

THE JASPER NEWS

ROLAND B. GRIFFITH, Editor.
JASPER, MISSOURI

Another Canal Project.

Another canal project is to be mentioned. Germany in the Kell channel has a waterway by which she can shift her warships from the North sea to the Baltic or vice versa at will, and she is also developing her interior system, showing she is giving attention to the needs of peace and commerce as well as those of war and national defense. High officials in England have suggested the advisability of constructing a canal from the Clyde to the Forth for the use of battleships. It appears, says Troy Times, there is a feasible channel of about 30 miles, and all that is needed is dredging the bottom, which is of soft sand. It is asserted that the canal can be so contrived that the tides will scour it and thus prevent it from being filled up again, wherein a great advantage will be scored over many other similar canals, including the Suez, where there has to be constant fighting to maintain a proper depth of water. What England will do is not announced, but this multiplicity of canal undertakings must impress the observer. The United States is in the lead in such matters, and it is typical of its spirit that all of the works now under way are intended primarily for purposes of peace and to facilitate commerce.

A farmer who has just driven into Vermilion, Saskatchewan, in a dog sled brings word that he is running the most northerly wheat-raising ranch in the world, and he submits specimens of fine grain to prove the statement. As his farm is 1,500 miles above the international boundary line it certainly is pretty well north, but the farmer is enthusiastic over the conditions. All the region needs, he affirms, is the opening up of communication, as travel by dog conveyance and without roads or trails is a little slow. He admits that the winters are a trifle severe up there, but says the summers are great for grain raising. No doubt Canada will hail this as a fresh boom for her wonderful north-west, but it is quite likely that the average farmer would prefer a section which does not require a combination of agriculture with arctic exploration.

The toll roads once so numerous all over the country are gradually but surely becoming free public highways. The toll system was recognized as a necessity of earlier times, but the modern spirit will not submit to the restrictions involved in being compelled to pay tribute to private ownership. Yet the toll road has by no means entirely disappeared, and it is found even in close proximity to big and prosperous cities. Cleveland, O., one of the foremost towns in the state, is moving to secure the abolition of 19 miles of toll roads in Cuyahoga county, in which Cleveland is located. Rensselaer county some years ago threw open its tollgates, and can lay claim to rank among the most progressive communities in the Empire state.

The official figures, just forthcoming, show that leather takes an important place in the commerce of the United States, the aggregate having amounted to \$150,000,000 in 1906. This represents a rapid growth, our leather dealings ten years ago having been but \$55,000,000. Our imports are mainly hides and skins, which are the crude material for our leather-working industries, while foreign countries are taking our manufactures of leather in many forms and in increasing quantities. In 1906 we sold abroad \$9,500,000 worth of boots and shoes and \$25,000,000 worth of sole leather. The biggest item in imports of this character was \$32,500,000 worth of goatskins, to be made up into the high-class American shoes which are steadily walking into favor the world over.

There is an enormous number of small landholders in Egypt, 5,000,000 acres being cultivated by over 1,000,000 landowners, of whom 6,000 are Europeans, owning, on an average, a little over 100 acres. Nine hundred and forty peasants hold under five acres each, or 23 per cent. of the whole cultivated land, while 12,000 men of means have holdings above 50 acres; their total being over 2,250,000 acres, or 44 per cent. of the whole; proprietors of between five and twenty acres having 31 per cent.

Lady Isabel and the Curio Shop

BY MRS. NEISH
(Copyright by Joseph B. Bowles.)

"I don't know why it is," said Lady Isabel, "but the more one makes, the less one always seems to have."

"Do you make so much, Isabel?"

"No, only a scrap here and there," she said regretfully, "because, you see, it takes such an awful lot to make an income; but I wasn't thinking of myself."

"No?"

"You needn't say 'No' in that tone, Marjorie, as though you thought me egotistic," said Lady Isabel, in a slightly aggrieved voice. "The fact is, I am trying to help a friend."

"Really—how kind of you, dear. Who is it?"

"Laura Staunton," she answered; "the dear girl, the youngest daughter of our old vicar. Like all clergymen, he had what David or Solomon or somebody called a 'quiverful' of daughters. I don't know why it should be considered in the light of a blessing to have a quiverful of daughters. It's very hard, at any rate on them, for he has left them all without a penny."

