

CURRENT NOTES.

Inventive genius and mechanical skill have in the last few years so developed the construction of bicycles that many experts see but little room for further improvement. The task of bettering the wheel of 1896 in order to greet customers of 1897 with one still more desirable is not easy. The most notable change in the '97 models, already promised by two big makers, has to do with the gearing. About ten years ago, when safety machines were first seen in this country, some of them were equipped with bevelled gear, in the place of chain and sprocket wheels. Mechanically the experiment was fairly successful, but the result was not wholly satisfactory to wheelmen. The several pounds of weight which a cog gear added to a bicycle were not reckoned in those days of wheels weighing fifty or sixty pounds. But if from any cause the gearing broke or became loose, so that the cogs wouldn't mesh, the ride became a walk; and trundling a wheel of more than half a hundred weight was no fun. Then, as weight began to tell and to be avoided in wheeling over poor roads and hills, the lightening of the machine became a leading aim on the maker's part. So the shaft and cogs were replaced by the gear in use now.

Since then the wheelmen have heard little about bevel-gear bicycles until this fall. According to the statements of numerous manufacturers familiar with their industry, a bevel gear is impracticable on a machine so light as a modern bicycle. They say that a bevel gear on the present wheel might work when operated slowly on a smooth surface, but when heavy pressure is put upon the pedals some part of the gear or frame will be likely to give way. No modern bicycle, say many mechanics, is strong enough to withstand the wrenching and straining caused by the use of a bevel straining caused by the chainless wheel's lesser possibilities for speed militate against it. Despite these discouraging reports, the chainless bicycle is awaited with universal interest. The first pneumatic tire in the market was far from perfect, and so, by the way, was the first driving chain. Wheelmen are not slow to give a fair trial to new wheels, and the women riders would be delighted to discard a dirty, greasy chain for a substitute that wouldn't rust or stretch, or interfere with their skirts. Besides, who knows precisely what brand new device may surprise the wheeling fraternity with the appearance of the fully guaranteed chainless bicycle for 1897, sold for the rational and up-to-date price of fifty dollars!

VISITS HER BIRTHPLACE.

Ex-Empress Eugenie, of France, who is at present in Tagiers, Morocco, spent recently a few weeks in Southern Spain. During the last week in June she visited Granada, where she was born in May, 1826, and where she had not been since 1850. Although nearly half a century has since elapsed, the ex-Empress knew very well all the streets and corners of the town, and related numerous occurrences which took place in Granada during the time of her childhood. She easily found the house where she was born, which still stands in the Calle de Gracia, and bears the number 12. In 1867 a tablet was fastened to the front of the house stating that there the then Empress of France was born. It must have been an awful shock to the venerable old lady who once wielded such immense power to see that tablet. During her present trip through Spain the Queen Regent Christina invited her to come to Madrid, offering her the hospitality of her palaces, but the ex-Empress graciously declined this offer and made quite a detour in order not to touch Madrid.

PADEREWSKI'S SORROW.

A domestic grief has saddened the life of Paderewski, the famous pianist. "You must be a happy man, who can give so much pleasure to so many people," said a gentleman who met him recently at supper in a private house. "Yes," Paderewski replied; "yes, I am happy in doing that, but it is the only happiness I have." Then, after a short pause, he added: "You perhaps are not aware that my only child is an incurable cripple. He is all I have in the world, and my wealth and fame, can do absolutely nothing for him. My only motive in studying for the career of a public artist was that I should at last be able to obtain the best medical advice possible for my poor boy. Alas! I have found it an idle dream. And when the public, which is always so kind to me, applaud me, I think of the little fellow lying on his couch in the house by the sea which I have taken for him, and I feel how vain it all is."

CLEAN JEWELS AT HOME.

If you happen to possess jewels enough to make a safe a necessity, you probably have money enough to have them cleaned by "professionals." But if your diamond engagement ring or the pearl brooch which was your mother's is your only gemmed treasure, it may behoove you to know how to clean precious stones yourself. Diamonds should be carefully washed in soap-suds and shaken in a bag filled with bran, but rinsed and dried in sawdust. So should gold ornaments, except that they may be rubbed with moistened pulverized chalk and polished with a flannel wet with olive oil. Ivory will recover its whiteness if brushed with bicarbonate of soda and hot water. Opals, if tarnished on the surface, may be made brilliant again by cleaning with peroxide of zinc and rubbing with moistened powdered chalk.

