



One-third of the earth is controlled by the Anglo-Saxon race.

It is estimated that the world's cannon have cost over \$40,000,000.

The New Zealand Maoris own about 10,000,000 acres of land.

The spring and autumn maneuvers of European armies cost annually \$10,000,000.

The Egyptian Government pays interest on \$80,000,000 Nile Canal debt and \$30,000,000 Suez Canal bonds, squeezing the money out of the farmers.

In the mountains of Kentucky a majority of the log houses are built now just as they were in the days of Daniel Boone. There are no windows, no carpets, no whitewashing, often but one room, and many of them not even hewn.

The most unhealthy city in Europe, according to statistics recently issued, is Barcelona, Spain, one of the loveliest places in that part of the continent. One who lives in Barcelona increases considerably his chances of death.

With the growth of the new taste for cut flowers the cultivation of small flower gardens may become a source of unexpected revenue to countless homes. Many valuable plants can be made profitable with care, even in a small back-yard or in a sunny room, and certainly no more agreeable home industry for women can be imagined. The work demands fitness, patience and unremitting care, but it pays rich dividends for the amounts invested.

A young man of Lewiston, Me., who prides himself on his attractiveness for the gentler sex, got on a train the other day and saw a good-looking young lady, who seemed to have nobody with her. He approached her, relates the New Orleans Picayune, and did the masher act. She was responsive, and he was having a very nice time when a man came in and thanked him for having made the task of taking a lunatic to the asylum easier than he dared hope.

N. S. Nesteroff, an attaché of the Russian Department of Agriculture, is in Michigan inspecting methods employed there in cutting and marketing lumber. His object is principally to get information respecting improvements in sawmill machinery. Mr. Nesteroff pronounces the Saginaw Valley mills the finest he has ever seen. He was especially interested in the maple sugar industry in the spring, and spent a month in a New York State sugar camp. This business was entirely new to him, and he will try to introduce it into his native country, which has, he says, an abundance of sugar maples.

The Chinese trade unions can trace their history back for more than 4000 years. The Chinaman does not discuss with his employer what he is to receive for the work he does; he simply takes what he considers a fair and proper remuneration. He levies toll on every transaction according to laws laid down by his trade union, and without for a moment taking into consideration what his employer may consider proper. He is, therefore, says a correspondent of the Philadelphia Telegraph, generally called a thief; but he is acting under due guarantees, in obedience to laws that are far better observed and more strict than any the police have been able to impose.

An estimate of the charitable bequests in England during 1893 puts the total sum at about \$7,000,000. This is held to be about one-tenth of the estates upon which probate duty has been levied. Among the larger amounts given are the following: Earl of Derby, \$100,000; Richard Vaughan, of Bath, a retired brewer, \$225,000; the Rev. James Spurrell, \$1,300,000; John Horniman, a tea merchant, \$450,000; Henry Spicer, the well-known paper dealer, \$750,000; Sir William Mackinnon, \$300,000. The largest legacy of all is by Baroness Forrester, \$1,500,000.

TELLING STORIES.

I know of a boy that's sleepy,
I can tell by the nodding head,
And the eyes that cannot stay open
While the good-night prayer is said.
And the whispered "Tell a story,
Said in such a drowsy way,
Makes me hear the bells of Dreamland,
That ring at close of day.

So you want a story, darling!
What shall the story be?
Of Little Boy Blue in the haystack,
And the sheep he fails to see,
As they nibble the meadow clover
While the cows are in the corn?
O Little Boy Blue, wake up, wake up,
For the farmer blows his horn!

Or shall it be the story
Of Little Bo Peep I tell,
And the sheep he lost and mourned for,
As if awful fate befell?
But there was no need of sorrow
For the pet that went astray,
Since, left home, he came back home
In his own good time and way.

Oh, the pigs that want to market—
That's the tale for me to tell!
The great big pig, and the little pig,
And the wee, wee pig as well.
Here's the big pig—what a beauty!
But not half as sunning is he
As this little lot of a baby pig
That can only say "We-we!"

