



Children's Column

Eight small children for busy bees—Eight to feed and wash and dress. Four small girls and four small boys. In one small house make no small noise. And so, to have them out of the way. She's sent them off to the woods to play. "Don't quarrel, nor tease, nor fret, nor frown. But come back home when the sun is down. And if you see the chipmunk small, Don't throw stones at him—that is, all. For he's just as busy as he can be, And I know how that is, myself," said she.

House of Delight for Children.

Fairmount park, Philadelphia, has a children's play house which has been open for 15 months. One thousand children have been entertained there in a single day, but 350 is the average number. Boys over ten are barred. All other children are welcome. The house is fitted with swings, see-saws, wagons and tricycles for the older ones, and hammocks, baby jumpers, rocking horses and building blocks for the younger ones. For the little ones who are too young to walk a big creeping pad is provided. In the sand pavilion are twelve tons of white sand. For those who meet with injury a trained nurse is in attendance to administer consolation and necessary treatment.

The institution was bequeathed by Mr. and Mrs. Richard Smith.

A Surprised Cat.

Several days ago five or six sparrows were pecking away in the gutter immediately in front of an engine-house, when a cat crept across the street and pounced upon one of them. Instantly the victim's companion sent up a wailing cry, which was as instantly answered. From the housetop and tree the sparrows flocked to the scene. With whirring, hissing cries of noisy rage, they fearlessly attacked the offender. For about 30 seconds the dazed cat endured the blows from perhaps a hundred beaks and twice as many beating wings. Then, still holding her prey, she struggled away from the infuriated birds, and ran into the engine-house. The plucky little fellows followed her inside, but soon gave up the chase, leaving her with her dearly bought dinner, a sadder but a wiser cat.

England's First Parliament.

January 20 is memorable in English history as the date of the first meeting of the first parliament, an assembly which corresponds to the national congress of the United States. This great English reform took place in the year 1265, in Westminster hall, which still is in existence. This first of British national legislative bodies in which the common people were represented consisted of two knights, or noblemen, from each county and two citizens from each borough or township. The election and service of the citizens representing the common people (as distinguished from the nobles) in this parliament was the first clear admission by the government that the citizen had a right to take part in making the laws and managing the affairs of the country. Thus we see that hundreds of years before the birth of the United States the principles on which our republic was founded were recognized and put into partial operation in Great Britain.

Strange Discoveries in Africa.

The problem of how the apple got into the dumpling sinks into insignificance beside that of the jellyfish, the crustaceans and Lake Tanganyika; but J. E. S. Moore, who recently returned from Central Africa, believes he has discovered how the fish from the sea got into the lake in the middle of the continent.

Mr. Moore is one of the young men at the Royal College of Science, South Kensington. He was leader of an expedition largely subsidized by the Royal Geographical society, and after a year's march of over 2000 miles, from the Zambesi to Uganda, he has come back with hundreds of specimens and several important additions to the knowledge of Central Africa.

He has encountered cannibals, volcanoes and glaciers and sealed an ice-cold peak called "Sitchwi," in the Ruwenzori mountains, or Mountains of the Moon, at a height of about 16,500 feet. The mountain took ten days to climb. The peaks of the range are covered with ice to a depth of hundreds of feet, for the snow melts in the day and freezes at night.

Mr. Moore and the 20 Ujiji boys who accompanied him lived on goats during the ascent and descent, driving the goats and killing them when food was wanted. The Ujiji boys were so struck with the phenomenon of ice that they tried to carry bits down to Ujiji. The tropical sun nearly boiled the ice on the way.

Between Tanganyika and Lake Albert Edward is a lake called Kivu. The best atlas published gives it as about one-tenth the size of Albert Edward. Mr. Moore, who was accompanied by Malcom Ferguson, geologist and geographer, found that Kivu is larger than Albert Edward. The north end of Tanganyika was found to be 50 miles westward of its ascribed position.

