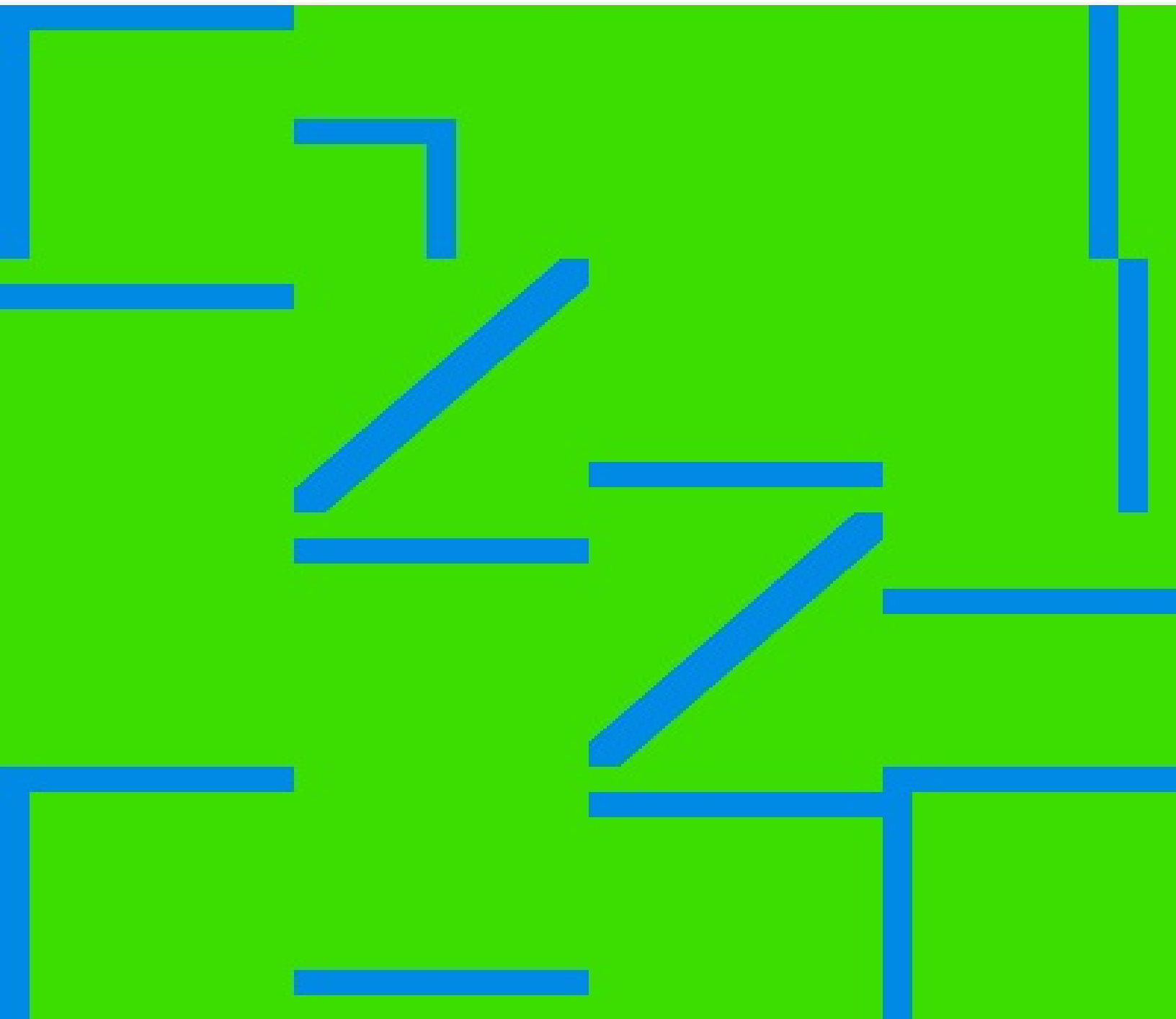


O. Henry Encore

O. Henry



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ENCORE ***

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O. Henry Encore

STORIES AND ILLUSTRATIONS BY O. HENRY 🐘 *Usually Under the Name*

The Post Man ♀ *Discovered and Edited by* Mary Sunlocks Harrell

New York 1939

Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc.

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By Mary Sunlocks Harrell

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Table of Contents

[Preface](#)

[Introduction](#)

[Part One: Stories](#)

[A Night Errant](#)

[In Mezzotint](#)

[The Dissipated Jeweler](#)

[How Willie Saved Father](#)

[The Mirage on the Frio](#)

[A Tragedy](#)

[Sufficient Provocation](#)

[The Bruised Reed](#)

[Paderewski's Hair](#)

[A Mystery of Many
Centuries](#)

[A Strange Case](#)

[Simmon's Saturday Night](#)

[An Unknown Romance](#)

[Jack the Giant Killer](#)

[The Pint Flask](#)

[An Odd Character](#)

[A Houston Romance](#)

[The Legend of San Jacinto](#)

[Binkley's Practical School
of Journalism](#)

[Part Two: Sketches](#)

[Did You See the
Circus?](#)

[Thanksgiving
Remarks](#)

[When the Train
Comes In](#)

[Christmas Eve](#)

[New Year's Eve](#)

[Watchman, What of
the Night?](#)

[Newspaper Poets](#)

[Part Three: Newspaper
Poetry](#)

[Topical Verse](#)

[Cape Jessamines](#)

[The Cricket](#)

[My Broncho](#)

[The Modern Venus](#)

[Celestial Sounds](#)

[The Snow](#)

[Her Choice](#)

["Little Things, but Ain't
They Whizzers?"](#)

[Last Fall of the Alamo](#)

[A New Microbe](#)

[Vereton Villa](#)

[Whiskey Did It](#)

[Nothing New Under the
Sun](#)

[Led Astray](#)

[A Story for Men](#)

[How She Got in the Swim](#)

[The Barber Talks](#)

[Barbershop Adventure](#)

Preface

During the years 1934 and 1935 I made a close study of O. Henry's Texas contacts. The newspapers of Texas during the time of O. Henry's residence in the state furnished one of the sources which I investigated; and it was during my research in the files of the *Houston Post*, 1895–1896, that I discovered the stories and illustrations which make up this book. In reprinting this material, I have followed the original version meticulously except for the correction of obvious typographical errors and certain slight aberrations in punctuation that seemed to demand revision for the sake of consistency or to comply with modern standards of usage. Even so, I have allowed many typographical and even grammatical conventions to remain as they were printed forty years ago.

The companion volume to *O. Henry Encore*, namely, *O. Henry in Texas*, embodies the results of my investigation into the Texas period of O. Henry's life, and contains a much more complete account of his work on the *Houston Post* than I have been able to give in the short introduction to the present volume.

Permission for reprinting the material here was arranged for me by former Governor W. P. Hobby of Texas, now President of the *Houston Post*, and Mr. A. E. Clarkson, Business Manager of the *Post*. I am happy to express my gratitude to them. My thanks are due also to Dr. Leonidas Warren Payne, Jr., of The University of Texas, Dr. Vernon Loggins, of Columbia University, and the late Dr. Dorothy Scarborough, of Columbia University, for helping in the identification of the material.

