

ELEPHANT BLOCKED THE WAY.

English Clergyman While Cycling Has a Strange Experience.

This story comes from Birmingham, England: The clergyman of a neighboring town was returning home on his bicycle. He had been preaching in an adjoining village, and this means of locomotion was the one most suited to his tastes and to his convenience. The night was dark, and the rays of the reverend gentleman's lamp did not pierce far into the gloom. Suddenly something seemed to loom large, vague and ominous before his eyes. He had a short sensation that he was rushing on to some unknown doom; there was a collision with something soft and of shape most curious, and away flew the machine one way and the cleric the other. When the reverend cyclist had pulled himself together he heard noises, and there was a gleam of a lantern near at hand, flickering as though indicative of much agitation. Through the darkness came a sleepy-looking man, rubbing his eyes. From him the cleric discovered that there was an elephant stretched across the rather narrow road. The animal had been as awkward as "My Lord the Elephant" of Rudyard Kipling creation. True, he was not blocking a path, but he had fallen in the road on his side, and had stopped there, refusing to move. He belonged to a circus, did this trunked obstruction, in course of transition from one town to another, and since his fall had been left in charge of two men with lanterns, who appear to have fallen asleep. Beyond a few quiet and quaint utterances, the elephant did not mind. What the front wheel of the bicycle thought about it is not known.

SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY.

A Chinese typewriter has been invented by Dr. Sheffield, of Jungcho, China, which has a wheel carrying over 4,000 characters, arranged in 30 circles. It is said to exceed so far the speed of the swiftest Chinese writer, that its value is assured.

Heretofore, perfumery has been detached from flowers by soaking them in lard. A Parisian has now found a way of gathering the fragrance by simply soaking the flowers in water, a process which can be repeated several times without destroying the flowers.

Nearly 48,000 patents were granted by the United States patent office last year, or more than in any preceding year. Inventive genius is evidently active in this country. Not one in a hundred of these inventions will perhaps ever come into practical use.

The total value of the mineral products of this country last year is reported to be about \$740,000,000. The greatest loss is in silver. The yield was 2,370,000 ounces less than in 1896, and the value dropped about \$5,700,000. The gain in gold was 127,000 ounces, or \$2,650,000.

"During the course of a recent lecture at Montevideo," says Science, "Dr. Sanarelli stated that the serum he has obtained from the animals with which he has been experimenting, is effective against yellow fever, and that it will very probably cure yellow fever in human beings."

The Massachusetts cattle commissioners' annual report, just issued, says that the number of cattle paid for as victims of tuberculosis during the year was 5,255, and the amount paid for them was \$179,867. Quarantine and killing expenses and arbitration brought the average amount paid for condemned cattle to \$34 per head.

INSECT NURSES.

Bees and Ants That Look After the Sick.

The care of the young is always considered one of the most important of the industries of the commune. Among the bees and ants the care of the young is relegated to the younger sisters, although the elders do not scorn these duties if they find their performance necessary. However, the first work of the ant or bee just emerged from the pupa state is that of nurse, and a most tender and devoted one she is. Especially are the ant nurses solicitous about the health and comfort of their small charges. In some species the young ant grubs are assorted into sizes, those of the same age being kept in the same apartment, suggesting a graded school. When the ant babies are hungry they stretch up like young birds, and their nurses regurgitate partly digested food into the gaping, hungry mouths. The nurses keep them very clean by licking them with their long tongues, and, what is more interesting, are very careful to keep them in the right temperature. When the sun shines hot on the nest in the morning the nurses carry their charges to the lower compartments, but toward night they carry them again to the upper nurseries. The nurses show great interest in the young when they emerge from the pupa state, helping them to straighten out their newly freed antennae and legs, then taking a hand at their education by leading them around the city and showing them the ways of the formic world.

All the members of the insect commune are shining lights in their devotion to the young. The moment an ant nest is attacked those citizens who are not detailed to fight the intruders will snatch up the babies and flee with them to places of safety, or when hard pressed will fight to the death for their protection. This is worthy of note, since it is not the mother instinct for saving her young but is a race instinct.

instead. It may here be stated that the objects popularly known as ants' eggs are not the eggs, but the young grub ants; the eggs are too small to be seen well with the naked eye.—"Insect Communities," by Anna Botsford Comstock, in Chautauquan.

