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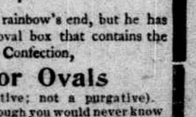

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INDOOR FERNERIES.

How to Select Plants and Transfer Them From Woods to House.

From the Garden Magazine.

The dry heat of our homes in winter is not at all favorable for the growth of native ferns, which by right should rest at least four or five months of the year. A few species, however, break the natural order of things and may be kept growing indoors with fairly good results.

The cheerful little polypody is always pleasant to look upon. It is astonishing how this rock-clinging species holds its own in any situation. It is especially attractive grown in birch bark baskets accompanied by herb robert, with its happily contrasting foliage.

As an all-around fern the ebony spleenwort (Asplenium platyneuron) takes prominent rank. My plant was taken from the pine woods in July, and a year later had not materially changed. The only noticeable difference is the loss of one or two of the old fertile fronds and a profusion of new sterile ones clustering about the base.

The secret of success in this indoor cultivation is the simulation of natural environment of the root growth. Thin bits of limestone or other rock must be placed against the fern roots, and moss and earth enough added to hold them in place. This is the one imperative demand of the ebony spleenwort. I have never taken up a specimen whose roots were not resting on or against or tucked under a stone of some sort. Aspleniums as a rule are limestone-loving ferns, but the ebony spleenwort is sometimes found on certain slate formations.

An unusually fine plant of the dainty maidenhair spleenwort (Asplenium trichomanes) has been growing for years like an ordinary potted plant. The natural habitat is much the same as that of the ebony spleenwort, but I have seen fine plants luxuriating in deep leaf mold, which accounts for the success of the specimen in question.

The walking leaf (Camplosorus rhizophyllus) prefers a rocky foothold, but grows remarkably well indoors with an apology of mineral matter beneath its roots. It is an exceptionally interesting fern because of its unique habit of growth. Spores are not only wafted hither and thither by fitful winds, but the long, tapering fronds rooting at the apices throw up other progressive plants. This is the tramp of the fern family—the sole member of the group that literally walks a crack in the rock. The root growth of the walking leaf seems to be a matter of circumstance, for the species thrives equally well in the outdoor world, with much or little nether development.

For cultural purposes full-sized specimens growing in thin moss are to be avoided; they can be made to grow indoors or outside, but it saves time to select plants from earth-filled crevices or from thick sheets often found on the top or at the base of rocks.

The staying qualities of the fronds are unprecedented. I have in mind one remarkably fine specimen with adherent plantlets, all carefully taken up and properly placed on the platter with moss. New growth appeared, other fronds rooted at the apices, but the original fronds were in good condition for two years. A few weeks only of this time were spent in the cellar for enforced rest.

Mexican Prosperity.

From Modern Mexico.

Since May 1 last the currency of Mexico has been on a stable basis. The action of the Mexican government fixed the value of its peso or dollar at practically an equivalent in United States money of 50 cents.

This currency reform, with others which have lately been instituted by the Mexican government, makes Mexico a most inviting field for American capital. That American capitalists are taking advantage of the many opportunities to invest their money in Mexico the readers of this publication know. The railways of Mexico, particularly, have taken heart and are arranging for large extensions to their mileage. At present there are 11,000 miles of steam railways in Mexico, and this will be greatly augmented in the next few years. The Mexican Central railway, which is the most important line in the republic, operating now 3,200 miles of standard-guage road, is engaged in building two very important lines. One of them is to the port of Manzanillo, on the Pacific coast. This line, it is expected, will be completed in twenty months, and will be the first line to reach from the interior of Mexico to the west coast.

Mexico offers a very inviting field, particularly for railway employes in the transportation departments, the new lines opening requiring more skilled employes than are now in the republic. The principal railways have recently rearranged their wage scale with their trainmen, so that they are now paid extremely well, and as life and property are as safe in Mexico as in any other portion of the globe, no doubt many American railway employes will take advantage of the opportunities in Mexico and locate in this country during the next few years.

The Socialist's Shirts.

From Everybody's Magazine.

