

Iron County Register.

By ELI D. AXEL.
IRONTON, MISSOURI.

NEIGHBORS.

When you live alone, how you hear each sound!
Should a mouse scurry along the floor,
And a loose board creak: There was it
Or a ghost's step through the house?
Strange! What fancies come in a crowd,
When your fire burns fast and your clock
Outside, there's a sudden fall in the rain,
And—there's a tap on the window
pane?
Only a wind-blown jasmine spray;
I saw it hung loosened yesterday;
But it's odd—it's odd—how the fancy
Hinges!
It seemed like a dead man's fingers!
Dead! Yes, dead. Oh, more than a year;
What should a dead man do down
here,
Tapping like that on my window pane?
Fahaw! The freak of a foolish brain!
But the wind! the wind! Like a soul
Of reason, hopelessly lost and left,
It wails and moans. Ah! years ago
A voice that I loved moaned so.

The Safety of Numbers.

By Gwendolen Overton.

MRS. DENNISON had begun life by choosing the wrong man. In the plenty of company she gave her no consolation. She had many suitors, both because she was the only girl within a radius of 50 miles, and because she was a very nice and pretty one. But only Leslie and Dennison had ever stood a chance, and Dennison had won out—no one could quite tell why, Maggie herself least of all, probably. Leslie would have been the better match, viewed financially, and looks were in his favor very decidedly.

But Maggie chose Dennison with the usual wisdom of her kind; and having no particular religious preferences one way or another, went with him to the nearest adobe town and had herself married by a padre, as being the easiest and quickest way out of it. And the greater for three years Dennison had treated her abominably. He made nothing whatever of beating her; he overworked her; he drank. His conduct was the scandal of the surrounding country. Knowing Maggie's progenitors and her own disposition, the wonder to every one was that she did not shoot Dennison and have done with it. Since nothing of the kind happened, the only possible conclusion was that she loved him. Which she did. If he had neglected her she might perhaps have had recourse to a six-shooter; but it is at least having some notice taken of you to be knocked down, and Maggie frequently was.

The treatment told on her good looks after a while, the more especially as they were of the sort that are of youth alone. The plains any man usage age a woman early. So when Maggie was 24 she looked ten years older than that.

Then Dennison left her. He found somebody he liked better, one day when he went over to the railroad town 75 miles away, and took her away with him. Maggie had no notion where he had gone, else she would probably have followed him. Instead, she stayed on the ranch and hoped and pined. She carried on the ranch alone, it being one of those plains ranches having no especial boundaries, no special fields or crops, and only a scrawny milch cow or two and a few chickens. There were a couple of hundred head of stock, cattle that roamed the country and were, to all intents, wild, and some horses of much the same sort. These required no care, so Maggie spent most of her days sitting on the sill of the back door of the adobe and staring off toward the mountains and thinking about Dennison.

The Mexican woman who lived with her squatted on the ground—in the shade in summer, in the sun in winter—with a black apalo over her head, smoking cigarettes until the hard soil in the neighborhood was strewn with straw paper stumps. She had 14 children. Maggie had none. There had been a baby, but it died. A whitewashed board fence upon the top of a knoll that was to be seen from the back door marked where the grave had been before the coyotes had torn it up. Besides the woman and the 14 children there were two "grasser" vaqueros, whose duties were not burdensome, who ate jerked beef and frioles, and helped Maggie wait for Dennison to come back.

But though she sat day after day with her fading eyes looking toward the mountains beyond which was the railway and from which came the road, no Dennison appeared. Other people came by at long intervals. Twice Leslie had ridden up. There had been a year's space between the visits. And at the second one Maggie had seemed no nearer consolation or common sense than at the first. Then he had let 18 months elapse.

When he came down the road this time he saw Maggie, from afar off, sitting on the door sill with her chin in her hands, the Mexican woman hugging a marrow. The trip of shade, for it was near noon, and some chickens and children variously disposed. He was dismounted with a clanking of spurs and led his broncho to the water trough.

Maggie rose without haste and went over to him. She might have seen him five minutes before from any sign of surprise or pleasure she made. Hers was the pathy of the woman of the frontier rancho, to whom life is as her outlook upon the world—dead, fruitless and dry. She took him into

the house when the pony was turned over to a vaquero. Had he heard news of Dennison, she wanted to know. Leslie looked serious—so serious that she leaned forward with her yellow hands clasped hard. What was it, she asked. Dennison was dead. It was that he had come to tell her. He had just returned from the other side of the Colorado, and had had news of her husband there, quite by chance.

