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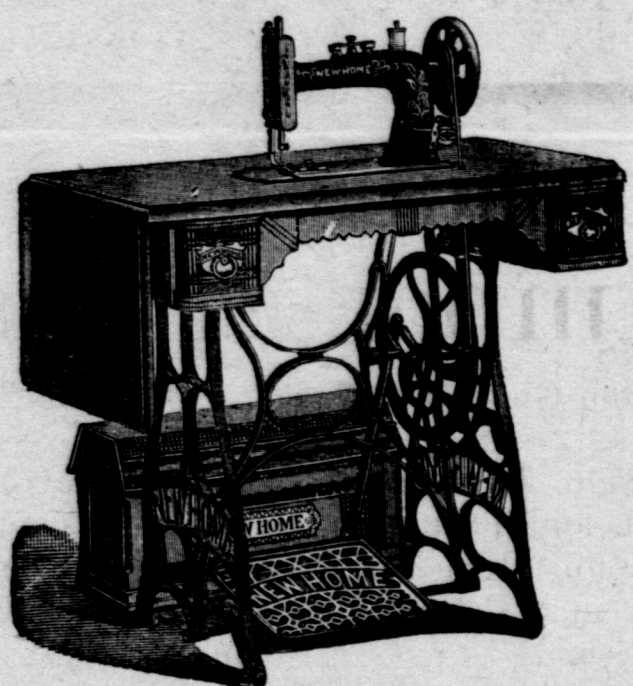
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THE ALBERT STAR.

WEDNESDAY, NOV. 7.

Autumn.

Grey autumn! Tell us why the glorious gold of falling leaves, of fern, and ruddy lines of brambles glistening in the morning dews, should to our gaze sad fantasies unfold. Why should our souls, with nature's instincts rife, Turn with a sigh? In dying, if it be like, Then should they moaning winds, and shadows give The prelude to the death that gives us life. We see thee fading for the winter sleep; That cold white sleep that wraps thee in its breath, And, though we sing of all we gain by death, We listen to the falling leaves—and weep.

Rice Planting in Japan.

The people were busy putting out their young rice plants, and the fields were full of men and women wearing their "kasa" and straw coats, oiled paper, rush mats or other contrivances to keep off the rain, and working in mud and water half way up to their knees. It is surely the most dirty and most laborious form of agriculture; the work is almost entirely done by manual labor, with a spade and a heavy four-pronged rake, though I occasionally saw a cow or pony, with a little thatched roof on its back to shoot off the rain, dragging a sort of harrow through the mud. As soon as the spring crop of barley or rapeseed is gathered and hung up to dry the ground is trenched with the spade and water is turned over it until it has become a soft slush, which is worked level with the rake.

The young rice plants, grown thick together in the nursery patches, are pulled up when the fields are ready for planting; these roots are washed, and they are tied in bundles, which are thrown into the mud and water; then the men and women wade in, untie a bundle, and set the seedlings in line by just pressing them with their fingers into the mud. They do this wonderfully quickly, and can plant eight or nine in a row without moving from their places; when the field is all planted it looks like a pond with a delicate green haze over it. The dividing banks are planted with beans and other vegetables, so that not a yard of ground is wasted. This was the 18th of June, the damp, clammy heat of the "dew month" just beginning a period very encouraging to all vegetation but full of discomforts for the traveler and especially for the landscape painter.

Hadn't Got the Girl Yet.

"Got any bridal chambers here?" asked a tall, awkward young man, with an ancient carpetbag in one hand, a frightened look on his face, a black slouch hat on his head, and wearing a hand-me-down suit of faded brown. "Yes sir, we have some very fine bridal chambers here," replied Chief Clerk Cunningham.

"Waal, I want ter look at 'em, fer I've got to engage one uv 'em," said the stranger.

"All right, just step this way, please," said Mr. Cunningham, who called an assistant and gave the order: "Show this gentleman the bridal chambers."

