OGILVIE WHITTLECHURCH

CHAPTER II

Ogilvie proposed to make his first halt [illegible] Queensferry, where at the time of [illegible] we write, that immense and almost superhuman work of engineering, the Forth Bridge, was just being begun. He arrived there about noon. As [illegible] had not advanced beyond the preliminaries, but [illegible] or so at a scale, [illegible] recoiled from the [illegible] the amount of time, [illegible] and capital it would take [illegible] this gigantic undertaking to [illegible] termination. A huge [illegible] destined to form the base of [illegible] had been completed, and was [illegible] launched that afternoon, and he determined to wait and see the operation.

No one in good health takes a long country walk without feeling hungry, and Ogilvie, who had been indulging in sharp pedestrain exercise for about three hours in bracing air, was simply ravenous. His knapsack held a small stock of cold provisions, but that was only for emergencies. At present, a little inn, near at hand, seemed to offer the prospect of a much more substantial lunch, and thither accordingly he repaired.

In answer to his inquiries, the landlord informed him that the parlour was engaged, but that whatever he pleased to order could be served him in the taproom.

"No, no!" interposed a young man, who at that moment emerged from behind a glass door leading to the parlour in question, and who had evidently overheard the conversation in the taproom.

There's lots of room in there. Forward and this place will be chokefull of workmen in a few minutes. Come in, and let me introduce you to my mother and sister." The speaker was a young officer of the mercantile marine, named Rimington, whom Ogilvie had often met at Leith, where he had been staying to go through a course of drill in his capacity of sub-lieutenant in the Royal Naval Reserve, on board the gunboat stationed there.

Gladly accepting his invitation, Ogilvie followed him into the parlour, where he was duly presented to the ladies. The elder of these, Mrs. Rimington, was a widow. Her husband had been lost at sea not many years after they were married, and this, doubtless, had something to do with the subdued and rather sad look which her face so often wore. There was something very kind and winning about the look, notwithstanding its sadness—something that had the effect of making one feel at home in her presence from the very first—that seemed to say to Ogilvie: "You are my son's friend, so of course you are mine also, and I hope that you will consider me yours."

Her daughter, Miss Rimington, was a delicately lovely girl of about eighteen summers, of a type of beauty rather Spanish than English. Neither in her manners nor conversation however, was there discernible the slightest trace of that languid deliberation, sometimes natural to, and sometimes affected by brunettes. On the contrary, she was in every respect like any other pretty, healthy English girl of her age. She seemed also to have inherited from her mother the gift of being able to put people at ease in her presence.

"I suppose," said Mrs. Rimington, "that you are like us, Mr. Forward, very nearly leaving the neighbourhood without having seen the Forth Bridge!"

"Oh, well, mother," put in her son, "you know they say that there's many a Roman stop-gaper who lives and dies without seeing the Colosseum; and then we have come at last."

"Are you on a walking tour?" asked Miss Rimington of Ogilvie, as he unstrapped his knapsack.

"Only a very lispshed sort of a one, I am afraid, Miss Rimington," he replied. "I shall never walk farther than I feel inclined; and if at any time I want to avail myself of the coach, I most certainly shall do so."

"I was thinking of going for a tramp myself," said Rimington; "but I shan't have time."

"Isn't it a shame, Mr. Forward?" said his sister. "George has only just finished drilling on board that horrid little gunboat, and to-morrow he will have to go to Glasgow to join his ship."

"It does indeed seem hard," sighed Mrs. Rimington, glancing fondly at her son. "He hasn't been six weeks in England, and if Mary and I hadn't come up here, we should hardly have seen him at all."

"Nonsense, mother," laughed Rimington. "It's an ill wind that blows nobody good; and if I hadn't been qualifying to serve my Queen and country on board the gunboat, we should have all stayed vegetating down at Whitby and then you and Mary would never have seen Edinburgh."

"Do you live at Whitby, Mrs. Rimington?" asked Ogilvie. "My father has just taken a house there, in North Crescent. I hope we are neighbours!"

"In North Crescent! Oh yes, we are neighbours, and very near ones too. We live just at the end of North Crescent, at Rose Cottage. I hope we shall prove good neighbours, and that we shall see you there."

"Well, I had no idea that you were a Whitbyite, Forward," said Rimington. "Why, I believe that the world grows smaller every day. I never thought very much of our planet after my first voyage to Australia, but lately I've positively got to despise it.—Hullo! here comes lunch at last. Hadn't we better set to work? It would never do to be late for the launch."

When they went out after lunch, the last preparations were being made round the caisson. Rimington, as became his profession, was chiefly interested in the actual launching arrangements, so was his mother. So, while these two were inspecting sluices and locks, rollers and tackles, and the rest of the attendant paraphernalia, Ogilvie, as an engineer was able to explain to Miss Rimington the construction and use of the caisson itself. And so interested and attentive did he find his pupil, that he went on to instruct her in the principles of the 'cantilever' system of bridge-construction, demonstrating its advantages and picking out its weak points most impartially. The conversation, however, was disturbed soon afterwards by the very event which they had come to see—the launch of the caisson. Everything worked perfectly; and in a few minutes amidst the hurrahs of the workmen, the great machine was quietly floating in the firth, ready to be towed off to its position, and sunk.

