

Free Press Tribune

Established 1888. PUBLISHED EVERY MONDAY AND THURSDAY. BY THE TRIBUNE PRINTING COMPANY, Limited

Subscription Rates: One Year \$1.50, Six Months .75, Four Months .50, Two Months .25

Even in China, things do move, though slowly. A Chinese Mandarin living in the vicinity of Shanghai is about to establish a farm on the American plan...

The fact that a wreath from America was placed at the foot of the statue of Charles I. in London, on the anniversary of his execution with the inscription "America remembers her martyr king," seems to indicate that some alleged Americans are quite devoid of a sense of humor.

An old maid—she was only 102!—has died from grip, most modern of diseases, in Derby, Conn. In 1815 Miss Hetty Purdy was engaged to a young Englishman, who died just before their wedding day.

The Thrift bank, limited, of London, is preparing to place at railway stations, large factories, and other desirable positions, some thousands of "peenny-in-the-slot" machines to induce the poorer classes of the community to cultivate saving habits.

No subject relating to railways is attracting more attention among engineers of all kinds than that of the substitution of electricity for steam as a motive power.

The charge will come an increase in speed more than double the highest rates attainable by steam, for the ability to move a train of cars of regulation size at the rate of 120 to 130 miles an hour has been demonstrated repeatedly, and is now conceded by all authorities.

The outer uniformity about wills in general, both as to parchment and penmanship, makes all the more noteworthy the last testament, now at Somerset House, of the late Sir George Parker, whose daughter has just died at Falmouth.

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THE PRISONER.

Grown bent and gray with his despair, In an old castle of the air, I found a hope, forgotten quite, I broke his chains with eager hand; He said: "I do not understand; Shut out—shut out again the light."

He knew me not, this hope of mine, This old, old hope of youth divine; And so I left him hurried deep In that gray ruin of my tears.

On earth I shall not see his face Again; yet when the weary race Of life is nearing its goal, Perhaps before me he may go.

HE day, which had been one of the hottest of India's hot season, was drawing to a close. Throughout the day the heat had been oppressive and overpowering, and in the late afternoon there were no signs either of rain or of a cooling breeze.

My brother was in Government service, and the week previously he had received notice to meet a State official at Rhanaghat. He had gone with a company of natives, taking with him his guns and dogs, in order on the way back to try and rid the neighborhood of its terror, a man-eating tiger.

"Sahib," said Chadda, one of our men, "near Dotta Singaram, a village two coss (four miles) off, there one Burra Bagh" ("bagh" means tiger) "who kill plenty men: he ate one old woman yesterday. He has an evil spirit, sahib, for though all shikarmen and village people plenty, plenty, looking, never can find him. No burra chor by (he is a very great thief, sir)."

Inquiry more than substantiated the accusations made against the terrible Burra Bagh, and it was found that, not only was he a great thief, but a wholesale murderer to boot. Lurking amongst the dense brushwood that skirted the highway, he had within the last six months seized and devoured the amazing number of forty of the inhabitants—sixteen of whom were "running postmen."

So he departed, and I was left alone—alone in my little home up among the hills. Fear I knew not, so accustomed had I grown to the sights and sounds of jungle life. But on this the third evening of his absence, I began to feel lonely, and the extreme heat made me rather nervous into the bargain.

I had finished my home letters ere dusk, and, with a yawn, I drank the cup of welcome chakwa (coffee) which Bara, the ayah, brought me. I then retired to my room, and was soon in bed. How hot it was! I have been in what are considered warmer parts of India since, but never have I experienced heat like that which prevailed that night.

Suddenly a big gadal (black bat) landed on my mosquito net. I started, and sat up in bed shaking all over. When I discovered the cause of alarm I felt foolish. Black bats were quite common, but my nervousness at seeing them was most uncommon.

THE PHILIPPINE PEARLS.

The richest grounds are in the Sulu Group—Controlled by a Great London Jewelry Firm—Mother-of-Pearl Worth One Hundred Dollars a Ton.

