

FIERCE AMAZONS OF AFRICA.
Women Forced to Enter the Army--Considered an Honor.

One of the most picturesque of the African institutions, which are disappearing as England, Germany and other European nations take possession of the continent, is the Amazon army of the Guinea coast. It is possible that the stories told of these Amazons have been much exaggerated, but the accounts of them given by entirely reliable authorities are too interesting to need embellishment of any kind.

When Captain Burton visited Cana, in West Africa, the Amazon army, which he first encountered near that place, consisted of 2,500 women, who were served by other women, held as slaves for them.

The Amazon soldiers consisted of women of two kinds—those who were originally spinners, selected by the king for the service, and those who had been separated from their husbands. Although enlistment among the Amazons was looked on as an honor, it was also used as a punishment for any wife whose temper was so domineering that her husband found her insupportable.

About one-third of the army had been married women. The rest were maidens, watched with the greatest care to prevent them from indulging in the human weakness of falling in love. A fetish, placed over the gate of the camp, was supposed to have the power of detecting them, but if in spite of it they broke their laws of military conduct they and their accomplices were put to death.

Their uniform consisted of a blue and white tunic without sleeves and a petticoat, under which they wore a pair of short trousers, much like the Mayo bloomers of the United States. Over the whole was strapped the ammunition belt. The muskets carried by the women were antiquated, and, as they rammed the ball down on the powder without wadding, they were never likely to hit anything they aimed at.

The Amazon army was divided into battalions, one of the most curious of which was the "razor brigade," armed with razors two feet long, used in cutting off the heads of enemies killed by the others or of criminals condemned to death.—*New York World*.

There are no rich men, says William Allen White in the Atlantic, in these Kansas towns. The men who own a million dollars' worth of property number less than half a score in the whole State. Those who control half a million dollars' worth of property might ride together in a sleeping-car, with an upper berth or two to spare. Every town has its rich man, measured by a local standard, who is frequently a retired farmer turned banker, but not one in five of these is rated at \$100,000. Yet each is the autocrat of his county if he cares to be. The mainspring that moves the town's daily machinery may be found in the back room of the bank. There it is decided whether or not the bonds shall be voted. There it is often determined whether there shall be eight or nine months of school. There the village chronicles are spread upon the great ledgers every day. The town banker supplies the money for every contest. If he is wise, he watches his little corner of the world as a spider watches from his web. The great trust which he keeps requires a knowledge of the details of the game that men are playing around him. Yet with all his power this town banker would be counted a poor man in the city. Seldom is his annual income as much as \$10,000. But he lives in the best home in the town. The butcher saves his best cuts for him, the grocer puts aside his best vegetables, and the whole town waits to do his bidding.

Bankers are already looked upon as acute men, not easily overreached, but the following story shows that they may sometimes be outwitted when least suspecting a defeat.

A poor Irishman one day went to the office of an Irish bank and asked for change in gold for fourteen £1 Bank of Ireland notes. The cashier at once replied that the Cavan Bank only cashed its own notes.

"Then would ye give me Cavan notes for these?" asked the countryman in his simple way.

"Certainly," said the cashier, handing the fourteen notes as desired.

The Irishman took the Cavan notes, but immediately returned them to the official, saying:

"Would ye give me gold for these, sir?" And the cashier, caught in his own trap, was obliged to part with the money.—*From Answers*.

The Queen of England's descendants either now occupy or will in due course sit upon seven thrones—namely, those of the British Empire, the German Empire, the Spanish Empire, the Kingdom of Greece, the Duchy of Nassau-Ostburg and Gotha, the Grand Duchy of Hesse and the Duchy of Nassau-Meiningen—an amount of territory ruled by her descendants which must comprise at least half of the entire globe. Her Majesty is also a relative of the King of Hanover, the King of Denmark and the King of the Netherlands. The Queen, it may be mentioned, became a grandmother when she was 40.

A French lady, learning the English language, had made very good progress, she thought, and one day accepted an invitation to dine with some English friends. As the dinner went on, she was offered a dish that was new to her. Not knowing its appearance, she declined it, saying: "My son, you ask who or what a 'nobody' is. Well, my dear boy, a 'nobody' is a prominent woman's husband."

A Liberal Employer.

