

KING OF THE BELGIANS, WHO MAY VISIT THIS COUNTRY

WHILE Dame Rumor has it that Leopold II., king of the Belgians, is soon to honor this country with his presence, it is hardly possible that this report will prove premature, as he has several times previously been on the point of setting out for a call on Uncle Sam, but as often coun-

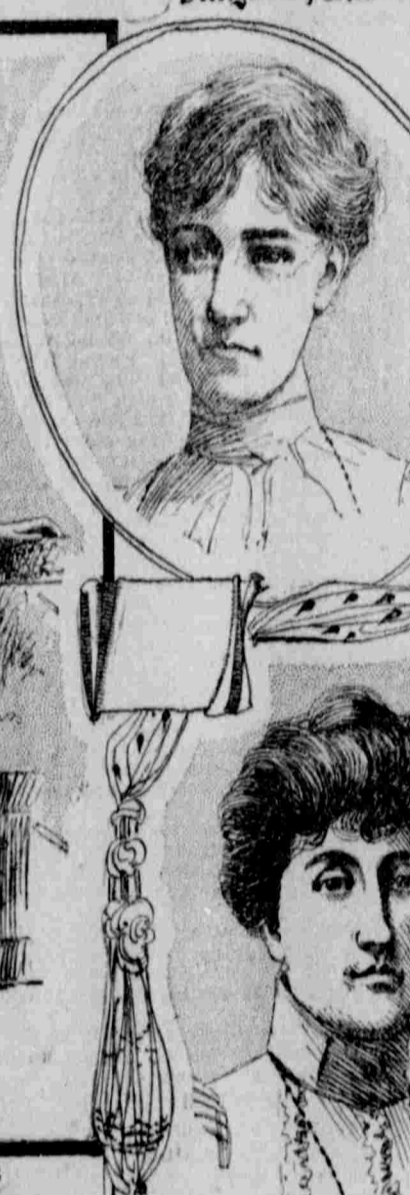
termanded his orders for the voyage and resumed his temporarily discarded crown. He has, however, a great admiration for the world's biggest republic, and the moving motive for his trip hither at this time is said to be not only to cruise in our southern waters, but to examine into our shipping laws and merchant marine, and to inform himself at first hands as to the wonderful growth of our navy.



THE QUEEN OF THE BELGIANS

Small as is his kingdom, with only 7,000,000 inhabitants, its seaboard of less than fifty miles, and fewer than half a dozen seaports, King Leopold yet has ambitions for a navy and designs

Princess Stephanie's Daughter, Elizabeth.



King Leopold.



Princess Clementine.

Princess Stephanie.

KING LEOPOLD AND HIS INTERESTING FAMILY.

Should he decide, after all, not to visit us it will be a great loss to Leopold. But there are persons ungallant enough to more than hint that if he can stand it we can. There are those, in fact, who declare that many unexplained incidents crop up in his career which, if he had been lowlier born,

sovereign of the Belgians. Born in 1835, it would seem that he is now old enough to have outlived the volcanic ardor of youth, but this is not the case. He is a bundle of contraries—a peculiar compound of sobriety, abstemiousness, elevated ideals, base inclinations and reckless indulgence. His habits