Just look at the baby, bless him!
The little rogue's fast asleep,
I might have stopped telling stories
When I got to Little Bo Peep.
Oh, little one, how I love you!
You are so dear, so fair!
Here's a good-night kiss, my baby—
God have you in His care!

—Eben E. Rexford.

OCTAVIA'S CHOICE.

BY HELEN WHITNEY CLARK.



"I ain't right, so accordin' to my ideas of what's right an' what's wrong, Octav'!" said Grandma Mookbee, severely. "An' Ishan't give my consent!" added the old lady, winding briskly away on a big ball of clouded red and white yarn.

Miss Octavia Mookbee, black-eyed and scarlet-lipped, turned sharply around with an impatient frown on her shapely forehead. "I haven't asked your consent yet!" she retorted, imperiously. "When I do, it will be time enough to refuse!" "Then you ain't a-goin' to marry him after all, Octav'?" cheerfully commented Aunt Adaline, looking up from the sponge pudding she was making for dinner. "I'm so glad! Mr. Fothergill may be respectable, for all we know, an' then ag'in he mayn't. But we know all about Jerome Meadowgaw, an' his folks afore him. Not a shiftless one among 'em."

"An' like as not the t'other one is a wolf in sheep's clothin'," sagely commented Miss Martha Phipps, who was spending the day. "It ain't best to take no risks, Octav'."

"But you hadn't ought to encourage Mr. Fothergill so much, Ockie," admonished Mrs. Mookbee, with a mollified glance at her tall granddaughter. "It ain't right to accept the attentions of any man without you think—"

"Now, look here, grandma, and Aunt Adaline—and you, too, Miss Phipps!"

The black-eyed beauty wheeled around and leveled a whole battery of angry glances at her startled hearers. "You may all keep your good advice till it's called for! I don't want it! I'm going to marry Ferdinand Fothergill and live in the city. I shan't tie myself down to a common farmer like Jerome Meadowgaw, and you needn't think it!"

And the offended Xantippe flounced out of the room, leaving her auditors breathless with astonishment.

One hour later, sixteen-year-old Margie, coming in from the barn-lot with a flat split-basket of fresh-laid eggs, met Jerome Meadowgaw leaving the house.

"Oh, Jerome, do stay to dinner!" greeted Margie, cordially. "We're going to have rice waffles and sponge pudding."

But Jerome gloomily shook his head. "I'm going away, Margie," he said gently. "This is the last time I shall see you for a long while—perhaps forever."

Margie's dimpled face clouded over like an April sky.

"Going away, Jerome! But—but where?" she asked, blankly. "I—I don't know yet," hesitated Jerome. "Maybe to Greenland," he added, recklessly. "But good-by, little Margie. Don't forget me, will you? There'll be nobody else to remember me."

"That's is, if you don't get froze up in Greenland," she added, dubiously. Jerome laughed in spite of his gloomy prospects, and a ray of warmth seemed to find its way to his chilled heart.

"I don't think I'll freeze, Margie and I'll certainly write to you," he promised.

And releasing the mite of a hand, he strode away, while Margie hurried into the house.

"I mustn't watch him out of sight, because it would bring bad luck, and maybe he would never come back," she commented, gravely, to herself, as she stowed the eggs away in a stone jar on the pantry shelf. "Ugh! how I would hate to go to Greenland!" she reflected, with a shudder at the picture her fancy conjured up.

How Jerome Meadowgaw had come to fall so desperately in love with Octavia Mookbee was a mystery, seeing there were plenty of other girls—quite as pretty, and with more amiable dispositions around the village of Hillsdale.

However, love is proverbially blind to all defects, and though Octavia was as heartless as one of the marble Bacchantes at Forest Park, she was really very attractive-looking, with her red lips and Spanish black eyes.

And as Jerome Meadowgaw was considered quite an eligible match among the belles of Hillsdale, the course of his love seemed to drift placidly along, and bid fair to run in a smooth channel for a time—until Ferdinand Fothergill appeared upon the scene. Then everything was changed.

