

**THE QUEEN'S
CRUCIFIX.**

The crucifix with which Queen Victoria's name is associated has its place in the convent of the Grande Chartreuse. This may seem strange to the uninitiated, but it is true. It is a beautiful silver crucifix, and has its place among the convent's treasures. It was given by the queen to a humble Carthusian monk of English nationality when her majesty visited the Grande Chartreuse some years ago. She conversed with this monk in his cell, the conversation turning upon serious matters. The royal visit at an end, the monk saluted his sovereign, and the queen of England left the cell. Shortly afterwards the general of the Carthusians called to him, the religious in question, and handed to him a beautiful silver crucifix. It was Queen Victoria's gift to the English monk in remembrance of her visit to his cell. "Our rule forbids us to possess such things," said the superior, "but keep this beautiful crucifix by you for a time at any rate." The monk withdrew and returned almost immediately, handing his superior the crucifix with a piece of paper having the following words written upon it: "Regina dedit, regula abstulit sit nomen Domini benedictum." "The queen gave it, the rule withdraws it, may the name of the Lord be praised."—Catholic Times.

A CURIOUS SUPERSTITION.

In a former article I mentioned some curious superstitions which are still to be found among the people; but here is one of the most curious, which I happened to hear the other day. A clergyman was walking, through the outskirts of his parish one evening, when he saw one of his parishioners very busy whitewashing his cottage. The parson, pleased at these somewhat novel signs of cleanliness, called out, "Well, Jones, I see you're making your house nice and smart." With a mysterious air, Jones, who had recently taken the cottage, descended from the ladder, and slowly walked to the hedge which separated the garden from the road. "That's not 'xactly the reason why I'm a doing of this here job," he whispered, "but the last two couples as lived in this 'ere cottage 'ad twins; so I says to my missus, I'll take an' whitewash the place, so as there mayn't be no infection. Ye see, sir, as 'ow we got ten of 'em already." Whether the whitewashing was effectual or not, I have not been able to ascertain.—Cornhill Magazine.

RATS AND UNSEAWORTHY SHIPS.

The old superstition, which has grown into an adage, that rats desert a ship which is no longer seaworthy, is still an article of faith with the fresh-water sailors of the great lakes. Sundry well-authenticated instances seem to justify this belief. The Vernon was a three-

master, which did a tramp business. Built in Buffalo in 1850, she was for many years regarded as one of the best craft on the lakes. Late in the fall, about fifteen years ago, she unloaded a cargo of grain in Buffalo and reloaded with package freight for Chicago. She was about to sail one rough November night. Just before the lines were let off, one of the seamen saw a rat run over the hawsers to the wharf. In a moment another was seen. The seaman called others of the crew to see the unusual sight. Between fifty and seventy-five rats poured out of the ship and took refuge along the wharf. The crew refused to sail, but the captain was obstinate, shipped a fresh crew, and sailed forthwith. The ship was lost with all hands. The Idaho, a fine passenger steamer, foundered in Lake Erie in November, 1897. Out of her crew of twenty-one men nineteen were drowned. Just before the vessel left her moorings a swarm of rats crawled over the hawsers to the wharf. This was known to part of the crew, and four men deserted at the last moment. Similar stories are told of other wrecked vessels, and an old lake man says: "It has been proved a hundred times. There are a whole lot of things in this world that we don't know anything about. Rats live in the very fibres of a ship. They see what we can't see. When the timbers are hollowed and the seams open, these little animals know that the ship is unsafe, and they desert it."—Household Words.

THE MAGAZINES.

The January Scribner's opens with an article which gives one insight into one of the most interesting personalities now before the public. This is Theodore Roosevelt's story of his Rough Riders. Mr. Roosevelt's every movement seems to be distinguished by energy; he comes against a subject with a distinct jar; "shock tactics" was what he most exercised his command in. His story is very pleasant reading, though it is apt to make one wish for out-door life. His catalog of cow-boys is good enough for an American Homer.

By way of an odd contrast, a story by Richard Harding Davis comes next, after a page or two of which you turn back to the other man for a breath of real air. It contains one or two of those peculiar expressions in the French language to which Mr. Davis now and then treats himself. It is always gratifying to know that your author has been abroad, but one could wish that, if the alternative cannot be arranged, the Academiciens would learn Mr. Davis' kind of French, so that uniformity would at least be secured.

Mr. Robert Grant follows with one of his Philosopher papers. Mr. Grant is harder reading than he once was, but he does himself proud by quoting Dante in the original. We understand that Boston can go no further than that.

**NON-APPROPRIATION FOR STATE
BOARD.**

In the Omaha Daily Herald of Thursday morning, February 25, 1875, will be found the following from its Lincoln correspondent at the legislature:

"A letter from J. Sterling Morton, president of the state board, was read in the house last night asking that not a cent be appropriated to the State Board of Agriculture this year, that they had not asked and did not need any appropriation."

That was true then. It is true now after twenty-four years. The state board ought not to have one cent. If a state fair can not pay its own expenses it should not be held.

There is no good reason for bestowing tax-raised revenues upon either state or county fairs. All laws permitting such misuse of public funds ought to be repealed.

BOOK NOTICE.

Mr. D. Lange, instructor in nature study in the public schools of St. Paul, Minnesota, has prepared a textbook entitled, "The Handbook of Nature Study," published by the MacMillan company, in New York and London.

The plan of the book suggests that children of the common school course should receive instruction about and be taught to observe the birds, insects, trees, shrubs, and flowers to be found in the region in which they live; learning so far as possible from lessons received either during out-of-door rambles or from material brought into the school-room. There can be no question as to the desirability of having such a course of instruction introduced into our schools that interest in the study of nature may be awakened and knowledge gained and prized.

The book contains illustrations and helpful suggestions to teachers, with numerous references to works that will furnish needful and best information upon subjects to be brought before the children.

The book is admirably adapted for the purpose for which it is designed.

February 11, 1875, was a very exciting date in the chronology of republicanism in Nebraska when a joint resolution was introduced by Senator Spaun of Omaha to expunge from the journals the impeachment record in the case of David Butler, deposed executive of the state.

A resolution requiring a per capita assessment of all the members of the republican party who helped nominate and elect Bartley and Moore to office to reimburse the state for their defalcations, would now be exciting "as works meet for repentance" can be. As soon as the legislature has been organized it is thought that remorseful republicans will provide in some way for returning to the people all the money which has been lost through republican officials. Such an act of conscience would be very proper and perfectly just.