LORD OF THE DESERT

By PAUL de LANEY.

CHAPTER XXII—Continued.

Dan Follett rose to his feet in surprise. But the chief remained calm and continued his conversation. He told him the facts of her escape, and the fraud in the scalp he had given him, at the same time repeating that he and the Canadian were friends now.

"But where is she?" inquired the Canadian. A hundred things entered his mind. With Bertha Lyle in his possession, he could get revenge on Hammersley, on the Lord of the Desert, on everybody! With her under his control, he could demand a ransom. He could make terms with General Crook, he could possibly get possession of that $10,000. Plans came on so thick and fast that they clouded his brain, and he saw a thousand advantages in the possession of Bertha Lyle as a prisoner in an Indian village.

"Where is she?" he demanded again.

"But wait!" said the chief. "You are too impatient to make a good brave for Egan's band. I told you she escaped. The trapper still has her!"

"But I have been to his home in his absence," said Follett, "and she was not there!"

"He hide her when he go away," replied the chief. "He fear someone steal her! Now, me and my men will hurry away tonight. We will go to hell trap, where soldiers never find us; and if they find us they can never get us. You take two, four, ten braves, go to trapper's home while he away and get girl and bring her with you! See! make trapper mad, you get even, and you have white squaw. Egan a good friend as well as bad enemy."

Within another hour Dan Follett and four of Egan's most stealthy braves were riding across the plains toward the trapper's abode, and Egan and a majority of the chiefs and warriors had quitted the vicinity of the Stone House as silently as the desert night breeze. Only a small scouting party remained behind.

The cowboys stood at their posts, and the Lord of the Desert kept watch over all with the vigilance of a trained general, waiting to see what the early morning would bring.

"The birds have flown," was the first expression of General Crook when he arrived in the vicinity of the Stone House. "There are no Indians about the place," he said, "but they may be close at hand. We will wait until daylight before we approach nearer."

He secreted his men in a grove of junipers on the mountainside, some distance from the premises, and waited developments.

As soon as the morning light began to break, the general, accompanied by Hammersley, began to reconnoiter. "The whites are vigilant," he remarked, as he pointed to the rifles in the loopholes in the wall. "They are evidently expecting the Indians, but I see no cover behind which the redskins could conceal themselves from our view. I am of the opinion that the red rascals have 'smelt a mouse' and left during the night. We must communicate with the whites as quickly as possible and get on the trail. Can't you creep up near that guard and manage to communicate with him?"

"That will be easy," replied the trapper, and he started in a stooping posture, keeping himself well hidden behind the runty junipers.

"Hello, there!" spoke the trapper in a low tone, at a short distance from the man at the loophole.

The astonished guard looked in a dozen different directions in an instant.

"I am the trapper, returned from the fort with aid. Tell the Lord of the Desert I wish to speak with him." him."

In a few moments this personage was at the loophole and Hammersley walked to the place, being well shielded from the main points of the plain.

Daylight was rapidly coming on, and the Lord of the Desert, upon consulting his men, soon concluded that the Indians had made their escape. The guards, however, were certain that some of the Indians had remained until a late hour in the morning ,as they had been seen skulking about the place just before dawn.

A short reconnoitre was made and General Crook was informed of the result. His men were marched inside the stone wall surrounding the Stone House and were ordered to prepare their breakfast and to take a few hours' rest.

In the meantime, the general held an interview with the Lord of the Desert and began preparations to pursue the Indians as soon as his men were refreshed. Scouts were sent out upon their trail, under the leadership of the never-sleeping but ever-fresh Hammersley, and they soon struck the trail and sent word back to the Stone House accordingly.

When General Crook informed Martin Lyle of the episode with Dan Follett, the Lord of the Desert went to his treasury and found a large sum of his money missing. He became frantic. He wanted to go to the fort and lynch the half-breed; but General Crook informed him that they had "whole" breeds to deal with just now, and that he would take up Follett's case later.

