

PERSONAL.

Oscar Wilde has in the press a volume of five fairy tales.

The King of Spain can now walk, with the assistance of his nurse.

King Otho, the mad king of Bavaria, is seriously ill with pleurisy and his death may occur at any time.

Mrs. Hicks-Lord, who was one of Monsignor Capel's great friends, gives large sums of money to Catholic charities.

The medical attendant of the Queen of Corea is an American lady physician, who receives a salary of \$15,000 a year.

Lady Colin Campbell has been offered \$5000 for two lectures in America, which, on the advice of Matthew Arnold, she has declined.

The Princess of Wales writing to Mrs. Mackay to thank her for her silver wedding gift expressed her deep gratification at the "exquisite mirror."

King Humbert of Italy has grown very gray of late. He much prefers civilian dress and is something of an Anglomaniac as regards his attire.

Emperor Dom Pedro, of Brazil, who is now in Florence, has had several long chats with Queen Victoria. They are both re-reading George Eliot's novel "Romola."

M. Leconte de Lisle, the French poet, says that Shakespeare never wrote a play. "He was," says de Lisle, "an uneducated and uncultivated butcher-boy, who died young, with a great weakness for the bottle."

Letters numbering 132, written by Cardinal Richelieu, were put up for sale at the Hotel Drouot, Paris, recently, but nobody would bid £800, which was the reserve price. They were all in excellent preservation.

Meissonier, the famous French painter, is a very small man with a very large head, and a long white beard that sweeps over his chest. He lives in a gorgeous house in Paris, but he is said to be discontented because, wealthy as he is, he is not wealthier.

Now that Gen. Boulanger has been turned out of the army, he is entitled to a pension of 10,000 francs a year, and 2,000 francs additional as a Grand Officer of the Legion of Honor. His parliamentary salary will be 9,000 francs, leaving him 21,000 francs in all.

Immediately after Emperor Frederick left San Remo the Sultan sent him a collar, consisting of nine hazel-nuts with inscriptions from the Koran, over which the Dervishes and Sheikhs of the palace had prayed, and which, as the Sultan assured the Crown Prince, would cure him as if by magic.

The Queen of Serbia is described as a tall, handsome woman about twenty-nine years of age. Her features are very regular, and her complexion very white. Her eyes are dark, and so is her hair. She may be seen on any fair day driving through the fashionable streets of Florence, accompanied by her little son, dressed in a sailor suit, and by his governess. The young Queen has the reputation of being clever and talented.

The British Dairy Farmers' Association have invited Mr. W. H. Lynch, who is at present in Ottawa, to address them at Ipswich on "Butter-Making" on the 22nd of May. Mr. Lynch, who is an authority on dairying, has accepted the invitation, and will sail for England early in May. While abroad Mr. Lynch will study the European system of dairying, visiting Denmark, France and other countries for that purpose.

Albert Wolf says in *Le Figaro*: Army officers were not allowed to gamble at Baden-Baden. One evening the King was visiting the tables when he noticed a subordinate in civilian dress trying his luck at trente-et-quarante. He had placed two or three louis on the table and had won a nice little sum, when he saw the King opposite. He turned pale, trembled, and hesitated to take possession of his money. Thereupon King William approached and whispered in his ear: "Don't be afraid. Take in your money, but don't do it again."

At Ahmedabad it is the custom that when native Government officers have to present themselves before their European superiors they remove their country shoes before entering the house or office. If they, however, have a pair of English boots on they can approach without being put to any trouble. Recently some Hindoo officials, to avoid the indignity of presenting themselves in their bare feet, bought a pair of English boots, and each wore the boots in turn as he went up to be presented to the Governor at a levee. There was great fun caused by the officials running hither and thither to take their turn with the pair of boots, and often they put on the right and left boots indiscriminately.

A Sensational Trial.

A sensational trial began recently at the Vienna Criminal Court. The facts of the case are not devoid of interest to psychologists.