Mary Sunlocks Harrell

Introduction

O. Henry's real name was William Sidney (Sydney) Porter. He was born in Greensboro, North Carolina, 1862, of mixed Quaker (Connecticut) and Southern (Virginia) ancestry. His mother, a woman of remarkable strength of character and some literary talent, died in 1865, and O. Henry's rearing was entrusted to his paternal grandmother. His father was a physician, but apparently a business failure at everything he attempted. What schooling O. Henry had was received in the little private school of an aunt, Miss Lina Porter. From early boyhood he worked in the drug store of an uncle, and long before he was twenty he was a registered pharmacist.

In 1882 O. Henry left for Texas to seek a dryer climate. It was feared that he was developing consumption. He settled on the Hall ranch in La Salle County, almost half way between San Antonio and the Mexican border. He spent two years on the ranch and in 1884 went to Austin. During his first three years there, he lived as practically an adopted son in the home of Mr. Joe Harrell, who was also a native of Greensboro. He worked at various "jobs"—cigar-store clerk, pharmacist, etc.

In 1887 O. Henry secured a position in the State Land Office as assistant compiling draftsman. Here he remained for four years—the happiest ones, it seems, in his life. The position meant to him prosperity; and five months after he had begun his work, he was married to Miss Athol Estes, the daughter of Mrs. G. P. Roach. There was a romantic elopement, a family reconciliation, and what O. Henry called "a settling down to a comedy of happiness ever afterwards."

It was shortly after he took up his work in the Land Office that O. Henry first marketed his writings. The amount received for a "string of jokes and sketches" accepted by the *Detroit Free Press* was small, but it was to increase steadily, even during the most troublous period of his life. As a boy in Greensboro he was known for his drawings and cartoons, and while on the ranch in Texas he drew some pictures and also wrote to his relatives and friends in North Carolina letters indicative of his later literary style.

A change in the State administration in 1891 meant that O. Henry's position in the Land Office was lost. He became connected with the First National Bank of Austin as paying and receiving teller, where he was to work until December,

1894. Before giving up his position in the bank, he had undertaken the publication of a humorous, semi-political weekly, *The Rolling Stone*, published at Austin and later simultaneously in Austin and San Antonio. After he left the bank, he had to depend on *The Rolling Stone* for all his income, but without capital he could not make of it a financial success. It existed only a year, from April 28, 1894, to April 27, 1895. Almost six months passed before O. Henry left Austin to become a staff contributor to the *Houston Daily Post*. His first work appeared in the *Post* on October 19, 1895.

It was shortly after this date that an ominous shadow settled over O. Henry's head. In February of 1896 the Federal Grand Jury at Austin brought an indictment against W. S. Porter, charging the embezzlement of funds while he was acting as paying and receiving teller of the First National Bank of Austin. Finally, summoned to trial in July, 1896, O. Henry left Houston to answer the charge; but he only got as far as Hempstead. There it was necessary to change trains; but instead of taking the train for Austin, he returned to Houston and then went on to New Orleans. When next heard from, he was in Honduras. In January, 1897, after six month's absence O. Henry received news of the serious illness of his wife. He set out to join her immediately and reached Austin by February 5, 1897. He at once reported to the civil authorities. His bondsmen had not been assessed, and he was allowed to go free but with his bond doubled.

His wife died of tuberculosis the following July, and in February, 1898, O. Henry's case came to trial. He plead not guilty, but for some unknown reason he maintained an utter indifference throughout the trial. On March 25 he was sentenced to imprisonment in the Federal Ward of the Ohio State Penitentiary. On account of good behavior, however, O. Henry's term in prison was shortened to a little over three years. On July 24, 1901, he again became a free man. His ability as a pharmacist gave him the opportunity to work in prison at something comparatively easy. But what is of most interest to us in regard to his life there is that by the time he got out of confinement he was pretty well known, under the pseudonym of O. Henry by editors of a number of America's most popular magazines.

As soon as he was out of prison O. Henry went to join his daughter and the Roaches, who were then living in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He now devoted all his energies to writing, and in the spring of 1902 he was called to New York. The eight years that O. Henry spent in the great metropolis were marked by an astonishing fecundity in literary production and an ever increasing fame as the writer of a peculiar type of short story, now known universally as the "O. Henry

writer of a peculiar type of short story, now known universally as the O. Henry short story."

O. Henry died in New York City on June 5, 1910, and was buried in Asheville, North Carolina. The only other event of his life which should be recorded here is his marriage in 1907 to Miss Sara Coleman, a sweetheart of his North Carolina days, and author of *Wind of Destiny* in which appear many letters written to her by O. Henry just before their marriage.

Practically the whole body of O. Henry's stories and sketches first appeared in periodicals. Doubleday, Page & Company (now Doubleday, Doran and Company) have put into book form almost everything he wrote, and the volumes in the order of their publication are as follows: *Cabbages and Kings*, 1904; *The Four Million*, 1906; *The Trimmed Lamp* and *Heart of the West*, 1907; *The Voice of the City* and *The Gentle Grafters*, 1908; *Roads of Destiny* and *Options*, 1909; *Strictly Business* and *Whirligigs*, 1910; *Sixes and Sevens*, 1911; *Rolling Stones*, 1913; *Waifs and Strays*, 1917. In 1923 Harper and Brothers brought out *Postscripts* by O. Henry, edited by Florence Stratton.

The title of *Rolling Stones*, invented by Harry Peyton Steger, is based on the weekly, *The Rolling Stone*, published by O. Henry in Texas in 1894 and 1895. It contains odds and ends; some stories written when O. Henry was at his best, "The Fog in Santone," for example; material used in the original *The Rolling Stone*; excerpts from the *Postscripts* column written for the *Houston Post*; and a few letters. *Postscripts* by O. Henry, as the name suggests, contains material taken from Will Porter's *Houston Post* column. *The Four Million* is based on New York life, and *The Trimmed Lamp*, *The Voice of the City*, and *Strictly Business* are simply "more stories of the four million." *Heart of the West* is made up exclusively of western stories. *Cabbages and Kings*, a composite of several individual stories separately published and now woven together, depicts life as O. Henry saw it in Honduras, Central America. *The Gentle Grafters* is supposedly based upon stories which O. Henry heard his fellow prisoners relate in the Ohio Penitentiary. The other volumes are made up of stories varied in character—New York, Texas, and tropical America.

Just as every other great artist has done, O. Henry has set an example. He invented a short-story technique of his own, and the most discriminating critics have studied that technique and pronounced it good. He owed no more to the "unity of impression idea" of Poe than to the stringy structure of the medieval

Patient Griselda. Almost by chance, it seems, he hit upon the trick of concentration of attention, economy of words, rising suspense, and dénouement of climax and surprise; and in that trick lies his art.

There was in O. Henry, however, a power greater than his art. That was his genius for observation. Art without ideas profits nothing. O. Henry got his ideas by seeing everything about him, by always keeping on the *qui vive*, as he himself said, for “the man around the corner.” Fate dealt him a life of manifold experiences, and from every experience his store of observations increased. After all, his works are no more than an artistic record of life as he saw it.

