

FOREIGN GOSSIP.

The Russian Empire is composed of fifty governments and provinces.

London covers 700 square miles, has 9,000 miles of streets, and a population of 5,000,000.

The Empress of Germany has conferred the Cross of the Order of Louise on three lady presidents of Augusta, the Catholic and Jewish asylums at Berlin.

The Queen of the Belgians recently took pot-luck with the officers of a regiment of infantry. Her dinner was a plate of cabbage-soup and a pickled pig's foot.

By way of the British Embassy at St. Petersburg comes probably the first authentic statement of the Russian debt, which shows a total of £171,474,000, with the interest for the current year over £25,000,000.

At Forli, Italy, a very ancient tomb has been found under a street, containing the remains of a skeleton warrior, leaf-shaped lance heads of iron, fibulae and a great number of small vases and urns of pottery.

In the Acropolis at Athens was a golden lamp large enough so that when filled it would burn night and day for a year. Above it was a bronze palm tree to carry off its fumes and act as a reflector.

There has just been completed in London another tunnel under the Thames, a mile long, starting from a point just north of London bridge. It took only about four months to build, cost £25,000, and is expected to be one of the best-paying enterprises of the day.

The French are smoking less every year, apparently. Last year's tax on smoking tobacco, including cigars, was 6,000,000 francs less than 1885. Of snuff, however, the consumption is as large as ever, 80,000,000 francs being the annual expenditure for the nose-tickling compound.

A supposed equestrienne statue of Jeanne d'Arc in the Cluny Museum, whose horse once formed a reliquary, is declared by a writer in the Courrier de l'Art to be not the Maid of Orleans at all, but a Saint Maurice, the receptacle in the horse having been used to contain the relics of that favorite of the Middle Ages.

The railway through the so-called "Hell Valley," in the Black Forest, from Freiburg to Neustadt, will be completed next month, opening up to tourists a fresh view of the beauties of this romantic district. Another item for tourists is the opening to the public of the palaces of Hohenschwangau, Linderhof and Herrenchiemsee, built by the late King of Bavaria with such magnificence and at almost incredible cost.

In Russia, on the northern railways, the locomotives, hitherto burning wood or coal, are being adapted or peat burning, the saving being estimated at some fifty per cent. In many places the peat is cut by hand machines, but these, although cheap and easy to work, have the drawback that the peat can not be worked below eight feet, whereas the peat-cutting machines worked by steam-power penetrate twenty feet, and reach the lower, denser layers of peat, which, owing to their superior quality, command a higher price in the market.

Sir Peter Lumsden lately read a paper before the Royal Geographical Society, in which he describes a lake in Asia about six miles long, the bed of which is one solid mass of hard salt, perfectly level, and covered by only an inch or two of water. To ride over it was like riding over ice or cement. The bottom was covered with a slight sediment; but, when that was scraped away, the pure white salt shone out below. How deep this deposit may be it is impossible to say, for no one has yet got to the bottom of it.

VOODOO CHARMS.

A Species of Witchcraft Which Has Many Believers in Louisiana.

The fear of what are styled "voodoo charms," is much more widely spread in Louisiana than any one who had conversed only with educated residents might suppose; and the most familiar superstition of this class is the belief in pillow magic, which is the supposed art of causing wasting sicknesses, or even death, by putting certain objects into the pillow of the bed in which the hated person sleeps. Feather pillows are supposed to be particularly well adapted to this kind of witchcraft. It is believed that by secret spells a "voodoo" can cause some monstrous kind of bird or nondescript animal to shape itself into being out of the pillow feathers. It grows very slowly, and by night only; but when completely formed the person who has been using the pillow dies. Another practice of pillow witchcraft consists in tearing a living bird asunder—usually a peacock—and putting portions of the wings into the pillow. A third form of the black art is confined to putting certain charms or fetiches—consisting of bones, hair, feathers, rags, strings or some fantastic combination of these and other trifling objects—into any sort of a pillow used by the party whom it is desired to injure.

