Sneezing Omens.

Omens derived from sneezing are not confined to the human race, for in Sussex, England, even the most petted cat is instantly turned out of doors if it sneezes; for, should she stay and sneeze three times in the house every one within its walls will have colds and coughs.

To quote a few of the sneezing superstitions prevalent among distant nations, we are told that when a Hindu sneezes, the bystanders at once exclaim, "Live," whereupon the sneezer replies, "With you." The Moslem, when he sneezes, cries out, "Praise to Allah;" and the Jewish sneezing formula is "Good life."

In Theodore Irving's "Conquest of Florida," an amusing anecdote is told in connection with an interview between Hernando de Soto and Cacique Guachoya, a native chief. In the midst of their conversation the Cacique happened to sneeze. Upon this all his attendants bowed their heads, opened and closed their arms, and, making their signs of respect saluted him with various expressions, all to the same effect—"May the sun guard you!" "May the sun be with thee!" "May the sun shine upon you, defend you, prosper you," etc.

Among the many fairy tales illustrative of sneezing and its folk-lore may be mentioned the story of a young man living with fairies for a year, who took him to fairs and wedding, where, unobserved by human eyes, they feasted on the good things spread about. On one occasion they attended a wedding banquet where there was every kind of cheer in rich profusion. During the feast the bridegroom happened to sneeze, whereupon the young man, in accordance with his usual custom, exclaimed, "God bless you!" But the fairies were offended at this mention of the sacred name, and warned him against repeating it. The bridegroom sneezed a second time, and the young man uttered the same words as before, which so enraged the fairies that they threatened him with punishment if he dared to disobey them again.

No sooner had they thus spoken than, unfortunately, the bridegroom sneezed a third time, at which the young man blessed him as before. Such an act of disrespect was too much for the fairies, so they enacted summary punishment by casting him over a precipice, but by some unaccountable means he reached the bottom unhurt, and, much to the surprise of every one, returned home after a year's absence.

Again, speaking of fairies in connection with sneezing, it has become a time-honored belief in the Highlands of Scotland that a new-born child is in the fairy spells until it sneezes, then all danger is past.

A correspondent of *Notes and Queries* informs us that he once overheard an old and most reverend-looking dame crooning over a new-born child, and then, watching it intently and in silence for nearly a minute, she said, taking a huge pinch of snuff:

"Oich! oich! no yet, no yet."

Suddenly the youngster exploded into a tremendous sneeze, when the old lady suddenly bent down and drew her forefingers across the brows of the child, very much as if making the sign of the cross, and joyfully exclaimed:

"God sain the bairn, it's no a warlock!"

The same notion, under a variety of forms, is found in different parts of the world. Thus a legend current in Iceland relates how a troll, or fairy, who has transformed herself into a beautiful queen, says:

"When I yawn a little yawn I am a neat and tidy maiden; when I yawn a half yawn then I am as a half troll; when I yawn a whole yawn then am I as a whole troll."

The custom, too, exists in the Tyrol for persons to cross themselves when they yawn, lest something evil should come into their mouth.

In these fairy tales and superstitions we have no doubt distinct survivals of the primitive belief we have already noticed which connects the act of sneezing with spiritual agency.

Tree Hills on the Prairies.

We do not know where the following story is located, but we have no doubt it is founded on fact, as it is contributed by a correspondent of the *Country Gentleman*, whose friend, accustomed to the hilly regions of the East, thought he would see what he could do to break, to him, the monotonous appearance of his prairie home.

In the center of a circular land, about 200 feet in diameter, he set a cottonwood tree, and twenty feet away a circle of six others. The center tree was much larger and thriftier than the circle, this one of willows, set fifteen feet apart. Then followed catalpa, ailanthus, osage orange, and last, holly. These outer circles were closer, and the trees, being of smaller growth, were set closer.

By cultivation and manuring he endeavored to incite the central trees to a more luxuriant growth than the outer ones, and has succeeded in a remarkable degree. The result is a solid green hill of foliage that soon will be 100 feet high in the center, and slopes down to about ten feet at the base.

He is now building another hill on a modification of this principle. This is to be an evergreen hill, and for the place of honor he has a white pine, surrounded by spruces, and the varieties graded as to size to the edge. To secure a greater hill appearance, he allows five years to elapse between the planting of the different circles, so that when the last circle is set the central tree will be twenty-five years old.—*Prairie Farmer.*

According to the police reports of Philadelphia, 250 street lamps are broken daily, mainly by boys.

