FOREIGN GOSSIP.

—The population of Paris is said to be decreasing quite rapidly.

—American investments in Mexico aggregate nearly or quite $1,000,000.

—The past season's wool-clip in New South Wales is the largest ever known in that country.

—The London firemen are to be uniformed in asbestos cloth, like their Paris brethren. They will be veritable salamanders.

—The Emir of Afghanistan has fallen in love with bag-pipes, and has ordered two hundred of them for Cabul. The Shah of Persia has also ordered a brass band. Thus music soothes the savage breast.

—The great tower of iron, a thousand feet high, which was to have been the feature of the next world's fair at Paris, is to be abandoned. It was found impossible to induce workmen to build it.

—The largest electric light in the world is in the lighthouse at Sydney, Australia. It has the power of 180,000 candles, and can be seen at sea fifty miles distant. America's largest light, 24,000 candle power, is at San Jose, Cal.

—An "Anti-Celibacy Insurance Company" has been established in Denmark, in which young women beginning at the age of thirteen can insure themselves for a trifling sum. If they marry they forfeit all claims, but if they remain spinsters until forty they are entitled to a small annuity.

—The Russian war scare has led to great activity in Austrian military circles. There does not seem, however, to be any real ground for the apprehension that Russia contemplates hostile demonstrations on the frontier, although there is evidently a good deal of bad feeling at St. Petersburg.

—The London *Telegraph* believes that better times are in store for British farmers. It believes the improvement is coming in the direction of stock raising, to supply the large demand for beef and mutton which has been to so large an extent supplied from abroad, and that thousands of acres of fine farming land in the British Islands will be utilized for that purpose.

—A London newspaper speaking of the breaking up of the Wild West show in London, says that Buffalo Bill has gathered in the "dust" beyond the wildest dreams of avarice; that since the exhibition of 1851 London has never seen a show that so took it by storm, and that the show might have gone on exhibiting in London for the rest of Mr. Cody's natural life.

—Austria-Hungary boasts of some of the oldest newspapers in the world. On the 1st of January next the *Pressburger Zeitung* will commemorate the 125th anniversary of its foundation. A copy of the first issue is preserved at the National museum in Buda-Pesth. There is, however, a more ancient newspaper in Vienna, namely, the *Weiner Zeitung*, which is the official gazette, and was founded in the year 1700.

—The fact that fifteen to twenty-five steamers a month are now arriving at the mouth of the Congo illustrates the growth of commerce in that region since Stanley showed the importance of the great river. One ocean steamer has already ascended the river to Boma, fifty miles from the sea, and the best channels are being marked by buoys, so that deep-draught vessels may safely navigate the lower river. Little hotels for the entertainment of travelers have been built at Banana and Boma.

—A story comes from Honolulu that after Queen Kapiolane and her daughter got home from their recent trip to Europe they caused to be put into shop windows pictures of themselves taken in London in the superb court costumes that they had bought in Paris. A native mob passed resolutions denouncing this breach of Sandwich Island customs as to clothing, visited all the shops where the pictures were displayed, destroyed the portraits, and then went to the palace and demanded that the costumes themselves be delivered to them. The royal ladies had to yield, and saw the triumphs of Worth torn in pieces by the mob. A promise was then exacted that the Queen and Princess hereafter would wear only the native costume, and the mob broke up.

THIEVES IN RUSSIA.

Flourishing Markets for the Sale of Stolen Goods of Every Description.

There is so much thievery in Russia that all the principal cities have what is known as "thieves' markets." They are conducted openly, and little, if any, effort is made to trace an article which goes in that direction. Travelers, in their exasperation, often declare that the authorities, the thieves and the venders of stolen articles are banded together, and that the profits are divided on a fixed scale. Be that as it may, there is more stealing in this than any other country, unless, probably, Egypt is excepted.

The thieves' market flourishes most on a Sunday morning, although Sunday is not generally observed here, and street improvements, building of every character, and trade goes forward. But many people take a holiday on Sunday and spend it here. To this point I wended my way one Sunday morning, and saw a throng such as Five Points, New York, would have been shocked at in her palmiest days. In a window I saw some fine old chinaware, bearing the private mark of Alexander I., the crown and seal of the empire. Immediately the shop-keeper, a woman, informed me that the goods were stolen from the Winter Palace; she knew it because she got them directly from the thief, and she had handled his property before.

