BRIGHT MESSENGER BOYS.

LONDON THE GREAT IS PROUD OF HER MESSENGER SERVICE.

Never Accused of Loafing or Impudence, And Always Alert and Energetic—Some of the Various Errands Performed by the Messengers—No Work is Too Strange For the Boys to Undertake.

London has a messenger service of which the British metropolis is proud. It provides smart, capable, ambitious lads, who vie with each other in executing their tasks, in a manner that will win recognition and reward.

A writer says:—"A correspondent of the St. James's Gazette mentioned that having retired to a spot in the north of Scotland twenty miles from any railway station, and five hundred from London, he was flattering himself that he was sufficiently removed from all things savoring of the monster city. But lo, in his pathway, as he descended the hillside on his homeward way, unconcernedly stepped along a boy in the uniform of the London District Messengers with a bundle of fishing rods over his shoulder. He had been chartered from the Piccadilly office by two gentlemen on a bicycling tour. His duties, to valet them, travel with their luggage, while they were laboriously breasting hilly roads on safeties, and apparently to enjoy an occasional day's fishing. Who, would not be a District Messenger boy?

"But, upon further inquiry, it appears that the stern path of duty occasionally leads messengers into places where they would prefer not to go—and to undertake duties which are, to say the least, unpleasant. Not long since a private hotel rang up.

"When the boy presented himself he was told to send the biggest and strongest they had. Fortunately a tall, strong lad of about eighteen was in the office, who

MOUNTED MESSENGERS.

was in training for the police. He was accordingly dispatched to the hotel, it being about midnight, and was conducted to a bedroom upstairs, where he was told he was to sit up with a gentleman who was ill, and keep him in bed. After being there about an hour he came to the conclusion that they had left him in charge of

A RAVING LUNATIC,

and such proved to be the case. The boy, however, stuck manfully to his post till the morning. Recently there was another curious case where an unfortunate man deranged in his mind appeared at one of the offices and asked for two boys to sit up with him to protect him. One was sent and the other was to follow, but before he came the man got so nervous that he sent the first boy—to his no small relief—for a policeman as well.

"The public do not realize how carefully this elaborate messenger service is organized. Every effort is made to insure the efficiency and absolute promptness of the service. Even a messenger police force had been organized in every district. The duties of this police are to occasionally, at uncertain hours, patrol their district to take notice of any messenger who might chance to be improperly dressed, or performing his duties in a slovenly manner. The chances of this, however, are very remote, for a messenger is not only encouraged to perform his errands in good time by the bestowal of silver medals carrying gratuities with them, but an offender in this way is first warned, then fined, and lastly dismissed. Taken altogether, the discipline of the service, which is in the efficient hands of an old Horse Artilleryman, who is enthusiastic in praise of his lads, is admirable, and strong esprit de corps pervades all ranks.

"Since this admirable organization took London by storm the General Post Office has lost some of its most treasured laurels, and most emphatically been beaten on its own ground in certain directions. The new service is so expeditiously and accurately performed, and withal so cheap, that often the demands of the company's resources are difficult to comply with, and many a time every messenger from a station will be out simultaneously. In fact, the organization is

GROWING AT A MIGHTY RATE,

and feeling that a service so praiseworthy and admirable must be a matter of quickly growing interest, we have gleaned some particulars at headquarters for the benefit of our readers. It is satisfactory to see, in the first place, that their healthy outdoor work has an excellent effect on the army of boys in the company's employ. All of them look the very picture of health, and despite their numbers, cases of sickness are extremely rare. As an instance of the ceaseless call on these young messengers, a fair example of a couple of day's work at a single branch may be given. At the Piccadilly office recently considerably over 800 calls were performed in two days, some of these representing long journeys into the country, and including many trips into the suburbs.

"Quite recently the company have started a number of bicycles, so now for a small additional fee an extra accelerated service can be given. The royalties inflicted on the company by the Post Office are so excessive that several additional features have lately been introduced.

"No work is too strange for a London District Messenger boy. Nothing ever surprises him. Quite recently one was 'rung up' for by an institution. On arrival he was conducted on to the platform where a lecture on ambulance work was in progress. His presence was required for the purpose of

SIMULATING A CORPSE,

and having various limbs bound up.