Two casual acquaintances were discussing politics. One announced that he had turned socialist.

"I don't know what a socialist it," said the other.

"A socialist is one who believes in dividing up with the other fellow."

"Does that mean that if you had two farms you would give me one?"

"Sure I would."

"And if you had two houses?"

"I would give you one."

"And if you had two shirts what would you do with them?"

"Ah, gwan! you know I have two shirts."

Postal Card Insurance.

From Everybody's Magazine.

The members of a photographic society or institute in Zurich have started a plan of cheap life insurance. A postal card costing 4 cents protects the receiver for thirty days to the amount of $200, to go to the next of kin, or insures him $2.25 a week, so long as, in case of a not fatal accident, he cannot work. Address this card to yourself and you have about as easy a form of life insurance as can be desired. But 48 cents a year for $200 insurance seems suspiciously low rate.

TRISTAN DA CUNHA.

Something of a Little Island With a History.

From the Pall Mall Gazette.

For some little time past the island of Tristan da Cunha has been brought somewhat prominently to the notice of the public in connection with the doings of the ship Pandora. To the majority of people the island is little more than a name, for it lies far out in the South Atlantic, outside the usual track of ships, and only on rare occasions is news gleaned of its inhabitants. Yet for nearly a hundred years it has been a British dependency, although it was discovered by the Portuguese explorer, Tristan da Cunha, in 1506, and was at one time held by a party of Americans. When, however, Napoleon was imprisoned on the neighboring island of St. Helena it was deemed advisable to occupy Tristan da Cunha with British soldiers in order to be prepared for eventualities. But when Napoleon died the soldiers were withdrawn, and from that time the island community has consisted entirely of civilians.

At first the island contained only a dozen souls, of whom a man named Glass was elected as chief. After a while a few men and women immigrants from the Cape arrived and formed a little colony in one of the few fertile tracts of the island. As the years passed the population slowly increased, until at one time the island contained nearly one hundred souls. Then there came a change. The little community which had for so long been regarded as one family, experienced a process of disruption. The old ways failed to appeal to some of the younger members, while the limitations of their surroundings gave rise to a spirit of unrest. When, therefore, an opportunity occurred of emigrating to the Cape they gladly availed themselves of it.

Communication with Tristan is at the best of times very limited. Occasionally, however, small coasting vessels run down from the Cape in order to "do a deal" with the inhabitants. It was in one of these expeditions that I had an opportunity of seeing the islanders and learning something of their lives. Our ship had brought up a short distance from the beach, and almost before we had the canvas furled some of the islanders came aboard. And a strange sight they presented. Hardly two of the men were dressed alike. Some wore cast-off garments acquired from sailors of passing ships, some had home-made clothing of canvas, while others had coats and pants made of sheep or goat skins.

Unkempt and unshaven, they looked a pretty wild lot. Yet their manner was wholly at variance with their looks. There was a diffidence in their bearing which in a woman one would have termed shyness. Their voices were quiet and not unpleasant in tone, and when they became merry, instead of boisterous mirth, they laughed quietly. They had apparently the simplicity and guilelessness of children. They made known their wants almost deferentially, and they bartered their sheep, poultry and vegetables in a generous spirit. They had need for most things on the island, it seemed, and whatever was offered them they gladly accepted.

Indeed, in all their dealings they showed none of the grabbing acquisitiveness which usually marks the natives of southern seas. When it became necessary for the islanders to return to the shore I accompanied them. A hard pull brought us to the beach near the little town that bears the name of Edinburgh. Before us lay a handful of quaint-looking cottages, sprinkled in a plain at the foot of a dark, grim mountain some thousands of feet high. Its base was bleak and bare, but half way up a thick scrub partially relieved its gauntness.

A Man Who Saved Napoleon's Life.

From the Pall Mall Gazette.

A writer in a Dublin newspaper has disinterred a long-forgotten book, published in London in 1820, which consists of a series of letters describing a tour in Ireland in 1812 by I. B. Trotter, who was a friend of Charles James Fox. Mr. Trotter relates that the Rev. Father Redmond, who was parish priest of the little town of Ferns on the occasion of his visit, had actually saved Napoleon's life.

