

"Are You Married Yet?"

SAY! Are you married yet?"

Ivan Carlyon turns abruptly as a delicate pearl-colored glove is laid on his sleeve, and looks down into the beautiful laughing face upturned to his gaze.

As his eyes meet Cora Marriotti's she flushes a hot vivid crimson and withdraws her hand. Instinctively he raises his hat, but with a muttered "I beg your pardon," the girl flits on and her butterfly robes are soon lost in the brilliant throng.

Smiling and still puzzled at the recent encounter, he passes on to exchange a greeting with Lady Lorraine and her pretty daughters.

"How do you do, Mr. Carlyon? Delighted to see you back again—just in time for our ball. I hope you will come."

"I shall be delighted. I only returned to town last night, and am going up to Scotland next week with the Hunt."

"Are you? So are my girls."

"What a sad thing about the Lesters. I suppose the property goes to a distant cousin?"

"Yes, Miss Marriotti—a wild York-shire girl—a most 'larky' person, I hear. A girl who has never been in society, and stayed in a country house in her life; whose chief diversion has been reading round hydroponics with an old maid governess. But there—money covers a multitude of sins."

Lady Lorraine's spacious rooms are filled with dancers; the sound of a dreamy waltz falls on the ear, while the perfume of lovely flowers lulls the senses to dreamy languor. Ivan Carlyon has put down his name for dances with his hostess's daughters, when his friend Jack Stanforth comes up.

"Got any dances left, Carlyon? Come on. I'll introduce you to the jolliest little girl in London; the best dancer, by Jove, in the two hemispheres!" And Carlyon finds himself standing before a brilliant little figure that reminds him more of a bird of paradise than anything else.

"Mr. Ivan Carlyon—Miss Marriotti."

"May I have a dance?"

The blonde head is raised, two blue eyes meet Ivan's, then a wave of color floods the girl's face.

"Jove! Then you've met before? Ivan, old fellow, you're in luck!" And Jack Stanforth takes himself off.

For a moment the other two are silent, then Ivan takes the white and gold card from the girl's slim hand and sees her fingers trembling.

"I may have a waltz?"

"If you care to—yes."

"Thanks."

"Of course, you remember I can give you no explanation."

"Don't think of it," Ivan breaks in. "You took me for some old friend—"

"More than that," she says, hurriedly. "I mistook you for someone I knew, but my words were a quotation—an old joke."

Ivan sees she is really distressed; he hands back her card, saying with grave courtesy:

"Your remark was meant for another gentleman, Miss Marriotti, and I—well, I have forgotten it."

Cora flashes him a grateful glance as she turns to other men who are beginning her for dances, but when it comes to his dance Ivan searches high and low for his partner, corridor, conservatory, supper-room, and in vain. Miss Marriotti is nowhere to be found.

II.

"If I'd known he was to be here I'd never have come! I hate even being in the same house!"

"But, Cora, dear, what has he done? Ivan is such a favorite generally."

"It's not anything he has done, it's what I did. Before you can understand, Millie, you must hear the whole story. Last summer, before I came into my money, old Grundy and I were staying at a hydro—"

"First tell me, who in the world is old Grundy?"

"My old governess; she always plays propriety, you know. Well, the doctor there was a bachelor and very amusing. There was one girl who came to stay every year who couldn't understand how it was he didn't become a slave to her charms. He told me a story; concocted of him, Millie, but very amusing—when she arrived there one day she greeted him with 'I say, are you married yet?'"

"Not yet," he responded. "I'm waiting for you!"

"Humph!" with a toss of her head. "You'll have to wait a long time!"

"Well, I hope so," he returned blandly, and I must say brutally, and 'Beauty' as we called her, sulked and refused to speak to him for several days."

"But what has this to do with Mr. Carlyon?" says Millie, much dignified.

"This, dear. A fortnight ago at the rose show I saw a man I was positive was Dr. Clarke; he was close by me; so putting my hand on his sleeve, I remarked in imitation of 'Beauty's' coquettish tone, 'I say, are you married yet?'"

"Imagine my horror when he turned, and I saw it was a stranger—Mr. Carlyon!"

"What did you do?"

