OLD[illegible] SOLOMON.

Ancient Tablets Exhumed in the Land of Egypt.

Missives That Were Passed Between the Kings of Jerusalem and Egypt Four Centuries Before the Birth of David.

The Smithsonian institution has just received information of the recent discovery at Tel-el-Amaria, in Upper Egypt, of a number of tablets relating to the history of Jerusalem and dating back six hundred years earlier than any records hitherto known. When it is understood that these tablets of stone are letters passed between the King of Jerusalem and the Pharaoh of Egypt four hundred years before the birth of David, who was the father of Solomon, some notion will be formed of their extreme interest. These letters were written, so Dr. Cyrus Adler told a writer for the Washington Star, about the year 1500 B. C., and cast a great light upon the relations of Egypt at that ancient epoch. This of course was long before Jerusalem was captured by the Jews.

At that time Palestine was a federation of independent cities, each of which, like Jerusalem, was governed by a "prefect"—this word meaning literally "king of a city." Nevertheless, these towns paid a tribute to the Pharoah, and it was in relation to this tribute that several of the letters found were addressed to the ruler of Egypt by the king of Jerusalem, Abdi-Taba. In them he tries to explain, with due respect, that he occupies a more independent position than the other prefects and ought to be treated accordingly. For example, in one missive he says:

"Behold, this city of Jerusalem neither my father nor my mother has given unto me, but the call of a mighty King."

This refers to the ancient custom in Palestine by which rulers were sometimes chosen in consequence of a supposed divine call and without any reference to hereditary law. Having been summoned to his throne by the Deity, Abdi-Taba argued that he should be treated more leniently with regard to tribute. In another of the letters he says:

"Behold, neither my father nor my mother has appointed me to this place, but the mighty King has made me enter into the house of my fathers."

That the "mighty King" spoken of was the Deity is proved by the fact that to Him as authority is referred an oracle inscribed upon another tablet, which says that: "As long as a ship sails upon the sea, so long will Mesopotamia and Babylonia conquer."

The chief aim of the three other letters written by Abdi-Taba is to ask the Pharaoh for military aid against the foreign conquerors invading Palestine, and especially the district of Jerusalem. These warlike strangers he calls people of Habri—in other words, they were Hebrews. It seems hardly probable that the Hebrews as a nation should have invaded Palestine at so early a date, and so it is likely that these were some advanced tribes of Israel which settled down west of the Jordan and made incursions from time to time. In one of his letters on this subject Abdi-Taba says:

"The Habri people are conquering the cities of the King"—i. e., the cities tributary to the Pharaoh—"therefore the King may turn His face to His subjects and send troops. If the troops arrive this year the countries of the King, my Lord, may be saved, but if no troops arrive the countries of the King, my Lord, will exist no longer."

This tremendous "find" at Tel-el-Amaria includes two hundred tablets, largely of Babylonian cuneiform script, which is thus discovered for the first time to have been in use at so early a period in Egypt and Palestine. Many of the other tablets are dispatches of about the same date from prefects of other cities of Palestine to the Pharaoh. Some of the inscriptions are in an unknown language which no one has so far been able to translate. It is funny to think that Solomon himself would have looked upon these tablets as remote antiquities.

The Greatest Travelers.

In point of actual distance covered, the greatest traveler in the world is said to be Chief Engineer Sewell, of the White Star fleet, who is well known. While in charge of the engine department of the vessels of that line, notably the Britannic, Mr. Sewell completed 133 round trips between Liverpool and New York, traveling the enormous distance of 818,400 nautical or 941,000 standard miles, nearly four times the distance between the earth and the moon. This is said to be only about two-thirds of the total distance traversed by Mr. Sewell since he became a sea-going engineer. Chief Engineer Kitchen, who was in charge of the Adriatic's engines for sixteen years but who now superintends the Britannic's, boasts a similar record. He has made 154 round trips between Liverpool and New York, and has traveled over 954,800 nautical miles, or 1,100,000 standard English miles.

A Divided Town.

The town of Texarkana is on the line between Texas and Arkansas, with a street-car track dividing the two. This was thought to be very funny at first, but now it has to have two sets of city officers, has lost the county seat and criminals escape from one state to another by going six feet. The man who staked out the town is dead, however, and nothing can be done.