"Tell me," said Maggie, "tell me the whole thing. I want to know."
Leslie told her, tipping back in his chair with his hands clasped behind his fine head, and his buckskinned legs crossed with a swing.
"Well," he started, "it was this way, you see. He lit out with a woman—a man's girl—from over Central City. (Central City was the railway town.) 'They went into California, and they set to keeping a restaurant at Meyer's mine. He got tired of her by and by, and he vamoosed the rancho there, too, and went down near to Los Angeles. He got into a scrap there—and the other fellow was a better shot, I guess. That's all."
"The other fellow?" asked Maggie.
"Two fellows that was on the coroner's jury," he answered her.
"What did he fight for?"
"Woman," he told her, curtly. "She was the other man's wife."

Maggie's face was so near the color of the alkali sand outside that it could not turn pale. And the only expression of which her eyes had ever been capable was a dull hopelessness. She there would have been no guessing how the news affected her except that her fingers strained until the joints of them were livid. "Where's he planted?" she asked.
He told her the name of the town. "If you'll marry me now, I'll take you to see his grave."

Maggie began to cry then. Even when Dennison had departed she had not wept. So now she wept the worse now. Tears held back for four years from eyes, heat-dried, come painfully.

Leslie thought for a while that she was going to die. And that would be his fault. It occurred to him that he had perhaps been abrupt. He had never seen a woman cry, because women had not entered much into his scheme of things. For a while he sat and shifted on his chair and watched, very unhappy indeed. Then he got up and went to her and put his hand on her shoulder tentatively. She pushed it off—and he felt that he had been unwise again. So he walked to the door and stood there, his feet wide apart, considering the glaring flat and looking back at Maggie, over his shoulder, now and then.

She cried for a good half hour, and the whole experience frightened Leslie so much that it was not until nearly sunset that he dared get up to the subject again. He meant to go at it tactfully this time, but it came at the end of a long, strained pause. "Say—what about our getting joined in wedlock and all that—anyway?" He held his breath for fear she would cry again.
But she took it quietly this time. "I ain't sure he's dead," she answered. "I ain't," said Leslie. "But I'll go fetch the fellows that told me about it, and you can find out for yourself." He went out and saddled his broncho, and departed by the way he had come. "I'll be back," he said.

He had no idea where the fellows were to be found. They had been prospectors, and might be anywhere in Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado or California by now. But though his phrasing might have been less polished, his sentiments were identical with those of Calonne—if it were but impossible, it should be done. It took him four months to do it. But at the end of that time he rode up to the ranch again. There were two men with him, and they went into details that caused Maggie to be convinced.

"All right," she said to Leslie that night, "I'll marry you." It was not enthusiastic, but Leslie made allowances, and took what he could get.
So, the next morning, the ranch was left in charge of the two vaqueros, the Mexican woman, the 14 children and five mongrel dogs. And Maggie and Leslie rode off, side by side, with the two men bringing up the rear. The same padre who had made her Mrs. Dennison made her Mrs. Leslie now, and gave her his blessing. She took it stolidly. Then she and her husband took the train for California, to see Dennison's grave.

The head board to it had the surname in black letters on a plain board ground. Maggie did not like that, so Leslie paid for a new one—white, painted with the Christian names as well. When it was duly put up, they went on their way. The way was toward the Mojave. Leslie had mining interests up there, and, being in the general neighborhood, he took the opportunity of looking them up.

At Mojave they left the train, hired a wagon and proceeded toward the interior. All day they drove along a road that wound between soft-rolling hills, pale brown, shrub-flecked. The sun scorched. Near the railway there were small cultivated bits, where green things grew. But they stopped after a while. By afternoon it was desolation.

"Where'll we put up to-night?" Maggie asked—the first time there had been a word in two hours or more.
There was a house ahead, he told her. He had inquired as to that. It was 35 miles from the railway—more or less—and it belonged to one Dennison it seemed.

