

IN FOREIGN LANDS.

BEAUTIFUL VENICE.

To this pretty, womanly city there are two sides, a writer tells us; it is the most deceitful city in the world—a city of wide and wonderful contrasts.

THE SPANISH ARMY.

An account of the strength of the Spanish army has been published. It consists of 40 regiments of the line (80 bata lions), 80,000 men; 20 battalions of light infantry, 24,000 men; 4 regiments of foot artillery, 3,000 men; 5 regiments of horse artillery (180 guns), 2,500 men; 3 regiments of engineers, 6,000 men; 17 regiments of heavy cavalry, 5,540 men; 8 squadrons of light cavalry, 800 men; 2 regiments of hussars, 940 men. These 238,000 men form the regular army.

A CORSE IN THE AIR.

The Paris correspondent of the Philadelphia Press writes: "One of the strangest and most horrible of sensational incidents took place the other day at Puteaux. A party of children who were playing in the environs discovered floating in the air and partly entangled amid the branches of a tree a white parcel upborne by some twenty or thirty little red toy balloons which were attached to it. The attention of the police being called to this singular object, it was brought down and the package opened, which proved to contain the corpse of a new-born infant.

KISSING IN CHINA.

It is a singular fact that the custom of kissing is altogether unknown in China. The Chinese, indeed, have no word or term expressing love as we understand the tender passion. An American navy officer voyaging Chinward narrates an amusing experience of the ignorance of the Chinese maidens of the science of kissing.

HAVANA FOMEX.

A writer in Lippincott's, speaking of Havana society, says: "The ugliness of the women amounts to a vice, and is unredeemed by any quality such as sometimes palliates plainness of features. I have cried aloud for the beautiful Cuban, but in vain. I am assured that she exists—am told, 'My dear fellow, you never made a greater mistake in your life.' Am soon-pouched in various ways, but I cannot find her. I hear it said that owing to the political chaos here she has retired from public view; but it is not denied that she will go to the carnival and the opera. I was warned not to expect her at the ball in Alfonso's honor at the Spanish Club, and certainly it was a timely warning. Fancy a long hall of colored marble pillars running the length of it, forming avenues; balconies on both sides hanging over the streets, and full of young men smoking cigarettes; men parading up and down the hall and quizzing the women, who were all seated—two rows of them, hundreds all together—seriously contemplating the male procession; ennobled, powdered, attired in the wealth of the Indies, saying nothing, doing nothing, not smiling nor blinking, just sitting there, an awful array of hideousness. After the hall struck up and the dancing began I remained long enough to lose in the music the horrible impression of the opening scene, and then hurried home. At the opera and the carnival it was the same."

is not so positively unendurable, but a handsome face, a pretty face, or even an intelligent, expressive face I have not seen in a woman in Havana; and at this season of the year, if ever, Havana is Cuba. I don't condemn them—I merely give my luck."

THE "LIGHT FANTASTIC" IN FIJI.

A Fiji correspondent of a London paper writes: "At eight a company of 200 Fijians performed one of their strange dances by torch-light. These people, with their faces blackened in a great variety of hideous patterns, and their bodies decked with leaves, branches and tapa in a very grotesque manner, formed themselves into a compact company, with an orchestral party and master of ceremonies in the center. The music began with a sharp clapping of hands, accompanying a measured, monotonous song in perfect time. Then those composing the outer edge of the company formed themselves into a wide circle round the orchestra, and went through a series of most extraordinary antics, shouting and gesticulating, and giving the circle a constantly revolving motion. But however eccentric the motions were, they were all performed in exact time by every member of the party, and the cadence of the hand-clapping was never lost. Sometimes arms were advanced to their fullest extension, and sometimes they were swung wildly around. Then the men would stop with an extravagantly ludicrous wriggling motion, which affected all their members. You had no sooner determined that they were going to tie themselves in so many knots than you changed your opinion and felt sure they were about to stand on their heads; yet neither feat was actually performed. The light from the coconut leaf torches fell upon the figures with a strangely weird effect. When the dance reached its end the outer circle closed up on the central body; the shouting and gesticulating became more wild and insubordinate, until with one last effort there was a prodigious yell of 'Wa-oo!' at the very top of the voice, and exhausted nature demanded rest."

