

RAILWAY LITERATURE.

THE GUIDE BOOKS THAT ARE PUBLISHED BY RAILROADS.

Fast Sumo Are Spent in Hiring Capable Writers and Exceptional Artists to Reproduce Scenery for Costly Volumes to Advertise the Line.

The greatest rivalry among railroad men is in the getting out of guide books. Several years ago a rich southern railroad published a luxuriously gotten up book as handsome as almost any example of a rich edition of Shakespeare that men and women display upon a parlor center table.

But that elegant volume is almost forgotten now. Its defects were that its pictures were really made, and represented a low grade of art, while the letter press, or reading matter, was the work of the general passenger agent—a clever man but not a professional writer.

Today no such pictures and no such writing is accepted for a representative guide book. A school of artists has grown up to meet the demand for such work, and they are salaried by the big printing and bank note engraving companies that get out these books.

As a matter of fact, the latest guide books are imitations of the magazine in every particular except that they include no advertising pages. But the more wealthy railroads will not employ these professional guide book illustrators. They secure high class artists who are too independent to sign their names to what they do, but provide the best work of which they are capable, because they are better paid for it than for any other work that they do.

BIG PRICES PAID FOR WORK.

Men who study such matters are able to recognize the personality of the artists in their methods of drawing, and such persons often see a painting or a study of a picturesque place in one of the art galleries on an art sale at the same time that they receive a copy of some guide book illustrating other beautiful spots in the same region in a set of drawings by the very same artist, who has been whirled hither and thither in that part of the country in a special car at the expense of the railroad company that monopolizes the traffic.

In that same car with the artist goes the general passenger agent, but he no longer writes the matter in the book. He has secured the services of some well known literary man of the second or third class to describe the region with his pen for a higher rate of remuneration than the writer could get for any other work. Two thousand dollars is paid for the illustrations in a single guide book, and in all probability no first class book of the kind has been written for less than \$500.

These books have been poured from the presses of the best printers in the country in editions of from 5,000 to 10,000 copies, and have cost the railroads from five to twenty cents a copy. Some are designed to appear like novels, and some like stories of adventure and some like books of travel. Their titles are such as are likely to prove attractive to large bodies of citizens.

Not to quote any one of them, but to show what sort of bait they throw to the public, they may be said to be named in some such way as these: "Where to Camp Out," "Where to Go This Summer," "Three Days and a Thousand Trout," "Hunting the Mountain Goat," "Pure Air and Balsam Pines," "Country Board," "Cheaper Than Staying Home." One enterprising western railroad man has issued a little book on etchings, exquisitely printed, and made to close up into a large envelope tied with a satin bow knot.

SOME NOTABLE PECULIARITIES.

Some of the very best map making that has been done in this country has grown out of the competition in guide books. Just at present the rage is for bird's eye views, however, and these are cleverly made to show every hill and stream and village and patch of forest in vast areas of country. They all omit every indication of marsh land, and all are printed with green ink, in order to produce the most astonishing effects of universal greenery, shade and coolness.

It is a noticeable characteristic of all them that they show only one railroad, never any more. No guide book published exhibits Chicago as accessible by more than one railroad, and enormous tracts like North Dakota and Utah are made to appear to depend upon a single line of rails for their means of internal traffic. In such maps railroads seem to reach a degree of perfection that is not noticed by those who travel most upon them.

For instance, they are always straight, direct lines from point to point, precisely like the great highway that Nicholas marked down upon the map of Russia with a pencil and a ruler in order to show his engineers how he would connect Moscow with St. Petersburg. Not even the Rocky mountains are able to hinder the absolutely straightforward course of any railroad. On the maps the line of the tracks goes straight along past the mountains as if they were mere grass in a wheat field. The reading matter in the guide books shows that each railroad avoids mosquitoes and malarial regions with the same success.

Where there are no mosquitoes the writers say so, and where they are as thick as peas in a pod the most dignified silence is maintained with regard to them. But there one sees how greatly competition has elevated this class of literature, for only a few years ago these books were as unreliable as the old fashioned circus posters. They do not lie to the reader. The next thing will be that they will tell the truth.—New York Sun.

