

A SERVIAN SONG.

Mother, a dear little lad
After through the night is creeping
His hand his way and is dead.
I fear him for his sleeping.
I know he is coming to me,
On to the door and see.

Daughter, woman's ending
Is to be without loving
When she meets her lover half way,
He holds her fast and she
As the lamp he drains by day,
Or the lamp he burns at night.

Mother, no more,
But open the door
I have his heart, he mine;
He must be honest and bold.
I will give him kisses for wine,
And my eyes shall light him to lead.

—H. H. Stoddard in Century.

OVERCONFIDENCE.

Ten years ago in a certain good sized town in Pennsylvania there lived a family whom I will call Mitchell. The family consisted of husband, wife and two children, the latter being a boy aged five and a girl of seven. Mitchell was a private banker, known to be honest, respectable and worth a clear \$100,000. A few years ago, however, the family was overtaken by a series of small but certain incidents occurred. One day his wife was fatally injured in a railroad collision at a point about fifty miles from home. When he reached her, in response to a telegram sent by a stranger, he found she had been removed to a hotel and was being tenderly cared for by a woman who gave her name as Mrs. A. H. Gray, of Philadelphia. She was on the train, but suffered no injury. Mrs. Gray, as I might as well tell you now, was petite, good looking, a good talker, and in a general way captivating. The fact of her taking charge of Mrs. Mitchell as she had done proved her tender heart. She told Mr. Mitchell she had been a widow eighteen months and was practically alone in the world, and though he was burdened with grief and anxiety, he did not forget to thank her for her great kindness and to take her address. She resumed her journey, and he took his wife home to die of her injuries. It was three weeks after her death that I came into the case. After everything was over, the husband suddenly discovered that his dead wife's jewelry was missing. She had with her when the accident took place about \$1,000 worth of diamonds. They had disappeared, and when he came to run over events in his mind he could not remember that they had come home with her. Mrs. Gray had turned over to him Mrs. Mitchell's purse and a few other things, but a pair of diamond earrings, two rings and a pin were missing.

I was employed to proceed to the scene of the late accident and seek to trace the jewelry. The collision had occurred right at the depot in a small town. People about the depot and the hotel assured me that Mrs. Mitchell had her jewelry on when taken to the hotel. The landlady's wife was positive, and the doctor who was called in was positive, and when I had worked the case out I returned home to report to Mitchell that nobody but Mrs. Gray could have taken the jewelry. He was astonished and indignant, and not only vigorously repudiated the implication, but discharged me from the case with the assertion that I was a noisy intruder in the profession.

I went about other business, and it was about four months before I saw Mitchell again. Then he sent for me in an official capacity again. No reference was made to my previous work, but fresher and other troubles had come to him. A month after the death of his wife he had opened correspondence with Mrs. Gray, and the result was that she had come to take charge of his house. He was without relatives, or at least without those who could aid him in his situation, and she claimed to be free in her movements. You will suspect just as I did, that she had captivated him, but he fought shy of any acknowledgment of the sort.

I haven't told you about the bank. It was situated just a square from his house and exactly in the rear of it. The house fronted on one street and the bank on another, and there was no alley between them. Indeed the rear yard of the house led right up to the rear door of the bank, and Mitchell used to come up and go through the yard. In the rear of the banking rooms, divided off by the usual railing, were the private offices and the vault. A burglar alarm was connected with the front doors and windows, but none with the back. A large and savage dog guarded the rear, having a kennel close to the door.

What the banker wanted to see me about was this: He had not only missed money from his wallet at night, but on two occasions considerable sums of money had been taken from a small safe which stood in his office outside the vault. One of the mysteries was in the taking of the money. He employed a teller and a bookkeeper, neither of whom had a key to safe or vault, unless it was a duplicate made without his knowledge. Neither had the word of the combination of the vault, and it seemed impossible that they could have taken the money, even if so inclined. Both were perfectly honest, so far as any one knew, and Mitchell was all tangled up over the mystery.

