

A FEATHER CLOAK.

The Gorgeous Royal Mantle of the Sandwich Islands.

Its Manufacture Took a Century and Cost a Million.

The Washington Star describes the royal feather cloak from the Sandwich Islands that is spread out fan-shaped in a case in the National museum. This cloak is computed to have cost in labor \$1,000,000. The native name for it is rama. In the days when a Hawaiian heau or belle wanted little clothing, but wanted that gorgeously colored, this cloak or mantle would have been considered of more value, ethetically and intrinsically, than a shipload of Worth costumes, and its happy possessor might truly be said to be in high feather. Since the natives have adopted wide trousers, lawn-tennis shirts and four-in-hand ties, its value lies chiefly in the traditions that surround it. The mantle, which is semi-circular, is four feet long or deep, and is 11 1/2 feet wide at the bottom and 23 inches at the top where it goes around the neck. The entire outer surface is made of feathers of fine texture, giving the whole the appearance of pluck. The prevailing colors are red and yellow or orange. The body is decorated with large figures, crescent-shaped, of either red or yellow feathers. The upper and lateral borders are corded and decorated with alternate tufts of red, black and yellow feathers. A legend on a label states that this feather cloak formerly belonged to Kahuakalani, one of the highest chiefs of the Sandwich Islands. After the abolition of idolatry in 1819 that chief rebelled against the reigning King and attempted to re-establish the ancient religion. A sanguinary battle was fought and Kahuakalani was slain, and this cloak, which he then had on, fell into the hands of the conquerors, and thus became the property of King Kamehameha, by whom it was presented to Capt. J. H. Aulick, U. S. N., in 1841. The cloak is now the property of Capt. Aulick's grandson, Richmond O. Stinson, who deposited it in the National Museum. The great value of the cloak is due to the long time required to secure the feathers that compose it, and to manufacture the cloak. The foundation is a net-work of cloas, or native hemp, and it is attached by fine threads of the same material to the feathers found only in the Hawaiian Islands, and very rare there. Recent writers have declared that the life is now extinct. The feathers are woven into as to lap each other and lie flat, forming a smooth pluck-like surface. The inner surface is without lining and shows the close network and the quill-ends of the feathers. The cord of the net-work is prolonged so as to serve the purpose of a lining. The yellow Uho, and has strands of great value. The life is rare and very difficult to capture, and it has but a very small tuft of these feathers upon each shoulder. The black feathers are from the head and back of the same bird—its general plumage being a glossy black. The Oa is caught alive by means of bird-line; the yellow feathers are then plucked and the bird released. The red feathers are from the body and neck of the Drepanis Corcorina, the most abundant bird of the Sandwich Islands. The Hawaiian Sooty Tern, a new species published in 1839, refers to this, or a similar mantle, as follows: "Kawakani has the mantle or feather war-cloak of his father, To-Meha-Meha. It was not completed until his reign, having occupied eight preceding years in its fabrication. A piece of nankeen, valued at \$1.50 was formerly the price of one of the yellow feathers. By this estimate, the value of the cloak would equal that of the purest diamonds in several of the European regalia, and, including the price of the feathers, not less than a million dollars' worth of labor was expended upon it at the present rate of computing wages."

Another authority states that two yellow feathers only are obtained from each Oa, and these are found under the wings. When the much-prized feathers are plucked the bird is set at liberty. The price of the feathers, according to this authority, was \$1.50 for three, and the time occupied in making the cloak was estimated from fifty to one hundred years.

Shaved by a Bullet.

General Stuart, as usual, greatly exposed his own person on horseback, by riding out of the wood into the open field, and I felt it my duty to say to him that, in my opinion he was not in the whole place as in a few minutes the proper fire of the enemy would be concentrated upon him. But he was in a very bad humor and answered curtly that if this place seemed likely to become too hot for me I was at liberty to leave it; whereupon I made response that since my duty attached me to his side, no place could be too hot for me where he chose to go.

