



A RUSSIAN who the other week won over a million francs at the Monte Carlo tables is said to be now almost penniless. Baccarat at certain clubs at Nice relieved him of the greater part of his winnings; the remainder he lost at Monte Carlo. He has even been reduced to pawning his jewellery.

In connection with nearly all the police stations of the Metropolis and the large towns of the provinces there are 'professional bail-givers,' who make a very fair sum by becoming bail for persons who have been locked up for drunkenness and other minor offences. Suppose that a man who has valuables about him, or can give a card with a good address, is locked up, and that his friends are too far off to be communicated with, or that he does not want to let such friends know of his plight, one of the policemen hanging about will, when the incarcerated one becomes decently sober, generally, for a 'tip,' find him a professional bail-giver, who, whilst holding valuables, or good references, as security, will enter into a bond for the appearance of the offender at the police court next day, or when required. These men as a general rule clear a sovereign by each case they take up, but of course they give a bit out of this to the policeman who has introduced them.

The greatest dandy in the world (according to *Woman*) is Prince Albert of Thurn, Germany. This fastidious young man attires himself in a suit of clothes every day, enough yearly to keep twenty experienced workmen going, and to run up a bill of £3,000. Each suit of wearing apparel is highly perfumed with attar of roses, at £5 an ounce.

For a wager three men recently tested their water-drinking powers. The winner swallowed twelve quarts, the second nine, and the third seven. All died very soon after their feat was over.

A doctor, while condemning cigarette smoking as injurious to the health, especially in the case of young people, says that the free carbon deposited upon the teeth discolours them, but may act as an antiseptic and preservative.

Many of the most fashionable hotels in London and other places are the happy hunting ground of a set of men who avail themselves of numerous hotel privileges without paying hotel fees. These men are generally attired in stylish apparel, and contrive to be on speaking and visiting terms with one or more of the hotel guests. Armed with the slightest of pretexts, and oftentimes without any reasonable excuse at all, they will boldly enter the smoking and reading rooms of the establishment and make themselves quite at home. They will use the hotel writing paper for their correspondence, and help themselves freely to anything that is not likely to involve them in expense. They will peruse papers and magazines; arrange appointments for people to meet them in the hotel, lounge on the best chairs, and loaf about the hall and passages as though they lived in the place; and all this without spending a sixpence if they can avoid it. Hotel proprietors justly dread them, for while they are responsible for much of the wear and tear done to the place they contribute practically nothing toward the expenses of the establishment.

There are notorious losers of umbrellas, whether these latter be carelessly left by them or stolen from them. But this is by no means the case with women, who very seldom indeed lose an umbrella. An inspector of detective police once said to the writer—'Amongst professional umbrella thieves—men who will snatch up a 'mush,' as they call it, whenever and wherever they can—it is well-known that going for the umbrella of a woman is too dangerous a game. They do not put valuable umbrellas down and then forget all about them as men do. We seldom have to offer rewards for valuable umbrellas lost by women.'

A most striking article by Mr J. Holt Schooling, on the nation's expenditure, appears in the April issue of *The Windsor Magazine*. The writer says:—'Our expenditure is equal to a cost of £11,130 per hour, or not far short of £200 per minute, for conducting the national business of this country. We are not yet spending quite £200 per minute, for this means a yearly expenditure of over 105 millions; but year by year the amount gets bigger, and for the year ending the 31st of March, 1897, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach estimates the expenditure at just over 100 millions. This is the first time that a Chancellor of the Exchequer has touched the 100-millions level in his estimate of the current year's expenditure. An old clock is now ticking solemnly on my

staircase, and at every swing of its old brass pendulum it records the fact that a paltry £3 4s 6d actually suffices to run this country and to leave a surplus of four millions at the end of the year. This clock is more than 150 years old, and it first ticked time away just as it does now, in the time of George II., when, according to Mulhall, our national income was about one-tenth of its present amount, and when each swing of its pendulum was worth only 6s 6d, as a record of the country's income during one second of time. Our income of £3 4s 6d per second is a vast improvement on the 6s 6d of 150 years ago. But all the same, £3 4s 6d per second does seem a trifling income for this country to have.'

We are glad to see (says a London journal) that the Kennel Club has at length been stirred in regard to the odious and idiotic practices indulged in by the baser fanciers of cutting, trimming, and dressing up dogs for the show bench and show ring.

Friends abroad who have not seen the Prince of Wales for a few years (says the *Whitehall Review*) are shocked at his altered appearance, he seeming to have aged almost twenty years in this time. Those of us in England who see the Prince often have been observing this change coming on in his appearance ever since the death of the Duke of Clarence.

All of us have seen men wearing collars too large, too high, or too tight, without the smallest consideration of their style. Short necked, fat, puffy men look miserable in collars too high for them, but perhaps not quite so absurd as do others with great thin necks disfigured with Adam's apple, who wear the lowest possible neck dressing. Men to look well in the high-banded fold-over collars must have good necks and perfectly formed chins.

The pipe smoked by the Shah of Persia on State occasions is set with diamonds, emeralds, and rubies. It is said to have cost £80,000.

Recently published statistics have thrown deep gloom over the French Anti-Tobacco League, for they show an enormous and rapidly increasing consumption of the narcotic weed in that country. In 1896 French smokers threw 395,000,000 francs into the Treasury of France by the patronage which they gave the Government's tobacco shops, and this is 12,000,000 francs more than they spent for that purpose the year before. The President of the League finds in their excessive use of the weed the chief reason why Frenchmen are not increasing in number, and when an interviewer asked him how it was that smoking did not seem to produce the same effect in Germany he took refuge in the more than dubitable assertion that in Germany the people bought good tobacco, while in France they were practically forced to buy the wretched stuff prepared in the Government factories.

