

THE PRISONER.

A man's skull is his lifelong jail.
Behind his prison bars,
From his eye wind does the soul
Peep at the earth and stars;
But unlike jail of wood or stone
His prisoner ever dwells alone.

Though through its front doors perfumed
gales
Are blown from glens of gladness,
And through its back doors music strains
Roll in waves of madnes—
And though he hear and heed each tone,
The prisoner still must dwell alone.

Though past the wind wail of the jail
Sweep scenes of solemn splendor,
And through the doors float hymns of joy
Or dirges deep and tender,
The prisoner hears the mirth and moan
But in his jail he dwells alone.

No lover ever knows the soul
He loves in all its sweetness;
The fullest love, however strong,
Is marred by the prison's door;
No heart is ever fully known,
The prisoner ever dwells alone.

—(Sam Walter Foss, in Yankee Blade.)

HOW HE SETTLED WITH GRINGO.

BY BELLE HUNT.

"Back in the seventies," said a Texas merchant who was "on East" buying goods, "when I was just a boy, I went to investigate a creditor of theirs out in the southwestern part of the State, my instructions being to collect the claim or run an attachment on the concern."

"At the end of a tedious run on the train, I found myself in P—, the nearest railroad station to P—, the town of my delinquent customer, which, upon inquiry, I found to be seventeen miles west, on the Mexican border."

"In my prowling about —, whom should I run across but my old friend, Bill Scott, captain of the Texas Rangers, who asked me what I was doing out there. I frankly stated my business, and asked if he knew the man I was going to settle with."

"Know Gringo Perez? Scott repeated. 'Well, I reckon I do—that is by reputation.' He's a regular fire-eater. Why, man alive, Gringo Perez has fine hair like you on toast for breakfast. He is a Greaser, you know, whose fellow-citizens nicknamed him 'Gringo'—their term of contempt for an American—because he gave up sheep-shearing and horse-stealing and took to the slower but surer business of merchandise. He's a holy terror—adds a notch to his pistol-belt every six months and two during election! Pay? Why, he don't pay for anything, and as for your attachment, you'd as well try to serve attachment papers on the devil for back bills on brimstone!"

"Say, Rice, I think I'd better ride over with you. We are making this headquarters while we make a roundup of this season's crop of horse thieves, road agents and fence-cutters in this part of the country, and I can leave word for the boys to join me at P— when they come in this evening. We might come in handy if you get into any trouble."

"It is needless to say that I accepted Scott's offer with avidity, though I have him to understand that I had not undertaken to adjust that claim under the impression that I was going to a Sunday school picnic and would need to wear my blood shirt."

"It was about noon when we set out for P—, I riding on Scott's 'extras,' a wiry, nimble-footed little broncho. I had taken the precautionary measure of getting out my attachment papers before we started—which I still hoped to use only as a last resort in bringing Mister Fire-Eater to terms."

"It was close upon 4 o'clock in the afternoon when we rode into P—, a typical Tex-Mex border town. Most of the houses were one-story adobe, straggling along either side of the main street, which was nothing more or less than the continuation of the wagon road from one settlement to another. There were bunches of chaparral here and there about the outskirts of the town, and a dense thicket of it lay about a mile away to the west. Five of the nine business houses had 'saloon' in big letters over the door, and calmly and peacefully confronted me, when we got off our horses, was the sign 'G. Perez, Dealer in Dry Goods, Clothing, Hats, Caps, Millinery, Boots, Shoes, Notions, Groceries, Hides, Wool, Agricultural Implements, etc.,' which covered the entire gable end of the unpainted, weather-boarded store."

"Tied to the racks on either side of the public well, were eight or ten ponies, their flanks dripping with the big Mexican saddles, which varied their monotonous duration by biting and kicking at each other while their indifferent riders loafed on the steps and stoops of the stores, telling yarns, smoking cigarettes, playing poker and reading the county papers, which were handed out, regardless of address, by the obliging postmaster."

"We found Perez in. He scooped out, weighed and tied up a dose's worth of sugar for a slab-sided girl, while I introduced myself and stated my business. This professional duty finished and the lid put back carefully on the sugar barrel, he casually informed me that my house might go to —, and that he'd pay when he got ready, and not before."

"Naturally, this reception did not tend to increase my amiability, and I promptly turned on my heel and went out, intending to put my attachment papers in the hands of the deputy-sheriff and instruct him to serve them at once."

"But the deputy turned pale at the mention of serving papers on Gringo Perez, kindly explaining to me that his present incumbency of office was the result of his 'never, under no circumstances, meddlin' with other folks' business."

"Of course, I did not attempt to gain say so obvious a statement, and was just taking a mental inventory of my ammunition, preliminarily to a man-to-man settlement with Mister Gringo, when Scott overtook me at the door of the deputy's office, and hearing the new turn given to my situation, said:

"That's all right. I'll serve your paper. The captain of the Rangers is virtually a sheriff anywhere in the State—at his own discretion, you know!" laughing and giving me the wink."

