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THE CITY OF NANTES.

A PEOPLE WHOSE COSTUMES ARE OF ECCENTRIC DESCRIPTION.

A Refuge from the Artificial Life at the French Capital—A Homelike Meal at a Hotel—Principal Business Street—A Royalist's Opinion of the City

Nantes takes a certain character from the sea, from the fishermen and from all the queer types of humanity who dwell along the coast of this department and of Morbihan well on up toward Brest. The costumes of these people are of the most eccentric description, so much so that it is said that nowhere else in France can there be seen such a variety. Some are strikingly picturesque. There is the peasant woman, for instance, whose business it is to cultivate early potatoes in the sand near Noirmoutier and bring them to market. She wears a skirt coming just below the knees, a small cap, some sort of apron, checked or otherwise, and has the foot, ankle and calf entirely exposed, or shoes or sabots neatly polished and stockings closely fitting and often of intricate pattern. The shoes and hosiery are their special weakness, and it is not rare to see among them a well made foot and ankle. The entire costume is commonly in sober colors and neatly kept. On the contrary, you see little girls with long skirts coming to the soles of the shoe, who look as if they had just stepped from one of Vandyke's portraits.

As a specimen of the male costume of Morbihan, we have the low crowned, round topped hat of velvet, or of straw or felt bound with velvet, very jaunty, or, as the French would say, chic. The jacket is something like the voluminous exterior garment of our ancestors of the Seventeenth century, but a jacket all the same, and gay with rows of buttons so thickly set that they overlap one another. The collar of the shirt is as broad as a ship's mainsail. It is open in front and rises stiffly up behind the head, serving as a background to a face that is the picture of innocence and as quaint as the costume itself.

It is a pleasant relief to get away from the highly artificial life and the highly artificial articles of food and drink at Paris even to a stupid and not over cleanly place like Nantes. The country offers its treasures more generously than the city. It is pleasant to know that the wines, if they are not Clos Vougeot, Pomard, Chateau Lefite or Chateau Yquen, are at least all they pretend to be; that you are near the place where people produce their own butter and lay their own eggs; where they even put the butter on the table and sell their milk at four cents a quart from the wagons in the street and at the corner groceries. It is really with a homelike feeling that you sit down to breakfast or dinner in a hotel in a town in Anjou, or at the hotel at Nantes on which I bestowed my humble patronage. The stillness that pervades the dining room is solemn. You hear two or three flies buzzing behind the lace curtains that drape the windows. You look up to the ceiling not painted by Michael Angelo, but by some unimmortalized local fresco painter, in imitation of the sky. You don't remember ever to have seen exactly such shades of blue in the firmament before. But no matter. The chandeliers are attached to the ceiling with blue ribbons painted flat thereon, the ends drawn out sideways and held in the beaks of doves, the species and the school of art being alike unfamiliar.

Into the room steal furtively from time to time representatives of the Nantals bourgeoise—solid, solemn, funereal—who tranquilly partake of the several courses and then steal away as stealthily as they entered. Perhaps there enters a whole Breton family—father, mother, sons, daughters and bonne—all of whom make the sign of the cross before taking their places. Their dress is quiet and their manners almost as reverential as if they were in church. The repast is served by the mature garcons—one gray haired whom you seem faintly to recollect as having seen in the opera of "The Huguenots." Their duty is performed decorously and entirely in keeping with the surroundings. There is none of bewardage so often seen at French tables. The cuisine is rather remarkable for its profusion than its fine quality, thus reversing the Parisian rule. Some dishes are even left on the table where persons can help themselves. Nothing could be more un-Parisian. The butter is of a character to attract attention. There are perhaps twenty persons at table (comparatively few persons come to Nantes) and there are four rolls of golden butter distributed along the table, each weighing at least a pound, and, like everything else offered you, it is "a discretion." Then you drink, if you are disposed, a whole bottle of white or red wine. The hotel is, I believe, the best in Nantes, and your breakfast and dinner cost you together only five francs a day, while a good room costs only three francs more.

