

FOREIGN GOSSIP.

An elephant died in Bombay lately who had lived to be 300 years old.

A young woman at Ostend, Belgium, is said to take a sea bath every day in the year, remaining in the water about fifteen minutes.

Li Hl, the present King of Corea, belongs to a family which has held the Korean throne since 1392.

The Czar is said to wear always a ring in which is embedded a piece of the true cross that was given to an ancestor of the Czar by a Pope long ago.

At Russian places of amusement the ladies wear fur caps and big fur collars instead of the hats and bonnets worn in other countries.

Among the hereditary jewels belonging to Duke of Cumberland are Queen Charlotte's pearls, valued at \$750,000.

Queen Victoria and the Hanoverian King quarreled with majestic dignity. The Queen maintained they belonged by right to England.

The King insisted they should have been sent to Hanover in 1837, on the death of William IV.

The other jewels belonging to the Duke are valued at \$2,000,000. His gold and silver plate weighs twelve tons.

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She handed me a disk of wood about the size of a tea-plate. "There, put that on your head. This ribbon prevents its falling off."

"You must not lift your toes." I did so and balanced the piece of wood with ease.

"Now, I will be the Queen pro tem. Glide up to me." She retired to the end of the room.

THE RUSSIAN POLICE.

The Almost Unlimited Field Occupied by Its Representatives.

There is probably no country in the world where the public power occupies a wider field, plays a more important part, or touches the private personal life of the citizen at more points than it does in Russia.

The theory upon which the Government of Russia proceeds is that the citizen not only is incapable of taking part in the management of the affairs of his country, his province or his district, but is incompetent to manage even the affairs of his own household.

and that, from the time when he leaves his cradle and begins the struggle of life down to the time when his weary gray head is finally laid under the sod, he must be guided, directed, instructed, restrained, repressed, regulated, fenced in, fenced out, braced up, kept down, and made to do generally what somebody else thinks is best for him.

The natural outcome of this paternal theory of government is the concentration of all administrative authority in the hands of a few high officials, and an enormous extension of the police power.

Matters that in other countries are left to the discretion of the individual citizen, or to the judgment of a small group of citizens, are regulated in Russia by the Minister of the Interior through the imperial police.

If you are a Russian, and wish to establish a newspaper, you must ask the permission of the Minister of the Interior.

If you wish to open a Sunday-school, or any other sort of school, whether in a neglected slum of St. Petersburg or in a native village in Kamchatka, you must ask the permission of the Minister of Public Instruction.

If you wish to give a concert or to get up tableaux for the benefit of an orphan asylum, you must ask permission of the nearest representative of the Minister of the Interior.

HABITS OF ROOKS.

How to Keep the Greedy Birds Away from a Certain Locality.

In the autumn when the nuts are ripe the rook is busy. Walnuts are his especial favorites. You will not see a bird near the place until they are ready for thrashing down; but when that time has come a solitary pioneer will appear first, high up, inspecting the tree or trees.

The next day he will be joined by one or two more. After wheeling about and over the place they will settle and examine the state of the crop.

If the outer rind is loosened from the shell of the nut, a problem soon solved by the birds biting a piece off, they will fly away and give information to the rest that luxuries are to be had.

Then a number come, nipping the nuts off in the most wholesale manner and flying off with them. In the first field or meadow they dine; with a dig or two of the powerful bill they split off the outer covering, and then with one more dig open the nut and eat the contents.

They are quickly back for more. "Hi! Gip! Rooks!" cries a man's voice, and a fine old dog dashes over the lawn a dozen times a day, barking his loudest to scare them off, for if left to themselves they will clear the heaviest crop from the trees in a very short time.

It is no use thinking of shooting them; you may point a stick at them and flourish it about as much as you like, and it will not disturb them in the least.

A gun is a different matter; only let them catch sight of one, and instead of committing their robberies in an open and deliberate manner, as is their usual way, they will clatter into the trees like hawks when they get a chance, nip off the nuts and fly away.

The only effectual plan is to trap one. I once saw the experiment tried. One of them hopped into a common trap, set openly, only so secured that the bird could not fly off with it.

SOLITARY AS A GOD.

The Hard Lines Surrounding the Young Emperor of China.

As yet the doings of the Chinese have no particular interest outside their own country. The marriage of the Emperor is a strong proof that this is the case.

