

Mexico pays \$12,000,000 interest a year on that portion of her debt held in foreign countries.

Spain and Turkey were once great Nations. Both are to-day on the verge of utter collapse.

Trade competition in Chicago has become so tremendous that collars are now offered at actual cost.

The Brazilian Legislature has voted to the members of the next Congress free passes on all Government railways, in addition to pay and mileage. It is somewhat hard to reconcile the free pass and mileage.

One would think that truck farming within six miles of two great cities would not only pay, but pay well, but, according to the New York Advertiser, it doesn't. Southern competition is knocking out the Long Island agriculturists, some of whom say they will lose as high as \$10,000 on their crops this year. All of them are singing a melancholy song.

Within the last twenty-five years it has become evident, observes the New York Advertiser, that hypnotic force, if dimly understood, is yet as real a force as electricity; that only length of time and persistence in experiment are necessary to unfold the laws which govern its workings. Even in this day it is not entirely severed in the minds of many persons from charlatanism. Because it has been associated with numerous frauds they reject it as spurious. There is excuse for this prejudice. The best attested phenomenon of hypnotism wears an air of improbability.

It is bad policy to rent land where it can by any possibility be bought. A really good farmer is sure to leave the farm he occupies in better condition than he found it, and in this country, unless a special bargain is made, the man who has made the improvements gets no benefit thereby, except as he has made it while occupying the farm. This matter is managed much better in Ireland, declares the Boston Cultivator, where for a number of years the law requires that the landlord shall pay to the tenant the value of the improvements made. Renting land is much more common in Ireland and England than it is in the United States. It is also true that in European countries land under cultivation is more apt to improve than it is in the United States. Heretofore indeed there has been little occasion for laws to reimburse the renter for increase of value in the farm from which he had been for several years taking off the cream of fertility. Probably as the improvement of land rather than its exhaustion becomes more common the laws will be amended so as to better apply to the new conditions.

A new plan is being tried in Ohio which threatens the extinction of the old fashioned "destrict school." In Kingsville, Ashtabula County, there were a number of small schools requiring many teachers, entailing much expense, and which could not be properly graded. The farmers of that section studied the question, and then applied to the legislature for relief. Five outlying school districts were abandoned, with the agreement to bring the pupils to the schools at the centre of the town. Covered wagons, completely inclosed on stormy days, were provided, and arrangements made with certain farmers to bring the children each morning. The wagon held from eighteen to twenty-two persons. In two districts pupils were brought four and a half miles. In the other three the longest trip was three and a half miles. The conveyance both ways cost from ninety-five cents to \$1.05 a day for each wagon. As a result the expense of education in that district has been reduced from an average of \$22.75 per capita to \$12.25. The attendance has been much better than under the old plan; there has been less sickness among the children, their feet and clothing being kept dry in stormy weather; teachers are better paid and of a higher grade; and the improved teaching would be maintained even if it cost as much as the old plan. The scholars reach the schoolhouse at nine o'clock and leave at four, with the usual noon recess. The plan is being tried in other parts of Ohio, and one by one the "little red school houses" are being deserted for more commodious buildings farther apart, a loss to pleasant memories of the old, but a great gain to the rising generation.

A WORLD OF LOVE.

When that her little arms are curled (About my neck they twine), She "loves me—loves me all the world." Hence all the world is mine! And sweetly to the heavens above Smile on that wondrous world of love!

Not royally my mansion towers; So humbly doth it rise That you may lose it in the flowers That bloom 'neath tranquil skies. And yet for all, I do opine; The very world God made is mine!

And rich am I when poorest seeming, With wealth to match the worlds above. When, sweetly on my bosom dreaming, She bringeth me her world of love! There lies she like a gem unpaired— Her love my life, my wealth, my world! —F. L. Stanton, in Chicago Times-Herald.

A WOPFUL WAGER.



IX pairs." "Long ones, ten buttons and Suedes." "You can choose for yourself." "Dona." "Oh, you will back out."