A SENSATIONAL ROBBERY IN PARIS.

A few mornings since, says an English paper, a sensational robbery was committed, of that bold but patient and thoughtful type which we are beginning to recognize as the American style. A M. Delapierre, money changer on the Boulevard de la Madeleine, joins to this business a trade in expensive neck-ties. Nearly every day for the last six months an American has made small purchases in the shop. With the ease and volubility of his pleasant race, this gentleman had fallen into a habit of exchanging long gossip with M. Delapierre, who looked on him as one of his best customers. The other morning the American arrived as usual with a friend. M. Delapierre had just taken out a bag of money and valuables, which he placed in the window while talking. There is, of course, a money changer's grating between it and the shop. Presently entered a third person, who bought a silver teapot, which the assistant packed up and carried to the assistant given. When he had gone the American produced a claw, such as gas globes are set upon, and said carelessly to the money changer, "I wish you would see if you have a glass to fit this claw." M. Delapierre went with him into the back shop and sought a globe to match, leaving the friend alone. It appears that he immediately opened the grating, seized the little bag of valuables, and called out, "Haven't you found a glass yet?" The American came back, chose some small articles to be sent home, and then went off quietly with his companion. Not for half an hour afterward did M. Delapierre discover his loss, which amounts to £12,000, half of it in bank notes and gold, the rest in checks and negotiable paper. A theft so patiently concocted, so audaciously carried out, is worthy of notice. Like our own bank robbers, these men had plainly some capital, beside shrewd brain and cold resolution. They could afford to wait six months and to buy silver tea-pots and trifles of that sort.

THE STINGING TREE.

One of the torments, says a writer on Australia, to which the traveler is subjected in the North Australia scrub is a stinging tree (Urtica gigas), which is very abundant, and ranges in size from a large shrub of thirty feet in height to a small plant measuring only a few inches. Its leaf is large and peculiar, from being covered with a short, silvery hair, which, when shaken, emits a fine pungent dust, most irritating to the skin and nostrils. If touched it causes most acute pain, which is felt for months afterward—a dull, gnawing pain, accompanied by a burning sensation, particularly in the shoulder and under the arm, where small lumps often arise. Even when the sting has quite died away, the unwary bushman is forcibly reminded of his indiscretion each time that the affected part is brought into contact with water. The fruit is of a pink fleshy color, hanging in clusters, so inviting that a stranger is irresistibly tempted to pluck it, but seldom more than once, for, though the raspberry-like berries are harmless in themselves, some contact with the leaves is almost unavoidable. The blacks are said to eat the fruit, but for this I cannot vouch, though I have tasted one or two at odd times, and found them very pleasant. The worst of this nettle is the tendency it exhibits to shoot up wherever a clearing has been effected. In passing through the dry tracks cut through the scrub, great caution was necessary to avoid the young plants that cropped up even in a few weeks. I have never known a case of its being fatal to human beings, but I have seen people subjected by it to great suffering, notably a scientific gentleman, who plucked off a branch and carried it some distance as a curiosity.

SPEAKING OF THE BRAZILIAN YAM.

now extensively cultivated in the Gulf States, a correspondent of a Mobile paper writes: "These potatoes are the best I have ever seen. They are equally as sweet as the old yam, and on the same land, with the same cultivation, will make fully one-third more than any variety I ever saw. They are hardy and keep well during the winter. I have also the red-skin yam, yellow inside, which is certainly the best early kind to be had. They are fully six weeks earlier than any kind obtainable."

COWDEN CLARK'S

tells a story of a gentleman who lately, in making a return of his income to the Tax Commissioners, wrote on the paper: "For the last three years my income has been somewhat under £150; in future it will be more precarious, as the man is dead of whom I borrowed the money."

wondering the while what caused the pain and numbness in his arm. Horace I have seen die in agony from the sting; the wounded parts becoming paralyzed; but, strange to say, it does not injure cattle, who dash through the scrubs full of it without receiving any damage. This curious anomaly is well known to all bushmen.

