

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 come 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."

GIRAFFE HUNTING IN AFRICA.

Sport That Almost Necessitates the Wearing of Leather Clothing.

The bush is horribly dense and thorny, and the thorns are of such a nature that the strongest cord breeches can scarcely withstand their assaults. The old giraffe bulls, with hides nearly an inch thick, care for no thorn in the forest, and plunge through the armed thickets as though they were black currant bushes. There is only one thing to be done—to forget the sickle thorns and follow them. The spurs go in, the gallant pony springs forward, and the chase begins. It is truly headlong. Crash go the tall giants, their long necks rising and falling rhythmically, their heads sometimes bending low to escape a bough which all but scrapes the withers.

It is wonderful how such monstrous game can evade branches and tack this way and that among the interruptions and obstacles of the forest. It is a tough gallop, indeed, but in ten minutes the hunter has driven his pony right up to the tail of the nearest bull, and, from the saddle, has fired his shot. He falls behind a little, then closes up and fires again. Both bullets, planted close to the root of the tail, have plowed deep into the short body of the giraffe and done their work. The painted giant falters, sways, and then in an instant falls crashing to earth, carrying with him in his ruin a stout sapling. Dark chestnut of the coat (almost black with age upon the back), this old bull, measuring nineteen feet from the hoof to the tip of the false horns, forms a noble prize indeed. As he lies there in the long yellow grass, he looks, surely, the strangest of all survivals of the fauna of the dark ages; a priceless and pathetic relic left to the modern world by the ravages of time.

Johnny's Ambition.

Little Johnny—I'm going 'to be a good boy, so I'll be real religious when I grow up. Fond Mother—Mamma's own treasure! Would you like to be a minister? Little Johnny—No'm; I want to play the big drum in the Salvation Army.

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 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 undershirt 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.

TESLA'S MARVELLOUS INVENTION.

The Oscillator Expected to Displace Engines in Ocean Ships.

Tesla's latest invention, the "oscillator," is described as being the core of a steam engine and the core of a dynamo combined, making a harmonious mechanical adjustment. This combination constitutes a machine which has in it the potentiality of reducing to the rank of old bell metal half the machinery at present moving on the face of the globe. It may come to do the entire work of the engine of an ocean steamship within a small part of the space they occupy, and at a fraction of their cost both of construction and operation. It will do this work without jar or pounding and will reduce to a minimum the risk of derangement or breakage. There is nothing in the whole range of mechanical construction, from railway locomotives to stamp mills, that such an invention may not revolutionize. The essential characteristic of the machine is the application of the pressure of steam to produce an extremely rapid vibration of a bar of steel or piston, which, in turn, is so adapted to a set of magnets that the mechanical energy of the vibration is converted into electricity. The extraordinary result is that practically an absolutely constant vibration is established, and a power is obtained greatly beyond that obtainable in the most costly expansion engines using a similar amount of steam.

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.

The Sea's Inroads on England.

An inspection of the cliff between Dover and St. Margaret's shows that an enormous slip has taken place—the largest subsidence of coast cliff, in fact, which has occurred for many years. When it happened, on Sunday, a dull roar was heard in the distance, followed by a cloud of dust from debris, which blew across Dover Bay almost like a sea fog. There is every appearance that when the frost breaks further slips will occur, as there are several places along the cliff where there are great cracks on the top, as well as in the face of the cliff. One is right in front of the convict prison, which, in course of time, as well as the South Foreland Lighthouses and the Cornhill Coastguard Station, must stand in great danger of slipping into the sea unless some measures are taken for the protection of the foreshore. So serious has been the effect in recent years of the encroachment of the sea that the whole line of cliff between Dover and St. Margaret's is becoming extensively honey-combed at the base.

Associate with men of good quality, if you esteem your own reputation; it is better to be alone than in bad company.—Washington.

BRITISH TRADE.

A Severe Depression, But in Shipbuilding and in the Cotton and Woollen Industry Trade is Fairly Good.

The output of the shipbuilding yards in the United Kingdom in 1894 exceeds that of 1893 by more than 210,000 tons, and the proportion of steam tonnage to the total tonnage launched is larger than ever before. The country has not, says The Saturday Review, reached the production of 1889 which was 12½ per cent. greater than that of 1894, but last year was the best of the past five years. Six hundred and fourteen merchant vessels of a gross tonnage well exceeding 1,000,000 were built last year in the United Kingdom, against 318 vessels with a gross tonnage of 270,000 built in the colonies and foreign countries put together.