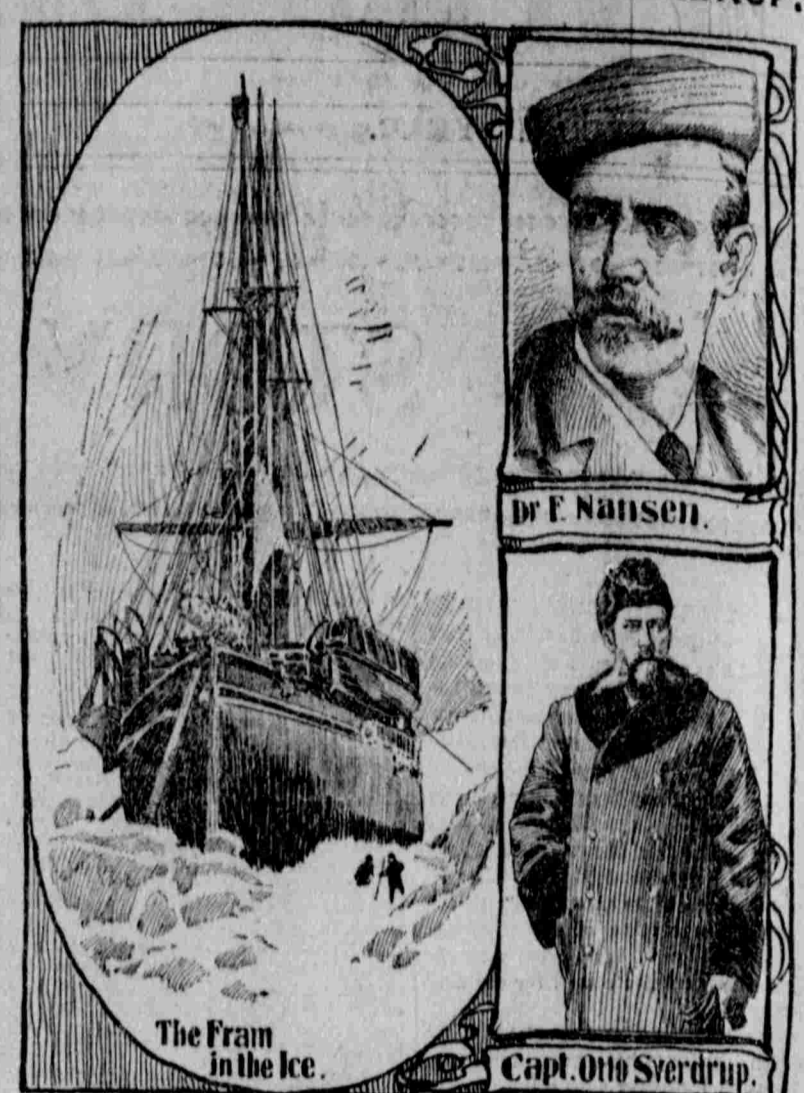
kingdom and capital with parks and gardens, palaces and architectural models. But—and here comes in the fatal defect in his character—he frequently gives rein to his passion for clandestine adventure. He has often insulted the nobles of his court by forcing upon them women hardly entitled to the re-

spect of society and has even gone so far, if rumor speaks true, as to bring his unhappy consort, Queen Henriette, to the verge of suicide. As to his three beautiful daughters, no tongue can tell the shame and confusion he has caused them by his affairs. It has happened more than once that his ministry has sent word to the king—who under Belgium's constitution is the sole executive—that important and urgent measures awaited his signature, only to learn that he was away on a journey of pleasure with companions of shady reputation. At one time, after he had been absent for weeks, he was finally located in Geneva, where he had indulged in a prolonged debauch with a friend more to his liking than the venerable counselors of Belgium.

Yet sorrow has marked the king of Belgium for its own, and the charitably inclined are prone to ascribe his erratic behavior to desperation engendered by repeated misfortunes. He lost his only son and heir by death, and the heir apparent today is his nephew, Prince Albert of Flanders, who was married a year ago to the Bavarian Duchess Elizabeth, another, and his favorite nephew, was killed in a quarrel; his second daughter, the Princess Stephanie, was married to Crown Prince Rudolph of Austria, who died so mysteriously a few years ago; his eldest daughter, Louise, ran away from her husband with another man as companion; Clementine, the youngest and his darling, nearly perished in the fire that destroyed a portion of his palace at Laeken, and she has felt so humiliated on account of her father's conduct that she threatens to retire to a convent. And yet the gay old king, brother to crazy Carlotta, maintains his hitherto invincible attitude of defiance, presenting a bold front to fate and all the world. He is called a handsome man even now, with his tall, erect form, his serious, strong face, with its set sneer so repellent to men, but so fascinating to women. His verve and dash, his democratic simplicity of manner, his approachableness, his kindness of heart, his love of flowers and nature, his encouragement of art and struggling genius and his consideration for the welfare of his subjects—having already deeded all his real estate to his country and promised to make it his heir—all these qualities have endeared King Leopold to his people, despite his known failings in the way of dissipation.

