

A DAY IN CEYLON.

Among Scenes of Oriental Magnificence and Splendor Baffling Description.

Dancing of the Nautch Girls—The Sacred Drama of Harischandra.

There is no twilight in Ceylon. When the sun sets darkness falls suddenly upon the earth, and the stars shine out as if some hand had turned on the starlight. And it is thick darkness, too; so that an anthropological speculation is born in my mind, that the dark complexions of these people are due to the primitive survival of the night-like. A Shinghalese man is invisible against the night, and the tread of his bare foot is inaudible. The lighter, more visible varieties of their race would have been killed off by invaders and wild beasts, and those who mimicked the night would be passed by. In addition to this the predatory class would be successful in the proportion that, as it is said in the book of Job, they were marked by the night. The Colombo coachman will not drive a step after 6 o'clock unless his lamps are lit, lest he should run over a sleeping native. This darkness lends a special beauty to the bungalows of the rich, which appear illuminated, the rays from their lamps shining through the foliage in a mystical way, especially if they be cocoanut-oil lamps, which give a soft, spiritual light. The most palatial bungalow in Columbia, I should say, is that of Mutu Cumara Swamy, whose hospitality and that of his brothers was extended to me in consideration of my friendship for their uncle, the late Sir Cumara Swamy. As I drove up through the large park of palms, radiant with fire-flies, the bungalow looked like

A FAIRY PALACE IN THE DISTANCE; but when I arrived and entered, it was a fairy palace. I feel sadly in need of some new similitudes. I am trying to write without referring to the "Arabian Nights," but it is not easy when I recall the verandahs, porticos, rooms of such a mansion and the entertainment of last evening. The tropical heat was made pleasant by the gentle wind blowing from the neighboring sea through the open doors. It was difficult, as one passed amid the flowering trees and floral festoons, to say just where the garden ended and the verandah began, or even the drawing-room, which had flower-laden trees in each corner, flowers and wreaths everywhere. In front of the chair of honor to which I was conducted, stood a high table, and thereon a silver salver covered with stemless flowers, arranged with artistic skill. From the centre of the salver, which was nearly a yard long, rose several slowly-burning stems, whose incense filled the air with a sweet and subtle perfume. The odors, mingled with the soft light of the cocoa lamps, shed their influence upon seers and scene with a sensuous effect quite indescribable. When our beautiful hostess entered, with her rich Oriental robe, and the turbaned Tamil took his place behind her with large peacock fan, I said—"No doubt, that is Maya, goddess of illusion, who has waved her wand and begun her air-woven mask." But when presently a blonde young lady entered, in unmistakable English evening dress, realism came with her humorous clear eyes. There were but four or five foreigners present, and we had an opportunity of satisfying our curiosity in several things—for instance, chewing a little betel and making our teeth red with it. On the walls were sacred pictures, one of the infant Krishna and his mother, the new-born babe's head haloed with light. One side of the drawing-room was partly open, and from the room beyond we presently heard a slight jingling of silver ornaments, next caught flashes from jewelled hair, and after this the flash of dark eyes glancing into the room. Five Nautch girls entered with five men, singers and musicians. The girls sat in a row on the floor facing us, and the men behind them, the plain snow-white of the latter making a background for the

