IN THE ODD CORNER.

QUEER AND CURIOUS THINGS AND EVENTS.

Story of an Ostrich and a Hot Potato—Something About Ferns and Its Poisonous Sons—Types of the Native Races.

There Is No Death.

HERE is no death!
The stars go
down,
To rise upon some
fairer shore,
And bright in heaven's
jewelled
crown
They shine for evermore.

There is no death!
The dust we
tread
Shall change be-
neath the summer showers,
To golden grain or mellow fruit,
Or rainbow-tinted flowers.

There is, no death! An angel form
Walks o'er the earth with silent tread,
He bears our best loved things away;
And then we call them—dead.

Born into that undying life,
They leave us but to meet again;
With joy we welcome them—the same,
Except in sin and pain.

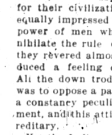
The dear immortal spirits tread;
For all the boundless universe
Is life! There are no dead.
And ever near us, though unseen,

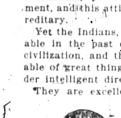
The Native Races of Peru.

According to Sir Clements R. Markham, president of the Royal Geographical Society, the Indian population of Peru is little changed in appearance since the days of the Incas, while great numbers of Mestizos or half-casts have retained most of the Inca characteristics. With intellectual powers fitting ly the whole laboring class in the church and state, under favorable surroundings, the Indians still form nearly the whole laboring classes in the interior of Peru. Like his ancestors, the Indian of the present day is robust, and capable of enduring great fatigue. His countenance is usually clouded with a look of profound melancholy, the indelible stamp of centuries of intolerable oppression. The worst forms of tyranny disappeared with the Spaniards in 1824, and the tribute was abolished in 1855. But the crushing oppression of the Spanish conquerors made a deep impression on their victims, which has produced a lasting effect. It instilled a natural hatred of their cruel enemies into their minds, as well as a profound aversion for their civilization. But they were equally impressed with the tremendous power of men who could utterly annihilate the rule of those Incas whom they revered almost as gods. This induced a feeling of hopeless despair. All the down trodden people could do was to oppose a passive resistance with a constancy peculiar to their temperament, and this attitude has become hereditary.

Yet the Indians, as a race, were capable in the past of achieving a high civilization, and they are equally capable of great things in the future, under intelligent direction.

They are excellent cultivators, and





TYPES OF NATIVES.

as shepherds they excel by reason of their patience and kindness to animals. It is probable that no other people could have successfully domesticated so stubborn an animal as the llama, so as to use it as a beast of burden; and constant watchfulness and attention alone enable the Indians to rear their flocks of alpacas, which need assistance in almost every function of nature, and to produce the large annual out-turn of wool. As miners, they are exceedingly apt at the work of extracting the metal from the ores; and no people in the world are to be compared with them in ability to endure the extremes of heat and cold. They make faithful and trusty servants, and become admirable soldiers. They are most affectionate in their family relations, and have an intense love of home. The people are fond of singing, especially when at work, and the little shepherd lads enliven their long hours of solitude with plaintive tunes on their flutes. The memory of former wrongs has tinged their most popular songs with sadness. The young mother lulls her infant to sleep with verses, the burden of which is sorrow and despair; and the love songs usually express in the most hopeless grief, though there are many festivals when the people indulge in cheerful intercourses, and only too often in an excessive use of a pleasant fermented liquor made from maize. They are fond of singing birds, kept in cages, of flowers and bright colors. Their artistic talent, though not of a high order, is far from contemptible. The memory of ancient times is preserved in songs and traditions, and it is believed that delegates, composed of the leading Inca chiefs, periodically meet in secret councils and discuss matters relating to the welfare of the people.

An Ostrich and a Hot Potato.

For odd appetites the goat and the ostrich stand supreme, with the ostrich just a step ahead. And yet an ostrich finds trouble in swallowing a hot potato. A South African writer tells an amusing story of greed and how it was punished. He says:

These ostriches were a source of endless trouble to us. They grew rapidly and developed great kicking powers, until they became sometimes positively dangerous, the dogs and the Kaffirs coming in for most of their attentions. Their appetite was insatiable. We used to make large quantities of biltong, or sun-dried meat, and there were usually dozens of strips of it hanging on the reims slung from wagon to wagon, and these were always objects of attention on the part of the ostriches. It was most amusing to see one trying to swallow a strip a yard long and two inches thick, just as a chicken struggles with a worm that is a little to big for it. Once we had to drag a huge strip out of one of the bird's throats to save it from choking.