The stranger investigated the bridal chambers for half an hour and then returned to the counter down stairs, and said to Mr. Cunningham: "Golly! those rooms air ez lovely ez a pasture, lot in paradise! Now, they air the finest you have, air they?"

"Yessir, they are the finest in the city, and are good enough for a millionaire and his bride!"

"Waal, I'm much obliged fer all the trouble you've gone to; I'll be in next week, I s'pose, an' take one uv 'em," the stranger said, moving off.

"Oh, you did not wish to engage a bridal chamber to-day," said Mr. Cunningham, in surprise.

"The young stranger almost jumped out of his brogans. "Mister," he exclaimed, "I hain't ast the gal yet. I'm jist a-doin' this to get my nerve up so's I can go back home an' pop th' question to 'er."

Too Great a Sacrifice.

The two had sat in moody, sullen silence for some minutes. Then she spoke.

"Before we were married, Algernon," she said, "you used to declare you could give up heaven itself for me."

"Yes," answered Algernon, bitterly, "but I little thought you would ever ask me to give up smoking."

The Japanese as Electricians.

Not the least of the advantages enjoyed by the Japanese in their war with China is the fact that they are thoroughly informed as to the use of modern electrical apparatus, have employed it freely, and do not depend upon foreigners to handle it for them. One of their first actions was to take hold of the telegraph lines and stations in Southern Korea and to turn them over to their own corps for operation, for immediate service. In China the telegraph lines have been cut by the people, on the allegation that they caused drought, and are but now being painfully rebuilt. In Japan, on the contrary, from an humble beginning with about forty miles of line in 1870, the Government has developed a land system of 26,000 miles, and has established several cable links between the islands.

During the Satsuma rebellion of 1876, the service proved of great value. The military field telegraphs of the Japanese army are modeled on European systems. The Japs also make free use of the telephone, which caught their fancy from its earliest days, and they have always shown a marked partiality for the electric light. There are several central stations and isolated plants in the country, and the operation is skillfully carried on by highly trained men, many of whom gathered their experience in America. The Japanese electrical society is hundreds strong, and its principal proceedings are said by those who can read them to be of a high standard. It is worthy of note, too, that the Japanese were quicker than ourselves to apply electricity to the operation of canals, by using motors to raise and lower the boats from one level to another.

Star Beams.

The German colony in London numbers 100,000.

Sometimes love goes to a fellow's head as well as to his heart.

In the course of a year a single crow destroys 700,000 insects.

There is an average of forty-seven inhabitants to each house in Vienna.

To Angeline—No; the subject of a joint debate needn't necessarily come from a butcher shop.

Sculpting was practiced by the ancient Scythians and is not original with the American Indian.

Fig—Tell me, is there anything crooked about Gay? Fogg—I don't know, unless it is a corker.

It is found that some of the mummies taken from Egyptian tombs are wrapped in a thousand yards of bandages.

The famous Massachusetts lake, Quinsigamond, means, in Indian etymology, "good fishing place for pickerel."

The condor is the largest of all birds. Some that have been shot in the Andes had wings measuring twenty feet from tip to tip.

Sporting men in Michigan are experimenting by sowing wild rice seeds in marsh land to attract ducks, if the crop grows.

"Did he fall on his knees when he proposed to you?" "No. That happened when he reached the sidewalk. I think papa had something to do with it."

NO THIEF DARE TOUCH IT.

Diamond Ring on a Public Statute in a Madrid Park

A ring, studded with diamonds and pearls, hangs suspended to a silken cord around the neck of a statue in one of the most frequented parks of Madrid. It is safer there than in one of the strongest rooms of the Bank of England, says the London Answer.

Thousands of people pass it every day and admire its beauty, but the greatest thief in Spain hesitates even to touch it. It is believed to deal out death to whom it belongs. The ring was especially made for the late Alfonso XII, who gave it to his cousin Mercedes on the day of their betrothal.

Upon her death it passed into the possession of the king's grandmother, Queen Christina. Three months afterward she died. The king passed on the deadly band of gold to his sister, who died a month after she received it.