RICH COSTUMES OF THE DANCERS. These Nautch costumes, though glowing with color and laden with jewels, were not gaudy, nor even gorgeous; they were somewhat barbaric, but had a certain antiquarian character about them that was very pleasing. In old conventional pictures of goddesses and heroines—Draupadi, Damayanti, Sita—one may see dresses resembling these, with the exception of the silken trousers. These probably are the addition of a more prudish age. The Shinghalese Nautch girls are dressed with scrupulous regard to decorum. These are all small of stature, several of them pretty, and the pearls and gold they wear, always excepting the nose-gems, and the silver anklets above their bare feet, well become their dusky beauty. Soon after they had seated themselves on the floor all men and women, began to sing. It sounded as a faint with grace-notes at the end of each bar, and my host, who sat beside me, told me it was a hymn to Siva. I did not like it much; it impressed my ear as nasal, not to say whining, and decidedly monotonous. Then followed a love-song, and for a few moments it sounded like the same hymn over again; but as I listened more closely—as I tried to detach the accompaniment of tom-tom, pipe, and viol—I perceived that there was more variety and more science in this music than my ear could easily take in. For the first time it occurred to me that part of the fault I found in Oriental music might lie in my ear being not sufficiently cosmopolitan. But at the same time I felt sure that this music was not a product of art in the European sense of art; it was not a thing that aimed at beauty alone; it had ulterior purposes, to move the compassion of a god or a lover, and was a cry wrung one of the struggle for existence. It is a remarkable fact that all the ancient love-songs of India are uttered by women to men. My host, whose studies of such subjects have been careful and extensive, told me that, judging by the ancient love-songs, the love-making used to be entirely on the part of women. These Nautch girls belonged to the Hindu temple, and they sing and dance only these very ancient themes, transmitting them to their children with extreme literalness.

PRECISELY AS THEY RECEIVED THEM. The great piece of the evening was a long dramatic love-song of extreme antiquity, sung by all the performers, male and female, accompanied by full instrumentation, and danced by the leading Nautch girl, who alone did not sing. Her gestures were very expressive, and I was at times reminded of the French saying: "What can't be said can be sung, and what can't be sung can be danced." The feet had little more to do with the dance than to bear forward and backward the swaying, or rather undulat-

ing, form, while the arms were ever on the move, and the fingers twisted themselves into a thousand variations. None of these hand movements were the same, and each meant something. The first scene pantomimed, so to say, was the first glimpse of the beloved, told in embarrassment, meditation, and then the flinging up of the arms in appeal to the god of love. Then followed the first coquetish attempt to fascinate him—now by coyness, next by a display of charms. Then follows dismay—the beloved makes no sign of requital. The maiden becomes melancholy, weeps; then she becomes passionate, and confesses to him her love. He is still cold, and she is jealous. Finding he loves no other, she asks if he is a man who is thus unmoved by woman's love. He then proposes illicit love; that she refuses with an indignation that turns to sorrow. Then she becomes angry—and when her anger melts the heart of her beloved she melts. Then her finale of joy is danced. Much in this dance was touching, much was exciting, and it was all of absorbing interest; when the girl sat down, breathless, it for the first time occurred to me that she had been dancing fifteen minutes without an instant's pause; and yet the last thing I should have ascribed to it is—beauty. It was all too serious for that. It is a strange thing to reflect on the sublime secularism of the fact that such a chant and dance as that just described at times make part of the Hindu temple-service. When David danced before the ark could it have been—but I mustn't get too profound. There were other dances, one of the most striking being a dance to the words,

"MOTHER, A SCORPION HAS STUNG ME!" These words were endlessly repeated in the chant, though in varying tones, while the dancer goes through all the drama of pain, illness, parting, faintness, death. This was skillful, and so were all the dances. Those in which all the Nautch girls danced—especially one in which they fenced with each other—were more beautiful; but it was the more ancient dances, representing love and death, which I found most interesting. After the dances were over I had an unexpected delight in hearing the singing of the closing acts of the great sacred drama of "Harischandra." I first made the acquaintance of this wonderful play, which may fairly be described as the "Passion Play" of India, through a translation by the late Sir Cumara Swamy. It is of epic dignity and pathetic beauty. Harischandra is "The Martyr of Truth." The prologue is in the court of the supreme deity, Indra, where the truthfulness of the great king is affirmed by one and denied by another. The result is a wager. Harischandra is subjected to the most terrible ordeals in order to induce him to tell a lie. He stands by his word at cost of his kingdom, his wife, his child—these and himself becoming slaves. In the end all their persecutors throw off their disguise and are shown to be gods, and everything is restored. The poem is much the same as that of Job in the Hindu Puranas, where the test is not of Harischandra's veracity, but of his fidelity to his promise of gold for a sacrifice to the gods when he no longer has the gold (his property being destroyed, as Job's was.) This gold he obtains by