As a scion of the German Saxe-Coburgs, he is allied to nearly all the thrones of Europe, being a cousin of King Edward of England. As a grandson of Louis Philippe of France he inherited great wealth, much of which he has spent in improving his kingdom and promoting his empire of the Congo. He is sixty-six years old, but "acts like sixty." He likes to travel and may yet extend his journeys to this country; but meanwhile, should Leopold not come and should any one desire to make his acquaintance, he is more likely to be found in gay Paris than in Brussels, for it is "only a step" to the brilliant French capital, and he likes the society he finds there.

NANSEN'S FRAM AND CAPTAIN OTTO SVERDRUP.



The accompanying illustration introduces Captain Otto Sverdrup, the famous arctic explorer, and the Fram, in which he set sail June, 1893, for a spin around the pole. Having now been three years absent on this voyage, some anxiety has arisen concerning him and his seventeen shipmates, but as he was provisioned for five years and is an experienced explorer, having accompanied Nansen in his trip across Greenland in 1888, and also commanded the Fram in her former wonderful voyage, those who know him best have no fear. The latest reports, in fact, indicate that he may have found the way to the pole and now be on his return voyage. His ostensible object at the start was to discover the northern limits of Greenland, study the formation and find out if possible the origin of the paleogeographic ice, but as the last information from Lieutenant Peary was to the effect that he himself had succeeded in rounding the northern coast of Greenland, it is possible that Sverdrup may have changed his course and, finding open, ice free water, "made a dash" for the pole itself.

AN AUSTRIAN GEOLOGIST.

Professor Edward Suess, president of the Vienna Academy of Sciences, whose portrait appears in the accompanying illustration, is regarded by many of his contemporaries as the foremost geologist of our time. The scientific men of Austria, his native land, recently joined in a celebration of his seventieth birthday, on which occasion he proved his right to be called a silver-tongued orator as well as a geologist. His chief contribution to knowledge in book form is "The Face of the Earth," a treatise on the globe's geologic features, but he is also known as a writer on mountain formations and has been several times the recipient of medals from scientific societies.

LADY CURZON'S LATEST PORTRAIT.

This is the latest portrait of the vice-reine of India. Although born of American parents whose only claim to distinction is their great wealth, May Leiter, now Lady Curzon, has won golden opinions from the British aristocracy and is a great favorite with royalty.



Her husband's continuance as viceroy in fact, is said to be as much owing to the gracious charm of Lady Curzon as to his own abilities, for the court of the vice king and vice queen is the center of luxury and refinement.

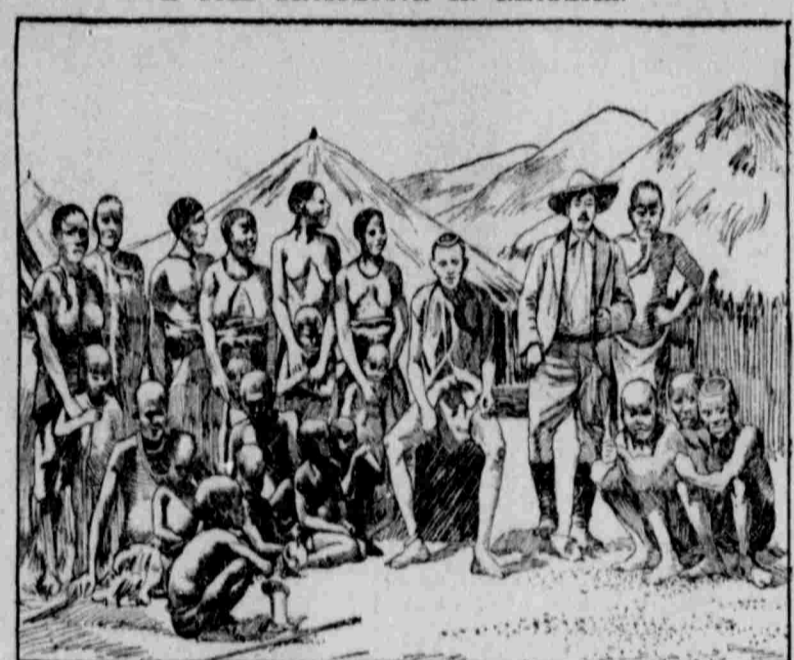
CAPE COLONY'S JUMPING HARE.