Better as She Is.

Miss Plumpleigh (of the suburbs)—Why can't you urge a reduction of fares on our road? The Editor (gallantly)—I can, but I know one fair that I hope will never be reduced.—Pittsburg Bulletin.

A rural youth calls the new district school room "Experience," because she is a dear teacher.—Detroit Free Press.

M. Brumard, the French savant, says that in 80 cases out of 100 typhoid fever is caused by polluted water.

ON THE MOUNTAIN.

Time flies in busy valleys below. But here above he drops his wings. He climbs with footstep calm and slow. Or passes while the gay life stings.

Time stretches from us, so it seems. In these woods each happy hour. But here above he drops his wings. He climbs with footstep calm and slow. Or passes while the gay life stings.

India's Troops of Monkeys. All along this road to this side of Ahmidabad we saw many troops of monkeys of all sizes, from that of a terrier dog up to a large setter—now romping over the fields close by the track, or springing from branch to branch on the trees, or sitting up on some prominent limb wisely watching us as we whizzed by. They are sacred, and the natives never hurt them, although they are fearful thieves and make destructive raids upon fields and orchards. We also saw large numbers of peacocks—noble birds, with tails and plumage of great beauty. They, too, are sacred. A foreigner would be mobbed should he shoot one. They, as the monkeys, are not wild, as travelers books would lead us to suppose. They are free, and roam as they please, but are hardly less tame than the same birds are on an American farm. They are rarely seen far away from villages and farms.—Carter Harrison in Chicago Mail.

Peculiarities of Composite Photographs. A very curious point in composite photographs is that almost invariably this combined picture is that of a better looking person than any of the individuals who have contributed to it. Some of these photographs now lie before us. Here is one which has been taken from a number of criminals, and, as we have just indicated, the picture is much better favored than the various low browed, coarse mouthed individuals who have contributed to make it up. Another picture we may call attention to as being a great contrast to the last, this is a group of ten girls who are the members of a literary club. The picture is that of a bright looking, intellectual girl of about 19 years of age. The face is thoughtful and the shape of the head indicates great intellectual power. The same observations are applicable to another photograph which is before us, to which several scientific men have contributed each his share.—Chambers' Journal.

Shrewdness of a Planter. Negroes are deeply religious in character, though they maintain a too rigid separation between religion and morality. There was once a planter "up the coast," whose flocks and herds suffered from the depredations of his colored neighbors. His method of self preservation was unique. He built a church which he presented to the negroes upon one condition. This condition was announced to the congregation from the pulpit by their minister. It was that so long as nothing was stolen from the sanctuary remain open, but upon the disappearance of the great article the church was to be closed, never to be reopened. The plan worked faithfully, and while other plantations suffered as of old, the originator of this scheme possessed his goods in peace.—New York Post.

Woodpecker's Justice. A year ago a pair of red headed woodpeckers determined to peck a hole in the boarding under the eaves of a house, as woodpeckers often do. The owner of the house, not liking such mutilation, after repeated efforts, succeeded in driving them away, and they went to work at once and dug a hole in the nearest tree.

When the bird's house was finished and housekeeping had begun the farmer's boys captured the female as she sat in the nest and kept her in a cage, hoping to catch the male also. Two days later he returned with another wife. The boys rooled at the sight. They gave Mrs. Woodpecker No. 1 her liberty and awaited results. To their surprise the male woodpecker, after a relentless pursuit of about six hours, killed her. Then he destroyed the one egg which she had laid, and continued housekeeping with wife No. 2 as if nothing had happened.—Cor. Youth's Companion.

Beating Street Car Railways. It is hard to get ahead of the street car companies, but some people in Chicago think they are going to do it. They are having constructed vehicles exactly like street cars, except that the wheels are a little larger. They are gauged to fit the car tracks, and it is proposed to run them on the tracks just like any horse car, without asking for your leave or by your leave. They will stop like the street cars and charge the same fare. If the car companies object, owners of the new vehicles will point to the fact that they are simply omnibuses, which are entitled to use any portion of the public streets, whether tracks happen to be there or not. If the car companies don't like their tracks to be used they are at liberty to take them away.—Exchange.