WELL-KNOWN SAYINGS.

The Origin of Some Phrases That Have Become Proverbial.

It will be found on examination that most sayings may be traced back to a literary origin, says the New York Sun. What more common, popular maxim is there than that "Procrastination is the thief of time?" Yet it is the first line of that most deadly dull of books, Young's "Night Thoughts." Crowds of people have been befooled in imagining that "The Lord tempers the wind to the shorn lamb" is a biblical saying, yet it is only as old as Sterne's "Sentimental Journey." Everybody knows about the man who read "Hamlet" at an advanced age, and said he would have liked it if it had not been so full of "chestnuts." The fact is that a great part of it has become proverbial, and so common property. We no longer have to read the play to imbibe a lot of its philosophy, for it is floating in the air about us.

On the other hand, some sayings undoubtedly have a popular origin. A splendid example of the evolution of one occurs in the old testament, in the history of Saul. When the future first king of Israel appeared among the prophets the people were astonished. He had been of a rather frivolous disposition. Some man in the crowd exclaimed: "Is Saul also among the prophets?" The expression caught on, and it has been a familiar saying ever since.

We have among ourselves a very good example of the same sort in the expression: "A good enough Morgan till after election."

A difficulty here meets us. How is it that among eastern illiterate nations proverbs of the most perfect form and literary finish are found? The same state of affairs occurs in Spain.

The explanation lies in the fact that in both cases the people are able to get at literature vicariously. In Persia and the east generally the professional story-teller comes to a village. In the evening the inhabitants sit around the tent and he tells them tales, many of them thousands of years old and full of the condensed wisdom of ages. In Spain the muleteer who wanders about the country fills exactly the same position and to the literature popularized by him must be largely attribnted the richness of Spanish in proverbs.

Tony Weller was the proverb-spinner of the Pickwick crowd. He got his facility in the very same way that the Spanish muleteer and the Persian story-teller got theirs. He met a great many people in his trips on the coach and his sayings got sharpness and clearness of outline with every fresh repetition. So do not many of them were retailed by countless appreciative hearers.

In the same way, the Jarvey in the south of Ireland is by nature a manufacturer of proverbs. He is a part of all that he has met, and as action and reaction are equal and opposite, all that he has met become a part of him.

When a proverb has gained a sure place in one language, and strikes some observer of a different race and civilization, there is a difficulty about transporting it bodily. If it be eastern it will have a reference that will not, for instance, appeal to westerns. What then happens is that it is localized. It is treated in the very way that names are altered in a good story to give it local color. In this way an eastern proverb about a camel becomes a western one about a horse, and so on.

TRICKS OF TRADES.

Natural Explanation of an Unusual Way of Treating a Ladylike Shopper.

"Here, you get out of this! Don't let me catch you in this store again!" A little feminine shriek followed this rough salutation. I turned, relates a New York Herald personal pronoun, and beheld a beautiful and fashionably dressed young lady in the clutches of a tailor made man. He had torn open a little bundle which he had just received from the package desk, and forced back her money into her hand, and with considerable roughness was hurrying her to the door. The face of the young woman was a picture. She looked like an angry queen. Her eyes were half aflame and half drowned in tears. Her magnificent teeth showed through the reddest kind of lips, and her clear complexion was like marble touched with the fine scarlet of flowers.

I was tempted to interfere, but having heard tales of kleptomania and other strange things in these great bazaars, and knowing the man besides to be a gentlemanly floor walker—for this drama was taking place in one of the most fashionable stores in the city—I withheld my hand.

"Do I know that lady?" said the floor walker, with a laugh. "I should say I do! She is a very grand lady, indeed. My dear sir, she is one of the tricks of the trade. That bewitching lady in Paris made gown and imported bonnet is a salesgirl in the store of our enterprising neighbor on the next block. She gets eleven dollars a week. She came down here disguised as a customer, bought a dozen handkerchiefs as a blind, and proceeded to price a number of our goods in which our enterprising neighbor suspects we are underselling him. This is so as to give him a tip how to mark his goods. In short, she is a spy, and as we are not permitted to hang spies in this warfare of trade all we can do is to escort them to the picket lines and let them go. Now that this young lady has been discovered her occupation in this particular line of usefulness is gone; but our neighbor will have another rigged up in less than no time. Eternal vigilance is the price of underselling."