"By George, old man, I exclaimed, grasping his hand, I am beginning to look upon you as a 'providential intervention' in my favor on this trip!" and we walked on together over to Gringo's store."

"He was getting on toward dusk, and Gringo was in the back part of the room looking over his books. Scott and I both saw that we had him at our disadvantage,

and before he knew what had happened, Scott was reading off the paper at the rate of sixty miles an hour. The man seemed stunned for a minute, then, suddenly collecting himself, he whirled round, ran his hand in a drawer, and whipped out a revolver, but before he got a good grip on it, I knocked it out of his hand, straddled it on the floor, and covering him with my own said: 'Come, come, Mister Fire-Eater, none of that! That isn't what we want you to get out of that drawer. A little cash would make it easier for both of us.'

"Like all bullies, the fellow was a bluff and coward. He saw we had him, and he cooled down, standing sullenly by while Scott finished the paper, and then ransacked the miscellaneous stock on the counters and found some tacks and a hammer, with which he fastened the notice on the outside of the door. Then, rejoicing me, Scott kicked the fallen pistol under one of the counters, and, getting behind Gringo, requested him to precede us out of the store. This done, he locked the door, put the key in his pocket, and we then bade our host a pleasant good evening, and then walked over to the racks to get our horses."

"I don't think it would be a bad thing for our health to get out of here as soon as we can," Scott said. "The boys are mighty late getting in. They may be in a skirmish somewhere."

"We watered our horses, mounted and rode down the main street. As we passed a little shanty close to the road Scott sniffed and said: 'That smells like fried ham and eggs, don't it? Let's stop and have a snack.'"

"We alighted, hitched our horses behind the house in an angle made by a shed room which served as the kitchen, and, going inside, seated ourselves at one of the two old cloth-covered tables, and gave our order to an old man, who filled the joint and respective positions of proprietor, cook and waiter."

"While we were eating we were interrupted by the entrance of a girl, whom I recognized as the customer in at Gringo's when we first called on him. She had an old shawl over her head, between the close-fitted edges of which her small, intelligent face peered out, looking strikingly. She could not have been more than 14 years old, yet her face had all of the shrewdness and strength of a woman's. Daring past us she made a hasty survey of the kitchen, and turning, asked: 'What's to be?'

"'Gone to the well,' I said, thinking she meant our host, and half rising and smiling, in spite of myself, added, after a thought for the county town storekeeper, 'Can I do anything for you, miss?'

"She came close to the table, and, leaning on the back of Scott's chair, she said nervously:

"'You're better clear out, quick! Dad an' the boys is on your trail. He an' maw's hide 'll git it fur you's doins.'"

"We understood in a flash that she was warning us against Gringo."

"Who are you, child?" Scott asked, turning and taking her hand, 'why do you come to save us?'

"'I ain't kearin' so much about savin' you's as gettin' him tuk up,' she answered seriously. 'Still, I didn't want him to git the drop on yer—that ain't fair.'"

"She watched the door furtively, and gathered up the ends of the shawl as though for flight as she went on: 'He's my step-maw, an' a meaner cuss never lived. Me an' maw'd a lef' him long ago, but he would kill us if he ever ketcht up with us. The only way to do is to git him tuk up for some uv his deviltry, and put in the penitentiary, whar he can't git at us. But, honest, you feller's better vamoose. You ain't got no time to lef'.'"

"'He's gone after the Cowles boys, an' I heard him tell Dick Sims an' them to jine 'em, back that backer or the calibosee.' She pointed to the rear of the house. 'Some of 'em is goin' to lay fur yer behin', an' yer can't git out 'n town no ways. You better git a move on yer, honest.'"

"She started to the door, then shrank back. 'That's the Cowles boys, now! she exclaimed. 'Dad ain't far off. Ef he sees me I'm a goner.'"

"By this time Scott and I were on our feet, and the proprietor came in with his bucket of water. His manner led us to suppose—and hope—that there was nothing unusual going on in the street. Setting the bucket on the shelf, he wiped his hands on the tail of his coat, and taking a plug of tobacco out of his pants pocket, bit off a chunk as he remarked, 'Well, ef I could see, this was the statement of an unfattering fact. 'Don't bolt, Rice,' Scott said quietly, his words accompanied by the rapidly revolving six clicks of his pistol, 'the boys will be in any minute—we're all right!'

"'Let's get to our horses,' I said, 'and make a dash for the thickets.'"

"'Stay where you are!' he answered, and his voice had the ring of the born commander."

"What are you going to do? I asked, nettled."

"'Whip the whole town!' he replied, beginning to barricade the back door with barrels of sugar and flour."

