

AFTER THE BATTLE.

[Joaquin Miller.] Sing banners and cannon and roll of drum! The shouting of men and the marching!

CRUISING ON THE RAIL.

The Great Fun that May be Got Out of Steam Travel. [New York Sun.]

A good-natured and talkative conductor on the Pennsylvania road leaned against the stove in the smoking-car of an incoming train the other day, and remarked to a passenger who smoked near him: "You have no idea how rail-roading grows on a man. The more you railroad the more you want to."

"Why, a man can go yachting over the American continent with more comfort and pleasure than he can over the Atlantic ocean. It will cost him a good deal of money, but not as much as it will to run a big yacht, and he will have no end of fun. Fog will not affect him; he can live like a prince on the fat of the land, and just drift from one place to another. The only cost will be for mileage over the roads and the salaries of the engineer, fireman, conductors, cook, brakeman, and attendants. He can have any sort of an engine he wants. It can be gold plated from stem to stern, and have an alabaster bust of Venus on the cowcatcher if he is willing to pay for it. He can buy his own engine and car, or he can own his car alone and hire an engine on each division as he goes over the railroad system of the country. If I were going to travel and I had the money, I would do it up in the proper style."

"There are a great many men, you know, who have their own cars. They hitch them to the tail-end of express trains and go about from one watering place to another, or off on little picnics with parties of friends. Actors and actresses actually find it cheaper to travel this way than to live at hotels. I saw the car recently in which Boucicault travels. It is fitted up so as to accommodate his entire troupe, including everybody and the light luggage of the company. They eat, sleep and travel in this car, have no hotel bills, and thus come back to almost the same conditions that characterized their great-grandfathers, who were known as play actors, and who went about the country in a caravan. I heard of a man who came to our office a few weeks ago who had an ambitious scheme in this line. He wanted to hire a special engine and car and take a trip over the entire systems of the country. His idea was to sell railroad supplies of every sort. He wanted to supply the needs of the big round-houses as well as the station managers, and he was going to sell everything from car wheels to potted plants. He also expected to drum for a railroad supply house in New York. He expected to make such a reputation by his unusual way of traveling as to earn a fortune in five years. The scheme didn't go. Our superintendent didn't see it, and he had to give it up."

Skobelev's Semitic Sentinel.

[Chicago Tribune.] There are a great number of anecdotes about Gen. Skobelev which have become legendary in the Russian army, and there are a much greater number about the Russian Jews which circulate through all classes of Russian society. The following story, which is of interest both for the admirers of the "White General" and the haters of the Russian Jew, was revived when Prince Bismarck, as a sign of special distinction, received the cross Pour le Merite. Skobelev, so goes the story, was working one evening in his tent near the Danube, or near a pond, when a Turkish bomb dropped at the threshold of the tent. The general had just time to see the sentinel outside stoop down and phlegmatically throw the shell into the water.

Skobelev approached the soldier and said, "Do you know that you have saved my life?" "I have done my best, general." "Very well; which would you rather have, the St. George's cross, or 100 rubles?" The sentinel was a Jew, with a fine Semitic profile. He hesitated a moment and then said: "What is the value of the St. George's cross, my general?" "What do you mean? The cross itself is of no value; it may be worth 5 rubles perhaps; but it is an honor to possess it." "Well, my general," calmly said the soldier, "if it is like that, give me 95 rubles and the cross of St. George."

The Source of Typhoid.

[Chicago Herald.] There has been a terrible outbreak of typhoid fever at Kidderminster, in England. Between 600 and 700 attacks have altogether been reported, the majority being upon young persons, among whom the principal mortality has occurred, but many adults are also victims of the outbreak. The fever is due to the source of the water supply being from a well in the middle of the sewage pumping works.

The Silent Stars.

[Detroit Post.] "How silent the stars are to-night, George," she said, softly, gazing at them over his shoulder.

"Yes," he replied, "but do you think they are any more silent than usual?"

A Terrible Fate.