"But do all the big stores keep these spies, as you call them?" I asked.

"Well," said the ungallant floor walker, with a sly wink and smile, "they all of them do but ourselves."

SLUM SISTERS.

Women of the Salvation Army in the City of London.

The Terrible Scenes of Distress and Degradation Witnessed by Them in Their Visits Among the Poor.

One of our representatives, says the Pall Mall Budget, has made a personal inspection of the distress in east London in company with a couple of salvation lasses. The following is the report:

"My friends were not clad in their coal-scuttle bonnets and blue serge jackets, for these would be feathers far too fine for the slum brigade. Long experience in the huts and hovels of outcast London has taught them wisdom; the slum dweller, if he sees fine feathers—and even the salvation bonnet is a fine feather to him—scents coppers, and thinks of making up a 'stunning story,' and the lasses, the 'sisters,' want truth and nothing but the truth. Therefore they don hideous hats and other ugly garments, and if you go with them you do the same.

"They turn into a back lane, down in grimy Shadwell, and knock at a door which looks battered and ill used. The windows are mostly broken but neatly mended with brown paper, for the army money is wanted for other things than home comforts in weather such as this, and this house with the rickety stairs and the clean, poor-looking back kitchen is the slum brigade's fortress. Thence the girls sally forth early and late, and make their way through the crowd of poor that stand around their door when they have said a cheering word to each of the hungry women and children and taken the addresses of strangers, for each single case where help is given is first investigated. The crowd then disperse, knowing that before nightfall they will at all events have some soup, some bread and cheese, and haply also some coal. On that hope they can endure starvation a few hours longer, and cheerfully they go home.

"The girls dive into the alleys briskly and in a business-like manner. 'Sister,' the little ones in the gutter say, and smile, and 'sister' the hobbling crones salute them as they pass.

"They think nothing of a three-mile walk to a hovel in some yard whence tidings of distress have reached them, and when they enter some filthy doorway the women from a dozen neighboring houses rush out to beseech them not to pass them over. Wherever they enter it is the same; want and starvation in their cruelest form stare no longer in at the doors and windows, but are in possession and look as if they meant to stay.

"Three old women live in this cellar-like hole. 'If I had three half-pence,' whimpers the least infirm, who crouches on a deal box near the tiny fire, 'I could buy stock and sell some oranges. But we hain't a farthing. It was so cold I used the stock money, and now I owe her three weeks' rent.' And she points to a ragged bed in the corner, whence come unearthly groans. Thick darkness reigns around that bed, on which the 'landlady,' the woman to whom the ruins of furniture belong, has lain for weeks. No, nobody comes to see the three; neither of them can work, and since yesterday they have had nothing to eat. The third has gone out to pick up what she can in the gutters; the others wait and starve on, light-headed for want of food.

"Up the back stairs a large family—men, women and children—stand about the empty room. Everything is pawned and one is ill. They shiver with hunger and cold, and the sight of a ticket for food of the value of four pence lights up their faces into brilliant hopefulness.

"To the garret the parish doctor has refused to go. But the lasses go. A cloud of smoke meets them as they enter. Every pane of the small window is broken and mended with dirty rags; a heap of rags—a very small heap—lies in the corner, and by the fire there is a small deal box. On it sits a creature that may have been a woman once, but to look at whom now is to turn away with a shudder. She is naked, with only a rag around her; her hair hangs over her face, the hands are like claws, and as you put your hand on the thin covering round her shoulders you can feel hard bones only, and the shivering creature grins and holds out her claw-like hands. 'Look at me—I have nothing to wear, nothing to eat; have you brought me something to eat?' Her sister, who shares this 'home,' is out on the only errand which drives these creatures out of their lair—the search for crusts and crumbs and cabbage leaves and orange peels.

