

CUCKOOS OF THE CAPE.

Good Hope Famous for These Brilliant Birds of Plumage.

But the true gems among birds of the cuckoo kind known in South Africa are, after all, those lovely feathered creatures familiar at the Cape as "golden" and "emerald" cuckoos, which towards November fly south, and are so often met with in the noble forest country of the Knysna and Zitzikamma, fringing the cape littoral between Mossel bay and Cape St. Francis. Here, almost unknown to the average traveler who rushes hurriedly up country in search of gold, diamonds, or land concessions, lies a magnificent and most picturesque forest region some 110 miles long by about 12 miles in width, between the mountains and the sea. Let the traveler, lucky enough to find his way thither, stand upon the crest of the Outeniqua mountains and look around, and he will see, stretching away before him, a dense line of forest and jungle, wherein troops of wild elephants still roam. Yellowwood trees 80 feet high, the fine stinkwood, the oak of South Africa, the essenwood, and other trees all flourish here. The sneezewood (whose saddest upon reaching the nostrils brings on an uncontrollable fit of sneezing) is found in the Kaffrarian forests more to the eastward. Here you may see the Kaffir bean with its brilliant coral-like flowers, the Hottentot's bean with its dark green foliage and rich clusters of scarlet blossoms, masses of ferns, wild pelargoniums, gladioli, ixias, irises, and many other flowers bedecking the soil. Pendulous lichens add a wild and fantastic charm to the forest trees.

Amid these scenes many brilliant birds of plumage are to be noticed, and, preeminent among them, the three glorious cuckoos for which the cape is famous. Of these the golden cuckoo (Chalcides smaragdinus) is perhaps preeminent in coloring. The upper plumage, with the neck and breast, is of a wonderful metallic sheen; in some lights brilliant emerald, in others a greenish coppery gold. The under parts are in most specimens rich yellow; in a few others almost white; the tail feathers are barred with white. This is a smallish cuckoo, measuring only some eight inches in length. The lovely little Didric—so called from its melancholy and frequent note—is of a cupreous, metallic green, marked with white, and is found not only at the Knysna, but also in various other parts of the colony. Klaas' cuckoo, so named from a favorite Hottentot servant (Klaas) of its discoverer, Le Vaillant, is another forest bird notable for its shining metallic coat of green touched with copper; the under parts are clear white, and there are green markings upon the chest and thighs. The female may be readily identified by the brown cross bars upon the back and the green bars upon the white breast and belly. This charming cuckoo is known to the Dutch colonists as the "Mietje." The Didric is slightly smaller than the golden cuckoo, while the tiny Klaas' cuckoo is still smaller than the Didric. Needless to say, these matchless birds are eagerly sought for their plumage. Happily, their numbers are recruited every year by fresh migrations from the far African interior. — London Saturday Review.

EUROPE'S RAILROAD MILEAGE.

Germany Leads with 29,355 Miles—France Ranks Second.

At the beginning of the year 1897, there were, in all Europe 159,025 miles of railroads in operation, this being an increase during the year 1896 of 2,144 miles, says Consul Du Bois, of St. Gall. Of this increase, Austria-Hungary had 806 miles, of which Hungary had 679 miles. In Russia, there was an increase of 555 miles. This, of course, does not include the great transiberian and transcaucasian lines, with their 2,883 miles, a large portion of which has recently been opened to traffic. Germany increased her railroad mileage 579 miles—the same as Hungary—the kingdom of Prussia receiving 387 miles.

The countries of Europe now having the most railroads in operation, according to their areas, are, in their order: Belgium, 3,582 miles; Great Britain and Ireland, 21,217 miles; Germany, 29,355 miles; Switzerland, 2,309 miles; Holland, 1,808 miles; France, 25,089 miles. The other countries of Europe have the following railroad mileages: Austria, 18,951; Denmark, 1,605; Spain, 7,615; Greece, 590; Italy, 9,349; Luxembourg, 269; Portugal, 1,451; Roumania, 1,784; Russia proper, 22,435; Finland, 1,484; Serbia, 635; Sweden, 6,073; Norway, 1,201; Turkey and Bulgaria, 1,507; the islands of Jersey, Malta and Man, 68 miles.

A Peasant's Hoax.

Hoax—I understand the government's buying up the entire peanut crop. Hoax—What's the idea? Hoax—They're going to use the kernels in the army and the shells in the navy.—Philadelphia Record.

