

DEAD LETTERS.

The National Curiosity-Shop in Washington. The Dead-Letter Office is, as its name implies, the morgue for all the post-offices in the country. To it find their way the letters and packages in countless numbers which are the mute monuments of carelessness. There are gathered the evidences of thoughtless suicides, murders of chirography, and fatal accidents which result from carelessness. All letters or packages which have upon or in them the faintest traces of ownership are carefully traced to their homes; but there remain countless articles, each having a value, be it more or less, which accumulate day after day. The consequence is that the office becomes clogged up with the multitude of things which have strayed away from their owners, and it becomes necessary to hold an annual clearing sale "to make room for more stock," as the trademen say in their announcements. These sales have become a feature in Washington, and the curious crowd pick up many a choice bargain. The annual sale will begin in Washington this year at 10 a. m. December 4, and will continue until the stock is disposed of.

The catalogue is a curiosity in its way, and gives one an idea of the kind of articles forwarded through the mails. The list includes 2,002 lots, which in many cases are made up of a number of different articles, thus swelling the aggregate of pieces to an enormous number. The figures given represent the number of packages carelessly addressed, insufficiently paid, or containing unmarketable articles for which no owners could be found after systematic inquiry. About twenty per cent. of these articles had been returned on payment of postage had the senders availed themselves of the simple device of putting their name and address on the wrapper. The amount realized from the sales is reclaimable at any time within four years on receipt of proper proof from the sender or the person addressed.

In the catalogue are included 7,180 lots of miscellaneous articles, the combinations in each package being often fantastic and grotesque. Gentlemen who may be unprovided with neckwear can turn to the very first lot on the list and purchase a dozen linen collars, size sixteen and one-half. Just what the sender was after when he enclosed in lot 15 a box of keys, some window fasteners, two casters, and a rivet-head, is hard to imagine. In a similar assortment, which might truly be called "miscellaneous," consists of twenty-four pieces of isinglass, two coils of wire, two paint-brushes, an old razor, a pair of scissors, and a pocket-knife. A black lace tie, a corset, size 21, a piece of blue ribbon, and two hair-bands are unmistakably feminine; while a damaged meerschaum cigar-holder, a felt hat, a briar pipe, three soiled cuffs, and a revolver are unmistakably masculine; but it is difficult to classify a collection embracing a hair-switch, six pocket-knives, six tooth-brushes, a pair of striped hose, five toy wind-mills, three smokers' dressing-cases, a cotton shirt, and a lot of damaged toys.

From a careful study of the returns it would appear that the fair sex are largely to blame for the sale, for fully three-fourths of the packages contain articles essentially feminine—frizzes, bangs, switches, shoes, baby clothes, lace, gloves, thread, needles, sewing-machine attachments and articles which single men seldom see. The males are responsible for the revolvers, which are unmarketable, but both must bear the blame for the pocket-knives, which are constantly turning up in the most unexpected places. Being sandwiched in between a false front and a pair of colored corsets, or a foxtouch pouch and a screw-driver, there must be men at that sale, for it takes a man to bid on an umbrella cover, a pair of gent's kid gloves, and a pair of soiled half-hose, which forms lot No. 461, but there must also be some of the other sex at the sale, for no horrid man would dare lift up his voice for lot No. 601, which comprises a complete set of lady's soiled underclothing. The packages numbered from 1,541 to 1,549 each contains a box of violin strings, while those from 1,696 to 4,707 are each made up of hair combs and hair switches.

There are any quantity of toys, a washing-machine, a clothes-wringer, and 135 packages of music. The title of one of them, "Let Me Dream Again," suggests that the sender was practicing the dream business when he mailed the package. "Will He Come," might be answered had still another ballad reached its destination, while "The Letter in the Candle" is especially appropriate to a page of mail in the Dead-Letter Office.

