

THE OBELISK IN DANGER.

Ancient Egyptian Monolith in New York is Falling to Decay.

One of the chief attractions of Central park, in the city of New York, is the Egyptian obelisk erected opposite the Metropolitan Museum of Art. This ancient monolith was erected in Central park in 1881, having been transported from Alexandria, under charge of Lieutenant Commander Goringe. It was asserted that the severity of our climate would cause disintegration, and steps were taken to prevent this, or to reduce it to a minimum. A careful examination made recently proves that in spite of the care taken to prevent it the process of disintegration has been going on. The ravages of the weather are particularly noticeable on the west face of the obelisk, which has a scaly appearance in certain places. This is the side upon which the shaft rested when partly buried in the sands of Egypt, and the hieroglyphics on it are much fainter than on the other three surfaces. Then, the crack which extends from the base to the south side of the obelisk has been gradually spreading, although it was filled with a wooden plug covered with cement when the stone was erected on its present site. The authorities who have charge of the obelisk will make a thorough investigation, and if it can be shown that the monument is in danger of destruction by being exposed to the inclement elements, it will probably be removed and exhibited under cover.

DEADLY SEASONINGS.

They Are Sometimes Used in the Orient to Assassinate Objectionable Persons.

The ways of the east are devious, and an intelligent anticipation of coming events is a marked feature in Indian palace rule. The dreaded cholera is an ever present disease, but more men die "officially" of it than is actually the case. The cholera morbus kills its tens of thousands, no doubt; but powdered glass, finely cut up camel's hair and bamboo chips assist in the fell work, says the New York Journal.

Is a resident inconspicuously active? Then in his curry he may discover pulverized glass, which, once swallowed, imitates the disease sufficiently closely to account for death. The papers the other day announced the attempted assassination of a well-known Indian resident by this method; but, happily, enough, the deadly plot failed. The camel's hair and minute portions of bamboo are equally efficacious, and are exceedingly difficult to discover when cunningly mixed by a suburban cook.

These facts sufficiently explain the elaborate precautions against poisoning taken by all oriental monarchs. The sultan of Turkey actually has each dish sealed so as to avoid any tampering with the food in transit from kitchen to the dining hall.

A taster partakes of each dish before the autocrat and lord of millions can safely eat from it, and even then the haunted dread of death waits ever upon him.

VENDETTAS OF THE PRESENT.

They Differ But Slightly from the Sanguinary Feuds of Other Days.

It is through lack of information that the vendetta is referred to-day as an institution of the past. Vendettas—blood feuds—exist to-day not only in Sicily, Sardinia and Corsica, but in Kentucky and other of the southern and western states, and also at times in England, Ireland and France, Italy and the east, says the New York World. It has happened recently that an Albanian whose relative had been killed by a Turkish vizier shot the vizier's son—which is at least a partial exemplification of the vendetta. In Arabia the system is to-day in full operation, a fact which is so well understood that offenses sufficient to start a train of killings are rarely committed, and a considerable degree of order is thereby preserved.

As it is generally understood the vendetta originated in the following practice: An assassin was never allowed to escape. The responsibility of punishment was assumed by the nearest blood relations of his victim. There must be blood for blood, a death for a death.

Feminine Financiering.

That women are the best financiers of the world we have often had opportunity to acknowledge, says the Honolulu Independent. We have seen them at the auction sales when they made a "bargain" by buying an article they had no use for whatever, and we have seen them haggling over the price of cheap calico for a reduction in price of one cent a yard, and then triumphantly carrying their purchase to a fashionable dressmaker and paying her ten dollars for a "morning" dress. This morning we could not help smiling while watching a lady credited with possessing good business sense buying "Chinese birds" on board a mail steamer, haggling over the price of the birds and beating down the seller of seven fine specimens by 50 cents of the original price. In the meantime her hawk was waiting, and the driver "haggling." She made her bargain, saved 50 cents on the birds and paid the hawkman one dollar for waiting. That is female financiering.

Filled the Requirement.

A primary teacher was hearing a recitation in grammar and the class was composed largely of the smaller students. The teacher wrote the three words: "Bees, bear, boys," on the board and asked the pupils to write a sentence containing the three words. She was quite taken back a few minutes later when one of the bright boys in the class handed in the following: "Boys bees bear when they go in swimming"

SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY.