It was between this lake and Kivu that the cannibals were met. They

are tall, light-colored men, more like Arabs than negroes, and are born thieves. They gave much trouble and killed two or three bearers, but Mr. Moore never had to fight them outright.

The primary object of the expedition was to dredge and sound the lakes with reference to the marine forms which Mr. Moore found there four years ago. The question was whether the jellyfish and crustaceans originally got into Tanganyika by way of the Nile or the Congo. Having determined that these marine species are to be found in none of the lakes north of Tanganyika, Mr. Moore believes that Tanganyika was once joined to the sea by way of a great basin in the Congo State.

When Tanganyika was left high, if not dry, in the center of Africa, the jellyfish and crustaceans of the sea remained behind and their descendants are flourishing today. They have been there many thousands of years, for fossils they resemble are to be found below the chalk level.

Insects in Winter.

A little boy once asked his father if the house flies went South for the winter, like the birds; and then his father told him a long story about different insects and what became of them during the cold months.

He told the boy that when autumn comes the death knell of millions of flies has sounded. They do not prepare for winter as many other insects do. The majority die, and their little bodies are blown away by the passing breeze. A few hardy flies will linger in cracks in the walls, creep under the door frames or into crevices in the woodwork, and some naturalists believe that these few lingering flies are the parents of the multitude that appear in the warm days of June, for they lay thousands of eggs.

Katydid, grasshoppers, crickets and beetles are killed by the frost, and the eggs which they hide in the ground or conceal in the bark of trees furnish the supply for the next year. These hatch out in the warm days of spring.

Beetles exhibit a wonderful instinct in caring for their eggs during winter. Among some species the eggs are rolled in balls of material suitable for food, and then the balls are packed away in a nest until the infant beetle wakes up and eats its way out.

Then there are the "sexton" beetles, which deposit their eggs in the bodies of dead birds or field mice, after which they set to work and perform the proper rites of burial, heaping the earth upon the body of the dead. The young beetle, when hatched from the egg, finds a store of food awaiting its arrival in the world.

It is said that the spiders store away no food supply in winter quarters. Quantities of eggs are laid and carefully sheltered in velvety cobweb sacks that defy the weather. These sacks may be found swinging by silken ropes from the goldenrod and milkweed, and hidden away in crevices and corners of board fences and stone walls. The little spiders creep through their cozy sleeping bags which the wise mother has provided for them, and if they escape their cannibal brothers and sisters they enter at once on a career of trapping and hunting.

Bees and wasps lay up stores for the winter, the wasps not as carefully as the bees, but in the centre of the cone shaped nest of the paper making wasps may be found goodly stores of honey.

The thrifty ant deserves much sympathy, in that it is a dainty morsel for spiders, beetles, crickets and other insect hunters. A few ants may survive and feed on accumulated stores during the winter, but it is chiefly the eggs and cocoons hidden away in the secure underground chambers of the ant hill that furnish the ant population of the following summer.

The ant's care of its young, the management of its slaves, and the tiny insect cows which they capture and from which the honeydew is milked, all would furnish a tale as interesting as the customs of any wandering tribe of the desert or any lost nation of darkest Africa.—New York Tribune.

Curiosities in London.

Country things which flourish in London have been receiving a good deal of attention of late. At the present time there may be seen a number of fine bunches of fast-ripening black grapes on the south wall of the Hospital for Incurable Children, at Chelsea. No doubt the poor miles within will be enjoying them before long.

In a garden at the King's road end of Flood street, Chelsea, there is a mulberry tree which has this year borne a fine crop of fruit. It was picked during the present month. Mulberries are not always to be obtained in London, and they are expensive. This, by the way, has been a good year for mulberries in various parts of the country. They have been allowed to fall from the trees and rot on the ground in some places.

The reed harvest is a small matter, but not one to be altogether overlooked in districts where this tall, handsome plant flourishes. The mowers are now among the reeds, which go down before the old-fashioned scythe. They are bound up in sheaves like the corn, and when dry stacked and used as they are required for thatching purposes.—London Express.