"How are you going to help her?" I asked with interest.

"Well," replied Lady Isabel, "she has opened a shop for nice second-hand things—now don't look like that Marjorie, I don't mean clothes, I mean things like grandfather's clocks and broken china and old fenders, and all that sort of thing," she added vaguely.

"Oh, you mean curios—an old curiosity shop, in fact?"

"Yes," said Lady Isabel. "And now, Marjorie, dear,—delightedly—you've put an idea in my head. I'll make her call it 'Ye antique curiosite shoppe'; but I must see she spells it right, or rather, wrong, it will sound so much more genuine."

"It will certainly be an advantage in these days even to sound genuine," I said.

"Yes, won't it," she answered very pleasantly, "especially as most of the things will be faked. You know they nearly always are faked at that sort of shop."

"Really?"

She nodded. "Yes—and I'll tell how it's done a little later on."

"How are you going to help Miss Staunton's shop?" I asked her presently.

"Well, for one thing, I am going to take Mrs. Barrington-Brown there to buy things; you see, we shall both be in town for a day or so next week."

"I see. And Mr. Malcolmstein, is he to be taken there as well?"

"No; I shan't take him there," said Lady Isabel hastily, "nor the Fliedermanns; they know too much; but I dare say they'll pick me up some little things for her to sell. She's very pretty—Laura, I mean."

"Is she faked, too?" I asked.

Lady Isabel laughed. "No, my dear, she's not; she's absolutely genuine."

"I've been going over the list of things in Laura's shop and rearranging them," said Lady Isabel the following afternoon.

"Have you; how very good of you."

"Oh, it's rather fun," she answered, bending over her table and writing something rapidly.

"La Marquise Victorine—Victime de la Revolution," leaning on her shoulder as I read. "Who's she?"

"It's for a small miniature I picked up cheap," said Lady Isabel airily. "It was very faded, so I got a little artist I knew to touch it up for half a guinea."

"And how did you find out who it was?"

"I didn't," she replied frankly; "but if I don't know, I shall always put Victime de la Revolution—there were so many of them, poor dears, so I shall always be safe."

"Why call it anything?"

"Only on account of the price," she answered seriously. "You see, Mrs. Barrington-Brown will pay so much more for something really historical."

"I see," I said.

"All the broken china has gone to be mended by a little man Mr. Fakenstein told me of—he lives at Whitechapel, or Notting Hill, where no one ever goes, or somewhere, and he's a Polish Jew, and frightfully clever and tricky. His name is Balenski, and you can't tell a Balenski-Chelsea figure from the real thing, if you're ever such an expert—unless, of course, you know his work."

"Is that how collectors get their china mended?"

"No," she said, "not collectors, only dealers. You see, collectors generally only care for genuine things; but then, of course," she added thoughtfully, "dealers must live, and if you can't tell the difference, it doesn't hurt anybody. Besides, collectors shouldn't be taken in, they ought to have a thorough knowledge of their subject before they attempt to begin to collect."

"What a lot you seem to know about the subject, Isabel."

"Yes, Mr. Malcolmstein taught me a tremendous lot," she answered. "He told me how they make real old Worcester china and real Chelsea and Crown Derby over in Paris, and how they send it over here almost by the ton. And they make old English glass, too, over in Holland and in Germany, at a place called the Giant mountain—or the Giant something or other, but I think it was a mountain."

A day or two later I went with Lady Isabel to see Miss Staunton's curio shop. Mrs. Barrington-Brown had not yet arrived, and Lady Isabel took me round and let me into several little secrets of the curio trade.

"This box is Battersea enamel," she said; "you know, Marjorie, enameled on copper—at least, it ought to be."

"I know," I said, "it's a lost art, isn't it?"

"Well, it's not quite as lost as you think," she answered thoughtfully.

"This, for instance,"—she took up a lit-



La Marquise Victorine—Victime de la Revolution.

tle box as she spoke—"this is what I call a 'Balenski-Battersea' box; but this one is genuine—I mean, it isn't mended yet."

"And this," I said, taking up another.

"Oh, that has just come back from Paris. It has had a new lid. Isn't it a pretty one?—of course, it has no more intrinsic value than an enameled saucepan; but then, all values are only relative, aren't they dearest?"