The stories that make up the present volume have for forty years remained unnoticed in the files of the *Houston Post*. The general belief that O. Henry was simply a columnist on the Post is probably the reason for their being overlooked. The idea that his column appeared regularly has, furthermore, tended to dismiss the question of what sort of work he really did on the paper. When I examined the files of the Post, I was surprised to find that the column “Some Postscripts” was often missing. In February, 1896, it came out only four times, in April seven, in June three. In spite of this irregularity Will Porter’s salary had gradually been raised from \$15 to \$25 a week.

Here is a situation which has only one logical explanation. O. Henry must have done other work in order to draw this steadily increasing weekly salary. A close examination of the *Houston Post* files from October 19, 1895, to June 22, 1896, reveals a mass of material, heretofore unidentified, as unmistakably the work of Will Porter.

What first attracts the eye is the abundance of unsigned comic drawings and clever cartoons. The style of these drawings is unquestionably O. Henry’s. We know from various sources that he was constantly drawing pictures, and we have a positive statement from Colonel R. M. Johnston, under whom Will Porter worked on the *Houston Post*, that his ability to draw cartoons was called into requisition soon after he joined the staff of the *Post*. Some of the best of these cartoons depict the political situation of the time. Others are entirely independent of politics and point to the development of the present-day comic strips in all newspapers. Sometimes they portray character traits and are accompanied by rhymed quips. At other times they are used to illustrate lengthy stories. These stories, of course, were composed by Will Porter, and from them the selections

for this volume have been made.

The word-usage, sentence-structure, mythological allusion, plot-manipulation, character types, and central ideas that characterize O. Henry's short stories generally, are also plainly recognizable in these selections from the *Houston Post*. For example, "A Tragedy" not only turns on a pun, as O. Henry's stories often do, but is based upon the story of *The Arabian Nights*, which later colored O. Henry's whole conception of New York City, Little-Old-Bagdad-on-the-Subway. The central idea of "An Odd Character," the story of a tramp who claims to be 241 years old, appeared later in "The Enchanted Kiss" and "Door of Unrest."

The characters of these earlier stories—shop-girls, Irish policemen, crooks, tramps, sheep-men, cowmen, drunkards, pharmacists, doctors, newspaper reporters, dudes—are practically identical with many of those used in later O. Henry stories.

Likewise, O. Henry's propensity for the use of the "envelope structure," the sort provided by the pilgrimage in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, and "narrated development," or the telling of the story by one of the characters, is very much in evidence in these *Houston Post* stories, as in a number of his later acknowledged works. For example, in "The Mirage on the Frio" a sheep-man from La Salle County tells his story to a group of men on a Buffalo Bayou fishing party; and later in *Cabbages and Kings* the story of "The Shamrock and the Palm" is told by the Irishman Clancy to a group of fellow Caucasians who have met at the end of a tropical day.

A large amount of internal evidence, moreover, points emphatically to O. Henry as the author of these pieces. They have the unmistakable stylistic qualities, the humorous point of view, the unexpected climaxes of O. Henry. After a careful and detailed study of every single piece of the material here reproduced, along with the application of various stylistic tests, I was thoroughly convinced of the authenticity of its authorship. In order to support my own convictions, however, I consulted experts who have been students of O. Henry for years. Dr. L. W. Payne, Jr., of The University of Texas, Dr. Vernon Loggins, of Columbia University, and Dr. Dorothy Scarborough, also of Columbia and compiler of many books of short stories, examined photostatic copies which I had made of the material. They are unanimous in the opinion that the authorship of both the drawings with their legends and the articles and stories may be safely attributed

to O. Henry's pen.

The nature of the material included in this volume determined the arrangement of the book into three parts. The stories in the first part show that Will Porter had already discovered the technique that made him famous as O. Henry. The sketches in the second part show O. Henry at work-gathering story material from his observations of life. Will Porter's ventures into the realm of newspaper poetry, I have included in order to illustrate the principles set forth in his article "Newspaper Poets," also reprinted here. As far as I know, this article is the only bit of serious literary criticism ever written by O. Henry. It is noteworthy also as the only article in the *Houston Post* which was ever signed in full by "W. S. Porter." A more detailed treatment of this and allied topics concerning O. Henry's life in Texas may be found in my *O. Henry in Texas*, designed as a companion volume to the present book.

Part One

Stories

A Night Errant

One of the greatest of books is the daily life around us. All that the human mind can conceive; all that the human heart can feel, and the lips tell are encompassed in the little world about us. He that beholds with understanding eyes can see beneath the thin veil of the commonplace, the romance, the tragedy and the broad comedy that is being played upon the world's stage by the actors great and little who tread the boards of the Theater of the Universe.

Life is neither tragedy nor comedy. It is a mingling of both. High above us omnipotent hands pull the strings that choke our laughter with sobs and cause strange sounds of mirth to break in upon our deepest grief. We are marionettes that dance and cry, scarce at our own wills; and at the end, the flaring lights are out, we are laid to rest in our wooden boxes, and down comes the dark night to cover the scene of our brief triumph.

We elbow heroes on the streets as grand as any the poets have sung; in the faces of obscure women and prosy men a student of his kind can see the imprints of all the passions, both good and bad, that have illuminated the pages of song and story.

There is good in all, and we are none all good. The scholar in his library, the woodcutter in the forest, my lady in her boudoir and the painted, hard-eyed denizen of the byways—we are all from the same clay.

And the hands of fate pull the strings, and we caper and pirouette; and some go up and some go down and haphazard chance or else an obscure divinity pulls us this way and that, and where are we left? Blind and chattering on the brink of an eternal unknowableness. We spring from a common root. The king and the bricklayer are equal except as to environs; the queen and the milkmaid may sit side by side with pail and crown on the ragged edge of destiny; the human heart is the same the world over; and when the judge sits upon the doings of his puppets, who will prevail?

The Post Man has an overcoat with a high collar. This is convenient in more ways than one. He turns it up when passing beggars upon the street corners, and thus shuts out their importunities and saves his conscience; he pulls it around his ears with dignified stateliness when meeting gentlemen who deal in goods which he hath bought anon; and lastly, it is useful when the weather is cold

he had bought alone, and lastly, it is useful when the weather is cold.

Sometimes when the purple shades begin to fall on Saturday evening and the cool mists creep up from the sluggish waters of the bayou the Post Man dons his useful article of apparel and hieth him forth among the hedges and the highways. He sees the seamy side through the gilding that covers the elect of the earth, and he sees the pure gold that glitters amid the mire where tread the lowly and meek of heart. He catches the note of discord in the prayer of the Pharisee on the street corner, and the jangle of the untuned bells that hang above many houses of worship. He sees strange deeds of nobility and lofty self-denial among people from whose touch respectability draws aside its skirts, and the mark of the beast upon the brow of the high and saintly.

A little here and there he jots down upon his pad; the greater part of the panorama goes by unrecorded until something comes in the vast To Be that will either explain—or end.

Robert Burns has drawn a perfect picture of the purest peace and happiness in his “Cotter’s Saturday Night.” The laborer comes home from his work and is met by his joyful family. The fire burns brightly, the lamp is lit, and they draw the curtains and sit about their humble board, shutting in their little happy world from the cold and bleak night.

There are such homes now and always will be, but if one will traverse the streets of a city on Saturday night he will witness many scenes of a far different nature.