In the remote parts of Scotland the old Covenanters' love for long services on the bare hillsides still lingers. At Dingwall a recent communion service in the open air lasted from 10 a. m. until 4 p. m.

CONSCRIPTS OF FRANCE.

MILITARY SYSTEM IS STRICT AND NO MAN ESCAPES.

A Youth Is No Sooner Born Than the Army Officials Have Their Eyes on Him—"Drawing His Number" Is an Interesting Occasion—His Feuille de Route.

The French boy is no sooner born than the military authorities have their eyes on him, says a writer in the Pall Mall Gazette. Within three days after his entry into the world his parents are bound under severe penalties to register his birth at the local mairie, or town hall. This formality accomplished the youngster at once receives the visit of the doctor attached to the register office. The medecin de l'etat civil, as this functionary is termed, verifies the declaration made by the parents and satisfies himself that the infant is indeed a man in miniature. This precaution is necessary as the father and mother, were they left entirely to their own devices, might be tempted to palm off their boy as a girl, with a view to enabling him to escape his military service.

The existence of the youngster having thus been duly placed on record, he is allowed to run loose for a score of years. If he chooses to, he can shorten this period of liberty by voluntarily enlisting before his time, providing, of course, his physique passes muster. The marine infantry, a corps that sees a good deal of actual fighting in the colonies, recruits a number of adventurous spirits in this way, and not a few of the young men who propose to adopt the army as their career improve their prospects by making an early start. As soon as his twentieth birthday is passed he begins to have a keen eye on the official posters displayed on the walls of the town hall, the schools and other public buildings. These posters are white, like all other official posters in France, but they are of exceptional size, while, that there may be no possibility of their escaping notice among their many miscellaneous fellows, they compel attention by a most apparent distinctive sign, consisting of two tricolor flags placed crossways above the reading matter and printed in colors. One of these military posters details the arrangements for the departure of the class, or annual contingent, and from it the conscript learns the date of his incorporation and other items of information.

In the course of his twentieth year he should give his address to the nearest recruiting office, and see that the mayor of his district has put down his name among the conscripts of the coming class. The mayor, however, is bound to see that his name is on the list, whether he concerns himself with his inscription or not.

It should be said that the conscript draws his number in the January that follows the completion of his twentieth year. In consequence, a conscript born in December has only just turned 20 when the army claims him, whereas, a conscript whose birth is in January is 21 at the time of the tirage au sort. The only use at present of the drawing or numbers is that when there is a deficiency of men for the marine infantry the vacancies are filled up from among the conscripts who have drawn the numbers one, two or three.

For the next six months or so the conscript is left to himself, but toward the middle of the year he makes acquaintance in earnest with the military authorities. The occasion is the sitting of the councils of revision, the bodies that definitely decide the fate of the conscripts. The council of revision is composed of two civil functionaries, of a superior officer and of an army doctor, and it has the assistance of a member of the recruiting staff and of several gendarmes. A council sits in the chief town of every canton. The mayors of the different localities comprised in the district are allowed to be present at its operations, with a view to safeguarding the interests of the sons of their electors. The conscript is expected to present himself before the council, but should he abstain from putting in an appearance he does not incur a penalty. He loses the right, however, should he remain away, to benefit by certain dispensations which will shortly be explained, and he is purely and simply taken as a soldier without more ado—he is taken d'office, it is technically said. In the case of the conscripts who come up before it—and they are the vast majority—the council decides their military service, and pronounces on the admissibility of the claims they may put in to be dispensed from the full term of service, to serve one year instead of three. The question of physical fitness is settled, of course, by a medical examination.

