

MYSTERIOUS OR NOTABLE.

MORE OR LESS REMARKABLE INCIDENTS AND FACTS.

Florida Alligators—The Best Miner—Bishops' Salaries—An Old Woman—A Soap Mine, Etc., Etc.



A FLORIDA newspaper says that the killing off of alligators is having a marked effect on the supply of water in the cattle country. When alligators took possession of a water hole they always kept the mud pushed up on the banks, and even when hundreds of cattle went to the pool, and by crowding and pushing filled it with mud, the alligators soon repaired the damage by digging and pushing back the mud. Now the cattle stand around these holes, which are filled with mud and almost entirely dried up, and wait for rain; the only water they get meantime being from the dew-covered grass which they eat at night.

The authorities of London have for some time had under way an extensive system of works at the outfall of the city's main sewer at Barking Creek, on the Thames, the object in view being to prevent the river in future from becoming during the hot season a danger to health. According to this plan thirteen precipitating tanks on the land side of the existing reservoir are to receive the sewage, this being allowed to remain for some two hours in a quiescent state for the deposition of the sludge. The effluent water will then be run off into the river, and the sludge into other tanks, where it will settle for ten hours longer to remove more of the liquid, the substance being used for mixing with lime to form a precipitating agent. The settled solids, still containing equal to ninety per cent. of moisture, will be passed through pipes and loaded into ships, in which, unless it shall be found of sufficient commercial value to warrant its utilization as a land fertilizer, it will be carried a long distance to sea. Experiments already made with this kind of sludge have led to the conclusion that it will prove valuable as a marketable commodity, and without any sanitary risk.

The movement of the Mormons toward Mexico is assuming definite shape and large proportions. Recently dispatches have been published to the effect that the Mexican Government had granted a concession of 10,000,000 acres of land to the Mormons and that they had purchased 10,000 square miles of the Zuni Indian land in Mexico. There is no foundation for such statements. Every foot of land obtained by the Mormons in Mexico so far has been by purchase from private owners, and the Government would no doubt utterly refuse to make them a concession of land. The Zuni Indians live in New Mexico and not Old Mexico and cannot dispose of a single acre of their reservation. The facts are that the Mormons have quietly bought from private parties large tracts of agricultural lands in Northern Chihuahua, principally in the valley of the Casus Grande River, and that they are negotiating for more. Several flourishing villages exist in that neighborhood already, the principle one being called Porfiro Diaz. The colonists are the precursors of greater bodies in the future, and are very quiet and unobtrusive.

SENATOR HEAST, of California, is the best miner in America. He began in the mountains as a day laborer. To-day he is the richest man in the United States. There is not a mining State or Territory in which he is not owning or working mines. Jim Witchlatch sold his mine near Unionville, Mont., for \$1,800,000 and lost all that money in Wall street. He went back to Leadville and in six months made \$120,000. He lost every cent of this by the failure of Grant & Ward in 1883. He now has a fortune of \$150,000. Ten years ago Joe Stanley was prospecting in Gilpin county, Col. His wife took in washing while he dug his way through 700 feet of barren rock. He had no money and couldn't hire help. At the end of 700 feet he struck pay ore, and named it the California Mine. A party of Englishmen on a tour through the State gave him \$1,000,000 cash for it, and have received \$5,000,000 in dividends since. Joe is now one of the richest men in Denver, and Vice-President of the Denver City National Bank.

If kings have been abolished in France, various Frenchmen seem determined to have their "innings" by setting up as monarchs on their own account in far and foreign climes. Everybody has heard of the "King of Arancia, Orelus I.," who was a Parisian Rio de Tulipatan, and now another Gaul, M. de Mayrena, has just been crowned monarch of a tribe of Annamites on the borders of Siam. The new sovereign calls himself "Mario I., King of the Sedangs," and, according to all accounts, he has inaugurated a happy and prosperous reign, and promises to be as merry and as contented a potentate as "Old King Cole" himself.

A NATURAL soap mine has been discovered near Crawfordsville, Ga., and the editor of the Crawfordsville Democrat has tried it. He says: "We took the article, and to test it we washed our face and hands with it, and it out the dirt from the skin and made the water lather like manufactured soap. It is exactly the color of turpentine soap, and has a peculiar smell. There is money in this natural soap mine."

