. "I used to know him years ago. He is—or was—very pleasant."

"Oh, yes; he's generally popular. Why, turning suddenly round. "I'm afraid you're not very well. Can I get you anything?"

"Nothing, thank you. It is only neuralgia," she said, quietly. "I am afraid I must go. I am subject to it, and it is very bad to-night."

"I'm awfully sorry!"

He was all sympathy and eager proffers of assistance, and when he put her into her carriage shook hands with reiterated regrets.

"I hope the pain will be gone in the morning," he said.

She smiled at him with white lips and then drove away.

But the pain did not pass in the morning.—London Sketch.

A Life Tragedy.

For twenty years William H. Jerolamen, of Morristown, N. J., was silent in his home. He made a vow never to speak to his wife again and kept it until death faced him. One morning he woke up to find that pneumonia had laid its grip upon him. He was eighty years old and he felt that he could not recover. Then he broke the oath, spoke to his wife, kissed her and died. Upon the day he took sick he sent for the woman whose love he had spurned for so many years. His wife bent over him with a love that all his harshness had never killed. He saw the light in her eyes, and, feeling essaying to take her hand, he sobbed:

"Dear, I'm so sorry. Will you forgive me?"

Forgive him? Would she? Kneeling by the dying man's bedside she wept softly, while he, with tongue freed at last, rambled on deliriously about old times. She did not leave him until the end came. He died with his hand in hers and a look of happiness that his face had not borne in twenty years.

The quarrel occurred back in the '70s over a trifling affair. At that time Jerolamen was fifty-eight years old. He kept his vow and lived on, utterly ignoring the woman who had shared his joys and sorrows so long. They lived in a cottage at Mount Arlington, Morris County, but, as far as Jerolamen was concerned, it was as if his wife was not living. She bore the slight without a murmur. He dined in silence and alone, and so did she. Often Mrs. Jerolamen had to speak to her husband in reference to household affairs, but he never answered. He was a church member, being one of the organizers of the Mount Arlington Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1874 the town was divided on the question of prohibition. The old man tried to induce the members of the church to indorse the cold-water ticket at the town election, but they refused. He swore that he would never go to church again. He kept his word in this as he had toward his wife.—Chicago Tribune.

Vitality of the "Life-Plant."

There is a creeping moss found in the islands of Jamaica, Barbadoes and other parts of the West Indies, known as the "life plant." Its power of vitality is beyond that of any other member of the vegetable kingdom. It is absolutely indestructible by any means except immersion in boiling water or the application of a red-hot iron. It may be cut up and divided in any manner, and the smallest shreds will throw out roots, grow and form buds. The leaves of this extraordinary plant have been suspended in the air of a dry room, they have been placed in a close, air-tight box, without moisture of any sort, and still they grow. Even when pressed and packed away in a botanist's herbarium it has been known to grow. Evergreen leaves sometimes remain on the tree for several years; for instance, in the Scotch pine, three or four years; the spruce and silver fir, six or seven years; the yew, eight; Abies pinsapo, sixteen or seventeen.—Tit-Bits.

OUR BUDGET OF HUMOR.

LAUGHTER-PROVOKING STORIES FOR LOVERS OF FUN.

A Modern Version—When the Light Burn Low—The Matrimonial Mart.

Yemine—Knew His Business—Quite Different—In the Green Room.

"Where are you going, my pretty maid?" "To marry a mill king, sir," she said.

"Then what will you be, my pretty maid?" "The flour of the family, sir," she said. —Chicago Tribune.

Where the Lights Burn Low.

"Julia calls her new sweetheart 'in candescence.'"

"Why?"

"Because he is such a gas-saver." —Chicago Record.

The Matrimonial Mart.

"I came to ask you for your daughter in marriage, sir," said the young man.

"Have you any money of your own?" asked the careful parent.

"Oh, you misunderstood me, sir! I do not want to buy her."

Feminine.

