

NOTES AND COMMENTS

This month the ancient city of Lichfield, in England, is to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the birth of its most distinguished son, Dr. Samuel Johnson, compiler of the immortal "dictionary," a presentation copy of which, it will be remembered, Miss Sharp ungratefully threw out of the carriage window on the occasion of her leaving the justly famed educational institution of the Misses Pinkerton. But Lichfield cannot confine the celebration of his birthday to its municipal limits, for the whole English speaking world will insist on recognizing the anniversary and taking some part in its celebration; yes, even Americans, whose insistent ancestors he pronounced worthy to be hanged, will on that occasion take notice of the natal day of a man who stamped his individuality and influence upon the mother tongue.

Like a great many authors, we read about him, but not his works. The real Johnson is not in anything he wrote, however, but in Boswell's "Life." In that biography, the greatest ever written, we find the man we want to know. It is there we learn who he was, what he said and what he thought, and how he influenced his contemporaries and those who came after them. It is there we find him sitting as the literary arbiter of his time, rolling out his ponderous judgments upon men and affairs, browbeating Garrick and Goldsmith, Reynolds and Piazzi, insulting Boswell and gazing with frightful noise and facial contortions innumerable cups of tea.

His knowledge has been pronounced to be all-embracing, yet even the proverbial school boy of to-day can catch him tripping every now and again; his judgment was biased by petty prejudices; he was a Tory, dearly loving a lord, yet who can forget his rebuke to Chesterfield in remembrance of the affront about the dictionary? Who can forget the helping hand he lent to Goldsmith in his distress, his kindness to younger brothers in letters, his hatred of shams and pretense? If he was ungrateful to Mrs. Thrale because she married without his consent, do not forget his household of queer dependents whom he never deserted, or his loyalty to Savage, his companion in days of poverty.

It is to Johnson's credit that he made English conversation a fine art, for it was in his club that English speech first dealt with things above fox hunting and the gaming table. But of all this how much would we know were it not for the despised Boswell. He has been held up to ridicule for more than a century for the undignified methods he used to get his material, yet his work stands to-day the most living of all biographies, and without it Johnson would be to us nothing more than a name.

Wonder is often expressed at the great distances covered in the migrations of birds. Among the little warblers that cross this continent is one called the blackpoll, whose range is from Brazil to Alaska. It is said that the shortest journey performed by members of the species is 3,500 miles, while those that go to the limit make 7,000 miles. Of course, the flight is not continuous, nor is the rate of progress very great, since the birds feed by the way. But for part of the trip they cover 200 miles in a day.

A bird of a different kind, the godwit, goes a much longer distance than these warblers in certain parts of the world. It is represented in this country, but the migrations to which we refer are from north-eastern Siberia to New Zealand. The flight southward is made after a nesting season in the North that lasts pretty well through our summer months. The birds pass down the eastern Asiatic coast, then by the islands of Oceania to New Zealand. It is calculated that the total distance of the migration is 10,000 miles, and during the last stretch of 1,000 miles there is no land for a resting place. In this connection it should be noted that, though the birds seek their food in mud banks by the sea, they do not settle on the water like sea birds, so that the flight for that last thousand miles must be continuous.

A writer for a London paper points out that the godwits are not forced to make the great migration because of the need of food, and he says that the best explanation of their course is that it is due to an instinct derived from a time when there was land on the route to New Zealand that has since disappeared. The birds keep up the habits of their remote ancestors who were favored with those lost land ridges. Their instinct seems to be valuable now chiefly for the chances it offers for the New Zealand wanderer with a gun. At times the godwits gather in great numbers on the shores, and as many as ninety-seven have been killed by the discharge from two barrels of a shotgun.

YOUNG FOLKS

TWO TABBIES.

Margy put Tabby on the doorstep to watch while she swept the leaves off the walk with her little broom. Margy did love Tabby so dearly! She stroked her and warmed her little toes at the fire, and talked to her as if she had been a real live pussy, instead of only a printed and stuffed one.

Somebody besides Tabby was watching Margy. It was the old lady who lived next door and had nobody but her cats to keep her company; but she was such a nice old lady and had such smiling wrinkles all round her eyes that she reminded Margy of the picture of the funny good fairy in her Cinderella book.

The leaves fell so fast and kept Margy so busy that she did not see Monk, the big St. Bernard puppy, come frolicking into the yard. As soon as he spied Tabby, he thought she would be a fine plaything; so he snapped her up in his big jaws, and was off in a twinkling.