"The officials take a particular pleasure in taking on the staff one-armed or one-handed lads of good character. One of the oldest boys in the company's service is one-handed; but if he is deficient of his proper complement of limbs he makes up for it in medals, of which he has earned four. Such an array is a guarantee of good conduct and trustworthiness, so it is not surprising to learn that this boy has carried hundreds of pounds at one time with him to various parts of the country. In the summer he and another equally trustworthy lad took charge of the canteen of a volunteer camp.

"Few people have any idea of the work involved in summoning a messenger. They little dream of the miles of wire which have been laid, of the battery-room beneath the district office, of the difficulty of finding reliable superintendents, of the anxiety of the superintendents to afford a good service to their numerous clientele. These winter storms have given the foreman linesman many an anxious moment. Spans of wire snapped by furious squalls mean circuits suspended, and that means complaints from subscribers, naturally indignant.

"One feature of the messenger service has scarcely yet been developed, and is little known. When it is, it is sure to be appreciated; for it is so simple and so perfect in insuring its object—viz., absolute watchfulness on the part of a watchman.

THE TELL-TALE CLOCK

is all very well, but it only tells its tale on the following morning. In the meantime the watchman may have been drugged or murdered, or be drunk. But under the Messenger Company system the watchman is obliged to signal to the district office at stated times, either hourly or half-hourly, as arranged. Should the signal not arrive within three minutes of the appointed time a messenger is sent to enquire the reason. Thus assistance can at any time be summoned without the watchman leaving the building. A report is sent every morning to the manager of the building showing the times at which the watch calls came in.

"Had this system, which is now in operation at the Cafe Royal, been there sooner the murder of the night watchman must have been detected within an hour, or even a much shorter period. This would have probably meant the murder's detection and possibly saved the life of the victim.

"In conclusion, the following are among the various errands performed by the company's messengers. Leading a blind man about, taking a young lady to school, taking children to school daily and bringing them back, taking luncheon down to river picnics, acting detective in plain clothes, down into the west country to pay a county court summons, shopping at the stores, taking a newly arrived Indian servant to the play, and a newly arrived German cook out for

A WALK IN THE PARK

(and bringing her back, to the disgust of her fellow servants, who hoped he had left her there.) Many other amusing instances might be related, but the list would be a very long one. There is one other point which should be mentioned, and that is the utility of the fire and police call. Many serious fires have been extinguished by the prompt arrival of the 'Fire Queen,' summoned by the call box. As will be readily understood, it is of paramount importance that immediately on the discovery of a fire the whole energies of the person on the spot should instantly be devoted to extinguishing it. If, therefore, he has ready to his hand a means of summoning assistance, without rushing out of the house to give an alarm, thereby making a draught which will fan the flames, it will be odds in favor of the fire being got under control by the prompt use of handy appliances at the initial stage. A couple of minutes' delay might mean the total destruction of the house. By the use of the callbox a fire, which broke out at 3 o'clock on a Sunday night in a house in Green street, Grosvenor square, a month ago, was confined to two rooms. Had it not been for the prompt use of it the whole house must have been burned down. The police call, too, is in almost daily use."

Moustaches Prohibited.

This is the rule at the well-known banking house of Messrs. Coutts & Co., 59 Strand. None of the bank clerks wear moustaches, and it has long been considered a point of business etiquette that all the gentlemen employed at the bank should wear frock-coats during business hours. A clerkship at Messrs. Coutts' is considered one of the prizes in the banking profession. Some of the men are university graduates, many have been educated at one of the great public schools, while several have been called to the English bar. Some years ago an attempt was made to have the unwritten law regarding moustaches rescinded, but it was found that a greater number preferred the old custom to remain in force than were in favor of its abolition. This curious custom is also said to prevail in some of the large tea houses in the city, while it is well known that some Church of England bishops prefer the curates under their charge to be clean shaven. A lady who tried about three years ago to enforce a shaved face on the groom in her employment, and dismissed him at once because he refused compliance with her order, found that the law gave her no such power, and was mulcted in £5 for wrongful dismissal and the costs of the action by the Judge of the Bedford County Court.

Envious.

"So you told your friend about my three hours' speech," said the emancipated woman.

"Yes," replied her husband.

"What did he say?"