Having taken leave of the Rimingtons, who were going back to Edinburgh, Ogilvie crossed the Forth by the ferry-boat, and, pipe in mouth, resumed his tramp. When a man smokes, he meditates; it's a law of nature. If his tobacco be ordinary, his meditations have a tendency to be practical; if good, they are more inclined to be abstract and philosophical. Now, Ogilvie's tobacco was good, and before he had walked a mile, he had satisfactorily established the hypothesis, and the pleasant people are always those whom one meets unexpectedly; but then he was not thinking of Miller.

CHAPTER III

"Keep her as she goes, Mr. Rimington, and get a small pull of the weather-braces if the wind draws aft. If it draws aft much, you can set studding-sails."

"Ay, ay, sir," replied Rimington, second mate of the Maharanee clipper, and was then on watch.

"But if we only have a little luck, we'll be first ship home; I'd bet a year's pay on it," said the skipper as he went down to his cabin by the after-hatchway after giving the above directions.

They had just caught the south-east trade, after rounding the Cape, homeward-bound from China, with tea and one passenger; and, as the captain had said, it seemed by no means unlikely that they would be the first of that year's tea-ships—not steamers, of course—to take the pilot on board in English waters. But everything depended on crossing the line. If they were lucky enough to get a puff to carry them across the 'Doldrums,' it was a certainty. If not—well, they must hope that the others would suffer the same delay.

Rimington paced the poop, pipe in mouth, occasionally giving a critical glance at the mainroyal, and longing to get that little pull of the weather-braces; but each time that he looked, the shaking of the water-leech told him plainly that nothing must be touched. It was two bells (nine o'clock), and by it was two bells (nine o'clock), and his watch would be over at midnight. But he was not particularly anxious for that. There was no great hardship in pacing the poop, and smoking his pipe in the soft moonlight, while the balmy air, set in gentle motion by the southern trade, fanned his cheek and filled the sails; and the ship, just heeling to its tender caress, except for an occasional gurgle under the bows, slipped noiselessly through the water.

Presently he was joined by the passenger, Mr. Parkins. The latter was a man with whom things had gone well. He had originally gone out to China to take up a post in the Customs, then as now, chiefly administered by Europeans. His duties, however, were not so arduous but that he was able to carry on a certain amount of business on his own account. The Flowery Land at that time presented a grand field for an enterprising man; and by unflagging diligence, aided by a few lucky speculations and a natural aptitude for business, he found himself in a few years, and while still quite young, one of the richest tea-merchants in Shanghai. He had resigned his Customs appointment some time ago, and was now going to revisit his native country. He had intended to take a berth on board one of the Peninsular and Oriental Company's splendid steamships; but chancing to light on his old school-fellow and chum, Rimington, serving on board the Maharanee, he had changed his mind and taken passage in her instead.

The two friends continued for some time to walk about in silence; then Parkins said: "It's a strange chance that has brought us together, old chap. I suppose that if I had been asked, there is no one in the world whom I should have said that I thought I was less likely to meet walking along the jetty at Shanghai than yourself. You never used to talk about going to sea."

"No; I never had any intention of doing so, in fact, when we knew each other, I don't think we either of us troubled much about professions. On the whole I'm not sorry that things have turned out as they have. A sailor's life is a hard one; but there are a good many worse; and if you don't stop my heaven-born right to growl at anything and everything I have to do, I can jog along very happily. Every one can't be a Croesus like you."

"No; I suppose not. Certainly I have been very lucky. It will be interesting to know what has happened to all the other Olswick fellows.—By the way, there is one especially I want to speak to you about. Do you remember a little chap called Whittlechurch, who was expelled? I fancy I Wasn't his Christian name Ogilvie?"

"Yes it was.—What about him?"

"Well, it's rather a long story, and a very curious one.—Wait a minute till I get a light."

"Right you are said Rimington; "and meanwhile I'll get the yards in a bit.—Watch, round in! Weather-braces! Come along there, shake up, shake up!"

For a few minutes the watch could be seen moving about the deck in obedience to the order, while the blocks creaked and the yards were trimmed. Then all was quiet again.

"Finished old chap?"

"Yes.—Now, let's have your yarn."

"Most of my property," said Parkins, "as you know, is some way in the interior, and last tea-harvest I went to inspect some improvements which I had had made on one of my estates, up the Chongkiang. I reached the place by a little steam-launch, without any mishaps or adventure; and when we started to come back, we found that one of the cylinders was out of order and could not be used. I didn't care to take a passage down in a junk, so there was nothing for it but to wait. The engineer said he should be about three days repairing the damage; and for want of a better way to spend the time, I decided to visit Wangkiang, the capital of the province and the usual seat of government. I found it the most thoroughly Chinese place that I had ever seen. Not a single mission had managed to build a church there, and I don't suppose that there are half-a-dozen Europeans in the whole place. It so happened that I arrived at a very opportune time: the whole town was en fete, and a long procession was being formed to meet and welcome the governor's army, which was returning victorious from an expedition against some pirates, and was expected back that evening. I had heard something about these pirates at Shanghai, and knew that the expedition was the result of several very urgent remonstrances made by the Western ambassadors to the government at Pekin; and I was heartily glad to hear that it had been successful."