But it was the culinary department that interested them most. They would always attack the Kaffirs bringing the viands from the "kitchen" to the tent, and sometimes were so pertinacious that the boy would get frightened and throw the dish away and bolt, and we would lose the best part of our dinner. They would even come into the tent and snatch things off the table, and we would take it out of them by smothering a dainty morsel with salt and cayenne pepper, but after awhile they seemed to flourish on it.

One day, however, we got the laugh on our side. Dinner was preparing and one of the birds was investigating the pots around the fire. A great pot of huge potatoes took his fancy, and he incontinently seized and swallowed a red-hot tuber as big as a large pomegranate. He danced, he jumped, he kicked, he twisted his neck about almost into knots, he flapped his wings and waggled his tail, he ran amuck, knocking things down and banging himself up against the wagons and stone walls, and at last tore away into the veld at twenty miles an hour until he was out of sight, and did not appear again for a couple of hours.

Every morning soon after sunrise these birds would indulge in a dance. They would come away into the veld for about a mile, and then, suddenly stop and commence waltzing round and round in the most ridiculous fashion, often till they dropped. I never could understand the meaning of this performance. It might be mere gamboling, but if so it was the nearly the only case of young birds playing, as so many young animals do.

Spiders as Weather Prophets.

One of the best of weather prophets is the spider. If there happens to be a web in the secluded corner of the porch watch it carefully. For a few days or weeks and the spider will unfailingly predict the coming of storms.

When the high wind or a heavy rain threatens the spider may be seen talking in sail with great energy—that is, shortening the rope filaments that sustain the web structure. If the storm is to be unusually severe or of long duration the ropes are strengthened as well as shortened, the better to resist the onset of the elements. Not until pleasant weather is again close at hand will the ropes be lengthened as before. On the contrary, when you see the spider running over the slender filaments, it is certain that calm, fine weather has set in, whose duration may be measured by their elongation.

Every twenty-four hours the spider makes some alteration in its web to suit the weather. If these changes are made toward evening just before sunset, a fine, clear night may be safely counted upon. When the spider sits quiet and dull in the middle of its web, rain is not far off. If it be active, however, and continues so during a shower, then it will be of brief duration, and sunshine will follow. These various indications may be witnessed and studied to the best advantage in the open air. But you need not always go outdoors to watch the spider barometer. There are few houses where the crafty creature does not find an obscure corner wherein to swing its sleight-hard: "Flies taken in and done for here." Watch these places, and when you see the spiders coming out on the walls more freely than usual you may be sure rain is near.

The Royal Express Company.

Since 1861 the queen has governed less than she did before. She has done better in just being a guiding influence in home affairs and a standard of international morality to her ministers. Nevertheless she has attended industriously to routine business. In the course of a visit to the chalet she staid at near Lucerne I was taken to a spacious rustic kiosk. It looked down on the rushing Reuss. Everything save a great, round table was old. Why was the table, I asked, so new? It had been ordered for the queen. She sat there, with all the windows open, for hours in the forenoon, writing and signing papers. A favorite dog sat on a chair. As there was no regent to replace her majesty in England (and never has been) queen's messengers often came and left, but we are not to suppose these gentlemen only bore mysterious state papers in their dispatch boxes.

The messenger department of the foreign office is a good deal a parcels delivery office for the convenience of royalty. Any little commission they also used to send by queen's messengers to the Crown Princess of Prussia cakes, pies, and other dainties they made themselves, and flowers. This way of utilizing foreign office messengers is not peculiar to England. The empress of Austria, when queen of Prussia, bought, two or three years a dress bonnet of Mme. Marx-Weill of the Faubourg St. Honore, but she usually sent it back twice to be cleaned and retrimmed. The bonnet was carried backward and forward by a king's messenger. Whether she continued to give her custom to Mme. Marx-Weill's successor I am not aware.—London Contemporary Review.