A CERTAIN M. Alex. Seiler, native of a Swiss canton, owner of the chief hotel at Zermatt, a few miles from his native town in the same canton, made application in 1875 for leave to become a citizen of Zermatt. The cantonal government granted his petition, but the commune refused to confirm it, because M. Seiler was a "stranger," not born in the town. He has continued his effort unsuccessfully ever since, and lately he has been boycotted by the inhabitants, with the connivance of the local authorities. He can get nothing in the neighborhood, but must fetch everything for his hotel from other towns miles away. He appealed to the cantonal authorities, and they have sent gendarmes to protect him. The commune has to pay for the lodging and food of these officers, and if this does not make the local authorities relent it is announced that a company of soldiers will be sent to Zermatt to board upon the same terms.

A CURIOUS old marriage custom, which is still widely prevalent in Brittany, was recently interpreted in a novel and amusing manner. According to the custom, the bridegroom, immediately after the priest had wedded the couple, strikes his wife in the face, saying: "This is how you will fare if you make me angry," and then, kissing her, he says: "This is how you will fare if you treat me well." A short time ago a young Breton married a German girl, and after the ceremony was over began at once to practice the first part of the time honored custom. The bride, who was ignorant of the "inner meaning" of what she considered an insult, turned round on her lord and master and returned the stroke, saying: "Look here, I do not approve of such behavior," after which the husband is said to have performed the second part of the ceremony with more than usual affection.

The bishop of New York has the largest personal revenue in this country. It is \$10,000 a year. The Bishop of Maine has the smallest. It is \$1,300 a year. The Bishops of California, Chicago, Long Island and Massachusetts have each \$6,000 a year. Others have incomes running from \$5,000 a year down, while eight of the American prelates are content with \$2,000 a year each, and are not perfectly sure of getting it in time to meet their butcher's books and coal bills. In England, where the State takes the place of the voluntary contribution in support of the church, the head of the prelate has an income of \$75,000 a year. Two of the bishops have each \$50,000 a year. Others run from \$40,000 down, the average revenue of the episcopate below the greatest named being between \$25,000 to \$20,000 a year.

An engineer on the Wabash railroad, whose run is between Danville and Springfield, has a cat which he would not part with for love or money. It belonged to his wife, who is now dead, and for a year past has been his companion in the cab. Ordinarily it sits perched up in the cab window before its master, but occasionally it strolls out to the pilot, where it will ride for hours at a stretch, winking knowingly at the dogs which bark at the train as it thunders by the cross-roads. Sometimes when the train is approaching a station the adventurous animal climbs to the top of the sand box and calmly rests there, undeterred by the shriek of the whistle or the clang of the bell. The engine has had good luck ever since the animal became an occupant of the cab, and the trainmen look upon it as a mascot.

RECENTLY the Pacific Coast Steamship Company employed Victor Hinson, a professional diver, at \$150 per day, to go down and examine the machinery of the steamer City of Chester, which was sunk in the waters of Golden Gate in August last by collision with the Oceanic. The diver located the vessel in fifty fathoms of water, cut in two as if by an immense saw. While looking into the steerage, the first thing which met his eyes was the form of a man standing with distorted face and tongue hanging from his mouth. The body was swollen to twice its natural size. Going a little further aft he saw another victim of the wreck on his knees grasping a third man around the waist. The diver returned to the surface and reported his discovery, but nothing could induce him to return to the wreck.

MRS. NANCY COUCH of Jasper county, Ga., says that she is 120 years old. She may be wrong, but she is certainly very old and very remarkable. She lives with her granddaughter, Mrs. Halloway, who is 80 years old, and this is what Will Harden, her great-great-grandson, says about her: "She is just as spry, lively, and quick as most women of 50 or 60, and when I saw her last looked as healthy, pretty, and young as most of the women around. You can't tell that she is so old, as she is lively and young looking, but when you talk to her of her childhood it looks like you are hearing about the creation. She just knows lots, and they tried to get her to go to the Centennial, in Philadelphia, but she just would not go, as she said she did not want to play the part of a mummy."

