An Avenue of Escape.

Rival committees were appealing for funds.

"Let's see," said the capitalist, musingly. "If I give $5,000 to each committee one donation would nullify the other, and, so far as I can see, leave both relatively where they started."

Musing a little more, he decided that $10,000 would just buy the sort of automobile he had in mind.—Philadelphia Ledger.

Her Book Diary.

She held up the fat little red leather book for her friend to see.

"No—not a diary. I kept one once, but I burned it long ago. My father gave me this when I was 15, and showed me how to keep it.

"It is my list of books I have read. I call it my book of books. Here is the first entry: 'Westward Ho,' by Charles Kingsley—double-starred because I have read it three times; a star means rereading. Underlined, too, because when I looked the list over at the end of the year it was one of my favorites. A little circle after the title—that's because it was a work of fiction that set me hunting fact, in history and biography.

"Not all the marks in my code were marks of honor, though. Look at the cross after number nine; that means trash. And there, after number eleven—the Frederika Bremer novel—the black dash; that means simply that I didn't like it. Father enjoined me to be honest with my black marks. He said I should find them an antidote to literary pretentiousness."—St. Louis Republic.

Short Kings.

There is hardly a king in Christendom whose wife does not overtop him by a head.

The English king is quite six inches shorter than Queen Alexandra.

The czar, a little man, is overtopped a full head by the czarina.

Kaiser Wilhelm is of the medium height, but the German empress is tall, and that is why the proud kaiser will never consent to be photographed beside his wife unless she sits while he stands.

The king of Italy, short and squat, hardly comes up to the shoulders of the tall, athletic Queen Helena.

The king of Portugal, though fatter, is less tall than his queen.

Even the Prince of Wales is shorter a good four inches than the princess.

And the young king of Spain is several inches shorter than his queen.

Misunderstood.

He had bought her a pot of real Irish shamrock, grown on the ould sod, for it was St. Patrick's day, and she, too, had in her veins the blood of Erin.

"Oh," she cried, "how good of you! How perfect they are! How fresh! Why, I believe there is still a little dew on them."

"Yes," he answered, flushing. "I know there is, but it will all be paid off tomorrow."

Long Way from Nowhere.

The most remote mission station in the world is on Herschel Island, in the far northwest corner of the Dominion of Canada. The nearest postoffice is 2,000 miles away. Consequently the packets are few and far between, seldom more than two in a year. The island is a most uninviting place for a residence. No sun for more than two months in the winter, and not a tree to be seen anywhere. Under the teaching of the missionaries many of the Esquimaux are becoming more civilized, and are greatly improving in their manner and habits, and there is a growing desire for instruction.

A count of the unoccupied houses in London shows 40,000. That is one house in fifteen of the whole city.

Science AND Invention

An ingenious Yankee sea captain has invented an apparatus with which he thinks whales can be killed by electric shock. A harpoon is fixed at the end of a long, metallic cable, properly insulated, and which serves in place of the usual rope. Through this cable an electric current of 10,000 volts is to be sent by means of a dynamo carried on the whaleboat.

An official of the national museum at Washington gives some facts not generally known concerning the relative values of diamonds and rubies. According to the latest figures obtainable, a ruby weighing as much as 5 carats is worth ten to twelve times as much as a diamond of the same weight, even though the latter be of the first water. The ruby, therefore, instead of the diamond, is the material that embodies the highest money value in the smallest compass.

Prof. Atkinson, a botanist of Cornell university, is the discoverer of an example of the very rare specimen called a "plant atoll." It consists of a ring of plants floating in a pond, with a circle of clear water within the ring. The plants derive their nourishment from the decayed vegetable matter that collects about their roots, and these are gradually becoming anchored to the bottom, so that in time a true ring island will be formed, resembling the coral atolls of the southern oceans.

Sir Patrick Manson, in his recent lectures on tropical diseases, although accepting the theory that the only mode of transmission of marsh, or malarial, fever is through the bite of the Anopheles mosquito, adds the statement, which will probably be new to most readers, that the mosquitoes are capable of becoming infected by absorbing the blood not merely of human patients, but also of anthropoid apes, and perhaps even of various other mammals, which, in an evolutionary sense, are related to man.