They came to it in due time, but Dennison himself was not around just then. His wife explained that he had gone to drive in a heifer and her calf. She took charge of them herself. Maggie did not like that. It was a pretty little thing, tragically young, considering the hardships and the loneliness of her life. Her eyes were innocent and big, and her countenance was of a sweetly-inspired cast, with a skin still of peaches and cream. She was glad to see Maggie. Probably she would have been glad to see anyone, for the sake of human speech. However that was, she gave Maggie attentions of a kind she had never thought of.
And Maggie was feminine at heart, though she had had little enough

chance to realize it. The gentle cooing of the little thing melted her. Within half an hour she had learned to like her—perhaps even more than that—to have some affection for her. They were hand in hand, on the edge of a bunk, talking, when Dennison came in. Dennison was merely Dennison with a last syllable the less and a beard the more.
Maggie knew him at once. And he knew her. His jaw fell.

"This is my husband," said the girl. The tone of adoration and possession made Maggie sick—but only for a short instant. She stood up and put out her hand. Dennison hesitated; then he came forward and took it. His terror was making him quaver.

"Pleased to meet you—Mr. Dennison," said Maggie, with stress on the name, and looking him straight in the eyes.
His own fright, "Sure!" he agreed, lamely. He tried to smile. "I got to go to the corral," he said.
Leslie was there. Maggie thought of that, and of what might possibly follow. "My husband's out there—Mr. Leslie's out there; you'll find him," she called. It was a warning with intent to save bloodshed. He might take it or not, as he chose.

He took it. Instead of to the corral, he went to his room and locked himself in and examined his revolver, against an emergency.
But Maggie went out to the stable. She found her husband rubbing down the stock. "Say," she said, standing beside him with her hands on her hips, "say—he ain't Dennison at all. He's Dennison. He's my husband."
It was Leslie's turn to have his jaw drop. "Did you know it?" she demanded.

He faced her. "I did not, Mag. I wouldn't have played you any such dirty trick."
"All right," she said. She knew the truth when she heard it. "It's done and there ain't any sense making the girl pay for it. Let on he's Dennison as long as we're here."
Leslie nodded and went on with the rubbing down.

Maggie returned to the house. Mrs. Dennison was getting supper in that one of the three rooms of the shack which served for kitchen and dining room. Maggie ascertained that, then went around to the window of the room where Dennison was, and tapped on it. He appeared at it, ready to open back. She motioned to him to jump it. He did so. "Put up that gun," she advised; "nobody's going to hurt you." He put it up, within easy arm's reach. "Now you listen," she said. "I thought you were dead. Two fellows told Leslie and me that you was. I waited for you to come back for four years, and you didn't come or send word. They said as how you got into a shooting scrape down south and was killed. So I married Leslie and he took me to see your grave. We had a new board put on it, too." She leaned her arm on the window sill and spoke at leisure.

"Now," she said, "you see here. I got married on the straight. There can't anybody bother me nor him. But it ain't that way with you. You didn't. You'll be in all kinds of a mess if I want to talk. But I won't." He knew the value of her word so well that an expression of relief came over his face.
"But I won't," she repeated, "so long as you treat that little thing in there square. She's a lot to good for you, but she don't know it, poor little fool. You might have had the decency to take an older one, anyway. She—she cares about you." Her voice caught, but she went on: "And you ain't going to break her heart if I can stop it. I'm on to you, and Leslie's on to you. And we mean to keep on to you. We'll know if you are doing, and you won't get away from us again. We'll be on your trail from now till your last round-up. So, if you want to keep out of jail, you make things easy for her—a darn sight easier than you did for me. Sabe?" She withdrew her arm from the sill. "That's all—but don't you forget any of it," she counseled, and walked away.

The evening was not a pleasant one for any but Mrs. Dennison. It was not Maggie's fault, however. She helped get the supper, and made as much conversation as she could. She smiled upon the just and the unjust alike. She heard without the quiver of a lash the detailed story of Dennison's courting his wife. Dennison heard it, too, and did not enjoy it much more. She helped with the breakfast the next morning, too, and then, just before the wagon was ready, she had speech with Dennison again. Leslie was with her this time. He lent a moral support, which very little would have sufficed to make physical.

"Don't you forget what I told you," she advised, dispassionately. "Your wife—she's got my address, and she's promised to let me know if ever she's in trouble of any kind. So you'd better not be the one to get into it. And, as for you—she," she jerked her thumb at Leslie over her shoulder, "he'll keep a well-peeled eye on you for the rest of your natural life. And we'll make it interesting for you if you don't talk Spanish. Sabe?"
Dennison was moved to gratitude. His voice shook when he thanked her, and so did his hand when he held it out. She looked at it, and her lips curled, very nearly haughtily. Then she lifted her eyes with one withering glance, and turned on her heel.