Rough Treatment of a Bummer.

The village of Waverly, W. Va., uses an empty ten foot oil tank as a lock-up for the confinement of drunk and disorderly person. One was hustled into it a day or two ago, and then the tank was rolled about by a crowd of villagers, while others beat violently upon it with clubs. Two hours later the unhappy prisoner was released, much bruised and quite sober.

Of Bavaria's 7,275 public schools only 4.8 per cent are in the cities. Of the 18,113 teachers 74.43 per cent are Catholics, 25.17 Protestants, and 0.63 Jews.

About 30,000 families make their living in Paris in connection with the cab industry and taking care of horses.

ENGLAND MAY FALL.

VAST INDIAN EMPIRE A SMOLDERING VOLCANO.

If the Present Revolt Spreads and Succeeds, the British Empire Will Begin to Crumble—Navy Army Formidable Now, Thanks to the British.

THAT revolt in India is of far more importance than people on this side of the water suppose. When a nation whose population number one-fifth of the entire population of the globe shows signs of going to war it is a time for thinking. There are 300,000,000 inhabitants in India, and of these only 100,000 were born in the United Kingdom. In the whole population only 238,499 speak English. Of British and British descent of the whole empire 200,000 would be a fair estimate, and these few people rule India with the help of an army of 74,000 British troops. In the native army there are 145,680 men, and they have been for years trained and trained again by the British until the native army is a formidable one of which England has more than once boasted in the face of Europe and with it threatened her European foes.

It is a mistake to think that the native army is officered almost entirely by Englishmen. There are 2,753 native officers in that army as against 580 Englishmen. To read Kipling one would think that it was the British non-commissioned officer who made the Indian army effective, but in the whole native army there are only three British non-commissioned officers outside of the eighty-four who belong to the "scientific corps" of the Sappers and Miners, or, as we would say in the United States, the Engineer Corps. The revolt of the Sepoys in 1857 was child's play to what the revolt of the Indian army would be now. To the present Indian army the Sepoys were as raw recruits, and when they made the

DIZZY ROAD IN THE MALAKAND PASS.

stand around Delhi they mustered only 30,000 men.

It is an anxious time for those charged with the government of India today. England would, in the case of a general revolt, no longer find barbarians for her opponents who were more afraid of the noise of a gun than the bullet which came from it. She has put into the hands of the Indians all the resources of the age for war, and trained the people to a degree of civilization which makes them a foe not to be despised. With her vast numbers and her well trained army, India could, if her people held together, shake off British rule as a dog shakes water off his back. To put down the uprising of a few tribes in 1817, Hastings had to assemble in India a British army of 120,000 men. But before Victoria's title of Empress of India becomes an empty title there will be some pretty fighting.

The loss of India would be the signal for all her foes to pounce upon her, and would be the beginning of the end of the British empire. It is not alone the uprising of the tribes on the Afghan frontier, though that is serious enough; but the general state of discontent which prevails all through India that makes the situation look serious. For some time a propaganda of sedition has been going on among the natives, and many of those most actively engaged were men whom the government had trusted and taken into its councils. Circulars appealing to the prejudices of Hindus, Mahometans, Sikhs, Parsees and Buddhists alike have been circulated in every village in India, and native papers have openly denounced the British government.

Gangadhar Tlak, a member of the government council, and other prominent Indians have been arrested for inciting to rebellion. There have been street fights in some of the cities, and several incipient uprisings have been put down by force. Two British officers have been assassinated, one almost on the steps of the Governor General's palace, and India is a smoldering volcano that is liable to break forth into eruption at any moment.

Troops must be sent to the frontier, for actual war is there, and the English can with difficulty make headway against the rebels in arms, though they have already 35,000 troops in the disturbed districts to do the fighting, and are pouring in more. Of the native troops the Sikhs are most relied upon by the British for hard fighting and loyalty, but the circulars spread broadcast show that an effort has been made to shake the loyalty of these soldiers, with what success is not yet known.

