

AN ALLIGATOR FARM.

Neval Industry Pursued in an Arkansas Locality.

The alligator farm of H. T. Campbell lies on a small mountain stream that flows the year round. A series of small lakes, or ponds, fed by the stream, constitutes the breeding grounds of the reptiles. Mr. Campbell has not taken stock of his farm for several months, but knows that there are over 600 'gators in the lakes at the present time, which range in length from six inches to nearly fifteen feet. On account of a disposition among the larger ones to make a dinner of the smaller ones, the lakes are separated by wire netting. The number of occupants of each lake is then determined by their ability to take care of themselves.

In the summer months the 'gators are fed every Sunday. They hibernate during the winter and will not eat the most tempting morsel placed at their mouths. The winter quarters of the farm is a long, low-roofed building, heated by steam. The building is divided into sections, and each section possesses a pool of water, with steam pipes at the bottom. In the winter the 'gator cares nothing for space, and 200' one on top of another, will occupy one small pond.

The age of an alligator is something no one can determine. Mr. Campbell's experience with them will tempt him to do nothing more than guess when the age of Big Joe is asked. He will say that Big Joe is over 150 years old, and perhaps 300, but he will not be more definite.

Mr. Campbell spends a part of each year hunting for 'gators to replenish the stock on his farm. The bayous of southern Louisiana, along the Gulf coast and the swamps of Florida are his favorite hunting grounds. The small alligator is caught with a net, but the capture of a large one, that is, one over eight feet long, is never attempted in the summer time. He is located then, and the hunter waits for him to hibernate. When the 'gator thinks he is stowed away for the cold season he awakens to find the hunter upon him with unyielding nooses that tighten with every vicious lunge he makes. When the hunter succeeds in getting the reptile on its back then the rest is easy, as the position soon causes it to pass into an almost comatose condition.

In the hottest of the summer months the female begins to lay her eggs. She will first make a nest resembling a rubbish heap on the bank of the lake, and after laying will cover the eggs with the same material. In tropical climates the heat of the sun hatches the eggs, but at Mr. Campbell's farm an incubator is depended on. One female will lay from thirty to forty-five eggs before abandoning a nest. Afterward she will guard it night and day until the young ones take to the water, but after they reach the water they have to look out for themselves.

Mr. Campbell sold more than three hundred alligators last year to zoological gardens, circuses and private individuals. He supplied one patent medicine company with one hundred, which are being used for advertising purposes.

Track Laying by Electricity.

An interesting portable electric plant is used by the French railways in a permanent way construction, and enables track laying to be executed at a much more rapid rate than by the older methods. On a platform car that can be run either on the rails or on an ordinary road, is mounted a vertical steam engine of twenty-five horse power connected with a dynamo supplying current at 220 volts.

There is also a vertical boiler and water tank, and various portable conductors and supports that enable the current to be carried to the tools employed in fixing the rails and packing the sleepers. The current is taken from two wires by small trolleys, and is then led to machine tools, which, with their motors, are mounted on small trucks. Two men are required to work the two machines which set the wood screws holding the rails into the sleepers, and two more are required to hold the latter in place with crowbars.

In this way 19.7 yards of single track can be set with 200 screws in ten minutes, a rate seven times as fast as the same operation can be performed by hand. Following this operation comes the packing or tamping of the broken stone around the sleepers, and there is also an electrical tool for this purpose, four of these usually being in the hands of as many men, while two others supply the ballast.

Thus the six men can properly pack a sleeper in broken stone in one minute, while if the material is sand only thirty-five seconds is required. The apparatus is designed so that it can be operated conveniently from either a siding or from one of a set of double tracks when repairs are being made on the rails being laid on the other side of the exchange.

Royal Tips.

Some of the European monarchs give very large tips whenever they travel. The Emperor Nicholas of Russia is the most liberal in this respect. During his last visit to France three years ago he spent \$10,000 on tips to servants, and almost as much on presents to officials and others. King Edward of England is not quite so generous, but as he travels a good deal, both within his own realm and abroad he is obliged to lay aside each year \$32,000 as an allowance for tips. The Emperor William of Germany is much more generous in a foreign country than at home. During his latest visit to the United States he spent not less than \$100,000 on tips.

