

## RUGS IN THE ORIENT

To Secure Choice Specimens Is a Laborious Task.

Trading with Orientals Means Hard Work and Loss of Much Time—The Most Precious Weaves Described.

[Special Constantinople Letter.]

THE present craze for oriental rugs, which prevails not only in the United States, but also throughout Western Europe, suggests an inquiry into the antiquity of rug and carpet weaving in the Asiatic countries east of the Mediterranean sea. There is no doubt that the industry is more than a thousand years old and that it has passed through various stages of evolution. Originally the rugs were primitive floor coverings for the tents of the nomadic tribes which inhabited central Asia, but in the course of time they developed into genuine works of art, and as long ago as the seventh century some are reported to have been sold at fabulous prices.

The oriental rug industry is divided into five general groups—the Persian, Central Asiatic, Caucasian, Indian and Western Asiatic; but at the present time the Persian and Caucasian weavers work along identical lines and only experts can detect any material difference in their work. From time immemorial two processes of manufacture have been in vogue, the weaving and the knotting methods; but in each instance none but hand work is employed, and this is usually performed by women. The knotting or tying process has been introduced with some success in several European and American factories, but thus far nothing like the original has been produced by accidental cleverness in imitation.

The soul of oriental rugs is the pattern. In it is concealed a legend,



TURKOMAN WOMEN CLEANING A RUG.

an eastern fairy tale, which is interpreted by the deft figures of some nomad woman. All the average oriental wife can do is to weave carpets; and the more skill she possesses in this direction the more highly esteemed she is by her lazy husband. It frequently happens that a Persian or Turkoman will pay a price for an old, ugly bag which would buy three handsome maidens, simply on account of her skill in rug making.

The oriental woman bleaches the wool under the sun, gives it an acid bath of grape juice and a treatment of alkaline lye. With the exception of sulphuric acid, used for producing a deep black, only vegetable dyes are used. During the past decade the use of aniline dyes has made some headway, but only when the demand for rugs has been so great that no time could be lost in filling orders. The dyeing process of the various tribes is a secret which has been preserved



KURDISTAN RUG DEALER.

through countless generations. It is probable, however, that modern chemistry could solve this mystery; yet such a discovery would be of scant value, as the American and European workmen are without the ornamental "language" with which the Persian and Turkoman women enrich their products and which constitutes the real beauty of their work.

The Persian rug is the choicest of all oriental weaves and displays a diversity of pattern and handwork unapproached by other products. The best known varieties are named after the localities where they originated—Tehran, Khorassan, Kurdistan, Kashkai and Kirman. Each variety has peculiar characteristics and appears in so many variations that the general effect of their richness baffles description.

The knotted rug made by mountain women of Kurdistan may, on account of its dainty pattern, and the marvelous delicacy of its knotting, be termed the rarest specimen of orien-

tal carpet work. A prime Kurdistan has from 7,000 to 8,000 loops to the square yard and is thoroughly genuine even when the pattern may perhaps appear a trifle too oriental in general effect. The Kirman is one of the most exquisite rugs, and is produced, by men exclusively, in horizontal looms.

In the Caucasus, Daghestan, a locality noted for the roughness and thievish propensities of its inhabitants, produces the finest and most gorgeous rugs; and critics are unanimous in admitting that the Caucasian rugs retain their original character to a remarkable degree, which may be ascribed to the conservatism of the rough mountaineers who produce them. The thin, shiny Shirvan, the rich Sumakh and the Daghestan essentially differ from each other in the weave, but characteristic of all is the brownish red ornament of the "running dog."

The Turkoman rug occupies a front rank, so far as material and workmanship are concerned, but as regards pattern and color development it certainly is not entitled to recognition as a first-class article. In a general way all the rugs made in the Asiatic highlands are known as "Bokharas," but experts know how to differentiate between the various weaves. At the head of the Bokharas stands the rug made by the Teke-Turkomans, which is peculiarly strong in its ornamentation and woven so substantially that it must be numbered among the very best varieties.