Hammersley, at the head of the band of cowboys, had followed the trail of the Indians all day and kept General Crook posted. The latter moved out with his command from the Stone House at sunset, intending to travel by night so as to keep the Indians off their guard. He started out on one of his determined chases, never intending to return until he had punished these bandits, the most troublesome and bloodthirsty at that time roaming the American plains.

CHAPTER XXIII.

..t Hell's Trap.

Hammersley had located the Indians at "Hell's Trap." Upon being notified of this, General Crook had come in advance of his command, which was to march by night, to view the situation.

It was about 4 o'clock in the afternoon when he and the trapper stealthily climbed to the top of the rimrocks overlooking this remarkable place, and lying flat on the capstone of the rimrocks, they looked into the Indian camp below. There was nothing about the place to indicate a trap or place for a harsh name. It was a beautiful natural meadow in the bend of a mountain stream, surrounded on three sides by towering rimrocks, the river forming a distinct peninsula, almost creating an island, so close did the entrance point of the stream come to the point of exit after making the circuit of the little valley.

Through this narrow neck the Indians had entered, and while their animals grazed on the luxuriant grass they had pitched their tents among the willows bordering the stream and prepared for a few days' rest after their long siege at the Stone House. Here game and fish were plentiful, and the haunches of deer and antelope, and fish frys alternating the feasts on the Lord of the Desert's fatted bullocks, made a garden of Eden for the braves, instead of a "Hell's Trap."

Here they felt safe. In this amphitheater they were isolated from the world, and there were numerous outlets through the rimrocks where they could make their escape if attacked, and they had as prisoners four cowboys, the only persons they had discovered on their trail from the Stone House, and they now felt as safe in this retreat as if among the lava beds of the Klamath country.

They regarded a casual lookout as being sufficient for their safety from surprise, in view of the fact that hunting parties were continually covering the territory in the immediate vicinity of the camp.

It was a continuous feast and holiday for the hunted bandits.

"I cannot understand why they call this Hell's Trap," said General Crook, as he looked down upon the placid scene.

"There is no reason for it now. It is true," replied the trapper, "but I have seen it when the name of Hell's Trap was not too harsh for it. The river, now fordable at most any point, rises from the snowbeds of the great mountains yonder. The warm south winds at times start the snow to melting, and the water comes dashing down from every point, filling the ravines and gulches, and these flow into the river, making it a rolling sea of water as suddenly as a cloudburst. It is on these occasions that the place bears the appearance of a 'hell's trap.'

"It has always been a great grazing place for wild animals of all kinds, and the rise often comes down upon them suddenly and fills the banks all around them and breaks across the narrow neck yonder, imprisoning them completely before they have time to escape. No living thing can ford the river during the rises.

"The Indians make it a point to take advantage of these rises. They stand guard outside, and as soon as the water is at its highest they rush through the current overflowing the neck and slaughter the animals by the wholesale. In this manner they long ago secured their winter meat food. This has given it the name of 'Hell's Trap.'"

After a few minutes in silence General Crook remarked that there seem u to be four canyons, or outlets from the place, through the walls of the rimrocks, besides the main entrance through the "strait," or neck. But the trapper showed him the fifth.

"To make a wholesale capture," remarked the general, "I will have to station me nat all of those points and charge in over the 'neck.' My men will arrive about midnight, and I will then require your assistance in stationing the men for an early morning attack," he continued.

Before the trapper had time to respond, if he had intended to reply, a sight caught the eyes of both men that riveted their attention in the same direction.

They placed their field glasses to their eyes and a groan escaped simultaneously from each. The sight that greeted them has often been seen on the American border. Human beings put to torture by savages, in full view of friends who were unable to render them aid!

The savages marched forth into an opening four white men in single file their arms bound to their sides, and each being led by a painted warrior.

The general and the trapper immediately recognized the men as four of the cowboys who had been sent out on the trail of the Indians from the Stone House. This is the first that either had known of their fate. General Crook, as well as the trapper, had supposed that all of the men were safe. The latter had not seen these men since two days before, but he supposed that they had either lost the trail or were loitering somewhere close at hand among the rimrocks. But they had acted indiscreetly and had been entrapped by the Indians, and were now about to pay their last earthly penalty.