He hadn't talked to me five minutes when I would have taken my solemn oath that Mrs. Gray was the guilty party, but of course I didn't drop a hint of my suspicions to him. She was shy, prudent and apparently all right, and I had put in a month on the case and made no discovery when the outside safe was robbed again. A deposit and some bonds had come in at the last moment and had been placed there for the night. The whole thing amounted to about \$500, and bonds and greenbacks were missing next morning. The safe had not only been opened with a key, but the bank had been entered by unlocking the rear door. No one could have entered by the front without sounding an alarm. No stranger could have entered by the back on account of the dog, who was wide awake and all right.

When Mitchell sent for me to give me the news I was perfectly satisfied that Mrs. Gray was the guilty party. I believed she had the key to enter the vault at the night, secure the keys and then slip through the back yard, enter the bank and open the safe. When I learned that the dog was a great favorite of hers this belief was a certainty. I couldn't, for reasons already given, say a word to Mitchell about this. He wanted to suspect his two employees, but when he had canvassed the matter he was made to see that it was altogether unlikely that either of them was guilty. Indeed he was alone in the bank when the bonds and money came in, and he

THE FRIEND IN NEED.

What did I do? I turned to Mrs. Gray again, and in about a week something happened to prove that I was on the right trail. One of the street car lines of the town ran down to the railroad depot. It was Mrs. Gray's habit of an afternoon to ride on this line with the little girl as far down as a certain park, and to sit near the fountain and read while the girl romped about with other children. I had closely watched her while in this park, but no one had ever come near her and her demeanor had been perfect.

On the third afternoon after the robbery she occupied her usual seat for an hour without anything happening. I sat on a bench in the rear of her and about thirty feet away, and by and by I noticed that she was writing a note with pencil. She did it so deftly that one sitting in front of her could not have told what she was at. Beside her was a large shade tree, and as near as I could make out she disposed of the note, when folded up, somewhere about the tree. When she left I followed her for a short distance, and looking back I saw a young and well dressed man occupying the place vacated by her. An hour later, when I could examine the tree, I found a hollow in the trunk just about on a line with her shoulders as she sat on the bench. One not looking for it would have sat there fifty times and discovered nothing.

My theory was that she had an accomplice—the young man whom I had seen. The hollow in the tree was the postoffice. Next day I was at the park half an hour before her usual time, and behold the young man was occupying that seat. As she appeared he got up and took a seat a hundred feet away, and by watching closely I saw that she took a note from the tree. Before leaving she wrote and "posted" one in reply, and after she had gone I saw him get it. I was now certain that I was on the right trail, and I went to Mitchell to secure some particulars I wished to know. I told him I had a clue, but would not reveal which way it led. I learned from him that the combination of the vault door had four numbers, and he alone knew it. It had been changed about a month after Mrs. Gray's arrival, and he hesitatingly admitted that the word was "Aime," which was her Christian name. He would not, however, admit that this fact was known to her.

For two weeks after receiving this information I hardly got sight of Mrs. Gray. For some reason she remained very closely at home. I found out from Mitchell in a roundabout way that the money needed to pay the men at the coal mine and also at a large factory was deposited with him on the 14th of every month. It was simply passed in to him to be locked in the vault over night, as it came up from Pittsburgh by messenger. I reasoned that Mrs. Gray would work this information out of him in some way, or that her accomplice would discover it, and that if she had the combination of the vault she would make her strike on the night of the 14th. On Aug. 12 she exchanged notes at the bank also on the 13th. On this latter date I shadowed the young man for three hours and became satisfied that he was from Pittsburgh and a "slick" one. Among the things he did was to go to the depot and inquire about various night trains, and particularly one which passed over the road half an hour after midnight.

I promised Mitchell that a climax would soon be reached, and then staked my all on what might happen on the night of the 14th. At 5 o'clock on that evening I threw a piece of "dosed" meat to his dog from a neighboring yard, and at 10 I softly climbed the fence to find the canine in his kennel and sick enough to remain there. I lay down within ten feet of him, hidden behind a bush, and it was an hour and a half before anything happened. Everybody in the neighborhood was in bed and asleep by that time, and I was not greatly surprised when a female figure, which I knew to be that of Mrs. Gray, suddenly appeared and passed me five feet away going toward the bank.

