

## WAIFS AND STRAYS.

**A SINGULAR REMEDY.**—Whenever Burke felt himself indisposed, he ordered a kettle of water to be kept boiling, of which he drank large quantities, sometimes as much as four and even five quarts in a morning, without any mixture or infusion, and as hot as he could bear it. His manner was to pour about a pint at a time into a basin, and to drink it with a spoon as if it had been soup. Warm water, he said, would relax and nauseate, but hot water was the finest stimulant and most powerful restorative in the world. He certainly thought it a sovereign remedy; and not only took it himself, but prescribed it with the confidence of a Sangrado to every patient that came in his way.

**LONG SUIT.**—The longest law suit ever heard of in England was between the heir of Sir Thomas Talbot, Viscount Lisle, on the one part, and the heir of Lord Berkeley on the other, respecting certain possessions not far from Watton-under-Edge, in the county of Gloucester. It commenced at the end of the reign of Edward IV., and was pending till the reign of James I., when a compromise took place, it having lasted above one hundred and twenty years.

**AMERICAN VICISSITUDES.**—The rise and fall of Pithole City, in the centre of Pennsylvania oil regions, seems almost like a miracle. In three months after the first house was built, Pithole had two theatres, two newspapers, an opera house, seventy-five hotels and salons—one of 100,000 dols., and a population of 25,000 people. Now the inhabitants have vanished, the theatres are closed, the newspapers removed, the oil wells are dry, and the place is lapsing into its original desolation as rapidly as it was built up. There are scarcely one hundred people left.

**ANECOTE OF NAPOLEON I.**—It was in 1796. Josephine, before marrying General Bonaparte, consulted her lawyer, M. Raquideau, as to her union with the young victor of Saint Roch. "It's folly," answered the sage man of law, "perfect folly, to marry a young officer without fortune and without future." But Josephine had more confidence still in the oracles of Mlle. Lenormand, the celebrated fortune-teller; or rather she did as people often do after asking advice, she followed her own mind, and did well. Bonaparte heard of the opinion passed upon him, and made his way in spite of M. Raquideau's doubt, and the young officer became Emperor. But, although he had advanced much, he had forgotten nothing. When he was attired in his coronation robes, and a few minutes before proceeding to Notre Dame, he called out in a voice of thunder, "Let Raquideau be brought!" The poor notary thought he had signed his last contract. "Well," said the Emperor, as soon as he perceived him, "here is the man without fortune and without future!" and then, after a mischievous pause of a few minutes, he turned to the confused lawyer, and said, "I name you lawyer to the family." Josephine did well, they say. Can we think so, if we remember her after suffering, and the agony of that night when, knowing her fate, she drew Bonaparte to the window, and, pointing to the sky, said, prophetically, "Like those two stars, we have risen together, and separated we shall fall."

**THE FIRST ENGLISH COPPER COINAGE.**—The first copper coinage consisted solely of farthings, and was issued in the reigns of James I. and Charles II. Charles II. issued halfpence and farthings. Penny and twopenny pieces were first coined in the early part of the reign of George III. [We have, however, read of the reason of their being so called, which, if true, would upset this assertion. It has been stated that when pennies were first coined, they had two deep incisions, crossing each other, and dividing them into four equal parts. When the smaller sums were required, it could be broken into either two or four pieces—the larger being called half-pence; the smaller four-things, afterwards perverted to farthings.]

**CURIOUS DISCOVERY.**—In 1596 the Dutch explorers in Nova Zembla constructed a small wooden hut. Captain Carlsen, in a fishing exhibition between September 9th and November 4th, 1873, made the tour of Nova Zembla, during which he discovered this house fallen to ruins, and completely covered with ice. In it he found 150 objects of interest; amongst other things, books which, after nearly 300 years, are in a good state of preservation. This collection is to be placed in the Museum of Amsterdam.

**ABOUT KINGS.**—Although the desire to rule has been so often productive of fatal results to princes, there are still men willing to sacrifice almost anything for a crown. It is estimated that out of 2540 emperors or kings who ruled 64 nations, 229 were dethroned, 64 abdicated, 20 committed suicide, 11 went mad, 100 died on the battlefield, 123 were made prisoners, 25 were pronounced martyrs and saints, 151 were assassinated, 62 were poisoned, and 108 sentenced to death. With this gloomy record staring him in the face, Don Carlos is vigorously striving to obtain possession of the Spanish crown, and the Count Chambord would make an equally stubborn effort to secure the French crown if encouraged by the faintest glimmer of hope that the attempt would be successful.

**A WISE ENACTMENT.**—The New York theatres are obliged to pay a tax of 500 dols. each to the "Society for the Reformation of Juvenile Delinquents," on the ground that, as they assist to deprave the mind of youth they must aid in the reform. The managers now intend to test the constitutionality of the law. Their ground is not that the State had not the right to tax and regulate theatres under the general police authority reserved to the State by the Federal Constitution, but that it had no right to impose on theatres in the guise of a license what is already a fine for the benefit of a particular form of organised charity.

**THE ROYAL CROWN OF ENGLAND.**—Queen Victoria's crown is composed of hoops of gold, inclosing a cap of deep purple, or rather blue velvet, the hoops being completely covered with small diamonds, and having a Maltese cross of brilliants on the top of it. This cross has in its centre a splendid sapphire. The rim of the crown is clustered with brilliants, ornamented with *fleur de lis* and Maltese crosses equally rich. In front of the Maltese cross, which is in the front of the crown, is the celebrated heart-shaped ruby, traditionally said to have been worn by the Black Prince at the Battle of Cressy, and by

Henry V. at the Battle of Agincourt. Beneath, in the circular rim, is an immense, long sapphire. There are many other precious gems,—emeralds, rubies, and sapphires—and several small clusters of drop pearls.

