

VERY READABLE.

Interesting Items Collected from the World's Four Corners.

The starfish has five eyes.

The United States ranks seventh as a naval power.

Great Britain makes over 130,000 bicycles a year.

The heart of a Greenland whale is a yard in diameter.

All the world over there are ninety-eight women to one hundred men.

Diamonds so small that 1,500 go to the carat have been cut in Holland.

England receives annually from Ireland about 640,000,000 eggs.

In Finland and East Turkestan thunderstorms are wholly unknown.

The Dakota River is the longest navigable river in the world—over 1,000 miles.

American women are growing taller, while the men are getting shorter.

There are over 4,000 South African war medals awaiting claimants in England.

It is stated that the cholera is rarely fatal to a system impregnated with tobacco.

Rome is to be illuminated by electricity generated twenty miles away by a cascade on the Tiber.

Buffalo is the only city in the United States that has given the country two Presidents.

The Empire of Morocco is the most important State that is absolutely without a newspaper.

A club in Berlin, called the Giants, admits to membership only men who are over six feet in height.

Texas permits aristocratic convicts to hire substitutes to work for them in the convict camps.

The moon is not so small after all. Its surface is fully as great as that of Africa and Australia combined.

The Pennsylvania Hospital in Philadelphia is the oldest hospital in the United States. It was built in 1755.

More than 60,000 stamps are said to be found every year loose in the letter-boxes of the United Kingdom.

During the last fifty years more than 9,000,000 people have emigrated from England, of whom 10 per cent. have returned.

The rubber trees come into bearing in about seven years after planting and with proper care the tree is good for fifty years of production.

The exportation of vegetables from California, in 1893, exceeded 110,000,000 pounds, or 50,000 tons, 5,500 cartloads of ten tons each.

The shark manifests a distinct liking for certain races, and will eat an Asiatic in preference to a negro, and a European rather than either.

In some of the ancient temples of Egypt perfectly sound timber of the tamarisk wood has been found connected with the stonework which is known to be four thousand years old.

A Paris toy merchant has brought out a novelty in the shape of a doll wearing a Panama hat. On pulling a string the hat disappears, and its place is taken by a convict's cap.

The drill of the Roman soldier was exceedingly severe. It comprised not only the use of weapons, but running, jumping, wrestling, swimming, both naked and in full armour.

It takes seven days after death, according to Siamese belief, for the soul to reach heaven, and prayers are kept up during that period to help it on its way.

Counting the bearing and non-bearing orange trees in Florida there are estimated to be 10,000,000. California is credited with having 6,000,000 and Arizona about 1,000,000.

Caged lions and tigers, pumas and jaguars take no notice of the men and women passing in front of them, but let a dog be brought anywhere near the cage and they show their savage nature at once, and spring up, glaring out savagely.

When a Chinese girl is married her attendants are always the oldest and ugliest women to be found in the neighborhood, who are paid to act as foils to her beauty. It is said that some exceptionally ugly old women make their living by acting as professional attendants at weddings.

Probably the most remarkable knife in the world is that in the curiosity room in the factory of Joseph Rodgers and Sons, in Sheffield. It has 1890 blades, and ten blades are added every ten years. Another curiosity is three pairs of scissors, all of which can be covered by a thimble.

Traces of the bicycle are found as far back as the fifteenth century. In fact, Egyptian figures found on obelisks mounted on two-wheeled vehicles show they had some idea of the velocipede.

One hundred domestic servants are killed annually in England in the process of window cleaning. An invention recently patented is a window of which the outside may be cleaned without exposing the cleaner to any chance of a tumble.

There is a woman in Sitka known as Princess Tom, who is very rich. She at one time had three husbands, but has become Christianized and has discharged two. She is an extensive trader, is known all over Alaska, and wears upon her arm thirty gold bracelets, made out of twenty-dollar gold pieces.

According to all Rabbinic writers the whole human race before the Flood were giants. Herion tells us Adam was 123 feet 9 inches in height, Eve 118 feet, 9 inches, 9 lines, and Noah 27 feet even.

The King of Assam has 200 wives, who are divided into nine grades. When one of them dies her body is lowered from the roof of the palace to be buried; the law in Assam prohibits the carrying of a corpse through the doors.

