

HIS FIRE ESCAPE.

The Only Time the Traveler Wanted to Use It He Couldn't Find the Key.

A commercial traveler who was putting up at one of the hotels exhibited a curious contrivance to some friends the other evening, says the New Orleans Times-Democrat. It consisted of a metal reel almost eight inches long, bolted securely to one of the inside corners of his trunk. On the reel was wound about 100 feet of steel wire, terminating in a sort of stirrup. The entire device occupied considerably less than a square foot of room, and the drummer explained that it was a fire escape of his own invention. "All I have to do," he said, "is to put my foot in the stirrup and let myself out of the window. The trunk acts as an anchor at this end and the ratchet at the side of the reel prevents the wire from paying out too rapidly." "Did you ever have occasion to put it to use?" asked one of the spectators. "Only once," replied the drummer. "I was in a hotel that caught fire at night about eight months ago and the first thing I did when I jumped out of bed was to rush for my trunk. It was locked and in my excitement I couldn't find the key. I hunted high and low and was still hunting when the porter rushed in and led me downstairs. They extinguished the fire and I subsequently discovered the key under the bureau. Now I have the thing on a chain and am loaded for conflagrations of all brands."

THE BUGLER WHO FORGOT.

He Saw an Opening in the Enemy's Line and Sounded a Charge.

It is not often that an enlisted man gets a chance to run a part of the fight to suit himself. That chance, however, says Leslie's Weekly, came to one bugler. Capt. Hannay, finding that company L was too far away to hear orders, in a recent engagement in the Philippines, sent his bugler after the company to sound the charge. At the first notes company L flew onward. It was right here that the bugler forgot, for the time being, that he was only the commanding officer's orderly. He saw an opening in the enemy's line, and, imagining, of course, that the order came from Capt. Hannay, executed it. Not even yet was the bugler's thirst for forward action sated. He sounded again and again, as the heat of generalship made his blood flow thick and fast. By the time the bugler came to himself and relinquished the duties of fight director, the poor fellows of company L were troubled with shortness of breath. In this brisk affair, according to the official report, the dead reached a total of about 60, including some officers. It is the enemy's dead that is meant, of course. Twenty-one maulers and six remingtons were the spoils of the field.

LONDON TAILORS.

Their Garments Are Well Made and Show Good Workmanship But Do Not Fit.

"The best that can be said of the clothes imported by American men from London is that they are well made," said Nelson R. Huntington, of New York, who has spent years abroad in the study of the hospitals, to a Philadelphia North American man. "They never fit. Indeed, the art of misfit seems to be carefully studied. The garments of both men and women never set well, and even the actresses, who are supposed to be exacting, suffer from the inability or indisposition of the English tailors to fit the figure. The finish, however, shows fine and thorough workmanship. The French achieves better fits, but the work is atrocious making the best garments look cheap and hurried. Not even important buttons are secure. American tailors and dressmakers surpass everything in Europe in making a fit, and the finish compares favorably with the English. The New Yorkers who import garments made by Poole and other fashionable London tailors had them refitted by American tailors until a year or two ago, when the latter refused to touch them at any price."

THE BOSTON WOMAN.

She Thoroughly Inculcates and Illustrates the True Principles of Freedom.

Boston does not develop its character through the medium of its aristocracy alone, writes Margaret Alliston in Ladies' Home Journal. It is the most democratic city in America, if not in the world. It is both the cradle and nurse of independence. Evidences of these truths were set forth in the costumes of the feminine mass in evidence at the first symphony rehearsal I attended. All of fashionable Boston was present, and still the audience did not look fashionable from a metropolitan standpoint. There were so many women! If you could hear the plaint of that exclamation you would understand at once how oppressive in its preponderance is the femininity of Boston. "Woman" is stamped on every inch of Massachusetts ground. (There can be even too much of a good thing.) She is as inevitable as the seasons. She is more difficult to escape than the Mormon eye. She inculcates and illustrates the principles of freedom all the way from her emancipation creed to the shape of her waist and the length of her stride when she walks.

Exploration in Iceland. Seventeen years ago a large part of Iceland was unexplored, and only 25 glaciers had been discovered. To-day 113 glaciers are known, and the whole island has been explored and the limits of eternal snow determined by the geologist, Dr. Thordson.