About the House.

FOR COLD NIGHTS.

To be obliged to step out into a fireless room on a cold winter morning and clad in a thin muslin gown is most disagreeable. With such a thin gown one is chilled to the bone in a twinkling. Many people have adopted cotton flannel for winter use, but it is very hard and heavy to wash and shrinks badly; besides it is very homely.

Outing flannel, or tennis flannel, may be procured for about eight cents a yard and makes the warmest of gowns for night wear. Light colors, of course, should always be chosen. Cream-white with dainty stripes of pale blue or pink is lovely for that purpose. Coarse linen lace makes a suitable trimming, and feather-stitching with pale silks is also pretty.

These gowns should be made extremely long, and as the material is soft and clinging and falls in graceful folds, any style of gown may be made. The plainer they are, however, the better they are to launder. A broad turndown collar edged with heavy lace and either turn-back cuffs or merely bands, also finished with lace, is all the trimming necessary.

Those who have such gowns are immensely pleased with them, and no doubt others who will try them will never be without them for winter wear. The material is suitable alike for men, women and children. For men who cannot wear starched shirts or those of flannel, this material has been found most satisfactory.

HOW TO MAKE CRACKER-JACK.

Long before anyone thought of selling the candy that increases your appetite rather than satisfies it, a little southern girl thought out the recipe for herself. She was very fond of popcorn, also of molasses candy, and it occurred to her that it would not be a bad plan to mix them. There was an old hunting dog in the family, who had the same tastes, and when his mistress went into the kitchen to make her favorite delicacy, he went, too, and sat near the stove, with his great eyes fixed wistfully upon her and his mouth fairly drooping water as he smelled the good rich smell. He always got a generous share of the candy as soon as it was done. This is the way that little girl made it then, and the way she makes it now for her own children, who like it as well as she did.

The corn she always preferred, if she could get it, was the squirrel-tooth corn, and, if possible, that which was a year old. She shelled and popped the corn, sometimes in a popper, but often in a tin pan with a pie-plate for cover. By shaking the pan as soon as the corn gets hot, the corn will pop as well in this fashion as in a regular popper. After the corn was popped, she sat an iron skillet on the fire, with a cupful of molasses, a piece of butter the size of a walnut, and a saltspoonful of salt in it, and cooked the mixture until, on dropping a little into a cup of cold water it would candy. Then she set it on the back of the stove, where it would not cook any more, and stirred it in just as much of the popped corn as she possibly could. The more corn the better the candy. Then she would take up the pieces of corn on the top of the skillet, which had the least candy on them, and pat them into cakes, or roll them into balls. Next, she would stir in more popcorn, and repeat the process, and so on, until she had used up all the candy. She would set the cakes in a buttered dish away to cool, and afterward she and the dog would have a feast.

PICKLES, SAUCES AND VINEGARS.

A crispy, delicious, home-made cucumber pickle is made in this manner: Select small, green cucumbers about two inches long. Pack in a jar, alternating the layers with salt and a few green peppers. Pour boiling water over them and let them stand twenty-four hours. Take out, wipe and dry, and pack in glass cans. Heat vinegar boiling hot, with spices to taste and plenty of horse-radish, and pour over them. Cover each with a grape leaf before screwing on the cover.

A delicious chow-chow that will add relish to our winter's bill of fare, is made in this way: Chop two large heads of cabbage, cut thirty cucumbers in small slices, and separate three cauliflower into their clusters. Pack in layers in a jar over night together with one-quarter peck small onions, one pint grated horse-radish and a large cupful of salt. In the morning pour off the brine, and cover with vinegar and water for twenty-four hours; strain. Mix together three pounds sugar, six quarts vinegar one-half pound white mustard seed, one ounce celery seed, one-half teaspoonful each ground pepper, cinnamon and turmeric powder; scald and pour over the pickle. Repeat this two mornings. When cold add two boxes French mustard mixed with one pint of salad oil.