In the picturesque miscellaneous collection of Sultans, active volcanoes, rajahs Dyak pirates, and so forth, handed over to the United States in the far Pacific as one result of the Spanish war, are the important pearl fisheries at the Suu Islands—pearl fisheries that, since the decline of those of Ceylon and the Persian Gulf, divide with the north coast of Australia the reputation of being the most valuable in the world.

The Sulu pearl grounds have for some time been controlled by men or companies with large capital, of which the chief is a great London jewelry firm. These capitalists equip and send out fleets of from twenty to thirty moderate-sized schooners upon annual cruises, and employ in the pursuit, besides European officers and supercargoes, many hundreds, if not thousands, of native divers.

It may be information to many that the chief revenue of the pearl fishing industry is derived not from the pearls—a very uncertain contingency—but from the pearl shells, or mother-of-pearl, which brings in the market \$100 a ton and upward. As an illustration of this, while the West Australian pearl fisheries netted in one year \$400,000 from the shells, the returns from the find of pearls was valued at a little more than \$150,000, or about one-third.

The actual diving operations are carried on chiefly by the natives, though of late years Europeans, with diving apparatus, have in some instances been employed. The former method is simplicity itself. The diver being denuded of his clothes and provided with a knife and a small net bag in which to gather the shells, and having a forty-pound stone attached to his feet, draws a deep breath, and is let rapidly down by a rope into the transparent waters. The depth at which pearl diving is generally carried on is from thirty to forty feet, though depths of eighty feet have been thus reached in a few instances.

While thus engaged the divers are sometimes subject to the attacks of sharks, but they find a far deadlier enemy in the exhausting nature of their work, carried on beneath the waters of the tropics. Their lives are generally of short duration after once adopting the profession.

When a vessel has received its full capacity of from twenty to thirty thousand shells, it is put into the shore, where the cargo is landed and piled high on the beach for the sun to assist in causing the decomposition of the dead fish, so that the pearls may be the more easily obtained. During the cleaning and washing process great care is exercised in order to discover all the loose pearls, which, being nearly all perfect spheres, are the most valuable for stringing, or necklace purposes; after which the shells are examined for those that may remain attached, furnishing the many quaint shapes to be seen in jeweler's windows. Pearls of value are seldom discovered in shells under four years of age—the age being computed by the weight of the shells—and eight years, it would seem, being the extreme limit of pearl mussel longevity.

The pearls found in the Sulus are remarkable for their fine white color and soft iridescent sheen, and up till the present have found their principal market in London, but now that the archipelago has become an outlying territory of the United States one may naturally expect that these gems will come more into favor on this side of the Atlantic than heretofore.—New York Sun.

"Hot Time" Does Duty as a Dirge. Harry T. Montgomery, a private in the Thirtieth Minnesota, now stationed at Manila, in a letter received by his uncles, W. E. Montgomery, at Macon, Mo., relates a curious incident there. A merchant of the well-to-do class came to the camp one day and told of the death of a friend. He said his friend's last request was that a certain one of those "beautiful American tunes" be played during the march to the cemetery.

As an object lesson this Egyptian enterprise should have no more interested observers than in America, especially in Colorado, Nevada, California, and other States of the West, where the irrigation expert is succeeding the railway-builder as a developer.

In the Courant of March 16, 1784, we printed the following queer story, which our readers will pardon us for repeating. Some of them may have forgotten it. "Hebron, February 15, 1784.—This day departed this life, Mrs. Lydia Peters, the wife of Colonel John Peters and second daughter of Joseph Phelps, Esq. She was married at the age of fifteen, and lived with her consort three times fifteen years and had fifteen living children, thirteen now alive, and she had three times fifteen grandchildren. She was sick fifteen months and died the 15th day of the month aged four times fifteen years."—Hartford Courant.

Mexican school children are allowed to smoke during lesson time, provided they have attained a certain standard of excellency.

RICHEST MAN IN TURKEY.