SELLING HIMSELF AND FAMILY into slavery. The popular form has humanized, but not exactly raised, the motive. My friend who sat by me translated for me in a low voice every sentence as it was sung, and then I began to appreciate something of the meaning of Hindu music. The singer was a man over 30, with a fine voice—very flexible—and though a slight inclination of the head occasionally was his only gesture, the persons of the drama seemed to live in his tones. There is one part of the drama where the wife of Harischandra, Tamavati, finds her only son dead, bitten by a serpent. She says to him: "Why do you not speak to me? What have I done that you do not reply or look on me?" One could hardly refrain from tears when the man sang these words. And again when Harischandra, ordered to be the executioner of his wife (charged with child murder), says: "Tama-vati, my wife, lay thy head on the block, thy sweet face turned to the east!" The voice was here most plaintive, and suddenly rang out triumphantly when the sword of execution becomes a necklace of pearls on her neck, and the gods pay homage to the inflexible "Martyr of Truth." It is notable that while so many charge these Orientals with being liars, this should be their national drama. It looks as if the Hindu Job were combined with the hero Otaue, whose memorial has been translated by Mr. Alger:

Otaue, from his earliest youth,
Was consecrated unto truth,
And if the universe must die,
Unless Otaue told a lie,
He would defy the fate's last crash,
And let all sink in one pale ash,
Or'er by any means was wrung
One drop of poison from his tongue.

As I left my friend's house it occurred to me whether it might not be possible for us to import from the Orient something in the way of an occasional evening entertainment quite as dainty as their now fairly Angelicized curry—some aesthetic dish such as that for which I was indebted to the thoughtful kindness of Mutu Cumara Swamy.—M. D. Conway in Glasgow Herald.

Well Met.

"There," she said, as she raised a window in a Pullman car the other day: "now I can breathe. The air in this car is stifling. Why don't they have better ventilation? If I couldn't sit next to an open window I believe I should die."

Presently a slender female sitting directly back leaned over and asked her if she wouldn't just as lieve close that window now, as the draught was more than she could stand.

"No, madam, I shall not close this window. I could not live with it down. I was just thinking how delightful it was with it open, now you want it shut, but I shall not shut it; so there."

"Then you are a selfish thing, and I shall have to change my seat."

Just then a gentleman sitting close by reached over and said: "Ladies, that window being raised makes no difference, as this car has double windows, and not a breath of air can possibly get through the one that is still down."

Then the one that had raised the window turned to the other, and, with a crushed look on her face, said: "Madam, I beg your pardon, but I think two fools have met at last."

Of the 27,672,048 inhabitants of France, 1,101,090 are foreigners, of whom 432,266 are from Belgium, 240,733 from Italy, 81,986 from Germany, 73,781 from Spain, 66,281 from Switzerland, and only 47,066 from the British Isles. The number of naturalized persons is but 77,046.

JUST AS SHE TOLD IT.

BY JULIE K. WETHERILL.

What time is it? Lor-r-d! we'll have half an hour to wait, and I do hate sitting round in a hotel with nothing to do.

Ain't New Orleans an awfully funny place? It can't hold a candle to Chicago. Some one told us to visit the French quarter; but, my goodness!—its awfully shabby; just awfully shabby; and as for the French Market, you get up at an unearthly early hour in the morning, and the coffee they have's fit to poison you. I think it's your duty to see everything that's to be seen; so I said to the chamber-maid, the other day, "Where are your handsome dwelling-houses?"

"Ah! out Prytania and St. Charles, mum, there's elegant fine mansions," she said.

