

## In the Smoke Room.

IN this most restless age fatigue is one of the great evils against which we have to contend. During the past few months interesting experiments have been made upon the exact nature of the poison which is engendered by excess of brain work or physical exertion. Professors Maggiori, Mosso, and Wedensky maintain that if the blood of a greatly fatigued animal be injected into another animal which is fresh and unfatigued, the phenomenon of fatigue will be produced. Professor Wedensky goes even further, and as the result of chemical analysis, states that the poison engendered by excessive fatigue is exactly similar to the ancient vegetable poison known as curare. This was the deadly poison used by Indians in time of war for dipping their arrow points. Both poisons are said to be of the most virulent nature. If this poison is created more rapidly, as is sometimes the case, than the blood can manage to carry it away, the effect on the general physical condition is extremely serious.

Surely one of the strangest applications of science to sports is that made by a certain hunter in India (says a writer in *Chums*), who calls in the aid of the electric light to enable him to make sure of his aim. It has been found almost impossible during the daytime to draw tigers into the open near thickly-settled parts of India. At night, however, this is easily accomplished by placing a carcass in some convenient place, near which the hunter may lie in ambush. But after the tiger has accented the blood of the dead animal, and has begun to tear the carcass, it is difficult for the hunter to take aim in the darkness. Accordingly, an electric light is hung right above the carcass, and connected with the sportsman's rifle. As he approaches the tiger, he takes as good aim as possible; and when he considers himself sufficiently near to make sure of a kill, he presses the button that turns on the light. Its appearance so startles the tiger that he remains motionless for a few seconds.

'At Raglan Castle,' said Mr Canthony, the ventriloquist, 'I gave an entertainment in the open air, and throwing my voice up into the ivy-covered ruins, said, 'What are you doing there?' To my amazement, a voice answered, 'I climbed up here this morning just to see the folk and 'ear the music; I won't do no harm.' 'Very well, stay there, and don't let anyone see you, do you hear?' The reply came, 'Yes, muster, I 'ear.' This got me thunders of applause. I made up my mind to risk it, so I bowed, and the boy never showed himself.

One of the most curious of pleasure railways is that built through the palace of the Sultan of Morocco at a cost of 100,000 dollars. Comfortably smoking in an electric car, His Highness takes several trips a day over this miniature road.

M. Fischer, a French physician, maintains that the present system of making up beds so that the head of the sleeper is much higher than the feet, is altogether wrong and productive of insomnia and all kinds of evil, and that the proper position for absolute repose is to have the head on the same level with the feet. He even goes further than this and advocates so placing pillows that your feet may be higher than your head.

Mr C. E. Linnar, of the Illinois State Weather Service, finds evidence in police records that crime increases with increase in temperature, with decrease in rainfall, and to a greater degree with both causes. There is also a slight apparent increase in clear as compared with cloudy weather. On the other hand, crime seems to diminish with increase in the severity of the cold in winter, with excess of rainfall in summer, and especially during seasons that are both rainy and cold. A north-east wind is less conducive to crime than a south-west wind.

A curious story is told of Dr. Pasteur. He was eating cherries with his daughter and her family, and carefully washing each cherry in a glass of water by his side, and wiping it before putting it into his mouth, which little vagary, he said, was to prevent him from swallowing microbes. A few minutes later the doctor was observed, in a fit of absent-mindedness, to carefully lift the glass to his lips and drain it. Yet he lived to tell the tale which was a source of amusement to those present.

**GOLD IN A COAL MINE.**—In the Transvaal, coal occurs in the Karoo formation at varying depths from the surface to 100ft; the largest of the coal measures has 40ft of workable coal, the others up to 22ft in thickness. The coal contains as much as 15 per cent. of ash, which curiously enough contains about 9dwet of gold per ton of coal. The production of the three principal mines in 1894 was 501,422 tons. The labour employed consisted of 124 whites and 2,005 natives. The evaporative efficiency of the coal varies from 43 to 81 per cent. of that of British coal.

A Motor-Car Club has been formed as a limited liability company, to be managed by honorary officials

only, and to consist of shareholders and members who do not look for dividends, the sole object of the club being to further the interests of the whole motor-carriage movement, to secure the removal of legal impediments, and to encourage exhibitions. The first International Motor-Carriage Exhibition was to be held at the Imperial Institute this month.

Within the walls of Buckingham Palace, constructed on the 'strong room' principle, is a room known as the 'Queen's Secret Library,' and in this are stored documents and private letters, which, were they sent forth to the world, would doubtless set the whole universe talking. From the very commencement of her reign her Majesty has assiduously stored away in nice order all family and other important papers, her only assistant in this duty being a secretary, who entered her service within fourteen years of her accession to the throne, and who still retains his place, though he himself has had no access to nine-tenths of the papers which are docketed, the Queen alone retaining the keys of the safes and cabinets in which her 'secret library' is contained. Only the other day Her Majesty added to the list of her papers a batch of letters of the most private and confidential kind, addressed by the late Prince Consort to his brother, the Duke Ernest of Coburg, and it is a well-ascertained fact that she has, when possible, acquired every scrap written by her late Consort to his most private friends. It is said by those who are qualified to surmise that the 'Queen's secret library' not only tells of Royal marriages, births, and deaths, but that it is virtually the private history of Europe during the past fifty years.