Four States are represented in both houses of Congress by natives, Delaware, Maine, South Carolina and Vermont.

Doomed to Extinction.

"In fifty years," said an observer of nature to a Cincinnati *Enquirer* writer, "and I dare say twenty-five, the buffalo will be be a rarity in our museums, as not one in twenty has a specimen."

"How so?"

"They are doomed to extinction. First, they were driven to the West, and now they are being hemmed in by the settlers that are extending out from both the East and West, and when these two bodies meet fairly, as they will in the time I have stated, and the country is cut up by hundreds of railroad lines, the buffalo that has existed in countless thousands will be gone."

"Why," continued the speaker, "not long ago these animals covered the eastern part of the continent to the shores of the Atlantic, and Mexico. Now, you never see one east of the Missouri, except perhaps the northern portion, while their only range to-day lies between the Upper Missouri and the Rocky mountains, and from Northern Texas and New Mexico to Great Martin lake, in latitude sixty-four degrees north. They are being hemmed in on every side, with all the other animals of the plains; their limit is becoming more restricted; in fact, are being driven out of existence by man. Over one hundred and fifty thousand are yearly used legitimately by the trade, and half as many are killed in wanton sport. But we live only for the present, and your grandchildren and mine will be going to the big museums of 1980 and paying fifty cents to look at a piece of buffalo skin. It's as sure as anything can be. The history of the last six hundred years tells the same story, yet we kill and slaughter."

A Stingy Man.

"Talking about stingy men," said the conductor of a Pullman car, as he sat in the smoking-room while the porter was doing the work, "the worst specimen I ever saw came out of Detroit the other night. His wife, a great woman, was with him, and they took seats in the ordinary coach. Pretty soon he came back, selected a berth—a single upper—and then went back to his wife. Pretty soon he returned and went to bed alone. About an hour after this I was going through the train when the fat woman stopped me and wanted to know if I had any empty berths. I told her there were plenty of them, when she brought her lips together like a vise and clenched her hands as she said: 'I thought as much. Here, take my bag with you, and make me up the best section you have. I'll be back as soon as the train stops again.' You see that selfish cuss of a husband of hers had told her there wasn't an empty berth left, but he had found a chance to share a bunk with an acquaintance. He was the maddest man you ever saw next morning, when he had to hand over five dollars for her night's rest, in addition to the $2.50 he had paid for his own. He gave the porter only two cents for shining his shoes, and scowled so the porter didn't dare kick for more. Oh, but he was a tough one."

The Finest Stanza of Poetry.

"Now, Mr. Washburn," asked the writer, "what is the finest stanza in English poetry?"

"It is a stanza in a commonplace old English ballad, 'The Lady Isabella's Tragedy.' A step-mother bribes a cook to make mince meat of her daughter Isabella. As he is about to kill her—

'Oh! then, cried out the scullion-boye,
As loud as loud might bee,
Oh, save her life, good master-cook,
And make your pyes of mee!"

Every contradictory excellence is reached at the same time in this stanza. One laughs and cries at the same moment; a scullion-boy as hero; the highest love; calling a cut-throat 'good'; the absurdity of a martyr begging to be made into meat pies; and the intrinsic truth and heroism of the prayer. In no other stanza can you find comedy, burlesque, pathos, tragedy, pathos, climax, every art of writing uttered by the voice of nature."—*John Swinton's Paper.*

Tigers as Playthings.

Abram Bateman, of San Francisco, has two tiger kittens that were recently stolen from a tigress in an abandoned shaft of El Rocario mine, in Sonora. They were eight weeks old, and weighed thirty pounds apiece. Having been petted all their lives, they are as tame and playful as domestic kittens, and betray few signs of ferocity except when feeding, at which time they are unapproachable. They are kept confined in a cage in the back yard, but are often brought into the parlor and turned loose for the entertainment of guests. Then they evince their appreciation of their liberty by chasing each other, jumping over furniture, scattering ladies and children in every direction. When tired of the play the kittens either climb to their owner's lap or sprawl on the sofa, and then purr contentedly until they fall asleep.

The Lonesomest Man in the World.

Dave Walker, of Anderson's store, was one of the best North Carolina soldiers that Lee had. Dave was in Richmond some time since, and sitting at night in the St. James hotel he heard a fellow with a cocked hat on talking everybody nearly to death about the war. He said he had been a colonel. Finally he drew a seat up to Dave and asked him if he was in the war. Dave said, "Yes, he was there."