SAWDUST GUNPOWDER.

The Man Who Made and Sold Cypress Hams Was a Worthy Successor in Mexico.

The man that sharpened shoe pegs at both ends and sold them for wheat was a genius, but he has his equal in Mexico, says Stray Stories. Some months ago one of the belligerent little South American presidencies which masquerade under the title of republics. A couple of hundred men, marshaled in opposition to the government, swore solemn oaths and met nightly in an abandoned hut at the entrance to a swamp.

Enthusiasm was plentiful, but arms were scarce, so a purse was made up and three of the party sent off to buy ammunition. They went to Mexico, where a cargo of powder was delivered to them, and after inspection was shipped to the revolutionary headquarters. A signal gun was mounted on a hilltop, and when the day and hour arrived the field marshal of the revolutionary army touched a match to the fuse of the piece. There was no response. The marshal used all the matches in his silver match box, but the gun refused to fire.

An investigation by the "war office" followed, and the cargo of powder proved to be nothing but mahogany sawdust, which had been vigorously stirred up with powdered graphite to give it the proper color and appearance.

STORIES FOR ANGLERS.

A Trout That Was Caught Twenty-Four Hours After It Took the Fly.

A well-known Albany angler had a unique experience this summer trout fishing up in Canada, says the Argus of that city. He was sent out from camp to catch a mess for supper. He was fishing with three flies on a single leader. At the first cast his fly was taken by a good-sized trout that leaped from the water to grab it. He evidently got the leader on a "slink" before the line was tightened from the rod, as he snapped it off and went swimming away with the two flies and broken leader trailing behind. Next day the angler revisited the lake, and as he was looking over the side of the boat he espied in 10 or 15 feet of water the big trout that had taken his leader the night before. A closer examination revealed that his troutship was safely hitched to the dead branch of a tree which had fallen into the water. In swimming about one of the two free hooks on the leader had caught in the branch and that ended the migrations of the trout still firmly hooked by the fly he had grabbed. Rowing ashore the angler stripped and dove for his prize. He secured it and a piece of the branch, and to-day has the stuffed trout with hook still in his jaw and the other hook imbedded in the broken branch mounted as a piscatorial study and souvenir of the incident.

ROYAL FISHERWOMEN.

Ladies in the English Royal Family Who Are Devoted to the Sport.

The only "killing" form of sport indulged in by the ladies of the royal family is fishing. The princess of Wales, the duchess of Fife, and Princess Louise, marchioness of Lorne, being all enthusiastic fisherwomen. When acting as vice queen of Canada Princess Louise used to go out in a canoe with natives for guides, and on one occasion she dispatched three of her finest fish, of course securely packed in ice, to the queen at Balmoral. The princess of Wales and her daughters go out almost every day when staying with the duchess of Fife at New Mar Lodge, and some two years ago the duchess landed the largest number of fish ever taken in one day on the Dee by a fisherwoman.

The prince of Wales does not now own a single acre of land in Scotland. He was the owner some years ago of Birkhall, but he sold the property to the queen in 1885, and though he always pays a long visit to Scotland each autumn he invariably stays—with the exception, perhaps, of a flying visit to Balmoral—with the duke and duchess of Fife, says Lippincott's.

SHOPLIFTING IN PARIS.

Women in the French Capital Use Their Toes to Steal Fabrics With.

The ways of women shoplifters are thus described in a foreign journal: "At the Bon Marche and the Louvre, in Paris, a regular allowance is made for shoplifting in the debtor and creditor accounts; the daily sum thus registered is surprisingly high. Besides amateur kleptomaniacs, female thieves make a continual raid on the counters, and, notwithstanding the vigilance of the inspectors, they manage to reap a good harvest. These women usually wear skirts as full as fashion will allow, with very deep and capacious pockets; they also wear shoes, not boots, and have stockings cut off, so as to leave the toes free.

They press close to the counter, where a rapid motion of the elbow, favored by some dangling fringe, catches the coveted article and throws it down. Then, quickly, the foot slips out of the shoe, and the toes, exercised by long practice, draw the lace, or whatever it may be, under the long skirt, where it remains hidden till an opportunity occurs of quickly secreting it in the pocket."

An Inventress.