In December last a commercial traveller named Alfred Frankenstein induced Julie Kunerth, a housemaid, to steal some diamonds from her mistress, replacing them by imitation stones. In January Frankenstein declared to his accomplice that the theft would probably be discovered during the carnival, and that therefore it would be advisable to abstract all the jewelry and to feign a robbery, for which purpose he would discharge a revolver into the upper part of her arm. The girl consented, but when the appointed day came, Frankenstein, after having taken all the valuables upon which he could lay his hands, shot straight into the woman's breast, and left her for dead in the room. She was found shortly afterwards lying in a pool of blood, and was considered the victim of a daring robbery. A series of accidents, however, soon revealed the true state of affairs, though the woman, after her recovery, tried hard to exculpate the man who had acted so treacherously toward her.

Frankenstein was sentenced to seven-year penal servitude. The jury found him not guilty on the major count of attempted murder. The girl herself was condemned to two and a half years hard labor as an accomplice.

Mrs. Kass—"You seemed greatly changed and improved since you returned from Europe, Mr. Thomson." Mr. Thomson—"Oh, vastly, I assure you. Why, I'm a different man altogether." Mrs. Kass—"Indeed! How pleasant that must be for Mrs. Thomson."

A saloon keeper wanted the motto "Yesterday, To-day and Forever" painted, and when the painter presented the work it read "Yesterday, Toddy and Forever."

Madame Boucicaut and the Bon Marche.

When this century was in its first quarter, Marguerite Guerin, a peasant girl, lived in Verjux—a small village in the department of the Saone-et-Loire in eastern France. Her parents were very poor. They led the simple life of the French peasantry, working hard, earning little, and concerning themselves not at all about matters outside of their own and their neighbors' lives.

Marguerite was not sent to school. She had to help her mother with the work, and to pull weeds in the turnip-patch behind the house, and she hardly guesses that the world was not embraced in the hamlet beyond which she had never travelled.

As she grew up, it was necessary to do something to earn her living, and the only opportunity open to her was to become a washerwoman. The washing of Verjux was done on the banks of the Saone. There Marguerite Guerin stood, on her floating platform, and dipped her pile of linen clothes in the river. Then she spread them on the platform, and rubbed them with a scrubbing-brush. When they were scrubbed, and rinsed quite clean, she carried them—herself scarcely less wet than they—to the fields and spread them on the grass to dry in the sun.

At this time, there was a young travelling merchant, or pedlar, who drove a cart from village to village, selling linen at the fairs or *foles*. Every French place has its annual *fete*, or outdoor festival, made by people who travel from town to town in a sort of car, and set up their tents, booths, and merry-go-rounds along the village streets, or on some public square, or common. Among the showmen and vendors of trinkets are some pedlars with more useful wares.

Aristide Boucicaut was one of these. In time he arrived with his stock of linen at the *fete* of Verjux. He became acquainted with the Guerins, and, after a little, proposed to them for their daughter Marguerite. The parents were well pleased; for young Boucicaut bore a good character, and besides was the owner of a horse and cart which helped him to an honest living. So they were married, and Marguerite rose a step in the world. She now travelled in her husband's cart. Although they only met their expenses with the sales they made from day to day, they were content.

The French know how to economize in a thousand ways that Americans as yet are ignorant of. And by dint of contriving and saving a few sous at one time, and a few more at another, they at length accumulated a sum which served in these days to take them with their little boy to Paris.

In 1848 they had saved enough to make a venture of their own, and they bought a small place on the corner of the Rue du Bac and the Rue de Sevres, which they opened as a variety shop. They called it the "Bon Marche," which means literally "cheap market,"—a place where bargains are found. Madame Boucicaut assisted her husband. She made change and kept the books. Together they originated the happy system of "fixing prices." At that time, the prices in Paris stores were very elastic, varying according to the merchant's guess as to the size of his customer's purse. The Boucicauts saw that it was not agreeable to customers to pay uncertain values. Accordingly they attached "etiquettes," or price tags, to their articles, which served the double purpose of determining the price and saving time in asking it.

It was a struggle at first to sustain their humble beginning; but they were so courageous, and took so much pains to please, that their patronage increased. Presently they added the adjoining store to their own; and M. Boucicaut gave his clerks permission to invest their money in the business, with a return of six per cent. interest. Gradually the Bon Marche absorbed the adjacent shops, until it had crept over the whole great block, and risen to the height of five stories. Its trade, too, was not confined to Paris, but extended over France entire, then to the other European countries, and finally east and west to China, Japan and America.