All through the oriental countries magnificent rugs and carpets are obtainable, but to buy them is a far more difficult task than might be supposed. Leaving aside the fact that wide experience and considerable technical knowledge are essential to recognizing and determining the value of a rug, oriental dealers have a wonderful knack of "befuddling" prospective purchasers. By displaying, in rapid succession, rug after rug, they make a thorough examination almost impossible and when the deal is closed the buyer usually has an article on his hands which, in normal conditions, he

would not have acquired at any price. The novice who wishes to buy his own rug in Persia or elsewhere in the east must, in the first place, have time enough at his disposal to spend half a day or more at the dealer's bazaar. He must, in the second place, appear indifferent and phlegmatic, sip his tea and smoke his pipe, only occasionally requesting that this or that piece, which may happen to strike his fancy, be laid aside. After a prolonged rest the choicest of the pick should be bargained for, deliberately and politely, and always without showing haste or impatience. When buying a Persian rug several precautions must be taken. It must be without thick places or folds and the tying must be perfectly even, for which purpose the back must be examined. The corners must fit the pattern; otherwise the rug loses 30 per cent. in value. At no time must more than one-third of the dealer's price be offered by the purchaser, and one-half of the dealer's price should be the maximum amount paid for the article. It is also quite important that no particular preference be expressed, otherwise the dealer will at once put a triple price on the coveted article. Persons who make the buying of rugs a business frequently manage to secure costly antiques among the mountain tribes of the Caucasus and the steppe dwellers of Central Asia, which, after a thorough cleansing, are sold at an advance of 50 times their first purchase price.

The chiefs of many of the nomadic Asiatic tribes possess vast fortunes in the shape of rugs, some of which are hundreds of years old. For many of the natives of Central Asia the rug is an indispensable companion. They need it in their homes, their tents and their travels. It serves them as bed, traveling bag and prayer mat—forms, in fact, a part of their lives.

So much about the genuine oriental rug. And now a word about the imitations, many of which exceed the real thing in regularity of design and brilliancy of color—for a time. The bogus rugs are made in Europe, in some of the eastern states of the union, but most of them come in bales from Constantinople and Smyrna. The fraudulent article is sold in many shops in the United States and as it is without any real value it yields an enormous profit to dishonest dealers. For this reason one word of advice: If you buy an oriental rug, buy it from a house in whose reliability you have reason to have the utmost confidence.

GREGOR KARMANOFF.

Curious Suit for Damages.

A curious suit will soon be tried in Anderson, Ind. To cure her brother of a constant desire for intoxicants, Mrs. Laura G. Hosier secretly administered a drug, with the result that liquor is now disagreeable to him. He has brought suit for \$5,000, asserting that his sister has robbed him of a great amount of pleasure by destroying his thirst.

## DELVING FOR POWER

Political Moles of Both Parties Are Busily at Work.

How a Successful Presidential Boom Is Created, Expanded and Transformed into a Potent Reality.

[Special Washington Letter.]

THE political moles are burrowing deep down beneath the presidential pastures, where they would not be discovered, nor suspected, but for the work of inimical political ferrets. They are unlike the coyotes and gophers who abrade the surface sward, but delve far, far below.

One of the wonder-workers in the political world is the senior senator from Ohio, the man who from obscurity stepped into national fame early in 1896 as the manager of the McKinley campaign for nomination. The old-time politicians thought that he could soon be disposed of; but they found that for three years Mark Hanna had been burrowing for delegates to the national convention.

Politicians do not rest during the Lenten season, nor for any other season. They are not primarily religious, although some of them are richly veneered with churchly in-gings and out-comings. Primarily, they are self-seeking and ambitious, ready to sacrifice others, even good friends, for their own advancement. The most successful of them are always burrowing for future preferences.

Senator Davis, of Minnesota, once said to the narrator: "I went to church this morning, just for a few minutes. I sat up last night until after midnight thinking over the applicants for an office. Having concluded that a certain man should have preference, I went to bed and slept as calmly as a child. After late breakfast this morning I lighted a cigar and took a walk. Just as I was passing a church, memory called up a picture of my first election to the senate. One of the candidates for office had sacrificed a great deal for me at that time, and I remembered having said: 'If ever you need a friend, rely on Cuth Davis.' And yet, because another had seemed to me to be of greater future value, I had made up my mind to turn that friend coldly down. I went into church, stayed until the conclusion of service, came home and concluded to have my former helpful friend appointed. So, you see, once in awhile conscience will make even a politician do the right thing."