She stopped at the kennel to speak to the dog, and then opened the rear door and entered. I did not move from my hiding place until she reappeared about twenty minutes later. She carefully locked the bank, and as she passed me on the way to the house I followed quickly behind. The keys she laid on the bank steps, softly opened the side gate, and I let her reach the street before I brought matters to a climax. She was only out of the gate when she was joined by a man, but when I rushed to seize them he got the alarm and was off before I could grab him. I got her, however, and she had a bundle under her arm which took charge of a bundle containing about \$19,000 in greenbacks.

What a nervy woman she was! She just simply laughed a bit as I led her up the steps and rang the bell to arouse Mitchell, and when I had told him all and had the money and the keys to prove it she just looked up at him with a smile and asked:
"Well, what of it?"
The "what of it" was a corker. Mitchell couldn't let the public know that his bank could be so easily robbed, and he couldn't let society know that he had been duped by an adventuress, and after a consultation he actually gave that little adventuress \$2,000 in cash to clear out. She went, and as I left her at the depot she said:
"Give the old man my love when you get back to the house, and ask him if he never heard of Tony Weller's advice."—Columbus Post.

Not a Good Gentleman.
Glide—Ladies and gentlemen, right here among these cliffs is a wonderful echo. A pistol shot is repeated 15 times. Is there a gentleman here from the west. If so, will he please discharge his pistol?
Man from Kentucky—I don't go much on a gun, but if you can use a "seven inch bowie knife I've got one right on hand in my boot."—American Industries.

Herds of Elephants.
Sir Gerald Portal says that between the coast and Uganda the supply of elephant tusks in Africa is "apparently almost inexhaustible." Enormous numbers of elephants are in the country still. One of the officers of his expedition, while exploring the country west of Monge, saw more than 200 in one herd.

The history of gardening from the most ancient days is likely to be illustrated at Versailles during the great Paris exhibition of 1907. There is plenty of space in the grounds, while the lakes would give ample scope to the display of floating gardens such as Aztec and the Chinese loved to arrange.

THE FRIEND IN NEED.

IRVING'S STORY OF THE "BUSTED" ACTOR'S GOOD SAMARITAN.

A Reminiscence Which Seemed to Touch the Relator's Heart—Once He Was Very Poor and Unknown, but Now He Is Rich and Famous in All Lands.

The place was a cozy room in a cozy house in a quiet street off the Strand, London. The time was Saturday, the hour, midnight. A company of professional men, composed of some of the lawyers, doctors, newspaper men and actors whose names are famous on both sides of the Atlantic, was scattered in groups about the room smoking and chatting after the Saturday night supper, which had become a standard institution with them. In a sheltered corner over by the fireplace sat a small knot of men, every one of whom had reached the top, or at least the front rank, of his profession. The talk, drifting in a smooth, desultory, half sleepy way from phase to phase, had gradually assumed a retrospective hue. From one to another the story had passed, each telling the tale of an empty stomach, or an empty pocket, or a hopeless tramp of 30 miles or so in thin shoes along a snowbound road in search of employment.

Henry Irving, thoughtfully smoking, with an air of deep attention, had not spoken and did not speak until the others, having exhausted their stock, turned to him. He had experienced harder luck than any of them, and they knew it. He looked up at them for a moment and then, after a pause, said:
"The recollection uppermost in my mind just now, while you boys have been talking about tramping and winter roads and all that, is of a certain Christmas dinner at which I was present. I wonder whether any of you remember a poor fellow, long since dead—Joe Robin—who played small parts in London and outside it, and who made the one big mistake of his life when he entered the profession. Joe had been in the men's underwear business and was doing well when an amateur performance for a charitable object was organized, and he was cast for the part of the clown in a burlesque of 'Guy Fawkes.' Joe belonged to one of the Bohemian clubs, and on the night of the show his friends among the actors and journalists attended in a body to give him a 'send-off.' He played that part capably, and the mischief might have ended there, but some one compared him to Grimaldi. His fate was sealed. He sold his stock, went on the stage, and a few months later I came upon him playing general utility on a small salary in a small theater in Manchester. One relic of his happy days still remained to him. He had retained shirts, collars and underwear sufficient to last him for a generation."