The length of time allowed Uncle Sam's servants for vacations with pay is prescribed in the Revised Statutes. Certain details, however, are left to the discretion of the executive. For instance, a recent order permitting government clerks to leave their desks at 3 o'clock Saturdays in summer had to be passed upon by the President and cabinet. The law states that "all clerks and other employees" in the civil service of the executive departments are allowed thirty days' vacation and thirty days' sick leave each year, with pay, and in usual cases of particular merit, sixty days' sick leave with pay. What employer would allow his clerks to remain absent one-fourth of the year, with pay?

Army officers may spend thirty days a year away from their posts of duty, but this may be enjoyed not oftener than once in two years, when they may remain absent sixty days altogether. Many prefer to take their vacations every three or four years, when they may stay away three or four months at a time, long enough to take an extensive trip abroad. The leaves of medical officers of the marine hospital service are regulated just as are those in the army. Officials of our diplomatic posts abroad are allowed sixty days' holiday each year, not including time required for the voyage to and from this country, if they return home. Members of the legislative and judicial branches of the federal government, of course, suit themselves as to the disposition of their time while their respective bodies are not in session. They are for the most part independent in this respect, even while they are assembled. After all, Uncle Sam is the most liberal of employers, so far as vacations are concerned.—*Washington Star*.

The Witness Spoke Up.

"Now, sir, I hope we shall have no difficulty in getting you to speak up," said the lawyer, in a very loud, commanding voice.

"I hope not, sir," shouted the witness, at the top of his lungs.

"How dare you speak to me in that way?" angrily asked the lawyer.

"Because I can't speak no louder, sir," said the hootie.

"Have you been drinking?"

"Yes, sir."

"I should infer so from your conduct. What have you been drinking?"

"Coffee," boozily vociferated the knight of the stable.

"Something stronger than coffee, sir; you have been drinking! Don't look at me like that, sir!" furiously. "Look at the jury, sir! Did you have something in your coffee, sir?"

"Yes, sir."

"What was it?"

"Sugar."

"This man is no fool—he is worse!" stormed the counsel.

"Now, sir," turning to the witness, "look at me. What besides sugar did you take in your coffee this morning?"

The hostler collected his forces, drew a deep breath, and, in a voice that could have been heard half a mile away, bellowed out:

"A spune! a spune! an' nothin' else!"—*Texas Siftings*

Possibly the most interesting woman's invention was patented by the wife of a well-known western man. There had been some trouble with a lock, either at her home or at her husband's office, and she had been much wrought up about it. When she went to bed at night she dreamed of a new lock made on a plan entirely different from any she had ever seen. In the morning she made a model of her dream lock out of a cake of soap. Then she took the model to a machinist, who duplicated the soap lock in steel, and it worked so satisfactorily that a large firm of locksmiths offered a royalty to her for the privilege of manufacturing locks after her design, and she is still in receipt of a considerable income every year from that source.—*Ohio State Journal*.

"The card is dusty and covered with cobwebs," he said to himself, "It has been there a long time, but I'll just go around and see if that door's still unlocked. If they'd rather have me go in that way I think I'll humor them."

Whereupon he stole softly around to the rear door, opened it, and a man in one of the sleeping-rooms upstairs, awakened by a burglar-alarm, came down and shot at him.

This incident shows, dear children, that it is possible to be too confiding.—*Chicago Tribune*.

"You say that you want money to buy food for a hungry man whose face you never saw up to this time!"

"Yes, sir," replied Meandering Mike.

"Where is he?"

"He's standin' right here," was the hesitating reply. "I'm him"—*Washington Star*.

There are some who seem to tread the ways of life with their eyelids closed to everything except the exclusive strip of velvet lawn on which they choose to walk. The world may swing on its own way, so long as their path is smooth.—*Mail and Express*.

The smallest newspaper in the world is published in Guadalajara, in Mexico. The *E. Telegrafo*, a weekly publication, is printed in eight columns, each 4½ inches wide, on thick manilla paper.

"My son, you ask who or what a 'nobody' is. Well, my dear boy, a 'nobody' is a prominent woman's husband."

IN A MINE ABOUT TO EXPLODE.

Extinguished the Fuses When Almost Burned to the Powder.

