



One of every eighteen inhabitants of Germany is a soldier.

Tourists to Jerusalem annually increase in number. Next to Russia the United States sends the greatest number of visitors to the Holy Land.

Morocco is within sight of civilized Europe, but a journey of a day into the interior carries the traveler into savagery as wild and fierce as any in Central Africa.

A very serious fall has taken place in the price of horses in Paris, also in various French towns, says the Philadelphia Record. This is said to be mainly due to the extraordinary increase in the number of bicycles and tricycles, the production being during last year excessive—namely, over 100,000 more than in the year prior. The complaint is bitter on the part of horse dealers, who say the bicycle is taking their bread away; but they must, like the rest of society, suffer for the benefit of the million.

The Marine Journal of New York is alarmed at the disappearance of the Anglo-Saxon race from the sea. It is commonly believed that Britannia rules the waves more completely than ever before, but the Journal calls attention to the fact that even England is finding an increasing difficulty in manning her ships from her own people. British vessels, like our own, are worked largely by Scandinavians. According to the Liverpool Journal of Commerce, at least fifty per cent. of the men who furnish crews for the mercantile marine of England are foreigners.

A Troy man now in Ojo Caliente, New Mexico, writes to the Troy (N. Y.) Times about the remarkable climate and powerful waters of that place. On three successive mornings the mercury at Ojo Caliente indicated twenty degrees below zero, eighteen degrees below and four degrees below, yet by 9 o'clock on these mornings the thermometer had risen to ten to twenty degrees above, and during the middle of the day an overcoat was superfluous. In fact, there have been but four days in several weeks when it was not possible to sit in the house with the door wide open and read or write in comfort. The air is very dry and crisp, and even when the mercury sinks below zero the cold is not felt. But, while the climate is remarkable, it is nothing compared with the waters, which are particularly recommended to persons suffering from locomotor ataxia, paralysis and rheumatic troubles. The Trojan writes, and vouches for the truth of the statement, that a native placed a cowhide in a tub and let the water run on it during the night, and in the morning it was found that the skin had completely dissolved, leaving nothing but the hair. A person bathing in the water must use extreme care and cannot stay in the tub more than fifteen minutes, for the water softens the skin so that scratches and cuts are very easily received.

In spite of its adversities agriculture still remains the largest industry in England. Farmers' clubs, having given up for the present any hope of protection from the Government, are now considering how to win back for the home market the millions of dollars spent every year upon the produce of "small cultivation" on the continent. One method suggested is professional instruction in the economics of small farming. More attention is to be given to the cultivation of fruits and market gardening. The light railways, which it is understood will be sanctioned by Government, will bring remote districts into close touch with the markets and enable the home producer to compete with greater ease with the foreigner, who at present has better means of transportation to the great centers of population in the United Kingdom. "This awakening of the British farmer comes none too soon," believes the Chicago Herald. "He is a stubborn fellow at the best, and has hitherto fought shy of all new fangled schemes for bettering his lot. He finds that he must shake off his lethargy and adopt modern methods of making the most of his holding. There is no doubt that with a little more prodding on the part of his friends he will finally do something for himself and his nation."

NIGHT.

Out of the night of the sea
Out of the turbulent night,
A sharp and hurrying wind
Scourges the waters white
The terror by night.
Out of the doubtful dark,
Out of the night of the land,
What is it breathes and broods,
Hoveringly at hand?
The menace of land.
Out of the night of heaven,
Out of the delicate sky,
Pale and serene the stars
In their silence reply:
The peace of the sky.
—Arthur Symons, in Independent.

A GIRL'S STRATAGEM.



AY CARROLL had just passed the border of her eighteenth year. She was sitting in the window gazing out abstractedly.

"My dear," said Mrs. Carroll, "I think you ought to feel very highly honored. If a man like Squire Peckwood had proposed for my hand at eighteen I should have felt proud."