The jumping hare of Cape Colony, a specimen of which has only recently been brought to this country, is a rodent, like a rat or a rabbit, but travels by means of long leaps or bounds, like the kangaroo. It is said to be absolutely unique, no other related species



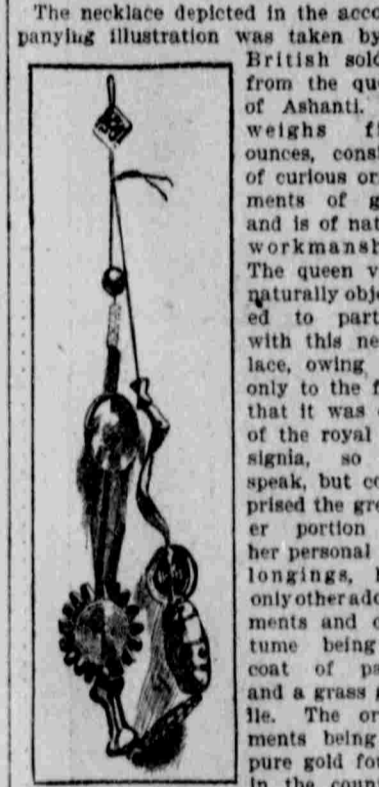
being known. When full grown, it has a length of about twenty inches, its tail, which it carries erect when on the jump, being as much longer. It lives in colonies underground and is destructive to the crops. Nocturnal in habit, it is generally hunted by the aid of a bicycle lamp, affording fine sport to the boys of Cape Colony.

A GOLD PROSPECTOR IN RHODESIA.



The accompanying illustration presents a group comprising a gold prospector and his assistants in the mountains of Rhodesia, South Africa. It is estimated that there are more than 6,000 square miles of goldfields in south Rhodesia alone, and its other mineral resources are reported abundant, while a great portion of the country is favorable for agricultural operations as well. South Rhodesia is more developed than north Rhodesia, and the two together have a population of more than a million, mostly native blacks, the great Cecil Rhodes, after whom the provinces were named, being virtually king over all.

ASHANTI QUEEN'S NECKLACE.



A search is now going on for the gold mines, which are supposed to be very rich.

ELLEN TERRY'S GRANDCHILDREN.

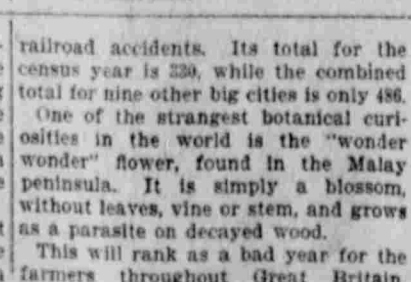
Miss Rosie and Master Peter Craig, whose portraits appear in the accompanying illustration, are the grandchildren of that eminent actress, Miss Ellen Terry (Mrs. Wardell in domestic life) and, together with their brothers, Robin and Philip, are always welcome



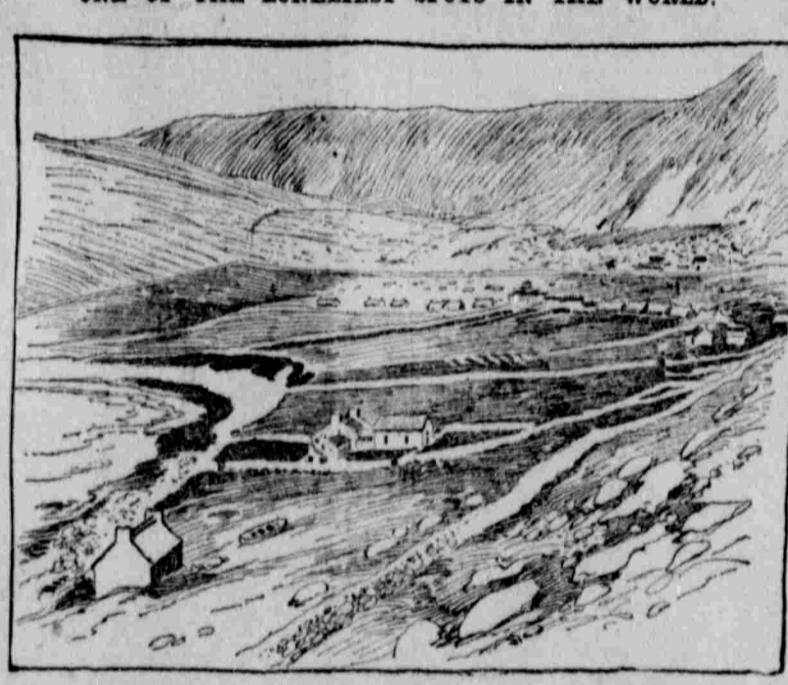
at "Grandma Ellen's" beautiful house in Barkston gardens. They are most charming children—as they should be, with such a fascinating woman for a grandmother—but they are said to be rather disconcerting toward the lady who has had the playboys of several continents at her feet and are fond of making her play the piano, sing, recite and even act for their amusement.

