

ON OCTOBER PAGES.

SELECTIONS, INTERESTING AND INSTRUCTIVE FROM THE MAGAZINES.

THE BAR AND JURY TRIALS.

In jury trials there is a distinct descent in the nature of the presentation, tempting and easy. Some men have a peculiar fitness for such trials; they have always afforded opportunity for the exercise of brilliant powers. A respectable proportion of the bar take part in them, and perhaps an equal proportion of the respectable bar, and yet it seems that the average of the men so engaged is deteriorating, and that in time, though perhaps very gradually, this practice will pass into the hands of a segregated body of lawyers, the majority of whom will enjoy not much more reverence from the profession at large than now does the criminal bar. Such an attitude on the part of the profession toward one of its own units may be pharisaical, but it seems likely to prevail. This is of course, very far from denying that most lawyers are willing to try jury cases, and none will refuse to do so if they be important enough. The statement simply refers to a tendency. One reason for this may be found in the smallness of the return for this class of work; another, perhaps, in the reluctance of the keen, trained, unimpassioned mind to appeal to intelligences so much less alert and so much influenced by sympathy, antagonism and prejudice that the temptation to arouse these motives by any device short of dishonesty or evident impropriety is very strong.—(Henry E. Howland, in The Century Magazine.)

CRONJE AND THE GRAPHOPHONE.

The graphophone is beginning to figure as a considerable American export, and certainly it is one of the most curious and interesting. While its commercial use is beyond the comprehension or needs of the Persian, the Hindoo or the South Sea Islander, each of them is fascinated by an invention which reproduces the familiar sounds of the human voice and entertains him with grand and light opera and orchestral music. Captain J. W. Webster, of the transport Milwaukee, who took General Cronje to St. Helena, amused the old hero and his wife with a graphophone. Although the instrument is common enough in Johannesburg, the general knew of it only by report. "I heard you had a box that talked like a man," he said to Captain Webster through an interpreter. Webster, telling the story, goes on: "Yes, general, I replied, 'and if you and Mrs. Cronje will come into my stateroom I will give you an exhibition.' They sat down soberly in front of the talking box, and I slipped in a cylinder containing Moody and Sankey's hymn 'The Ninety and Nine,' which I had been told they sang in their own language. The effect was startling. They recognized the tune at once, and Mrs. Cronje burst suddenly into tears. Her husband turned away and wiped his eyes, and I could see by the spasmodic claspings and unclaspings of his hands that General Cronje himself was deeply affected. To relieve the tension I put on a record with a lively banjo solo, and in a moment the old gentleman began to smile and beat time with his feet and head, his gray beard wagging to the melody.—(H. E. Armstrong, in Ainslee's Magazine.)

THE LIFE OF A COAL MINER.

First, the boy of eight or ten is sent to the breaker to pick the slate and other impurities from the coal which has been brought up from the mine; from there he is promoted and becomes a door boy, working in the mine; as he grows older and stronger he is advanced to the position and given the pay of a laborer; there he gains the experience which secures him a place as a miner's helper; and as he acquires skill and strength he becomes, when in the height of his manhood and vigor, a full fledged miner. If he is fortunate enough to escape the falls of rock and coal he may retain this position as a miner for a number of years; but as age creeps on and he is attacked by some of the many diseases incident to work in the mines he makes way for those younger and more vigorous following him up the ladder whose summit he has reached. He then starts on the descent, going back to become a miner's helper, then a mine laborer, now a door boy; and when old and decrepit he finally returns to the breaker where he started as a child, earning the same wages as are received by the little urchins who work at his side. There is no incentive for ambition in the average miner's life. He cannot rise to places of eminence and wealth; only one in five hundred can even be given place as a foreman or superintendent, and these are positions which few miners care to hold.—(John Mitchell, in The Cosmopolitan.)

OLDEST RECORD OF HUMAN HISTORY.