"Do? Turned and fled! I saw the wretch again at your ball. He was introduced and asked for a dance; I gave him one, then went and hid from very shame and mortification when it came off."

"I hate to have your visit spoiled. Cora, perhaps he won't stay long."

"If he does I shan't!" And Cora re-joined into silence.

The annual ball at Glenfold Castle is in full swing. Crowds of gay figures throng the fine old mansion. Cora has danced with all the best-looking men in the room—save one!

And he? Well, a little pucker writhes the girl's brow as she stands by the heavy plush curtain. He has only put down his name for one dance, and that turn has come; shall she dance with him, or shall she run away—as she did once before? She must decide quickly. Voices fall upon her ear.

"And his answer was, 'No; I am waiting for you.'"

"So that was the story!" It is Ivan who speaks.

"And now," goes on Millie, her clear voice reaching Cora where she stands, "now she simply hates you, and I believe if she knew I had explained the riddle to you she would never speak to me again. Come, the music is beginning."

Cora has been rooted to the spot. Now a movement of the curtain wakes her to life, and with scarlet cheeks and trembling limbs she turns to fly. How could Millie betray her! Dance with him now? Never! Sit it out? Impossible! There is nothing for it but instant ignominious flight. Down the corridor she goes and seeks refuge in the cloakroom; here she is safe, though every step passing the door makes her shiver.

She avoids the usual gossip in Millie's room that night, and goes straight to bed. Next morning, when Millie's maid takes up her breakfast, a little note lies on the tray:

"Dear Millie: Don't be angry; I am so anxious about Grundy, and have gone to join her. We shall wander about for a few weeks, and revisit our favorite hydro haunts. I will write soon. Be sure and forgive. Your ever loving friend, CORA."

III.

The sea is dotted with small boats, and the spa at Scarborough is alive with spectators. The gardens are alight with fireworks, whirling wheels and many-colored showers of sparks fill the air.

There is a terrified scream. A large rocket has fallen short. It drops into one of the little boats and explodes with a crash. An old lady in the stern of the boat starts to her feet. The little cockleshell quivers, lurches, and in a moment her occupants are struggling in the chilly water.

The boatman has grasped the old lady firmly by the arm and has her safe in tow, but the other—Cora—is gasping in the dark silent water, while the sparks of the rocket have caught and set fire to her filmy summer gown.

"Through fire and water!" she thinks with a little shiver. "Is this what it means?" Then a strong arm is thrown around her; she is for a moment submerged to quench the flames, then she rises to the surface and remembers no more.

When she wakes to consciousness she is on the sofa in their own rooms. A doctor is bandaging her arm and hurting her horribly all the time. Her dress is burned and torn, and wrapped around her shoulders is a light tweed coat.

Two days pass by, and Cora is recovering from her accident. The rocket had burst close to her arm, inflicting an ugly wound, but in spite of the doctor's orders for "quiet and bed" she is lying by the open window of the drawing-room looking out over the sea. It is many months now since that ball at Glenfold Castle, and though she and Millie have met often since then, the subject of her flight has never been mentioned between them.

A firm step crosses the room and the girl raises her eyes.

"You!" she exclaimed, concisely, while the hot color floods her brow.

"Who else should it be?" says Ivan Carlyon, calmly seating himself by her side.

"But was it you who—saved me?" she says in an awestruck whisper.

"Yes," he says, taking her hand. "Why did you run away?"

"She makes no answer, but her fingers tremble in his grasp."

"What a tiny little hand! I remember when you first laid it on my sleeve, I thought it the prettiest I had ever seen. Cora, ask me that question again. 'I say, are you—'"

"Don't!" she breaks in. "How can you?"

"Because I want to show you how well I know the answer," he says.

"No, I'm waiting for you." Shall I have to wait long, Cora?"

She raised two shy eyes.

"My darling!" And in a moment she is in his arms, and he is kissing again and again her sweet, trembling lips!

His Bluff Was Seen.

He retires the town in which he lived and did business, and now Edward Webb, a young boot and shoe dealer of Hopkins, Mo., has become a wanderer upon the face of the earth for a year. It came about by Webb's ridiculing Hopkins as a place of business, saying he would leave the town and stay away for \$5. The sum was quickly raised, and rather than show the white feather Webb accepted the money, signed a contract and bid farewell to his relatives, his business and the town. He cannot return within a year without forfeiting a large sum of money, death or sickness in his family being no excuse for the breaking of the contract.