An Instance of Base Ingratitude on the Part of an Eastern Man.

At dinner the talk turned on southern hospitality, and many were the instances related of it before a pretty young southern matron had a chance to tell her story.

"When my husband was in business in the south several years ago," she said, "the manager of the Boston firm whose agency he held was taken suddenly ill while in our city. He was alone at the hotel and I told my husband to bring him to the house.

"It turned out that he had typhoid pneumonia, and for five weeks he was just about as sick as a man could be and get well again. I nursed him with as much care as if he had been my own husband, and when he finally recovered, the doctor told him that if he had not been for my nursing he never would have gotten well.

"The day he was leaving he thanked me for taking care of him and pressed a five-dollar bill into my hand. I was so mad I hardly knew what to do, and I said: 'When I do a kindness I don't charge anything for it, but if I was going to charge anything it would be a heap more than that.' And right then and there I called my colored maid and, handing her the money, said: 'Here, Mary, is something Mr. Pratt is giving you for your trouble.' And what do you think that man whom I had nursed back to life said:

"So this is your southern hospitality, is it? Every time I remember that fellow's sneer I wonder if you people up here really know what hospitality means."

GILD LEATHER HANGINGS.

An Old-World Art That Has Been Revived by Two New-World Women.

Two young American women, American women of Boston, have lately made new again the old-world and old-time art of gilding leather hangings for the walls of homes and buildings.

The revival of this old art is due entirely to the perseverance of two sisters, the Misses Mary and Clara Ware, who are graduates of the courses in decoration of the school connected with the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. While continuing their studies in Venice they were much impressed by the beauty of the gilded leather in some of the old palaces and gradually they were led to investigate the methods that had produced it. They found that in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries gilded leather was one of the chief industries of Spain, where it had been introduced at least 300 years before by the Moors. It is therefore undoubtedly of African origin. From Spain the art spread to France and Italy, while the making of "Cordovan leather," as it was called, is said to have been one of the chief sources of wealth in the Netherlands. This art, like other old arts, degenerated in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In its last days both materials and workmanship were often cheap and inferior.

In the present century practically no leather of this kind has been produced, and it has remained for these two young American women to show its possibilities in modern schemes of decoration.

THE FIGHTING SWORDFISH.

Deadly Combats Are Often Fought by These Most Fearless Fish.

The swordfish is utterly without fear, and will, like a buffalo or rhinoceros, charge anything that offends it, often doing an amount of execution hardly to be believed did not the evidence exist. Combats between swordfish are most interesting, and may be compared to a duel between two expert swordsmen. Such a contest was observed off the long pier that extends out into the ocean at Santa Monica, near Los Angeles, last year, says the San Francisco Call. Some fishermen noticed two big fish leaping out of the water and dashing along the surface. Soon it was seen that they were swordfish. The season was when the fish are unusually ferocious. They had made several rushes and when observed were at close quarters, striking each other powerful side blows like cavalrymen. This was unsatisfactory, and finally they separated and darted at each other like arrows, the water hissing as their sharp dorsal fins cut through it. They evidently struck head-on, one missing, while the sword of the other struck just below the eye and plowed a deep furrow in the fish, partly disabling it, so that it turned and attempted to escape. But its adversary also turned, and with a rush drove its sword completely through the body of its foe and held it fast, only wrenching its weapon loose when its enemy stopped swimming.

Bicycles in Tiger Hunts.

The latest use to which bicycles have been applied is tiger hunting. A paper published in British India gives an account of this startling innovation. A pig, it appears, was carried away by a tiger from a coffee estate at Castlewood, in the state of Johore. "The news having been sent to Johore," runs the report, "the sultan's trackers were out on bicycles by midday and located the tiger in some low shrub within a half mile of the shed. The sultan himself rode out at four o'clock, and after a short beat of half an hour a large tiger was driven out of the shrub and fell to one well-placed shot by the sultan through the tiger's forehead."

Tall Government Chimney.

The tallest and largest chimney south of New York is now being constructed for the use of the United States bureau of printing and engraving. When completed it will be 223 feet high.