A new estimate of the comparative amount of light received on the earth from the sun and from the brightest (apparent) fixed star in the heavens, Sirius, has been made by Mr. Ceraski of the Astronomical Observatory of Moscow. The sun, according to his estimate, sends us about 17,000,000,000 times as much light as Sirius does. But this, of course, is a matter governed by relative distance, so that if the earth were half-way between Sirius and the sun, Sirius would appear between 16 and 17 times as bright as the sun.

Some interesting statistics have been collected by Vice Consul Arnold at Foochow concerning the great decline in China's tea trade. From 1678, when tea was first introduced into England, until 1837 China held exclusively the tea trade of the world. Then India began to enter the tea market. The Chinese trade reached high tide in 1886, with a total export of 300,000,000 pounds. In 1884 China furnished about 72 per cent of the world's total, India and Ceylon 18 per cent, and Japan and Formosa 10 per cent. But in 1904, when the total consumption had increased to 644,000,000 pounds, China contributed only 30 per cent, India and Ceylon 60 per cent, Japan and Formosa 10 per cent. The decline in China is ascribed to careless methods of cultivation and preparation of the leaf.

CURIOUS HOLIDAY MANIAS.

Same Vacation Suit Worn for Twenty-two Seasons.

Many people who are sane enough on most points become eccentric cranks at holiday time, says Tit Bits. In a certain Liverpool household the subject of where to go invariably gives rise to a stormy discussion. For no less a period than forty years the head of the house has regularly each summer passed his holidays at Douglas, in the Isle of Man.

A very charming place, too, but the younger members of the family kick against going there year after year. They naturally want to see some other pleasure resorts, but their annual grumble only extorts from their irascible parent the declaration, "Douglas or nowhere," and, as he holds the purse strings, Douglas or nowhere it has to be.

Curiously enough, the trouble with another Liverpudlian is that he will never be induced to go to the same place a second time. There are few seaside resorts that he has not visited at one time or another, but to none has he ever been known to go more than once.

On the other hand, his wife does not care for a fresh place each holiday season. She is in love with the east coast, and thinks there is no place in the world for a holiday equal to Cromer. She would be quite happy to go there every year if only her wandering husband—as she calls him—would be agreeable. But he will never listen to this, so that if she is not prepared to accompany him to a resort which he has never seen before her only alternative is to remain at home. She has often threatened to go where she wants and leave her husband to do likewise, but so far has never done so.

Another good lady, residing in Manchester, has trouble with her lord and master over a different matter. For upward of twenty-two years he has had what he calls a "holiday suit," which he has worn during every vacation that he has had since he bought it. This suit he has never had on his back at any other time, but during his annual holiday he cannot be induced to wear any other. As his wife tells him, it is in that that he is seen morning, noon and night, as if he had not another suit of clothes to put on.

As a matter of fact, he has no other with him, for, despite all his better half's remonstrances, he cannot be persuaded to take more clothes than his holiday suit when he leaves home for his annual outing. This is rather a sore point with the wife, for she insists on being well dressed and sees to it that she has no lack of changes of raiment, even if her husband refuses to encumber himself with one.

Some men have a mania for disappearing during their annual holiday, leaving no trace of their whereabouts behind. A very busy London merchant does this every season, and for a space of a month not even his wife and family have the remotest idea where he could be found. He leaves by himself and comes back by himself, and he brings nothing with him that gives the least clew to where he has spent his holiday.

This man's business friends often chaff him about where he goes, but none of them has ever yet been able to glean anything of the secret. His wife and family have long since ceased to exhibit any curiosity regarding it, recognizing that it is good for him to have a month's rest in a year from the ordinary worries of his life.

RESTORED CONFIDENCE.

Mrs. Potter had spent a week at the mountains, and naturally her neighbors plied her with questions as to what she had seen and how she had enjoyed her visit. "We all know you're fond o' your house and home," said one of the neighbors, "but wasn't it a kind of a relief not to have to think of washing and ironing and baking and sweeping for a good long week and just feast your eyes on views and sights?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Potter, with an absent-minded expression, "of course the mountain views are grand. I took a good look at 'em morning and night, and sometimes between."

