



CHAPTER XVII.

For a few moments, in that wild and hurried excitement, Vanity was forgotten. She lay upon a grassy bank, and none asked if she were alive or dead. But the detective went to her side, and saw that she breathed, although her eyes were closed and she was quite unconscious. With professional presence of mind, he opened her lips and poured a little brandy into her mouth, and perhaps he saved her life, for when, an hour after, she was taken into the hospital, the doctor declared that she had just escaped death by exhaustion—a few beats of the pulse more and she would have been past help and hope.

But let us return for one moment to the burning farm. As I said, the most complete silence prevailed within the walls. Hardware was neither seen, nor was any motion of him heard again. Just after the whisper went round that the fire was going out, the roof fell in with a crash. Hardware had made elaborate preparations for a conflagration; and the fire ran from room to room, and seemed to meet fuel everywhere. Its rapidity was equalled by its heat and fury; for when the ruins were searched there was absolutely nothing but a charred mass. Rake it with a rake, and pore over every handful and sift it to the last pinch through a sieve, all was ashes, and nothing but ashes. They expected, perhaps, to find diamonds, pearls, emeralds, rubies, sapphires, cat's eyes, and so forth. Blessed are they who expect not! Have you ever burned a lot of old letters in a corner of the grate? Within the four blackened walls of old Tumbledown Farm nothing was left but such this ashed and smoldering flames could consume had vanished.

As Willie Snow came back with help a strange thing occurred. At a turn of the pleasant lane, under a shady tree where he and Vanity many a time had stood, there met him a party of bearers carrying his former sweetheart down to the hospital. Now, I don't by any means want to pile horror upon horror, and as Willie told me, there was no horror here; for she lay white and calm, beautiful beyond words, the sweetest repose upon her face.

"Is she quite dead?" Willie gasped.

"No, but going fast enough," some one replied.

"God, spare her life!" the young man cried. "Oh, God, hear my prayer, and spare her life!"

Under the excitement of the time, I suppose, the detectives cast off their silent ways and answered questions freely. Hardware was wanted. About two years ago there had been a most extraordinary jewel robbery at Birmingham. From "information received" the police were led to believe that a man named Barnett had been connected with the robbery, and this man they traced into connection with old Hardware and his daughter.

Now, in this place I had the better relate what came out afterward. Hardware was of respectable family, and had even been at Cambridge for one or two terms. But he turned to evil ways, drank, gambled, and took to the race course. Subsequently it was found that he had "reformed," and had married the daughter of a clergyman. One daughter was born to them, and the mother stuck to him through all his vicissitudes and profligacy. Barnett had early in life been celebrated as an amateur actor, and now, in his life as an adventurer, he took to the stage, and became a small manager. So he lived on for several years. His wife died; his daughter, whose beauty and vivacity were well known, went upon the stage, and, for a time, father and daughter did tolerably well. Then the two vanished, and when they reappeared Miss Hardware had an engaged father, very rich, and she was a beautiful character. Under this disguise, throwing it off artfully and by night, he had committed several burglaries, and left the police nowhere at all. It is fair to say that his daughter was connected with his crimes, or even knew of them.

Barnett or Hardware had not only been in several burglaries, but there was little doubt that his was the hand which had shot one of the Birmingham police, who had tried to capture him. The detectives fully believed that Hardware—or Barnett, rather—had learned that the police were on his track, and their "theory" was that he intended to set fire to the farm, and to lead them to the belief that he and his daughter had perished in the flames.

Gracious Me lay stretched on the grass, just where he was when I last, when the excitement had somewhat subsided, they went to examine the dead body, and were surprised to observe that the eyes remained open. Still more the observers were astonished to see the said eyes blinking in a curious way.

"Where were you hit?" inquired one of the compassionate persons. "Which side did the ball enter?"

"Neither side," said little Gracious, trembling still. "You see, this is how it occurred. I was here, and he was—there. He was going to fire, when it struck me. I can't tell why—that if I was to drop down, do you see, and lie quite still, the affair might blow over. So I did. Hit? bless you, no! Not within a yard of me!"

Vanity Hardware was taken to the hospital, where for seven weeks she lay between life and death. Suddenly she began to mend. Then one morning, when some kind person called to ask after her, the reply was that she had gone. Where? Nobody knew. Neither doctor nor chaplain could tell anything except that she was gone.

