THE TREASURE OF SANTA ROSA REEF

CLARENCE HERBERT NEW.

CHAPTER VI.—CONTINUED.

From the depths under our feet we could hear McPherson and the captain in earnest conversation, broken now and then by a dull tapping, as of a hammer on hollow or fractured steel. Occasionally one of the Spanish assistants would shout some order to the oilers, at work upon the high-pressure cross-head. Presently we heard Halstead say: "Turn her over once or twice, Mac, while I keep my hand on the shaft;" and in a moment one of the great oily pistons stretched itself up to within a foot of Garcia's pretty nose, as she leaned over the steel rail, startling a subdued squeal of surprise from the girl, who had no idea the thing moved. Up and down, greasily, insinuatingly, they slid, while we could hear a little sharper tapping from the shaft-alley; then, with a slippery sough of content, they rested again. Another period of consultation below, while the steamer rolled in the trough of the sea; after which we heard the captain say: "Well, keep her at about 60 turns for half an hour and see how she feels. Then report to me." In another moment we saw him coming up.

He smiled reassuringly as he reached the grating where we stood, but looked thoughtful. As soon as he stepped out on deck the passengers crowded about with anxious questions; and he told them, briefly, that there had been an accident to the shaft, how serious a one it was impossible to say at present, but that the ship was in no immediate danger, and that they had better go below for lunch. Then he called to the mate, on the bridge: "Pipe your men down, Mr. Diaz, and come to my room as soon as you are relieved." I was very anxious to question him, but, by an almost imperceptible motion, he signaled me to go below with the senorita.

When we reached the saloon every one was talking excitedly about the accident and speculating as to whether the steamer would be obliged to lay up for repairs at Yap. The pulsation of the screw was noticeably slower; and the second mate, after hastily finishing his meal, hurried on deck to relieve Diaz, so that he might consult with the captain. The engineer's chair was empty; he did not put in an appearance until dinner-time. About the time we reached the dessert, the screw stopped again. The stewards continued to wait upon us as if nothing had happened, and this alone kept several from rushing on deck again. When we did finally leave the table, McPherson came down from the captain's quarters and assured Padre Sebastiano that the danger was not serious. But as bell after bell struck without the engines being started, a vague uneasiness spread through the ship, and every one talked in subdued tones. Three of the passengers went below to make up small bundles of their valuables in case it should be necessary to take to the boats.

Late in the afternoon, Halstead came down from his room, followed by the mate, and told those on deck that, owing to the accident, he had decided to head for the island of Guajan in the Ladrones, where he hoped to obtain spare machinery which would enable the steamer to make the remainder of the voyage in safety. Then he asked the senorita, Padre Sebastiano and me if we would like to go down into the engine-room and see the damaged shaft. I fancy the padre would have preferred remaining on deck, but, as it was against his principles to miss anything, we went, holding bunches of cotton waste as a protection against grease on the hand-rails and machinery. The captain naturally went first, and the senorita followed, blushing like a peony at the revelations for which the steepness of the iron ladder was responsible. Down, down, grating after grating, until we were 12 feet below the waterline and the cylinders towered above us like grotesque monsters; then through a tiny door into the long tunnel, or shaft-alley, lighted at intervals by hanging incandescents and extending clear to the inboard bearing at the stern of the ship. Four of the assistants and oilers were leaning against the wall-plates, like navvies waiting for the ore car in a coal mine; while down at one side, obstructing the passage, was the wreck of an iron tank which had been lashed on brackets to hold lubricating oil, and which evidently, fetching loose as the steamer rolled, had fallen upon the shaft with sufficient force to start the crack that we could see distinctly as Halstead swung a torch over it. There was quite a perceptible dent where the tank had struck, and, leading from it, the finer line of a fracture in the steel which extended two-thirds of the distance around the shaft, slanting spirally toward the stern. To our inexperienced eyes it seemed that anything over the normal resistance upon the screw might easily twist it apart, but the captain said it was not quite as bad as it looked, tapping the steel with a hammer and calling our attention to the sound as he did so. He said that in ordinarily smooth weather he might get back to Manila without an actual break, but that, as the risk would be great in squalls or heavy seas, it would be foolhardy to proceed without the strengthening rings and clamps which he expected to find at Guajan.