Well, while ambitious men are burrowing for the presidency, all of them are denying their ambition. Senator Hanna, the greatest burrower of them all, keeps gravely quiet and affects indifference to the quest. But there are surface indications which point to his ambition in that direction. An old politician here today called the attention of the writer to one very interesting fact. He said: "Do you remember that last October the physicians informed Senator Hanna that he must quit politics and go to bed, because of danger from heart failure? Well, what did Hanna do? He went home for only



ARTHUR PUE GORMAN. (Senator from Maryland and Prince of Campaign Managers.)

a couple of days, and then appeared on the hustings in Indiana to help his friend Senator Fairbanks; and he was so weak that he was obliged to quit speaking in the midst of one of his addresses. What did he make that effort for in Indiana?"

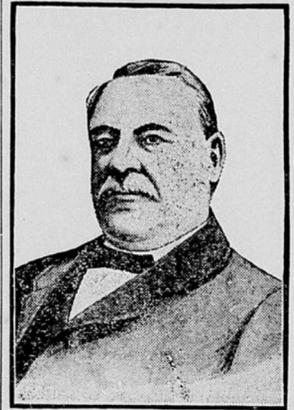
But the chief burrowers are on the other political side, and all of them seem to believe that the democratic presidential nomination will be worth striving for next year. Senator Gorman, of Maryland, who is close to the national capital; Mr. Hearst, Judge Parker and Mr. Hill, all of New York; Mr. Olney, of Massachusetts; Mr. Cleveland, of New Jersey, and Mr. Bryan, of Nebraska, are all of them standing right in the line where the presidential lightning is expected to strike.

Now you would like to know how this burrowing is done. It is a great game, and is very well understood in this center of politics as well as of statecraft. The stimulus for all politicians is the federal patronage. Every political worker wants an office.

There is a blue book published by the national government every two years and it contains lists of all of the federal office-holders, even down to the lowliest and lowest-paid. The big politicians employ little politicians to take up certain parts of this blue book, and go to work on the former office-holders. For example, suppose that Mr. Olney, of Massachusetts, wants to get the delegates from the state of Illinois to

support him for the presidency in the next national convention.

The blue book will give the names of 2,000 postmasters in Illinois who held office during the last Cleveland administration. It will give the names of all other office-holders, and each one of them must have been a democrat of some consequence, to have secured an office. Each one of those office-holders must be communicated with, either directly or indirectly. He must be assured that if he will get out and hustle and work for Olney he can again be postmaster, or hold some other office equally good. Now, unless Mr. Hearst, or Mr. Cleveland, or some other candidate will get in ahead of him, Mr. Olney can form quite a strong army of politicians who can control the next state convention



GROVER CLEVELAND. (Stands Right Where Presidential Lighting May Strike Him.)

and name Olney delegates to the national convention. The delegates are almost all bought with offices or with the hope of office. Sometimes they change, but usually they remain true to the individuals to whom they pledge themselves. Lewis Cass, of Michigan, bought supporters with offices, and he said: "An honest politician is one who will stay bought."

Gathering in delegates more than a year in advance is one of the new tricks in politics which Mr. Hanna developed previous to 1896. Those who are far-sighted enough to do this systematically have what is called "a good organization." That is to say, that if one has an organized army of ex-postmasters, all of them hungry for political fleshpots, he is a political general with whom one must reckon.

In the state of Pennsylvania there are 5,000 postmasters and about 1,500 deputy postmasters. These, with the other federal and state office-holders, make an organized army of political workers numbering upwards of 10,000 men, all of them working to retain their positions, and all of them under the skillful direction of Senator Quay; and yet people wonder that Quay always succeeds.

Early in March, soon after his re-entry into the senate, Senator Gorman, of Maryland, said to Champ Clark, of Missouri: "William Jennings Bryan must be reckoned with. While his friends may not constitute the necessary two-thirds to nominate in a national convention he will undoubtedly have more than a majority in the convention next year, and will be able to dictate the platform. Whoever overlooks this all-important fact will find himself hopelessly in a minority when the convention gets down to actual work."