"But Squire Peckham is old enough to be my father," pleaded May.

"As if a few years, one way or the other, made any difference."

"And he has had two wives already!"

"Everybody will tell you, child, that he was a model husband."

"It's altogether too much," shuddered May. "There's no telling how soon I may be called upon to make way for the fourth Mrs. Peckwood!"

"Is that all you have to bring against Squire Peckwood?"

"No, mother, it is not. He is avicious, fault-finding, whimsical, hypochondriac—"

"May!"

"You asked me, mother."

"But you know very well your father's heart is set on this marriage. Why prejudice yourself against it, when the matter is as good as settled?"

May Carroll knew very well that the heart of obstinate Deacon Carroll was set on seeing his only daughter the wife of Squire Obed Peckwood, and that was what made her spirit grow faint within her. For there was still another reason against this ill-suited match—a reason which May had not ventured to speak of to either father or mother—and it was this: May had already given her little heart away to David Chesterson, the student in Lawyer Kelsoe's office, whose brains were his only capital and who carried his fortune in his frank face and straight, lithe figure.

"I have promised David, she thought, with a fluttering palpitation at her heart, "and I will sooner die than prove false to him. But, oh! what shall I do to ward off the suit of this horrid old Squire Peckwood!"

As these thoughts passed through her mind Mrs. Carroll's voice interrupted their current.

"May, child, what are you dreaming about? Twice I've asked you a question, and you have stared at me as if I were empty space."

"I beg your pardon, mother; what did you say?"

"Whether you knew that he was going to take you over to the Peckwood farm this afternoon, to see the house of which you are so soon to be the mistress?"

"I knew it, mother."

"Then why aren't you dressing yourself?"

"I am dressed, mother."

"Indeed! Go upstairs and put on your silk dress immediately, and wear the garnet set your father gave you last birthday."

May obeyed unwillingly enough; but when she came down stairs she was a new brightness in her eye, an unwonted color on her cheek. Squire Peckwood, who was waiting her appearance in the big easy chair, with a purple-faced contentment chucked to himself at her fresh young beauty; and Mrs. Carroll mentally came to the conclusion that May had resolved to "behave like a sensible girl."

She was more mistaken, however, than she had any idea of. Cupid, the mischievous little imp of true love, had been invisibly counseling Madeemoiselle May in the quiet and seclusion

of her own apartment upstairs, and May had profited by his hints.

"I'm sure we girls would have little enough chance in this world," pouted May, "if we didn't have recourse to our wits once in a while."

She was all smiles and dimples and winning words, as Squire Peckwood trundled heavily along by her side, and that portly gallant racked his brains for some appropriate conversation to amuse the third Mrs. Peckwood that was to be.

The squire wiped his beet-red brow and secretly wished he had read Moore and Byron in his younger days, so as to be able to converse agreeably with a pretty girl of eighteen.

"That's the house," he said at last, pointing to the gable end of the Peckwood mansion, peeping through a mass of elm boughs. As Miss Carroll had been familiar with the neighborhood for eighteen years, she replied with some acerbity.

"I know that."

"How will you like it for your future home?" he asked with a clumsy effort at badinage.

"I don't know—I may like it well enough," answered May indifferently. "but it has got to be altered very much."

Squire Peckwood's jubilant countenance fell. To him the family home of the Peckwoods was a modern Mecca, a sacred spot, faultless in its perfection, and susceptible of no possible improvement.

"Altered!" he echoed. "How?"

"That horrid old elm-tree must be cut down first," said May, with a disparaging motion of her parasol toward it. "It shades everything!"

"That elm-tree, ma'am," said Squire Peckwood huskily "was planted by Moses Peckwood, ma'am, my great grandfather. It is known, ma'am, as the Peckwood Elm!"

"It must make the house as damp as a vault," said May, "and I don't wonder that your two first wives died. The Peckwood Elm must be cut down, Obed!"