He is a Naturalized American Citizen, Whose Wealth is Bloodstained.

The richest man in Turkey is an Armenian, who is a naturalized American citizen, and lived in this country for several years, writes W. E. Curtis in the Chicago Record. If the stories told in the diplomatic circle of Constantinople are true he came by his money in a peculiar manner. It will be remembered that the Sultan Aziz was assassinated in 1876. For several years prior to his death he accumulated all the money and bonds he could obtain, which he stored away in his palace as a reserve fund in case of a war with Russia, which had been impending for some time.

Although the assassination was a mystery, it is believed to have been inspired, if it was not actually accomplished, by Midad Pasha, the Minister of Finance, from avaricious motives. He alone was aware of the magnitude of the Sultan's hoard and the place of its concealment, and after his Sovereign's death, by virtue of his position, he took charge of the fund and pretended to deposit it in the public treasury. But it is believed by those most familiar with Turkish affairs that he retained for his own benefit a large part—perhaps one-half of it—whenever for motives of self-protection, he intrusted to the Armenian banker I have named, and directed him to take the bonds to London and Paris and there deposit them in such a manner that their ownership could not be traced to Midad Pasha.

It is also believed to have been the latter's intentions to withdraw a portion of this property from concealment as soon as he felt safe in doing so. But not long afterward Midad Pasha was himself assassinated in the boldest and most astounding manner. He was attending a meeting of the Ministry, when he was informed that a messenger was awaiting him in the ante-room with a confidential communication that must be delivered immediately and to himself alone. Midad left his colleagues and entered the ante-room, where an unknown man immediately plunged a dagger into his heart.

The man who reaped the profit of the secret was a Yankee timber merchant, and at last accounts he was still doing an enormous business, taking orders and saying nothing. The sighting of the Ovalon, an innocent ship of commerce, caused intense excitement, as she was first taken for the expected enemy. Just before this steamer turned up it had been decided at a second council of war to call on every man capable of carrying arms. However, the appearance of Ovalon quieted things down, and peace promises to reign once more in the principal town, but the poor people who fled to the back country and the other islands will be some weeks in learning the situation.

George I. of England introduced the black cockade from Germany as a mark of the servant. More women than men go blind in Sweden, Norway and Iceland; more men than women in the rest of Europe.

Several States in New England have statutes forbidding kissing on the streets. The law is an old one and obsolete. A grain of fine sand would cover about 100 of the minute scales of the human skin; each scale covers from 300 to 500 pores.

The utilization of grain-elevator waste for sheep and cattle food has given rise to a new industry in the Northwest. The waste brings \$7 a ton. John Hooper, a man with a mania for tombstones, stole eighteen of them from Graceland Cemetery, Chicago, and used them for bric-a-brac at his home.

Some of the petrified wood found in Arizona, it is said, is so hard that steel tools will not work it, the petrifications being only three degrees less in hardness than the diamond. The walking advertisement known as a "sandwich man" is by no means a modern idea. In 1348 a procession of men dressed to represent straw-covered wine bottles used to parade the streets of Florence, Italy.

Tea drinkers in London are swindled systematically. A number of old women go about and buy up from servants tea-leaves that have been used. The leaves are then artificially colored, dried, and sold as good tea. In Japan is a venerable camphor tree, which, it is said, will hold fifteen full grown persons in its hollow trunk. According to Japanese tradition, it grew from the walkingstick of the famous philosopher Kabodaira, who flourished about the year 780. The tree is certainly 1000 years old.

Embarrassing For the Lecturer. Civilized people when they listen to a lecture on some abstruse scientific subject applaud even if they do not understand. But there is evidently more frankness among savages, according to a story told by Captain Guy Barrows. A white man one evening tried to explain to some members of an African tribe, the Moubungi, the wonders of the steam engine and steamship. He drew diagrams on the sand, and the audience listened and looked with apparently intense interest. At last he asked his hearers whether they understood. "Yes," they replied, "they thought they did." "There was a deep silence," Captain Barrows says, "for some time, and then a voice in the centre of the crowd expressed the unspoken sentiments of the whole assembly in a tone of the deepest conviction—'Liar!' Embarrassing for the lecturer!—Westminster Gazette.

