

FACTS AND FANCIES.

JOHN ROUSE spied a jug under a photographer's wagon at an Illinois fair, conjectured that it held whisky, and so drank fatally of sulphuric acid.

THE municipality of Paris levies a duty on almost everything which enters the city; that of London on scarcely anything but coals, which furnish a large revenue.

Two boys quarrelled over a game of marbles at Reading, Pa. One cried "Here's one for your head," and throw a big stone, which broke the other's skull and killed him.

THE newest creations among the peers, Messrs. Lowe and Knatchbull Hngsaw, having opposed the Disturbance bill and other Ministerial measures, both these pillars of the State are indignantly discarded by their former associates.

SOME Chinamen fitted up boats and made a contract with the cannery firms to fish for salmon off British Columbia. The boats drifted empty ashore on the day after, and the Chinamen were never afterwards seen. The white fishermen had murdered them.

THE "fly suffocator," an insect resembling the mosquito, is the latest affliction that has visited the Russian peasantry. Last month, in the Mirgorod district of the Poltava province, 142 head of cattle, 2 horses, 212 sheep, and 173 pigs were killed by it. The flies are said to enter the air passages of the animals and thus suffocate them.

THE following advertisement in the London *Lancet* is scarcely reassuring to the public: "College of Surgeons and Apothecaries. Hall Preliminary Examinations. The dullest and most backward get through. Payments based on results." The prospect of having the "dullest and most backward" hacking away at one is not agreeable.

THE announcement of the formation of ice during the hottest days of last summer in the caves near Zehinval, in the Caucasus, attracted many travellers. It is reported that these caves are filled with ice only during the hottest weather, and that the newly formed ice disappears with the fall of the thermometer. This curious phenomenon greatly puzzles the Caucasians.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said one of the three men who entered Dovey's store at Mercer's Station, Ky., "but will you please hand me the five hundred dollars out of your safe?" and he politely levelled a revolver. "Sorry to disoblige," Dovey replied, "but there isn't a cent there;" and he affably opened the safe for them to see. The robbers made a thorough search, and withdrew.

THE Russian political inquisition, known under the name of "The Third Section of his Majesty's Own Chancellery," had acquired such odium that the Czar, on recently abolishing it, would not permit the Fourth Section to be styled the third one. By special ukase he ordered that the Fourth Section should henceforth be known simply as "His Majesty's Own Chancellery for the Institutions of the Empress Mary."

THE *Antiquary* says that the largest oak in England is that in the parish of Cowthorpe, west riding of Yorkshire. It is hollow, and some forty men could stand within its trunk. It is believed to be about 1,500 years old. The Cowthorpe oak, which stands on the land of Andrew Montague, a great proprietor, is larger than the Greenlands oak at Welbeck. A few years ago the boughs extended sixty feet from the trunk.

A PAIR of lovers at San Francisco could not induce the County Clerk to give them a marriage license, because their ages were only 16 and 15, and their parents objected, being Jewish on one side and Roman Catholic on the other. Therefore the boy and girl gathered a party of their friends as witnesses, joined their own hands, and formally declared themselves husband and wife. The question whether the ceremony was valid is to be tested in court.

BEN ZERCHER was an only son, and his father owned one of the best farms in Belmont County, West Virginia. The old man was past 80. During several years his health had declined, and it was supposed that he would speedily die. Ben was so confident of this that he began to buy stock for the farm, and made other preparations to take possession of the "estate." But the octogenarian suddenly recovered from his illness, and took to courting a neighbour's daughter. This exasperated the impatient heir, and he shot his father dead, recently.

A STRANGE pagan scene was witnessed in the Volkovo Kladbishche, the largest orthodox cemetery of St. Petersburg. From

early morning it was crowded by thousands of men, women, and children. After a solemn requiem by the Metropolitan and clergy, the relatives and friends of the dead treated each other to kutia, or rice boiled with raisins, and drank in memoriam vodkas, or ryo whisky. In half an hour there could be heard not only loud weeping, but singing, swearing, and boisterous laughter.

THE *Saturday Review* says that the number of autumn sojourners in London is increasing every year, and the people who used to live in their back rooms now make no secret of their whereabouts; while as for the male habitués, they may now be found in scores not only among Guardsmen, Government functionaries, or business men, but among those who have no particular tie that binds them to one place more than another, but who are getting sagacious enough to see that they have, on the whole, a better chance of enjoying themselves by maintaining their headquarters in London than by restless fittings to and fro.