"He said he wished his wife would make her speeches to an audience instead of to him."

Give Him a Show.

"One more request," said the sick man, "and I shall die satisfied."

"Name it," said his weeping wife.

"I want John to write my obituary for he's the biggest liar in the family, and ain't never had much chance to spread himself!"

Household.

Home Sewing Points.

"I see you are doing a job I have always disliked, Mrs. Peters," said Mrs. Price, as her friend resumed the work laid down at her entrance. "I often wish we could return to the old fashion of buttons and buttonholes on all dresses, it is so difficult to have hooks and eyes look nicely."

"I used to find it so," replied Mrs. Peters, "until I learned from a dressmaker I had at the house. When ready for the facings, turn down both sides of the front about a quarter of an inch on the side for the eyes, and about half an inch on the side for the hooks, and baste it. Sew on the hooks and eyes, evenly, through the little rings, and also over the sides to keep them firm. You need not break off the thread every time, but carry it from one to the other. When this is done, cut the facings, and overcast them across the eyes and under the hooks. In this way hooks and eyes are both covered, except the little part that is needed. The only difficult part is to have the eyes project the exact distance necessary, which should be about an eighth of an inch."

"I think those directions will help me next time," said Mrs. Price, gratefully. Now I think I will tell you what I learned from a dressmaker, though I think very likely you may have practiced it."

"Perhaps not," was the answer, "let me hear it."

"I always had trouble with my skirt sagging in the middle of the back, until I learned of sewing large eyes on each side of the middle of the belt and hooks to match on the seams of the waist. I never had any more trouble of that kind.

"Yes," remarked Mrs. Peters, "I have used that plan and found it very satisfactory. Please excuse me a moment, while I look for a bit to mend this undershirt with." Returning a few moments later, she said: "I can't bear to see flannels and stockings or other clothes mended with thread or material that does not match. I sometimes think a hole is almost preferable to a gray stocking darned with blue, or black underskirt bound with red, or a brown patch where there should be a black one. Buttons, all kinds of mending threads, in cotton, linen, silk and wool, bindings in taffeta, ribbons and even webbing by the yard are to be bought at most reasonable prices for making old things as good as new, and for keeping the new in perfect condition."

"For that reason," remarked Mrs. Price, "I think it would be an economy in the same direction to buy the same makes and colors in flannels and hose from season to season, so that one may have material to reinforce weak places without buying it."

"That is true," was Mrs. Peters reply, "and for that reason I often think it economy to dress in one color entirely or to dress a child so."

"You don't mean always in one shade of color?" asked Mrs. Price, rather deprecatingly.

"Oh, no, indeed," was the quick answer. "But if one's clothes and hats and gloves were either all blue, of which many shades could be used from the darkest navy blue to light blues in wash goods, and shirt waists, it would save much trouble in matching linings, silk, thread, etc., left over from dressmaking. Or, if they were all brown."

"I believe there is something in your idea, Mrs. Peters. I shall think about it."

Rice.

While rice is often seen on the table, it is with many people considered a dish only fit for invalids, and with others always cooked in one of two or three ways. This should not be, for there are many dainty and palatable ways of preparing it.

In cool weather when cooked rice will keep for several days, cook quite a quantity and press it in a mould—a long or square cake tin makes a good one. Either simply boil the rice in water or cook it in a double boiler, using one cup of rice to three of sweet milk. When cold, cut off slices as needed. One pretty way of using is to spread layers of bright-colored jelly between slices of the cold rice—three layers of rice and two of jelly—then slice down through it and serve cold, with cream and sugar.

Another fancy dish is made by taking slices of the rice, rubbing butter over them and browning in a broiler. Spread on a hot platter and put cooked chicken (minced) on each slice; garnish with parsley and serve hot. Simply browned in butter and served as "rice toast," it is a delicious and easily prepared breakfast dish.

Cook the rice and pack in wet cups; when cool, turn out on a flat dish and place a lump of jelly on top of each ball and serve either with cream or a sauce made of sugar and butter. When the rice is cooked in milk it is converted into "creamed rice" by adding (as soon as cool) a cupful of stiffly whipped cream seasoned with lemon. Pile roughly on a dish and serve when very cold.