"Accident," writes Mr. Trotter, "introduced me to the Rev. Mr. Redmond, priest of the place, who related to me a curious little anecdote. When pursuing his studies and finishing his course of education in France he had spent a summer in Bas Poictou, where Gen. Bonaparte, then a thin, slight young boy, was. He had slept in the same room with him six weeks, and perceived nothing shining or engaging in him. He was generally employed in making machinery, which he placed on a small watercourse. As the party were one day shooting, Bonaparte, who was not very active, fell into a brook five feet deep, which he endeavored to leap across. He was nearly drowned, when Mr. Redmond immediately discharged his piece and presented the end to him, by which he saved his life."

Mr. Trotter inquired whether Napoleon had ever shown him any gratitude for this service, and was thus answered: "No, and I assure you, sir, I do not admire his principles."

Foreigners in Russia.

From Everybody's Magazine.

The chancellor smiled.

"Not long ago," he replied, "a gentleman came here with just such a letter. But meanwhile the governor had received different orders from some one else in Petersburg. The gentleman did not see the peasants."

"Let's get out of this," I said, speaking low in English. "Let's hire a sleigh and just begin looking as we did in those other villages. At least we can see something before we get expelled."

Unfortunately the chancellor caught my meaning.

"If you try to see the peasants by yourselves," he said, "you will not only be watched by the police, but some at least of the peasants to whom you talk will be our spies. We have telephones to every village, and in two hours at latest we shall know not only whom you have seen, but also what you yourselves have said. Meanwhile you will have been seized and thrown into a village jail, awaiting our orders." He smiled grimly. "Our village police are rough fellows. They would doubtless flog you both in jail before we could inform them who you were. Of course we should be sorry for this and should reprimand them. But in the meantime, you see you would have been flogged."

COFFIN'S COURT-MARTIAL.

Trial of Midshipman for Hazing Will Occur Next Week.

Special Dispatch to The Star.

ANNAPOLIS, Md., December 23.—It was announced at the Naval Academy this morning that the court-martial for the trial of Midshipman Trenmore Coffin, jr., of Carson City, Nev., for hazing Midshipman Jerdon P. Kimbrough of Germantown, Tenn., would be convened at the Naval Academy next week. The trial will in all probability start on Thursday. The court will be composed of six members, including the judge advocate.

Rear Admiral Sands, superintendent of the academy has not definitely arranged the detail of the court. Three of the members will be sent down from Washington by the Navy Department, because the six members are not available here unless with interruption of their other duties at the academy. The ranking member will be a commander. The charges and specifications against Coffin are now being prepared in the office of the superintendent. The charge will, of course, be "hazing," the specification being that Coffin compelled Kimbrough to stand on his head until he became unconscious.

The trial of Warren A. Vanderveer of Mount Holly, N. J., who is under arrest for not reporting the hazing of Kimbrough while he was aware of it as the midshipman in charge of the floor where the offense was being committed, will probably follow immediately after the conclusion of Coffin's trial.

"CAR COMING."

Scenes and Sensations That Follow This Megaphoned Announcement.

From Everybody's Magazine.