The woman who invented satchel-bottom paper bags was offered \$20,000 for the patent before she could get from Washington.

DEWEY AS A BOY.

The Admiral Invariably Took Sides with the Weak and the Bullied.

As a boy George Dewey was alert, bright and vivacious. He was not a hard student. He was often mischievous, but never malicious, says one of his biographers. He was fond of all outdoor sports, and was not averse to a fist fight when he considered that he was in the right. But he never pitched into a lad smaller than himself. He was always on the side of the weak against the bully. Mary Dewey, his sister, was his frequent companion in the milder amusements of his early boyhood. She remembers that he was always chivalrous and kindly to her and the other girls. She has said that even as a child he was never afraid of the dark.

"When his sister emphasized this characteristic," says Mr. Barrett, who tells the story, "I thought of the dark night when he took the lead on the Olympia and sailed into Manila bay past Corregidor, without fear or hesitation. During his first year at Annapolis Dewey did not hold any high rank. He was not exactly indolent, but he was so engrossed with the pleasures of student life and its good comradeship that he had little time left for plodding. He took in good part, however, a letter from his father urging on him more assiduity to study, and, as a result, when graduation day came he was third in his class, with Howell and Reed respectively first and second.

LYING ABOUT JAMAICA.

The Persistent Misrepresentation of the Island in Some of Our American Newspapers.

The authorities of Jamaica have been greatly disturbed by alleged news printed in this country. Some of these items, says the New York Sun, have reported that a severe drought has caused widespread distress; that the coffee, orange and corn crops have been destroyed and famine impends; that the starving country people are fleeing into the towns; that the use of putrid water has caused an outbreak of typhoid malarial fever, and so on. These statements were all very inaccurate and some of them entirely false, and were calculated to injure the island by producing a most unfavorable impression in regard to its condition.

A Colonial Secretary Evans, therefore, wrote to Vice Consul Springer calling attention to these erroneous statements, and asked him if he could assist the Jamaican government to put a stop to such continued misrepresentations, or at least to counteract their injurious influence. He said they were already doing much mischief to the colony. The vice consul accordingly sent specimens of these falsehoods, together with the letter which Mr. Evans had written to him, to our state department and they have just appeared in our consular reports. Somebody seems to be interested in libeling Jamaica, and has found a medium in this country for the promulgation of his falsehoods.

ALUMINUM IN LITHOGRAPHY.

Some Advantages of the Metal Plate Over the Cumbrous Stone.

A steady demand for aluminum is springing up in various kinds of printing processes, as well as in lithography. When its surface is properly prepared it is capable of replacing the ordinary lithographic stone. The advantage of having, instead of cumbrous and heavy stones which can be printed only on special slow-running "litho" machines, thin sheets of metal, which can be bent into a circular form and printed on rotary presses, is evident. In Germany five-pound sheets of aluminum are being used as a substitute for the usual Solenhofen limestone slabs, weighing 50 to 100 pounds. After being polished with ground pumice, the aluminum sheets are dried and washed with a patent acid solution, and after a second drying are ready for the imprint. The sheets cost only one-third of the stone; to correct an error the ink has simply to be washed out with acid; there is no liability to fracture under heavy pressure; and both space in storage and labor in handling are saved. The quality of work done on the metal plates is excellent, and many establishments in this country are now using aluminum plates and rotary presses.

Arizona Seeks Statehood.

Arizona people believe that the census of 1900 will show a sufficient population to warrant the admission of the territory to the union. Arizona had 59,820 inhabitants in 1890, and the claim is made that the territory has doubled in population since then. Increased activity in mining and the development of copper and gold mines is responsible for the increase. Yet, even if Arizona should have as many as 120,000 inhabitants next year, it would still lack 53,000 of the ratio of representation adopted in 1893. New Mexico, which is yet a territory, has more than twice as many inhabitants as Arizona.

Farthest from an Ocean.

The most continental region on the globe—farthest removed from an ocean—lies in central Asia, south of Tsain-Shan. It lies below the level of the ocean, and the Russian government has established a meteorological station there.

Salt Lake Disappearing.

The reason why the Great Salt Lake in Utah is growing smaller, according to Prof. James E. Talmage, is that the volume of water from its four tributary rivers is being more and more diverted by irrigation.