It was the first time she had ever called him by his Christian name, yet it did not sound sweet in Squire Peckwood's ears.

"How narrow this hall is!" said May pettishly, as the squire threw open the front door and silently motioned her to enter. "Can't it be widened? And only one snuffy little parlor!"

"It was good enough for Susan Emery, the first Mrs. Peckwood," cried the squire irately; "nor did Jane, my second wife, ever venture to object to it!"

"They must have been milk and water sort of people," said May irreverently. "Dear me, Obed, I never can live here. The two rooms must be thrown into one, with an arch across the center!"

"You can't do it; the chimney stack is between."

"Put the chimney stack somewhere else!"

"That would be equivalent to building a new house," groaned Squire Peckwood.

"Well, suppose we do, Obed?" cried May, suddenly grasping at this novel idea. "A new house would be perfectly delightful; a Gothic cottage with ornamental grounds just on the slope of the hill. I'm sure I never should be contented in this old shell of a house!"

"Mrs. Peck—I mean Miss Carroll," slowly enunciated the squire. "I'm not made of coined gold, consequently I can't afford to build! May I ask what your rational objection can be to this house?"

"It isn't big enough, said May, with a toss of her defiant little head.

"Not big enough! There are thirteen rooms, besides a very good cemented cellar."

"I dare say; but, you see, I'm not going to live like a mole burrowing in solitude and darkness. I shall fill the house with company the very first thing."

There was a speculative gleam in Squire Peckwood's grayish-green orbs as May Carroll spoke.

"Do you mean, take summer boarders? A good plan, very."

"No," said May abruptly. "I mean nothing of the sort. I mean invited company—my cousins and friends—who are to stay here as long as I can contrive to make it pleasant for them. Of course I shouldn't for an instant contemplate receiving any money

from them. And we could have the sweetest summer picnics up here, with a band from New York, and refreshments from Santillani's. In strawberry time I suppose we could have our own berries, and—"

"By no means," interposed the flurried squire. "I always make a contract with a man for my berries, twenty cents a quart the season through."

"Oh, we'd change all that," said May carelessly. "Though, indeed, I shouldn't care what you did with the fruit the weeks I spent at Cape May and Nahant!"

The squire's face darkened.

"The first Mrs. Peckwood spent a day in New York once in four years; the second Mrs. Peckwood never wished to go anywhere except to church, and—"

"And the third Mrs. Peckwood," flippantly interrupted May, "will go where she pleases and when she pleases, and she wishes it distinctly understood beforehand."

"Miss May!"

"Yes, squire!"

"Is this a specimen of the respect you intend to bestow upon your husband?"

"Yes," said May, after reflecting a minute or two, I think it may be considered a pretty fair specimen!"

And with a shy side glance from between her long lashes she took in the squire's flushed face and uneasy gestures.

"In that case, Miss Carroll, I may as well withdraw from—"

"Stop, squire!" said May, with a certain spice of maidenly dignity, which he was bound to respect. "As your bargain—for it was nothing more nor less than a matrimonial bargain—was made with my parents, it must be unsealed in their presence. I shall be very happy to accompany you home, but until we reach there I will hear no further word on the subject!"

And she branched off into a pleasant little chatter on indifferent subjects, while the squire, disenchanted and disappointed, stalked sullenly along by her side.

Half a mile from the Carroll farmhouse they met the deacon, gravely inspecting the progress of a line of stonewall.

"Father," said May, walking demurely up to him, "Squire Peckwood has something to say to you."

The deacon turned expectantly to the squire. That individual reddened and turned pale, stammered and stuttered, but finally contrived to signify the fact that, "on mature consideration, he had concluded that perhaps he was a little too old, or Miss May was a little too young, or—on—anyway they didn't seem quite suited to each other, and, although he respected Miss May very highly—yet—yet—"

And the next May knew, she was safe in her own little room, laughing quietly to herself at the success of her scheme.