Maudie—"Do you know, I really believe that Tom is going to propose."

Bertha—"I noticed that he was looking terribly sad about something of other, but then, you know, dear, it may not be that. Perhaps his mother is sick, or possibly he isn't feeling well himself." —Boston Transcript.

A Horrible Pretext.

Business Man—"If I should commit murder, would my policy remain valid?"

Life Insurance Agent—"Er—I'm not sure about that. But you don't expect to commit murder?"

Business Man—"Yes, I do. I feel it in my bones that I'll kill a life insurance agent some day." —Puck.

In the Green Room.

"Ah," exclaimed the melancholy Dane, complacently, "what, indeed, would be the play without me?"

Old man Hamlet gestured fretfully.

"It wouldn't have a ghost of a show without me," he retorted.

But that which irritated the Prince particularly was to have Ophelia giggle that way. —Detroit Journal.

The Count's Mistake.

"So Gwendolyn is not to marry the count, after all?"

"No, poor man. He tried to tell her that her singing was something that made one glad to live, and his pronunciation was so broken that she thought he said it made one glad to leave. And then she requested him to leave." —Indianapolis Journal.

Has Plenty to Say Now.

"Does old Gruffy ever say anything to any of the men in his employ, aside from giving business orders?"

"Bless you, I should say he did. He talks so much to them that they actually have to stay after office hours very frequently in order to get their work done. You see, he only recently became a father for the first time." —Chicago News.

A Puzzle.

Willy Addeplate—"There is one thing I can't understand, doncher-no?"

Cholly Noddlekins—"What's that?"

Willy Addeplate—"Why, when we stop to consider—aw—how uncomfortable it is in a crowd—why, aw—I can't see why it is that there are always more people in a crowd than there are where there is no crowd?" —Puck.

Another Newspaper Horror.

Mrs. Jones (indignantly)—"These newspapers are just simply not fit to read."

Mr. Jones—"Another crime, I suppose?"

Mrs. Jones—"Yes; here is a description of the gown I wore at the ball last night, that must have been written by some ignorant, amateur male reporter that didn't know a dress from a frock!" —Puck.

Quite Different.

Caller—"Sir, I am reliably informed that you have been insinuating that I was a liar and a thief, and I have called to demand an immediate retraction, or, in lieu thereof, your worthless hide, sir."

Editor of the Eagle—"All the Eagle has ever said about you, Major Gore, has been in a political way."

"Oh! I beg your pardon. I was under the impression that you had been attacking my character." —Indianapolis Journal.

The Art of Management.

Of course, he thought he knew it all. A man always does.

"When it comes to the art of managing servants," he began.

"It's very easily done," she interrupted.

"Oh, you admit it, do you?" he asked.

"I do," she said. "It's like managing children. All that is necessary is to let them have their own way."

Of course, he readily saw that she had mastered the subject. —Chicago Post.

Hopeless Task.

"What strange methods some men adopt to get wives," she remarked as she looked up from the newspaper which she had quietly appropriated as hers by right because she was first at the breakfast table.

"What happened now?" he asked.

"Why, a New York widower has made application for one at the Barge office where the immigrants land," she explained. "He says he wants a woman who is thoroughly respectable, of kindly disposition, fairly good looking, good to children, obedient—"

"Hold on!" he interrupted. "What's that last?"

"Obedient."

"He might as well give up." —Chicago Post.

PRIVATE HOWE'S PAY.

After He Had Put Up \$31,000 He and His Regiment Got Their Money.

When the Civil War broke out an immense meeting was held in Bridgeport, Conn., and many men volunteered for the army. To the general surprise, one of the richest men in the State—Elias Howe, the inventor of the sewing machine—arose and made this brief speech:

"Every man is called upon to do what he can for his country. I don't know what I can do, unless it is to enlist and serve as a private in the Union Army. I want no position; I am willing to learn and do what I can with a musket."

