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QUEER OLD NATURE.

"Why is it," asked a wondering child
(Sweet, simple little thing),
"That the foolish tree puts on its clothes
When the sun shines in the spring,
And then, when chilly autumn comes
And the winds of winter blow,
Why does it stand out there, all bare,
In the frost and sleet and snow?"

"Wise nature has arranged it thus,"
I told the little one,
"The rustling leaves can only live
Beneath a smiling sun;
The tree that in the summer time
Makes shady bowers for you
Must have its rest, therefore it stands
Asleep the winter through."

She sat in silence for awhile
And gazed far into space,
And lines of thought and trouble came
To mar her childish face,
And so, at last, she turned and said:
"I'm sorry for the tree,
And glad that nature wasn't left
To fix things up for me!"

—S. E. Kiser in Cleveland Leader.

THE AMERICAN SAILOR.

Jacky Has Become a Specialist and a Credit to the Navy.

Jacky, who used to be more sailor than gunner, is now more gunner than sailor. Just in proportion as he has ceased to be a part of the great engine on which he lives, so he has come more and more into the control of it, and as the cardinal purpose of a warship is to hit things with her projectiles Jacky has become a specialist in getting that work out of her. He does it in two places—at the guns and at the engines. Correctly pointed guns are of no use unless the platform on which they rest is put in proper relation to the thing to be hit and kept there. Equally it is useless to get the ship into proper place unless the guns are correctly pointed. Men who can do either of these things must have natural capacities and be susceptible to education, and only men of this sort are eligible for our navy.

Accordingly the "beach comber," or the "rock scorpion," or any other variety of that ruck of marine refuse which drifts around the great maritime ports and ships in any craft where "grub" is plenty and work light, no longer slings his hammock on Uncle Sam's berth deck, as he used to do, to the shame of the service, in years gone by. Nor can the tramp nor the jailbird nor even the incorrigible black sheep of the family thus be provided for, to the relief of constables and long suffering relatives. No man or boy can now pass a United States naval recruiting officer unless he is clean, healthy, honest, young, strong and intelligent, nor can he afterward get that advancement, which is certainly open to him without fear or favor, unless he continues to show aptitude and ability.—Park Benjamin in Independent.

ARMY AND NAVY GUNS.

A Vast Difference In the Number of Men Required to Handle Them.

The number of men required to man naval guns of the British, French, German and American navies is about the same, although the French are understood to have more men as a rule for some of the larger guns.

For the 4 inch and 5 inch all services require four men to work each piece; for the 6 inch, six men are needed, and for the 10, 12 and 13 inch the same number.

As nearly all our 8, 10, 12 and 13 inch guns are used in pairs and mounted in turrets the 12 men working them are protected by heavy plates of steel. For the little 1 pounders three men are necessary to work them rapidly, and for the 3 pounders and 6 pounders four men are assigned, and for the Hotchkiss three men.

Treble the number of men seem to be required to work the same caliber of guns in our coast defense system, although there is no special reason for this, unless it be due to the fact that the army guns are mounted on disappearing carriages and are not provided with turrets, which naturally limits the space of the operators. An army 8 inch gun takes 15 men to work it; a 10 inch gun requires 18 men, and a 12 inch gun, the largest now constructed by the army, calls for 21 men.

It will be seen, therefore, that a 13 inch naval gun is operated by six men, while an army gun of one inch less caliber calls for 21 men. The navy gun can be fired just as rapidly with its six men as the army gun can be fired with its larger number.—Boston Herald.

Mme. de Pompadour encouraged fan painting and also collected fine specimens of the work. Greuze, Watteau and other great artists did not disdain to lend their talents to the art. These pictures were done mostly on vellum or chicken skin.

CITY FIRE FIGHTERS.

The Deadly Perils They Encounter In Saving Human Lives.

A great tenement house was burning like tinder wood in one of the poorest quarters of the metropolis. The stairs had gone up in smoke before everybody had left the building, and even the fire escape down the outside of the building was cut off by the hot flames from the lower windows, which had already peeled off a part of it. A young girl of 14 or 15 was frantically shrieking for help in one of the top windows, and a mother was wringing her hands in pitiful despair down in the street.

The chief called for volunteers to save the girl, and three men came forward on the instant, without hesitation and without awaiting to count their chances for success. This is the custom in such cases, for no one would take the responsibility of ordering a fireman to his possible death.

A strong young fellow who had yet to win his spurs was selected for the task, and he disappeared quickly through the doorway of the adjoining building. When next the crowd saw him he appeared at the window just under the roof, and, grasping the tin cornice of the burning building next to him, he swung out into the air and made his way, hand over hand, for 80 feet through the dense smoke that rose in black clouds from the lower windows to the sill where the girl was seen.

