

THE CZAR'S LAST GIFT.

An Instance of the Thoughtfulness of Alexander.

The late czar of Russia may have pursued a mistaken and somewhat cruel government policy, but in his domestic relations he was all thoughtfulness and affection, says a foreign exchange. It is told that last summer the czar and empress visited a great shop in St. Petersburg to buy jewels for their son's future bride. The empress greatly admired a beautiful bracelet, and told the czar that she wished to possess it. On their return one of the serious attacks to which he was subject came upon him, and the empress forgot the bracelet. The czar died, and to the empress in the early days of her widowhood came, November 14, the first birthday she must pass alone. On her other birthdays the czar had been wont to place a bouquet in the morning room of the empress. Inside the flowers was always found some rich, rare gift, chosen months beforehand. The empress had avoided the room as too full of painful memories, but this morning, the morning of his wedding day, Nicholas requested his mother to go there as a favor to him. The first thing she saw was the bouquet in the usual place, and inside the flowers was a case, fastened and sealed by the czar's own hands. It contained the bracelet. He had ordered it on the same day that the empress saw it, and on his deathbed had given instructions for the birthday gift, bidding his son to be near to comfort her when she received it.

CLOTHES MADE OF WOOD.

One of the Things Which the Future Will Probably Bring Forth.

Time was when references to a "wooden overcoat" were understood as the irreverent equivalent of measuring a man for a coffin, but it would seem that suits of clothes made of wood may soon be an accomplished fact.

The writer, says the Edinburgh Scotsman, is indebted to a merchant of the city of cloth—Leeds—for a glimpse of samples of a species of cloth, and also of a sort of cotton, made wholly out of wood fiber, these two woven pieces having all the appearance of attractive articles of their own kind. Both these novel textile fabrics are the result of prolonged experiments with pinewood and spruce, which have been ingeniously torn to pieces in the first instance and then bleached by an elaborate chemical process.

After chemical treatment in many ways the wood becomes a soft, white pulp, which is run through perforated plates, the resulting threads being dried by a steaming process. These threads can be woven, and the material is susceptible of taking readily any sort of dye. The fabric can be made at an astonishingly cheap cost; it looks well and has a certain amount of strength (experiments in this connection are now being carried out), and its appearance on the market, sooner or later, is absolutely certain, especially in the form of imitation cotton.

HOW FISH ASCEND.

Oxygen Necessary to Make Them Rise Obtained from Their Own Blood.

A curious physiological discovery has been made in the last year by Prof. Bohr, of Copenhagen, in regard to the mode of storage by which a fish accumulates so much oxygen in the air that distends the swimming or air bladder.

The air contained therein has a percentage of oxygen that may rise to as much as eighty-five, an amount in excess of the percentage in atmospheric air. Prof. Bohr tapped the air bladders of codfish and drew off the gas by means of a trocar and airtight syringe. The gas had fifty-two per cent. of oxygen. In a few hours the air bladder was refilled, apparently by a process of secretion of gas from the blood in the capillaries on the wall of the bladder. In one experiment the gas thus secreted had eighty per cent. of oxygen. When the nerves connected with the organ were severed, the secretion ceased and the organ was not refilled.

It thus appears that when a fish descends to a great depth, and his body is reduced in size by increased pressure of the water about him, he is able to attain his former size and rise by secreting the gas he needs and not by absorbing the water. Support is thus given to the theory that the gaseous exchanges that occur in the lungs of animals are not purely physical.

BUYING SNOW.

A Wild Western Idea of New York Dinner Decorations.

What to do with the snow is always a mystery in New York city, says a western paper, but a portion of the commodity finds buyers at tolerably fair prices. The passion for making a snow man is strong in the breasts of all boys, but when snow falls in diminutive modicums, as it does in the metropolis, the youths have hard work to get enough for even a snowball. Papas who can afford it have been giving the carters a fair price for their cartloads. In the few little gardens of New York an occasional snow man has been challenging the admiration of neighborhoods. Some carters have even been ringing doorbells where they knew children lived and offering to leave their ablen wares for a consideration. The police are very watchful for these folk, however, for it is a misdemeanor to empty a wagon-load of snow in a New York street. It is not unusual for snow to be heaped up at a dinner table on some silver tray or other, with roses and other flowers arranged about it.

A Curiosity of Hungarian Divorce.

A farmer was arrested in a village in Hungary for firing two shots through the window of an inn at his wife and her father. Fortunately his aim was bad. On being asked his reason for the attempt he stated that he had already had nine wives, who had all consented, at his request, to be divorced. His tenth and present wife, however, acting on the "injudicious advice" of her father, refused, and consequently he felt annoyed.

NO SMOKING IN PUBLIC.

In Some German Towns the Weed Is Prohibited on the Streets.

The consumption of tobacco of all kinds in France, according to recently compiled statistics, is nearly one hundred and twenty-five million pounds per year. An analysis of the figures shows that the people of northern France use nearly four times as much per capita as those in the southern provinces. Almost every other country of Europe, however, consumes more smoking tobacco in proportion to its population than does France.

This is especially the case with Germany. In many small German towns smoking in the streets is forbidden. Less than fifty years ago if a man ventured on the streets of Berlin with a cigar in his mouth he would be liable to arrest. The same provision existed until 1848 at Vienna, though the law was not observed by the populace. The town of Broeck, in Holland, which is said to be the cleanest city in the world, has long forbidden the people within its walls to smoke after sunset in the streets unless with a covered pipe, "in order that the cinders may not be blown out." Smoking with an uncovered pipe in German or Austrian forests is an offense that is rigorously punished, and as a result of this regulation forest fires are rare in those countries.

Fashion for Farmers.

A western farm paper, humorously inclined, gives the following "hints to farmers in regard to their attire:"

Don't wear a kid glove when teaching a calf to suck the finger.

Don't wear a silk hat when plowing corn.

Don't wear diamonds while breaking a colt.

Don't wear a starched shirt while mowing away hay.

Don't wear a spring overcoat with diagonal stripes while killing potato bugs.

Don't wear a white vest while currying the horses.

Don't wear a tight collar while discussing the currency question.

Don't appear in evening dress when you are called upon to meet a note.

Don't wear any clothes on any occasion that you don't feel that you have honestly earned.

A Crimson Water-Way.

One curiosity of coastwise navigation in the Gulf of Mexico used to be Grant's passage on the inside route from Mobile to Pensacola. The inside voyage is made by crooked way of waterways separated from the open gulf by narrow banks of sand. A man named Grant straightened a part of the passage by digging a canal to give deep water at a point where a wide detour used to be necessary. He set up a little lighthouse to aid navigators, and then charged toll upon all vessels passing through. The passage was of some importance during the period when north and south were fighting over the defenses about Pensacola.