FORTUNE-BRINGING DREAMS.

Numbers Seen in Sleep Considered the Luckiest of Omens.

Has there ever been a lottery, we wonder, in which dreams of lucky numbers have not played a romantic part, as in the case of M. Cousin, who won the second prize of £8,000 in the recent French lottery?

That, for instance, is a strange story that is told of Signor Pozzi, a merchant of Milan. Not long ago the signor dreamed of his daughter, who died several years since, and next morning, with his dream still mournfully haunting his memory, something brought to his mind that it was one of the days on which the municipal lottery was open. To the lottery he went, being a man of sporting instincts, and his dream suggested the venture. His daughter having died at the age of 24 years 13 days and 4 hours, he selected these three numbers to bet upon, and two of the three proved highly lucky. One, on which he laid 8s. 4d brought him 250 times his stakes, or over £100, and the other 4250 times his stake of £1 12s. 6d., or nearly £7,000.

It was a dream that brought fortune too late for an Italian peasant called Lura. The peasant dreamed one night that he had been present at the drawing of the great state lottery, and that the first prize of £3,000 had fallen to ticket No. 24,016. When he awoke he was so strongly impressed by his dream that he scraped together all the money he possessed, and after long searching, was able to buy a ticket, not of the number of his dream, but containing the same figures in a different order. Then he fell on evil days, his wife died of an illness brought on by hardship and starvation, and a few days later he, too, succumbed. Within a week of this double tragedy the ticket he had purchased was awarded the great prize at the lottery drawing.

In the early days of lotteries in England to dream a number was always looked on as the luckiest of omens. In an old copy of the Post Boy we may still read this advertisement: "This is to give notice that 10 shillings over and above the market price will be given for the ticket in the £1,500,000 lottery, No. 132, by Nath. Cliff, at the Bible and Three Crowns in Cheap-side." Light was thrown on this mysterious notice by a letter which the advertiser wrote to the Spectator, in which he says: "You must know I have but one ticket for which reason, and a certain dream I have lately had more than once, I resolved it should be the number I most approved. My visions are so frequent and strong upon this occasion that I have not only possessed the lot but disposed of the money which in all probability it will sell for."

Woman and Proverbs.

The Spanish rhyme has it: "Were a woman as little as she is good, a pea pod would make her a gowu and a hood."

An old English saying: "If a man lose a woman and a farthing, he will be sorry he lost the farthing."

The French adage: "A man of straw is worth a woman of gold."

The German: "There are only two good women in the world—one dead and the other can't be found."

The Scotch say: "Honest men marry soon; wise men never."

In Fife they say: "The next best thing to no wife is a good wife."

The Arabian declares: "Words are women; deeds are men."

The Persian sage says that a woman's wisdom is under her heel.

The German affirms that every daughter of Eve would rather be beautiful than good.

The Persian asserts that women and dragons are best out of the world.

The Corsican says: "Just as a good and a bad horse both need the spur, a good and a bad woman both need the stick."

The Hindoo: "A man is not obeyed by his wife in his own house, nor does she consider him her husband unless he beats her." Another Hindoo proverb says: "Drive out a woman's nature with a pitchfork and it will return again and again."—Philadelphia Inquirer.

State with Many Counties.

The Georgia legislature made a further addition to the number of counties in the Cracker State, bringing up the state number from 127 to 145.

New York, with its great population, is able to get along with 61 counties, while California, more than double the size of Georgia, gets along with 57.

What political necessity there can be for 145 independent counties in Georgia, each with a separate government, organization and expense, is a problem, but perhaps the reason is the same which has added to the number of counties in Texas until there are now 248. In one of them at the presidential election of last year only 22 voters were cast, in another 120, in another 180 and in a fourth 60. The propensity to create counties in the south and southwest has always been marked. There are 76 counties in Mississippi, 119 in Kentucky, 75 in Arkansas, 45 in Florida and 96 in Tennessee.

Motion He Couldn't Overrule.

A judge of the supreme court is fond of yachting, and a few days ago he invited a friend of his to go for a cruise with him. At the start the wind was quite brisk, but soon freshened into a gale and made the little craft toss and roll in a manner that caused the guest's features to twist into expressive contortions. The judge, noticing his friend's plight, laid a soothing hand on the other's shoulder and said: "My dear fellow, can I do anything for you?" "Yes," replied the other in plaintive tones, "you will greatly oblige me by overruling this motion."