When we turn to Egypt we meet with a consecutive record of man covering some seven thousand years. The scribes of the times of the pyramids looked back as far to the beginning of the kingdom as we look back to Charlemagne, the founder of modern Europe. Although recent Babylonian discoveries have challenged the primacy of Egyptian civilization, yet there is not by any means the same continuity of record in Mesopotamia as there is in Egypt. But the Egyptian record by no means passed unchallenged. A couple of generations ago it was the fashion to deny that anything could be certain before the Greek historians. Then, when the mass of contemporary records of the earlier times compelled attention, it was grudgingly allowed that the older history might be followed just as far as we could prove it. But nothing was much believed in before the pyramid builders, about 4000 B. C., and writers put down the first three dynasties as a tissue of fables of a semi-barbarous time, for which no reality or exactitude could be claimed.

To the surprise of the sceptical world, the last two years have brought to light the actual possessions of these earliest kings. Name after name has been proved to be founded on fact, the successive order of the whole of the first dynasty has been proved, and of other kings before and after that. We now familiarly handle the royal drinking bowls of these sovereigns, once so shadowy and unreal; we know precisely all their changes of taste and of work, and deal with Mena, Zer, or Den as fluently as we do with Louis Quinze or Louis Seize furniture. We even know what was going on in every generation for some two thousand years before that time, far more than the later Egyptians themselves knew.

It is the cemetery of the royal tombs at Abydos, and the treasures of gold and ivory and beautiful stones which were left there, that have placed us face to face with the beginning of history.

The oldest record of human history is the statement that ten kings reigned at Abydos, in

Upper Egypt, during 350 years, before Mena, who founded the united kingdom of the whole land, and is counted as the first king of the first dynasty. Even of these earliest kings we now have four of the tombs and the objects which belonged to them, nearly five thousand years B. C., and their names are given as Ka, Zeser, Narmer and Sam. Of two of these kings monuments were found three years ago at Hierakonpolis, in Upper Egypt; but it is only now that we can appreciate their historical position.—(W. M. Flinders-Petrie, in Harper's Magazine.)

THE COLONIZATION OF SIBERIA.

While the stringent regulations now governing emigration to Siberia have abolished to a great extent the disorder and abuses of the old system, they have entangled the whole process in a network of bureaucratic formalities; and the preliminary steps which must now be taken by every intending emigrant are enough to make all but the most resolute desist. Before making any movement at all the emigrant must seek the advice of the local authorities and obtain a certificate of his suitability and capacity. Permits to emigrate are no longer easily obtainable, but are frequently refused on such grounds as "insufficient means," "physical disability" and "want of working power in the family"; the regulations laying it down that only "good farmers and taxpayers" are to be granted permits. The provisional permit is given only to the head of the family or some other able bodied member of it, who, having taken the advice of the emigration officials at Tchelabinsk as to the nature and location of the available lands, is sent at a nominal fare into Siberia, where he is free to examine all the lots available. If he is successful in finding suitable land, he must first have his choice approved at the local emigration office, the title being indorsed upon his pioneer's certificate. Afterward a final permit to emigrate is given to the remaining members of his family, who follow him on special terms as to railway fares, monetary assistance and exemptions; the poorer obtaining grants or loans to enable them to set up house and purchase the necessary implements. Formerly this assistance was given liberally, but the present policy of the government is to encourage emigration by the more prosperous and thrifty peasants only, and monetary assistance is now restricted to small amounts, seldom exceeding from \$15 to \$25, and then nearly always in the form of a loan repayable without interest within ten years.—(R. E. C. Long, in The Forum.)

FOOD AND LAND TENURE.

It may be dogmatically stated that both wheat and cotton are becoming the excess, surplus or money crops of farmers whose products otherwise suffice to sustain the farm. It is therefore difficult to measure the exact cost of raising wheat. It has been produced at less than 1 shilling per bushel, including use and repairs of machinery and interest thereon, but not including any charge for the rental of land, which forms a part of the income or profit of the farmer. It may be dogmatically affirmed that so long as the farmer in the Mississippi grain growing States can secure to his own use and enjoyment 1 cent a pound, 60 cents a bushel, \$480, or 20 shillings a quarter, the present average production of wheat will be maintained, subject to variation in quantity according to the season. At 70 cents a bushel new land will be put under cultivation in wheat to any extent of the demand, and capital will be found. The difficulty will be to procure even the necessary labor still required, notwithstanding the increasing use of machinery and the common practice of small farmers in combining for the ownership of mowers and reapers or in contracting for the harvest.