With that ominous fracture before us, the wisdom of his decision seemed undeniable, and the whole affair had been managed in so realistic a manner that I thought the engineer had done his work a little too well. Having seen all there was to see, we made our way back to the engine-room, where Halstead scared Gracia nearly out of her wits by placing her hand upon the throttle-lever and telling her to push it down, slowly, the answering plunge of the great connecting rods making her think that something was about to explode. Then we climbed to the deck, the senorita insisting that Sebastiano should go first with me, and accepting Halstead's support in order to keep him on a level with herself.

During the remainder of the afternoon, Sebastiano appeared to be in a brown study, planking a secluded corner of the deck with Cura Juan. At dinner he started a discussion concerning the change of route by joking the cura upon the unexpected length of his voyage, and hoping that it would not inconvenience the other passengers; adding that as far as he personally was concerned the accident had been a fortunate one, inasmuch as it would enable him to reach his destination at least two weeks sooner than he expected. I noticed that he was questioning Diaz during the meal, so was not surprised at their coming on deck together, or when they approached Halstead and myself as we were enjoying our after-dinner cigars on the bridge. Diaz merely touched his cap and retired to port, but the padre, remaining upon the ladder until he should receive permission to invade the official precincts, said that he'd like to have a little chat about the voyage.

Halstead sent one of the quartermasters below for another stool, and courteously offered him a cigar. When we were settled comfortably, the padre said:

"Senor Capitan, this my first voyage is to the Ladrones; but much of the interes I have for them, and the intencion have to un gran descripcion write while among las Islas I do remain. You the knowledge have that I go to Saipan, I believe. Yes? And Saipan is how far from Agana?"

"M'—well, let me see. I presume you'll stop at Garapang, that's Tanapag harbor. About a hundred and twenty-five miles, padre."

"And the transportacion, capitan? I am told that nothing they have but the—the proas, the native boats; and that very wet they sometimes are—muy descomodo."

"Well, they are rather cramped for room, and, I guess, when there's much of a wind, rather sloppy. Still, they are very fast; if you have a good wind you can make the run in nine or ten hours, I should say."

"'Nine or ten of the hours'! Santisima! In the one posicion! What does one not do por la servicio pio! He is not the voyage dangerous, is he, capitano?"

"Dangerous? Oh, I don't think so, at this time of year. You might strike a hurricane in July or August, but you could put in at one of the islands if the weather looked threatening; they're none of them very far apart. You're familiar with the general position of the archipelago, are you not, padre?"

"Si, senor; I have seen them upon the atlas. Like the string of little pin-points."

"Shucks! You can't tell anything about them from an atlas; the scale's too small, and they're miles out of the true position. Haven't you ever seen a chart of the Ladrones? Would you like to look at one?"

"No—si—he mucho interes por las islas. I fear it will you incomodar."

"Not at all, padre; not at all. If you and Mr. Stevens will come below, I'd be pleased to show it to you. I'm

"NINE OR TEN OF THE HOURS! SANTISIMA!"

obliged to refer to the charts constantly, you know."

The Imray chart of the western Pacific was still upon the table in our quarters, and Halstead took from the locker another, on a larger scale, of the archipelago itself, showing the exact shape and bearing of each island. From the absorbed way in which the padre bent over them and listened to the captain's remarks, it was easy to see that his education had been a broad one, comprehending readily, as he did, marks and measurements that would have puzzled most landsmen. Halstead had carefully erased our pencilings from the larger chart, leaving only the course as actually sailed up to noon of that day; and at Sebastiano's request he drew a line to indicate the direction in which we were then sailing—east, half north—in order to make Point Orote, on Guajan. When he removed the ruler, Sebastiano said:

"I was told, capitan, that el Guajan the most southerly island was; but here I do one more see—la Isla Santa Rosa, with five little crosses marked in its circle. All entiendo; he is una isla de coral—una laguna. Is it not so?"

"Well, it may have been a good while ago, padre; but it's all under water now, and has been for several hundred years. We call it a reef in English — 'una roca sumergida,' I guess you'd say. There's no doubt but that it was there once—several of the old navigators mention it—but, you see, these islands are volcanic, and it has probably sunk, because no captain has found it since 1740."

"Ah! entiendo. Each of the capitanos who do sail near it do make the sounding, and when find they do not, behold, it no longer must there be. I suppose many the examinacion must have made, that los geografos so sure are that it is now gone?"

