SIDELIGHTS ON NOTABLE PEOPLE

BY THE MARQUISE DE FONTENOY

King Edward of England and his consort have once again given an illustration of the rare tact and diplomacy by which they have converted many adversaries into warm friends and admirers. Few modern French writers are more widely read than Capt. Viaud, of the French navy, known in literature as "Pierre Loti," and who is also a member of the French academy. There is no contemporary French writer who has been more bitterly antagonistic to everything English in his books, especially in connection with British rule in India and in Egypt, denouncing it as tyrannical, barbarous and vandalistic. English people would therefore have had every reason to hold aloof from Pierre Loti, and when he was in command of the French guardship off Constantinople, he was practically boycotted by his English fellow officers, and cold-shouldered in the British embassy.

The other day he visited London, on the invitation of the French ambassador there, Pierre Cambon, who, it is said, had acted in the matter at the instigation of King Edward. Cambon received him at the railroad terminus, gave a series of luncheons and dinners in his honr, to which he invited all the leading members of the English great world, especially those who were susceptible to the influence of King Edward and who overwhelmed Loti with the most flattering tokens of admiration. Then Ambassador Cambon took him to a ball given by Ambassador Whitelaw Reid in Dorchester House, where Loti was presented to Edward VII., who retained him for some time in conversation, showing himself gracious and cordial, and expressing himself so highly about the works of Loti, that the latter, who is an extremely vain little man, and who had expected quite a different attitude on the part of the King, almost lost his head. The King wound up by presenting him to Queen Alexandra, who was even still more gracious than her consort, and after a prolonged chat, invited him to visit her in Buckingham Palace, about two days later, before he left London on his return to Paris.

Queen Alexandra, who had heard of the stories of his positive idolatry of cats, by means of which he rendered himself conspicuous in Constantinople, and who rallied him about the matter, was considerably surprised, when on arriving at the palace for his audience, he brought, concealed under his coat, much to the concern of the servants at the entrance, a fine young Maltese cat, the grandchild or great-grandchild of the cat for which he gave wonderful entertainments on board his ship. He had caused it to be brought over from Paris by special messenger, to present it to her, knowing her pronounced fondness for animals. She accepted the gift, with which she expressed herself charmed, and Loti has returned to France, completely won over by his welcome in London, especially by the kindness of the King and Queen; so much so, that it is doubtful whether he will ever pen anotoher word against the English.

Sir John Bingham, who in February last succeeded Baron Gorell as president of the English divorce court, is showing himself to be an exceedingly strict judge, and since his assumption of the presidency of this particular division of the English high court of justice, the obtaining of a release from matrimonial bonds has become much more difficult than heretofore. He may be said to grant decrees in a grudging manner, and it takes far more to satisfy him in the way of evidence, than it did any of his predecessors. This is a matter of considerable importance. For owing to the turning down of Gorell's proposal for the extension of powers of divorce to the county court of assizes, Sir John and his one deputy remain the only two men who have the right to undo the marriage tie in England

Sir John is a thorough man of the world, and possessed of two large fortunes, one acquired at the bar, and the other inherited, and is a well-known and popular figure in London society, with which he possesses a more intimate acquaintance than the majority of his predecessors in the presidency of the divorce court. He is a clean-shaven, ruddy-faced man, with brown eyes which disdain glasses, and with a savor of Lancashire, and a touch of the sportsman about him. He looks bluff, But he is careful in his speech. He does not call a man a liar, when he finds a witness perjuring himself in the witness box; but he exclaims in velvet accents, "I do not believe a word you say," which comes to about the same thing.

If Sir John has one weakness, it is for bull dogs. One of them, known as "Brief," who died not long ago, was a great canine character. It would invariably accompany Sir John to the law courts in the morning, usually waiting in his chambers until the day's work was over. Sometimes, however, it would return home of its own accord: would stroll out of the law courts, jump into the best-looking hansome at the neighboring cab stand, and ensconcing itself comfortably on the cushions, would absolutely refuse to be turned out by the driver. Owing to its formidable appearance, the driver would usually have recourse to a policeman, who, knowing the dog—the name and address of the owner were engraved on the collar, would recommend the cabman to drive to Sir John's home in Kensington. There "Brief" would descend from the cab, and wait at the door with the driver, until the latter had rung the bell and collected the fare.