The largest stationary engine in the world is used to pump out the zinc mines at Friedleville, Pa. Its driving wheels are 35 feet in diameter and each weighs a little over forty tons. The cylinder is 110 inches in diameter, and the engine raises 17,500 gallons of water every minute.

Physicians who have investigated the causes of sickness in the lower grades of public schools say that nine-tenths of it comes from stomach troubles, and that it is the direct result of having children in school from 8.30 o'clock in the morning until 12.

o'clock midday without giving them a chance to get anything to eat.

Queen Victoria is in possession of a curious needle. It was made at the celebrated needle manufactory at Redditch, and represents the Frajan column in miniature. Scenes from the Queen's life are depicted on the needle so finely that they are only discernible through a microscope.

It is stated that ordinary bricks boiled in tar for about twelve hours, or until they are saturated with it, are increased about 30 per cent. in weight, are much harder than common ones, and unaffected by frost and acids, as well as perfectly waterproof. They form an excellent flooring for workshops or store-rooms, particularly in chemical establishments.

There is no proof of the extinction of the buffalo so convincing and saddening as the great piles of skulls, horns, and bones of these animals that are seen near the railroad tracks on the North Western plains. The sale of these bones by farmers and ranchmen who find them gives them a small return in ready money. Most of the bones are shipped to the East, where they are converted into bone charcoal, which is used for filtering in the sugar refineries.

In Belgium it is the custom to give certificates of marriages in the form of little books, which also contain a summary of the marriage laws, and among a mass of other miscellaneous information, directions for the feeding and care of infants. There are also places for entering the names and birthdays of the children of the marriage.

Attar of roses comes from the rose gardens of Ghazeeboor, in India, where the bushes are planted in rows for acres. Every morning the blossoms are gathered and distilled with twice their weight in water. This is "set" for oil, and the oil is skimmed off and prepared for sale. Twenty thousand roses are required to yield £10 worth of the pure attar of roses.

In China there is a strange profession for ladies, openly and handsomely remunerated in the current coin of the realm. It is carried on by elderly ladies, who go from house to house of rich people announcing their coming by beating a drum and offering their services to amuse the lady of the house. This offer accepted, they sit down and tell her the latest scandal and the newest stories and on dits, and are rewarded at the rate of half-a-crown an hour, beside a handsome present should some portion of their gossip have proved particularly acceptable.

Horseflesh in China has been considered a great delicacy for centuries. The inhabitants, however, for the purposes of the kitchen, use almost exclusively animals of a small breed, little larger than ponies, which have thin legs and small bones, and grow fat on little food. They are fed almost entirely on grass and hay. Many farmers devote their time almost exclusively to raising these horses for market.

Parrots have been taught to amuse by their imitation of the human voice, and now their powers in this respect have been made use of for a practical purpose. At almost every station on a German railway the station master has a parrot or a starling, so trained that whenever a train draws up at the platform, it commences calling out the name of the station most distinctly, and not only this, but it continues doing so while the train remains there. This has been found an excellent mode of informing the passengers where they are.

Live Healthfully.

One of the simplest obligations imposed upon man by divine ordinance and conscientious intuition is that of living healthfully. Not only is it a plain duty but an equally plain policy. Then why are the laws of health so frequently violated? Why do so many people overwork their brains, neglect exercise, persist in irregular and unhealthy habits and thus lay the foundation of disease? A few perhaps from lack of knowledge, but far more from lack of courage. It is much easier to continue a bad habit than to break it up. The former demands no efforts, the latter requires spirit, resolution and the exercise of will power. Every one honors truth and sincerity yet every one does not practice them. Temptations come, desires are strong, opportunities present themselves for the promotion of self interest by questionable methods and we readily yield to the pressure although we are fully alive to their inherent falseness and consequently injurious results. How many people live beyond their means, year after year, living in the shadow of inevitable ruin because they have not the strength of mind to endure the disdainful looks of some set or clique who are regarded as the leaders of fashion or to break away from the social bondage that is more degrading than the most abject slavery. We read almost every day of men and women destroying themselves because they have not the courage to face a change of fortune that they suppose would lower them in the eyes of their neighbors. So it is through the whole category of duties that are supposed to be difficult or disagreeable. Moral courage is required to overcome the dislike and the mental indolence that lead to their neglect. Indeed it often takes more self sacrifice to make those quiet and private efforts than those which have the appearance of being greater and more important. There is more opportunity for heroism in private life than there is on the battlefield and the victory is often more glorious.