That some of these Indian agitators are unscrupulous rascals is evidenced by the fact that in one of their circulars, and one which much stirred up the people, they made the following outrageous and lying statement:

"But a greater and, if possible, worse humiliation is in store for the people of India—Hindus and Moslems, Sikhs and Parsees, Tams and Buddhists alike. A petition has been presented to the Queen of England (who styles herself Empress of India) praying that English officials may be allowed to enter your houses, and for a detailed examination of your daughters, to carry off to their cantonments, forcibly, such as may be by them selected as official women for the most degraded and most brutal soldiery in the world. This infamous petition is signed by the Princess of Wales and the wives of nearly all the English 'nobility,' and is certain to be granted, being only delayed pending the organization of another department to carry on the shameful traffic, and for which you will be obliged to pay, as for every other degradation to which you are subjected."

While the plague was raging the British health officers violated the religious feelings of the natives in their efforts to stamp it out. They were, of course, in a large measure obliged to do so, but an Englishman, especially when he was, as from some does the most proper thing in a most irritating manner. An Indian is used to being whipped and cursed by an Englishman, but when it comes to touching a part of his religion, no matter what that religion is, he at once becomes dangerous. The agitators have carefully fostered the resentment felt by the people concerning the plague regulations and have added fuel to the fires which were about exciting.

As to the Mahometan population, and there are 57,321,164 Mahometans in India—there have been fanatical mullahs

DESCRIPTIVE MAP.

west part of India that the fighting is going on.

The Khyber Pass, for the safety of which the British now fear, is the great northern gateway of India. It commands the road to Kabul and has been the scene of many historical events. It was through this pass that Alexander the Great marched when he went to India. Its possession is necessary for the safety of the Anglo-Indian empire. North of this lies the Swat Valley, the gateway of which is the Malakand Pass, which is also on the way to the Chitral.

A few years ago, when the Akhoond of Swat died, the western world for the first time realized that there was such a place, and the comic papers had lots of sport over the strange name. It is not so funny now for the "Swattees" are all up against the English and are fighting hard in their mountains and valleys. Up to the north and west of Swat is the Chitral. About three years ago the Chitral rose and an expedition went up there and put down the rising. The work does not seem to have been thoroughly done, though General Kelley made his reputation out of it, for the Chitral is up again and refuses to be downed.

SCIENTIFIC JOTTINGS.

An Italian named Gabellini has succeeded in making a boat of stiffened cement. The frame is of steel bars, a third of an inch in diameter, over which is spread a wire netting. On this cement is laid, and the outer surface polished. The boat is heavier than one built of wood, but is cheaper, and skips better through the water. Experiments have proved its strength.

Digestion proceeds more rapidly in the horse with active exercise than when eating is followed by a period of rest, according to the experiments of Dr. Tange, of Budapest, in the dog, and in man, the opposite is true, which shows how unsafe it is to infer results in one animal from observations on another.

An experiment which demonstrated the capacity of steel to endure greater pressure than the hardest stone was recently made at Vienna. Corundum cubes of both substances were placed under pressure. A weight of six tons smashed the corundum, and forty-two tons were required to crush the steel. When the steel did give way, the effects are described as most remarkable. With a loud explosion the metal flew into powder, and its sparks are said to have bored minute holes in the crushing machine.

By a new invention a fine spray of oil is thrown against the outside of a ship's hull, thus lessening the friction and making the progress of the vessel much easier. It has been known that oil scattered over the surface of the water will quiet the action of the waves, and now the proposition to oil the vessel's hull is received with great favor. There is an absorbent composition saturated with the oil by means of the spray, and the drip and spread of the oil is assured by the composition, which is a preparation of tallow, carbon and a number of other articles which the inventors do not mention. It is claimed that this invention will increase the speed of the vessel about 25 per cent.

Forgotten How to Play.

Gentle mother, whose life is full of work and care, have you forgotten how to play? If so, let your own children teach you over again. Join in their frolics, share their sports, learn to play their games. It may seem loss of time to you, but it means infinite gain to the children for the mother to be also the playfellow.