Studying the American Twang.

Our American twang is a subject which has recently been occupying the attention of the Laryngological Society. After considerable research it has been established that the cause of the twang is not climatic, nor is it the result of the nasal catarrh and affection of the larynx, which are so common in America, though these may be caused by the twang. The most probable theory is that the twang is the result of carelessness on the part of Americans in adopting the nasal sounds of the French settlers and the gutturals of the Dutch and Germans. At any rate, it is possible to cure it.

The Responsibility.

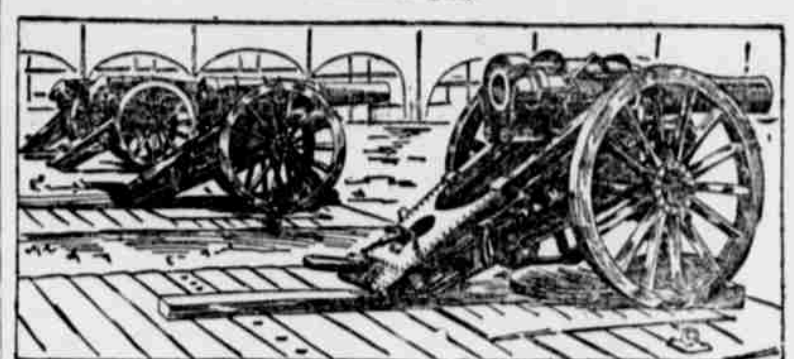
Mr. Grumps—The Ladies' Journal says a woman should make herself as attractive to her husband after marriage as she did before.

Mrs. Grumps—Huh! My father always gave me plenty of money to make myself attractive with. You don't—New York Weekly.

The bigger the man, the more charity there will be for you if you hit him.

BRITISH HOWITZERS AND BOER CREUSOTES.

Something About the Guns that Will Play the Final Act in the South African Tragedy.



GUNS OF THE BRITISH SIEGE TRAIN SENT TO SOUTH AFRICA.

ONE of the revelations of the South African war has been the extent and the excellence of the Boer armaments. That the Transvaal Government was preparing for the inevitable war was whispered from time to time after the Jameson raid. Guns and ammunition were brought into the country by the obliging Netherlands Railway Company, who, notwithstanding the fact that the Boers were labeled "Pianos, with care," and "Mining machinery," must have known that the goods transmitted along their line for the Transvaal Government were less innocent than external appearances indicated. At any rate, the ordinary residents of the Transvaal knew it, and the knowledge was a matter of general comment both in Pretoria and Johannesburg. One thing, however, was not generally known, that the Transvaal Government gave an order to the firm of Schneider-Creusot, in France, for two of the largest guns ever constructed for any Government. These huge pieces of ordnance were of 12-inch and 9½-inch caliber respectively.

The London Daily Mail gives some interesting facts in connection with these big guns in the possession of the Boers. The power of a 12-inch gun such as that now in the possession of the Boers will be better appreciated when it is explained that it fires a projectile weighing half a ton, which can penetrate a target of solid steel six inches thick. The gun weighs sixty-six tons. The 9½-inch gun is lighter, and fires a shell weighing three cwt. These guns, whose shells can wreck solid stone buildings as completely as if their objective were so much cardboard, are believed to be at Pretoria, mounted on substantial bastions in the fort, and intended to resist the British when the march on the Transvaal capital takes place.

The same paper also gives some account of the British siege train sent to the Cape and which, in the final struggle, will be pitted against the Boers' smuggled cannon. A siege train put simply and devoid of professional technicalities, amounts to an artillery force specially equipped for the purpose of reducing a strongly fortified place. Hence, it is a combination of guns and men that is only employed when it is considered by competent military authority that the final stages in a war are being approached. The material of the siege train which recently arrived at the Cape is composed chiefly of howitzers. Altogether about thirty of these pieces of ordnance are being employed, supplemented by a number of 4½-inch and 4-inch ordinary breech-loading guns. Owing to the extremely solid manner in which they are constructed, the guns forming the armament of a siege train are extremely heavy. Thus, when limbered up, the 6-inch howitzer alone weighs nearly four and a half tons in draught. Then, in addition to the pieces themselves, a train must be provided with a vast quantity of artillery stores of all descriptions, as well as with ammunition to the extent of 500 rounds per gun. It will, therefore, readily be understood that the task of moving a siege train up country is in no sense of the term a light one.