Nevertheless, I changed my position, and I cautiously brought a large tree, in front of which I had been standing, between myself and the enemy. In an instant the firing began and three bullets struck the tree at just the height to show that I had remained where I was; but I was certainly not gone through my body. Looking at the tree I saw him pass his hand quickly across his face, and even at that serious moment I could not help laughing heartily when I discovered that one of the numerous bullets that had been whistling around him had cut off half of his beloved moustache as neatly as it could have been done by the hand of an experienced barber.—(Youth's Companion.)

Important if True.

First Baseball Crank: How does the game stand, Billy? Second Baseball Crank: Eight to ten. First Base Ball Crank: Who's ahead? Second Base Ball Crank: Fourteen.—[Time.]

The Franklin Press.

By JOHNSTON & CHRISTY.

FRANKLIN, MACON CO., N. C. THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 1888.

VOLUME III. NO. 21.

From Within. Not by the sea tide, Nor the swift river, Nor the stars that sweep thro' waste of heaven, Side by side Forever and over, Do we mark man's life with its loss and gain. Not by the leaf's fall, Nor by spring rain, Nor the atoms that drift thro' endless forms Changing all, Tho' they changeless remain, Do we count man's life with its hap and day. Not by the strong things, Nor by things weak, Nor by the things that are, Nor by the things that are not, Do we tell man's life with its duk and day. But by the strong will, But by the soul's grace, But by the yearnings that thread night and day. Soft and still, Till they glow in his face, Do we tell man's life forever and aye. —(George Le Moine in Overland.)

A SMART WOMAN.

BY HELEN FOREST GRAVES.

"That woman," said Squire Dockley within himself, "ought to have been a man!" The English language, as the squire interpreted it, had no higher form of praise than this. The squire believed implicitly in his own sex. And when he said that Maria Pool: "ought to have been a man," he did homage to her capacity.

Squire Dockley was on his way to the postoffice. He liked to go in the early morning, before the thermometer had mounted to too high a degree, and while the dew yet sparkled upon the close, short grass along the road. Old Mr. Poole had been postmaster at Sassafras Gap for 12 years, but his daughter Maria performed all the duties of the position, as the old man was bedridden, deaf and helpless. Maria also worked the farm, with the aid of a vacant-faced, red-haired auxiliary, named Elias Smith, who came for half wages on account of a limp in one leg; and the kept boarders in summer.

"Je-rus-salem!" ejaculated the squire, starting back. "Why, it's you, ain't it, Miss P-o-o-ee?" "Yes, it's me," said Maria. "I've been down to the clean it. A tin trumpet, two doll babies, a spelling book, a coconut shell and fourteen apple-cakes—that's what the boarders' children have dropped down since this day week. I sometimes think," giving herself a shake, and sending the surplus moisture of the well flying in all directions, "that King Herod wasn't so far wrong as folks pretend to think. If you want a drink, Squire Dockley you'd better go down to the spring house. The well's sort of stirred up."

The squire quickly followed Maria Poole down to the cool, sweet-smelling spring-house where a living stream flowed beneath the shelves, all laden with pails of milk and a glittering spring bubbled up in the corner like a magnified fountain.

"Made much latter this year?" the squire inquired as he slaked his thirst.

"Two hundred and nine pounds, packed down a'ready," was Maria's response.

"Well, I declare!" admiringly commented the squire, as he laid down the gourd-shell. "You'd ought to have been a man, Miss Maria; and so I've said again and over."

"Humph!" observed Maria. "If I couldn't make a smarter man than some I know of, I would give up. Well, squire, I don't want to hurry you, but it's about time to open the post office and see about the morning mail."

"I was a-thinkin' of callin' for my letters and papers," said Squire Dockley, wiping his mouth with a red bandanna pocket-handkerchief.

"Can't nobody get into the post office—not if they had a letter for the president himself—before 8 o'clock," said Miss Maria, curtly. "Business hours is business hours!"

"Yes, I know—I know!" apologized the squire, as he followed Miss Poole up the winding path; "but I was calculatin' to speak to you, Maria."

"Well, what is it? Don't keep me long!"

The squire shifted from one foot to the other. Was ever lover expeditious like this before?

"I was a-thinkin', Maria," said he, "that it wain't in place for a woman to be keepin' post-offices?"