It is related that Peter the Great, once remarking to a guest the propensity of his subjects to steal, observed that in the midst of prayer at church a Russian would not hesitate to rob his neighbor. The inclination to steal varies in the classes only according to opportunity. The officials who pilfer do it in a more civilized and respectable way than the common fold. I have heard a story about Russian thieves which illustrates their dexterity in this regard. A French noble, who had suffered much from thieves at St. Petersburg, made a wager with a member of the royal family that he could produce Russian thieves who would rob a man at the dinner table, and he might use every precaution to prevent it. To the dinner a number of guests sat down. The royal Russian naturally supposed that one of those who sat about the board was the expert thief, and to them he directed his attention.

From the prison one of the most hardened rascals was taken and told that if he would rob the Grand Duke he should have his liberty. The thief was dressed as and acted the part of lackey and waiter. The liveried servant moved about with all the grace and pomp of a lord. Indeed, he so little resembled the adroit rogue that he was that his employer began to fear, as the dinner progressed, that he had made an unwise selection. It was arranged between the master and thief that when the latter had accomplished his difficult mission he was to indicate it to the former by a sly wink. The wine flowed, the soup, meat, fish, game, the various entrees and relishes appeared and disappeared and still no signal of success. Finally the cigars were passed, and as they were being lighted the thief gave the signal. The master asked the time of night. The guest, with pleasing confidence, drew his guard and found at the end of it instead of his watch a slice of turnip. Then the host asked his guest for some snuff. The box was gone. Inquiry was made for a beautiful ring which the guest had worn. That, too, was absent. His purse had likewise disappeared. But the astonishing part of the performance was discovered in the fact that not only had the guest of the evening been robbed but the host likewise.—*Cor. Philadelphia Press.*

PAINTING ON GLASS.

Works of Art Produced by Artists of the Fourteenth Century.

The early windows were marked by simplicity in design and brilliancy of color. In the thirteenth century an improvement in design took place; the architect apparently supplying the figures, if we may judge from "the works of Wilars de Honecort, who has left among his drawings scores of studies of figures, draperies and proportion." In those days there was less subdivision of the arts than is the case now, and so "the glass-painter often embraced in his work the whole art of his profession, from the first preparation of the glass to the painting of the finished window; as in the case of the Alsatian glass painter, Jean de Kirkheim, who executed great works in Strasburg Cathedral, (about A. D. 1340.) where he is described as Vitreator factor vitrorum, glass-eater, Pictor." In England much destruction of works of arts and of records took place. Occasionally, however, they were ingeniously preserved, as, for instance, the records of Newstead Abbey, "which lay for centuries unsuspected in the brass ball of its lectern, now standing in the choir of Southwell Minster." Most of the glass was foreign, as, e. g., the windows for Rivaulx Abbey, which were sent from France in 1149. In 1303 we come upon the name of an English glass painter, which is preserved in the history of Exeter Cathedral, where for 140 feet of painted glass, and other such work, "Walter the Glazier" was paid various sums. A few years after "Walter of Exeter," the name of "Robert of York is preserved, as having been paid in 1338 at the rate of twelve pence per foot for his painted glass." He painted the great west window of York Cathedral. Another name occurs in the records of Exeter Cathedral, that of Robert Lyen, (A. D. 1391.) Men of his craft were held in high estimation in former times, being relieved from imposts under the Emperors Constantine, Theodosius and Valentinian; and at "Venice the master glaziers of Murano were honored by high social privileges, admitting them to intermarriage with the Venetian nobility, and to the rank of nobles, with their titles inscribed in their *libro d' oro.*" The destruction of painted glass was in no country greater than in Italy, where this branch of art was little appreciated. Indeed, with walls adorned with mosaics and frescoes, there is more need of pure sunlight than variously-colored light shining through glass windows. There was a school of art in Florence, at the convent outside the Porta a Pinti, where monks established themselves in 1383, and where, until the siege in 1529, when it was entirely ruined, they employed themselves in the practice of various arts, and pre-eminently in glass painting. "Their prior prepared with his own hands the ultramarine for Pietro Perugino for the frescoes which he painted on the walls of the convent; and for Michel Angelo, upon his undertaking the frescoes on the vaulting of the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican." Before the end of the fourteenth century this art had attained to eminence in northern and central Italy, but it rarely penetrated the south. Instances are given of glass painters of Siena and Pisa, among whom two, "about the year 1460, filled with their painted glass the arcade on the two sides of the Campo Santo, for the preservation of the frescoes there from the action of sea breezes—B da Scarperia and Leonardo, a Florentine."—*Edinburgh Review.*