No subject of greater importance could be brought before the English speaking people; none of greater weight in maintaining our independence with our kin beyond the seas. The right comprehension of this problem will give assurance of peace, goodwill and plenty.—(Edward Atkinson, in The Popular Science Monthly.)

SINGLEFOOTING AND TROTTING.

My view used to be that, while there could be no objection to teaching a horse to singlefoot if it did not spoil his trot, as a matter of fact it did almost always spoil his trot, and that it was therefore best not to teach it. But I have of late been surprised to see many horses that could both singlefoot and trot. Now if we can have singlefoot without spoiling the trot, it is certainly desirable to have it. The habit of riding continually at a trot is hard upon horses' feet, legs and shoulders. It is better to vary the trot with a canter, and still further with singlefooting. Whether singlefooting is easier upon horses than trotting, as pacing is, I am not sure, but I am inclined to think it is. In a singlefoot there is the same lateral contact with the ground as in a pace. It is hard to tell, by watching him, what a singlefooter does with his feet; if you attempt it you will probably end by looking in the dictionary. (How the dictionary man found it out is none of your business.) It is, of course, a highly artificial gait. As for the comfort of it, I have known some singlefooters in whom the gait was a lullaby.—(E. S. Nadal, in Scribner's Magazine.)

PARISIAN STOCK GAMBLERS.

Except, perhaps, around the Casino at Monte Carlo, there is no army of monetary rakes as big as that which prowls around the Paris Bourse. Few spectacles are more affecting than that of such men—once, doubtless, prosperous in legitimate pursuits, with a healthful view of the world and possessing in full that inestimable gift of life, le bonheur d'être—so shattered in character and degraded in morals; always mental and often physical wrecks; men with broken volition, with lost purpose, with professions they can no longer exercise, with strenuously acquired commercial experience which has been hopelessly vitiated by the terrible dissipation of thwarted speculation; men whose sole idea and possession is a "system" of playing the market which they themselves can never play—like the Vieux Professeur at Monaco, who, moynenant une faible rétribution, will cast you a beautiful horseshoe with his infallible diagrams and apparatus. Men—but they are not men. They are ghosts—pitiable, miserable apparitions who haunt the parlours of the relentless, inexorable monster that destroyed them.

These, with a few old women, are the drags and the leas of the Paris Bourse, and they are known as the pichs humides—wet feet. The old women carry old handbags, and in the old handbags are "securities." The securities are as cheap and as degraded as the dealers in them—the engravings issued by insolvent corporations, by corrupt companies, by counterfeit concerns that were never intended to develop beyond their charter, and by South American mining companies that never yielded an ounce of ore. Yet this worthless mass of paper finds a market occasionally. Sometimes a bank or cognate financial institution fails. Among its assets are found



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General Painter:—Wm. J. Shaw, 116 West 39th St., Hard Wood Finisher.  
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the contents of the old handbags. Usually these were bought not long before the failure. The failure is not explained by the contents; the contents are explained by the failure. Probing deeper, we discover that the officers have speculated, not in handbag rubbish, but in the officially listed securities, and when bankruptcy was inevitable, purchased the refuse to "give themselves a countenance."—(E. Friend, in The Forum.)

KILLING A "MAN-EATING" ELEPHANT.