A Novel Barometer.

A clever Frenchman, who has original ideas on most subjects, employs a kind of barometer which may safely be called unique. It's nothing more nor less than the figure of a general made of gingerbread. He buys it every year at the Place du Throne, takes it home and hangs it by a string on a nail.

Gingerbread, as every one knows, is easily affected by changes in the atmosphere. The slightest moisture renders it soft; in dry weather, on the contrary, it grows hard and tough.

Every morning on going out the Frenchman asks his servant, "What does the general say?" and the man applies his thumb to the gingerbread figure.

Sometimes he replies, "The general feels soft. He would advise your taking an umbrella." On the other hand, when the general's symptoms are hard and unyielding the Frenchman sallies forth arrayed in his best, with no fears for his spotless suit or his new hat. He says the general has, so far never proved unworthy of the confidence placed in his prognostications.

ENGLAND AND THE ALLIANCE.

An Indian Newspaper Replies to a Russian Critic.

Great Britain has resolutely refused to be drawn into alliance with the Powers of Central Europe. Probably, the reasons for this course are, that the British Government is unwilling to meet the enormous expenditure which such an alliance would demand; and, more especially, because the English people firmly believe that India, the main source of England's wealth, is in no immediate danger from Russia. This last proposition is defended by the Official Press of India. Joseph Popowski, an ardent admirer of the Triple Alliance, in his book "The Rival Powers of Central Asia," undertakes to show that if England isolates herself, she will not be able to defend India against the assaults of Russia; but that if she joins the Triple Alliance she can successfully resist the approaching foe.

The Statesman, Calcutta, in a long article replies to Popowski, as follows: He has to prove, first, that Russia seeks to conquer India; secondly, that England alone could not repulse Russia; and, thirdly, that, with the help of the Triple Alliance, the position would be inverted, and that she would enjoy a very good chance of success. Now, all these points are eminently disputable, and Herr Popowski's presentation of them needs to be analyzed.

He devotes an exceedingly valuable chapter—by far the most valuable chapter in the book—to the history of Russia's advance into Asia. This history is already pretty well known, but it has never been written with more ability than by Herr Popowski. His intimate knowledge of the Russian authorities on the subject places his analysis of the Russian advance and its methods on a far higher plane than the rhodomontades of English political writers. But when he comes to argue that the advance of Russia must necessarily terminate in

AN INVASION OF INDIA.

the writer begins to lose his historical sense. Herr Popowski forgets that the strength of an Empire is in inverse ratio to its extent. He forgets that the Slav-Finnish-Mongolian-Tartar races, which we loosely call "the Russians," are not bound together by any real cohesive force. The Slavs are dwindling in number and in force, their civilization eaten through by political Nihilism, religious unbelief, and physical disease. The Finns yearn to return under the mild sway of Sweden; the Poles are in a state of chronic discontent, ready at any moment to express itself in open rebellion; the wild tribes of Central Asia suffer under the corrupt yoke of Russian officials, and would be only too glad to throw it off; and the Germans of the Baltic Provinces, who have contributed to the Empire many of its greatest generals and administrators, are being excluded from power and irritated into emigration. Russia is trembling in the throes of disintegration.

It is, therefore, curious to turn to the Austrian writer's view of what he considers the chief weakness of the English position in India.

"Certainly," writes Herr Popowski, "the defense of India would be much easier if the British could thoroughly rely on the loyalty of the natives. The British Government, however, does not trust the natives. This is evident from the resolution that the number of European troops must equal one-third of the Anglo-Indian forces; that native officers should be excluded from the higher commands; and that

THE NATIVE TROOPS

should only be enlisted from certain castes and nationalities. The same mistrust of the natives is observable in the administration, and in the relations with the Indian Princes. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that Great Britain is accomplishing a grand work of civilization in India." The author goes on to lay weight on the heterogeneous nature of the population of India as a source of weakness, though he calmly passes over the same fact with regard to the Russian Empire.