THE CARE-FREE VIENNESE.

They Rarely Take Life Seriously, Unless at a Funeral.

The native Viennese is a jolly, good-natured, shiftless creature. No people on the earth are so jolly, or so easily and so much amused. Go to the Prater, the largest public park in Europe, and from a hundred different beer-gardens comes the noise of tooting brass bands and stamping feet and beating drums. Merry-go-rounds swing old and young, and dime museums and music halls are as full of people as they are empty of decency. Go to the theaters on any night, and you will find them crowded by an enthusiastic audience, the galleries filled by noisy students and working girls. The court theaters, which present only legitimate dramas and operas, have also their numerous devotees. Go to the coffee houses, of which there is one on every corner, and you will find them full, especially in the afternoon, with merchants with their noses in the newspapers, and clerks sipping their Mocha, and officers smoking their cigars, and one-pushing and card-shuffling youths. At night these coffee houses become the rendezvous of the lower element. I have never seen the Viennese serious, unless it be at a funeral, and I suppose that even out of that he manages to get some fun. Yet he is easily excited, and although loyal and law-abiding, his good nature may quickly turn into a fiery passion, and a Viennese riot is a serious matter.—Edward A. Steiner, in Woman's Home Companion.

REMOVING THE KINKS.

Colored Ministers in Washington Preach That "Flesh is Vanity."

The colored ministers of Washington are preaching that "flesh is vanity" from a point of view which does not give their white brethren any trouble, says a correspondent in the St. Louis Globe-Democrat. Displayed in a show window on one of the principal shopping streets is this sign:

"Attention, colored people! Blank's take-out-kink will take the kink out of your hair and make it silky, soft, pliable and beautiful."

Then follow instructions for the use accompanied by the guarantee of harmlessness, and by other statements calculated to encourage the application of the preparation. But the sign is not what draws the colored people to the window and causes them to remain there with admiring gaze. The bottom of the show window is piled high with black hair in the natural state. There is enough to make a good beginning with a mattress. Above are exhibits of what "Blank's take-out-kink" can do. Switches and bangs and braids and other forms of black hair, soft and glossy and wavy, are shown in strong contrast with the raw material underneath. The sight is temptation. Colored pastors of Washington have discovered that the fashion to experiment with "take-out-kink" is sweeping through their congregations. They are denouncing from the pulpit in vigorous language the wickedness of trying to change the natural order of capillary growth.

ANXIOUS TO MARK.

He Popped the Question Before His Wife Was Dead.

Widowers, as well as widows, are the targets for many jokes. Here is a story they tell of a farmer in a certain county not 50 miles away from St. Louis, says the Republic:

His wife had been in poor health for some time, and one day he was called in from his work because she was so much worse. The neighbor women told him to hurry to town for the doctor. He rushed out to the stable, saddled a horse and galloped toward the village, a few miles distant.

As he rode he met an interesting widow. She was interesting because she had been a widow but six months, and the departed one had left a good farm to her. Of course, she wondered why Neighbor Jones was hurrying so. She called to him to know what was the matter. He pulled up his horse, turned toward her and said:

"My wife is very sick. They don't think she will live, and I am on my way for the doctor." He paused and seemed about to ride on, but a thought struck him. He leaned over toward the widow and asked, anxiously:

"If she does die, will you have me?"

She Was Costly.

"The man I refused," she said softly, "is now rich, while the man I accepted is poor."

"Of course," replied her dearest friend, "it would be just the same if you had married the other."

The young matron could readily see that this was a reflection upon her, but it was two days before she was able to see in just what way, and even then she wasn't sure of it.—Chicago Post.

Manitoba Soil.

In Manitoba you can turn a furrow many miles long and not encounter a stone as large as your fist. The earth, for a distance down from three to five feet is a rich, black loam, made by centuries and centuries of decaying vegetation.

LOOK OUT FOR A STRAY MOON.

Round Black Body 600,000 Miles Away Wanted by an Astronomer.