"But if Joe lacked ability as an actor he had a heart of gold. He would lend or give his last shilling to a friend, and piece by piece his stock of underwear had diminished until only a few shirts and underclothes remained to him."
"The Christmas of that year—the year in which we played together—was perhaps the bitterest I ever knew. Joe had a part in the pantomime. When the men with whom he dressed took off their street clothes, he saw with a pang at his heart how poorly some of them were clad. One poor fellow without an overcoat shivered and shook with every breath of the wind that whistled through the cracked door, and as he dressed was disclosed a suit of the lightest summer gauze underwear which he was wearing in the depth of that dreadful winter. Poor as Joe was, he was determined to keep up his annual custom of giving his comrades a Christmas dinner. Perhaps all that remained of his stock of underclothing went to the pawnbroker, but that is neither here nor there. Joe raised the money somehow, and on the Christmas day was ready to meet his guests."

"Among the crowd that filed into the room was his friend with the gauze underwear. Joe beckoned him into an adjoining bedroom, and pointing to a chair, gently walked out. On that chair hung a suit of underwear. It was of a comfortable scarlet color; it was of silk and wool; it was thick and warm, and it clung around the actor as if it had been built for him. As the shirt fell over his head there was sufficed through his frame a gentle, delicious glow that thrilled every fiber of his body. His heart swelled almost to bursting. He seemed to be walking on air. He saw all things through a mist of tears. The faces around him, the voices in his ears, the familiar objects in his sight, the very snow falling gently outside the windows, seemed as the shadows of a dream with but one reality—the suit of underwear."

"His feelings seem to have entered your heart," said one of the listeners.
"They might well do so," replied Mr. Irving, "for I was that poor actor."—New York Tribune.

Valuable Pumps.
The hydraulic pumps at the Combination shaft cost \$3,000,000; the first set put in cost \$750,000. The surface pump plant at the same shaft cost \$400,000. That at the Union shaft cost \$650,000. At the Yellow Jacket's shaft the steam pump plant cost nearly \$800,000, while that at the Forman shaft cost \$500,000. Statistics show that the pumping machinery on the Comstock is not only the most costly but the most powerful in the world.—Virginia, Nev., Enterprise.

There is a ripe side to the orange as well as to the peach. The stem half of the orange is usually not so sweet and juicy as the other half, not because it receives less sunshine, but possibly because the juice gravitates to the lower half, as the orange commonly hangs below its stem.

The net debt of New York city is \$100,762,407. Chicago's debt is \$18,000,000; Philadelphia's, \$32,000,000; Boston's \$30,000,000; New Orleans \$16,000,000; Cincinnati's \$26,000,000; Baltimore's \$16,000,000; Washington's \$20,000,000; and Brooklyn's \$47,000,000.

Wild tobacco has been found growing in Texas, and it is claimed that for delicacy of perfume and strength of leaf the plant is not surpassed by the real Havana.

From Cambridge comes this definition of a popular game, "Football is the pursuit of blows leather by blows humanity."

CURED BY HIS OWN MEDICINE.

A Post Anarchist Who Healed His Views After a Dose of Hypnotism.

It is characteristic of laughter loving Paris that the main interest of the recent exhibition at the Cafe Foyot was generally held to center not so much in the character of the entire affair as in the fact that Albert Tailhade, the poet and epigrammatist of anarchy, was a victim to the methods of which he had expressed approval. M. Tailhade, who, by the way, is 47 years of age, enjoys a considerable reputation as a poet and a wit in bohemian Paris, although, as appears from an account of him given in the European edition of the New York Herald, he does not by any means belong to the Impetuous class of Quartier Latin vendors. He has, in fact, an independent fortune and can afford a luncheon for his dinner at a fashionable restaurant whenever he feels so inclined.



M. TAILHADE.

For a long time M. Tailhade wrote on several subjects without attracting any particular attention outside the circle of his personal friends. Then he published a book called "Pays du Midi," and his satirical references to many would-be litterateurs by creating him enemies brought him in a measure of fame. To the great body of the public however, he was less known by his best references to anarchy and its methods. "What matter the victims," he said, referring to Vaillant's explosion, "if the deed be done!" and flippantly remarked that the distribution of deputies by dynamite over the quarter of the city was as long as the dynamite "imagined that he was acting for the general good." He has since tried to explain that in making phrases of this kind he was only trying to be clever without intending anybody any harm. At any rate, he has revised his views of the doctrine of destruction and admits that dynamite may sometimes be misapplied by the propitius.

