

JERSEY'S BLIND HEIRESS.

A Most Interesting Woman Is Miss Alice A. Holmes.

One of the most interesting women imaginable is Miss Alice A. Holmes, the heiress. Miss Holmes has just come into \$600,000 or more, but there is no danger of her marrying any young and ardent lover, for she is now in her seventy-fifth year, says Pennsylvania Grit. Then the old woman is blind and has been blind ever since she was 14. Recently her brother died in California and left her a big fortune, which she purposes to spend in the amelioration of the sufferings of her fellow-afflicted kind. Miss Holmes lives in a quiet and pretty street in Jersey City, and for 25 years she has struggled through a decent poverty. Her brother in California has always looked after her wants, but Miss Holmes' pride would not allow him to support her, and she has earned her own living well through the years of her solitude. Early in life she conceived a love for music, and although deprived of her sight she managed to master that difficult art. Once that she became proficient she desired to teach. And, strange to say, she was quite as proficient as a teacher as she was as a performer. She found she could succeed with pupils who had their eyes as well as with pupils who had not. And in that way she supported herself, if not in elegance, at least in comfort. Now that Miss Holmes has been rendered independent, she will devote her money to the education of her fellows who are afflicted with blindness. A number of years ago Miss Holmes published a volume of verses that have the true ring of poetry in them.

SINCE VICTORIA WAS CROWNED.

There Have Been Great Social Reforms and Wonderful Inventions.

Great social reforms belong to Queen Victoria's reign, writes William George Jordan in Ladies' Home Journal, narrating the progress of the world since Queen Victoria ascended the throne 60 years ago. The degrading practice of flogging has been abolished in the armies and navies of America and England. Children are no longer permitted to work in the mines of Britain. Press gangs no longer force men into the service of the queen's navy. The Red Cross society, approved by 49 nations, has softened the horror of war. The transportation of criminals, with its many evils, has been suppressed. Executions are no longer conducted in public. The treatment of criminals has become humane. Factory laws and building acts make life easier for the poor.

Inventive science has made marvelous progress in every department during Victoria's 60 years as queen. Cantilever bridges have surprised the world. Travel has been wonderfully quickened by street cars, cabs, trolleys, cable cars, elevated roads and other triumphs of invention. In 1837 there were no type-writers, no passenger elevators, no modern bicycles, no soda-water fountains, no horseless carriages, no chemical fire extinguishers, no ironclads, no perfecting presses. Fully chronicling the inventive progress of the last six decades would make it seem as if nothing of real consequence to man's comfort had been done before 1837.

DANGEROUS CHEMICALS.

The Time Has Arrived to Put Legal Restrictions on Their Sale.

Several more or less dangerous articles of chemical manufacture are becoming so largely employed for a variety of useful purposes now that some restrictions as to their sale, conveyance and storage are imperative, says the San Francisco Argonaut. Thousands of gallons of "liquid" carbonic acid gas in steel cylinders under high compression may now be seen every day being conveyed in carts from place to place, and similarly other gases are stored under pressure in "tubes," as, for instance, oxygen, hydrogen, nitrous oxide and so on; all of which may expose the public to danger. Solid bricks of metallic sodium, again (kept under naphtha, of course), are every day carried from port to port as part of a ship's cargo, and very serious accidents have occasionally arisen from the intermixtures of various chemicals on board ship by the damaging effect of a rough passage upon the packages. Still another chemical substance of comparatively recent discovery is carbide of calcium, which on simply becoming moist gives off the exceedingly inflammable gas, acetylene, which, with air, forms an explosive mixture.

A number of shawls sold as "real India" are actually manufactured in France. Persons familiar with both articles say that the original is softer than the imitation and that this softness arises from the way the thread is spun and partly also because the Tibet goat deteriorates when removed from its native hills.

WED EARLY IN LIFE.

Age at Which Marriages May Be Contracted in Europe.

In Austria a "man" and a "woman" are supposed to be capable of conducting a home of their own from the age of 14. In Germany the man must be at least 18 years of age. In France the man must be 18 and the woman 15. In Belgium the same. In Spain the intended husband must have passed his fourteenth year and the woman her twelfth. In Hungary, for Roman Catholics, the man must be 14 years old and the woman 12; for Protestants, the man must be 18 and the woman 15. In Turkey the man must have seen at least 14 summers, and the woman 12. In Portugal a boy of 14 is considered marriageable and a woman of 12. In Russia and Saxony they are a little more sensible, and a youth must refrain from entering into matrimony till he can count 18 years, and the woman till she can count 12. In Switzerland the men from the age of 14 and the women from the age of 12 are allowed to marry. In Turkey any youth and maiden who can walk properly, and can understand the necessary religious service, are allowed to be united for life.

A Costly Joke.

British jesters sometimes pay dearly for their jokes. One who frightened a married woman into fits by telling her that her husband had been severely injured in a railroad accident has had to pay \$500 for the fun.

HOTELS CHINA.

St. Made of a Black Cat Is Rather Expensive.

The hotels are usually grouped within a square or two of one another. Each one seeks to attract guests by high-sounding titles, says Lippincott's. For example, in Canton are hotels which flaunt the signs of "The Fortune Star," "The Golden Profits," (an unusually frank confession for a landlord to make), "The Rank-Confering" and "The Happiness." The food is not so bad, but the traveler who goes to one of these houses to sleep will wish that he had gone to another. The bedrooms are small, thin-walled boxes in which you may hear the breathing of your next neighbor or be kept awake half the night by the conversation of people at the other end of the hall, or, worse still, be almost stifled by the smoke from an opium pipe which is being indulged in by the man across the passageway.

