

CURRENT TOPICS.

A SMALL parcel of 100,000 new sovereigns, of the Jubilee pattern, for 1899, have just been put in circulation in Great Britain.

The "speech from the throne" is a genuine ceremony in Sweden. It is delivered by the King Oscar himself, clad in white ermine trimmed with red and gold, wearing a crown of gold upon his head, and bearing a jeweled sceptre in his hand.

HORACE GREELEY: I protest against presuming an editor a libel because, in the routine of his vocation, the line of his duty, he prints information which may prove inaccurate or wholly erroneous, without fairly exposing him to the presumption that he was impelled to utter it by a malevolent spirit, a purpose to injure or degrade.

A REPORT comes by way of Germany that a novel use of electricity has been made in India for the prevention of the intrusion of snakes into dwellings. Before all the doors and around the house two wires are laid, connected with an induction apparatus. Should a snake attempt to crawl over the wires, he receives a shock of electricity which either kills or frightens him into a hasty retreat.

THE Medical Press says there is a talk of applying telephones to the infectious wards of the French hospitals, so as to enable the sick people isolated in their contagious sufferings to have the comfort of hearing their relatives' voices without any risk of conveying infection by an interview. It certainly is a very humane idea, and would not, one would think, be a very costly one to carry out.

ARKANSAS CITY, Kansas, is the chief out-fitting point for Oklahoma boomers, and the Traveller newspaper of that town estimates that of the thousands who have come there en route for Oklahoma, but 250 intend to be farmers. The others are mechanics, laborers, merchants and professional men, all who expect to live off the 250. It is to be feared that such a social fabric may be found somewhat top-heavy.

It is rumored that "General" Booth, who has been for so many years the responsible commander of the Salvation Army, is about to retire in favor of his oldest son, Mr. Bramwell Booth. Some of the religious papers on the other side of the Atlantic call attention to the rumor as bearing upon a very peculiar example of family property. Hereditary commander in the command of the Salvation Army is noted as a peculiarity.

REV. CANON WILBERFORCE says of Ireland in the Contemporary Review: "During the last fifty years, the reign of Queen Victoria, in spite of certain ameliorations wrought with difficulty from the British Parliament, we have the horrible record, under the cold arithmetic of which lies hid an aggregate of agony indescribable: Died of famine, 1,225,000; evicted by landlords, 3,668,000; emigrated, 6,186,000; land gone out of tillage in the last twenty years, 100,000 acres; good land now waiting for reclamation, 1,500,000 acres."

SWIMMING about without any visible means of support appears to be a kind of petty misdemeanor in the Straits Settlements. A Malay was found the other night "swimming aimlessly about in the harbor at Singapore," and, as he could give no satisfactory account as to how he came in the water, he was "roped in" by the water police, and locked up. The next day he was brought before the magistrate, charged as above, but, having a good character, he was discharged, after being severely admonished, and warned not to go "swimming about aimlessly" any more.

NO SEA ROMANCER ever introduced a more novel expedient than that by which Lieut. R. M. G. Brown, of the United States warship Trenton, saved the lives of his crew. Finding that his ship was going on the reef he ordered the entire crew to mass themselves solidly in the port rigging. This made a living sail-area of 4,000 square feet, and threw a weight of 35 tons just where it was needed. Though minus both rudder and screw, the Trenton answered to this device and drew back into the bay. Lieut. Brown richly deserves recognition at the hands of Congress. His act was a stroke of genius, which only the best of discipline in his ship could carry out.

THE Chicago Tribune does not consider woman suffrage in the far west to be a success. In Utah, it points out, woman suffrage was given an extended trial, but Congress had to disfranchise the female voters because the Mormon women were completely under the control of the Church authorities and voted solidly in support of polygamy. In Kansas the female voters of the cities made no attempt to "purify politics," but as a rule voted the same way as their husbands, fathers or brothers. Where one woman voted against her husband and for the better, another took like freedom, but cast her ballot for the worse. In Leavenworth, Atchison, Wichita and Topeka the municipalities were carried for misuse by the votes of the women.

