

DOWN THE FLUME

THRILLING VOYAGE FROM THE SNOW LINE OF THE SIERRA.

What a Log Flume Is—How It Works—A Newer Design—A Wonderful Speed—On an Excursion—The Grand Scenery—Bad of the Trip.

After a slow and wearisome climb, and as it began to grow dark, our team, tired and dusty, drove into Camp Superior. The flume extends from the high snow line in the Sierra to the plains, 55 miles distant. It is built of inch and a quarter planks, and at the start, where the grade is steepest, it is 45 inches across the top. This width is increased, however, when the decrease in the grade necessitates a larger volume of water to float the lumber, and at the lower end reaches an enormous width of 100 feet. As the water increases in the flume, the flume more water must be added to the stream.

The first head of water comes from Lake Superior, and the supply is augmented by small streams as four different places between the mill and King's River. To preserve a fairly regular flow in constructing this flume enormous high trestles were found necessary to carry the flume across canyons, chasms, and around sharp spurs of mountains. The first 37 miles built took over 5,000,000 feet of lumber to construct, and most of this lumber had to be packed on the shoulders of men. It has taken about 5,000,000 feet of lumber, all told, to complete the flume.

But to return to the head of the flume, around which our little party of four was clustered, our spirits dropping as rapidly as the mercury during a cold snap, and our hearts seeking the consolation of our books. Coming down a flume when you are at the bottom and look up is a very different proposition to going down a flume when you are at the top and look down. Stories of former trips that resulted most disastrously flashed through our minds. If it had not been for the crowd of onlookers that stood around ready to cheer if we started, or jeer if we didn't, we would have backed out, one and all. These was no help for it, and with a last despairing look at the beautiful bright world around us that we were leaving—perhaps forever—we solemnly climbed into the flume boat and shook hands sadly with those that were not going.

The boat that was to carry us down the flume resembled nothing so much as a hog trough with one end missing. The frame being built V shape and at a right angle, the boat is constructed likewise, but at what would be the bow end of an ordinary boat there is no end at all, it being purposely left open in order to provide means for the water that backs up into the boat to escape. On examination we found our boat to be 16 feet long with a 14 inch plank running the length of the boat, thus making a false bottom, to raise us from reach of the water. On this plank rested four small wooden stools, one for each of the party.

After taking seats, with many misgivings and balancing ourselves, the order to cast off was given, the spikes holding our frail craft to the flume side were pulled out, and our craft shot on with the current on its journey to the plains. The sensation was exactly as if the bottom had dropped out of the universe and we had dropped with it.

"Watch out!" yelled the man in front, throwing himself back on the man behind him. It was just in time. The sudden shock threw us all flat on our backs and the boat "dipped" under a projecting beam that would have decapitated the whole outfit. Cautiously regaining an upright position we took a look at the scenery around us. As far ahead as one could see stretched the flume, looking a thin, spidery thread stretching down the mountain side. On either side gloomy rocks and forest trees flanked past in an indistinguishable blur when the flume lay near the ground, but when it rose on trestles to cross some canon or ravine we seemed suspended, like Mohammed's coffin, "twixt heaven and earth."

In the meantime our speed had been increasing. Not a member of the party spoke a word, but in dumb amazement held a firm grip to the seat. Our boat had proceeded but half a mile when immediately before us could be seen what we subsequently learned to be one of the steepest inclines of the whole course of the flume—a drop of 200 yards, with a grade of 1,500 feet to the mile. It was but a few moments when our boat was at the head of this incline. Pieces of timber could be seen on the mountain side below us, these pieces having been hurled out of the flume during their course. The sight was not very reassuring to us, but there was no such thing as stopping or turning back at this stage of the journey. Holding our respective breaths, and offering mental prayers for our own safety, we continued ourselves to our fate. The boat stopped for an instant at the head of the chute, pitched over the curve, and shot out into what seemed to be mere space.