When her husband died, ten years ago, Madame Boucicaut became the head of a business worth twenty millions of francs, with an income of from sixty thousand to two hundred thousand francs per day. She continued the business with eminent success, sustaining relations to finance unparalleled in the history of woman.

Her store is one of the sights of Paris. Everything is sold there, from a pocket-handkerchief to a Persian rug. There is something, too, to suit the purse of every purchaser; and the clerks are as attentive in doing up for one a box of notepaper at thirteen sous, as they are in taking one's order for a seal-skin sacque.

But there is another side to the Bon Marche which is not known to most of its customers. If it is so pleasant for those who buy, it is not less so to those who sell. There are more than thirty-two hundred employees, and they resemble an immense family. Madame Boucicaut felt gravely the responsibility of her position as mother to so many children. After her husband's death, she divided one-half of the business in shares among the employees, and established pensions for those who had served in the store more than twelve years. She took great care of aged and infirm employees, finding light work for them when they were no longer able to do their full share. Only last summer, she gave five million francs as the foundation of a fund to support superannuated clerks.

Another fine idea was the erection of kitchens and dining-rooms in the top of the store, where the entire force of clerks have their meals without expense. She also built a private infirmary for the employees, and engaged a doctor, who comes every day to investigate cases of sickness.

But remembering her own and M. Boucicaut's struggles for an education, Madame Boucicaut provided food for their minds as well as for their bodies. She hired teachers of music and languages to give evening lessons to all who were anxious to learn. As a result, the Bon Marche has organized one of the best brass bands in Paris; while many of the clerks are excellent linguists, interpreting six or seven languages with facility. This makes the Bon Marche the most convenient store in Paris for foreigners.

There is a gymnasium and fencing-room for the men. And the hundred and twenty-five young women who serve in the ready-made department are lodged in Madame's own house, opposite the store. Each has her separate room, with polished walnut floor, dainty white bed, and fresh curtains.

But Madame's charities were not confined to the Bon Marche. The poor of Paris and the benevolent institutions throughout

France knew her as a magnificent philanthropist. She looked upon her vast fortune as a sum entrusted to her to use for the good of others. She did not forget the scene of her *debut* in the commercial world, as the wife of a poor pedlar, and, last fall, gave the community of her birthplace six hundred thousand francs to build a bridge across the Saone at Verjux. This is to give the farmers a short route to carry their crops to market.

For herself, Madame Boucicaut spent next to nothing. She lived in the most simple and unassuming manner. Of late years, she had terrible attacks of asthma, and spent the winter months in her villa at Cannes—the mild climate of southern France alleviating her sufferings. It was there, that, unexpectedly, she died the 7th of December. She was buried from her parish church of St. Thomas Aquinas in Paris. The employees of Bon Marche, and delegations from the charitable institutions of France, with friends and *protoges* filled the church to overflowing, and made a vast procession to the cemetery of Montparnasse.

As Madame Boucicaut left none but distant relatives, there was some curiosity to know what she would do with her sixty million francs.

Seventeen million francs are divided as legacies among the employees of the Bon Marche, in sums varying from one thousand to ten thousand francs, according to their years of service. She also leaves them her favorite chateau and grounds at Fontenay-aux-Roses, with enough money to convert into a home for convalescent invalid employees. This makes two millions more. Sums of one hundred thousand to five hundred thousand francs are left to numberless benevolent associations. Homes for old women and schools for young girls are endowed. The five orders founded by Baron Taylor—the associations of artists, of musicians, of dramatists, of inventors, and educational workers—are each left a hundred thousand francs. Monsieur Pasteur and the archbishop of Paris have legacies of one hundred thousand, and three hundred thousand respectively.

The religious sects of Paris are remembered, the poor of each of the twenty *arrondissements* of Paris are to have some thousands. Her pictures are given to the collections of the Louvre and the Luxembourg; her linen and silverware to a house of education for poor girls.

These are only a few of the long list of legacies. All that remains is to build a hospital in the city.

A Bloody Battle With Outlaws.