"Meanwhile the child stood there, the shawl dropped back from her head and shoulders, her little white face a study of disinterested curiosity and approbation. Her heavy-lidded black eyes gazed with excitement, and her thin-arched nostrils contracted and distended like a restive pony."

"'I reckon you're is gwine to ketch him?' she said complacently. Just here my attention was diverted to Tobe, whose sir name of Hartsfield we had not yet learned. Going to a rack over the door between the two rooms, he took down an old army musket, and a raw hide belt containing powder and shot horns. Whipping out the ramrod he swined it twice up and down the barrel, blowing down it afterward. Then, whirling around facing us, he slammed the gun down on the table and said: 'Gentlemen, that's my weapons, and here's me, at yer service. I don't know what yer been up to, but I'm with yer! I'm glad uv an excuse to chase this settlement anyhow. But ain't enough excitement gwine on here fur me. I want to move fader west whar folks is got some spunk! an' I'd jist as lief defend my principles on yer'ses side as enybodies else's!'

"Our formal acceptance of the arms of our unexpected ally was prevented by the whizz of a ball past the window, and Scott's springing to the door and calling out:

"'Throw down your arms and surrender in the name of the law!'

"'Han' us over that fine-hair, an' we will,' came Gringo's voice."

"What have you against him?" asked Scott."

"'He's too blamed smart, an' wears a

stake-an'-ridder shirt' answered a voice from the rear of the mob, followed by a roar of laughter, which was suddenly changed to one of fury when it was discovered who Scott was."

"That's Bill Scott, the bell-wether uv the Rangers!" howled one, 'le's capture him!'

"'Yes, he's strayed off too fur from the fold this time!' yelled another; 'le's shear him!'

"'Him, an' the fine-hair! 'lud purty ride!' uv the same rail, won't they?' joked another, and so the fun might have gone on until they forgot their blood-thirst, had not Gringo himself pushed to the front swinging his pistol around his head and yelling, 'stop yer foolin', boys! I'm here fur business. I've been insulted an' my rights as an citizen uv this State an' county interfered with. All that is in favor uv personal rights, an' hon'es deals, come an' help me whoop the stuffin' out'n these smart Ellocks!'

"This strange was welcomed by a murderous look, and a click what sounded like a hundred pistols and Winchester."

"Stand your ground," said Scott to me and Tobe."

"'All right, Cap,' answered Tobe, as he rammed awad of tobacco into his mouth and hitched his powder and shot horns around handy. The old man fairly danced from side to side of the half open door, as eager as a boy who has lighted the fuse of his first Fourth of July rocket."

"'Gimme lief, Cap; gimme lief!' he chuckled, bracing his shoulder against the gun."

"'Wait a minute; wait a minute!' Scott said, putting one hand on the old man's shoulder and cooping the other around his ear, leaning toward the north and listening intently. A click what sounded like a hundred pistols and Winchester."

"That's the boys!' he said. 'I hear their horses feet!' Then flinging the door wide open he called out once more: 'Throw down your arms! I command you in the name of the State of Texas!'

"Their answer was a volley of bullets which Scott returned by thrusting out his pistol arm and emptying the six chambers into their faces. This gave the signal to me and the old man, who kept the stream hot from the side of the door, until the next eight minutes, till the Rangers came. But, I tell you, they were the longest eight minutes I ever counted. The old man was in his glory. The way he poured powder, wads, bullets and caps into Miss Betsy and fired them out, was equalled only by the way he ejected one quid of tobacco, and bit off another. He took it as a matter of official interference that the Rangers should come up and take the fight out of our hands. He sent his last load at random through the air, and, going to the buck-stood leaning on Miss Betsy while he gulped down two successive dippers of water."

"Some fools is allers meddlin', he said. 'Them Rangers better be tendin' to their business an' let us ten to ourn! It'd be the makin' uv P— to hev Gringo Perez an' his gang laid out by three men an' a gal!'

"This called our attention to the child, whom we had utterly forgotten. Looking around I found her sitting on one of the barrels against the back door, swinging her feet and calmly awaiting results."

"Do you want to go home, sissie? I asked, standing beside her perch. She set her little teeth and shook her head."

"No, I don't! Dad n' I kin kill me for shore! He seen me in here an' knows I giv him erway!"

"That's all right, Chee!" the old man said. 'You kin come an' go out West with me, an' be my gal!'

"No, I can't! answered she. 'Thar ain't no schools out ther, an' I ought ter be educated!'

"Our further family discussion was interrupted by the return of Scott, who informed us that Gringo and his ring-leaders were lodged in the calaboose, and the rag-tag and bob-tail of the gang had taken to the brush."

"Scott, and the group of citizens who accompanied him, concurred in support of Chee's proposition, that she ought to be educated, and a purse was made up, and there, providing for the child and her mother out of reach of Gringo, when he should again be at large." —(New York Recorder.)