The privilege of only serving one year is accorded in the first place to certain classes of young men whose family circumstances are exceptional. Thus the oldest son or only son of a widow, the eldest son of a family of orphans, the eldest son of a family of seven or more children, and the elder of two brothers who happen to be conscripts in the same year are entitled to a dispensation. The dispensation is also granted to young men whose earnings are proved to be indispensable to the support of the family, and to the brothers of soldiers who have died or been definitely invalidated while on active service. By far the largest class, however, of single year soldiers is furnished by the learned professions. The young men who are studying to be barristers, doctors, professors and engineers, or for certain other careers, have to serve but one year. This concession is conditional on their

passing their examinations; should they fail in them they must return to the army and complete their three years. The number of dispensees from all causes is very considerable, some 70,000 out of the 250,000 or so conscripts who form the annual contingent.

The council of revision takes note of the conscript's trade, occupation, or profession, this matter and, so far as his physique allows, his own wishes being taken into consideration in assigning him to this or that branch of the service. The labors of the council over, the results are sifted and classified at the war office and the destination of each conscript settled. He learns his fate by the receipt of his feuille de route, or marching orders, an official intimation commanding him to join the corps to which he has been attached on a given day. If he is penniless, his third-class railway fare is given him by the mayor of his district; should he be able to meet this expense, the sum is refunded him on his joining his regiment. Failure to comply with the instructions contained in this feuille de route is accounted an act of insubordination and exposes the insoumis to severe penalties. The incorporation of the classes takes place, as a rule, in November. The conscript has become a bleu, and is entitled to the munificent pay of a cent per day.

DYKE MAKING IN HOLLAND.

Where a Half Inch of Water Is Between the Country and Destruction.

Few people have any definite understanding of the constant wrestling and struggling that is carried on in Holland with the waters of the sea and rivers. These are the common enemy of the people, who are in hourly peril of their lives and property in consequence.

How serious is the position of Holland is fully demonstrated by the popular saying that the safety of the country may be jeopardized by only half an inch of water. The truth of the saying is accepted by all, and we cannot help admiring the people, who, notwithstanding the gravity of the situation, go about their daily occupations with perfect coolness.

Nature, as though conscious that she had acted unkindly by placing so much of the country below the water level, endeavors to assist the inhabitants to keep out the waters. The first work of dyke making is often performed by her; layers of sand and clay are thrown up on the banks and the people take advantage of these embryonic embankments. They assist the formation by putting mats of willow on the deposits to strengthen them and bind the earth substances, and later they drive piles at the back, and so in time form the high dykes which prevent overflows.

For something like 500 years the people have been fighting the waters and reclaiming the land; but even when they have snatched a tract of territory from the water the fight is not done. The work of draining these polders or lowlands must go on incessantly or the efforts of the past would be quickly nullified.

The greatest work of the kind was the draining of the Haarlem meer, or Haarlem lake, the result of which was an addition of 41,675 acres to Holland. A canal was dug encircling the Haarlem lake and a dyke was built on the inner side; then engines were planted to pump the water out of the lake. It took four years to complete the work; 80,000,000 tons of water were pumped out and the cost was \$20,000,000. The ground was then intersected by canals for drainage purposes and in two years the land was being cultivated.

But the people in Holland have in view an undertaking which puts that of the Haarlem lake entirely in the shade. This is nothing less than the draining of the Zuyder Zee, which has an area of 1365 square miles. The initial stage of this undertaking would be the construction of an embankment from mainland to mainland; it would be 35 miles long and 216 feet wide. It would take 10 years to build this embankment, which would serve as a road for railway and general traffic. The work of draining and reclaiming the land would take 40 years and the total cost of the undertaking would be \$750,000,000.

Cruelty of the Deaf.

Deaf children as a class are generally believed to be especially cruel to their mates and to the lower animals. Professor G. Stanley Hall suggests in a recent article that this apparent cruelty may be in part accounted for by the fact that they cannot hear the cries of pain, and hence do not really understand the amount of suffering which they are causing. He points out that Aristotle in his Rhetoric develops the theory that the sight and sound of others in pain call to mind or to the imagination a copy of the sufferings the spectator would experience under similar circumstances.

