

# Round the World Paragraphs.

## Circus Rider as Spy.

### WOMAN WHO SOLD ARMY SECRETS TO DE WET.

Lily Whitehouse, a circus rider, charged with drunkenness at Bradford last month, told the Bench an extraordinary life story.

She was the daughter of an army officer, she said. She ran away from home while in her teens and joined Buffalo Bill's show in Massachusetts. She became a crack shot and an expert rider under Colonel Cody's tuition.

Later she married an Austrian army officer. She followed him to South Africa, and managed during the war to secure some secret information respecting the movements of the British army.

She went to the Boer general De Wet, sold him the information, and was engaged as a despatch runner.

She wore military attire and passed as a man.

Remorse for her treachery overcame her, and she deserted the Boers and joined the British army at Modder River disguised as a trooper.

She went through several battles, she said, and earned special distinction by carrying a wounded soldier part of the way across the river on her horse.

Afterwards she became ill with enteric fever, and in the hospital her sex was discovered. She then became a nurse, and later she returned home to resume her professional career.

She was fined 27s, including costs, with the alternative of three weeks' imprisonment.

## Astrological Prediction.

A prophecy, which is of special interest in view of recent events in Lisbon, is to be found in the "Green Book of Prophecies" for 1908, which is published annually by the Zambuk Company. It reads as follows: "At the outset of the year Mars joins his fiery influence to the sinister rays of Saturn to provoke the Portuguese to acts of frenzy. The cause of the Braganzas will be espoused, and there is extreme danger of violence and bloodshed in the peninsula. The disaffection will spread to Spain, and the lands of Don and Don will be filled with lawlessness and riot."

## America's Pressing Problem.

A pessimistic picture of America's future is sketched by Mr. James J. Hill, one of the American railway magnates, in the current issue of the "National Review."

He looks forward over four decades, and estimates the probable increase in population. Allowing moderate calculations for increased birth rate and immigration, he arrives at the following figures:—

Population in 1910	95,248,805
" " 1920	117,036,229
" " 1930	142,091,063
" " 1940	170,905,412
" " 1950	204,041,223

The problem which Mr. Hill presents is how these people are to be fed.

"Within forty-four years," he says, "we shall have to meet the wants of more than two hundred million people. In less than twenty years from this moment the United States will have 130,000,000 people. Where are these people, not of some dim, distant age, but of this very generation now growing to manhood, to be employed and how supported?"

"When the searchlight is thus suddenly turned on, we recognise not a mere speculation, but the grim face of that spectre which confronts the unemployed, tramping hateful streets in hope of food and shelter."

The remedy Mr. Hill sees in a "back to the land" policy. These are his words:—

"The country needs more workers on the soil. Not to turn the stranger away, but to direct him to the farm instead of the city; not to watch with fear a possible increase of the birth-rate,

but to use every means to keep the boys on the farms, and to send youths from the city to swell the depleted ranks of agricultural industry is the necessary task of a well-advised political economy and an intelligent patriotism."

Mr. Hill declares that the timber and mineral resources of the country are fast being depleted. By 1950, he declares, America will be approaching an ironless age, and by the same date all the best and most convenient coal will have been consumed.

"Again," he urges, "a profitable husbandry is the very fountain from which all other occupations flow, and by which they are nourished into strength."

## Mark Twain.

Interviewing a celebrity without seeing him is perhaps not an entirely new phase of the new journalism. In the case of Mark Twain, however, the result is fairly satisfactory (remarks an American paper). A small buffer meets you on the threshold in the form of a gracious, diplomatic, and silver-voiced young lady, Miss J. V. Lyon (Mr. Clemens's private secretary), who tells you how the great man spends his time. If you should open the door to his bedroom at 8 o'clock you would probably find him smoking a cheap cigar, and waiting for his coffee and rolls. More cigars and pipes follow, and he slowly and surely dictates chapters of his autobiography. After dictation, Mark Twain may read—not fiction, but scientific tomes and biography. His lunch is a glass of milk, after which he will take a drive, and at 7 o'clock dine, this being his first square meal. The evening he will spend with his friends and acquaintances. He takes little exercise, using his vigorous mental faculties to such an extent that physical exercise is unnecessary. He does not indulge in games or sports, though there was a time when four aces would have caused his face to brighten. Although not particularly fond of animals, he "rents" a kitten for the summer, but, not being able to keep kittens in his New York home, he always returns it to the owner when the winter season begins.