**ORIGIN OF THE WORD "BUDGET."**—The word "budget," which is used as synonymous with the financial statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer of Parliament, seems to have been derived in the following manner:—A French author says, "The word 'budget,' which France has borrowed from England, to express the estimate of national receipts and expenditure, comes originally from the Norman-French word *bouquette*, signifying a leathern purse or wallet. It was the custom of the early parliaments in England to put into a leathern bag, or *bouquette*, the accounts submitted to the Commons, and hence the word passed from the thing containing to the thing contained, and with this new signification returned to France. The word 'budget' is first officially used in the *arrêt* of the consuls, 4th Thermidor, year X, and Germinal year XI, of the Republic."

**CURIOUS EXPERIMENT.**—M. Krœping points out the following mode of determining which of two objects seen from a distance is further off than the other: Let the reader suppose two trees, for instance, standing in a line with the eye; if he moves his eye to the right, the tree which is nearer will appear to move to the left, and the other will seem to follow the motion of the eye.

**THE OLDEST ROSEBUSH.**—It is believed that the oldest rosebush in the world is one which is trained upon one side of the cathedral of Hildesheim in Germany. The root is buried under the crypt below the choir. The stem is a foot thick, and half a dozen branches nearly cover the eastern side of the church, bearing countless flowers in summer. Its age is unknown, but documents exist that prove that the Bishop Hezilo, nearly a thousand years ago protected it by a stone roof, which is still extant.

**PETER THE GREAT.**—A board bearing the following inscription has been recently put up in the new Foreign Cattle Market at Deptford, by order of the City officials:—"Here worked as a ship-carpenter Peter, Czar of all the Russias, afterwards Peter the Great, 1698." That Peter the Great visited England is apparently clear enough, but it has not been satisfactorily proved that he worked as a shipwright in Deptford dockyard. The traditional belief is, however very strong, and the great Czar's title has been given to a street in Deptford—a very wretched and woe-begone one, and quite unworthy of the name.

**MENTAL SYSTEM.**—The faculty of concentrating the mind on the matter in hand, to the exclusion of all other things, is one of the rarest and most valuable gifts with which a man can be endowed. To commence with a theory, to think it out to its legitimate results to a concrete form, and, if it be in material science, to proceed to experiment and practice, without diverging in any direction from the purpose, is possible to very few men. And we do not think we are overstating the case when we assert that in proportion as a man is gifted with this faculty he will become a successful investigator of the phenomena of nature. Certain it is, that the most eminent men in the scientific world have been remarkable for this power of self-concentration; and the study of nature and her laws—which go from process to process, and from fact to fact, by strict induction and with inexorable logic—is the pursuit of all others for the employment of this invaluable talent, as well as for the increase of its strength. The study of nature, in other words, science, is the best occupation for the mind, if it be desired to systematize the thinking faculty, and to obtain the greatest result from the exertion of the intellect. It is one phase of the same power, of which thoroughness of work is another; for, if the ability of mental concentration can be acquired, it is by doing most thoroughly and earnestly the work in hand. So the true worker and thinker never wastes time and strength in going back to what he has accomplished; but, having done it once, he is prepared for the next process, and so goes on with the least possible dispersion of mental force.

**SAVE THE CHILDREN.**—Year by year people are getting more sensible ideas in regard to clothing children, and fewer lives are sacrificed than formerly by the absurd, criminal method of dressing children (or, rather, undressing them) in low-necked and short-sleeved dresses. But still the custom is alarmingly prevalent, and people should be continually warned against it. A distinguished Paris physician says he believes that during the twenty years he has practiced his profession twenty thousand children have been carried to the cemeteries, a sacrifice to the absurd custom of exposing their arms. Put the bulb of a thermometer in a baby's mouth, and the mercury rises to ninety degrees. Now carry the same to its little hand; if the arm be bare, and the evening cool, the mercury will sink to fifty degrees. Of course all the blood that flows through these arms must fall from ten to forty degrees below the temperature of the heart. "Need I say," he asks, "when these currents of the blood flow back to the chest, the child's vitality is more or less compromised? And need I add that we ought not to be surprised at its frequent recurring affections of the tongue, throat, or stomach? I have seen more than one child, with habitual cough or hoarseness, entirely relieved by simply keeping the hands and arms warm."

**RELIGIOUS CENSUS OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA.**—The South Australian census of 1871 shows 50,849 persons—men, women, and children—described as belonging to the Church of England. This number is 27.39 per cent. of the whole population. The Roman Catholics have 28,688, or 15.44 per cent. of the population; the Wesleyan Methodists, 27,075, or 14.59 per cent.; the Lutherans, 15,415, or 8.30 per cent.; the Presbyterians, 13,371, or 7.20 per cent.; the Baptists, 8,731, or 4.70 per cent.; the Primitive Methodists, 8,207, or 4.72 per cent.; the Congregationalists, 7,969, or 4.29 per cent.; the Bible Christians, 7,758, or 4.18 per cent. The remainder of the population comprises some members of the smaller denominations, with 5,436 objecting to answer, and 3,802 whose religion is not stated. The Wesleyans and Roman Catholics show the largest numerical increase since 1861. The total population in 1871 was 185,626—males, under 14, 39,936, and above that age, 55,472; females, under 14, 39,192, and above that age, 51,626.