"What position did you hold?"

"None, sir," said Dave. "I reckon I'm the lonesomest man in the world."

"Ah, why so?" asked the colonel.

"Why," said Dave, "I was a private in the war, and I am the only one I have ever seen since.—*Raleigh* (N. C.) *News and Observer.*

Alaska is one-sixth of our whole country.

Propagating Roses.

The Philadelphia *Press* says that the most popular of all flowers is the rose. It has its thousands of devoted and skillful worshipers as a garden flower, blooming in summer, and clinging to trellis or pillar, or trained to cover the ground with a mass of color. But its widest empire is in society, where it reigns pre-eminent, queenly in its beauty and bestowing its royal grace upon the fair ladies who wear it. The variety of roses is almost endless, and incalculable time and labor have been expended to develop new kinds which shall combine fragrance, color, form and profusion of bloom. It is a singular fact, however, that not until very recently have records been kept of the parentage of roses. There is excellent authority for saying that the exact origin of all but about a dozen of the beautiful varieties which have sprung into being within the last fifty years is unknown. Now, however, records of experiments in crossing specimens of different families are carefully kept by rosarians in England, France, Germany and this country. France has done more than any other country to increase the varieties; but there can be no doubt that America, with its range of climate and soil, and with the great attention now being paid to this fascinating branch of floriculture, will give to the world its share of beautiful roses.

The usual way of crossing roses is to cut off the stamens of one variety, and shake over it the pollen of the other, or apply it carefully with a camel's-hair brush. By this method the characteristics of both parents are equally transmitted to the new flower. If the stamens are not amputated the characteristics of the female parent will predominate. Families which differ very widely, can not, as a rule, be wedded with satisfactory results. There is a wide field for investigation and experiment open in this direction, and many enthusiastic growers are working diligently in the search for subtler laws which may govern the breed of roses. It may be years before definite results are obtained; but the pursuit is so fascinating that the number and character of experiments are constantly increasing and becoming more various.

The Granary of the World.

Sir Samuel Baker tells the *Pall Mall Gazette* that the Soudan is the granary of the world. He has ridden through districts where the corn grew high enough to cover an elephant. "When this region," he says, "passes into civilized hands it will be the richest on the whole continent."

There is a class of travelers' tales which never ceases to fascinate the popular imagination. Explorers who return from the Blue mountains of Thibet or the river of Golden Sand, from the regions of Borneo head-hunters or the wild men of the Malay peninsula, invariably announce that they have discovered "the granary of the world." Yet somehow the course of commerce is undisturbed and the corn producing centers remain just where they were.

"If," says Sir Samuel Baker, "the Soudan were in English hands, in a very few years you would be entirely independent of the United States both for cotton and corn." Possibly. But, judging from the present rate of slaughter, we should say that before the Soudan is in English hands so many Englishmen will be killed that England herself will easily be able to supply all the cotton and corn that will be needed for the few who are left.—*New York Herald.*

Goat-Herding in Texas.

An Abilene (Texas) correspondent of the *Inter-Ocean* writes: Goat-herding is another profitable and popular industry, and is rapidly increasing throughout the State. The original goats of Texas, like the sheep, were imported, or rather drifted over from Mexico, and were a small, coarse-haired, neglected and unkempt breed. The large increase in the number of goats in the State a few years ago has been accounted for by the theory that they have been imported to eat up the preserved meat and fruit cans left by the construction gangs along the railroad tracks, but this is, perhaps, problematical.

There is no doubt of the rapid increase of the herds, and of the improvement of the stock by the introduction of the Angora, and goat-herding is gaining a recognized position among the money-making interests of the State. The profit of goats is in the sale of the hair and the pelt, which is in great demand at Eastern manufactories of ladies' shoes. The flesh is eaten as generally as mutton or beef, and can scarcely be distinguished from the former. The hair of the goat is long and silken, and is so valuable that attempts are made to imitate it. It is readily sold at from sixty cents to $1 per pound.

The Greatest Match-Making.

It would more than repay a day's sojourn at Jonkoping, Sweden, says the *Pall Mall Gazette*, to visit the factory whence proceeds not a small part of the light of the world. The latest novelty, only at work about a month, is an enormous engine, which daily produces 1,000,000 boxes of Swedish matches. This wonderful machine receives the raw material, namely blocks of wood at one end, and, after awhile, gives up at the other, the matches neatly arranged in their boxes, ready to be dispatched to the uppermost ends of the world. The wood, which in the course of last summer was brought over to Jonkoping to be made into matches, filled twenty steamers and eight sailing vessels.