The natives tell tales of man-eating elephants, but there is no such thing. When I was at the village of the Boorokas they told me of an elephant that it was impossible to kill. He had a charmed life. They made him out to be a monster. He ran about in their plantations, charging every man he saw. He had been the terror of the village for years, and had killed several people. He would suddenly disappear, and as suddenly come back again. At the time I was there he had just killed one of the guards of the plantation, and, strange to say, they could not find the man's body. His hut had been torn down, and the elephant tracks were all around, showing that he had done the work. The natives all declared that the elephant had eaten him, and no amount of argument would convince them that it was contrary to the nature of an elephant to eat flesh. My own opinion is that after the elephant had gored the man to death with his tusks, a leopard had carried away the body. They showed me the elephant's tracks, and declared his tusks were as big as a tree standing near, which measured 18 inches in diameter. The footprints at least were large, and showed that he was no small beast. I organized a hunting party, and following his tracks all day long came upon him about 5 o'clock in the afternoon as he was digging roots. I crept up behind a coconut palm tree, so as to be on the broad side of him. I waited until he let his ears fall back on his body to give me the exact spot where to shoot—the ear marking the perpendicular line of the body shot. Then I clipped the line with a No. 4 ball just two inches from its outer diameter, and behind the front leg. He doubled up, turned halfway round, and fell on the wounded side; the ball having passed through both lungs to the opposite side, where it could be felt through the skin with the finger. His tusks, although not as large as reported, were of good size. His body measurements were slightly larger than those of Jumbo.—(William Stamps Cherry, in McClure's Magazine.)

NOAH WEBSTER'S BIRTHPLACE.

The house in which Noah Webster was born in West Hartford still stands. It is on the west side of the street and overlooks a beautiful succession of undulating fields and blue vistas. Great elms overhang the ancient structure, one being of unusual height and thickness. The place long ago passed into the possession of strangers, and the broad acres which composed the original farm have been divided. But the house is little changed from what it was when the scholar lived there as a boy. The writer visited the place in the autumn two years ago. The yellow pumpkin lay smiling in the rustling cornfield in the slope back of the house, and vines chambered over the old lean-to in the rear, and everything looked quite as it must have done in the early part of the nineteenth century.

The house is of a familiar old New-England type; is severely plain, and from a modern point of view very ugly. The big front door is ornamented by an iron knocker. Two stories in height, the house contains many large rooms, though the ceilings are low. Each side of the front entry is a large room on the first floor, and these rooms, in keeping with the old style, show the large sheathed beams lower than the plastered ceiling. The chambers above correspond to the rooms below. The rear portion of the house is only one story high, the roof sloping down unbroken from the ridge. In the centre of the house is a huge chimney, which affords three fireplaces—one for each of the front rooms and one for a large room on the west side of the house. The latter room was the living room of the Websters. North of it is the pantry and south of it a sleeping room. In the old lean-to in the rear of the house is another large chimney with a fireplace and the brick oven that was considered indispensable to the kitchen by the oldtime housekeepers. It is not definitely known in which room Noah Webster was born. This information is nearly always the first information which visitors to the place ask. Not long ago a lady stopped one night in the house and went away and wrote a letter to a newspaper, joyfully proclaiming that she had slept in the room in which Noah Webster was born; perhaps she did, though by what means she became certain of it is not known. Just when the farm passed fully out of the possession of the Webster family is not recorded.—(Joan Webster Field, in The Connecticut Magazine.)

THE GREAT PLATEAU.

The story of the Great Plateau west of the Rocky Mountains is long and varied. It tells of ages in which the world was slowly moulded by fire and flood, and carved by wind and sand and rain. Dry land was conjured from the sea and lifted into vast plateaus; then torn and tilted and gullied. Life came and traced its record here and there on the pages of the great stone book.

The vast tableland is dumb agent the coming of man, but you find the ruins of his abandoned homes all over its southern reaches and straggling out upon its eastern and its western fringes. Cliff dwellers and cave dwellers, dwellers upon lofty mesas and in snug valleys at their feet, all are gone, and their crumbling homes are desolate.

It was not until the Spaniards came prying up over the plateau that the Pueblo and other still-living types of Indians were dragged, very much against their will, out of the languid prehistoric silences. Then came the conquests by

the Spaniards and their domination of the land for three hundred years, followed by a quarter of a century of Mexican rule.