Although King Peter of Servia and his Government have endeavored to persuade Prince George to leave Servia, by means of the promise to pay all his large debts, and to place him in possession of an extremely liberal annuity, he absolutely declines to consider their offers, or to quit the kingdom. Moreover, he has, since the surrender to his younger brother of his rights of succession to the crown, become a far more important figure in the country than he ever was as crown prince. Indeed, so large and influential is his following today, that the Government would not longer dare to deprive him of his liberty, by incarcerating him as a prisoner of state or as a lunatic, or to expel him; methods of dealing with him which were at one time under serious consideration.

The movement of which he is the head, and which he may be said to have organized, comprises some of the best people in the country, and the bulk not only of the population, but also of the army, and has for its main object the dismissal of every one of the 68 officers of the army who took part in the killing of King Alexander and Queen Draga. It is because King Peter insists in retaining these men in the service, and continues to allow himself to be terrorized by them, that the court of Belgrade remains boycotted by all the reigning families of Europe.

King Peter is reported to be in such a precarious state of health that he may die suddenly at any moment. In that event, the ex-crown prince may be relied on to at once seize the throne, with the consent of the army, and of the people, and with the sanction of his younger brother, who is a gentle lad, and who was reluctant to accept the position thrust on him by George's resignation of his rights.

That the punishment of Prince Alphonse of Bourbon for marrying Princess Beatrice of England and of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha is not likely to be of a lasting character, is perhaps best shown by the fact that the young Queen of Spain's favorite brother, Leopold of Battenberg, and the one who is on terms of greatest intimacy with his brother-in-law, King Alfonso, was in Coburg at the time of the wedding there, and officiated as best man at the ceremony. The king was compelled by his ministers to inflict some disciplinary punishment on the prince for marrying without the consent of the crown. The latter by the terms of the Spanish constitution is indispensable to the marriage of every infant or prince of the reigning family, and must not only be signed by the king, but be countersigned by the prime minister. The king, who is extremely fond of his cousin and namesake, was ready enough to give the necessary sanction. Premier Maura absolutely declined to be a consenting party to the union, owing to the refusal of the princess to become a convert to the Catholic faith. Then, too, Alphonse rendered himself guilty of an infraction of military regulations by wedding without obtaining the consent of his commanding officers, and of the war department. However, the measure adopted with regard to the young prince are merely temporary. Premier Maura's cabinet is tottering, and his successor is likely to show himself more pliable to the wishes of the kind and the two queens, and to countersign the royal decree of Alfonso XIII., restoring to the prince all the honors of which he was deprived the other day.

While the rehabilitation of the prince in Madrid is assured, it will be a far more difficult task to reconcile his father, Prince Anthony of Orleans, Duke of Galliera, to the match. He has already notified his son that he will no longer grant him any allowance, for having married without his consent, and has intimated that he would have nothing more to do with him, and would exclude him as far as possible from any share in the inheritance of his wealth. It is Prince Anthony who has all the money, his wife, the Infanta Eulalie, from whom he is separated, being always in financial difficulties and in straitened circumstances. Moreover, Prince Anthony is not easily amenable to the influence of his French and Spanish kinsfolk, by whom he has for many years been almost completely cut adrift, as well as boycotted by all the reigning houses of Europe.

In England a good deal of popular indignation has been expressed on the subject of the penalties to which Prince Alphonse has been subjected by the Spanish Government for wedding the princess. But if Alphonse has been deprived temporarily of his rank as an infant, and as a prince of the blood, for marrying a Protestant, Princess Beatrice has, by virtue of the terms of the British constitution, and of British law, been deprived for all time of her place in the line of succession to the English throne, for becoming the wife of a Catholic. Moreover, King Edward himself has thus far withheld recognition of the marriage, and has allowed no mention of it to be made, either in the London Official Gazette, or in the Court Circular.

Fortunately for the reigning family of Saxe-Weimar, Prince Hermann, who has just been expelled from his membership in that family, and deprived not only of his position as heir presumptive, but also of all his rights and prerogatives as a prince, has a younger brother, Prince Albert, who is serving as a captain of the Kaiser's second or Pasewalk Cuirassiers, and has thus far given no cause for complaint as to his conduct. Owing to the childlessness of the widowed grand duke, and to the improbability of his marrying again, Albert will, according to present appearances, be the next ruler of the grand duchy of Saxe-Weimar, and the head of all the junior branches of the family of Saxony, which include the King of Saxony, the Dukes of Saxe-Meiningen, of Saxe-Altenburg and of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, as well as the Kings of England, of Portugal and of Bulgaria, who are all three of them dukes of Saxony.