—A solitary female vulture had dwelt for twenty-five years on the Blotschorn, in the upper Valais, Switzerland, and escaped countless attempts at capture. Recently, during severe weather, a poisoned fox left below the cliff proved a successful bait, and the bird was found dead. The body was stuffed and placed in the museum at Lausanne. It measured across the wings 88½ inches. It is possible that one or two solitary specimens still remain, but it is quite certain there is no nest, and the species is believed to have disappeared from Swiss territory.

YOUNG CONGRESSMEN.

A Chat About Those Who Have Not Yet Reached the Forty-Year Limit.

The Fiftieth Congress has a lot of young men. Thirty have not yet reached the forty-year limit, and of that number sixteen, or more than one half, are thirty-five or under. It freshens up the rows of faces for the lookers on from the gallery, this infusion of fresh young blood, and makes the contrast with white locks stronger than ever. Ben Shively, of Indiana, the youngest of the lot, has been in Congress before, not in the Forty-ninth, but back in the Forty-eighth, when he had just a little sniff of public life in the filling out of the term of W. H. Calkins, who resigned. Shively is just thirty-one, and so he has quite a little lead on "Old Jim" Phelan, as they used to call the Tennessee man from the Memphis district when he was running for Congress. But Phelan's face is adorned with a soft heavy dark brown beard, which makes him look quite five years older than Bob Vance of Connecticut and Bob La Follette of Wisconsin, who had only a year the start. The latter had a slight mustache last year and a short, full beard this, but he has shaved both off, and now, with his hair brushed straight up from his forehead in Pompadour style, he looks quite as youthful as when he captured all the prizes for speaking which were offered within 400 miles of Wisconsin State University. Representatives Sherman, of Utica, who used to be mayor there, and Simmons, of North Carolina, the man who defeated O'Hara, the negro member of the Forty-ninth Congress, are the other two who make up the quartette of thirty-two-year youngsters. Sherman is broad-shouldered and stalwart, and with his spectacles looks thirty-seven, in spite of his rosy cheeks.

Bourke Cockran stands alone in the thirty-three class, but for his bumptious ways, the gray streaks in his dark hair would make observers vow that he was ten years older. There is just one quartette in the thirty-four class, too. Bob Yost, of Virginia; Congressman Russell, of Connecticut; McAdoo, of Jersey City; and Charley Voorhees are in it. They are slim, and a 200-yard dash between them would be a pretty sight. Voorhees ought to be the best cross-country traveler, coming, as he does, from Washington Territory, but McAdoo has very good wind. There are four who own to thirty-five years. Perry Belmont is one, and this is after he has seen three Congresses spring up, flourish and die. Harry Welles Rusk, of Baltimore, is another, with John Kean, jr., of New Jersey, and Hastler Dubois, of Idaho. The quartette would probably make a very nice melody together if it was wound up right. The Yale men would take the tenor, the Southerner the bass, while Mr. Belmont could carry the air gracefully. Four more of them are Lloyd Bryce, of the New York delegation, who has just come out as a young literary man in a novel which treats of the divorce question, and is named "Paradise," and who heads the group. McRae, of Arkansas, and Taulpee, the young Kentuckian, who had his training in a divinity school, and William E. Mason, of Chicago, complete this coterie. Mason is one of the most wide-awake men from the big Western town, if he is a new-comer. He is short and roly-poly, curly-haired and always moving. If his avoirdupois were not distributed quite so much, and his face were ruddier in hue, a stranger wouldn't have much difficulty in mistaking him for Captain Christie, of the Senate. Henry Cabot Lodge, the biographer of Washington, Hamilton and Webster, and Isadore Ruyther, of Baltimore, are the two Congressmen of thirty-seven years.