Prince Matolero, the field marshal of Dahomey, convicted of treason, will have a novel execution. He is to be buried chest deep in the earth and then shot at by Amazon arrow-men until dead.

PERSIAN CARPETS AND RUGS.

Costly Work Done by Peasants—Luxurious Carpets Called Namads.

The far-famed rugs and carpets of Persia are largely made by peasants in their homes, and are in reality a sort of needlework. United States Consul Gen. Benjamin at Teheran has sent to the state department a long account of the business. He says there are four leading classes of these carpets—the large size, the rugs, the ghilsem, or knitted goods, and the namads, or felt carpets. Carpets produced in Irak are called pharaghans, and are firmer than other Persian carpets. Large-sized carpets must be made to order.

"Besides the pharaghan carpets," he says, "floors are also carpeted sometimes with fabrics from Kerwanshab, Hawadan, and the district of Lauristan. Also for this purpose the carpets of Mech-Kabad, in Khorassan, are available, although of inferior texture to the pharaghan. The carpets of Kerwan have the texture fitted to the rough usage required in covering floors; but while perhaps of superior quality to the pharaghan, they are always small and proportionately more expensive.

"The Persian carpet par excellence is the rug. The Persians use these in preference to large sizes. First covering the earth floor with a hassoe or matting of split reeds, they lay over it many rugs, which completely conceal the mat. This arrangement, when composed of rugs of harmonious designs, is very rich, while the cost is actually less than if one large carpet were employed instead.

"A point to be considered is that while the small carpets of Persia go under the general designation of rugs, it would be a serious mistake to consider them all as merely carpets of small size intended to be trod on by heavy shoes. In the first place Persians, when at home, take off their shoes, and thus a carpet of fine, delicate wool and design will last for ages, and actually improve with use such as this. In the second place, a large proportion of the rugs of Persia, and especially the finer grades, are never intended to be laid on the floor, but to cover divans or tables, or to hang as tapestries and portieres.

"This explains the extreme fineness of texture and velvety surface which many of these rugs display, and also accounts for the fringe at the ends. Some of the rugs of Kerwan are almost as fine as cashmere shawls. The designs of these rugs were formerly of a large pattern, with a general ground of red, white or some other uniform tint, with borders and details of minute tracery harmonizing with rather than disturbing the general effect. These patterns are unquestionably of higher artistic importance, exhibiting quality designated by artists as breadth.

"The colors formerly employed in the rugs of Persia were imperishable. Rugs one hundred years old show no deterioration in tint, but rather a softness such as old paintings assume. The introduction of aniline dyes at one time threatened to ruin the manufacture of textile fabrics in Persia, but the law against the employment of aniline dyes enacted by the Persian government is enforced with rigor.

"The namads or felt carpets of Persia, although produced by a process which perhaps excludes them from the list of strictly textile fabrics, may yet properly be considered in this report. The namad is made by forming a frame of the thickness intended or excavating a place in the ground floor of the size and depth equivalent to the namad intended. The hair is laid in this, and beaten with mallets until the original disjointed mass has attained cohesion and is reduced to the dimensions of the frame. A design of colored threads is beaten into the upper surface, sometimes quite effective. The namad, however, is desirable less for its beauty than the complete sense of comfort which it affords. It is much thicker than other carpets, and the sensation to the tread is luxurious. No carpet has ever been manufactured that is more suitable for the comfort of a sleeping-room in winter. One would imagine that the size of the namad must necessarily be limited. But, on the contrary, the regular Persian carpets rarely equal and never exceed the dimensions of some namads. The namad is more often than the carpets intended to cover an entire floor, elegant rugs being laid over it in places. I have seen a namad seventy-five feet long by nearly forty wide in one piece.

There is one species of rug special to Persia often spoken of but rarely seen. I refer to the rugs made of silk. It is not uncommon to see rugs of the finer types with silken fringes, and sometimes with a wool of silk in the body of the rug. But all silk rugs are rare, and rarer now than formerly. They are generally small, and intended for luxury rather than use. The price is necessarily very high. The chief of the merchants of Teheran told me of one he had seen over a tomb; it was barely two square yards in size; but he said 200 tomans, or \$960, would be a low price for it.