The tea saloons furnish employment to singers and ventriloquists or elocutionists, who are hired by the proprietor to entertain the men who gather there to drink tea and gossip. Upon small tables are placed trays holding a variety of cakes and preserves, which are served with each cup of delicious, freshly made tea.

One house of entertainment peculiar to China is the dog-and-cat-meat restaurant. This does not mean that household pets are there brought to be fed, but that Tabby and Fido are served up in stews. According to prices charged for other food, these stews are rather expensive—especially if the cat or dog chance to be black and therefore more nutritious, according to popular notion.

YEAST OF LONG DESCENT.

Brought from Ireland, and Its Stock Goes Back of Cromwell's Time.

Mrs. Barbara Curran, who lives near East Orrington, Me., has a stone crock on a shelf in her cellar which is filled with yeast, and both the crock and the yeast came over from Ireland in her possession in 1846, says the New York Sun.

She came to America when a girl, and brought the yeast as a present to an aunt, who lived in South Boston. The yeast was renewed with freshly-scraped potatoes three times during the voyage on the sailing packet that brought her to this country. When she found employment as a cook in a Boston boarding house she took this yeast along and kept it alive and vigorous until she was married in 1853 and went to live in Medford. Before the war her husband moved to East Orrington and took up the farm where he now lives. Though they were poor and had much hard work, the yeast was never allowed to die out or get stale. The crock in which it is kept is a hand-molded brown earthen vessel, holding about two quarts. It was made and baked on the farm of Mrs. Curran's father, who rented a place near Galway. Mrs. Curran says this particular kind of yeast has been kept alive in the Norton family since before the time Cromwell's soldiers came along and found her great-great-grandmother making bread for the troops of King Charles I., and hanged her to an ash tree in front of the house.

INDIA SHAWLS.

Very Good Imitations Are Made in France.

Since the introduction of the Tibet goat into France the cashmere shawl has been imitated with such wonderful exactness that it is hard to detect the imitation from the original, says the Chautauquan. Experts say, however, that the genuine India shawl can be detected from its having a less evenly woven web and also from its brighter colors. It is likewise said that the border of the real India cashmere shawl is invariably woven in small pieces, which are sewed together and the whole border is afterward sewed onto the center. In 1837 there were no type-writers, no passenger elevators, no modern bicycles, no soda-water fountains, no horseless carriages, no chemical fire extinguishers, no ironclads, no perfecting presses. Fully chronicling the inventive progress of the last six decades would make it seem as if nothing of real consequence to man's comfort had been done before 1837.

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THE ROYAL WAY.

High-Born Dames Carry Their Own Bedding on Their Travels.

Few royal folks when traveling require their bedsteads and bedroom furniture to form a portion of their luggage, as the queen does, for instance. But many great ladies there are who carry their own beds and bed linens, blankets and quilts, and always a mackintosh sheet to spread over the mattress to guard against dampness for lack of sufficient airing in transit from place to place. Grand Duke Paul of Russia, it is true, is always, when traveling, accompanied by a bedstead, which he has had built in sections, and which is put up by a special mechanic, under the superintendence of the royal valet, wherever the grand duke goes, but then it is simply because he can seldom, owing to his great height, meet with one long enough for his comfort, says the Philadelphia Press.

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NATURAL COKE.

It is Claimed There Is a Deposit of It in the State of Utah.

In works of mineralogy it is learned that there is such a product as natural coke, but so far as known there has not been a deposit of this commodity been found in the United States, and this was in the vicinity of Richmond, Va.

Although the deposits of coal in Utah are immense in their proportions, it was never dreamed that among its commodities of trade and commerce the state could boast of beds of this natural coke, but such is the case, however, and the Salt Lake Herald is informed that a short time ago a vein of this coke had been discovered in a section of the country about 140 miles south of this city, and within 15 miles of a railroad.

This deposit crops out on the surface for some distance, and a 25 to 30-foot tunnel has disclosed a body of coke that is all of five feet in width, and there is every reason to believe that with the size of this deposit will increase. In quality the coke is all that could be desired, and at the assay office at which it has been tested the statement is made that it is a pure article, and that it is even superior to the manufactured coke, as it is entirely free from sulphur, bitumen, and that it gives out no smoke when burned, and makes less ash than the manufactured article.

The new find, which is considered as being among the most valuable that has been made in the state, is owned and controlled by ex-Mayor R. N. Baskin and several other Salt Lake gentlemen, who have located 640 acres in the immediate vicinity of the discovery.

FORGET THEIR CHANGE.

Men in a Hurry to Get Away After Making Their Purchases.

A man entering a State street book-store, made several small purchases, threw down a dollar bill to pay for them, and as soon as his package was handed to him turned to go out. The clerk called after him, says the Chicago Times-Herald.

"Hi, there! Don't you want your change?" and he handed the customer the best part of his dollar.

"That happens every day," said the clerk, "and we give quite an amount at the end of the year to charitable organizations from the fund created by change that has not been called for. It seems as if customers have only one idea, and that is to get their goods and go away."

"Do they ever come back for the change?"

"Very rarely, and then it is always for change that was left somewhere else. I often wonder how such people get through the world. And another funny thing is, the customer never seems to expect the change when we offer it to them, that is after he has forgotten it. You saw how that man looked when we called him back—just as if I was making him responsible for some other man's mistake. It takes one idea, and that is to get their goods and go away."

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