"She, too, is light-headed and shrieks and grins and asks for clothes and bread, and the one idea only has remained in her head—that she must try not die of hunger. The two have been respectable women, taking in sewing, but the cold came and the furniture went piece by piece, and now they have neither strength nor clothes to go to work. They have become lower than beasts. The cold has done it."

To Hear a Fly Walk.

If you wish to hear a fly walk, you can do it without the aid of a nugaphone, provided you can find the fly at this season of the year, says the New York Sun. Having made friends with the fly, spread a silk handkerchief over your ear and induce the insect to crawl across the handkerchief. As he approaches your ear you will distinctly hear a harsh, rasping sound, made by the contact of the insect's feet with the filaments of silk.

BEAUTY OF FORM.

The Charm of Proportions in Both Man and Woman.

Beauty of the human form is to-day exactly what it was in ancient Greece; it is the same through all the centuries, however blind we are to its characteristics through ignorance. The census of ages is a true verdict, and classic forms become safe models. Greek sculpture was wrought when the body received its highest cultivation, and was so beautiful as to be called divine, writes E. S. L. Adams in Harper's Bazar.

This sculpture should be carefully and continuously studied, as well as pictures of good nude figures. They are to be made familiar, that one may learn why they are good, why they deserve admiration. Most people fancy they admire these classic models, but it must be in imagination only, else why should they allow themselves to exemplify false standards of form, and positively distort their own God-given bodies?

Searching for the highest standards of human form, we discover that manly beauty and womanly beauty differ essentially. It is agreed that the type of manly proportion includes a comparatively large head, wide shoulders, rather square, a torso tapering to a contracted pelvis; while the whole may be seven and one-half heads in height, or an additional half-head added to the length of the legs, giving a particularly elegant figure.

On the other hand, fine proportions for a woman are a small head, shoulders rather sloping and narrow, the torso full and widest at the hips; while the front line from the sternum over the abdomen should show first a gentle, and then a full outward curve.

The conventional figure of the day is at variance with this type. Every effort is made to imitate masculine characteristics. The shoulders are thrust up high and square, or made to appear so, the torso is made to taper in, and everything under heaven is done to make the waist look small. The front line is forced to take an inward curve below the bust, and the side lines to form an awkward angle, in the hollow of which voluminous skirts are hung.

One should study sculpture with the new knowledge of these proportions most thoughtfully, till the rhythm of the lines has fastened itself upon the memory. Studying the pictures of the best artists of every age, we shall find these principles everywhere demonstrated.

The charm of womanly proportion is in the long curve from armpit to ankle, which is so different from the beauty of a manly figure. The depression at the so-called waist line—only the meeting of two large muscles which in a beautiful woman should be slight—would better be ignored in the clothing, for the sake of the greater beauty of the whole sweep.

It is to be understood that the long curves are made up of shorter contours, one gently melting into another. A form made up of graceful sweeps alone would be a weak, nerveless, insipid thing.

These proportions should be so understood, and so thoroughly appreciated, as to be always in mind, else a beautiful human form will not be recognized. Use physical exercises to attain the perfection of these curves. Hang pictures showing them where they may grow into your thoughts.

LIVED BY HER WITS.

How a Shrewd Shoplifter Utilized a Tame Rat.

"There have been many extraordinary stories told of the ingenuity of thieves in the pursuit of their nefarious calling, but a case which occurred while I was at Chatham recently beats anything I ever heard," remarked a newly-arrived Englishman to a Philadelphia Inquirer man. "A girl was brought before the police court on the charge of robbing milliners' shops. She was only fourteen years of age and of very innocent appearance. What puzzled the magistrate was that none of the witnesses ever saw her take anything, or at least they would not swear to it, although after she had left a shop where she had been making a purchase articles of value were missed. When arrested nothing was found upon her. The magistrate said he could not convict the girl upon mere suspicion, and then began to cross-examine her himself in a kind, fatherly way which touched her heart and she broke down and confessed that she was guilty and explained her methods to the astonishment and amusement of the court and spectators. It seems that she had a tame white rat which she carried about with her in a muff. She would enter a shop full of girls and women and ask the price of some article while looking at it contrive to dr[illegible] rodent on the floor. Any one [illegible]agine the result. Those near [illegible] dashed into the street, while [illegible]ployes jumped on the co[illegible] chairs, wrapping their pe[illegible] round their ankles and [illegible]mad,' as the prisoner ex[illegible] the laughter of the cour[illegible] assurances that the rat [illegible] In the scrimmage she [illegible] help herself to what she [illegible] the rat, put it in her [illegible] and walk off. The magi[illegible] on account of her youth, [illegible] voluntarily confessed t[illegible] would give her one m[illegible] bound her over in t[illegible] pounds sterling—two [illegible] dollars of your mone[illegible] judgment when call[illegible] her friends soon [illegible] bonds, and Mary [illegible] find some other r[illegible] weakness of [illegible] dodge won't [illegible] more."