"I heard of them, too," said Rimington. "But I fail to see the connection between a nest of Chinese pirates and our old schoolfellow, Ogilvie Whittlechurch.—What are you doing with the helm down there? Keep her away, man, can't you? Give her the helm! You'll have the ship aback in a minute.—Who is that at the wheel?—Miller?"

"Yes, sir."

"Let me recommend you to keep your eyes open, then."

"He's a good enough seaman, as a rule," explained Rimington; "but they all go to sleep on a calm night, if you don't look out.—However, to continue your yarn. I had just said that I didn't see what the pirates could possibly have to do with Ogilvie Whittlechurch, or Ogilvie Whittlechurch with the pirates."

"Wait a minute, old fellow; I am just coming to it."

"Well, that evening, sure enough, the army did come back, and with such a beating of drums and waving of banners as you never saw in all your life. A Chinese soldiery is a rare hand at that sort of thing, if at nothing else. Then there was a whole wagon-load of heads, and two of the pirates' prisoners whom they had rescued, and who were carried in litters. One of these litters contained an old Chinese merchant who had been captured on board one of his own junks, and, who, except for a good fright, was very little the worse for what he had gone through. The other, an Englishman, was Ogilvie Whittlechurch's father."

"Whew! How did you find out that?"

"From the man's own mouth. The governor sent me a message that a fellow-countryman was dying at the palace, and would like to see me. I found the poor fellow worn down to a shadow with fever, and obviously at his last gasp. He seemed to have something on his mind that he wished to tell me; but it was perfectly awful to listen to him trying to speak while his voice came and went spasmodically—interrupted every minute by terrible fits of coughing. The gist of what he said was this: His name was John Whittlechurch. When he was young, he had been a bad lot—a drunkard, by what I could make out; then he emigrated to America, leaving his wife and her baby in England. For a long time he seems to have got on no better in the new country than he did in the old; but a few years ago he had a stroke of luck at the diggings, and became a millionaire. He then started to come home, westward to try to find his wife and child; but the ship was wrecked in the China seas, and all who escaped the waves were captured by the pirates. Before leaving America, however, he had taken the precaution to make a will which he left with his solicitors at Sacramento. In it he left everything to his wife to go to his son Ogilvie, at her death. In case neither should be found, everything was left to a certain Pedro Bersano, who seems to have been sort of banker at the diggings, and who on this condition had advanced him money to carry on digging his claim."

"What usury, I suppose the fellow is a thorough scoundrel."

"I shouldn't wonder—anyway, he seems either to have done fairly well out there, or else to have made the place too hot to hold him; for he has gone to London, so the dying man told me. His present address is 'The Californian Club,' near Leicester Square."

"Humph! I'll bet he's a rascal.—But wait half a minute, old chap;" and so saying he walked to the compass—the ship was two points off her course. This was too much for Rimington's patience, and he told the helmsman so in no very gentle language; threatening, if he had again to find fault with him during the watch, to give him an extra trick to practise in. Having thus given vent to his indignation, he returned to where his friend was standing and resumed the conversation.

"Did he give you no details by which to trace his wife and son?"

"No. I think that he wanted to; but his strength was quite used up in telling me as much as he did, and he died in my arms not an hour after I had come in."

"But how do you know that the Whittlechurch we were at school with is the man you want?"

"I can't be certain, of course; but Whittlechurch is such an uncommon name, and so is Ogilvie as a Christian name, that I hardly think there can be two. Besides, the age seems about right."

"Well, there should be no difficulty in finding him. We can trace him from the school. And then, even if he is not the man himself, he must surely be a cousin. I suppose you told the lawyers all you knew?"

"Yes; and they sent me a telegram to say that they were employing a detective in London to make inquiries."

"Well, I wish a relative of mine would die a millionaire and make me his heir.—And now, I think I'll try how the topmost studding-sail stands.—No; I won't though; it's just eight bells. The other watch can do it when they muster."

(To Be Continued.)

SHOT AS AN ARROW.

A Young Girl Fired From a Gigantic Cross bow—A Narrow Escape.

Alar, a trim young girl of 19, has a contract with Mr. Bailey, of the great Barnum circus, that she be shot from a crossbow twice a day across the arena, through a paper-covered hoop serving as a target, into the arms of her sister, swinging from a trapeze at the opposite side of the enclave. That is, she is to be fired except when the crossbow slips, and that has happened twice last season, to the excitement of the spectators and the extreme peril of the young girl herself.