In probably no country in the world, says an English exchange, "has the telephone come into more general use than in Sweden. Not only can Stockholm boast the most perfect telephonic arrangements of any capital, in addition to the largest per centage of telephone subscribers, but the east coast and the west coast will soon be in telephonic communication, a line between Stockholm and Gothenburg being in course of erection. Many small towns are in telephonic communication with each other, and the number of subscribers is constantly increasing. In Malmo, for instance, which has about 40,000 inhabitants, there are 900 subscribers. This town is connected with about thirty smaller towns and country places, with subscribers ranging between 200 and 100."

The total tobacco consumption of Europe,

according to the Uhlans Wochenschrift, is about 24 pounds to each inhabitant. In the Netherlands the proportion is a little over 7 pounds to each inhabitant; in Austria-Hungary, 3.8 pounds; in Denmark, 3.7 pounds; in Switzerland, 3.3 pounds; in Belgium, 3.2 pounds; in Germany, 3.1 pounds; in Norway, 2.3 pounds; in France, 2.1 pounds; in Sweden, nearly 2 pounds; in Spain, 1.7 pounds; in Great Britain and Ireland, 1.34 pounds; in Italy, 1.25 pounds, and in Russia 1.2 pounds. In the United States the proportion is said to be greater than that of any European country except Holland—4 1/2 pounds per inhabitant. The largest revenues derived from tobacco are obtained in France, Great Britain, Austria-Hungary, Spain and Italy.

A LEADING Philadelphia physician professes to have discovered why so many persons afflicted with bronchitis and kindred diseases of the respiratory organs are able to associate their contraction with taking a nap. This is the result of his prolonged inquiry: "I found that there was no draught; no sudden transition from heat to cold; no wet clothing; that there was not any of the usual causes, but in every instance I discovered microscopic fungi on the larynx or wherever the subject of the disease had resided. These exist in the form of mildew, molds, and yeasts. They belong to the conomyces, hyphomyces and phycomyces, all of which bear spores. I, therefore, look upon this coincidence as attributable to the inhalation of these spores, for they must necessarily be a source of irritation to the mucous membrane which lines the air passages. There is an immunity acquired by having plenty of natural light, ventilation and dryness."

Latest from Ireland.

Dr. Hamilton, editor of the Witness, has been appointed President of Queen's College, Belfast.

Mr. Thomas A. Dickson, M.P., has left Dublin on his way to Buenos Ayres for a three months' visit.

The dead body of John Maher, forist, 11 North Strand, Dublin, was found in the Royal Canal the other day.

At Drogheda last week Peter Connelly Town Clerk, was sentenced to five weeks imprisonment for abusing a policeman.

Sir Arthur Mitchell, K.C.B., has been appointed Chairman of a Departmental Committee to inquire into certain matters relating to lunacy administration in Ireland.

The Protestant farmers on an estate in South Tyrone have demanded the compulsory sale of their farms. They declare that unless this is done they must join the Home Rule movement.

The Magistrates at Strabally Petty Sessions have granted warrants for the eviction of 40 tenants on the Marquis of Lansdowne's estate at Luggacurran who owed three years' rent and have joined the Plan of Campaign.

Mr. Clifford Lloyd has consented, for £750, to allow a road to run round Killybeg Hill, which will open up a beautiful view of the scenery of Dublin Bay and coast line, but the expected boon is likely to be marred by the erection of a high wall, intercepting the view at the finest point.

The will has been proved of Mr. James Campbell of Lorne, Craigavad, county Down, the personality being £238,000. Provision is made for founding and endowing a college and an hospital about Belfast, the former to be called the Campbell College and the latter the Campbell Hospital.

The Unassuming Toad.

Talk about blue birds and robins being harbingers of spring, the old-fashioned toad lays over them all. He is modest and unassuming, and doesn't make any pretensions to being a weather prophet, but he gets there just the same. He can't boast any brilliant plumage, and doesn't fly as high as his feathered rivals, but when it comes down to good, solid horse sense he takes the cake. When he tunes his little pipe and begins his merry-go-round of melody you can bet your winter's clothes he won't get left. This lowly child of melody knows a good thing when he sees it, and never begins operations till spring has been on hand a couple of weeks.