Mr. Fothergill was an insurance agent, and made plenty of money; at least he spent it plentifully, which amounts to the same thing as far as appearances are concerned.

He was a dashing young man, with sharp gray eyes, and whiskers out a la Vaulyke.

He wore a seal-ring, and a dangle gold watch chain and the finest of broad-cloth attire. And as Octavia Mookbee was one of those persons who are caught by superficial attractions and outside glitter, she straightway gave Jerome Meadowgaw the cold shoulder.

The forty-acre farm, well stocked and timbered, with its snug cottage, Gothic-roofed and covered in spring with clambering hop vines and Virginia creepers, whereof Jerome had hoped to make her the mistress of compared to the prospects offered by the dashing city dade, soon dwindled into insignificance.

And in spite of all opposition, Octavia determinedly took her fate into her own hands and made no secret of the fact that she was "off with the old love, and on with the new."

Seeing that she was determined to follow her own course, Grandma Mookbee and Aunt Adaline decided to give her a respectable wedding, at least.

"It's the best we can do for her," sighed the grandmother. "A willful girl must have her own way; but if she lives to repent, it won't be laid to our charge."

And so the wedding drew near, and there was whisking of eggs and baking of cakes, to say nothing of dress-making and clear starching, within the old Mookbee homestead.

The prospective bridegroom had gone on a collecting tour which would detain him till the eve of the wedding day, and the morning before the auspicious event arrived.

Octavia was trying the effect of a pale pink necktie against her creamy complexion; Aunt Adaline was basting the box pleats in a silver gray poplin that was to do duty as a "second-day" dress; Grandma Mookbee was threading the looms in a French corset, over which the wedding gown was to be tried on.

Margie alone was idle, having refused to lend any assistance whatever toward the coming festivities.

"I shall not help to injure poor Jerome!" she declared, with a curling lip.

"Poor Jerome, indeed!" mimicked Octavia, sneeringly.

She was about to add some stinging remark, when a scream from the dress-maker, Miss Martha Phipps, drew every eye in her direction.

Under the circumstances I cannot afford to marry for love alone, and, therefore, I give you back your freedom, and hope you will soon forget that there ever was such a person as Ferdinand Fothergill.

"Three years since I went away a bachelor forlorn," laughed Jerome Meadowgaw, as he strode along toward the Mookbee farm and turned his steps toward the old stile at the foot of the lane.

A tall figure stood in the dusky twilight, faintly outlined against the slowly-fading crimson of the west.

"Welcome home!" called a soft voice.

Jerome sprang eagerly forward. "Margie!" he cried.

"No, not Margie!" in peevish tones. "It's Octavia. Don't you know me, Jerome?" she asked; then added, in dulcet accents, "—I did not know my own heart when I sent you away. Forgive me, Jerome, and—let us bury the past!"

A soft hand was laid on his arm, and Octavia's liquid eyes looked apparently into his.

Jerome put the hand coldly aside. "The past is buried, so far as I am concerned," he assured her. "You said all was over between us that day, Octavia, and I accepted your decision."

"But—but it is not too late yet, Jerome. I—"

"It is too late!" was the stern reply.

Pretty, pink-cheeked, Margie made a charming bride, a few weeks later, and the Gothic-roofed cottage, with its hop-vines and Virginia creepers, is no longer in want of a mistress.—Saturday Night.

Living With Their Heads Off.

Most persons of an observing turn of mind are aware of the fact that there are several species of insects that will continue to live without seeming inconvenience for some time after decapitation, exact knowledge on the length of time which the various species of insects would survive such mutilation being somewhat vague.

Professor Conestrini once undertook a series of experiments with a view of determining that and other facts in relation to the wonderful vitality of such creatures. In each case the head was smoothly removed with a pair of thin-bladed forceps, and when spontaneous movements of wings and legs ceased he employed sundry irritating devices, such as pricking, squeezing and blowing tobacco smoke over the insect. As a result of these experiments, he ascertained that members of the beetle family at once showed signs of suffering, while such as ants, bees, wasps, etc., remained for hours unaffected. Some which seemed stunned from the effects of the operation recovered after a time, and continued to live and enjoy a headless existence for several days. Butterflies and moths seemed but little affected by the guillotining process, and the common flies appeared to regard the operation as a huge joke.