Poor Margy! Could she help crying? She dropped her broom, and the tears made two little streams down her cheeks, and fell, patter, patter, on the dry leaves at her feet.

The nice old lady was very sorry. She put on her bonnet and cloak, and in her hands she took something that was soft and warm and furry. She went into Margy's yard, and put the soft, warm, furry something on the step, just where Tabby had sat. Then she wiped away Margy's tears, so that she could see what was there.

And what did Margy see? The very image of her lost Tabby, only this one had real fur to be stroked, and a real tail to chase, and a real purr in her little throat, which the other Tabby never had. And the kind neighbor told Margy that this should be her very own Tabby. Now is it any wonder that Margy insists that the nice old lady is really a good fairy—Youth's Companion.

A WILDERNESS OF BEAUTY.

(By a Banker.)

In various parts of the globe where cliffs of chalk or of sandstone form the coast-line, landslips are not of infrequent occurrence. Several instances of these subsidences may be observed round the British coast, one of the most striking of them all being on the coast of Kent, where the snow-white chalk cliffs appear to have been exposed to some convulsive organism of Nature which has rent from them a great section, apparently partially sinking into the depths of the earth, and causing an irregular upheaval of hillocks, and knolls, and crags; here cleft as by the cyclopean axe of some Titan into deep fissures and rifts; here a jagged, angular mass dislodged from above and hurtled down the steep acclivity on to the beach beneath, where it remains a jutting promontory exposed to the onslaughts of the waves; or here a lovely verdure-clad sheltered dell, beautiful, though alas! the basking place of the harmless but repulsive grass snake.

The entire extent of this wildly picturesque and lovely wilderness of beauty is ornamented with a luxuriant growth of flowering shrubs and dwarf trees; while every open space is a parterre of wild flowers—delicate rock-roses, pink centaury, the handsome saffron-lemon toad-flax—why this name for such a beautiful flower?—wild mignonette, tall pink willow herb, with many another beauty of the fields; while the "traveller's joy" entwines and wreathes itself amongst the branches of even lofty trees, crowning even the highest branches with caplets and garlands of its beautiful cream colored flowers, contrasting strangely with the striking and handsome viburnum, gemmed with a profusion of corymbs of vermilion-pink berries, like clustered corals, of which numberless examples may be seen in all directions. Winding amidst all this beauty, beneath arches of overhanging boughs, are many by-paths, up hill, down dale, through glen and combe, down a steep declivity to the sea shore, or by the side of a purling stream or brooklet, every turn of the path opening out some new vista of beauty, or some fresh display of floral adornment.

In the background is the lofty line of chalk cliffs towering upwards to the sky, while far beneath, the rolling billows break upon the rock-strewn shore, from time to time dislodging from the chalk cliffs spheroidal of pyrites, which when broken appear as if formed of crystallized gold. And in the solitude of these beauties of Nature the mind turns in gratitude to the Creator of it all for having, with surpassing and incomprehensible condensation and love, consented to suffer scorn, and obloquy, and racking agony at the hands of the ungrateful dwellers upon this planet, in order that by undergoing all that suffering upon their behalf as punishment for their sins, all and any who will may be pardoned and eternally saved from the terrors of the wrath to come.

IN SPITE OF BEING BLIND

MANY PERSONS ARE SUCCESSFUL IN BUSINESS.

The Proportion of Sightless People Who Win Out is Above the Average.

It is a curious fact that the ratio of really gifted blind people is out of all proportion to their total number when compared with those who have full power to see.

The cases of Helen Keller and of Senator Gore are familiar to every one. The middle West has produced another remarkable blind man in "Blind Kelley," the "St. Louis Sherlock Holmes," as he has been called, a lawyer practicing at the bar. According to Van Norden's Magazine, his powers of deductive reasoning are almost uncanny. He can tell on entering a room how many persons are there assembled. He can give you the dimensions of the room without walking around it. Almost, it appears, he has solved the mystery of the fourth dimension, and has apparently developed a sixth sense.

In challenging jurors this blind attorney displays a judgment of character that is miraculous to the man gifted with sight. There are honest and dishonest voices, he says, and he makes astonishingly accurate decisions.

Walter A. Kelly lost his sight when 11 years old. He is only 29 now. He was educated at a school for the blind, and then took a course at the St. Louis Law School and was graduated with honors in 1904.

He explains his professional successes by pointing out that the human memory can be so cultivated that anything read aloud can be engraved upon the mind to be called upon at will.