Japanese Love of Flowers.

The term *hana*, used by the Japanese, includes the blossom-clad stems and branches of flowering plants and trees, and even the leaves and branches of flowerless trees and shrubs. The blossom is regarded as but one detail of the composition, of little artistic value dissociated from the parent stem and from the lines of growth which impart to it its character. The branches of certain evergreens and other flowerless trees and plants hold the highest rank, for example, as the pine, the cedar, and the maple.

The flower sellers in Japan invariably carry more bunches of greenery than of flowers, and the tiny vases placed before the innumerable Buddhas, in wayside shrines, have seldom bright blossoms, but always sprigs of cryptomeria, maple or shrub branches; and it is astonishing how pretty and artistic a Japanese gardener will make a bunch of green that we would scorn.

An artistic gentleman who has been in Japan some time said that, at first, he often thought he could improve the appearance of a basket or a vase of flowers after the gardener had brought them in, so he would add a touch of color, or take away a bit of green; but he invariably found he bungled, for the first arrangement was better, and he soon learned not to alter it.

In going up the mountains or along the level rice-fields, the bright coolies quickly see if their jirinkisha occupant is fond of flowers, and in a very careless and haphazard way, apparently, will pluck a blossom here and there, and soon present an artistic bouquet. The love for flowers and their arrangement seem to be natural characteristics of the entire Japanese nation. Tiny children, who can scarcely toddle about on their wooden clogs, have, in nine cases out of ten, a bunch of flowers or greenery clutched tightly in their small fingers; and they find beauty in the commonest wayside weed.

—(Demorest's Monthly.)

Refused to Be "Shook."

In a recent German newspaper two curious announcements appear. In one number is the following notice: "I hereby declare, since the written notice of the 8th of August, 1892, and notwithstanding her refusal to accept the same, my betrothal with Fraulein Emma Zeigler is null and void. Richard Ziegler."

The next number of the paper the following appeared: "I hereby declare that with respect to the advertisement of the annulment of my betrothal, written and proclaimed with Herr Ziegler, I do not agree. I am, and still intend to remain, his betrothed. Emma Ziegler." —(New York World.)

SOMEWHAT STRANGE.

ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS OF EVERY DAY LIFE.

Queer Facts and Thrilling Adventures Which Show That Truth Is Stranger Than Fiction.

THE INHABITANTS of the northeastern part of Asia use a mushroom to promote intoxication. It is known as the fly-down mushroom, and is also very abundant in the United States. The fungus is gathered in the hottest part of the year, and is then hung up by a string in the air to dry. Some are dried before gathered, and these are stated to be far more narcotic than those artificially preserved. Usually the fungus is rolled up like a bolus, and taken without chewing, for, if masticated, it is said to disorder the stomach. One large or two small fungus produce a state of intoxication for one day. The effect is the same as that produced on taking a quantity of spirits or wine, except it is delayed from one to two hours after the bolus has been swallowed. At first it produces very cheerful emotions of the mind. It renders some persons exceedingly active, and is a stimulant to muscular exertion. Thus, if a person be tired, he wishes to step over a straw or a small stool, and in a few minutes he jumps suddenly to clear a low hedge or the trunk of a tree. It keeps those fond of music perpetually singing, and under its influence a talkative person can neither keep secrets nor silence; hence it is a source of danger to ladies and politicians.

There was an exhibition at Dunbar's canning factory at Bay St. Louis, Miss., a great curiosity in the shape of a fish, called a devil fish or butterfly fish, or sea bull-bat fish. Captain Eugene Favre, of the schooner Saint Peter, captured the big fellow in four feet of water in Cat Island spit. He was shot five times before being killed, and it took six stalwart men to manage him. His weight is estimated at 3000 pounds. His measure was taken by Captain Favre, of the Saint Peter, and he was found to be seven feet long, with seven feet in width, and a mouth two feet; between the eyes it measured seven feet, and from tips of wings thirteen feet. The captain of the Saint Peter says he has been on the water for twenty-two years, and never saw anything like his capture, and that this fish is the first of its kind ever seen in these waters. The fish drew a large crowd to the factory, where the Saint Peter was anchored, and he saw the crowd would season several barrels of sweet potatoes, and feed the employees of the factory for several weeks.

The penny-in-the-slot machine has been adapted to the use of the elephants at the Manchester, England, "Zoo." When a visitor gives the elephant a penny the animal drops it in a slot and gets a biscuit. There is no use in trying to deceive the animals by half-pennies. Those despised coins are always flung in the face of the baby. The visitor day a visitor gives the elephant a number of half-pennies in succession, but all were thrown back. The animal was then given two half-pennies at the same time. The creature's demeanor changed. For more than five minutes he held the two coins in his trunk rubbing them together and seeming to be pondering deeply. At last he dropped the two half-pennies in the box, and with the result that the combined weight gave him a desired biscuit, at which he gobbled about in a manner which exhibited extravagant delight.