Queer Land Laws.

[Boston Budget.] In the old Florentine republic in case of a land owner wishing to alienate his land, the neighboring owner had by law the right of pre-emption. If there was a difference about the price, the question was to be referred to arbitration. In case the land was sold to some one else, the neighboring proprietor had the right of buying it back at any time he chose during the next three years, on payment of the price for which it had been sold. Moreover, where a piece of land was not worth more than a certain price, and was surrounded on two sides by a larger domain, the larger holder had the right to force a sale. This, however, applied only to land on which there was no house. A man's right to his dwelling was always respected.

Very Economical.

Elder sister (to Mary, who has just received a penny from papa). "Do you love your mamma, Mary? Mary—Yes, she is very nice, but she is so economical."

Courier-Journal: One of the strangest things about the success of coachmen in love affairs is the fact that they never buy ice cream.

WEALTH IN STORE

For Those Who Develop Alaska's Lumber and Mining Interests.

The Valuable Red and Yellow Cedar—Density of the Forest Growth—Uncertainty of Mining Claims.

[Alaska Letter.]

Although this vast territory of Alaska measures 1,400 miles one way and 2,200 the other, and its furthest island is as far west of San Francisco as that city is west of Bath, in Maine, few people have any clear idea of the country and its people. Within the 1,400 miles between its northern and southern boundaries there is a chance for a great range of climate, and while the northern part of the mainland lies within the Arctic circle and is wrapped in the snow and ice of polar regions, southern Alaska rejoices in climate that in winter is not as severe as that of Maryland or Kentucky. The isothermal lines make strange curves on the Pacific coast, and influenced by the warm Japan stream or Kuro-Sino, a mild temperate climate is given to the shores and archipelago of southwestern Alaska. As in California, temperature and climate depend more upon the distance from the equator, and Sitka summers are quite as windy and foggy, but hardly cooler than those of San Francisco. Sitka itself lies in the same latitude as Aberdeen, Scotland, and in all the islands south of it there is much the same climate, accompanied by the corresponding ocean current as prevails on the west coast of Ireland. By the records of the Russian observatory maintained here for fifty years, the thermometer fell to zero only three times during that period. The reports of the commanders of United States ships during the past four years confirm this climatic marvel and show many other strange things in meteorology.

The lumber interests are undeveloped, but a great industry is in promise for the future, as all southeastern Alaska from Cape Fox to the Kenai peninsula is clothed with forests denser than anything in Oregon or Washington territory. The comparatively mild temperature, the heavy rainfall, and the nightless days of the summer season force everything to a tropical luxuriance. No forest fires ever devastate these pine-clad shores and islands, and the season suffices to clothe with living green undergrowth the scars of landslides or avalanches. This vast area of forest includes little besides conifers. Much of the pine is as poor as Oregon pine, which is such bad ship timber that vessels built of it can only be insured as A No. 1 for three years. The white spruce, Sitka pine, which grows to a height of 150 to 175 feet and is from three to six feet in diameter, is the common tree in all these forests, and Menzies and Merion spruce, red and yellow cedar, pinus contorta, fir, cottonwood, ash, alder, small maple, and small birch are the other trees most frequently met with.

The red and yellow cedar are the most valuable woods, and the latter, more particularly, is the only good ship-building material on the Pacific coast. Its value arises chiefly from the fact that it is impervious to the teredo, or boring worm, which eats up the pine piles under Puget sound wharves every two or three years. It has a fine grain and a certain fragrance, and when made into chests it affords protection from moths to anything placed within. This yellow cedar is rarely found south of the Alaska boundary, and the largest tracts of it are on Kupreanoff, Kon, and the Prince of Wales island. It was once urged upon congress to declare the Prince of Wales island a government reservation for the purpose of preserving the valuable ship timber and piling for its own use, but, like all Alaska bills, it was laughed at and voted down. As the government would neither sell nor lease these timber lands, establish land offices, make surveys, nor allow settlers to pre-empt their acres, there are few saw-mills in the territory, and their owners are guilty of taking government timber, and are liable to prosecution if the new officials press things to the finest point. Want of lumber has been a serious hindrance to settlers, miners, and the owners of canneries.