As the homeward bound columns file along the sidewalks there is much to be seen that presages sorrow and scant comfort to the waiting ones at their homes. There are staggering steps, loud speeches with rude and thickened tongues, and plentiful signs of misspent wages and the indulgence of debased appetites.

The saloons are reaping a rich harvest that should belong to wives and children. Some fling away in an hour what has taken them days to earn, and will carry home nothing but sullen looks and empty pockets. You can see all along the streets pale, anxious-looking women slipping through the crowd in the hope of meeting the providers and protectors of their homes, and inducing them to come there instead of lingering with their besotted comrades. What should be a season of rest and repose beneath the home vine and fig tree is turned into Saturnalia, and a loosing of bad passions.

Homeward flit the trim shop girls, the week's work over, intent on the rest and pleasure of the morrow; threading their straightforward and dextrous way through the throng. Homeward plods the weary housekeeper with her basket of vegetables for Sunday's dinner. Homeward goes the solid citizen laden with bundles and bags. Homeward slip weary working women, hurrying to fill the hungry mouths awaiting them. Respectability moves homeward, but as the everlasting stars creep out above, queer and warped things steal forth like imps of the night to hide, and sulk, and carouse, and prey upon whatever the darkness bringeth to them.

Down on the bank of the bayou, beyond the car shops, the foundries, the lumbermills and the great manufactories that go to make Houston the wonderful business and trade center she is, stands—or rather, leans—a little shanty. It is made of clapboards, old planks, pieces of tin and odds and ends of lumber picked up here and there. It is built close to the edge of the foul and sluggish bayou. Back of it rises the bank full ten feet high; below it, only a few feet, ripples the sullen tide.

In this squalid hut lives Crip. Crip is nine years old. He is freckled-faced, thin and subdued. From his knee his left leg is gone and in its place is a clumsy wooden stump, on which he limps around at quite a wonderful pace. Crip's mother cleans up three or four offices on Main Street and takes in washing at other times. Somehow, they manage to live in this tottering habitation patched up by Crip's father, who several years before had fallen into the bayou one night while drunk, and what was left of him by the catfish was buried upon the bank a hundred yards farther down. Of late, Crip had undertaken to assist in the mutual support.

One morning he came stumping timidly into the office of the *Post* and purchased a few papers. These he offered for sale upon the streets with great diffidence. Crip had no difficulty in selling his papers. People stopped and bought readily the wares of this shrinking, weak-voiced youngster. His wooden leg caught the eye of hurrying passersby and the nickels rained into his hand as long as he had any papers left.

One morning Crip failed to call for his papers. The next day he did not appear, nor the next, and one of the newsboys was duly questioned as to his absence.

"Crip's got de pewmonia," he said.

The Post Man, albeit weighed down by numerous tribulations of others and his own, when night comes puts on his overcoat and wends his way down the bayou toward the home of Crip.

The air is chilly and full of mist, and great puddles left by the recent rains glimmer and sparkle in the electric lights. No wonder that pneumonia has laid its cold hand upon the frail and weakly Crip, living as he does in the rain-soaked shanty down on the water's edge. The Post Man goes to inquire if he has had a doctor and if he is supplied with the necessities his condition must require. He walks down the railroad tracks and comes close upon two figures marching with uncertain stateliness in the same direction.

One of them speaks loudly, with oratorical flourish, but with an exaggerated carefulness that proclaims he is in a certain stage of intoxication. His voice is well known in the drawing-rooms and the highest social circles of Houston. His name is—well, let us call him Old Boy, for so do his admiring companions denominate him. There comes hurrying past them the form of a somberly-clad woman.

Intuitively the Post Man thinks she is of the house of Crip and accosts her with interrogatories. He gleans from her gasping brogue that a doctor has seen Crip and that he is very sick, but with proper medicines, nursing and food he will probably recover. She is now hastening to the drug store to buy—with her last dollar, she says—the medicine he must take at once.

“I will stay with him until you return,” says the Post Man, and with a fervent “Hiven bless you, sorr!” she melts away toward the lights of the city.

The house where Crip lives is on a kind of shelf on the bayou side and its approach from above must be made down a set of steep and roughly hewn steps cut into the bank by the deceased architect of the house. At the top of these stairs the two society lights stop.

“Old Boy,” says one of them, “give it up. It might be catching. And you are going to the dance tonight. This little rat of a newsboy—why should you see him personally? Come, let's go back. You've had so much—”

“Bobby,” says the Old Boy, “have I labored all these years in vain, trying to convince you that you are an ass? I know I'm a devil of a buzzerfly, and glash of

fashion, but I've gozzer see zat boy. Sold me papers a week, 'n now zey tell me he's sick in this ratsh hole down here. Come on, Bobby, or else go't devil. I'm going in."

Old Boy pushes his silk hat to the back of his head and starts with dangerous rapidity down the steep stairs.

His friend, seeing that he is determined, takes his arm and they both sway and stagger down to the little shelf of land below.

The Post Man follows them silently, and they are too much occupied with their own unsteady progress to note his presence. He slips around them, raises the latch of the rickety door, stoops and enters the miserable hut.

Crip lies on a meager bed in the corner, with great, feverish eyes, and little, bony, restless fingers moving nervously upon the covers. The night wind blows in streamy draughts between the many crannies and flares the weak flame of a candle stuck in its own grease upon the top of a wooden box.

"Hello, mister," says Crip. "I knows yer. Yer works on de paper. I been laid up wid a rattlin' pain in me chist. Who wins de fight?"

"Fitzsimmons won," says the Post Man, feeling his hot freckled hand. "Are you in much pain?"

"How many rounds?"

"First round. Less than two minutes. Can I do anything to make you easier?"

"Geeminetty! dat was quick. Yer might gimme a drink."

The door opens again and two magnificent beings enter. Crip gives a little gasp as his quick eyes fall upon them. Old Boy acknowledges the presence of the Post Man by a deep and exaggerated but well intentioned bow, and then he goes and stands by Crip's bedside.

"Old man," he says, with solemnly raised eyebrows, "Whazzer mazzer?"

"Sick," says Crip. "I know yer. Yer gimme a quarter for a paper one mornin'."

Old Boy's friend ranges himself in the background. He is a man in a dress suit

with a mackintosh and cane, and is not of an obtrusive personality.

He shows an inclination to brace himself against something, but the fragile furniture of the hut not promising much support, he stands uneasily, with a perplexed frown upon his face, awaiting developments.

“You little devil,” says Old Boy, smiling down with mock anger at the little scrap of humanity under the covers, “Do you know why I’ve come to see you?”

“N-n-n-no, sir,” says Crip, the fever flush growing deeper on his cheeks. He has never seen anything so wonderful as this grand, tall, handsome man in his black evening suit, with the dark, half-smiling, half-frowning eyes, and the great diamond flashing on his snowy bosom, and the tall, shiny hat on the back of his head.

“Gen’lemen,” says Old Boy, with a comprehensive wave of his hand, “I don’t know myself, why I have come here, but I couldn’t help it. That little devil’s eyes have been in my head for a week. I’ve never sheen him ’n my life till a week ago; but I’ve sheen his eyes somewhere, long time ago. Sheems to me I knew this little rascal when I was a kid myself ’way back before I left Alabama; but, then, gentlemen, thash impossible. However, as Bobby will tell you, I made him walk all the way down here with me to shee zis little sick fellow, ’n now we mus’ do all we can for ’m.”