A curious point in connection with a howitzer weapon is that it is fired at a remarkably high elevation. This, in great measure, is owing to the fact that its comparatively low muzzle velocity makes its shell follow a curved path as it travels through the air. The circumstance, however, is rather an advantage than otherwise, for it insures a particularly steep angle of descent, thus materially contributing to increased effectiveness at the moment of impact. Another and even greater benefit arising from this well-marked trajectory of a howitzer projectile consists in the fact that it enables the gun to be worked altogether under cover of ground. Indeed, thanks to a most ingenious range-finding instrument that is used with these pieces, it is practically unnecessary that the object aimed at should be in view when a round is being fired.

In connection with the employment of a siege train, it is rather curious to note that, despite the vast amount of warfare in which Britain has been engaged of recent years, this is the first occasion on which such an "article of war" has been used since the days of the Crimean campaign.

The gun on the right is the larger of two very powerful guns made to the order of the Boers by the French firm of Schneider-Creusot. The Transvaal Government have endeavored to preserve as a secret the part they intend these guns to play in the war; but it is now believed that they will be mounted at Pretoria Fort, and will assist in defending the capital against attack by the British forces.

THE BOER 9½-INCH RIFLE. 12-INCH GUN OF THE BOERS.

RUSKIN'S LAST HOURS.

The End Came Suddenly—In Only a Short Time.

The following statement as to Mr. Ruskin's last hours has been sent to us by publication, says the London Times:

"The end came with startling suddenness. On the morning of Thursday, the 18th, Mr. Ruskin was remarkably well, but when Mrs. Arthur Severn went to him as usual after tea in order to read him the war news and 'In the Golden Days,' by Edna Lyall, his throat seemed irritable. His cousin was alarmed, for several of her servants were ill with influenza, but the professor was inclined to laugh it off, although he said he did not feel well, and admitted, when questioned, that he felt pain 'all over.' Helped by his faithful body servant, Baxter, he was put to bed, and he listened while Mrs. Severn sang a much-loved song, 'Summer Slumber.' It was now 6.30, and Mr. Ruskin declared that he felt quite comfortable. Nevertheless, Dr. Parsons was immediately summoned. He found the temperature to be 102, and pronounced the illness to be influenza, which might be very grave if the patient's strength were not kept up."

"That evening the professor enjoyed a dinner, consisting of sole and pheasant and champagne, and on Friday he seemed to be much better. On Saturday morning there was a change so marked that the doctor was alarmed, and from that time Mr. Ruskin sank into an unconscious state, and the breathing lessened in strength, until, at 3.30, it faded away in a peaceful sleep. He was holding the hands of Mrs. Severn, and Dr. Parsons and Baxter stood by, now and then feathering the lips with brandy and spraying the head with eau de Cologne."

"And so he passed away, amid silence and desolation. Then, a little later, when the first shock was over, Mrs. Severn's daughter prevailed upon her to look from his little turret window at the sunset, as Mr. Ruskin was wont to look for it from day to day. The brilliant, gorgeous light illumined the hills with splendor, and the spectators felt as if heaven's gate itself had been flung open to receive the teacher into everlasting peace."

A QUEEN OF SOCIETY.

Plain, Poor Woman, Who Was Very Influential in Paris.

In the life of Madame Mohl, a woman who, without rank, fortune or beauty, held a controlling position in French society for the greater part of a century, there are useful hints for American women who wish to gain influence in the world.

Her dinners were famous. The most learned, wise and witty men of every country were her guests, and she gave much anxious thought to assuring them, to placing them at table, and to the suggestion of subjects which would draw from each the best he could give. The food was plentiful, but plain and simply cooked, and only a white-capped maid served it. There was no display of any kind.

