

Land" and "The Wonder Clock," by Howard Pyle, are beautifully illustrated by the author, who is even more noted as an artist than as a writer.

"Once Upon a Time," Mary E. Wilkins.
 "King of the Golden River," John Ruskin.
 "Classic Stories for the Little Ones," compiled by Mrs. L. D. McMurry.
 "Five Little Finger Stories," Lucy H. Warner.
 "Little Jarvis," Molly Elliott Seawell.
 "Marjory and Her Papa," Robert H. Fletcher.
 "Little Miss Phoebe Gay," Helen D. Brown.
 "Stories from Plato," Mary E. Burt.
 "Children's Book," edited by Horace E. Scudder.
 "Classics in Babyland," Clara Doty Bates.
 "Christmas Every Day," William Dean Howells.
 "Daddy Jake, the Runaway" and "Little Mr. Thimblefinger," by Joel Chandler Harris (Uncle Remus).
 "Fifty Famous Stories Retold" and "Fairy Stories and Fables," James Baldwin.
 "Short Stories for Short People," by Mrs. Alicia Aspinwall, are the most popular stories from Grimm, Andersen and others, rewritten in a most charming way for young readers.
 "Cruikshank Fairy Book," edited by George Cruikshank, the famous illustrator.
 "Mopsa the Fairy," Jean Ingelow.
 "Ting-a-ling," "Fanciful Tales," "The Floating Prince," Frank R. Stockton.
 "Bunny Stories," by J. H. Jewett, are similar to the "Uncle Remus" stories, except that the scenes are laid in New England.
 "Princess Idleways," Mrs. W. J. Hayes.
 "The Reign of King Herla," by William Canton.
 "The Christmas Angel," by Katherine Pyle, is similar to "Alice in Wonderland," and is beautifully illustrated. "The Rabbit Witch" and "The Counterpane Fairy," by the same author, are two pretty fairy tales.
 "Green," "Blue," "Pink" and "Yellow" fairy books by Andrew Lang.
 "The Light Princess" and its sequel, "Princess and Curdie," and "At the Back of the North Wind," by George MacDonald.
 "Josie and Her Chipmunk," Sidney Reid.
 "King Midas," from "Tanglewood Tales," is especially good for these grades.
 —Mae Harris Anson.

A CURIOUS STREET CAR LINE.

A curious street car line is that between Atami and Yoshihoma, two coast towns in the province of Izie, Japan. The line is seven miles long, the rolling stock consists of a single car, and the motive power is furnished by a couple of muscular coolies, who push the car along wherever power is necessary. When the car comes to a down grade they jump on and ride.

Ways of the Ermine Changes Color With Seasons

Hartford Times.

SOMETIMES in the late fall or winter, when we are sitting very quietly in an old fence corner, or near a stone heap in woods, we are thrilled by seeing a snow-white, long bodied, short-legged, blue-eyed little creature creep from beneath an old stump and peer into our faces with an odd mixture of curiosity and impertinence. Small, beautiful and graceful as it is, no more cold-blooded and merciless animal exists than this. It is the white weasel or ermine, whose second-hand winter coat was for ages the proudest ornament upon the costumes of kings and prelates, and to the wearing of which they often owed at least half of their dignity. The body of this weasel is about ten inches long without the tail, which is perhaps seven inches more. In winter the fur is all white with the exception of the last three inches of the tail, which are black. In March it sheds this white coat, and the new hair of the upper parts comes in a rich brown. The chin, throat, inner surface of the legs and the rest of the under parts remain white, and the tip of the tail is black as in winter.

About October the color changes again and remains white until the spring. At least this rule applies to New York and New England, further south the changes are less marked.

If providence designed the weasel on purpose to assist in keeping down the surplus wild animal population in the countries he inhabits, the weasel certainly does providence great credit. "Killing," with him, is not only a means of livelihood, it is his hobby, and as the boy says, he "has it bad." It is said that an Englishman never feels quite right unless he has killed something before breakfast; I don't believe that a weasel ever goes to sleep with a clear conscience unless he has been killing things all day.

