

WAIFS AND STRAYS.

SOME second thoughts are generally preceded by headaches. Two things a woman always jumps at—a conclusion and a mouse.

Every year 36,792,000 births occur; 100,800 each day and 70 each minute.

A cynic is one who speaks right out what everybody knows, but is too charitable to say.

On an average there are 106 boys born to every 100 girls; but more boys die in infancy than girls.

What sweetness and brilliancy are to the flower, what freshness and clearness are to water, what melody and harmony are to sound, such is purity to the heart.

THE LATIN NAME FOR IT.—Mrs Dimling: 'The doctor says Mr Totling is suffering from *prolapsus banani*. I never heard of that disease before. Did you?' Dimling: 'Yes, one gets it by stepping on a banana peel.'

If a division of the real estate of the globe was made, each one would only have a small lot. Some one has figured it out that taking the whole land surface of the globe into consideration, there is, on the average, twenty-two and one-half acres to each person.

THERE WAS NO WEDDING.

He loved the widow and he loved cigars; she hated them, tho' they were never so fine. When asked to marry, 'If you give up your weeds,' she answered, 'I will gladly give up mine.'

A HINT FOR WET WEATHER.—In order to prevent the leather of leggings and boots from cracking and hardening, never place them close to a fire to dry. To render the leather soft and impervious to water, and to renew elasticity, rub it well with castor or linseed oil about once a month. This will not prevent the leather from taking the blacking afterwards; although it is as well to clean and polish the boots before applying the oil.

A lawyer tells the following story concerning a client, something of a wag in his way, with whom he had kept a long account. When the latter was finally made up, the bill, mostly for trifling services, covered several yards of foolscap, the items giving the most minute details. When the client came round to settle, he refused to enter the office but stood in the door, and holding one end of the bill, unrolled the voluminous document in the direction of his legal adviser, with the request that he would receipt it. 'Come in,' said the lawyer, in his most cordial tone. 'Not much,' replied the client, 'you'd charge me for rent if I did.'

PLAIN FEATURES.—Plainness of feature is not at all incompatible with beauty. There is a great deal of difference between a person's being plain and being ugly. A person may be very plain, and yet attractive and interesting in both countenance and manner, and surely no one could call such a person ugly. An ugly face is repulsive. There are no rules that can be depended on for the settlement of beauty; and still less can ugliness be defined, otherwise than by itself. If we were asked to say what constitutes an ugly woman, we could not reply. We know there are such, for we have seen them.

THE NEWEST FASHION IN GIRLS.—Mr C. Dudley Warner, the well-known American essayist, has made the discovery that it has become the fashion for girls to be tall. This, as he observes, is much more than saying that tall girls are the fashion. It means not only that the tall girl has come in, but that girls are becoming tall because it is the fashion, and because there is a demand for that sort of girl. No very decided explanation of this phenomenon is suggested through a choice of theories is offered. Somebody has said that long dresses add to the height, but this is putting the effect for the cause. Obviously she who wears long dresses must herself be long. It may be the result of a constant effort to live up to Mr Du Maurier's society sketches. The hint is thrown out merely for what it is worth. All that Mr Warner can say is that a while ago it was the fashion to be *petite* and arch; now it is the fashion to be tall and gracious, and nothing more can be said about it.

EMPERESS EUGENIE.—Ex-Empress Eugenie is going to have a home in France, notwithstanding the refusal of the French Government to allow her to own property within its boundaries. Her friend the Duchess d'Aosta has bought land at Cape Martin, in the south of France, and is there building a villa which Eugenie will 'visit' about nine months of every year. It's the only wish she has now, this desire to live in France, and it is unlikely that the Government will interfere further with her plans. There is no trace, it is said, of her old beauty or of the old girl. One must travel a long distance to find a more changed woman than Eugenie de Guzman, Countess of Teba, Banos and Mora, Marquise de Moya, Andalis and Osera, ex-Empress of the French.