WICHITA, Kan., April 30.—Ever since last fall farmers in the counties of Texas and Kansas adjoining Indian Territory have been sorely annoyed by horse thieves, who have been unusually bold in their periodical raids. Vists from the marauders at last became so frequent that the farmers formed a vigilance committee for the purpose of exterminating the thieves. Some time ago the vigilantes, armed with Winchester six shooters and lariats, started on the trail the marauders, but it was not until they had been two weeks in the saddle that they found any tangible trace of the robbers' camp. While the vigilantes were travelling through the western part of the Territory ten days ago they suddenly ran across the thieves in a deep ravine. The outlaws were in their blankets, but not asleep. When the vigilantes rode up the crest of the ravine the thieves, who were in command of Bill Higgins, alias "Scar-Face," sprang on to their horses, but in mounting one of their number was shot dead. The others put spurs to their animals and were soon throwing dust and bullets into the eyes of their pursuers. The horses ridden by the vigilantes were fatigued and were in no condition to give the outlaws' horses any kind of a race. But the chase was begun and the trail of the thieves followed. After a furious ride, lasting all day, the vigilantes succeeded in driving the gang upon a butte near a small creek, where preparations were made for a desperate resistance. As the vigilantes approached they were met by a volley which brought down one of their number, Peter Ackerman, of Medicine Lodge, Kan. The thieves were surrounded as well as possible, and the fight continued. One by one the rifles of the outlaws were silenced, until but few flashes answered the vigilantes' rifles. About dusk a white rag was hoisted on the summit of the butte. The vigilantes greeted it with another volley and charged up the hill. Three of the outlaws escaped, but "Scar-Face," Hank Window and "Curly Bill" were captured. "Curly Bill" and Window were riddled with bullets, but "Scar-Face," although nearly dead from the loss of blood, was dragged to death suspended by a lariat from the pommel of a saddle. Four other members of the gang were found dead behind their stone barriers.

A Glimpse of Victoria.

The stranger who first visits Victoria, the capital of British Columbia, is struck by the great number of Indians who live in the city. They wear clothing of the European style. The men work on the wharves and steamers, sell fish and skins, or are occupied in different trades, particularly as carpenters. The women wash and work for the whites, or stroll idly about the streets. The suburbs of Victoria are almost exclusively inhabited by Indians. There they live in miserable, filthy shanties and sheds, or even in thin canvas tents. The city has about thirteen thousand inhabitants, and of these about two thousand are Indians who stay there over summer. Besides these, about three thousand Chinese, many Sandwich Islanders, a few negroes, and a white population coming from all parts of Europe and America, live in the city. The internationality of the population and its easy-going ways give it a peculiar character.

What Woman Never Admits.

That she is in love.
That she ever flirted.
That she laces tight.
That she is tired at a ball.
That she is found of scandal.
That her shoes are too small.
That she cannot keep a secret.
That it takes her long to dress.
That she has kept you waiting.
That she uses anything but powder.
That she says what she doesn't mean.
That she blushed when you mentioned a particular gentleman's name.

When some loving friend shirks his burden of care.
That you may have double to carry;
When some other fellow is ringing the hand
Of her whom you wanted to marry.
Your principles may not permit ugly words,
But don't such things make you feel swayed.

The Country Housewife.

One of the darkest features of farm life is the hard lot imposed on the wife and mother. Country customs have made the farmer's wife a slave to work, and it will be a blessed era in country homes when this hard working martyr will throw off the bondage entailed upon her by her female ancestry, and through the privileges thus secured rise to a higher place among women.

There is a prevailing idea that has descended from generation to generation that the farmer's wife, in order to be a true helpmeet, must bear a far heavier responsibility than is expected of any other woman. In almost all other avocations of men the wives are relieved of any financial obligation. But the average farmer's wife not only performs the work of the house, endures all the sufferings and anxieties of maternity, but also assists largely in the family's support. For the body and mind to be under such constant pressure from work and care must inevitably work degeneracy to both.

Some time since a friend of mine had been visiting one of his aunts, a farmer's wife. When speaking to me of her, he said: "If my aunt were made of cast iron and every joint in her body of the hardest steel, I should think she would have worn out long ago." And when he told of her rising before daybreak, and of her constant labors that never ceased until at a late hour of night, why it fairly made my own body ache.

As facts are more powerful than fancy, I am going to relate an instance of one farmer's wife's work: and I want to preface it by saying that as highly colored as it may seem it is not in the least overdrawn. I chanced to become acquainted with the family a few years ago, and the memory of that woman's life, the human machine that she was, will ever linger in my mind.