THERE are two dogs, one on the Canadian and the other on the American side of the Niagara River, just below the railway suspension bridge, out of human reach. The one on the American side is a small black and tan, who was thrown into the river four months ago and manages to live where he landed. This other is a large Newfoundland dog which was thrown from the bank. He landed 100 feet from the top of the rock precipice and still lives, roaming about and wagging his tail at his smaller companion across the way.

MISS KATE BISHOP, an actress in Australia, wears a silver bracelet on the left arm night and day. Her only sister locked it there before she sailed for America to get married. The ship went down with all hands, and the key is with the drowned girl.

ONE of the simplest of nature's barometers is a spider's web. When there is a prospect of wind or rain, the spider shortens the filaments by which its web is sustained and leaves it in this state as long as the weather is variable. If it elongates its threads, it is a sign of fine, calm weather, the duration of which may be judged by the length to which the threads are let out. If the spider remains inactive it is a sign of rain; if it keeps at work during rain, the down-pour will not last long, and will be followed by fine weather. Observation has taught that the spider makes changes in its web every twenty-four hours, and that if such changes are made in the evening, just before sunset, the night will be clear and beautiful.

PROBABLY the first prohibition petition issued in this country has been discovered in the State archives of North Carolina. On May 26, 1766, King Hagler of the Catawbas thus petitioned Chief Justice Henley: "I desire a stop may be put to the selling of strong liquors by the white people to my people, especially near the Indians. If the white people make strong drink let them sell it to one another, or drink it in their own families. This will avoid a great deal of mischief which otherwise will happen from my people getting drunk and quarreling with the white people." The Chief Justice as appears from an endorsement promised to bring the matter to the Governor's notice.

If the lawmakers of Georgia are wise, they will take steps to stop the rapid destruction of the pine forests of the State. It is estimated that from 200 to 400 square miles of timber land are cleared every year. The Atlanta Lumber Company has 40,000, and is cutting 100,000 feet a day. Since the mountains to the southwest of Rome have been cleared floods have become very common in that part of the State, and the rapid rise of water has caused great damage. It is the old story; and when Georgia is stripped of its trees the Government will be called upon to replant the forests. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

A COUPLE spent their honeymoon at Bar Harbor. They met first on a steamer on the Atlantic Ocean; he proposed in Sweden; was accepted in Russia; obtained her father's permission in England; the marriage settlements were drawn up in this country; they were married in Algiers and goodness knows where they are now and will be to-morrow.

The Black Silk Dress.

The latest fashions seem to be designed for large women, who will find the plain skirts and flat folds of drapery eminently becoming. Last year's style of an underskirt of a lighter or brighter shade than the drapery has, by no means, disappeared, and the costumes now most popular for street wear are those which are ecru or some light shade draped with dark colors. Terra cotta is much worn this fall; and the bordered materials in terra cotta with white stripes make a petticoat of terra cotta striped with bands of white, over which falls an artistic drapery. The basque may have a white India silk vest and velvet revers. A green cloth dress has a petticoat of white striped with green, or the green may be draped over a beige skirt. Silk passementerie and braid will be much used, even upon walking costumes. There seems to be a revival of gold in braid and buttons, not only upon green, but upon Roman red.

Many women will be pleased with the array of black silks, which seems to prophesy a renewal of the old-time popularity of the "black silk gown." Faille, satin, moire and armure are to be found and are often seen in combinations, such as moire antique striped with satin, black armure silk ornamented with satin designs. Twilled silks will be liked, and surah silks with a serge weave are heavier than those manufactured for summer use. The most novel silks are those which have small polka dots and plaid stripes on moire backgrounds. Square blocks of satin are popular ornamentations, and the black silks ornamented with braided designs are very new. A dress of black moire is made with simple elegance. Narrow box plaits, with wider plaits on each side, make the front of the skirt; the sides and back are in plain loose folds. The basque has a point of medium length in front and a short postillion at the back. A vest of the material is outlined by graduated folds, set in at the shoulder seams and extending to the point of the basque. The collar is plain and high; the sleeves are slightly full at the shoulders and plain below the elbows; around the arm midway is passed a band of the material with bow. Jet ornaments are set on the front of the basque and skirt.

A Very Curious Stone.