She had fallen back into the room unconscious and was overcome with smoke by the time he reached her. A thousand anxious faces in the street below were tortured with fear for the hero, a hundred muttered prayers went up for his safety as the fireman disappeared into the black cloud, and a thousand throats sent up a lusty shout of relief as he appeared again at the window a moment later with the limp form of the girl in his arms.—Harper's Round Table.

Spanish Cruelty.

The cruelty of the Spaniard, or rather his callousness, his recklessness of the lives of others, and even of his own, is a mediæval and oriental survival, says Irving Babbitt in The Atlantic, and then, too, there underlies the Spanish temperament I know not what vein of primitive Iberian savagery. Mme. d'Aulnoy relates that on a certain day of the year it was customary for court gallants to run along one of the main streets of Madrid, lashing furiously their bare shoulders, and when one of these penitents passed the lady of his choice among the spectators he bespattered her with his blood as a special mark of his favor.

Insensibility to the suffering of animals, though general in Spain, is not any greater so far as my own observation goes, than in the other Latin countries. Possibly mediæval religion in so exalting man above other creatures, in refusing to recognize his relation to the rest of nature, tended to increase this lack of sympathy with brute creation. The Spanish peasant belabors his ass for the same reasons that Malebranche kicked his dog—because he has not learned to see in it a being organized to feel pain in the same way as himself.

Slow Eating May Be Bad.

According to The Journal of Mental and Nervous Diseases, slow eating is as bad as fast eating. "The important point is not that we eat slowly or fast, but that when we do eat we chew with energy. Of course where the haste is due to some mental anxiety this may injuriously inhibit the secretions. Slow eating begets a habit of simply mumbling the food without really masticating it, while the hurried eater is inclined to swallow his food before proper mastication Hence hurried eating is bad, but rapid mastication is advantageous. It concentrates our energies on the act in question, and hence more thoroughly accomplishes it. Moreover, energetic chewing stimulates the secretion of saliva in the most favorable manner. These various points are so commonly misunderstood, at least by the laity, that they demand our frequent attention."

Caught In His Own Trap.

It is always pleasant to read of instances in which would be practical jokers have had a chance to sample their own wares. In "Life In California," Alfred Robinson tells of a Senor Lugo, who often amused the travelers by his stories and eccentricities, and one evening attempted a practical joke, with the following result:

He had loaded a paper cigar with gunpowder and placed it among his cigarros. During his visit with me he repeatedly asked me to smoke, but I fortunately missed the cigar he had prepared, until finally, from the lateness of the hour, he withdrew.

In the course of the night he awoke, and feeling a desire to smoke selected from his bundle, quite forgetful of the evening's amusement, the very cigar he had prepared for me. Having lighted it, he returned to bed.

The cigar was about half consumed and he more than half asleep when a sudden explosion carried away the better part of his mustache, and so thoroughly frightened his poor wife that I venture to say the event will never be forgotten.

The Bicycle Did It.

Miss Countrycousin—What are all those badges that woman wears?

Mr. Wheeler—Each one represents a century.

Miss Countrycousin—Gracious! She doesn't look to be 40!—Jewelers' Weekly

Washington Letter.

Washington Oct. 31, 1898.

No surprise was felt in Washington at the semi-official announcement that the U. S. would demand all of the Philippine islands. It has been felt from the first that such would be the ultimate result. Politics has had little or nothing to do with the decision of the administration to adopt this policy. It is public opinion, regardless of politics, that has brought it about. When President McKinley started upon that western trip neither he nor any member of his cabinet had made up their minds that we should take the Philippines, and at least one of them—Secretary Gage—was opposed to our taking any of the islands; but when they returned to Washington they had all about made up their minds that public opinion was so strongly in favor of American ownership of the entire Philippine group, as the only logical crowning of Dewey's great victory in Manila bay, that no other policy would do. What they heard later, at Philadelphia, clinched that opinion, and our peace commissioners at Paris were accordingly instructed to make that demand. So much for the adoption of the policy.

While it is certain that the policy of American ownership of the Philippines will be popular, it remains to be ascertained whether the method of obtaining that ownership will meet with such general approval. It must be understood to start with that no official announcement has been made concerning that method, but that enough has been said by those who ought to know to cause it to be believed that the consent of Spain will be obtained either by a direct payment of money to Spain, or by the assumption of about $40,000,000 of Spanish bonds, issued for improvements in the Philippines. At first glance, there will naturally be opposition to the U. S. paying $40,000,000 or any other sum for undisputed possession of territory which had already been conquered by force of arms. But many will doubtless accept the argument that the Philippone bonds, which were not, as were the Cuban bonds, issued to make war against the natives of the islands, but for the purposes of public improvement, should be considered a lien on the island, regardless of ownership, and that it would be an injustice, discreditable to a great country like the U. S., to take the islands from Spain and leave that country to pay indebtedness incurred for public improvements on them. The question is likely to be much discussed as soon as it becomes absolutely certain upon what terms we are to acquire the Philippines.