But it soon proved that the chronic lameness from which Howe suffered incapacitated him from marching with a musket, even to the extent of standing sentry. Determined to be of use, however, he volunteered to serve the regiment as its postmaster, messenger and expressman.

Sending home for a suitable horse and wagon, he drove into Baltimore twice a day and brought to the camp its letters and parcels. It was said that he would run over half the State to deliver a letter to some lonely mother anxious for her soldier boy, or bring back to him a pair of boots which he needed during the rainy winter.

For four months after the Seventeenth Connecticut entered the field the Government was so pressed for money that no payment to the troops could be made, and there was, consequently, great suffering among the families of the soldiers, and painful anxiety endured by the men themselves.

One day a private soldier came quietly into the paymaster's office in Washington and took his seat in the corner to await his turn for an interview. Presently the officer said:

"Well, my man, what can I do for you?"

"I have called to see about the payment of the Seventeenth Connecticut," answered the soldier.

The paymaster, somewhat irritated by what he supposed a needless and impertinent interruption, told him sharply "that he could do nothing without money, and that until the Government furnished some it was useless for soldiers to come bothering him about pay."

"I know that the Government is in straits," returned the soldier. "I have called to find out how much money it will take to give my regiment two months' pay. I am ready to furnish the amount."

The amazed officer asked the name of his visitor, who modestly replied, "Elias Howe." He then wrote a draft for the required sum—\$31,000. Two or three days later the regiment was paid. When Mr. Howe's name was called, he went up to the paymaster's desk and signed the receipt for \$28.65 of his own money.

The officers of a neighboring regiment sent over to the Seventeenth Connecticut to see if they could not "borrow their private." —Youth's Companion.

Cleverly Done.

"Charge it to experience," said the man of the world who had just heard the plaint of a friend who had paid for a straight tip at the races and lost. Cupidity makes gillies of the best of us. I was up against it myself only a few months ago."

"Not you?"

"Yes, I. Looking out of the window one morning I was surprised to see a stranger on the lawn hunting closely in the grass and under the shrubbery for something he had evidently lost. He looked like a gentleman in ill health, was well dressed, and apologized for intruding as soon as I went out. While taking his morning walk he had noticed a baseball outside the hedge, concluded at once that it belonged to some boy about the place and tossed it into the yard. In doing so he had thrown a plain gold ring from his finger, emanated by recent sickness. He did not mind the intrinsic loss, but the ring had associations that made it very dear to him. After further search he gave it up, but before leaving he assured me that he would gladly give \$100 to anyone leaving the ring at his hotel. Of course, I could take no such reward, but I could send one of the boys and that would make it all right."

"While I was down on all fours inspecting every inch of ground a man dressed like a laborer looked at me awhile and then joined in the search. He soon had the ring. He had it all the time. On learning that it was not mine, he refused to give it up. He would advertise it and get a reward. After much dicker he turned it over to me for \$50. Of course, I never found hide or hair of the invalid." —Detroit Free Press.

A Duke's Endowment.

On the occasion of the wedding of the late Duchess of Teck to her handsome but impecunious husband her brother, the Duke of Cambridge, gave vent to his unfortunate habit of thinking aloud. When the Duke of Teck solemnly pledged himself with all his worldly goods to endow the bride, the Duke of Cambridge marred the solemnity of the occasion by exclaiming quite audibly: "Well, by Jove! And Wales gave him his shifts!"

The Figure Was Lost.

A colored woman went to the pastor of her church the other day to complain of the conduct of her husband, who, she said, was a "low-down, worthless, trifling rascal." After listening to a long recital of the delinquencies of her neglectful spouse and her efforts to correct them, the minister said: "Have you ever tried heaping coals of fire upon his head?" "No," was the reply, "but I done tried hot water." —W. E. Curtis, in the Chicago Record.

FOR BOYS AND GIRLS.

SOME GOOD STORIES FOR JUNIOR READERS.