As the two-score line is approached the groups grow. There are five at thirty-eight. Newton Blanchard, of Louisiana, is one; Farmer Burnett, of Massachusetts, is another; Melbourne Ford and Tim Tarsney, of Michigan, and Hemphill, of South Carolina, both belong here. Judge Crain, of Texas, is thirty-nine; Enloe, of Tennessee, the man who wants to cut the undelivered speeches out of the *Congressional Record*; C. Newton, of Batrop, La., and Stone, of Missouri, are as young. There are several men who, through modesty or a desire of secrecy, have not answered the clerk's question as to their age. Stockbridge, of Michigan; Neal, of Tennessee; Heard, of Missouri; Butler, of Tennessee; Hutton, of Missouri, and Pugsley, of Ohio, are in this category.—*N. Y. Sun.*

HIS FIRST GRIZZLY.

A Newspaper Humorist's Encounter With a Mighty Smart Bear.

It was this way:

We had been out from camp—Jim and I—for three days, and the whisky was getting low. We had first emptied both our flasks into the coffee pot, pooling our remaining stock, and were going to make an even divide, when the bear came in.

He had not been invited, nor did he knock as he came in. He just came strolling out of the brush, in a listless *distingue* way, up to the camp fire.

We rose, of course. It is the invariable custom in the mountains, when a bear joins a party unexpectedly, for the members of the party to rise. If the bear is a small one, it is not considered necessary to rise higher than the lowest branches—some seven or eight feet; but, on the approach of a grizzly or a large cinnamon, it is customary to rise five or six feet higher. Social etiquette is very strict on these points.

This was a grizzly; so we did not stay even to look for our guns; but rose at once about twenty feet.

He hardly acknowledged our courtesy—just the bearest recognition—and then proceeded to take an inventory of our outfit. It was not long before he struck the whisky. Then he sat down to make a night of it.

"Jake," said Jim, calling across from his tree to mine: "I poured my whisky into the pot first, didn't I?"

"Yes."

"So my share's at the bottom, and it's your half he's drinking now ain't it?"

It was a low-down way for Jim to talk, and I felt like dropping out of my tree and climbing up to thrash him. But I didn't.

Soon the liquor began to tell on the bear, as we could see from his hiccoughs and the unsteady look in his eye.

Then he—the bear—began overhauling our packs. Soon he came to my spare overalls and, diving his fore paw into the pocket, pulled out an old pawn-ticket and a key. The ticket had run out, so he threw it away. Then he grabbed the key; and, picking up my hat and putting it on over one ear, staggered across to the foot of Jim's tree, and commenced jabbing the key into the crevices of the bark.

"Looking for the keyhole, by all that's holy!" said Jim, as he drew his legs up a couple of feet higher.

Presently the bear dropped the key into the grass, and tried to look as if he had done it on purpose. Then he saw my rubber boots; and you should have heard him laugh as he grabbed them! Then he sat down on his haunches and began to pull the boots on.

But he had his back turned to me now; so, while he was wrestling, trying to put his left foot into the right boot, I just dropped from my tree and reached for a rifle. He must have heard me drop, and I hardly had hold of the gun before he was up and facing me.

It was an awful moment! Scarcely ten feet separated me from the Monarch of the Mountains—the Terror of the Forests! His eyes seemed to flash living fire in the blaze of the burning logs, and in the flickering light, his teeth—those teeth which, if my muscles trembled at the critical moment, would soon be bathed in my life-blood—looked doubly terrible.

For an instant there was a death-like hush as we stood facing each other in the lurid fire-light. We both knew that it was war to the death.

Then he rose in all his rugged majesty. He came toward me—slowly, terribly. I could almost feel his hot breath on my hands. The supreme moment had arrived. My finger was already pressing the trigger. He opened his mouth.

"Let 'er—hic!—go, Gallagher!" he growled with his last hiccough.

And I did.

But when he was dead, I wished I had stopped to ask him how he had got onto my name.—*James Gallagher, in Puck.*

A Cure for Diphtheria.

