

Round the World Paragraphs.

Female Cabbies Retire.

The forty-six women who started driving cabs in the streets of Paris have dwindled down to twenty-two.

Further, there are at present only two women taking lessons at the School of Practical Cab-driving, which is open to all would-be cab-drivers.

Mme. Duffat, the first woman who was granted a licence, has retired for personal reasons. Another woman won a small fortune in a lottery, and a third has married a well-to-do tradesman, whose acquaintance she made by taking him as a "fare."

The Countess of Lutgen, who was one of the first to mount the box, has yielded to the arguments of her relatives, who strongly objected to her choice of an occupation, and she has now retired into private life.

The Society for the Protection of Animals is encouraging women to learn cab-driving, in the hope that their example will tend to check the ill-treatment of horses. So far, however, they have met with no success.

The cabmen now realise that their interests are not seriously threatened, and their incivility towards their female competitors has become marked courtesy.

The police authorities say that the experiment of granting licences to women has, from the public's point of view, been a complete success. The cabwomen always obey the police regulations, drive very well, and look after their horses admirably.

Stead on the Navy.

Mr. Stead, who wrote in 1884 "The Truth About the Navy," which he claims was mainly responsible for the rebuilding of the first line of defence, returns to the subject with vigour in the December "Review of Reviews." "There is no question," says Mr. Stead, "as to what John Bull will reply to the German programme, be it little or big. He will say that he is sorry, but if it must be so he cannot help himself. We are willing to maintain the status quo, either by reducing armaments or by arresting the increase of armaments. But if it can be maintained in no other way, we are ready and resolved to maintain it by competition. We shall bring forward no imposing counter-programme. But when the Kaiser lays down one keel we lay down two. That is the formula of safety. We shall no more discuss it than a swimmer discusses the necessity of keeping his head above water. We shall simply do it because we have no alternative except that of suicide." The London "Daily Mail" gives figures to show that Mr. Stead's plan would involve Naval Estimates of £40,000,000.

A Sultana's Romance.

MARRIES A POLICEMAN.

To be a sultana by right of birth, and to renounce her royal rank in order to marry a simple gendarme, and settle down as a farmer's wife in France—this, in brief, is the life story of Salima, Sultana of the Comores, who has just demanded an audience of the French Minister of the Colonies. When France established a protectorate over the Comoro Islands, the little Princess Salima, Sultana of Moheli, was placed in a convent. It was arranged that when she had finished her education, she should return to her island. But instead of assuming the dignity of a Sultana, she elected to marry M. Paule, a French gendarme.

M. Paule, who has now turned to farming, and resides near Dijon, likes to tell how he met his wife. One day he saw the Queen of Moheli walking with some nuns in the street of Saint Denis, in the island of Reunion. He was sitting on the wall of the barracks. "I found her beautiful," he says, "I loved her, and from that moment I regretted that I was a French gendarme, and not a Prince." Here is how Salima renounced her rank (says the London "Morning Advertiser"):—"One day," she relates, "the Inspector

General of the Colonies found me in the convent, and informed me that, as I had attained my majority, I could marry or return to Moheli. For one moment the vision of my mother wearing her Royal mantle and her crown studded with jewels came to me. I reflected. I saw myself alone, ignorant of power, and afraid of its obligations. Then I thought of him whom I had seen several times for a few moments, and who came one evening with the Sister Superior to have a little chat. I concluded that I was too weak to reign, that I loved him, and was ready to abandon my rights for him. The Government raised objections to our marriage. But you see that I was not a bad diplomat after all, for I conquered. And now we have been married six years, and I want nothing. But, stay, I have one wish. It is this, that for the sake of my little son and daughter, the French Government, in exchange for what I gave up, might assure me a peaceable existence."

Kaiser's Model Battleships.