Now that he has lapsed into notoriety many other of M. Tailhade's sayings—some of them witty, some simply impertinent or silly—are being quoted. "Pays du Midi" was written by a very ugly woman, he observed for her. "Madame, you create in my breast the purest of sentiments—a horror of breaking the seventh commandment."

Then he pointed out an impertinence at the expense of M. Emile Zola at the banquet of the "Ligue." Turning to the famous novelist, he remarked:
"It's a pity you don't write better French, my son, for there are some passages in your books that are not half bad."

To some one who asked him what he thought of himself, Tailhade observed: "I am a man of the world who writes verses just as others go in for horsemanship. My literature is a piece of jewelry, a ring that I wear on my finger."

M. Tailhade has one very devoted admirer of his verses. This is Mme. Julia Mialle, who was dining with him when the explosion took place. She has been variously described as a milliner, a dressmaker and a poetess, and her address is the same as his. She is a very pretty young woman of 20, knows all M. Tailhade's poems off by heart, and what is more, thinks a great deal of them. It has been conjectured by some that the bomb was intended specially for Tailhade himself, the motive of the attempt being jealousy, of which young Mme. Mialle was the cause.

SEVENTY FEET IN THE AIR.

How an Old Yankee Lives in a Tree Top Down in Bluefields.

One of the famous attractions in Bluefields, the Nicaraguan town over which Uncle Sam and John Bull have been having a dispute lately, is an old house that is located in a tree 70 feet from the ground. It was built by an eccentric Yankee who is familiarly known in Bluefields as "Pap" Wilderson. What are known as "bob trees" grow to moderate height and proportions in that country. This tree furnishes an excellent hard wood lumber, and it bears a nut from which an oil is extracted that is used for both lubricating and cooking.



PAP WILDERSON'S HOME.

Old Pap Wilderson, by the aid of ingenious machinery, sawed off the tree at a point 70 feet from the ground, and with the long trunk of the tree as a foundation constructed a house up in the air. The two stories of the house rise above the 70 foot trunk of the tree. The house is reached by an elevator that runs along the trunk of the tree. The center of the house rests on the tree while supports run from each corner down to the ground.

So this ingenious Yankee obtained from the bob tree the lumber with which to build his house on the trunk of an old tree and the bob nuts furnished him with all which he uses to lubricate the gears of his elevator and in cooking his meals. After all, old Pap Wilderson can give a "hard row of haw" the Bluefields case looks like a man up a tree.

The Great Paris Library.
M. Marchal, the assistant librarian of the Bibliotheque Nationale at Paris, has finished the general inventory of that library, on which he has been at work with a large staff of assistants, since 1875. The figures given out thus far show that the National Library of France contains 2,159,990 volumes. This number does not include the collection of French provincial newspapers, which is still in an unbound form and could therefore not be counted among the volumes.—Philadelphia Ledger.

BRIDGE OF SIGNS AT VENICE.

The Famous Archway Around Which Romance Thickly Clings.

In the heart of Venice, between the magnificent palace of the doges and the grim walls of the old prison, flow the dark waters of the Rio del Palazzo and across the canal stretches the Bridge of Signs—connecting link between the splendors of a palace and the terrors of the dungeon, the torture chamber and the heading block. One of the most noticeable points about this bridge is the fact that it is closed in, thus proving all stories of suicides committed from it to be fabulous.

This fact rolls the Bridge of Signs of one of its most romantic associations—of its pretty legends of grief laden mortals heaving their last sigh upon its parapet and ending their sorrowing lives in the black waters beneath it. From without the bridge, with its archlike form, its ornamental stonework, its grotesquely carved heads and its small square windows filled in with iron tracery, presents a rather fine appearance, but the interior is strictly devoid of ornament and has not the slightest pretensions to beauty.