"I" indignantly. "No, indeed; I have been longing for it for days."

"All right, then, take the bet." "Hallo!" chimed in a third voice from the other end of the room, "what are you two up to now?"

The girl laughed. "I thought you were too deep in politics to be listening," she said, "but if you want to know Stanley has just bet me six to one—"

"That she won't walk down the Grand Rue at noonday in the fisher girl costume she admires so much," interrupted Stanley.

Percy Rivers threw his paper on the ground, rose, and crossed the room. "What nonsense is this?" he asked sternly, facing his younger brother and sister.

Ethel shrugged her shoulders. "You are always a spoil sport, Percy," she said plaintively; "it is as dull as ditch water with you stepping in to stop every bit of fun. Where's the harm in this? I dare say, for all your long face and priggish manner, that you had plenty of larks in your time."

Percy's brow grew sterner. "Am I to understand, Ethel," he said, "that you purpose masquerading here in a foreign town?"

Ethel nodded. "Call it what you like," she said doggedly. "I am going to dress up as a fishwife; the costume is most becoming. Stan can withdraw his bet; I shall do it just the same."

"I forbid you, Ethel." A defiant look answered him. "We'll see," she said saucily. "I'm off to consult madame." And with a glance at Stanley she left the room.

"How could you be so senseless, Stanley?" said his brother angrily as the door closed. "Now she will carry out this ridiculous farce."

"Don't fly into a passion, Percy," returned the young fellow calmly. "I had no idea she was really in earnest."

"Look here," said Percy grimly, "I wash my hands of you both, but I depend on you, Stanley, to keep her out of any scrape this tomfoolery leads to."

"All right, old fellow, but you can be easy. Ethel won't come to grief." Miss Rivers, in the meanwhile, was closeted in madame's sanctum behind the shop. The Lenoirs were jewelers, but mother and daughter would have found their income precarious enough without the money accruing from the first and second floors, now occupied by the Riverses. It was policy, therefore, to be obliging, so though Mme. Lenoir was shocked at the proposed escapade, and inwardly apostrophized the English as "a mad lot," she expressed great interest.

"I think I can find mademoiselle the dress she requires," she said, all smiles and smirks.

"You dear woman!" exclaimed Ethel delighted. "How? Where? Of course, it must be new."

Madame nodded. "Leonie," addressing her daughter, "Josephine would lend here, oh?"

"What?" cried Leonie shrilly. "Her wedding dress—never!" Madame regarded Ethel.

"Mademoiselle would be very careful of it, would she not?" she said.

"Oh, yes," replied the young lady eagerly. "I only want it for an hour. But will it fit me?"

The French woman surveyed Ethel from top to toe critically.

"Yes," she said, "mademoiselle is the same height." Then with a wink at Leonie: "How much will mademoiselle pay for the loan?"

"The cost is the least part," replied the girl quickly. "I leave that to you, dear madame."

Madame's arched eyebrows and hand gesture said plainly: "The folly of these people!" and she instantly resolved to take advantage of the said folly to do a stroke of business on her own account, independent of the "commission" she intended to charge Josephine when the bargain was concluded.

"I will send about the costume at once," she said aloud. "And, Josephine, if she consents, shall bring it to show mademoiselle this evening. It is all complete except—"

"Except what?" interrupted Ethel eagerly, as madame paused, while Leonie looked wonderingly at her mother.

"The long earrings," replied the French woman suavely. "Mademoiselle knows they are an essential part of the dress, and Josephine would not care to lend them—"

"But—" began Leonie. A frown from madame cut her short. "Mademoiselle must buy a pair of real gold ones," suggested the shrewd tradeswoman, with a triumphant glance at her daughter; and leading

the unresisting Ethel into the shop she showed her several pairs of handsome earrings.

"You minny," said madame to Leonie, with a reproving shake of the head, when Ethel, having selected, ran off with her treasures. "You minny, will you never learn to open your mouth for the ripe fruit to tumble in it?"