Hands That Statesmen Write. Among Lord Granville's other amiable possessions was that of a very neat and scholarly handwriting. Perhaps this is one reason for his popularity with press men. On the whole, however, statesmen certainly do not write worse than "writers." Mr. Gladstone's hand is indeed spoiled by over indulgence in postcards. Mr. Balfour's hand is not pretty, and Mr. Goschen's is execrable. Mr. John Morley's hand has character, but is not always easy to read. Lord Salisbury writes clearly. So do Lord Rosebery and Lord Hartington. But it may be doubted whether any of those who have mentioned write at once so prettily and so legibly as did Lord Granville.—Pall Mall Gazette.

When You Go to Europe. A hint from one who knows continental hotels: I carried with me one good sized bedroom pillow encased in dark summer silk, and wished many times that I had brought one or two more, as one is forcibly reminded of the block and gullotine when placing the head upon some of the miserable contrivances politely called pillows in many places in Europe.

An apparatus called a lactaric has recently been used by French chemists to separate greasy matter from milk. It consists of a steel barrel rapidly revolved, and if a certain temperature is necessary for the reaction the barrel is placed in hot water until the required degree of heat is attained.

PARIS NEWSPAPERS.

SIGNED EDITORIALS ARE COMMON BUT NOT UNIVERSAL.

Foreign Affairs Treated with Intelligence and Ability—Local Columns Not What They Should Be—Prices of Advertising—Copying the News.

The editorial department of the Paris papers, which is their leading feature, is often able and brilliant. The habit of signing editorial articles is common, but by no means universal. Among the exceptions are the Temps, the Debats, and La Paix. The Matin has an article daily from one of several writers, among whom are Jules Simon, Emmanuel Arène, René and John Lemaître. Each writer expresses and is responsible for his own opinions only, and as they represent all shades of politics except Socialism, what the paper says one morning is flatly contradicted by its article of the following day. What are called "general articles" by the American newspapers are almost always signed by Paris writers. They may be literary, critical, or may cover a wide variety of interesting topics. Among the best contributions of this class are those of Anatole de la France and Hughes le Roux, written for the Temps.

Foreign affairs, so far as regards the continent, are of late years treated with intelligence and ability. The domestic politics of the United States are still poorly understood by the majority of French journalists, with the exception of a few who have crossed the ocean. As to the foreign continent in general it is fairer than that of the London newspapers, which is not paying it an extravagant compliment. Probably not less than sixty members of the senate and chamber of deputies are connected with the Paris newspapers, principally as contributors. This leads to what would be considered in other countries violations of parliamentary privilege, or to occurrences that strike foreigners as somewhat indelicate, journalists not hesitating sometimes to publish facts that should be kept secret, or to give speeches of their own writers in extenso with fulsome comment.

IN THE LOCAL COLUMNS. The local columns of the Paris newspaper are not what they should be, or what their readers would be glad to have them, for want of room. The great city is a mine of sensational material, tragic, comic, grave, gay, but always interesting. If properly treated. As a Paris newspaper is usually a small four page sheet, printed in course type on bad paper, it is difficult to get more into it than the literary and political matter that must in any event appear, and a mere resume of local events. If the foreign news is of great importance, local matter is crowded out. If a single local event is sensational all other local matters, no matter how interesting in themselves, must make way for it. Reporters of some papers sign their names. This practice sometimes causes curious displays of egotism, the writers forgetting that which they have to narrate is their own personal experiences. The facts are obscured by their efforts to obtain them, their little deprivations, and the articles of food that composed their breakfast. The self consciousness of French newspaper writers is always noticeable, whether they sign their articles or not. The editorial "we" often appears in the editorial columns. It is hard for a correspondent in a foreign capital to give the facts in a dispatch without prefacing or interspersing them with useless personal detail. Aside from these evidences of imperfection and journalistic juvenility, the local columns are usually readable, and sometimes bright and witty. The Paris interviewer, who is a recent institution already become universal, is, if possible, more unscrupulous and imaginative than his American confrere.