A din pervaded of falling forests, dashing wildly past a wall of rocks for a few seconds, the noisy wash of the waters behind us, after all of which we found ourselves at the bottom of the flume, trying to regain our heads. It was almost, and luckily, too. If our heads could have been struck the strain would have been almost insupportable. Still, as we sat at a slightly reduced rate of speed, we were struck by a most startling change of the perpendicular wall of the rocky gorge, now being swept around the sharp point of a mountain on one way across which cascades, one as high as 150 feet, with only the knowledge of the fall treatment between us and what?

No greater view of the lower flume could be experienced than that which we had as we swept on through space. The dominating view of deep gorges, high cliffs, and the mountain heights, combined with the novel means of transportation, entitled the journey of all seasons.

A MEMOIR.

Some may forget the prettiest old They knew when life was young; But though the tale be often told, The soul is often young. The one to whom I gave my heart I can remember yet, White hair—gray hair—tear-drop start— Ah, who could love forget! The very day when I proposed, The very hour, the place, The way she looked, but half-composed The blush on her face; The—oh, perhaps, I'd better tell The secret. Oh my life! I remember her so very well— Because she is my wife!

LONG ENGAGEMENTS.

Owing to the complications of modern life, and the large increase in the list of creature comforts which polite people have come to regard as necessary, marriage has become a vastly more serious undertaking than it used to be, and is deferred until a later period of life. People in cities who have been used to wear good clothes, and to have servants to wait on them, and to go out of town in summer, no longer marry when the girl is 18 and the man 22. The man is apt to be nearing 30 before his income will stand the matrimonial strain, and the lady is proportionately experienced. It would not be quite accurate to say that, though it is harder to get married than it was, it is so easy as ever to become engaged. That would not be quite true. The difficulty of getting income enough to marry does deter, and even prevent, a great many betrothals; nevertheless, engagements do often happen when the prospect of marriage is remote, and a reasonable percentage of them last until marriage ends them. Long engagements are not popular, but enough of them are running to make the behavior of their beneficiaries a fit subject for comment in the interest of human happiness.

All the world loves a lover, but lovers make a serious mistake when they presume too far on the strength of the world's regard for them. The polite world loves its lovers exactly so long as they are interesting and agreeable. When they cease to be so in the eyes of the world, they take the form of anxiety to have them married, which may indeed be so extreme as to result in practical efforts to put them in the way of pairing, but which is more apt to take the form of what is vulgarly known as the cold shoulder. Lovers who are intelligent and who are disposed to make themselves agreeable ought to be exceptionally charming. They are enveloped in a pleasant bias of sentiment which makes them interesting. So long as they are nice, all kind people are in a conspiracy to indulge them and make them think that life is lured with rose tints. Their politeness is the more appreciated because it is thought to involve special self-sacrifice, and whatever they do for the community's amusement is raised above the ordinary value because they have done it.

All the world loves a lover, when lovers regard themselves as temporarily exempt from the ordinary obligations of politeness, and abandon themselves to spoiling and mutual absorption. The sort of courtship that goes on for hours behind closed doors, that insists upon seclusion and resents a third person, that thinks first of the beloved object and not at all of any one else—this may do for a six weeks' intermission between maidenhood and marriage; but long engagements should be conducted on radically different lines. Was there ever a dearer sweetheart than Lorna Doone, whose maidenly fervor allowed John Ridd one kiss a day, and no spooning whatever? And do you remember Mary Garth, so true to her lot as any eligible Fred, and yet so straight and strict with herself? Engaged or not, the most marry have been a welcome companion in any home, Fred or no Fred. And again that dame in silver gray who married John Halifax—be sure that her betrothal was a modest and unselfish one.—Berliner's Magazine.

THE GREAT GUNS OF THE JAPANESE NAVY.

The attention of naval and military authorities has been strongly drawn of late to the remarkable difference in the effective power of the heavy guns of England made and those of the French. The 110 ton guns of the English navy, constructed at immense cost, represent the latest and most formidable type of armament which Britain has produced. If the calculations of the makers could be realized in practice, the power of these guns would be astounding. They are 45 feet 9 inches long, 14 1/2 inch bore, intended to maintain a charge of 800 pounds of powder, carry a projectile of 1,500 pounds, with a muzzle velocity of 2,128 feet per second, equal to penetration of almost 84 inches of wrought iron. Several trials of these guns have been made with charges much below the maximum, and in every instance the guns have been so much injured as to render it dangerous to subject them to full tests. The latest trial was that of the 110 ton gun of the warship Bass Parrel, at Shoeburyness, with a moderate charge of powder. The result was the loss of the gun was found to have dropped, and also to have become laterally deflected. This is much to be regretted, for the gun is a magnificent specimen of mechanical construction.