The first accident, in New York, was caused by the slipping of the spring which holds back the cord of the crossbow, tripping Alar while in the act of lying down upon the narrow board, not much wider than her body, which serves as the barrel of the big spring She was tripped backward and thrown on her back upon the board, and so lay unconscious with half her body hanging over until her brother climbed a rope ladder and brought her, still in a fainting condition, to the ground. Half the spectators of the performance, intent on watching the other performers, remained in ignorance of the accident.

HOW IT IS DONE.

Alar's family name is Zedora, and she has been performing in this country only since last March, having been brought over with a large number of other European performers for the present season of the Barnum & Bailey show. Her feat is a new one, although the human cannon ball, known as Zazel, appeared in an act of a similar nature. The difference between them is that, while the cannon ball was fired into a big net, the arrow is sent flying through a paper target and caught by another of the Zedoras while swinging from a trapeze.

The Zedoras are aerialists, and the arrow finishes their "return" act.

The crossbow from which she is fired resembles the catapult that was used centuries ago for hurling stones and spears. It consists of a narrow board, twenty feet long, covered with smooth billiard cloth and having a great bow set in one end. Alar stretches with her head pointed across the arena and her feet resting against the bow, that is fastened to the bowstring. The piece of the bow is graded to 100 pounds. When everything is in readiness the girl sets her hands above her head in the attitude of a diver and gives the word to her brother below, who when he jerks a cord that releases the spring and Alar is sent through the air at a rate which makes the ribbons in her hair sing and is caught safely on the swinging trapeze.

IT WAS A MISS.

This is what happens when everything works well, and all has worked well except in two instances this summer. The New York incident was one; the other happened at Johnstown, Pa. In spreading a net below the trapeze used by the Zedoras the property man had caught the foot of one pole in the tripod used to support the crossbow while on the road, throwing it a very little out of position. In the hurry incident to the performance this change in the direction, or aim, of the bow was not noticed, and Alar was fired, not at the centre of the target, but at one side of the rim of the hoop. Her shoulder caught and deflected her, so that she sped to one side of her sister, instead of directly into her arms, as she should have gone.

"Look out!" called the brother from below, and the sister with an effort wrenching herself sideways, caught one hand of the arrow only, but with so strong a hold that she saved her from dropping to the ground. Alar turned half about, then back, and as her oscillation began to moderate she was dropped into the net with no greater injuries than a badly tousled head of hair. The sister, however, put her shoulder out in making the difficult catch, and had to be carried to the dressing-room.

Like many of the best women acrobats employed in circus work, Alar is English, and was trained at the Royal Westminster Aquarium. In the United States children cannot be trained to such acts, because so many States have restrictive laws prohibiting children from performing acrobatic feats, even under the direction of and in connection with their parents. In Brooklyn an attempt was made to stop Alar from appearing, as she is very small and does not seem like a girl of 19 but as her family was able to prove her age she did her act.

During the floods which submerged tracts of land in and about western Tacoma, Wash., early in December, salmon were seen swimming over farm land several miles from their home in the Sound.

LETTERS BY THE MILLION

SOMETHING ABOUT THE POSTAL SYSTEM OF THIS COUNTRY.

Sketch of Its Development and Statistics as to Work Done—Facts as to Registered Letters and Money Orders.

In the year 1851 an act of the Imperial Parliament transferred the management of the postal systems in the colonies of British North America to the various provincial authorities, and from that date until Confederation, each province controlled its own system under its own laws and regulations. Shortly after Confederation, however, the Post-office Act came into effect, establishing uniform rates and regulations for the Dominion.

These regulations, which since that date have changed from time to time, are now as follows: General letter rate, 3 cents per ounce or under; letters for local delivery, where there is a free delivery, 2 cents per ounce or under; letters for local delivery, where not delivered free, 1 cent per ounce or under; registration fee, 5 cents; letter cards, 3 cents; post-cards, 1 cent; newspapers, books, etc., generally 1 cent per 4 ounces; parcels, 6 cents per 4 ounces; fifth-class matter (parcels open to inspection), 1 cent per ounce.

In the year 1875 an agreement was made with the United States, whereby a common rate of postage between the two countries was adopted, each country retaining all money collected, and no accounts being kept between the two Post-office Departments with regard to international correspondence. Later in 1888 another agreement was made, specially providing for the establishment of an exchange of general articles of merchandise, open to inspection, between the two countries, subject to certain regulations for the protection of customs with respect to articles liable to duty. All the principal provisions, however, of the agreement of 1875 were retained. The internal postage rates of each country generally govern, and official correspondence entitled to pass free in one country is delivered free in the other.

THE UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION.

The Universal Postal Union was formed at a conference held at Berne in 1874, and a treaty was signed in that year, the countries represented being the several countries Europe, the United States and Egypt. The object of the Union was to form all the countries of the world into a single postal territory, and to establish uniform reduced rates of postage, and to further the interchange of correspondence by arranging that every country should be bound to convey the mails of other countries by its land or sea services at the lowest possible rates. The next Postal Congress was held in Paris in 1878, when the Dominion of Canada was admitted a member from the following 1st July. Letters, newspapers and other printed matter, samples and [illegible] became subject to uniform postal rates and regulations for all places in Europe and for all other countries that were members of the Union. The existing postal arrangements with the United States were allowed to remain undisturbed, being of a more liberal and advantageous character than the ordinary regulations of the treaty. At this meeting the regulations of the treaty of 1874 were revised and embodied in a convention which came into force 1st April, 1879.