"Oh, that's your came, is it?" retorted Maria. "You'd like to get the office, wain't you? You'd like to get the office, wain't you? You'd like to get the office, wain't you?"

"Anyhow," said he, "I've got the start of him this time. He will have to content himself with the Willow Blessington."

The squire's amazement when he heard that Maria Poole was to be his daughter-in-law exceeded description.

"Hold on, Maria—hold on!" gasped Mr. Dockley, instinctively stepping back a pace or two. "I mistrust you don't quite apprehend me. It's quite another tack as I'm on. I'm a well-to-do man, Maria, without no incumbrance but my son Leonidas, and I've reason to think he's plannin' to get settled in life pretty soon. And lately it's been born in upon me that I'd order have a second parader. The Scripser says it is not well for man to be alone, and the Scripser is generally right. And you're the parader I'd like to hav, Maria Poole!" The squire beamed. Evidently, in his opinion, there was no sort of doubt but that Maria would accept him, out of hand.

Was he not "The Squire" and was not Maria Poole a hard-working, dignified woman, just overstepping the borderland where people would begin to refer to her as "single-blessedness?"

Maria viewed him out of her honest, gray eyes with utter amazement.

"You see," went on Mr. Dockley "you ain't so young as you was, Maria."

"No," thoughtfully observed Maria, stroking her chin in a man-like fashion.

"And you ain't what folks call pretty?"

"No," winced a little, in spite of herself.

"And there's your father. Most people would object to your father, because—"

"Squire, look here, none of this! curtly interrupted Maria. "Praps you think you've done me a favor, but you ain't! And I've no more time to stand giff-giffing here, afore the mail is opened. I don't want you. And I wouldn't marry you at no price. There!"

"Very well, very well!" cried the squire, in a great rage. "Do just as you think best. I've no more to say. But it ain't likely a plain, humbly old maid like you will get another chance if, indeed, you ever had one afore, which I doubt. I only hope you won't live to regret it, that a all."

And Squire Dockley whisked him off away, never stopping to inquire for his morning's mail.

"A plain, homely old maid!" Maria Poole was only a woman after all, and the old man's brutal words stung her to the very quick.

She was fair to look upon, but plain in her dress, and she had a certain grace and charm that would have made her a desirable wife to any man who would have taken her. She was, then, shut out forever from all the prospects that opened themselves to the eyes of other women.

Nevertheless, she went bravely about her manifold daily duties. She distributed the outgoing letters, stamped the incoming ones, and made the daily report as usual. She saw to the dinner, made her old father comfortable, superintended the affairs of the dairy, gave assistance to Elias Smith, and looked after the boarders; and by the time that the soft dusk descended over the hills, she was tired enough. She had often been tired before, but this was a different kind of weariness. It seemed to strike to her very heart.

"I wonder if this sort of thing is to go on forever?" thought she, as she went out into the garden to see if the tomatoes would be ripe for the morrow morning's breakfast.

She was stooping over the vines, when a shadow came between her and the moonlight. She looked up—it was Leonidas Dockley—a tall, well-made young fellow of eight-and-twenty, a most striking contrast to his father.

"Maria, what is the matter?" cried he.

"Nothing is the matter," answered Maria, with a little hysterical laugh. "I suppose you've come to scold me about your father. But I couldn't help it."

"Has he been meddling about the post office again?" said Leonidas, soothingly.

"Well, don't mind him, Maria. He don't mean anything. It's only his way."

"But, Leonidas—"

"Yes!"

"He says—he says you're going to be married!"

Leonidas looked against the picket fence, looking thoughtfully down at the scarlet spheres of the tomatoes.

"So I am," said he.

"Oh, Leonidas!"

"You know, Maria, we have never been formally engaged."

"No, but—"

"And I can't go on with things as they are now; it's too uncertain."

"But, Leonidas—"

"So I've made up my mind to marry you this fall whether you consent or not. And if you can't leave your father and the post office, why, I'll come here to live. But as for letting you dudge on by yourself as you're doing now, I won't stand it, and there's an end of the matter."

"But, Leonidas, your father says—"

"Don't care what he says!"