The list of the blind who have achieved a success at least equal to that of seeing men of their own standing in education and intelligence might be continued in definitely. There are Gen. Brayton, the blind boss of Rhode Island; Chris Buckley, the blind boss of San Francisco; Dr. William Moon, who invented a new system of reading for old and insensitive fingers, and whose son, Robert Moon, is secretary of the Pennsylvania Home Teaching Society and Circulating Library for the Blind.

There is the Rev. William Beresford of England, who lost his sight while playing with his little brother. Dr. Morrison Heady of Norway, who lost his sight and hearing when a boy, but who wrote verses of

NO MEAN CALIBRE.

There is Prof. E. D. Campbell, who holds the chair of chemistry at Ann Arbor, and another blind man of the same name is Dr. F. J. Campbell, LL. D., who holds the position of head at the Normal College in England. Blind as he is, Dr. Campbell climbed Mont Blanc. Prof. Edward Crowell taught Latin at Amherst for fifty years, during twenty of which he was quite sightless. Prescott, the historian, was nearly blind.

Nicholas Saunderson, who was blind from childhood, was professor of mathematics at the University of Cambridge in the first part of the eighteenth century. Curious enough he lectured on optics and the theory of vision.

Queen Carmen Sylvia of Roumania has a blind secretary, who is also the inventor of a writing machine for the blind. Roumania has 6,000,000 inhabitants, of whom 50,000 are blind. Of these, 18,000 became blind from trachoma.

John B. Curtiss, who superintends the teaching of the blind in the public schools of Chicago, is himself

A BLIND MAN.

There are 1,200 sightless persons in New York city. Blind telephone operators are now growing in number. The first was a blind girl who was in a New York hospital. A switchboard was installed at the Association for the Blind in New York.

One of the New York newspapers now has a blind telephone operator, and in spite of prejudice, the blind are being engaged by commercial concerns. A blind man in Brooklyn has a profitable coffee business. He blends the coffee and delivers it. There are blind stenographers and typewriters.

Vidal, the blind sculptor, went into a lion's den with a trainer and with his sensitive fingers noted the conformation of the fierce animal's body. The result is a model of a magnificent lion in angry rebellion.

TO BE ENVIED.

"I can't understand my husband, doctor. I am afraid there is something terrible the matter with him."

"What are his symptoms?"

"Well, I often talk to him for half an hour at a time, and when I get through he hasn't the least idea what I've been saying."

"Don't worry any more about your husband. I wish I had his gift."

HEALTH

LEPROSY.

There is possibly no disease the presence of which inspires greater fear in the public mind than does leprosy. This is perhaps in a measure due to the loathsomeness of the disease in its later stages, but it is in most cases simply fear of a name.

The disease, or diseases, spoken of as leprosy in the Bible are popularly supposed to be the same as the leprosy of to-day, and the evident fear of the leper inspired in the people of old is held to justify the dread with which he is still regarded. The Biblical descriptions do not, however, fit modern leprosy; so that, whether the fear of the "leper" of olden times was or was not justified, it should not be allowed to color the view with which the leper of to-day is regarded.

Leprosy is, indeed, an infectious disease; that is to say, it is due to the presence in the tissues of a bacillus, known generally as Hansen's bacillus, after the Norwegian physician who discovered it. But whether it is contagious, under the ordinary conditions of modern life, in temperate climates, at least, is held by specialists in diseases of the skin to be very doubtful.

Of the few lepers known to the physicians in all the larger cities, some are cared for in hospitals, others live at home and visit the clinics of the doctor's office from time to time; yet an instance in which another person has acquired the disease from any of these lepers is unknown.

There are many diseases more to be dreaded than leprosy, because more rapidly fatal, more painful, or more contagious; yet none of them, except perhaps smallpox, is more feared.

The illogical terror of leprosy may be the cause of great cruelty to those afflicted. There are thousands of people who show culpable indifference to the enforcement of the laws against spitting in public places, although they know tuberculosis hinges largely upon care in this regard. Yet these same persons would fly in horror from any place that had harbored a leper—Youth's Companion.

IN THE SICK ROOM.

Flaxseed Lemonade.—Over four tablespoonfuls flaxseed pour one quart boiling water, let steep four hours, strain through piece of linen, and add sugar and lemon juice to taste. This is soothing for colds.

Slippery Elm Tea.—Pour one cupful of boiling water over one teaspoonful of elm bark. When cold strain and add lemon juice and sugar to taste. Good in case of inflammation of the mucous membrane of the throat.