But when the cry "Car coming!" came roaring up the track, the faces were all alike! Millionaire's daughter, race-track gambler, absorbed scientist, man-servant, broker, newspaper reporter, staid mother of family, wife of one of the competing drivers—it made no difference who the spectator was, or how near or remote his interest in the race and the racers. They were all made alike. All were alert and atingle when that cry of "Car coming!" was bellowed through the megaphone. Those at the roadside, behind the ropes, crushed forward and craned their necks, despite all efforts of bucolic deputy sheriffs to restrain them. Those in the stands leaped to the seats of their chairs, or balanced on the backs of two that stood together. The anxiety and nervous tension of all were manifest to the observer by clenched hands, knit brows and drawn mouth muscles. One could see along the road to the west for more than half a mile, but no car was in sight. The hiatus was for but a second or two. A tremor and a sigh ran through the crowd as the object of their watch rushed into view. At first it was seen, but not heard, but for a few seconds only; for its oncoming was like the sweep of a meteor. At first, in the distance, the noise of the engine was blurred into a growling whir, not unlike the roll of muffled drums. On came the indefinite, bug-like thing, and in another second the separate reports of the cylinder explosions could be distinguished, like the reports of a piece of rapid-fire artillery. Then, as the car came nearly abreast and swept past, these reports, though booming louder, were overborne, so as to be almost lost to cognizance, by the tremendous swishing noise, caused by the rush with which the air was cleft by the car and by the gritting of its wheels on the ground.

American Conquest of Paris.

From the World Today.

There are Americans in Paris who live exactly as they do at home, and there are other Americans in Paris, some of whom have resided there for thirty years, who are not aware that any American commodity can be purchased in the French capital, although they unwittingly patronize Yankee products every day they live. It is said that the Frenchman will never take to the American folding bed, but certain it is that he is quite content to be awakened by a New England alarm clock, and in the Americanized flats he may now take a morning hot or cold bath in a Yankee tile bath tub rather than buy his hot water from the man who sells it on the street and brings it upstairs—tepid—by the pailful. If the signs on every dead wall of Paris are to be believed, the Frenchman is becoming acquainted with our breakfast foods, and certain it is that he reads a newspaper printed on an American press, rides on a Yankee trolley car to his office furnished with American furniture, dictates his work to a Yankee typewriting machine and signs his letters with a Connecticut fountain pen. At lunch it is doubtful if he is not served some of the chilled or canned beef we now send to France in large quantities, and it is pretty certain that his wine is blended with the fiery claret of California. The only mixed drinks available are at the numerous "American" bars, and for the teetotaler there is the American ice cream soda which has at last invaded the candy stores of Paris. In fact, one becomes Americanized in Paris without realizing the insidious fact.

Rural Telephones.

From the World Today.

In these small, widely scattered New England neighborhoods, as in the farming regions of the west and south, hundreds of telephone lines have been established on the initiative of local societies organized for the purpose, whose members cut the poles along the road where they now stand and practically built their way, under the supervision of a few trained telephone experts, to the nearest connection with the general system. In some cases such local development has been brought about entirely by the enterprise of a single individual, sometimes by that of one far-sighted woman. An element of rural picturesqueness is often added by the location of "central" in the local grocery store, where the grocer himself performs the offices of chief operator and all the "hello girls." Here the uses of the telephone are part social and part severely practical. The farmer, removed even from the sphere of the daily newspaper, is kept in touch with the weather bureau for information touching the growth day by day of his farm produce, and with the latest market quotations for pointers touching the final selling of it. On its social side the instrument brings each farm in speaking distance of its neighbors and, in a thousand and one ways, lessens the sense of isolation that has so long been the bane of the woman living in a lonely farm house.

Biggest Farm in the World.

From Everybody's Magazine.

In a moment of vinous enthusiasm Daniel Webster put his hand in his pocket, asked how much the national debt was, and offered to pay it himself. A Mexican farmer, Don Luis Terrazas, a great friend of President Diaz, once offered to assume the Mexican national debt; and it wouldn't have kept him awake nights if his offer had been accepted. Don Luis has what you might call a tidy little farm at Chihuahua; about eight million acres. Takes the Mexican Central trains more than half a day to cross it. Whew! Don Luis is thought to own more than a million cattle, but a bagatelle of a hundred thousand or so more or less never bothers him. His stable consists of some 100,000 horses; his sheepfold of 700,000 sheep. From 200,000 to 300,000 calves are branded with his brand every spring. More than a thousand cowboys and so on keep his cattle on a thousand hills. By the way, his farm includes a few mountains, for diversification. At his slaughter and packing houses near Chihuahua City 250,000 cattle, as many sheep and hogs innumerable are killed; and away they go in his own refrigerator-cars. Some 40,000 persons dwell on his estate and are ruled by this Arabian Nights farmer, who lives in a two-million (silver) dollar castle and is a swell and nabob such as these United States know not.

