

### STONES OF COLOR.

The sapphire is (although it may sound somewhat paradoxical) a species of blue ruby, the formation of these stones being identical.

There is a pretty Russian proverb which says: "A turquoise given by a loving hand carries with it happiness and good fortune." The shah of Persia is reputed to possess the finest turquoise in the world.

A really flawless emerald is very rare. The richest emerald mines in the world are those of Colombia, but the earliest-known emeralds were those of Egypt, the "land of fair emeralds." Cleopatra often bestowed as presents to ambassadors emeralds with her portrait engraved.

It seems that a precious stone cannot properly be dignified by the title of gem until it has been cut and polished. It is the optical character of precious stones that distinguishes the real from the imitation. Among other questions that the intending purchaser should ask himself in the selection of stones is this striking one: Are the stones like dewdrops hanging from a damask rose leaf?

The ruby stands supreme among colored stones and, owing to its rarity, is sometimes worth ten times the value of an ordinary white diamond. A dark species of ruby is found in Siam, a pale tinted kind in Ceylon, but the true "pigeon-blood" ruby is yielded only by the famous mines of Burma. Until the year 1885 this land of rubies was practically unknown to Europeans. Since then various scientific explorers have "lifted the veil of mystery" which enshrouded this famous country.

The most effective expedition was that conducted by Mr. George Skelton Streeter. With the permission of the English government, who granted him the assistance of a military force, he formed one of the three explorers in a romantic expedition into the interior of Burma. The country was developed by these men at great personal discomfort and even peril, for an organized resistance was made by the hill tribes, and some people in this country doubted the motives of the explorers. Their efforts resulted in the formation of the "Burma ruby mines."

### SCIENCE BREVITIES.

What are known as "tidal waves" have nothing to do with the tides, but are supposed to be caused by earthquakes. They do not, therefore, appear at regular intervals.

If you pinch your finger the hurt and the pain are not quite simultaneous, and if your arm were long enough to reach to the sun it would be 132 years before you would feel the pain.

The curious fact is noted by M. Maurain, in the Journal de Physique, that careful measurements of the intensity of gravitation in different parts of the globe show this to be greater on islands than on continents.

A Polish schoolmaster, Scepanik by name, claims to have invented an electrical device which utilizes a beam of light to explode bombshells. He is also alleged to have perfected an instrument by means of which objects at a considerable distance can be seen, tinted with their natural colors.

The lighting of a room, says the Pharmaceutical Era, depends, to a large extent upon the color and the material of the walls; in other words, upon the percentage of light reflected by them. Recent experiments have shown the proportion of light reflected to be in percentages as follows: Black velvet, 0.4; black cloth, 1.2; black paper, 4.5; dark blue, 6.3; dark green, 10.1; light red, 15.2; dark yellow, 20; blue, 30; light yellow, 40; light green, 46.5; light orange, 54.8; white, 70; mirror, 92.3.

### BICYCLE BEARINGS.

The Austral Wheel Race netted the Melbourne Bicycle club \$7,500.

Cycle polo performances are given by American teams in London music halls and attract full houses.

Lord Salisbury has had a special bicycle made for his own use, and when affairs of state permit of such diversion is learning to ride the silent steed.

With the assistance of the fine art booklets being sent out by the various manufacturers, buying a wheel is as easy as rolling off a catalog.—L. A. W. Bulletin.

At the suggestion of one who studies the small things which go toward the making up of the perfect bicycle, a number of riders made nickel-plated chains last year. The advice was given on the theory that the nickel finished chain would shed dust and dirt much better than either the blued or straw-finished chain would. The scheme proved so successful that all "their friends" are going in for nickel-plated chains this coming season.

### POINTS ABOUT PEOPLE.

The daily cost of President McKinley's table is said to exceed \$25.

The Chinese pronounce their dowager empress the most beautiful woman whom the celestial kingdom has ever known.

Capt. C. Rath, who had charge of the execution of the four Lincoln conspirators in 1865, is at present a railway postal clerk and lives at Jackson, Mich.

Every senator who retired with the recent congress made something in the shape of a set speech except Murphy, of New York, and Roach, of North Dakota. Neither of these offered more than a few remarks during his entire term.

Gen. Guy V. Henry, who succeeded Gen. Brooke as American governor general of Porto Rico, and has already developed fine administrative qualities there, was born to the military service, for he drew his first breath in an army wagon at Fort Smith, I. T., where his father, Maj. William S. Henry, was stationed.

Reading for Bridewell Prisoners. A new experiment has been tried in the New York penitentiary on Bridge-well's island, and so far it has proved wonderfully successful. A thousand entertaining and instructive volumes have been added to the library, and the prisoners are allowed to read from 5:30 to 9 p. m. The privilege is eagerly embraced. If a man is rebellious he is deprived of his respite in the reading-room, and as a consequence the number of insubordinates has dropped wondrously nearly 75 per cent.