A Paris newspaper office is not usually an abode of luxury. The France has a fine building, of which it uses but a small part itself. The Figaro is handsomely installed in the Rue Droite. The Petit Journal, the newspaper of the bonnets, cochetmen and garçons, has comfortable quarters in the Rue Lafayette. Most of the papers of small circulation are in the upper story of some large building, where their business, editorial and composing departments are crowded into a few small, badly ventilated and poorly lighted rooms.

TOO MANY NEWSPAPERS. There are far too many newspapers in France for the number of readers, and they cannot all be rich. The revolutionary, socialist and some of the ultra-radical newspapers are sold at one sou. Most of the others are sold at two sous. Some are sold at three sous, with another sou added when the size is doubled, as in the case of the Saturday edition of the Figaro. A sou is sometimes added to the Paris price for purchasers in the departments. The newsboy cuts no great figure in Paris. Men, boys and women cry certain sheets in the streets, but if one wants a newspaper he has usually to go to the news stands. Prices of advertising are high, and Paris merchants do not care much about the newspapers as a means of making their goods known. The space occupied by legitimate advertising is small, therefore the newspapers have to depend for support on their circulation and on subsidies paid for their influence. These are sometimes large, and constitute their chief means of livelihood.

Paris newspapers working for the most part with an insufficient staff, the habit of copying from one another's columns is general, paragraphs being taken verbatim by the evening from the morning papers and vice versa. As these paragraphs often contain opinions and individual ideas they read curiously when met with in successions in several different journals. Dispatches two or three days old are often seen in some of them. An important occurrence happening in some European capital, like Bismarck's speech in the Reichstag, is known as regards its general import, in San Francisco before it is in Paris. The speech in question was delivered about 2 o'clock. The Temps that appeared at 4:30 had nothing of it, and the Soir, appearing at 9 p. m., only a few words.—Paris Cor. San Francisco Chronicle.

Fast Western Railroad. The record of the Pennsylvania limited mail train had again been lowered, and again it knocks out all previous time. Recently the train made the run from Columbus, O., to this city, 188 miles, in four hours and four minutes, making fifteen stops and a number of slowdowns. The run to Bradford was made in two hours, and from Bradford to this city in two hours and four minutes. A great deal of the distance was made at the rate of eighty miles an hour. "We had an engine," said Conductor Taylor proudly, "that could climb a tree."—Indianapolis News.

A REMINISCENCE OF MR. BARNUM.

How He Got Circus Posters Into Canada Without Paying the Duty.

"One of P. T. Barnum's most successful feats of bamboozlement," said a New Yorker the other day, "was played upon the Canadian customs authorities. The veteran showman's tours were always planned far in advance, and one winter he made up his mind to take his great circus and menagerie through Canada during the summer after the next. This gave him about two years in which to mature his plans. "One important item of a showman's expenses consists of his advertising placards, and Mr. Barnum was always lavish with these gaudy prints. He was aware that the Canadian government imposed a high duty on this class of imports, and yet he wanted to paint Canada red, yellow, blue and green with a lavishness that no showman had ever displayed there before.

"Now there was no printing house anywhere in Canada that could begin to turn out the kind of work that Mr. Barnum required, either in size, color or finish. Nevertheless, his immense posters came under the same classification as much smaller lithographs and printed colored matter did, and he knew that the Dominion custom authorities would not abate one jot of the full toll, but would rather rejoice at the opportunity to mulct the foreigner who would convey so much money out of a country.

"So Barnum studied the question a while, and finally set on at once a great lot of circus posters of the most gorgeous designs, whereon yellow lions glared striped tigers, and brown bears fought with blue hippopotami till the gore flowed into beautiful crimson backgrounds. No agent appeared, when the posters were detained by the Canadian customs officers to pay the duty. They were accordingly held for twelve months, then duly advertised for sale for three months more, and finally put up at auction with a lot of other unclaimed parcels, and were designated in the catalogue merely as 'colored prints.'

"Nobody took any interest in them when the auctioneer called for a bid, and finally the whole batch was knocked down for a song to a secret agent of the circus, who had been sent up by Mr. Barnum for that express purpose."—New York Tribune.

Received as a Private Individual.