In France the great company known as the Forges of Chateaufort is manufacturing, at Havre, under contract with the Japanese government, five prodigious guns, each about 150 feet long, intended to stand at the present time in the front rank. Japan may be said to lead the world in the actual power of her heavy guns. They have been subjected to the severest tests, in some cases having been spent in these trials to render them sure and effective. Each gun cost first cost \$2,000,000, and some \$3,000,000 in all were spent for the purpose. These guns weigh 96 tons, 124 inches bore, 41 feet 8 inches length, maximum weight of projectile 2,200 pounds, powder charge 922.5 pounds, muzzle velocity 1,950 feet per second, penetration of wrought iron 43.5 inches, maximum range over 13 miles. These guns were fired with out the loss of a man or carriage. There are several more guns, and show that the French navy has some advantages over all other navies.

\$155,000,000 IN GRAPES.

AN AREA OF 400,000 ACRES IN VINES IN THE UNITED STATES.

A Product of 4,000,000 Gallons of Wine and 220,000 Tons of Table Grapes—Statistics Taken for the First Time—California the Wonder-land of the Vine.

"I have no doubt that it will surprise even grape and wine growers themselves to know that there are invested in vineyards and wine cellars in the United States over \$155,000,000," said Colonel H. Gardner, special agent of the census office for the collection of statistics relating to viticulture, a branch of agriculture which has never before received any official attention in this country. "I find by statistics, which are now collected for the first time, that there are in round numbers 400,000 acres of land in this country planted to vineyards, of which 300,000 will be in bearing this year. This is an increase of 200,000 acres in vineyard area during the past 10 years and an increase of over \$10,000,000 a year in the capital invested. Of the area of bearing vines in the country California alone has 150,000 acres, including 35,000 acres of raisin grapes. That State also has of the total investment of capital nearly \$78,000,000. Between 30,000,000 and 40,000,000 gallons of wine will be made in the United States this year, of which California will produce more than half. Seven-eighths of the grapes of California go to the wine press. Four-fifths of the grapes grown in all the rest of the United States are for table use. California alone grows the raisin grape.

"I spent three months in California this season, giving official attention to its viticultural interests. Although every county in the State produces grapes, the principal counties of the vine are Napa, Sonoma, Fresno, Santa Clara, San Diego, San Bernardino, and Los Angeles, although there are many others of more or less importance. The counties of Fresno, San Bernardino, San Diego, and Tulare comprise the great raisin district, and will cure 2,000,000 boxes this fall, a product worth at least \$2,000,000. The grapes grown for raisins are the Muscat of Alexandria and the Muscat of Gascogne. These counties grow large quantities of wine grapes also, and the sweet wines of California come principally from that district. Fresno county has 35,000 acres of vineyards, Sonoma 31,000, and Napa 18,000.

"The grapes grown in California to-day include every variety that have made the vineyards of Europe famous. The cultivation of the grape in California dates back to the days of the old Spanish friars, the Franciscan fathers, who brought with them from their native land cuttings of a grape popular there. Just what the true name of the grape was nobody seems to know now, and very few care, for while there are in bearing to-day some of the vineyards a century or more old, the grape is not in high esteem now. It has always been known as the mission grape. The old mission vineyard supplied grapes for the table and the wine press in California until a comparatively short time ago. Then a Hungarian grape known as the Zinfandel was introduced. This newcomer was handsome, proved to be a generous producer, and took the popular heart.