Germany has an army which costs her people \$135,000,000 a year.

TAHITI'S WAR SCARE.

Everybody Excited Except a Yankee Who Had Timber For Sale.

The worst scared people of the year 1898 probably were those inhabiting the French isles of the Pacific, especially in Tahiti. The people of such islands as New Caledonia, Tahiti, etc., receive news from the outside world when it is months old, and the white inhabitants, being mostly French, are easily excited. New Caledonia is a convict settlement of the French Government, where there are thousands of exiled criminals. This made an exceedingly anxious time for the respectable inhabitants of the principal town, Noumea, during their war scare.

At Tahiti the officers of the French transport ship Aube, hearing of the war talk between their country and England several weeks after it started, became disturbed at the movements and signaling of several foreign vessels, and straightway ordered all harbor and lighthouse lights out, and began collecting and carting all stores into the country, the work being carried on at night. To heighten the scare several of the crew of an American ship went on a spree and started a row in the market place at Papeete, and the natives joining in, the fight became general. Then was spread the rumor that the English had landed and were "in the fight."

More than half of the natives and a large number of French women and children made for the country, taking their goods and chattels with them, and have not returned yet, thinking that a terrible war is going on. For a few days boats and cutters were kept busy taking emigrants to Moorea, a mountainous island lying twenty miles away, and the Governor of Tahiti, the Captain of Aube and the military officers held a council of war. This council decided to make a new fort, the soldiers being started on the work in a pouring rain, the wet season having just begun. Everything portable from the Aube was landed and her guns were mounted on the new fort, and the vessel was prepared to be taken to the entrance of the harbor and sunk, a la Hobson and the Merrimack.

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OUR BUDGET OF HUMOR.

LAUGHTER-PROVOKING STORIES FOR LOVERS OF FUN. A Hammer Plumber—Pleading For Himself—Easily—Two Souls Confess—Rather Ambiguous—Her Consolation—Quarreled With Herself.

A Hammer Plumber—Pleading For Himself—Easily—Two Souls Confess—Rather Ambiguous—Her Consolation—Quarreled With Herself. "I am not afraid of the best man living!" He—"I hope not, dear. I don't think I ever gave you any reason to be afraid of me."—Yonkers Statesman.

Her Consolation. He (preparing to leave)—"I assure you, Miss Sweet, the time has passed very pleasantly this evening." She (abstractedly)—"Yes, it is pleasant to know that it is past."—Truth.

Rather Ambiguous. "Measures not men," remarked Asbury Peppers. "What on earth are you talking about?" asked the curious boarder. "The ladies' tailor."—Cincinnati Enquirer.

Easily. "Could you tell me what this prescription calls for?" asked the inquisitive citizen. "Yes," answered the clerk as he glanced over it rapidly, "fifty cents."—Washington Star.

Quarreled With Herself. "The two-headed girl got up another rumpus this morning." "What was she mad about?" "One of her heads picked out a hat just like that which the other one had."—Chicago News.

Blasting Fond Hopes. Mrs. Newlywed—"We are going to name our new baby after you, Uncle Josh!" Rich Uncle—"That's a good idee; he'll have to start out in life without a cent, jes' the same as I did!"—Puck.

The Practical Side of It. "How much did you make out of your new book?" "Well, we got breakfast out of the first edition, and dinner out of the second, but times are hard now, and it's a mighty long time between suppers!"—Atlanta Constitution.

A Possible Mistake. Callahan (despondently)—"Shure, an' Oi've been leading a dog's life ever since Oi got married." Kerrigan (thoughtfully)—"Perhaps yez went to the wrong clerk, Callahan, an' got a dog license instid uv a marriage license."—Judge.

