THE QUEENSTOWN NEWS.

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An increase of 4,000,000 in the population of Germany in five years indicates that it is still the Fatherland.

If it is true that the London 'bus is doomed, the driver who has just sold Nelson's "General Memorandum" for $18,000 is happily prepared for the passing.

When the airship, the automobile and the wireless telegraph come at it all at once, the North Pole may as well surrender to the age and the inventions.

"It's a poor boy's country," says Senator Doliver. Not an exact statement. It is any boy's country, rich or poor, who does not waive his birthright. Opportunity is democratic.

Twenty-five new electric locomotives have been bought by the New York, New Haven and Hartford which can haul 250-ton trains from New York to Boston at seventy miles an hour. Steam is visibly losing its grip.

Observes the Atlanta Constitution: One thing, and perhaps only one, will materially reduce the South's cotton acreage, or, rather, hold it down to a safe and sane minimum. We refer to the negro's inherent love of rest.

Reports received by the Russian government show that 14,130 persons were killed and 19,524 wounded in the internal disturbances of the last year. That can scarcely be called making a desert and calling it peace, but it suggests that famous phrase.

Evidence has been produced to show that baseball was invented at Syracuse, 386 B. C. A further re-reading of history may show that Dionysius, the tyrant, gained his bad distinction by arbitrary conduct as umpire in the games of the Syracusan nines.

A long list of what has been accomplished by men over sixty years of age, published in the Brooklyn Eagle, conveys the impression that instead of chloroforming people at that age the chloroform should be used on any man who tried to do anything more than preparatory and experimental work at an earlier age, declares the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle.

March 21, 1906, was the centenary of the birth of Benito Juarez. It is a proof of the vigor and good health of free institutions in our neighbor Republic that the event was celebrated with appropriate honor all over Mexico. It was Juarez who brought a wavering and fickle independence into full bloom and bearing by finally sweeping away the Spanish colonial system and delivering his country from the grasp of France.

United States Consul McNally, of Leige, writes that until the last few years Belgium was compelled to draw on France for her canned goods of all descriptions. There have been importations from the United States, but these were of little importance. This industry, however, has been created in Belgium with the result that the domestic goods are put upon the market at a price better within the reach of the people. The industry is in an imperfect condition and the market is yet open for the introduction of American canned products, which enjoy a reputation of merit throughout Belgium.

Trolley lines may soon carry freight in New Jersey. Whether the law will bring to the rural communities all the advantages they anticipate remains to be proven by experience. There is force in the argument, however, remarks the Philadelphia Record, that the freight carrying privilege will cause the extension of trolley lines into regions from which it would be impossible to derive living profits out of passenger traffic alone; and the time may be near when there will be a siding connecting every dairy and truck farm in the State with a freight trolley line, and when to live on a farm will not mean banishment to a narrowly circumscribed circle of human society

The president of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, in his annual report to stockholders, confides to them a daring scheme for promoting the solidarity of the nation. He proposes the establishment of a national telephone system in which every subscriber can be connected with every other subscriber throughout the land. To this end he has entered into a contract for the sale of $100,000,000 of convertible bonds. The number of telephones in use at the end of the year 1905 was 5,698,258. The company reports 6,043,515 miles of wire in its system; 87,212 employes; 4,479,500,000 overwire talks; $21,712,831 gross earnings. These figures are not inclusive of many independent telephone companies. The business is taking on vast proportions. It is a pleasure, confesses the Philadelphia Record, to be informed that the charges for service are to be steadily reduced as operating cost has been reduced through economy of installation, standardization of apparatus and tools, and improved engineering and construction methods.

The Fortunate Painter

—BY—

W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM.

THERE were times when Charlie Bartle could take his straitened circumstances with a light heart. When the sky was blue and the air of Paris keen yet balmy, was more exhilarating than wine, his studio in the Rue Breda lost its shabbiness. On such days as these he went down into the street and watched gay women make their purchases for luncheon. The disarray of their costume in the morning contrasted with the splendor with which he had seen them emerge from their houses the night before. They lingered at the door of green grocers bargaining for their vegetables with the strenuousness of model housewives. Several had sat for him, and with these he exchanged the gossip of the quarters. Then, his eyes filled with the vivacity of that scene, he returned to his studio, and sought to place on canvas the dancing sunlight of the Parisian street. He felt in him the courage to paint masterpieces. But when gray clouds and rain made the colors on his palette scarcely distinguishable from one another, his mood changed. He could scarcely bear the dingy shabbiness of his studio. He looked with distaste at the picture on which he had been working for a month and saw that it was bad. His poverty appalled him.