True, Albert's father is still living, Prince William of Saxe-Weimar. But his career has been almost as stormy as that of his eldest son, who has just been disinherited. If he had refrained from rendering himself guilty of those unsavory shortcomings which led to the dismissal in disgrace of his elder son from the German army, and to his being divested of all the honors due to him as a scion of the Saxe-Weimar dynasty, he at any rate in his younger days involved himself in scrapes sufficiently serious to force him to leave Europe. Prince William spent a number of years abroad, and after some service in the foreign legion of the Dutch army in Sumatra, came to the United States, and under the name of "William Rohde," he earned his living by means of callings quite the reverse of royal. He received remittances from home, but like most remittance men, he always managed to spend them long before they came to hand, was often in the most desperate straits, knew by frequent experience what it was to go hungry, and picked up a living as a riding master, store clerk, salesman and even as a waiter; the only prince of a reigning family of Europe who can boast of any such extraordinary vicissitudes. Overtaken by illness, his relatives took compassion on him, brought him home and nursed him back to health. He then married Princess Gerta Isemburg, with whom he lives in Heidelberg, where he is not above recalling old times in the United States with American students at the university, over a friendly mug of beer or glass of wine.

While his name figures on the retired list of the German army, with the honorary rank of major, he is not allowed by the grand duke to reside in his dominions, and is virtually boycotted by all the courts of Europe. The grand duke is said to have already taken steps to exclude him from the succession to the throne, in favor of his younger son, Prince Albert.

Ex-Prince Hermann, who from now on becomes an ordinary noble, with the title of Count Ostheim, and who remains a bankrupt, under curatel, that is to say, precluded from the exercise of ordinary civic rights, constitutes a notable addition to the ever-growing list of royal and imperial personages, who have, for one reason or another, ceased to occupy a place on the steps of the throne, and who have forfeited the inherited rights and prerogatives of membership of a sovereign family. Among them have been an uncle of the new Count Ostheim, the late Prince Bernard of Saxe-Weimar, who sacrificed his rank to wed a Hamburg innkeeper's daughter, and received the title of Count Crayenberg, under which he spent several months in the United States in 1905 and 1906. Then there is the ex-Archduke Leopold of Austria, now Leopold Wölfling, who was excluded from the family of Hapsburg by Emperor Francis Joseph, and who is married to a Munich chambermaid; his sister, ex-Archduchess Louise, divorced by the present King of Saxony, prior to his accession to the throne, and Duchess Pauline of Wurtemburg, who was obliged to descend to the rank of a Baroness Kirbach before she could obtain permission to marry Dr. Willim, in practice at Breslau. The Khedive of Egypt a few weeks ago solemnly excommunicated his cousin, Princess Saliha, widow of Prince Makemed Ibrahim, divesting her of all her prerogatives as a princess of the reigning family of Egypt, owing to her determination to adopt the French stage as a profession, despite her wealth. The late Archduke John was obliged to surrender his status as a member of the reigning family of Austria-Hungary, and to assume the name of John Orth, before perishing in a voyage around Cape Horn.

Prince Frederick of Schleswig-Holstein, brother of the German Empress's father, made a voluntary sacrifice of his position as a prince of the blood, and became an ordinary noble, with the title of Prince Noer, to be able to wed Esther Lee, of New York. She is now the widow of Field Marshal Waldersee. Then there is Prince Oscar, the eldest of the brothers of the present King of Sweden, who renounced his rights of succession to the throne, and his rank as a scion of the reigning family, becoming an ordinary citizen, with the title, first of Count Wisberg, and afterwards of Prince Bernadotte, to marry his mother's maid of honor, Ebba Munk.

The fact that Count Wolff Metternich, the German ambassador in London should have consented to officiate as host at the large dinner dance given there just before the season closed, by the Baroness Eckardstein, and at which some of the younger members of the royal family were present, goes to show that the sympathies of the German embassy, and also of the German court, have been with the baroness rather than with the baron in their recent domestic troubles.

It may be remembered that the baron, who after spending several years in Washington as attache of the German mission there, was transferred to the German embassy in London as secretary. There he married the only child and heiress of the late John Blundell Maple, of the Maple retail furniture emporium, of Tottenham Court road. Eventually she was driven by her husband's extravagances and brutality to seek relief from the English courts. These declared that while there was plenty of evidence to warrant a decree of divorce against the baron, yet the fact that he was a German, who had his residence in Germany, with his legal domicile there, had the result of depriving the English tribunals of competence to dissolve the marriage, even though it had been contracted in England, under English law. The presiding judge of the divorce court decided that, while he had no authority to grant a divorce, he possessed the power to devise measures for the protection of the baroness as long as she remained in England, by according to her a decree of judicial separation.