This cannot always be done, but it can be done often enough to increase many fold the child's delight in sport. There is no opportunity like it for inculcating the doctrine of fair play and of unselfish sharing of toys. From being played and played to have another play with them, they can easily be led to the desire to make her have a good time, and from that to the consideration and practice of giving other people pleasure. Remember the play time is his best time for the average child. He'll learn quite early enough that they can have good times without the mother. Do not, by trying to postpone that evil day, and, leaving the welfare of the child out of the question, the fun will be all on the mother's side. It takes away the worry and makes at least one bright and sunny half hour in a day that may be full of cares. We have no space to enumerate the advantages, but they are many. Try them for yourself, dear mothers, and help each other by reporting the results of the trying upon your heart, and also upon the temper and spirit of your child.

Biggest Farm on Earth.

The largest farm in this country and probably in the world is situated in the southwestern part of Louisiana. It extends 100 miles east and west, and was purchased in 1883 by a syndicate of northern capitalists, by whom it is still operated. At the time of its purchase its 1,500,000 acres was a vast pasture for cattle belonging to a few dealers in that country. Now it is divided into miles and miles of fields, existing every six miles. The fencing is said to have cost about $50,000. The land is best adapted for rice, sugar, corn and cotton. A tract, say half a mile wide, is taken, and an engine is placed on each side. The engines are portable and operate a cable attached to four plows. By this arrangement thirty acres are gone over, in a day with the labor of only three men. There is not a single draught horse on the entire place, if we except those used by the herders of cattle, of which there are 100,000 on the place. The Southern Pacific railway runs for thirty-six miles through the farm. The company has three steamboats operating on the waters of the estate, of which 300 miles are navigable. It has also an ice-house, bank, shipyard and rice mills.—From the Knoxville Tribune.

A Fossil Giant.

A huge petrified giant was found in Appanoose county, Iowa, two years ago. The huge fossil was excavated and taken to the office of the Centerville "Daily Citizen." Its exact measurement was sixteen feet four inches high, fifty-two inches across the shoulders and twenty-eight inches through the breast, and it weighed four thousand pounds. Mr. Swaim, one of the regents of the state university, visited the place where the petrified giant was found, and procured it for the museum of the state university of Iowa City, where it may now be seen.

AN ASTRAL ROMANCE.

THEY were, I think, the happiest couple it was ever my good fortune to meet — Margaret, Lady and Paul Fischer.

They were so completely absorbed in each other that they seldom took the trouble to become acquainted with strangers, nor feeling the need of companionship. But, as good luck would have it, they did allow me to come to see them, and when I had known them long enough to dare to speak on personal matters, I remarked upon the perfect harmony that existed between them. Then Margaret told me their story, and this is the romance as she gave it to me:

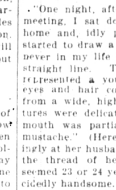
"I will tell you my side of the story and then Paul can tell you his.

"As you may have discovered, I have dabbled somewhat in occult matters. I have always been a natural musician and I play without difficulty any piece of music which I may pick up, although I have never taken a lesson or 'practiced' one hour during my lifetime. When I was a child I had only one playmate—he was a little older than myself—and I was satisfied if I could hide away somewhere and wait for him to come. The peculiar part of the matter was that no one else was able to see him, and as for myself, I never knew where he came from, nor did I ever see him until I looked up suddenly and found him beside me. Another peculiar fact was that he always carried an odd instrument similar to a harp, and we would sit side by side for hours, he playing, I listening, entranced, until suddenly the music would cease and I would look up to find the player gone. Then I would go into the house and play the music over again on the piano. This went on for years and people considered me 'queer,' if not quite crazy.

"If I could talk with my playmate because he used a language which I could not understand. As I grew older I drifted away from him. Other affairs filled my mind and it was but seldom I would have a vision in which the same form always appeared, but seeming to grow older even as I did.

"I began to study occult sciences when I was about 18 years old. I attended spiritualists' seances and finally took up the study of theosophy. Never, however, had I received a so-called 'test,' and any deductions I made were of necessity founded upon the experiences of other people.