It was on such an occasion that Charles Bartle sat, pipe in mouth, contemplating with deep discouragement the work of his hands. He smoked gloomily. Presently, with a sigh, he took a palette knife and prepared to scrape down all that he had done. There was a knock at the door.

"Come in," cried Charlie, looking round.

It was slowly opened by a little old man, with a bald head, a hooked nose of immense size, and a gray beard. He was shabbily dressed, but the rings on his finger, the diamond in his tie, and his massive watch chain, suggested that it was not from poverty.

"Monsieur Leir!" said Charlie, with a smile. "Come in. I'm delighted to see you."

"I knew you couldn't paint in this weather, so I thought I shouldn't be in the way."

He came into the room and looked at Bartle's unfinished canvas. The painter watched him anxiously, but no change in the Frenchman's expression betrayed his opinion.

"Do you think it's utterly rotten?" asked Charlie.

"My dear fellow, you young men are so impatient. You buy a canvas, and you buy paints, and you think you can produce marvels immediately. You won't give time to it, and you won't give patience. The old masters weren't in such a hurry. Read Vasari and you'll see how they worked."

Charles Bartle impatiently threw aside his palette knife.

"I wish I'd been a crossing sweeper rather than a painter. It's a dog's life that I lead. I do without everything that gives happiness, and I don't even do work that's fit to look at."

Monsieur Leir sat down, took from his waistcoat pocket the stump of an unfinished cigar, rubbed the charred end with his finger and lit it. He smoked this with apparent satisfaction. In his day he had known many painters. Some had succeeded, but most had failed, and he knew that the profession, even for the fortunate, was very hard. Genius itself starved at times, and recognition often did not arrive till a man was too embittered to enjoy it. But he liked artists, and found a peculiar satisfaction in their society. Monsieur Leir was a dealer. He had early seen the merit of the impressionists, had bought their pictures systematically, thus saving many of them from disaster and at the same time, benefiting himself, and finally sold them when the world discovered that Manet, Monet and Sisley were great painters. His only daughter had married Rudolf Kuhn, a dealer in New York, so Monsieur Leir felt justified in spending the years that remained to him in a condition of opulent idleness. But he flattered himself that the painters whose works he had bought for a song were his friends as well as his customers, and it pleased him still to potter about the studios of those who yet lived. When Charlie Bartle settled in the house in which he himself had an apartment, Monsieur Leir gladly made his acquaintance. The young man was delighted to hear stories of the wild life they led in Montmartre in the seventies, and he was taken, too, by the kindliness of the retired dealer. There was an unaffected amiability in Monsieur Leir's manner, which led the foreigner quickly to pour into his sympathetic ear his troubles and his ambitions. The dealer was a lonely man, and he soon began to feel a certain affection for the young painter. Now that he was no longer in the trade he could afford to put charms of manner before talent, and the mediocrity of his friend's work touched his gentle old heart.

"It's one of your bad days, mon vieux," said the dealer.

"I wish to goodness I was a dealer, like you," laughed Charlie. "At least, I shouldn't be worried to death by the approach of quarter day."

"The picture trade is no place for an honest man now," returned Monsieur Leir, reflectively. "It was all very well in the old days, when we had it in our own hands. We drove hard bargains, but it was all above board. But now the Christians have taken to it there's a good deal too much hocus-pocus."

"I simply can't go on this way. I have to pay 300 francs for my rent tomorrow, and I shan't have a penny left to buy myself bread and butter for the next month. No one will buy a picture."

Monsieur Leir looked at him with good-natured eyes, but he said nothing. Charlie glanced at the portrait of a very pretty girl which stood in solitary splendor, magnificently framed on the chimney piece.

"I had a letter from Rosie this morning. Her people want her to give me up. They say there's not the least chance of my ever earning any money."

"But will she do that?" asked the dealer.

"No, of course not," answered Charlie, with decision. "She's a good girl. But it means waiting, waiting, waiting; and our youth is going, and we shall grow sore with hope deferred. When at last we marry we shall be disillusioned and bitter."

He sighed deeply. He brooded with despair on the future, and the old man did not venture to disturb him. He watched the painter with compassion. At last, however, he spoke.

"What are the exact conditions on which the father of your fiancee will allow you to marry her?"

"They're insane. You see, she has five thousand pounds of her own. He refuses to consent to our marriage unless I can produce the same sum or show that I am earning two hundred and fifty a year. And the worst of it is that I can't help acknowledging he's right. I don't want Rosie to endure hardship."