One Objection. "She rejected theophony when she couldn't be assured her soul wouldn't migrate into an elephant." "No!" "Yes, she said she didn't care about being reincarnated if it wasn't going to reduce her flesh."—Life.

Two Souls Confess. "Gladys Lucile, I must make a confession before we are married. You know me as Guy Percy Fitz-William, but the folks at home call me Bill." "That's all right. My pa and ma call me Toadie."—Chicago Record.

A Wish Realized. Post—"I do wish something that rhymes with 'boat' would strike me!" A Stranger's Privilege. Excited New Yorker—"I want to know why in the name of all that's good I should have to pay more for a cab I hire in front of a hotel than for one I hire along the street?" Policeman—"Cause the hotel cabs is particularly for use of strangers in town, see?"—Indianapolis Journal.

BURRA BAGH.

By MARGARET C. S. MARSHALL.

How a lady left in a bungalow by herself attacked and killed single-handed a huge man-eating tiger.



HE day, which had been one of the hottest of India's hot season, was drawing to a close. Throughout the day the heat had been oppressive and overpowering, and in the late afternoon there were no signs either of rain or of a cooling breeze.

The creepers surrounding the bungalow were drooping, and even the usually stately palms looked languid. Everything out of doors was motionless, as if paralyzed by the stifling atmosphere. "Rain, rain, rain," was the universal cry of thirsty nature.

At this time we lived away up in the North Provinces, fully twenty miles beyond the Mission Station of Rhanaghat, the missionaries there being our nearest white neighbors.

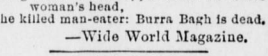
Round us on every side was jungle, stretching as far as the eye could see. To the west could be seen, in bright weather, the clear, sharp, snow-crowned peaks of the mountains more than a hundred miles away. Our beautiful white bungalow, which always looked so clean and cool—almost hidden in a wealth of roses and gaily-colored creepers, and surrounded by rhododendrons, azaleas and other flowering shrubs—was built on the slope of a hill overlooking the little native village of Signal.

My brother was in Government service, and the week previously he had received notice to meet a State official at Rhanaghat. He had gone with a company of natives, taking with him his guns and dogs, in order on the way back to try and rid the neighborhood of its terror, a man-eating tiger.

"Sahib," said Chadda, one of our men, "near Dotta Singaram, a village two coss (four miles) off, there one Burra Bagh" ("bagh" means tiger) "who kill plenty men: he ate one old woman yesterday. He has an evil spirit, sahib, for though all shikarmen and village people plenty, plenty, looking, never can find him. No burra chor by (he is a very great thief, sir)."

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She killed man-eater: Burra Bagh is dead.

—Wide World Magazine.

Paris Periodicals. The periodicals published in Paris number at present 2587, of which 188 made their first appearance last year.

In this enormous mass, politics, properly speaking, is represented by only 144 organs. Strange to say, its medicine that absorbs the largest quantity—namely, 206. Financial matters are dealt with in 195 publications, fashions in 113, law in 95, agriculture in 67, and industrial matters in 54. There are 26 journals on gas and electricity, 24 on assurance, 10 on cookery, 5 on matrimonial matters, and 25 on photography. The "Revue" reach the number of 162.



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Policeman—"Cause the hotel cabs is particularly for use of strangers in town, see?"—Indianapolis Journal.

Willie's Little Joke. Dashaway—"You say your sister will be down in a minute, Willie? That's good news. I didn't know but what she would be excused, as she did the other day." Willie—"Not this time. I played a trick on her."

Dashaway—"What did you do?" Willie (triumphantly)—"I said you were another fellow."—Tit-Bits.

Self-Possessed. Policeman (who has carried a woman out of burning building)—"Your name, please? I have to make a report, you know."

Rescued Woman—"Jane Althea Jarvis, and I'm the most grateful human being that ever—"

Policeman—"That's all right, ma'am. Age, please?"

Rescued Woman—"None of your business, sir!"—Chicago Tribune.

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