

News, Views and Opinions.

Mr. Rees, who has on many occasions amused the House of Commons with his quaintly audacious speeches, writes a letter to the "Times," in which he pleads for a more considerate treatment for tigers. The plea is not so paradoxical as it sounds. There are tigers and tigers; and according to Mr. Rees the man-eating tiger is a comparative rarity, and—with bated breath he it added—he is generally a tigress. The average tiger is a real philanthropist. He devotes his very considerable energy to killing the deer and the pigs that destroy the crops of the Indian peasant. He is thus indirectly a pillar of the British Empire; for if there were no crops there would be no land revenue, and if there were no land revenue the Government of India might come to an end. Moreover, the tiger, even in his marital relations, can give points to some of the human inhabitants of India, for while he is a monogamous, a Kulin Brahmin, as we have recently learnt, may be the husband of a hundred wives without losing a reputation for sanctity. The point at which Mr. Rees is aiming in this amusing plea for the tiger is that the Indian Government ought to cease to offer indiscriminate rewards for all tigers killed. The man-eater is perfectly well-known to the villagers, and his death is desired by everybody; but it is folly to exterminate all tigers in order to get rid of the small minority which attack men. Mr. Rees therefore suggests that rewards for tiger-killing should be limited to man-eaters, and that other tigers should be left to continue their beneficent career as the destroyers of man's agricultural enemies.

Nothing seems to stay the cult of the cigarette, which, according to the "Daily Mail," now accounts for three-fifths of the £25,000,000 worth of tobacco annually consumed in the United Kingdom. By common consent an effeminate indulgence (as even its volaries acknowledge between whiffs), it has an insinuating convenience for odd moments, which helps it to gain ground steadily against the pipe and the cigar. If, as the medical faculty aver, the cigarette is a peculiarly deleterious enemy of the national physique, progressive countries may ultimately follow the lead of those American States in which its sale is forbidden.

A sailor gives in the "Boston Courier" a curious account of how crocodiles are baited in Ceylon. "Baby bait," he says, "is the only thing for crocodile, and everybody uses it. You can rent a baby down there at half a dollar a day. Of course," he continues, "the thing isn't as cruel as it sounds. No harm ever comes to the babies, or else, of course, their mothers wouldn't rent them. The babies are simply set on the soft mud bank of a crocodile stream, and the hunter lays concealed close by. The crocodile is lazy. He basks in the sun in midstream. Nothing will draw him in to shore, where he can be 'potted.' But set a little fat, naked baby on the bank, and the crocodile soon rouses up. In he comes, a greedy look in his dull eyes, and then you open fire. I have got as many as four crocodiles with one baby in a morning's fishing. Some Cingalese women living near good crocodile streams make as much as two dollars a week regular out of renting their babies for crocodile bait."

Are we becoming more charitable? asks the "Pall Mall Gazette." It used to be said that the new death duties would dry up the wells of beneficence, and that many institutions which depend upon legacies would die in poverty, but the gloomy prediction has not been verified. Indeed, the last two years have produced exceptional windfalls for charitable, religious, and other public uses, the total in that period being nearly £11,000,000, against an annual average of £2,500,000 for the twenty years before 1906. The sum of the legacies in fact has more than doubled. From these truly gratifying figures we turn to the records of income received by the 883 London charities, and find that it is over seven and a half millions a year.

In Paris the struggle against the mutton hat is now at its height. The Parisienne does not look on a hat merely as a thing to cover her head, but as the crown

and finish of her out-of-door costume, and as an indispensable complement to a theatre toilet. But the audiences are determined not to be balked of a sight of the stage, and at Christmas time the Parisian theatres resounded with the cry of "Chapeau!" to such an extent that on more than one occasion the performance had to be stopped. At M. Gemier's Theatre the disturbance was so great that the actor himself came down to the footlights and asked the offending lady to take off her hat "for my sake." Luckily she was not deaf to such an appeal, and removed her hat amid loud applause. But war is now to be waged, not only against hats, but also against cigarettes, feathers and exaggerated head-dresses, which are only a little less objectionable than hats. The idea is rapidly spreading that people go to a theatre to look at the performance, and not to study the back of a head-dress, however costly.