They drove off toward the sunrise between the eternal, rolling hills. Presently Leslie turned to her. "Do you care about that bad egg still?" he asked. She did not reply. His face was not as red as it was usually. "Do you?" he asked again. She shut her lips and looked hard at the white road ahead.—San Francisco Argonaut.

Setting Day in Sight.
"Mamma, since when is our name Knoll?"
"How do you come to ask that, my dear?"
"Papa said yesterday that you were a regular Mrs. Knoll."
"He did, did he? Well, I'll explain that to your papa by his entire satisfaction. He may tell you afterward, but I think not."—N. Y. Times.

A Planting Trick.
Fence-maker—Your garden is dug up to perfection. How did you ever get that boy to do it?
Gardener—I gave him a fishing rod and told him the garden was full of angle worms.—Chicago Daily News.

THE CHAPLAIN'S HORSE.

How a Clergyman Unconsciously Turned a Neat Trick in a Horse Trade.

I reached camp at Chickamauga on Saturday, had service on Sunday, and on Monday proceeded to buy a horse. Being a sailor by education and natural predilection, I knew but little about horses, so I turned over the conduct of negotiations to an old trooper of the Seventh United States cavalry who had enlisted with us. He bought the horse, says Cyrus Townsend Brady, in the Sunday School Times.

He took me to see him, and he was present when the purchase was consummated. He stood by the seller, and calmly pointed out defect after defect in the animal, which the other man repudiated vehemently, at the same time calling attention to perfection after perfection in his steed. I never saw such divergent views about a single animal. Finally, alarmed at the zeal of my advocate, I remarked decisively that if the horse had all the faults he said it had I didn't want it at any price, whereupon the seller with alarming promptness came down in his figures to a reasonable basis, and before I could utter a protest the horse was my own. As I had unequivocally committed the negotiation to the expert, I felt that I was in honor bound to abide by his decision. We led the horse away, I confess, with a very rueful, disgusted feeling on my part. When we were a short distance off the trooper remarked, chuckling with glee:

"That was a fine play of yours, chaplain. I didn't know you were so keen in a horse trade, sir. That just sealed the deal. That was mighty wise, I tell you. You had the fellow scared. A little more on your part and we'd 'a' got him for nothin'."
"Keen? Cute?" I exclaimed in surprise. "I was perfectly honest in what I said; I didn't want a broken down old hack such as you described. Why, look at that and that and that!"

I pointed to various blemishes which he had indicated during the trade. He stared at me in amazement a moment, and then fairly shouted with laughter, apologizing the while, until it gradually dawned upon me that it was simply a case of balancing lies and assertions, and that I had been guilty of aiding and abetting the deal, and that he had taken an honest refusal for an adroit move. I always felt that I got that under false pretenses, but, however that may be, he was undoubtedly the best horse in the regiment. Every other officer who owned a horse, I admit, was ready to make the claim, but I knew my own horse the palm. To anticipate a little, having no means of keeping him when I returned home and was mustered out, I sold him to a United States cavalry officer.

"Hello, archdeacon, when did you return from the Philippines?"
"I have never been there," I answered.
"Oh, come!" he replied, jokingly. "You can't tell me that, you know. I received a letter from a friend of mine a week or so ago from Manila stating that Archdeacon Brady was the gamest thing in the regiment, that he was always in the front of the battle line, that he was never tired and never complained, and that the writer and the men of his troop positively adored him."

I was mystified, of course, until I learned that it was Clifford, my horse. The cavalry officer had referred to him for me, and I have always been thankful to the gallant animal that he gave me so good a reputation. I wish I had him now.

FEW TIMELY HINTS.

Intended for the Benefit of Discouraged and Disagreeable Persons in Public.

The person who tries to take up the whole car seat generally ends by sitting next to the window on the sunny side with a 200-pound woman, says Puck.

Grumbling because front second-story rooms are not available at third-story back-room prices does not make the straw mattress any softer.

A ten-cent tip will do more to make the breakfast tender than a week of complaints at the office.

Flirting with the summer girl will do all right until the Saturday afternoon beau arrives, and then there must be a recess. For steady company try the widow.

Inquire not too closely into the fresh country vegetables when they are canned. Instead of that, stroll out into the air and work up an appetite.

Believe implicitly the man who tells you he got \$1,000 a share for his Northern Pacific stock. He may treat to cigars.

Always play progressive euchre. It gives standing with the old ladies, and it affords a preliminary training for the worst possibilities of the future life.