LONDON'S NEW LORD MAYOR.

Sir Joseph Cockfield Dimsdale, the new lord mayor of London, is, as his portrait shows, a fine appearing man and looks no older than his years, which are fifty-two. His date back only to 1894, when he was "elected," but he has been an alderman since 1891. As a successful banker he is managing director in the firm of Dimsdale, Cave, Tugwell & Co., was sheriff of London in 1894 and has represented that city in the common council since 1895.



ONE OF THE LONELIEST SPOTS IN THE WORLD.



The town of St. Kilda, situated on the island of the same name and shown in the accompanying illustration, has attracted attention to itself of late owing to a dissension in its church. The island is probably the loneliest in the world, being situated fifty miles northwest of the outer Hebrides, and is known as the veritable Ultima Thule of Scotland. It has communication with the mainland during only three months of the year, and at the present time is shut off from all connection with the outer world. When the last steamer left this quaint and desolate island, the entire population was convulsed over a doctrinal question, a mere matter of "openion" or "releigious defficiency" between the people and their dominie. As the latter was particularly obstinate, his parishioners had undertaken to starve him into submission and at last accounts had cut off his supplies. When the spring opens, we shall receive intelligence as to whether the dominie gave in or preferred starvation to surrender.

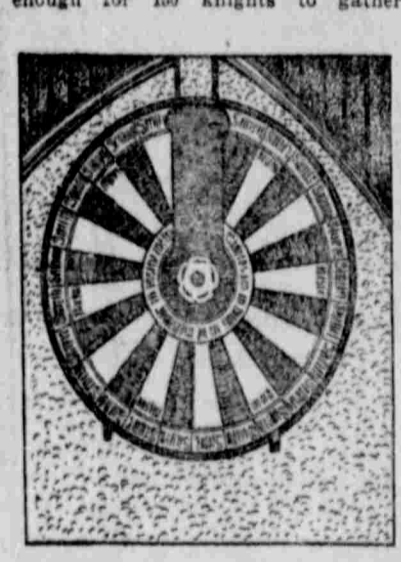
MEDICINE MASKS, OR "FALSE FACES," USED BY THE INDIANS.



In the accompanying illustration, made from a photograph, are shown several typical "false faces" or masks invented and in use by various Indian tribes of the United States and Mexico. Some are worn only in the dance, while others have peculiar virtues as "medicine masks" for the curing of the sick and those afflicted by evil spirits. Residing from left to right, these masks are as follows: War dance mask of Mexican Yaquis, buffalo dance mask of the Dakotas, Iroquois medicine mask, "laughing" mask and "wolf" mask of the Sioux.