The mode of the American savage's torture of his prisoners is well known. It has been described often enough, with its harrowing variations. The Snake Indian was the most cruel, and in this case his incentive was great. Many of his companions had fallen before the loopholes at the Stone House. These men had fired the fatal shots in many instances. It was now the Indians' turn.

Binding the prisoners, hands and feet, and tying them to short stakes driven deeply into the ground, their prostrated bodies were made the subject of every indignity, every cruelty and every torture that the depraved Piutes and their allies could invent.

It was well even for the iron nerves of the intrepid general and the desert trapper that the position of the men partially obscured them from view, and that they could not see all that was done.

The torture was kept up almost until sunset, when the last life succumbed, and the savages were even then desecrating their mutilated bodies when interrupted by a chorus of yells from the center of the bend in the river.

Turning their glasses in this direction, the two white men saw another sight that startled them still more.

A mounted party had just passed through an opening in the rimrocks, and was fording the stream and heading toward the Indian camp.

In front rode an Indian warrior, next came a white man bound to his horse, then came a white woman, her feet bound by a rope which encircled the horse upon which she rode; then followed two warriors mounted on one animal, and bringing up the rear was Dan Follett!

"Bertha Lyle, as sure as I live!" gasped the trapper.

"And that cursed half-breed!" exclaimed General Crook.

The trapper started to rise, and rush to the rescue, but the cool-headed general restrained him. "Cool, my boy! Cool!" he advised. "Careful work requires careful action, and I see now that we have a lot of both on hand!"

The trapper had already informed General Crook of the entire situation, so far as he knew it, but both were at a loss to understand how Follett had escaped and how he had succeeded in enticing Bertha and her companion from the secret caverns of the trapper's home.

"We will solve these mysterious problems later, young man," said the general. "We have practical ones ahead of us now!"

Old Egan greeted Follett with full fellowship as a chief, and cast a vindictive glance at his fair captive. The party was soon dismounted, and while Metzker, the cowboy captive, was led away and bound to a stake where his late friends had been confined, Bertha was given a tepee all to herself among the willows, and two lithesome braves were placed as guards over her.

"This complicates matters," said General Crook. "I intended opening the campaign at daybreak tomorrow and not leaving one of the red devils to tell the tale, after witnessing the butchery of those poor fellows a while ago, but now that cannot be done, for it would hazard the girl's safety and life. It will never do to shoot into the place while she is in it."

"I'll rescue her before morning, General," said the trapper.

"It's a ticklish job, young man, but if you succeed, my men will do the rest!"

Night was now coming on, and they returned to the temporary quarters of the great Indian fighter, in a secret nook among the rimrocks, there to plan the rescue of the woman, and the early morning attack.

(To be Continued.)

WAS AN INTERESTING FIGURE.

The Late William N. Roach, Once Senator from North Dakota.

The death of William N. Roach, former United States Senator from North Dakota, occurred in New York, after a nine months' illness with cancer. Roach never acquired eminence in statesmanship, but he was at one time an interesting figure at Washington. He was born in that city in 1840 and was educated at Georgetown College. After the war he embarked in banking and became eventually cashier of the Citizens' National Bank of Washington. In 1879 he went to Dakota, invested largely in lands and became a prosperous farmer. Then he entered politics and was a power in the Democratic party. Twice he was the candidate for Governor. In 1893 he was elected to the United States Senate. Then came echoes of a scandal. He was accused of irregularities in his connection with the Citizens' National Bank, the amount involved being $64,000, and Senator Hoar offered a resolution for an investigation, but none was ever made and Senator Roach served his term. Since 1899 he had lived in New York, where he was president of the Cuban Asphalt and Oil Company.

THE LATE WILLIAM N. ROACH.

No Squashes.

One woman, according to the New York Press, has rebelled against the prevailing style of millinery. She went the other day to buy a simple hat, and looked over a large variety, all decorated with cherries, grapes, strawberries, hazelnuts, apples and beans.