"Well, not very many. The Challenger didn't get as far east as the Ladrones, and the American cruiser Alert is the only one that really made much of a search. You see, the supply boat only comes out here four times a year, and the place is not in the track of any other ships."

"And the capitanos de los vapores de la Compania—yourself also — have been unsuccessful?"

"Why, personally, I've never looked for it. You see, there's plenty of sea room to keep clear of the place, and I don't see the use of risking my ship by fooling around where a shoal certainly existed at some time or other. As for the other captains who run out here, I doubt if they would bother about it, either."

"But would not you much honra gain, and una gran recompensa from la sociedad geografica, if the correct report of su posicion you did send them?"

"Oh, the Royal society is always glad to get anything of the kind, and they like to have every captain send in what information he can; still, a merchant skipper wouldn't be expected to go out of his course for such a search. The warships are supposed to do most of the surveying, you know, padre."

"Ah, si, that I do know, of course. But, as you say, they come not often to the Ladrones. Well, perhaps while I la gran narracion de las Islas am writing, I may be able to make un examinacion with those native proas you did speak of. If so, the true posicion of every roca y isla in the archipelago I will send to you. Then los capitanos the name of el Padre Sebastiano will bless; is it not so?"

"Why, padre, if you're really going to write a book on the group, I've no objection to helping you out all I can. Bound as we are for Guajan, it wouldn't take us more than a few hours out of our way to pass the position of that reef and take a sounding or two, if you think it would be worth while. But you'd have to make it right with my primero, Mr. Diaz. He feels pretty sore about having to overhaul his cargo on account of our shifting about; you see, Guajan has always been our last stop, and all the Agana stuff is in the lower hold. But if you can persuade him that there is a chance of glory and thanks in it, he may feel in better humor. You go talk to Diaz and Moreno; say that it'll give them five or six hours more to get their stuff up, and work it in as a favor to the church. Then if they come to me and say they'd like to take a whack at Santa Rosa, I'll head her a quarter further east in the morning."

"Ah, capitan, I have the fear you are un hereje; you do make the joke upon the padres. But you are un benevolo, so I you forgive. El primero I will see and him absolve. Buenas noches."

When Padre Sebastiano was out of hearing Halstead and I looked at each other. His expression must have been a reflection of my own, for it said, as plainly as words:

"Well, what do you think of that?"

I shook my head. It was a little too much for me. We smoked in silence for several minutes. Then the captain sauntered out on deck, to be sure there was no one near, and carefully closed the door when he returned.

"What I am trying to figure out," he said, "is whether that oily old duck is convinced that we are interested in the reef, or whether his suspicions have been so completely lulled by the accident that he thinks it safe to meddle with it on his own account."

"Your impression is, then, that his book on the islands is nothing but a fake?"

"M'—blessed if I know what my impression is. If he were really planning such a work, nothing would be more natural than the questions he asked, or his anxiety to obtain all possible information. These islands have never been written up; there isn't even a cyclopedia that devotes more than a thousand words to them, mostly relating to their discovery and nothing else; and it would be a natural explanation of such a trip undertaken by a man of his position and learning. On the other hand, every word and action might easily be construed as indications of a secret purpose connected with that reef. I guess the only safe thing is to accept the last supposition and keep him from making anything out of it. We fooled him on the accident, anyhow."

"H'm—fooled ourselves a little, too, didn't we? You didn't count upon an actual crack in that shaft, did you?"

"What! Do you mean to say that, knowing all about it, you— Well, I'm—! That's a compliment to Mac. Why, man alive, he made that scratch with a Cape chisel while she was making 90 turns, then filled it with lampblack and oil. He took the screws out of the tank brackets and fixed them with wooden plugs, so's it would fall straight when she rolled to leeward, and the hammer he used—that made it sound so hollow—had a wooden head blackened with plumbago. The shaft is as sound as a new dollar, but we'll have to put a few of those clamps on it to carry out the deception."

"Well, you fooled me completely. For an impromptu accident, it was a howling success. Old Palacios won't move six feet from a life-preserver for the rest of the voyage. But how about those soundings? Are you really going to take them?"

"Well, I rather guess I am, as a particular favor to my friend el Padre Sebastiano. And, being quite interested in his forthcoming book, I shall use every endeavor, within the time that I can spare, to make a thorough search for it. But I'm very much afraid—very—that he'll be no wiser than he was before. Why, Harry, I'd have steered straight for the place myself, if I'd dared. But further irregularities so soon after the accident wouldn't do. Now I'm obliging the padre; and, by thunder, I've got him just where I want him."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Frugality of a Naturalist.