Italians in Argentina.

One-fourth of the inhabitants of the Argentine Republic are Italians.

DOLLAR OF 1804 IS A MYTH.

This Is the Assertion of a Well-Known American Authority on Numismatics.

Is there an American dollar of the date of 1804? If there is, it is worth a fortune, for it is one of the jack-o'-lanterns of numismatics. In a recent issue the American Journal of Numismatics goes into an interesting account of what it terms the "myth of 1804 dollars," and denies that any such coin struck in that year, its existence, like comets, these alleged coins have been turning up in most unexpected places for nearly a century. Recently coin dealers were excited by a story from Racine, Wis., which told how a woman went into a dry goods store to buy a spool of thread and tendered in payment a worn silver dollar, saying that she did not know whether it was good or not. The clerk saw the date "1804" on the coin, put it into his pocket, and threw a new silver dollar into the cash drawer. He was offered \$1,500 for the old coin by a dealer, but refused to sell. In this way the story got out and the clerk's employer put in a claim for the 1804 dollar. Both men have employed lawyers to defend their titles, and now the suit for the possession of it.

For years Mr. Nesson, an expert of Brooklyn, N. Y., has made a study of the subject. He has convinced himself and other competent judges that no genuine 1804 dollar was ever coined. He has become convinced that the alleged dollars of that date are alterations of Spanish, Mexican, Bank of England five-shilling pieces, or some such fraud. It is believed that an experimental die with milled edges was made but not used in 1804. In 1842 some one, perhaps surreptitiously, struck a few dollars on this old, unused die, and it is these that are occasionally found.

PLEGGED TO MARRY WIDOWS.

But the Bachelor Members of the Club All Seem to Prefer Young Girls.

There is a Bachelors' club in the west whose only rule to which members swear allegiance when they join the club is: "Marry a widow." Young girls and old maids alike are barred, says the New York Herald.

One explanation of this rule, given by a member, is: "We consider it the part of wisdom to marry some one who has already discovered that men are not angels."

Another member gives this philanthropic reason: "Young girls always have the best chance with their fresh, blooming faces, and we think the widows ought to be given a show, as their lives have been in a measure blighted, as it were. Anyway, they seem to understand a man better."

Another view of the case is the fact that anything forbidden suddenly acquires wonderful interest. A lot of bachelors who pledge themselves to marry widows are sure to discover the hitherto unappreciated charms of all the maidens in town. No marriages to widows have yet been announced, but several engagements of members to young girls have been confessed. The rules of the club provide for this contingency by demanding a fine of five dollars and loss of membership.

ANYHOW IT RAINED.

The Two Wrangled So Long About It They Got Caught in the Downpour.

"It-Bits tells the story this way: "It looks like rain." "I beg your pardon?" "I say it looks like rain." "What does?" "The—the weather."

"The weather, my dear sir, is a condition. Rain is water in the act of falling from the clouds. It is impossible that they should look alike."

"What I meant was that the sky looked like rain."

"Equally impossible. The sky is the blue vault above us—the seeming arch or dome that we mistakenly call the heavens. It does not resemble falling water in the least."

"Well, then, if you are so thunderingly particular, it looks as if it would rain."

"As if what would rain?"

"The weather, of course."

"The weather, as before stated, being a condition, cannot rain."

"The clouds, then! And here it comes! And I have taken so much time in talking to you that I shall get wet to the skin before I can get to the tram car. Good day!"

Cherokee in the Philippines.

A curious bond of sympathy between some of the people of these United States and one of the Philippine tribes has been discovered by a California soldier, who tells his Luzon experiences in the pages of the Overland Monthly. When the Ygreto chief, badly wounded in the February fight, was recovering from his hurts in our hospital in Manila, one of our soldiers who knew the Cherokee language, though he recognized in the Ygreto's talk words that bore a striking resemblance to Cherokee. He tried the chief with a few sentences in Cherokee, with the result that the two soon readily understood one another and became very good friends. As the California "thinking bayonet" who records the incident says: "Here is a curious item for ethnologists."

Tobacco in South America.

A writer in the German scientific periodical Prometheus declares that over-indulgence in tobacco will prove the ruin of South American peoples. Not only do children of two and three years smoke all day long, but mothers have been seen trying to quiet their babies by putting cigars in their mouths.