"No, I don't want any of these," said she, putting them aside.

"Perhaps you would prefer this cluster of currants?" suggested the milliner.

"No, nor squashes nor cucumbers. These things are very necessary on the dinner-table, but I object to them on my head."

"But they are so fashionable!"

"Never mind, I draw the line at fruit and vegetables."

A Gastronomic Feat.

At a little schoolhouse in the north of Scotland the schoolmaster keeps his boys grinding steadily at their desks, but gives them permission to nibble from their lunch baskets sometimes as they work.

One day, while the master was instructing a class in the rule of three, he noticed that one of his pupils was paying more attention to a small tart than to his lesson.

"Tom Bain," said the schoolmaster, "listen to the lesson, will ye?"

"I'm listening, sir," said the boy.

"Listening, are ye?" exclaimed the master; "then ye're listening wi' one ear an' eating pie wi' the other!"—London Tid-Bits.

The Omnibus.

In the newly issued "double part" of the New English Dictionary, Dr. Murray gives two quotations under the word "omnibus" which neatly tell the birth-story of the vehicle. In a memorandum to the chairman of the Board of Stamps, dated April 3, 1829, Mr. Shillibeer stated: "I am * * * engaged in building two vehicles after the manner of the recently established French Omnibus, which when completed I propose starting on the Paddington Road." Mr. Shillibeer was as good as his word. In Saunders' News Letter of July 4 appeared the paragraph: "The new vehicle, called the omnibus, commenced running this morning from Paddington to the city."

Old Document Tells Early Railway History

In overhauling the contents of an old stone vault in its Newark station officials of the Lackawanna Railroad have come across a set of interesting documents relating to the early history of the road. Among them is one which shows that it was just sixty-six years ago on the 19th of November that the Morris and Essex Railroad (afterwards absorbed by the Lackawanna) was formally opened for traffic. At that time there were only seventy miles of railroad in the United States. Cars were operated between Newark and Orange and were pulled by horses. The commuters of those days were obliged to change at Newark to the cars of the New Jersey Railroad and Transportation Company (now a part of the Pennsylvania system) in order to reach New York. The rails consisted of a flat bar of iron 2½ inches wide by ⅝ of an inch thick, and were laid on timbers running lengthwise. There are people living in the Oranges who still remember the iron sheathing placed over the floor of the cars to prevent loosened rails from breaking through the car floors and injuring passengers. Horse cars continued to run until 1851, though among the papers are several petitions protesting against this method of locomotion. Steam cars were introduced in 1837, and the first locomotive, the Orange, made its trial trip from Newark to Madison on Sept. 13 of that year. The Orange was a wood-burning engine of the most primitive type, requiring a wood-passer on the tender (usually a young fellow who aspired to become engineer) to "stack 'em up" for the fireman. The first passenger trip between Newark and Madison was made on Sept. 22 and the road was extended to Dover on Aug. 1, 1848, and to Hackettstown in January, 1854. Other papers found in the same vault include a number of petitions presented in 1848 by the early residents of the Oranges asking directors of the road to stop the cars at Whisky lane, now Grove street, East Orange. The petitions have been framed and will be hung in the new East Orange station. Perhaps the most interesting is one from the women of Orange dated March 25, 1848, complaining of the inconvenience suffered by them and their children in not being able to board the cars at Whisky lane. Several others from the male residents of the town contain the names of those whose descendants are among the most prominent people in the Oranges.

FACTS ABOUT OUR SHIPPING.

Five Million Tons Now Required for American Foreign Commerce.

It would be conservative to state that fully 5,000,000 tons of shipping are now required for the carriage of our entire foreign commerce. Toward supplying that need home shipyards contributed only 29,069 tons during the census year of 1900, and only 206,771 tons during the entire ten years ending with 1900. At the rate of construction in 1900 172 years would elapse before enough tonnage would be built for the present needs of our foreign trade.