The third congress was held in Lisbon in 1885, but no material change was made. The fourth congress was held in Vienna, 1891, when the admission of the Australasian colonies was agreed upon, and a number of measures all tending to facilitate the transmission of correspondence were agreed upon.

WIDE AS THE CIVILIZED WORLD.

The Universal Postal Union now includes almost every civilized country in the world, being composed of the following:—The whole of Europe, the whole of America, in Asia—Russia-in-Asia, Turkey-in-Asia, Persia, British India, Burmah, Ceylon, and the postal establishments at Aden, Muscat, and Guadar, Japan, Siam, the European colonies and the European and Japanese postal establishments in China, and Corea; in Africa—Egypt, Algeria, Tripoli, Tunis, Liberia, Congo Free State, the Azores, Madeira, the European colonies, the Orange Free State, the Transvaal and all the territories, under the protectorate of Germany and the French postal establishment in Madagascar; in Australasia and Oceanica—the British colonies, Tasmania, New Zealand, Fiji, British and German New Guinea, Hawaii, the Marshall Islands, and the French, Dutch and Spanish, colonies.

EXTENT OF THE JURISDICTION.

A central office has been established at Berne at the cost of the various countries comprising the union. At the time that the treaty of Berne came into effect (1875) the jurisdiction of the union extended over an area of 14,293,700 square miles, with more than 350 millions of inhabitants whereas it now extends over an area of 38,372,000 square miles and 1,035,000,000 inhabitants. The population of the whole world is less than a billion and a half.

WENT THROUGH POST OFFICES.

The number of pieces of postal matter distributed over the whole area of the union during 1893 was computed as follows: 8,291 millions of letters, 1,938 millions of postal cards, 5,509 millions of papers, printed matter and official documents, 143 millions of samples, 44 millions of registered letters with a declared value of $8,028,000,000, 307 millions of money orders and postal credits with a value of $3,061,752,000 making the enormous total of 17,778 millions of pieces of mail matter. The prevailing rates among Postal Union countries are 5 cents per 1-2 ounce and under for letters, 2 cents for postal cards and 1 cent per 2 ounces for newspapers, books, etc. The registration fee is 5 cents.

On account of the enormous stretches of country over which the mail has to be delivered at the ordinary rates, the Government of Canada found itself behind in the Post-office Department to the extent of $880,000, the total net revenue being $2,792,790 and the total expenditure $3,593,617. The same trouble has confronted the post-office authorities of the United States, as in only ten of the States are the postal revenues in excess of the expenditure.

COST OF CARRYING THE MAILS.

The following sums were expended for carrying the mails:—By rail, $1,241,115; by land, $844,118; by steamers, $79,356. The department has postal contracts with 48 railways, whose combined length is 14,463 miles. It uses 157 postal cars, of which 53 are on the Grand Trunk, 50 on the Canadian Pacific and 18 on the Intercolonial. The daily distance travelled is 30,436 miles. The total distance travelled in 1895 was 14,836,735 miles.

The correspondence between Canada and China and Japan consisted last year of 179,993 letters, 77,488 newspapers, 652 pounds of parcels and miscellaneous articles to the number of 61,049. With the Australian colonies the mail communication resulted in the transmission of 148,729 letters, 313,525 newspapers, 206,916 books and samples.

GROWTH OF POSTAL SERVICE.

At Confederation there were only 3,638 post offices in Canada. There are now 8,832. The first year of Confederation 704,700 registered letters were sent, last year 3,183,200 registered letters were sent. The total letters posted in 1868 were 18,100,000; in 1895, they numbered 107,565,000. Post cards were used in the year 1876 to the number of 4,646,000. Last year no less than 24,025,000 of them were sent by mail. According to the population there were 5.37 letters to every head of population; in 1889 there were 10.86 letters per head; in 1890, there were 19.63 letters per head, and in 1895 21.16 letters per head.

Newspapers, periodicals, books, circulars, parcels, etc., to the number of 5.6 per head of population went through the mails in 1868. Last year 18.92 per head of population were handled, or a total number of 96,176,206.

LETTER WRITING IN ONTARIO.

Of the total 107,565,000 letters sent in 1895, Ontario people wrote 57,900,000, or more than one half. This is at the rate of 26 letters per head of population. Quebec sent letters at the rate of 15 per head; Nova Scotia, 17; New Brunswick, 17; Prince Edward Island, 11; British Columbia, 27; and Manitoba and North-west Territories, 25. Out of a total of 3,183,200 registered letters Ontario sent 1,750,000.

During the whole period since Confederation the postal revenue has been always considerably under the expenditure. Each of the past twenty years has shown a deficit of from $400,000 to $800,000.