A Chili sauce equally appetizing is also in order. Chop fine one dozen ripe tomatoes, four ripe peppers and two large onions. Add three cupfuls vinegar, two tablespoonfuls salt, two tablespoonfuls sugar, and two of cinnamon, and boil an hour. Bottle.

Mint Vinegar.—Put loosely into a wide-mouthed bottle spearmint or peppermint leaves which have been washed and drained dry. Fill the bottle with good cider vinegar; at the end of a month strain, bottle and seal.

Horse-radish.—Pour a pint of boiling hot vinegar over six tablespoonfuls of grated horse-radish and immediately add a tablespoonful of granulated sugar. Let stand a week, or longer if more convenient, then squeeze the radish pulp lightly, add the vinegar, strain and return to the bottle after rinsing and draining it. Cover the cork with wax.

Nasturtium.—Fill a can or bottle with nasturtium blossoms and green seeds and cover with vinegar. In a month it will be ready for use.

Green Pepper.—Put whole green pep-

pers into a quart can or bottle, let stand a month covered with cold vinegar, then strain and bottle. This is a mild, but excellent seasoning for soups and sauces.

Chili or Cayenne.—Use for this chili, a variety of cayenne bearing very small red pods when ripe. Let forty or fifty of these tiny pods stand in vinegar a month. It was found upon the home table when I was a child in this way: The ends of the quill part of a goose feather were cut off, one end passed through the cork of the bottle, the other end closed with a tight-fitting plug of soft wood. We had only to remove the plug, invert the bottle, give it a gentle shake, and a drop or two of the contents would season a plate of food.

Peach.—Crack a pint of peach-stones, throw the kernels into boiling water; when cold remove the skins by rubbing with a cloth, put the kernels into a bottle and pour over cold vinegar.

Spiced Vinegar.—This is a favorite with many. Mix and tie in several small thin bags an ounce each of whole allspice, cloves, mace, pepper, ground mustard, white ginger root cut in thin slices and celery seed. Put these bags into a gallon and a half of vinegar in which has been dissolved three pounds of brown sugar. Tie up closely. This vinegar is usable in a few days, but is more spicy after standing three or four weeks.

Garlic.—Over a few bruised garlics pour a quart of vinegar. In two or three weeks it is ready for the table. Two or three drops will flavor a salad or a large bowlful of gravy. Half this quantity will suffice a small family for a year.

WOMEN WHO MADDEN MEN.

Women may be charming, wholly devoted to their homes and their husbands, and yet be so tactless, thoughtless and aggravating as to drive husbands to the extreme of misery. "Any observant bachelor could recall the number of instances of women, who, from mere want of tact and intelligence are almost driving their husbands mad by getting on their nerves. They forget that busy men require absolute brain rest, change of scene, change of subject. They forget that however worrying the little affairs of a household may be, the anxieties of a great business upon which the whole family's present and future depends are far greater. A friend of mine, who is now nearly a millionaire, told me in confidence that while he was sitting one night over his smoking-room fire wondering whether he could next day possibly survive a terrible crisis which was hanging over his head and might lead to a disastrous bankruptcy, with debts to the extent of \$200,000 or so, his wife came whirling into the room to say that the butcher must be paid the next day—and the amount of the butcher's bill was under \$50!

It is on such occasions that a man wants a helpful wife—one who will tell him about or read aloud the last good novel, who will say, "Come let us go to the theatre to-night; you need change of scene," and above all, one who knows just when her husband requires nothing more than to be left alone. It is women who get on their husbands' nerves, that drive them to take bachelor holidays when they ought to be getting more enjoyment from the wife's companionship.

"Of course there are men who are always out of sorts, spoiled dyspeptic bears with sore heads, who require strong minds to manage them, but there are very many others who only want judicious, sympathetic treatment to be the best husbands in the world. Avoid being silly, avoid saying silly things or trying to make conversation or commenting on some remark your husband has made. Read and think in order to cultivate intelligence and resourcefulness, with the object in view of being his counselor and his friend, and above all, his "chum"—that word means much."—London Woman.