The baron thereupon sued his wife in the Berlin courts, on the ground of desertion, refusal to live with him, and a variety of other charges, on the strength of which he obtained a German divorce, but at the same time lost his position in the German diplomatic service.

That the German ambassador should after all this have consented to act as master of the house and host at the dinner dance of the baroness, at which most of the members of the German embassy in London were present, leaves no doubt as to the views of the German authorities about the baron's conduct.

REGULATING THE HOURS OF TOILERS IN SHOPS

Mr. Gladstone Explains the Provisions of an Important Measure.

Mr. Gladstone, home secretary, introduced in the House of Commons the other day a bill "to consolidate, amend and extend the shops regulation acts, 1892 to 1902." The chief purpose of the bill, he explained, was to secure reasonable hours of work for those mainly concerned in the retail trade. Last year Sir Charles Dilke introduced a bill enforcing a time of closing upon all shops throughout the country. On that occasion the Government undertook to deal with the question of hours and bring in a bill this year. On careful consideration it was clear that there were grave objections to the course which was proposed by Sir Charles Dilke's bill. In the first place, the system of compulsory early closing offered no satisfactory guarantee against unduly long hours after closing. In the second place, when hours varied in different districts the number of areas and boundaries added to the complexity and anomalies of the subject. Thirdly, Australian experience showed that where a compulsory system prevailed what was known as the back-door system of trade was very liable to spring up, and was very difficult to deal with. In the fourth place, the principle of that bill was very strongly opposed by the small shopkeepers throughout the country—those who were either single-handed or only employed one assistant. They outnumbered the larger shopkeepers in the proportion of about ten to one, and it was on account of their opposition that the shop hours act of 1904 had been, apart from Scotland, almost a failure. It had been proposed that the small shopkeeper should be excluded from that bill. But in such a case, evasion would be very easy and detection would be very difficult, and, moreover, in his opinion, exception was wrong in principle. The Government proposed to deal with the question by a different method.

Proposed Methods.

We propose, proceeded Mr. Gladstone, to effect our main purpose—firstly, by restricting the hours of shop assistants; secondly, by compulsory closing of shops on Sundays; thirdly, by the provision of a weekly half-holiday, and fourthly, by early closing at the option of the local authority on the lines of the present act, which we small shopkeeper should be excluded sists of 29 clauses, 4 parts, and 2 schedules. It is to apply to the whole country, excepting rural parishes with a population of less than 1,000. The first part deals with the hours of employment in shops. Shop assistants are not to be employed for more than 60 hours per week, exclusive of meals, nor after 8 p.m. on more than three days in a week. The occupier of every shop is to fix, firstly, the time at which employment begins and ceases; secondly, when employment is provided in spells of work, the time at which these spells begin and end. Those times are to be specified clearly in a notice which is to be affixed in every shop. Meal times are provided according to a scale in the schedule of the bill, and those meal times are also to be specified in the notice which is affixed in the shop. Overtime is allowed for two hours a day on not more than thirty days in the year.

A Wekly Half-Holiday.

The second part of the bill deals with the closing of shops. In the first place we provide that there shall be one weekly half-holiday for every shop with a certain few specified exemptions. Every shop is to close not later than 2 o'clock on one day every week. The day is to be fixed by the local authority, who will have three options. First, the local authority may fix different days for different classes of shops in its area, or, secondly, it may fix different days for different parts of its area, or, thirdly, it may fix alternative days, subject to certain divisions. If it fixes no day the occupier of a shop in the district is to select the day for himself, and that day is to be specified in the notices to be put up in the shop. Special provisions are made for holiday resorts and bank and public holidays. The third part of the bill provides that shops shall close on Sunday. Competition in the retail business, I regret to say, has led to a constantly increasing tendency to open on Sunday, not because the shopkeepers desire it, but because somebody opens, and the rest open to keep their trade. We found an almost unanimous feeling among shopkeepers, and, of course, among shop assistants, in favor of closing shops on Sunday. It is necessary, of course, to make certain exceptions, which are provided in the schedule. As regards the Jewish question, the bill adopts the proposal made by the joint committee of Lords and Commons, which sat in 1906. The secretary of state may specify areas, which are largely inhabited by Jews, where it would not be an obligation to close before 2 o'clock on Sunday if the shop is closed from sunset on Friday to sunset on Saturday. Similarly street markets, where they are important and customary, may be exempted by order of the secretary of state. We give powers to the local authorities to make early closing orders. The procedure of the present law is incorporated in the bill, but we make material simplifications in that procedure. Not ably we propose that the area in London should be the area of the county council—(hear, hear)—instead of the area of each metropolitan borough, which has absolutely and entirely defeated the object of the act.