The average life of a ship is commonly computed at ten years, taking into account losses, accidents and deterioration. But allowing twenty years as the average life of a modern steel steamship, at the present rate of construction for foreign trade over eight years would elapse before enough ships would be constructed to provide for the average loss of one year. In Great Britain, in 1899, steel steamships to the number of 567 were constructed, the tonnage of which aggregated 1,341,425, while in the United States 123 steel steam vessels, aggregating 237,579 gross tons, were constructed for all kinds of trade, inland, coastwise and foreign.

As a matter of fact, only one steel steam vessel of 1,771 tons was built in the United States during 1900 for the foreign trade. On the great lakes alone vessels aggregating 111,241 gross tons were built in 1900, or 16.2 per cent of the total tonnage built during that year in the United States, while the tonnage built under register constituted only 4.2 per cent of the total tonnage, or 26.1 per cent of that constructed for the traffic of the great lakes.

In number of tons the merchandise moved annually upon the great lakes approximates very closely to the merchandise imported into and exported from the United States, but the distance it is carried is very much less. For this reason the commerce of the great lakes can be carried by use of a tonnage approximately one-third as large as is necessary for the carriage of our foreign commerce. And yet, says R. Smith in Leslie's Weekly, notwithstanding the smaller requirements of the traffic on the great lakes, the tonnage built for that traffic in 1900 was nearly four times that built for foreign trade.

SORROWS OF A GREENER.

Experiences of an Unsophisticated Immigrant in New York.

In an article on "The Russian and Polish Jew in New York," in the Outlook, E. A. Steiner thus describes the "greener:"

The "greener" is treated with kindness, but is made to feel his greenness at every point. There is an unwritten law in the ghetto that for two days he must not work, but must eat all he can, for usually he arrives hungry to the starving point. His countrymen come to see him during that time, ask all sorts of questions about the old home, give much advice and show a great deal of superior wisdom in the use of English, upon which they pride themselves, and with which they freely sprinkle their Yiddish. The more English they can display the smarter they are, and usually in two years the "greener" has mastered this difficult language. He is put to work after the two days are over and this process is called "ausgreenen"—getting a chance to shed old clothes and habits and becoming like us; generally he goes into a sweatshop as an "aprater," which means that he learns to run a sewing machine, and for two weeks he receives no wages, but a good deal of a certain kind of training. In the rarest instances is he a tailor, being almost always unused to manual labor, and those two weeks are the hardest of his existence; after that time he earns from $1 to $1.25 a day, and reaches the goal of $2 after a long apprenticeship. Out of his wages he sends money to his wife and children or aged parents whose support he is, and to whom America is still a large gold field where money is picked up. The wife and children are anxiously waiting to join him, and he is saving money for their tickets.

Pitiful was the story of a cloak presser who has a wife and four children on the other side and who has been almost heart-broken because he has been here two years and has been kept by "hard luck" from sending for them. I worked by his side for a day, receiving my first lessons in cloak pressing from him, and the last letter from his wife was so pathetic that it drew tears from my eyes and money from my pockets toward those tickets. When the day's work was over and the possibility of soon seeing his family was almost realized he said as we parted, "I shall sleep happily tonight," and so did I in spite of heat and sore muscles.

KING EDWARD'S KITCHEN.

It Is an Elaborate Affair and Employs Hundreds of Domestics.

The royal kitchen is a room of considerable size, much larger, in fact, than the kitchens of many of the leading London restaurants, for some hundreds of meals have to be prepared there every day. It is fitted up with black oak throughout, for which George III. was responsible, he having expended $50,000 in this direction alone. Besides the kitchen proper there are the confectionery room, the pastry room and the bakehouse.

The clerk of the kitchen, who rejoices in a salary of $3,500 a year, is responsible for the conduct of these departments, and he has to deal with all the tradesmen who supply the royal household. But the potentate of the kitchen is the chef, who also receives $3,500 a year and under him are four master cooks, each of whom has control of a small army of assistants, while the confectionery department is ruled by two yeomen with salaries of $1,500 and $1,250.

Such a thing as unpunctuality is unknown in the king's kitchen. The most rigid economy is practiced, and such food as remains unconsumed is distributed among the poor, who apply at the castle gate every day.