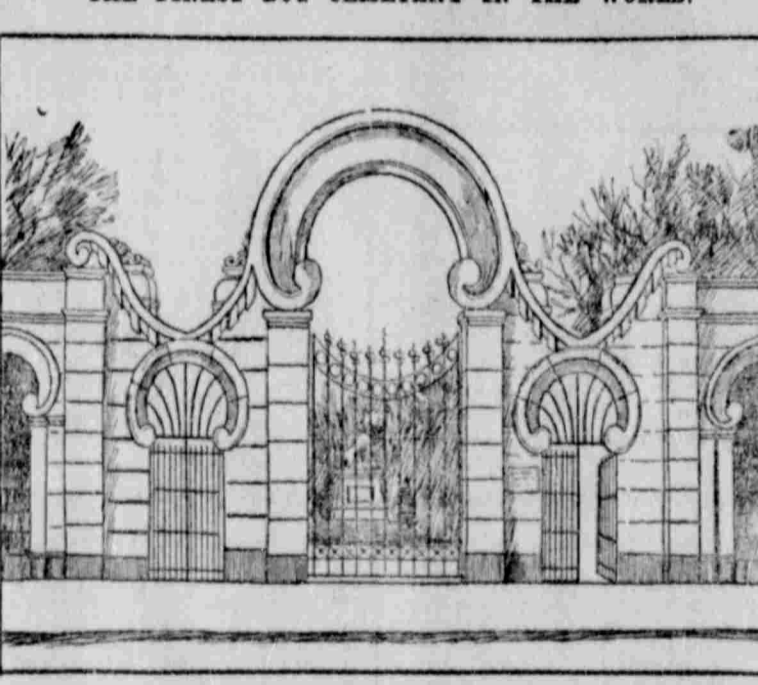
ARTHUR'S ROUND TABLE.

Celebrated in song and story and so ancient as to be relegated by some to the realm of myth and fable is the legend of the round table which, according to tradition, was received by Arthur as a wedding gift with his bride, the beautiful Guinevere. It was large enough for 150 knights to gather



around, but in the only existing representation of it, shown in the accompanying illustration and now to be found affixed to a wall in Winchester cathedral, England, the names of but twelve are preserved.

THE FINEST DOG CEMETERY IN THE WORLD.



The dog cemetery near Paris, in which many lovers of canines have erected monuments to their departed pets, is not absolutely unique, but it is called the most beautiful of its kind in the world. The entrance to this cemetery, shown in the accompanying illustration, is considered a work of art in itself. The cemetery is on an island in the Seine, and some of its monuments are very elaborate and costly. One of them perpetuates the deeds of a noble St. Bernard that saved 40 lives and was killed by number 41, who did not want to be rescued. Another, standing above the body of a soldier's pet, was erected by subscription of the regiment to which he belonged when alive.

THE WORLD'S DOINGS.

Manitoba and northwestern Canada farmers will have \$30,000,000 distributed among them when their crops are marketed this season. Before 1898 there had been no rubber planting in Nicaragua beyond a few fruitless experiments on the Atlantic coast of the country. In 1898 the work began on what may be called a large

scale, and each year since the number of planters has increased. It is safe to say that in this vicinity \$50,000 in gold value is now being expended yearly in growing rubber exclusively. Few men can disguise their voices in talking through a telephone. Every person has some little peculiarity of speech that, no matter how infinitesimal it may be, is sure to be accentuated and made more recognizable over the wire. The man who has a sharp ring in his voice will seem to speak more sharply; a gruff voice will be made more gruff, and by the same rule an insincere voice is given a greater tone of insincerity.

The latest census bulletin shows that Chicago outclasses all the other large cities in the number of deaths from railroad accidents. Its total for the census year is 230, while the combined total for nine other big cities is only 481. One of the strangest botanical curiosities in the world is the "wonder wonder" flower, found in the Malay peninsula. It is simply a blossom, without leaves, vine or stem, and grows as a parasite on decayed wood. This will rank as a bad year for the farmers throughout Great Britain.

Alfike in England and Scotland the acreages sown in wheat and barley are smaller than they were last year, and there is a decline in the number of cattle, sheep and pigs kept in England. Nor is the decline an unimportant one. In many respects it leaves British agriculture in a more restricted plight than for years. In Scotland the position is not so bad as in England. The Boston board of health has been

considering for some time the question whether typhoid fever lurks in ice and is prepared to report that there is little danger. In natural ice the bacteria are thrown out by freezing, and in artificial ice they are killed by sterilizing. There is a parliamentary party in Belgium, backed by influence in very high quarters, in favor of having every abridged Belgian a soldier, as against the report recently submitted to par-

liament as the result of an investigation of army reform by a parliamentary commission. English mail for Australia is delivered in thirty-one days when sent by way of the United States, the quickest route. Potatoes form the world's greatest single crop, 4,000,000 bushels being produced annually, equal in bulk to the entire wheat and corn crop.