

Ameer of Afghanistan.

The Ameer of Afghanistan, Aburrahman Khan, was born about 1830. He has been a very strong man, and held his throne by the power of his sword. During the civil war of 1864 he took a leading part in supporting his father's claim to the throne. He was successful for a time, and won the battles of Shahabad and Kheilat-Ghizal. But in 1868, his father having died, he was defeated by Yakoub Khan, son of Shere Ali, and took refuge in Russia. He was provided with a residence at Samarcand and a pension, and remained in Turkestan until 1879, when he made his way to the Kabul frontier, and having gained the allegiance of the leading men of that city, he was acknowledged by the British Government as Ameer of Afghanistan. It was afterwards seen that his sympathies were more British than Russian. In September, 1880, a British mission, sent with the object of settling British-Afghan boundaries, and so getting rid of frontier disputes, was received with cordiality, and an agreement was come to which has since been carried out. His subsidy from the British Government was about £100,000, and he was appointed a G.C.S.I. in January, 1884.

Ten-rooms in London.

The opening of "ten-rooms" in London has proved a great success, owing to the fact that domestic help being much more difficult to obtain than in former years, many people take their friends to these ten-rooms in preference to returning to their own homes, and giving additional work to their maids. There is a capital opening for such a business enterprise in Toronto, and it is curious that the opportunity afforded has not yet been seized upon. Canadian women, as a rule, are inclined to fight shy of anything like business enterprises in their own country, which is generally supposed to have not yet reached that stage of prosperity which would allow of ideas of this kind proving a success. I hear that in London, England, Miss McCaul, the daughter of the late Dr. McCaul of Toronto, has a most charming photographic studio, where, in partnership with another Canadian lady, she carries on a most successful business. We have as yet no lady photographer in Toronto, though the opening for such a business is excellent, I believe.

French-Canadian Congress.

According to an article by Monsieur J. L. K. Lafamme, in the Revue Canadienne for August, a congress of all the French-Canadians settled in the State of New York and in the New England States is to be held on the first and second of October next. The objects of this congress are the consideration of the following subjects, in relation to the position occupied by the French race in the United States of America: (1) Beneficent societies, (2) naturalization, (3) education, while the second day is devoted to matters relating to (1) the situation in regard to religious matters; what it is, reports and statistics; (2) what it would eventually become; (3) measures necessary to improve the present condition of religious affairs. It appears, according to the article by Monsieur Lafamme, that the beneficent societies are federated under the jurisdiction of one organization, the Union of St. John Baptiste of America, and that the establishment of charitable societies under this union has been astonishingly rapid. The work of naturalization is one which, of course, affects their political influence in the States, and the writer remarks that as the numbers of naturalized French-Canadians increase, their position in many regards is rendered more pleasant by the citizens of the republic they have chosen to cast their lot with. And Monsieur Lafamme observes: "The right to vote has contributed greatly, we believe, to ameliorate our difficulties in regard to religion, even more so than social enigmas." To cite an example, the privilege of being able to elect Monsieur Dubouque of Fall River to the Legislature of Massachusetts, was the means of saving our principal of parochial schools, gravely threatened in the neighboring State. Consequently the question of "naturalization" has an important place on the programme of the convention.

Postal Reform Needed.

A postal reform advocated by The Baltimore News may interest us in Canada. The News refers to the annoyance and confusion caused by the varying rates on different kinds of postal matter. Books, parcels, etc., are carried through the mails at a lower rate than letters; but if any kind of communication is found in them the whole weight is charged at the letter rate, and sometimes a penalty is incurred. Then there are regulations about leaving book-packets open at the ends, in order to facilitate inspection. All this complicated machinery is devised for what purpose? Simply to avoid the possibility of two cents being occasionally lost to the public revenues. "The amount the Government gets for over-weight letters is insignificant. The amount it squeezes out of literary workers, who are charged letter postage rates upon manuscripts (when unaccompanied by printed proofs), is too trifling to be considered. The sole object, therefore, worth thinking of in the maintenance of the distinction between written and other matter is that of getting two cents instead of one cent for a letter." The News says that this object can be attained by the simple regulation that any parcel containing a letter shall pay a minimum rate of two cents; but that over that there shall be no discrimination against letters. "Thus, a letter or manuscript would be charged at the same rate as a book, a book, with or without written matter in it, would pay one cent for every two ounces; merchandise in general, whether a written message went along with it or not, would pay one cent for every ounce."