PASSING OF THE PARIAH.

Dogs Will Not Run Loose in Constantinople.

One of the oldest institutions in Constantinople is to be swept away by the reforming zeal of the Young Turks. After the end of the present month no more pariah dogs are to be allowed to run loose about its streets.

For centuries these animals have acted as the scavengers of the city, and what will happen if they are cleared off without proper provision being made for doing the work that they have hitherto accomplished remains to be seen.

Certain it is that other experiments in this direction have resulted more or less disastrously. Thus Abdul Medjid, the reforming Sultan of the nineteenth century, nearly provoked a revolution by banishing the dogs—they were found to number over eighty thousand at that time—to the island in the Sea of Marmora. Plague followed hard upon their removal, and the Commander of the Faithful was only too glad to bow to public opinion, and have them back again.

Another occasion was a certain Chief of Police started emigrating them in batches across to Asia Minor; or at least he said that that was their destination. (As a matter of fact, he had the poor brutes secretly and quietly drowned in the middle of the Black Sea, and the populace, finding out what was going on, tore him limb from limb, and set fire to, and burnt to the water's edge, the dog transport ship that was lying at the quay waiting for its next living load.)

For these mangy mongrels are greatly beloved by the lower orders of Constantinople, who gladly share with them their scanty meals, besides improvising for them kennels out of old barrels, boxes, and so forth.

The dogs, in return, act as guards to their patrons' property, warning off all strangers in a manner none can gainsay or fail to understand.

And their adaptability is marvelous. The coming of the railway affected them not at all. They got used to the electric trams. Even the advent of the motor-bus in the narrow, crooked, ill-paved streets has not greatly disturbed their equanimity.

THE CHEMISTRY OF FIRE

MANY THINGS THAT MAY START A BLAZE.

Fires Caused by Spontaneous Ignition—Be Careful of Oily Rags.

One of the things the average man knows little about is the chemistry of fire. He hears occasionally of fires from spontaneous combustion, but his ideas of the process of spontaneous ignition are vague and his knowledge of the substances or combinations of substances susceptible to such ignition is limited.

MYSTERIOUS FIRE.

It is difficult to acquire the knowledge outside of the chemical laboratories, for in the common run of experience, unless fires from this cause are discovered at their inception, they soon destroy all evidences of their origin. Such fires are commonly reported as "probably incendiary" or of "mysterious origin."

The chemistry of spontaneous ignition is simple. Decomposition is a slow combustion. The human body slowly burns to ashes in the grave. Oxygen uniting with carbon produces heat. If they unite rapidly enough, in sufficient quantities, the combustion is visible in flame. If they unite slowly, as in the decay of organic bodies, the heat escapes unnoticed.

OILY WASTE DANGEROUS.

Rapid chemical action will start visible combustion as easily as the application of the torch. Vegetable oils spread over easily carbonized substances, such as cotton, rags or waste, will ignite the latter very quickly. The cotton fibre furnishes a sort of tinder. Animal fats, like tallow, butter and lard, especially if rancid, will ignite under conditions similar to the above, but they are not such great offenders as the vegetable oils—cottonseed, nut, castor bean, olive and especially linseed.

An oily rag or oily waste never should be thrown into a rubbish heap. Many fires start in closets from such rags after use in oiling floors or polishing furniture, and factory fires occur constantly from spontaneous ignition of turpentine and linseed oil on rags and waste.

GOOD HOUSE RULES.

There are not many men who give the same thought to this danger in their homes that they give to it in their factories, where metal waste cans, with self-closing covers, are generally provided.

At the time of renovations, however, it is well to keep an eye on the domestic establishment, with this hazard in mind, as servants are generally quite irresponsible. Products of petroleum such as kerosene, gasoline and naphtha, although they do not ignite spontaneously, have a hazard of their own, and rags soaked in them should be carefully looked after. A good house rule is that all greasy or oily rags should be burned in the cook stove without delay.

INDIAN GAMBLERS.

Much Money is Lost and Won in a Season.

Most of us are familiar with the old joke which asserts that the best way to find the winner of a horse-race is to cut out a list of the runners, get a pin, shut one's eyes, stab at the names, and put your money on the horse whose name is first pricked.

The native of India has an equally amusing method. He wagers his money according to the colors worn by the jockeys, and takes no heed of the merits of the horses; or he will back a horse ridden by his favorite jockey, no matter whether the animal is a rank outsider or not.