"You know that my daughter's husband is a dealer in New York," returned Monsieur Leir, presently. "I vowed when I sold off my stock that I would never deal in pictures again, but I'm fond of you, my friend, and I should like to help you. Show me your stuff, and I'll send it to Rudolf; he may be able to sell it in America."

"That would be awfully good of you," cried Charlie.

The dealer sat down, while Bartle placed on his easel one after the other his finished pictures. There were, perhaps, a dozen, and Monsieur Leir looked at them without a word. For the moment he had gone back to his old state, and he allowed no expression to betray his feelings. No one could have told from that inscrutable gaze whether he thought the painting good or bad.

"That's the lot," said Charlie, at length. "D'you think the American public will seize their opportunity, and allow us to marry?"

"What is that?" asked the dealer, quietly, pointing to the last canvas, it's face against the wall, which Bartle had not shown him.

Without a word the painter produced it and fixed it on the easel. Monsieur Leir gave a slight start, and the indifference of his expression vanished.

"Watteau!" he cried. "But, my dear fellow, how did you get that? You talk of poverty and you have a Watteau. Why, I can sell that for you in America for double the sum you want."

"Look at it carefully," smiled Charlie.

The dealer went up to the picture and peered into it. His eyes glittered with delight. It represented a group of charming persons by the side of a lake. It was plain that the ladies, so decadent and dainty, discussed preciously with swains, all gallant in multi-colored satins, the verses of Racine or the letters of Mme. de Sevigne. The placid water reflected white clouds, and the trees were russet already with approaching autumn. It was a stately scene, with its green woodland distance, and the sober opulence of oak and elm, and it suggested ease and long tending. Those yellows and greens and reds glowed with mellow grace.

"It's one of the few Watteaus I've ever seen with a signature," said the dealer.

"You flatter me," said Charlie. "Of course, it's only a copy. The original belonged to some old ladies in England whom I knew; and last summer when it rained, I spent my days in copying it. I suppose chance guided my hand happily; every one agreed it was not badly done."

"A copy?" cried Monsieur Leir. "A copy? Where is the original? Would your friends sell it?"

"The ruling instinct is as strong as ever," laughed the painter. "Unfortunately, a month after I finished this the house was burned down, and everything was destroyed."

The dealer drew a deep breath, and for a moment meditated. He looked at Charlie sharply.

"Didn't you say you wanted three hundred francs for your rent?" he asked very quietly. "I'll buy that copy off you."

"Nonsense, I'll give it you. You're taking no end of trouble for me, and you've been awfully kind."

"You're a fool, my friend," answered Monsieur Leir. "Write me out a receipt for the money."

He took from his pocketbook three banknotes and laid them on the table. Bartle hesitated for an instant, but he wanted money badly. He shrugged his shoulders. He sat down and wrote the receipt. But as he was about to give it, an idea came to him and he quickly drew it back.

"Look here, you're not going to try any hanky-panky tricks, are you? I won't sell you the copy unless you give me your word that you won't try and pass it off as an original."

A quiet smile passed across the dealer's lips.

"You can easily reassure yourself. Just paint out the signature and put your own name on the top of it."

Without a word, Bartle did as the old man suggested, and presently his own name was neatly painted in place of the master's.

"I don't mistrust you," he said, as he handed the receipt, "but it's well not to put temptation in the way of wily dealers."

Monsieur Leir laughed as he pocketed the document and took the Watteau in his hand. He pointed with a slightly disdained finger at Bartle's pictures.

"I'm going to take the copy along with me, and I'll send my femme de menage for the others," he said. But at the door he stopped. "I like your pictures, my friend, and when Rudolf knows that I take an interest in you, I dare say he'll be able to sell them. Don't be surprised if in another month I come and tell you that you can marry your fiancee."

Monsieur Leir packed the Watteau with his own hands, and dispatched it without delay. He wrotes a discreet little letter to his son-in-law announcing its immediate arrival and suggesting that they should share the profits of its sale. It was growing late, so he went to his cafe and drank the absinthe with which he invariably prepared for the evening meal. Then, with a chuckle, he wrote the following note:

To the Chief Officer, U. S. A. Customs, New York.

Sir: An attempt will shortly be made to pass through the Customs a copy of a picture by Watteau. It is signed Charles Bartle. If, moreover, you scrape away this name, you will find the signature of a French painter. I leave you to make what inference you choose. Yours faithfully,

AN HONEST MAN.