Vanity had been dangerously wounded. The ball had entered her side, and the doctors had great trouble in extracting it. The patient suffered much; and from weakness she dropped into fever. The physicians said she would die, but she rallied, and, with a weary, heartless look upon her face, turned, as it were, up the tolls some road leading back to the life that was gone.

A lady was nursing in the hospital who was what I used to call a nun—only I believe now the saying is "dister," and she seemed to be drawn to Miss Vanity by what she was told. Somehow this lady, Sister Catherine, treated the sick lady like a daughter. Anyhow, she found the way to Vanity Hardware's heart.

Poor Vanity Hardware! Wounded in body and utterly broken in spirit, she clung to her new friend like a child, and told her all the story of her life. How her mother had been good and true through all her sufferings, until her death. How, when dying, she had called Vanity to her side, and put a little faded white flower into the child's hand, saying:

"There, darling, I laid that flower on your little breast the day you were baptized. Then the flower was as fresh and sweet as your bosom was white and pure. Keep that flower, year after year, my child, as I ever do anything to soil it."

"Which I never did," Vanity said, bursting into tears at this place. I never forgot mother's dying words—

"For which," the good lady said, "thank the blessed Lord. You have a new life before you."

"No," Vanity answered, with a firmness in her beautiful eyes that amazed the lady, "you mistake me. I shall never be good."

And at this point Vanity Hardware turned her face upon the pillow and burst into crying. For all the world like a broken heart!

Sister Catherine was not the woman to give Vanity up. Attracted by Vanity's looks, pitying her sorrow and sustained most of all by her own resolute will, she determined that this girl should have one chance in life, and that a good one. She had a niece, a married lady, who lived about fourteen miles away in a hand-some country house. This niece was rich, and of the same persuasion as the aunt, was a charitable lady and did many good works.

This niece was not a nun, nor at all nunish in her ways, but fond of life and fashion. Now, to this young lady the sister dispatched Vanity Hardware, with a letter of introduction, and the time was a rainy October evening when poor Vanity, with trembling steps and beating heart, stole up the avenue towards the fine house to which she had been directed. She saw an iron fence which ran round the lawn. She gazed into a handsome drawing room, which was so brilliantly lighted that her quick eyes could see all that went on.

This might have been what quality call the children's hour. Two misty eyes were playing about the room, dressed to perfection, and Vanity noticed that a third small girl, with a white face and long dark hair, was lying on a lady's lap, watching the other children with a tired expression. Vanity called this lady mamma at once.

A gentleman sat in an easy chair reading the newspaper, and not taking notice of anybody. From the familiar way the two little children ran about him, Vanity judged him to be the father of the family. Next she remarked that on a settee there sat a slender lady, very stout, very stiff, very dignified in her manner. Now, Vanity Hardware had eyes like a lynx or a hawk, and the light of the room, as I have said, was brilliant; so she saw how this old lady watched with shrewd and designing face a bit of by-play which was going on at the piano.

Then the piano stood a well-fashioned, ruddy young man, who had evidently just dropped into the drawing room. A young lady was sitting at the instrument, looking up with laughter into his face.

Little Vanity Hardware dreamed that in this drawing room she saw enacted the prodigious to her own future life. Little prodigious, however, mistress, flirting and dominating dame dreamed how, out in the cold October mist, a watcher stood who was afterward to step into the midst of their schemes and hopes and fears, in triumph and resistless.

Vanity hurried to the front door and rang the bell. A spruce maid answered. After some hesitation, the answer was given that, "O yes, missis probably would see the young person."

Next moment handsome "missis" came out, with a quick step.

"You look very pale," she said. "Are you ill?"

Vanity looked up. Something in the lady's face encouraged her. But when she tried to speak, her lips would not obey her, and the only sound she uttered was a sob.

Immediately the lady flew off to the drawing room, and Vanity heard her say: "Augustus! Augustus; there is a poor girl outside. She looks so thin, and so pretty—and so cold. Do go and see her."

"Well, well, Maud," Augustus rejoined, in a good-natured tone, "this comes of being married to a wife. I suppose I may as well go at once."

The next instant the gentleman was standing beside Vanity.

"What is your business, my girl?"

He asked this question with a curious air of mingled condescension, authority and kindness.

"I come with a letter from Sister Catherine."

"Indeed!" the gentleman said; but in that brief space he, too, passed under the spell of her face and voice. "Let me see, will you—what a rosy and not so better come in to—to the drawing room?"