The British Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the recent debate on the depression of trade, said that at the present time there is twice as much cotton imported for manufacture as there was twenty years ago, that cotton is half the price, but that

WAGES ARE HIGHER.

He contended that a fall in prices affects the profits of the capitalists most, but that the thing in which the laborer is interested is the volume of trade. If there are so many millions of pounds of cotton imported and worked up there must be so many more thousands of men employed, and it is a fact that the volume of trade has not diminished. "What has happened in the last twenty years has been this—that the laborer who works up the material gets a far larger share of the profits than in former days, and no doubt that is a gain to him, but a loss to the third partner, who gets a smaller share. The quantity of raw cotton imported in 1893 was 12,600,000 cwt.; in 1894 it was 15,965,000. The imports of raw wool in 1893 were 672,000,000, and 1894 699,000,000. In 1893 the exports of cotton yarn were 206,000,000 pounds, in 1894 236,000,000 pounds, and the exports of cotton manufactures in 1893 were 57,700,000, and in 1894 57,000,000. So in both cases the values were larger, but the quantities of material were immensely larger." Sir William Harcourt also made

AN INTERESTING COMPARISON

as to pauperism. In 1851 pauperism on the total population was 4.5 per cent.; it is now 2.4 per cent., or about one-half. Of children under 16 it was then 5; it is now 2.3. From the ages of 16 to 60 it was 1.4; it is now 5. In old age after 60 it was 21.5; it is now 13.7. In 1849 the mean adult pauperism was 13 per 1,000; it has now fallen to 7.7; but it never fell much below that figure until after 1871, when the fall in prices began. This has reference to the period since 1871. From 1849 to 1871 the fall was down to 7.7 but it has now fallen concurrently with the fall in prices to 2.4. There is severe depression in Great Britain, no doubt, but there are facts also which tell on the other side, and show that the progress of the people in comfort and abundance of food has been continuous.

AMENITIES OF THE BATTLEFIELD.

They Are Occasionally Absurd and Show Plentiful Lack of Logic.

Archibald Forbes says the abstract theory of the "amenities of war" is preposterous. You strain every effort to reduce your adversary to impotence; he falls wounded whereupon, should he come into your hands, you promptly devote all your exertions to saving his life and restoring him to health and vigor, in order that he may go home and swell the ranks of your enemy. This is, no doubt, humanity, but it is supremely illogical.

Marbot recounts in his memoirs perhaps the most absurd application ever made of the theory of the "amenities." In the battle of Austerlitz a body of beaten Russians, about 5,000 strong, strove to escape across the ice on the Satschan Lake. Napoleon ordered his artillery to fire on the ice, which was shattered, and men and horses slowly settled down into the depths, only a few escaping by means of poles and ropes thrust out from shore by the French.

Next morning Napoleon, riding around the positions, saw a wounded Russian officer clinging to an ice floe a hundred yards out and entreating help. The Emperor became intensely interested in the sufferer of the man. After many failures, Marbot and another officer stripped and swam out, gradually brought the ice floe toward the shore, and laid the Russian at Napoleon's feet. The Emperor evinced more delight at this rescue than he had manifested when assured of the victory of Austerlitz. He had no compunction as to the fate of the unfortunates whom his artillery practice of the day before had sent to their death.

Why Ice Floats.

Ice is specifically "lighter" than water just about to freeze, and, therefore, floats upon it. That is one reason why the formation of ice usually, but not always begins at the surface. Another reason is because of its peculiar law of expansion. The general law is that cold induces contraction. This holds good in the case of water only to a certain point. When water has cooled down to within 7.4 degrees of freezing it ceases to contract as before, and, with increased cold, actually begins to expand, and continues to do so until it freezes. This expansion causes the colder portions of the water to rise to the surface. Above we have said that ice does not always begin to form at the surface of the water. The exception is in the case of what is known as "ground" or "anchor ice." In this case the whole body of the water is cooled at the same time to below the freezing point, and the substances at the bottom, such as the stones and pebbles of river or lake beds, serve as nucleus or point of congelation and crystallization for the water. This rare species of ice is formed under such peculiar circumstances that others than students and experimenters seldom see it.