"The common house fly," says our experimenter, "appeared to be in full possession of his senses (rather paradoxical, when in all probabilities the canary had swallowed head, sense and all) thirty-six hours after being operated upon."

The bodies of some species of butterflies survived as long as eighteen days after the head had been removed, but the head itself seldom showed signs of life longer than six hours after decapitation. In the general summary of these huge experiments we are informed that the last signs of life were manifested either in the middle or last pair of legs; and that the myriopods showed great tenacity of life "and appeared wholly indifferent to the loss of their heads."—St. Louis Republic.

A New Service.

When the workmen came to tear off the roof of the Elliott City (Md.) Presbyterian Church, which is being demolished to give place to a new church, they stirred up a numerous and influential colony of bees which had made their home in a cornice of the old building for years and years.

The bees fought off the intruders and had to be smoked out and massacred before the men could go on with their work. The honey which the industrious little insects had hoarded up was taken out, and it filled a big tub and a pan, making all told not much less than 150 pounds.—Washington Star.

Mount de Agua, otherwise the "water volcano," is situated twenty-five miles south of the capital of Guatemala. It takes spells of vomiting immense torrents of pure cold water.

THE LAPLANDERS.

THEY ARE A PECULIAR AND INTERESTING PEOPLE.

A Great Proportion of the Race Are Pagans—Bear Hunting Their Pursuit—Reindeer Their Staple—Lapp Lovemaking.

THE Laplanders are a peculiar and interesting people—peculiar in their appearance and in their habits; interesting in that we Americans always find interest in everything strange with which we come in contact or about which we hear. It was in the streets of Hammerfest that I first came upon one of these people, writes A. M. Dewey in the Washington Star. Turning round the corner of one of the ill-built houses, I suddenly ran over a diminutive little personage in a white woolen tunic, bordered with red and yellow stripes, green trousers, fastened round the ankles, and reindeer boots curving up at the toes like Turkish slippers. On her head—for notwithstanding the trousers it turned out to be a woman—was perched a colored cap, fitting closely around the face and running up at the back into an overarching peak of red cloth. Into this peak was crammed, I afterward learned, a piece of hollow wood weighing about a quarter of a pound, into which is fitted the wearer's back hair; so that perhaps, after all, there does exist a more convenient coiffure than a Paris bonnet. Hardly had I taken off my hat and bowed a thousand apologies for my unintentional rudeness to the fair wearer of the green trousers before a couple of Lapp gentlemen hove in sight. They were dressed pretty much like their companion, except that an ordinary red night-cap replaced the queer helmet worn by the lady. The tunics, too, may have been a trifle shorter. None of the three were handsome. High cheek bones, short noses, oblique Mongol eyes, no eyelashes and enormous mouths, made up a cast of features which their burnt-sienna complexion and hair did not much enhance. Their expression of countenance was not unintelligent, and there was a merry, half-timid, half-annoying twinkle in their eyes which reminded me of faces I had met during my travels in some of the more neglected districts of Europe. Some ethnologists, indeed, are inclined to reckon the Laplanders as a branch of the Celtic family.

Even at this late day a great proportion of this race are pagans, and even the most intelligent among them remain slaves to the grossest superstition. When a couple is to be married, if a priest happens to be in the way they will send for him, perhaps out of complaisance, but otherwise the young lady's papa merely strikes a flint and steel together, and the ceremony is not the less irrevocably completed. When they die a hatchet and a flint and steel are invariably buried with the deceased, in case he should find himself chilly on his long journey. When they go bear hunting—the most important business in their lives—it is a sorcerer, with no other defense than his incantations, who marches at the head of the procession. In the internal arrangement of their huts it is not a room to themselves, but a door to themselves, that is assigned to their womankind; for woe betide a hunter if a woman has ever crossed the threshold over which he sallies to the chase; and for three days after the slaughter of his prey he must live apart from the female portion of his family in order to appease the evil deity whose familiar he is supposed to have destroyed. It would be useless to attempt to recount the innumerable occasions on which the ancient rites of jumble are still interpolated among the Christian observances they profess to have adopted.