A GENTLEMAN in London lately took a bad half sovereign. He asked sundry experts if it might possibly be good, but they were unanimous that it was not; and so he put it away in the corner of his pocket and resigned himself to the loss. But it happened that in the evening he took a cab and drove about to so many places that, feeling for change, he discovered that he had not enough to pay the fare. Forgetting all about the half sovereign being bad, he handed it to the cabman, asked for change, which the man gave him, and then drove off hurriedly. Just then the fare remembered, and, not wishing to "do," the cabbie, called out:—"Here! that money is bad!" "It's quite good enough for you!" retorted the man, turning round with a grin. The fare looked at the half crown, and at once suspected that they were bad, as proved to be the case; but the long drive had been enjoyable, and on the whole the cabbie hardly got the best of it.

Buried for Years in a Cavern.

A few days ago Messrs. D. E. Duane, W. H. Enfield, and W. W. Blake were surveying and locating the boundaries of the Chihnahuo mine in the Magdalena mountains, about twenty-five miles west of Socorro, where they made a somewhat startling discovery. In chaiting down the hill from the centre stake to the west-side line they passed nearly over an opening in the rocks that was about three feet long and fourteen inches wide. A small dead tree about fifteen feet in length was let down into the aperture, and immediately disappeared from view. A young pine tree thirty feet long was then chopped down and a ladder hastily improvised therefrom. Carefully let down, it finally found secure foothold, and two of the party descended into the cavern. By the aid of some lighted pine knots they discovered that they were in the centre of a room about thirty feet square. Continuing their explorations, they found natural tunnels leading to two other but smaller chambers. The ceiling of the main room was fully twelve feet from the floor. In one corner of this room were found the bones of a human being. A portion of the rock overhead had fallen in and buried the greater number of the bones, but one of the collar blades and a bone from the forearm were obtained in excellent state of preservation. Pen can not portray the agony which the solitary occupant of this "dead man's cave" must have endured during his last hours. He could scarcely have been a lone prospector lured to his doom years ago by a fatal curiosity, as no sane man would undertake to explore the cave without first sounding its depths. Besides this, the pioneer of the Magdalena, Mr. J. S. Hutchinson, says that, to his knowledge, no prospector has been missed during the last fourteen years. It is thought that the Apaches, having knowledge of this subterranean prison, must have compelled some unfortunate captive to descend into the cave and tauntingly left him to his fate. How well might the inscription over the entrance to the infernal regions, as recorded in Dante's "Inferno,"

Who enters here leaves hope behind,
be applied to this dismal dungeon. The last chapter of the life of the tenant of this cell would make abundant material for a romance of the border.

ALFONSO makes the Palace hideous by singing "Baby Mine."

THE Czar has become so nervous that a sound of a wash boiler falling down stairs at midnight, will raise him out of bed before it strikes the third stair.

EMINENT PEOPLE.

DR. TANNER lectured at Lawrence, Mass., and took in only \$275. With his peculiar ideas of gastronomy he ought to live sumptuously on that.

THE Queen of Sweden, who is very ill, has gone to Antwerp to place herself, as her last chance of recovery, in the hands of a celebrated physician.

QUEEN VICTORIA is a poor speaker. She wouldn't draw worth a cent as a lecturer. Her last speech had the effect of dispersing Parliament, to which it was addressed.

THE cruise of Mr. Gladstone, his family and friends, in the Grantully Castle, cost a very large sum of money, the whole of which was defrayed by Mr. Donald Currie, an English merchant, and his partner.

WHEN that baby Princess of Spain grows up and finds how mad everybody was about it, she won't feel greatly flattered. The nearest she can come to it is to wear a Derby hat and bang her hair.

MR. RUFERT KETTLE is about to have greatness unexpectedly thrown upon him, Mr. Gladstone having advised the Queen to grant him knighthood for his tact and energy in preventing many strikes, and his plan of a arbitration boards, which have worked so well in the north of England.

MR. FAUCETT, the British Postmaster-General, has a new plan for facilitating the savings of the poor. A saving child may now get an official strip of paper intended to hold twelve stamps, add a stamp at a time to it as he can save a penny, and, when it is full, take it to the postoffice and get a savings bank receipt for a shilling, the minimum deposit which it will pay the Postoffice Savings Bank to take.

RECENTLY an American traveller saw on a hotel register the name of "Sir A. T. Galt, and fifteen children." The latter were ushered into the dining-room by their governess, and were mostly fine-looking, well-behaved, British boys and girls, in a cynical way, as the people who particularly overdo things. But when it comes to fifteen young Canadian girls, it seems to us that it is rather "crowding the mourners."

ABEDDIN PASHA, Minister of Foreign Affairs, presented himself the other day before the Sultan in such a very seedy coat that his Majesty could not refrain from suggesting to him that it was only decent he should put on his best clothes when he was going to see his sovereign. Abeddin replied humbly that he had put on his very best. Whereupon the Sultan directed one of his secretaries to give an order to the Imperial tailor to rig the Pasha out completely. Abeddin accordingly ordered thirty-five coats, thirty-five waistcoats and the same number of every other garment. Since then the mean attire of the functionaries who have been called to the palace has been quite striking, but none of these imitators have as yet excited the Sultan's commiseration.