The Boulognaise fish girl proved ready to oblige the English lady, and Ethel was summoned downstairs that evening.

"This is Josephine, Mees Etel," said madame, by way of introduction, pointing to a young girl in still-brimmed white cap and scarlet petticoat.

"It is very good of you to lend me your dress," said Ethel, with a smile. Josephine began untying a brown paper parcel.

"See, mademoiselle," she said proudly, placing each article over a chair; "see, everything fresh and new."

"They are your wedding things," said Ethel, fidgeting the bodice. The fish girl reddened.

"We are to be married next week," she said simply.

"And what will Antoine say to your lending your finery?" broke in Leonie's high treble voice.

Josephine's face clouded. "Hold your tongue," cried madame to her daughter; "Antoine is not such a fool; he will think a handful of francs payment enough."

Josephine looked from one to the other hesitatingly, but Ethel, unheeding the dispute, slipped on the petticoat.

"Did I not tell mademoiselle it would be the right size," exclaimed Mme. Lenoir triumphantly—"eh, Josephine?"

But Josephine kept her eyes on the ground.

"Their figures are exactly alike," continued madame, nodding her head in approval at both supple, graceful forms.

Ethel gathered up the rest of the apparel in her arms.

"Stop a moment, mam'selle," said Josephine, touching her. "Antoine is strange; he may be vexed, as Mademoiselle Leonie suggested just now."

"You won't lend them?" Ethel's voice was plaintive.

Madame came to her rescue. "You can't disappoint Mees Etel after it has all been arranged," she said to Josephine. "Antoine need not know unless you are so silly as to tell him, and the money will come in useful."

A smile crept around the corners of Josephine's lips.

"Take the things, mam'selle," she cried; and Ethel, promising to return them the following evening, slipped away.

About 11 o'clock next morning a tap at Stanley's door made him open it. He stared for a moment, then uttered a long drawn whistle.

"Well, do look nice?" demanded his sister, gleefully.

"Capital!" and he laughed heartily.

"How did you manage it so soon? But, Ethel," and his tone was serious, "mind your p's and q's, don't look about you."

She nodded.

"I shall go straight down the Grande Rue to the quay, pop in upon the Stuarts, and back again; while I am gone, Stan, you can buy the gloves. Ar revoir!" And kissing her hand, she descended the stairs.

Percy, coming up, almost knocked against her. He started at the gay apparition. Then he recognized Ethel.

"Good heavens!" he groaned, but before he could say more the bird had flown into madame's parlor.

Percy hesitated a moment, and walked into Stanley's room.

"What's up?" asked the young fellow.

"I have just met Ethel in that ridiculous togethery," answered Percy jestingly. "You will please follow her and see that she does not get into mischief, do you hear?"

But Percy, returning to his study, could not settle himself to his work. Ethel had neither father nor mother; little control as he possessed over her, he was still the responsible party. The thought of possible insult to his madcap sister so disturbed him that he resolved to go after her himself.

An unexpected call, however, detained him from putting his resolution into immediate action.

In the parlor Ethel had been duly admired and flattered.

Ethel explained the joke, but her friends shook their heads. How could Percy have allowed it!

She sat subdued and dispirited for a few moments, and rose to depart.

"Yes, get back as quickly as you can, you silly child," said Mrs. Stuart. The return journey had lost its zest; the flavor had gone from the fun. Ethel, as she went swiftly along the quay, was more alive than ever to the comments of the passers-by, and the glances of other fish girls. The bright color in her cheeks had given place to pallor, a longing to be safe again at home seized her. How far off the Grande Rue was!

Absorbed in herself, she had not noticed a Nthe, dark-browed young fisherman following her at a distance, a sinister, jealous gleam in his black eyes. But as by degrees he came closer, an instinctive feeling warned her of his neighborhood. He tried to see her face, but Ethel looked straight before her. Turning a corner, she came face to face with Percy. A sigh of relief escaped her; she grasped at his offered arm. Before she could take it, a strong hand pushed her aside, a glint of steel flashed in the sunlight, a savage oath, and a knife was buried in Percy's shoulder. Ethel screamed. At the sound the hot-blooded Gascon staggered back, pale and trembling. He stared at her.