An international mining exhibition will probably be held in London early in 1885.

A Seventh Sense.

Sir William Thomson, the eminent professor of mathematics in the University of Glasgow, in his inaugural address delivered last week as president of the Midland institute at Birmingham, broached the idea of the existence of a magnetic sense. This sense he called the seventh sense, to distinguish it from our other six senses—namely, those of sight, hearing, taste, smell, heat, and force. He said that, in speaking of a possible magnetic sense, he in no way supported that wretched, groveling superstition of animal magnetism, spiritualism, mesmerism, or clairvoyance, of which they had heard so much. There was no seventh sense of a mystic kind. Clairvoyance, and so on, was the result of bad observation chiefly, mixed up with the effects of wilful imposture, acting on an innocent and trusting mind. If there were not a distinct magnetic sense, it was a very great wonder that there was not. The study of magnetism was a very recondite subject. One very wonderful discovery that was made in electric magnetism was made by Faraday, and worked out very admirably by Foucauld, an excellent French experimenter, showing that a piece of copper or a piece of silver let fall between the poles of a magnet would fall down slowly, as if through mud. Was it conceivable that, if a piece of copper could scarcely move through the air between the poles of an electric magnet, a human being or a living creature in the same position would experience no effect? Lord Lindsay got an enormous magnet, so large that the head of any person wishing to try the experiment could get well between the poles; and the result of the experiment was marvelous, the marvel being that nothing was perceived. Sir William Thompson, however, was not willing to admit that the investigation was complete. He could not but think that the quality of matter in the air, which produced such a prodigious effect on a piece of metal, could be absolutely without any perceptible effect whatever on a living body. He thought the experiment was worth repeating; and it was worth examining whether or not an exceedingly powerful magnetic force was without perceptible effect on a living vegetable or animal body. His own speculations had led him to conclude that there might be a seventh or magnetic sense; and that it was possible an exceedingly powerful magnetic effect might be produced on living bodies that could not be explained by heat, force, or any other sensation.—*British Medical Journal.*

Our Gold all Going Back.

"Did you ever think that all the gold the delvers in the earth are working so hard to get out of it is being gradually put back again?" asked a Cleveland dentist. "It's a fact. There are about 17,000 dentists in the United States, and they pack into the teeth of the American people a ton of pure gold every year. I guess about five times that weight of less precious metal, such as tin, silver and platinum, go the same way. Now, these metals are worth $1,000,000, and in the twenty-first century, all the coin will be buried in the graveyards."

"Is the decay of teeth increasing or diminishing among the people of this country?"

"Oh, increasing. Two hundred years ago one person in five had sound teeth. A hundred years ago, but one person in twenty-five had perfect teeth, and in the nineteenth century age of reform, our very latest statistics show that but one person in eighty has perfectly sound teeth."

Why Papa Slid Out.

"Our cat has wandered off again."

Mr. and Mrs. Popperman, with their little daughter Ethel, were seated at the crowded dinner-table the other evening, when the landlady made the above remark.

One of the boarders said: "Mrs. Jones, if you will put grease on your cat's feet it will stay home."

"Grease?" asked Mrs. Jones.

"Yes."

Toward the close of the meal little Ethel Popperman spoke out loud enough for all to hear: "Mamma, won't you put some grease on papa's feet, so he'll stay home nights?"

Mr. Popperman didn't wait for a second piece of pie.—*New York Journal.*

Little Family Foxes.

One of the most malignant of the family foxes is discourtesy, and he creeps into households where one would not suppose for him to find even momentary hospitality. People who are ordinarily polite, well-bred and genial, are sometimes guilty of rudeness in manner, and speech, and action at home, of which they would be ashamed in society. Parents are often hasty or fretful in their way of addressing or reproving children, and children forget the respect and honor due to parents. A great deal of unhappiness overclouds homes which might be bright in the morning but for this habit.

There is a standing reward of $2,000 in Nebraska for the discovery in that State of a paying vein of coal.

A Mormon temple is being built in Logan, Utah, which will cost when completed $515,000.

There are $70,000,000 in fine houses along Fifth avenue, yielding $1,000,000 in taxes.

Nebraska reports 1,000,000 cattle, 900,000 hogs, 500,000 sheep, and 300,000 horses.

Of the 167 students in the Texas university forty are women.

AT MORN.