We vouch for the efficiency of the following remedy for diphtheria: A few years ago, when this dreaded disease was raging in England, a very simple and rapid remedy for it was discovered by the celebrated Dr. Field. He put a teaspoonful of flour of sulphur into a wineglass of water, and stirred it with his finger instead of a spoon, as the sulphur does not readily amalgamate with water. When the sulphur was well mixed he gave it as a gargle, and in ten minutes the patient was out of danger. Brimstone kills every species of fungus in man, beast and plant in a few minutes. Instead of spitting the gargle out, he recommended the swallowing of it. In extreme cases, to which he had been called just in the nick of time, when the fungus was too near closing to allow gargling, he blew the dry sulphur through a quill into the throat, and after the fungus had shrunk to allow of it, then he resumed the gargling, and he never lost a patient from diphtheria.—*Cape Town (Africa) Argus.*

Cruelty to Children.

A good work, receiving less help than it should, is that done by the various societies for the prevention of cruelty to children. This work is not a charity in its strictest sense; for charity often pauperises, and the effort here is to prevent pauperism, the intention being so to guard and protect children while of tender years and frame that instead of growing up to swell the viler classes, as they might if left to themselves or chance, they shall be given the opportunity of becoming good people, and, therefore, good citizens. Every dollar spent upon them, then, is so much money saved to the governing powers, who would otherwise have to spend that sum in the cost of providing police and penalty. Moreover, just so much wealth is added to the community as this person made worthy may create by thrift and industry. In addition to these considerations should be reckoned the satisfaction felt in the prevention of positive suffering to the weak and delicate little beings, too young and ignorant, and sometimes too loving, to protect themselves.—*Harper's Bazar.*

—In the recent national convention of barbers at Buffalo the question of substituting some other sign for the red-and-white striped barber pole was discussed, and it has been engaging the attention of gentlemen of the tonsorial profession ever since. It is said that in early times barbers served the public in the capacity of surgeons also, and that the pole symbolized the arm wound with ribbon previous to the letting of blood. It was George II. of England who decreed that henceforth the trade of the barber should be "foreign to and independent of the practice of surgery." Despite the fact that the striped pole is the symbol of blood-letting, it seems to be the opinion of conservative barbers generally that no other sign would be so effective.

An Infallible Sign.

Apartment housekeeper—How is that young man in the back room getting along, Sally?

Chambermaid—He's no young man. He's married.

"Married?"

"Yes'm. He never finds his necktie, nor his hat, nor his overshoes, nor nothin' until I looks for 'em."—*Omaha World.*

KEEP FOWLS TAME.

Why Poultry-Raisers Can Not Afford to Have Wild Birds.

Keep fowls tame. You can not afford to have them wild. They will not pay as well, lay as well or afford one-half the satisfaction that a tame flock would. If there is any thing that will disgust a fancier it is to see a lot of hens flring wildly here and there whenever a man approaches. We hate wild hens.

All breeds can be rendered tame by proper treatment, but some breeds require more care than others to produce this result. Generally speaking, the larger breeds, like the Brahmas, Cochins, Plymouth Rocks and the like, are more easily tamed than the smaller ones, like the Leghorns and Hamburgs. We have seen very tame Leghorns and Hamburgs, however. We call to mind a brown Leghorn cock that will approach its owner, a woman, and, upon being told to crow for dinner, would straighten up and crow. He would lie down and roll over, also, upon being bidden to do so. We know of a flock of golden-spangled Hamburgs that will eat out of the hands of their owner without a sign of fear. These cases are instances to show what the right kind of treatment can produce. It is not uncommon to find Brahmas so tame that they can be picked up anywhere. We know of one of the leading breeders of Asiatics whose Brahmas are so tame that they act as if they expected to be caught, and liked the idea, when the owner appears.

Fowls can be rendered tame easily. The observing of a very few rules is necessary:

1. Never frighten them.
2. Speak quietly in their presence.
2. Never make a quick movement toward a fowl, unless it be a sudden, short movement in catching one, and then never miss your bird.

The advantage of having tame fowls are many besides the general satisfaction experienced. It is convenient to have them tame if you wish to show a particular bird to a customer. He would like to closely examine it, and to do so he must have the birds in his hands. It is often necessary to catch fowls for examination as to some symptoms of disease. If you have to chase them all around the yard in order to catch one, you either do not catch the fowl or you waste a great deal of precious time; there is some wear upon your clothing and a good deal upon your temper. Fowls, too, will actually keep on less food, lay more eggs, fatten more easily, and in every way prove more profitable for being tame. If you doubt it, try it and be convinced. A single season's trial will satisfy you, and you will never have any more wild fowls in your yards.—*Indianapolis Sentinel.*

STRICTLY PURE LARD.