MARSHY LYLES, an old colored woman, who lives two miles below Sylvania, Ga., and is now over seventy years of age, started to school for the first time the other morning. For three score years and ten she has walked this footstool in intellectual darkness, and there is both humor and wisdom in the picture of this old woman wending her way to the high school house in the woods. Marshy has been blessed with a numerous progeny and has children and grandchildren in numbers, and even great grandchildren to call her name. She has always been a lover of the Scripture and her object in starting to school now, she says, is that it may aid her in studying the Bible in the days to come. Every morning with dinner bucket and a book in hand she goes along with the children to the log cabin, and there pours over the mystic letters which seem hard enough indeed to her fettered mind.

In May, 1887, Adelia Hubbell of Greenfield Hill, (Conn.) went out to walk on her mother's estate. As she walked along she saw a large and ugly-looking ram owned by a neighbor, Miss Agnes Murray. Miss Hubbell, instead of climbing a tree or a stone wall and hurling recriminations at the beast, advanced toward him. Whereupon the ram lowering his head charged at Miss Hubbell. There were no witnesses to the collision, but judging from the result it was a tremendous one, for Miss Hubbell fell for a long time, and the ram got his head tangled in her skirts and died of suffocation. When Miss Hubbell recovered she sued Miss Murray for damages and Miss Murray began a counter suit for the loss of the ram. Judge Hall at Bridgeport decided that Miss Hubbell was entitled to \$1750 damages, but Miss Murray probably won't get a cent.

A most extraordinary story comes from Boise City, Idaho, which is said to be well authenticated. It says that while three travelers were at the upper end of Lake Chelan recently one of them went into the water to bathe. He was seized by the foot by a marine monster and his screams attracted the attention of his companions, who came to his rescue. They pulled him ashore, the monster hanging to his foot. It had legs and hind legs were large ribbed wings. The men tried hard to tear the monster from the foot of their companion, and finally tried fire, which had the effect of causing the animal to rise suddenly into the air, taking its victim along, and finally landing in the lake, where both disappeared from sight.

The manager of a big store on Sixth avenue, New York, says there is a regular company of women who do nothing else but patrol the stores on the lookout for articles and money lost by shoppers. Most of these women, he says, are known to the floor-walkers and detectives, but as they break no laws and occasionally make small purchases, they are not molested. At 6 o'clock each night, according to his story, or when they meet at their "office" and make a general division of their spoils, to the unique band it is no uncommon thing to divide \$100 worth of goods as the proceeds of a day's persistent search. Of course they closely examine the personal columns of the papers, and if a large enough reward is offered the persons who lose things stand a pretty good chance of having them returned.

RECENTLY an instance of canine heroism took place near Kilkenny, Ireland. A farmer named Lawrence Archer went crazy and attacked his wife with a pen-knife, stabbing her in more than a dozen places and swearing that he would cut her into ribbons. The household dog rushed to the rescue. He flew from the madman's throat and tore him away from his victim. The madman fought wildly with the dog, striving to stab him with the knife, but the thick hair of the animal turned the knife aside while his sharp teeth tore the man's throat till the blood gushed out in torrents. At last the madman got himself clear of the dog and rushed out of the house into the woods, and it is probably dead of exposure and loss of blood.

A WONDERFUL story reaches us from Japan of a snake swallower who has outdone all forerunners in the art. Saito Tora-no-suke was one day breaking up some land, when he came upon a snake three feet long. Seizing it in his hands he called out to his companions that if they would give him \$4 he would swallow it whole. The snake was scarce in Japan it is stated that the money was at once subscribed, the on-lookers not believing that the bet could be won. But true to his word Saito put the head of the creature into his mouth and swallowed the whole three feet of snake without difficulty. The punishment of his temerity was swift and fell. While his companions were gazing at him, speechless with horror and astonishment, he was seen to change color and fall to the ground in great pain, and he died in a few minutes.

It will be a surprise to many to learn, says a correspondent of the Horticultural Times, that after all, the most important function of the bee's sting is not stinging. "I have long been convinced that the bees put the finishing touch on their artistic cell work by the dexterous use of their stings, and during this final finishing stage of the process of honey-making the bees inject a minute portion of formic acid into the honey. This is in reality the poison of their sting. This formic acid gives to honey its peculiar flavor, and also imparts to it its keeping qualities. The stings really are an exquisitely contrived little trowel, with which the bee finishes off and caps the cells, which are filled with honey with honey. While doing this the formic acid passes from the poison bag, exudes, drop by drop, from the point of the sting, and the beautiful work is finished."