American astronomers are requested to keep their eyes open for a stray moon, which Dr. Waltemath, of Hamburg, is anxious to find again. His object, says the New York Sun, is to account for and control certain irregularities in coming to time on the part of the old moon that we are accustomed to see. He knows exactly what sort of a moon he wants and where it ought to be. Its apparent diameter is 140 seconds, but its real diameter is 420 miles, its surface about one-twenty-fifth and its bulk one-eighth that of the visible moon, and it is 615,600 miles distant from the earth, and two and two-thirds times as far as our moon.

This little moon has been seen a number of times in the last 300 years. During the seventeenth century it appeared as a fiery red ball with a white streak across it. Later observers describe it as of the dark gray color of the spots on the moon, and as a round, black body, so that it had probably cooled off in the interval. Cassini, the father, saw it at Montpelier November 7, 1700, and seven other appearances are noted in that century. Dr. Ritter, a Hanover school-teacher, saw it with the naked eye in broad daylight in the neighborhood of Naples June 11, 1855. It crossed the sun from right to left. Mr. Govey saw it at North Lewisburg, O., September 4, 1879. None of the observers had any idea of its true nature, however, till Dr. Waltemath made his discovery.

February 3 of this year the little moon passed over the sun, and it will do it again July 30. Its mean synodic course is 177 days, and its daily motion a little over three degrees. Anyone noticing its wanderings will please inform Dr. George Waltemath at Hamburg-on-the-Elbe.

A WELCOME TO A MONARCH.

Reception Given by Mayor Colvin, of Chicago, to King Kalakaua.

Three men were discussing the propriety of the call made by President McKinley upon President Dole. The discussion brought out this story:

"I think old Harvey D. Colvin knew how to do things when it came to entertaining folks from abroad, especially hand-me-down-kings," said one of the two. "He was mayor of Chicago when Kalakaua passed over the country in search of a loan. Colvin was rough and ready, and wore a shirt with a ruffle front and a diamond in the middle, which always made me think of a bar-keeper on his day off. When the king and his suite arrived in Chicago, Colvin and his staff were at the station, and the mayor took the king by the hand as warmly as if the king had been a ward politician. The carriages moved quickly to the Grand Pacific hotel. Clark street was jammed with people clamoring for the king to come out. The hour was early in the day. At the request of Mayor Colvin, Kalakaua stepped out on the veranda and bowed. The populace, unused to sights of kings in flesh, yelled. Mayor Colvin waved his hand and shouted:

"His majesty, the king of the Sandwich Islands."

"The populace yelled, laughed, and hooted. Then the mayor, remembering the early hour, turned to his royal guest and said:

"Well, king, you must be tired. Better go and wash up and then we'll have breakfast."

HOSTILITY TO EDUCATION.

The English Are Opposed to the Teaching of Servants.

An American visitor to England who spends some little time in the country, says J. N. Larned, in the Atlantic, can hardly fail to become conscious of three serious facts: (1) That there is a strong class-feeling against much education for those who are looked on as underlings and servants—a feeling more prevalent and more pronounced than the shamed sentiment of like meanness that is whispered in some snobbish American circles. (2) That the "school rate" seems to be the most begrudged of English taxes, the most sharply criticized, the most grumbled at; and this to a degree for which there seems nothing comparable in America. (3) That the opposition to secular schools, fostered by the church and ostensibly actuated by a desire for religious instruction in the schools, is largely supported in reality by the two sentiments indicated above. * * * Looking, therefore, to the increasingly democratic conditions that are inevitable in England, the reluctance and factiousness of disposition that appear among its citizens touching the vital matter of popular education are ominous of evil to the nation, and gravely lessen its chances of holding, under the reign of democracy, the high place to which it rose under the aristocratic regime.

The card bore the name of Dr. Mary Walker.—N. Y. Sun.

A Fine Point in Banking.

Banks do not usually accept checks which call for one dollar more than the amount of deposit, unless the customer is well known, and the officers are confident that he will promptly make up the balance. Thus, if a check for \$200 is presented and the maker has only \$192 in his credit, the paper will usually go back stamped "no funds." But one attorney recently got around that. He had, after long dunning, secured a check from a slow-pay debtor. When it was presented for collection he found that the deposit lacked eight dollars of the amount the paper called for, and payment was refused. Thereupon he promptly deposited eight dollars to amount of the creditor and gained \$192 by the operation, for the check was cashed.—Worcester (Mass.) Gazette.