"I am not fit for the drawing room," she said. "Please don't ask me."

"My library, then," he said. "Follow me!"

The upshot of the interview in the library, and the perusal of Sister Catherine's letter, was auspicious. An hour later Vanity found herself alone in a pretty bedroom surrounded by comfort and refinement, and twelve hours' quiet before her.

In the morning a servant brought her a message that the lady of the house was engaged, and could not see her till 12 o'clock; and meanwhile a small boudoir next to her room was set apart for her use. Here sat and her breakfast. The room looked out upon the garden; and as the morning was warm and sunny, she opened the window and enjoyed the fresh air.

Well might Vanity sit and muse. What room in life was she to take? Her experience was remarkable, almost unexampled. Her mother, affectionate, pious and refined, had made it the chief care of her struggling life to imprint something of herself upon her child. But Vanity had inherited some of her father's qualities also: his recklessness, his love of change. A horror had oppressed her ever since the tragedy at Tumbledown Farm; why allow it any longer to brood over her mind? Her father was gone. She had no part in his awful fate. She might change her name, and with that banish forever the terrible gloom which she had believed must rest upon her forever.

Her experience of Willie Snow's inconstancy had been a bitter disclosure. Vanity had idolized that young fellow. All that her mother had ever taught her about goodness alone, the idea that had been de-graded. Virtue and goodness had been reduced to feeble amissibility and prudent

consideration for number one. Yet what was this whisper in her heart? Why, as she listened to it, did her color deepen, and her eyes grow strangely bright, and her pulse beat fast?

"Willie Snow—the man who loved me once—who was stolen from me—who could not resist me even now—the man that I love still—what if I won him back after all?"

CHAPTER XVIII.

Suddenly, as she sat at the window, she saw her handsome hostess appear, walking in a very sisterly way with the young horseman. They promenade the gravel walk up and down, engaged in earnest talk.

"No, Tom," the lady said, "I don't agree with you; most decidedly not. I cannot call her handsome. Of course I don't care to say she is anything else."

"But, like the celebrated parrot, Maud," he replied, "you think a deal."

"Besides, Tom," Maud raised her finger warningly—"mark my words; you will have the old lady on your hands. Charming mother-in-law, Tom."

"Oh, no, you know," Tom called out, in sincere alarm. "Take precautions, you know. Insert special clauses in the lease. You see—the knocked the card out of his cigar—what is a fellow to do? These beauties require such a lot of love-making, and it eats up a fellow's time. Now, Arabella is not excessive in that way."

"Then I suppose it is settled, Tom?"

"Don't think I could do better, Maud."

"Well, dear, I hope you will be happy."

But if ever a kind sister's voice expressed sorrow and disappointment, verging on disgust, it was Maud's voice then.

Just at that moment a servant came hurrying out and whispered something to her mistress, who drew into the house without a word, seeming in an instant to forget her brother.

The cause of Maud Neville's exit did not at first appear. In about a quarter of an hour she came into Vanity's room, and Vanity noticed that her expression was anxious. The letter of her aunt, Sister Catherine—had evidently not been the first communication made to her concerning the young actress, for she knew all her history; and Vanity felt grateful for the tact and delicacy with which she glided over things which would be painful to the poor wanderer. Every minute she grew more charmed by the kind manner of her new friend, and felt ever ready to accept her guidance.

(To be continued.)

The Tasty Judge.

A young man with a delicate, straw-colored mustache and football hair parted in the center and glued down to his temples, sauntered carelessly into one of the Superior Courts the other day. He eyed the Judge through his glasses, and sized up all the attorneys. Then he walked up to the bar and poured out a glass of ice water.

The Judge, who is nervous and testy, had observed the young man and frowned down on the glued hair and glasses. When the young man boldly walked up to the bar and took a glass of ice water the Judge fairly boiled with indignation at such temerity amounting almost to contempt. The young man was just raising the glass to his lips when the Judge roared:

"That water, sir, is for attorneys and other officers of the court."

The glass almost dropped from his hand, he started violently, turned red, then placed the glass on the table and walked out of the court. The Judge chuckled. Half an hour later the young man entered the court room again with a roll of parchment in his hand. The Judge glared at him savagely, but he never flinched. Finally there was a lull in the proceedings, and he addressed the Court:

"Your Honor!"

"What is it, sir?"