Her husband's name was good for fifty thousand dollars. His property consisted of many rich, valuable acres, herds of fine cattle, spans of beautiful horses, and a heavy bank account. Two men were constantly employed on the farm, and extra hands in the busy seasons. There were four children in the family, the eldest a girl of twelve. All the domestic labor on this farm home, even to the knitting and sewing for the family, and washing for the hired men, was done by this farmer's wife, her only help being what her little daughter gave her when out of school. Dairying was a prominent feature of the farm, and every year hundreds of pounds of butter was made by her.

It is needless to say that this woman was a slave—worse, even—for had she possessed nothing there would have seemed more reason in such hard work. I do not believe she ever spent one moment in rest and recreation, for when the housework was over she always had knitting or sewing in hand. She gave no time to reading, no time to home or social pleasures. Her children were all supplied with food and clothes, but as to spending any time with them in that sweet intercourse which is fraught with so much pleasure and benefit to both mother and children, it was something outside of her thoughts.

I always compared her to a machine. And alas, for the thought! when, like the machine, hard usage has exhausted her capacity for work, there will be nothing left as a monument for her labor but some soulless dollars.

Who was to blame? No more the husband than the wife. There was a fast-rooted idea in the community that extra help in the farmhouse was unnecessary; that, excepting in sickness, the woman was untrifling who could not carry on her housework without paying wages for hire.

Now right here I shall mention one plain subject which does not receive the attention that it should when the duties of the husband and wife are spoken of comparatively. A great deal of allowance should be made for the physical debility that maternity produces on the system. For the woman who is bearing children, who spends anxious, sleepless nights in caring for crying babies, to carry on the work that many a farmer's wife does, is simply barbarous.

One excellent woman gave me her experience while passing through this trying period. Cheese-making was the leading industry of the farmers in her locality. Her husband owned quite a number of cows, some of which she always milked. The summer that her sixth child was born, she milked four cows daily, in addition to her housework. But weeks and weeks after the advent of the little stranger, she lay upon a sick bed with her vitality seemingly exhausted. The strength which should have been so carefully husbanded had been spent in hard work, and the penalty to abused nature was paid by long months of enfeebled health.

There are various ways in which the country housekeeper can lighten her labor. It is often impossible to get good, regular domestic help in the country; but the washing can be hired, and a seamstress be employed at the house for a week or two each season to do the bulk of the sewing. Even this help cannot always be obtained in one's neighborhood; but there are laboring women in almost every town who are glad to receive work.

When we first commenced farm life, we were four miles from the city, with so many factories near where girls were employed, that it was impossible to get househelp. So arrangements were made with a woman in town who did our washing for three years. Another way in which our housework has been greatly lightened is by patronizing the baker. Much of the time our bread is bought, and if we are unusually busy, we buy cakes, cookies and doughnuts.

The conditions of people's lives are so different that it is impossible to make plans beneficial to all. Yet there are ways by which every overburdened housewife can be relieved of some of her work. The very first step in this direction should be in fitting up the house conveniently, and with conveniences for her labor.

I do not mean to have the reader infer from this article that all farmers' wives suffer the martyrdom herein described. There are many country homes where the strength of the wife and mother is appreciated; where the income from the farm is spent in advancing the home interests and pleasures as well as the interests of the farm. And it will be a glorious reformation when they are all so.

I well understand and appreciate the scarcity of ready money on the farm. How hard is it, oftentimes, to touch a dollar that is not needed for actual necessities. Yet among the actual necessities the guarding of the health of that central home figure, the wife and mother, should always be reckoned—the entire happiness and prosperity of the

farmhouse depend so much on her. And if there is a more unprofitable and unpleasant object than a wornout, groaning, nervous woman, I don't know what it is.

NELLIE BURNS.

The Women of England.

While the women lately in international council at Washington were exulting over what education had done for their sex during the last generation, a very serious discussion was begun in England as to whether, under the existing conditions there, this education had really been of practical advantage to women.