There are exactly 3,274 packages of books which will never delight the minds of the people for whom they were intended. There are scores of Bibles, dozens of religious works, and plenty of standard volumes by authors of note. "Songs for the Sanctuary" is wedged in between "American Education" and "Guetier's Metallic Alloy," while "How Gamblers Win" finds a place between two dictionaries. And, by the way, it may be observed that the number of people who are stumbling about in literary darkness for want of the dictionaries which never reached them is simply alarming, and a fit subject for Congressional investigation.

The last schedule embraces different packages of jewelry, and these will doubtless be eagerly scanned by the bidders, for many of them appear to be valuable. Watches, chains, rings, eye-glasses, and tableware appear in profusion and confusion, many being of evident value, while others are mere worthless trinkets.

If anything was ever valuable for its oddity, it will surely be lot No. 1,813 of schedule "A," which contains "ten gent's odd leather gloves, four gent's odd mittens, two child's odd mittens, five lady's odd mittens, four gent's odd hose, for lady's odd hose, five child's odd hose." Odd, isn't it?

The Ostrich Kick.

When a farmer goes into a savage bird's camp he takes with him a thorn pole, with a branch or two of the thorny bush left on the end. This is called a "tuck," and when the tuck is applied to the ostrich's neck or head (his tender points) he is almost invariably subdued, and, after one or two efforts to escape, bolts furiously off to the other side of the camp, where he rears up and down to vent his baffled rage. If, however, the bird gets near enough to his opponent to give the so-called kick, he lifts his bony leg as high as his body and throws it forward with demonic grotesqueness, and brings it down with terrible force. His object is to rip the enemy down with his dangerous claw, but in most cases it is the flat bottom of his foot which strikes, and the kick is dangerous as much from its sheer

power as from its lacerating velocity. It is a movement of terrible force and power, at all events. Several instances may be mentioned of herd-boys being thus either wounded, maimed, or killed outright. One case occurred near Graaff Reinet, in which a horse had his back broken by a single blow. In this case the bird had endeavored to kill the rider, but missed him and struck the horse.

Many persons have been set upon by birds when there was no shelter, not even a tree to run to. In such a case, if the pursued were acquainted with strutting tactics, he would find himself flat on the ground, where the bird finds it impossible to strike him. But even this is no light matter, for some birds in their rage at being baffled of their kick, will roll over their prostrate enemy, bellowing with fury and trampling upon him in the most contemptuous fashion. One man who thus attempted the lying-down plan found that every time he attempted to rise the bird would return and stand sentry over him, till at last, after creeping a distance he got out only by swimming a pond that bounded one side of the camp.—Century Magazine.

An Age of Monologue.

"There is no comfort in talking nowadays," sighed an nice old lady, recently; "even the best-bred people interrupt so that one can never finish anything. Everybody wants to talk, but nobody is willing to listen." Perhaps the inattention of her hearers to some pet story had ruffled the speaker's usually placid humor, and undoubtedly she stated the case somewhat strongly, but there is unfortunately far too much truth in her remark than in these days everybody wants to talk and nobody to listen. It is partly because it is an age of profane, if not always profound thought, and the simplest of our acquaintances are seething with ideas that jostle each other in their eagerness to come to utterance. For the most part these ideas, like Dr. Holmes' moral, run at large, and are caught from the air, but none the less they do compel speech, and the result that conversation has well become a lost art, and we live in an age of monologue. Two or more people sit down together, and each utters his monologue, more or less brilliant, as the case may be, paying no especial heed to the words of his companion, and only in the faintest degree modified by them. Epigrams, anecdotes, simile and wise observations are poured out to unheeding ears, not for the sake of being heard, but for the sake of utterance. We have become like so many Cassandra's, and bear about the burden of prophecy with an inward necessity of declaring it which is mightier than we. We read, talk, but how seldom do we listen.—Boston Courier.

Manner and Manners.