The sum of $16,154 was paid during last year in money on letters delivered. Rents of letter boxes and drawers produced $27,698. Commissions on money orders amounted to $307,085, and profit on exchange on money order business with other countries to $1,815. Among the items of expenditure it appears that postmasters received $905,369; stamp vendors made $17,325, and that there were losses by fire and burglaries to the extent of $3,278.

DECREASED COST OF CARRYING.

In 1868 the conveyance of mails over 10,622,216 miles cost per mile 5 1-10 cents, and the transmission of 36,984,800 letters, newspapers, etc., cost 1-4-10 cents apiece. In 1895 the conveyance of mails over 38,431,115 miles cost 7 2-10 cents per mile, and the transmission of 227,766,206 letters, newspapers, etc., 9-10 of a cent apiece, so that there is a decrease in the cost of carrying each article of about one-half cent. And in connection with this it must be considered that if newspapers were carried now at the old rate of 1 cent per pound a sum of probably not less than $100,000 would be added to the revenue each year.

The system of free delivery of letters by carriers in the principal cities was commenced in 1875, and last year the total number delivered thus was:—Letters and postcards, 38,088,719; newspapers 13,734,474. The number of carriers employed was 398.

AS TO REGISTERED LETTERS.

Last year 3,183,200 registered letters were posted in Canada. Of this number 161 failed to reach their destination. No less than 29,158 of those registered letters were sent to the dead letter office. Of these 15,189 were returned to the writers, 1,339 remained in the office or with postmasters for delivery, while 12,330 failed of delivery and were found to contain no value. Of the 161 which failed to reach their destination the contents of 127 were made good by the officials or others held responsible for the loss; five were stolen, and in 28 cases no evidence could be obtained to account for the discrepancies. In every instance registered letters only one miscarried, so that sending by registered letter in Canada may be considered a very safe method.

THE DEAD LETTER OFFICE.

Last year 960,031 letters found their way to the dead letter office. Of this number 131,343 were returned to other countries; 24,973 were forwarded to correct addresses; 289,770 were returned to their writers; 8,547 remained in the office; 471,870 being of no value were destroyed; 23,693 were returned to printed address, and 8,455 were returned to Government Department.

The growth of the money order system is shown by the following figures:—In 1868 there were 515 offices, 90,103 orders issued; amount of orders $3,372,881. Last year there were 1,261 offices, 1,097,052 orders issued; amount of orders $31,187,892. Of the 1,261 money order offices, Ontario has 624 and Quebec 199. Of the total money orders issued in Canada $10,736,647 were payable in Canada and $2,450,064 in other countries.

THE YEAR JUST CLOSED.

Some of the Principal Events of 1896.

In Europe, the year has been eventful. Continued massacres of Armenians have excited the horror of Christendom; but the so-called concert of action of the Powers at Constantinople has been paralyzed by mutual distrust, and especially by dread of Russia; and not even the shocking scenes which followed the attack of Armenian revolutionists upon the Ottoman Bank stirred Europe to action. The Powers did use their influence to secure reforms in Crete, but not until that unhappy island had been devastated by a sanguinary revolt.

In Russia the event of the year was the coronation of the tsar, the pageant attending which was marred by a catastrophe at Moscow, where more than a thousand peasants were crushed to death.

Germany has been agitated by the Bismarck disclosures and by political discussion. France has experienced a change of ministries, resulting from a clash of authority between the two legislative chambers. Italy has abandoned her attempt to establish a protectorate over Abyssinia, after suffering several humiliating defeats.

Spain has more than two hundred thousand men employed in the thus far futile attempt to put down the insurrection in Cuba; and is further embarrassed by a formidable revolt in the Philippines.

The continent of Africa has been the theatre of some stirring scenes, including both the war in Abyssinia, the Jameson raid into the South African Republic; the bloodless British expedition against Ashanti; the revolt of the Matabele tribes; the bombardment of Zanzibar; and the beginning of the reconquest of the Sudan by an Anglo-Egyptian expedition which, after two engagements with the Dervishes, has occupied Dongola.

The greatest scientific events of the year were the discovery of the properties of the X rays; and the return of Nansen's Arctic expedition, after reaching the highest latitude attained by any explorer.

The list of the dead of the year includes many distinguished names. Among them are the eminent painters, Lord Leighton and Sir John Millais; Doctor Benson, Archbishop of Canterbury, Benjamin Apthorp Gould, the astronomer; Harriet Beecher Stowe, William Morris, George du Maurier, Henry C. Bunner, "Gail Hamilton," Nora Perry and Coventry Patmore, among writers; the distinguished French Statesmen, Floquet, Simon and Leon Say; Prince Lobanoff, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs; Prince Henry of Battenberg; the Shah of Persia, who was killed by an assassin; and Baron de Hirsch, the generous philanthropist.

PLENTY OF SELF RESPECT.

Mrs. McSwillem—I should think you'd have more self respect than to drink the way you do.