There are now in the United Kingdom 800,000 more women than men, or, as the London *Spectator* puts it, "there are 800,000 girls who, unless we establish polygamy, never can be married at all." The vast majority of these spinsters, of whom 500,000 are 35 years of age or older, belong to the educated or partly educated classes, and the rest of them are without money. Meantime the emigration of men from the crowded islands is steadily increasing their numbers actually and proportionately, the continuous agricultural depression is adding to their poverty, and the general diffusion of education is rapidly multiplying the ranks of those whose tastes and habits unfit them to earn their bread in the only employments in which there is a great demand for women's labor. Even though her pay be small, an ordinary working girl can always secure a place, but these "necessitous gentlewomen," these educated girls without money, are only competent for the light work for which the demand is comparatively small.

The consequence is that "the great shopkeepers could fill their establishments with the daughters of clergymen, country solicitors, doctors, and superior clerks, and then leave a kind of worldful begging for admittance outside." These lighter situations, of one sort or another, are in no so eager demand by a yearly increasing multitude of such women that "the bestowal of the smallest patronage of the kind becomes a heart-breaking burden." Mr. Walter Besant tells how a false report that he had established an association for providing "ladies" with copying work brought him an "incredible" number of letters from writers who related "terrible, heartrending stories of suffering."

What is going to be the end of all this? To the *Spectator* there seems to be "a genuine prospect" that twenty years hence it will result in "a serious demoralization of educated women from the desperate desire for a livelihood seen to be almost unattainable." Therefore it is "half tempted" to reconsider the whole question of education, and to "doubt if the majority of gentlewomen without means would not be better for ignorance, as leaving them better able to give up their grade at once," and join the class of the working women for whose labor there is a great demand.

It is also to be borne in mind that the proportionate number of educated men has increased, and continues to increase rapidly, and that there is a great competition between them and educated women for many of the places that do not require hard manual labor, or other qualification than the "general intelligence" which is so large a part of what both have to offer in the market. The consequence must be a reduction in the price for the work, and, therefore, of the incomes of fathers of educated daughters who in their turn will find it the more necessary to enter into the competition for work.

If, then, we do not go to the extreme of the *Spectator* and question the advisability of education for these women, we must at least conclude that there is something radically defective about the sort of education they are receiving. Though Mr. Walter Besant takes a purely poetic view of society when he declares that "no woman should be forced to work at all, except at such things as please her," we cannot overlook the fact that the introduction of women into the labor market has been one of the chief causes of the labor disturbances of modern times.

Earthquakes in China.

San Francisco, April 30.—A steamer from China brings details of the earthquakes in Yunnan. From the second day of the 12th month of last year till the third day of this year there were ten shocks of earthquake accompanied with a noise like thunder. In Shiping eight or nine tenths of the houses in the south are falling down and half of those in the east. In the north-west a thousand are cracked or bent out of the perpendicular. Two hundred people, men and women, old and young, were crushed to death: of wounded and injured there are over three hundred. At Tung-Hiang over 800 were crushed to death and about 700 or 800 wounded. At Nan-Hiang there are over 200 dead and 400 injured. At Si-Hiang there are over 200 dead and over 500 injured. At Pei-Hiang about 100 killed and the same number injured. (The four places last named are suburbs). In the town and suburbs over 4,000 people are either killed or wounded. Eight or nine-tenths of the houses have fallen down and the rest are cracked and leaning over. At Kien-Shui in the city seven were killed and wounded; in the north-west suburb 300 to 400 houses were overturned, 249 people killed and 150 or 160 wounded.

A practical attempt to provide superior agricultural education is being made in England through the medium of a bill which has been introduced into the House of Commons by Mr. Jesse Collings, of Ipswich, and others. By this measure it is proposed to utilize the public elementary schools in rural districts for the purposes of affording to children practical instruction in agriculture and horticulture and to empower School Boards and other managing bodies to purchase the land, implements and buildings necessary under the circumstances. A special grant of not exceeding fifty per cent. of the expenses thus incurred will be made by the Committee of education, and certain scholarships are also to be offered for competition. Not only may this course of technical education be given in the elementary day schools, but continuation and night schools may also adopt it, when allotment holders and laborers will be given an opportunity of benefitting by the teaching afforded.

In a recently published poem James Russell Lowell speaks of "champagne in the air." There is some disappointment felt because he did not mention the locality in which he had discovered this inspiring atmospheric phenomenon. Doubtless it was in a country where the climate is extra dry.