A Model Ball Dress.

At the Centennial Ball in New York Mrs. Harrison, wife of the President, wore a dress of the richest green grain, cut en princesse. The waist displays an applique of silver and pearl trimming and is filled with gauze to the neck, held in place by a band of ostrich feathers. The transparent sleeves reach to the elbow and are also bordered with ostrich feather bands, which edge the skirt and disappear beneath the long silk train. The front is entirely draped with superb embroidery in the Grecian key pattern, worked in silver and pearls, meeting panels of silver brocade.

Miss Beacon Hill—"I cannot marry you, Mr. Brighton. Our families are not sufficiently equal. Mine were among the first settlers in America." Mr. Brighton—"No one has better reason to appreciate that fact than I have, Miss Beacon Hill. One of my ancestors was the English sheriff who superintended your family's embarkation."—Chicago Journal.

The Chinaman afflicted with leprosy who was recently put off the Canadian Pacific Railway at Brandon has been shipped across the line.

A vicious horse is like a nail—no woman can drive it.

"Johnny," said the father, severely "are you still reading that history?" "Yes, father." "Well, you drop it pretty quick and hustle out with your baseball bat and go practising. If you ain't careful you never will get to be famous."

Rev. Dr. Horatius Bonar, of Edinburgh, whose religious poems and hymns have been widely read, has become a confirmed invalid and is unable to conduct his own correspondence. He is now in his 81st year.

A carpenter can seldom be as handsome as his wife, because he is generally a deal plainer.

The best thing yet discovered for seasickness is port. "Clare," he whispered, ardently, "do you think you could bring yourself to marry me?" "No, George," she answered, with a sad little smile. "I couldn't very well bring myself; I'm so timid. You might bring me, though, George."

TOYS THAT TALK.

Wonders of Phonographic Playthings—Singing Birds, Cats and Lambs.

"The phonograph promises to afford as much recreation to children as it does interest to grown folks," so said M. P. Handy, the European manager of the great corporation which now controls the phonograph and graphophone industry, to a New York Mail reporter. "You have heard of the phonographic doll if you have not as yet seen one, but unless you have seen it you can form no idea of how naturally and charmingly it talks, laughs, cries and sings. This is the first step in a long line of phonographic toys upon which our inventors are now at work. When these are put upon the market they will create a wonderful sensation. Among them may be mentioned phonographic animals. These are toys made out of papier-mache, pasteboard, composition and other material, each and all of which are strong and durable. Each animal contains in his interior a phonograph, which, when set in motion, produces all the natural cries of the original. There is a cat that purrs, meows, spits and osterwauls in the most approved style; a horse that neighs and whinnies; a dog that barks, snaps and howls; a sheep that bleats in a way that would defeat the mother ewe. By using a magnetic attachment the amount of noise may be increased to almost any desired extent. Much more interesting than the phonographic animals are the phonographic birds; we have secured the melodies of the lark, the linnet, finch, robin and canary, and can reproduce them indefinitely. With canary birds the success is notable. We have preserved in metal the entire repertoire of a number of the finest bred and highest priced birds in the market, and by combining the songs of two or three into one whole we have an artificial canary that will outsing any natural one whatever. The phonographic orchestra and the phonographic miniature theatre are other novelties soon to be produced. In the former a band of little images, dressed up in glaring military colors, are seated on the stage as in some grand concert, or stood around the drum major as on a parade. The moment the phonograph is set going each little musician moves his hands and instruments in natural style, while the cylinder inside reproduces the music of a full orchestra with startling fidelity. In the theatre we can reproduce all the spoken parts of the play. Another novelty that is half a toy and half a luxury will be the great boom to all mothers whose young children insist on being sung to before going to sleep. It is a phonograph into which a lady has sung her best songs at her leisure, and which is placed near the crib or cradle. A mere touch upon a spring starts the machinery and gives the child as much music as he or she may want. A singular feature of the phonograph is the fact that if the speed of the mechanism be increased the pitch of the voice it reproduces is heightened, and, on the other hand, if it be slowed, the pitch is lower. At the same time the character of the voice is not changed in the least. This odd peculiarity enables a man to hear how his tenor would sound if he had been born a high voice like Campanini, or the young girl if she had been born a basso profundo."