Mr. McSwillem—Self r'spect, m' dear! I'm, also full self r'spect, m' dear, that I enter every shloon by back door.

TAUGHT TO BE A MONKEY

AN INHUMAN FATHER'S TREATMENT OF HIS DAUGHTER.

Covered Her With an Ape's Skin, and Made Her Cut Capers on the Street—Dosed Her With Gin and Stifled Her to Stop Her Child's Growth—Rescued By a Salvation Army Officer.

What dreadful things would be brought to light if all the secrets of the Salvation Army work were made known can be judged from this story which Commander Booth-Tucker told the other day.

Commander Booth-Tucker and Brigadier Swift, of the New York Salvationists, can show you a little girl attending one of the grammar schools of New York city, whose father deliberately so stunted her growth and maltreated her in other respects that he was able to use her to beg pennies as a grind-organ monkey without people who saw her suspecting that she was other than the beast she represented.

FOUND IN KENTISH HOP FIELDS.

It was down in the Kentish hop fields of England that Brigadier Swift found the pitiable little creature. Mrs. Swift's keen eyes had seen humanity in so many almost unrecognizable forms that they detected it even in the form of a little being that [illegible] the brightest disguise with [illegible] deavored to [illegible] was of human [illegible]

The child was [illegible] be guessed, [illegible] but she was dressed in a dirty red jacket trimmed with lace and shining buttons, like the typical hand-organ monkey. Her diminutive body, moreover, had been squeezed into the skin of a real monkey.

It fitted down closely over the entire face, leaving only openings for the mouth and nostrils and two holes surrounded by hair, through which a pair of eyes peered.

Originally the monkey skin had been made to cover the hands and feet, but had worn away, leaving the tiny members bare, save for the thickly encrusted filth and dirt that covered them almost beyond recognition.

HER COVERING MOTH-EATEN.

The monkey skin upon her body had become worn bare in spots, and besides was moth-eaten, and had been dingily patched, but the ape-like tricks the child had been beaten into acquiring readily diverted attention from these defects.

To the gaping crowds of stolid hop-pickers and stupid farm laborers before whom she was exhibited she was the typical grind-organ monkey they had been used to seeing, only a trifle more knowing and impish in her grotesque caricature of humanity than the ordinary run.

She could climb a table leg as nimbly as any monkey ever exhibited, and there was a contrivance by which she could move the tail that was attached to the monkey skin she wore. It was dreadfully fatiguing work for the withered little midget to move this tail, and out of all the horrors of her life the memory of the half-fainting efforts to do this still come back to her as among the most vivid of her child miseries.

The estimable parent who maintained his valuable existence by thus exhibiting his offspring took a sound commercial view of his property and did not pound her except in moments of mental depression incident to alcoholic relaxation.

He had to starve her and had fed her on gin from childhood in order to repress her unfilial tendency to outgrow her monkey skin, and he knew that this could not go on forever without killing her. So he was trying to get as much out of her as he could while she lasted.

But in one way and another she was a great trial to her benevolent parent. She wantonly wore away the fur of her monkey skin for one thing, and as she grew older became perverse in the matter of exhibiting human tendencies at critical moments in the exhibition. Walloping, of course, was the only remedy for this, and wallopings wore her and shortened her days, and thus, too, was a source of aggravation.

TAUGHT HER TO STEAL.

During the summer the father and his grind-organ monkey tramped it afoot, and once in awhile, by way of variety, the father let her out of her monkey skin and sent her begging from house to house with instructions to steal whatever she could lay her hands on.

In this way after the two joined a company of men who played a sort of pantomime, the father assuming the role and costume of a horned devil. The girl monkey appeared with him and relieved his henpecked-villain part by her agile grace and agility. She climbed table legs, nibbled the nuts that were handed her and begged pennies by passing around the little red monkey cap she wore.

Brigadier Swift found her as related, readily got her away from her father on condition that he be not prosecuted, adopted her as her own child and brought her to this country. Speaking of her, Commander Booth-Tucker said:

HER SECRET WELL KEPT.

"The little girl is very sensitive about her history. Her secret, out of respect for her feelings, has so far been kept from all but a very few of her friends. She is at present attending one of the public schools of New York City. She is an unusually bright child, of refined tastes and with very lofty ideas and ambitions.

"I consider it very remarkable that, in spite of her early training, and her doubtful heredity, she should have turned out so well.

"We took a considerable risk in adopting such a type, but we have been amply rewarded."

The little girl's ambition is to become a trained nurse. She will soon complete her course in a grammar school in New York, after which she will get a scholarship in Moody's school in Northfield, Mass.

The suffering of the early years of her life seems to have left no touch of bitterness, but instead a very ready sympathy for the poor and the afflicted everywhere.

MISREPRESENTING OTHERS.

The truth that a good man has spoken with the noblest purpose may be changed into a falsehood by simply taking it out of its connection, giving it a different inflection, or attributing to it some motive that was not in the mind of the original speaker. The fair-minded man will always try to represent another as doing and saying what he has reason to believe the other intended, purpose, do and saying. When he reports the words of another, he conscientiously aims to give them the exact connection and circumstances in which they were originally spoken, and then puts upon them the best possible construction. In short, he treats the word and acts of others as he would have others treat his word and acts.