In coming from Cholet to Nantes I made the acquaintance of a young lawyer of Poitiers, a royalist by birth and political preference and a most charming and intelligent traveling companion. He said to me, "Nantes is a vile de luxe." As I have already remarked, this is not intimated to the stranger. There is nothing in the houses or shops that would indicate it. Then as I met him in the evening he conducted me through what he said was the principal business street—the only business street in fact—a thoroughfare narrow and crooked like the rest, half a mile in length and having on either side commonplace shops, badly lighted and with poor displays of goods in the windows. There were no carriages, but it was filled with a crowd of promenaders walking purposely to and fro and looking listlessly into the uninteresting windows, as I have seen them in the smaller towns of Italy or elsewhere in Europe. There was nowhere else to go, theatres being closed and summer amusements conspicuous by their absence. The rich were at the watering places; the poor were amusing themselves in low drinking houses, such as are seen in the pictures of Temers and Steen, of types that are universal and have been for 300 years.

There are, however, at Nantes things that are solid, substantial and elegant in the way of art and architecture. The cathedral and other churches are among the finest in France, and there are statues of kings and other celebrities in them, or here and there in avenues and streets about the city. There is a library of 100,000 volumes, and the museum of paintings and statuary, the finest in France outside of Paris and Versailles. It is well worth a visit. I went to the castle, which is not so massive and interesting as that at Angers, and better preserved, and from the top of the dungeon tower the concierge pointed out to me that great place of the famous noyades, one of the most infamous reminiscences of the revolution.—Albert Sutliffe in San Francisco Chronicle.

ON A KENTUCKY FARM.

Associations of Ante-Bellum Boyhood. "Mammy," the Cook, "Uncle Tom."

The typical boy on a Kentucky farm was tenderly associated from infancy with the negroes of the household and the fields. His old black "mammy" became almost his first mother and was but slowly crowded out of his conscience and his heart by the growing image of the true one. She had perhaps nursed him at her bosom when he was not long enough to stretch across it, sung over his cradle at noon and at midnight, taken him out upon the velvety grass beneath the shade of the elm trees to watch his first manly resolution of standing alone in the world and walking the vast distance of some inches. Often in boyish years when flying from the house with a loud appeal from the incomprehensible code of Anglo-Saxon punishment for small misdemeanors he had run to those black arms and cried himself to sleep in the lap of African sympathy. As he grew older, alas! his first love grew faithless, and while "mammy" was good enough in her way and sphere his wandering affections settled humbly at the feet of another great functionary of the household—the cook in the kitchen. To him her keys were as the keys to the kingdom of heaven, for his immortal soul was his immortal appetite. When he stood by the biscuit bench while she, pausing amid the varied industries that went into the preparation of an old time Kentucky supper, made him marvelous geese of dough, with farinaceous feathers and genuine coffee grains for eyes, there was to him no other artist in the world who possessed the secret of so commingling the useful with the beautiful.

The little half naked imps, too, playing in the dirt like glossy blackbirds taking a bath of dust, were his sweetest—because, perhaps, forbidden—companions. With them he went clandestinely to the fatal duck pond in the stable lot, to learn the art of swimming on a walnut rail. With them he raced up and down the lane on blooded alder stalk horses, afterward leading the exhausted coursers into stables of the same green bushes and haltering them high with a cotton string. It was one of these hatless children of original Guinea that had crept up to him as he lay asleep in the summer grass and told him where the best hidden of all nests was to be found in a far fence corner—that of the high tempered, scolding guinea hen. To them he showed his first Barlow knife; for them he blew his first home made whistle. He is their petty tyrant today; to-morrow he will be their repentant friend, dividing with them his marbles and proposing a game of hop scotch. Upon his dialect, his disposition, his whole character, is laid the ineffaceable impress of theirs, so that they pass into the final reckoning up of his life here and in the world to come.

But Uncle Tom—the negro overseer of the place—the greatest of all the negroes—greater even than the cook, when one is not hungry. How often has he straddled Uncle Tom's neck, or ridden behind him afield on a barebacked horse to the jingling music of the trace chains! It is Uncle Tom who brings him his first young squirrel to tame, the teeth of which are soon to be planted in his right forefinger. Many a time he slips out of the house to take his dinner or supper in the cabin with Uncle Tom; and during long winter evenings he loves to sit before those great roaring cabin fireplaces that throw their red and yellow lights over the half circle of black faces and on the mysteries of broom making, chair bottoming and the cobbling of shoes. Like the child who listens to "Uncle Remus," he too hears songs and stories, and creeps back to the house with a wondering look in his eyes and a vague hush of spirit.—James Lane Allen in The Century.

Stories About the Man Milliner.