During our visit to Venice of course we included the doges' palace and the dungeons in our programme. After wandering for some time through the vast halls and beautiful saloons of the old Venetian palace we passed over the Bridge of Signs on our way to the gloomy cells. The bridge seemed to be little more than a narrow passage between two thick walls of stone, and unless you stepped up onto the slightly raised stonework which runs along beside the tiny windows on either side and caught a glimpse of the canal without you might easily take it for an ordinary passage within the palace. At the far end of the bridge our progress was barred by a grim looking oaken door—small studded, age blackened and of immense thickness—guarding the entrance to the dungeons. Our guides came to a halt. There was a jingling of keys, a lighting of torches; then the great door swung slowly back, and we passed into the darkness beyond. When next we passed the ancient door and crossed the Bridge of Signs, it was with the memory of those terrible cells, those fearful dungeons where the hapless prisoners endured the most horrible tortures that tyranny could devise or brutality inflict.

I remember strolling, on the last evening of our holiday in Venice, along the Piazza San Marco and making my way to the Ponte della Paglia to take a farewell look at the Bridge of Signs. It was a summer evening, hot and sultry, while the fast gathering clouds, dense and inky, betokened an approaching storm. I had just reached the Ponte della Paglia and was gazing at the Bridge of Signs when a tremendous peal of thunder rent the heavens, seeming to shake the city to its very foundations with its violence.

Suddenly a blinding flash of lightning lit up the palace, bridge and dungeons with its lurid flare. For an instant the bridge stood out with dazzling distinctness, while the lightning played on its traceried windows; then all seemed dark. And this was the last I saw of the Bridge of Signs.—Newcastle Chronicle.

A Postman's First Attempt.

A route is given to you, and just about this time it begins to dawn upon you that perhaps you could not cover the route in half the time the regular man did, and before you get half a block away you got mixed up because you couldn't work your papers in with your letters, to say nothing of several small packages in your bag. You found yourself chasing up and down the street, and in order to make up the time you were losing you began to plunge, and the more you plunged the more you got mixed up and the better you got mixed up, when you stopped still looking for a minute, a little boy asked you whom you were looking for. Dreadful, wasn't it?

And when you got back an hour or so behind the regular man's time you were sure it was the heaviest route in the office, and you felt like fainting when you were told that it was the easiest. And owing to your inability to make time you had to double up with your partner, so that you worked all day long, from before sunrise until long after sunset. You got no lunch except a few mouthfuls you grabbed in passing from a free lunch counter, and when you got home you were so tired, so hungry and so disgusted with your first day at the business that you would have resigned forthwith, but, aye! there was the rub.—Postal Record.

Chinese Visiting Cards 1,000 Years Ago.

The Chinese, who seem to have known most of our new ideas, used visiting cards 1,000 years ago, but their cards were very large, and not really the prototypes of our visiting cards, as they were on soft paper and tied with ribbon. Venice seems to have been the first city in Europe to use cards. Some dating from the latter part of the sixteenth century are preserved in a museum there. The German cities followed the Venetian custom in 109 years or so, then London followed suit, actually followed suit, for the first visiting cards in Great Britain were playing cards, or parts of such cards, bearing the name of the bestower on the back. They were first used in England about 1700. We do not know when they were first used in this country, probably not long after their first introduction into British society.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Sparring on Boston Common.

Two black boys not more than thirteen years old were the center of interest for all who chanced to pass this spot along the Common, near the Park street gate. They were equipped with a set of boxing gloves, and having taken up position on the lawn where the grass was longest they proceeded to show how skillful they were on the attack and defense. After a brief bit of sparring, a ring of interested spectators was formed, and the bout rapidly became more exciting. The good nature of the combatants was never ruffled, for whether it was a sharp blow on the nose or a smart cut under the ear, the victim always recovered instantly and stepped up again with a smile that showed his glistering ivory from ear to ear. No guardian of the peace chanced along to interrupt the sport, and spectators and principals enjoyed it with relish. When they had sparred to their hearts' content, the boys drew out their gloves and started off down town.—Boston Transcript.

ODD THINGS IN TAXES.

GOVERNMENT DUES DERIVED FROM MANY QUEER IMPOSTS.

Marriage Taxed in Some Parts of China. Even Bread and Meat Have Had to Contribute to the Revenues—Peter the Great Levied a Tax on Heads.