THE CZAR AND THE JEWISH SINGER.—At the present time, when one hears of nothing but cruelty to the Jews in Russia, it is pleasing to recollect one kind act of the present Emperor to a Jewish lad, the Rev. David Meyerson, cantor of the Mason-street Synagogue, San Francisco. He was born in St. Petersburg, and when a youth was known as the 'Lucca tenor,' owing to the fact that when that famous songstress was one evening leaving the theatre during a snowstorm, Mr Meyerson spread his fur cloak upon the snow, so that her dainty foot should not be chilled by contact with the flakes. When Prince Alexander, now the present Emperor of Russia, heard of this romantic incident, he sent for the chivalrous youth, who was then removed from the dingy Jewish quarters of the city and installed as a favourite in the Royal palace. After the Prince had heard the lad sing, being convinced that he had a great future, he sent Mr Meyerson to Paris, where, under the favour of the Rothschilds, he studied for eight years at the 'conservatoire.' He sang in nearly all the European capitals for some years, and about seven years ago went to California, where he has since been very successful. Although he has never studied for the Rabbinical career, his knowledge of Hebrew is excellent; he is proficient in English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Hebrew, Russian and Polish, and he is always styled by his colleagues the Sulzer of America.

BOOKS AND BOOK-MEN.



LORD ROSEBERY.

UNDOUBTEDLY the most important book that has reached the colony lately is Lord Rosebery's 'Life of Pitt.' It may be thought that enough had been written about that great defunct statesman, but this first book by Rosebery is of interest in showing the living rather than telling about the dead. Its interest lies not so much in the life of the subject as in the glimpses we get of the author's mind and character. To every subject of the British Empire Lord Rosebery is perhaps the most interesting man—young man—that is of the present day. He is almost certainly destined one day to become Prime Minister, and the broad liberality of his views, together with great administrative power, coolness, and level-headedness, fit him as no other man in the Liberal party is fitted to step into Mr Gladstone's shoes.

ALL through the new life of Pitt, which is, by the way, written in very excellent literary style, the workings of the author's own mind are clearly seen. Self-revelatory passages abound, and in several instances the young author betrays himself most thoroughly. His contempt for his own order is strongly emphasised, for instance in the following passage, in which he speaks of the possible consequences of the removal of Pitt to the House of Lords:—'While London was illuminating for the King's recovery Lord Chatham lay mortally ill. So grave was his malady that the hunters after Providence had fixed on Grenville as the new Minister. For Lord Chatham's death, by the grim humour of our Constitution, would have removed Pitt from the Commons to the Peers. In the prime of life and intellect he would have been plucked from the governing body of the country, in which he was incomparably the most important personage, and set down as a pauper Peer in the House of Lords. It would have been as if the Duke of Wellington, in the middle of the Peninsular War, had been transferred by the operation of constitutional law to the government of Greenwich Hospital. The system in which Burke could find no flaw had ruled that default in the possession of an elder brother should be thus punished, and that the accident of an accident should have power to blight this great career.'

As a boy, Lord Rosebery was quiet and thoughtful. He was rather fond of listening whilst others were talking, and then astonishing his hearers by some smart and *apropos* remark. So great was his reserve, that his tutor, it is said, had on one occasion to tear up his verses in order to ensure his coming forward for a necessary interview in the class room. When his political career began he was warned, and obeyed the warning, not to accept any of the subordinate appointments which Ministers are fond of offering to promising young men. When his party, through the fall of Khartoum and the death of Gordon, was in some discredit, Lord Rosebery wrote to Mr Gladstone, offering the services, which in prosperity he had not been willing to give.

OUT of the new novels worth reading this season, undoubtedly that remarkable work of Mr Thomas Hardy, 'Tess of the D'Urbervilles: A Pure Woman,' occupies an important position. The heroine, Tess, is a lovable character, with plenty of faults, but sufficient virtue to counteract them. The hero, Angel Clare, is curiously inconsistent, but this idea is well carried out by Mr Hardy. The sketches of rustic life are cleverly executed, and form a pleasant relief to the profound seriousness and ethical questions which underlie the story and crop up continually. As a study the book deserves attentive perusal. Possibly some people might term it too realistic, but it is an exceedingly interesting novel, and already much in demand.

SCIENTIFIC AND USEFUL.

NEW BREED OF CHICKENS.

ONE would think there is enough breeds of chickens in the world, but a New England man has a brand new strain as a result of a blend of Indian games, Plymouth Rocks and Shanghai. The originator says he has caught and combined the merits of these three in his new breed, which he calls 'The Argonauts.'

FOR SMOKERS.