How Farmers' Wives Can Produce a Sweet Article for the Kitchen.

Pure, sweet lard is a thing to be desired by every housewife, and yet the common article of merchandise that we buy at the average grocery stores that fills the bill, even in a plausible degree, furnishes the exception, rather than the rule. It is difficult to get it pure—that is, in the end to have nothing but the pure lard itself. Naturally, a sediment composed of minute particles of the flesh distributes itself through the body of the rendering, which always imparts more or less of a disagreeable flavor to the lard and the offensiveness of the same to the smell is measured by the offense to propriety and the laws of health in the discriminations made of the fatty substances used in obtaining the lard. A lady at Fulton, Mo., now visiting Dallas, established a reputation for marketing an article that was always exceptionally pure and much sought after and buyers were always ready. The lady, Mrs. M. E. Bush, was asked the secret by which she was always enabled to produce an article pure and sweet and as white almost as snow. She said: "There is little or no secret about it, further than this: During the slaughtering, dressing and trimming of the swine, I always attend, giving personal supervision in detail, and particularly the trimming from the parts wished for pork the fatty substances intended for rendering. With this I am just as particular as I am with my butter, for in nothing would indifference to cleanliness prove more unsatisfactory. Indeed, the flavor of the lard is governed entirely by the care and pains taken in this particular, and the color also, and whenever you detect an offensive odor either from the bread containing the lard, or the lard itself, just as certain are you assured that careless and indifferent hands have done their work. Pure lard has no unpleasant odor; rather the opposite. My rule is, before cooling a kettle, while it is yet boiling hot, to put one gallon of lye to every thirty of lard, and stir it to the cooling point. This will destroy the most minute particle of substances foreign to the oil itself, consume all agencies tending to discoloring, or offensive to the smell, and leave nothing but the pure, snow-white article with an enhanced value of several cents to the pound.—*Texas Live-Stock Journal.*

Cold and Distant.

Miss Clara—Have you met Count Shoreoffsky, Mr. Featherly?

Mr. Featherly—Yes, last evening.

Miss Clara—He has a great deal of dignity of manner.

Mr. Featherly (who is nothing if not funny)—Yes, most Russians are cold and distant, you know, Miss Clara.—*N. Y. Sun.*

—In Salt Lake City the houses of the Mormons all have two doors, even the smallest of them. Some have also two woodsheds and two wells. A house that is begun with only one room is frequently lengthened out room by room and door by door as new wives are taken.

—A pound of the ordinary bronze pennies of the United States is worth $1.42. A pound nickle five-cent pieces is worth $4 55½.

FOR OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

TWO VALENTINES.

Mary to Papa.

Bert and Nell and Caroline
Sit a-choosing valentines,
Laugh and whisper, nod and wink—
Got a secret, s'pose they think.
Call me baby! Sakes alive!
They forget I'm almost five.
Guess I know whom I love best
Well as Bert and all the rest.
Here's a pencil on the shelf,
Now I'll write one all myself.

"This is from your little May;
There—it says as plain as day,
Loves you more than tongue can tell
(That's what Charlie wrote for Nell)—
Loves you all the day and night,
All the dark and all the bright—
More than candy, pink and nice
Frosted cake, or choc'late mice.
Now I know your eyes will shine
'Cause you're choosed my Valentine."

Papa to Mary.

Here's to my little maid,
Whom I love well:
All her sweet, winsome ways
I can not tell;

New graces she puts on
Each day and hour,
She grows within my heart—
My precious flower!

Here's to my little maid,
Who loves me well:
All my fond thoughts for her
No tongue can tell.

I am her sweetheart true,
And she is mine;
She is the girl I choose
My Valentine.

—*Emily Huntington Miller, in Our Little Ones.*

GENERAL GEORGE.

The Valentine He Did Not, and the One He Did, Receive.

We fellows always called him General George, and so did the girls. His name was George Washington. There was a Smith tacked on to it, but that was so short and so at the end, like a bob on a kite, that folks 'most always forgot it.

