

THE QUEENSTOWN NEWS.

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Men wear out faster at the top than they do below. This is one reason why "there's always room at the top," but it does not lead to permanent vacancies.

If Cornelius Vanderbilt, Jr., had not been cut off by his father's will with a paltry \$7,000,000 he might never have been reduced to such pitiful makeshifts as chemistry and locomotive work for a living.

A Boston woman gets a year in jail for refusing to return over-change to a street car conductor. The idea that honesty is any part of the passenger's policy will strike many people as a novelty in the surface railway book of ethics.

It is safe to say that the value of the farm crops of the United States for the current year will exceed \$5,000,000,000. This is probably more than twenty-five per cent. of the value of all the farm property in the country, which the census of 1900 put at \$16,674,690,247.

While cremation is on the decrease in England, it is increasing in the United States. Eighteen years ago there were only two crematories and the annual number of cremations was sixteen as against the present twenty-six crematories with an annual list of incinerations numbering 2500. The whole number of cremations performed in this country is 14,000.

"My Lady Nicotine" is something of a queen in the United States. Her wealth in 1900 was estimated at \$283,762,516. A little more than half of which was represented by cigars and cigarettes. She paid \$8,951,624 in salaries to officials, clerks, etc., and \$49,852,341 in wages to work people. Last year she paid the Federal Treasury in taxes over \$62,000,000.

The British Engineering Commission has recommended the extension of the Cape works at Table Bay, Cape Town, South Africa, at an estimated cost of \$17,500,000, to accommodate the increasing traffic which the colonization of Orange River Colony and the Transvaal is expected to develop. Similar harbor improvements are also to be made at Durban in Natal.

Lord Kitchener has hit on a happy phrase, prophetic of South Africa's future. At the presentation of a sword given to him by the corporation of the Cape Town, though the formality took place in London, in his speech of thanks the general said: "You have the makings of nothing less than a new America in the Southern Hemisphere." The English papers seize upon the phrase, "the new America," for their headlines.

A single example will show the immense value of irrigation to the West. On one side of a fence in Arizona are orange groves worth \$1000 an acre. On the other side of the fence is a bare cañon desert. These tracts have the same soil and the same exposure, but one has water, the other has not. It is said that there are more than a billion acres of arid land in the United States, all of which could be made productive like these orange groves in Arizona; the only thing needed is irrigation.

The Morgen Zeitung, of Vienna, is authority for the statement that nearly 18,000 noblemen are serving terms in prison, as follows: 32,000 in Russia (chiefly for political offenses, it may be supposed); 5400 in Italy; 955 in France and 350 in Belgium. They include a Duke who poisoned his wife, a Marquis who killed his mother and an incorrigible Prince who has run the whole gamut of crimes. Let us no longer be sceptical when foremen who get into the hands of the police declare they belong to the nobility.

The proposition to insure the safety of railway travel by having a director ride on the cowcatcher of every engine pulling a passenger train, though deemed admirable in conception, was never put to a test. The experience of the owners of automobiles who of their own option readily take a more deadly risk than that is involved in sitting in the front of a moving locomotive inclines us to doubt whether the peril of a director on the cowcatcher would have added anything to the safety of the passenger in the coach, remarks the Philadelphia Record.

Dr. Barnardo, whose work among the waifs of England has brought him world-wide fame, recently celebrated the thirty-sixth anniversary of the beginning of his labors by sending 400 children to homes in the Canadian Northwest. Dr. Barnardo was a medical student when he became interested in London waifs by the plea of a little, starving chap for a night's lodging, and the first contribution made for his work came in from a maid servant who sent him 67d. in farthings. Since then he has found homes for over 45,000 waifs, boys and girls, nearly all of whom, he says, have done well, less than two per cent. having turned out failures. In fact, he receives over \$5000 a year from boys—now grown up—who he sent to the colonies.

IN THE EVENING HUSH.

What witchery dwells in the evening glow
When the fire burns low and the shadows
From the clock of time, on either hand
Like flitting ghosts where the dim light
Falls.

In flickering shapes on the dusky walls?
What spirits come when the heart goes
And moves again o'er the darkened track—
That walk with us through the long ages
In the evening hush when the lights are
Low?

What shadows o'er the dim room creep
To silent mourn or to pause and weep
And place a wreath on some crumpled
tomb
Hollow in the dust of the ancient gloom?
Forgotten shapes that in silence come
When the cars are dilled and the lips are
dumb
And only the dream tides ebb and flow
In the evening hush when the lights are
Low.

Gray specters out of the vanished past
Come stealing forth; and all living fast
The mystic ones from the future greet
And clasp one's white hands as the winding
sheet
Unseen, the flooding of the haunted room
With the scene of a long dead rose's bloom;
In the evening hush when the lights are
Low.

THE AURORA DIAMONDS

Being the True Story of Cuban Anita and the East Indian Prince.

ALL the American residents of Havana were interested in the masquerade ball which was given by the American officials to the distinguished Cuban officers at the close of hostilities and at which the diplomatic of every country were entertained, when all hostile feeling were to be laid aside, and peace and harmony were to prevail. On this account the ball was expected to establish an era of prosperity as well as one of returning luxury and splendor.