Beauty is generally considered as the most seductive and irresistible of social graces. Yet even beyond the fascination of beauty may be ranked the charm of manner, and the brilliant interchange of thought between refined and cultivated intellects. Manner may indeed take the first place among social gifts, for it has an ethical value as a refining influence in all grades of life. It promotes harmony, softens acerbity of temper, and diffuses a calm joy over the home circle; while in society it dominates as no other gift or grace can do. Beauty may often have fatal power to draw souls earthward, and conversation, with all its wit and brilliancy, may be used to vitiate the moral sense; but manner is ever noble and ennobling, because based on the two great moral principles—respect for one's self and respect for others.

Manner exists as an heirloom among some races, as the Celt, the Slav and the Arab. The courtesy of the Celt approaches reverence, and the Bedouins have the calm majesty of desert Kings. All the Latin races generally have singular grace of idiom and gesture, but the Teuton is naturally uncouth and rough. John Bright, in one of his eloquent addresses to workmen, says, with truth, that manners, far more than pomp or luxury, form the chief differences between high and low, rich and poor, the noble and the ignoble.

If the uncultivated classes could be trained into habits of mutual courtesy and politeness, if they were made sensible of the moral beauty of gentleness, forbearance, self-respect and reverence, there would be less of the hideousness of coarse language and brutal self-assertion in their ordinary intercourse. Manner is a royal grace that we are accustomed to associate with high rank and high breeding, but it may dwell in the cottage as in the palace; and it has this advantage, that, while it can beautify all life, it costs nothing, and never generated an evil thought or word.—Lady Wilde, in Home Journal.

Foreign Social Customs.

Wealthy New York families are fast forming their habits upon French and English models. Mothers and daughters each have their own maid, and the "own" maid never loses sight of her young mistress. She sleeps in an alcove, or small room separated only by a portiere; or, if her quarters are in another part of the house, she is the last to leave her at night and the first to see her in the morning; for she makes her clothes, she prepares her toilet for the day, she superintends her bath, dresses and undresses her, accompanies her on her walking, shopping and other little expeditions. The oversight exercised is constant, and so minute in the nature of the case that the young girl can do nothing, not even post a letter, except under surveillance.

In society, and especially in the ball-room, this is removed. The maid may be in the dressing-room, the chaperon chatting with some other matron within a few feet of her, but the feeling of personal restraint, in a measure, removed, and the joy in it, the temptation to avail herself of it, is all the greater for its contrast with her daily life. That the restriction and scrutiny should be reserved for the home, and the freedom accorded in society, is one of those social inconsistencies which arise from the attempt to ingraft European customs on American stock.—Boston Times.

Postage-Stamp Portraits.

The portrait of Benjamin Franklin on the 1-cent stamp, in the imperial ultramarine blue, is after a profile bust of Rubrecht. The head of Jackson on the 2-cent stamp, in vermilion, is from a bust of Hiram Powers. The Washington head on the green 3-cent stamp is after Bowden's celebrated bust. The head on the 5-cent blue stamp is that of Zachary Taylor. The Lincoln profile, in red, on the 5-cent stamp is after a bust by Volk. The 7-cent stamp, in vermilion, gives the head of Stanton,

after a photograph. The head of Jefferson, on the 10-cent stamp, in chocolate, is drawn from a life-sized statue by Hiram Powers. The portrait of Henry Clay, in neutral purple, on the 12-cent stamp is after a bust by Hart. The head of Webster on the 15-cent stamp, in orange, is after the Cleveland bust. The portrait of Gen. Scott on the 24-cent stamp, in purple, is after a bust by Coffey. The head of Hamilton on the 30-cent stamp, in black, is after the Cerrachi bust; and the portrait of Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry, in carmine, on the 30-cent stamp, is after Wolcott's statue. The new 5-cent stamp has a portrait of Garfield, from the photograph of which the Queen had a copy, and which was approved by Mrs. Garfield.—Boston Traveller.

Leaving the Old Farm.