Placing charms before the entrance of a house or room, or throwing them over a wall into a yard, is believed to be a deadly practice. When a charm is laid before a room door or hall door, oil is often poured on the floor or pavement in front of the threshold. It is supposed that whoever crosses an oil-line falls into the power of the voodoo. To break the oil charm, sand or salt should be strewn upon it. Recently a

Spaniard, shortly after having discharged a dishonest colored servant, found before his bedroom door one evening a pool of oil with a chara lying in the middle of it and a candle burning near it. The chara contained some bones, feathers, hairs and rags—all wrapped together with a string—and a dime. No superstitious person would have dared to use that dime.

Some say that putting grains of corn into a child's pillow prevents it from growing any more; others declare that a bit of cloth in a grown person's pillow will cause wasting sickness. Putting an open pair of scissors under the pillow before going to bed is supposed to insure a pleasant sleep in spite of fetiches; but the surest way to provide against being "hoodooed," as the American residents call it, is to open one's pillow from time to time. If any charms are found they must be first sprinkled with salt, then burned.

To point either end of a broom at a person is deemed bad luck, and many an ignorant man would instantly knock down or violently abuse the party who should point a broom at him. Moreover, the broom is supposed to have mysterious power as a means of getting rid of people. "If you are pestered by visitors whom you would wish never to see again, sprinkle salt on the floor after they go, and sweep it out by the same door through which they have gone, and they will never come back."

The negroes believe that in order to make an evil charm operate it is necessary to sacrifice something. Wine and cake are left occasionally in dark rooms, or candles are scattered over the sidewalks by those who want to make their fetich hurt somebody. If food or sweetmeats are thus thrown away, they must be abandoned without a parting glance; the witch or wizard must not look back while engaged in the sacrifice.

Prof. William Henry, of New Orleans, received from a negro servant for whom he had done some trifling favor a gift of a "frizzly hen"—one of those funny little fowls whose feathers all seem to curl. "Mars' r Harry, you keep dat frizzly hen, an' ef enny niggers from enny conjure in your yard dat frizzly hen will eat de conjure." Some say, however, that one is not safe unless he keeps two frizzly hens. A negro charm to retain the affections of a lover consists in tying up the legs of the bird to the head, and plunging the creature alive into a vessel of gin or other spirits. Tearing the live bird asunder is another evil charm, by which some negroes believe that a sweetheart may become magically fettered to the man who performs the quartet.

Scattering dirt before a door, or making certain figures on the wall of a house with chalk, or crumbling dry leaves with the fingers and scattering the fragments before a residence are forms of malignant conjuring which sometimes cause serious annoyance.

WEST POINT CADETS.

The Somewhat Disagreeable Lot of the "Fishes" or First-Year Men.

The summer camp is one round of labor for the plebe, as the first-year man is called at West Point. If he were transported to another planet, there could hardly be a greater change in his life than that which he experiences when he leaves the comforts of his home and plunges into the routine of military drill and discipline of West Point. He rises at five in the morning for reveille, and in half an hour marches to breakfast, the interval being employed in doing the policing of his own tent, and of the tent of the cadet to whom he may stand in the relation of "special-duty man." When he walks, he marches with depressed toes and outspread palms. He has two hours of drill every morning, and another hour with parade in the afternoon. After tattoo, which is at half-past eight, he may retire; but no downy couch awaits him. He spreads his blanket on the tent floor, and spreads himself on that, with a quilt drawn over him for protection against the night cold. The only change from this programme is on Sundays, or on days when he marches on guard. On Sunday there is the Sunday morning inspection, and two hours at chapel, making it any thing but a day of rest; and when, as a sentinel, he marches on guard in the morning, he walks post two hours at a stretch in sunshine and in rain, with four-hour intervals, during the whole twenty-four hours that elapse before the guard is relieved.

This much, in general, falls to the lot of every plebe, in the way of duty. Aside from this, comes in the question of his treatment by older cadets. Ability to sing, play, dance, or render one's self entertaining in some such way is highly appreciated by cadets; and a readiness to exercise what few accomplishments he may possess, usually saves the plebe much harassing. Of course all do not escape so easily. Many have guns to clean, and water to carry, and bedding to pile for the upper-class men, and are unpleasantly "roughed" in other ways; but the illness which a new cadet ordinarily receives is almost always exaggerated in the accounts which reach the public through the press.

New South Wales has a new tariff which materially affects imports of lumber from the United States. While laid for "revenue only," according to the statements of friends, it is strongly protective. America exported to the Australian colonies in 1886 about \$11,000,000; our imports amount to about \$4,000,000.