Less than this was necessary to excite the suspicions of the least trusting section of mankind. It was scarcely to be wondered at, therefore, that when Rudolf Kuhn went to the Custom House at New York to pass the picture that had been sent him, he was received with incredulity. He asserted with conviction that it was only a copy, and produced the receipt which Monsieur Leir had been so cautious as to send him. But the official who saw him merely laughed in his face. He was quite accustomed to the tricks whereby astute dealers in works of art sought to evade the duty.

"I suppose you'd be surprised if I told you that the picture was signed by Antoine Watteau," he said, with a dry smile.

"More than that. I should be amazed beyond words," answered Rudolf Kuhn confidently.

Silently the customs officer took a palette knife, scraped away the name of Charles Bartle, and there, sure enough, was the French artist's signature.

"What have you got to say now?" he asked in triumph.

A curious light passed through the dealer's eyes as he stared at the canvas, but he made no other sign that Monsieur Leir's astuteness had suddenly flashed across him.

"Nothing," he replied.

With meekness he paid duty on the estimated value of an original Watteau, and a very heavy fine into the bargain for his attempt to defraud the customs. He took the picture away. But when he reached home that night he kissed his wife on both cheeks, with unusual warmth.

"You father's still the smartest dealer in Europe, Rachel," he said. But when she asked for an explanation of his words, he merely shook his head and smiled.

In New York the newspapers learn everything, and perhaps it was not strange that within twenty-four hours of these events an important journal had an amusing account of how Rudolf Kuhn, the well-known dealer, had been foiled in his attempt to pass through the customs, as a copy of some obscure painter, a very perfect example of the art of Watteau. It was a triumph for the officials, and the newspapers gibed freely because they had got the better of a wily Hebrew. Now Rudolph Kuhn had a client who chose to spend much of his vast wealth in the acquisition of Old Masters, and no sooner had he read these entertaining paragraphs than he hurried to the dealer's shop. When he saw the picture he burst out laughing.

"I like your impudence, trying to pass that off as a copy."

"I showed them the receipt," smiled Rudolf, with a deprecating shrug of the shoulder. "I propose to sell it as a copy. It was sold to my representative in Paris as such."

The millionaire looked at the dealer and chuckled. "Well, Uncle Sam's Customs are good enough guarantee for me. I'll give you fifty thousand dollars for it."

"I'll take sixty," answered the other, quietly.

"Not bad for a copy," smiled the buyer. "I'll have it at that."

He carried the picture off, and with it the various documents which the Custom House had delivered to Rudolf Kuhn in proof that he had paid both duty and fine. In face of these it would have been a skeptic indeed who doubted the authenticity of so delightful a work.

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Some weeks later Monsieur Leir again knocked at Charlie Bartle's door. He advanced into the middle of the studio, and without a word counted out fifty English banknotes of a hundred pounds each.

"What the dickens are you doing?" cried Bartle, who thought he had suddenly taken leave of his senses.

"Five thousand pounds," said the old man. "I thought you'd like to see the money actually before you, so I changed it into these notes."

"What do you mean?"

"It's your share of the profit on the sale of your pictures, and you marry your Rosie whenever you choose."

Bartle stared at Monsieur Leir, helplessly. He thought it must be some heartless jest, but the old man's eyes gleamed with their usual kindliness. He rubbed his hands joyfully as he gloated over the painter's utter consternation. At last he vouchsafed to explain. Bartle understood vaguely that a California millionaire had bought his picture, all the pictures, and this money was the result. He wanted to write to this amiable and discerning patron, but Monsieur Leir hastily told him that was impossible. The Californian had bought the pictures and taken them away without leaving his address. Monsieur Leir assured him that the American millionaires were notoriously eccentric. Bartle drew a long breath and looked at the pile of notes.

"Take them to the bank, my boy," said the old dealer, enchanted with the young man's pleasure, "and send a wire to a certain lady."

He made the notes into a bundle, and put them in Bartle's pocket, and led him out of the house. The painter walked as though he were in a dream. But when Monsieur Leir had seen the young man safely on his way to the bank he went to his own apartment. He took out Charlie's pictures, which had remained in the safe obscurity of a well-locked cupboard. One by one he ripped them off their stretchers, and one by one he put them in the fire. He laughed as he saw them crackle in the flames. Then he took a hatchet and cut up the stretchers neatly.

"Here is some excellent firewood," he chuckled, as he gave the bundle to his maid.

He rubbed his hands when he thought that thus he saved several coppers. It had slipped his memory completely that he had just made his friend a present of £5000.—New York Tribune.

SCIENCE & MECHANICS

The rapidly increasing scarcity of ties in the country constitute one of the grave problems which the railroads have to face.