A gentleman whose lungs are not strong enough for him to enjoy the fumes of tobacco at a dinner party, took with him to a friend's house a little lamp which he sat on a table when the cigars were lighted. The American *Machinist* says that over the flames of this little lamp was a ring of platinum which became red hot in a very few seconds, and which consumed the smoke of a dozen cigars as fast as it was made, so that the atmosphere of the room was as clear as it would have been had there been no smoking going on at all.

A SIMPLE BAROMETER.

A simple barometer that can be made for one's self, and which, though old, may be new to some, is made as follows:—'Two drachms of camphor, half drachm of pure saltpetre, half drachm of muriate of ammonia, and two ounces of proof spirits, in a glass tube or narrow phial, will make a very good weather guide. In dry weather the solution will remain clear. On the approach of change, minute stars will rise up in the liquid, whilst stormy weather will be indicated by the very disturbed condition of the chemical combination.'

AN ELEPHANT RANCH.

Another novel enterprise in stock raising is to be added to the ostrich farm, the black cat ranch and the chicken ranches of the Pacific coast. A Mr Newbury of California is enthusiastic over a project he is about to carry out of starting an elephant ranch in that State. He proposes to cultivate the elephant for its meat and its capacity for hard and diversified work. He says that 'as an article of food the elephant is superior to the horse,' and most people will be willing to accept his statement, though not fully appreciating its force. He says that behind a tough exterior it hides a tender steak, and that African explorers are profuse in their praise of elephant cutlets. A full grown elephant weighs about 7000 pounds, and Mr Newbury counts 6000 of this as good meat. He is going to train the elephants to pick oranges and hire them out to orange-growers.

THE DEADLY COLD BED.

If trustworthy statistics could be had of the number of persons who die every year or become permanently diseased from sleeping in damp or cold beds, they would probably be astonishing and appalling. It is a peril that constantly besets travelling men, and if they are wise they will invariably insist on having their beds aired and dried, even at the risk of causing much trouble to their landlords. But, according to *Good Housekeeping*, it is a peril that resides also in the home, and the cold 'spare room' has slain its thousands of hapless guests, and will go on with its slaughter till people learn wisdom. Not only the guest, but the family, often suffer the penalty of sleeping in cold rooms and chilling their bodies, at a time when they need all their bodily heat, by getting between cold sheets. Even in warm summer weather a cold, damp bed will get in its deadly work. It is a needless peril, and the neglect to provide dry rooms and beds has in it the elements of murder and suicide.

SMELL AND MEMORY.

Dr. Richardson says that the central seat of the olfactory sense must be very near to the central seat of memory, for it is noticeable that nothing recalls a past event like an odour. A little child was thrown out of a pony carriage in a country lane. Near the spot where the fall took place there was a manure heap, which gave forth the peculiar dry ammoniacal odour so often recognisable from such heaps—an odour distinctive, yet not altogether unpleasant. The child was stunned by the fall, and on recovering and returning to consciousness smelt this odour powerfully. Over fifty years have elapsed since that little mishap, and yet whenever the person referred to passes, in country lanes, a heap giving out the same odour, the whole scene of the accident occurs with every detail perfect, and sometimes with a recurrence of the giddiness and nausea which were experienced at the moment.

ANIMALS LIKE PERFUMES.

Wishing to test for himself the reputed fondness of many animals for perfumes a well-known writer paid a series of visits to a menagerie provided with bottles of scent and a packet of cotton wool, and there tried some harmless experiments, which apparently gave great satisfaction to the inhabitants of various cages. Lavender water was received with particular favour, and most of the lions and leopards show unqualified pleasure when the scent was poured on the wool and put through the bars. The first leopard to which it was offered stood over the ball of cotton, shut its eyes, opened its mouth and screwed up its nose. It then lay down and held it between its paws, rubbed its face over it, and finished by lying upon it. Another leopard smelled it and sneezed, then caught the wool in its claws, played with it and lay back and rubbed its head and neck over the scent. It then fetched another leopard which was asleep in the cage and the two sniffed it for some time together, and the last corner ended by taking the ball in its teeth, curling its lips well back and inhaling the delightful perfume with half-shut eyes. The lion and lioness, when their turn came, tried to roll upon it at the same time. The lion then gave the lioness a cuff with his paw which sent her off to the back of the cage, and having secured it for himself, laid his broad back on the morsel of cotton and purred with satisfaction.