KNOWS EVERY DOG IN TOWN.

Former Lightning Calculator of the Treasury Can Tell the Ownership of Washington Curs.

The man who knows every dog, and the way to every place in the town where he lives, is quite common. But there is a man in Washington who was "born and raised here," as the native Washingtonian speaks it, who knows everybody's dog, and the dog's name. He will stand on a corner and point them out as they travel hither and yon. He was in front of Willard's the other day when a cur of low degree poked his nose around the corner, says the New York Sun.

"That's Beriah Wilkins' dog," he said to his acquaintance who also prides himself upon knowing a good deal about everything in Washington.

"It looks more like Jim Riley's dog," said the acquaintance.

"Jim Riley's dog don't wear any collar," replied the authority.

"Cause that dog wears a collar it's no sign he's Beriah Wilkins' dog."

"No, that's so. But Beriah's dog here got a collar in his neck, and is a little off in one eye."

The authority whistled to the cur, and when he came up familiarly, the authority showed his friend the marks of Mr. Wilkins' dog. This led to a bet that the authority could name the owner of every dog that passed the corner, and in 30 minutes he called the ownership of 14, and offered as testimony of his claim to follow the dogs home. It may have been a bluff, but people who know say it wasn't. Not only does he declare that he knows these things, but he offers to wager that he can tell the ownership of the dogs by their bark.

This man was at one time known as the lightning calculator of the treasury department, and now sells dogs for a livelihood.

CHARACTER OF THE BOERS.

Natural Result of the Difficulties and Dangers They Have Gone Through.

Though au fond their natures and characters may be much alike, there is at this day a considerable difference in many of their ideas owing to the different life they have led for several generations; and it must also be remembered that the Transvaal Boer is of a rebel stock—his hand against every man, and every man's hand against him. In 1835, when the great trek from the colony took place, these men's ancestors were the men who defied the government—with great good cause in many instances—and whose hearts were filled with bitterness and loathing, whose one idea was to get away from their oppressors, says Mrs. Lionel Phillips in "Some South African Recollections."

The difficulties and dangers that they went through, fighting wild beasts as well as Kaffirs, although it gave them a rugged independence, at the same time developed some of the very qualities possessed by their new foes—namely, treachery and a callous cruelty. Hence, one has to distinguish between them and the colonial Boer, who during the same period has gradually been enjoying the advantages of settled government and contact with a superior class of persons. The Boer living on his solitary farm has been so exempt from laws and has gone his own way for so many years that now force is the only argument that appeals to him.

WOMAN WASHES SOCKS.

A Chicago Wife Cleans and Mends Friends' Fancy Hose and Handkerchiefs for a Living.

A young married woman of Chicago residing on the North side has recently kept herself busy with an occupation which promises to be successfully remunerative, says the Chronicle. Her husband was unfortunate, which necessitated the sale of their home and most of the furniture. The remaining furniture was placed in a small house. The clever wife had two rooms left unfurnished save for a gas stove and a table she intended to use in her business. When settled in her new small quarters she sent letters to her friends and acquaintances intimating her desire to undertake the washing of their fancy handkerchiefs, laces of all kinds, silk stockings, waistcoats and all dainty articles that could not be entrusted to the usual laundress. In a very short time she had more work than she could undertake single-handed, so she employed the services of a woman, whom she allowed to wash the articles and do any of the rough work, while she devoted her spare time to the careful ironing. Very soon the energetic wife was earning quite a sum of money in a quiet way. The rooms devoted to the occupation were kept quite apart and the family put to no inconvenience.

A New African Town.

The Westminster Gazette tells of an English night editor who found in a dispatch this information: "The Boers have taken Umbrage," and who wrote for it a displayed headline, starting off in this style: "Capture of Umbrage by the Boers." He tried to pad his dispatch by giving an account of the location of Umbrage, but was unable to find a town of that name in the gazetteer. It may be observed that the exploit of this night editor throws ordinary newspaper blunders into the shade.

The Alhambra.

The most curious place in the world is the Alhambra, in Spain. It was originally a fortress, so great in extent as to be capable of holding 40,000 men. It was begun in 1248 and finished in 1314.