From this it is apparent that Mr. Gorman realizes, and fully understands, that Mr. Bryan is burrowing also for delegates, although not for the purpose of forcing his renomination. It means that the eloquent Nebraskan intends to remain a dominant factor in his party. This also means that as long as he lives Mr. Bryan will have hopes of getting the prize for which he has twice so brilliantly contended. Here is a story about Mr. Bryan which has never been published:

During June, 1896, while the narrator was at the crowded counter of a telegraph office at the St. Louis convention, sending special dispatches to some large daily newspapers, a bustling big fellow crowded in, and received a stiff punch from an energetic elbow. No resentment followed the blow, but, instead, the writer heard his name called cheerily by one who said: "Won't you let a poor working man have a chance to earn his bread and butter?" Looking up, the narrator saw the smiling face of his old friend Bryan. Room was made at once; Bryan's brief telegram was written and sent to a small paper, which he said was paying him \$30 per week, and then he disappeared in the crowd. Three weeks later he was nominated for the presidency. There never was a better illustration of the possibilities in this great republic, for there never before was such a meteoric rise from penury to position and political power.

And so, while all of the others are burrowing for delegates to gain the presidential nomination, the astute politician from Maryland says that "Bryan must be reckoned with." When it is recalled that Mr. Gorman is the only man who has been able to lead his party to success in presidential campaigns, for well-nigh 50 years, it may be well for all of the other burrowers to hearken to his words of wisdom. And it is worthy of note also that while Mr. Gorman thus respectfully takes off his hat to Bryan that worthy in his weekly paper says that "Gorman was regular, but not too regular."

SMITH J. FRY.



## UPS AND DOWNS.

Johnny's cryin'; do you hear him?  
I don't see why he should cry!  
Jus' because we two went coastin';  
On the hill there, he an' I.

Got a lovely sicc' las' Chris'mas,  
Papa gave it, painted red.  
"Let your little brother use it  
Half the time"—our mamma said.

An' I did. I only used it  
Coastin' down the hill an' then  
Every single time I let him  
Drag it up the hill again.

An' it took him so long climbin'  
That he had it most—he did.  
An' yet there you hear him cryin'  
Isn't that jus' like a kid?  
—St. Nicholas.

## HOME-MADE THEATER.

With This Boys and Girls Can Have More Fun Than With Any Other Contrivance.

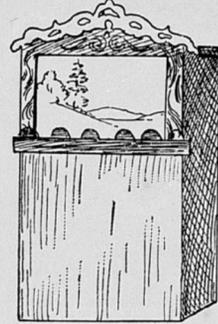
Lots and lots of our readers delight in playing theater. Here is an opportunity to build one at no cost, as everything needed can be found around the house.

Take a large wooden soap box and, after removing the cover, take a crosscut saw and saw through the bottom of the box about 9½ inches carefully and fit it inside of the box, at right angles to the sawed front, to form the floor of the stage. Cut out the end which is now the top of your toy theater, leaving but a strip along the front.

Take a strip of this removed piece and tack it to the front of the box, a little bit below the level of the stage.

The next thing is the curtain. Hunt around until you find an old shade roller, some twine and a piece of red or green cloth. Cut the roller the exact width of the box. Then cut the cloth so that half an inch of roller will show on each side, tack one end to the top of the box. Wind the twine around the ends of the roller, leading the twine from each end up and over smooth tacks driven into the top of the theater. These lines should be operated from one side and serve to pull the curtain up and down.

Now comes the making of the footlights and proscenium. Paste drawing paper on stiff cardboard and get father or mother to follow the design in the drawing or carry out their own ideas, using a soft pencil for the outlines and filling in the pattern with water colors or crayon.



READY FOR THE PLAY.

After this is done tack the cardboard upright to the strip in front of the stage, bending them back and tacking them to the top. Tack the painted footlights to the front strip, high enough to hide any roughness of the stage. After designing and painting the arch, cut out along the outline and fasten it to strips of wood nailed to the top of the stage and jutting out as far as the strip along the footlights.

The scenery for the little theater has now to be made. Get old cardboard boxes, and take the large flat pieces, cutting them to the desired size and cover them with white paper. If you want a wood scene outline the trunks and branches with a heavy pencil, or india ink, filling in the foliage with water colors, permitting each color to dry before applying another.

Interiors, farm houses or sea scenes can be cut out of old magazines and pasted on.

After this is all done, your curtain in good working order and scenery in place, get out your toy soldiers, form them into groups—or, put your tin boats behind the paper waves with their paper and paint scene behind it. One little boy who had this theater built for him had two sets of scenery, one of the woods and one of the sea.