Ignorant of Napoleon.

From the London Chronicle.

The instances of general ignorance to which attention has been drawn recall a remarkable case once mentioned by Lord Beaconsfield. He related that Napoleon I, a year after he became emperor, determined to find out whether there was any one in the world who had never heard of him. Within a fortnight the police of Paris had discovered a woodchopper of Montmartre, within Paris, who had never heard of the revolution, nor of the death of Louis XVI, nor of Emperor Napoleon!

EXCHANGE OF GREETINGS.

Mr. Howard Compliments Employes and They Reciprocate.

Mr. George E. Howard, proprietor of the Howard Printing and Publishing Company and general manager of the Howard Label Company, gave his employes, numbering over one hundred, a luncheon at 1 o'clock today at his place of business, 714 12th street northwest. The composing room, where the luncheon was held, was decorated with greens, holly and bunting.

A large Christmas tree occupied one end of the room, and contained a stocking for each employe. Mr. J. Harry Cunningham, manager of the Howard Printing Company, presented Mr. Howard, on behalf of the employes, a fur automobile coat, and Mr. Thomas F. McCrew, superintendent of the Howard Label Company, acted as Santa Claus and distributed the stockings. Mr. Howard, in his usual happy vein, thanked each and every one for their attention to duty and attention to his success.

MONEY WAGON STALLED.

Half Buried in Street, Which Had Been Undermined.

The curious sight of an electric express wagon half-buried in the concrete pavement collected quite a crowd at the intersection of 1st street, E street and New Jersey avenue this afternoon. The wagon was one of the Adams Express Company's electric delivery wagons, and was laden with money and papers from New York destined for the Treasury Department.

There was a broken water main under E street, and it had undermined a large section of the pavement. When the heavy wagon rolled across it the concrete went in like cutting a large slice of pie, and the wagon disappeared half-way up the body. Neither the operator, C. W. Webb, nor the express messenger, G. W. Marks, was hurt, and it is thought the vehicle itself will be released without much difficulty.

The money and papers were transferred as rapidly as possible to another wagon for conveyance to the treasury, and Col. Biddle, the Engineer Commissioner, being notified, the water was cut off and a local company engaged at once to rig a tackle and get out the unlucky automobile.

NEW MUSIC SOCIETY.

Organized to Create Conditions for American Composers.

ALBANY, N. Y., December 23.—The new Music Society of America was incorporated here today for the purpose of creating conditions favorable for the expression of American composers and encouraging the performances of serious music. The operations of the society will be conducted principally in the city of New York, where the principal office will be located.

The directors are Louis A. von Gaertner, Samuel Swift, Jacob Altschuler, Modest Altschuler, Lawrence Gilman, Rupert Hughes, New York; Arthur Farrell, Newton Center, Mass.

MARRIED THE WRONG MEN.

Women Wed Their Lovers' Doubles in Austria and France.

From Tit-Bits.

A strange case of matrimonial fraud has lately occurred at Vienna. A woman of the lower middle class married a man whom she took to be a Herr Weiss, her fiance, returning after a year's absence in America to make her his wife. In less than a month he robbed her of her savings and then suddenly disappeared.

A month later she received a letter from America regretting that the writer had been too ill to return at the time agreed, but stating that he was about to sail, and that immediately on his arrival he would fulfill his promise by leading her to the altar. The letter was signed "Herrmann Weiss."

The poor woman was thrown into a sad condition of perplexity and apprehension, and her worst fears were realized when, on her correspondent's arrival, she recognized that she had been imposed upon by a callous imposter whose resemblance to the real simon pure was marvelously striking. It subsequently transpired that the genuine Herrmann Weiss had while in America foregathered with his double, who had ascertained sufficient of the former's history and prospects to enable him to carry out with success his base scheme of deception and heartless robbery.