"A ROAD OF TOMBS."

Col. Forney writes from Rome: "Everybody has read about the Appian Way. It was the great line of communication between Rome and Southern Italy. Before you reach the old road you see the colossal ruins of the baths of Caracalla, which occupy the space of nearly a mile, and accommodated 1,600 bathers at a time; but this is surpassed by the size of the bath of Diocletian, which accommodated 3,900 bathers at a time. The baths were the favorite resorts of the poets and philosophers, and were adorned with porticos and vestibules for the idle and libraries for the learned; they were also decorated with the finest objects of art in painting and sculpture, and placed in the midst of fountains and shaded walks. Along the Appian Way were built the tombs containing the urns with the ashes of hundreds and thousands of Romans who lived and died thousands of years ago. These tombs are temples above ground, built of solid stone walls, inside of which were placed the urns, while outside were carved the beautiful decorations and inscriptions, oftentimes including exquisite statuary to designate the dead. Many of their busts were found centuries after inside, and as you now ride along this still solid road you see the remains of costly sepulchers, with the fragments of their marble memorials and highly wrought statues. You would think that this road of the tombs would be rather a mournful affair, but the Romans had strange notions of death. Their funerals were jolly feasts, and they liked to have their villas and their merry meetings near the houses of their departed relations and ancestors. For miles the relics of the graves extend along the Appian Way. One of the most curious of these sepulchers is the tomb of Coecilia Metella, erected sixty-seven years before Christ, to the memory of Coecilia, the Crete, and wife of Crassus. It is a circular tower of massive construction and enormous strength, and has seen many changes. It was a fortress or feudal stronghold in the Middle Ages, and sustained great injury in the sixteenth century when Rome was besieged. To-day it stands in solid and solitary grandeur, as if grimly defying the ravages of another 1,900 years."

WHAT IS LOVELINESS?

It is not in pearl powder, nor in golden hair-dye, nor in jewelry. It cannot be got in a bottle or a box. It is pleasant to be handsome; but all beauty is not in prettiness. There is a higher beauty that makes us love people tenderly. Eyes, nose, hair, or skin never did that yet; though it is pleasing to see fine features. What you are will make your face ever for you in the end, whether nature has made it plain or pretty. Good people are never ill-looking. Whatever their faces may be, an amiable expression atones for all. If they can be cheerful also no one will love them the less because their features are not regular, or because they are too fat, or too thin, too pale, or too dark. Cultivation of the mind adds another charm to their faces, and, on the whole, if any girl is desirous of being liked by the many and loved by the one, it is more in her power than she may believe to accomplish that object. Cosmetics will not accomplish it, however. Neither will fine dress, though a woman that does not dress becomingly wrongs herself. Forced smiles and affected amiability will be of no avail; but if she can manage to feel kindly to everybody, not to be jealous, not to be cross, to be happy if possible, and to encourage contentment, then something will come into her face that will outlast youth's roses, and gain her not only a husband but a life-long lover."

A FAMOUS CANNON BALL.

A cannon ball is preserved in the office (bureau no longer) of the Revenue Marine, in the Treasury Department, in Washington, which deserves to become historic—if cold iron can be said to deserve anything. It weighs twenty pounds, and its recollection is correct, and is a plain, rough shot, with an iron ring attached to it. In a storm which occurred on the coast of New Jersey, many years ago, it was thrown from a mortar, with a line fastened to the ring, and passing over, fell beyond a ship which was stranded and in danger of going to pieces. The line was tied to a cable on the shore, and the shipwrecked people drew this in, and fastened it to the vessel. On this cable a life-car was passed backward and forward from the ship to the shore, by which means 300 lives were saved. The ball was hauled in and retained. It was subsequently sent to the headquarters of the Revenue Marine Department, where it has since been carefully preserved, and where it is always regarded with much interest by people who are informed of its history. It might have sunk a "seventy-four" and never been heard from."