Herr Popowski forgets that, if England joined the Triple Alliance, she might be forced to fight Russia at sea and in Asia, in order to create a diversion for the Central European Powers. The power of disposing of the navy of England and of the wealth of England is earnestly desired by the Continental Powers, in order to bring her into line with the Triple Alliance in Europe. This is the avowed intention of many Continental statesmen and publicists. But, work on the fears of England as they may, the burnt child dreads the fire, and England has suffered too much in the past from her interference in European politics to be tempted to such a course again.

The Allgemeine Zeitung, Munich, declares that England has lost her chance of becoming a member of the Great Alliance of Central Europe. England would probably demand great concessions, which the

Powers are all less likely to grant as English influence has been greatly diminished by the vacillating policy of English statesmen. Mr. Hartpole Lecky, the English historian, in a speech delivered in the Imperial Institute, says that there is no need that England should sacrifice herself to the Moloch of Militarism like the Continental Powers. England's colonies love the mother-country, and thus Greater

BRITAIN IS STRONG ENOUGH

to withstand all attacks. The population of India appreciates the reign of perfect peace which British rule has brought them. We cannot tell what clouds may arise, but nothing in the world can destroy the power of the British race.

A writer in Die Nation, Berlin, in a series of articles entitled "Wanderings in Russia," denies that Russia aims only at a consolidation of all the Slavonic races. The true Russian dream of empire is the Czar ruling the whole world. Everything that regards the progress of Russian influence and power must be stamped out, and the Slavonic nations of Eastern Europe can hope that Russia will be friendly toward them only as long as they submit to the will of the Czar.

G. v. Schulze-Gaevernitz says in the Preussische Jahrbucher, Berlin, that the Russian manufacturers are in favor of an aggressive policy of Russia in Asia. The backward state of civilization and the poverty of the Russian masses prevent the expansion of trade which the Russian industrialists had hoped for, and this forces them to look abroad for a market. If Russia could possess herself of Turkey, she would shut out all foreign manufacture from Turkish ports.

Exercise Care.

We hear a good deal said, from time to time, to the effect that girls should exercise more care than they do in the selection of husbands. This is true enough in the abstract, but like many truisms it is without practical value, for the very sufficient reason that girls, as a rule, have not much to do with the choice of their inferior halves, that being largely a matter of environment or association. Nor in the exceptional instances in which they are allowed any more than a Hobson's choice is it by any means assured that they choose more wisely than if they had left it to chance. Those who have given this matter special attention say that it should be here as it is in Germany, where the parents take a hand in the love affairs of their daughters and pick out their husbands for them. But the daughters may possibly fail to see in such a scheme the "larger liberty," which the friends of female suffrage demand on behalf of the sex. The suggestion also gives rise to an issue of fact. It is a question, for instance, whether the American mother really does less picking and choosing than her Teutonic neighbor. The maternal instinct is much the same the world over and the manœuvring mamma is not indigenous to any particular land. The matter may safely be left to mother and daughter.

The Story of Charity.

There are 7,600 soup kitchens in France. Italy has 270,000 inmates of the poor houses. The almshouses of France have 290,000 inmates. Austria has 124,030 orphans cared for by the State. Germany has 320,000 paupers in the public almshouses. English charity hospitals annually relieve 145,000 sick. The annual expense of raising an orphan in France is \$50. There are in Austria 290,000 persons receiving State aid. Berlin charity hospitals receive an annual subsidy of \$350,000. The soup kitchens of Vienna feed every year 228,000 persons. The soup kitchens of France annually assist 1,778,000 persons.

Why Swimmers Drown.

The accidental death of known good swimmers while bathing is, as a rule, attributed to cramps. Recent investigations would, however, go far to prove that this is but a time-honoured and general error. There is nothing, says a contemporary, in a cramp in the leg to prevent an ordinary swimmer from supporting himself in the water by his hands or on his back, or to cause him to throw up his hands and sink like a stone, as seems to be the rule in these cases of "cramps." It is more probable that the cause of these sudden fatalities is a perforation of the ear drum, through which the access of water pressure causes vertigo and almost immediate unconsciousness. A few post-mortem examinations would settle this question. The theory is more than probable to the medical mind and no harm would be done if persons should take precaution of stuffing cotton wool in the ears when bathing.