"Antoine, you fool," shouted the bystanders, collected at the fray, "you have killed the Englishman! The girl is his sister!"

They carried the injured man to the nearest surgeon.

Fortunately for Ethel's stricken conscience the wound was not dangerous. During Percy's tedious convalescence she was a devoted nurse, but she never thinks of that day without a shudder at the possible consequences of that woful wager.—Household Words.

Sankey's Most Famous Hymn.

At a great gathering recently in Denver, Col., Ira W. Sankey, before singing "The Ninety and Nine," which perhaps of all his compositions is the one that has brought him the most fame, gave an account of its birth. Leaving Glasgow for Edinburgh with Mr. Moody, he stopped at a news stand and bought a penny religious paper. Glancing over it as they rode on the car, his eye fell upon a few little verses in the corner of the page. Turning to Mr. Moody, he said: "I've found my hymn." But Mr. Moody was busily engaged and did not hear a word. Mr. Sankey did not find time to make a tune for the verses, so he pasted them in his music scrap book. One day they had an unusually impressive meeting in Edinburgh, in which Dr. Bonar had spoken with great effect on "The Good Shepherd." At the close of the address Mr. Moody beckoned to his partner to sing something appropriate. At first he could think of nothing but the Twenty-third Psalm, but that he had sung so often; his second thought was to sing the verses he had found in the newspaper; but the third thought was, How could it be done when he had no tune for them? Then a fourth thought came, and that was to sing the verses anyway. He put the verses before him, touched the keys of the organ, opened his mouth and sang, not knowing where he was going to come out. He finished the first verse amid profound silence. He took a long breath, and wondered if he could sing the second the same way. He tried it and succeeded. After that it was easy to sing it. When he finished the hymn the meeting was all broken down—the throngs were crying and the ministers were sobbing all round him. Mr. Sankey says it was the most intense moment of his life. From that moment it was a popular hymn. Mr. Moody said at the time that he had never heard a song like that. It was sung at every meeting, and was soon going over the world. While traveling in the highlands of Scotland a short time later, Mr. Sankey received a letter from a lady at Melrose thanking him for singing the verses written by her sister. That sister was Elizabeth C. Clephane. He wished to call it "The Lost Sheep," but Mr. Moody insisted upon calling it "Ninety and Nine" whenever he announced it. Mr. Sankey firmly believes that God inspired him to sing that song with such effect, and the honor should be His.—The Outlook.

Fire Gives Protection From Lightning.

Science and superstition occasionally meet on common ground, making it rash to condemn old customs as senseless. For instance, there are many primitive villages abroad where smoke fires are kindled hastily upon the approach of a thunderstorm, doubtless a survival, the antiquarian would say, of some heathen rite of propitiation. On the other hand, Professor Schuster has recently pointed out that flame will discharge an electrified body, and that every fire or chimney emitting smoke serves as a lightning conductor for carrying off the pressure of electricity from a charged cloud. Some figures prepared in Schleswig-Holstein for the purpose of testing this theory show that while 6.3 churches in 1000, and 8.5 windmills, are struck by lightning, only one factory chimney in 3000 suffers in the same way, despite their greater height and more exposed condition.—Fall Mall Gazette.

Only Known Venomous Bird.

New Guinea is the home of the most wonderful feathered creature known to the student of ornithology—the awful spix n'doob, or "bird of death." The venom of this bird is more deadly than that of any serpent except the cobra. In fact, no antidote for the bite of the creature is known. A wound from its beak causes excruciating pains in every part of the body, loss of sight and hearing, convulsions, lockjaw and certain death.

BUDGET OF FUN.