Indiana University has been offered an endowment for pathological research by Dr. Benjamin Taylor Terry, of Columbia University.

The oscillating character of lightning flashes has been proved by B Walter from photographic records, which showed a wave-shaped fluctuation in luminosity.

The new Cunarder, the Mauritania, will, according to a special cable despatch, be a perfect palace of light, as she will be fitted with five thousand sixteen-candle power lamps.

The tenth International Congress of Geologists has been called to convene in the City of Mexico on September 6, 1906. Sr. Jose G. Aquilera will be the chairman, and Sr. Ezlquael Ordony the general secretary. The official program announces a number of excursions in connection with the convention.

In his revised book of altitudes, the geographer of the Geological Survey gives the height of Mount Hood as 11,225 feet, in place of the old measurement of 11,932 feet. Shasta is set down as 14,380 feet high, and Rainier at 14,363. California has twelve peaks over 14,000 feet, twenty-three over 13,000, and fifty-five over 12,000.

The Erie Railroad is about to commence a series of experiments with gasolene cars, with the idea that if they prove practicable they will be used on many of the small and now unprofitable branch lines. It is believed that these cars will be widely adopted because the inroads made upon the passage receipts by trolley competition make necessary a more rapid and more elastic service than is afforded by the steam power.

Experiments at Sault Ste. Marie have demonstrated that magnetic as well as hematite ores can be successfully and economically smelted by electricity, says the Boston Transscript. Not only can the electric process be applied to various grades of Canadian ores, but iron ores containing considerable percentages of sulphur and phosphorus, and which up to the present have been regarded as valueless, can be successfully treated by the higher temperature available in an electric furnace.

Property Controlled Wholly or in Part by J. D. Rockefeller.

Mr. Rockefeller controls wholly or in substantial part approximately 475 great industrial, commercial and financial corporations, exclusive of very recent acquisitions. In such of these as he does not own a majority of the stock his word is nevertheless law, since opposition to his desires means a fight destructive to those who would thwart his wishes. The 475 corporations have a capitalization of $5,239,098,802, and are grouped as follows:

	Capitalization.
Railroads	$2,521,523,075
Industrial companies	1,535,872,303
Banks and trust companies	181,062,300
Safe deposit companies	609,531
Telegraph and telephone companies	182,870,000
Insurance companies	3,200,000
Mining companies	195,000,000
Gas, electric light and power companies	110,763,700
Traction and transportation companies	166,750,000
Navigation companies	41,447,800
Total	$5,239,098,802

Mr. Rockefeller is largely interested in practically all of the leading banks trust companies, building and loan companies and safe deposit and surety companies of New York City, and is also in eighteen outside financial institutions. He is in five big mining corporations and in navigation companies representing more than $40,000,000 of capital, of which one is the Pacific Mail Steamship. He controls sixty per cent. of the railroads of the country, and nearly 6,000,000 human beings are dependent for the necessaries of life upon the earnings of those in the employ of the Rockefeller concerns.—New York World.

The Average Age of Birds.

The doctrine of vegetarianism appears to be slightly shaken by the result of an investigation that an English newspaper has made into the subject of the longevity of birds. With one notable exception, the carrion or meat feeding birds are the longer lived. The exception is the swan. The average ages of some of the best known birds are given in the following: Black bird lives twelve years; blackcap, fifteen; canary, twenty-four; crane, twenty-four; crow, 100; eagle, 100; fowl, common, ten; goldfinch, fifteen; goose, fifteen; heron, fifty-nine; lark, thirteen; linnet, twenty-three; nightingale, eighteen; parrot, sixty; partridge, fifteen; peacock, twenty-four; pelican fifty; pheasant, fifteen; pigeon, twenty; raven, 100; robin, twelve; skylark thirty; sparrow hawk, forty; swan, 100; thrush, ten, and wren, three years The average age of the boarding house variety of chicken is still undetermined.—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

Japanese Stoicism.

U. Iwatani, a Japanese soldier on his way home from prison in Russia, committed suicide on receiving a letter from his father saying that his conduct in being taken alive would spoil the reputation of the Japanese army and cast odium on the names of the family and the villagers, and concluding by ordering him not to return home alive.

New York has just been paid by the National Government for equipment supplied in the War of 1812.

SPORT AND ADVENTURE

THRILLING FIGHT FOR LIFE.

TO be seated in a buggy behind a runaway horse, battling for his life with a wildcat, was the experience of Harvey Jackson, a traveling man from New York. While he was driving from Irventon, Pa., to Youngsville, the rig was passing a lonely stretch of woods, when the beast sprang into the vehicle from a tree, alighting on the driver's lap.