PRINCESS SELLS CATS.

Queen's Daughter Derives Large Income from This Source.

Everyone knows that Queen Alexandra is a cat lover, but it has come somewhat as a surprise to a number of English women that her daughter, Princess Victoria, is not only a lover of cats, but an energetic and enthusiastic breeder as well. The princess does not breed cats, it appears, merely to increase the number of her feline pets. Her "catteries" are worked on a solid commercial basis and apparently with considerable profit to her private pocket. That her enterprise is conducted on thorough business lines may be seen from the following announcement, which appears in a weekly paper whose space is mainly devoted to sales and exchange of miscellaneous articles:

"Her royal highness, Princess Victoria, has for sale several handsome Chinchilla kittens, sire Puck III, ex-Chela, also Chela, splendid mother, lovely green eyes, blue Persian female. Cheap to good homes. Must sell Mrs. Amor, Cumberland Lodge, Windsor, Great Park."

Mrs. Amor occupies an important position in the household staff at Cumberland Lodge. "Cheap" is always a relative term, but in this instance it stands for anything between \$25 and \$100.

When a woman of title goes in for millinery, dressmaking or any form of shopkeeping, she thereby loses her right to presentation at court. In view of the fact that his majesty does not even draw the line at making money out of cats in his own exalted family circle, it is held that he ought, in justice, to rescind this rule.

How They Do Things in Sweden.

A barber will shave you for six cents, but you have to wash your own face and comb your own hair.

Everybody trusts you, and you are expected to trust everybody.

You never have a dispute with the cabman over the fare. A taximeter measures the distance you travel and shows what you owe at any minute.

You get a bill every day at the hotel. This permits you to correct any mistakes at once.

Women shine your shoes, shave you, cut your hair and even give you a bath—unless you rebel.

Police men salute the street car conductors and are saluted by them.

A servant who brings you something says, "So good." You say, "Tak." (thanks).

You take off your hat when you enter a shop and return the shopman's low bow.

Although drinking is common, one seldom sees a drunken man.

Tips are everywhere given, but they are small. Ten ore (2½ cents) is the ordinary tip to a cabman or porter.

A lady always waits for a gentleman to speak, instead of the reverse as in America.

The comedians crack jokes on the rich Swedish-American who has come home to spend his money.

Grand opera lasts from Sept. 1 to June 1. The state furnishes the opera house and endows it.

It is light all night in summer and dark all day in winter.

There are more telephones in proportion to the population in Stockholm than in any other city in the world.—Minneapolis Journal.

Pearls "Die" When Not Worn.

That pearls "die" in obscurity, and retain their luster and value when worn frequently, is a fact that has always had to be borne in mind by the owners of jewels.

"Pearls," he said, "must be worn frequently to preserve them. If you take a pearl necklace and lock it up you will find that in the course of years the pearls become dull and lose the sheen that makes them so valuable. Heirlooms which have been carefully treasured will sometimes be found to have deteriorated in this way. They lose their glow, and in some instances become almost black. Pearl necklaces never keep so well as when they are constantly on the necks of their owners."

"It has been suggested that personal influences have something to do with the matter, but I think it is more likely that the effect is due to light and air. You can wear pearls practically as long as you like, certainly for fifty years, and they would give no indication of change, and you might lock pearls up and perhaps in twenty years they would show signs of 'dying.' There are, however, ways of resuscitating pearls, but the fact that they 'die' is quite clear."—London Daily Mail.

Facts About Ivory Gathering.

Ivory is, strictly speaking, obtained only from the tusks of the elephant, the finest of which come from the east coast of Africa. This hard, heavy, fine-grained green or Guinea ivory is esteemed for its transparency, and because its light yellow or pale blood tint, unlike the whiteness of other kinds which becomes yellow, bleaches with age. The different species of African elephants supply almost all the ivory used in Europe. Its quantity is enormous. The British importation in 1900 was 1,175,000 pounds, which represent 60,000 tusks. One London firm sells 10,000 tusks yearly in billiard balls. Under so heavy a drain the supply must fall, but to fall back upon are remarkable deposits of mammoth tusks which have accumulated on the rivers discharging into the Arctic ocean.