The coast was clear for David, and such good use did he make of the "margin" given him, that he was married to Deacon Carroll's pretty daughter while Squire Peckwood was yet "looking about him" for a worthy successor to Mrs. Peckwood the first and Mrs. Peckwood the second.—New York News.

A Great Aid to Digestion.

A Chicago paper says that a smooth stranger recently placed a number of nickel-in-the-slot machines in the town of Evanston. The machines bore the following inscription:

"The greatest known aid to digestion. Drop a nickel in the slot. Push, then pull."

At the top of the machine was a handle to be pushed, then pulled, and many townspeople who could not resist the temptation of trying some new device, for the same reason that Timothy took the wine—"for his stomach's sake"—dropped in their nickels and took a push and a pull on the machine. But that was all. No result followed and there was some talk of blowing open the hoarded treasure. At the end of the week the agent reappeared, unlocked the machines, garnered the wealth and retired, after explaining that "exercise was the greatest thing for digestion in the world." The crowd was so paralyzed that the agent took the train without harm.

THE POLAR BEAR.

HAS ITS HOME IN THE DESOLATE LATE ARCTIC WASTES.

Very Sagacious and Cunning, but Playful Rather Than Fierce—A Good Swimmer—Mother Bruin Affectionate.

THE polar bear, the nanook of the Esquimaux, has its home in the desolate and icy wastes which border the northern seas. It has many characteristics in common with its brothers which live in warmer countries. It is very sagacious and cunning, sometimes playful, but is not a very savage beast and will rarely attack a hunter unless in self-defence or when driven by hunger to fall upon everything that comes in its way. Dr. Kane, the great arctic traveler, says he has himself shot as many as a dozen bears near at hand, and never but once received a charge in return. The hair of the polar bear is very coarse and thick, and white like the snow banks among which it lives. Its favorite food is the seal, which abounds in the northern regions; it will also eat walrus, but as that animal is very strong, and possesses a pair of formidable tusks, bears are sometimes beaten in their attempts to capture it. Wonderful stories are told of bears mounting to the top of high cliffs and pushing heavy stones down upon the head of some unwary walrus sleeping or sunning himself at the foot, and then rushing down to dispatch the bruised or stunned animal, but arctic travelers disagree on this point. A very hungry bear will sometimes attack a walrus in the water, for the polar bear is a powerful swimmer; but in his peculiar element—and he is never very far from it—the walrus is the best fighter, and his tough hide serves as an almost impenetrable armor.

As seal hunter the polar bear displays much cunning. It will watch patiently for hours in the vicinity of a seal hole in the ice, and the instant its prey comes out to bask in the sun, the sly bear crouches, with its forepaws doubled up under its body, while with its hind legs it slowly and noiselessly pushes and hitches itself along toward the desired game. Does the seal raise its head to look around, the bear remains motionless, its color making it hardly distinguishable, until the unsuspecting seal takes another nap. When the bear is near enough, with a sudden movement it seizes the innocent and defenseless victim, and makes a fat feast. Unless it is very hungry, it eats little besides the blubber, leaving the rest for the foxes. It is said that arctic foxes often follow in the path of bears, and gain their entire living from the refuse of the bear's feast.

The nest of the she-bear is a wonderful illustration of instinct, and a proof of the fact that a thick wall of snow is an excellent protection against cold. Toward the month of December the bear selects a spot at the foot of some cliff, where she burrows in the snow, and, remaining quiet, allows the heavy snow storm to cover her with drifts. The warmth of her body enlarges the hole so that she can move herself, and her breath always keeps a small passage open in the roof of her den. Before retiring to these winter quarters she eats voraciously, and becomes enormously fat, so that she is able to exist a long time without food. In this snuggerly the bear remains until some time in March, when she breaks down the walls of her palace, and comes out to renew her wandering life, with some little white baby bears for her companions, which have been born during her long seclusion.