So we went, and—would you believe it?—they're all made of wood! Did you ever! Yes; this is a dreadfully queer place. I used to have sort of romantic notions about the South—thought it must be just perfect. I thought, don't you know, you wore white dresses all winter, and sat on piazzas in hammocks, and that the Southern men were all dark, and tall, and very fiery; and the darkies were so funny, and sang, and played on banjos; but, gracious; they behave just like every one else; and as for white dresses, I've never come so near freezing to death in all my life.

Fred would say that's because I never read anything, nor listen to what any one's saying. But that ain't it at all.

You'd just die if you knew Fred. He's the funniest boy. Awfully nice, don't you know, only he will prose so about literature and culture. Oh! he's too funny. Why, when he likes one book by an author, he must rush right off and read all the rest of 'em. He read *David Copperfield*—did you ever read *David Copperfield*? Well, I did, and I declare I thought I'd be old and gray before I got through; but I'd promised Fred I'd read it. Well, then he read all of Dickens. Same way about Thackeray. He began *Vanity Fair*, and just went crazy about Thackeray. Ever read *Vanity Fair*? Ain't it simply awful? I told Fred I just wouldn't read it, if he never spoke to me again.

Then that Becky Sharp, too. A girl at our school wrote a composition about Becky Sharp. What did she say about her? Lor-r-d! I didn't listen to it. All I know is, it was about Becky Sharp.

Fred ain't a bit like me. Now when I like one book by an author, I never read another, because I think I'd be sure not to like it half so well, and then I'd get to hate the whole lot like poison.

But you mustn't think Fred ain't nice. He's real handsome and fascinating; has big brown eyes and the cutest moustache; only he will be superior, and it's so fatiguing. Now what's the use being superior? Why can't you just be happy and sensible?

I've known Fred for per-r-feetages. Why, he used to walk to school with me, and carry my books. But that was last year, for I've been out ever so long.

We used to quarrel like cats. One day he said to me, "Marie Cassidy, do you ever intend to be anything but a frivolous butterfly?"

"Frivolous fiddlestick's end!" said I, and I spoke very severely, too. "If you want superiority, just visit mommer seven evenings a week."

Mommer's superior enough, gracious knows. The way she goes in for general information is simply awful.

"Well," said he, "if you are content to remain—"

"Fred Delbert," I said, "am I a griffin or a Cyclops?"

"Why, of course not," he said opening them big eyes of his.

"Well, then I ain't a Cyclops, that's settled, and popper has lots of money—just dead loads of it—so what do I want with superiority? I'm sorry you find me so unattractive. There's De Lancy Witherington, he says my eyes are like bits of heaven on earth, and—"

Fred got so mad he regularly stamped. "Don't quote to me the inane remarks of an idiot," he shouted.

"Anyhow," I said, "he likes me just as I am, and he isn't always treading on my poor little pug."

"I hate pugs," said Fred. "They always look as if they're making faces."

Well, somehow or other we made up again, and I made him kiss Gibi, because he'd said such horrid things about the poor little pet. Gibi's just killing; you ought to see him.

Fred and I were sort of engaged. Not quite, though, because popper said Fred was young, and I was young, and he didn't want to give up his little girl just yet awhile. That made me cry, and feel real badly, because I've never been anything but the bother of his life.

But Fred and I had a serious row once.

You see, there was a girl staying with Mrs. Calvin, in our block; Pamela Stonehenge was her name, and she came from somewhere East. Some people said she was so elegant and charming, and talked about her "classic outline," but Lor-r-d! she was so tall and thin, and her nose was miles too long. I don't care what anybody says, it was long.

She was dreadfully profound and high-toned, and Fred began to fly around her a little. I didn't let on I cared a bit, because I wasn't going to set him up, but I just flirted awfully with De Lancy.