In spite of the rise of many dressmakers in Paris who have a certain hold on the fashionable world for a space and who threaten the supremacy of the chief corner stone of fashion, M. Worth remains, as he has for nearly twenty-five years, at the head. Parisians are never tired of telling stories of his wealth, his luxury and his caprices. As to his whims, he could give a prima donna points. Not long ago a customer went to him whom he kept on her feet for two hours walking up and down and posing before him, while he draped all manner of fabrics about her shoulders, pinned and unpinned, experimented with numerous combinations, and finally flung everything down, declared he was not in the mood for composition and, telling her to "wait," went out and banged the door. After some three-quarters of an hour he returned. Whether he had been asleep or had had luncheon she never knew, but he came back fresh and buoyant and declared he had an idea at last. Then he took lace and brocade and velvet, experimented a bit, made her walk up and down while his assistant played the "Invitation to the Waltz" on the piano, and finally dashed at her, whirled everything about into a different position and said: "Madame, I have discovered you at last. You are the 'Invitation to the Waltz.'" She went home exhausted and raging, but she admits the gown was, when it came home, "a dream."

If he does not know anything about a woman he generally refuses to dress her at all. He prefers to make only for distinguished people, but even with these he is perfectly arbitrary. One will say, "I want une robe princesse with bouffants Louis XV." He replies, dryly: "I receive instructions from no one. I dress madame. I shall make a Louis XIII skirt, with Medici bodice and collar," and she takes that or doesn't get anything. If she suggests red, he is sure to make it blue; if she says "velvet is most becoming to me," he replies, "I shall make you a superb corsage of satin." An actress went to him the other day and asked for a pearl gray costume. "For what do you take me?" he cried. "Gris perle is no longer worn; I shall not make it of gray." When she insisted he simply showed her the door.—New York World.

A New York Club Swell.

He is a club man, and copies the existence of the rich club swells of London. He has a suite of apartments in an apartment house at $1,500 a year, furnished at a cost of about $5,000—not half as costly in appointments as those of some other swells who "go in for that sort of thing, don't you know?" He and "his man," as the swells call a valet, occupy these rooms. This man gets about $30 a week, and has simple, though sometimes trying duties. It is his business to sit up for his master at night to assist him, or to put him to bed, according to the swell's condition. Whether the swell is blind drunk or only just drunk, it is the duty of the man to prepare a tepid bath, pull his clothes off, put him in the tub and wash him, and then rub him with coarse towels until his skin glows.

In the morning the fellow must hang about till his master stirs—unless he has had orders to awaken him at a certain hour—and then he must exercise him at a certain hour. This also is a peculiar operation. The man rubs the swell, slaps him to spur the circulation of his blood, pulls his limbs to limber his joints, and then both put on boxing gloves and engage in a lively and earnest fight. The wires of a magnetic battery have been put in the warm bath that is awaiting use, and the swell leaps into the tub and has the electric current strengthened until his skin tinges. He is then taken out, robed in a pajama of Turkish towel cloth and put on a lounge with the toweling under him ready to be massaged, which is to say kneaded, slapped and pulled and rubbed until he says his head feels quite its natural size again, and then he thinks he can manage a little toast and coffee and possibly a soft boiled egg or two. His man shaves him while he waits for his breakfast.—Julian Ralph's Letter.

Size of Molecules of Silver.

Applying certain measurements to a scarcely visible film of silver, Herr Wiener arrives at the conclusion that no less than 125,000,000 molecules of silver must be laid in line to measure an inch.—Arkansaw Traveler.

A MENDING BUREAU.

WHERE THE TATTERED AND TORN MAY LIE UP FOR REPAIRS.

An Institution Started for the Poor Man's Benefit—Peace and Joy for a Nickel—Buttons Sewed on While You Wait.

You will readily guess what a mending bureau is. It is a place where the tattered and torn may lay up for repairs, where the elusive button may be fastened in its socket so tight that it stays there for the rest of his natural life, where he that hath a torn lining to his overcoat may have a new lining put in its place or the old one brought to a proper frame of mind, where a rip in the coat sleeve may be doctored in genuinely scientific style, where the right sort of treatment is administered to all sorts and conditions of dilapidated garments.

A reporter stood in front of a big jewelry store, wondering if there really were "great reductions in watches and diamonds," when he encountered an acquaintance of erstwhile seedy but present dapper appearance.