BERNHARDT'S SEASIDE HOME.

On a Lonely Island the Tragedy Queen Seeks Health and Rest.

Hundreds of miles from Paris, at the most lonely end of the rock-bound island of Belle-Ile-en-Mer, near Brittany, stands the extremely unpretending but romantic summer home to which Sara Bernhardt flies each year for health and rest. The savage, sea-girt shores to which the tragedienne has transferred her rural household goods are so remote that Paris is forgotten there. At Le Fort des Poulains (or, as it is usually called, "Les Poulains") artifice and sometimes even art gives place to nature. The charming woman who welcomes her guests so prettily and effusively on their arrival at Belle-Ile has, for the time being, put the footlights out of her mind and transformed herself by some miracle into an idealized peasant.

Driving, fishing, shooting and crab catching barefooted among the gigantic rocks piled up around her house are the chief pleasures indulged in at Les Poulains by the theatrical queen. She varies them from time to time by taking long tramps over the cliffs and through the hamlets which are scattered here and there between Les Palais and the seaport at which you land after ten miles' tossing up and down in the preposterously little steamboat plying between Belle Isle and Quiberon, on the mainland, in Brittany. The peasants with several miles of her diminutive and barren estate all know and speak in glowing terms of the belle dame who is so fond of distributing sweetmeats and apples and cakes to the children who may cross her path. Monsieur le Cure, over at Le Palais, and Monsieur le Maire (he also a priest) speak even more highly of the devout and generous lady who is so constant an attendant at mass on Sundays. Notwithstanding her Semitic origin, Sara Bernhardt is a sincere, if sometimes rather careless, Catholic. The rude fishermen and fishwives who make up the greater part of Monsieur le Cure's congregation were slightly startled at first by the strange costumes and the curious ease of the Dame des Poulains. But they soon got used to her.

Mme. Sara's chateau is a very primitive affair; a plain two-storied oblong building, with a parapet (once lined with frowning guns). Until some years ago it was a genuine fort, occupied by 40 men and a few officers. There are Algerian suggestions in the white stone walls and brown brick facings of the edifice. In front of the fort, which lies in a deep hollow near the weather-beaten, stormy Point des Poulains, stand, like twin sentinels, two mighty porcelain stalks. The waves race ceaselessly about the base of this strange residence. Enormous bowlders, molded into the rough likeness of monsters grim and horrible, surround the house. No human habitations can be seen from any corner of the building, with the exception of a melancholy lighthouse and a small cottage owned by the rustic of whom Sara bought the five or ten desolate acres which adjoin her rocks.

The interior of the fort, although less Spartan and severe than the exterior, is simple. One long, broad, lofty vaulted hall—formerly the Salle du Corps des Gardes—serves the tragedienne as dining-room and studio combined. It is wainscoted by pine wood and adorned by ten or twelve by no means valuable paintings. On a buffet near the dining table is an array of the quaint Breton faience exclusively affected by the fair chateleine at Les Poulains. A huge fireplace and the indispensable chairs, a few lounges and one or two artistic couches draped with soft oriental stuffs make up the furniture. Tens of millions of francs have been earned by the great actress since old Auber heard her recite the fable of the "Deux Pigeons," who "loved so tenderly." Yet at this moment all the property she owns on earth is probably this one rude storm-swept dwelling on the remote shore of a small Breton island.—St. James Budget.

Rare Old Story.

"I tell you," exclaimed the patriot, "the spirit of '76 is at work." "You bet!" replied Switzer. "I just had about four fingers of it around at Finnigan's. It went down like oil."—Philadelphia North American.

A Curious Accident.

The peninsular and oriental steamer China was driven ashore on Azalea point near Perim, recently, when she landed on the old wreck of another steamer and had her bottom torn out by its engines.

A French Translation.

Bucolic Boat Boy—I say, Sarah, wotever be a crematorium? Metropolitan Maid—Oh, you are an ignorant boy! Why, it's French for a milkshop, of course!—Punch.

His Excuse.

She—Perhaps you have forgotten that you promised to love me forever. He—I had no idea that forever could last so long.—Indianapolis Journal.

DON'TS.

A Few Useful Hints for Travelers to Mexico.

Don't attend bull fights on Sunday and then find fault with the morals of the native populace.