A farmer near Circleville, Ohio, hung himself because he was compelled to move off a farm on which he had lived since childhood.—Exchange. And still there are people who will go on wondering and inquiring how to keep the boys on the farm. Here is a man who had grown up with the old farm and become so attached to it that to leave the scenes of his boyhood broke his heart, and he hid his grief in a suicide's grave. There is no sense in talking about how the boys may be kept on the farm. To be sure, farm life is not one continual circus day, as in the city, nor a Fourth of July, and farmers can make their sons hate the old farm home by subjecting them to all manner of drudgery, the same as they would a pair of yearling steers, and expect them to wear the yoke and never make a kick. The man alluded to above had grown up on the farm. He was somebody's son, and, no doubt, in his boyhood days he often had a sort of yearning to leave the old farm and go away to the city, and put on a boiled shirt and smoke cigars, and amass a fortune. But he stuck to the old farm, and when he was finally obliged to leave it, the thought was too much, and he took his own life rather than go. No doubt when he thought of leaving the old place, the scenes of his boyhood's happiest hours would arise up before him, and he could see, in looking back over a lifetime spent on the old farm, the same narrow, winding lane through which he trudged when a boy, over the grass and stubble covered with the heavy dew and frost of early morning, and the thought of how he placed his bare foot down on the early bumble-bee which nestled among the clover blossoms and sang its morning song, came back to him with old-time vigor. The thought of leaving the dear old home, around whose cheerful fire-place he had spent many a happy evening, and then went to a bed of feathers beneath rafters laden with dried pumpkin and catnip, and seed-corn and cob-wets and dried apples, was more than the poor man could stand. There is no use talking about keeping boys on the farm when they get the roaming fever, but after a man has been there a lifetime he would not exchange places with a King, and wear a crown, and suffer with the gout and the dyspepsia. There are thousands who know just how that poor man must have felt, and will pity him, as they know that it is often better to own a 300-acre farm, without a mortgage on it, and a good, sound constitution, than to be the proprietor of millions, and a brown-stone mansion, and the consumption.—Texas Sun.

Central American Women.

Just within the courtyard of a white marble palace, in the leafy shade of a mango grove, hangs a silken hammock lined with the brilliant plumage of tropical birds. In it reclines a creature whom to call divine would be base flattery to the gods. Note the classical features, the delicate, very light olive tint of her skin; see the long black silken tresses, in which an immense diamond-headed pin holds a rose; see the long lashes, half shading those lustrous orbs, which give forth all the varieties of expression of refined thought as she listens to her maid's reading from Espronceda's poems. Her shoulders, arms and bust are covered, but not concealed, by the finest of lace, and a long white skirt trails the ground, but allows one microscopic foot to peer forth, just enough to show the point of a gold-embroidered slipper. The gentle breeze gives ever so slight a motion to the hammock, and each little movement of its ravishingly beautiful occupant reveals thousands of new charms. Who would that men, especially those who possessed by a tropically inflammable temperament, become inspired with the divine atlantis—sing of her, rave about her—aye, kill for her?

The Law of Leap Year.

The Albany Law Journal calls attention to an important law relating to the extra day in leap year, which business men and others should bear in mind. The Journal says: "As leap year is coming, it is well to know what the law of leap year is. The law, it is said, takes no notice of parts of days, and, as to the 29th of February, it takes no notice of the whole day. The 28th and 29th are computed as one day. For example, suppose a note is dated on the 28th of February, 1880, payable one day from date. Ordinarily it would be payable on the 4th of March, and so it is in leap year, and not on the 3d. In Indiana the question has recently come before the Supreme Court, in regard to service of process in 1876, the last leap year. The law there requires ten days' previous service for the entry of the judgment. In the case before the court the judgment was premature if the 28th and 29th were to be computed as one day. The court said: 'It must be regarded as settled in this State that the 28th and 29th of February in every bissextile year must be computed and considered in law as one day.' The question is set at rest by our statute, 1 R. S. m. p. 610, s. 3, which provides that 'the added day of leap year and the day immediately preceding, if they shall occur in any period so to be computed, shall be reckoned together as one day.' This embraces statutes, deeds, verbal or written contracts, and all public or private instruments."

Old Bob.