The Mecklenburg Declaration.

The Mecklenburg county (N. C.) commissioners have given a plot of land 30 feet square in front of the new courthouse in Charlotte for the erection of the monument to the signers of the Mecklenburg declaration of independence. Four thousand dollars of the \$6,000 desired for its erection has been subscribed.

Grain in Brazil.

The facilities for inland transportation are so limited in Brazil that the inhabitants of the ports find it cheaper to import grain from North America than from their own farms.

SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY.

Greenwich observatory claims that it has little clear weather, sun and stars are wholly invisible every other day in winter, one day in four in fall, one in eight in spring and one in sixteen in summer. In the 20 years ending with 1896 there were only eight instances of sunlight for 14 continuous hours.

The number of asteroids discovered up to the present date is 423. A number of these small planets have not been observed since their discovery and are practically lost. Consequently it is now a matter of doubt, until the elements have been computed, whether the supposed new planet is really new or only an old one rediscovered.

Oil can be automatically fed to rapidly revolving shafts and pulleys by a new attachment for ordinary oil cups, consisting of a tube curved the way the shaft runs, with a screw cap at the inner end, the outer end being left open to receive air as the wheel turns, thus forcing the oil through the cup instead of letting it run to the top of the cup from centrifugal force.

It is supposed that a Centauri, one of the brightest stars of the southern hemisphere, is the nearest of the fixed stars to the earth. The researches on its parallax by Henderson and Maclear gave, for its distance from the earth, in round numbers, twenty billions of miles. At the inconceivable rapid rate at which light is propagated through space, it would require more than four years to reach the earth from this star.

The president of the Agassiz association, Mr. H. H. Ballard, recently caught an ant near its hill, shut it up in a box, carried it 150 feet away, and set it free in the middle of a shady road. What followed he thus describes: "It seemed at first bewildered. Then it climbed to the top of a ridge of sand, erected its antenna as high as possible, waved its antennae for several seconds, and then started in a straight line for home."

Last year Dr. Abbott, of Philadelphia, published some researches which tended to show that microbes which could not accomplish the death of healthy animals proved fatal to animals under the influence of alcohol. A French investigator has gone a step further, and has succeeded in demonstrating on irrefragable evidence that alcohol not only destroys what we may call natural immunity, but tends to prevent the acquisition of the immunity conferred by the various serums.

Stories of the ravages of termites, or "white ants," come from the curator of the Australian museum at Sydney. Some time ago they destroyed the roof of the museum building, and it had to be replaced with a covering composed largely of steel and copper. Their work, being carried on in the interior of the timber, does not reveal itself until the structure is about ready to fall to pieces, and so it was only recently that the fact came out that the ants had also destroyed the underpinning of one of the important floors of the museum.

COULDN'T FIND HER.

Lady Who Sent Senator Perkins Her Card Wore Male Attire.

The owners of probably half the cards that are sent in to the senators are unknown to their recipients. Senator Perkins one day recently, in responding to one of those unknowns, who happened to be of the feminine gender, told the page who brought the card to show the lady to the marble room. He went out there a few minutes later, expecting, of course, to be recognized by the lady who had called on him. None of the three ladies in the room came forward, so he politely asked each of them in turn if she wished "to see Senator Perkins." Receiving a negative to each inquiry, he started back to his seat in the chamber when he met, in the corridor of the marble room, the weather bureau man, who is stationed there, and who is often called upon by visitors to point out senators whose faces are unfamiliar to the former. Seeing the senator with a card in his hand and a perplexed look on his face, he asked him if he were looking for some one.

"Yes," the senator replied, "I received this card, and told the page I would see her in the marble room, but she isn't there."

The weather man glanced at the card and grinned. "But she is there, senator," he said, at the same time pointing to an individual clad in broadcloth trousers and Prince Albert coat seated on a soft in a corner of the marble room.

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