"It proved to be an unfortunate one, for it seemed so easy to grow the Zinfandel that everybody planted vineyards. When they began to bear they bore with a vengeance. The market became choked with grapes, and prices went down to disastrous figures. It became apparent that the Zinfandel was an inferior grape after all, and to cap the climax the phylloxera came down on the Hungarian importation and bore it away, vineyard after vineyard. No new vineyards were planted with the Zinfandel, and the vine is being replaced with the choicest and hardiest varieties of wine grapes from the famous districts of Europe, including Cabernet Sauvignon, Carbanet Franc, Malbec, Tarnet, Merlot, and St. Laurent grapes from the Bordeaux districts; Mataro grapes from Pales; Semillons and Sauvignons from Sauternes; Pinot and Petite Sirrah grapes from the Burgundy districts; Johnsburgers, Trambiers and Frankon Bismalgs from the storied Rhine; Chasselas grapes from Alsace Lorraine, and the rich Burgers from Moselle.

"California has the largest vineyard in the world. The vineyard is in Tehama county, on Senator Leland Stanford's famous 60,000 acre farm. It contains 4,000 acres. Senator Stanford also has a wine cellar on his vineyard of notable capacity. There are now stored in it 1,000,000 gallons of wine and 300,000 gallons of brandy. They have been now in storage four years. The government tax on the brandy alone was \$770,000, which had to be paid before it left the still. A more remarkable case of persistent storage of brandy is that of the estate of the late General Nagle, who was one of the pioneer wine growers of California. The cellars have held 60,000 gallons of brandy in store since 1871. This brandy, including cost of making, tax, shipping, and interest, now represents a cost of \$14 a gallon. The largest wine cellar in the world is owned by Batmas & Wise, near St. Helena, their capacity being 3,500,000 gallons. Thirteen tunnels extend 200 feet into the side hill from the main building. They are sixteen feet wide and seven high. The building is 400 feet long and 30 wide, built of volcanic stone.

"Among the curiosities of the California grape region is a vineyard that may well be called the smallest in the world as regards number of vines. For it has but one vine. That is a most remarkable one, however, for its branches extend over a space of 15,000 feet, the vine being a foot in diameter. This extraordinary vine is over 70 years old and was grown from an old mission cutting by a Mexican woman. It has borne grapes every year since it was two years old and is good now, they claim, for the sixth year of its life. It was said that during a winter season it had been plucked from this mission, and the mission destroyed.

Education and Crime.

It is stated in one year there were received into the Eastern Penitentiary of Pennsylvania 497 convicts. Of these 83 had never attended schools of any kind; five are reported to have attended college for an average of six years, one of them having attended for 10 and another for seven years; seven are said to have attended a public high school for an average of a little over two years; 13 were said to have been educated at private schools for an average time of seven years and a quarter; 299 had attended public schools, 149 of them advancing to the grammar grade, the average age at leaving school being 14, and the average time they remained at school being five years. Out of 371 convicts received at the Western Penitentiary of Pennsylvania during the years 1879 and 1880, only three are set down by the prison authorities as possessing what they called a superior education. The two Pennsylvania penitentiaries in 1879 received 799 prisoners, of whom 114 were wholly illiterate; in 1880 there were 732 convicts, of whom 151 were wholly illiterate; in two years there were 1,531 convicts, with 395 illiterates. Thus it is found that one-sixth of the crime of the State is committed by the illiterate citizen, although the illiterates in all are only one-thirtieth of the whole population. There were also 272 convicts who could barely read or write and had received no education beyond that point. The document from which these figures are taken is published by the Bureau of Education at Washington, and it is there stated that the reports of 30 other States show a similar experience to that of Pennsylvania. With this testimony the following conclusions are reached:

(1) That about one-sixth of all the crime in the country is committed by persons wholly illiterate.

(2) That about one-third of it is committed by persons practically illiterate.

(3) That the proportion of criminals among the illiterate is about 10 times as great as among those who have been instructed in the elements of a common school education or beyond.

These facts, while they are a satisfactory answer to the charge that the system of free public education actually promotes crime, do not give that system due credit for its work in diminishing crime. To get at the truth we should consider the history of all those criminals who are alleged to have received a public school education. In many cases it would be found that they were exceedingly irregular attendants at school, persistent truants, and in a state of constant rebellion against the school authorities. And at the best the pupils are under the care of their teachers, on an average, only about one-fourth of the hours of the day and scarcely more than one-fourth of the days in the year. It frequently follows that the good influence of the school are neutralized by the bad influence of the street and sometimes of home. On the whole, there is ground for the belief that in the United States and Canada the system of free public education has been a preventive of crime.—Toronto Globe.