That white-faced bay horse you see looking at us from among that bunch of mares and colts is quite a celebrated character in the neighborhood, and if the Royal Humane Society gave gold medals to dumb animals I am sure Old Bob deserves one. One rough, stormy day, after a succession of rainy days, which had swollen the Little Laramie river till it became a raging torrent running level with the top of its banks,

HUMOR.

Hosts of people—Landlords.

The great revolutionist—The fly-wheel.

A matter of deep feeling—Ocean soundings.

"Naturalists say that a single swallow will devour 9,000 flies a day." Obviously the naturalists have made a mistake of 8,999 swallows.

It may be truthfully stated that, no matter how a young man acts towards a young lady, he can never cease her to dislike him sufficiently to decline his picture.

A Manitoba man advertises: "Wife Wanted.—Must not be over 25; good cook, good housekeeper, and able to milk four cows; if lady means business send photo."

"Dogs, under favorable circumstances, live to be 30 years old," says an exchange. "Favorable circumstances" probably means a family without boys or neighbors.

One great unpleasantness attending a man's getting married is his utter insignificance on the occasion. The bride is the object of attention as the star performer of the show, and he is regarded merely as a necessary property.—Boston Post.

An Iowa juror stated in open court that a man had sought to bribe him with half a dollar, and the judge gave him credit for his great firmness in holding out against temptation. There is no telling what might have happened had 75 cents been offered.

"Get right out of this," shouted an irritated merchant to a mendacious clerk; "this is the third lie I have caught you in since 10 o'clock this morning?" "Oh, well," said the new man, "don't be too hard on me. Give me a chance to learn the rules of the house."

Yes, John, there are lady drummers, but we cannot answer your inquiry as to the solidity of their cheeks. We never kissed one on the cheek, and, by George, the man that would do so when there is a rosy mouth laying around doing nothing deserves to be lynched.—Evansville Argus.

"Justice, dey say yume gwine to run for justice ob de peace, am dat a fact?" "I did hab a hanker' dat ah way, sho' 'nough; what's yo's 'pinion 'bout de matter?" "Well, Jimmie, ef turbanout's fair play, yume justified in yo' pappus, cause yume been runnin' away from de justice ob de peace these sebl' years."

We have near sympathy with that dear and saintly old lady from the country "deestriet" who, upon examining the weapons in an antiquarian museum, declared that there was only one thing more she desired to look upon, and then she would go home satisfied—viz, the axe of the Apostles.

SENTIMENTAL inscriptions do not always have the effect their authors intend. In the cemetery of Pere Lachaise are two columns, side by side, with the inscriptions (in French, of course):

"Adele R.—I wait for you. 1845."

On the other: "Louis R.—Here I am. 1881."

Beneath the last some gain has inscribed: "He took his time."

DURING the recent election, here in Austin, a candidate asked a man who was working for the opposition if there was not something the matter with his opponent's nose. "Not that I know of," was the reply. "Why, no. What makes you think so?" responded the other, feeling his nasal organ. "Nothing, except that my opponent has been leading you by the nose for the last four or five years, and you do not seem to be aware of it, so I thought you could not have much feeling in your nose."—Texas Sittings.

The young man was evidently honest in his intentions, but three years of constant courting had failed to overcome his excessive bashfulness. They were sitting in chairs at a respectful distance apart. Said the young man, having spent five minutes in search of a subject: "How do you get along with your cooking?" "Nicely," replied the young miss; "I'm improving wonderfully. I can make splendid cake now." "Can you?" said the young man in a pleased manner. "What kind do you like best?" "I like one made with flour, and sugar, and citron, and raisins, and currants, and lots of those things, and beautiful frosting on top," responded the young miss. "Why, that's a wedding-cake," exclaimed the young man, nervously. "I meant wedding," said the young miss, shyly. They were published.