EYES OF THE BEE.

Structures Whose Complexity Is Difficult of Comprehension.

Any one who will take the trouble to examine with a lens the head of a bee will see on either side the large, rounded compound eye, and on the forehead or vertex three bright little simple eyes. The latter are, as their name implies, comparatively simple in structure, each with a single lens. But the compound eyes have a complex structure. Externally the surface is seen to be divided up into a great number of hexagonal areas, each of which is called a facet, and forms a little lens. Of these the queen bee has on each side nearly 5,000, the worker some 6,000 and the drone upward of 12,000. Beneath each facet is a crystalline cone, a so-called nerve rod, and other structures, too complex to be here described, which pass inward toward the brain. It will be seen, then, that the so-called compound eye with its thousands of facets, its thousands of crystalline cones, its thousands of "nerve rods" and other elements, is a structure of no little complexity. The question now arises: Is it one structure or many? Is it an eye or an aggregate of eyes? To this question the older naturalists answered confidently—an aggregate. And a simple experiment seems to warrant this conclusion. Pusset, quoted in Goldsmith's "Animated Nature," adapted the facets of the eye of a fly—pardon me, fair reader, of a aphannipterous insect of the genus Pulex—so as to see objects through it under the microscope. "A soldier who was thus seen appeared like an army of pigmies, for while it multiplied it also diminished the object; the arch of a bridge exhibited a spectacle more magnificent than human skill could perform, and the flame of a candle seemed the illumination of thousands of lamps." Although Cheshire, in his book on the bee, adopts this view and supports it by reference to a similar experiment, it numbers today but few supporters. One is tempted to marvel at the ability of the drone to co-ordinate 24,000 separate images into a single distinct object. Picture the confusion of images of one who had sipped too freely of the sweet but delusive dregs of the punch bowl! Under similar circumstances human eyes are reported to see double. Think of the appalling condition of an inebriate drone! Those who believe the faceted eye to be one organ with many parts, contend that each facet and its underlying structures give, not a complete image of the external object as a whole, but the image of a single point of that object. Thus there is formed, by the juxtaposition of contiguous points, a stippled image or an image in mosaic. Hence this view is known as Muller's mosaic hypothesis. Lowne has experimented with fine glass threads arranged like the cones and nerve rods of the bee's eye, and finds that (even when they are not surrounded by pigment, as are the elements in an insect's eye) all oblique rays are got rid of by numerous reflections and the interference due to the different lengths of the rays. Some modification of the mosaic hypothesis is now generally adopted, and Dr. Hickson has recently worked out with great care the structure of the optic tract which lies between the crystalline cones and the brain.

THE COLONEL'S WIFE. A Thrilling and Absolutely True Story by Albert Perkins.

Colonel Albert C. Pelton, whose beautiful twenty-thousand-acre ranch is out toward the Rio Grande, near Laredo, has been the Peter the Hermit of the Texans for years. He has believed that he held a divine commission to kill Apache Indians. Colonel Pelton came to Texas in 1844, a common soldier. By talent and courage he rose to the rank of Colonel, and finally, in 1847, commanded Fort Macrae. That year he fell in love with a beautiful Spanish girl at Albuquerque, N. M. Her parents were wealthy, and would not consent to their daughter's going away from all her friends to live in a garrison. The admiration of the young couple was mutual, and parental objections only intensified the affection of the lovers. The Spanish girl's nature is such that, once in love, she never changes. Finally, after two years' entreaty and devotion, Colonel Pelton won the consent of the parents of the beautiful Spanish girl, and they were married and removed to Fort Macrae. Then commenced a honeymoon such as only lovers, shut up in a beautiful flower-environment fort, can have. The lovely character of the beautiful bride won the hearts of all the soldiers of the fort, and she remained a queen among these rough frontiersmen. One day, when the love of the soldier and his lovely wife was at its height the two, accompanied by the young wife's mother and twenty soldiers, rode out to the hot springs, six miles from the fort, to take a bath. While in the bath, which is near the Rio Grande, an Indian's arrow passed over their heads. Then a shower of arrows fell around them and a band of wild Apache Indians rushed upon them, whooping and yelling like a band of demons. Several of the soldiers fell dead, pierced with poisoned arrows. This frightened the rest, who fled. Another shower of arrows, and the beautiful bride and her mother fell in the water, pierced by the cruel weapons of the Apache. With his wife dying before his eyes, Colonel Pelton leaped up the bank, grasped his rifle and killed the leader of the savage fiends. But the Apaches were too much for the Colonel. Pierced with two poisoned arrows, he swam into the river and hid under an over-hanging rock. After the savages had left, the Colonel swam the river and made his way back to