Like certain gentlemen of quite another color he frequently brings himself to the attention of the public by his visits to the poultry yard, where, in a single night, he will kill forty or fifty pullets, chiefly from sheer "cussedness." He may eat off half the head of one and suck the blood of another. After that he just "runs amuck" and cuts the throat of every fowl he can reach until he almost drops from exhaustion. When the owner finds the victims next morning it will be useless for him to make plans for sitting up the following night with a gun, for Brer Weasel will not be there to meet him. Why should he? He had his fun last night and why should he come back just to have his skin filled with buckshot. He will probably not come near the place again for a year, and the only thing to do is to protect the poultry from such attacks in the future. And if he were to come back by appointment to be shot, it would probably be a bad stroke of business to shoot him, for, like many another criminal, he makes a good detective. If a farmer has a pair of weasels on his farm he will be safe from many of his other enemies. Chief among

these, perhaps, are the rats, which not only kill chickens and eat their eggs, but destroy his vegetables and make a general nuisance of themselves in the house and barn. Now the weasel is born with an undying hatred of rats, and we can imagine something like a malicious smile coming over his cruel little face as he enters a cellar or a granary infested by his enemies. To the rats, however, it is quite a different matter. There is nothing funny about it to them, and you can hear them shrieking with fear as they flee from one hole or gallery to another in their attempts to baffle a foe who knows not pity and never gives "quarter." The ermine sometimes destroys scores of rats in this way, and those which escape are not likely to be seen in the vicinity of their old haunts for a long time to come. In some respects the weasel reminds me of those so-called sportsmen who kill great bags of game just for the sake of numbers; moreover, the weasel often piles up his victims in heaps, possibly to gratify himself by counting them, just as the game butchers do.

The ermine also destroys mice of all kinds and will occasionally eat one up without leaving a trace of it. Chipmunks also suffer from the attacks of this lithe-bodied foe, who can glide into their burrows and kill a whole family in a few minutes. Rabbits are troubled, too, by the weasel, which is sometimes trained to go into the burrow and drive the bunnies out to be shot by the hunters, just as its cousin the ferret is used in England. To prevent the weasel from killing the rabbit, or for gorging itself on the young ones which may be in the burrow, its teeth are sometimes filed down. Only a few years ago it was a common practice to sew up the ferret's lips with a needle and thread before sending it into the burrow, and old game keepers have assured me that the little animal didn't mind it a bit.

Though chiefly nocturnal in its habits, the ermine is often abroad by daylight. Sometimes it makes its nest beneath the roots of a tree, and sometimes in an old stone heap, but when such retreats are not available, why, a good home and a good dinner may be obtained at one and the same time by simply clearing out a family of chipmunks and taking possession of their underground dwelling. The young, from four to seven in number, are generally born in May in New England, and earlier or later in localities respectively north or south of this. The white weasel has a very wide distribution, and is found in cold and temperate regions practically all over the world.

NOT MANY PUT TO USE.

The value of the stamps sold in Borneo and Labuan during 1899 was £20,000, but the postage paid on letters sent from those two colonies never exceeds the sum of £800 a year. The stamps representing the remainder, £19,200, may be presumed to have found their way into albums all over the world.



JACKSONVILLE, FLA., was visited on Friday, May 3, by the most disastrous fire in the history of the city. One hundred and forty-three blocks, or two and a half miles, were burned in the heart of the city, 1,300 buildings destroyed and ten thousand people made homeless. The fire is supposed to have started from an electric wire which accidentally got into a shredding machine of the American Fibre company. Six bodies have been found in the ruins and it is feared others were drowned in attempting to escape from the whirlwind of flame. The people are energetically picking themselves up after the blow, and contracts have already been let for several new buildings. The Windsor Hotel, the opera-house and several other of the most important large blocks, will be rebuilt at once.