AN Englishman who knows the Baroness Burdett Coutts well says her vitality and energy are extraordinary. When she is perfectly well she defeats her age by a dozen years. She is a good horsewoman, and is still fond of exercise, and she walks with an elasticity which many a younger woman might envy. Her capacity for business has long been known; and though her benevolence is boundless, no begging impostor could ever hope to outwit her. She has all the shrewdness of the Charity Organization Society, without the callous cynicism which makes that body nothing more than a system of police. Her knowledge of politics and politicians extends over half a century; and as she can write as well as speak with no little grace and force, a book of her recollections should have greater interest than anything of the kind which has been published for many years.

A LATE number of the London *Truth* contains a statement in reference to William H. Vanderbilt and Meissonier, which is quite characteristic of the prompt, decisive way in which the former acts. While painting Mr. Vanderbilt, Meissonier observed: "There is one picture that I really loved, and unappreciated it is in Germany. It represented General Dossax in the middle of a plain, questioning some peasants. It was fine; it was very fine. Petit sold it to a German, a Dresden man, long before the war, for 30,000 francs. I have done everything to get that picture back to France, to ransom it from its captivity in Germany. Petit offered the owner as much as 100,000

francs for it, but he would not sell. I never think of it without a real pang." "Ah!" said Mr. Vanderbilt, beginning to talk of something else. A few days afterward Meissonier went to dine with Vanderbilt. Upon entering the saloon there was his Dresden picture facing him upon an easel. "I bought it by telegraph for 150,000 francs," quickly remarked Vanderbilt. "It was a simple enough matter, you perceive, to get the picture."

MR. EDISON is among the prophets once more. He has now perfected the Japanese bamboo for the carbon loop, and in four weeks will have his shops and eight miles of street lamps lighted. He has facilities for making 1,000 lamps a day, and a man engaged in canvassing the lower part of New York City for customers. From the figures of the amount of gas and steam power used he calculates to introduce his light at such prices as will send the gas companies into the milk or grocery business. The wires will be laid down in December. "The gas companies," he says, "are fighting hard to keep the city authorities from giving us permission to lay wires, but they are butting against a wall. Their days are numbered." The lights which went out last winter burned a little while and then were only used for experimental purposes. Some of them lasted 900 hours; but others only a few days. They were abandoned and the bamboo fibre substituted. "The chorus of abuse and ridicule which greeted me in January last," he says, "induced me to work without noise." The details are now perfected, and he seems almost as positive of his success as he was eight or ten months ago.

Wonderful Swimming of a Scotch Girl.

The young lady who has shown this wonderful endurance in water is a Miss Lizzie Gow, who swam from Dunoon to the Sloch Lighthouse, and was in the water one hour and fifty-three minutes. She is only 16 years of age, and when it was known that she intended to swim the channel, a gentleman also essayed to accomplish the feat. He swam vigorously for about a mile, when he was forced to take refuge in a boat, completely beunumbed. Before mid-channel was reached Miss Gow's hands were benumbed, and she turned on her back and chafed them a few moments. Helped by the boat, she again proceeded on her way. At this point she was joined by her brother from one of the boats following her, who is a splendid swimmer and diver, but he also had to succumb, after being half an hour in the water. Left alone, she followed the leading boats with indomitable pluck, and gradually neared the shore. The current was now, unfortunately, very strong against her, and her failing strength was unable to fight against the tide, and she made little or no progress. When within fifty yards of the shore she complained of cramp, and her friends advised her to leave the water. She complied, reluctantly, and, after entering the boat, was carefully attended to. After partaking of refreshments and resting an hour she returned to Dunoon, none the worse for her daring swim.

A Bloody Room-Mate.

It was at the time of a county fair, and the village was crowded.

A man, carrying two round bundles carefully tied up, knocks at the door of an inn and asks for a room. They tell him that the best they can give him is a room with two beds, one of which is already occupied. Under the circumstances he is obliged to accept the vacant bed. The occupant of the other is fast asleep and snoring loudly when he enters the chamber. But he takes him by the shoulder, wakes him up rudely, and asks:

"Are there any rats or mice here?"
"I believe not, sir."
"All the better, for they gnaw everything they can find. Now, I have there," added the newcomer, pointing to the round bundles, "the heads of two persons whom I executed this morning, that I am taking to Paris, and you understand if there were any rats or mice—"

"Heads of persons" exclaimed the other, turning pale.

Five minutes after, the possessor of those horrible trophies was alone in the chamber, where he slept comfortably until morning.

The bundles were merely two melons.

It is said that profanity has increased fifty per cent. in this country since the telephone came into general use. The boy in the central office is all to blame.