## Mr. Stead as Cromwell.

Mr. W. T. Stead has announced that if the London Pageant Committee "do him the honour" of asking him to appear in the part of Oliver Cromwell—whom he regards as "the greatest man in English history"—he will consent.

The heroism of this resolution lies in the fact that, as Oliver Cromwell, he will be compelled to shave off the fine grey beard and moustache, which, in varying shades, have adorned his face, since his youth.

Mr. Stead protested against an evident intention to exclude the Protector from the pageant, and Mr. Lascelles, the master of the pageant, has definitely decided to issue the invitation to Mr. Stead, regardless of the personal sacrifice it must entail.

"If I were asked to play Othello I should do the thing properly, and black myself all over," said Mr. Stead to a newspaper interviewer, but while he spoke he stroked his beard almost affectionately.

"I have never owned or used a razor in my life," he continued, meditatively. "My beard was never trimmed until I was past forty. I am now fifty-eight. But I am willing not only to shave my face, but even my head, if I am honoured with an invitation to play the part of the greatest man in English history."

## La Tetraxini.

To employ a sporting phrase, Madame Tetraxini has now brought off a treble event (writes a London critic). Making her first appearance in Buenos Ayres, London, and New York in "La Traviata," she in each instance conquered her audience at the outset by her brilliant singing of "Ah! lara lara," and then worked

her way on to a triumph by her superb interpretation of Violetta's music in the final scene of Verdi's opera. Her success was due to the fact that she has obtained perfect control over a beautiful voice of exceptional range and volume. Having noted the practical unanimity that existed among the London critics with regard to the artist's remarkable qualities, the musical public—as on many earlier occasions when assured of obtaining good value for their money—came to the doors of Covent Garden in their thousands. That some of the German critics in New York should be unable to appreciate fully the beauty of Madame Tetraxini's tones and the brilliancy and certainty of her technique is not to be wondered at, for that delightful artist's method is laudably free from those blemishes which render the singing of many Teutonic artists so destructive of enjoyment to those whose ears derive pleasure from just intonation. As Sir Alexander Mackenzie pointed out at the Royal Academy of Music recently, the opera performances given in not a few towns in Germany are so bad that they would not be tolerated in London. Dr. Joachim, too, not long ago affirmed that, while rough playing elicited no protest from connoisseurs in Berlin, the London critics would certainly draw attention to and condemn any lapses of the kind.

## Reminiscences of Faust.

Ellen Terry, in "M.A.P.," recalls some of the incidents which were associated with the production of the tragedy of "Faust" by Sir Henry Irving.

In many ways "Faust" (the great actress writes) was our heaviest production. About 400 ropes were used, each rope with a name. The list of properties and instructions to the carpenters became a joke among the theatre staff. When Henry first took "Faust" into the provinces the head carpenter at Liverpool, Meyers, being something of a humourist, copied out the list on a long thin sheet of paper, which rolled up like a royal proclamation. Instead of "God Save the Queen," he wrote at the foot, with many flourishes, "God help Bill Meyers!"

I made valiant efforts (proceeds Ellen Terry) to learn to spin before I played Margaret. My instructor was Albert Fleming, who, at the suggestion of Ruskin, had revived hand-spinning and hand-weaving in the north of England. I had always hated that obviously "property" spinning-wheel in the opera, and Margaret's unmarketable thread. My thread always broke, and at last I had to "fake" my spinning to a certain extent, but at last I worked my wheel right, and gave an impression that I could spin my pound of thread a day with the best.

Two operatic stars did me the honour to copy my Margaret dress—Madame Albani and Madame Melba. It was rather odd, by the way, that many mothers who took their daughters to see the opera of "Faust" would not bring them to see the Lyceum play. One of these mothers was Princess Mary of Teck, a constant patron of most of our plays.