"I wish to submit to the Court my certificate of admission to practice in the Supreme Court and all other courts of this State," and he passed the parchment to the clerk.

"Well, what of that?" growled the Judge.

Now, your Honor, having presented the proofs of my admission to the bar I would now move the Court that I be permitted to drink from the official pitcher." And he calmly drained the glass of water he had left on the table.

—San Francisco Post.

Prowled with a Dog.

They were talking about cats of high degree, each succeeding one being a little more altitudinous, when a young lady from Farmington avenue at last found opportunity to say: "Have a cat whose intelligence is best illustrated by a bit of moral and race obliquity she exhibited the other day. The color of her glossy coat puts her in the 'orange' class, whatever that may be. She has a native antipathy for dogs, but she is somewhat more than tolerant of the frisky fox-terrier table-mates his headquarters at our house. Fox-terriers, as you know, consider it to be their earthly mission to rid the ground of cats, snapping their necks at if they will not adopt the habits of the squirrels in the trees. We always knew that he made an exception of our cat, however, but we were not aware of the extent to which they trained together until last week. Then we heard the not unfamiliar sound of sharp barking and lively scurrying in the yard, and, rushing to the window, saw a neighbor's tabby on the limb of a tree, her tail about as big as the branch, glowering down at Sport. And there, side by side with Sport, on the ground, looking upward, sat our cat. We were praising her as an intercessor for her kind, when suddenly she left him and darted up to the tree to the branch where tabby covered. Before we could comprehend her motive she had assailed tabby and the poor animal was fairly dislodged, after a tussle, and landed at the feet of Sport. Sport's bark of delight brought us to our senses just in time for us to interfere and rob both him and his cat ally of the fruit of their triumph. But wasn't it cute in her?"

—Hartford Courant.

Works Both Ways.

Much has been written about the new experimental colony established at Fitzgerald, Ga. One of the notable features of the colony is that negroes are not allowed in it under any circumstances. Another colony, with similar restrictions, is soon to be established in Ware County, near Fitzgerald. Meantime a colony of colored people is being established on the Abbeville and Waycross Railroad, adjoining the Fitzgerald colony. In this no white people are to be allowed under any circumstances.

Kansas Is Growing.

In Kansas the farm and livestock products combined show an increase in value over the preceding year of \$11,128,068, or 13.3 per cent.

FARM AND GARDEN NOTES.

ITEMS OF TIMELY INTEREST TO THE FARMERS.

Grooming Horses—Symptoms of Tuberculosis—Skilled Farm Laborers Demanded.

Grooming horses is quite common among farmers, for far more men and boys take delight in working around the horse than will do the same thing for the cow. Yet to brush and curry the cow, especially at the time she is shedding her coat, is even more necessary than to groom the horse. It will aid greatly in keeping the milk free from the dust and hairs which introduce bacteria into it, and make it impossible to produce good butter from it. Besides, no domestic animal enjoys a thorough currying better than does the cow. Try it and see.

For the first four or five weeks of their lives they will need to be fed at least five times daily. "Little and often" is a good rule to follow in feeding. Corn bread made by mixing the meal into a batter with buttermilk, using twice as much soda as the measure of milk, as if for the table, makes one of the best foods for small chicks. This quantity of soda will make the bread crumble readily. Possibly the crust may need soaking. It is not a great deal of trouble to bake once a day enough to last until the next day, and as a food it is certainly an improvement on raw cornmeal mixed with water, which some of us can remember used to be the regulation food for young chicks. If the skim milk is not fed to the calves or pigs it can be given to the chickens to drink; or, better still, after it has clabbered, heat until the curd and whey separate. There is nothing better than the curd for young chicks, especially during the first three or four weeks of their lives. As soon as they are old enough to eat wheat, give all they will eat of this grain for the last feed at night. Cracked corn may alternate with the wheat, and at a later period whole corn.

SYMPTOMS OF TUBERCULOSIS.

These are first a cough, accompanied by quick breathing, then a discharge from the lungs or throat, brightness of the eyes, loss of flesh, a bad-smelling breath, in a cow thin blue milk, deficient in casein (the curd) and rich in fat. The skin becomes drawn and the hair harsh and erect, the cough becomes worse; if the bowels are diseased, there is an incurable fetid diarrhea, and as the disease progresses the animal becomes skin and bone only, and very weak and tottering. Finally it lies down for the last time and slowly dies. If the milk organs are affected, as they may be, although the lungs and bowels may show the effects most, the milk is likely to affect persons who may use it, or the meat will be diseased and unfit for food, as carrying the germs of the disease with it, unless thoroughly cooked.