The king then placed the jewel in his own casket of precious jewels, and lived less than a year after he had done it.

A Wasted Warning

Long—"There's a dangerous counter-let twenty-dollar bill out; you want to be careful!" Short—"That's all right. A twenty-dollar bill always comes to me in installments."

THE QUEEN OF COREA.

How She Looks, What She Wears, and Some of Her Fads.

The Queen of Corea is now forty-four years of age, being just one year older than her husband. She is of medium height, and her form is slender and straight. Her manner is pleasing, and she is always described as "every inch a Queen." She is by no means bad looking. Her face is long, and every line of her features beams with intelligence and vivacity. She has a high forehead, a long, slender, aristocratic nose, and her mouth and chin indicate determination and character. Her cheek bones are high, her ears are small, and her complexion is the color of rich Jersey cream.

Her eyebrows are after the approved style of Korean beauty, the hair having been pulled out so that they form an arched thread of black over her eyes. These are almond in shape, and they fairly snap with life. They are keen, business-like eyes, and they see everything, being intellectual rather than soulful. The Queen's hair is jet black. It is parted in the middle, is combed perfectly smooth away from the forehead and brought down over the ears, and rolled in a low coil which rests on the nape of the neck. Here it is fastened with hairpins of gold or silver, each a foot long and as big around as your finger. The Queen has a good mouth, full of well-formed, large, teeth; and when she laughs, which is quite often, she shows the upper ones.

She dresses in a conventional Korean style. Korean ladies wear a short jacket which covers the shoulders and extends about four inches below the armpits, the front just covering the breasts, which are also bound in by the wide bands of the skirts. These skirts reach from the top of the breast to the floor, and the Queen's are so full and so long that she has to hold them with her hands when she walks. They are of different colors, are laid in plaids, and the band at the top is about eight inches wide.

Her hands, which are long, thin and shapely, never sparkle with diamonds; her only rings are heavy gold bands, and she always wears these in pairs, two rings on one finger. She wears neither bracelets nor necklaces, and her clothing is more like that of a retiring woman of the west than that of the Queen on the most gorgeous Oriental court of the world. Her feet are clad in Korean shoes of the softest of skins, finely embroidered, and more like slippers than shoes.

She carries a diamond-studded American watch, and, as is the custom among the Korean women, she is by no means averse to a smokes. She does not, however, affect the long-stemmed Korean pipe with its bowl of silver or brass, but prefers a cigarette; and I was told at Seoul that she orders her cigarette from the United States and smokes them quite freely.

Manna Eaters.

In some of the Eastern countries, notably Arabia and Persia, a manna answering closely to that mentioned in the Scriptures is still naturally produced in considerable quantity. It comes from the tender branches of the tamarisk and is known to the Persians by the name of "tamarisk honey." It consists of tear-like drops, which exude in consequence of the puncture of an insect, during the months of June and July. In the cool of the morning it is found solidified, and the congealed tears may be shaken from the limbs. That, in fact, is one of the methods of gathering manna. Herodotus alludes to the same nutritious product, so that there is no doubt it has been known in these regions from the earliest ages. It is easy to see how it might be produced in wonderful quantities without any special manifestation of the supernatural. It is a sweetish substance, pleasant to the taste, and highly nutritive.

Some students of the Bible have supposed the manna there mentioned to have been a fungous growth; but while the explanation would be a natural one, the modification which it would require is an unnecessary one. There are numerous interesting kinds of fungi, which modern experimentation has decided to be edible; and not only that, but highly palatable and nutritive. What country boy of an imaginative nature but has trod in mimic warfare with imaginary foes, getting the smoke for his artillery and infantry from the numerous "puff balls" which a convenient pasture afforded, while his own lung power furnishes the "crash and roar and cheer" for the inspiring contest? Yet silence has demonstrated that those very puff balls were once good to eat—in fact, capable of furnishing the most dainty refreshment.

Scissors at \$1,000.