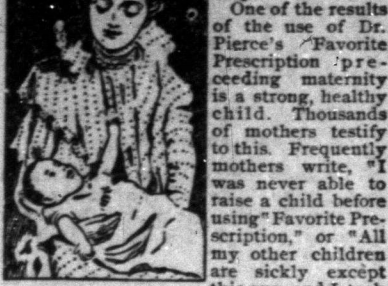
These are American rates, but we see no reason why the principle should not be applied to Canada. It might be briefly put in this way: "Under one ounce, letter rates; over one ounce, parcel or book rates; in addition to the two cents." As a matter of fact, communications rarely exceed the ounce limit; and if a parcel weighs two or three ounces, what does it matter whether it is a book, a letter or a pair of gloves? The reform would do away with the necessity of writing on envelopes descriptions of their contents, or leaving parcels open at the ends, for deciding to what class a mail package belongs. It would save wear and the shipper and for the postoffice clerks.

Visitor—"Charlie, your father is calling you."
Charlie—"Yes, I hear him, but he is calling 'Charlie.' I don't have to go all the way to 'Charlie.'"

Mrs. Goswami—"How does it come Mrs. Swager invited you to her party?"
I thought you were enemies.
Mrs. Swager—"We are, but she thought I had nothing to do with it, and wanted to make me feel bad."—Columbus (Ohio) State Journal.

"Save the Child!"

That is the heartfelt cry of many a mother who sees her beloved child wasting and fading day by day. Sometimes it is too late for medical aid to help the child. It is so weak, so lacking in stamina that there is no chance of recovery.



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Sick mothers are invited to consult Dr. Pierce, by letter, free. Correspondence confidential. Address Dr. R. V. Pierce, Buffalo, N. Y.

IMMENSE TUNNEL.

New York, Sept. 27.—President Baldwin of the Long Island Railroad, today made application to and filed plans with the rapid transit commission in behalf of the Long Island Railway Extension Co. for a tunnel in the vicinity of a point in this city in the vicinity of Madison Square, Broadway, and Forty-fifth street, under Seventh avenue to Thirty-third street, thence to East River and under it to Long Island City. The plans represent an outlay of \$5,000,000 and call for a double track tunnel its entire length for the carrying of both freight and passengers. The tunnel is to be controlled by the Pennsylvania Railroad Co.

BROUGHT MOTHER'S KISS.

Charleston, Mass., Sept. 27.—Patheistic in the extreme was a scene enacted in the state prison here when the condemned murderer, Luigi Storti, received from his brother, Salvatore, a kiss sent to him by his old mother in Italy. The brother of the prisoner had traveled from his home in Italy to tender the condemned man any assistance that might be found possible in the fight now being waged in the courts for Luigi's life. The prisoner was affectionately informed that no lip had touched his brother's since the aged mother had pressed upon them the kiss for her unfortunate son in America.

DEADLY EXPLOSION.

New York, Sept. 27.—Six men, and possibly seven, were killed and seven injured by the explosion yesterday of an oil tank of the Essex & Hudson Gas Company, at Newark, N. J. The known dead are Lawrence Kirsch, 35 years old, employed in the works but two weeks; William Meyer, 40 years of age; Otto Newman, 27 years, foreman of the works; Alfred Snyder, 22 years old, of Jersey City; Nicholas Miller, 45 years old; unidentified man. Many witnesses say they saw a body in the river, as they saw it hurled high in the air and thrown in that direction. The injured are:—Thaddeus Rindorom, 39 years old; Salvatore Nicotri, 48 years of age, may not live; Henry Ludwig, 33 years old; Theodore Brunner, 26; Arthur Vincent, 24 years old, burned and suffers from shock; Edward Miller, 27 years; A. H. E. Becker, superintendent of the works, burnt, leg broken, arm badly torn.

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CURE SICK HEADACHE.

House Plants For the Winter.