Queen Sophia of Holland, when visiting Napoleon III., expressed a wish to dine with Madame Mohl, who asked a brilliant company to meet her.

"And what will be your menu?" asked an anxious friend.

"Oh, Marie must cook us a lobster," said the old lady. "She cooks lobster very nicely."

The usual simple dinner was served, with its sauce of rare wit and wisdom, and the queen was enchanted.

The next day, with her suite, she came to call upon her hostess, Madame Mohl, her gray hair in curl-papers, attired in a short jacket and skirt, was busy dusting the chairs, while the linen from the laundry was spread upon the table. When the royal party suddenly entered, the old lady laid down her brush, and after welcoming the queen, chatted away as gaily as usual.

"Were you not mortified at being caught in such a dress?" a friend asked the next day.

"Not a bit, my dear. I didn't mind it. Neither did my majesty. I suppose it was important to her maid and the funkey who waited behind her, and they were mortified."

Once, as one of her favorites left the room, a fashionable woman asked, perceptively, "Who was Madame X. before her marriage?"

Madame Mohl turned. "She is my friend. What do I care for her was-est?"

She once said, "It is des amies amies (well-born souls), not bodies, that we need in our friends," a maxim as profoundly true in America as in France.

Women Jewelers.

All the jewelers in the Philippines are women, and their skill is marvelous. The shops are small and gloomy and the stock displayed is meager and unsatisfactory. But if one wants to buy the jewelers will exhibit such treasures that any pocketbook is too lean to buy all the pretty things desired.

Necklaces of pale pink coral, statuettes of the coral, rosaries with beads and chains of pearls, white and pink and yellow—all these are to be seen.

There are a bewilderingly varied lot of garnets shown, blood, orange and yellow, the latter set in silver; silver filigree work is popular and small bowls of mother-of-pearls. Gold is worked up in pattern like lace. The women buy the crude gold, make their own alloys, draw out the wire thread and beat it with hammers. They are equally skillful with silver and do delicate filigree work, very original and striking.

The average girl has only one good dress in winter, and changes her clothes by changing the ribbon on her neck.

The individual who repeats a slander stamps it with his approval.

GIRLS USE COLLEGE SLANG.

Some of Their Expressions Would Totally Upset Their Elders.

Miss Mary Charlotte Crothers, 1901. Crothers, Pa., read a paper on "College Slang" recently, says the Baltimore Sun, in which she said: "Any one who has been to Annapolis has heard the remark that a certain cadet 'bilged the cause he gauged'; and who would guess the sentence translated runs 'the cadet was expelled because he cheated.'"

"You would be puzzled if told that Cadet Brown was 'ratty,' and so could go out in town after the 'femme' he was to 'drag' to the hop; but it means only that he has privileges which enable him to go out of the yard for the girl he is to court to the ball."

"At West Point a modest little maid was greatly startled by a cadet's asking her to 'spoon' with him the next day at 5.30. She drew herself up indignantly and was about to administer a rebuke when the youth hastened to explain that at West Point 'to spoon' meant to take a girl walking. At West Point the boys call the co-eds 'quail,' and their dormitory the 'quail room.'"

"But if we have no slang peculiar to our own college, we cannot flatter ourselves that we are free from the evil, for any one who spends a half day within our sacred portals will hear an appalling amount of the jargon issuing from the lips of our stately upper classmen. I don't think a girl has much right to set down as rough and unpolished a poor little freshman's English when her own vocabulary consists in the main of such expressions as 'bone,' 'dig,' 'pull,' 'oram,' 'grind,' 'tacky,' 'waddy,' 'woolly,' 'simply great,' 'perfectly gorgeous,' 'proud to death,' 'I care for that,' 'forget it,' 'how ghastly,' 'fustie,' 'fendish,' 'ferce,' and 'that girl looks like a peanut.'"

"The freshman soon adds to her list all our slangish abbreviations as 'sym,' 'chem,' 'psych,' 'soch,' 'quize,' 'fab,' and 'math.' These belong strictly to a college, and until she is fully versed in the lore, she doesn't feel able to converse on equal ground with an upper classman."

Pittsburg, Pa., is said to have forty local lodges of the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers, being the largest organization of any single craft in any city in the world.