John Kendall, who was recently the foreman of a mine at Roseland, B. C., lately underwent an experiment that has left him a physical wreck. His nerves were shattered and it will be months before he regains his former strength.

Kendall and four other men lighted the short fuses under eight charges of giant powder in the True Blue mine and then jumped into the basket to be hauled to the surface and out of harm's way. The basket raised a few feet and then stopped. Soon it began settling, and it looked as though the five men would be blown to atoms when the tremendous charges (" powder were exploded. When the basket was within four feet of the bottom of the shaft the fuses could be heard sputtering, and the men knew that only a few seconds would elapse before the blast was discharged.

Kendall jumped from the basket and began pulling the fuses from the primers, which were to explode the powder.

Kendall had extinguished five of the fuses nearest the bottom of the shaft when he heard the preliminary sputtering that betokened an immediate explosion several feet away. He stumbled towards them and fell, extinguishing his light. Then there was nothing but the spitting fire to guide him.

"Fortunately," he says in describing his actions, "the two shots had been down close together. I was able to seize a fuse in either hand. Providence was with me again, for neither blast exploded as I drew the fuse from the primers. What happened after that I do not know of my own knowledge. A great darkness came over me. They say they found me doubled up at the bottom of the shaft, with the fuses of the last two holes clinched tightly in my hands."

It was afterwards discovered that the stopping of the ascending basket was due to the engineer's carelessness. He had forgotten to open the water-cocks in the cylinders, and, as a consequence the slide valves choked and would not act.—*New York World*.

As illustrating the almost incredible extent which the Italians—the Sicilians especially—can communicate with gestures, grimaces, and what is called the sign language generally, Alexandre Dumas relates that he was one evening in the theater at Palermo, with a gentleman of that city named Arami, when his attention was attracted to what appeared to be, and in fact were, conversations carried on between the boxes and the orchestra. Presently Dumas' companion recognized an acquaintance on the other side of the house, and began exchanging with him eager actions of the hands and eyes. When it ended, Dumas begged to know what had been said, and was informed that the gentleman was a friend of Signor Arami who had been away for three years. "He told me," said Signor Arami, "that he had been married in Naples, and then had traveled for three years with his wife in Austria and France; that a daughter was born and died; and that he had arrived by steamboat yesterday, but could not bring his wife to the opera with him because she had suffered so much from seasickness as to unable to come." Dumas was so astonished that he went privately and verified this account; and he adds other equally long and complicated conversations which came under his notice at Syracuse and Naples.

A builder in a small town was walking down a street in which he was having some buildings erected, when he observed one of the men standing on the scaffolding, with his hands in his pockets, smoking a pipe. He went gently up the ladder, and, stepping in front of him, said:

"Now I've caught you. We'll have no more of this. Here's your four days' pay (it being Friday), and you can consider yourself discharged."

The man pocketed the money and went away rather quickly. Just then the foreman came up, and the builder told him what he had done.

"Why," said the foreman, "that man wasn't working for us; he was only asking for a job."—*Tid-Bits*.

Tennyson used to tell a story of a farmer, who, after hearing a red-hot sermon of never-ending fire and brimstone, consoled his wife quite sincerely with the naive remark:

"Never mind, Sally; that must be wrong; no constituency could stand it."—*Tid-Bits*.

Among the many remedies for indigestion is the agreeable one of the rocking-chair. An excellent medical authority declares that the slow, rocking motion after meals stimulates the digestive functions, and gives marked relief. The patient ought to be placed in an almost horizontal position.

Mrs. Mulligan: "Do you feel better this morning, Mrs. O'Toole?"

Mrs. O'Toole: "I do, an' then again I don't."

Mrs. Mulligan: "That's bad, fur it's hard to know whether ter say O'm sorry or glad."

Betha—You are a weather prophet, I believe?

Potts—Sir, I allow no man to call me a fakir!—*Yonkers Statesman*.

"How would you define an optimist?"

"As a man who expects to pay his week's board by drawing his next week's salary."—*Truth*.

Betha—What is the height of you ambition, dear?

Mario (blushing)—Oh, something between five and a half and six feet.—*London Puff*.

A MOORISH EXECUTION.

The Murderer of a Christian Regarded as a Martyr.