An imperial alliance of the same kind in the West would have sent a flutter through every court in Europe.

No Chancellor or Premier will disturb himself about the rank or the relations of the lady who becomes the Empress of China.

In the Flowery Land itself the choosing of an imperial bride has no political interest; she comes from no royal house; princely or even blue blood is not a necessary qualification.

She has to be selected from the "Eight Banners," a phrase which expresses the Manchu army of Peking. We should call them the "guards," for they are the personal defenders of the Emperor.

Up till lately the Emperor of China only knew of the Western nations as "foreign devils," and the small states—such as the Corea, which are in contact with China—go under the name of the "tribute-bearing nations."

Ambassadors from these states present tribute as feudatories, and in doing so appear before the Emperor on their stomachs, knocking their heads on the ground—a ceremony known as the "kow-tow."

The Son of Heaven could not condescend to ask for a companion to the "Dragon Throne" from any of the rulers of these insignificant countries.

SIR JULIAN PAUNCEFOTE.

Something About the New British Minister to the United States.

There are few more cosmopolitan men in the British Government service than Sir Julian Pauncefote, the newly-appointed Envoy of the English Government to the United States.

He was born at Munich, was educated at Paris, Geneva and at Marlborough College, in England; has acted as Attorney-General at Hong Kong and as Chief-Justice of the West India Islands, and is now about to crown his erratic but successful career by becoming the Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of Queen Victoria to the United States.

Though far from a brilliant man, and even reputed as somewhat slow and ponderous, yet he has the advantage of being a particularly safe man—one, in fact, who will duly weigh the pros and cons of every matter, even the most trivial, before coming to a decision as to what particular course to pursue.

If anything, he is too cautious, the effect, perhaps, of a legal training which enabled him to devise a code of civil procedure for the colony of Hong Kong and subsequently for the Leeward Islands.

In 1874, after having been knighted by the Queen, he was appointed Assistant Legal Under-Secretary of State to the Colonial Department.

He, however, did not succeed in getting on very well with the Permanent Under-Secretary, Sir Robert Herbert, who complained that the excessive caution exercised by his legal assistant delayed business.

In fact, Sir Robert used every means in his power to shunt Sir Julian from the Colonial Office. But the Pauncefotes have considerable staying powers, and not even the offer of the lucrative Chief-Justiceship of Ceylon could induce him to forgo the sweets of a fat office in England.

At length, however, Sir Robert persuaded the Earl of Derby, at that time Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, that Sir Julian was the very man of all others whose legal services would be of incalculable value to the Foreign Office.

MORGANATIC MARRIAGES.

They Are Perfectly Respectable, But Confer No Rights on the Wife.

Morganatic marriages are but little understood either in the United States or in England. By some they are regarded as a kind of semi-legalized concubinage; by others they are believed to confer the full rights and privileges of an ordinary marriage.

Even the origin of the word morganatic is unknown. Its most likely derivation, however, is from the Scandinavian verb "morgjan," to "shorten or limit," implying that the rights of the inferior of the two contracting parties are limited, and do not extend to the full condition of the other's rank.

Thus a morganatic wife has no right either to her husband's title or fortune. He is not permitted to charge the family domain with a life interest in her behalf.

She is deprived from the appanage ordinarily reserved for the wife of her husband's family, and if he dies without specially providing for her and her children out of his savings or private and unentailed fortune, both she and her offspring are left penniless.

Moreover, although the position of a morganatic wife is regarded as perfectly respectable, yet her husband is at liberty during her lifetime and without obtaining any separation or divorce, to contract another marriage with a Princess of his own rank.

Among the numerous instances thereof may be cited that of Prince Christian of Schleswig-Holstein, who at the time when he married Princess Helena of Great Britain, and became the son-in-law of Queen Victoria, was known to possess a morganatic wife and a numerous family of morganatic children, who lived in a small provincial town near Frankfurt-on-the-Main.

Another case was that of the Duc de Berry, at one time the heir presumptive to the throne of France, who although morganatically married to an English woman, Miss Lydia Thompson, was forced by reason of state to become the husband of a Princess of the royal house of Naples.

Notwithstanding these drawbacks, the sister of the present Duke of Richmond and Gordon, the most haughty and powerful peer of Great Britain, did not consider it beneath her dignity to become the morganatic wife of Prince Edward of Saxe-Weimar, a cousin of the reigning Grand Duke of one of the smallest of the petty German States.