Cosmos Eckenrode, who lives on the Blue Mountains, near the line of the Berks and Schuylkill, Pa., was out hunting. As he was crossing a small clearing he laid down his gun to gather some Blue Mountain tea. Shortly after he picked it up again and was startled to hear very close to his ear, the peculiar whirring which is the signal of the proximity of the rattlesnake. He looked suddenly around, but could discover nothing, when suddenly he discovered the tail of the snake protruding from the muzzle of his gun. He dropped the gun quickly, but instead of coming out his snakeship crawled into the barrel again. After fruitless efforts to dislodge him, Mr. Eckenrode resolved to fire the gun, which was very successful, and the snake, after taking a trip in the air, came down in shreds, badly used up.

A Medical Opinion on Kissing.

Promiscuous kissing has been infinitely more productive of disease of various kinds than the public exhibitions of it, and it is a practice that should be discontinued. The people should confine their kissing propensities to members of their own families, and even then it is not always safe.—Medical and Surgical Reporter.

A Curious Race.

The Jagans impress one as a poor race. In general the men are scarcely more than of medium stature, while the women rarely reach it. The faces of this race are round, large and flat, with huge cheek bones, low foreheads, large and flat noses, very black and restless eyes, wide apart, large tumid lips and strong jaws, furnished with beautiful teeth. The head and chest are disproportionately large, compared to the extreme slenderness of arms and legs, and it is a marvel that the latter can support the well-developed trunk and heavy head. In spite of this strange formation, both men and women have uncommon strength, and I have seen them carry weights that would have taxed the robustest of our sailors. No less surprising is the smallness of their hands and feet, which, if a beauty is very disadvantageous to the men, who can carry only one or two objects in their hands at the same time. They have rough, lusterless black hair, which they wear long and falling over face and shoulders. Some bind it with a leather strap, but most let it grow to such an extent that they look more like furries than human beings. The men have very little beard, and that little they pluck out, while neither men nor women have any hair on their bodies. They do not tattoo, but use all kinds of paint. Two or three hues of color on the face and a few necklaces of shells or birds' bones is the usual dress of a Fuegian.

The German Bed.

And that bed is enough to make a man stoop-shouldered. It's about as broad as the back of a knife blade, as hard as a billiard table and about six inches too short. I couldn't straighten out in it to save my life. I had to lie all twisted up into a knot, like a rattlesnake ready to strike. But I could have made out even with that if it had not been for that feather concern which they palmed off on me for a coverlet. That was too short, a foot and a half shorter than the bed. If I tried to cover my shoulders, my feet got so cold that the nails nearly dropped off, and when I tried to save my toe-nails my shoulders were covered with goose pimples as big as hazel nuts. When I'd get one side of the thing tucked in nice around me all the feathers would go sliding over to the other side, leaving nothing but a double thickness of cloth (and mighty cold cloth, too, I tell you) to keep me warm on that side. And as the feathers would all congregate on one side, that side would rise up so that there would be an interval of about two inches for the pure air of heaven to find an entrance and circulate around my swiveling body. If I'd hit a hillcock of feathers a rap to make it lie even, the whole confounded thing would fly up. I never had such a time in my life. I fought those feathers nearly all night, and never did manage to get 'em fixed right for more than a minute at a time. Every time I'd wink the whole thing would assume a new attitude. And that infernal wedge-shaped bolster nearly broke my neck until I went rummaging around and found it.

About Canary Birds.

The cost of keeping canary birds is seldom thought of. The canary is the pet bird of the rich and the poor; it is everywhere, and its keeping involves an immense amount of money in the aggregate. A gentleman who has for several years been extensively engaged in the trade of bird seed, and who is excellent authority, informs us that he has the statistics to prove that there are now fully 14,000,000 of these pets in this country. Each bird will use twelve pounds of seed per year, if not overfed, and, unfortunately for them, they generally get too much. Thus it takes 168,000,000 pounds of seed to feed them through a year, worth at least \$14,000,000. Beside this seed, as any one knows, is the sugar, the crackers, the eggs, and the thousand and one things that different keepers supply them with. Again, we have a great expense in cages. There are now twenty-two manufacturing of bird cages in the United States. One of the most extensive of them turned out \$1,000,000 worth of cages last year, and will this year add largely to the amount. The whole cost of cages made last year is estimated at nearly \$3,000,000. This gives for the two items of seed and cages the snug little sum of \$17,000,000.