WHO MAKES FASHIONS.

An Inscrutable Mystery, but Some Guesses at its Solution.

Stepping into a millinery establishment I asked the lady in charge if she would tell me what might be the fashionable color for the season. "Garnet," she replied. "Garnet, sir, is all the go. Have you not observed it?" I meekly replied that female apparel was seldom observed by me, and I considered her word worth a month of careful examination on my part. Turning to the woman called me to stop a moment. She had been listening at the telephone, and smilingly announced that it "the fashion has changed. Old gold color will now have its reign." "Madam, I said, 'will you tell me who orders this change?'" "I am afraid I cannot gratify your curiosity, but will do my best."

Stepping to the telephone she gave orders to have the necessary inquiries made in New York. "We will see what can be done for you," was her reply. "No one in this office has the slightest idea, but we will ask in London and Paris." In about an hour the answer came, "We cannot find out; we do not know; nobody in the world knows." Laughing, the madam added, "I think, sir, that fashions come like the seasons; nobody is responsible for them, but everybody obeys. We are the trees that wear just such colored leaves as nature paints."

This was a pretty way of getting out of the difficulty. Her illustration was a charming one. The trees follow a tendency and unfold their leaves and fold them away without any exercise of reason, but they always do the right thing. October would be awkward if she could swap places with May. You may be sure that when the time comes our mothers' scoop hats, as large as Arabs' tents, will loom upon us. Nobody will order it; they will come.—New York Press.

The Animals Suffer.

"Domestic animals in Greenland must have a hard life of it," she said. "Why so?" he asked. "Because," she explained, "giving him a stony stare, 'the people of that country have no doors to their houses, and when a man gets mad at his wife's cooking, or comes home and finds dinner ten minutes late, and no door to slither, he must necessarily kick the cat or dog clear across the room to relieve his feelings.'"

A Child's Singular Death.

The young son of Mr. Martin, estate gardener at Hassobury, Bishop's Stortford, has just died under singular circumstances. A lady visitor was attempting to kiss him, when the boy ran away and accidentally knocked his head against the corner of a table, causing his death.—Trove bridge (Eng.) Chronicle.

The father of Lewis Hayden, the well-known colored man who recently died in Boston, was once sold to Henry Clay for a pair of horses.

The late Aaron White, of Connecticut, got together five tons of pennies during his lifetime, and probably died happy in the thought.

DON'T NAG.

BY KATE THORN.

Whatever else you do, young wife, don't nag! the man you have married. Burn his bread, give him pie and cake that you learned to make at the cooking school, allow his heels and his toes the inestimable privilege of free ventilation, spend his money, if you can get it to spend; but, for sweet charity's sake, don't nag! him. A husband is a fellow-creature. He has rights which ought to be respected. And a fault-finding woman is worse than a smoking chimney in a perpetual northeast rain-storm.

The nagging woman will meet her husband in the hall and open fire on him before he gets off his overcoat. "James, did you get that braid I sent for? No! Well, I hardly expected you would. This is the third time you have forgotten it. Why didn't I write it down? Write it down! Dear me! if I was a man, and managed a business like yours, I'd see if I couldn't remember such a little thing as ten cents' worth of braid without having it down in black and white."

"Now, James, I must speak to you about that sink pipe before I forget it. It leaks into the cellar. We shall all die of diphtheria and typhoid fever if that pipe is not attended to. I had the headache all night and it must have been the gas from that pipe. No, James, it was not the cold cabbage I ate just before going to bed. Indeed, it was not. How absurd you are!"

"And there is Mary Ann so put out with the coal at the bottom of the bin that she declares she will give notice to-morrow. And dear mother just coming to make her annual visit, too!"

"And the man that painted the front door was here yesterday with his bill. Such a bill! Ten dollars for painting a door! Why, I could have painted it myself for half that money."