The amount of the Chinese indemnity having been settled by the powers, consideration is now being given as to the means by which it may be raised. Four alternatives are presented. First, a Chinese loan not guaranteed by the powers. This would be almost ruinous to China. Second, a loan guaranteed by all of the powers. This could be easily obtained and would hasten the payment of the indemnities and the return to normal conditions, though it would involve heavy responsibilities to the government. Third, to issue Chinese bonds to each power for the amount of its indemnity, payable at fixed terms. Fourth, annual payments, which would be inconvenient because they would prolong the time of payment. The committee also considered the source of revenue which could be used in the payment of the indemnities. These included the maritime customs, which are already under foreign control; an increase in the customs duties to an effective 5 per cent ad valorem; native customs which might be placed under maritime customs; duties on goods, such as flour, cheese, foreign clothing, etc.

The United States cavalry and artillery have left Peking. Imposing international farewell ceremonies attended their going. General Chaffee thanked the cavalry and artillery for their work in the relief and their behavior since, which he said had been a credit to themselves and to their nation.

Wall street for the past week has been a perfect whirlpool of stock speculation. Great fortunes have been won and lost, men have been crazed by the excitement, and both the United States government and that of Great Britain have cautioned the people not to indulge in this battle of the giants. The men concerned largely in the speculation are those representing billions of money—J. Pierpont Morgan, J. J. Hill, James R. Keane, the Vanderbilts, Rockefellers and others.

The historic frigate, Minnesota, which has been used for many years by the naval militia of Massachusetts, has been formally turned over to the government. It was expected that with some trifling repairs the old boat could be towed to Norfolk and used as a receiving ship, but when it was found upon inspection that at least \$200,000 would be required, it was decided to sell the boat to the highest bidder. About all that will be left when the fittings are removed is the ship's hull.

Melbourne, Australia, has been in gala attire for the week in honor of the arrival of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York. Fully three hundred thousand sightseers were in Melbourne.

The population of London, including the old city of London and the twenty-eight metropolitan boroughs, is now 4,536,034, an increase of 308,717 since the census of 1891.

The old trouble in the Korean customs department, which has been under the control of McLeavy Brown, an Englishman, has resulted in an order from the government notifying him to leave his home and give up the control of the customs. In April Mr. Brown was first dismissed from his position, but when the Japanese and British ministers at Seoul protested against this ac-

tion by the Korean government the order of dismissal was withdrawn. Trouble has been brewing for some time.

King Victor Emmanuel has created a new order to be known as the Knights of Labor, which will be conferred upon citizens, including workmen, distinguished in the study of labor questions.

Charles B. Hare, the medical student at Ann Arbor who was stricken with the bubonic plague April 4, has just been released from quarantine and pronounced permanently cured. The friend who nursed him through his illness was also released. There has not been the slightest sign of infection from the case, which is supposed to have resulted from inoculation while handling culture tubes containing the germs.

The interior department has given orders that the famous Wind Cave in the Black Hills be reopened to the public. The cave was closed over a year ago because visitors had chipped souvenirs to the point of positive disfigurement. The cave comprises about 1,000 acres, and receives its name from the very strong current of air that rushes through the entrance.

The hydrographic branch of our naval service is acknowledged to be far in advance of anything of the kind in Europe. Recently inquiries as to our sea charts have been received by the hydrographic office from Spain, France, Greece and practically all European nations. This shows conclusively that foreign navies are endeavoring to follow the example set by the American navy in this respect. All proper information asked is given without reserve.

A vessel which recently arrived at San Francisco reports having passed within three miles of the famous Pitcairn island without observing signs of life. The natives usually put out to passing vessels with fruit, vegetables and other provisions, but none greeted this vessel and the strongest glasses did not reveal the slightest sign of life anywhere on the island. It is feared that some unknown calamity has depopulated the island.