"One night, after I had attended a meeting, I sat down by the table at home and, idly picking up a pencil, started to draw a portrait—I who had never in my life been able to draw a straight line. The picture resulting represented a young man with dark eyes and hair combed straight back from a wide, high forehead. The features were delicately molded and the mouth was partially covered by a mustache." (Here she looked admiringly at her husband and then resumed the thread of her narrative). "He seemed 23 or 24 years old, and was decidedly handsome. Underneath the portrait I was impressed to write: 'This is Paul ——. You will soon see his face.' I was told soon afterward that



WAS INTRODUCED.

Paul Fischer was a spirit and was the same little boy with whom I had been acquainted in my childhood. I was told also that he was born in Alsace-Lorraine and had never been outside of his own country. I measured the portrait I had obtained, it had a great fascination for me, but so much occupied my thoughts that I had no time, as a rule, to think much of the original. Six years passed by and I found it necessary to go to a strange city. I reached there early in the morning and, hunting up a boarding house at once, I settled down for a good rest before commencing the business which had brought me to the place.

"As I was going to dinner that night I came face to face, in the hall, with Paul. I started and so did he. Then with, 'I beg your pardon madam,' he stood aside to allow me to pass. I was too much disturbed to be able to eat much, and I felt his eyes were watching me all the time, so I soon left the table.

"In the evening Mrs. Porter, the woman at whose house I was staying, knocked at my door and asked me to come into the parlor. I hesitated, but went and was introduced to 'Paul Fischer'—the man of my dreams—the man of the portrait. I recognized the face, the voice, the way in which the hair was arranged, in fact, every detail corresponded with my preconceived ideas of how he would look. But my head was in a whirl. My Paul Fischer was supposed to be a spirit, but this Paul Fischer was decidedly material.

"It was just one week before the problem was solved. I do not intend to solve it for you—Paul will do that. To make mattters short, however, I will say that I found that he was my Paul Fischer. It was just one month from the time I met him until we were married. On our wedding day Paul brought out a portfolio and asked me to look through it and tell him what I thought of his drawings. The first sheet I picked up showed a portrait of myself. I was represented sitting at a table sketching a man's head, and the head was the same one which I had done my first and only drawing six years before. But Paul must tell you the rest."

FLAGS FOR UNCLE SAM.

For more than thirty years the flags which our ships and men-of-war have flaunted all over the world have been made in one suite of rooms at the Brooklyn navy yard.

It is the boast of the department that the workers turn out flags better made than those obtainable in any other portion of the globe. Not only are American flags made but flags of all nations, for each warship is required to be fitted out with a flag of every nation which sends ships upon the sea. James Crimmins, the foreman, knows more about flags than any one else in the world. He weighs the bunting, tests the colors, measures the stripes, cuts the cloth, carves out the stars and inspects the sewing.

The department reserved for the measurement of the flags resembles a gigantitic tennis court, only in place of white lines the floor is inlaid with strips and plates of brass. The measurements of the flags must be perfect. The floor is so good and so large that the semi-monthly balls of the officers stationed at the Brooklyn yards are held in the room.

Some of the women who sew the flags together have worked for fifteen years. Machinery and electricity have done away with the necessity of sewing the flags by hand, but the women who sew on stars are expert needlewomen. A certain number of stitches is allowed to one inch and only careful hands can do the work. Cutting out the white stars is interesting to watch. The foreman folds the cloth twenty times, places a metal star on the pile and marks the pattern. Then with chisel and mallet he cuts out a whole shower of stars at once.

The flags used by the navy have to endure frost and snow, rain storms and blazing suns, and therefore great care is exercised in the choice of goods and coloring and many testing devices are used before choice is made of cloth.

One of Those Strange Happenings.

A good one is being told on a Chicago man. A few days ago, the story goes, he received a photograph from his girl in another town. The girl had wrapped the picture in a piece of newspaper on which was printed the ad of a stove firm. A portion of the paper adhered to the picture and the young man was very much surprised to see staring at him on the face, in bold, large type, the words, "See the name on the leg."

A Poor Rule.

"Remember, my son, that early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy and wealthy and wise," remarked the reason the farmers are the richest class of people in the nation?"—Indianapolis Journal.