### "Because You Love Me."

Because you love me I have found  
New joys that were not mine before;  
New stars have lightened up my sky  
With glories growing more and more.  
Because you love me I can rise  
To the heights of Freedom and Power;  
Because you love me I may learn  
The highest use of every hour.  
Because you love me I can choose  
To look through your dear eyes and see  
Beyond the beauty of the Now  
Far onward to Eternity.  
Because you love me I can wait  
With perfect patience well possessed;  
Because you love me, all my life  
Is circled with unquestioned rest:  
Yes, even Life and even Death  
Is all unquestioned and all best.  
—Fall Mail Magazine.

Faithfulness.  
Snyder left his dog with me;  
"He'll soon get over it," said he;  
"But there's my girl, she'll miss me,  
though."  
She'll count the days that come and go,  
And yearn for my return, I know,  
Beside her.

Ere Snyder had been gone a year  
The girl forgot him, fickle dear.  
The dog refused to eat and hid  
Him to a corner, there beside  
A shoe of Snyder's pinned and tied,  
For Snyder.  
—Philadelphia Press.

### THE LOWER KINGDOM.

Neither camels nor elephants can jump.

The silkworm is liable to over 100 diseases.

Nearly all skin diseases are supposed to be caused by microscopic insects.

The migration of birds is supposed to have originated during the glacial period.

The dentine of the teeth is permeated by tiny canals one twelve-thousandth of an inch in diameter.

The barn owl, when she has young, brings a mouse to her nest about every 12 minutes, 40 mice a day being a low computation.

The earthworm was glorified by Darwin. It is now asserted that the common earthworm promulgates diseases to an alarming extent among animals.

To keep hunting dogs in training there has been designed a race track with a mechanical arrangement mounted on a pair of rails outside the track to drag a stuffed bait around the ring for the dogs to catch.

### CURIOS FACTS.

Women, according to a prominent physician, have, as a general rule, much coarser hair than men.

The largest steel shaft in the world has just been finished. It is 27 feet 10 inches long and its diameter in the middle is 37 inches.

The floors in French hospitals are painted with a solution of paraffine in petroleum for hygienic reasons. One application lasts two years.

If a Persian chances to sneeze when he is about to take medicine, he throws the medicine away, thinking that the gods have warned him to beware of it.

The "pathometer," a new invention for use on bicycles and other vehicles, not only mathematically records the distance traveled, but also the direction of the routes traversed.

In the library of the Hereford Cathedral, England, are about 2,000 volumes, and 1,500 of them are each of their own attached to the book case by a chain three or four feet long.

### ODD AND CURIOUS.

Byra, a town in Africa, is built entirely of zinc. The public buildings and residences did not cost more than £5,000.

A London Times advertisement asks for a girl of 18 as advertisement and com-panion. She must be highly educated, English, and a Protestant, but no cyclist need apply.

A writer on China says that the Chinese believe the Yellow river has always been of its present color except one day about 3,000 years ago, on which occasion a great man was born and the river was perfectly clear.

A Viennese professor, Dr. Troncz, recently discovered that a three-year-old child, which had frequent attacks of inflammation of the lungs, owed them to having swallowed a small screw 1½ years ago. He thinks similar cases may be frequent.

WREATHS FROM CZAR'S TOMB.

Sold by St. Petersburg Dealer and the Ribbons Recovered at Immense Cost.

A dispatch to the Tageblatt from St. Petersburg says that on the occasion of his latest visit to his father's tomb in the cathedral of St. Peter and Paul the czar noticed that the wreaths that were deposited by the royal representatives at the funeral were piled in confusion and covered with dust. His majesty directed Court Minister Baron Fredericks, who accompanied him, to see that the wreaths were put in order. Eventually, through a misunderstanding on the part of Baron Fredericks or his subordinates, the wreaths were removed and sold to a St. Petersburg tradesman.

When Baron Fredericks learned this fact he was dismayed. He reported the matter to the czar, who was indignant. His majesty ordered that at least the ribbons from the wreaths bearing royal monograms be recovered, whatever the cost might be. The buyer, meanwhile, had sold a majority of the wreaths and ribbons to foreign collectors for many thousands of rubles. The purchasers have since been addressed separately and privately, with the result that nearly all the ribbons have been recovered, but with enormous trouble and at great expense.

The ribbons bearing the initials of Emperor William were found at Budapest, and were repurchased for 12,000 gulden. Another ribbon that was recovered at The Hague cost the government 8,000 gulden.

Baron Fredericks, who is exceedingly remorseful over the affair, has resigned his office, but the czar has not yet accepted the resignation. His majesty is deeply hurt by the lack of reverence displayed by the officials immediately responsible.

### TEA IMPORTATIONS.

Dealers Not Bringing Any More to This Country Than Necessary in Hope of Escaping Tax.

Imports of tea for November showed a decided falling off when compared with the same period for the previous year. This is due to the fact that the importers are not bringing any more goods to this country than is necessary.

### In the hope of escaping the payment of

thirteen per cent. tax. Tea importations in November of this year were 6,804,882 pounds, valued at \$816,066, from which \$272,842 revenue was derived, as against 12,239,859 pounds for the same period last year, valued at \$1,685,040. Of this 2,728,422 pounds, valued at \$376,972, were withdrawn for consumption. Tea withdrawn at Chicago amounted to 576,593 pounds, valued at \$75,932, from which \$57,659 in revenue was derived.

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