Don't buy a rubber plantation of a man on the street. He also has gold bricks that come cheaper.

Don't sit in Mexican draughts. Don't cash American drafts. They are dangerous south of the Rio Grande.

Don't try to see as much the first day, or exert yourself at an altitude of a mile and a half, as you would at home near the sea level.

Don't expect your meals to be put on the table all at once or twice or three times. Each thing you order will be served as a separate course.

Don't forget to shake hands with your Mexican friend both at meeting and parting, no matter how often you meet or how brief the interview may be.

Don't try to convince the Mexicans that they don't know how to make coffee. They have been burning it for several centuries, and the present generation prefers it black.

Don't forget that Mexico City is nearly 8,000 feet above the sea level and that every month in the year you will need warm clothing to be comfortable both mornings and evenings.

Don't think the newboys are crazy when they offer you "to-morrow morning's paper" at four o'clock in the afternoon. It isn't their fault. The afternoon papers are dated a day ahead.

Don't be surprised if your acquaintance who has been in Mexico long enough to have become acclimated has adopted many of the little mannerisms of the country. He can't help it; the very atmosphere is permeated with politeness and procrastination.

Don't try to convince an Indian street peddler that if a dozen bananas sell for 12 cents two dozen ought to amount to 24 cents. You can't do it. He knows that one real is 12 cents but two reals are 25 cents, and eight make a dollar.

Don't expect an appointment to be kept on the minute or the hour. If your Mexican friend should rush past a half-dozen friends on the street without stopping to shake hands and pass the compliments of the day, they would think he had lost his mind and his manners; so you must wait.

Don't imagine you will have to live on "Mexican" cooking, which, according to the popular idea, means everything so hot with chile that it is cooked without a fire. The hotel and restaurant bills of fare rarely contain more than one or two dishes that are highly seasoned, and they are easily distinguishable by their names. As a rule the American traveler will find no greater difference in the cooking in Mexico as compared with that served in the United States than he would in almost any other foreign country.—Modern Mexico.

USEFUL DISCOVERIES.

Important Part Electricity Has Played in This Line.

One of the most fortunate discoveries in the realm of electrochemists, whose results are peculiarly adapted to rouse interest in wide circles, is Henry Moissan, of Paris. With the force of the current he conquered fluorine, which most stubbornly of all the elements has resisted isolation, and presented it, free of all combinations, to the eye of the investigator—the first time it ever was seen in a free state. In his electric oven he crystallized coal to diamonds, and gold, copper, and resiating graphite were neglected and melted down into the form of little scales. These and similar experiments give an important idea of the almost creative power that the strong current lends humanity over matter.

Besides such new knowledge, electrochemists has ripened the prominent practical results and has placed others nearer attainment. The extraction of the far-famed aluminum from clay takes place almost immediately under the influence of the powerful current. In like manner soda is formed from kitchen salt almost without expense if you take into account the value of the important second product. Electricity has been used successfully also to purify streams and rivers and to free them effectively from the death germs most inimical to humanity, such as cholera, typhus, malaria, etc.—Franz Bendt, in Chautauquan.

Tale of Three Cities.

"I see," said the ungrammatical Chicago man, "that they are going to try the experiment of mummifying Philadelphia bodies."

"Before death?" asked the inane New Yorker.—Indianapolis Journal.

What Becomes of Them? Every time a woman picks up a newspaper, she finds a recipe for cooking, which she cuts out and carefully looses.—Acheson Globe.

Price of Edibles in Perils.

At Kerman, Persia, meat and bread are under two cents a pound, eggs five for a cent, chickens four cents, a small lamb nine cents.

Bulletin Financier.

Mercredi, 13 juillet 1898.

COMPTES D'EGANGES (CLEARING HOUSE) DE LA NOUVELLE-ORLEANS.

Montants des... 3,260,389 00

MARCHES DIVERSES.

Nouveau-Orleans... 7

MORNING... 24 200 40

PARIS... 11 1/2

AGENTS... 17 1/2

ORLEANS... 11 1/2

LA BOURSE DE LA NOUVELLE-ORLEANS.

ACTIENS... 11 1/2

RENTES... 11 1/2

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Bulletin Commercial.

Mercredi, 13 juillet 1898.

MARCHE DE LA NIVE-ORLEANS.

Le Coteur... 11 1/2

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