Old Boy runs his hands into his pockets and draws out the contents thereof and lays all, with lordly indiscrimination, on the ragged quilt that covers Crip.

“Little devil,” he says solemnly, “you mus’ buy medicine and get well and come back and shell me papers again. Where in thunder have I seen you before? Never mind. Come on, Bobby—good boy to wait for me—come on now and le’s get a zrink.”

The two magnificent gentlemen sway around grandly for a moment, make elaborate but silent adieus in the direction of Crip and the Post Man, and finally dwindle out into the darkness, where they can be heard urging each other forward to the tremendous feat of remounting the steps that lead to the path above.

Presently Crip’s mother returns with his medicine and proceeds to make him comfortable. She gives a screech of surprise at what she sees lying upon the bed,

and proceeds to take an inventory. There are \$42 in currency, \$6.50 in silver, a lady's silver slipper buckle and an elegant pearl-handled knife with four blades.

The Post Man sees Crip take his medicine and his fever go down, and promising him to bring down a paper that tells all about the great fight, he moves away. A thought strikes him, and he stops near the door and says:

"Your husband, now where was he from?"

"Oh, plaze yer honor," says Crip's mother, "from Alabama he was, and a gentleman born, as everyone could tell till the dhrink got away wid him, and thin he married me."

As the Post Man departs he hears Crip say to his mother reverentially:

"Dat man what left de stuff, mammy, he couldn't have been God, for God don't get full; but if it wasn't him, mammy, I bet a dollar he was Dan Stuart."

As the Post Man trudges back along the dark road to the city, he says to himself:

"We have seen tonight good springing up where we would never have looked for it, and something of a mystery all the way from Alabama. Heigho! this is a funny little world."

(*Houston Daily Post*, Sunday morning, March 1, 1896.)

In Mezzotint

The doctor had long ago ceased his hospital practice, but whenever there was a case of special interest among the wards, his spirited team of bays was sure to be seen standing at the hospital gates. Young, handsome, at the head of his profession, possessing an ample income, and married but six months to a beautiful girl who adored him, his lot was certainly one to be envied.

It must have been nine o'clock when he reached home. The stableman took the team, and he ran up the steps lightly. The door opened, and Doris's arms were flung tightly about his neck, and her wet cheek pressed to his.

"Oh, Ralph," she said, her voice quivering and plaintive, "you are so late. You can't think how I miss you when you don't come at the usual hour. I've kept supper warm for you. I'm so jealous of those patients of yours—they keep you from me so much."

"How fresh and sweet and wholesome you are, after the sights I have to see," he said, smiling down at her girlish face with the airy confidence of a man who knows himself well beloved. "Now, pour my coffee, little one, while I go up and change clothes."

After supper he sat in the library in his favorite arm chair, and she sat in her especial place upon the arm of the chair and held a match for him to light his cigar. She seemed so glad to have him with her; every touch was a caress, and every word she spoke had that lingering, loving drawl that a woman uses to but one man—at a time.

"I lost my case of cerebrospinal meningitis tonight," he said gravely.

"I have you, and I don't have you," she said. "Your thoughts are always with your profession, even when I think you are most mine. Ah, well," with a sigh, "you help the suffering, and I would see all that suffer relieved or else like your cerebro—what is it?—patient, at rest."

"A queer case, too," said the doctor, patting his wife's hand and gazing into the clouds of cigar smoke. "He should have recovered. I had him cured, and he died on my hands without any warning. Ungrateful, too, for I treated that case beautifully. Confound the fellow. I believe he wanted to die. Some nonsensical

romance worried him into a fever.”

“A romance? Oh, Ralph, tell it to me. Just think! A romance in a hospital.”

“He tried to tell it to me this morning in snatches between paroxysms of pain. He was bending backward till his head almost touched his heels, and his ribs were nearly cracking, yet he managed to convey something of his life story.”

“Oh, how horrible,” said the doctor’s wife, slipping her arm between his neck and the chair.

“It seems,” went on the doctor, “as well as I could gather, that some girl had discarded him to marry a more well-to-do man, and he lost hope and interest in life, and went to the dogs. No, he refused to tell her name. There was a great pride in that meningitis case. He lied like an angel about his own name, and he gave his watch to the nurse and spoke to her as he would to a queen. I don’t believe I ever will forgive him for dying, for I worked the next thing to a miracle on him. Well, he died this morning, and—let me get a match—oh, yes, here’s a little thing in my pocket he gave me to have buried with him. He told me about starting to a concert with this girl one night, and they decided not to go in, but take a moonlight walk instead. She tore the ticket in two pieces, and gave him one-half and kept the other. Here’s his half, this little red piece of pasteboard with the word ‘Admit—’ printed on it. Look out, little one—that old chair arm is so slippery. Hurt you?”

“No, Ralph. I’m not so easy hurt. What do you think love is, Ralph?”

“Love? Little one! Oh, love is undoubtedly a species of mild insanity. An overbalance of the brain that leads to an abnormal state. It is as much a disease as measles, but as yet, sentimentalists refuse to hand it over to us doctors of medicine for treatment.”

His wife took the half of the little red ticket and held it up. “Admit—” she said, with a little laugh. “I suppose by this time he’s admitted somewhere, isn’t he, Ralph?”

“Somewhere,” said the doctor, lighting his cigar afresh.

“Finish your cigar, Ralph, and then come up,” she said. “I’m a little tired, and I’ll wait for you above.”

“All right, little one,” said the doctor. “Pleasant dreams!” He smoked the cigar out, and then lit another.

It was nearly eleven when he went upstairs.

The light in his wife’s room was turned low, and she lay upon her bed undressed. As he stepped to her side and raised her hand, some steel instrument fell and jingled upon the floor, and he saw upon the white countenance a creeping red horror that froze his blood.

He sprang to the lamp and turned up the blaze. As he parted his lips to send forth a shout, he paused for a moment, with his eyes upon his dead patient’s half ticket that lay upon the table. The other half had been neatly fitted to it, and it now read:

Admit Two

(*Houston Daily Post*, Sunday morning, April 26, 1896.)

The Dissipated Jeweler

You will not find the name of Thomas Keeling in the Houston city directory. It might have been there by this time, if Mr. Keeling had not discontinued his business a month or so ago and moved to other parts. Mr. Keeling came to Houston about that time and opened up a small detective bureau. He offered his services to the public as a detective in rather a modest way. He did not aspire to be a rival of the Pinkerton agency, but preferred to work along less risky lines.

If an employer wanted the habits of a clerk looked into, or a lady wanted an eye kept upon a somewhat too gay husband, Mr. Keeling was the man to take the job. He was a quiet, studious man with theories. He read Gaboriau and Conan Doyle and hoped some day to take a higher place in his profession. He had held a subordinate place in a large detective bureau in the East, but as promotion was slow, he decided to come West, where the field was not so well covered.

Mr. Keeling had saved during several years the sum of \$900, which he deposited in the safe of a business man in Houston to whom he had letters of introduction from a common friend. He rented a small upstairs office on an obscure street, hung out a sign stating his business, and burying himself in one of Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories, waited for customers.