The W y s of Old Time Boston.

Visiting in Boston seems in old times to have been attended with some difficulties, and if the influences which one would naturally draw from certain entries in the old records are correct, the authorities of the town were not accustomed to be over given to the encouragement of hospitality, whatever may have been the case with individuals. For a meeting of the selectmen of the town held on November 19, 1749, for instance, the record begins as follows:

"Mrs. Rebekah Young appearing informs that she with one Child is lately come into this Town, from Harwich to Visit her Sister, that she intends to return in the spring, & that she hath brought with her to the Value of Two Hundred Pounds in Money and Household Goods.

"Liberty is Granted her to tarry until the Spring and then to return to Harwich with her Child, or give Security to indemnify the Town."

The good folk of Boston were in a perpetual panic in those days lest they should get upon their hands to take care of paupers that really belonged to some other community; and it is very likely that they had good reason for their fear and their precautions. One would suppose, however, that a woman who could bring with her a couple of hundred pounds in gold and gear might be of sufficient importance to be spared the formality of appearing before the selectmen of the town. It would be interesting to know how small an amount of belongings would have admitted her to the privilege of passing the winter with her sister.

A Possible English Ruler.

The court and the public generally are regarding Princess Margaret of Prussia, who accompanies her imperial mother to England, with a good deal of curiosity. It is hinted, somewhat openly, that one object of the Emperor Frederick's visit here is to do her best to arrange a marriage for Albert Victor, duke of Clarence, and her daughter, his first cousin, despite the fact that the Prince of Wales's eldest son is undoubtedly in love with his second cousin, Princess May of Teck, and has apparently his father's permission to continue so. However, the queen can not get over the fact that Princess May is the daughter of that Mary of Cambridge of whom she was so jealous in the days when the late Prince Albert first came a courting; and so, as young Albert Victor has no spirit of his own, it is not unlikely that the announcement of his engagement with the Princess Margaret will come to us before the emperor has concluded her visit here. Margaret of Prussia seems to be a delightful and highly educated young woman, but there is no doubt that she has a will of her own, she has imperial mother and royal grandmothers. It is equally certain that Albert Victor is about as likely and as unobtrusive a specimen of a young man as could be found among noble heirs to thrones. If Margaret becomes queen of England we will still remain under the same government.—London Letter to Chicago News.

BIG FIND OF MUMMIES.

IMPORTANT DISCOVERY OF AN EGYPTIAN CRYPT.

Numerous Manuscripts—Their Deciphering May Restore the Lost Learning of Egypt—Curious Questions That Await Solution.

A letter from Cairo to the New York Tribune announces the discovery near the Temple of Hatsou, in Egypt, of a crypt containing mummies and manuscripts that have never before been disturbed. The discovery is considered as important as that in Der el Bahari, in 1871, when the mummies of Esmenee the Great, the chief oppressor of the Israelites, and of Thothmes I, II, and III, Seti I, and Amen-hap I, were recovered. The hidden tombs at Der el Bahari had been preyed upon for 10 years by the sheved Arab who discovered them. He had opened mummy cases and sold jewels and manuscripts to travelers, and many manuscripts were destroyed, but others were decipherable. These manuscripts throw much light upon the customs of the Egyptians, their daily life, and the extent of their learning in medicine and law. The historical references have never been very useful, except to fix dates, as the records are merely boasting of kings' victories in the most florid style. Truth about kings was smothered. The learned men of Egypt formed a vast organization for keeping knowledge within the bounds they had fixed. The discovery of a subterranean tomb or crypt near the temple of Queen Hatsou, at Thebes, was made by an Arab, who reported it to the government, and received a proper reward for his faithfulness. The temple stands under a bluff of limestone at some distance from the Nile. Near the temple the opening of a perpendicular shaft in the solid rock was found. This shaft upon exploration proved to be 45 feet deep, and at the bottom was a doorway, which had been walled up. The following description of the underground chambers is from the Cairo letter:

"Passing through the doorway, the explorers entered a level corridor running north and south, about 250 feet long. From this a flight of steps led downward about 18 feet, and then came another corridor nearly 40 feet long. At the ends of this second corridor were two mortuary chambers. Still a third corridor was found, starting from the top of the stairway and extending 175 feet. The mummies were found piled about in all parts of these rooms and corridors in such a way as to favor the theory that they were hastily removed thither from their original resting place."