The coal miners, by agreements, now have the eight-hour established in Michigan, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas and that part of the Indian Territory and Arkansas where work has been resumed at scale rates.

Commissioner of Immigration T. V. Powderly says that the flood of immigrants is greater than at any time since 1883, and that an unusually large number of the newcomers have railroad tickets for Pittsburg and other Western cities before they leave Europe. He asserts that the alien contract labor law is being openly and flagrantly violated.

The Bourne Mills Company, of Fall River, Mass., has issued a circular to their employees offering them direct financial interest in the new mills now building, with a guaranteed income on their investment of 6 per cent. for five years: Debentures to the amount of \$50,000 will be issued in lots of \$50 to \$100 each, and offered to the employees at par.

The membership of the United Mine Workers' Union, according to President Mitchell's report at the national convention, was more than doubled in the past year. In January, 1899, it was a little over 40,000, while this year there are 91,000 members in good standing, making it in point of numerical strength the most powerful trades union in America.

Everything in Its Place.

A merchant went in the summer time to a pleasant, peaceful, pastoral clime. Where the roadways ribboned the acres through.

And the fruit of the farmer's labors grew. He walked along where the hidden chairs tossed plaintive notes to the vibrant wires.

Of Zepherus, that caught the thrill And flashed its sweets o'er grove and hill.

His senses woke to a measure new, A hallowing peace did his mind imbue, And he passed as he felt its beneficence. Like a spirit passed to the realms of bliss.

As there he stood in the bowered way He caught the notes of a happy lay. That came from a lad in the cornfield wide.

Who whistled the while his hoe he plied.

He watched the boy as from hill to hill He swung the hoe with a sturdy will. And the harder he worked the fuller vent He gave to his lips' accompaniment.

"Ah, there," said the merchant, by impulse bade,

"Is the son of man whom work makes glad."

Then he went to the boy in tattered blouse And engaged him to work in his counting house.

The youth took hold with industry grim. But he brought his whistle along with him.

And in just two days its charms gave o'er.

And the whistler was kicked through the office door.

—Boston Courier.

A Coveted Distinction.

Clever horsemen as they are, the Arabs are quite as liable to accident as English grooms. But the Arab likes to be kicked by a thoroughbred horse, and cannot endure to be put to any pain by an animal whose pedigree is at all defective. An English surgeon had been setting the broken leg of an Arab, who complained more of the accident than of the pain, when he was thought becoming in one of his tribe; this the surgeon remarked to him, and his answer was truly characteristic. "Do you think, doctor, I should have entered a word of complaint if my own high-bred colt in a playful kick had broken both my legs, but to have a bone broken by a brute of a Jackass is too bad, and I will complain."

LAZY MAN'S HEAVEN.

HE CAN LIVE COMFORTABLY AND DO NOTHING.

Impossible to Starve—No Beggars, No Paupers, No Crime on the Beautiful Island of Ruatan—Great Sharks of Those Waters.

"On our island," said Lemuel Cooper of Ruatan to a New Orleans Times man, "a man may live very comfortably all his life and without doing a single lick of work. To starve there would be simply impossible; it would be like trying to drown a fish. We have no beggars and no pauper class to maintain. There has never been a murder, theft is unknown and locks are unnecessary. Some go so far as to claim that people don't die there, but that is an exaggeration. They occasionally expire of extreme old age. Last year our actual mortality was one-fourth of 1 per cent."

The lazy man's paradise thus sketched by described is a corner of the world about which curiously little is known. Ruatan is the largest of the five "Hay Islands," a little chain or key lying some thirty miles off the coast of Spanish Honduras, southeast of Port Cortez, and only four days' travel from New Orleans. Their one industry is the raising of coconuts, and altogether they form a domain that is absolutely unique in the western hemisphere. Mr. Cooper is the most important citizen of Ruatan. He was born there, and with his brothers he now conducts a very considerable business. In conversation with a reporter he told an interesting story of his island home.