Three days after he opened his bureau, which consisted of himself, a client called to see him.

It was a young lady, apparently about 26 years of age. She was slender and rather tall and neatly dressed. She wore a thin veil which she threw back upon her black straw hat after she had taken the chair Mr. Keeling offered her. She had a delicate, refined face, with rather quick gray eyes, and a slightly nervous manner.

"I came to see you, sir," she said in a sweet, but somewhat sad, contralto voice, "because you are comparatively a stranger, and I could not bear to discuss my private affairs with any of my friends. I desire to employ you to watch the movements of my husband. Humiliating as the confession is to me, I fear that his affections are no longer mine. Before I married him he was infatuated with a young woman connected with a family with whom he boarded. We have been

married five years, and very happily, but this young woman has recently moved to Houston, and I have reasons to suspect that he is paying her attentions. I want you to watch his movements as closely as possible and report to me. I will call here at your office every other day at a given time to learn what you have discovered. My name is Mrs. R——, and my husband is well known. He keeps a small jewelry store on Street. I will pay you well for your services and here is \$20 to begin with.”

The lady handed Mr. Keeling the bill and he took it carelessly as if such things were very, very common in his business.

He assured her that he would carry out her wishes faithfully, and asked her to call again the afternoon after the next at four o’clock, for the first report.

The next day Mr. Keeling made the necessary inquiries toward beginning operations. He found the jewelry store, and went inside ostensibly to have the crystal of his watch tightened. The jeweler, Mr. R——, was a man apparently 35 years of age, of very quiet manners and industrious ways. His store was small, but contained a nice selection of goods and quite a large assortment of diamonds, jewelry and watches. Further inquiry elicited the information that Mr. R was a man of excellent habits, never drank and was always at work at his jeweler’s bench.

Mr. Keeling loafed around near the door of the jewelry store for several hours that day and was finally rewarded by seeing a flashily dressed young woman with black hair and eyes enter the store. Mr. Keeling sauntered nearer the door, where he could see what took place inside. The young woman walked confidently to the rear of the store, leaned over the counter and spoke familiarly to Mr. R——. He rose from his bench and they talked in low tones for a few minutes. Finally, the jeweler handed her some coins, which Mr. Keeling heard clinking as they passed into her hands. The woman then came out and walked rapidly down the street.

Mr. Keeling’s client was at his office promptly at the time agreed upon. She was anxious to know if he had seen anything to corroborate her suspicions. The detective told her what he had seen.

“That is she,” said the lady, when he had described the young woman who had entered the store. “The brazen, bold thing! And so Charles is giving her money.

To think that things should come to this pass.”

The lady pressed her handkerchief to her eyes in an agitated way.

“Mrs. R——,” said the detective, “what is your desire in this matter? To what point do you wish me to prosecute inquiries?”

“I want to see with my own eyes enough to convince me of what I suspect. I also want witnesses, so I can instigate suit for divorce. I will not lead the life I am now living any longer.”

She then handed the detective a ten-dollar bill.

On the day following the next, when she came to Mr. Keeling’s office to hear his report, he said:

“I dropped into the store this afternoon on some trifling pretext. This young woman was already there, but she did not remain long. Before she left, she said: ‘Charlie, we will have a jolly little supper tonight as you suggest; then we will come around to the store and have a nice chat while you finish that setting for the diamond broach with no one to interrupt us.’ Tonight, Mrs. R——, I think, will be a good time for you to witness the meeting between your husband and the object of his infatuation, and satisfy your mind how matters stand.”

“The wretch,” cried the lady with flashing eyes. “He told me at dinner that he would be detained late tonight with some important work. And this is the way he spends his time away from me!”

“I suggest,” said the detective, “that you conceal yourself in the store, so you can hear what they say, and when you have heard enough you can summon witnesses and confront your husband before them.”

“The very thing,” said the lady. “I believe there is a policeman whose beat is along the street the store is on who is acquainted with our family. His duties will lead him to be in the vicinity of the store after dark. Why not see him, explain the whole matter to him and when I have heard enough, let you and him appear as witnesses?”

“I will speak with him,” said the detective, “and persuade him to assist us, and you will please come to my office a little before dark tonight, so we can arrange

to trap them.

The detective hunted up the policeman and explained the situation.

“That’s funny,” said the guardian of the peace. “I didn’t know R—— was a gay boy at all. But, then, you can never tell about anybody. So his wife wants to catch him tonight. Let’s see, she wants to hide herself inside the store and hear what they say. There’s a little room in the back of the store where R—— keeps his coal and old boxes. The door between is locked, of course, but if you can get her through that into the store she can hide somewhere. I don’t like to mix up in these affairs, but I sympathize with the lady. I’ve known her ever since we were children and don’t mind helping her to do what she wants.”

About dusk that evening the detective’s client came hurriedly to his office. She was dressed plainly in black and wore a dark round hat and her face was covered with a veil.

“If Charlie should see me he will not recognize me,” she said.

Mr. Keeling and the lady strolled down the street opposite the jewelry store, and about eight o’clock the young woman they were watching for entered the store. Immediately afterwards she came out with Mr. R——, took his arm, and they hurried away, presumably to their supper.

The detective felt the arm of the lady tremble.

“The wretch,” she said bitterly. “He thinks me at home innocently waiting for him while he is out carousing with that artful, designing minx. Oh, the perfidy of man.”

Mr. Keeling took the lady through an open hallway that led into the back yard of the store. The outer door of the back room was unlocked, and they entered.

“In the store,” said Mrs. R——, “near the bench where my husband works is a large table, the cover of which hangs to the floor. If I could get under that I could hear every word that was said.”

Mr. Keeling took a big bunch of skeleton keys from his pocket and in a few minutes found one that opened the door into the jewelry store. The gas was

burning from one jet turned very low.

The lady stepped into the store and said: "I will bolt this door from the inside, and I want you to follow my husband and that woman. See if they are at supper, and if they are, when they start back, you must come back to this room and let me know by tapping thrice on the door. After I listen to their conversation long enough I will unbolt the door, and we will confront the guilty pair together. I may need you to protect me, for I do not know what they might attempt to do to me."

The detective made his way softly out and followed the jeweler and the woman. He soon discovered that they had taken a private room in a little out of the way restaurant and had ordered supper. He lingered about until they came out and then hurried back to the store, and entering the back room, tapped three times on the door.

In a few minutes the jeweler entered with the woman and the detective saw the light shine more brightly through a crack in the door. He could hear the man and woman conversing familiarly and constantly, but could not distinguish their words. He slipped around again to the street, and looking through the window, could see Mr. R—— working away at his jeweler's bench, while the black-haired woman sat close to his side and talked.

"I'll give them a little time," thought Mr. Keeling, and he strolled down the street.

The policeman was standing on the corner.

The detective told him that Mrs. R—— was concealed in the store, and that the scheme was working nicely.

"I'll drop back behind now," said Mr. Keeling, "so as to be ready when the lady springs her trap."

The policeman walked back with him, and took a look through the window.

"They seem to have made up all right," said he. "Where's the other woman gotten to?"

"A-hy, there she is sitting by him," said the detective.

why, were she is sitting by him, said the detective.

“I’m talking about the girl R—— had out to supper.”