Plain boiled rice is to some tastes an insipid dish, but if served with lemon it is very different in both taste and appearance. Before putting the rice on to cook, slice a lemon thin and cover with sugar. When the rice is in the dish ready for the table, pour the syrup over it and place the slices of lemon over the top and serve one or two of the slices with each dish of rice.

Rice fritters are made by boiling a cup of rice in a pint of milk, adding the beaten yolks of three eggs, a tablespoonful of sugar and two of flour. When cold, add the whites of the eggs, beaten stiff, and drop by spoonfuls in hot lard. Fry a delicate brown.

Sour Krout and Bologna.

This method of preparing cabbage is given by a Dutch woman who was noted for making excellent sour krout:

Slice cabbage with a slaw cutter or very sharp knife, sprinkle a little salt on the bottom of a jar or cask, put in some cabbage and salt it as you would the same quantity for cooking. Pound and pack it down closely, about an inch in depth, with a wooden pounder, but be careful not to bruise the cabbage. Now put in another layer of cabbage about an inch in depth and salt it as before, then pound down. Fill the cask or jar, pressing each layer down as hard as possible without bruising the cabbage. Cover the top with two layers of cabbage leaves, an oaken board and heavy weight. Pour water over slowly till it shows a little at the top. If the cabbage was packed very firmly, a very little water will suffice. Tie a thin cloth over the cask and set it in a moderately warm place until fermentation ceases. This may be determined by the non-appearance of bubbles around the outside. It will ordinarily require three or four weeks to complete the process, when a cloth should be tied over the cask and it should be set in a cool place. If no water is used the kraut will not be as white; if too much salt is used fermentation is checked.

Bologna Sausage.—This receipt for making bologna has been tested and found to be good: Take three pounds of lean beef, three pounds of lean pork, two pounds of fat bacon and a pound and a half of beef suet; put the lean meat into a saucepan of hot water and set the saucepan over the fire for half an hour. Cut the pieces fine, each kind by itself. Chop the suet and bacon, each by itself. Season each with pepper, a little thyme and ground mace; chop all lightly together. Fill skins with the mixture, tie them in lengths, and put them in beef brine for ten days, then smoke them. To prepare the skins: Take beef intestines, cut them in long strips, wash thoroughly in warm water, turn them and wash again. Scrape thoroughly, wash in two or three waters, then soak them in salt water till wanted for use. The skins must be handled carefully in the process of cleansing as they are often quite tender and tear easily.

A REMARKABLE RUSSIAN.

A Wealthy Man, Yet Count Tolstoi and His Family Work With the Laborers on Their Estate.

While Russia has long been a synonym for despotism and oppression, there is associated with it one name that has become familiar in many lands as representing a benevolence remarkable in theory and practice alike. Count Tolstoi is well known as an author, but better known as a man. He is descended from one of Russia's oldest families, and before he was twenty he came into possession of a large amount of property. His ideas during his early life were not very different from those prevailing in his class, although he soon showed a disposition to help the poor people living on his estate. Witnessing an execution led him to study the relations of government and religion, with the result that he came

COUNT LEO TOLSTOI.

to adopt as the practical creed of his life the Sermon on the Mount in its most literal meaning. Following out his example, he lives in the simplest style. He and his family work with the laborers on their farm. He learned the trade of a shoemaker and gives much of his time to work at the bench. His life and words are made a constant protest against injustice everywhere. His wealth is most freely shared with the poor; and, were he left free to follow his own course, he would doubtless be ready to give away all that he has. His fine scholarship also is devoted to the service of others, and he has been engaged in preparing for the common people a collection of the best thoughts from the greatest thinkers of all times. The persecuted Stundists have had his warmest sympathy, and such is the hold that he has gained that no one person, probably, wields a greater moral influence in Russia to-day. His works are eagerly sought, and some that have not been published have a wide circulation in manuscript among the people. However widely one may differ from views that would make Christianity opposed to government, and a synonym for anarchy, and however little one may approve not a few of Tolstoi's positions, it cannot be denied that he has stood for principles that hitherto have been in little danger of being too strongly emphasized either in theory or in practice.

The Bicycle Mania.