He belonged to Miss Melissa Melon. She got him out of the county house, and he did chores for her and was company, seeing she lived alone two miles down the road from the "Corners." It was a pretty good walk on a cold winter morning, for the roads were generally drifted down that way, but I tell you that made no difference to General George. Rain or shine, he was always the first at the school-house. He swept out, you know, and made the fire, and so on, and he was always at his post.

Jane Graham, one of the girls that has traveled around considerable, and seen a big statue of the *first* George Washington, says that there was a few lines on the bottom of the marble, and they said: "First in peace, first in war, and first in the hearts of his countrymen." "Our General," she said, "was first in piece (his clothes were awfully patched, you see), first in war (he could fight like blazes when he was a mind to), and first in the school-house in the morning!"

Well, he was the funniest-looking creature you ever saw! My, how we *did* laugh the first day he came! Tall, awful tall, and as thin as a rail, with a big head and a shock of black hair. Celesty Moore said he looked for all the world like her big shawl-pin! And when Miss Root asked his name, he drew himself up on his long legs and stood up straight and stiff as a poker, and says in a loud voice, like as he was going to speak a piece, "George Washington—" here Bill Greene, who sat behind, pinched him, and he jumped and turned red, and never said the Smith at all, and there's no knowing whether Miss Root ever put it down."

Well, the General wa'n't much in his studies when he first came. Teacher put him in the "First Reader," with Billy Dwight and Jerry Gray and all those shavers. But my stars! It wa'n't two terms before that 'ere chap had skipped up into the highest classes, and was figuring out "Partial Payments" and parsing "Paradise Lost" with the biggest scholars! He was at it all the while, too. Dig! dig! dig! Didn't care a copper for recess. P'raps, though, he didn't have much fun out on the play-ground—we fellows run him so much, and the girls were always poking fun, too.

But le's see; I started out to tell you about his valentine, didn't I? It happened the morning of February fourteenth. School hadn't begun yet. Rob Haliday, Charlie Forbes, and one or two other fellows, were over by the girls' seats. Myrtie Talbot had a lot of valentines on her desk. Some had been sent her, and others she was going to send to folks.

Most of them were real pretty—all lace-paper, pink roses, hearts and darts, and little angels playing with bows and arrows—but there were a few funny ones. There was one gamey old chap, with a cocked hat, long-tailed coat, and a pair of top-boots. He looked as though he'd just got up to make a speech.

"Oh, my eye!" says Rob, "that's General George, sure enough!"

"You ought to send it to him, says Clara Gordon.

"Do!" we all joined in. "It would be a splendid joke!"

"How can I send it to him so he'll get it to-day?" says Myrtie.

"Put it in his dinner basket," said Clara.

"Yes, and now's your time to do it," says Rob, "for he's gone down to the pump."

We all rushed pell-mell across the room to General George's seat. Rob grabbed up the basket. It was a ragged old one, the cover tied on by a string.

"Now, we'll see what the General's got to eat!" says Rob. "He's a selfish pig, any way! Now, you know, when any of us boys bring something nice we share it. We just have a jolly picnic in the recitation-room."

"But the General don't, says I. "He never comes with us, but mopes out here alone, and even tips up the lid of his desk so we can't see what he's got!"

"I know it!" says Rob; and he gave a sniff as he yanked off the string. Then he pulled up the cover and peeked in. Then he looked at us, and says he: "By the Great Horn Spoon!"

We always knew when Rob said that he was considerably surprised.

The rest of us crowded around peeked in, too, and what do you s'pose the General had?

Nice white bread and butter with a bit of cold chicken or ham, a piece of apple-pie, a lump of cheese and a chunk of fruit-cake?

He had—just one small piece of rye-bread and a raw turnip!

That was all! No butter even on the bread!

Myrtie stepped back, and her face was all red and her eyes kinder shiny and misty. She grabbed the valentine from Clara's hand and tore it into forty-'leven bits before you could say "Jack Robinson."

"General George'll never have *this* valentine!" she said.

"Why don't that mean old maid feed him better?" says Rob, angry-like.

"I s'pose she can't afford it," says Myrtie. "She's awful poor. But she's good to the General—that is, he seems to like her. I s'pose she gives him as good as she has herself."