The mother bear's affection for her little ones is so strong that she will lose her life defending them. Two arctic hunters once saw a bear taking a promenade on an ice island with two little cubs. Chase was given at once, but the bear did not perceive the hunters until they were within five hundred yards of her. She then stood up on her hind legs like a dancing bear, gave one good look at her pursuers, and started to run at full speed over the smooth ice, her cubs close at her heels. She had the advantage of the hunters, as the feet of the polar bear are thickly covered with long hair—nature's wise provision to keep the animal from slipping; but the ice soon broke up into a vast expanse of slush, and here the little

cubs stuck fast. The faithful mother seized first one and then the other, proceeded with so much difficulty that the hunters were soon near enough to fire at her. The little ones clung to their mother's dead body, and it was with great difficulty that the hunters succeeded in dragging them to the camp, where they stoutly resisted all friendly advances, and bit and struggled and roared as loud as they could.

Bears often annoy arctic travelers by breaking open the caches, or store-houses, left along the line of march for return supplies. Dr. Kane relates that he found one of his caches, which had been built with heavy rocks laid together with extreme care, entirely destroyed, the bears apparently having had a grand frolic, rolling about the bread barrels, playing foot-ball with the heavy iron cases of pemmican, and even gnawing to shreds the American flag which surmounted the caches.

Roast bear meat is very palatable and welcome food to travelers in the dreary frozen arctic regions, and at the cry of "Nannook! nannook!" (A bear! a bear!) from the Esquimaux guides, both men and dogs start in eager pursuit. The bear being white like the snow, it often escapes detection, and Dr. Kane mentions approaching what he thought was a heap of somewhat dingy snow, when he was startled by a "menagerie roar," which sent him running toward the ship snarling back his mittens, one at a time, to divert the bear's attention.

Polar bears are sometimes found upon floating ice-cakes a hundred miles from land, having been caught during some sudden break up of the vast ice-fields of arctic seas, and every year a dozen or more come drifting down to the northern shores of Iceland, where, ravenous after their long voyage, they fall furiously upon the herds. Their life on shore, however, is very brief, as the inhabitants rise in arms and speedily dispatch them.—Detroit Free Press.

Why It Was So.

Some good stories of the late Lord Cardigan and his shooting exploits have lately been retold in Blackwood. On one occasion, it is said, he was annoyed with his keeper about the scarcity of game, and ordered him to beat through another wood which he pointed out, promising instant dismissal if satisfactory results were not obtained.

"But, my lord," urged the keeper. He was interrupted by Lord Cardigan. "Not a word, sir! Obey my orders at once!"

Terrified, the wretched man slunk off, and the wood was duly beaten up to the guns. There was scarcely a head of game in it. Limp and dejected, the unfortunate keeper came up, and, when his lordship had said all he had to say, and was compelled to stop for want of breath, the poor man meekly pleaded:

"But, my lord, it's not your wood at all—only you told me to beat it." Another story is that Lord Cardigan always shot annually at the same place in Northamptonshire. The woods were difficult ones to beat well, being rambling and hollow, necessitating the use of a large number of "stops." These "stops" were always, as is generally the case, small boys. But in this particular year the case was different. Lord Cardigan's quick eye noticed that, instead of the small boys, the "stops" were grown-up men. This struck him so much that he asked the keeper why it was so, saying that it must come very expensive. The keeper replied:

"Well, you see, my lord, your lordship shot the boys down rather close last year."

A Wild Cat's Courage.

While four section men were repairing the track of a Florida railway a large wild cat sprang from the adjoining woods with all fours upon the back of one of the men. The other men rushed to their companion's assistance and then it required a dozen blows with the spike maul to make the beast turn loose his hold. When the cat finally ran away the exasperated men followed it up the track, and were sorry for it, because the cat turned on them. For five minutes he sprang from one to the other, biting and clawing, until felled with a blow from a crowbar. Then they finished it, and the men adjourned to dress their wounds.—Atlanta Constitution.