Their manner of life is strange enough. Here and there, as we strolled outside the town, blue wreaths of smoke curling from some little green nook among the rocks would betray their temporary places of abode. In the summer time they live in canvas tents; during winter, when the snow lies deep on the ground, the forest Lapps build huts in the branches of trees and so live like birds. Their tents or huts are usually hexagonal in form, with fire in the center, the smoke from

which rises through a hole in the roof. The men and women occupy different sides of the same apartment, but a long pole laid across the space between them symbolizes an ideal partition.

Hunting and fishing are the chief employments of the Lapp tribes, and to slay a bear is the most honorable exploit a Lapp hero can achieve. The flesh of the slaughtered beast becomes the property, not of the man who killed it, but of him who discovered its trail, and the skin is hung upon a pole for the wives of all who took part in the expedition to shoot at with their eyes bandaged. Fortunate is she whose arrow pierces the trophy. Not only does it become her prize, but in the eyes of the whole settlement her husband is looked upon thenceforth as the most fortunate of men. As long as the chase is going on the women are not allowed to stir abroad, but as soon as the party have safely brought home their booty, the whole female population issue from their tents, and, having deliberately chewed some bark from a species of alder, they spit the red juice in their husbands' faces, typifying thereby the blood of the beast, which has been shed in an honorable manner.

Although the forests, the rivers and the sea supply them in a great measure with their food, it is upon the reindeer that the Laplander is dependent for every other comfort in life. The reindeer is his estate, his horse, his cow, his companion and friend; he has twenty-two different names for him. His coat, trousers and shoes are made from reindeer skin, stitched with thread manufactured from the nerves and sinews of the same beast. Reindeer milk is the most important item of his diet. Out of reindeer horns are made most of the utensils used in his domestic economy, and it is the reindeer that carries his baggage and drags his sledge. Moreover, so just an appreciation has the creature of what is due to his own merit, that if his owner seeks to tax him beyond his strength, he not only becomes restive, but often actually turns upon the inconsiderate jehu who has over-driven him. When, therefore, a Lapp is in a great hurry, instead of taking to his sledge, he puts on a pair of skates twice as long as his own body, and so flies on the wings of the wind. Every Laplander, however, has his dozen or two of deer; and the flocks of a Lapp Croesus amount sometimes to two thousand head. As soon as a young lady is born—after having been duly rolled in the snow—she is dowered by her father with a certain number of deer, which are immediately branded with her initials, and thenceforth kept apart as her especial property. In proportion as they increase and multiply does her chance improve for making a desirable match in marriage.

Lapp courtships are conducted in pretty much the same fashion as in other parts of the world. The aspirant to a lady's hand as soon as he discovers that he has lost his heart, goes off in search of a friend and a bottle of brandy. The friend enters the tent of the fair maiden's parents and opens, simultaneously, the brandy and his business, while the lover remains outside engaged in hewing wood or some other menial employment. If, after the brandy and proposal have been discussed, the eloquence of the friend prevails, the suitor is himself called into the inclosure, and the young people are allowed to rub noses. The bride to be then accepts from her suitor the present of a reindeer tongue, and the espousals are considered concluded. The marriage does not take place for three years afterward; and during the interval the lover is obliged to labor in the service of his father-in-law as diligently as did Jacob serve for his long loved Rachel.

An Unpleasant Surprise.

Widowed Papa (to his sixteen-year-old daughter)—"Effie, did you know our housekeeper was going to be married?"

Effie—"Is she, really? Well, thank fortune, we'll get rid of the disagreeable old thing at last. Who is she going to marry?"

Papa—"Me."—Truth.

A special train on the London and Northwestern Railway makes the trip from Liverpool to London, a distance of 241 miles, in three hours and forty-three minutes.