The best time to get decorative plants to be grown indoors during the winter is early in September. At that season artificial heat and high, moist temperature have been dispensed with, and plants are growing more naturally than at any other time in the year. There are but few which one can expect to grow well in the house in winter. The aspidistra is a plant which cannot be killed by ordinary neglect. Give it all the water it needs, an occasional application of fertilizer and a reasonable amount of light. The agave is a stately plant, and a well-grown specimen always attracts attention. For the hall it will be found quite as ornamental as a palm. Because of the semi-succulent nature of the foliage, it will not require much water, except when it is growing. Asparagus Sprengeri is another plant which grows as well for the winter as for the summer. It is a liberal allowance of water when it needs it, a shady place to grow in and a frequent shower bath. Begonias are not often classed among the very robust plants, but there is one variety which I have found sure to grow well under difficulties. This variety is B. argentea guttata. Give it a soil of sandy loam, well drained. Be careful not to overwater, but shower it frequently.—Eben E. Rexford, In The Ladies Home Journal for September.

A Noted Engineer.

M. Philippe Bunau-Varilla spoke in New York recently from the standpoint of an engineer on the subject, "Comparative Methods of the Nicaragua and Panama Canal Routes." He was born in Paris in 1839, and was admitted to the Ecole Polytechnique in 1857, being a classmate of Captain Dreyfus. When he left the institution he was named engineer of the State of France, an honor which is reserved for the twenty-nine or thirty men at the head of their class. In 1884 he left France to become the chief engineer of one of the three sections of the Panama Canal. Later he took charge of two sections, and still later became Director-General of the work. He was decorated in 1887 by the French Government as a Knight of the Legion of Honor. After the financial crash, which stopped the work on the canal, he turned his attention to writing a history of the canal, and in 1892 published a volume on the construction, at the same time advancing a new and very ingenious theory of lock canal construction. In an appendix to the book he compared the Nicaragua and Panama routes, and approved the latter.

Gold Fish as Pets.

The immense demand for gold fish in Chicago is explained by the Misses Adams as being due to the fact that, where gold fish are about the only pets which can be tolerated. They make no noise, and are considered highly decorative, and, above all, they call for little attention from their owners. It appears that the native gold fish from San Francisco are the finest of the American breed. The fish come from the eastern States and Indiana. The Japanese and Oriental fanciers have long been fond of the gold fish, and for some time owing to the regulations necessitated by the appearance of the bubonic plague, the fish of which gold fish thrive best come from Germany and the "water moss" with which the gold fish will not prosper is grown by the Misses Adams in large quantities. Other species of fish are bred on this interesting place, and the foreign population of Chicago places within the view of these intrepid business women endless vistas for rest and recreation. For work it means whatever the profit may be, the slightest relaxation of attention in relation to the health of their finny stock, will mean a serious loss. The healthy fish must be fed and cared for perpetually, the weakly ones must be isolated and nursed back to health, and the fish must be kept in the best of care and attention. They belong to the tribe of the nest-building fish, and the nests are composed of air bubbles (not as in Spain), which are blown by the male fish. The eggs deposited by the mother are hatched by the action of light, and the young are born. The parent watches the nest and the young ones, not allowing the mother to come near either eggs or small fry. Usually of a dull grey color, it is in the incubation season that the rainbow colors are discernible, and the darting fish are so beautiful. The young are shimmering with wonderful gleams of radiance, that it is almost impossible to recognize them as the quiet hermits in somber grey which they have inherited the tank for nine long months.

Australia Growing Tobacco.

A conference of tobacco-growers was held at Wangaratta, Australia, last week. Mr. J. M. Sinclair, the Government agent in London, who explained the steps taken by him to secure a market in England for tobacco leaf, and gave information for future guidance. He handled the only one trial shipment of unstemmed leaf, and the highest price then obtained was 41-22 per pound. Purchasers complained of the irregular grading and the trouble of stemming. If leaf was properly graded and stripped, he was convinced there would be no trouble in finding a market for it, and he urged the growers to proceed slowly, and attend carefully to classification and curing. From what he had seen in America, he believed that leaf from England and Australia, and the other United States could be grown in Australia if proper varieties were secured and attention paid to curing and classification. He was anxious to obtain good samples to submit to reliable firms in England, who would take large quantities if it was necessary. Mr. A. Byrne presided over the meeting, which comprised growers resident in Hedd, Chestnut, Moyna, Bright, Whorouly, Ewerton and Young, and advantage was taken of the conference to secure an opinion regarding the duties of duty per pound on colonial leaf be decreased. The speakers pointed out that when the excise duty was lowered from 1s to 6d the industry revived, but it gradually languished after the duty was raised to 9d some years ago. The concession asked for was urgently necessary, and should accompany the efforts to establish outside markets.

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1 lb. can Baking Powder 10 cents per pound.

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