There has lately been found in Colorado a white opaque variety of hydrophane in rounded lumps from five to twenty-five mm. in diameter, with a white, chalky, or glazed coating, and which is of peculiar interest to scientific men. For its power of absorbing liquid this substance is quite remarkable, and when water is allowed to slowly drop on it it first becomes very white and chalky, and then gradually perfectly transparent. This property is developed so strikingly as to give rise to the name "magic stone" for it, and has suggested its use in rings, lockets, chains, etc., to conceal photographs, hair, or other objects which the wearer wishes to reveal only when caprice might dictate. In an examination of several specimens of this curious material to determine its specific gravity, etc., the fact was readily disclosed that hydrophane—the weight being taken both dry and wet—absorbs more than an equal volume of water.

THOSE JOKING STORIES.

HUMOROUS ITEMS GLEANED FROM THE PAPERS.

Up in Maine—Explained It—A Mean Thing—A Fine Opening—End of the Season, Etc., Etc.

WHAT MADE THE BOY MAD.

Hardly closer their heads could be bent if 'twere tried;
"Pweep! Pweep! Pweep!"
The dicky bird sat in the window outside:
"Pweep! Pweep! Pweep!"
And the small boy in hiding the sofa beneath,
Clenched his teeth in his anger and gritted his teeth,
For he couldn't determine if lovers or bird
Were making the comical sound that he heard:
"Pweep! Pweep! Pweep!"
—Chicago Mail.



A FINE OPENING.

One-legged Man—Say, boss, can't you do something for an unfortunate cripple?
Gent—Yes, let me give you a piece of advice: Sail into politics. Now's your chance. One-legged orators are always successful on the stump. (You can get fifty dollars a speech from either of the campaign committees.)—Texas Siftings.

CHICKEN FOR THAT DINNER.

Visitor (to convict)—Why, what brought you here, Uncle Rastus?
Uncle Rastus—'Cessive hospitality, sah.
Visitor—Excessive hospitality?
Uncle Rastus—Yes, sah. Yr see, sah, I invited the minister to a Sunday dinner, an' when I got home late Saturday night de ole 'ooman 'fo'med me dat dar warn't a chicken in de house an' de sto's was all clos'd.

GOT ON THE INSIDE.

Friend—I don't hear of you making any more speeches against the Trusts, Boomly.
Boomly—You bet you don't. I've been elected President of one.
SPEAK, OH SPEAK!
Fat Widow—Doctor, I want you to answer my question candidly.
Doctor—Certainly, my dear madame. Well, am I in love, or have I only got fatty degeneration of the heart?

WHAT MADE HIM MADDER.

Soon they snatched the young wretch from his coy retreat;
"Swipe! Swash! Swank!"
He got about ten on his upholstered seat:
"Swipe! Swash! Swank!"
And the small boy soon learned to his infinite woe,
That his big sister had a most muscular beau,
And he felt quite assured 'twas a man, not a bird,
Was making the terrible sound that he heard:
"Swipe! Swash! Swank!"
—Minneapolis Tribune.

A MEAN THING.

"What is George's last name, Etta?" asked the little sister one morning at the breakfast table.
"Simpson, dear," said Etta, with a beaming blush. "What makes you ask?"
"Oh, nothing," said the little sister, carelessly, "only I was listening outside the parlor door when he was here last night, and I thought from what I heard you say to him all the time that it might be Don't."

LIMITS TO HIS AMBITION.

Bobby was ill. "Mamma," he asked wearily one day, "will I get well again?"
"Yes, darling," replied the mother, "you will soon be well again, and grow up to be a big man."
Silence for one minute. "Mamma," he asked earnestly, "will I be as big as Uncle Dick?"
"Yes, my dear."
"Then I guess," he continued thoughtfully, "I'd rather die."

FORGOTTEN MUCH OF IT.

Miss Waldo, of Boston, and young Mr. Wabash, of Chicago, were discussing literature, and as he allowed her to do all the talking, he was getting on famously.
"You have read 'The Quick or the Dead' of course, Mr. Wabash?" she said.
"Oh, yes," he replied, "but very much of it has escaped my mind. It must be ten years now since I read it."

AN UNKNOWN SPECIES.

New Governess—Now, my dear, in what zoological classification would you place man?
Pretty Girl—Man?
"Yes; don't you know what a man is?"
"No, ma'am. I been spending my winters in a convent and my summers at seaside resorts."—Philadelphia Record.