"I've just been to the mending bureau," said this worthy, "and I feel like a new man. The lining of my coat had slipped its moorings, and every time I put on the coat I swore new and attractive oaths. There was fringe on my trouser legs. My cuffs were pinned on. My pants were supported only by a shoe string and a piece of clothes line. Suspender buttons I had none. There were only two buttons on my vest, and I kept it on with a bent hairpin. If I had sneezed hard I should have stood pantless and forlorn before a gaping, jibing world.

OFFICIATING GOOD ANGELS.

"While in this sorry plight I found this morning a circular of the mending bureau. It was sent to me by some special dispensation of a pitying providence. I went to the mending bureau and stayed twenty minutes. They did not repair me completely, for I am a modest man, and the officiating angels are all of the gentler sex, but my coat lining is in a state of perfection that fills me with admiration. My cuffs are now properly attached to their buttons. My vest displays a goodly array of buttons upon its facade. I am going home, where I shall go to bed and send a boy down to the mending bureau with those articles of apparel, the mending of which cannot well be done in my presence," and so saying the mended and happy man vanished.

The reporter felt his external raiment all over, but failed to find anything for the mending bureau to experiment upon. Finally he bethought him that there was but one button on the back of his Prince Albert coat. What do they have those two buttons on the back of a coat for, anyhow? The absence of one of the duo of buttons had caused the reporter much annoyance for several weeks. It detracted from the symmetry of his figure, and caused him to walk lop sided. Relief was at hand. The reporter sought the mending bureau. As yet it consists of a single good sized room, light and airy, and containing sewing machines, work tables and chairs. Two or three middle aged ladies and three or four young ladies were seated about the room, busily plying the needle. One was threading a needle, and she performed that intricate operation so quickly and neatly that it made the reporter envious as he recalled past struggles of his own. A tall young lady with an amused expression in her eloquent dark eyes asked the blushing reporter what he wished to have mended. He restrained an inclination to say that his heart had suffered a compound fracture, and coyly explained that another button on his coat tails was the essential to his happiness. The young lady smiled and asked the reporter to remove his coat. Being an unmarried man, unused to feminine society, he blushed like a red, red rose; then, remembering with gladness that he had put on his pink striped shirt in the morning, he took courage, took off his coat and accepted a proffered chair. The other ladies kept on sewing and paid no attention to the customer.

THE CONVENIENT BUREAU.

There were two other customers in the room, both minus coats. One was having a button sewed on his shirt cuff, and the other had his coat up for repairs. The ladies sewed rapidly, and the three contracts were soon completed. The reporter was assisted into his coat by the tall, dark eyed young lady. This alone was worth the price of admission, and five cents was all that was charged for the replacing of the button, for which the assurance was given that it would stay as long as the coat were worn.

"We have no regular scale of prices as yet," said the manageress of the establishment, "as the mending bureau has only been running a few days. It is the first institution of the kind in the west, though there is one in New York that has made a good deal of money. We thought that there was a demand for a bureau where the mending of underwear could be done with neatness and dispatch. Single gentlemen will appreciate the convenience of a bureau where their clothes are looked after in a good, homelike way. Ladies who are overburdened with the cares of housekeeping will also find the bureau convenient, and we expect to have considerable trade from people who visit the city and stop at the hotels. We intend to make arrangements whereby for a small sum paid weekly or monthly we will keep wardrobes in good repair. We all do quick work and when we sew a button on it stays there every time."

The reporter realized fully the truth of these statements. There are careless mortals who would quite as leave have their garments in bad repair, but they are in the minority. The great majority will prefer to have their clothes kept in order, and if they have no women folk of their own to do that sort of thing, the bureau will be a full fledged boon to them. The darning of stockings will be a special benefit. The average man, who has no one to do his mending, now wears a pair of socks two or three times, and then throws them away total wrecks, rent asunder and worn through by the disastrous processes of laundries. Here at the bureau socks can be darned at low rates, and money will be saved the wearers thereby. Altogether, the bureau is an institution that merits encouragement.—Chicago Herald.

Senator Farwell's Texas Land.

Senator Charles V. Farwell, of Illinois, and his partners, his brother and Abner Taylor, of Chicago, will make from $15,000,000 to $20,000,000 in their Texas land speculation. It is said that the state of Texas has given to the Farwell company 3,000,000 acres of land in Texas. The land today is worth $5 an acre, and the state buildings did not cost more than $1,000,000. The land is all fenced in. Seventy-five thousand cattle are now on it, and more are to follow. It comprises enough territory for a principality. The Farwell company have their headquarters in London. English capitalists own about one-quarter of the stock.