The wildcat tore the robe to pieces and attacked Jackson. He drew a small knife and managed to open it. While the cat was tearing his face and body he jabbed it with his weapon.

The horse had become frightened and was running away, while in the swaying buggy the battle continued.

Jackson was gradually growing weaker, when suddenly the cat dropped to the bottom of the buggy, dead. He had killed it with the knife.

The horse ran almost to Youngsville before Jackson recovered and stopped it. Although badly hurt, the man will recover.—Philadelphia Record.

PERILS ON CHINESE RIVER.

Miss Anna B. Coole, a young Baptist missionary, who has been in the far interior of China for two years, arrived recently in San Francisco, Cal., on the Coptic on her way to Cleveland, Ohio.

With Miss Coole were Gretchen and Kathleen Wellwood, young daughters of the Rev. Robert Wellwood, a missionary in Szechen, not far from the border of Tibet, 2000 miles up the Yangtse Kiang from Shanghai.

The trip made by Miss Coole and her young charges was most unusual. Leaving Suifu on January 15 in a native boat, accompanied by a lifeboat in charge of Chinese soldiers, they started down the river, traveling only by day.

On the way down their boat was wrecked on a rock and the party had a narrow escape for their lives, finally reaching Shanghai in safety.

BURGLARS ODD ADVENTURE.

When a Paris architect named M. Georgel was sitting in his office a few days ago, he heard a knock at the door, but as he desired to be alone he took no notice and went on with his work.

A few minutes later he heard a key moving in the lock, so, not doubting that his visitor was a burglar, the architect armed himself with a revolver and hid behind some curtains. A moment later the burglar entered and proceeded to rifle the room. Then suddenly he started and grew pale. In a mirror he had seen a revolver leveled at his head from behind the curtains.

"Open the window," ordered the architect, "and shout 'Police!'" The burglar had no alternative but to obey, and was speedily arrested.—Paris Journal.

THE SAHARA TRAVERSED.

The most remarkable journey across the Sahara was begun in May last year, and ended less than five months later. The explorer was Professor E. F. Gautier, of the School of Letters, Algiers, who is well known for his geological studies in the northern part of the desert. For the last 600 miles he had with him only a guide and a servant, and was practically unarmed, for he carried no rifles.

He met the Tuareg outlaws, who had lived by plunder and made the desert travel impossible except for the strongest caravans; but he expected no harm at their hands, and in fact they helped him on his way. He made remarkable discoveries, for his route was through the unknown and widest parts of the desert, south of the Tuat oasis. The paths of Caille and Lenz were far to the west, those of Barth and Foureau were far to the east of his track, and so he had a virgin field for his researches.

Four years ago, such a journey as Gautier has made would have been regarded as a madcap enterprise, doomed to failure and involving the lives of all engaged in it. But Gautier believed he would pass unscatched and win success, and no one thought his foolhardy. His journey was made possible by an idea that struck the French four years ago—a brilliant conception, brilliantly carried out, by which they have revolutionized the conditions of desert travel—Cyrus C. Adams, in American Monthly Review of Reviews.

MAIL IN THE WILDERNESS.

The annual mail for Arctic circle points with the Dominion of Canada has just been despatched by way of Edmonton, Alberta, over a trail which is not only the longest mail route in the world, but the most desolate and most difficult. Letters only are carried, says a British Columbia correspondent of the New York Sun, and these are limited to one ounce in weight, as the entire bulk of the packet when it leaves Edmonton must come within 300 pounds.

For the two-cent stamp which decorates the corner of the envelope the letter will be carried in some cases from the extremes of South Africa, Australia or India, and it will most probably be necessary to have the carriers go 500 or 600 miles into a frozen, forbidding wilderness. The Government expends upon the redemption of the stamp very many thousand times what it receives, and the carrier must fight single-handed with nature. His life and the safety of the precious packet entrusted to him are at all times in hazard.

This is the first year in which the Postoffice Department of Canada has assumed the delivery of mail in the extreme North. The Hudson Bay Company has heretofore carried messages to and from the Arctic and sub-Arctic country. Increases in the numbers of trappers, missionaries, prospectors, settlers and policemen in the extreme North explain the taking over of the responsibility by the Postmaster-General of Canada.

The mail is divided into two packets at Edmonton, one for points between Lac La Biche and Fort Resolution, and the other for the straggling outposts of empire as far north as Fort McPherson, the most northerly depot even of the Hudson Bay Company, nearly 100 miles within the Arctic circle, where the year is divided into a single day and night.