An Apple District.

It is estimated that 40,000 barrels of apples will be shipped out of Huron county, Ont., this year.

WHIMS OF RACE HORSES.

The Thoroughbreds Are as Full of Queer Notions as the Most Erratic Human Being.

"Talking about people being peculiar," remarked an old trainer out at the Benning race track the other day, "if there is anything more peculiar than race horses I haven't come across it. Race horses, I mean thoroughbreds, of course, are as full of whims as—well, as a woman, and you've got to humor them just the same as women. I remember one I trained some years ago—a horse, I mean, of course. He was a great one, and few of them could show him the way in. Yet that fellow couldn't be exercised in preparing him for a race unless the boy on him was rigged out in the stable's colors. You couldn't fool him about it, either, for he knew just as well whether the boy was fully dressed as we did, and if he wasn't you couldn't get the old fellow on the track. But when the boy put on the studs, why, the old horse would go out and do all that was wanted of him," says the Washington Star.

"Then there was another that I had that wouldn't associate with other horses, and the consequence was that we had to train him by himself. Actually had to wait every time until every other horse was off the track. Then, when he had the whole track to himself, we had all we could do to get him off when we thought he had been given enough. This same one we had to send to the post by himself, and when we got him there we had to keep him away to one side, off from the bunch. Another one I had was just the opposite, for he wouldn't go on the track, either for exercise or for a race, unless he was accompanied by another horse.

"Then there is the horse that runs true as long as he is in the lead, but will stop and give up the fight the moment another one gets near him or passes him. On the other hand, there is the horse that tries all the harder as long as he is behind. Then there is the horse that will not try if the jockey has a whip, while there are others that will not try unless they are given both whip and spurs. But, as I said, they are very peculiar, and have as many whims as mankind."

WHERE HONESTY EXISTS.

No Burglar Alarms Are Required in the Small Towns of Connecticut.

"People in the small towns up in Connecticut," said a traveling man, "appear to be much more honest than they are in New York. Not one family in ten thinks of such a thing as burglar alarms, and half of them do not even lock their outer doors when they retire. But what impresses me most are the street laundry boxes.

"Nearly every town of 5,000 or more inhabitants has several places where laundry packages are received and delivered. These places are generally dry goods or notion stores, or haberdasheries. Suburban merchants as a rule do not keep their stores open much later than eight o'clock in the evening, and do not open them until seven or half-past seven in the morning.

"This does not suit all their patrons, so it is no infrequent sight to see outside the store a large red box with a fair-sized opening in the top. The box bears the legend: 'If the store is closed put your laundry in here.' Now just imagine a New York laundry office using a receptacle like that. Why, five minutes after a package was deposited in the box it would be fished out and in an hour its contents would be in the possession of some dealer in second-hand clothing. But up in Connecticut the scheme seems to work very well, and all I can say is that it is a tribute to the general honesty of the community."

COULD NOT RESIST BOOTS.

A Woman Who Had Never Seen Anything, But Them Shoes Would Steal.

Here is a respectable looking middle-aged woman; 20 times at least she has been sent to varying terms of imprisonment for stealing from shops; an incorrigible shoplifter she is termed, and so I thought till I came to understand her, says the Contemporary Review. Repeatedly as she was charged the pathos of the whole thing grew upon her. Her silence in the dock and her tears in the cell were irresistible.

So we became friends, and she told me her secret. I found respectable longings for her, hired a sewing machine, and secured her plenty of work. She was not idle, and was soon beyond the necessity of stealing. I flattered myself we were on the way to success and I said to her: "Your devil shall be cast out," when all of a sudden the old offense was repeated, and again to prison she went. My heart went out to the wretched creature as she sat in the cell. I could not condemn her, for I knew. With a piteous look into my face she said: "Don't blame me, Mr. Holmes, don't blame me; I can't steal. I would if I could, but I must steal boots." Knowing this, I had provided her liberally with boots to minimize the temptation, but all in vain, and so far as I could ascertain she had never stolen anything but boots.

Soup in France.