The Russo-Japanese war has so raised the price of camphor that a substitute is being sought for.

ALICE GETS COSTLY GIFTS.

Presents Received by Miss Roosevelt Aggregate \$100,000.

It is estimated that the presents which Miss Roosevelt has received from the empress of China, the emperor of Japan, the emperor of Korea, the Sultan of Jolo and others in the far east will reach a cash value not far short of \$100,000.

Miss Roosevelt was placed in a position where she could not decline any of the presents without giving offense. The gifts came to her as the representative of the government, although she did not travel with any such credentials. As the daughter of the President she was regarded by the Orientals as they regard the reigning families of European kingdoms.

The gifts were tokens of friendship and good will for the United States, and Miss Roosevelt could not have declined any not even the pearl from the sultan of Jolo, without placing this government in the attitude of rejecting friendly overtures.

Lives on 7 Cents a Day.

Seven cents a day is all that A. J. Seaman, a professional tax-title buyer, with residences in Denver and Omaha, spends for food and drink, according to his own statement.

He is thought to be worth at least \$100,000, and is known to have presented a certified check for \$50,000 on one occasion.

Despite his fortune, he lives in the most frugal manner, renting a small room far out in the suburbs, for which he pays almost nothing.

"I have reduced the cost of living to a science," says Seaman. "Seven cents a day is my limit, and what this amount buys keeps me in excellent health. This allows two cents each for breakfast and supper and three cents for a hearty meal in the middle of the day. For breakfast I have coffee and crackers; for dinner a bowl of soup with bread, and at supper bread, butter and tea. I clothe myself for \$1 a year and always have two complete outfits."

Seaman does not use the street car and walks to his suburban lodgings; also for short distances through the country, but patronizes the railroads for long journeys.

His sole business is buying the titles of property sold for taxes and disposing of them at higher prices.

Advice to Smokers.

An excellent plan for smokers is to abstain from time to time—that is, fast from all tobacco, say, for weeks or a month at a time. This method enables the smoker to enjoy his smoke more when he goes back to it and is less harmful to his health.

"It is a fine scheme," said one man.

"When I stop for a month I am equipped with the keenest relish and liking for a good cigar at the end of that month I am rested, refreshed, recuperated—in pocket, too. Thus I show that I am master of my habit, and not mastered by it. I have been doing this way for a long time now, and I heartily recommend my plan to all smokers. I do not limit myself to any number of cigars while in one of my smoking months, but simply smoke at will, and then absolutely quit until another month is through."—Baltimore American.

A Swallow's Fast Flight.

Unless swallow stories are like anglers' yarns, a bird belonging to an Antwerp gentleman has just established a record. A flight of homing pigeons had been arranged from Compiègne to Antwerp. The swallow, caught by the gentleman from a nest under his own roof, and duly marked, was sent to Compiègne and given its freedom with the pigeons at 7:15 in the morning. At 8:23 that same morning the swallow returned to its nest at Antwerp. It had covered the distance between the towns of just under 148 miles in one hour and eight minutes, having, therefore, traveled at the extraordinary speed of two miles and some 300 yards per minute. The first pigeon to reach its cage, also at Antwerp, arrived there only at 11:30.—London Telegraph.

The Town Jay Gould Founded.

Gouldsboro, Lackawanna county, which was named for the late Jay Gould, who was the founder of the town, he having operated a tannery at that place before he became either rich or famous, is a deserted village. According to the report of School Superintendent Taylor of Lackawanna county its public school has dwindled to a paltry attendance of fifteen pupils, and its tanneries and sawmills have about disappeared.—Philadelphia Record.

Novel Use for Leather.

The Belgian government discovered some time ago that the leather bags used for the mails in the Congo Free State were often stolen. Investigation proved that natives in the postal service took them, cut out the bottoms and gave them to their wives to be worn as clothing.

Japanese War Pictures.

During their war with Russia the Japanese took pictures of the Russian prisoners and their surroundings in Japan and with the aid of kites scattered them among the Russian soldiers in camp, in order to show the contrast between their hardships and the comforts enjoyed by the prisoners.

Valuable Wedding Gifts.