HETTY GREEN'S ADVICE.

For the benefit of women with small sums of money to invest, Mrs. Hetty Green, who is the richest woman in America, recently made the following statement:

"I would advise any woman with \$500 at her command to invest in real estate. She should buy the real estate at auction on occasions when circumstances have forced the sale. If she will watch for such an opportunity, it will surely come, and she will find that she can buy a parcel of land at one-third its appraised value.

"I regard real estate investment as the safest means of investing idle money. It does not always bring a steady interest, but it is less likely to depreciate in value than stocks, which are always somewhat uncertain. A woman with tact and ability will be on the alert of a mortgage about to be foreclosed. In such cases she should negotiate with the owner of the property and give him enough to clear his debt, thus saving him the costs of a sale. Many a woman has profited by an opportunity of this kind.

"Of course, if a woman has \$500 in cash and wishes to speculate, she may branch out more broadly and take greater risks, with the prospect of greater returns. But she should bear in mind that real estate is the collateral to be preferred to all others."

A GOOD BICYCLE POSITION.

Most doctors now recommend the preserving of the upright position on a bicycle, because the spinal column is thus kept straight, the shoulders are thrown back, and the weight of the body rests on the saddle. This position is not only the best from a medical and hygienic standpoint, but, in case of a fall, one is less likely to be thrown fatally on the head or hands than when leaning over the handle. Although certain muscles come chiefly into play, all the muscles of the body used are more or less strengthened. A person who only works and walks seldom fills his lungs as the cyclist must do to accomplish his journey. This brings about a more perfect oxidation of the blood, and good blood means healthy tissues, strong nerves and normal secretions."

PRACTICAL FARMING.

CURING BACON.

There are so many little essentials about the curing of meats that we often hesitate about giving any recipe unless it has been tried and found reliable. We cannot say this for the following, taken from a foreign exchange, but we give it for what it is worth: With reference to cutting up and selling great care must be taken in cutting the hams, as shapely hams always command a better price than those badly cut. The quantities of various condiments to the 100 pounds of meat are as follows: Two ounces of saltpetre well powdered, three pounds salt, two pounds black or dark brown sugar; one pound allspice, one ounce carbonate soda; mix well together. Rub the meat first with one pound of honey to the 100 pounds. Then rub with the mixture, using about two-thirds of the preparation. Then place it in a tub or vat with the fleshy side up. The vat or tub should be placed in a cool place, with plenty of fresh air. In twenty-four hours turn and rub again, adding a little more of the unused mixture, after which turn and rub once every forty-eight hours for six times, using some of the mixture each time. It should be packed closely in the vat, so as to raise the brine as high as possible. Always keep the hands and hams at the bottom of the vat. After remaining in pickle for twenty-one days, take out and scrub with a scrubbing brush, using hot water. After thoroughly cleaning, soak in cold water for ten hours; then hang up in a dry place (not in the cellar) where there is a good draught. If flies are troublesome it is advisable to stop up any cracks or crevices with lard, then dust the hams over with a little pollard, which will stick to the oily substance and form an artificial skin. After hanging from fourteen to sixteen days they should be ready for the smoke-house. The wall of the house should be twelve feet high. The smoke should be conducted to the bacon as cool as possible. My smoke-house is thirteen feet high and ten feet square. I hang the hams and bacon close to the top, in rows about six inches apart. It usually takes about ten days to smoke properly, making a smoke every other day. After leaving the smoke-house it is well to go over the hams and hands with lard and pollard, and stop up any place that is likely to be attacked with flies. It is a good plan to place the hams and hands in muslin bags, taking care to tie them tightly at the top. Hang them in a warm place. I hang my bacon in a kitchen. I have strips of 3x3 timber fixed to the ceiling with hooks screwed into them, and suspend the bacon there until the weather gets warm; then pack it away in bran and sawdust, which must be dry. It should be taken out every six weeks and examined, and if found to be getting mildewed or to be sweating, it should be rubbed dry with a cloth, then add a little chaff to the sawdust or bran. If you use bran be sure that it is free of mite. If possible, keep the hams and bacon in an even temperature. Too much heat will cause the fat to melt and turn rummy, and if too damp it will sweat and decay. By curing and treating your bacon by this process you will have an article that will always command a good price, and will keep for many years. The fat remains sweet, and the lean soft and savory. This treatment is based on a pig weighing 200 pounds. A smaller one does not require to be kept in pickle or smoke-house so long. A heavier pig would require to be kept longer. The longer you use the brine the better it is. It may require boiling occasionally."