The density of the forest growth, the tangle of underbrush, and the thick carpet of moss that covers every inch of the ground, has made mineral prospecting very slow and difficult. The men who discovered a ledge of quartz near Sitka worked for ten days to clear off a small patch of ground over the outcroppings, and the more one sees of these dense tangled forests the more one marvels at the extensive mining region that has been opened up near Juneau and across on Douglass island. As they have had neither land offices, surveyors, nor recorders, the ownership of mining claims has been rather uncertain. While they could get no title to their claims, nor protection for themselves, mine-owners have been contented to do only yearly assessment work, wash or pound out enough gold to pay expenses, and keep very still while they held their mines by sufferance, luck, or shot-guns only. The fear of inviting more adventurers to come and jump their claims and increase mob rule, has made the miners very reticent about the value of their properties, and boasting in that line is unknown in the mining camps of the archipelago. The first quartz ledges were found near Sitka in 1871, but bad management and bad luck have prevented their becoming profitable claims. A mill was erected on one of the ledges and was successfully worked for awhile, but litigation and vicissitudes of mining life have kept it at a standstill for several years. The great mining region is at Juneau, 150 miles south of Sitka.

Good Detective Work.

[Philadelphia Call.] First detective—I've got the two men who committed that murder. Their names are Chinks and Kinks. Second detective—You don't say so! How did you discover them? "I ran across Chinks one day and boldly charged him with the crime." "Yes; how did he take it?" "He changed color—a sure sign that he is guilty." "True; and the other?" "I saw Kinks soon after and boldly charged him with the crime." "Good! How did he act?" "He didn't change color at all—a sure sign that he is a hardened criminal."

A Heistful Picture.

[New York Times.] "That is a very handsome picture," he observed politely to the artist. "What do you call it?" "That is a study from still life." "What's the name of it?" "A Trump at Work."

A good definition of flirting is "attention without intention."

THE KING OF CRASS.

Japan's Marvelously Large Creature Twenty-Two Feet Across.

[Philadelphia Times.]

A reporter who happened into the museum of natural history in New York the other day ran across a naturalist who was examining a curious object.

"That's a crab," said he, lifting an enormous something that might have served as a shell for a large-sized turtle and one of the largest known. "This is only the top shell; the legs were unfortunately lost, and if you are astonished at this you will probably think that I am drawing on my imagination when I say that the crab when alive was twenty-two feet across."

The shell was a curious object—rough, corrugated, of a light yellow hue, and about two feet across. The eye-stalks were two inches in height, and between them extended upward a long, sharp spine that would have been a formidable weapon if the giant was disposed to use it.

"If you could see one of these fellows alive," continued the naturalist, "and under the circumstances that I did, you wouldn't forget it. I caught this fellow myself. They are found in Japan and known as rock or spider crabs. The shell of the large ones attains a length of about two feet and resembles a moss-covered rock. From it branch the legs, that are truly enormous, and, as I have said, this one when crawling along with its claws expanded would stretch from the tip of one to another at least twenty-two feet."

"I had heard of these giants, but I had no idea that they attained this enormous size. But when I arrived in Japan I soon heard from the native fishermen the most remarkable stories and soon found a man who said he could take me to a spot where they could be caught. We started one afternoon in one of the small native boats and skirted the bay for seven or eight miles, finally arriving at the mouth of a small river. Here we went ashore and the Japanese soon rigged up a tent of rush, in which we were to pass the night, as it was only after dark that the sea spiders could be seen. It was dusk when we reached the spot, and for three mortal hours we sat there speechless, watching the shore. The tide was on the ebb, and finally the fisherman grasped me suddenly by the arm and pointed down the shore a way, and there I soon made out a curious, lumbering object making its way up out of the water. The moon was rising, and at every move the creature glistened and sparkled as if it was drenched with molten silver. On it came until finally I could make out the outline of a gigantic crab that was undertaking the uncraab-like operation of leaving the water and taking to dry land. I waited until the animal stopped and showed signs that it would go no higher and then rushed out, making for the water so as to head it off. I had provided myself with a large stick, and soon found that I should have to use it, as the moment the huge creature saw us it started for the water, crawling along sideways and at no mean rate of speed.