The German Emperor has lately received a beautiful present from one of the most successful ironmasters in the fatherland, consisting of a pair of scissors of the finest steel and nickel, beautifully polished and engraved with views of historical buildings and the portrait of the Kaiser. The scissors, which took five years to make, are valued at \$375. A similar pair is to be seen in the Hohenzollern museum at Berlin, which belonged to the late Empress Augusta, and which were valued at \$1,000.

UNWELCOME GUEST.

The King of Abyssinia and His Visit to Europe.

Europe's courts, both imperial and royal, are at the present moment in a great state of perturbation owing to the impending visit of a self-invited guest, whose company they could well dispense with, but whom they cannot refuse to receive by reason of the political and commercial interests involved. Not that their guest was of low rank or plebeian descent. For, like the Shah of Persia, he bears the title of King of Kings, while he traces his descent in a direct line to the Queen of Sheba and King Solomon.

He bears the name of Menelik, and is the Emperor of Abyssinia. Physically he does not show traces of the comeliness we are wont to associate with our ideas of the appearance of a great King and is a queenly visitor. He is almost coal black, short and exceedingly dumpy. He is gentle and amiable to those who have his friendship but he has been guilty of acts of gross cruelty.

The chamberlains and dignitaries of the European courts are already speculating as to what form the customary gifts, which he is expected to make, will take. Inasmuch as he is in the habit of cutting off the noses of those of his subjects whom he catches indulging in snuff and slicing off the tips of those whom he finds smoking, it is obvious that he will present to the European court officials neither jeweled cigar cases nor gem-studded snuff boxes, and can hardly picture an African monarch whose notions of civilization are of the most elementary offering diamond and sapphire scarves to those who have found grace in his sight.

Those European diplomats and envoys who have ventured to take a trip to his court and to his capital have received as the greatest token of honor at his hands a lion skin. Will he, therefore, bring with him a cargo of lion skins for distribution? That is the question which is now agitating the minds of those august creatures—jelepe masters of ceremony, chamberlains, equeiries and gentlemen in waiting, lion skins being much less easily convertible into cash than jeweled snuff boxes and cigar cases.

Another reason why his visit is looked forward to with misgiving is that his personal habits are on a par with those of the Shah of Persia. When the latter stayed last at Buckingham Palace in London it cost some \$80,000 to clean the place after his departure, it being found necessary to not only replaster the walls, but even to take up the floors of the room occupied by himself and his suite. His manner toward the Princess of Wales and the other royal ladies in London were quite as offensive and disgusting as those which he rendered himself guilty of at the courts of Berlin, Vienna and St. Petersburg.

At Berlin old Emperor William was so horrified by his behavior that he pretended illness and left him to be entertained by the old Empress. Her high-flown and ultra-romantic notions of the poetic orient were somewhat rudely shattered when the King of Kings, finding the viands at the State banquet given in his honor not to his taste, deliberately removed them from his mouth and deposited them in her lap, making a ghastly mess on the lovely pink moire-antique robe which she had donned for the occasion.

Monocles Common in Europe.

In every capital of Europe the monocle is common enough. It attracts no attention on the street. In a row of men at the theatre a considerable proportion are sure to have it. Perhaps half the officers in the German army wear monocles. They are to be seen in abundance at any meeting of the French Academy. Even Socialist Deputies in France are not ashamed to go among their constituents wearing them. A session of the English House of Commons glitters with solitary eyeglasses. The single eyeglass is said to have originated among the officers of the British army.

About the beginning of the century an order was issued that army officers should not wear eyeglasses or spectacles. It was supposed that they gave the wearers an unilitary appearance. The order caused severe inconvenience to many short-sighted officers, and one of them, belonging to a crack regiment, invented the single eyeglass. He claimed that being an eyeglass, its use was no contravention of the order which prohibited spectacles and eyeglasses. It soon became very popular in the army, and was afterwards adopted. On account probably of this origin the single eyeglass is very generally worn in Europe by army officers. It is by some thought to give an aspect of determination and ferocity to the wearer, whereas eyeglasses lend an air of feebleness.

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