It was at Mrs. Jenifer's ball, and De Lancy and I were sitting on the stairs, when I saw Fred and the classic Pamela skipping off to the conservatory. Ain't men too heartless? I was sure he must have something important to say to her, so I told De Lancy I wanted to stroll about and look at the flowers; and of course he agreed, for he was mashed—regularly mashed. I passed as close to Fred and Pamela as I could. They were talking in a low, earnest tone, and I heard something about "a scheme of cosmic philosophy."

Now did you ever! The idea of dragging a girl off into a conservatory to whisper such jaw-breaking things in her ear! I felt sort of relieved, for it's a comfort, after all, to have a lover who's too big a goose to flirt with other girls.

But when I thought it over that night, while I was taking out my hair-pins I began to think there might be more in it than met the eye. I don't know but it was the intellectual way of making love.

I was very cold to him when he brought me chocolate creams. I told him I abominated chocolate, and it was very plain he found it too troublesome to remember my likes and dislikes.

Well, then, in the midst of this, he had

to go to St. Louis on business; and while he was away I repented, and began to feel sort of soft about him.

He had written he was pretty sure to be home Tuesday evening. I was sitting by the window, and the gas was turned low, and somehow I felt blue. I could see Mrs. Calvin's house, where that horrid Pamela Stonehenge was staying; and as I was looking two men went up Mrs. Calvin's steps. It was a hateful showery night; but they were laughing and talking, and when they put down their umbrellas I saw something that made me jump.

Fred has an umbrella with the funniest head, an ebony skull with Rhine-stone eyes that flash in the most life-like way, and there that thing was winking at me in the gas light across the street. I was so mad I just cried—regularly howled. To think that Fred would go to see her first of all!

Well, who should walk in bright and early the next morning but Fred himself! He looked pale—with remorse, I thought. But icebergs and polar bears were nothing to me in the way of coldness.

He began, "I wanted to see you the first thing Marie—"

"Indeed?" I interrupted. "I feel quite honored."

He turned very red, and stared at me. Then he said: "What do you mean? What are you talking about?"

"Oh! of course you haven't an idea," I said; and so it went on from bad to worse, until he just got up and remarked, with the most dreadful dignity,

"You seem to be accusing me of some, thing; but as you will not do me the justice to explain yourself, I will bid you good-morning and good-by, Miss Cassidy."

Of course I never meant him to get on his dignity, and when I saw him going I had half a mind to run after him, only I was too proud.

Two or three days passed, but still no sign nor symptom of Fred. Mommer was getting ready to go to Chautauqua, and the house was turned upside down, and I was fairly distracted. At last I just wrote him a few lines, telling him I wished to explain something. I waited all that day, and all the next, but no answer came.

Then I got desperate. I just decided life wasn't worth living, and I'd be superior, and go in for sociology and demonology, and all that sort of thing.

So I told mommer I was going to Chautauqua with her, and she said she was glad I had awakened at length to a sense of my own deficiencies; and we started off.

It isn't any fun to travel with mommer. She always declares she's suffocating in the Pullman, and she thinks the train is running off the track every few minutes, and drives the conductors half crazy asking questions. Then she's always dropping her eyeglasses and hand-bag and handkerchief—particularly her handkerchief. I tell her it's like the French exercises, "Ou est le mouchoir de ma mere?" But that makes her hopping mad.

Chautauqua's an awful bore, don't you know—a lot of old drones and mummies going about, and pretending they enjoy it so much. I believe they really hate it, only they think it looks nice to be profound.

And then Palestine Park! Oh, my! how those Eastern people can make such guys of themselves, and dress in bags that haven't any hang, or fit, or anything, I can't imagine. Mommer would drag me about everywhere, to improve my mind, she said. She has a mania for measurements and calculations, and one day she was calculating the dimensions of the Great Pyramid, and I said, "Lor-r-d, mommer! you must have been evolved from a measuring-worm." She didn't like it one bit, but I think she ought to have been glad I knew how to apply my knowledge.

I was so broken-hearted I took up Hebrew, and it most blinded me. How people could ever have talked in such a language!