AN ACHING VOID.

My fond heart, if it doth ache
With love, for thy sweet sake,
Say yes—say yes, and make
My gray life rose tints tache.
We'll sail love's glazy lache,
Where billows never breach,
In barque that ne'er shall quache,
Joy'll follow in our wache.
Now, ho! the wedding cake!

CLEARLY ANOTHER PERSON.

"What did you find in the pockets?" inquired Mrs. Hankthunder, anxiously. "There was a 'all hymn-book,' said the Coroner, 'to ether with a handker-on total abstinence'."
"It wasn't a Colonel," exclaimed the Kentucky ay, greatly relieved; 'he's probab' coming on the next boat.'—Chicago Tribune.

THAT EXPLAINED IT.

"What's the matter, Johnny?" asked one of the neighbor's boys, as his companion came out of the alley gate. "Ain't finished your dinner a ready have ye?"
"Nop."
"Didn't ye get any?"
"Yep; but I didn't stay to finish it."
"What made ye leave so soon?"
"Well, I said something at the table, and everybody but pa laughed.—Merchant Traveller.

UNRECOGNIZED GENIUS.

He was dressed in a new suit of faultless fit, and he was the only man in the bobtail car. This gave him an opportunity to show off a fine diamond ring he wore. At last he gave up his seat to a lady and then posed for a further benefit on the outside platform.
But fate, in the shape of a woman, pursued him. The woman to whom he had surrendered his good seat reached the end of her route. Singling him out with her index finger she called sternly: "C-o-n-ductor, stop the car."

A PRACTICAL WIDOW.

"I confess, sir," said the widow, with some shyness, "that I might in time learn to love you; but, er—you are quite poor, are you not?"
"Well, yes; but with you, dear Mrs. Tompkins, to cheer and encourage me it would soon—"
"Ah," interrupted the widow, with a sigh, "that would be giving hostages to fortune. I am drawing fifteen dollars a month pension, and I wouldn't like to give up a dead sure thing for a rank uncertainty."—Epoch.

PREVENTING A FAMINE.

A missionary writes from the Feejee Islands as follows:
"Our small force of brethren seems to be absolutely unable to cope with the distress which prevails in this dark and benighted land. Many of the natives are starving for food. Please send at once a few more missionaries."—New York Sun.

WAY UP IN MAINE.

"How's crops this year?" asked a tourist of a Maine farmer.
"Well, purty fair, purty fair; nothin' to brag on, but a purty fair average, after all."
"How many bushels of corn will such land as this produce?"
"Well, if it's manewered right smart and worked as it'd order be, it'll turn out about eight bushels."
"Eight bushels, man; is that all? Eight bushels to the acre?"
"Eight bushels to the acre? Land, no!—eight bushels to the farm."—Time.

NO RUIN THREATENED.

"Vhot vas ve going to do, fadder," said little Abraham, as he laid down the newspaper, "if dose Democrats take off de duty on wool? It means ruin, sare; de brices was too low, alretty!"
"Nef r you fear, mine little sohn," replied the old man: "it will not affect dis peeznias; dere was not an ounce of wool in all de cloddings in dis emporium!"—Puck.



AT THE VERY END OF THE SEASON.

He—I've been trying to tear myself away for a week, but these autumn breezes are awfully enticing.
She—How very funny! I heard papa say, yesterday, he couldn't raise wind enough to get away on to save his life.

RELIGIOUS BUT ECONOMICAL.

Husband (on his way to church)—I'll just skip on ahead my dear, and get some change. I've nothing less than one dollar, and that's too much to give.
Wife (on his overtaking her)—Did you get the bill changed?
Husband—Yes.
Wife—You will contribute half a dollar, John?
Husband—I can't very well now. I happened to meet three or four friends, and I've only got a quarter left.—New York Sun

NEW WHAT HE WAS.

"Did you see any Quakers in Philadelphia?" was asked of a Detroitier who recently returned from that city.
"Only one that I was sure of."
"Did he 'thee' and 'thou' you?"
"He did. He got off his back and said: 'If thee don't pay me \$2 I'll knock althly blamed head off; and I paid, although I knew the regular fare was two shillings. You don't want to fool with these Quakers any, and don't you forget it!'—Free Press.