One of the authors of "The Czar and His People" gives the following instance of Tolstoy's independence of thought and action: General Loris Melnikoff had been given such unbounded power to act against the nihilists that, as he said, he was virtually created vice emperor. He was directed in the course of his official investigations that one of the leading nihilist chiefs was in the habit of visiting Tolstoy, and one day Melnikoff himself went out to the novelist's country house. Before the visitor had announced himself Tolstoy recognized him and said:

"You are Loris Melnikoff. Do you come to see me officially or as a private man? If you come officially here are my keys. Search, open everything. You are free to do so."

"I do not come officially," replied Melnikoff. "Very good," answered Tolstoy, and calling two stalwart servants he said to them, "Throw this man out of the house!" The order was obeyed to the letter, and Melnikoff dared not seek redress.

Wit of the Small People.

I was decanting on the angelic dispositions and ways of some dear little children in a fond mother's presence the other evening. "They are very trying," she said, "but then they are funny. We had company the other afternoon and the children were brought in. I asked Ethel if she still remembered her text. 'Oh, yes, mamma, 'Is I my brother's sallow keeper?'"

"I was very angry with little Robbie the other evening, and had prepared to give him a good spanking. He looked up at me so funny, and says, 'Mamma, you better not monkey wiv the band wagon.' Very angelic, but where do they learn such things?"—Chicago Times.

Better to Have Left Unsaid.

A literal "thing one would rather not have said" was overheard in a Sixth avenue elevated train the other evening. A man and a woman were discussing Mr. Howells' works and their effect while reading them. The man asserted that he invariably found something responsive in any page of them he turned, whereas the woman innocently questioned, "Don't you think that is because he always writes of such commonplace, everyday people and happenings?" When you come to think of it that was rather severe.—New York Times.

Poor Shooting.

No record of the work of the big guns on the big iron clads of Europe is allowed to be published, but the gunners admit that the big cannon are so unwieldy that an enemy a mile away might be fired at twenty times before being hit by accident. The best of the gunners further declares that the mania for big guns has been run to foolishness.—Detroit Free Press.

In a Fur Store.

Mrs. Saverzin Riche (in a fur store to salesman)—I want to look at a pair of fur-nalies. Salesman (doubtfully)—I don't think I know what you mean, madam. Mrs. S. R.—One of my friends has bought a pair of horses and a sleigh, and she said she got the paraphernalias to go with it, and I want a pair, too. Salesman (face reddening)—We are all out of them today, madam.—Judge.

Lincoln as a Rail Splitter.

Leonard W. Volk, the Chicago sculptor, says that once when taking a plaster cast of President Lincoln's hands he detected a scar on the left thumb. Noting that it had attracted his attention the president said "You have heard me called a rail splitter, well, one day while sharpening a wedge on a log the axe glanced off and nearly took the end of my thumb off. That's the scar."—New York World.

WAR AND AERIAL SHIPS.

POSSIBILITIES REGARDING FUTURE FLYING MACHINES.

How Fast Navies and Expensive Land Fortifications Might Be Rendered Useless—Antiquity of the Idea of Flying—Some Schemes of the Ancients.

Regarding the rate of propulsion of the future flying machine, Professor J. Elfteth Watkins, the distinguished mechanical expert, declares that it simply depends upon the size of the propeller used and the rate at which the fans are revolved. In his opinion the old theory that the atmosphere was too tenuous a medium for a propeller to act upon has been demonstrated to be nonsense. Sufficient resistance is offered by it to render possible an enormous speed, so that it would not be too much to surmise that a properly constructed air ship might accomplish the distance between Chicago and New York within an hour's time.

Necessarily, however, there would be a limit to the rapidity of flight, inasmuch as a propeller ceases to propel after a certain number of revolutions per second has been reached. It is open to any one's observation that a vessel's propeller, operating in the water, often revolves much faster when the craft is moving slowly than when it is going fast. Attention was called by Mr. Hazen to the tremendous revolution which the introduction of practical air ships would work in the methods of offense and defense in war. Fortifications, on which it is suggested that Uncle Sam shall expend \$30,000,000 as soon as possible, would be of little use against flying machines that could drop dynamite and other explosives from aloft. Likewise ships of war, however heavily armored, would be at the mercy of hostile aerial navigators.