So that our idea of suffering in a given case may be said to be gauged by the amount of pain that would make us look and cry out as the sufferer does. The deaf individual's sensitiveness to suffering, in other words, his pity, would be thus naturally much curtailed by the entire absence of the important senses in producing this emotion.—New York Times.

The Increase of City Population. It isn't so much a "tendency to urban life" that moves men toward as it is the tendency to get away from the kind of work that induces perspiration.—Charleston News and Courier.

A Bloody History China's Record for the Past Forty Years. . .

The pages of modern Chinese history are stained with blood—the blood of helpless and defenseless men and women. Since the days when foreigners first went to the far east, but especially during the last forty years, there has been a constant succession of brutal murders—murders usually brought about solely by the passionate hatred of the yellow man for the white. One of the most characteristic of these was the Ku Cheng massacre on August 1, 1895. The Church Missionary society has a very successful enterprise in that city. There were many converts, and no one dreamed of any danger. Five women missionaries lived in one house on the hills beyond the city during the summer heat and close to them lived Mr. Stewart, early in the morning three of his missionary in charge, his wife and five children. August 1 was the birthday of one of the children, so brothers and sisters got up and went out on the hills to gather flowers. Hearing horns and drums, they ran to look at the procession. One Chinaman seized the oldest girl by the hair and beat her. She tore from him and made for home, to find the house occupied by the mob. She caught a glimpse of her father making for her mother's rooms, and then no more was seen of either of them. Seeing the house burning, she got her little brothers and sisters and dragged them off. The baby she pulled from under the body of its dead nurse. Her two brothers and her little sister were all wounded. An American missionary, hearing the riot, rushed up to help, but he was too late. In the brief time he had been murdered, and two of the children soon died. The story of the death of these brave girls, one of whom, Miss Marshall, was the daughter of a Blackheath vicar, went with a

thrill of horror through the land. Why were they murdered? A proclamation had been issued among the people as follows: "Notice is hereby given that at the present time 'foreign barbarians' are hiring evil characters to kidnap small children, that they may extract oil from them for use. I have a female servant named Li who has personally seen this done. I exhort you, good people, not to allow your children to go out. I hope you will act in accordance with this." The mob did act on it. The experience of Lord Loch and his companions in 1857 present a tale of horror rarely equaled. On June 21, 1870, came the infamous Tientsin massacre. The French Catholic missionaries and Sisters of Mercy had established a mission in Tientsin, and one of their agencies was an orphan home. A report got about among the natives that the sisters were killing the children to use their hearts and eyes in the manufacture of some medical specific much sought after in Europe. Every one saw that a storm was coming, and the French consul was urged to take such steps as would show the slander to be false. But the consul thought such a request a slur on his dignity and refused to listen to it. The consul paid for his dignity with his life. No one fully knows what happened, for every European on the spot was done to death. The defenseless sisters were butchered after nameless barbarities, and the French cathedral and orphanage were set on fire. Twenty foreigners, including a Russian and his young bride, who were mistaken for French, were slain. For the moment it seemed that a general uprising, such as that of the present hour, must follow. But in the end the Chinese authorities subdued the uprising and executed a score of rioters.

The... Cowpunchers They Are Not a Little Bit Like Cowboys...

There is a distinction and a wide difference in the terms cowboy and cowpuncher, although by most persons each is accepted as a synonym for the other. As a matter of fact, no more grievous affront could be offered a cowboy than to call him a cowpuncher; out on the cattle ranges not even ignorance would serve to excuse such a mistake. To the minds of cattlemen the term cowpuncher carries opprobrium, while everywhere that of cowboy has been lifted into respectable prominence by the courage, dash, goodfellowship and hospitality of these centaurs of the plains. The difference, however, has not been clear to orators and literary lights. Even so well-informed a writer as Colonel Henry Watterston has failed to discover it, for only recently he applied the opprobrious epithet to Governor Roosevelt while giving expression to his high opinion of the Republican candidate for the Vice Presidency. Said Colonel Watterston: "Youthful, well balanced; a gentleman, a cowpuncher, a man of letters, a man of action, a clear-headed politician, a dashing soldier, he has the respect of those to whom ability, both mental and physical, appeals, and he has the admiration of those whom accomplishment, whether in the lead of politics, arms, or literature, impresses." Of course, he meant to say cowboy, for, while Mr. Roosevelt had some experience on the cattle ranges, he was never a cowpuncher. In the early seventies, when cattle were driven "up the trails" to northern markets, the cow-