It is rumored that the French, after having taught the world the merits of soup, are themselves falling off in their love for the traditional national dish. Until the Franco-Prussian war soup was regularly taken at luncheon as well as at dinner and the older custom included breakfast No. 1 as well, but it is now coming to be the fashion to restrict its use to dinner. In this country the soup habit has increased prodigiously within the past ten years, though less importance is attached to it than in Europe.

LAYING UP A COMPETENCE.

Something That Practically Any Man Can Do by the Exercise of Self-Denial.

"There are some men of genius," said Mr. Nippingly, according to the New York Sun, "who accumulate great fortunes by great strokes, but by far the greater number of fortunes, including those of moderate dimensions, and these form the great majority of all, are made by the very simple process of living within one's income and investing the surplus, with more or less wisdom, but always where it will be safe.

"The older I grow the more amazed I am that more people don't lay up a competence for themselves, as most anybody can do, by beginning early in life to live within their income, and sticking to that course faithfully. Did I do this myself? No! Am I, however, having learned the wisdom of this course, now making a beginning? I am obliged to say: 'No; I am still spending all I get and laying up nothing.'"

"There are some lessons that we all easily acquire, but never turn to our own advantage. One of these is of the benefits that arise from the exercise of self-denial. We get from this, at once, the direct benefit of what we save, and self-denial nourishes, strengthens and broadens the will and enables a man constantly to do and to earn more and more.

"There's simply nothing like self-denial; it is the key to every one of life's treasures; and everybody has one of those golden keys in his possession, eager to help him, and waiting only for him to bring it in use."

A FIGHT TO THE DEATH.

It Was Between a Man-Eating Shark and an Alligator and the Shark Won.

Some fishermen down at Mayport, Fla., the mouth of the St. John's river, witnessed a strange fight a few days ago between a large alligator and a man-eating shark, says the Philadelphia Press.

The alligator was sunning himself on the river bank when the fishermen approached within 30 yards.

There was a roar from the alligator, which attracted attention to his presence, and he fell sprawling in the river.

Then a huge shark shot toward the bank and caught the alligator's tail in his mouth, causing the alligator to roar with pain and turn onto the shark's tail with his mouth.

The two monsters stuck their teeth firmly in each other's tail, and the shark snatched off a piece of the alligator's flesh, swallowing it at one gulp. The alligator let loose the shark and made a desperate effort to escape. The shark raised himself above the water and pounced upon the head of the alligator.

The entire head of the alligator was caught between the jaws of the shark and mangled.

Several hours later the dead alligator, without head or tail or legs, rose to the top of the water and was carried out to sea by the ebbing tide.

Several sharks have been caught at Mayport this year, and the fishermen who reported the above story will try to catch the shark that ate the alligator.

THE BUGLER WHO FORGOT.

Got a Chance to Run the Fight to Suit Himself and Made Things Warm.

It is not often that an enlisted man gets a chance to run a part of the fight to suit himself. That chance, however, came to one bugler, says a Manila correspondent of Leslie's Weekly. Capt. Hannay, finding that L company was too far away to bear orders, sent his bugler after the company to sound the charge. At the first notes 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 another chance for L to move on the jump—too good a chance, he thought, to be lost. He sounded once more and Lieut. Ross, 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 fast and hot.

By the time the bugler came to himself and relinquished the duties of first director the poor fellows of L company 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 Mausers and six Remingtons were the spoils of this field.

Self-Protection in Plants.

Young long-leaved pines, according to Mr. Pinchot, of the department of agriculture, protect themselves against forest fires in a most interesting and remarkable manner. For four or five years the stems of the infant trees attain a height of only as many inches above the soil. During this time their bark is extraordinarily thick, and that alone gives some protection. But in addition, the long needles spring up above the stem, and then bend over an all sides "in a green cascade which falls to the ground in a circle about the seedling." This green barrier can with difficulty be made to burn, while the shade that it casts prevents inflammable grass from growing near the protected stem. Mr. Pinchot thinks that it is owing to this peculiar system of self-protection which the pine seedlings have developed that the growth of evergreen oaks in Florida has been restricted in regions where fires have raged while pure pine forests have taken their place.

SAT NEXT TO GRANT.

And There is Reason to Believe She Boasts About It to This Day.