On Friday, May 3, the Bulgarians celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Bulgarian revolt against Turkey, which resulted in the establishment of a separate government.

One copy of the one hundred copies printed of a military map made by the British while occupying New York during the revolution has just been discovered and is now in the possession of the New York Historical Society. The original was discovered only last year in some rubbish in the British war office. Both reproduction and original are ten feet long by four feet wide, and show with considerable minuteness the city and the plans of the British fortifications.

The long-expected break in the Prussian ministry came May 4, when at the close of the Prussian diet three ministers handed in their resignations. This means that the kaiser and the party in the cabinet favoring his policy have declared war upon the agrarians, who demand legislation which shall protect the agricultural interests of Germany. While the granting of these demands might work good to internal agricultural conditions in Germany, a complete compliance with their views would make it impossible to renew existing commercial treaties, and might eventually prove an obstacle to the renewal of the triple alliance.

The recently organized ministry in Japan has also dissolved, only one minister remaining in office. Marquis Ito, the noted Japanese statesman, was the premier of this cabinet.

A son and heir has just been born to the crown prince of Japan and his wife. This child is of peculiar importance to Japan, as it is absolutely necessary that the royal line of Japan shall not show one break in the direct succession. Other na-

tions may change the direct line of their rulers, as happened in England when Victoria, niece of the king, came to the throne because King William had no children of his own to succeed him. When the dynasty of the mikado shows such a break Japan will be Japan no longer.

The report of the Cuban delegates who recently visited Washington in the hope of softening the demands of the Platt amendment to their constitution, has been favorably received. The Cubans were not given the one great favor—complete independence—which they asked through these commissioners, but enough concessions were granted to preserve their self-esteem, and it is thought that these will hasten a satisfactory conclusion of the issues now existing between the United States and Cuba.

A strange accident recently happened on the river Dneiper, near Katchkarovka. A hundred mothers with their babies were returning on the ferry from their evening milking, when a sudden storm sprang up, the ferry was swamped and nearly all the passengers were drowned. As a result nearly every child left in the village was made motherless.

President Castro of Venezuela has been officially notified by the government of the United States that he must not assume any judicial functions in litigation to which American citizens are parties. The well known asphalt case is the most important case to which this notice applies.

It is said unofficially that President Castro has intended to give Germany a port on the island of Margarita. This would alienate the United States and result in the enforcement of the Monroe doctrine. This is in line with recent utterances in England and among our naval men that Germany is preparing to make a test of the Monroe doctrine. This harbor on Margarita island is one of the finest in South America and will give to the nation owning it and possessing a navy, practical control of the Panama canal from the eastern side. Hence it is vital that Venezuela be not allowed to transfer its possession to any other nation than the United States, if she does not care to keep it for herself.

Astronomers at Harvard who have been investigating the variations in light of the little planet Eros have issued a circular stating that according to their theories the variations are caused either by its own peculiar rotation or because it is in reality two similar bodies which eclipse each other in rotation. They favor the latter idea, and further say that according to all deductions the planet is shaped like a dumbbell.

Bresci, the assassin of King Humbert, has been removed to a new cell especially prepared for him, enclosed within high walls, and is watched constantly by two warders. One of his hallucinations is that he will be released soon by a revolution.

The chief engineer of the Trans-Siberian railway says that since it was begun in 1892, 3,000 miles of track have been laid and that 2,000 more must be laid before it is completed. Thirty miles of bridges have already been constructed. The railway is expected to be finished in 1908.

Mrs. Carrie Nation, who has been in jail at Wichita for some time, attempted to gain her freedom by attacking and biting the turnkey who came to notify her to make less noise in her cell. Two prisoners had to help the turnkey to force her back into her cell. As a result of this outbreak she was placed in solitary confinement and is under constant guard. It is claimed upon good authority that local temperance workers are making quiet efforts to have Mrs. Nation declared insane. Her three followers who shared her cell have weakened and will give bail as soon as possible.