A number of Americans in high official positions had created palaces in Havana from their impoverished owners, and they did not hesitate to concede for that one occasion the priceless jewels and robes on which they had advanced money to successful Cuban. Costly raiment, such as princess alone possess, attracted and enslaved the eye. The barbaric opulence of dress was the center of the ballroom; diamonds were not worn, a mask being the only safeguard of the face, the gorgeous character costumes presented. Every one present was in costume, excepting one, and he was the most superbly and elaborately robed of the night.

The exception was a Hindu prince, wearing the robes of gold which only those of the royal caste may wear; a chaplet of great pink Oriental pearls at his neck, a jeweled sash about his waist, and the counterpart of a cluster of Oriental jewels, covering his head. The Hindu's breast was covered with decorative orders also blazoning with gems. He accompanied the impersonation of the goddess Aurora, a woman sumptuously robed in transparent laces and white satin overlaid with pearl embroidery. A pale tulle of "white fluted" over the costume like a veil, and this was accentuated by rose-red diamonds of fabulous size and beauty, the jewels forming into a stole for her shoulders and a tatra around her hair. As she turned in the undulations of a mystic, dreamy waltz Aurora attracted admiring and ecstatic attention from all the male dancers. The Hindu prince was her constant escort. The jewels she wore flashed in constellations of light and sent out prismatic rays that seemed alive of their own volition.

"Who is she? Who is she?" was asked with intense curiosity. At last a masker in the character of Mephistopheles answered: "I presume they are Oriental but old Lynde's daughter, the beautiful Anita, who has some foreign blood, although born in the neighborhood of New York. Her father had some money, but hasn't much now, and if the girl would save him from bankruptcy she must marry her Hindu prince."

"Bankruptcy, when he can give his daughter a dozen of diamonds fit for the Queen of Sheba? I thought it was the crown and the scepter of King Solomon signed regrettably."

"The diamonds are now to the fair Anita," said another of the company, "this time a woman, dressed as Martha Washington." "I presume they are betrothal gift from her lover, the Hindu. Yet I am told she has refused him twice. His devotion to-night is not discouraged, however."

"Perhaps the diamonds are treasure trove of some Cuban lord who has abandoned them. Saw you ever finer gems or any to compare, indeed?" "These brilliants are unusual—they hurt the eyes. Can you estimate their worth?" "By my faith, no. Mine uncle would advance several fortunes on them, Hush! They are coming this way, I feel dazzled."

"There are representatives of every nation on earth here to-night. It is a bit weird. I believe that Hindu is numbing his prayers. Did you hear a strange oracular chant as they passed?" "What they had heard as Aurora and her Hindu prince went by was apparently said for the purpose of sustaining interest in the character impersonation. It was intoned monotonously, and was heard but indistinctly through the crash of music and the clatter of conversation. But a few caught the words. They ran a sort of foreign jargon."

Pluck and Adventure.

Among the "Queer Stories" of which City Hall teems in St. Nicholas perhaps the queerest is a "nurse" shark, captured at sea and impounded in a tide-water aquarium in Florida.

With a little difference says Mr. Hilder, we caught the nurse, towed it to the aquarium, which was an inclosed most half a mile long, fifty feet wide and seven to eight feet deep. It required a dozen or more men to haul the fish which was eleven feet in length, over the little tide gate. Just before it was released the rope broke and was passed over it—a loop that fitted over the head and was tightened just behind the head, so that it remained in place, a perfect snare. To this a rope was attached and in turn made fast to a float. All this was prepared in advance, and it did not require an hour to get the shark through a plunger of the shark netting several men from their feet. Finally all was ready, and the shark was rolled out into the water. The shark stands a fair and stately symbol of the boy's life.

"Fear is an awful thing," said a young man who figured in several of the Philippine tales, "and while I have been swimming on many occasions, I really never had a genuine feeling of fear but once, and that was while I was in the war with the fellows in the Philippines. I was arrested at first, was caught by the natives. At the time of my first and last experience of fear we were about fifteen miles from Manila. During the day, we had rather a rough time of it. The natives were worn out. They had been beating down bushes, wading through marshes, cutting and shooting and making a great deal of noise, and these experiences left the men in a bad way. Their minds were feverish. I know that my mind was feverish, and under more happy circumstances I would have (I'm sure) been as calm as a cucumber. It fell my lot to stand guard on an outpost, and I was fifty of a lunatic. I had a gun, and I was to be ready to my neck in the bushes, engulfed in the fog of Philippine marshes on one of the blackest nights I ever saw. It has been a long time since I was undergrowth were waterlogged. On nearly a direct line with me were a number of comrades on outpost duty, but they could not be reached by my voice. We were the squares of platoons and then the companies of the regiment, spaced according to the regulations, and in front of me, driven back into the thick undergrowth, lay places of concealment, were the fellows we had fought all during the day. They knew the country. I did not know it. I was to be ready to my neck in the bushes, engulfed in the fog of Philippine marshes on one of the blackest nights I ever saw. It has been a long time since I was undergrowth were waterlogged. On nearly a direct line with me were a number of comrades on outpost duty, but they could not be reached by my voice. 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