COSTLY GUNS RENDERED USELESS. In such a case batteries of a description altogether new would have to be devised for shooting vertically, and the general defending a position on terra firma would be obliged to assail the winged foe with volleys of bombs directed upward, as one would shoot ducks on the wing. Should such a state of affairs come to pass, it seems likely that the conflicts of the future between nations will have to be fought out in the air between squadrons of flying men-of-war. About that time one would imagine, it would be considered that the period had arrived, so long looked for by military thinkers, when there could be no more fighting because it would be too vastly destructive.

Having achieved the conquest of the waters, it is natural that man should likewise desire the mastery of the air, and thus in all ages the human race has been ambitious to fly. The earliest attempt in this direction recorded by tradition is the mythical account of Daedalus, who, having constructed the celebrated labyrinth for Minos, king of Crete, was so unfortunate as to offend that monarch, and being imprisoned, escaped with the aid of wings made of feathers cemented with wax.

Another ancient story of Archytas, of Tarentum, who constructed a wooden pigeon that had power to fly, so nicely was it balanced by weight and put to motion by inclosed air. If there is any truth in the account, it seems probable that Archytas was a fakir and worked his bird with a string, as is done on the stage. The ancients, generally speaking, made no attempts in the direction of aeronautics, believing that the power of flight could only appear in the most powerful gods.

OLD SCHEMES FOR FLYING. Four centuries ago an ingenious gentleman named Laureus Laurus published a statement to the effect that his swan's eggs filled with quicksilver, when exposed to the sun, would ascend in the air, but it is not recorded that the experiment was ever subjected satisfactorily to scientific test. In 1670 a Jesuit, Francis Lana, proposed to make four copper balls, each twenty-five feet in diameter and only four one-hundredths of an inch in thickness, from which the air was to be exhausted.

To these balls a basket was to be attached, with a mast and sail, and the calculation was that the contrivance would carry 1,200 pounds. Unfortunately it was discovered that the excessive thickness of the copper spheres would cause them to be broken when a vacuum was created inside of them by the pressure of the atmosphere from without.

Nevertheless, this suggestion approached more nearly to a practicable idea in aeronautics than any other offered up to the time of the invention of the balloon in 1783 by the brothers Montgolfier. So late as 1775 Joseph Gallien, a Dominican friar and professor in philosophy, contended that it would be possible to collect the rarefied air of some lofty mountain top and inclose it in a huge vessel a mile in diameter, which would carry fifty-four times as much weight as did Noah's ark.

Funnily enough, nearly all the early theorists on this subject imagined that the atmosphere merely covered the earth like a shallow ocean, on which the aerial vessels they had in mind were intended to float, like ships in the sea, with their upper portions in the diffuse ether that lay above.—Washington Star.

Why Milk Sours.

Professor Tolm, an Italian chemist, concludes that the ozone produced by electric discharges in a thunder storm conglutates milk by oxidizing it, and generates lactic acid. Mr. Treadwell, of the Wesleyan university, in discussing this, states that the action is not a mere oxidizing, but is in part produced by the growth of bacteria, which is very rapid in hot, sultry weather.—New York Times.

Doubtful Consideration.

"My husband is the dearest, most considerate man in the world." "How does he show it?" "He knows I hate tobacco smoke in the house, and so he goes to the club every night after supper and smokes there."—Harper's Bazar.

When Dudes Meet.

"Good mornin', Jones." "Good mornin'." "Beastly mornin'!" "Beastly!"—Hatchet.

In Paris there are said to be people who make a living by waking people up in the morning. They must do a rousing business.—Boston Commercial Bulletin.

A Philadelphia firm of soap manufacturers have a kettle that holds 471,000 pounds of liquids and six kettles that hold 150,000 pounds each.

A WISE WOMAN'S COMPLAINT.

She Is No Use for the Housekeeping-in-Flat Young Man of the Period.

An elderly country woman, who has chaperoned two charming nieces through the dangers and delights of a gay New York season, claims to have discovered one of the gravest evils menacing modern society, and gave her views at elaborate length the other day. "The ladylike young man is at the bottom of the mischief," she remarked animatedly, "and so long as he is allowed to flourish of course girls can't and won't marry. Who do I mean? Why, that hybrid housekeeping creature.