"That I'm a 'lida, homely, old maid."

"My father isn't a judge of the article," calmly asserted Leonidas. "Because it isn't he that wants to marry you."

"Yes, it is, Leonidas."

"And then Maria told him the tale of the squire's wooing."

Leonidas listened with a queer curve of the lips, a twinkle in his eye.

"Anyhow," said he, "I've got the start of him this time. He will have to content himself with the Willow Blessington."

The squire's amazement when he heard that Maria Poole was to be his daughter-in-law exceeded description.

"Yes, but I wasn't the pitcher; I was the umpire."—(New York Sun.)

FLAKES OF GOLD.

Means Jewelers Adopt to Preserve Precious Particles.

Valuable Auriferous Sweepings from Factory Floors.

Gold and silver even in the most minute particles, explained a New York manufacturing jeweler to the Graphic, are worth extracting from such easily worked material as the refuse or the floor of a shop, and no man ever thought of seeing this refuse and jetsam of his factory.

Then he explained the interesting processes by which this saving is effected.

"Of course," he said, "it is practically impossible to save all the gold that gets scattered; that is, some escapes always that might perhaps be stopped, but it would cost more than the gold is worth to stop them. Every time you walk through a jewelry man's factory you are likely to carry some gold away with you on your clothing or your shoes. I took off my shoes the other night, and noticing that they were worn I turned them over and looked at them. Stuck in the bottom of one of the heels was a little lump of gold, which I picked out with a knife. A certain amount of gold, no doubt, is carried off in the clothing and shoes of the workmen, and no attempt is made to save that. But in regard to the floors and benches and tables it is different.

"You notice that you are standing on a peculiar flooring, do you not? It is comparatively a new practice to cover the floor with sheets of tar roofing. It is put down just like a carpet, for the reason that it is easier and cheaper to burn it than to burn the floor. When I felt a shop in Fulton street that I had occupied for six years I burned the floor and got enough gold out of it to pay for a new floor, which I had to put down, and leave me \$200 in cash besides."

The sweepings and refuse of the shop yield a very considerable amount, and so do the washings. The dry dirt is swept up two or three times a day and put into this stove."

Here he opened the top of a "chowder stove" and showed a pile ready to be burned. The chowder stove is a four-inch wide, small chamber for burning underneath and a large one above.

"You see," he explained, "we burn it underneath and burn it until the soot catches fire. That will smoulder a long time, for there is no draught through the chamber, merely a pipe above it to allow for the escape of the smoke. Finally it is reduced to ash, and the gold and silver can be easily washed out of it."

"With our waste water the process is different. The aprons and caps the workmen wear are washed over the same sink where they wash their faces and hands and any vessel or tool that needs cleaning. The water runs into a barrel and then through pipes below the water line into a second and a third barrel before it is allowed to escape. The object of running the pipes below the level of the water is to prevent the minute flakes of gold from floating off, for though they will float on top of the water, they will sink to the bottom when they are drawn below the surface. We throw a little quicklime in from time to time, and that curdles all the grease and soap so that it sinks to the bottom and the water that runs off is bright as runs from the faucet. The curd is taken out when enough is accumulated, and the precious metals are washed out by usual methods."

"The crucibles which we use for melting gold are broken up and thrown into an octagonal revolving chamber, in which is also put a heavy iron cylindrical bar. The chamber is tightly closed, a belt is attached to the main shaft and the whole thing set whirling. In a time the crucibles are ground into powder as fine as dust, and this powder is sold to the refiners, who treat it with mercury. I used to do this work in the place, but I gave it up, for I don't like to have mercury around. The fumes are very unhealthy."

"So gold that we get by these various processes is of really the same fineness as the average of that we use in the work. The first alloy is destroyed or partially destroyed, I suppose, but enough alloy is gathered to nearly keep the standard."

A Drill by Sightless Soldiers.

Forty-five sightless boys went through the evolutions of company drill with all the precision of trained veterans recently on the trimly-kept lawn attached to the grounds of the blind asylum at Twenty-first and Rees streets. They comprised the cadet corps attached to the institution. The boys carried dummy muskets and marched with perfect step. "By columns of fours," shouted Major W. King, the commandant, and from single file the boys made the movement without a mistake.