Up to February 19 about 100 mummies had been removed to the Boulak Museum. It is the opinion of the Egyptologists who are in charge of the examination of the mummies and manuscripts that the most recent belong to the twenty-first dynasty. That dynasty was established by a priest who possessed great influence. Many of the mummies are those of priests. About the corridors are hollow wooden images containing manuscripts, and other manuscripts were found upon piles of mummy cases. It is believed that these writings were hidden by priests after the mummies were removed to the underground chambers. The hasty disposal of the mummy cases and manuscripts leads to the conclusion that they were originally deposited in the temple of Hatsou and removed before a threatened invasion.

The painting on the cases, although at least 3,000 years old, is brilliant in color and apparently unchanged. The elaborate decorations indicate that the dead were persons of consequence. The forms of some of the mummy cases are new to Egyptologists and new forms of hieroglyphics appear in the manuscripts. This may be accounted for by the fact, recorded by Rawlinson, that Herhor of the twenty-first dynasty had formed alliances with outside nations and had a wife of Semitic race, who was not a princess. Herhor was known as Ss-Ammon or son of Ammon. If the new records can be deciphered, the history of Egypt may be rewritten. It would be a singular and interesting outcome, if at this late day, all of the lost learning of Egypt should be restored.

The civilization of ancient Egypt had a vast influence upon the world, chiefly through the captivity of the Israelites. The Egyptians devoted a great part of their energies and their fortunes to preparations for a future life. Their belief in the literal resurrection of the body has had its influence upon all religious beliefs. Whatever modern antiquarians believe, they have not respected the belief of the Egyptians; for the Egyptian dead have been scattered and destroyed, ship loads of mummies having been brought to England and the United States to be ground into paint. The vast cemeteries have been pillaged for relics of the past. Still the resurrection of the body is one of the cardinal doctrines of to-day. The Egyptians held it necessary to aid in that resurrection by preparing the body for it. The moderns hold that the power which can raise the body to an immortal life is great enough to bring together the scattered fragments after dissolution. The belief in the resurrection of the body was shared by the Incas of Peru as well as by the Egyptians, and Peruvian mummies are almost as common in our museums as those from the land of the Nile. The pyramids of Mexico and the mummies of Peru are the best evidence yet adduced to show that there was formerly a connecting link between Africa and America. The story of the lost Atlantis came from Egypt, and discoveries in America go far toward confirming it. The question now is, Did the civilization of Egypt have its rise in America or Africa? Are the pyramids of Mexico older than the pyramids of Egypt? Are the mummies of Peru older than the mummies of Egypt?

When young boys or plants are received from the nursery it is important that the roots be not exposed to the wind or to any dryness. They should be "basted" if the ground is too sandy. A large majority of the failures with young plants would be reached if this simple precaution were observed.

A Queer Eton Custom.

The first or second day of every term, when the whole school has returned, a sort of slave market is held in each house, at which the upper boys have the privilege of choosing from among the lower boys their own particular flag for the next three months or so. In some houses, when the lower boys—that is, boys who have not reached the fifth form—are numerous, an upper boy may have two such servants for his own exclusive use, if he thinks he wants them.

The right of selection is exercised according to seniority, the boys known to be the quickest and best servants being snapped up first, except in the case of new boys, when looks are to be taken as credentials as often as not, to the ultimate disgust of the fagmaster, for the smartest looking boys are often the greatest duffers at their work.

The duties of an Eton fag are many and various. Not a few of them would be declined by their own fathers, were they at home as far too menial to suit the dignity of the modern James de la Pluette. The fag is responsible for getting his master out of bed in time for early school—a dangerous and thankless task to perform on a big boy who is a hard sleeper, free with his flits, and quick at flinging boots when once awakened. School over, the fag has to prepare his master's breakfast. He lays the cloth, makes the tea and toast—woe betide him if the latter be burned or cut too thick—boils the eggs, and fries any extra luxuries in the way of mashes or sandwiches his master may send him to purchase in the town.