When Claude Bonnat, a baker of Marseilles, was in hiding from the police, who held a warrant for his arrest on a serious charge, he managed to communicate with an acquaintance, one Leriot, who in every respect was his exact double, and conjured him on the strength of their old friendship to promise that, should any misfortune befall him, he would, by impersonating him—an easy enough task by reason of the striking resemblance existing between them—keep from the young woman to whom he was engaged the knowledge of her lover's shame. Leriot gave his promise, which sat but lightly on his conscience, as one to be kept or broken as whim might direct.

However, when Bonnat a day or two later fell into the hands of justice Leriot sought out the young woman, of whom he had no previous knowledge, with the result that his susceptible heart was so touched that he entered into the fulfillment of his promise with surprising zeal. So well, indeed, did he enact the role of Bonnat that he in a short while espoused the latter's fiancee. The couple led a life of complete happiness, which was in no wise dimmed when some years later, on the convict's release, the wife first discovered the fraud of which she had been the victim.

Safest Seat in the Train.

From Everybody's Magazine.

Timid persons shun the last car, at least for a week or two after reading about some deadly "rear-end" accident, and the first car from fear of a "head-on" collision. They practice the old maxim, "In the middle you will go safest," and stick to the middle of the train. A "scientific gent" has just demonstrated, after much brow-furrowing calculation, that a seat in the middle of the last car but one is the safest. Thus does science verify, with great parade, the conclusions of the non-learned. Accidents are so diverse and eccentric, however, that the stoical traveler puts more trust in his accident policy than in any doctrine of probabilities. At last the railroad companies are condescending to build steel cars. Human life ought to lengthen as a consequence. It has not escaped cynical observation that the voyager in a Pullman is usually safer than the common herd.

Timber Wolf Caught in Indiana.

From the Indianapolis News.

Indianapolis hunters, armed with bird shot intended for the elusive quail, came across three wolves on the farm of John Oursley, about thirty miles from Indianapolis, yesterday. By strategy they captured one of the animals, a timber wolf as large as a setter dog.

J. E. Clark and Jack Abrams sighted the wolves on the Oursley farm and they went after them, thinking they were large foxes. Two of the animals were some distance away, and they scampered over the hills and escaped. The third wolf was chased by Clark's setter dog, and the wolf, after a mile run, took refuge in a hollow log. It held the setter at bay until the hunters came up.

It was desired to capture the animal alive, and, still thinking it a fox, one of the men went after Oursley, a blanket and an ax. A hole was chopped in the top of the log and a small stick was used in prodding out the wolf. It finally ran out of the end of the log and Abrams fell on it with the blanket. A lively fight followed, and the three men finally overpowered the animal by choking it. They then tied and muzzled it securely.

During the fight the men realized for the first time that they were struggling with a strong wolf and not a fox. The wolf was placed in a wagon and brought to the city. Clark said he would attempt to save the animal's life and keep it as a pet.

Quite a Difference.

From Puck.

"I love my love in the morning," sang the young man, ardently.

"Huh!" exclaimed her younger brother, "you hain't never seen her in the morning yet."

To Keep Your Boy Clean:

Give him a cake of Ivory Soap, a Turkish towel and turn him loose in the bath room.

Lock the door!

Unlock it fifteen minutes later and look at him. He is clean from top to toe—smiling; fresh; radiant with health.

Ivory Soap is the ideal soap for the bath. It is 99 44/100 per cent. pure.

It lathers freely and it—floats.

There is no "free" (uncombined) alkali in Ivory Soap. That is why it will not injure the finest fabric or the most delicate skin.

IVORY

Ivory Soap
It Floats

CITY OF MEXICO.

Changes Being Wrought in Capital of the Sister Republic.

From Modern Mexico.

The capital of this republic has undergone and is undergoing a tremendous transformation. We refer not so much to the new buildings as to the handsome and modern residential sections occupying suburban treats where only a few years ago not an edifice was to be seen. All this, it is true, is remarkable enough, and happy are the few who had the shrewdness accurately to foresee the growth of the city and its direction. These lucky investors in real estate are now selling at 18 or 20 pesos the square meter, the land which a decade back they bought at less than a peso the square meter.