Fort Macrae. Here his wounds were dressed, and he finally recovered, but only to live a blasted life—without love, with a vision of his beautiful wife, pierced with poisoned arrows, dying perpetually before his eyes.

After the death of his wife a change came to Colonel Pelton. He seemed to think that he had a sacred mission from Heaven to avenge his young wife's death. He surrounded himself with merriment, and consoled himself with brave companions, and consecrated himself to the work of revenge. He was always anxious to lead any and all expeditions against the Apaches. Whenever any of the other Indians were at war with the Apaches, Colonel Pelton would soon be at the head of the former. One day he would be at the head of his soldiers and the next day he would be at the head of a band of Mexicans. Nothing gave him pleasure but the sight of dead Apaches. He defied the Indian arrows and courted death. Once, with a band of the wildest desperadoes, he penetrated one hundred miles into the Apache country. The Apaches never dreamed that any thing but an entire regiment would have dared to follow them to their camp in the mountains. So when Colonel Pelton swooped down into their lodges with ten trusty followers, firing their Henry rifles at the rate of twenty times a minute, the Apaches fled in consternation, leaving their women and children behind. It was then that there darted out of a lodge a white woman.

"Spare the women!" she cried, and fainted to the ground.

When the Colonel jumped from his saddle to lift up the woman he found she was blind.

"How came you here, woman, with these cursed Apaches?" he asked. "I was wounded and captured," she said, "ten years ago. Take, oh take me back again!"

"Have you any relatives in Texas?" asked the Colonel.

"No, my father lives in Albuquerque. My husband, Colonel Pelton, and my mother were killed by the Indians."

"Great God, Bella! Is it you—my wife?"

"Oh, Albert, I knew you would come!" exclaimed the poor wife, blindly reaching her hands to clasp her husband.

"Bella—Bella," and the old soldier clasped his lost bride to his bosom.

Of course there was joy in the old ranch when Colonel Pelton got back his wife. The Apaches had carried the wounded woman away with them. The poison caused inflammation, which finally destroyed the eye-sight.

After my lecture in San Antonio I rode over to see the Colonel in his Texas ranch. As I entered the door he was reading a newspaper to his blind wife. One hand lay lovingly on his brave strong arm and in the other she held a bouquet of fragrant Cape jessamines which he had gathered for her. It was a picture of absolute happiness.—Ed Perkins, in N. Y. Sun.

THE TERM "KICKER."

An Entertaining Story of the Origin of the Now Popular Phrase.

The term "kicker" belongs to the political phraseology of the times, and is applied to the discontented, dissatisfied, pugnacious, selfish, obstinate voter who does not accept or approve the action of his party. This term, like "boodler," "flat footed," "level-head," "con. men" and kindred expressions originated within the past ten years, in a sort of spontaneous way, like other special terms past and present. One story of the origin of the phrase "the kicker" is that in Steuben County, N. Y., one Bill Stearns was a noted fighter, whose chief mode of attack and defense was in kicking instead of striking out from the shoulder. Stearns was a local politician as well, and was generally sent to the county conventions as a delegate. On one occasion he represented his town at a gathering which adopted a resolution indorsed by every vote save his own. The chairman, in announcing the result, declared that the measure was adopted "unanimously," whereupon Stearns sprang to his feet and said: "Mr. Chairman, I want the secretary to record my vote in the negative. I'm down on the resolutions, and if they were left to me to be disposed of, I'd kick 'em into the street." The chairman replied that judging from Stearns' reputation as a "kicker" he could dispose of the resolutions in the manner mentioned, were they turned over to him for that purpose, but that the unanimity of the meeting was so apparent that Stearns might "kick himself instead," if he didn't like them. Bill was thereupon christened "the kicker" by his fellow-delegates, and the name clung to him until it was applied in a more public way to the obstinate, pugnacious class of voters that modern politics has produced.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Conformably to the delicacy of her frame, there is a beauty in the composition of a woman, a grace in her motions, a charm and a fascination peculiarly her own. This nature seems to have been given her as a sort of compensation for her lack of strength and energy, so that in her weakness, as Anacreon sings, she can conquer both fire and iron by the mere graciousness of her presence. Let her never forget this; and in all that she does be assiduous to temper and to harmonize and to sweeten that society which she can not always guide. Let her know also that by a gentle influence, indirectly applied at a convenient moment, she may secure greater victories in important social matters than by planting herself as an armed champion in the war.