GEORGE JONES, a woodchopper, engaged in trimming sycamore trees in the centre of San Bernardino, Cal., observed hanging over him two shining objects. He climbed higher and found them to be in cans of glass, and he secured them, brought them to the ground, and on opening them found that they contained gold pieces. The contents amounted to \$1,900. Jones, though a poor daily laborer, was not tempted by the glittering heap, but brought the treasure to the bank at San Bernardino and deposited it for identification by the owner. The money had evidently been hanging in the tree but a short time, as a week ago the same tree was partly trimmed.

Two interpreters were needed in a trial in the Court of Criminal Correction, St. Louis, Michael Shuler being able to speak only German, and his wife only French. They were married in Switzerland in 1890, and came to this country about a year ago. Being poor they taught their baby with Shuler's sister, who lives on a farm in Louisiana, and both went to work, the wife securing employment as a servant girl. The testimony developed that they had lived together over a year without being able to understand each other.

There is a girl in San Francisco, Cal., who is rosy-cheeked and bright-eyed and never ill, and whose white and shapely limbs are always as cold as ice and dripping with sweat. When anyone complains of pain or headache, this girl pusses back her sleeves and lays her cold, wet hands on the aching head. The patient feels a queer, creepy, shivery sensation crawling down the back; the throbbing pain ceases and the headache is gone.

A STEER and a colt were put loose the other day in A. V. Turner's pasture near Springfield, Ohio, and the two animals fought a terrible battle. The colt kicked one of the steer's horns loose. The fight lasted for over half an hour, the colt finally becoming weak from the loss of blood, when the steer dashed its one horn into its side and killed it.

A LOCAL paper tells of a remarkable union funeral that took place the other day at Black River Falls, Penn. Three different families met at the Lutheran Church at the same hour, each with a dead relative, and none of the families related. One sermon was preached for them all, and then the procession was formed with the hearse, mourners and friends following indiscriminately.

The Opal.

There are three varieties of this famous gem. Ranking first comes the Oriental; as second in value, the fire; and, lastly, the common opal. The Arabian opal, a precious treasure, as expressed by the ancients, can hardly be believed. Nonpareil, a Roman Senator, absolutely preferred exile to parting with a brilliant opal of the size of a filbert, which was earnestly coveted by Marc Antony. An opal ranking as third among the finest in the world is described as having three longitudinal bands of the hardest kind, from the uppermost of which rose three perpendicularly the most resplendent flames. It measured nine inches by six.

In the last century a very round and brilliant opal was the property of the amateur Fleury. Another, said to be fascinatingly vivid, was owned by a noted French financier. These two were regarded as marvels of beauty among the French, and were valued at enormous prices. On account of the thousand's of the stone, engraving is always difficult, and often impossible. A head of Sappho engraved upon a "presumable opal," an antique, has been highly valued and carefully studied by experts in gem lore. It is catalogued, so we read, among the treasures of a princely home. —[Harper's Bazar.]

A Message From the Stars.

A meteorite weighing ten tons was found imbedded in the soil near New Castle, Col., about nine o'clock on the morning of November 29th. It was very warm, when touched by wondering fingers, and bore other evidences of having been a long journey through space. It was lying very still, also, when found, and showed no disposition to leave its bed when called on by curious visitors. It was the only stellar specimen of its kind to be found in the neighborhood of New Castle. Nobody saw it fall; but the warm and restful condition of the meteorite when found should satisfy all real scientists that it had come a long distance and was very tired—that in point of fact it was dead, and the purview of real science, a chunk of Bick's comet. Welcome, O chunk, to New Castle. —[Frank Leslie's Weekly.]

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

COUNTRIES that have invidiously allowed their forest lands to be denuded eventually come to the conclusion that such recklessness involves most serious penalties. This appears to be the case in certain parts of Russia, where severe droughts cause great distress and injury. These droughts are ascribed to the gradual denudation of the country around the principal rivers and to the removal of obstacles in the river beds. Both these factors combine in causing the rain water and the melted snow to pass off more rapidly and the low-water level of the rivers therefore becomes abnormally and permanently low. To remedy this ponds are to be dug or built up in the sources from which the rivers are fed, and on the plains long banks are to be raised, against which a snow-drifts will be formed. The snow thus accumulated will melt more slowly than the thinner masses elsewhere, and will form a valuable supplement to the water supply at the period of the year when the droughts have hitherto obtained. This is simply a wholesale adaptation of a practice that has long been attributed to the provident Russians, who are in the habit of using the banks to intercept the snow. The walls thus formed are said frequently to serve as the family water supply up to the month of August.