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TURKEY'S EFFECTIVE ARMY.

Seven Hundred Thousand Mussulmans with Modern Weapons and Well Drilled.

The military forces of Turkey may be said to consist exclusively of Turks proper as nomad Kurds and nomad Arabs, although liable to serve, are not recruited, and Christians are allowed to pay an exemption tax. All Mussulmans come under the recruiting law at 20 years of age and remain in the service until 40. Of the twenty years six are passed in the Nizam, or regular army, eight in the Redif, or Landwehr, and six in the Mustanfu, or Dandsturm. About 140,000 Moslems become liable to serve yearly, and of these some 50,000 pass into the Nizam and serve their four years with the colors and then remain on the reserve until the time comes for them to pass to the Redif.

The total strength of the combatant forces of the Turkish empire is upward of 700,000 men. In 1887 Turkey obtained a supply of large-bore magazine rifles, but these are now being converted into small calibre, so as to take the same ammunition as the small-bore (302 in.) Mauser rifles of the Belgian pattern which were introduced in 1890. This latter, which is the arm of the regular infantry, carries five rounds in the magazine, and fires a hard lead bullet, coated with cupro-nickel, with a muzzle velocity of 2,139 feet per second. The rifle is sighted up to 2,000 metres (2,187 yards).

The artillery, which has been reorganized recently, is armed with nearly 1,400 guns, about 900 of which are new pattern Krupp's, the rest being older Krupp's and Whitworth guns. That the men are available and that they would be well armed is certain. It is doubtful if sufficient horses fit for active service could be supplied to meet the requirements of two hundred cavalry squadrons, and nearly as great a number for horse and field batteries. Another difficulty is the lack of communications, and it is probable that, owing to the want of sufficient rolling stock on the railways, especially in the Asiatic provinces, a large force could not be concentrated in any distant part of the empire for many months.

The army is organized on the territorial system, and the Ottoman empire is divided into six great military districts. Western and southwestern Arabia comprises a seventh district, but its recruits are drawn from districts in Turkey. The garrisons of Crete and Tripoli are also recruited from Turkey. Each of the six districts contains an army of corps of two infantry divisions, a cavalry division, and other troops belonging to the Nizam. The Redif is also organized in twenty-two divisions, spread over the six districts.

It would appear, therefore, that, notwithstanding certain drawbacks in the way of a rapid mobilization of all the forces of the empire, a powerful and well-organized army is at the back of the Sultan, and when the stand the Turks made for hours at the battle of Zewin during the campaign in Armenia in 1877 is remembered, it cannot be doubted that in a struggle for the integrity and independence of their country they would exhibit a military spirit and endurance not easily overborne.

MARRIED A CHINESE GENERAL.

About six years ago Miss Bella Adams was a young waitress in a King street restaurant at Toronto, now she is the wife of a Chinese general. The young lady herself wrote to that effect to a member of the Wanderer's Bicycle Club of that city. She was a great favorite with the road riders of the club half-a-dozen years ago. After leaving Toronto Miss Adams, or Mrs. Wong Mon, as she now writes her name, was given a position as assistant stewardess on the "Empress of Japan," and in this way became acquainted in Hong Kong. She became tired of the tedious trips across the Pacific and settled in Hong Kong. There she met the general, and the acquaintance developed into a love affair, which was followed by a marriage ceremony performed both in Chinese and English.

A COMPOUND FRACTURE.

Why was it that she broke the engagement, Fluffy? Because she found out that I was broke.

ALL IN THE LOOKS.

Robbie claims to be a great man to look ahead. That may be true, but he is an infernally poor one to go ahead.