His first tableau was "A Storm at Sea," using a tin ship and his sea scenery. Tableau two was called "At the Station," showing a company of toy soldiers ready to enter an iron train, toy blocks were used to build the station. Tableau three he called "The Holdup in the Woods," the same little train being stopped by a toy man with his gun at his shoulder ready to fire.

This will give you an idea of the fun you can have with this home-made theater, and from these few ideas can be created an unlimited number of plays or tableaux that fill in many a stormy holiday or long winter evening.—Brooklyn Eagle.

Coloring Silk Cocoons.  
It is found that silk cocoons can be given any color by coloring the leaves upon which the silkworm feeds.

## BOY'S LAND YACHT.

French Youngster Furnishes an Idea Which Our Own Boys May Find Worth Imitating.

While crude in construction, a curious and useful little carriage was recently built by a French boy. He was staying with his mother at a seaside resort and one day, after watching a yacht skim over the water, it occurred to him that a person could travel very comfortably on land by attaching a sail to a carriage.

He got an old box and a set of wheels and in a few hours was riding up and down the beach in a carriage the like



FRENCH BOY'S LAND YACHT.

of which had never before been seen in France.

To the box he simply fastened a mast and a double triangular sail. There happened to be a good wind when his work was done, and it carried him and his carriage for a great distance.

Any boy can make a little land yacht of this kind, all that he needs being four wheels, which he can obtain without much trouble, an old soap box, a strip of canvas or calico and a stout stick, which is to serve as a mast. When there is any wind he will find a land sail decidedly pleasant.—N. Y. Herald.

## THE SPIDER'S WAY OUT.

Little Insect Showed So Much Intelligence That Its Captor Retained It to Liberty.

A close observer never has to travel away from home for entertainment and instruction. One bright-eyed young person, who had grown tired of reading, tells in an English paper how he found a spider an interesting playmate.

I took a washbowl and fastened up a stick in it like a vessel's mast, and then poured in water enough to turn the mast into an island for my spider, whom I named Crusoe, and put on the mast. As soon as he was fairly cast away, he anxiously commenced running around to find the mainland. He'd scamper down the mast to the water, stick out a foot, get it wet, shake it, run round the stick and try the other side, and then run back to the top again.

Pretty soon it became a serious matter to Mr. Robinson, and he sat down to think over it. As in a moment, he acted as if he were going to shout for a boat, and as if he were afraid he was going to be hungry, I put molasses on the stick. A fly came, but Crusoe wasn't hungry for flies just then. He was homesick for his web in the corner of the woodshed. He went slowly down the pole to the water and touched it all round, shaking his feet like pussy when she wets her stockings in the grass. Suddenly a thought seemed to strike him. Up he went like a rocket to the top, and commenced playing circus. He held one foot in the air, then another, and turned round two or three times.

He became excited and nearly stood on his head before I found out what he knew, and that was this: that the draught of air made by the fire would carry a line ashore on which he could escape from his desert island. He pushed out a web that went floating in the air until it caught on the table. Then he hauled on the rope until it was tight, struck it several times to see if it were strong enough to hold him, and waked ashore.

I thought he had earned his liberty, so I put him back in the wood shed again.

## A California Dog Hero.

From California comes a tale of a heroic rescue by a dog. During a forest fire which raged along the border between Yuba and Butte counties, Bruno, a Great Dane dog, fought his way through the flames bearing in his jaws the living body of 2-year-old Florence Rogers. The parents of the child, when the alarm of fire was given, hastened to assist neighbors, leaving little Florence on the kitchen floor. When the wind shifted Rogers and his wife rushed for their home, but when they reached the clearing it was to see the barn in a blaze. Rogers tried to get to the house, but was restrained. Just then Bruno burst through the kitchen window with the child, her garments knotted in his teeth. The baby's clothes gave way as the dog landed, but in an instant he had her again in grip and reached safety. The child's face and hands were cut and burned, but she recovered.

## Four Thousand Godfathers.

Princess Irene of Prussia is better provided for in the matter of godfathers than is any other woman in the world. She can boast of 4,000 godfathers, and how she came to obtain so many is a pretty story. When she was born the war of 1866 was drawing to an end, and peace being concluded just at the time of her christening, her father, Prince Henry of Hesse, requested all the officers and men of the regiments under his command to stand godfather to his little daughter, whom he named Irene (Peace) in commemoration of the end of the war.