His ideas of gambling, in fact, are distinctly novel. Some of the more wealthy Indians form rings and back every horse in the race, thus gaining the satisfaction of getting a winner every time. It is really only of late years that the native of India has become a habitual gambler on the turf, and now-a-days the bulk of the betting at the various racing centres in India is done by natives. Indeed, the authorities are becoming somewhat concerned about the growth of the betting which takes place amongst Indian natives, it being asserted that as many as thirty lacs of rupees (about \$1,500,000) is lost and won in the course of a season.

The ignorant masses have not a great deal of actual money to wager, but so lately bitten are many of them with the craze for betting at race-meetings that they frequently wager what little property they possess on a horse, and if they lose they simply replace their loss by stealing a neighbor's goods. The consequence is that, when the racing season comes round, the police are kept very busy dealing with cases of petty larceny and other crimes involving loss of property.

Many a hand-painted complexion looks like a tea store chromo.

Fashion Hints.

HATS COVERED WITH SILK.

While some of the latest official utterances of the heads of the important houses savor of Delphic vagueness with regard to autocratic fashions for the winter, there is a decided note which is being sounded in the millinery world of Paris, says a Paris letter. It is noticeable that covered hats are gaining favor. The covering can be confined to the crown, in crushed silk or velvet. Entire large hats with high crowns are beautifully covered with moire and topped with an immense bow of wide moire ribbon. Just at the juncture of the crown and brim a narrow fold of the silk is placed. This style is most convenient, because any shade of a costume can be well matched for the hat.

Unusual, this, for the Parisienne loves her contrast. On the turbans there is a backward tendency of the bulk of the trimming. Most of the folds of material are drawn from the front and project at the back beyond the line of the hair. Velvet in black and colors figures conspicuously in autumn millinery. Coque feathers are extensively used. Metallic figures in gunmetal tone are conspicuous. There is a renewed vogue of jet, which appears in combination with crystal, silver and gold. It is also introduced in beautiful embroidery designs.

In some new models the waist line is again normal. The French woman clings to the high line for evening, and her demand for this is answered by the upper line of a high girder. Although the polonaise draperies are featured, the long, clinging lines and the variations of the tunic will not be completely surrendered. The fulness of the sleeves appears at the elbow or below, rather than at the top of the arm. Huge unstiffened revers and large pockets are concessions to the liking for Louis XIII. styles.

Skirts of street gowns are generally devoid of trimming, a la Americaine. Designers are relying upon clever introductions of pleating to give decorative effects. On the bodies much braiding is used in raitall and fancy designs. The emphasis in street costumes is laid on the line rather than the trimming. This deserves careful study, but when mastered it can be incorporated in many new gowns. A raised line is the last innovation. It appears in the upward tendency of tunics, in the line of trimming of the bodice and in the underarm seam that curves upward from the hip to the bust.

The bride who wishes to depart from the conventional pink or yellow wedding can now have a combination of two colors, which gives originality and a rest from the one-color scheme.

One delightful idea is worked out in soft, shining silk, with the overdressed of chiffon. The pale shell-pink silk of one dress has the soft overdrapery of grayish sea green. The iridescence of the sea at sunset is caught in the shimmering effect produced by the two materials.

The other gown has the reversed colors. Over a green silk falls the pink chiffon in the same design as that of the first.

Both of the dresses are held in the same color picture by the ever-efficient touch of black. At the back of the gowns, holding the ends of the crossed folds, are large, flat bows of black tulle with long flowing ends. It is a chic relief from the sameness of most bridesmaids' gowns, and offers an opportunity for using two favorite and harmonizing colors.

The jersey dress has been met with, but it has not been carefully introduced. Its credentials have not come with it and it is misunderstood. It is hardly to be regarded as a coming fashion—it is here. Whether or not it will be found a favorite and encouraged for any length of time, its place is within the present fashion period and its time is now. It is not put forth as a dressy garment, but a fairly low-priced and convenient one for the lover of the cuirass, or fitted princess, and for the buyer of things new. Its happiest expression is a beaded, glittering surface and a well tied sash.

For the older woman, painted and printed mousselines and the spangled and jetted nets are most frequently represented in the early importations. Importers are also showing robes of printed mousseline, in the piece, as the most novel of their wares.

SENTENCE SERMONS.

The only smile that helps rises in the heart.

The gushing preacher often leaves a desert.

Success is an unreliable evidence of righteousness.

The rough places are never smoothed by soft soap.

He who makes no friends has his greatest foe in himself.