But the most striking fact in the metamorphosis of this ancient capital is its changing complexion. This depends on a variety of factors. Some of them, of course, consist in the march of invention and improvement. For example, the electric cars and automobiles. It is only a truism to say that these are comparatively new sights on the streets. And, of themselves, they suffice to give it a vastly altered aspect and render it hardly recognizable to those who remember its deep restfulness and old-world charm of twenty years ago.

But even these features are not the main constituent of the city's transformation. That constituent is the result of the modification of the people's habits, which is perceptible enough to old-time foreign residents.

Who could have predicted a decade ago that this capital, where the habits of the individual were regarded as secure against all interference, would witness, as at present, a systematic campaign conducted by the authorities in the interest of temperance, decency and morality?

What is most encouraging in this respect is that what has been done already is merely a prelude to what is to be done in the future. The liquor traffic, it is to be hoped, will be still further restricted. There are still too many bar rooms and dram shops in the city. An all-day closing act for Sunday, instead of the half day, is looked for at no distant date.

Gov. Landa intends next to attack some minor bad habits of the people of the capital.

He has just issued an ordinance to prevent loafers from blocking the sidewalks and interrupting traffic. He holds that the streets are not clubs and are not intended as places of reunion for persons who have nothing better to do than to spend whole hours discussing banalities with other idlers or address offensive compliments to passing ladies. The police have orders to see to it that people in the streets "move on."

If this regulation is strictly enforced, as seems probable and as is to be hoped, it will be a new departure. Mexico has hitherto been essentially a southern capital, easy going, rather indolent and giving full scope to all the idiosyncrasies of the Latin temperament. Hitherto one has seldom here been in such a hurry that, meeting a friend in the street, he has not had time to spend twenty minutes or half an hour in the discussion of some literary or philosophical question. This has always been a city of leisure, and there is something in the mild air and bright sunshine which makes these outdoor debates here as natural as they were at Athens. Again, the throwing of "flowers," as the habit of addressing compliments to ladies in public is called, became so inveterate that it seemed that all attempts to eradicate it would prove fruitless.

But if, as is being done at present, the police compel all to "move on" not only will friends and acquaintances be compelled to keep their disquisitions and exchange of views for more suitable places of reunion, but the bad practice of annoying ladies with inopportune and insipid compliments will be cured in a radical and drastic manner.

Gov. Landa is also credited with the intention of preventing, or, at least, restricting the habit of smoking in the street cars. Among minor reforms this is one of those which are most urgently needed. Smokers in the street cars give infinite annoyance and inconvenience to ladies and even to male non-smokers. If regulations to abate this nuisance are adopted they will have in general the support of public opinion, which is illustrative of the great change that has taken place in the popular point of view in recent years. It is now beginning to be realized here that in all these matters the liberty of the individual ends where the rights of others begins.

It is regrettable that, while so many changes for the better can be chronicled, popular diversions are not in general being elevated. It is true that there is a much greater interest in athletics and physical sports among the young, and this is a good sign. The opening of a Mexican branch of the Young Men's Christian Association has greatly stimulated this movement. But in addition, and in other centers of physical culture, ten young Mexicans are regularly engaged now in healthy corporal exercises where one was five years ago.

Alpine Accidents.

From the Country Gentleman.

It is not the skilled English Alpinist, nor even the comparatively unskilled one who knows the limitations of his experience, who falls a victim to the perils of mountain climbing, but the inhabitants of the countries bordering on the Alpine region, with whom familiarity has bred contempt.

Chinese Progress.

From the Hong Kong South China Post.

China has no secret service to get at the bottom of crimes of a political nature. It has now been decided to establish a detective department by selecting sixty students from the police school at Peking and sending them to Japan for training.

EVENING DRESS PUZZLE.

When and When Not to Wear It Puzzles Average Man.