At the headquarters of the republican and democratic congressional committees in Washington the claims are about equal as to which party will elect a majority of the house, but the opinion outside is that the republicans will retain control of the house by a reduced majority. Some democrats say that they would prefer that the house should remain republican, because if their party carried it they would have to share in the responsibility of the administration in inaugurating the experiment of a colonial policy, or take the responsibility of hampering that policy, and that they would prefer doing neither during the next two years. If that sentiment exists to any extent among the voters of the party, there is no doubt of the result of the election.

Among the noted officers now in Washington are Gens. Miles, Wheeler, Lee and Lawton of the army, and Capt. Robley D. Evans and Lieut. Hobson of the navy. The latter officer is here to report to a board of the chiefs of bureaus of the navy department on his work upon the wrecked Spanish ships. This board will decide whether the work shall be continued. Hobson's confidence in success in raising the ships is not shared by all of the naval officials. But if public sentiment is consulted, they will not stop Hobson's work, on account of its cost, if there is any certainty of his succeeding in saving the ships. Those ships would, in the eyes of most people, be worth more than new ones would cost, as object lessons in the patriotism, bravery and marksmanship of the American sailors, and if they can be saved, neither cost nor jealousy of Hobson should be allowed to stand in the way.

A rather curious request has been made of the navy department by the Acme wrecking company of San Francisco. This company wants to raise the battleship Maine and bring her to the U. S., claiming to have a method by which the work can be accomplished, and asks nothing more of the government than permission to do the work at its own expense. The company states in its request that if the government wishes the ship after it has been safely brought to some U. S. harbor, that it will not ask more than the usual salvage payment, through condemnation proceedings. It is not supposed that the government would care to buy the wreck. In fact, the real object of the company is to raise the Maine in order that she may be exhibited in this country, although nothing of the kind is said in its letter to the navy department. According to the request of the company, it intends to blow the mud from under the wreck with streams of water under high pressure, and then to pass chains under and attach them to a framework on each side connected with a system of steel air-tight barrels. The gradual winding up of these chains is counted upon to raise the wreck.

both Well Posted.

There is a story current in Washington of a charming girl whose partner said to her as in waltzing they just missed a statue of the Venus of Milo:

"We mustn't dance too near that or somebody will accuse us of breaking it."

The girl turned her lovely eyes on the statue. "Why," said she, "somebody's broken it already."

Most Pleasant Picture.

Photographers, in their constant study of the face, find that the left side makes the more pleasant picture and that the profile as seen from the left gives a more correct likeness than when viewed from the right.

An Eye to Business.

Optician—My dear sir, your case is hopeless.

Customer—And am I doomed to blindness?

Optician—It is inevitable. I think you'd better look at my beautiful line of artificial eyes at once.—Jewelers' Weekly.

Home Influences.

Each one of us is bound to make the little circle in which he lives better and happier; each of us is bound to see that out of that small circle the widest good may flow; each of us may have fixed in his mind the thought that out of a single household may flow influences which shall stimulate the whole commonwealth and the whole civilized world.—Dean Stanley.

The Thrifty Shopkeepers.

Mrs. Bargin Friend—I wonder how those little 1 cent shops ever came to be invented?

Her Husband—I suppose to use up what's left of the dollar after the 99 cent stores get through with it.—Toronto News.

Jack Tar at a Christening.

A sailor went up to the font to have his baby baptized. Sailors as a class claim little stock in babies, and, naturally enough, this one presented the infant feet foremost.

"The other way," said the minister, and, accordingly, Jack turned the infant upside down.

"Excuse me," said the clergyman, "I mean the other way." So back came the embryo foretopman to the first position, to the discouragement of everybody.

"Wind it, Jack," said the nautical assistant, and with an "Aye, aye, sir," Jack promptly turned the baby end for end, and it was duly christened head first.—"On a Man-of-war."

A Literary Slip.

One of the most literary of the London evening papers makes the following startling announcement: "A complete set of hydrants and fire appliances will be arranged, and the stage is to be fitted with a double asbestus and steel fireproof curtain, controllable by one man The latter is designed to be one of the largest in London—namely, about 80 feet wide and 50 feet deep."—Glasgow Times.

Mustapha Pasha Fehmi, prime minister of Egypt, decorated by Queen Victoria with the grand cross of the Order of St. Michael and St. George, is known throughout Egypt as the gloved pasha, owing to the fact that no one has ever seen his left hand bared since the day two and twenty years ago when, as one of the chamberlains of the late Khedive Ismail, he helped his colleague, Sahmi Pasha, to strangle the Egyptian minister of finance at the close of a supper party given by the wicked old khedive on board his steam yacht, lying at anchor in the Nile at Cairo, just off the palace of Gezereh