"Company front" was formed with equal perfection, and the wheel was made without a break. Each boy kept his distance by placing one hand upon the shoulder of the boy just in front of him, and by this means went through the drill with but one mistake. Equal proficiency was shown in the manual of arms, the young soldiers handling their wooden muskets like West-Pointers.—(Philadelphia Record.)

A Singular Growth.

R. Compton, postmaster of Volo, Ill., claims to have discovered a peculiar phenomenon in the woods in Fremont, Lake county. As described by him, it consists of the natural grafting of a burr oak leaf upon a white oak. The burr oak leans against the other from the ground up, and is dead. The dead trunk, however, seems to go right through that of the living white oak, and the branches of both varieties of tree, all green and vigorous, mingle together in about equal proportions.—(Waukegan (Ill.) Patriot.)

Easily Discouraged.

"Yes," said a base ball man, "I'm discouraged, and have given up the business forever. Why, in the very first game they got onto me in the second inning, and pounded me all over the field."

"That ought not to discourage you. Mary's pitcher has had similar luck."

"Yes, but I wasn't the pitcher; I was the umpire."—(New York Sun.)

A Word About Teeth.

As regards the teeth, it must be admitted that in relation to the subject in hand they literally and truly cut both ways. In the complete set of 32 there are 20 for grinding, eight for biting and four for tearing. Grinding teeth are required for animals which live on grains and other hard vegetable substances; biting teeth are necessary for animals which nibble soft substances like grasses and some fruits; tearing teeth are essential for animals which actually tear tough and resistant structures, like fish, to pieces. In man the grinding teeth largely preponderate; and how well fitted these teeth are for grinding seeds, grains, apples, and the like, the teeth of our very old forefathers tell a significant and true tale. In man the biting teeth have a conspicuous place and a very decisive function; the skilled biter can cut through the finest thread, a fast equivalent to dividing the most delicate filament of food fibre that grows from the earth. The teeth are vegetable weapons; they are the best of weapons which the out-and-out vegetarian can use; they assist him both in practice and argument. But then there remain those four tearing fangs, those canine or dog's teeth, so firm, strong, and savage. The canine or tearing teeth stand out strikingly in favor of the view that man is formed for eating flesh; but it cannot be said by the staidest flesh eater that the flesh-eating tendency is the strongest altogether. No; it is certain that the balance turns fairly the other way. It may, however, be argued that the very fact of the existence of only four tearing teeth gives countenance to the belief that nature has supplied the human animal with fangs for devouring animal flesh if he is obliged or desirous to do so. This is true, but only to a limited extent, because we now know that even the tooth, firm as they are, become, by constant habit of life, changed in form and character. The canine tooth itself, even in the dog, has been exceptionally so modified from this cause as to lead to a characteristic type of structure indicative of the influence of manner of life on growth when extended through many generations.—(Longman's Magazine.)

Cricket in Algeria.

Accounts are published of the devastation caused by crickets in Algeria. The insects resemble but are not identical with either locusts or grasshoppers. Last year swarms of grasshoppers ravaged the colony. This year the crickets have taken their place. They spring like grasshoppers, but have a more rapid and sustained flight. They form clouds which shut out the light of the sun. When they alight on the ground they destroy every trace of vegetation. They sometimes fall exhausted on the ground in such numbers as to cover it with a layer of dead bodies, from which pestilential exhalations arise. The correspondent of a Paris newspaper, in a letter from Algeria, published tonight, says that the railway trains have been stopped by the insects between Constantine and Batna.

Paris Flowers.

Paris flowers can be made so natural that when put in proper places, they are indistinguishable from the real thing. The flowers are made of paper, and are so effective in point of beauty as the lovely owners themselves. A birch bark basket of many hued pansies, with here and there a saucy lily, can be not only beautiful but odoriferous, by sprinklingorris root powder in cotton in the bottom of the basket. Snow balls with glossy foliage, when mounted on paeonies, are ornamental. A bunch of dogwood in a dark corner is very effective and easily made. A jar of pansies (the rose-scented white ones) can almost defy detection if a drop of oil of rose be put in the cotton at the base of the pink seed vessels.

