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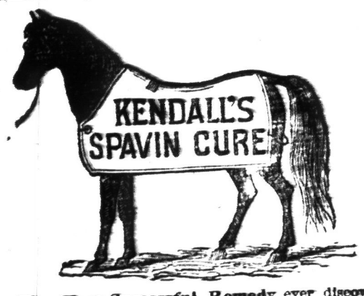

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JARVIS RECORD.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 24, 1889.

CURRENT NOTES.

A Jarvis lady is so strong a prohibitionist that she refuses to have a bar of soap in her house.

This finding of Cronin letters is getting to be a chestnut The Clan-na-Gael is cunning; but its methods are transparent.

Kingston people used barbed wire to fence in their boulevards, and Miss Nancy, of the News, protests. They say that her last new gauzy summer gown has been utterly ruined by the barbs.

A writer in The New York Times says that in New York the policeman wipes his foot on the citizens, while in London the citizen wipes his foot on the policeman. The preservation of law and order probably suffers as much from one extreme as from the other.

Just as public interest was dying out in the Cronin tragedy, Jack the Ripper once more makes a bid for notoriety. Another Whitechappel has been found murdered and mutilated, and all the evidence goes to show that Jack was the butcher, but who Jack is or where he is nobody knows.

The fire loss of the United States and Canada for the month of June, 1889, as compiled by the N. Y. Bulletin, reaches a total of $7,755,000. Large as this sum seems to be it is $1,500,000 below the total of the same month of the preceding year, and $2,000,000 less than the fire loss of June, 1887. The Seattle fire alone absorbed two and a half millions.

There is only one Johnstown in Pennsylvania, and only one Johnstown in New York, and it is noted as a singular coincidence that within the last few weeks each has been visited by a flood. The New York town is the more recent sufferer, the flood having been caused by the bursting of a storm cloud. Some fifteen persons lost their lives.

During the last session of the Dominion parliament a return was asked for showing the names of the veterans of the war of 1812 now living, their respective places of residence, and the amount of the pension received by each. The return has just been published. It shows that the veterans received $30 each from the Dominion government last year. Fifty-two of the old gentlemen live in Quebec, forty-two in Ontario, four in New Brunswick, four in the United States, one in Nova Scotia, and one in Manitoba.

The inhabitants of Cyprus recently petitioned the British Government for a reduction of taxation. They informed them that the population was 200,000, and that the taxes were £115,000; that this was very heavy, and that they could not go on paying it. The tax is eleven shillings and sixpence, or less than $2.50 per head. The taxation of this Dominion last year, according to the Statistical Abstract and Records, was $5.67 per head.

Maternal Instinct in Spiders.

It is a fact well known to naturalists that mother love in spiders is very fierce and strong for the time it lasts. What a wonderful provision is made for the preservation of the young! The finest swan's down and linen used by a human mother are not more fine and soft than the fabrics spun by the spider to keep her brood warm and impervious to torrential rains or scorching drought.

I will cite an instance in the life of the Olios leucosus. She spins no web, but in some out of the way corner lays her eggs and a large, flat cocoon of strong, cream-colored silk, as large as a 25 cent piece, in which they are inclosed. If disturbed, she holds the cocoon close to her body with two of her legs, but if not, she fixes it by a mass of fine threads to some safe place and watches it. I saw one fasten her cocoon on a door and wanted to have a good look at it, but on my approach she dashed to her cocoon, cut the threads with her mandibles, clasped her precious burden to her, and was out of sight in less time than I have written it. She roamed around for awhile and took her station behind a window curtain, and there remained fifteen days motionless. When the eggs were ready to hatch, the mother stuck the edge of the cocoon, making a clean cut, and out poured the young. When approached she raised her palpi and strutted about, trying to frighten you, and then huddled up her young ones that swarmed all over her. They remained only a few days with her, and not till they disappeared did she seek food or rest.

Olios are universal in the African islands of the Indian Ocean, and grow large. It is startling at first to see the great hairy creatures prowling over your walls; but their voracious appetites (especially when the duties of of maternity are over) and tenacity of purpose when persuing their prey render invaluable service to man. The old houses swarm with disgusting Blattae, or cockroaches, from an inch and a half long to less than one-half an inch. I once saw the capture of one of the former by an olios. It was eating a piece of bread, and I was about to kill it when I saw an olios not half its size creeping stealthily along the wall. Being curious to see if the tales were true of its killing such large prey, I left the field to it. Very soon the cockroach's attention was drawn to its deadly foe and it stopped eating. They speak of the fascination of snakes for birds, etc., but it, or whatever the power may be, is equally displayed between these enemies.

The cockroach had plenty of time to escape, but it appeared paralyzed, and sat quivering, its eyes fixed on the advancing olios. When near she rushed at it, whipped it off its legs, and clasped it so tightly it could not entangle her long legs with its claws. She soon began her meal, when I placed a glass over both, and she dropped her supper. Very soon, finding no interference, and the cockroach beginning to stir, she caught it again, legs uppermost, and though I removed the glass, she did not move till only skin and legs remained. After this experience the olsos had full liberty to roam round unmolested.

One spider, a Dolomedes, carries her cocoon in her mandibles, and when incubation is nearly over, she attaches it to a low bush or dead branch, and makes a good sized, loose web to receive the little ones as they hatch out, and for them to rest in till strong enough to forage round alone, she watching near, till they disappear.

The Lycosas, veritably the tigers among spiders, after the eggs are inclosed in their round bag of white or greenish silk, attach it to the abdomen and carry it about with them till ready to hatch out. During the season of maternity they are very savage, and if they had the power to bite that they have and the will, they would be formidable foes. The young swarm all over the mother, and she carries them about with her for several days. In some cases she falls a victim to her devotion, as the little creatures have such voracious appetites they devour their parent.

One of the Epeiras hangs her cocoons, little triangular ones with pointed tips, across her web, and every insect, when she has sucked the life out of him, is incased in a silken shroud and hung alongside the cocoons, till what with these, dust, straws, and other debris, it is impossible to distinguish the eggs. The mother places herself in a corner of the web, or in a cosy nest in a rolled leaf near, but so surrounded by silken burglar alarms that not the smallest insect can alight without sounding its death knell.

I do not know of any large spider that allows the male to approach her when tending either cocoon or young. His life would end there and then if he molested her, as the females have no scruples about devouring their spouses if they interfere in household matters. He may construct a house for himself, but it must be placed at a respectable distance from hers.

Open the head of a thistle, wild carrot or golden rod, and if you see a few threads on top, you will surely find a tiny nest inclosing white or yellow eggs. They belong, probably, to a spider of the genus Allus, some of which do not exceed a quarter of an inch in length. Small as is the mother, she will show fight, rise palpi, and only when you try to catch her does she leap down from her home.

I could recite numerous instances of spider love for her young, but I have said enough to prove how strong is the feeling of maternity even in these insignificant creatures, implanted to insure the propagation of their species.—M. L. PIKE in Scientific American.

Nothing has yet been heard of Edward D. Hogan, the aeronaut who went up in Peter Campbell's air-ship on Tuesday.

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—:o:—

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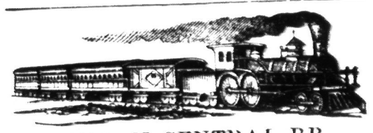

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