Casan, the Tartar Dwarf—If Words Were Spelled as They Sound—How to Make Fudges—A Laughing Dog.

The Hand of Lincoln.

LOOK on this cast, and know the hand that bore a nation in its hold; From this mute witness understand what Lincoln was—how large of mold.

The man who sped the woodman's team, And deepened sunk the plowman's share, And pushed the laden raft astram, Of fate before him unaware.

This was the hand that knew to swing the ax—since thus would freedom train Her son—and made the forest ring, And drove the wedge, and tolled amain.

Firm hand, that left office took, A conscious leader's will obeyed, And, when men sought his word and look, With steadfast might the gathering swayed.

No courtiers, toying with a sword, Nor minstrels, laid across a lute; A chief's uplifted to the Lord, When all the kings of earth were mute.

The hand of Anak, sinewed strong, The fingers that on greatness clutch, Yet, lo! the marks their lines along Of one who strove and suffered much.

For here in knotted cord and vein I trace the varying chart of years; I know the troubled heart, the strain, The weight of Atlas—and the tears.

Again I see the patient brow That palm erewhile was wont to press; And now 'tis furrowed deep, and now Made smooth with hope and tenderness.

For something of a formless grace This molded outline plays about; A playing flame, beyond our trace, Breathes like a spirit, in and out.

The love that cast an aureole Round one who, longer to endure, Called forth to ease his ceaseless dole, Yet kept his nobler purpose sure.

Lo, as I gaze, the statured man, Built up from your large hand, appears; A type that nature willed to plan, But once in all a people's years.

What better than this voiceless cast To tell of such a one as he, Since through its living semblance passed The thought that bade a race be free!

Casan, the Tartar Dwarf.

In a series of papers on "Historic Dwarfs," Mary Shears Roberts describes the famous Casan. Mrs. Roberts says:

Casan was the name of a little Mongol Tartar who flourished in the early part of the thirteenth century.

He was born in the eastern part of Asia, not far from the ancient city of Karakorum. His parents belonged to one of the barbarian hordes that owed allegiance to Genghis Khan, and Casan became a fierce though small warrior, and fought bravely under the banner of the great and mighty Mongol conqueror.

The exact height of this little dwarf is unknown. He was certainly not over three feet tall, but he was active and muscular, and like all his race, could endure hunger, thirst, fatigue and cold.

The Tartars were unexcelled in the management of their beautiful horses. The fleetest animals were trained to stop short in full career, and to face without flinching wild beast or formidable foe. Casan was a born soldier, and at an early age became expert in all the exercises that belonged to a Tartar education. He could manage a fiery courser with great skill, and could shoot an arrow or throw a lance with unerring aim, in full career, advancing or retreating.

Like many of those small in stature, he was anything but puny in spirit, and while yet a lad he gathered about him a troop of wild young Tartar boys as reckless and daring as himself, of whom by common consent he became a leader. He commanded his lawless young comrades with a strange mixture of dignity and energy, and they obeyed his orders with zeal and willingness. Sometimes they would go on long hunting expeditions, seldom failing to lay waste any lonely habitation they happened on.

How to Make Fudges.

It isn't "Oh, fudge!" any more. It's "Oh, fudges!" And aren't they good! Any one who has ever eaten fudges—stuck as full of nuts as Jacky Horner's pie was of plums—will know that they eclipse anything every invented in the line of goodies. They aren't so hard to make, either, when you once know how. But you must follow directions closely, for fudges can cut up the most unusual and extraordinary antics. If not made or refaxed to harden, here is a good recipe and it won't fail you: Take three cups of granulated sugar, one cup of sweet milk and two squares of the best chocolate, which, of course, must be grated; let these boil for eleven minutes; just before the time is up add a piece of butter the size of a walnut. Fudges must be stirred constantly, and when removed from the fire should be beaten briskly until they harden; then spread on a buttered platter, cut into small squares and set out