Well, one day I was in the steambot on the lake, and I was looking over my account book. Popper always makes such a point of my keeping accounts, because he says it teaches me the value of money, but no one ever knew the value of money better than I do. I had Gibi with me, and its awfully expensive boarding with a dog; and then the servants are always so grasping! I declare they're just like those horrid daughters of the horse-leech that said, "Give! give!" though why the daughters were a bit worse than the sons I never could see, only people are always slandering women.

Somehow or other I never can get my accounts to come exactly right. There were four dollars I couldn't account for, so I just put them down to "charity," because "sundries" has such an unbusinesslike look, though, to tell the truth, I'd only given ten cents to an organ-grinder.

I was so hard at work that I never noticed that I'd been taken ever, so far past where I ought to have got out, so I just stepped at the next stopping-place, and waited for another boat to take me back. It was quite a pretty spot, with trees and things, and a sort of cave not far off; and I sat and gazed at the beauties of nature till I was "most starved." All at once I heard a noise behind me, and I looked around and there was Fred coming out of the cave!

I thought for a moment maybe remorse had driven him to retire from the world and be a hermit. Wouldn't that have been romantic?

I glanced at him very haughtily, but he began right away: "Miss Cassidy—oh, Marie! don't let us make ourselves miserable by keeping this up!"

"Who's miserable?" I enquired. "Speak for yourself, Fred—I mean Mr. Delbert."

A horrid, unfeeling twinkle came into his eye, and he said, "Do you remember Miss Stonehenge?"

"Oh yes," said I, icily. "She has such a long nose!"

"She has it still—"

"Don't just on such a subject, if you please," I said.

"Well," said Fred, "I admit that it is a serious one. The point is that she was married last week to a Professor of Sanskrit."

"I suppose she's refused you," I said; "and you've come to me to be consoled."

Then he said a lot of absurd things I won't repeat; and I told him how I thought he'd gone to see Pamela that evening. It turned out that the poor boy had come back sick with malarial fever, and wasn't able to leave the house; and Ned Parkinson had dropped in and borrowed his umbrella.

"But that doesn't explain your not answering my note," I said.

"You see, when it came I was very sick at my rooms, and there wasn't a soul to do anything for me but an old man with a wig—"

"Well, did his wig prevent you from

writing to me?" I asked: for n be sarcastic when I feel like it.

"Of course not; but I was too sick even to raise my head. As soon as I could stand, I rushed around to see you; but you had gone. Delie Jones told me that you had gone to Chautauqua; so I followed you, and here I am."

"Well," I said, very sternly, "I'll forgive you this time, Fred; but you've treated me very badly. And, Fred, she has got a long nose—hasn't she?"

"Shockingly," he said.

So we were married, and came South for a wedding journey; and—Oh! there's Fred, it's time to start. Ain't he a darling? Do tell me—is my bang all right? Thanks, ever so much! By-by.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS.

Chinese Lepers—A Great Bell—Hotels in Switzerland—Hard Times in Cuba—&c. &c

From 1876 82 the population of Norway creased 104,000.

The Norwegians, twenty or twenty-five years ago, had plenty of oysters, but now they have scarcely any.

The Austrian Parliament has lately passed a measure assuring compensation to perjurers who have been wrongly convicted.

It is reported that the French Government is about to lay a further length of 4,530 miles of underground telegraph wires, the cost of which will be about \$11,000,000.

There are nineteen Chinese lepers in a San Francisco hospital awaiting return to their native land. The return is delayed because of the difficulty the steamship companies find in landing such cases at Hong Kong.

Cholera is increasing at Calcutta, two hundred and fifty-seven deaths having occurred there from the scourge last week. A steamship which has arrived at Suez had two deaths on her voyage from Bassein, Bombay.

A despatch from Matamoros, Mexico, says the condition of affairs of the Government is deplorable, charges financial rottenness, and intimates a revolution if a greatly better state of things is not speedily brought about.