Beware of the delicate young woman who wants to take a stroll through the hills. She can walk all day and pass every ice cream place in the country.

If at the seaside, always take the fattest of the fair sex bathing. At the very worst that may happen she will float.

Don't speak to the proprietor of expecting checks or coming remittances. He has troubles of his own, and it makes him more weary. Only the hard, ready, immediate and abundant cash talks to his hardened soul.

Then, after it is all over, don't grumble because you have spent your year's savings, but go home and rest up from your labors—and don't waste any time writing letters to the widow.

Impertinence.
He is guilty of impertinence who considers not the circumstances of time, or engrosses the conversation, or makes himself the subject of his discourse, or pays no regard to the company he is in.—Cicero.

PITH AND POINT.

The art of conversation consists in knowing where to begin, what to say and when to stop.—Chicago Daily News.

"Doctor, I feel dull and stupid all the time. Hadn't I better do something about it?" "Oh, no; you can't improve on nature."—Indianapolis News.

Mother—"I wonder how this new book got in such a horrible condition?" "It's Max—" "I heard papa say it was too dry for him, so I poured water on it."—Glasgow Evening Times.

"The idea of that college making Roxley an LL. D.!" "Yes, these colleges do some idiotic things." "They do, indeed, and yet they are supposed to be in possession of their faculties."—Philadelphia Press.

When a woman takes care of a sick man she makes him sit up every time a visitor comes in, that she may remove his pillow, spank it and put it back again, to show that no attention is lacking.—Acheson Globe.

"Yes," said Travers, "I came home from Europe on the Norcania, and a poor fellow died on board there." "Gee whizz!" exclaimed Hallrum, "that ship must have been as bad as Mrs. Starvew's house. A fellow's likely to die on board there, too."—Philadelphia Record.

Branded for Life.—Weary Willie (addressing fellow members of the fraternity)—"Gents, disyerobohat sez as he's Dusty Rhodes is a impostor. Strange Hobo—'Dat's er lie.' Weary Willie—'Aw, close up. I knowed Dusty Rhodes for five year, an' he's got er smut er coal dust on de right side of de mug. You'se ain't got none."—Detroit Free Press.

Johnny (at the end of the first week in the race for wealth)—"A dollar ain't much for a week's work, but when I get to be a millionaire it will be a great thing to say that I began my career at a dollar a week." The following Monday his employer told Johnny they guessed they shouldn't want him any longer. So Johnny has got to begin all over again.—Boston Transcript.

FORGED HIS OWN NAME.

Singular Case of a New Jersey Newspaper Man Who Could Not Recognize His Signature.

It was a banker who was asked: "Can there be such a thing as an innocent forgery?" It was a surprise when he answered: "Why, certainly; I know of such a case."

So the story that he told will have to be accepted on trust, says the New York Times.

"The man who committed the forgery lives over in Jersey, and he has been employed on one of the New York papers for many years. Some ten years ago he temporarily lost the use of his right hand. As he was a very busy man, who used to grind out anywhere from one to three columns of copy daily, he was at his wit's end as to what to do."

"Finally he thought to try and use his left hand. He began with a pencil, and, although it was slow and exhausting at first, he managed to get along, and never lost a day. Now, his right hand was a long time in getting well, and by that time he had become so accustomed to using his left that he kept on writing copy with it, and he does to this day. But he always draws and signs his checks with his right hand."

"One day there came into the bank a check, signed with his name all right enough; but it wasn't the signature I had been accustomed to, and I held it up. I sent word over to his office to have him drop into the bank. When I showed him the signature he vowed it wasn't his handwriting."

"I proceeded to investigate, and was satisfied that the man in whose favor it was drawn was innocent. So I brought the two together, and then the editor remembered that he had drawn such a check, but still he was puzzled. He sat down and wrote his name before us both."

"Why," said the man to whose order the check was drawn, "John, I thought you were left-handed."

"Then it flashed across the editor's mind that he had absent-mindedly drawn the check with his 'copy' hand. 'That's funny,' he said; 'I didn't know before that I could sign my name with my left hand.'

"That is the only case that I know of where a forgery was committed innocently, and in that case the man only forged his own name."