Does it ever occur to people that leap year may, and generally does, touch their pockets appreciably? Those wage-earners who are paid every Friday or Saturday suffer nothing, because they are paid for the extra day they have to live during the year. But those in receipt of monthly or quarterly cheques for salary are different, for they lose the payment for the extra day's work. Employers are naturally forgetful of such little matters, and employees are not so long sighted as they might be if we may judge from the fact that when engagements are entered into and contracts made for a term of years no account is taken of that extra day in leap year. A simple calculation shows that a person earning £1000 a year paid monthly, quarterly or annually finds himself out of pocket to the extent of £2 15/ as the result of leap year, and, of course, the larger the income the greater the loss. Still, we will mostly survive our misfortune in this respect.

A new proposal has come from the Parisian scientists, headed by Bertillon, that complete measurements should be made and registered of every person. The proposal has been widely condemned on the ground that it constitutes a serious invasion of personal liberty, and is altogether degrading. But there is much to be said for this universal "Bertillonisation."

Among its many advantages would be the impossibility of error in identification, with a consequent lessening of the numbers of false claims to estates, false entries in official registers, forgeries and the like. The mother of a family, taken in a street raid, could at once establish the fact that she was not one of those for whom the raid was made. An unoffending man arrested under seemingly suspicious circumstances could immediately show that he was a respectable citizen. There would be a great decrease in crime owing to the decreased chances of avoiding detection.

The Cunard liner Pannonia was fighting heavy weather, when her surgeon told the captain that a stoker was suffering from appendicitis, and that his life could be saved only by an immediate operation. The engines were stopped, the great ship lay as quietly as good handling could make her in the storm, and the surgeon did his work with perfect success. A human life was saved. Surely this is a record in the triumphs of surgery—it is at any rate a demonstration of the readiness with which in these days the highest skill is placed at the disposal of the humblest citizens. The surgeon is to be congratulated, but the captain who consented to stop his ship so that science might do its best for the poor stoker merits acknowledgment also. He showed a true appreciation of the sacredness of human life, and his action marks the advance that sympathy and civilisation have been making. It is not so long since such a case as this would have been impossible, because there was neither the skill nor the will to combat disease under such adverse conditions.

The chef d'orchestre at the Variety Theatre of that pleasant French town which is Beziers will probably think twice before he again offers a cake to a

performing elephant on the stage. It appears that the pachyderm, in his eagerness to accept the proffered refreshment, came down to the footlights, lost his balance, and went crashing down among the musicians in the orchestra. Two of the musicians were injured, and the audience made a stampede for the doors, while the cause of the trouble—the elephant, to wit, not the conductor or the cake—lay upon its back, or side, and performed a trumpet solo expressive of rage and terror. Now, an elephant never lies down (a fact not generally known) because, if he does, he can't get up without almost as much assistance as failed to set Humpty-Dumpty up again. Wherefore, it was a long time before he could be got on his ponderous pins, and a gangway prepared for his return to the stage. A swan on a high road, or a fish in a gravel pit, is much less out of place than an elephant in the orchestra of a theatre.

The stocks are out of date, but the automatic boot cleaner remains, and it seems to possess an autocratic power which the good old-fashioned method of public imprisonment never laid claim to. A City man, bound for Balham, sought to have the grime of London removed from his shoes before heing to that salubrious suburb, and being in a hurry placed a foot in the automatic cleaner. It remained there for an hour and a half. It is on record that "the gentleman waited calmly while the crowd stood around and made suggestions." He was supplied with a chair, smoked his pipe, and thought it "a nice way of spending the Old Year." Perhaps we should offer congratulations to the victim rather than condolences. The great nerve test only cost him a few pennies, and he can now go his way in the serene confidence that the rush and worry of modern life have left him unspoiled, and fit for any ordeal that the New Year may have in store. Timid people, however, are likely to look askance at the automatic boot-cleaner. The worst that a mere human bootblack can do is to shine one shoe and refuse to shine the other.