puncher was unknown. He sprang into existence with the shipping of live cattle in great cars over the railroads. He was not a cowboy—never had been. He was simply a nomad, with a desire to get from one point to another without expense and as easily as might be. Experience made it clear to cattle shippers that in order to deliver cattle on the hoof by crate car it was necessary to keep them on the hoof all through the journey. It was found that when fatigue induced the cattle in the cars to lie down more often than not they were trampled to death before they could get up. So the cowpuncher then and there acquired an identity. To keep cattle from lying down in the cars shippers hit upon the idea of sending out with each cattle train a crew of men armed with long poles, whose duty it would be to travel over the cars and "punch up" all cattle that were down. These crews were recruited from the riff-raff of humanity usually to be found about big stockyards, and only the foreman of each crew could call his employment permanent. This was, and is today, the duty of a cowpuncher. The cowboy is self-respecting, and he has a pride in his calling that is real. He condemns the cowpuncher—speaks of him as "poor white trash." And he has just one opinion of the fellow who classes him with the men who ride crate cars instead of cayuses and swing long poles instead of riatas. That same opinion would not look well expressed in cold type.

SUPPLY OF IVORY. Elephants Don't Furnish All That Is Used Nowadays.

The elephant is no longer the only animal which can produce ivory, according to the official decision of the United States general appraisers, says the Baltimore Sun. Ivory dealers and those who work in the material have known this for a long time, but the makers of the tariff do not seem to have been so well posted. Testimony from ivory dealers was introduced at the investigation to show that the tusks of the hippopotamus furnish just as good ivory as do any of the 25 different varieties of elephants and must pay the ivory tariff rate of 35 per cent ad valorem. It was also shown that the boar, narwhal, right whale and alligators were producers of ivory. Even the western hog gives up many an ivory tusk to the butchers in Chicago packing houses. This does not mean that there is no difference between elephant ivory and hippopotamus ivory. Ivory workers who understand their vocation can distinguish a difference even between the various kinds of elephant ivory before it has been polished and worked over. Hippopotamus ivory answers every mercantile purpose as far as it goes. That it is not considered as valuable as elephant ivory is due to the fact that it can be used for smaller articles. The hippopotamus teeth received in this market weigh from one-half a pound to three or four

pounds. The elephant tusks range in weight from 100 to 250 pounds. Narwhal tusks range in weight from five to 25 pounds. When manufactured into small articles the hippopotamus ivory brings just as much as any other kind. As far as that goes, however, the tusks of the American hog bring more than does any kind of ivory if weight alone is considered. If they were sold at the regular ivory rate of \$4 a pound they would bring over four cents each. They are sold by the piece and average 25 cents each. The pig teeth are hollow, but will take a very high polish and can be used in many ways. It is said that 20 per cent of the hogs killed produce valuable tusks. The long, thin, yellow tusk of the narwhal does not bring nearly as much today as it did 150 years ago. This is due to the passing of superstitious ideas regarding this ivory producer of the sea. A century ago people believed that the walrus was connected with the fabulous unicorn, and the horn or tusk was supposed to possess many magical virtues. For instance, it was regarded as an antidote for all poisons, and kings kept a horn in their dining rooms, believing that it would warn them if their food had been poisoned. The tusks were worth thousands of dollars in those times, but the whalers and hunters of the north are glad to sell them today for \$75.