The meal prepared, the fag is by no means free to go and get his own breakfast, so he has to wait at table, be ready to fetch hot water from the kitchen, and, if ordered, fly off up town to one of the "sock shocks" for a pot of jam or marmalade. He is a responsible boy if he can snatch a clear 10 minutes for his breakfast before the chapel bell begins to ring. The same round of duty has to be gone through again at tea time, the only difference being that there is more time to do it in, and fagmasters are generally in a better temper when school for the day is over. But fagging at meals is by no means the only service which the lower boy has to render. He has to scrape the mud off his master's football boots, to put his clothes away after cricketing or running with the beagles, and takes notes to other boys in other houses.

In addition to their regular daily work for their own master, the lower boys have to fag in a desultory way for any upper boy who may want them. At the cry of "Lower boy!" shouted by any fellow above the lower division of the fifth form, every boy below the fifth has to scamper out in answer to the summons, and the hindmost in the race is generally ordered off for whatever duty has to be performed.

This is rather a hardship when a boy is busy preparing his lessons for school, but he would rather run the risk of getting into trouble in school than incur the wrath of a boy very little older than himself by "skulking." The head master's birch does not inflict such wounds as the vigorously applied toasting fork of an incensed fagmaster.

On the whole, Eton boys do not seem to mind fagging much, and the system at any rate has the advantage of being the same for all. Every boy knows that though he has to fag at present he is certain to be able to fag others in time.

The Russian Empress Defers.

The carina is almost entirely deaf. When a courier, carrying messages from her majesty, Augusta Victoria, appeared before the carina, a lady in waiting secretly wrote down his messages on a piece of postcard, which was handed to her majesty under cover of a fan, and after she had read it she answered in quite an unconcerned manner.

It seems that the royal comedy which was once played by the blind George of Hanover, who endeavored by sly tricks to keep his terrible affliction a secret, is to be repeated to-day at Peterhof and Gatchina. In Russian court circles it is whispered that her deafness is the result of the terrible railroad accident of Borkum, when the detonation of the explosives which were intended to destroy Alexander and his family injured her ears. But then her sister, the Princess of Wales, is likewise affected with deafness, which leaves the suspicion that the trouble is hereditary.

The Decay of Nevada.

Talk about deserted mining towns, or rather of deserted all towns back in Pennsylvania, why some of the old-time cities of Nevada are to-day almost forgotten. In Austin, portions of the main street, which in years past were the scene of large business transactions and mining excitements, have in the past three years absolutely grown up with sage brush. When the moon rises an observer would be led to believe that here and there large stores with stone fronts, once occupied by prosperous merchants, were brilliantly lighted, only to find on passing that the roofs of the buildings have fallen, and the rays of the moon gleam through the still intact doors across the shadowed sidewalks with spectral effect.—San Francisco Letter.

How Victoria Proposed.

Approx of royal marriages, I heard a pretty story concerning that of Queen Victoria the other day. On the day that the young queen announced to parliament her betrothal to Prince Albert, her aunt, the Duchess of Gloucester, asked her if she had not felt greatly embarrassed in that connection. "Not half so much, dear aunt," was the reply, "as I did when I asked Albert if he would accept my hand." For a female sovereign by royal stipulation was proposed to the gentleman of her choice, as prince being considered of nobility, she was obliged to propose to him as a woman.—San Francisco Letter.

THE QUEEN "AT HOME"

A PLEASANT PICTURE OF THE DOMESTIC LIFE OF HER MAJESTY.

Stories characteristic of the British Sovereign—the Will Edie Arrived here in London—A Day at Windsor—Relationships Fractured.