RESTORING BREATH.

A Discovery That Will Be of Great Use to the Scientific World.

A miraculous surgical experiment has been performed at Buffalo by Dr. George E. Fell, professor of physiology at the University of Niagara. Dr. Fell is an enthusiastic vivisectionist, and has made a number of experiments whereby he claims he has discovered a means of saving human life after the patient has taken poison. Several weeks ago a man named Patrick Burns, who had been on a debauch, took a large dose of morphia, and was given up as dead. After Burns had been unconscious for five hours, Dr. Fell was called in. It had occurred to him that if he had an artificial respiratory apparatus he would be able to bring back the patient to life. He had often applied artificial respiration to dogs and cats at college during his lectures, to show the action of their hearts and lungs. Burns was a poor patient, and the physician had very little hope of being successful. There was no pulse, and only a slight flutter around the region of the heart, which showed that it had not ceased to beat. There were a number of physicians present, and the experiment was considered a chimerica one as far as success was concerned. An incision was made in the throat, and a respiratory tube was placed in the trachea. The blood which oozed from the wound was a dark coffee color. The lungs of the patient were useless, and when air was blown into them they were so stiff that they could not contract. Artificial means were used, pressure on the chest to expel the air and cause the expirations. This was kept up for fifteen minutes before any change was noticed. The blood soon became more arterial in color as it came from the wound, and the face assumed a life-like expression. The muscles of the eyes twitched when pressed by the finger. After a time the eyes opened, and the legs and arms began to move. Water was placed to the patient's lips and he drank greedily. For two hours the artificial breathing was kept up. The tube was removed, and the wound was closed with antiseptic dressing. The patient, an hour after breathing was restored, had an attack of delirium tremens, the result of drinking. It was necessary to hold him, and the wound commenced to bleed afresh. This was stopped, and when the poison passed from the system, after three days the respiration increased, and it was evident that the patient would recover. In two weeks he was able to go out and attend to his business. Dr. Fell used a very crude apparatus which he employs in vivisection. He is now perfecting an instrument which can be used by an operator in such cases as the one described. The discovery is a valuable one, and will be of great use to the scientific world.—Dearest's Monthly.

TRAVELING ABROAD.

The Wagon-lit of Europe and the Pullman Car of America.

The wagon-lit is a French substitute for Pullman sleeping-car. It has its advantages and its disadvantages. The "Orient express" is the grandest vitesse known in France, at least so far as our experience goes, of thirty-eight miles an hour, coming through from Constantinople to Paris in two days and two nights picked us up at Oos, to which station we came over a branch road from Baden-Baden in fifteen minutes. This express train was made up entirely of mail and baggage-car, three wagon-lits carrying twenty-four passengers each, and adding car. On one side of the wagon-lit there is a narrow alley, with doors opening into compartments, some of which are devoted to four passengers and others to two. In the day-time these are seen to contain in the first case two narrow, athwartship sofas, in the latter one. At night the cushion, serving by day for a back rest, is tripped up and converted into a bed. The whole affair has the appearance of an oyster-saloon's private compartments. Seclusion and comfort are attained at a great sacrifice of space. Two persons occupy the whole width of the carriage and one-third more of its length than four persons occupy in a Pullman car. At the same time the beds are much more narrow. I should think that corpulent people would partly hang over the sides, and that a strip of them would pass an uncomfortable night. On the other hand, there is better air, because of the windows in each compartment, than in the Pullman, and there is greater privacy. It is astonishing how the conventionalities are dispensed with in American sleeping-cars; how gentlemen who elsewhere would not take off their coats in the presence of ladies, and how ladies who regard every article of their outward make-up as an essential part of themselves in parlor or in the street, do not hesitate to reduce their apparel to a minimum when they are about to turn in.