Curious Results from Skulls Fractured.

Of the fifty-four persons who were killed by the falling of a huge chimney at Bradford, England, twenty-six had their skulls fractured. Several curious incidents are told about the survivors. A girl of 13, who was taken to a hospital, when asked her name replied: "Five minutes past 8" (the time of the accident). Two hours later, in response to the same question, she said: "Two minutes past 8," and again a few minutes later she was able to give her real name, and after that rapidly improved. A boy suffering from concussion of the brain remained motionless in a curled-up position for thirty-six hours. He finally became conscious, and in all respects entirely sensible, except that he had no recollection of the accident or even of the events which immediately preceded it. He knew where he lived and where he worked, but did not remember going to work that morning.

Adulterated Teas.

The word "pure" as applied to teas from Japan and China, appears to be as necessary to their sale as the omission of the same word is to Indian teas, from the simple fact that tea can only be tea—as if it is not tea, ergo it is something else and should be sold under another name. The cause need not be sought far, as it is simply due to the impurity of a too confiding public. The London and the assistant dealer unite in full force and the assistant dealer, who would instantly reject "Oscorogarine" or "butterine" for butter, will most meekly accept a mixture of willow or other leaves, highly faced with copperas and indigo or Prussian blue, as pure green tea, and this when infusion and a slight knowledge of the tea leaf would frequently place all in a position to test the purity for themselves. Further check is at hand in a sediment presenting an appearance like its adulterant. From most countries complaints are frequent that "pure tea" is unobtainable at any price. Still, pure tea is manufactured, but how much of it reaches the consumer of China and Japan tea, as such is a question. By the time it has passed from the bush to the factory, thence to middleman and grocer, and finally into the cup of the confiding drinker, its original identity would puzzle its manufacturer to determine its class, certainly as regards Indian teas, whose frequent "mixings" and transformations often destroy all trace of their origin.—Philadelphia Times.

Tragic Romance.

Some years ago I worked at the South Wales mine. Nothing but coal was mined from the shaft during the day. At night a gang of men was sent to clear up the timbers and debris scattered through the gangways during the day and impeding work. The mouth of the shaft was fenced in, the fence raising and lowering with the cage. In respect to the fence being always properly closed, the mine's rules were always very strict, a public pathway leading out the mouth of the shaft, and people otherwise being in danger of falling into it. One night while Davy Bevan, ear of the shaft, was eating his lunch at the foot of the shaft, he was startled by a heavy object, and he was looking up, he saw an object, that white, on the top of the cage. Unholy visions flashed through his mind, and, though a brave man usually, the screaming of the rats increased his terror, and it was some minutes before he could compose himself, and nearly an hour elapsed before his quaking heart

Permitted him to make a closer investigation.

He found then the dead body of a man. The corpse was evidently that of a well-to-do person who had met his death by walking into the shaft in the darkness of the night. The men were summoned from all parts of the mine, but none recognized the dead man's features. The mystery surrounding him deepened when at daylight the remains were taken to the surface and viewed in vain by the gathering crowd for some familiar likeness. At last there pushed through the throng a blue-eyed young woman, the daughter of a miner employed at a colliery of a few miles, but in the other valley. One glance at the corpse, and she swooned away. For days she was a raving maniac, and the story then came out. The strange unfortunate was the son of a had owner and her husband. Their marriage had been kept secret, and they had quarreled some weeks before. He was on his way back to ask forgiveness, and to claim his bride and take her to the home he intended for her. He was attracted by the light in the engine-room. The fence was out of repair, and a tinker whose duty it was to see to it had put off repairing it until the next day. The young woman, so credibly bereft of the man she madly loved, lived but a short time.—English Paper.