"I placed myself in front of it, but on the creature came, holding aloft its two claws, each of which was ten feet long, and by the time it reached me I stepped aside, and was rather in a quandary, as I wanted to secure it entire. The Jap was talking and yelling something that I could not understand, and suddenly grasped one of the big claws. Seeing his game I grabbed the other, and held on as well as we could, and would you believe, the strength of the animal was such that we could not stand still. We pulled in opposite directions, however, and in this way lifted the animal from the ground; but while we were holding on, the crab, by a quick movement, threw off its large claws, as you have probably seen small ones do, and over we went headlong into the mud, each holding a claw, while the crab took a fresh star for the water. We dropped the claws and soon had it, and a native rope quickly had it powerless, although its struggles to escape and the strength displayed were marvelous—that is, in a crab. I found that the crabs came upon the shore every night and wandered about to feed, it is presumed, on the muddy flats. Before morning we caught another and smaller one that had a spread of about ten feet. We have king crabs here, but these fellows were the kings of the crab family, sure enough. I took it to Japan and shipped it to New York in two boxes, but, unfortunately, the one containing the claws was lost, and I have only the shell to tell the story. There are, however, several good specimens in this country. Harvard college has a fair specimen, but not as large as these I have mentioned.

"What are they good for? Well, in Japan they are eaten just as we eat crabs here. The great claws are the only really valuable parts, and one crab will produce meat enough to supply a whole family. Then, again, the shell is broken up and made into a curious medicine taken by the natives, and, curiously enough, they also make a medicine out of a fossil crab that they get in the back country. Though this crab is the largest, it is not as powerful as the famous palm-tree crab of the islands south of Japan and in the Indian archipelago."

The Earliest "Early Bird."

[San Francisco Post.] The scientists are always knocking out the poets, somehow. Professor Swinhurst has just discovered that the lark, so far from being the typical early bird, is the very latest to rise in the morning, and that the crow and the quail are real early birds detailed to start the kitchen fire and take in the early worm. These are on deck before anything except the owls, who don't deserve any credit, however, as they stay up all night.

He Hated a Scene.

[Texas Sittings.] John Fizzletop is not as industrious as he might be at school, and his father endeavors to correct the evil.

"So you were kept in again to-day at school for not knowing your lesson. Just walk into that room," said old Fizzletop, hunting for a strap.

"O, no, pa. Don't for goodness' sake let us have another one of those scenes." Twelve steel rolls are used in making a \$5 bank-note plate.

Norway and Its Needs.

[Cor. Boston Transcript.]

Norway impresses one as a country that has just been discovered, instead of as a land of such ripe civilization that its sons were able to discover America half a century before Columbus. Monuments, castles, ruins, buildings, hoary or memorable it has none. Sweden seems much more ancient. Norway appears to yield nothing but mountains, valleys and fjords, the latter as narrow as the valleys and as deep as the mountains are high. The people seem so content with the mountains, valleys and fjords that they press no further claim on a country so lavish in these.