Oh, patient soul that throbs with bitter pain,
And finds denied the boon of eyelids stirred
By touch of tears; that hears no helpful word,
Or bleeds anew to find it lost again;
That sees the laurel long pursued in vain
Withered and dropped to dust through hope deferred,
And every vision of fair living blurred
By blind unreason of the clouded brain:
It will not all thy days be dark with thee.
His pale-leafed wreath of poppies Time will bind
About thy bruised brow's pathetic scars;
And quietude of peace shall on thee be.
Nay, more; at morn thou wilt look back and find
It was but dark that thou mightst see the stars.

—*Overland Monthly.*

PUNGENT PARAGRAPHS.

Good for nothing—a cipher.

The knave of hearts—the "masher."

"I hev often noticed," says Josh Billings, "that the man who would hav done such wonderful things ef he had bin thare, never gits thare."

"How's business?" asked a spiritualist of the car conductor. "Quite fare," replied the bell-puncher. "And how is it with you?" "Medium, as usual."—*New York Journal.*

A Yankee genius has invented an umbrella which cannot be stolen. The dickens! have we got to add another item to our bill of personal expenses?—*Burlington Free Press.*

A young man urged, as one of the reasons why a girl should marry him, that he had a collection of over 400 different kinds of wood. She said if it was kindling wood she'd think of it.

An "aside" from Crossgrain: Landlady—It's singular, but true, Mr. Crossgrain, that all my boarders remain with me. New boarder (at first meal)—Too weak to leave, I guess, after the first week.

"I remember you very well," said the hotel-keeper, "but your wife has grown very thin." "Yes." "She was taller." "Yes." "And lighter complexion, was she not?" "Yes. Beside, you know, she is not the same one."

A deaf old fellow, charged with stealing a hog, was arraigned before a court. The jury without leaving the box returned a verdict of guilty. "Old man," said his lawyer, "the jury says you are guilty." "Hay?" "The jury says you are guilty," shouting in his ear. "In what degree?" "There are no degrees in a stealing case." "Hay?" "There are no degrees." "Guilty all over, am I?" "Yes." "Hay?" "Yes," yelling at the top of his voice. "Well, that's what I told you at first, but you said you could clear me. Wish now that I had got the judge to defend me. Will get him next time."—*Arkansaw Traveller.*

A WINTER SERENADE.

I'm awfully bold,
For it's very cold,
To be singing under your winder;
Oh, the wind doth blow,
And in drifting snow
I am singing to you, Belinda!

But I greatly fear
That you do not hear,
And I wish I knew the reason.
Does my voice seem lost
Amid all the frost,
And can I be crowding the season?

I see the trouble—
The window is double!
And I might as well serenade Nero!
So homeward I'll slink,
And hot ginger drink,
For it's ten degrees below zero!

The Champion Whittler.

William Yoke, of St. Louis, claims to be the champion jack-knife artist of the day. He is making what he calls the Missouri Pacific and Strasburg cathedral automatic wonder, with the golden ark of the covenant. It will contain over 180,000 pieces and will have 1,100 moving figures. All around Yoke's whittling shop were piles of cigar boxes and laths and myriads of nicely-carved little pieces of wood, apparently portions of models of buildings. The whittler was a small man, with keen eyes and ready tongue, and about thirty-six years of age. In the course of an hour's conversation he said in substance: "I didn't know that I was anything extra of a whittler until about 1869, when in a small way I made some models. I was in Texas working at mill-wrighting. The first large piece I ever made was a model of a Bermuda castle. Afterward I made Balmoral castle, Bingen castle, Miramar castle, the steamer Bristol, Solomon's temple and the Texas state capitol at Austin. Solomon's temple contained 12,268 pieces and had 1,369 windows. It is now on exhibition in Texas. The Austin capitol building has 62,844 pieces and 561 moving people. Every room and department in the building was given, with all the officers and legislators. Everybody was represented, down to the man sawing wood in the basement for the furnaces. All the figures were moved by a wooden engine, which was run by sand falling on an overshot wheel. I made this piece at odd moments in 1881."

Baby's Pie.

The awful prevalence of pie in this country is illustrated by the remark sent to the Drawer by a grandfather, proud of his grandchild of three years, who is visiting him. Enthroned in her high chair, she waited at table for the appearance of the dessert. The family pie was duly set before grandma, and baby's eyes were directed that way, when a small pie made for her majesty was slipped before her. Equal to the occasion, her eyes dancing with delight, she burst out with:

"Oh, auntie, I'm mamma of this pie!"—*Harper's.*