DRAWING-ROOM SECRETS.

An English Lady Who Drills Debutantes for the Queen's Receptions.

Next to the Queen as a model of court carriage stands the Duchess of Teck. Mrs. R— told me all this in a soft, motherly way.

She handed me a disk of wood about the size of a tea-plate. "There, put that on your head. This ribbon prevents its falling off."

"You must not lift your toes." I did so and balanced the piece of wood with ease.

"Now, I will be the Queen pro tem. Glide up to me." She retired to the end of the room.

"You must regulate your steps and count two between each step forward. Take another step, and then curtsy."

I obeyed. It was a very unsteady one. "Try again, and go down very slowly. Slower, slower," she said, stretching out her hand, which I kissed.

"You mustn't try to grab the Queen's hand. You must sweep your hand round so"—and she made a graceful curve in the air—"and be careful your nose doesn't touch the Queen's hand. Any time can be given to the curtsy to each member of the royal family. The Empress Frederick may be next the Queen. Make a deep curtsy to her, and a shorter one to each of the others according to their distance from the Queen.

FASHIONABLE WOMEN.

One Who Claims to Know Talks About the Literature Affected By Them.

"What do fashionable women read?" I might answer "every thing" covers a large field in a general way, and I prefer to deal with particularities just now.

I have been told more than once that the readers employed by publishing houses to read the MSS. of novels are almost invariably women, and young women between the ages of twenty and twenty-five.

The reason given for this is that, as the majority of novel readers are young women, a young woman is considered the best judge in this matter. This may be true or not, but it is true that a great many elderly women devote a large portion of their time to reading novels.

They are too old for much social life, and therefore have plenty of time to devote to reading, and they seem to have a fancy for the lightest kind of novels. One elderly, crippled lady whom I once had the pleasure of knowing, took a great delight in books that told of murders and the pursuit of the criminals by detectives.

She declared that she knew the Bible and prayer-book by heart, for she had read them daily through a long life, and she read novels because she enjoyed them.

BATHING IN ALASKA.

Processes That Are Decidedly Disagreeable to the Uninitiated.

Every Russian trading post, according to Mr. Dall, has a bath-house, and once a week all the people avail themselves of its privileges.

The apparatus is simple, not to say primitive, but the method is what might be called heroic, especially the dressing in a room where the temperature is below zero.

A rude arch of loose stones is built, and more stones piled over it, so that a fire made beneath the arch can penetrate between them.

There is no chimney, but a trap-door in the roof. A large cask full of water heated for the purpose, and another of cold water, generally with ice floating in it, and a succession of benches, one above the other, complete the equipment.

When the stones are thoroughly heated, and the smoke has all passed out, all coals are removed and the trap-door is shut; any smoke or coals remaining will make the eyes smart and the bath very uncomfortable. Each one leaves his clothing in an outer room, and on entering wets his head and throws hot water on the heated stones until as much steam is produced as he can bear.

CHARMS AGAINST ACCIDENTS.

Charm against almost any of the ills and accidents of life can be obtained in Burmah, of the Buddhist priests, for a trifling consideration.

In this respect the priests constitute a sort of "travelers' accident insurance company." One of them will furnish a charm warranted to protect the wearer against being shot, for two or three dollars.

One of these charms, obtained by an English officer, consisted of a small image of a god, not much larger than a pea, carved on ivory. In order to make the charm efficacious against sword wounds, a medicine made by the priest, to be paid for extra, had to be eaten.

—Her Majesty receives as Queen an annual salary, termed the Civil List, of \$1,925,000; as Duchess of Lancaster she draws annually \$235,000, and a pension of \$4,015 "in lieu of prisage and butlerage on wines imported into the duchy," whatever that may mean.

This sum of \$2,000,000 odd is almost all clear profit. Her Majesty does not even have to be charitable out of her own pocket. For Parliament grants every year an "£5,000 for royal charities and..."

—The regulation professional garb of the English physicians and surgeons is the high hat—black in winter, drab or white in summer—and always a dark frock or morning coat.

—Including policemen, post-office officials, market men and women, caretakers, hospital nurses and newspaper writers and printers, it is estimated that fully 100,000 of the inhabitants of London are night workers.