Agassiz, when a young man, paid a visit to the great German naturalist, Prof. Lorenz Oken. The professor received his guest with warm enthusiasm but apparent embarrassment. He showed his visitor the laboratory and the students at work, also his cabinet, and lastly his splendid library of books, a collection well deserving the glow of pride which the owner manifested as he expatiated on its excellence. The dinner hour came, and then the embarrassment of the great German reached its maximum point. "M. Agassiz," he said, with perturbation, "to gather and keep up this library exacts the utmost husbandry of my pecuniary means. To accomplish this I allow myself no luxury whatever. Hence my table is restricted to the plainest fare. Thrice a week our table boasts of meat; the other days we have only potatoes and salt. I very much regret that your visit has occurred upon a potato day." And so the splendid Switzer and the great German, with his students, dined together on potatoes and salt.—San Francisco Argonaut.

We have come to the conclusion that this world is so bright that even the raindrops are little beads of light.

TROUBLE IN AFRICA.

Great Britain's Misunderstanding with the Boer Government.

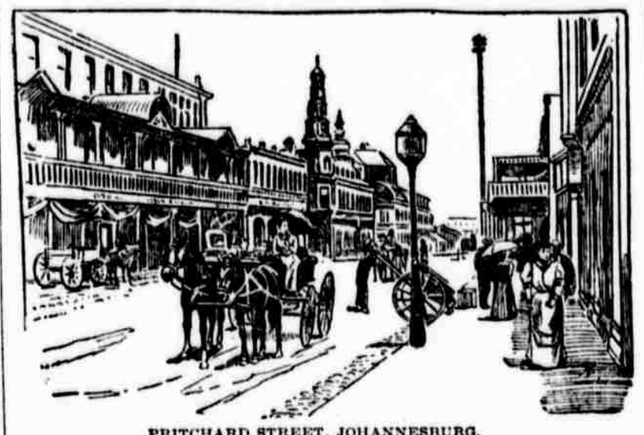
Events Which Led Up to the Strained Relations of the Present Day—England's Part Was Not a Noble One.

[Special Correspondence.]

That Great Britain is preparing to conquer the republic of South Africa, of which the famous Paul Kruger is president, is evident; that the task will be a heavy one is equally apparent to anyone familiar with the character, warlike disposition and religious fervor of the Boers.

Viewed from a purely ethical standpoint the English government is in the wrong when it seeks to destroy the political independence of the Boers, who were the original settlers in South Africa and whose valor and industry prepared safe landing places for the English traders and soldiers who arrived years afterward.

The Boers—the Dutch name for "peasants"—left Holland in the seventeenth century and took possession of what is now Cape Colony, after a long and bloody struggle with the Zulus, the dominant tribe of natives. They were left in undisturbed control of the country for years, until the beginning of the present century in fact, when the discovery of vast gold and diamond fields aroused the cupidity of English adventurers and capitalists. In 1814 the Boer territory, which had been existing under a crude form of republican government, was formally annexed to Great Britain. Rather than become subjects of any European prince or power, the ignorant, yet liberty-loving, Boers moved and wrested the Natal country from the still powerful Zulus. By tradition and training they were cattlemen and farmers, and in the newly-conquered region they found fat pastures for their stock and rich virgin soil for their crops. In 1837 Natal was a Boer state to all intents and purposes, and



PRITCHARD STREET, JOHANNESBURG.

promised to afford a permanent home to the industrious thousands who had created it.

But three years later Lord Napier, then governor of the Cape Colony, issued a proclamation denying the right of the Boers to form an independent colony anywhere in Africa. The Boers paid very little attention to this pronunciamento, and nothing would have come of it had not the agents of the various chartered companies in London discovered rich gold and diamond deposits in Natal. In 1842 British troops were sent to invade the Boer strongholds and Natal became a British colony. The Boers then began their second "trek," or move, and crossed the Klipp river, fighting the Zulus all the way, with the intention of occupying the fertile tract lying between the Klipp and Buffalo rivers. When the British government became aware of this intention, it proclaimed the Buffalo river as the northern boundary of Natal.