"For the land's sake!" cried the neighbor. "What did you do the rest part o' the day?"

"Well," said Mrs. Potter, looking as if she had been detected in a crime, "that woman we boarded with, she'd been using some kind of washing-powder that had eaten holes in her clothes and table-linen, and she didn't know how to make her own yeast, nor she didn't understand the ins an' outs of a boiled dinner.

"She had only been married a year, and she was brought up away from New England, so you couldn't expect anything different. But as I said to Anna, my duty lay clear before me.

"'You take in the mountain views,' I said, 'and I'll see what I can do at the kitchen end o' the house.'

"To tell the truth," and little Mrs. Potter looked as nearly defiant as was possible to a woman of her size and with her features, "those mountains kind of overbore me, but that kitchen made me feel as if I was some account, after all!"

Natural Detective Force.

"We have a better detective force in the old country than there is in the States," remarked Governor H. P. Hoggart of Alaska. "That detective force is nature. When a man commits a crime in the States he has many places to hide and he often manages to evade the authorities forever. If one of our people who does something wrong believes the climate of some other country will better suit his health and he makes for that country he undertakes the impossible. All we have to do is to sit and wait. There is only one way out of Alaska and that is by coming to the coast, and when the criminal comes to the coast he is sure to be caught. So well has the United States signal corps done its work in Alaska that we have a telegraph line to every mining camp of importance and when a man takes leg bail all there is to do is to telegraph to the coast towns and the authorities wait for the man."—Washington Post.

The Beauty of the Snowflake.

The thin snow now driving from the north and lodging on my coat consists of those beautiful star crystals, thin and partly tranparent. They are about one-tenth of an inch in diameter, perfect little wheels with six spokes, without a tire, or, rather, with six perfect little leaflets, fernlike, with a distinct, straight, slender midrib raying from the center. On each side of each midrib there is a transparent, thin blade with a crenate edge. How full of the creative genius is the air in which these are generated! I should hardly admire more if real stars fell and lodged on my coat. Nature is full of genius, full of the divinity, so that not a snowflake escapes its fashioning hand. Nothing is cheap and coarse, neither dewdrops nor snowflakes.—Henry D. Thoreau.

All Details Arranged.

"Dear," whispered the eloping lover, "what shall we do with the rope ladder? We shouldn't leave it hanging there."

"Oh, that's all right," replied the coy damsel, "pa said he'd pull it up again so we couldn't get back."—Philadelphia Press.

Your friends do not ask you to praise your rival, but they do think you should not expect them to hate him as you do.

Promise of Improvement.

"Edith," exclaimed her mother, "I'm sorry I brought you to the shore at all. Here five days and you're engaged to two young men. It's disgraceful!"

"Yes," admitted the summer girl, "it's pretty slow work, but give me time, ma, give me time."—Philadelphia Press.

Bridge Lore.

"What is that poem about the bridge at midnight?" asked Mrs. Flashington.

"I don't know," answered Mrs. Dasher; "but the poet knew what he was writing about. Bridge will keep you up till midnight and after if you happen to be loser."—Washington Star.

Notes.

Rivers—Can there be such a thing as a "crying need?"

Brooks—Why not? Everybody knows there is such a thing as a howling success.

On the Scent.

Crimson Rambler—Are you burning gasoline in dat automobile, mister?

Sparks—No, my friend; I'm trying alcohol just for an experiment.

Crimson Rambler—I thought so. Would you mind me hangin' on behind fer a mile or so, jest fer de smell?—Puck.

Real Monopoly.

The lone bandit was holding up a railway train.

"It's better than being president of the road," he chortled. "I don't have to divide any of the swag with influential politicians."

By the way of rebate, however, he returned the cheap watches to their owners.

The Last Word.

"Aw, g'on, Mike," said the British soldier, attempting to end the argument; "you're a lobster."

"Ye flatter me," retorted Mike; "shure, a lobster's a wise animal, fur green is the color fur him as long as he lives, an' he'll die before he puts on a red coat."—The Catholic Standard and Times.

A Query.

That "Love is blind" one can't dispute.
(He's often deaf and dumb to boot!)
But if he sightless be, I pray,
How does he always "find the way"?
—The Reader.