A correspondent at Tangier gives the following account of the execution of a native for the murder of Herr Haasner, a German banker. "The circumstances of the murder have remained entirely mysterious. The German legation here put pressure on the local authorities. After a short time a woman went over to Gibraltar for safety, and sent word to her that she could throw light on the affair. Upon her information three men—a Spaniard and two Moors—were arrested and thrown into the prison. Here they were tortured by the thumb-screw. The Spaniard confessed. He, however, was claimed by the Spanish authorities, and what has become of him I do not know. The other two were kept in prison. They lay chained hand and foot by a heavy three-inch chain in a small dungeon, where they remained in almost pitch darkness, with nothing to eat but bread and water, and very little of that. Of course, had not the murdered man been a European, little would have been heard of the matter. A message came from the Sultan that one of the men was to be shot. The Basha, who is an authority here, desired this to be carried out in private, but the German Minister insisted upon a public execution. On the day of the execution I went down to the soko (market).

About a dozen Europeans only were present, and among them were two French ladies on horseback. A posse of soldiers soon marched through the gateway, having in their midst the condemned man himself, seated on a donkey, with his feet chained together. I think he was too much dazed to comprehend fully all that was passing. The prisoner was taken, unresisting, of the donkey, and made to kneel with his face away from the soldiers. Two of the men were told off to shoot him. They refused, upon which the Basha's head man, with asperity, repeated the order. Then they walked up to within five yards of the prisoner and fired two shots into his back. The corpse was buried in sacred ground. All the Moors, even the authorities, Basha included, looked upon the prisoner as a martyr. Why, they asked, should a good Mohammedan die for a dog of a Christian? The feeling is universal, and if it were not for the legations, Europeans would not be very safe.—*Cornhill Magazine*.

WHAT JENNY LIND DID FOR AMERICA.

Jenny Lind's sojourn in America was fruitful in many ways. Her progress left a chain of charities through the land by which orphans and sick are still nurtured and healed.

The rapture of her music created a criterion by which the success of every other artist has been measured from that day to this. The tradition of her pure and noble womanhood has remained to music a bulwark against which the scandal and corruption of the operatic and musical world has broken in vain.

In Jamaica and other West India islands, they have a very curious way of preserving eggs fresh for a considerable time. A layer of eggs is placed at the bottom of a barrel, and ordinary black molasses is poured over in sufficient quantity to cover them. Then another layer is added, and more molasses, and so on till the barrel is full. The idea is that an egg can be kept good almost indefinitely if the air can be prevented penetrating the porous shell to the contents within. When the eggs have all been used, the molasses is given a frost boil up and is thoroughly salable again in Northern Russia the farmers use warm tallow in precisely the same way; but this is said to slightly affect the flavor of the eggs.

The sub-committee of a school, situated not a thousand yards from the city, were examining a class in a country school. One of the members undertook to sharpen up their wits by propounding the following question:

"If I had a mince-pie, and should give two-twelfths to John, two-twelfths to Isaac, two-twelfths to Harry, and should take half of the pie myself, what would there be left?"

There was a profound study among the boys; but finally one lad held up his hand.

"Well, my boy, speak up loud, so that all may hear," said the committee-man.

"The plate!" shouted the hopeful fellow.

The committee-man turned red in the face, while the other members laughed aloud.—*From Answers*.

The Thames of England is 170 miles long. The river of the same name in Canada, is said to be 180 miles long. Its namesake in the United States is hardly more than a dozen miles in length, but is better for navigation than either.

First Tramp: "If you had to work just suppose—what kind of a job would you rather have?"

Second Tramp: "Well, I think I could be a judge of a dog show. I've had experience of all the different kinds of dogs there is."

Perry Patetic—They say one of these champagne drunks will last a man three or four days on one night's drinkin'.

Wayward Watson—Them plutocrats always does have the best of it, don't they?—*Cincinnati Enquirer*.

The Court—As I understand it, the deceased policeman was killed in the discharge of his duty.

Witness—No, sor; it war the discharge av the gun. Yer Answer.—*Philadelphia North American*.

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"Why are you going to call your ice yacht 'Gossip,' old man?" asked Van-Witter.

"Because," said Von Miner, "there's much to it, but how it does go!"—*Chicago Tribune*.