For the third time the Boers moved—this time into the country bounded on the east by the Drakensberg, on the north by the Vaal, on the south by the Orage and on the west by the Vaal—

SIR ALFRED MILNER.
(British High Commissioner to South Africa.)

and established the Orange Free State. England, its eyes ever on the main chance—annexed the Orange Free State in 1848; and the patient Boers began their fourth move—across the Vaal river, northward into what is now known as the Transvaal.

The patience of the people was thoroughly exhausted; and on June 17, 1848, the burghers stopped at Bloemfontein, the capital of the Orange Free State, and routed the British regulars. On August 29, of the same year, the Boers were defeated by their enemies at Boomplats, but only after a stubborn fight. The exodus to the Transvaal continued, but 12,000 Boers remained in the Orange Free State to harass the British soldiers and miners.

In 1850 the Kaffir war broke out. The English forces were too weak to cope with this rebellion, and in order to placate the Boers, who were inclined to side with the natives, the British government acknowledged the independence of the Orange Free State. But this did not help the settlers in the Transvaal whose political organization was recognized only after severe struggles.

The Transvaal is a strip of territory 500 by 400 miles, with an area of 120,000 square miles. It is rich in diamond and gold fields, coal, iron and copper mines, and timber of great value. The Boers have never done anything toward the development of the mineral resources of the country, preferring the raising of cattle to digging for precious ores. Foreigners of all nationalities naturally gravitated toward this new Eldorado, and powerful companies invested fortunes in smelting plants and mining machinery, so that the population increased quickly to 850,000, of whom less than 75,000 are Boers. In order to prevent their absorption by newcomers, the founders of the South African republic drilled every citizen in military tactics and organized a system of government which virtually disfranchises all foreigners, or uitlanders. In 1875 the Boers passed a law, or rather reaffirmed an old law, to the effect that the people will admit of no equality of persons of color with the white inhabitants, either in state or church. In the same year a war with rebellious natives had emptied the Boer treasury; and England felt called upon to intervene "in the name of humanity," and Sir Theophilus Shepstone on April 12, 1877, annexed the Transvaal. More than three years afterward, the impoverished Boers began an active war for independence. They had chosen a new provisional government, with Paul Kruger, M. W. Pretorius and P. J. Joubert at its head. Sir G. Pomeroy Colley, lieutenant governor of Natal, refused recognition to the Kruger administration and led a punitive expedition against the Boers. In January, 1881, his troops came to Laing's Neck, where they met Gen. Joubert's forces, and in less than five minutes 169 English soldiers had been killed. A few days later the troops met again on the banks of the Ingogo, where Colley lost another 15 men. On February 27 occurred the famous battle of Majuba Hill, in which Colley and the flower of his army bit the dust. Shortly afterward England recognized the independence of the Transvaal, was given a resident agent at Pretoria, was permitted to establish a fictional suzerainty, and in its turn granted all the demands of the Boers. Kruger has remained president ever since 1881, and nothing occurred to disturb the tranquillity of the Boer government until 1895-96, when Jameson made his ill-fated raid against Johannesburg, the commercial center of the Transvaal. The Boers were prepared for the invasion and vanquished the adventurers in one battle.

Since then the uitlanders, who pay most of taxes collected in the Transvaal, have several times applied to the English government for redress of grievances. Among other things they demand the right of franchise and a voice in the expenditure of the vast sums which they are compelled to pay into the Boer treasury. Joseph Chamberlain, the British colonial secretary, responded to the call of the uitlanders, the majority of whom are Englishmen and Americans; and not very long ago Sir Alfred Milner, British high commissioner for South Africa, met President Kruger to discuss a readjustment of Transvaal affairs. The English official asked for more liberal naturalization laws and an increase of uitlander representatives in the "volksraad." President Kruger submitted a counter proposition that citizenship be granted to foreigners upon the following conditions: First, registration 14 days after arrival; second, six months' notice of intention; third, two years' continuous registration; fourth, continuous residence; fifth, to have undergone no dishonoring sentence; sixth, proof of obedience to the laws; seventh, full title of franchise in the country of origin; eighthly, the possession of property, or a yearly income; all these conditional upon England's consent to the incorporation of Swaziland into the Transvaal.