"Our first encounter with the new fangled specimen was when cards came asking us to tea at Mr. V.'s rooms. I hesitated about accepting, but yielded and went. Still, I felt for the poor fellow's natural perplexities, and bought a nice bag of Jumbies, some lump sugar, and took a few extra spoons along to help him out in a tight place.

"Well, bless your heart, when a neat, white capped maid answered the electric bell, and pushing aside long shadow curtains ushered us into an elegant parlor, I began making every apology, being sure we had stumbled into the wrong place. But, no; here came our host, bowing and smiling, begging us to take off our wraps, and excusing himself for preoccupation—just as I have done a thousand times at home—by saying the kettle refused to boil.

Well, while he talked to the girls I began looking round for some place to hide those odious cakes and heard the spoons rattling in my pocket. "With each survey I took that paper bag grew bigger and the silver jingled under the folds of my dress. But the polished mirrors, bowls of roses, embroidered scarfs and charmingly decorated walls were as nothing to a scene over in the left hand corner next the fireplace.

"There sat the tea table, in all its glory, with Mr. V.—hovering round it like a protecting spirit. He had a lady ostensibly presiding, but no old maid could have kept a sharper eye on the tea cups. He discussed the different varieties of tea with warmth, defended the infusion process, gave his reasons for patronizing a particular bakery, and in the meantime handed round bonbons and salted almonds to his half dozen men and women guests. From confectionery the talk drifted to napers, and with a glow of genuine pride our entertainer exhibited a set of exquisite doilies lately added to his linen closet. He advocated drawn work and the outline stitch in white floss as rather superior style at afternoon functions, and then got on the subject of china, which was evidently his hobby.

"Each fragile cup and saucer was dilated upon in turn, the delicacy and beauty of the porcelain naturally leading to a wholesale abuse of servants. Mr. V.—and a man (!) friend sitting near agreed that they never permitted Biddy to lay a finger on the properties of their pantry. They lauded every piece of china and plate personally to insure safe handling, and used only pure linen towels in order to avoid lint. As you may imagine I sat aghast to hear such conversation between two bearded creatures, and was scarcely surprised afterward, when a woman of the party ventured an opinion on the subject of sweeping, to hear both of them summarily suppress her.

"Now, I want to know who our daughters, sisters and nieces are to marry?" continued the wrathful lady. "Certainly not those finicky Miss Naneys; and there are no longer any bachelors, it appears—nice, jolly fellows, who couldn't tell a mop from a range or a broom from a lambrquin, who went buttonless, and with holes in their socks, till some nice girl took compassion on them; who were lonely and needed companionship, helpless and wanted a woman's hand to keep a neat hearth and warm their slippers.

"Since that first afternoon I have been to twenty feet of the same sort as in many different apartments. New York fairly swarms with this new type of humanity, and with each exhibition of his effeminacy I grow more disgusted. My girls are athletic—ride, swim, hunt and use the horizontal bar. Naturally, when their hosts talk bread and butter they become painfully embarrassed, feel out of their element and make absurd mistakes."—New York Sun.

Repelling Fire with a Drum.

A fire of a strange nature appeared in Wales in 1693. According to the most intelligible account concerning it now in existence, it came up from the sea near Harlech. At several places near that place and all over Merionethshire it did much damage, burning hay, shoes, barns, etc. A person writing of it said: "The grass over which it moves kills all manner of cattle that feed upon it. But what is most remarkable is that any great noise, such as the beating of a drum or sounding a horn, effectually repels it from any house."—St. Louis Republic.

Not a Lucrative Office.

The pay of the official watchman of the village of Springstille, in Hessen, has not increased in a century. One hundred years ago this valued official received one cent a day for his services, and "Old Heinrich," the present watchman, aged seventy years, receives the same compensation. Truly the pay is not princely, and the American officeholder will wonder how Heinrich manages to live on it after paying the usual assessments to the party.—New York World.

"Mystery Gold."