From the New York Press.

"New York may be the arbiter of fashion and the arbiter of a lot of other things to the provinces," remarked the man who has some social recognition of a somewhat Bohemian character, "but it should do a little arbitering on itself, I think, in the matter of how men should dress in the evening. Now, for example, I was invited to take a lady to dinner at one of those little eating places where only the invited are permitted to contribute their 60 centses to the table d'hote. As it happened, I did not get back from an afternoon out-of-town trip until too late to dress, and hurried from the station to keep the engagement, very much perturbed in spirit as to my garb. The lady assured me my business clothes were good enough. I thought it kind of her, but had my doubts. At the dinner not a man was in evening clothes; not even a Tuxedo showed up, though the women were gowned quite elaborately.

"The following evening I attended a club reception to some prominent middle western men. I went in full evening dress. Nine-tenths of the men present wore plain clothes. I was sorry I was in evening clothes.

"We should know what to do at evening functions in this town to secure some sort of uniformity in dress, so to speak. I have noticed that some thoughtful people, in issuing their invitation to affairs, not utterly swagger, make a note in a corner of the card, 'evening dress.' Now, why shouldn't this custom become so well observed that if the words were not on the cards men should understand that they could dress as they pleased? It once was that R. S. V. P. was not considered form on a card, because it was thought everybody knew enough to formally accept an invitation, but they didn't, it seems, and in these days it appears on the cards of the most fashionable.

ART BY THE TON.

Involving a Contract That MacMonnies Came Near Making.

From the World's Work.

Of late years Mr. MacMonnies has had so many commissions to do groups of sculpture that he has made it a rule never to enter a competition with other artists for an order. In this connection a story is told of an American city that asked him to enter a design for army and navy groups for a soldiers' and sailors' monument. He declined to compete. Then the commission was tendered him outright. He submitted sketches of his idea for the groups. The committee in charge of the monument wrote him, asking:

"How many tons of granite do you intend to use in the base?"

His reply was: "If you are in the business of buying granite you may use as much as you want, one ton or 100,000 tons. I am an artist, and I have never yet heard of art being bought by the pound."

The question was dropped until the contract for the commission was drawn. When Mr. MacMonnies received it he discovered in it a clause providing that in case the bronzes were ever thrown down from their base by any cause whatever, and any person or property should be injured, he and his heirs forever should be liable for the damage sustained. He returned the contract without comment, unsigned. When the committee wrote him asking the reason his brief reply was: "Your lawyers are too sharp."

The Darwinian Theory.

From the New York Tribune.

Miss Agnes Mahony, a missionary to Liberia, was visiting Philadelphia with two African slave girls that she had bought for $15 apiece. Miss Mahony's pictures of Liberia were somber. She relieved the gloom of her narrative with an anecdote of an African coast pilot.

"This pilot," said Miss Mahony, "was once bringing a ship northward. The captain, toward sunset, bade him go below and help himself to a glass of cold tea.

"After taking the tea the pilot proceeded to munch a biscuit.

"Now, the captain owned a large monkey, and this creature sat drowsing in a dark corner of the gloomy cabin. The pilot said:

"'A gusty day, sir,' and the monkey shrugged its shoulders.

"The pilot with affable gruffness went on:

"'The south light is away on the port bow now, sir.'

"There was no answer.

"But the pilot was persistent. He continued:

"'We'll be over the bar, sir, in an hour.'

"Failing to get a reply even to this pleasant information, the pilot went up on deck again, and, taking his place beside the captain on the bridge, said:

"'What a quiet chap your father is.'"

From Missouri.

From Harper's Weekly.

The following graceful acknowledgment and news item combined appeared recently in the columns of a Missouri contemporary: "Mrs. Henry Woggs, who is a pleasant and estimable lady, and who can bake the finest cake ever made, having sent us some and therefore making us a judge, and who has a family of nice, clean, polite children, and who plays the piano beautifully and gives lessons on the same to a few fortunate pupils in our little city, had a tooth pulled Friday."

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