Once upon a time there was a charming little blonde princess, with large blue eyes and golden tresses, who was known as Mayflower, because she was born in that beautiful spring month, and her father, holding her up before the lords and ladies who hastened to see the baby, said to them: "Look at her well, for she will be queen of England!" The spring of the year 1819 is far off now; the May rose has changed into the Christmas rose; the little princess has become the dowager of the sovereigns of Europe, and her people honor in her hall a century of reign which, in the words of the national anthem, has been "happy and glorious," and distinguished by her majesty's great virtues and devotion to the public weal. After being softened by the joys and griefs of her crowned romance, the public venerates the grandmother who, from the throne, has made the nation admire sentiments which are most dear to it.

The one place where the queen is never to be found is her good town of London. Whether it be that Buckingham Palace is displeasing to her majesty (as it might well be), or whether the air and noise of the capital are injurious to her health, one thing is certain—that she avoids London like the pestilence, leaving to her charming daughter in law, the Princess of Wales, and to the extremely popular her apparent, the duty of representing her on all official occasions. Since Princess Beatrice's marriage, and especially since the extraordinary manifestations which marked her public life, the queen has shown herself a little more to her liege subjects.

There is also more animation in the palace. Her majesty has commanded artists to appear at court, and has encouraged her entourage to get up amateur theatricals. The fact is that Princess Beatrice has married a Prince Charming, from whom one wishes to banish all enmity, and so he can not be sent over to Germany to hunt and shoot every week, the domestic hearth is made as attractive as possible. With the exception of a few weeks spent at some health resort the queen divides her time almost equally between Windsor, Osborne, and Balmoral. Windsor, the immense feudal palace of William the Conqueror and Edward III, is the actual official residence of the queen, and here, has monarch had a most stately home.

It is in Windsor that her majesty invites those whom she wishes to entertain. The invitations are usually to dinner, the guests arriving at the castle in time to dress, and spending the night at the castle. The queen's day begins a little later now than formerly, the rheumatic affection from which she suffers having diminished her strength, although she still works very hard. Rising between 6 and 9 o'clock she breakfasts alone in her apartment, but occasionally invites Princess Beatrice or some other member of the royal family. Often, in fine weather, she drives to Frogmore, and when it is warm enough she breakfasts in a tent erected in the garden. From 10 to 3 her majesty works. One of the ministers is always at hand, but the queen seldom presides over a council, except on some very exceptional occasion. Every day there are 20 or 30 packets of dispatches for her majesty to look through. Everything comes under her eyes. Prince Albert used to say the queen ought to be the best informed person in the realm. "Ministers go out—the queen remains," said the prince.

Her majesty has an elaborate de choir, for of the 50 children and grandchildren that Providence has granted her (without counting the fourth generation, which trends upon the heels of the others), there remain 48. As, beside, the queen is allied more or less closely to all who reign, have reigned, or will reign in Europe, one willingly abstains from attempting to classify those related to her majesty. For the queen, however, the disentangling process is a pastime; her majesty never gets confused over it and good humoredly pretends to be surprised that everybody is not as clever as she herself. After lunch there is a short walk, and at 4 o'clock, no matter what the weather may be, the queen goes for a drive, generally accompanied by Princess Beatrice, the lady in waiting, and another fair visitor. Dinner is at 9 o'clock. Should a reigning prince be present, the queen takes his arm; if not, she walks into the dining room alone. Before her majesty comes down, the gentleman in waiting acquaints all the male guests with the name of the lady they are to take in.

During the day there is complete liberty for all, yet there is none of that sociability which characterizes English country house life. The evening has never been a time of much gaiety at the palace. Charles Greville's diary is "dully dull." The queen used to be considered as a large round table and the conversation became more or less awkward. Now, the queen goes from time to time, addressing in each a few words, almost as banal, and rather so if it should. When only members of the royal family are present, men are not to be seen, but all her children, except the Prince of Wales, the queen has made a habit, and sometimes she does a council, with Princess Beatrice, and her lady in waiting, sitting at the table with her. She has a certain amount of conversation with her ladies, but she does not seem to be particularly interested in their conversation. She is a very good mother, and she is a very good grandmother.

When young boys or plants are received from the nursery it is important that the roots be not exposed to the wind or to any dryness. They should be "basted" if the ground is too sandy. A large majority of the failures with young plants would be reached if this simple precaution were observed.