One of the biggest of German ship-building yards has been entrusted with an interesting order by the Emperor. It is to make the model of a modern battleship, which His Majesty will present to the German Museum in Munich. As it is intended to serve as an object-lesson in the strictest sense of the term, and must consequently present a faithful reproduction in miniature of the bewildering complexity of mechanism which nowadays constitutes a war vessel, it has been found necessary to make the model of quite unusual dimensions. It will, in fact, be some twenty-five feet in length, and will be in longitudinal section, so that all parts of the construction and equipment can be clearly seen. Guns, machinery, boilers, and electrical installations will all be copied from the original, down to the minutest detail, and they will be so arranged that it will be possible to see them in operation. It is said that the cost of this unique model will be about £1500.

What is a Club?

At the Brighton County Court, last month, Judge Scully gave a decision of considerable interest to tennis players. About three years ago Doctor Whittle, a medical practitioner in the town, who was then an enthusiastic tennis amateur, rented a large court at Hove, and there was a friendly understanding between himself and a number of gentlemen that they would guarantee amongst themselves to cover the expenses in return for the privilege of using the court. The arrangements seemed to have worked very well for some time. Dr. Whittle then became an invalid, and it being necessary that the business part of the court should be taken over by some other person, a Mr. Perkins undertook the duties, and received the fees on behalf of Dr. Whittle.

It appears that a certain amount of profit accumulated, and the guarantors called upon Mr. Perkins to hand over the money. Mr. Perkins declined to do this, on the ground that the whole business was a club, and that the funds did not belong to them any more than the other members. The question was whether the gentlemen who formed the guarantors constituted a club.

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Flash Thieves in an Automobile.

Two swaggar thieves, who went about in an automobile like rich nabobs, dressed in Oriental fashion, and robbed a number of Parisian jewelers in open daylight, have just been caught at their tricks and arrested. One of them usually wore a fez and coat called "stamboulime," and the other disguised himself as an Arab. As a rule they drove up in great style to the door of some jeweller, and asked to see a number of precious objects, or anything that was most valuable in the shop, and would leave after giving an important order, saying they were presents for friends in Cairo. One of them had a trick of placing a spectacle-case on the counter alongside some precious pearls or diamonds, and pretending to be re-sighted, would, after a while, pick up his spectacle-case, together with the jewel. If the trick were noticed he would make the most polite apologies, and explain that it was a mistake, and if the dealer did not notice it he would simply be minus the jewel after the visitors had left. In this way they carried off a considerable stock-in-trade, and their orders could never be delivered, as they invariably gave a false address.

Twelve Million Pounds Baby.

A boy who will never lack pocket money is the son of Mrs. John Nicholas Brown, sister of Mrs. George Vanderbilt. Little Johnny, who is now seven years old, is heir to £2,000,000 and by the time he is twenty will be worth another £6,500,000 sterling. He has three palatial residences and a yacht, and when he travels he is accompanied by a special physician, a governess, a valet, two trained nurses, and six servants. John is by no means the richest baby in America, however. The baby boy born to Mr. W. K. Vanderbilt, brother to the Duchess of Marlborough, would regard such an assertion with a contemptuous snarl, for he beats Brown's baby by some £10,000,000. The Vanderbilt youngster is heir to a little fortune of £12,000,000, his mother being a Miss Virginia Fair, who had £2,000,000 of her own at her marriage to add to her husband's fortune of £20,000,000. The richest boy in the world, however, is Marshall Field, the twelve-year-old millionaire, whose grandfather, a Chicago storekeeper, died last year and left a fortune of £30,000,000.

Great Diamond Steal.

M. Habib, a Paris diamond merchant, has had a stroke of luck. Two years and a half ago he was robbed by a trick in broad daylight of a necklace and seven long chains of diamonds, worth in all £365,000. From then till a few weeks ago the jewels had never been traced. But at the beginning of last month he was informed by a Viennese merchant that the missing diamonds had been offered him for sale, and, suspecting a theft, he had had them seized. M. Habib went to Vienna, recognised the jewels, and has got them back. The Viennese merchant gets £800 reward from M. Habib.

In Time of War.