Leaves of all sorts may be made of waste leather from saddlery or harness shops, and cost but a trifle. The outlines of the leaf should be marked with pencil; then gone over with some sharp instrument to leave the impress. Dip the leather in warm water. If thin, a moment will suffice; but if heavy, several minutes. Then, with a stout pair of scissors or sharp knife, cut the leaf, always leaving the stem attached. With a round pointed instrument, such as the head of a steel crochet hook, draw the veins in a natural manner, unless it be a rose leaf or something requiring fine, sharp lines. While the leaf is wet, pull, curl or roll it into a natural appearance (flat leaves are not natural), and put it to dry quickly near, but not in the mouth of an oven. When dry paint with oil; if the leaves should be light, like those of some hot house roses, paint the leather white first. Pond lilies require very thick leather, so do magnolias, while quite thin leather is best for rose leaves, pansies, snow balls and dogwood. Hyacinths and peonies may be cut from thicker leather. Rubber stems may be had at most paper flower dealers, but the tubing sold at the drug stores for infants' nursing bottles is excellent for pond lily stems, and thick leather may be cut and rolled to answer at less expense.—(Good House-keeping.)

Novel Process of Justice in Belgium.

A curious step has just been taken in the administration of justice to criminals in Belgium. M. L'jeune, minister of justice, is the author of a law according to which criminals of a small type will receive no punishment for the first offense. First offenders will be tried, lectured and sentenced to be sent to the penitentiary, but the sentence will not be carried out. If convicted a second time, however, the severity will be treated with the greatest severity, and in addition to a rigorous confinement, the sentence meted out to a convict on his second offense, he will undergo the punishment from which he was first let off. The law will release thousands of King Leopold's subjects who are now in jail. It is believed it will have a wholesome effect in preventing criminals from becoming hardened and repeating their wickedness through dread of sentences behind them.

Two Friends.

When the Duke of Wellington was fighting in Spain, there were two horses which had always drawn the same gun, and had been side by side in many battles. At last one was killed, and the other, on having his food brought to him as usual, refused to eat, but turned his head round to look for his old friend, and neighed many times as if to call him. All the car that was bestowed on him was in vain. There were other horses near him, but he would not notice them; and he soon afterwards died, not having once tasted food since his former companion was killed.—(Plymouth.)

Paris now ordains that stockings shall match the shoe instead of the costume.

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Colored Seas.

It is a curious matter of interest to note that there are several large seas which are named for their color. The White Sea bears its name with perhaps the best reason of any. Its shores are covered with snow for the greater part of the year, and its frozen surface is for that time a snowy plain.

The Red Sea is also entitled to its name. Through its clear waters the reefs of red coral are clearly to be seen. Much of its rocky bed is the growth of the coral insect. Another reason, and probably the true one for the name of this sea, is the fact that along its eastern shores lies ancient Edom. This name signifies Red. It was given to the region not from the color of its sandstone hills, but from its people. These are the descendants of him who came in, said and weary from hunting and in faith to his brother, "Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red potage, for I am faint; therefore was his name called Edom."

In the case of the Yellow Sea, its name is sufficiently accounted for from the appearance of its water. The sea receives a great deal of mud from the rivers of China. Moreover, it is shallow, and the sandy bottom gives its own color to the water a long way out from the shore.

The Black Sea affords us no intelligible account of its name. Its waters are not black, they are described as a deep blue, like that which is seen in sunny weather off the southwestern shores of England.

A Robin's Paternal Instinct.

That animal instinct is lively in the bird was exemplified by the robin a few days ago. One of the beautiful sugar maple trees which grow in the yard of a well-known citizen of this place, a mother robin had built her nest, and as time went on she was rewarded by a brood of young robins. One evening when she had nested herself for the night a chicken hawk observed the harmless redbreast, and with a swift dart she caught the mother and took her flight. When the father robin came back to see that all was well for the night, he found the young birds without protection. He fluttered about and his bewailing song told his bravehearted mate he had fallen his partner, for he began to make preparations to act the part of a mother for the night.