M. Pasteur once expressed to some of his young student friends a doubt whether life would be possible in the absence of all bacteria, noxious or innocuous. We breathe bacteria, drink bacteria, eat bacteria, and our bodies are the happy hunting-ground of countless myriads of them. This being so, it seemed not improbable that their presence was a provision of nature, and as necessary to life as air or water. Pasteur commended the question as an interesting subject of experiment, and a couple of his young friends have been carrying the experiment out. The result of their experiments, so far as they go, is reported to be that animal life is quite independent of the presence of bacteria. A number of guinea pigs were kept carefully shut from the moment of their birth in a sterilised chamber, with sterilised air, and fed with sterilised food. They thrive under these conditions, and when killed not a single microbe was found in their blood or tissues. Guinea pigs, then, can get along swimmingly without bacteria, but whether men could do so is a matter still doubtful.

Phrenology has been a favourite science of the Minnesota Legislature this year, and bills to appoint a State Commission of Phrenology, a State phrenologist, who is to examine not less than 2,000 heads a year, and an assistant State phrenologist, have been introduced. A learned professor of phrenology has been having the free use of the hall of the House of Representatives at night for the purpose of giving instruction in the exterior details of headworks.

The Queen has become very fond of the game of 'patience,' and passed away many hours when on her way to Cimiez with the little 'patience' table (which was introduced to her by one of her ladies) before her. A 'patience' table is a simple matter, just a light flat piece of wood covered evenly with green cloth, for holding upon the knee, and the cards used are about half the usual size, and kept compactly in little boxes. The game is becoming more and more popular with ladies, just as popular in its quiet way as 'puff ball' in its rattling way. By the by, if you wish to be a success at a country house, you really must learn 'puff ball' before you accept your invitation.

Men and Women.

OF the fourteen reputed centenarians who died during the past year, no fewer than eleven were women, says the *Illustrated London News*. Out of the 168 persons who were declared as over 90 years of age at death, 103 were women. The superior longevity of the female sex is a well-established fact. To some extent it depends, of course, on their more sheltered way of living, but by no means exclusively, as the women of the labouring classes show a great vital tenacity as well as those who have an easy time of it in the world. The vital power of girls is shown in babyhood, for though about 104 boys are born to every 100 girls, the females have more that overtaken the deficiency before the end of the first year. In other words, the belief of old nurses that boys are harder to rear than girls is a true one.

Now deformities and ailments crowd fast after the inventions that characterise the end of the nineteenth century. The bicycle has brought a 'hump' in the spine of the devotee who has carried wheeling beyond a pastime into a habit. The typewriter is giving flat fingers and thumbs to the aproned and smiling girls who tap the keys for a living. Electric cars, through their swiftness and rocking motion, are shredding the nerves of passengers. And so it goes with this and that novelty. Each makes its evil as well as its beneficent impress on humanity. But the 'telephone arm' is an unexpected addition to the list. An employee in a large mercantile house writes:—'I am a victim of the "telephone arm." Do you know what that is? Presuming you do not, I will tell you. It is a deformity I have developed from using the telephone in the office of my employer. Now, our telephone is fastened on the wall at a height where it is necessary for me to stand up to use it. We send messages nearly all day. When we have no messages to send others are talking with us. So I do more telephone work than typewriting, although I am a typewriter. The result is my left arm becomes so accustomed to holding the receiver at my ear that I can hardly get it down by my side. I think my spine is getting crooked, too. Now, I want to suggest that all telephones now fastened to walls should be lowered to three and a-half feet from the floor, and that stools should be provided for people to sit on and rest for the elbow. Then the "telephone arm" and the "telephone back" would not be possible.'

A society girl has found how to become a reigning beauty—for a night, at least. 'Why, Maud!' exclaimed a friend, who found her at her desk surrounded by a score or more missives addressed in mamma's name to divers young men of their acquaintance, 'are you going to give a big party?' 'Not at all, my dear,' answered the eighteen-year-old Machiavel in petticoats. 'But I am going to go to Mrs M——'s dance next week, and I told mamma it would be a good scheme to ask all these men to dinner for the night before. Of course, at such notice not more than two or three will be disengaged, so it is perfectly safe to ask twenty, and then, in common decency, they must come up and express their regrets at the dance, so I shall appear to be quite a favourite, and they cannot very well get out of asking me for a dance.'

Domestic servants have now their calling cards and their 'days,' or rather 'nights.' A lady the other day found a visiting card in her kitchen inscribed, 'Miss E—— W—— 1st and 3rd Tuesdays,' and on inquiry discovered that it had been left by a friend of the cook.

Mr Joseph Chamberlain has always loved work for work's sake. As a lad at school he had no sympathy with boys who shirked their tasks through idleness, and his manner of beginning a holiday was to rise at as early an hour as possible. He was only a youth in his teens when, says *Cassell's Saturday Journal*, he joined his father in business, and he has always been proud of his connection with trade. It is not generally recognised that he is an ardent philanthropist, but it was due to his energy that Birmingham was cleared of its 'rookeries,' while the statesman's private charities are said to be as large as they are unostentatious.

An English scholar utters a protest against the ugliness and pedantry of the phrase 'such an one.' The only apparent justification for the use of 'an' is that our eyes may be satisfied by seeing it before the vowel, where our grammar primers had laid down that it should always be. But when read aloud, 'such an one' is simply barbarous, and the very authors who seem to lose no opportunity of writing it, would hesitate, the correspondent thinks, to speak of 'an one-armed man,' or 'an one-sided judgment.' While the phrase was the mark of the superior person it did not much matter, but now that its use is becoming alarmingly general, it seems quite time to inquire whether it is worthy of receiving the imprimatur of established custom.