NO TAXES THERE.

It is announced that commencing with January 1, 1897, the city of Glasgow, Scotland will cease to levy taxes of any kind. The city authorities have ascertained that from that date all the entire expenses of the city for the future can be borne by income received from public works owned by the city. The city owns the street railways, gas and electric light plants, waterworks, sewerage farms, tenement houses and other institutions, all of which are paying large sums into the city treasury.

WHAT UNCLE SAM IS AT

ITEMS OF INTEREST ABOUT THE BUSY YANKEE.

Neighborly Interest in His Doings—Matters of Moment and Mirth Gathered from the Daily Record.

Table Rock, Neb., refused to support a saloon. One was started [illegible] the receipts fell short [illegible]

How the horse [illegible] this fall might [illegible] ington, Ky; [illegible] colts were sold at [illegible]

The Presenting [illegible] Mich., is advertising [illegible] the names of all purchasers of drug stores shall be [illegible]

A sheriff to whom the law was as good as the three sticks of kindling property of some residents of who were used to a contest to have been fulfilled [illegible]

On a charge of burglary [illegible] Kans., a young man [illegible] white gloves, [illegible] spectacles was arraigned [illegible]

In the orchard [illegible] Lawrence, Kan. [illegible] recorded as the "[illegible] in the Union and became [illegible] have got more for it than their Illinois neighbors got for their crop.

An eighteen-year-old schoolboy of Sheldon, Wis., upon being reproved for throwing a cartridge into the schoolroom stove, where it exploded, took a revolver to school the next day and during the session shot himself in the side, but not mortally.

Being advised by a lawyer in the lobby of a Lincoln, Neb., hotel how to find out how a cigar-cutter on a counter worked, a barber belonging to the hotel shop stuck his little finger into the opening designed for the end of a cigar and had the tip clipped off.

Liston street, Lewiston, Me., should go on record as being the home of perhaps the best educated dog outside of Switzerland. A woman shopping the other day missed her nurse while in the street, and after hurriedly feeling in all places about her clothes where it might be and not finding it, she turned around and saw a big dog coming toward her with the pocketbook in his mouth.

An Annandale, Kan., Justice of the Peace was called upon to decide whether the caudal appendages of two subtailed dogs, which, it was asserted, had been stolen, had grown during the time the animals were out of the alleged owner's custody. The man who owned the dogs saw one day two which looked so much like his that he hailed to court the man in whose possession they were and claimed them as his property. He testified that his dogs had stub tails and when it was pointed out that these two had not, he asserted that the tails evidently had grown again.

KITES IN THE SERVICE

WIRES ARE CARRIED FROM VESSEL TO VESSEL.

And a Complete Telephone Connection Established—An English Commander Tries an Experiment Which Works Successfully.

The kite has become a means to the transmission of the human voice from one warship to another, while the fleet is in active service. It is the strangest adjunct the telephone has yet enjoyed, but it is none the less valuable. Just what can be done has been demonstrated by Commander H. G. O. Tupper, of the Royal Navy, at Portsmouth, England.

The kite used in this experiment was of the regulation sort, except that it was minus a tail. It was six feet long and three feet wide at the broadest point. In place of the tail, the kite carried two lines, one of which was retained on board the Daring, the instructional torpedo boat destroyer, from which the experiments were conducted. No little was expected as the result of this experiment, but the facts demonstrated were, nevertheless, very much of a surprise. With the wind between the two lines referred to, it was found that the kite was so easily managed that it was no trick at all to drop letters or even a hawser into another ship and in this way establish communication.

Following this experiment came one with a wire. The end of the wire which the kite bore away from the ship was dropped, upon the deck of H. M. S. Dauntless, where it was secured by the electrician of the ship and attached to a telephone instrument. The other end, which had remained aboard the Daring, was also attached to a telephone, and as soon as this task was completed, the two ships were

IN PERFECT COMMUNICATION.

The kite remained suspended, secured by the two lines, for more than four hours, during which time communication between the Daring and Dauntless was uninterrupted. The kite was pulled in when it was desired to disconnect the instruments and take in the wire.

The experiment that was made by the officers of the Daring and the Dauntless had another valuable result. It showed that it is possible to arrange for a new system of signals from one ship to another that would be greatly superior to any [illegible] at present in use. If the telephone wire can be arranged in this manner there is no reason why telegraphic communication cannot be made in a similar fashion. In this case an operator would flash signals to a corresponding [illegible] his fellow operator aboard [illegible] of the fleet without difficulty. [illegible] Admiral's orders could be easily [illegible] ted from time to time, and [illegible] what is now considered [illegible] service. It might be thought [illegible] flying of a kite under [illegible] stances would be a matter [illegible] difficulty, but kite flying [illegible] methods has become a [illegible] used to be a school boys' [illegible] become a subject