"Ruatan, where I live," said Cooper, "is some forty miles long and three miles wide. It has a population of about 3,000 people, mostly Carib Indians, and I doubt whether there is in all the world a more beautiful and prolific spot. The people are lazy simply because they don't have to work. Coconuts form their mainstay, and there is nothing easier to grow. To start a grove one merely burns off a piece of land and plants the nuts in rows twenty feet apart. In from four to five years' time the trees are a dozen feet high and are beginning to bear, and after that the planter is fixed for life. He may bid adieu to care. The nuts are never picked, but as they mature they drop off, and this shower of fruit goes on steadily month after month all the year around. How long a tree will bear nobody can say, but there are some on the island that are known to be over a half century old and are still dropping their harvest of nuts."

"When the native needs something at the store," continued Mr. Cooper, "all he has to do is to gather together some nuts and trade them for what he wishes. He buys them by striking them on a stake driven in the ground, and a man can easily haul 3,000 a day in that manner. Roses and flowers of almost every imaginable variety run wild from one end of Ruatan to the other. I should add, too, that other fruits grow just as easily as the coconut, and the only reason why that especially is grown is because it furnishes an easy crop, for which there is always a ready market. We have plenty of bananas, oranges, mangoes, plums and pineapples, and they are all delicious. They grow wild, without the slightest cultivation, and all one has to do is to pick them. Vegetables are equally prolific, and our native yams easily average forty or fifty pounds in weight. A piece of cane stuck in the ground takes root and renews itself perennially for years. A stranger who comes to the islands is invariably amazed at the prodigality of nature and the apathy of the natives—that is, before the lazy feeling gets into his blood. 'Why don't you grow this?' he asks. The native simply smiles. 'Why not take things easy and be happy?' they say. 'Any description of Bay Islands would be incomplete,' said Mr. Cooper, in conclusion, "without reference to our enormous tiger sharks. They are found three or four miles out from the coast and frequently grow to be fifty feet long. I know that sounds like a pretty daisy story, but it is the plain, unvarnished truth. They are referred to in the coast survey reports of the United States government, and are said to be the largest sharks in the world. As far as I know, they are not found in any other waters."

TRUE TALE OF MANY PENNIES.

How a Woman Got Even with an Impudent Street Car Conductor.

The Southern woman who had an interesting financial dispute with a street car conductor is a martyr to a painstaking attention to details of whom her sex may well feel proud. She started out in the morning with a \$20 bill, all the money she happened to have in her immediate possession. She went to the butcher's and the baker's, and neither could change the twenty. She was anxious to go downtown, and so she boarded a car, hoping that the conductor would accept her excuses and her money. He at first refused point blank. Then he hesitated.

That's where he made a mistake. If he had simply requested her to leave the car on the ground that the rules of the road were indirectly violated by the denomination of her legal tender, all would have been well and good. But he hesitated. A dangerous glitter came into his eyes. He took the bill and at the first opportunity halted the car and rushed into a bank, whence he emerged with \$10 in pennies. Another stop at another bank realized \$10 more in the smallest of Uncle Sam's coins, and then the conductor handed the 1,965 pennies to the unfortunate patron. She did not flinch. "I'll have to count them," was all she said, and set to work. When the car reached the end of the line she was still counting. When they turned and started back she hadn't finished. Then the conductor came forward. "I'll have to trouble you for another fare," he said. Her lips moved as she counted, and she only shook her head. When she got to a good breaking-off place she looked up. "I am not on this car as an ordinary passenger," she said; "I am simply verifying the amount of change you gave me when I was a passenger. When I am through with the verification I will leave the car and not before. Sixteen hundred and two, three." But the conductor broke in. He lost his temper. She must pay her fare or get off.

"Sixteen hundred and four, five, six."

was all the answer he received. And so he put her off, pennies and all. And now she's suing the road for a handsome sum and seems to stand an excellent show for getting it.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

KLINGING MET HIS MATCH.

London Publishers Became Sarcastic Over a Bill for Three Pence.

An amusing correspondence on a small matter recently passed between Rudyard Kipling and a London firm of publishers. There arrived, care of this firm, which deals extensively in American books, a letter addressed from America to Mr. Kipling. It was re-posted direct to him at Bottlingdean, with a formal note in these words:

The enclosed letter has just reached us from America, and you will see we had to pay a letter fine of 3d on it. Your obedient servants, GAY & BIRD.