Unfair Competition Dealt With.

We also provide against the difficulty which has arisen under the existing law. Under that law unfair competition has been carried on by hawkers, cheap-jacks, and auctioneers, and otherwise, by which trade is taken from shops closed by order after the closing hour has passed. We stop that by the application of the bill to trading elsewhere and otherwise than in shops. There are also clauses dealing with ventilation and sanitary arrangements. Part IV. of the bill contains a number of general provisions defining the powers and duties of local authorities, and specifying offences and penalties, with certain provisions applicable specially to bazaars, fairs and exhibitions. This part also deals with the important question of enforcement. We leave the responsibility for enforcement to the local authority, which will have power to take proceedings to enforce the law, or may appoint inspectors to see that the law is carried out. But power is reserved to the secretary of state, failing proper enforcement by local authorities, first, to hold an inquiry, and, secondly, if the results of the inquiry show cause, to authorize a factory inspector to take special steps for the enforcement of the act in a particular district. In the main the bill will work automatically. In every shop the assistant will see affixed his legal hours of work. If there is an encroachment in any shop upon his rights he will have his own remedy to take.

No Further Progress This Year.

Needless to say, we do not propose to proceed any further this session. There is much to be discussed in this bill, and I have introduced it largely with the object of promoting discussion in the country, with the view, if possible, of obtaining something like unanimous support of its principles. I maintain that the study of the bill will show that it is not intended to be in any way a contentious measure. We have made every effort to arrive at an agreement with those who are considerably concerned. We have been in constant communication for months past with various leading individuals—both employers and employed—and we have received 21 deputations from all the leading trades concerned in the country. This bill concerns the daily life of, speaking in round numbers, a million shop assistants and over half a million shopowners. The conditions of employment, of course, vary in every part of the country and in every trade. There are some large shops where the conditions are excellent. There are multitudes of others where the conditions are atrocious. There are many shop assistants in this country, who, with no possibility of a remedy, are working for 80 or 90 hours a week in one ceaseless round of daily drudgery. (Hear, hear.) The main cause is the wasteful and mischievous system of competition, one man keeping his shop open and compelling others to keep theirs open, though the vast majority of shopkeepers desire to keep reasonable hours. If you cut off at this moment 25 per cent of the time during which the shops of this country are open you will still leave ample time for all the business which is conducted in those shops to be compressed into the remaining 75 per cent. We propose to bring in a bill which will change the custom and habit of the people, and lead them to study more than they do the comfort and convenience of those who serve them. (Chers.) We do not propose to interfere with economic hours—that is to say, those occupied in profitable business. We interfere to prevent the waste of money, time and health of both employers and employed. No trade will be hindered No trade can be diverted to the foreigner. We seek by the intervention of the state—the only possible agency—to promote national efficiency. (Loud cheers.)

THROUGH THE BLACK FOREST.

For the Hohenweg is no more nor less than a forest path, glorified and monstrously elongated, to be sure, but retaining all the charm of its fascinating prototype in irregularity of breadth, surface and texture. Mostly you find a soft, springy footing of leaf-strewn earth and forest mold, but sometimes there are long stretches, slippery with pine needles, and occasionally, rocks to scramble over. One ten-mile length there is of clean, grass terrace, and beyond Triberg you travel a considerable distance upon an unused, sandy road.

A similar variety appears also in the breadth of your way. It may swell from a pleasant garden-path size to the full width of government macadam for a few rods, and then, with a sudden, capricious turn into the woods, dwindle to a mere brown thread winding in and out between the sheltering trees; or it may ramify, like a sort of dry delta, upon the hillside scarred with sheep and cattle tracks. In a word, there is nothing unpleasantly fixed or definite about its make-up. There is nothing that does not fit in nicely with a roving, holiday humor such as possesses the mind of a vacation pedestrian, and the only things connected with the Hohenweg that do not vary in their type are the "Wegzeichen."