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ENGLAND

contained about 78 congregations; in 1860 the number had risen to 95; in 1870 it had reached 117, and in 1874 the number was reported at 147.

"ECENTRIC" DISPOSALS.

One ordered his body to be sewn up in a pig's skin; another wished to be buried in the market quade naked, clothed, as the Indians say, with the points of the compass; another in amber, as the fies, which cause more wonder in their position than in their rarity of richness; another in honey, a disciple of Democritus, Alexander the Great. Another gave his body to anatomists, saying that nature teaches us to use the bodies of the dead to preserve those of the living, and that we ought not to honor what she dishonors; another ordered his body to be thrown into the sea, for the benefit of his wife, who had sworn to dance on it. Diogenes desired to be flung out as dung on the face of the field. In a museum, at Manchester, is a lady mummy, properly labelled and placed in a clock case, over the glass face of which a veil of white velvet hangs. Bentham, the celebrated jurist, ordered his body to be dissected and the skeleton afterward put together, clothed, and the whole seated in a diaphanous house on wheels. He is said to be preserved in this condition, with a stick in his hand, in a back room of University College. Inspired by that sad sight, some witty fellow produced what he was pleased to call an anagram on the strength of the change of position of a single letter: *Jeer my bent ham*. The jest is deficient, perhaps in point and polish, but in other respects it is perfect. People have been buried in various positions, with their heads turned every quarter of the compass, and a world of words have been written in defense of each position. The advocates of cremation say that one, and not the least, of its advantages consists in its rendering all idle dispute about position unnecessary. Many have been buried standing, sitting and lying—lying supine or prone—as Diogenes wished to lie in this world turned upside down, that at the time of the general resurrection and restoration he might be found as flat on his back as a flounder or old Bill Bowling. Some have desired to be buried without coffins, and it seems probable, from the absence of the name of this contrivance in the burial service, that at the time of the compilation of formula it was not in common use. The officiating priest, it will be remembered, speaks invariably of the corpse or body. Others buried in coffins or vaults have desired that the lids should not be soldered down, and that the door of the vault should have the key inside, as if they dreaded the absence, after their long interlude of sleep, of some angel to roll away the stone from the mouth of their sepulcher.—*Cornhill Magazine for March.*

THE DIFFICULTIES OF ENGLISH SPELLING.

The Methodist comments favorably upon the spelling-school mania, and adds: "It is a noteworthy fact, that the English language is the only civilized tongue in which the problem of spelling offers any difficulties. The French, with its peculiar sounds and silent letters, appears hard to a stranger; but the correspondence of sounds to combinations of letters is fixed, and the rules once learned, the pronunciation of the word follows from the writing, and the manner of the writing from the sound, without variation. In the other languages of Europe, whether of Teutonic or Latin derivation, each letter has its exact value, and mistakes—provided the ear be correctly trained—are impossible. As the countries speaking these languages must be deprived of the 'spelling school,' we may congratulate ourselves on having one amusement that is unique. Our language, as to its written forms, must be classified with such primitive tongues as the ancient Assyrian, whose writing has been pronounced the most complicated ever invented, and the Chinese, in which every word is represented by its independent character. It is a serious disadvantage to our complicated and irregular methods that so much time has been consumed in learning to spell. What other people can learn in a few hours takes up the time of our schools for years, and is never completely acquired. No rules will answer, but each word must be learned by itself in detail. The time thus spent must, of necessity, be lost from other branches of knowledge. We find it hard to believe that anything can be gained from the retention of the present forms which will compensate for this loss."

PLEASANTRIES.