This great and successful venture was brought to the Farwells by an impecunious and visionary man, who obtained the contracts which he sold to the Farwell company. The story goes that the man happened to be in Austin, and hearing that the state was offering land to any one who would put up state buildings he calmly walked up and took the contract, when he had barely enough money in his pocket to pay his fare to Chicago. The same men who gave away such a block of land rather than raise the money necessary by taxation of course never dreamed of questioning the contractor's financial ability. He had some trouble in convincing the Farwells of the value of the land, owing to their distrust of the visionary contractor's judgment, but investigation showed the value, and the contract was purchased for a few thousand dollars, and a property was obtained which will net its owners many millions.—Baltimore American.

Depends on How You Do It.

"Well, which are really the more injurious, cigars or cigarettes?" asked a pretty girl of a beflanneled member of the Belmont Tennis club, at the club's court yesterday afternoon.

"I'll show you," said he, and turning, he called to a friend: "Ned, toss me a cigar." Then he took out a fine cambric linen handkerchief, and blew a whiff of smoke through the cobweb texture. "Oh, look how black it is," said the young lady for whose sake the experiment was being made.

"Now look," said the club man. He lighted the cigar and puffed till he got a good volume of smoke, which he poured through the meshes of the handkerchief again. A scarcely perceptible stain was left on its whiteness.

"Well, that proves it," said the fair investigator. "My! just think of that horrid black stuff all settling in your lungs!"

"Wait one moment," said the experimenter, and he repeated the experiment with the opposite result.

"Well, how is that?" was the astonished question.

"Why, it is simply due to the difference in the way you place your lips when you impel the smoke through the linen. Hold them tight and blow hard, and it leaves a stain upon them, and barely force the smoke through and you get almost no trace."—Philadelphia News.

The Guillotine at Paris.

The distance from the prison door to the guillotine is not more than twenty steps. The executions take place at the dawn of day, and as far as anything being seen by the crowd they are practically private. Only the journalists and a few privileged ones are admitted on the square. At 2 o'clock in the morning the cavalry and infantry of the Paris Municipal guard, 100 each, fifty cavalry gendarmes and about 500 policemen appear. The soldiers push back the mob so as to leave the entire square clear. Shortly afterward the executioner arrives in a large red wagon which contains the guillotine. The instrument is packed in a number of cases, each piece being numbered. The aids put it together, the work not lasting over half an hour. When the knife is in place the headsman tries its edge on a small bundle of straw to see that it slides easily and cuts well. Just before the moment of execution the gendarmes range themselves in horseshoe form around the guillotine and two rows of policemen form a line from the prison door to the instrument. It is through this line that the condemned passes.—Paris Cor. The Epoch.

Narrow Escape from Angry Bees.

A farmer who is an expert in the culture of bees declares that they are the most interesting of creatures, and that their "cuteness" is wonderful. Like all living creatures, the bee has a natural enemy; in this case it is the moth miller, which sometimes drives the swarms to desperation and frenzy. Then it is that the wary keep at a safe distance from the hives. This particular bee owner once saw a peculiar instance of the bees' hatred of black objects. It became necessary in some way to rearrange something belonging to the hive, when, like a host of furies, the enraged inmates flew out en masse and attacked the disturber of their peace. Quick as thought the farmer's wife ran and threw her white apron over the husband's head, whereupon the bees did not alight on him, but instead attacked two innocent black hens who happened near by, and stung them to death.—Boston Post.

Employment for Prisoners.

Oakum picking is doomed even in military prisons. Sir E. Du Cane's last report on the discipline and management of these institutions is full of testimony for the more excellent plan of employing prisoners on less monotonous and more productive work. There is a military prison at Brixton, and here the governor perceives a steady amelioration in the conduct of his prisoners. He attributes this improvement in a great degree to the pursuit of industries which improve their bodily and mental health.—London News.

A Curiously Made Button.

A curious button was made about a century ago and worn by the English dandies of the period. It consisted of polished brass, and was ruled with lines so fine as to be almost microscopic. The roughness of the surface thus obtained broke the reflection of the light falling on it and gave it prismatic colors. The beauty of mother of pearl and its iridescent brilliancy are believed to be produced by three plates overlapping each other unevenly, and thus they disperse the light as they reflect it.—The Argonaut.