The Lac La Biche mail goes by horse only 120 miles out of Edmonton. Thenceforward the dog and the reindeer are the carrier's assistants. From Edmonton to Fort McPherson is over a thousand miles. Ten intermediate deliveries are made, and the mail arrives at the fort in April—if it has no exceptional delays.

Besides these packets, several other packets go to the northland about this season, so that all the posts will receive at least one mail a year. There is a mail made up at Prince Albert that goes as far as the head of Reindeer Lake, at the edge of the great Barren Lands. The York Factory packet runs to the far north by way of Winnipeg and the Nelson River. The Moose packet is made up at Mattawa, and goes by way of Abittibe River.

The carriers for the east and west shores of the great bay sometimes meet at the southern ports on the shores of the bay, and the meetings are made the occasion of brief but hearty jollifications. Then each passes on his way.

Newspapers and packages are carried to the north by the annual steamers of the Hudson Bay Company on the Mackenzie River in the summer. Of course letters are also carried, but newspapers convey the tidings of the world, and are treasured as fine jewels.

A SOLDIER'S WAY.

Abraham Haarscher was one of the beaux of his regiment. He attended the dances of the enlisted men as religiously as he attended reveille, but at no dance was there any particular maiden singled out for the attentions of Private Haarscher. He went the rounds and danced with every girl that came to the enlisted men's merrymaking. Haarscher had dodged Indian bullets and Spanish bullets and he dodged Cupid's shafts. He saw his comrades marry and leave the service. They told him his day would come, but he laughed at them.

During the course of his years of duty as one of Uncle Sam's soldiers Private Haarscher saw service in four different regiments and against every form of foe that his adopted country had to face. Few men knew as did this private what absolute devotion to duty meant.

Haarscher was intensely proud of his French nativity. One night at a far Northwestern garrison he was walking post as a sentinel upon a frail temporary bridge thrown across a stream. The ends of the structure marked the ends of his post.

A storm arose in sudden fury. The stream which flowed under the bridge had been swollen before by the rains of the season. In a few minutes it was a raging, roaring torrent. The bridge began to show signs of weakening. Haarscher kept on walking his post. The timbers were creaking under his feet and the water was beginning to creep over the planking, when the officer of the day appeared at the end of the bridge. He saw the sentinel and his peril.

"Come off that bridge, No. 5," he yelled above the storm.

Haarscher walked calmly off the bridge in obedience to orders and came to an "arms port."

"Haarscher, you fool, don't you know that bridge is going?"

Even as the officer of the day spoke the bridge was whirled way.

"That was my post, Lieutenant," said Private Haarscher, "and you forget that I am a Frenchman."

At the end of the Franco-Prussian War Haarscher came to America embittered because his native province, Alsace, had become the spoil of the enemy. He enlisted almost immediately upon his arrival in this country, and until the day of his death at Fort Sheridan he never passed an hour, save when on occasional leaves of absence, beyond sight of the flag that marked the campus, the garrisons or the battlefields of America.

Abraham Haarscher carried one record that is probably unique in the histories of the armies of the world. In nearly thirty years' service, although a model of soldierly neatness, discipline and intelligence, he never wore the stripe of a non-commissioned officer, refusing chevrons time after time; his reasons for refusing being known to no one but himself.

Haarscher did not know what the inside of a guardhouse looked like from the viewpoint of a prisoner. There never was a soldier in camp or barracks whose rifle and equipments were like unto his. So at guard mount, as the neatest soldier, he was chosen for the duties of orderly to the commanding officer. The soldier thus chosen is not obliged to walk post, and when tattoo comes he can turn in to sleep without fear of being routed out for the duties of the mid light guard.—Chicago Post.

"Biscuit De Sevres."

Paris is said to be devoted just now to the lovely, unglazed china known as "biscuit de Sevres," which has become almost an obsession. Little shepherds and shepherdesses, cupids, etc., in Louis XVI. style, combined with flowers, form the foundation of many of the dinner table decorations. One of the most charming schemes which was carried out at a recent wedding breakfast consisted of a terrace balustrade in "biscuit de Sevres," like that in an old chateau garden which inclosed a "set piece" in the same porcelain, surrounded by little vases filled with deep red geraniums, the corners of the table being likewise adorned with shells supported by "amours" holding candied cherries and strawberries, and flat baskets filled with geraniums and their foliage.

Kaiser's Voice at Washington.

Dr. Scripture has succeeded in obtaining for the Smithsonian Institution, at Washington, a photograph record of the German Emperor's voice. The Emperor made the condition that no use be made of the record during his life.