"But rye-bread and a turnip!" says Rob, groaning. "It seems to me something ought to be done about it."

"Course there ought," says Myrtie. "This thing's got to be seen to. We've acted real mean to the General, teasing the very life out of him! It's a shame! Poor fellow! With no father or mother! How could we have carried on so! And he's smart enough at his books to make us all blush for ourselves. I'm going to speak to my papa this very night and coax him to do something for the boy. But I'll tell you what we'll do now: we'll give the General a valentine—only it won't be the kind we were going to! Let's all take something from our baskets and fill his!"

"All right!" says we all.

So Myrtie put in a big piece of cocoa-nut-cake and a roast chicken's drumstick; Rob gave an apple turnover and a pop-corn ball; Clara gave some pickles and gingerbread, and the others bread and butter, and so on, until the basket was so full that the cover bulged up.

Then Myrtie wrote on a slip of paper and tied it on the handle, and these are the words she wrote:

"A valentine from those who are awfully sorry they've plagued you so, but who promise to never do so again."

You can bet the General was pleased when he found it! His big black eyes just shone! And since then he's joined in our games with the best of us. He's turned out to be an awfully jolly chap, and we're dreadful proud of him on examination and exhibition days.—*Mary E. Brush, in Youth's Companion.*

Toddlekins' Boo'fer Kitten.

THE KITTEN'S STORY.

I am Toddlekins' Boo'fer kitten. I used to live in a barrel with my brothers and sisters. But now I am Toddlekins' Boo'fer Kitten.

This is how I belong to Toddlekins. One day my mother boxed my ears. Toddlekins heard me cry. She climbed up the side of the barrel to peep in. The next minute Toddlekins was in too, standing on her head with her feet in the air! I don't believe you ever heard such a noise as me and Toddlekins and the rest of us made then, all crying together!

"That's what comes of being a little peep-girl!" said the nurse. The nurse then took hold of Toddlekins' feet and pulled her out, and Toddlekins, as she went out, grabbed me by the neck and pulled me out too. We looked at each other. "Boo'fer Kitten, I love you!" said Toddlekins. "Minow!" said I. And I have been Toddlekin's Boo'fer Kitten ever since.—*Babyland.*

How Arab Boys Play Marbles.

The Arabs play marbles differently from the American boys. Of course the arrangement of the marbles to be shot at can be varied in many ways; but the young Arabs shoot the marble in a way of their own and much more accurately than American lads. The left hand is laid flat on the ground with the fingers closed together, and the marble is placed in the groove between the middle finger and forefinger. The forefinger of the right hand is then pressed firmly on the end joint of the middle finger, and when the middle finger is suddenly pushed aside, the forefinger of the right hand slips out with more or less force and projects the marble very accurately in the direction of the groove on the left hand. Many of the boys become very expert.

Perhaps marbles are almost the only playthings for which Arab children pay money, and as a rule only a very small capital is needed.—*Henry W. Jessup, in St. Nicholas.*

—One of the delicacies of Governor Hill's Christmas dinner was a frozen watermelon sent by Fish-Commissioner Blackford, of New York. Last September, while at Mount McGregor, it was suggested to Commissioner Blackford that, if fish could be preserved by refrigeration, melons could be. He made the experiment and has sent a frozen September melon to Governor Hill, one to President Cleveland, and a third to the Albany journalist who suggested the experiment.

—A trainer of animals in Paris gives the following account of the way in which he trains cats and rats to live on friendly terms. Taking a cat and a rat each by the back of the neck, he brings their heads nearer and nearer together, accustoming them gradually to each other until finally their noses meet. This practice at length seems to please them.

—A traveler on a Georgia railroad wanted to get off at a station where the train did not stop. It was after dark, and so when the conductor would not agree to stop for him, the passenger went to the front platform of the rear car, drew the coupling-pin, set the brakes, and when the car stopped jumped off.

—Friend (to widow mourning her third husband)—I sympathize deeply with you, my dear Mrs. Hendricks, and was sorry not to be with you in your hour of affliction. Widow (sadly)—Ah, my friend, you don't know what it is to lose husbands.—*Accident News.*

—"I will not leave my post," remarked the hitched horse, when he found he couldn't break the halter.—*Washington Critic.*