SKILLED FARM LABORERS DEMANDED.

Notwithstanding the fact that machinery has been introduced that does away with much of the hard labor that was performed on the farm by hand a few years since, laborers seem to grow scarcer year by year, and at times it is very difficult for the farmer to command all the help needed to push forward his work in busy seasons; and it is skilled farm laborers that are needed. The man who doesn't possess enough intelligence to hitch up to and operate most any sort of farm machinery isn't wanted any longer on most farms. In looking for a good hand the farmer now counts skill worth as much as muscle. He knows, from sad experience, that in unskilled hands a machine will, in all probability, suffer injury and damage far beyond the amount of wages paid, and he strives to steer clear of this sort of unprofitable labor.

TRAINING TOMATOES.

Referring to the tomato-trellis recently described, I would say that for several seasons I have used wire netting in my garden for training tomatoes in preference to stakes and strings. Netting three feet wide, securely tacked to strong stakes set at intervals of three and a half or four feet apart, was formerly used, but greater width is desirable. This forms a perpendicular trellis about four feet high, as the wire should be placed ten or twelve inches from the ground. Stakes two by four inches are heavy enough if braced, the first season, although I have used three-inch hard-back fence-posts. A light strip of wood may be run across the top for staying the upper end of the wire, but this is not essential unless heavy blankets are to be used for protection against light frosts in autumn. Raffle, once used for tying the vines to the wire, will never be superseded by strings. It is always soft, pliable and strong, never stretching in wet weather or slipping if properly tied.

This method of training tomatoes admits air on all sides, and does not interrupt the sun's rays. The fruit ripens evenly, is easily picked and readily protected on cold nights.

An ideal trellis of this sort was developed in a neighbor's garden the past season. Ten-foot stakes and netting two feet wide were used. But the growth of the Ponderosa is phenomenal, and two other strips of netting were added, with a space of a few inches between them. The result was a handsome screen fully eight feet high, thickly decorated with crimson fruits. The aspirations of the vines, however, were unsatisfied, and a foot more of netting would have been covered. The expense of such an arrangement is light, and the profit and pleasure arising from clean, well-ripened fruit are satisfactory in every way.

IMPROVED ONION CULTURE.

The usual method of transplanting onions by hand and dibble is hard and tedious work. Often onion plants are set too deep in this way by the inexperienced, and the bulbs do not so readily form underground. During the first two years in my work with onions I have tested a method of transplanting young onion plants with a common turning plow, and found the method to work well. A furrow is opened with the plow, and the young onion plants are laid along on the straight side of the furrow, and then soil is thrown back on the roots with the same plow. After the earth is thrown on the roots it should be pressed with the foot by walking upon it, or a small roller may be used for the same purpose. In this way all the work may be done without bending the back except in dropping the young plants. Small boys may be employed for this work, and the setting of an acre can be done at a cost of \$2.50.

In starting onions early at the north, Mr. C. L. Hill writes to American Agriculturist: With varieties which require a long season for their full development, an early start in the spring is necessary. I plant the seed under glass in hotbeds, early enough to have plants of good size by the time the ground can be put in condition for setting out. The transplanting is something of a job, and yet it is scarcely more than would be the task of the first weeding that has to be done when the seeds are sown directly in the field. There is also a great gain in having well-filled rows of plants evenly distributed. Even if the seedling should be faultless, some seeds will fail to come up, and the rows will be more or less uneven. But the transplanting plan gives such even rows of fine plants as does one good to look at.

THE CARE OF EARLY CHICKS.

Early-hatched chickens seem to have stronger constitutions than those which are hatched after the weather becomes warm. It is surprising how much cold they will endure if they are kept dry. If it is possible, I like to have one or two broods out by the first of March. When one has no incubator and must await the pleasure of the hens this cannot always be done. A slatted coop, which will confine the hen and allow the chickens to run about, placed in a dry shed, into which the sun can shine, is a very good place for them for the first four or six weeks. If the presence of rats is suspected, there should be a tight box-coop in which to fasten them at night. In some localities this is absolutely necessary as a protection from minks and weasels.