At last the Great Plateau, austere as ever, was gathered to the fold of the United States. Its wayside stories, wild, quaint, pathetic, it tells to the wanderer in tune with its spirit along its ancient pathways. It has received the hunter, the trapper, the explorer, into its capacious bosom—to return or not, as fortune and the Indian willed. The cowboy has spied out its fastnesses; the railway engineer has marked in toil and hardship the routes along which in later time the tides of life and industry and trade surge to and fro; the surveyor has projected his lines over its arid 130,000 square miles. But the Great Plateau yields grudgingly to the touch of civilization. It grants some meagre green oases beside the waterways. It opens here and there a narrow path for the hurrying trains, closing its great silences behind them as they vanish; then rolls away their polluting trails of smoke into its vast aerial spaces, and falls asleep again.

The part of the plateau which, on the whole, is most attractive to the traveller in the land of wide horizons is that which lies between the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad on the north and the Santa Fe Railroad and its adjacent country on the south. The Santa Fe crosses the heart of the plateau, over a region austere and forbidding enough, it is true, from the car window, for all its miles of gorgeous cliffs and noble forests, but so lavish in stories of the world's fashioning, so rich in fading glimpses of strange old barbarians who are gone, so quaintly peopled with kindly children of the earth and the sun, who bid you welcome to homes and firesides where for centuries they have foregathered, a land withal so attractive for its absolute freedom from fret and fume, where you are the unchallenged owner of the day, that when once you have broken the link which bound you to the rails, and head away into the dreamy shimmering mazes which lure you on and on, it will be strange indeed if you do not for some lucid hours care least of all things whether the fortunes of the way are ever to lead you back.—(T. Mitchell Prudden, in Harper's Magazine.)

RECRUITING TEXAS RANGERS.

The membership of the Texas Rangers has consisted always of those restless beings in whom the spirit of adventure is the controlling motive. Most of them have been graduates of that school of courage, the cow puncher's saddle. Some served their apprenticeships as scouts and guides in the Indian country; a few are college men from the East, who proved their staying and fighting qualities on the plains before joining the Rangers. No man who is not capable of spending sixteen hours out of the twenty-four in the saddle could endure the hard riding that the Rangers are compelled to undergo. No man who was not a dead shot or who would not face without fear the business end of a six-shooter in the hands of a desperado would be considered for a moment as a possible recruit.

The recruit is not subjected to any examination as to his fitness beyond that which the captain of the company to which he applies may insist upon. Preference is given, of course, to men who are familiar with the country in which the Rangers operate, but this is not an essential requisite. If the recruit owns a plains hardened mount so much the better, for the men are required to furnish their own horses and outfits, only their arms, ammunition and rations being supplied by the State.

With this equipment of cool daring, shooting ability and a good horse the newcomer enters the ranks. The skill and experience which are to make him valuable to the State and a credit to the organization he acquires by the actual work of the service. New members come into the ranks so slowly that there is no difficulty in assimilating them. Nobody joins the Rangers from sordid motives, for the pay is only \$60 a month for the private, and the highest emolument that he can ever aspire to is the \$125 a month paid to the commanding officer of the battalion. Therefore no man is tempted to enter the service unless he has a real liking for the work, and these, of course, are apt scholars.

The first effort of the newly joined Ranger is likely to be devoted to improving his marksmanship. He finds that target practice is a favorite diversion among his comrades and that perfection in this branch of his calling is the best life insurance he can carry. So he practises assiduously, shooting from his horse at full speed while leaning far over to protect his own body, shooting from the hip, shooting with his left hand as well as his right, and from every position which the exigencies of frontier conflict might lead him to assume. In a business where not merely success, but one's very existence, depends upon the ability to get the drop on the other fellow and to fire unerringly, one cannot be too familiar with his shooting irons.—(Earl Mayo, in Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly.)

HIS COURTESY.

From The Washington Star.  
"So you won't chop the wood?"  
"I'm afraid," replied Meandering Mike, "dat de exercise would start an appetite dat 'ud trespass on your hospitality."

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