TRICKS OF THE IMAGINATION.

Strange Delusions Entertained by Highly Nervous People.

A writer in a scientific journal gives the following, respecting tricks of excited imaginations: "An eminent New York physician, who was fond of experimenting, told a friend that he had compounded some wonderful pills, a single one of which would cause certain described symptoms. His friend volunteered to take one. The symptoms followed exactly as foretold; but the pill was afterward noticed in the tangles of a very full beard, not having been swallowed at all. The doctor's faith in the potency of his pills was such as to make him think that their mere proximity to the mouth might prove to be efficacious. But we bystanders attributed the unquestioned symptoms to the influence of an excited imagination over the physical condition. A report has gone the rounds to the effect that a certain lady residing in Bridgeport, Conn., in mortal agony called her physician because she had, as she supposed, swallowed her false teeth. She could feel them far down in her throat, and was actually choking to death. Eminent doctors consulted and agreed to resort to tracheotomy, to which they were about to proceed when one of them happened to step on some object under the edge of the bed, which, on examination, proved to be the missing molars. As soon as they were exhibited to the patient her convulsions ceased and she recovered her normal condition. Sifting the facts from the sensational accompaniments, there remains the delusion as to the teeth, the calling for medical aid and the finding of the teeth before the doctor arrived on the scene. But, even thus modified, the case was quite remarkable. It suggests instances of somewhat the same nature."—N. Y. Ledger.

INDIA'S MINERAL WEALTH.

Many Obstacles in the Way of Enterprising Prospectors.

India is still a land of undeveloped mineral wealth. The deposits of iron and copper ore in certain districts are enormous, but as many of these districts are in the possession of semi-independent princes the British government does not care to arouse the ill feeling of these princes by opening their lands to prospectors. Nevertheless, says the Chicago News, the government has managed to bring sufficient pressure to bear upon them to persuade them to sell to some commercial companies.

On the line of one of the railroads that have lately been built in India the engineers, in cutting along the side of a mountain, came upon a mine of almost pure copper. A company immediately wanted to get possession of the property either by purchase or otherwise. But the prince to whom the property belonged was too quick for the speculators. He called his heathen priests to his aid. The union of church and state proved very serviceable to the prince upon this occasion. The priests accidentally passed by the cutting where the rich copper vein was discovered and here had a revelation of one of the potent Hindu gods.

Of course, the spot at once became holy ground and the greedy Englishmen's bright dreams of millions vanished into thin air when, a few days later, they saw a temple put up on the spot and two priests offering incense before the image of the god that had revealed himself.

PROFESSIONAL POSING.

Two Little Italian Boys Who Support a Family in This Way.

One of the foremost women artists of New York is emphatic in insisting that a majority of studio models are modest, clever women, says a writer in the Illustrated American. She says the ordinary price paid is one dollar a morning, or thirty-three and one-half cents an hour, posing thirty and resting fifteen minutes. It is tremendously trying work, necessitating considerable training to make a subject available for an artist's purposes. Prettiness of form and feature are strong recommendations to favor, but women of he[illegible] mold with characteristic and m[illegible] faces are prized above beauties, often able to command very [illegible] As an instance of the po[illegible] profession, she told of t[illegible] boys, brothers, who [illegible] nine members sole[illegible] in this way [illegible] handsom[illegible] ern ey[illegible] vend[illegible] eas[illegible]