The medical journals are discussing the interesting subject of bicycling, and they agree that when a man once falls victim to the bicycle mania he does not recover until the period of three years has elapsed. There are exceptions to this rule, and these exceptions are those men and women who take up bicycling as a means of recovering and conserving their health. These people practise the exercise temperately and modestly; they are to be met with in the byways rather than upon the highways; they do not seek to acquire speed, and they unite with the physical delights of the exercise the keen appreciation of those beauties of nature which are presented in the course of their excursions into the country.

GETTING LIGHT FROM NOISE.

A Remarkable Discovery Said to Have Been Made by a Convict.

According to a despatch that is going the rounds of the papers, a convict at the Ohio State Penitentiary has invented a battery that needs only some one to talk to it and set it into action. We notice that among the claims made for this acoustic battery is one that by its use a clock might be made to wind itself by its own tick. The acoustic battery is described as follows:

"If two dissimilar conductors of electricity which are subject to slight atomic change under the influence of sound are joined together after the manner of a pair of thermopile bars, and the open ends are insulated by a suitable nonconductor of both sound and electricity, a current is generated when sounds are made in the vicinity of the exposed ends. If two or more such elements are connected together we have an ordinary call bell by simply clapping the hands in front of the exposed ends of the battery."

Thus it would be seen to be a device working on a principle very similar to that of the thermo-electric pile, the sound vibrations being in this case sutstituted for the heat vibrations as a motive force. There is theoretically no absurdity in this, and it seems rather probable than otherwise that a battery capable of converting the energy of sound into electrical energy could be built acting on a principle entirely analogous to that to which thermo-electric currents are due. It will be remembered that Edison in the early days actually patented a device for accomplishing the same conversion, and it worked, too, but was of no value whatever commercially. He constructed a huge tuning fork which was to be caused to vibrate in a magnetic field by resonance with its fundamental note sounded on another instrument, and still later Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone, which is an adaptation of the same idea. The magneto receiver, when used as a transmitter, is a very familiar example of the facility with which sound will give rise to electric currents. The convict's idea, however, does not involve this principle. It would be a more direct method in which magnetism was not essential at all. If this announcement is authentic, it is one of considerable interest. As a method of generating current for power or lighting purposes, however, it is, of course, highly absurd.

ONLY TWELVE OF THEM LEFT.

An Almost Extinct Race of Indians Discovered in British Columbia.

A remnant of a once powerful and numerous Indian tribe has just been discovered by Franz Boaz near the head of Portland Canal. Dr. Boaz has devoted his life to the study of the Indian race in America. In the interest of the Berlin Museum and the British Association, he went to British Columbia a few months ago, having heard that one of the British Columbia's Indian tribes possessed many of the distinct characteristics—physical, religious, social and mental—of the ancient Egyptians, from which their legends would indicate that they had descended.

On arrival the investigator learned that the tribe he sought, now almost extinct, had a home somewhere in the Naas River country, whither he hurried. He found that the tribe had once ranged the great extent of country from Behm's Canal in Alaska to Cape Fox, and extending down to the Naas River, but that unable, by reason of their more peaceful disposition and pursuits, to oppose the inroads of Indians from the coast and from the Rockies the tribe had grown smaller and gradually smaller, until now but twelve souls remained of what was once a great people. They have even lost their name, the present tribal name, Tsotsout, being taken from the Naas River language, in which it is synonymous for slaves. These Indians differ in appearance, measurements, history and customs, from any other Indians of America, and are apparently a distinctive family. Dr. Boaz does not, however, agree with those who have pronounced them ancient Egyptians. Their sociology possesses much in common with that of the Pharaohs and their legends also are all of the "great river." But the expert does not consider this sufficient to establish anything in view of physical dissimilarities. He has taken careful and voluminous notes, however, which he will study and compare on his return to London and Berlin. The language of the Tsotsouts is, he says, remarkable in its likeness to the Egyptians.

Finical.

Tramp—"Thanks for the clothes, mum, but never mind the tie."

Kind lady—"But you said you wanted to look like a gentleman?"

Tramp—"That's jest it, lady; but this 'ere tie would queer the hul biz! Yer see, they tie their own ties in the saciety I moves in, mum."

A Saving of Wood.

Subscriber—What! no fire in the stove this cold weather?

Editor—None! but there's a creditor coming round this morning who said he would make it hot for me.