In times past it was deemed warrantable to tax salt, candles, leather, brick, soap, starch, paper and in 1652 even bread and meat. Peter the Great of Russia levied a tax on beads, with the laudable object of making his subjects wash their faces and shave. Brass tokens are still to be bought in that country bearing the words "Berado piavala taglia," which means "the beard tax has been paid." Mr. F. G. Lundy, in "The Fiscal Philatelist," gives particulars of the British hat tax of 1784, requiring hatmakers to take out licenses and imposing an ad valorem stamp duty on every hat sold. In those days revenue officials meeting a man with an unlicensed hat used to inquire, in the words of the comic song, "Where did you get that hat?" In old times, too, the Scotch sacramental certificates used to bear a six penny stamp. A tax on medicinal ailments, such as glass, stone bottles and advertisements was among the fiscal duties of the past.

There was also a tax on the "light of heaven" in the shape of an impost on windows until far in the present century. This impost and military burdens caused architects and builders to erect houses with as few windows as possible, and to escape the tax the windows of many houses were blocked up. Some of these dark and dismal abodes are still in existence in England. The Russian government a few years ago decided to tax kerosene oil and matches—virtually a tax on light.

In some parts of China a tax is imposed on all women entering the bonds of matrimony. Travelers to those parts are obliged to take a wife, and when they leave the ladies take fresh husbands to the benefit of the revenue. Those who follow the advice of the late Adah Menken and "marry young and often" are an acquisition to such a state. In Servia vanity is taxed in the shape of ladies' bustles. In Melbourne Christmas cards are taxed one-fifth per cent. Christmas, New Year, Easter and birthday cards would doubtless produce an appreciable revenue in England. It has been stated that in Weimar the authorities levied a duty on musical parties. The regulations were not given, but doubtless solos, duets, trios and quartets are subject to proportionate rates. Violins, cornets and the flute should incur special charges. Quite lately an annual tax of 10 francs has been imposed on pianos in France. Music has paid tribute to taxation in other ways. A musical hoop recently crossing the frontier of Saxony carried with them a crown of laurels awarded them at a triumphal performance. The custom house officers taxed the laurels as spices. Massenet, the composer, it is related, was also charged duty on a crown of laurels on the German frontier. In his case the wreath of fame was deemed to be woven of "medicinal plants." In Montreal organ grinders pay a license of \$20 and are only allowed to play at stated times. In Vienna they are also licensed and regulated as to hours. In France a certificate of character, a distinctive badge and limitation of hours are insisted upon. No licenses for street musicians have been issued for nine years in Germany.

In St. Petersburg no outdoor musical performers are permitted, but in romantic Italy there is a very practical regulation excluding those under 18 years of age from the privileges of a license. In New York wandering minstrels contribute to the revenue \$1 each and are prohibited from playing within a certain distance of specified buildings or dwellings and outside fixed hours. Battered musicians who are not allowed to exist in Spain, Italy, or Italy, the troubadour twangs his guitar, "for which, however, a license is required."

The state finances in Russia are recruited by a graduated income tax, commencing at five per cent on incomes between 1,000 and 2,000 rubles—a little equals \$3.21—and increasing at the rate of one-tenth per cent on every additional 1,000 or fraction of 1,000 rubles. A duty of a quarter kopeck—about one-tenth of a penny—is also imposed on the sales of all kinds of goods, which tax on food realizes several millions of rubles. Cycles are subject to a tax of 8 shillings in France and of a similar amount in Ireland.

"They do these things better in France!"—or worse. Advertisements in the form of posters and placards are restricted to bear a tax stamp in France, which is distinctly a tax on trade and publicity. In Italy, where the people complain that the taxes are exorbitant, the voluntary taxes paid by the poorer classes in the form of lottery amounts in a year over \$3,000,000. At Leghorn the Italians recently broke out in open revolt against the municipality, which had increased the hearth tax and took the civic buildings by assault, wounding the syndic, but they do not agitate against the lottery tax. "In old Madrid" in 1822 there was a terrible and fatal rioting among the men and women who hawk vegetables, fruit and other articles in the streets and markets, owing to the imposition of a tax on Spanish hawkers.