TIDAL WAVES TO ORDER.

Nikola Tesla's latest idea is that of creating an enormous tidal wave for purposes of coast defence or in order to annihilate a hostile fleet. It may be assumed, remarks Mr. Tesla, that "thirty tons of nitro-glycerine compound be employed to create the tidal disturbance. This material, weighing about twice as much as water, can be stored in a cubical tank eight feet each way or in a spherical vessel of ten feet diameter. . . . At the propitious moment the signal is given, the charge sunk to the proper depth and ignited. . . . The water is incompressible. The explosion propagates through the compound at a speed of three miles a second, so that the whole mass will be converted into gas before the water can give way ap-

preciably, and a spherical bubble ten feet in diameter will form. The gaseous pressure against the surrounding water will be 20,000 atmospheres, or 143 tons to the square inch." At this point Mr. Tesla lapses into a maze of calculations of calories and power units, where it is difficult and unnecessary to follow him. He emerges presently with the resultant statement that 25,000,000 tons of water would be raised one foot, or a smaller quantity to a correspondingly greater elevation. The height and length of the wave will be determined by the depth at which the disturbance originated. Opening in the centre like a volcano, the great hollows will belch forth a shower of ice. Some 10 seconds later a valley of 600 feet depth, counted from normal ocean level will form, surrounded by a perfectly circular swell, approximately of equal height, which will be large in diameter at the rate of about 220 feet per second. It is futile, concludes Mr. Tesla, pleasantly, to consider the effect on a neighbouring vessel, however large. Even a navy would be destroyed.

Opium-Eaters in the French Navy.

Wives of naval officers are now agitating against opium-eating (writes a Paris correspondent). The police of Marseilles have received and acted effectually upon information of a curious kind. A round robin reached the authorities, signed by several ladies, wives of naval officers quartered on shore at Toulon and Hyeres. The letter announced that the husbands of the undersigned were confirmed opium-eaters, and implored the police to interfere. Wifely remonstrances were of no avail, and the ladies had determined to have recourse to strong measures. They had discovered where their husbands surreptitiously obtained opium, and denounced two shops to the police. The latter, on the strength of the letter, raided the places named, and have seized there £800 worth of opium. Four other purveyors are known and are watched by the police. The ladies seem to have a great deal more strength of mind than their husbands, and if they stick to their determination ought to be able to stamp out a habit which is undoubtedly harming the corps of officers of the French navy. The purveyors of opium, who are importers from China and Japan, will be prosecuted on the charge of being found in possession without license of poisonous substances.

Heir to a Million.

CHARGED WITH SWINDLING.

The remarkable case recently heard at Pittsburg, U.S., in which a young Englishman giving the name of Reginald Spaulding was charged with swindling several wealthy society women, has had, says the London "Globe," a still more remarkable sequel. It may be mentioned that Spaulding sent circulars to numbers of prominent Pittsburgers, in which he asserted that he was in a position to obtain for them introductions to the cream of British society, and even presentations at Court.

When arrested, he protested his good faith, declaring that a well-known countess had authorised him to make these promises. Afterwards he alleged that he was in reality the son-in-law of this countess, having married her daughter in South Africa. The police, on the other hand, stated that they believed him to be an ex-convict from Capetown, and that his real name was Spate.

Later there arrived at Pittsburg Mr. E. M. Seymour, a Chicago attorney, who immediately visited the prison where Spaulding is confined, and had an interview with the Governor. It subsequently transpired that Mr. Seymour was acting on instructions received from England, and that he had come to Pittsburg to announce to accused his inheritance of a large fortune through the death of his mother in London. Spaulding is now, it would appear, enormously wealthy, his mother having, it is said, left an estate valued at £1,000,000.

Mr. Seymour states that the man's real name is neither Spaulding nor Spate, and has given the authorities the name and address of a London barrister, who, he states, is acting in the matter. He will have an interview with prisoner, the prison officials having granted him every facility for establishing the claim made by him on Spaulding's behalf.