The following acknowledgment reached Messrs. Gay & Bird a few days later, dated, of course, from Mr. Kipling's house, the Elms, Bottlingdean:

Dear Sirs—Rudyard Kipling desires me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of Nov. 30. The letter you inclose was from a firm of pirate publishers on the Pacific slope and Mr. Kipling is glad to learn that you are only 3d out of pocket by it. Faithfully yours, S. ANDERSON.

To this, it seems, Messrs. Gay & Bird replied in these terms:

In forwarding you the letter from America addressed to our care we thought we were doing a courteous act. We did not know from whom it came, but because it was "from a firm of pirate publishers on the Pacific slope" your secretary reports that you are glad to learn that you are only 3d out of pocket by it. This strikes us as the action of an "Absent-Minded Beggar." Yours faithfully, GAY & BIRD.

—London M. A. P.

Science AND Invention

From north to south Alaska stretches 1,200 miles, or 300 miles further than from the great lakes to the Gulf of Mexico. Its width is greater than from Chicago to London.

To run an eighty-car freight train at twenty miles an hour requires over 100,000,000-foot pounds of energy. At thirty miles it requires 222,000,000-foot pounds, which is equal to the energy manifested by a sixteen-lb. gun, whose projectile weighs 2,320 pounds, and fired at 2,000 feet velocity.

The possibility of the ostrich being used for a kind of two-legged saddle-horse, as the natives of Abyssinia are said to have employed it, was demonstrated at Pasadena, Cal., recently by a correspondent of the Scientific American. He not only mounted a full-sized male ostrich and rode 100 yards on its back, but also had a photographer make a picture of him on his feathered steed.

In Germany the granulated slag from blast furnaces is being utilized for the manufacture of brick. The making of slag brick is not a new thing, but heretofore fluid slag has been employed for the purpose, and the brick thus produced has been found unsuitable for building purposes because it is impermeable to air and steam. But the slag bricks made in Germany are, it is said, not open to this objection. On the contrary, while exceeding the strength of ordinary bricks, and possessing an extraordinary resistance to heat, they are more permeable to air, and consequently are well suited for the building of houses. They do not absorb water as rapidly as ordinary bricks.

Recent examination by Prof. T. G. Bonney of boulders containing diamonds from the famous "blue ground" rock of South Africa leads to new views of the origin of the gems. Prof. Bonney considers that the diamond is not produced in the blue ground, as some have heretofore thought that it was, but is present in it as a derivative from older rocks. The boulders examined were evidently water-worn, and consisted of garnetiferous rock. The diamond and the garnet, Prof. Bonney remarks, are brought into very close relations by the discovery of two specimens showing the diamond apparently embedded in the garnet. The blue ground, in which the diamond and garnet-bearing rocks are found, is a volcanic product.

In Central America are many strange birds with stranger habits, but probably none are more interesting than a little brown wren who may be seen along the roadsides or on fences. This little bird, about the size of a canary, builds a nest out of all proportion to its apparent needs. He selects a small tree with horizontal branches growing close together. Across two of the branches he lays sticks fastened together with tough fiber, until a platform about six feet long by two feet wide is constructed. On the end of this platform nearest the tree trunk he then builds a huge, dome-shaped nest a foot or so high, with thick sides of interwoven thorns. A covered passage-way is then made from the nest to the end of the platform in as crooked a manner as possible. Across the outer end, as well as at short intervals along the inside of this tunnel, are placed cunning little fences of thorns with just space enough for the owners to pass through. On going out, this opening is closed by the owner by placing thorns across the gateway, and thus the safety of eggs or young is assured.

Bills Payable in Russia.

The year 1900 not being a leap year in the Gregorian calendar, while it is so in the Julian mode of reckoning, the old style in Russia will, as from March 1 next, be thirteen days behind the new style. This is a point of the utmost importance in regard to bills payable in Russia. Indeed, it happens very often that bills drawn upon Russia bear both dates, and the slightest error is sufficient to render void a protest of such bills, as the courts are very strict about these matters. It is, therefore, inadvisable to mention the old style in any such documents. The latter date is quite unnecessary, as Russian commercial law provides that bills from abroad shall be payable according to the new style, which is followed by nearly all the countries of Europe.—London Financial News.