In 1899 M. Puzajewski, the Austrian minister of finance, who was described as "the nimblest politician in the world for inventing new taxes," decided to tax the totalisateurs, or betting agencies. Totalisateurs are established on all German and Austrian race courses. The system is to divide all the money invested on the racing horses among those who backed the winner after deducting 8 per cent commission for the agency. There is no cheating or weighing possible in the plan. A 10 per cent duty on winnings was decreed. In France the parliament, a similar system of betting, is taxed 7 per cent, 5 per cent of which is devoted to the relief of the poor. Bookmakers are also taxed. There is also a municipal tax of 10 per cent deducted from the receipts of theatrical and public entertainments, which is also assigned for the benefit of the unemployed. This revenue is principally distributed in the shape of grants to public charities and hospitals, thus making pleasure come to the rescue of poverty and the relief of pain. In Sweden commercial travelers visiting that country have to pay 100 kroner—about \$5 15—for every month's part of their journey, they may remain for the privilege of transacting their business.—Temple Bar.

Figuring It Out.

A schoolmaster had been severely correcting one of his boys and finished by saying: "Now sit down and write a letter to your parents telling them how much you are taught here and how little you profit therefrom. I should be ashamed to tell them." The boy cried a good deal and then wrote the following letter: "Father—I am very stupid, though there is more to be learnt here than anywhere. Twice two's four—four boys go to one bed—six beds make one attic, and four attics make one well ventilated and appointed sleeping dormitory. One round of bread and butter makes one breakfast, and every tea makes its own supper."

"This time," said the master, "we will—er—overlook your conduct, and you needn't send that note." (He had been overlooking.)—London Tit-Bits.

The Making of Shakespeare.

"An old crippled woman whom I know in Leamington, England," writes a correspondent, "used often to amuse me by her original ideas and speeches. Speaking of Shakespeare one day, I said I would like much to visit Stratford-upon-Avon. 'Law! was she! with much scorn, who was he? Only a plowboy, and he was never thought nothing of till them Americans came and took him up.'—Boston Transcript.

A Remarkable Swan.

One of the most novel wedding presents which Princess Marie of Edinburgh is to receive will be from the poetical queen of Roumania—Carmen Sylva—and will be a pleasure large in the form of an immense swan. It will not only be built to imitate a swan, but it is to swim like a swan and be like a swan in every particular of motion. The feet are to be so contrived as to take the place of oars. The neck and head will rise to a height of eighteen feet and the body will form a cabin large enough to hold ten persons.—Exchange.

Electricity in Drowning Cases.

An account of electricity as a life saver comes from Scotland, where a man, while bathing, was seized with a cramp and sank, being two minutes below water. When rescued he was thought to be dead, but after two applications of the electric current animation was restored. The current was passed between the nose of the neck and the heart.—Exchange.

EARNINGS OF BEGGARS.

The Professional Beggar in London and Paris Pick Up a Good Living.

The professional beggar is not a modern innovation by any means. Readers may recall Scarcrow, the famous London beggar, who, having disabled himself in his right leg, asked alms all day in order to get a warm supper at night. According to John Timbs, the R.ifiers, of whom we often find mention in the literature of the seventeenth century, were troops of idle vagrants who infested Lincoln's inn fields.

They assumed the characters of maimed soldiers who had suffered in the great rebellion and found a ready prey in the people of fashion and quality who drove by. Indeed it is made clear by contemporary allusion in comedies that this square was the regular haunt of bogs cripples who lived by mendicancy, which they carried on in the most barefaced and even intimidating manner. It is related that George IV, when prince of Wales, once attended a beggars' carnival in London incognito. He had not been there long when the chairman, addressing the company and pointing to the prince, said:
"I call upon that 'ere ginnaw with a shirt for a song." The prince, as well as he could, got excused, upon a friend, who accompanied him, promising to sing instead, which the latter did and great applause. The health of the prince and his friend having been drunk and duly responded to, they departed in order to afford the company an opportunity to fix their different routes for the ensuing day's business, for at that time the professional beggars of London used to have a general meeting several times during the year, at which they were divided into companies, each company having its particular walk.