Conspicuous among the adornments of the bridal fest in Brittany is an artistic and elaborate butter structure, as fanciful and elegant as the most beautiful bridal cake, and into this structure the guests stick slip sticks bearing coins of gold or silver.

A Ike Cage—The Witness Box.

THE RISE AND FALL OF ARMIES.

The Latest to Accomplish Something Holds the World's Attention.

Just at present the Japanese army is the cynosure of all military eyes. It is the latest army to do something, and for that reason, if for no other, holds the world's attention. Interest rather than study is what it provokes now. The study will come later, when we know more than we do today of the quality of its work and can parcel out how much of the Japanese success was due to superior fighting power and how much to overwhelming preponderance of numbers on its side. There is no reflection on the courage of an army in its winning by strategy. Only a brave army can be trusted by a strategist. At to concentrating superior numbers on the foe, that is what organization is for. So far as we now know, the Japanese organization admirably served its purpose, but the actual value of the Japanese army as a whole depends for ascertainment on fuller information than we now possess. We have heard little or nothing from the vanquished. We need the Russian account before we can make up our minds as to the degree of facility with which the victors achieved their successes. Boston Transcript.

Changes in Locomotives.

When one looks at the fleet, powerful locomotives of today, one can but smile when he remembers that they are the direct progeny of the little locomotives that were the astonishment of America 75 years ago, says Leroy S. Cutt in the American Illustrated Magazine.

The Best Friend made its trial trips in the autumn months of 1830 on a railroad that ran out of Charleston, S. C. One day, the next year, while the engineer was attending to some freight (for the engineer of that time was also the train crew) the fireman, a negro, became annoyed at the buzzing steam that escaped through the safety valve.

He first tried to cure the nuisance by holding the valve down with his hand, but the steam pressure was stronger than his arm. Then he sat down on the lever of the valve.

That was better; the steam devil quieted. The negro was content for a few minutes; then came the explosion, and the negro and the Best Friend were wrecks.

When Winding Your Watch.

The old superstitious belief that you will change your luck if you stop winding your watch at night and wind it in the morning may have some slight basis in fact, according to a jeweler, who says that the morning is the proper time to do the winding. This is not only because the hour of rising is for the average man much more regular than that for retiring, but even the soberest and most orderly of men are apt to relax and prone to carelessness at bedtime, when more or less worn by the wear and tear of the day. In this condition the winding is apt to be done in a jerky, irregular sort of way, or too far or not far enough. "Nine people out of ten wind their watches on going to bed," said the jeweler; "but if they would do it when they get up, at some regular point in the process of making their toilet, they would do it much better."—Philadelphia Record.

Insurance for Pigs.

A scheme for the co-operative insurance of pigs has been started in Wiltshire, the idea being to strengthen by amalgamation the hundred or more pig insurance clubs which already exist in the country, and to form new pig clubs in villages which are the source of some of our best breakfast bacon.

The new association, which is to be known as the Wiltshire Pig Insurance and Provident Association, is to be registered under the friendly societies' act.—London Express.

Red Hair and Baldness.

An eminent man of science has recently declared that red-haired people are far less apt to grow bald than those with other colored hair. The average crop on the head of a red-haired person is only 20,200 hairs. Ordinary dark hair is far finer, and over three dark hairs take up the space of one red one; 105,000 are about the average. But fair-haired people are still better off; 140,000 to 160,000 are quite a common number of hairs on the scalp of a fair-haired man or woman.

Uses for the Kite.

The kite, that toy and delight of boyhood, has very practical uses. In engineering it is employed to carry lines across deep chasms, thus supplying a means of carrying heavier cables, and by their use in turn, parts of the sustaining frame of the structure during its erection. Kites are also used to carry line across a line of eurt and breakers for the purpose of removing the passengers of stranded vessels.

Filtering Tobacco Smoke.

Users of tobacco should, according to a German investigator, filter the smoke from their pipes through cotton soaked in ferric salts. By this process the fumes of the essential oil, of the hydrogen sulphide, the cyanhydric acid and about half the nicotine and its products of decomposition are got rid of, while the smoke is not deprived of its aroma.

Savants for Conductors.

Conductors on the German state railways must hereafter be able to speak both English and French besides their own language. Those who fail to pass the examination will be discharged. If the educational requirements for conductors in Germany are made much more rigid none can qualify for the positions but the professors of Heidelberg and Bonn.—Four Track News.