HUMOROUS SKETCHES FROM VARIOUS SOURCES.

A Pleasant Oath—Initiated—His Dark Design—Settled—He Was Safe—A Bad Day—Available Either Way, Etc., Etc.

"Do you, said Phyllis, 'other day, 'In earnest, love me as you say Or are those tender words applied Alike to fifty girls beside?"

"You cruel girl!" cried I, "forbear! For by your vows,—your lips, I swear— She stopped me as the oath I took, And cried: 'You've sworn—now kiss the book!'" —Truth.

A BAD DAY. Beggar—"Beg pardon, sir, but I have seen better days than this." Passer-by—"So have I. The weather is horrible."

SETTLED. "I'll never ask another woman to marry me so long as I live." "Refused?" "No; accepted."

THE BEST OF PROOF. Quericus—"What Reason have you for thinking he is so rich?" Cynicus—"His children object to his second marriage."—Judge.

A UNIVERSAL MALADY. "Digby tells me he fears his wife is the victim of a wasting disease." "What is it?" "Bargain counters."—Chicago Record.

INITIATED. Tom (gloomily)—"I tell you, Charlie, this is a hard, hard world." Charlie (interestedly)—"So you have bought a bicycle, too, have you?" —Tit-Bits.

CANTED. Fuddy—"Do your folks keep a girl at your house?" Duddy—"Good gracious! no. And we've tried every sort of inducement, too."—Boston Transcript.

HIS DARK DESIGN. "Wonder why that man next door takes his wife's poll parrot out on his wheel every day?" "He probably hopes that he will fall off on it."—Chicago Record.

VERY SWELL. "Is it a dressy neighborhood where you live?" "Extremely so; the lady next door sweeps off her front steps with her diamond earrings on."—Chicago Record.

PUTTING IT MILDLY. "Then you mean to tell me I'm a liar?" "Well, no, I don't wish to be quite so rude as that; but I will say this—you'd make a good weather prophet." —Tit-Bits.

FROM KENTUCKY, OF COURSE. First Artist—"So Colonel Bluegrass would not take any of your pictures?" Second Artist—"No; he says he hasn't any taste for water colors?"—Town Topics.

FORCE OF HARM. May—"I met Dr. Fish on the avenue to-day and he cut me." Pamolia—"That's his great failing. He doesn't know where to draw the line between business and pleasure."—Brooklyn Life.

PATRIOTISM UP TO DATE. "Sawyer, don't you think a man ought to work for his political principles?" "No, sir; I think a man's political principles ought to work for him."—Chicago Record.

TRUE. "Is there anything certain in this uncertain world?" "Yes, if you out anything out of a newspaper there is always something more valuable on the other side."—Chicago Record.

HE WAS SAFE. "Listen, Mrs. Tugby; isn't this horrible? They make candles out of human fat." "Well, you wouldn't serve; you are everlastingly going out at night."—Chicago Record.

UNTERIFIED. "Do you think it's unlucky to meet a cross-eyed person?" asked the man of superstition. "Should say not," replied his newly made friend. "I'm an oculist."—Washington Star.

AVAILABLE EITHER WAY. Helen—"He is extremely reticent about his family." Her Brother—"Hum—must be a good man of bad family or a bad man of good family. You had best encourage him."—Judge.

EASILY EXPLAINED. Wyld—"That barber has shaved me two years, and I don't believe I have spoken a dozen words to him." Mack—"How is that?" Wyld—"He has never given me a chance."—Tit-Bits.

A MATTER OF TASTE. Customer—"You are using a different kind of soap from what you were, aren't you?" Barber—"What makes you think so?" "It doesn't taste the same."—Lita.

CONVINCING. Husband—"You're not economical."

Wife—"Well, if you don't call a woman economical who saves her wedding dress for a possible second marriage, I'd like to know what you think economy is!"

NEW HER BUSINESS. Aunt—"Your bride, my dear boy, is delightfully rich and all that, but I don't think she will make much of a beauty show at the altar."