Visitors to Washington will probably remember an old second-hand book dealer, who on nice days sits in front of his shop, on the north side of Pennsylvania avenue, just opposite the Peace monument, says the New York Herald. He is in much a part of Washington as is the white house, and he numbers among his friends many of those prominent in national affairs. He tells many amusing stories of the statesmen of the days just following the civil war. He relates one story in which he and President Grant figured rather prominently.

The old bookseller had received a ticket for a theatrical performance. He went early and took his seat in the parquet. Soon a family consisting of a husband and wife and several grown-up daughters took the seats to his right. A little later a man came and sat on his left, next the aisle. The old bookseller is blind in the left eye and did not pay any attention to the man on his left. At the end of the first act the lady on his right leaned over and asked him if the stranger were not President Grant. Sure enough, it was, and the lady was so informed.

"I reckon maybe you kin see a mite better from this chair where I'm sittin'," the old gentleman remarked, "and if you think you'd rather change with me I'm willing."

A second invitation was not required. "And I didn't have to change only with the woman, but with her hull family, and I thought they'd push me out in the aisle. But I'll bet that to this day the woman tells of the time when she sat next to the president," the old bookseller adds.

COSTIEST IN WORLD.

The Cradle in Which Each First-Born Son of Marlborough House Is Rocked.

There is exhibited in the drawing room at Marlborough house the wonderful golden cradle in which each first-born son of the house of Marlborough is rocked during his infancy, says Ainslee's Magazine. In this cradle, which is perhaps the most beautiful and costly thing of its kind in the world, the present little marquis of Blandford was placed on his christening day, when he had been given the name of John Albert Edward William Churchill. The little heir, by the way, is named for three well-known persons: John, for the great duke; Albert Edward, for the prince of Wales, one of his godfathers, and William, for his grandfather and godfather, William K. Vanderbilt.

The two children are very closely guarded in the nursery, which consists of the most charming suite of rooms in the palace. Here the young duchess, who is a most proud and devoted mother, spends much of her time with her babies. When they go out in their blue and white perambulators for exercise they are wheeled about in what is known as the "kitchen gardens," among the fruits and vegetables, for except on show days the kitchen gardens are not delivered over to tourists for inspection. Thus the two little lords may hold high carnival without fear of public intrusion and snapshots. On other days they are wheeled about where their nurses will, within the 350 acres of private grounds, which are walled off from Blenheim park.

DUNRAVEN'S SECOND ERROR.

His Suspensions Were Once More Aroused Regarding Excess of Ballast.

The earl of Dunraven is a Tory of the most militant, shellback type, and at the same time he ruined his reputation in America by his charges against the yacht Defender, which afterward he was unable to substantiate, he seriously impaired his popularity over here, says the Philadelphia Post. Englishmen object to a fellow countryman making an exhibition of himself, and the general impression there is that his lordship acted foolishly. Only the other day Lord Dunraven received a gentle reminder that his fatuous charges against American yachtsmen were not forgotten by any means. He is one of the reactionary members of the London schoolboard. If only citizens of the United States knew how Londoners have to fight for popular education against thick-headed Toryism they would not wonder at the ignorance and drunkenness that are met with in the poorer quarters of the mighty metropolis. Dunraven was hauling a board schoolmaster over the coals for being, as he claimed, the worst for four, and on investigation it turned out that the charge was quite unfounded. John Lobb, quite a character in his way, and also a member of the school board, in making a report of the matter, wound it up in the following words: "In fact, this case turns out to be a second occasion on which the noble lord mistakenly believed a gentleman to have taken on an unjust amount of ballast."

The Malaria Mosquito.

According to the observations of Maj. Ronald Ross in India the germs of malaria are borne, not by the ordinary brindled or gray mosquito, but by his cousin the spotted-winged mosquito. Maj. Ross was recently sent to the west coast of Africa to investigate the sources of malaria there, and he reports that, as in India, the spotted-winged mosquito is the agent through which the disease is spread. Italian investigators have also shown that mosquitoes convey the germs of malaria into the blood of human beings.

Transvaal's Luck.

There are no textile mills of any importance in the Transvaal, and in consequence, large quantities of cottons and woollens have to be imported.