English Newspaper Enterprise.

An evening newspaper in an English town determined to beat its rivals on the report of the great foot race between Hutchins and Gent, had its account written up beforehand and put in type, with blanks left for the name of the winner and other essential details, to be filled in later. Instead of the race there was a great riot on the grounds, but the paper got the news too late and came out with its report of the race, blanks and all.—New York Sun.

Time Spent with the Barber.

One of the rushers of New York, who is a forced patron of the barbers, has computed the time he spends every year in a barber's chair. He is shaved three times a week, and says the average time spent in the shop is twenty minutes. He feels that this is a moderate estimate, but is willing to let it pass. "That figures up just one hour every week," he resumed, "making fifty-two hours in a year, or two and one-sixth days, spent by me every year in being shaved. Say my 'shaving life' is thirty years, I lose over two months in a barber's chair. Too much, altogether too much time."—New York Sun.

"Pilgrim's Progress" in Japanese.

In "Pilgrim's Progress," as translated into Japanese and illustrated by native artists, Christian has a close shaven Mongolian head, Vanity Fair is a feast of lanterns with popular Japanese amusements, the dungeon of Giant Despair is one of those large wooden cages in which eastern criminals are confined, and the angels waiting to receive the pilgrims on the further side of the bridgeless river are dressed in Yokohama fashion.—Chicago Herald.

Another Health Resort.

Las Parmas, on the northeast coast of Grand Canary, long known as one of the most beautiful and populous towns of the Canaries, is now extolled for its advantages as a health resort, its invigorating air being attributed to the special influence of the trade wind in that locality.—New York Star.

A factory owner in Brooklyn claims to have sold 6,000,000 pounds of licorice last year to a tobacco firm.

A large number of petrified trees have recently been discovered on the line of the Rideau canal in Canada.

RUSSIAN NEWSPAPERS.

ONLY 600 JOURNALS PUBLISHED IN THE CZAR'S ENTIRE EMPIRE.

All the Noted Newspapers Conducted by Independent Writers Have Been Abolished—Official Statistics—Why Russia Is Almost Newspaperless—Warnings.

A complete stagnation threatens the Russian press. It is not because nowadays there are no able writers in Russia. The trouble is that the present minister of the interior, Count D. Tolstoi, has succeeded in abolishing all the noted journals conducted by talented and independent writers. The list of the periodical publications that have been suppressed during the last six years is far more interesting and valuable than all the papers now living. Now there is no originality about Russian journals, no freshness and none of that domestic stirring interest which in the days gone by used to so much attract attention in all parts of the great empire.

The suspended Golos (The Voice) has left fully 50,000 subscribers without any paper to their taste, for none of them dare to defend the constitutional form of the government as The Golos did. In the sixties, when the czar-liberator tried to free the press from the iron grip of the censor, Nicholas Tchernyshevsky started The Contemporary Review, a monthly in which he taught the Russian public for the first time to conscientiously criticise the government measures. It is impossible in this country even to imagine what a whirlwind of public opinion he raised as by magic. But even the liberator could not long stand such freedom of discussion, and Tchernyshevsky was sent to Siberia for seven years and kept there for fifteen. But the martyrology of the Russian editors and writers is too long to be given here.

The number of periodicals issued in Russia amounts to a little over 600. As the population of the czar's empire is 105,000,000, it is evident then that it takes 175,000 Russian subjects to support one periodical, whereas in the United States every 4,000 souls support some publication.

RUSSIA'S 400 PERIODICALS.

Putting aside 200 periodicals published in other than the Russian language, the 400 Russian periodicals are classified as follows: Daily, 55; weekly, 85; monthly, 87; several times per week, 40; several times per year, 133. Nearly one-half the Russian periodicals are published in the capital of the empire, St. Petersburg, and one-third in seven of the largest towns, leaving for the rest of the great empire less than 100 periodicals. In the czar's country there are many towns of 10,000, 20,000, or even 40,000 inhabitants which have not a periodical of any kind. The whole of Siberia, with 4,000,000 of population, has only two newspapers and bi-monthly of a geographical society.

According to the official statistics furnished by the post department last year in Russia there passed through the mail about 77,500,000 copies of Russian periodicals of all sorts, and 4,500,000 of foreign periodicals were received in Russia. Thus it appears that there is not for each subject of the czar during a year even a single copy of any periodical, Russian or foreign.