"SWAGGER STICKS."

Numbers of Them Wheeled Away from Canadian Red Coats as Summer Souvenirs.

According to official returns about 4,000 American lassies have visited Nova Scotia this season, and most of these, coming or going, it is safe to presume, have touched at Halifax for a longer or shorter time, as may be.

Among the treasures of these lassies will be found—unless the reader of feminine nature has gone all astray—a short stick, silver or nickel tipped and ferruled. This is the famous "swagger" stick of Tommy Atkins, who, as one of the citadel's defenders, a brave Leinster, guards the officials of high degree who are unmarried and eligible from the attacks of feminine invasions. Tommy Atkins without a swagger would be like a Chinaman without a cue, and these little sticks are just the final touch needed to inspire the onlooker with becoming feelings of awe as to Tommy's martial mien.

With his scarlet cap, about the size of a wafer, one glove on and one off, and the short swagger stick which he twirls by times, fiercely, sentimentally, coquettishly, as circumstances may demand, Tommy is by no means an unpleasant sight. Proud is the girl who, by bribery or cajoling, has induced Tommy to part with his swagger stick, when she exhibits it to her chums, who have not been sent to Halifax, and prouder yet when those who have been there are conscious of their own shortightedness in not noticing this very important part of Tommy Atkins' attire.

EXECUTIONS IN FRANCE.

The Authorities Propose to Employ Electricity by a New Method.

If importance is to be attached to a recent letter from Paris, while Americans are in the midst of a discussion as to whether or not death by electric shock is painless and instantaneous, the French government is considering the advisability of discontinuing the use of the guillotine for the execution of criminals and the adoption in its stead of a method in which needles charged with high-tension currents are shot into the brain, causing instant death. According to the accounts given, the head of the criminal, as he sits firmly strapped in the execution chair, is to be inclosed in a helmet similar to that of a diver, two holes, through which the needles, duly connected with the source of electric current employed, pass. As the executioner touches a button, and so turns on the current, the two needles leap from their sockets and are forced through the temples into the brain of the criminal. With them they carry powerful alternating currents, which rupture and destroy the brain cells with such rapidity that one convulsive movement of the victim is the only sign that life is extinct. Whether such a mode of execution, if seriously proposed, is more merciful than the electrical method adopted in this country will be doubted by many.

READ IT IN HIS EYE.

The Cuban Understood the Soldier and at Once Gave Up His Prospective Prey.

This occurred at Siboney, while the town was in flames. Panic had hold of everybody but the American troops, who were vainly endeavoring to conduct an orderly evacuation.

A lanky rough rider on some mission, says the Philadelphia North American, when he came abreast of a half-starved Spanish woman, who bore every trace of wealth and refinement in her face, manner and dress, and was struggling to keep a child, barely able to walk, at her side and at the same time restrain a burly Cuban from robbing her of a walnut box tipped with silver, which she held under her arm.

The rough rider took in the situation at a glance. He couldn't speak Spanish, so he let loose a wild yell peculiar to the genus cowboy, and at the same time leveled his gun at the rascally Cuban.

Then, to relieve his own feelings, he yelled in good vigorous English: "We're down here to fight men, not women and children, and if you don't sneak I'll drop you!"

The Cuban read the message in the soldier's eyes and slunk away, while the rough rider conducted the woman and child to headquarters, and then went about his business.

IN UNCLE SAM'S SERVICE.

The Prejudice Against Women in Government Employ Is Rapidly Disappearing.

"Women are eligible for appointment to many branches of the government service upon precisely the same conditions as men," writes Barton Cheryea, in the Ladies' Home Journal. "The question of sex does not enter into the matter when there are vacant positions which are open to women. At the present time there are one-sixth as many women as men in the service. The prejudice that formerly existed against the appointment of women is disappearing, and in 1898, of 418 persons appointed to positions in the departments at Washington, 190 were females. In addition to clerical capacities, women are appointed assistant microscopists, nurses, translators, teachers, matrons, telegraph operators, stenographers and typewriters, as well as to places requiring skilled and unskilled workers. As assistant microscopists they have the first chance of selection, there being always a demand for capable women in this line."

GIRLS ON A 'COON HUNT.