The average of European fortunes is below that of England and this country. Prince Schwartzberg, the richest man in Austria, with 170 square miles of territory, was said to have left \$55,000,000 when he died four years ago. There are two or three noblemen in Germany who own over 100 square miles, but the largest German income is Herr Krupp's, of \$1,000,500, and the next, a little smaller, is the income of the Berlin Rothschild. The Orleans family is said to have a fortune of \$150,000,000. If the Orleans were poorer, the chance of seeing one of them on the throne would be better. The Duke of Galliera, a Franco-Italian railway magnate, left \$55,000,000 in France and \$15,000,000 in Italy in the past decade, and this is by far the largest personal fortune mentioned in Latin Europe. Ten years ago M. Leroy Beaulieu, a high authority, estimated that in Paris, with its 2,500,000 people, only 8,000 persons spent over \$10,000 a year. There are probably three times this number in New York.

A LIFE insurance company whose advice, under the circumstances, may be taken as a sincere, tells its clients that the golden rule in cold weather is to keep the extremities warm. The first and most important rule for the carrying out of this idea is never to be tightly shod. Boots or shoes that fit closely prevent the free circulation of the blood by pressure, but when, on the contrary, they do not embrace the foot too firmly, the space left between the shoe and the stocking has a good supply of warm air. The second rule is never to sit in damp shoes. It is often supposed that unless shoes are positively wet it is unnecessary to change them while the feet are at rest. This is a great fallacy, for when the least dampness is absorbed into the sole, in its evaporation, it cools the feet, and is dangerous to health. This can easily be proved by trying the experiment of neglecting the rule. The feet will be found cold and damp after a few minutes, although on taking off the shoe and examining it, it will appear to be quite dry.

The seamen of the new navy are not the sailors the men of the navy in the past were. The modern warships are almost totally mastless and sailless creations. The masts are not used alone for the few sails, but coigns of vantage on which are located the machine guns, those death-dealing deck-makers which play havoc with the crew of an enemy. The Gatling gun is in use on our war vessels for fighting from aloft. These pieces, which can discharge, when required, 1,200 shots a minute, are intended to disable or kill the enemy's crew. Rapid fire guns are not of this class. They are used to defend battle ships from the rapidly-moving torpedo boats. A rapid-fire armor penetrating gun is a necessity, and the development of this arm of warfare has progressed so far that the largest of these pieces is six inches in caliber, is provided with 35 pounds of powder, a projectile weighing 100 pounds and at the rate of six aimed shots a minute.

To ALL budding and aspiring authors may be commended the statistics concerning novels given in a late English publication. During the last six years 1,600 novels have been published which have succeeded so far that they were asked for at the libraries. About the same number were published which were not asked for and failed. These 1,600 books were written by 923 people, of whom 50 form a company far in advance of the rest, so far as popularity is concerned, and 70 form a company well behind the first 120 make up a band who have so far succeeded as to create a small demand for their work, and the others have reaped neither pecuniary advantage nor fame. Which, being summed up in figures, indicates that of those who write one's chance of being one of the 50 novelists in some 3,000 who remain in obscurity and neglect is represented by the fraction 330-350, which is rather a discouraging certainty.

It is announced that the French rail-tray and carriages are to be heated with oil-fire. There are various ways known to chemistry, by which heat may be generated without what is commonly known as fire. The practical application of this knowledge, however, has never been utilized, unless these French scientists have now reached it. It is vaguely explained that the discovery simply involves the plunging of a block of acetate of soda into hot water, and the subsequent solidification of the block furnishes heat equal to an ordinary coal fire, that will last five or six hours. Acetic acid is a compound of carbon, hydrogen and oxygen. With these heat elements and the soda base, as chemists call it, there seems to be no scientific reason why the plant might not be feasible.

How large a place in the affairs of Brooklyn is filled by the bridge is annually set forth in the reports of the officials charged with its control. Over 40,000,000 fares were paid in the year just ended, and the cars have carried in all over 260,000,000 people in the nine years of their operation. While the two cities have paid \$450,000 in the year towards the construction account for expenses growing out of the work of increasing facilities for travel on the structure, they have been paid back \$460,000 out of the surplus receipts from travel. The work of construction will soon be completed, and then the steadily increasing earnings will flow back into the treasuries of the two cities. The operation of the cable has been extremely successful, and the average less than a minute a day for the year.

In the legal profession the American woman is making her way against much opposition. As yet only a limited num-

ber of States admit her to the bar, still seven States have been admitted to practice before the Supreme Court of the United States. Both the Chicago Legal News and the Chicago Law Times are edited by women lawyers, and several associations have been formed, including the Equity Club and the Woman's International Bar association. In Wyoming and Washington the mixed jury system has been tried with success, and in Montana the greatest of all triumphs has been scored by the election of Ella Knowles to the office of Attorney-General, an honor never before accorded to a woman. Miss Knowles is a graduate of Bates College, and studied her profession in the East. When she went to Montana she found that the statute prohibited woman's admission to the bar, but she secured the repeal of the law, and has ever since been practicing.