The king's kitchen hides something like $10,000 in copper and iron utensils and $9,000,000 in plate. Among the former should be mentioned the enormous meat screen of solid oak lined with metal, which is nearly 300 years old, and bears the imperial badge of the house of Tudor—the portcullis and arms. Connoisseurs have sighed in vain for this meat screen, for its worth is inestimable. Then, there are 4,000 knives, 3,000 forks and as many spoons used for cooking and kitchen purposes, which do not include the 8,000 forks and spoons of massive silver for use at the royal table. There are 800 pots and pans, mostly of copper, and five scourers are solely employed to keep them brightly burnished.

Not far away are the plate rooms, two in number, which, although they measure only 13 by 16 feet, hold treasures eighteen tons of sovereigns would not buy.

The most valuable item in the storeroom is, of course, the famous service consisting of plates, dishes, tureens, epergnes and candelabra, all of solid gold, which were made by Roundelle & Bridge for George IV. This service is only used on state occasions. Equally famous is the emperor's service of silver gilt, the worth of which may be vaguely gleaned from the fact that each plate weighs a stone and the epergnes two hundredweight apiece.

There is one gold dish of surpassing loveliness which is supposed to have been used by Alexander the Great before the battle of Hydaspes and for upward of six centuries it has reposed at Windsor. Another much-valued piece of plate is the silver gilt flagon three feet in height, which was recovered from an Armada wreck three centuries ago, while there is a table of solid silver, the surface of which measures nine feet square, and is engraved with the four emblems of Great Britain.

But perhaps one of the most cherished relics in the king's pantry, says the London Tit-Bits, is the golden eagle which was taken from the Tippoo Sahib's throne. It is of solid gold throughout, the feather tips being pointed with priceless diamonds and rubies, while the beak is carved from a flawless emerald.

Boys Were Ingenious.

One of the many things Prof. Brewer is interested in is the agricultural experiment station maintained by New York in the outskirts of New Haven. One day the professor took his sons through the place, explaining to them the different pieces of apparatus. They were particularly interested in a certain machine designed to smoke cigars automatically, whereby the finest ash possible is obtained and analyzed.

"I noticed that the boys were attracted by this machine and explained it to them carefully," said the professor recently, according to the New York Times. "I thought no more about it, however, until one Sunday I found our house full of smoke. And what do you suppose? Bless me if those boys hadn't rigged up a similar machine in the attic and were coloring a meerschaum pipe!"

Good Cause for Enmity.

Mrs. Korseley—I don't see your lady friend with you any more.

Miss Cunnen—No, but you may have noticed my lady friend's gentleman friend with me, so she's my lady enemy now.—Philadelphia Press.

Honduras No Market.

Honduras, since 1900, has had no market for her cattle. In the past she has depended on Guatemala, but financial conditions in that republic have closed the market.

See that big, fat, red headed woman? Well, she is the slender, auburn haired girl you used to know.

ARITHMETIC BY MACHINERY.

Louisville, Ky., Man's Remarkable Invention.

The stereotyped remark about some of our modern machinery having almost human intelligence gains new force as the result of the invention of a Louisville man. A. C. Schuman, of 569 —— street, that city, has been granted patents on an adding machine that computes all four sums in arithmetic—addition, subtraction, division and multiplication.

Mr. Schuman has already gained more than local distinction by his invention in the field of applied mechanics.

The manipulation of the invention involves no mental arithmetical calculation to assist in the working. The process is as nearly a mechanical operation as possible.

The adding machines now in use are built for processes of addition alone. It is possible, however, to use them for simple subtraction. When Mr. Schuman, some time ago, turned his attention to computing machinery he invented two machines.

One of these is an adding machine and typewriter combined, suitable for making out itemized bills and the like. This machine which was the first one patented by Mr. Schuman, only computes sums in addition.

The machine which is available for all our processes of computation is limited as to typewriting facilities. The change from one form of calculation to another means only the shifting of a bar and the turning of a crank so many times.