Mosquitoes—buzz-um friends. EARLY fruit—Chinese dates of yesterday. A POINT any woman can appreciate—Point lace. WHAT is that which, by losing an eye, has only a nose left? A noise. THE financial pressure is loosening. Even the days are not so "short" as they were. "LOVE," said George Sand, "is an infernal transport,"—the precise definition of a canal-boat. A PENNSYLVANIA breach of promise case has been settled by the man giving the woman six cords of wood. MANY women who are counted honest steal their petticoats, bone their stays, crib their babies, and even hook their dresses. THE latest dodge of a San Francisco hypochondriast is to exhibit a small boy and announce that he has been successfully removed from a corn. "PATRICK," said the priest, "how much hay did you steal?" "Well, I may as well confess to your reverence for the whole stack, for I am going after the balance of it to-night. THE Peruvian government wants to pay off Henry Meiggs' little railroad claim of \$15,000,000 in guano. In reply, Mr. Meiggs remarks to the Peruvian government, "G'w' now!" A LITTLE four-year-old woker up very early one morning, and seeing the full moon from the window, innocently remarked: "I should think it was about time for Dod to take that moon in."

A MAN WHO FELL INTO A VAT OF BOILING LARD

and got out alive, says that it was not an unpleasant sensation after the first moment, but he thought what a mighty queer-shaped doughnut he would make. A COLORED congregation in Dayton have decided to forgive their clergyman for betting on three-card monte and losing \$90 of festival money. One of the deacons remarked: "We are all human, and de game is werry exciting."

A DEUTSCHER CHINAMAN

feeling rich and elated at his progress in American civilization, went through the streets of San Francisco crying, "Hoop-la! hoop-la! Me all same as Malican man. Hair cut short and drunk like hell!" "THEY you won't lend me that dime novel, eh?" inquired one boy of another in the post-office Saturday. "No, I won't." "All right, then; next time our chimney burns out you shan't come into the yard and whoop and holler."

THE BROOKLYN EAGLE

says the elegiac bard of the Philadelphia Ledger has established a school of poetry in this country which is doing much to assuage the pangs of final parting. The last tribute is in memory of the late lamented Thompson: Death came at half-past nine o'clock, And put out Thompson's candle. Thank Heaven, that gives him rest at last From this here Beecher scandal. A YOUNG married man received his first curtain lecture the other night from his wife, Polly. He calls it "the epistle of Poll to the ram one." He won't be so facetious after awhile. Ephesian's the flowing bowl, he may get a rest, but Poll will lay the law down to him every time he gets Titus a brick. ON Saturday night two men got into a wordy controversy, which waxed quite hot, and finally one of them challenged the other to a square fight. The challenged party flustered around and endeavored to avoid committing himself on this issue, but finally, pressed by the other, he positively refused to fight. "Not that I'm any coward," he said, "or that I'm afraid of you, but I was allers an unlucky man in a fight."

AUTOMATISM.

The subject of crime and automatism, or the moral responsibility of great criminals, receives careful and skillful treatment at the hands of Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes in a recent magazine article. The discussion turns upon the question whether the quality of crime can be recognized and provided for in some measure in the laws. If the principle of automatism can be scientifically established, its practical application must eventually follow. It will then become the duty of scientific men, in specific cases, to ascertain in what degree, if at all, a murderer has been controlled by inherited instincts or automatic passions and impulses; and as the argument proceeds on the basis that most wanton criminals are automatons, medical officers will become necessary adjuncts of every court. When this new order of things is arranged, each criminal, instead of pleading mitigating circumstances, will expose the foulness and blackness of his heart to the best possible advantage, and seek to prove himself an automaton beyond peradventure. It is announced as an interesting fact that for \$1,000 a man can buy a ticket that will carry him around the globe. This seems like useless extravagance, when, if he will stand still, the globe itself will carry him around the same distance in twenty-four hours for nothing. THE San Francisco Call, under the head of "Personal," publishes the following touching notice: "Notice—I will not be responsible for any debts contracted by my wife, Maria A. Charney, she having put me out of the house. Antoine Charney."

THE ST. LOUIS GLOBE

gives a new word—"Shot-gunned."

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Piles! Piles! Why say this damaging and troublesome complaint cannot be cured, when so many evidences of success might be placed before you every day—of supposed hopeless cases? Your physician informs you that this is the complaint to exit, you lessen your chances for relief. Experience has taught this in all cases.

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W. D. BELDING, Albany, Oct. 16, 1874.