Imagine, then, a forest path one hundred and fifty miles long, or rather a connected series of paths and old woods roads, leading through forest and upland meadow, across rivers and among villages, up hill and down, in sunlight and shadow, tempting, fascinating, alluring, and you have at least an idea of the Hohenweg. Fairies may dance on the green summits under the summer moon. Kobolds, doubtless, are busily mining, deep in the mountains, and wood sprites and water nymphs peep out at you from the leaky thickets and cool, dark waters. You may expect anything you please. Your spirit is on tiptoe for adventure, and you have but to hold out your hand to Fancy, that good companion, and follow the sign of the road.—Scribner's.

PRINCE WHO WORKED IN LONDON SLUMS

Father Max, Brother of Saxony's King a Victim of Consumption.

It will be sad news to many a poor man and woman in London to hear that "Father Max," as he was affectionately known by them, or, to give him his full name, Prince Maximilian, of Saxony, has developed consumption and, in order to save his life, has been ordered by the doctors to leave his work and take the open air cure. For four years he worked devotedly in one of the poorest parishes of London, this being the first scene of his labors after his ordination.

In violent contrast to this were the earlier years of his life. He is a brother of the present king of Saxony, and began his career as a lieutenant of the Saxon guards. But court life was thoroughly distasteful to him, being always a serious-minded man, and inclined rather to study and meditation than the activities—or worse, the idleness—of mock soldiering. He inherited a deep religious feeling from his mother, the Archduchess Louis Antoinette of Tuscany, and when he turned to the church much was happening at the court of Saxony to disgust and depress him. His brother, King Frederick Augustus, married the unfortunate Archduchess Louise of Austria, whose divorce and subsequent matrimonial affairs occasioned so much scandal, and one can guess how glad the young prince would be to cut himself loose from such surroundings.

He, therefore, threw up his commission in the guards, and began his studies with a view to entering the Roman Catholic Church under Bishop von Leonard of Bavaria, and was ordained in 1896. When he took up his work in London, the late Queen Victoria, although a strong Evangelical, showed her approbation of the life he had chosen by presenting him with a gorgeous set of priestly robes. This is the more remarkable as he was an extremist in his religious views.

In 1901 he was called to the chair of theology at the University of Fribourg (Switzerland), where he has lectured on this subject until this late sad development has put a sudden stop to his work. In 1903 he was made Archbishop of Olmutz.

Prince Max is still on the sunny side of 40; he is tall and has an earnest face and a strong, resonant voice which lent much charm to his preaching.

THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

It is gratifying to learn from the official report that the number of visitors to the British Museum last year was well in excess of that for the year before. The Bloomsbury treasure house is, however, not only so rich, but so "alive," that its increasing popularity is not to be wondered at. Still, as we hear so much of the vulgarity and philistinism which are abroad in the land, it is also well to learn that they are not having things quite all their own way. The British Museum—or the "Mou," as our Athenians like to call it—is inexhaustible, and its "infinite variety" beats Cleopatra's hollow. When Wendell Holmes returned to America from his last visit to England he mentioned to a friend the fact that he had paid several visits to the museum. "Guess you know that institution pretty well," said the friend, with a smile. "My dear sir," replied the autocrat, "if one were to begin going to the British Museum on one's 10th birthday, entering at opening time, keeping busy all the while, and leaving at closing time, and were to keep that up daily, year after year, one might commence to have a faint conception and knowledge of its contents when one was about 80."—Pall Mall Gazette.

MINARD'S LINIMENT CURES DANDRUFF.

FEET OF SEALS AND SEA LIONS.

Of all the feet that I have looked at I know only one more utterly ridiculous than the twisted flipper on which the sea lion props his great bulk in front, and that is the forked fly-trap which extends from the hinder part of the same. How can it be worth any beast's while to carry such an absurd apparatus with it just for the sake of getting out into the air sometimes and pushing one's-self about on the ice and being eaten by polar bears? The porpoise has discarded one pair, turned the other into decent fins and recovered a grace and power of motion in water which is not equalled by the greyhound on land. Why have the seals hung back? I believe I know the secret. It is the baby! No one knows where the porpoise and the whale cradle their new-born infants—it is so difficult to pry into the domestic ways of these sea people—but evidently the seals cannot manage it, so they are forced to return to the land when the cares of maternity are on them.

I have called the feet of these sea beasts ridiculous things, and so they are as we see them; but strip off the skin, and lo! there appears a plain foot, with its five digits, each of several joints, tipped with claws—nowise essentially different, in short, from that with which the toad, or frog, first set out in a past too distant for our infirm imagination. Admiration itself is paralyzed by a contrivance so simple, so transmutable and so sufficient for every need that time and change could not bring—Strand Magazine.

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