"What a pretty picture!" I said, turning away to a print that was lying on a small Chippendale table.

She lifted it and handed it to me.

"Yes," she said, "isn't it? It is an old one—at least, it will be old by the time I sell it to 'Mrs. Barrington-Brown.' She dropped a little 'historical' label in the box as she spoke. 'You'll see how well we're going to make it pay, Marjorie,' she said with glee.

"Do you think it is quite fair," I asked, feeling as I said it, that I was, metaphorically speaking, running my head against a wall of brick.

"Fair!" she echoed; "my dear girl, of course it's fair—I am only telling you some secrets. All trades have secrets—grocers and butchers, and artists, and—and every one."

This dictum followed me as I turned from greeting the newly-arrived Mrs. Barrington-Brown to speak to Lady Isabel's protegee.

"Well how are you getting on, Miss Staunton?"

"Oh, very well indeed, thank you,"

~~~~~

## IN CONFIDENCE.



Mr. Skimpily—What did your father say after I married your sister?

Angel Child—He said he s'posed it might have been worse.

No matter how many times a girl dreams, it's either about a pearl necklace or orange blossoms.

she answered, and added hurriedly, "You know we never give a guarantee with anything that isn't right, and Lady Isabel only sends rich and ignorant people here who can well afford to buy out things, and she is very kind; she often almost gives away a thing to a woman who really is hard up, and she—"

"I know," I interposed, "her distinctions of honesty are wholly inimitable."

"She's awfully clever, too," said Laura Staunton, glancing half apologetically at Lady Isabel, who was showing Mrs. Barrington-Brown her "Victime de la Revolution," "and I shall miss her awfully while she is abroad. She has been so very, very kind to me."

"She has," I assented, "and she seems to be taking an especially great amount of trouble just now to make your fortune."

"My fortune," echoed Laura Staunton, staring at me in amazement; "it doesn't affect me, I only get my salary."

"Your salary!" I gasped, for even I was taken aback by this assertion. "Do you mean to say that Lady Isabel pays you a salary?"

Miss Staunton nodded. "Of course," she said gratefully, "and a jolly good one, too."

"But why?" I asked; "why should she pay you anything?"

Laura Staunton looked at me in fresh astonishment. "Didn't you know?" she stammered; "I thought, of course, you knew."

"Knew what?"

"Why," she explained, "I thought, of course, you knew the shop was Lady Isabel's!"

## FISH WEARS FUR OVERCOAT.

Strange Tale of Freak of Nature from Alaska.

Winnipeg, Man.—The following has been received by mail from Dawson City:

"Scientists will be puzzled when they hear of a recent discovery made at Moosehide. So strange a demonstration of freaks of nature has never before been published.

"Indian Tom of Moosehide brought in the news. He says the whole tribe is worn out with speculation as to what the strange happening portends for the future of the Indian race.

"After Christmas—just after the annual potlach—some industrious Indians thought it would be wise to catch some fresh greylings for the Dawson market.

"The first fish hooked was a greyling ten inches long. It had fur all over it. Never before did an Indian see any edible fish wearing a fur overcoat. The head of the strange fish, says Indian Tom, is just like that of an ordinary greyling, and the shape is the same.

"But from the back of the gills down to the end of the tail the fish is covered with a soft fur. The color of the fur is a dark brown, exactly the ochromatic tone and color of the taste of the morning after a whole night of jackpots. No wonder the Moosehide Indians have all decided to swear off with the new year."

## That Word "Other."

"I understand," said Miss Passy, "that he told you I was not like the other girls he had met in this city."

"Not exactly, dear," replied Miss Pepprey; "he said you were not like 'the girls' he had met here."

## Arithmetical.

"There is safety in numbers," said the strategist.

"Yes," answered Mr. Dustin Stax; "especially if the numbers run up into the billions and have a dollar mark in front of them."

## His Idea.

"Every man who starts out with the intention of killing things should be made to pay a license."

"I thought autoists already paid a license?"—Houston Post.

~~~~~

A Tragedy in Tonopah.

"How was the man killed?" inquired the coroner, before the viewing the body.