The land is very thinly settled and scarcely cultivated at all; farming has very limited significance, and the farm-houses are far from idyllic. They have no well stocked barn, larder, or what people with our ideas would call a dairy; the milk often has a queer taste, the butter is bad and the cheese is worse; the pretty and frightfully dirty children are to be pitied, having no pantry to go to with cookies and ginger snaps and pies and preserves. The poorest farmer in the United States can have cabbages and turnips and pumpkins and corn; here, the comparatively well-to-do countryman must content himself with flat bread, milk and the abominable cheese, fish and the poorest kind of meat. This is not the fault of the soil, however. It is because the Norwegian peasant rather despises vegetables from his scant knowledge of them. If ten kinds of vegetables, including asparagus, and seven kinds of berries will grow in Tromso, at nearly 60 degrees north latitude, this is proof enough that they would grow further south, if the natives would but make the attempt to cultivate them.

I devoutly wish that a few skillful Americans would come here and do missionary work by planting large gardens and raising vegetables and fruit for the market and to provide for the hotels. A supply of the best American garden seeds would be an inestimable blessing and a colony of Miss Parloas and Marion Harlands would win the benedictions and thanks of the whole grateful world of tourist, if they would teach in Norway the art most needed and which only a tour in Norway, under present circumstances, will lead one to appreciate properly.

Mrs. Burnett's Well-Trained Boys.

[Washington Letter.] Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett, the well-known authoress, has a craze for the picturesque which extends not only to her inanimate surroundings, but to her two boys. A lady who has recently paid Mrs. Burnett a long visit is the authority for the statement that they are very handsome boys. Their proud mother is quite aware of their beauty by keeping them dressed in a most becoming fashion. She taught them to pose in an artistic manner. If the bell rings and a visitor is announced, Mrs. Burnett turns to her sons and says: "Take your positions." Immediately the well-trained boys fall into the poses best suited to their dress and beauty. The older one will lean his elbow on the corner of the mantelpiece and rest his head upon his shapely hand, while the younger will stretch himself in a graceful attitude on the heavy fur rug in front of the fire.

The visitor enters and cannot fail to be struck by the picturesque beauty of the scene and goes away, her mind full of admiration for her friend's children, and feels almost ashamed of the general roughness of her own boys at home, whom she is much more likely to find gliding down the banisters, sitting on the fence or playing ball than in poses which would gladden an artist's heart. Of course the attitudes given above are only those for winter use. For summer an entirely different set prevails, but they are all quite as effective, and, indeed, they are the pride of Mrs. Burnett's heart. What the result of this novel mode of education will be is a question which agitates many of the writer's friends, but they will soon have the opportunity of seeing, for a boy who can lean an elbow on the mantelpiece cannot be so very small.

Edison's New Phonograph.

[New York World.] Mr. Edison has grown somewhat stout these last three years, and is no longer the bony alchemist he was when he held his midnight vigils, wrestling with the obstinate battery at Menlo park, and lunches of fortuitous pastry summoned the demon of indigestion. I asked him if he should go to Philadelphia to witness the fine electric show there. "Yes," he said, "probably; as soon as I get my new phonograph finished. I have now in the works far the finest talking-machine ever made. It is double-grooved, and will receive and utter two voices at once, and as it runs by electricity and is regulated to the desired speed, it will deliver its message exactly as it was spoken.

One prime trouble with the old machine was that the pitch and accents could not be preserved, for the message was sure to be turned on and off at a different speed; so that, in singing especially, there was a constant flattening and changing of pitch, which produced horrible discords. This is quite remedied in the new phonograph, and will give some important results not attained before.

A Relieved Sentry.

[The Irish Times.] Only the other day, it seems, a sentry post at the government in St. James' park was discontinued after some twenty years of needless vigilance. Some time about 1864 a military commission set in a back building abutting on the park. In order to mark the solemnity of the occasion they clapped a member of the rank and file upon the entrance which was thus held at the point of the bayonet from 10 to 4 o'clock. The commission accomplished its work, which was, no doubt to draw up a report, which was relegated, as such documents are, to the pigeon-holes of the department moving in the matter. Anyway, the commission disappeared, but the sentry remained.

Two decades passed away, and still Thomas Atkins, with his red coat, his fixed bayonet, and his twenty yards of sentry-go, paced up and down, up and down, the brief parade fixed by his superiors. There was nothing to guard, and he guarded it. He had been forgotten, in fact.