The Boy Art Critic.
New men say there is nothing really new in this world, and perhaps the boy who passed the following criticism upon the drawing abilities of his big sister was not an unseasoned plagiarist; but, anyway, his verdict amused the sister so much that she tells it occasionally, though the joke is on herself. The young woman has a fondness for executing those works of art which consist in the representation of dead game birds hanging by their heels from a nail on a board, fish on a platter ready for the cook, and fruit grouped on a table around a wine glass. These gems she turned off at the rate of about four a year, and presented them to her friends for their dining-room walls. She had just completed a twin pair for a bride. One represented a mess of lobsters in a nest of salad; the other a basket of peaches, with down on them like plush. She was so pleased with both that she asked her brother if he did not think they were just splendid. It was evident that the youthful critic liked one and not the other. After looking at them a minute or two he said:

"Sis, you're a peach on lobsters, but you're a lobster on peaches."—Chicago Tribune.

Not Up in Cookery Slang.
When on one of the recent hot days the lady of the house sent her maid out to do the marketing, she admonished her to get everything fresh, and said:

"Now, Mary, get some string beans. Break one of them to see if they are fresh, and get two pounds of tripe, and pinch the tripe."

Mary looked indignant, and then blurted out:

"Sure, I wasn't brought up that way, ma'am, and if you want any string pinched you'll have to go out and do it yourself."—N. Y. Times.

RICH IN RESOURCES.

Congo Free State Soon to Be Annexed to Belgium.

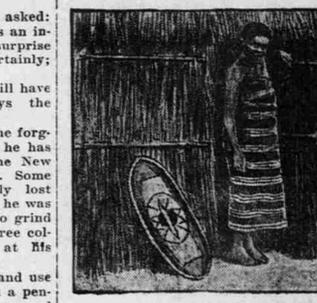
Country Now the Personal Property of King Leopold—Produces Rubber Enough to Supply the World.

(Special Correspondence.)

"ALL trees from little acorns grow." England has demonstrated that a country limited in area may be of great consequence in the map-making of the world. Belgium has always been of considerable diplomatic importance, and probably will soon rank among great colonial nations. The Congo Free State will be a center of political interest within a short time. If it be annexed to Belgium as a colony, as existing conditions would seem to indicate, it will mean much, not only to the peoples directly concerned, but other nations as well. When the Belgians first explored the country, cocoon, ivory and palm oil were the only products exported. Many other articles are now added to this list, and a newly-completed railroad will ship at low rates.

The rubber trade has been carried on for about 40 years, but it first attracted the attention of the Belgians a few years ago. Now it is prophesied that it will furnish the great future wealth of the state, as it has developed so rapidly that among the rubber producing countries of Africa the Free State now holds the first place, annually furnishing to the world more than 3,000 tons. During the time of his first expedition, Stanley said that on the islands of the Congo river alone enough rubber could be secured in a year to pay the expense of a railroad. There are several varieties of rubber in the Free State.

It also ranks first among the countries from which ivory is exported. About 700 tons of ivory are annually produced in the world. Of this 600 tons come from Africa. The African ivory is considered far superior to that produced in Asia, on account of its greater density and waxy softness. A small stock of fossilized ivory comes



A CONGO CHIEF AND HIS TWO WIVES.

from India and Siberia. According to Holtzapffel, fossil tusks from the north Siberian rivers have weighed 186 pounds. The average in Africa is said to be from 20 to 50 pounds. Those from the Congo are very large, weighing on an average 60 pounds. A pair, each weighing 156 pounds, were shown at the Brussels exhibition.

In the dense, almost unexplored, forests of the central Congo many herds of wild elephants are still roaming. These are hunted by the natives for their flesh, which they prize much more highly than they do their tusks. But what they term "dead ivory" forms the greater proportion of what the Free State sends out annually. The natives have collected elephants' tusks for hundreds of years for purposes of exchange, considering them of little value. In the Upper Nile region, the Khartoum merchants first discovered an accumulation of these treasures. Dealers finally advanced to Katanga, thence to the Congo, after which the ivory trade steadily increased. On July 31, 1888, an ivory market was started in Antwerp, selling 15 tons. In 1890 its sales exceeded those of the Liverpool market, and in 1895 those of London. In February, May, August and November of each

year, great sales are held there. There were sold in Antwerp, in 1899, 21,446 tusks from the reserves and only 8,539 from newly-killed animals. The government confiscates all carcasses of elephants killed without special permission.