The odd part of this uncanny machine is that it computes sums in five or six figures more quickly than the shorter ones. This is due to the mechanical construction. In division the fractional remainder is always set down with the answer.

"I applied for patents on both machines at about the same time, but the letters on the simple machine were granted first," said Mr. Schuman. "The machine which computes all sums was invented before the other."

Mr. Schuman is assisted by his son George Schuman. Between them they have done some remarkable work. For the Nazareth Academy Mr. Schuman furnished a planetarium and a telescope. The planetarium shows the position of all the inner plants for the century just closed, recording transits and eclipses. The telescope, which has an equatorial mounting, is an unusually good one.

Another of Mr. Schuman's achievements, says the Louisville-Courier Journal, was made in the line of cog and thread cutting machinery. He has built a machine which will cut any required number of cogs on a wheel of any given dimension. The threadcutter can be adjusted so as to cut from 100 threads to the inch to one thread in 12 inches, on a rod one-quarter of an inch in diameter. Only a mechanic can appreciate the importance of these machines or the difficulties surmounted in building them.

QUEER STORIES

The Russian mercantile marine consists of 745 steamers and 2,293 sailing vessels.

Three thousand newspapers and one thousand letters are received by King Edward every day.

Last year sixty ocean-going steamers were engaged exclusively in the banana trade.

Novel first-aid-to-the-injured boxes are to be scattered in the streets of Paris. Outwardly the apparatus resembles a lamp post letter box, and it contains a small medicine chest, a folding stretcher and a telephone for signaling the nearest ambulance station. Access to the box is gained by breaking a glass panel.

It was disclosed by examinations made in the Washington city postoffice, covering a period of about two and a half months, that 979,820 pieces of paid matter and 5,900,000 pieces of unpaid (or "franked") matter of all classes went through, the unpaid matter on some days running as high as 135,000, 127,000, 126,000, 125,000 and 122,000 pieces, while the percentage per day would often go to about ninety, crawling up as high as ninety-three per cent on a single day, and averaging 85¾ per cent every day.

Of the four hundred inscribed clay slabs found in the ruins of Babylon by the expedition sent out by the German Oriental Society, but two have yet been deciphered, one explaining the Babylonian cuneiform characters and the other containing the litany chanted by the singers of the temple of Esagila on the return of the god Marduk to his sanctuary.

MERCHANTS OF OLD MEXICO.

Government Controls All Business—Operations Public.

The government of Mexico exercises a somewhat paternal control over the doings of its merchants. Each town keeps a register of all mercantile houses in its confines, giving full particulars of the firm or corporation property, how held, etc.

Each merchant is obliged by law to keep at least three books, namely, a book of inventories, day book and ledger, writes the Dallas News. No erasures are permitted. The books must be balanced annually and show all obligations. They must show exactly what money the merchant draws out for his private use. A penalty of not less than $50 nor more than $300 is imposed for failure to keep books in the manner prescribed.

Merchants are also required to publish, through the press, the class of business, with its essential circumstances, etc.; to record in the public registry all documents which the public is interested in; to keep strict and accurate accounts, and to preserve correspondence for ten years which affects their business.

Persons who have been condemned for offenses against property, including forgery, embezzling and conspiracy, cannot engage in commerce.

Business failures are rare, not exceeding ten yearly in the last several years.

When you are lonesome you realize what poor company you are.—Life.

"Hi, Bill, look here! I weigh four pounds more'n you!" "Aw, y'r cheatin', Skinny. Youse got y'r han's in y'r pockets."—Baltimore News.

German Instructor (to usually late student)—"I see you are early of late; you used to be behind before, and now you are first at last."—Harvard Lampoon.

His Needs Were Small.—Landlady—"What portion of the chicken would you like, Mr. Newcomer?" Mr. Newcomer—"Oh, half of it will be ample, thank you."—Tit-Bits.

Mrs. Waggs—"I understand that drinking is one of your husband's failings." Mrs. Jaggs—"You have been misinformed; it is his most pronounced success."—Chicago Daily News.