"And oh, James, I do wish we could have stained glass in our hall, as the Joneses have got in theirs! I'm sure Jones doesn't make any more money than you do, and stained glass is when a man goes into a house, to meet it. Can't afford it? Well, I am not at all disappointed. I expected that was what you would say. That's what you always say when I have particularly set my heart on anything. It does seem, James, as if you sat up nights to study out how to vex and thwart me! Oh, dear! how much better off a woman is not to marry! If I had only known as much before marriage as I know now— But there! it's no use to wish! James, if we can't have anything else like other folks, I should like for you to wipe your boots before you step into the parlor. Of course, I don't expect that you will do so, now that you know that I want you to; but I thought I would speak of it. Some men are so careless! But, then, others are not. Now, there is Mr. Roberts. He never carries in a grain of dirt, I've heard his wife say, time and again, and he puts on his slippers in the hall."

"James, the clothes-wringer handle is broken. Mary Ann declared yesterday that she'd never try to wring another rag of clothes with it. And I declare, James, you must speak to the milkman. The milk this morning was blue as the sky. Oh, dear, I wish you would put down that newspaper long enough for me to tell you about it. Reading about Harrison's new appointments, are you? Well, do let them wait. There's been too much fuss about them already. I hate politics! A man is always reading politics when his wife matters to talk to him about household matters."

And then she goes out of the room in a pet, and slams the door behind her. Don't be like her.

WHILE IN THE BLUES.

What to Do With Letters Written During Transient Moods of Irritation.

Most women, unless they are absorbed in professional work or a favorite pursuit which takes both time and strength, desire "success in society," and none are insensible to the pleasure which many friends and numerous attentions bestow. The accident of birth and the possession of wealth give great advantages, but these possessions will not secure "success" unless tact, a desire to please and other attractive personal qualities command attention. In a "manual of good manners" Lydia E. White points out the road to social success, chiefly through illustrations and anecdote, making a book that is unusually pleasant reading and one that contains instruction. She strengthens one excellent rule in letter writing by the following story: "President Raymond, of Vassar College, was noted in his family for his moderation and homely wisdom. One day his sister, who thought she had reason to be annoyed with an acquaintance, wrote her an indignant epistle, which she sent by one of her children to her brother, that he might give her his opinion before she sent it away. The child came back directly, saying: 'Uncle John has read this, and he says as you have probably freed your mind by writing it you had better throw it into the fire.' Good counsel that for all who write letters in transient moods of irritation and anger which will pass in reflective hours. No better advice could be contained in a book of etiquette. The people who 'never write a letter and never burn one' have the most peaceful existence, while those who have a habit of transcribing their angry passions upon paper probably know the full meaning of the phrase, 'in hot water.'—Boston Journal."

At a Fashionable Wedding.

Mr. Onlooker—Humph! The fair bride looks heart-broken. Mrs. Onlooker—Yes, and the groom seems mad enough to kill somebody. I'll bet a dollar she has struck him already for a spring bonnet.

Otherwise Innocent.

Old Cashbox (to applicant for clerkship)—Have you any bad habits, young man? Applicant (with humility)—Well, yes, sir; I sometimes think I drink too much cold water with my meals.

Dangerous Conversation.

She—What are you saying? He—I was talking to myself. She—Take care, you are conversing with a flatterer.—Sophie Arnold.

SAVING A TENDERFOOT.

An Illustration of the Fiat that Providence Works in a Mysterious Way.

A dozen years ago, when eastern tender-foot capitalists were as thick as blackberries in the west, and every single man of them was ready to buy a silver mine before breakfast, four of us who had jumped an old claim in Nevada put up a job to catch a snaker. We went down about twelve feet with a shaft, struck "indications," and then raked and scraped for specimens to "sell" with. We sold our revolvers and everything else we could spare, and when we had the bait ready not one of us could have put up enough money to pay a week's board in advance.

We placed our figures at \$90,000, and as I was the smoothest talker of the quartette I was selected as the spider to walk the fly into our parlor. I went up to Virginia City, and after a couple of days I got hold of a Boston man. He was not only green, but powerful anxious to be taken in. He was loaded down with money and overflowing with confidence. Our first conversation ran about as follows:

"Are you looking for an investment in mining property?"