“So am I,” said the detective.

“You seem to be mixed up,” said the policeman. “Do you know that lady with R——?”

“That’s the woman he was out with.”

“That’s R——’s wife,” said the policeman. “I’ve known her for fifteen years.”

“Then, who—?” gasped the detective, “Lord A’mighty, then who’s under the table?”

Mr. Keeling began to kick at the door of the store. Mr. R—— came forward and opened it. The policeman and the detective entered. “Look under that table, quick,” yelled the detective.

The policeman raised the cover and dragged out a blue dress, a black veil and a woman’s wig of black hair.

“Is this lady your w-w-wife?” asked Mr. Keeling excitedly, pointing out the dark-eyed young woman, who was regarding them in great surprise.

“Certainly,” said the jeweler. “Now what the thunder are you looking under my tables and kicking down my door for, if you please?”

“Look in your show cases,” said the policeman, who began to size up the situation.

The diamond rings and watches that were missing amounted to \$800, and the next day the detective settled the bill.

Explanations were made to the jeweler that night, and an hour later Mr. Keeling sat in his office busily engaged in looking over his albums of crook’s photos.

At last he found one, and he stopped turning over the leaves and tore his hair. Under the picture of a smooth-faced young man, with delicate features was the following description:

following description.

“James H. Miggles, alias Slick Simon, alias The Weeping Widow, alias Bunco Kate, alias Jimmy the Sneak, General confidence man and burglar. Works generally in female disguises. Very plausible and dangerous. Wanted in Kansas City, Oshkosh, New Orleans and Milwaukee.”

This is why Mr. Thomas Keeling did not continue his detective business in Houston.

(Houston Daily Post, Sunday morning, May 17, 1896.)

How Willie Saved Father

Willie Flint was a little Houston boy, six years of age. He was a beautiful child, with long golden curls and wondering, innocent blue eyes. His father was a respectable, sober citizen, who owned four or five large business buildings on Main Street. All day long Mr. Flint toiled among his renters, collecting what was due him, patching up broken window panes, nailing down loose boards and repairing places where the plastering had fallen off. At noon he would sit down upon the stairs of one of his buildings and eat the frugal dinner he had brought, wrapped up in a piece of newspaper, and think about the hard times. Gay and elegantly attired clerks and business men would pass up and down the stairs, but Mr. Flint did not envy them. He lived in a little cottage near the large trash pile known as "Tomato Can Heights," on one of the principal residence streets of Houston. He was perfectly contented to live there with his wife and little boy Willie, and eat his frugal but wholesome fare and draw his \$1,400 per month rent for his buildings. He was industrious and temperate, and hardly a day passed that he did not raise the rent of some of his offices, and lay by a few more dollars for a rainy day.

One night Mr. Flint came home ill. He had been pasting up some cheap green wall paper on an empty stomach, or rather on the wall of one of his stores without eating, and it had not agreed with him. He went to bed flushed with fever, muttering: "God help my poor wife and child! What will become of them now?"

Mr. Flint sent Willie to the other side of the room and drew a roll of greenbacks from under his pillow.

"Take this," he said to his wife, "to the bank and deposit it. There is only \$900 there. Some of my renters have not paid me yet, and five of them want awnings put up at the windows. He who sent the ravens to feed Elijah will provide for us. Come by the baker's and get a nickel loaf of bread, and then hurry back and pray."

Willie was pretending to play with his Noah's ark, by charging the animals for rent and water, and adding the amounts on his slate, but he heard what his father said.

As his mother went out he asked: "Mamma is nana too sick to work?"

AS HIS MOTHER WENT OUT, HE ASKED: "MAMMA, IS PAPA TOO SICK TO WORK?"

"Yes, dear," said Mrs. Flint; "he has a high fever, and I fear will be very ill."

After his mother had gone Willie put on his hat and slipped out the front door.

"I want to do something to help my good, kind papa, who is sick," he said to himself.

He wandered up to Main Street and stood looking at the tall buildings that his poor father owned.

Passersby smiled when they saw the little flaxen-haired boy, and many a rough face softened at the sight of his innocent blue eyes.

Poor little Willie. What could he do in the great, busy city to help his sick father?

"I know what I will do," he said to himself presently. "I will go up and raise the rent of several offices and that will make my papa feel better."

Willie toiled up three flights of stairs of one of his father's largest buildings. He had to sit down quite often and rest, for he was short on wind.

Away up to the third story was an office rented by two young men who had just begun to practice law. They had their sign out, and had given their note to Mr. Flint for the first month's rent. As Willie climbed the stairs the young lawyers were eating some cheese and crackers, with their feet on their desks, and six empty quart beer bottles stood upon a table. They were breathing hard, and one of them, who had a magnolia in his buttonhole, was telling a funny story about a girl.

Presently one of them took his feet off his desk, opened his eyes and said:

"Jeeminy! Bob, get onto his Fauntleroyets."

The gentleman addressed as Bob also took his feet down, wiped his knife, with which he had been slicing cheese, on his hair, and looked around.

A little blue-eyed boy with long golden curls stood in the doorway.

"Come in, sissy," said one of the young men.

Willie walked boldly into the room.

“I’m not a girl,” he said. “My name is Willie Flint, and I’ve come to raise the rent.”

“Now, that’s kind of you, Willie,” said the young man called Bob, “to come and do that, for we couldn’t do it if we were to be electrocuted. Is that your own hair, Willie, or do you ride a bicycle?”

“Don’t worry the little boy,” said the other young gentleman, whom Bob addressed as Sam. “I’m sure that this is a nice little boy. I say, Willie, did you ever hear a gumdrop?”

“Don’t tease him,” said Bob severely. “He reminds me of someone—excuse my tears—those curls, those bloomers. Say, Willie, speak quick, my child—two hundred and ten years ago, were you standing—”

“Oh, let him alone,” said Sam, frowning at the other young gentleman. “Willie, as a personal favor, would you mind weeping a while on the floor? I am overcome by ennui, and would be moved to joy.”

“My papa is very ill,” said Willie, bravely forcing back his tears, “and something must be done for him. Please, kind gentleman, let me raise the rent of this office so I can go back and tell him and make him better.”

“It’s old Flint’s kid,” said Bob. “Don’t he make your face wide? Say, Willie, how much do you want to raise the rent?”

“What do you pay now?” asked Willie.

“Ten dollars a month.”

“Could you make it twelve?”

“Call it fifty,” said Sam, lighting a black cigar, “at ninety days, and open the beer, Willie, and it’s a deal.”

“Don’t talk nonsense,” said Bob. “I say, Willie, you may raise the rent to twenty dollars if you like, and run and tell your father, if it will do him any good.”

“Oh, thank you,” cried Willie, and he ran home with a light heart, singing

merrily.

When he got home he found Mr. Flint sinking fast and muttering something about giving his wife a ten-dollar bill.

“He is out of his head,” said Mrs. Flint, bursting into tears.

Willie ran to the bed and whispered to his father’s ear: “Papa, I have raised the rent of one of your offices from ten to twenty dollars.”

“You, my child!” said his father, laying his hand on Willie’s head. “God bless my brave little boy.”