THE SEALING RULES.

British and United States Officials Have a Conference at Washington.

A despatch from Washington says:—Sir Julian Pauncefote, the British Minister, Sir George Baden-Powell, representing the Canadian Government, and W. Edward Goschen, first Secretary of the British embassy, accompanied by Mr. Gresham, Secretary of State, called at the Treasury Department yesterday, by appointment with Secretary Carlisle, for the purpose of discussing rules and regulations to carry out the findings of the Paris tribunal affecting Behring Sea interests. Secretary Carlisle received the party in his private room of the treasury building. Behind closed doors the conference was conducted for two hours, during which time Commander Evens, of the navy, who was in command of the United States fleet in Behring sea in 1892, was called into the conference, and participated in it. At the conclusion of the conference Secretary Carlisle stated that a general interchange of opinion as to the scope of the instructions to be given the United States agent on the seal islands, and to the naval officers in the Behring sea fleet, took place, and a better understanding of the situation and conditions was reached. The final instructions to the agent on the seal islands have not yet been completed, but a rough draft was read during the course of the conference.

Great Men's Belief.

"As we grow older," says Mr. W. D. Howells of a belief in immortality, "we grow less and less positive about such a belief. The young are much more positive than the old. I can't say more about it than that I hope for another life, another chance." It would be interesting to know if the experience of which Mr. Howells speaks is the usual one. It was true of Goethe that his age had in it more of faith in the future than his youth. Doubt faded from Tennyson's mind as he came to "cross the bar." The belief in a personal immortality grew clearer in Emerson's writings as he approached his end. This was true also of Walt Whitman. Carlyle chronicles a similar change of view. For all these men the stars grew plainer as the night grew more dark. The author of "Ecclesiastes," so far as he accepts immortality at all, seems to have passed through a like phase, and the records both of religion and of letters, the annals both of action and of thought, contain many like instances.

A belief or a hope in immortality, it is often forgotten, has come but slowly to the race itself. It is almost absent from its youth. The savage believes in a ghastly life after death, but he has no conception of immortality. The early classic view of life after death was that it was a poor, miserable affair, not worth having. The Egyptian only believes in immortality through a return to the material body, which he accordingly preserved with infinite care. Much in the Hebrew Scriptures shows that its authors had no firm hold on immortality, if they believed it at all. For both the Jew and the Greek belief in immortality, in the sense in which the word is now used, came at a late period in the development of national faith.

In short, both a desire for immortality and a belief in it is associated with the youth neither of men nor of nations. In nations it has always dawned with a declining sun and been strongest when nations had reached their full stature and played their largest part on the world's stage and gained their full wisdom. With all respect for as close and accurate an observer as Mr. Howells, we are inclined to think that this is apt to be so with individuals as well. In the distinguished cases which we have cited, and we believe in lesser men—and we are speaking altogether of those who, like Mr. Howells, confine themselves to the light of nature and of the soul—the tendency and teaching of a wide experience of life and its lessons is to convince men that the spirit is life indeed and has hereafter its share in an existence which outlasts the sweep of sun and of planet.

Ye Modern Mistresses.

Fair Guest—"My goodness! This room looks like a prison cell. What is it for?" Hostess—"That is to lock myself in when I scold the cook."



A Marvelous Medicine

Whenever Given a Fair Trial Hood's Proves Its Merit.

The following letter is from Mr. J. Alcide Chausse, architect and surveyor, No. 163 Shaw Street, Montreal, Canada:

"C. I. Hood & Co., Lowell, Mass.:
"Gentlemen:—I have been taking Hood's Sarsaparilla for about six months and am glad to say that it has done me a great deal of good. Last May my weight was 152 pounds, but since

HOOD'S Sarsaparilla CURES

I began to take Hood's Sarsaparilla it has increased to 163. I think Hood's Sarsaparilla is a marvelous medicine and am very much pleased with it." J. ALCIDÉ CHAUSSE.

Hood's Pills cure liver ills, constipation, biliousness, jaundice, sick headache, indigestion.

THE DANGER OF EASY ROLLERS.

Life's Illustration of a Slip and a General Catastrophe to a Happy Family.