"I am, sir. Have you anything in that line?"

"Yes, sir. I own a one-fourth interest in a claim which we believe to be very rich."

"One-fourth? Oh, I want the whole thing. I don't want no partners in this enterprise."

"But I think you can buy all of us out."

"That alters the case. I'll look at your claim and make you an offer."

I took him out there. I don't believe he knew the first thing about ore, but he descended the shaft, looked around a bit, and when we had hauled him up he said: "Doesn't seem to be overly rich, but I'll chance it. I'll give you \$15,000 cash for your right, title and interest."

We closed on that, transferred our rights, and almost broke our necks to get out of the country before any climax came. The old chap was the butt of ridicule for several weeks, but people then began to laugh the other way. He got men and machinery to work, sunk three or four shafts, and inside of a year he took over \$100,000 worth of ore out of that claim. Inside of three years he took out half a million, and then sold to a syndicate for double that sum. I met him after he had drawn \$200,000 in Denver, and he held out his hand and said: "Why, my dear man, I'm glad to see you. Have often wondered where you went to. It was a pity you poor fellows were obliged to sell out so cheap. Here, take a couple of hundred to get a clean shave and a new suit of clothes!"—New York Sun.

SIR BOYLE ROCHE.

Something About the High Priest of Irish "Bulls."

A writer in the London Spectator says: Perhaps a few particulars about Sir Boyle Roche, the high priest of Irish "bulls," might be interesting to your readers. He was of the ancient family of the De La Russes, of Fermoy, was member for Tralee from 1775, and was created a baronet in 1782. He began one of his speeches in the Irish House of Commons as follows: "Mr. Speaker, it is the duty of every true lover of his country to give his last guinea to save the remainder of his fortunes." And another began: "Sir, single misfortunes never come alone, and the greatest of all national calamities is generally followed by one much greater." A letter of his is still preserved, supposed to have been written during the rebellion of '98, though it is doubtful if he ever put so many "bulls" together on paper. It is as follows:

"Dear Sir—Having now a little peace and quiet, I sit down to inform you of the bustle and confusion we are in from the bloodthirsty rebels, many of whom are now, thank God, killed and dispersed. We are in a pretty mess, can get nothing to eat, and no wine to drink except whiskey. When we sit down to dinner we are obliged to keep both hands armed. While I write this I have my sword in one hand and my pistol in the other. I concluded from the beginning that this would be the end, and I am right, for it is not half over yet. At present there are such goings on that everything is at a standstill. I should have answered your letter a fortnight ago, but I only received it this morning. Indeed, hardly a mail arrives safe without being robbed. No longer ago than yesterday the mail-coach from Dublin was robbed near this town; the bags had been very judiciously left behind, and by great good luck there was nobody in the coach but two outside passengers who had nothing for the thieves to take. Last Thursday an alarm was given that a gang of rebels in full retreat from Drogheda were advancing under the French standard, but they had no colors nor any drums except bagpipes. Immediately every man in the place, including women and children, ran out to meet them. We soon found our forces a great deal too little, and were far too near to think of retreating. Death was in every face, and to it we went. By the time half our party were killed, we began to be all alive. Fortunately the rebels had no guns, except pistols, cutlasses and pikes, and we had plenty of muskets and ammunition. We put them all to the sword, not a soul of them escaped, except some that were drowned in an adjoining bog. In fact, in a short time nothing was heard but silence. Their uniforms were all different, chiefly green. After the action was over we went to rummage their camp. All we found was a few bottles filled with water, and a bundle of blank French commissions filled up with Irish names. Troops are now stationed round, which exactly squares with my ideas of security. Adieu! I have only time to add that I am yours in great haste. B. R.

"P. S.—If you do not receive this, of course, it must have miscarried; therefore I beg you to write and let me know."

Hunts for the cat-a-mountain—the back fences. Harriet Beecher Stowe is very much better and her mind is nearly as unclouded as ever.

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