"He wuz shot in a quarrel over a game o' cards, jedge, fer cheatin'!" replied an eye witness to the tragedy.

"Why, I was told that he committed suicide, but I wanted to find out how he did it."

"He did kill himself, jedge, but you see—"

"I thought you said it was a quarrel?"

"An' so it wuz. You see, it wuz this way. Hank wuz the gold-derndest feller ter cheat an' fight that ever wuz. He jest natchally couldn't help cheatin' in a game an' he'd fight at the drop o' the hat. Hank wa'n't no coward, if he did cheat. So when he seen—"

"Whom did he cheat?"

"Himself, jedge. He wuz playin' solitaire."—Judge.

Seems Strange.

Ostend—Say, pa, is it true that owls are fond of mice?

Pa—Yes, my son.

Ostend—Lady owls, too, pa?

THAT MAGIC WORD

DIFFERENCES FORGOTTEN AT THE MENTION OF "HOME."

Little Wife Forgot "Point" She Had Meant to Make, and a Happy Party Went on Its Way United.

A small, frail-looking woman, followed by two young men of more robust fiber, although closely resembling her, hurried up to a gatekeeper in the Grand Central station.

"Does the train from Gresham come in here?" she asked, anxiously.

When the right gate was found there was still 30 minutes to spare.

"Better go inside, Letty, and rest," suggested one of the brothers.

But Letty would not leave the gate. Her two brothers looked significantly at each other, and let her have her way. They took turns in carrying the baby up and down.

Long before the train came the conversation revealed the situation. They were here to meet Letty's husband, who six months ago had gone away because of supposed irreconcilable differences between himself and his wife. But the relations on both sides had arranged a peace. He was returning—the broken home was to be restored.

"It was Jim's fault in the beginning," repeated the little woman, after asking her brother again to look at his watch. She was becoming more and more nervous.

It was easy to guess at the differences that had undermined this home. Excellent qualities were revealed in the young wife's face. Although of a nervous temperament she was no shrew. But evidently she had a habit of imparting "pieces of her mind!" She was capable of love, but one of those who stickle for a "point," while deeper consequences go unnoticed. Had the sad months past taught her the larger wisdom of life?

"It was Jim's fault at first—I stand just as firm as ever," she repeated, the tears in her eyes contrasting curiously with her words. "But for baby's sake I'll try it."

She must make her brothers understand that consenting to live again with Jim did not involve yielding her original point!

"I shall tell him so—the first thing!"

The brothers looked into each other's eyes doubtfully. Would there be a scene?

To the brothers' relief the train finally came. One held the baby, leaving Letty free—to tell Jim!

In the long line of passengers moving toward the gate a big fellow loomed up whose blue eyes searched vaguely. Suddenly he made a rush forward.

The little woman's face lighted up and grew beautiful; then she remembered herself and set her face in order. There was that point to be made first.

Jim, big and awkward and gentle, kissed the baby first—perhaps he, too, was giving Letty her opportunity. She went close to him; her head just reached his chest. The words seemed to stick.

Jim awkwardly patted her shoulder, waiting.

"Letty," he said, at last, his voice faltering over the last word, "let's go—home."

And then they all marched away together—the little woman's face beautiful now with the light, which stayed. She had let the "point" go. Through the awkwardness of Jim, big and blundering and kind, had worked a great wisdom—only four words, but the last one that word laden with the magic of the ages!—Youth's Companion.

Who can escape suffering? "I will not suffer!"—you might as well say, "I will not breathe!"—and die of suffocation.—The Duel.

Press Agent Honored.

"Today" Hamilton, the father of press agents, was entertained at a notable dinner in New York March 2. He retires after 25 years of brilliant service as the press agent of the Barnum & Bailey circus and his friends in all branches of the amusement world combined with newspaper men generally to honor him with this banquet and to present him with a testimonial of a practical nature. The dinner took place in the Waldorf-Astoria. Speeches were made by a number of distinguished men.

A Lesson in Society.

If you wish to appear agreeable in society, you must consent to be taught many things which you know already.—Talleyrand.

As Bret Harte Said.

The achievement of Woo Aug, of San Francisco, who raised a draft of eight dollars to \$8,000, is a refutation of the statements that the Chinese cannot adopt themselves to American ways.