This counter proposal was, of course, rejected by the British commissioner; and it is quite probable that consent to the English demands will be enforced at the point of the bayonet. The Transvaal is prepared for such an outcome. Its fortifications are in a splendid condition, and its army of 30,000 men, headed by Gen. Joubert, is equipped with Mauser rifles and modern artillery. Should war come, it will be a stubborn and bloody conflict, the success of which may hang in the balances for a long time. That England will win in the long run is almost certain, but whether the victory will be worth the sacrifice it must entail is another question.

G. W. WEIPPIERT.

FIND BAG OF COIN.

Cubans Stripping the Spanish Cruiser, Almirante Oquendo, Make Rich Haul.

A number of Cuban fishermen, who were working the other day on the wreck of the Spanish cruiser Almirante Oquendo, near Santiago, stripping the hulk of brass and copper fittings, found $2,000 in specie and $8,000 in Spanish currency. The paper money was found aft by a diver. It is badly damaged by the action of the water, and has little value, except as a curiosity. The specie, consisting of $1,200 in gold and $1,800 in silver, was found in a bag on the deck of the vessel. It is evident that some officer was compelled to drop it where it was found while he was attempting to carry it ashore after the warship was beached.

A Nuisance.

Mr. Hoon—I don't like to ask Jabberton about his health.

Mrs. Hoon—Why not?

Mr. Hoon—Oh! he promptly tells me about it.—Puck.

A MAN OF PRUDENCE.

He Thought a Cyclone Cellar Might Come in Handy When He Was Married.

"Speaking of wives and their dispositions and tendencies," said Mr. Biskum to the evening crowd in front of his cross-roads store, "there was John Brunt, that lived for ten years in the cyclone belt in Kansas, trying to raise corn and mortgages and things like that, until he was able to borrow money enough to get back to Maryland again without walking more than half way. John come right to me, and I let him have a job on my farm at $20 a month, for he was a hard worker and thrifty. At the end of the first year he had got the Widow Allen's promise to marry him in October, and he rented a nice little farm to do business again on his own hook. John was a widower himself, and being a practical sort of a man, he went to work right away putting the farm and the house into shape. One day I happened over his way, and found him digging a hole in the back yard.

"'What's that for?' says I, walking around and looking over things.

"'That's a cyclone cellar, Mr. Biskum,' says he.

"'A cyclone cellar?' says I, considerably astonished. 'What do you want a cyclone cellar for? This ain't Kansas.'

"'I know it ain't,' says he; 'but you know, Mr. Biskum,' and he got very confidential, 'I'm going to git married, and a cyclone cellar may come in mighty handy occasionally.'"—Washington Star.

SHAPE OF AN ANAESTHETIC.

As Described by an Eminent Specialist Who Had Used One in an Operation.

It is a Bath physician who tells the following:

"Some time ago I happened to spend the night in a country town not far from Bath and it happened that there was stopping at the same hotel an itinerant eye specialist.

"We drifted into a conversation, and during the course of the evening he told me some of the marvelous operations he had performed on the eye. One case in particular he spoke of that caused me considerable astonishment, for I didn't know, I confess, that the operation had been successfully performed. He said he had recently taken out a patient's eye, scraped the back of it, and returned it to its proper place. The patient, he said, was never troubled by bad eyesight afterward.

"'That was a difficult operation, doctor?' said I.

"'Yes,' said he, 'it was.'

"'I suppose you found it necessary to employ an anaesthetic?'

"'Yes, I did,' he admitted.

"'What anaesthetic did you use, doctor?' I persisted.

"'Oh, well, unless you are familiar with such operations you probably wouldn't understand if I were to tell you. But—well, it was shaped something like a spoon,' explained the eminent specialist."—Lewiston (Me.) Journal.

Slightly Mixed.

Mrs. Henpeck—The Episcopal funeral service is so beautiful! I want it read over me when I die.

Mr. Henpeck—Certainly! There's something in it about "Here endeth the first lesson," isn't there?—Kansas City Independent.

The scarcity of men should never result in making a poor one more desirable, but it unfortunately does.—Atchison Globe.

The man who doesn't believe in signs is liable to get fresh paint on his clothes.—Philadelphia Record.

So much of the happiness of life depends on whether you will give up your solo for a part in the chorus.—Ram's Horn.

Automobile or ought not to mobile seems to be the question at issue.—Cycling Gazette.

For disobedience the small boy frequently takes the palm.—Chicago Daily News.

"Keeping at it" is a mighty good substitute for real genius.—L. A. W. Bulletin.

A. N. K.—H 1770