An analysis of "mystery gold" reveals an alloy of copper, silver, gold, aluminum and iron, the last probably being an impurity. Even when present in small proportion, the aluminum resists the nitric acid test.—Arkansas Traveler.

Obesity a Nervous Disorder.

A French scientist advances the theory that obesity is a nervous disorder, and should be treated by avoidance of mental and physical fatigue and a diet of eggs, soup, milk, rice and potatoes.—Chicago Times.

The Slaves of China.

The question will naturally arise in many minds how these vast numbers are maintained and controlled in servitude. The answer is that all people are taught obedience to the head of the family, whether that person is the real parent or whether he merely stands in loco parentis. The teachings of parents, of the schools, of the books of religion, and of the government, are all in favor of such obedience and submission. There can be no living in China outside of a family. To be a nobody's child is to be an outcast, and hunted like the wolf on the mountains. In order to live in a house, to travel on the highways or byways, to buy food or clothing, to get employment or shelter, a government pass is absolutely necessary, and that is always based upon a family pass. All law, all the officials and all the people of a vast and densely populated country are joined against any fugitive from a family.

In addition to all these the terrors of religion and superstition are brought to bear to enforce obedience to the family law. It is implicitly believed that those who are disobedient in this world or outside the family association will be wanderers and outcasts through all the worlds to come. It is the terrors of this belief that make the victim of the Chinese family authority go uncomplainingly to the lingering, but sure death of the guano islands of Peru, to the pestiferous rice and cane fields of Cuba, and it is these terrors of the future which make the unfortunate slave girls endure lives of shame and infamy in foreign countries, where by raising a hand they could be freed.—San Francisco Chronicle.

Chefs and Their Assistants.

One has to look outside the private houses, no matter how grand they may appear, to find complete kitchens. Their number is confined to the hotels and small restaurants. The force of a complete kitchen embraces a chef, who cooks, at the same time, to be a maître d'hôtel, and have charge of the choice and preparation of dishes, and of the adornment of the table and dining room without ever having to put a hand to any of the cooking, unless he chooses to prepare some sauce of which he is the designer, or to garnish a dish, as some happy notion seizes him.

The chef in a European palace or castle is an artist and not a workman. His most he does is to prepare sauces, dress meats, and beauty and make attractive entrees and cold dishes, dividing all rough and heavy work among his assistants. In such an establishment there is a second cook, what you might call a meat cook, who prepares the principal dishes, an entree meter, who has to do with the little made dishes, the preparation of croquets, frying of potatoes or hashing of them with cream; in fact, who prepares all vegetables and does the frying. Then there should be a pastry cook to look after all the sweets. But we must go elsewhere than New York to find any such kitchen establishments in private houses.—New York Sun.

The Porter of Havana.

Seated at a little table not more than two feet square, well within the shade of the cool entradas of the better private residences and all public buildings, will be seen a strangely grim and quiet person, who is usually the only figure in the foreground of a lovely picture comprising a marble and colored glasses, tropical birds and flowers. This is the porter. Though the household depends upon him for all wise protection and safety, he is not of it, and he seems to sit eternally at his little table, oblivious to everything save his occasional immediate duties, rolling out cigarettes as though his very life depended upon this task alone. His livelihood practically does, for though a faithful sort of animal, he is poorly paid. The many thousand porters of Havana have become an important factor in cigarette manufacture. For each 5,000, which in a wheel like package are called una tarea, they receive an escudo, a sum equal to nineteen shillings in American money.—Edgar L. Wakeman in New York Mail and Express.

Several Groundless Superstitions.

There are thousands who believe it is healthy to rise early in the morning; whereas it is a hygienic crime for a man to get up before he wants to. The desire to sleep late in the morning is one of nature's most emphatic intimations that more time is needed for repairs. For a man to go to work in the morning in a sleepy, semi-comatose condition is simply gradual suicide. There is another popular delusion that a man should stop eating while he is yet hungry. He might as well stop breathing before his lungs are filled. Hunger is the barometer that tells the state of the stomach. A man is never hungry unless he ought to eat. There is another delusion that night air is unhealthy—as if any one could get anything but night air at night. There is really no air so unhealthy as day air bottled up and kept until night. There has been no way discovered for