Nephew—"You don't, eh? Just wait till you see her with the bridesmaids that she has selected."—Pick-Me-Up.

HER ABSTRACTION. "Esmeralda," he said, hoarsely, "I am waiting for your answer." "Oh! forgive me, Tom! I was thinking."

"What were you thinking of?" "I was thinking how I would have my wedding gown made, dear."—Pack.

AN IDEAL CORRESPONDENT. Farmer Benson—"Do you hear often from that boy of yours at college?" Farmer Johnson—"Every other day. You see, we arranged to let him have his money by \$10 installments, and he was always to write and let us know when he needed the next."—Town Topics.

TIME TO STOP. "You men must really be careful and not run over people," said the President of the surface car line to his motormen.

They listened in respectful attention, and he continued: "Every person you kill is one less passenger to ride."—Judge.

COULDN'T RESIST. Old Boy—"I pride myself on keeping myself to myself. For instance, I did not speak to my next door neighbor for ten years."

Son—"How did you come to speak to him first?" Old Boy—"He brought home a new bicycle, and I couldn't resist giving him some hints how to ride it."—Ally Sloper.

An Enterprising Peach Grower. The great Hale peach orchard, in Georgia, covers 1078 acres, 600 of which are in bearing trees, and the remainder in nursery stock. There are avenues running north and south through the orchard 500 feet apart, with a cross road every 1000 feet. There are two large packing houses 100 feet long and forty feet wide and two stories high, and a lodging house or hotel has just been built for the help. Last year some 400 helpers camped in barns, wagons, tents, etc. At picking time about 500 men and women, chiefly colored, and seventy-five horses and mules, are employed, while fifty men and thirty mules are employed the year round. At the lodging house rooms and beds are free, and board costs \$2.50 a week, while families and parties can furnish their own food and have it cooked for themselves, if they choose. This year the curculion attacked the peaches, and Mr. Hale waged prompt war upon the insects, jarring the trees and catching the insects in sheets tacked to light semicircular hoop frames. Two of these were brought together about a tree, which was struck by a rubber-padded club, and the insects which dropped were then thrown into buckets and carried by boys to barrels in wagons and drawn away to be buried with the stung fruit which dropped with them. Fifty men were busy for nearly two months, from early April onward, at this work, which cost \$4000. But while in other orchards from sixty to ninety per cent. of the fruit was lost, and in some orchards the entire crop, the Hale orchard alone had a full crop, and many of the trees were so overloaded that they required severe thinning by hand.—Forest and Garden.

Peculiar Mishap on a Railway. A very peculiar mishap to a freight train has just come to the attention of the motive power department of the Panhandle in this city, and in its details it assumes the nature of a miracle as strange as those of old. The train was running at a rapid rate between Xenia and Trebeins, a distance of four miles, when the trucks of one of the cars gave way and jumped onto the tracks of the Cincinnati, Hamilton and Dayton road, which runs parallel with the Pennsylvania at that point. The trucks lighted squarely on the rails and continued running until they smashed into the pilot of a Cincinnati, Hamilton and Dayton engine running in the opposite direction. The Panhandle train evidently did not suffer any inconvenience owing to the loss of trucks, as it was not discovered until Trebeins was reached, and then it was found that the body of the freight car was held in position by the couplings and had run two miles without any wheels. The accident is perhaps without any parallel in annals of railways, and although absolutely true and vouched for by the motive power department officials, it seems stranger than fiction.—Columbus (Ohio) Press.

Few Die of Old Age. Only 900 persons in 1,000,000, according to medical authority, die from old age, while 1200 succumb to gout, 18,400 to measles, 2700 to spopley, 7000 to erysipelas, 7500 to consumption, 48,000 to scarlet fever, 35,000 to whooping cough, 30,000 to typhoid and typhus and 7000 to rheumatism. The averages vary according to locality, but these are considered pretty accurate as regards the population of the globe as a whole.—Detroit Free Press.