If the hens have as free a range as they have on the greater number of farms, the young chicks may also be allowed to run at large after the first few weeks, but they should be kept in the coops until the middle of the forenoon. It is well to remember that a limp and apparently lifeless chick which has been caught in a sudden shower may often be warmed back to life by bringing it to the fire. It may be necessary to bring them in by the basketful sometimes, and I have seen some surprising recuperations in such cases. A hen running at large will raise her brood with less feeding than one confined in a small lot, but the chances are that she

will lose more of them. Not only are they caught by hawks, but there are other dangers which beset them. Most provoking of all is to have your neighbor's cat dine off chicken daily, while you wonder how Blackie manages to lose one or two chickens every day. By-and-by you catch the innocent-looking pussy in the very act of springing upon the chick, and the mystery is solved.

It must never be forgotten that the coops, as well as the feeding and drinking vessels, must be kept clean. Filth breeds disease always and everywhere. The mites which are so annoying, especially in warm weather, soon infest an unclean coop.

For the first four or five weeks of their lives they will need to be fed at least five times daily. "Little and often" is a good rule to follow in feeding. Corn bread made by mixing the meal into a batter with buttermilk, using twice as much soda as the measure of milk, as if for the table, makes one of the best foods for small chicks. This quantity of soda will make the bread crumble readily. Possibly the crust may need soaking. It is not a great deal of trouble to bake once a day enough to last until the next day, and as a food it is certainly an improvement on raw cornmeal mixed with water, which some of us can remember used to be the regulation food for young chicks. If the skim milk is not fed to the calves or pigs it can be given to the chickens to drink; or, better still, after it has clabbered, heat until the curd and whey separate. There is nothing better than the curd for young chicks, especially during the first three or four weeks of their lives. As soon as they are old enough to eat wheat, give all they will eat of this grain for the last feed at night. Cracked corn may alternate with the wheat, and at a later period whole corn.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

Two-thirds of all the letters which pass through the postoffice of the world are written by and sent to people who speak English.

George E. Faw, a leading wheat shipper of California, says that a single rain storm that occurred recently was worth \$2,000,000 to the Salinas Valley farmers and ranchmen alone. "This," remarks a contemporary, "should prove encouraging to the would-be rain makers."

Another man comes forward with the pleasant theory that people by living properly may attain the extra ripe age of 200 years. The trouble with theorists of this class is that in exploiting the beauties of their belief they generally talk themselves to death before having even reached the youthful prime of three score and ten.

The telephone, according to the Electrical Engineer, has got a footing in Iceland. It is said that an American is laying a line between Reykjavik and Akureyri, at a cost of 100,000 kr. (\$27,000). It is also reported that an Englishman has submitted to the Althing a proposal for a telegraph cable between Iceland and the Shetland Islands.

Horses decreased in number in this country 4.8 per cent. during 1895 as compared with the previous year, and also decreased 13.3 per cent. in value, according to Department of Agriculture statistics. Electrical street railways and bicycles are doubtless responsible for much of the decrease.

Among every 1000 bridal couples in England in 1894 there were 46 bridegrooms and 54 brides who were unable to write their names.

There are two things in connection with the new cure for consumption practiced by Dr. Cyrus Edson, of New York, which recommend it above other similar inventions. One is its perfect simplicity—the other the fact that its inventor has given the formula freely to the world, thus making it possible for sufferers everywhere to have the benefit of its properties immediately, and also for the widest experiment under all conditions and in all climates.

The czar has delighted all classes of Russians by commanding that for the future all petitions shall be presented to him personally. The aide-de-camp on duty will accept them from the petitioners and place them before the monarch without delay. The reason for this is that it has come to the czar's knowledge that hitherto countless petitions have been "lost on the way," and he intends to render such malpractices impossible for the future.

Great efforts are being made by Japan (writes a correspondent) to wrest from Great Britain a share of the carrying trade of the world. The line to Bombay is already arranged, and the P. and O. Company must expect severe competition. The line to Australia is not yet opened, but in March the Tosa-Maru, a fine steamer of 5000 tons, leaves for Europe. Captain McMillan has left for England to place orders for six vessels of similar capacity to the Tosa-Maru, and when finished these vessels will be placed on the European line.