RAPID GROWTH OF DIVORCE.

More Husbands Than Wives Apply for Complete Dissolution.

The growth of divorce in England, as in the United States, has grown so rapidly, says the London Mail, that it is causing uneasiness to those who are concerned in the moral health of the nation. It is now 47 years since the divorce court was constituted. Before Jan. 1, 1858, complete dissolution of marriage could only be effected by act of parliament, and consequently it was a privilege enjoyed by the very rich alone.

In the first year of the court's existence it had to deal with 326 petitions. Fewer applications for release from the marriage tie were made during the second and third years, in the fourth year, 1861, low water mark was reached, the petitions numbering 236.

From that date up to the present time there has been a continuous rise, but marked, as in the progress of trade, or emigration, or any other affair measured by statistics, by frequent remissions.

The judicial statistics, published this year, only go to 1903, and they show that in 1902 the highest point was touched. In that year there were a total of 1,050 petitions for dissolution of marriage, judicial separation, nullity, restitution of conjugal rights, etc.

The South African war acted as a disturbing factor. Many members of the class among whom divorce is most common were away, and, therefore, unable to take action. Thus the petitions fell by nearly 100 in each of the first two years of the war, and rose when the war came to an end.

The acts of 1878, 1886 and 1895 endowed the poor with some of the privileges of the well-to-do, and here there is real occasion for alarm on the score of morality. Any wife proving desertion, refusal to maintain her, or aggravated assault, on the part of her husband, can obtain a separation order which carries a weekly payment for her maintenance at the discretion of the magistrate.

While husband and wife are parted forever, the divorce is not complete. Marriage with another would be bigamy. There is only one moral safeguard—the maintenance order is revoked on proof of misconduct. The situation created is certainly hazardous.

Many curious facts are revealed by the judicial statistics. For instance, judicial separation is going out of fashion. Some people who cannot live happily together are disinclined to resort to measures for complete dissolution of the marriage and remain content with judicial separation, the old a mensa et thoro. But the number has fallen 12 per cent since 1858. It is the wives who keep it up. In 1903 the applicants for judicial separation comprised 85 wives and only four husbands.

More husbands than wives apply for complete dissolution. This is a curious fact, for it is true of other countries also where equal facilities are offered to the two sexes. The change in the status of women is shown, however, by a tendency in this difference to disappear.

A remarkable fact is that the increase of divorces corresponds with an older marrying age. People marry later in life now than formerly, and apparently with less judgment as to compatibility.

But more remarkable is the length of time husband and wives take to find each other out, so to speak. Taking the average of five years (1898-1903), nearly half the petitions were filed by people who had been married from ten to twenty years.

SHOWING WALL PAPERS.

Conveniences for Exhibiting Under Artificial Light.

Silks have long been shown in stores, when desired, by artificial light, so that the customer may see how they will light up, how they will look at night. Nowadays wall papers are shown in like manner.

There are wall papers that look well by day but not so well by night, and then there are wall papers handsome by day that are much handsomer under artificial light—papers that light up well. And it is a common thing now for purchasers in selecting wall papers to look at them by daylight and also by artificial light.

Purchasers have, indeed, long done this in a way. The customer would hold up for their inspection a roll of paper under a gaslight. But now in some wall paper establishments there are found electric lighted rooms in which wall papers can be shown as they would appear at night under artificial light on the wall.

The rooms for which papers are thus selected are likely to be not sleeping rooms, but rooms that are occupied by night as well as by day for living purposes—rooms in which it is important that the papers should light up well and be gratifying to the eye—the parlor, the dining room and the library.

Natural History.

"The moth," remarked the man who assumes superior knowledge, "has never been credited with the sagacity it really possesses. The moth is an epicure."

"It'll eat anything in sight," replied his auditor.

"That's where you are wrong. It is a creature of taste and discernment. You have observed that it eats holes in your evening clothes, and only attacks your business suit when there is nothing else."

"Which is sheer cussedness."

"Not at all. When you attend a banquet you wear your evening clothes. And the moth's procedure conclusively demonstrates that it knows the difference between terrapin and champagne and plain restaurant coup."—Washington Star.