## Malt Whisky.

Most of the Highland distilleries are in remarkably beautiful spots—some amid the wildest and most picturesque scenery (writes Benjamin Taylor in the "World's Work"). And one of the unsolved problems of the trade is why so much variety of flavour prevails. Broadly speaking, what is called Highland whisky is made from barley grown in the Highland counties, and malted with peat fires, the fumes from which rise up through a perforated ceiling and flavour while they dry the malt lying above. But, although a dozen or twenty or fifty distilleries were malting the same barley in precisely the same manner, no two of them would produce precisely the same results in the spirit distilled. The quality or flavour is said to be affected by the water used, yet distilleries using water from the same river or burn within a short distance of each other will yield

quite different results. Climatic effects may be suggested, but it is difficult to understand climatic differences within a radius of, say, a dozen miles on about the same elevation. Whatever the true cause, the quality of Highland whisky differs not only with the water used, but also with the location of the distillery, even when the same, or similar, native barley and Highland peats are used. Lowland malt whisky is made from a lower class of (largely imported) barley than that grown in the Highlands. For malting it peats are brought down from the Highlands. Lowland malt whisky has not the characteristic or distinctive flavour of Highland malt, and it is usually known as "plain malt" by blenders, who use it either to stiffen the grain whisky they employ in the blends or to cheapen the blending of Highland malts with grain.

## Saving Daylight.

The Daylight Saving Bill is the simple title of the ingenious measure introduced in the House of Commons by Mr. Robert Pearce, M.P. for the Leek Division of Staffordshire, which it is hoped will add 210 hours to the working year, or nearly two years to an average man's life.

Saving daylight by a parliamentary bill sounds somewhat like extracting sunbeams from cucumbers, but to Mr. Pearce it is a very simple matter. He proposes to put on the clock twenty minutes between 2 a.m. and 3 a.m. on each of the first four Sundays in April and to put back the clock twenty minutes during the first four Sundays in September.

By Mr. Pearce's computation this pleasant little practice will give everyone 210 hours more daylight every year. Workmen will thus be freed from their toil twenty minutes earlier in the summer evenings, and have this much more daylight at their disposal.

## The Tanner Cab Arrives.

The tannercab made its bow to the London public recently, when seventeen of the familiar handsome equipped with taximeters left the yard of the London Improved Cab Company.

The drivers who inaugurated this new era in London transportation were enthusiastic. "Their cabs were in great demand, and under the agreement which has been made between the Cabmen's Union and the proprietors, the men receive a third of the gross takings. Mr. Hill said that the men, who were opposed to the new idea at first, are now 'tumbling over each other' to get the new tannercabs."

The taximeter is fixed at the left side of the cab, where it can be seen by the passenger, while the driver can pull it up to look at it when he desires to do so. All the tannercabs bear the following notice pasted on the splashboard:—

- (a) Not exceeding one mile or for time not exceeding twelve minutes, 6d.
- (b) Exceeding one mile or twelve minutes:—

- (1) For each half-mile or time not exceeding six minutes, 3d.
- (2) For any less distance or time, 3d.

"The tannercabs will be very popular with country governesses," said Mr. Hill. "There will be no more disputes about the fare."

Dr. Radard, a Geneva dentist, claims that a complete narcosis can be obtained if the rays of a blue electric light are brought to bear on the human eye while all other rays of light are kept off it.

Sir Victor Horsley, at a meeting of the British Medical Association, spoke in favour of making a system of periodic measurements part of the general scheme of medical inspection of school children. It was stated that at Marlborough school, where annual measurements have been recorded for twenty years, the average size and weight of the boys has been steadily increasing. From a comparison of these statistics it appears that in 1906 the boys 14 years old were about five pounds heavier and nearly 1½ inches taller than those of the same age in 1886. The 16-year-old boys of the present date keep up in proportion, being three-quarters of an inch taller and 8½ heavier. It would be interesting to learn something of the foods on which these youngsters were reared.