Some startling statistics of the decay of the Russian nobility are given in a list of mortgaged estates furnished by the British consul at St. Petersburg. At present more than 100,000 estates, or 41 per cent. of the entire area owned by nobles, are burdened by mortgages, and the amount of money advanced on them has reached \$632,500,000, of which \$586,000,000 remains unpaid. The Nobility Land Bank, created by the government to make loans to stranded landlords, has advanced nearly its entire capital of \$250,000,000, and received but little in return.

The Emperor of China, Kuang Hsi, cannot appear in public. When he goes abroad it is usually in a sedan chair, with guards along each side of the road to prevent intruders from gazing at his sacred person. He lives in a great palace, surrounded by a wall, through which nobody but the court officers ever penetrates without special permission. He was kept in the strictest seclusion throughout his youth, the Dowager Empress acting as Regent. He had in his palace yard miniature models of men-of-war, a train of cars which was an exact model of the first railroad train run in China, and every toy that science could invent or money procure. But he has never seen one of his own men-of-war or ridden in a real steam car. He learns as much that goes on in the world as his Vicerey sees fit to tell him. The youthful Emperor is of frail physique and in very delicate health.

The city of Worcester, Mass., has a poor farm, which, according to the Spy, is well managed both for the inmates and the taxpayers. The leading feature is the raising of swine on city garbage. Over two thousand animals are kept, and about one thousand feet in pasture, the feeding grounds being changed from time to time and ploughed in. About eight hundred of the hogs are butchered in the fall, and their sales make the scavenger department self-supporting to within \$700. Worcester claims to have set the pace for other American cities in the disposal of sewage and of garbage. There has also been some profit from the sales of surplus farm produce. The leading products have been: 1256 bushels potatoes, 406 of onions, 319 of beets, 206 of beans, 75 of peas, 76 of tomatoes, 17 of Lima beans, 80 of currants, 101 of pears, 475 of apples, 1200 baskets field corn, 1002 dozen sweet corn, 5266 cucumbers, 400 melons, 711 pounds rhubarb, 863 quarts strawberries, 14 tons squash, 500 bunches celery, 6040 cabbage, 348 dozen eggs.

Shelbyville, Ind., is one of the many places west and south where the war of rates is on between the Bell Telephone Company and its new and less powerful rivals. The Shelbyville Company is winning thus far, perhaps because it was shrewdly conceived as a mutual company with a great number of stockholders. It has a fifty years' franchise from the city, and both it and

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Two-thirds of all the letters which pass through the postoffice of the world are written by and sent to people who speak English.

George E. Faw, a leading wheat shipper of California, says that a single rain storm that occurred recently was worth \$2,000,000 to the Salinas Valley farmers and ranchmen alone. "This," remarks a contemporary, "should prove encouraging to the would-be rain makers."

Another man comes forward with the pleasant theory that people by living properly may attain the extra ripe age of 200 years. The trouble with theorists of this class is that in exploiting the beauties of their belief they generally talk themselves to death before having even reached the youthful prime of three score and ten.

The telephone, according to the Electrical Engineer, has got a footing in Iceland. It is said that an American is laying a line between Reykjavik and Akureyri, at a cost of 100,000 kr. (\$27,000). It is also reported that an Englishman has submitted to the Althing a proposal for a telegraph cable between Iceland and the Shetland Islands.

Horses decreased in number in this country 4.8 per cent. during 1895 as compared with the previous year, and also decreased 13.3 per cent. in value, according to Department of Agriculture statistics. Electrical street railways and bicycles are doubtless responsible for much of the decrease.

Among every 1000 bridal couples in England in 1894 there were 46 bridegrooms and 54 brides who were unable to write their names.

There are two things in connection with the new cure for consumption practiced by Dr. Cyrus Edson, of New York, which recommend it above other similar inventions. One is its perfect simplicity—the other the fact that its inventor has given the formula freely to the world, thus making it possible for sufferers everywhere to have the benefit of its properties immediately, and also for the widest experiment under all conditions and in all climates.

The czar has delighted all classes of Russians by commanding that for the future all petitions shall be presented to him personally. The aide-de-camp on duty will accept them from the petitioners and place them before the monarch without delay. The reason for this is that it has come to the czar's knowledge that hitherto countless petitions have been "lost on the way," and he intends to render such malpractices impossible for the future.

Great efforts are being made by Japan (writes a correspondent) to wrest from Great Britain a share of the carrying trade of the world. The line to Bombay is already arranged, and the P. and O. Company must expect severe competition. The line to Australia is not yet opened, but in March the Tosa-Maru, a fine steamer of 500