The owner of the property who had observed the events, arose early the next morning and he noticed the male bird taking its flight. The bereaved widower soared high and was soon lost to sight. He remained away the entire day, and when he returned at nightfall he brought with him another wife. The strange bird was guided to the nest, and readily comprehending the situation, he began to sing, while the male bird darted off to find some food. There was great rejoicing when he returned. Let us hope the mother has also taken excellent care of her young. (Hollidaysburg (Canada) Dispatch.)

J. Passer Babies.

The babies in Japan have sparkling eyes and funny little tufts of hair; they look so quaint and old-fashioned, especially like those doll-babies that are sent over here to America. Now, in our country very young babies are apt to be naughty and disobedient, they must be punished, of course; but the punishment is very strange. There are very small pieces of rice-paper called moxa, and these are lighted with a match, and then put upon the finger or hand or arm of the naughty child, and they burn a spot on the tender skin that hurts very, very much. The child screams with the pain, and the red-hot moxa sticks to the skin for a moment or two, and then goes out; but the smarting burn remains the little child of his fault. I do not like these moxa. It is a cruel punishment. But perhaps it is better than a whipping. Only I wish little children never had to be punished.—(St. Nicholas.)

A Marvel in Steel.

There are one hundred and fifty thousand miles of railway in the United States; three hundred thousand miles of rails—length enough to make twelve steel girdles for the earth's circumference. This enormous length of rail is wonderful—we do not really grasp its significance. But the rail itself, the little section of steel, is an engineering feat. The change of its form from the curious and clumsy iron pear-head of thirty years ago to the present refined section of steel is a scientific development. It is now a beam whose every dimension and curve and angle are exactly suited to the tremendous work it has to do. The loads it carries are enormous, the blows it receives are heavy and constant; but it carries the load, it bears the blows and does its duty. The locomotive and the modern passenger and freight cars are great inventions; and so is the little rail which carries them all.—(Scribner's Magazine.)

Right in His Line.

"Where did you get that new bolted shirt?" asked one tramp of another.

"I came by it honorably in the line of my profession."

"The line of your profession?"

"Yes, sir. The clothes line."—(Meridian Traveler.)

CHILDREN'S COLUMN.

Out of my window I could see
But yesterday, upon the tree
The blossoms white, like tufts of snow
That had forgotten when to go
And while I looked out at them they
Seemed like small butterflies at play,
For in the breeze their flutterings
Made me imagine them with wings.

I must have fancied well, for now
There's not a blossom on the bough,
And out of doors it rains fast,
And gusts of wind are whistling past.

With butterflies 'tis etiquette
To keep their wings from getting wet,
So when they knew the storm was near,
They thought it best to disappear.
—(Frank D. Sherman, in Young People.)

A Straight Edge.

La Roy F. G. Hill, Lake Forest, Ill., communicates the following incident to the Popular Science Monthly: "Some six years since, I was of the New England states, a pig five weeks old was carried in a close box about four miles, circuitous, with several sharp turns, and the pig was removed to the box after dark. The following day near noon he disappeared, and about three hours later was found at his former home. Curiosity led to the examination of the route taken by the pig, and all his tracks could be followed nearly all the way. He had started on a straight line for the place from which he was brought the day before, and had followed that line. At one point an impassable fence turned him from the course, but he had moved along the fence on one side until he found an opening, and then had retraced his steps on the other back to the original line." The writer does not attempt to account for this seeming instinct in animals and birds which give them the power of directing their movements accurately for long distances through an unfamiliar country.

A Robin's Paternal Instinct.

That animal instinct is lively in the bird was exemplified by the robin a few days ago. One of the beautiful sugar maple trees which grow in the yard of a well-known citizen of this place, a mother robin had built her nest, and as time went on she was rewarded by a brood of young robins. One evening when she had nested herself for the night a chicken hawk observed the harmless redbreast, and with a swift dart she caught the mother and took her flight. When the father robin came back to see that all was well for the night, he found the young birds without protection. He fluttered about and his bewailing song told his bravehearted mate he had fallen his partner, for he began to make preparations to act the part of a mother for the night.