Captain F. N. Grose, the originator of a novel scheme for a floating hotel at Falmouth, in an interview, explained that the promoters of the enterprise will buy an old liner, take the engines out, remodel the interior, and anchor the vessel in Falmouth Harbour. There would be accommodation for about 100 guests of both sexes, and the tariff would be somewhat less than that of a first-class hotel on shore. We shall be able to have berths and other apartments somewhat larger than on a liner, but domestic and social routine would be much the same, even to a captain presiding over the ship and all servants being dressed in nautical attire. They will organise amusements on board, and when the guests are disposed to leave the ship there will be boating and fishing and the country to explore. There will be a steam launch for residents, and tennis and cricket grounds, and perhaps, a garage on shore. In winter we may enjoy a swim in the sea. A boom will be run from the side of the ship, and, by sinking a net, provide safe sea-bathing. The cost of the upkeep will be small, as there will be no rent or rates, and the minimum of dust and dirt. There are hundreds of people who travel to and fro on liners simply because they like to live on the sea. Many of these, Capt. Grose is convinced, will patronise our floating hotel.

Another trophy has been annexed by a disciple of vegetarianism. This is the recording of the best figure ever registered on the machine for testing endurance at Yale University. The "deep knee bend," which was the test employed, is one of the severest known in gymnasium work. Let any reader try to bend, say, forty or fifty times, and this statement will be fully verified by his aching muscles. The way you do it, if you want to try, is to stand with your heels slightly apart and on a line with each other. Place your hands on your hips, and then, leaning forward upon your toes, bend down until your thighs strike the calves of your legs, rising immediately to erect position, at once repeating the movements, and so on, as long as you can. When the Yale contest took place several flesh-eating athletes fainted. Several others were severely affected, some to such an extent that they could not climb stairs

for weeks afterward. The flesh abstainers were also affected, though no, it is said, quite so badly as their opponents. One of them went merrily on till he reached the extraordinary number of 5,000, and was out on the running track next day. So far there have been astonishing few vegetarian athletes. There have been "free lance" athletes, who have been vegetarians; there are many of them prominent to-day; but in college training camps, especially, the idea that from meat comes meat—that is, muscle, blood, power—has held undisputed sway up to this time. Investigations have shown that college athletes eat more meat than almost any other class of men. Perhaps this achievement will revolutionise training.

AMPUTATION AVOIDED.

ZAM-BUK SAVES A CRUSHED FINGER AND EARNS A MOTHER'S GRATITUDE.

Mrs. C. Emary, writing from Union-road, Surrey Hills, Melbourne, says: "A few months ago my little girl, aged three years, had the misfortune to jam one of her fingers in the door. I took her to the doctor, and he informed me that the finger would have to be amputated at the first joint. Naturally, I was greatly alarmed at the doctor's announcement, and in the hope of avoiding having the child's finger taken off, I had the wound stitched. I bathed the finger every day, and used various ointments. For some weeks I continued this treatment, but in spite of all my endeavours the flesh obstinately refused to heal. It was at this juncture that one of your pamphlet books relating to Zam-Buk Balm was left under my door, and reading of the many cures effected, I resolved to try it on my little girl's finger. I applied a dressing of Zam-Buk in the morning, and on removing the bandage at night I could hardly believe it was the same finger, such a reformation had taken place. The finger was nice and clean, the flesh knitting together, and a new skin was rapidly forming, and in a little over a week from the first application of the Zam-Buk Balm the finger was perfectly healed."

Zam-Buk is a healing, soothing and antiseptic skin-dressing which no home can afford to be without, and is unexcelled for cuts, bruises, scalds, eczema rash, mosquito bites and insect stings, sunburn, smarting patches, piles, bad legs, and, in fact, all conditions of the skin where soothing and healing is required. Of all chemists and stores at 1/6 and 3/6 per pot. The 3/6 pot, holding nearly four times 1/6, is most economical for family use.

Home they brought the warrior dead, Not a tear the lady shed, Worthy she to bear his name Simply asked, "Who won the game?"

It does not take long to clean your teeth thoroughly with **Calvert's Carbolic Tooth Powder**. You must of course brush them all over, from the gums upwards and downwards, but it can be easily and quickly done by using this well-known dentifrice, which makes the tooth brush work so smoothly and pleasantly and also gives an antiseptic cleansing.

Sold by Local Chemists and Stores.
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Three days' treatment with Dr. Sheldon's New Discovery entirely cured me of a severe cold on the chest. I can heartily recommend it, writes John W. Riall, Hon. Sec. of the Melbourne Press Assoc., and Publisher of the Port Melbourne "Standard."