Why is the Russian press so insignificant as to its volume? Some say it is because fully 80 per cent. of the Russians are illiterate. But if the educated and schooled Russians would read newspapers as freely as Americans do, then in Russia there would be 5,000 periodicals instead of 600. There are other causes that make the czar's country almost newspaperless. In the first place, there is no political life at all, and the industrial life there is in its embryotic state. Russians have not so much news to exchange as the people in other countries have. In the second place, the autocratic government systematically and most strenuously opposes the growth of the press. Czars have always been aware that writers, even though in the clutches of censors and under political supervision, are apt to think for themselves, to argue and to criticise. Thus they develop in themselves and in their readers the qualities most decidedly objectionable in imperial subjects. Every job printer in Russia must procure a police certificate of good character and furnish bonds, and every publisher, besides these qualifications, must maintain an imperial inspector at his own establishment.

In Russia every editor of prominence must pass a part of his life in prison. If we add to that the fatal ministerial warnings, prohibition of inserting advertisements, heavy fines and suspension, we shall wonder not that there are so few periodicals, but that among Russians there are men and women ready to enter the career of journalist, which ranks in danger next to that of conspirator.—Moscow Letter.

A Tough Sort of Animal.

A brutal looking slungshot was fished out by the sergeant. It was made of a clump of lead fastened on to an iron scraper, such as is used on shipboard. A handle of twisted copper wire gave a good grip. The sharp iron edges of the scraper projected on each side of the lead, and added the advantages of a knife to its other dangerous qualities. A more terrible example of fiendish ingenuity could hardly be devised.

"That was taken from a bucko sailor," said the sergeant.

"What sort of an animal is that?" inquired the reporter.

"Well, a mighty tough one. You don't see many of them now. The steam vessels have driven them out; but they used to be very plenty, in the Fourth ward especially. They always dressed alike summer and winter. They all wore heavy woolen comforters around their necks, no matter how warm it was. They were the toughest human beings I ever saw in all my experience. They would sleep on a hard pavement with the thermometer below zero and get up the next day as fresh and chipper as though they had been reclining on beds of down in a cozy, well heated bed room.

"I remember one of them who came near killing a mate of mine in the Fourth. The sailor was drunk and abusive. The policeman tried to run him in, and in about two seconds he was standing on his head in the gutter and the fellow was whaling him with his own club. Fortunately other officers came to his rescue. It took six of them to get the fellow in, and they tore every stitch of clothing from his body before they reached the police station. Every one of them bore some mark of the affray. That fellow's muscles were as hard as iron."

"Why did they call them bucko sailors?" inquired the reporter.

"I don't know. It was some slang term. They belonged on the Liverpool packets."—New York Sun.

Robert Garrett and His Tailor.

Dress is with Mr. Garrett a consideration of the highest importance. In this direction he steers with skillful discrimination between the gaudy and the somber. His taste is fastidious, and his every garment must be in the latest fashion and cut with the greatest precision to the lines of his figure. His clothing is connected with supreme regard for the smallest details, and his wardrobe is extensive. As a matter of fact, he has nearly 100 different suits of clothes. They are all new and can be jumped into in a jiffy, no matter how great the exigencies of the occasion. They range from the claw hammer coat to the Russian shooting jacket, and the pantaloons are a veritable symphony in wearing apparel. Mr. Garrett's tailor has his shop in New York. This personage keeps the railroad president constantly in receipt of samples of the latest styles of goods. So soon as he finds anything to please his fancy he wires his tailor a few days before a contemplated trip to New York to make him a suit of that sample. When he reaches New York the suit is made and waiting for him at his hotel. He nearly always has his feet incased in dainty patent leathers.

Mr. Garrett's collection of hats, canes and umbrellas is practically numberless. Visitors, upon entering his house, have frequently been appalled by the immense number of hats scattered through the halls. They fall into the natural error of supposing that he is entertaining a vast delegation of his friends at dinner. Mr. Garrett always carries a cane when walking, and hardly ever neglects to adorn the lapel of his coat with a boutonniere. His favorite costume on the street is a dapper tight fitting light check suit and a Derby hat.—Baltimore Cor. Globe-Democrat.

Leland Stanford on Grape Culture.

"What do you think, governor, about the grape culture of California, and the making of wine as concerns commerce hereafter?"