A Number of Them Have Great Fun Tramping About Through Swamps.

The young women here have discovered a new kind of sport, which is nothing more nor less than 'coon hunting. They have been out twice within a week, and had no end of fun in tramping round through the woods and swamps at midnight and later hunting the cunning 'coon. They engaged the services of an experienced hunter, who has had wide experience in hunting big game in the Rocky mountains, and knows all the haunts of the wild animals in this vicinity. Four young women started out under this famous hunter's guidance about ten o'clock of a fine night ago. They wore rubber boots and their shortest and oldest golf skirts. After they had tramped through the swamps and over the steep, rocky hills for three miles the hounds treed a 'coon. The hunters managed matters, so cleverly that each girl in turn had a chance to blaze away at it, and there has been a dispute ever since as to which of the young women brought the creature down, says the New York Journal.

Not satisfied with this, they went out again a few nights ago, but thought it would be more fun to have a few young men with them; so they enlarged the party, with the old 'coon hunter for chaperone. They managed this time, by staying out until two o'clock in the morning, to get two 'coons. On their way back one of the girls got stuck so fast in the mud that she had to be pulled out by the united strength of several of her friends. The sport will be continued with a large hunt some time next week, when the 'coon hunter will have a party of about 20. He will divide them up into squads, giving a bound to each squad, and see which party will have the best success.

HE DID GREAT THINGS.

And Then Jimmy Told His Father All About His Exciting Adventures.

"What kind of a time are you having this summer, Jimmy?"

"Oh, out of sight! The family all away. Father went the last to go. He went north on business and left me to take care of the house. Oh, yes, I'm strong on that, you know. Haven't been there since he left. That makes me think I'd better go around to-night—he's due to-day."

James was right. His father had returned and was sitting on the porch smoking a cigar when his son arrived, says the Detroit Free Press.

"Well, how have you been getting along for the last week?" inquired the father.

"Oh, very well, considering," said James, assuming the confident air of the man who has done his duty. "A few accidents about the house, but I fixed them all right."

"Yes—had the burglars one night? Lucky thing I was here—they might have stolen half the house. And the gas pipe sprung a leak, too. But I discovered that in time. And the rats! Why, we'd have been overrun with 'em if I hadn't been here to clean them out!"

"Hm! that's strange," said his father. "I haven't heard any burglars, nor smelled any gas, nor heard any rats, and I've been here all the week. You know, I didn't take that business trip after all."

COST OF LIVING.

A Comparison of the Various Capitals of Europe Shows Vienna to Be the Cheapest.

An investigation into the comparative cost of living at the various European capitals resulted in the following facts: At Vienna the prices of most articles of food are lowest; at Madrid they are dearer than in any other capital, and such things as bread, meat, sugar and coal are very expensive indeed. At St. Petersburg also the price of bread is still considered a luxury above the means of the working classes. Next to Vienna Brussels is an inexpensive city; Paris is a little higher in the scale, while London is still more expensive. An American spends on an average \$50 a year for food, a Frenchman \$48, a German \$45, a Spaniard \$30, an Italian \$24 and a Russian \$40. Of meat the American eats 109 pounds a year, the Frenchman 87 pounds, the German 64 pounds, the Italian 23 pounds and the Russian 51 pounds. Of bread the American consumes 380 pounds, the Frenchman 540 pounds, the German 560 pounds, the Spaniard 480 pounds, the Italian 400 pounds and the Russian 655 pounds. Outside of Europe, in times of peace, Manila is cheaper to live in than any other city in the world.

Made His Fortune.

The prince of Wales, while shooting in Austria, caused temporary trouble and ultimately made the fortune of the nearest ladies' tailor, by stipulating that all ladies receiving invitations to shoot with him should come in correct shooting costumes. This, in Austria, consists of a short skirt coming half way between the knees and ankle and a short, tight-fitting jacket, with waistcoat of another color, boots of brown leather and a Tyrolaise hat with a feather. None of the ladies had just these clothes at hand, and the tailor had to double his force to supply them.

Good Customers of Peoria.

President Kruger maintains his domestic establishment on an allowance of \$2,600 of what is called "coffee money," out of which he also receives Mrs. Kruger to sequester her pin money. The greatest customers of the Peoria distillers have are the Japanese.