## OLDEST SISTER OF CHARITY.

PHILADELPHIA has the distinction, according to a writer in *Donahoe's Magazine* for March, of being the residence of the oldest sister of charity now living. She is Sister Gonzaga, the mother emerita of St. Joseph's Asylum. She has had a most remarkable career. She was born in Baltimore in 1812 and her name in the world was Mary Agnes Grace. She became a sister of charity in 1827, and in company with several other sisters opened a school at Harrisburg. She made her final vows in 1830, and then went to Philadelphia to St.



SISTER GONZAGA, THE OLDEST SISTER OF CHARITY LIVING.

Joseph's Home, with which her subsequent life had been intimately connected.

The beginning of the Civil War marked the most eventful epoch in the career of Sister Gonzaga and developed her extraordinary qualities of administration. The Satterlee Military Hospital was established in Philadelphia, and as a result of several interviews with Secretary of War Stanton, Sister Gonzaga, with forty sisters of charity from different parts of the country, assumed charge.

In those three momentous years they nursed and cared for upwards of 48,000 soldiers. The sick and wounded comprised both Union and Confederate soldiers.

Sister Gonzaga, although in her eighty-fourth year, still retains clear and vivid recollections of those trying times. She rarely introduces the subject herself, but once it is brought into conversation she talks with enthusiasm upon it. The hospital was one of the largest in the country, and everything was arranged upon a generous scale. On the 12th April, 1877, Sister Gonzaga celebrated the occasion of her golden jubilee in the sisterhood.

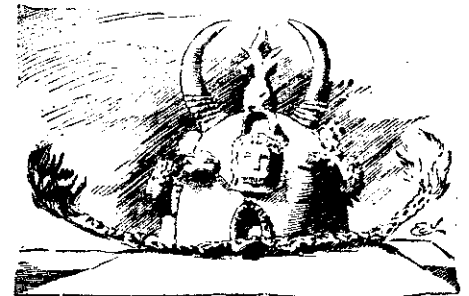
**CLARKE'S WORLD-FAMED BLOOD MIXTURE.**—The most searching Blood Cleanser that science and medical skill have brought to light. Sufferers from Scrofula, Scurvy, Eczema, Bad Legs, Skin and Blood Diseases, Pimples and Sores of any kind are solicited to give it a trial to test its value. Thousands of wonderful cures have been effected by it. Bottles 2s 6d each, sold everywhere. Beware of worthless imitations and substitutes.

## Plain Speaking.

A GENTLEMAN signing himself 'Fault Finder' writes:—'Having lately been in the Auckland Nurses' Home (attached to the Hospital) on business, I was much struck with the bareness of the rooms. I learnt that there was no coloured table-cloth in the dining-room, where the nurses often sit. They have either to contemplate bare boards or keep on the white cloth used for meals. Surely if our Hospital Board cannot afford this little luxury (many people would think it a necessity) some generous person in the city or suburbs will donate one. Possibly in some warehouse or private house there may be one which is good, but not quite the very latest style. Will they not send this up to the Lady Superintendent? I also learn that the beds are much in need of quilts, no new ones having been bought since there were nurses. A few cushions, pictures, bookshelves, brackets, etc., a rug or two, some books and games would all add greatly to the comfort of this very hard-worked portion of the community. Surely when we reflect the blessings and comfort these nurses are to the helpless sick and dying in our Hospital, we shall all feel inclined to do all we can to make the very little leisure they do have as much of a rest and enjoyment as possible. For nursing is most exhaustive work, there is such a continual demand not only on the bodily strength, but on the sympathy and tenderheartedness of the nurse, and only those who have had much to do with invalids and patients of any kind know how exacting, hard to please, and impatient many, or most of them are.'

## CROWN JEWELS OF ASHANTEE.

THE royal jewellery and other treasures of Ashantee brought to England by Sir Francis Scott have proved to be of very disappointing intrinsic value. It is estimated that they would be worth but some £2,000 in actual bullion; but if they are sold by auction as curiosities they may realise a considerably larger sum, since many of the trophies are almost unique as specimens of the rude workmanship of the country. King Prempeh's crown is made of thin hide, lined with silk, and surmounted by two golden horns. All round the sides are affixed models in solid gold of lion's heads, together with human heads and jawbones. If the jewels



KING PREMPEH'S CROWN.

are disposed of by auction, an exception will be made of this crown, which is destined to find a resting-place at Windsor Castle. Another peculiar curiosity is a cup made of solid gold, after exactly the same pattern as those used for incense in the Roman Catholic ritual. This and sundry other trinkets are chiefly of interest for the close imitation of European models shown in their workmanship. The inventive faculty would seem to have little kinship with what counts for civilisation in Ashantee. The sheath of the chief sacrificial sword is the most notable item among the spoils. This bears embossed designs in gold of the trunks of beheaded men. Smaller articles of jewellery, which are supposed to have belonged to the Queen, are of quaint design, but few of them are of solid gold.

## CYCLING IN LONDON.

In spite of ridicule and opposition, and the vigorous attacks of Mrs Lynn Linton—who styles it a 'crank and a craze,' and a combination of the 'treadmill and the tight-rope,'—the cycling mania spreads and spreads. The Prince and Princess of Wales having joined the wheeling throng, in addition to the already large number of Royalists and main portion of the aristocratic world, its triumph may be considered, we presume, complete. The Princess of Wales rides a quietly appointed machine; but some of the Royal and noble ladies are making very dainty affairs of their wheel-steps: the Countess of Warwick, to wit, who is very frequently *en evidence* in the neighbourhood of the glorious old Castle on her entirely white 'bike.' The hours in Hyde Park for the all-prevailing exercise now being extended to two o'clock, this coming season may see all restrictions ultimately removed, and a Cycling Row and Drive.