Traveling in Germany and France, excepting in third class cars, which, south to say, are about equal to many we call first-class at home, as much more expensive than with us. In this "Orient express" we paid about \$16 each for a distance of about 350 miles from Baden-Baden to Paris. The high charges are mainly due to the extra room that passengers occupy. As to the dining-room car, the meals are had and expensive, and the service filthy and abominable. I was representing these facts to a Gallicized American lady this evening. She admitted them to be true, but said: "I can put up with all the cost and inconvenience, and even the bad cuisine, in preference to a 'first-class American car' where a stranger can crowd himself upon my seat, and where there are tobacco puddles on the floors, or to the uncomfortable pivots of a parlor-car and a fetid atmosphere and personal exposure of a 'sleeping-car.'"

A PRETTY PUZZLE.

How Bright Little Midget Showed Her Love for Mamma.

Mrs. Blanchard was entertaining some friends in the parlor one evening when she heard a small voice she knew so well saying: "Please excuse me, mamma." Then she saw a little figure standing in the doorway in a long white gown, with tangled curls and bright eyes, too bright for ten o'clock at night, thought Mrs. Blanchard. Midget ran across the room to the refuge that had never failed—mother's arms. "Mamma, dear," pleaded the little night owl, "I just learned to-day how to tell you I love you in such a beautiful new way. Please, may I show you? I'm so 'fraid I'll forget by morning." Midget held up her dimpled fingers. "Now, every body do just as I do," she said, gleefully. "Hold your thumbs together so, now the next fingers the same way, but the next to that you must double in fight."

She held her chubby fingers in this position, the palms together, the thumbs lightly touching, also the forefingers, but the second fingers folded in so that her rosy nails and the dimples that stood for knuckles touched, then the third and fourth fingers met at the tips as the thumbs and forefingers did. "Now," cried Midget, in great delight, "how far can you go from the nurse?" and she parted the thumbs as far as they would go. "Now, how far from the cook?" and the forefingers went apart.

Then in suppressed glee she carefully explained: "You must skip the folded fingers and go to the next. Now how far can you go from your dear, sweet mamma?" she cried in great triumph. And odd it was that those queer little fingers would not separate and the more you tried the closer they were, not Midget's tiny fingers, but papa's strong ones and Judge Mills' wrinkled ones. As long as the second fingers are held in bondage the third ones will not separate. Try it.—Christian Weekly.

The Poach Fellah.

Charlie Knickerbocker—"What's the matter, Gus? You theme all broke up. Gus Snobberly—Yeth, Chollie, I'm a pweef wreck. Cawt cold last night. Gweat hevent! have you been expothin yourself?"

I went to the opera, Chollie, and the scoundrelly usher gave me a pwoogan that had just been pwoined, and it wath the moist and damp that I got chilled thru and thru.—Texas Siftings.

Ohio's wool crop, according to a recent report, was 25,000,000 pounds for the year 1886.

Washington is becoming the Mecca of bridal pilgrimages. One of the hotels of that city claims to have had under its protecting wings yesterday no less than twenty-five newly married couples. No place this side of heaven could in one day have sheltered so much happiness as that.

In some parts of Germany and Austria natural pumice stone has been superseded by an artificial stone, to which a suitable shape can be given and different degrees of fineness of grain obtained, which allows the stone to be used in all the industries where natural pumice stone was formerly employed. The ingredients are white sand, felspar and fire clay, mixed in suitable proportions to obtain the desired composition, and the paste is poured into plaster molds, being finely placed in fire-clay receptacles and baked in ovens.

The San Francisco Examiner says that the steamship City of Sydney, which recently arrived in that port, brought \$60,000 worth of Chinese girls to replenish the slave quarters of that city. Though such importation is against the Chinese Restriction act, against the Contract Labor act, and against the still older law prohibiting the immigration of women brought for immoral purposes, their owners will find no serious difficulty in landing these costly chattels. A few dollars for witnesses, something more for a lawyer, and \$17.50 apiece for court fees will settle the matter.

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