"Unquestionably the grape is our greatest production. For a long time we thought it impossible in California to make good wine. Among those who had tried the experment it seemed impossible for some time to get the necessary degree of flavor and dryness. After I became governor of the state, and the vineyard interest extended, I was frequently presented with bottles and baskets of wine raised in different parts. They were so inferior that I finally stopped opening them. Among others there was an old Frenchman who had applied his experience in France to vineyard work here. He gave me some wine, which I did not open at all, and it lay in the cellar certainly ten years, and perhaps fifteen. There were some people out here who wanted to test the oldest wines we had—some English and foreign people—and, therefore, our old French friend's wine was dragged out, and when it was tasted there were exclamations of surprise and pleasure, whereupon I called for the bottle and found that it was old monsieur's wine, which I had almost forgotten. The fact was that this wine had evaporated and improved by time, and that is one of the causes of the present quality of our wines. We keep them and let them mature. The Americans knew nothing at all about wine making in the first place, and even now in the east many of them think that wine is a product to be drank as soon as it is made."—"Gath" in Cincinnati Enquirer.

A Boston Boy's Tops.

One top is named Stonewall Jackson, because of an unconquerable tendency to "ride ahead" of the rest. This name shows that "Barbara Freitchie" has stuck in the memory of at least one small boy. Another long legged top, which has a decided preference for a stationary attitude in spinning, and wears an aspect of patient, smiling dignity, is named Gen. Grant, because, its owner said, it suggested to him Gen. Grant "sitting in his window and smiling down on the children going by to church"—obviously an incident of the general's last illness which had impressed the small boy's imagination. There is a certain battered old top, seamed with lashings and perforated with hostile peg holes, which nevertheless lies very close to its owner's heart, and which proudly bears the designation, always quoted at its full length, of "Daniel Webster, the old war horse." One top has the name of Pegasus, a title which the "Listener" fondly fancied showed a classical tendency on the part of Tommy's tastes until, upon inquiry, he found that it was borrowed from the name of a highly approved locomotive on the Boston and Lowell railroad.—Boston Transcript "Listener."

Pronunciation of "Yes."

There is probably no word in the English language which is more ruthlessly corrupted in the pronunciation than this monosyllable. A party of young people were saying goodby on the corner of a street in Boston.

"May I walk with you?" asked a young man of a charmingly pretty and fresh girl. "Shall we cross the Common?"

"Ayah!" was the nonchalant reply. At least this is as nearly as the pen can do justice to the sound. It is to be presumed that the pretty young laly meant "yes," for she and her companion immediately set off in the direction indicated, but no foreigner would have guessed that the correctly written affirmative and her corruption of it were one and the same.

There are many versions of this one little word, from the "Yup" of the street boy to the inarticulate grunt of the boor, yet, after all, the combination of three letters is not difficult to pronounce.—Youth's Companion.

A South African Ostrich Farm.

The proprietor is growing ostrich feathers to adorn European and American bonnets, and employs Hottentots and Boschjesmen to assist him. The ostrich farm visited that Sunday was said to be the largest in Africa, its owner possessing over 1,000 pairs of good breeding birds. Its value must have been very great, as a bank officer informed me that the cost of a pair of birds was never less than $250, and they charge for an egg the size of an average pineapple $25.—South African Letter.

Better than Doctors' Stuff.

The doctors may all talk, and they may blow and say they can cure this and cure that, but when it comes to telling anything about a man's stomach they're not there. I have come to the conclusion that the less medicine a man puts into his stomach the better for himself. Since I have quit taking medicine I have been all right. If I had kept on putting an apothecary shop under my vest I might now be out where the birds are singing and the leaves are rustling. The best medicine for a man is a good, healthy meal. That's what I am taking now. It beats pills, and it knocks teaspoon and tablespoonfuls of nauseating stuff higher than Gilderoy's kite.—Globe-Democrat.

Napoleon on English Society.

The English appear to prefer the bottle to the society of their ladies. This is illustrated by dismissing the ladies from the table and remaining for hours to drink and intoxicate themselves. If I were in England I should certainly leave the table with the ladies. Were I an English woman I should feel very discontented at being turned out by the men to wait two or three hours while they are drinking.—Napoleon.

On Mount Katahdin's Summit.

A cone of burnished tin, twenty inches in height and twelve in diameter, has been placed on the summit of Mount Katahdin by the Bangor (Me.) Appalachian club, in order to note the distance from which the peak can be seen.—Chicago News.

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