At the temples of Kroto, Japan, is the great bell cast in 1633. It is 18 feet high, 9 feet in diameter, and 9½ inches thick. Its weight is nearly 74 tons. About 1,500 pounds of gold are said to have been incorporated in the composition. Its tone is magnificent. When struck with the open hand its sound can be heard at a distance of a hundred yards.

In regard to the state of affairs in Egypt the following dispatch from Cairo tells a sad tale:—There are 138 men, women, and children of all ages in the infirmary at Tourah, living like wild beasts in indescribable filth and neglect. Among the inmates are several raving madmen who are sometimes unchained. There are other inmates in every stage of the most loathsome diseases. Two black men walk about entirely naked.

In New South Wales all labour is paid by the day of eight hours. Carpenters, 10s. to 12s. (city), 13s. (suburbs); stonemasons, 11s. to 12s.; stonemasons' labourers, 8s. to 10s.; plasterers, 11s. to 14s.; plasterers' labourers, 8s. to 10s.; bricklayers, 12s. to 13s.; bricklayers' labourers, 8s. to 10s.; painters, 9s. to 11s.; joiners, 10s. to 12s.; plumbers, 11s. to 12s.; gasfitters, 9s. to 11s.; sawmill hands, 9d. to 1s. per hour.

At Cour d'Alene, says a traveller who recently arrived at Denver, everything is very dear. It costs twenty-five cents to get a paper by mail, and fifty cents for a letter. Nothing is considered less than a quarter. Shaving is a quarter, hair cutting fifty cents, any kind of a meal costs \$1, and eggs fifty cents extra. You can't get a place to sleep for less than 1, even though you bunk on the floor.

Some bad dividends have been lately announced by steam shipping companies, but the Canard Company has, according to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, made an exceptionally wretched report. No dividend whatever has been earned for the past year, while 4 per cent. was paid in May last, 3 per cent. in May, 1882, and 6 per cent. in May, 1881. The times are explained to have been generally bad for steam shipping during the past year, as to which there is no sort of doubt, and the lines of shipping running to America have not been the last to feel the want of remunerative freight.

In a recent scientific *feuilleton* in the *Paris Debats*, M. Henri Parville quotes a reference to the singular action of oil on waves by Theophrastus, the Byzantine historian of the sixth century. The passage occurs in a dialogue on "various natural questions." The question propounded is, why oil makes the sea calm? and the answer given is to the effect that as the wind is "a subtle and delicate thing," and oil is "adhesive, unctuous, and smooth," the wind glides over the surface of the water on which oil has been spread, and cannot raise waves. The wind, in fact, slips over the water without being able to obtain a grip, so to speak.

A Parisian correspondent says that the archaeological researches on the site of ancient Carthage, conducted by Messrs. Solomon Reinach and Ernest Babelon, have brought to light a number of objects of historical and artistic importance. Conformably to the instructions of the French institute, this scientific mission has been chiefly occupied in determining the relative levels of the Roman and the Punic soil on the site of Carthage. The great accumulation of rubbish and stones which forms the upper layer of the Carthaginian soil renders the work of excavation long and difficult. Five metres deep a series of wells, cisterns, and cellars of the Punic epoch has been discovered.

Cuba is at present passing through a period of extreme commercial depression. One result of this is to increase the dissatisfaction with Spanish rule. Even the wealthy planters who formerly were fierce Spanish partisans, and aided in suppressing that long-continued insurrection which ended only a few years ago, are now somewhat disloyal themselves, and inclined to favor independence or annexation to the United States. They do not want Cuba; and as that is pretty well understood, independence is mostly discussed. The country is ripe for any revolt that may be started. Aguerro's attempt, which a few days ago was so insignificant as to be laughed at by the Spanish officials, has already met with such encouragement that it is now undeniably formidable, and there is no telling what may be its outcome.