Teacher—"Johnnie, this is the worst composition in the class, and I'm going to write to your father and tell him." Johnnie—"Don't keer if ye do; he wrote it fer me."—Detroit Free Press.

Mrs. Grady—"Mrs. Dolan lolkes her second husband betther than her first." Mrs. Dooley—"An' phwy?" Mrs. Grady—"Shure, he's in jail so much she has nearly all she earns fer herself."—Judge.

Consolation.—"I'm feeling very ill again, doctor; do you think I'm going to die?" "My dear madam, compose yourself; that is the last thing in the world that is going to happen to you."—Tit-Bits.

"Is this, then, to be the end of our romance?" he asked. "No," she answered; "my lawyer will call on you in the morning. I have a bushel and a half of your letters."—Chicago Record-Herald.

"Yes, I consider my life a failure." "Oh, Henry, how sad! Why should you say that?" "I spend all my time making money enough to buy food and clothes; but the food disagrees with me, and my clothes don't fit."—What to Eat.

"Oh, Major Bloodgore!" said a girlish gusher, "they say that during the war you were always cool in action." "Cool!" declared the major; "why, my dear girl, I was so cool that when I shivered people insinuated that I was trembling."—Baltimore Herald.

She—"Some persons claim that they cannot look from a height without wishing to cast themselves down. Did you ever have that feeling, Mr. Yearnso?" He—"Once." "Indeed? Where were you?" "I was in an elevated car, and I saw you in the street."—New York Weekly.

"But can you cook?" asked the prosaic young man. "Let us take those questions up in their proper order," returned the wise girl. "The matter of cooking is not the first to be considered." "Then what is the first?" he demanded. "Can you provide the things to be cooked?"—Chicago Evening Post.

Harris—"When I meet Flanders he generally has something to say about the virtues of his first wife, and my wife says Mrs. Flanders is always talking about her first husband's good points." Damon—"So they both have been married before?" Harris—"Yes. What a pity that first husband and that first wife couldn't have married one another! They'd make an ideal match.

Mrs. Temperton—"I've got the dearest old darling of a husband that ever happened. He has an awful temper, and about once a month he gets mad and tears up my best hat." Miss Singleton—"And you call him a dear old darling after that? How can you?" Mrs. Temperton.—"Well, you see, he always has a fit of remorse next day and buys me a better one."—Chicago News.

"Rather absent-minded, isn't he?" "Extremely so. Why, the other night when he got home he knew there was something he wanted to do, but he couldn't remember what it was until he had sat up over an hour trying to think." "And did he finally remember it?" "Yes; he discovered that he had wanted to go to bed early."—Philadelphia Press.

He was cutting an item from a newspaper. "It tells how a house was robbed, and I want to show it to my wife," he explained. "What good will that do?" a friend inquired. "A whole lot," was the reply; "you see, this house was robbed while the man was at church with his wife." "Say!" exclaimed the friend, excitedly, "you haven't got a duplicate copy of that paper, have you?"—Chicago Post.

First Pianist—"Did you have much of an audience at your recital yesterday afternoon?" Second Pianist—"Splendid! There were two men, three women and a boy. The boy, I afterwards learned, was employed about the place, and the two men came in for shelter, as it was raining at the time. But the three women were all right. They came to hear me, I know, for I gave them the passes myself."—Boston Transcript.

Mrs. Ferguson reached over, took a long, dark hair off her husband's shoulder and held it up for inspection. "That," he said, angry at her implied suspicion, "is from the horse's mane. I have just been currying him." "What made you suppose," she asked, haughtily, "that I thought it was anything else?" At which he shrank back behind his newspaper again, feeling as if he had kicked hard at something and missed it.—Chicago Tribune.

Just One.

Others besides Dogberry have been ambitious to be "writ down" in character.

Public Opinion says that a South African constabulary commander wrote to a local troop officer, asking if there were any donkeys in camp.

The reply came, in the troop officer's handwriting:

"Yes, one—R. H. Symes, captain."

We have reached that time of life when we wonder that some reformer does not, in the name of humanity, demand larger print.