Popular Life in Italy.

A most interesting feature of modern Italian life is the persistent survival of old manners and customs among the peasantry. French influence has modified the whole life of the upper classes; painters are for the most part content to follow the methods in vogue at the Salon; and the death of high-class music forms the stock complaint of Englishmen and Germans who sojourn in Italy. But in spite of railways, telegraphs, and half-penny newspapers, the peasant remains much as he has been from time immemorial; his pots and pans are still fashioned in Etruscan shapes; his great white oxen are yoked in the simplest conceivable manner to carts of primitive pattern; and only a year or two ago some friends of mine heard a boy of a Tuscan glass-making each other in increased phrases such as "The sun might have put me to the mouth of the night," "The sun has been so long in the sky," and "The woman's hammer is still hammer as of old;" and this survival of the past into the present gives a lively interest to the investigation of such customs as have dropped out of use, clothing the dry bones of antiquarianism with the sinews and flesh of every-day life. Though the past be dead, there is no need to bury it out of sight; for its death wears the semblance of a sleep, from which it may rise anew, for aught we can see to prevent it, at any moment.—Macmillan's Magazine.

Down in the Dark.

Down in the lower levels of our mines, hundreds of feet below the surface of the earth, in the dominions of Erebus, where darkness ever holds its reign unbroken by the light of day, are found some curious growths. In the lower levels of the Comstock mines—particularly those long abandoned or unused—are seen many wonderful growths of different kinds of fungi. Some of these are of great size, almost filling up drifts, and, seen by the dim light of a candle, look like sheeted ghosts. Down below in the dark these growths seem to strive to imitate the forms of things seen on the surface. In one of our mines was once found an imitation of a fancifully-carved meerschaum pipe, stem and all, so perfect that it would easily be mistaken for the genuine article if not taken in the hand, and closely examined. Some of the fungi resemble the horns of animals, and are from two feet to a yard in length, while others might pass for a petrified devil-fish.—Virginia (New) Enterprise.

An Oyster Omelette.

An oyster omelette may be a new dish to some cooks, and I can assure them that it will be a favorite if the family like oysters. Steep a dozen oysters in their own liquor, if possible, if not, use a very little water; roll two or three lumps of butter the size of butter-tubs in flour, and put in and let it come to a boil; salt it well, and add black or cayenne pepper to suit your taste. Take out the oysters and chop them, and, if necessary to make them thick, add a little flour to the sauce; then put the oysters in and set the saucepan in which they are on the back part of the stove. Beat your eggs until very light, and add to them two table-spoonfuls of cream or rich milk; fry in a well-buttered frying-pan. When done remove to a hot platter or a deep plate, and pour the oyster sauce over it. Serve while hot.—New York Evening Post.

The Man and the Mouse.

A Man having caught a Mouse in a Trap held him at arm's length and exclaimed: "Ah! you Rogue! I have you at last! Only the other Night you ate the Hind Pocket out of my Pants." "True, my Friend," replied the Mouse, "but I did you a good Turn at the same time. I ate up a Love Letter which your Wife got up an hour before Daylight to look for. But for me you would now be a Baldheaded old Coon." "Shake!" said the Man, as he Drew down his Left Eye, and the Mouse shook himself out of the Trap and into his Hole.

A Considerate Grandson.

Pete, the grandson of Mashesh, the Basuto chief, had the misfortune to be eaten by one of his friends, or enemies, the story does not say which. The cannibal was captured and brought before Mashesh, who was urged to kill him. "No," said Mashesh, "why should I disturb my grandfather's grave?"—Letter from South Africa.

There are Generals in the German Army who have as high as thirty-six medals of honor, and yet find it hard to keep out of debt. When you desire to honor a man, give him the cash.

A Man ought to keep his friendship in constant repair. I look upon a day as lost in which I do not make a new acquaintance.—Dr. Johnson.

INFINITE toil would not enable you to sweep away a mist, but by ascending a little you may often look over it altogether.

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