Half-Hour with the Children

THIS LITTLE BOY WAS

Said Peter Paul Augustus: "When I grown a man,
I'll help my dearest mother the very b I can.
I'll wait upon her kindly; she'll lean my arm;
I'll lead her very gently, and keep from harm.

"But, when I think upon it, the be so long,"
Said Peter Paul Augustus, "before and strong.
I think it would be wiser to be and joy
By helping her my very little boy."

—The Brown Memo

PIGEONS MATE FOR LIFE

When a pair of pigeons bec mated they are practically "marri In a loft of fifty husbands and housewives each couple attends t own household affairs; does not w about its neighbors, but goes on b ing nests, laying eggs and young. They are very each other and divide all labor ing laying eggs.

THE CUNNING CROW

Once a chained-up water-dog, front of his kennel lazily pick bone. A hungry crow looked on longing eyes, and hoped that verting the attention of the dog might succeed in securing the bone itself. So it came as close to the an mal as it dared, and began to indulg in all sorts of ridiculous antics; th dog, however, took not the slightest notice.

Then the crow hurried off and fetched a friend, who seated himsel on the bough of a tree just behind the kennel, while the first crow again danced before the dog. As the animal continued to remain absolutely indifferent, the crow friend flew into the air, suddenly swooping down, and struck the dog's spine a tremendous blow with its beak.

The dog started with surprise and pain, and dropping the bone, made a fierce but unsuccessful grab at his assailant. Meanwhile, the first crow snatched the bone as quick as lightning, and flew off with it; the two conspirators than shared the stolen property between them.—Baptist Argus.

A HERO.

"Oh, how cold!" escaped my lips as I stumbled through the door of a miserable attic tenement.

The mother was out, but her twelve-year-old boy was mo the other children, as about the poorly furnished shivered as the wind whistled the broken window panes, causing to pull my overcoat over my ears. boy was in his shirt sleeves, but refrained from asking questions g the whereabouts of his coat in ca its absence might have been the mea of providing a crust of bread for the fatherless family.

"Are you not cold, my boy?" I asked. "No," said he, "not very." Yet I noticed how his pretty pearly teeth chattered. I waited awhile and spoke to him; then I took a look into the cradle, where, sleeping quietly and comfortably, the baby lay, covered with the boy's coat. Talk about the bravery of men who face cannon; in the heat of passion they will do anything; but here was a hero, on a bitter day, in his shirt sleeves because he wanted to shield his little brother from the biting effect of a cold February wind.

Men say the age of heroism is past. It is false! So long as the nation raises boys like this one, she has within herself the germs of a boyhood that will keep her forever in the very forefront of the world's history.—Watchman.

HOW A MALTESE WAS WHIPPED.

One day while standing at my window watching the shifting clouds and drowsy swaying of the trees, my attention was called to the peculiar actions of a large maltese cat in the field beyond our lawn. It would crawl along, stop, fumble something, th go on a little distance, keeping this stopping and fumbling up for some time.

At last the lawn was reached, then through the fence the something came, followed by the cat. Then I saw what it was. A poor little mouse that the cat had been tormenting.

The cat was too well fed to kill and eat its prey, but just indolent enough to torment and worry its poor victim.

On and on they came across the lawn. The cat would catch the poor little thing in its claw, mouth it, and then let it go. Poor mousie, thinking he was free, would try to make good his escape, but the respite was only for a few minutes, when he would be grabbed again.

Across the lawn and up the terrace they came, just below the window where I was standing. When the top of the terrace was reached, the cat gave his victim one more squeeze, looking delighted at the poor exhausted thing, as much as to say, "I could kill and eat you if I wanted to."

You know it was the last straw that broke the camel's back, so this last squeeze and indignities were too much. The mouse turned round, faced the cat, sat on his hind legs like a squirrel when cracks a nut, and when the cat made an attempt to molest him the mouse slapped the cat in the face with its little fist—I mean paw—with a blow equal to Fitzsimmons' own.

The cat was taken so completely by surprise and so thoroughly disgusted with himself that he turned and fled, like the coward he was, and the mouse disappeared in a hole close to the cellar well.

I was as surprised as the cat, and thoroughly enjoyed the discomfiture of poor pussy. I think it was the most amusing thing I ever saw, and if I had not seen the whole thing I would have been tempted to doubt the story if it had been told me.—E. Gray, in Philadelphia Ledger.

Nathan Wesley Hale, Congressman from claim descendance well, and one of Nathan Towson Gener