The latest methods of treating the natives of the Congo Free State have brought out the fact that by proper management they may be utilized successfully as laborers. This means the possibility of a rapid development of the country. The building of the first 25 miles of railroad from Matadi to Leopoldville required five years. The negroes were treated like slaves, the Belgian overseers whipping them unmercifully. The results were so disappointing that they were afterward employed like the Belgian laborers and paid in accordance with the amount of work performed. They were so impressed by the fact that increased effort brought payment in proportion that the remainder of the road, 216 miles, was completed in four years, proving that "a man's a man for a' that."

Their being amenable to religious teaching to a remarkable degree goes

to prove that the members of the Congo tribes may yet be made useful members of society. People who have inherited their Christianity might even profit by their example. A missionary states that in one of their villages a school had been formed and they had erected a church. They so rejoiced in their newly-found religious experiences that they began to consider the condition of their regenerate neighbors, of the heathen natives across a great river who had not, like themselves, been blessed by Christian teaching. They said: "Those people know nothing of Jesus, while we are saved. What shall we do?" In order to find a fitting answer to this query they held a special meeting and gave the matter long and careful consideration. The river was full of crocodiles, the crossing dangerous, the distance too great for an easy return journey. Several days must be spent among those "heathen" who would, very likely, treat them with great violence. Yet 20 Congo church members crossed the river and preached during three days so earnestly that they left converts behind them on their return. Now a church of 20 members is established in that village, who are working with excellent results among their neighbors. The negro temperament is emotional and responds quickly to religious teaching. The railroad experience seems to indicate also that they are not indifferent to the "main chance." But it would take a long and optimistic look into the future to discern in them theologians, financiers and politicians.

It is very hard to obtain anything approximating correct figures regarding the population of this territory, which possesses a five times larger area than France. The number of inhabitants was estimated by Stanley to be 29,000,000. That this is a minimum is the opinion of Gov. Gen. W. de Selys Longchamps, who has obtained statistics from government agents stationed there. The people are unevenly distributed. Tracts almost destitute of population are adjacent to crowded districts. The largest village in the Free State is Ntombwa, with a population of 10,000. The general preference seems to be for the forests rather than the river banks as dwelling places.

During its course the Congo river changes its name many times, but Mr.

Stanley traced and identified it all the way. The Lualaba-Kongo, interrupted by cataracts and rapids, flows northward from the lake region to about two degrees north of the equator, where many islands stud the broad stream, ten miles wide. Then its course changes many times. In the great basin between east longitude 26 degrees and east longitude 17 degrees, through which it flows, the river has an uninterrupted course of 1,400 miles, with magnificent affluents. From here it descends by about 30 falls and flowing rapids to a great river between the falls of Yelala and the Atlantic. From the Chibala mountains to its mouth the length is 2,900 miles. Stanley states that by its numerous great tributaries it drains 1,300,000 square miles. It has no delta and but one mouth. Only the Amazon exceeds the volume of water it brings down. A steamer drawing 12 feet can steam 110 miles from its mouth, where it is nearly ten miles wide and 160 fathoms deep.

The Free State is now the personal property of King Leopold of the Belgians, and an absolute monarchy. This form of government is, however, only temporary. Belgium has had the right to annex the state since 1890. It is well known that King Leopold, in making his will, instructed that the state become the property of Belgium in the event of his death before its annexation was finally voted upon by the Belgian parliament. It seems outside the limits of possibility that such a magnificent gift will be refused, but in such an event it can be bequeathed to anyone whom the king desires to name as his legatee. His successor, however, must, before accepting the gift, be authorized to do so by parliament. The king's nephew, Prince Albert, son of the count of Flanders, will probably succeed him on the throne.

Self-Esteem.
"Yes," said the youngster's mother, "Mr. Bilgins' made that our boy going to grow up to be a wonderfully intellectual and estimable man."
"That is only a natural parental pride."
"Perhaps, I am not quite sure whether it is parental pride or belief in heredity."—Washington Star.

What Ailed Hendry.
Briggs—Hendry was rebuking me for being envious of people who are better than myself. He says that is one sin that cannot be laid at his door.
Griggs—No; Hendry doesn't believe there is anybody better than he is or that anybody possibly could be.—Boston Transcript.

Management.
"Don't you think you lose patience with your husband on rather slight provocation?" said the near relative.
"I have to provoke him sometimes," was the placid answer, "so that he will lose his temper and then give me anything I want so as to atone for the way he has acted."—Washington Star.

In Confidence.
Friend—What would you recommend for rheumatism?
Doctor—Patience.—Fuch.