SINCE the establishment of the Federal Government New York has had forty-two Cabinet appointments, Massachusetts thirty-seven, Pennsylvania thirty-six, and Virginia twenty-five. Together forty-three, California now one of the largest and most important States, has never had a place in the Cabinet. The only Cabinet office ever held by a man from either of the Pacific States was that of Attorney-General, held by George Williams, under Grant.

PERHAPS the most remarkable fact revealed by the religious census returns of South Australia is the big jump made by the Bible Christians—an advance of 64 per cent. during the decade. The prominence thus accorded by an elsewhere insignificant Methodist sect is attributed to the fact that the Chief Justice of the colony (the Hon. S. J. Way) is the most active, influential, and energetic member of the body.

WHALES THAT ARE FIERCE.

Bloodthirsty Monsters Which Hunt In Packs Like Wolves.

"I won't deny that some sharks are fierce," said a sea captain to a Star reporter, "but they're not by any means the most ferocious creatures I've seen. In my opinion not even the blue man-eaters are so bloodthirsty as a certain kind of whale. You imagined that whales were mild and harmless animals, did you? Well, it depends upon the species. I'm talking about the 'killer' whales. They are not very big—only about sixteen to twenty feet long—but there isn't anything they can't do."

"You see the killer whales hunt in packs like wolves. Other whales are their favorite game, but, bless you, there isn't anything they won't attack, unless perhaps it is a man. Just because they haven't got an appetite for human flesh, like sharks, they haven't earned the same sort of reputation for ferocity. But you can take my word for it that there aren't any voracious beasts on land that are more bloodthirsty than the whales. They assault full-grown warships and sink them, and on one occasion I saw a killer whale cut open which had thirteen porpoises and fourteen seals in its stomach."

"I once saw a pack of killer whales make an attack upon a gray cow whale and her calf. They surrounded her and began actually to tear her to pieces. The calf was three times as big as any of the assailants, but they quickly killed it, the carcass sinking to the bottom. They followed it down and came up with huge fragments of flesh in their mouths. While they were thus engaged the mother swam away, leaving a bloody track behind her. I am very sure that the story so often told in print about combats between swordfish and thresher sharks have their origin in fights where killer whales were engaged. They are true whales, you understand. Their back fins are about six feet high and look like enormous daggers as they project above the surface of the water."

"Killer whales are so strong and swift that they are very rarely captured. So far as I can ascertain the only people who hunt them are the Makah Indians of Washington State, who are very fond of their flesh and fat. The combs, teeth are sometimes sold as curiosities. Killer whales are plentiful in Atlantic waters. Very often they are useful to the fishermen, driving schools of black fish ashore on Cap Cod, Nantucket and elsewhere. They are afraid of nothing and have been known to half devour a big whale while it was being towed to the ship after being harpooned."

Where Licorice Grows.

On the banks of the Tigris and the Euphrates, in Arabia, the licorice plant is said to be thirty feet high, and its flow through flat, treeless prairies of uncultivated land. For three months of the year hot winds blow, and the temperature reaches 140 degrees.

For six months of the year the climate is moderate and salubrious, and for three months bleak and wintry, the thermometer going down to thirty degrees at night.

The licorice plant is a small shrub, with light foliage, growing to about three feet high, where its roots can reach the water. It grows without any cultivation. No lands are leased for the purpose, and no objection is made to its being cultivated. It grows on red-earth soil, and also on light, almost sandy soil, where the wood is best, provided it has plenty of water, and the ground is not fifty yards from the actual river or stream.

The wood, after being dug up, grows better afterwards. The time of collecting is generally during the winter, but it is possible all the year round. The root when dug is full of water, and must be allowed to dry, a process which takes the best part of a year. It is then sawed or cut into small pieces from six inches to a foot long.

The good and sound pieces are kept and the rotten ones are used for firewood. It is then taken in native river boats to Bussorah, whence it is shipped in pressed bales to London, and again from there to America, where it is used largely in the manufacture of tobacco.

The black licorice sticks sold in drug stores come mostly from Spain and are made of pure licorice, mixed with a little starch, which prevents it from melting in hot weather. The word "licorice" is of Greek origin, and means "sweet root." —[Boston Transcript.]

An Emotion Indicator.

The behavior of criminals, it is found, may be studied in a way likely to prove useful in medicine by means of the plethysmograph. This is a new instrument for measuring the slightest increase in the flow of blood in the arm. In most instances when a criminal receives sentence the flow of blood diminishes, but the sight of wine restores it. Brain effort increases the flow: In front of a loaded pistol an average man is greatly affected, but the crimson of a hardened murderer is little influenced. The instrument, it is said, elicits involuntary testimony of the physical and nervous state of the criminal. —[New York Telegram.]