Mr. Flint sank into a peaceful slumber and his fever left him. The next day he was able to sit up, and feeling much stronger, when Willie told him whose rent it was he had raised.

Mr. Flint then fell dead.

Alas! messieurs, life is full of disappointments!

(*Houston Daily Post*, Sunday morning, May 3, 1896.)

The Mirage on the Frio

The sheep man rejected the offer of a match, and lit his pipe from a burning brand. We were down on Buffalo Bayou fishing, and had cooked and eaten supper. Fried fresh fish, coffee, corn bread, potatoes, and just enough crisp bacon to flavor gave us a supper at which none murmured.

We reclined at ease and worshipped the goddess Nicotine. The moon made a glory in the eastern sky and spread a white shimmering glamour upon the black water of the bayou. A phantom tug crept down stream, leaving a ghostly, wavering silver wake, and a mysterious lapping and washing along the unseen shores. Mosquitoes hummed angrily about the borders of the hanging cloud of tobacco smoke. A dank fresh smell arose from bursting buds and wild flowers. We five sat in the chiaroscuro of the live oaks and cypresses, and babbled as most men and all women will when Night, the tongue loosener, succeeds the discrete Day.

Night should be held responsible for poets, breach of promise suits, betrayed secrets and dull stories. The man who will not tell more than he knows in the moonlight of a spring night is a rarity. Four of us were more or less hardened to moonlight and roses; one among us was young enough to note the soft effect of Luna's kiss upon the dim tree tops, the aerial perspective of the drifting gulf clouds, and the dim white eyes of the dogwood blossoms peering out of the wooded darkness. He noted and spake his thoughts without stint of adjectives, while we world-worn passengers grunted in reply; puffed at our cigars and pipes, and refused to commit ourselves on such trifling matters.

"Isn't it beautiful?" asked the young man. "The sky like the derne of some dream temple, the woods dark with mystery and the silence broken only by the faint breathing of nature."

"It's nice, and no mistake," answered the insurance agent, "but let me tell you, I've known men to plant the seeds of incurable disease along this old bayou. Feel that dampness rising every minute? A fellow never knows what is going to happen. Especially a man with a family dependent on him should—"

"Shut up," snapped the druggist. "For talking shop, recommend me to a man in your line. This is a pleasure trip we are on, and I have to have it spoiled by ringing in business. Talk about your malaria, why, two bottles of my—"

ing in business. Talk about your malady, why, two bottles of my

“There you go, just as bad,” said the lawyer. “You fellows have run in the same old rut so long you can’t get your minds on anything else. Put me on the witness stand, and I’ll swear that I never mention my own business outside of my office; if I don’t, kick me clean out of court.”

“This night,” said the sheep man, “reminds me of the night I was lost in the brush along the Frio. That was the night before the morning I seen the mi-ridge.”

“The—ah—oh! the mirage?” said the young man.

“No,” said the sheep man, “it wasn’t no mi-rosh; this was a mi-ridge, and the plainest one I ever seen. They happened somethin’ queer about this one, too, and I don’t often tell it, after seein’ that incredoolity generally waits upon the relatin’ of it.”

“Light up,” said the druggist, reaching for the tobacco sack, “and let us have your yarn. There are very few things a man can’t believe nowadays.”

“It was in the fall of ’80,” said the sheep man, “when I was runnin’ sheep in La Salle County. There came a norther that scattered my flock of 1500 muttons to thunderation. The shepherd couldn’t hold ’em and they split up right and left, through the chaparral. I got on my hoss and hunted all one day, and I rounded up the biggest part of ’em during the afternoon. I seen a Mexican ridin’ along what told me they was a big ’tajo of ’em down near the Palo Blanco crossin’ of the Frio. I rode over that way, and when sundown come I was down in a big mesquite flat, where I couldn’t see fifty yards before me any ways. Well, I got lost. For some four or five hours my pony stumbled around in the sacuista grass, windin’ about this way and that, without knowin’ any more than I did where he was at. ’Bout 12 o’clock I give it up, staked my pony and laid down under my saddle blanket to wait till mornin’. I was awful worried about my wife and the kid, who was by themselves on the ranch, for I knew they’d be scared half to death. There wasn’t much to be afraid of, but you know how women folks are when night comes, ’specially when they wasn’t any neighbor in ten miles of ’em.

“I was up at daylight, and soon as I’d got my bearin’s I knowed just where I was. Right where I was I seen the Fort Fwell road. and a big dead elm on one side

that I knew. I was just eighteen miles from my ranch. I jumped in the saddle, when all at once, looking across the Frio towards home, I seen this mi-ridge. These mi-ridges are sure wonderful. I never seen but three or four. It was a kind of misty mornin', with woolly gulf clouds a-flyin' across, and the hollows was all hazy. I seen my ranch house, shearin' pen, the fences with saddles hangin' on 'em, the wood pile, with the ax stickin' in a log, and everything about the yard as plain as if they was only 200 yards away, and I was lookin' at 'em on a foggy mornin'. Everything looked somewhat ghostly like, and a little taller and bigger than it really was, but I could see even the white curtains at the windows and the pet sheep grazin' 'round the corral. It made me feel funny to see everything so close, when I knew I was eighteen miles away.

"All to once I seen the door open, and wife come out with the kid in her arms. It was all I could do to keep from hollerin' at her. You bet, I was glad to see her anyhow, and know they was all safe. Just then I seen somethin' big and black a-movin', and it growed plainer, like it had kinder come into focus, and it was a Mexican with a broad-brimmed sombrero, on a hoss what rode up to the fence. He stopped there a minute and then I seen my wife run into the house and shut the door. I seen the Mexican jump off his hoss, try the door, and then go and get the ax at the wood pile. He came back and commenced to split down the door. The mi-ridge commenced to get dimmer and faint like. I don't know what made me do such a fool thing, but I couldn't help it. I jerked my Winchester out'n its scabbard, drew a bead on the darned scoundrel and fired. Then I cussed myself for an idiot, for tryin' to shoot somethin' eighteen miles away, jabbed my Winchester back in the scabbard, stuck my spurs in my broncho, and split through the brush like a roadrunner after a rattlesnake.

"I made that eighteen miles in eighty minutes. I never took the road, but crashed through the chaparral, jumped prickly pear and arroyo just as they come. When I got to the ranch I fell off my pony, and he leaned up against the fence streamin' wet and lookin' at me mighty reproachful. I never breathed in jumpin' from the fence to the back door. I clattered up the steps and yelled for Sallie, but my voice sounded to me like somebody else's, 'way off. The door opened and out tumbled the wife and the kid, all right, but scared as wild ducks. 'Oh, Jim,' says the wife, 'where, oh where have you been? A drunken Mexican attacked the house this morning and tried to cut down the door with an ax.' I tried to ask some questions, but I couldn't. 'Look,' says Sallie.

“The other door was busted all to pieces and the ax was lyin’ on the step, and the Mexican was lyin’ on the ground and a Winchester ball had passed clear through his head.”

“Who shot him?” asked the lawyer.

“I’ve told you all I know,” said the sheep man. “Sallie said the man dropped all of a sudden while he was choppin’ at the door, and she never heard no gun shoot. I don’t pretend to explain nothin’, I’m telling you what happened. You might say somebody in the brush seen him breakin’ in the door and shot him, usin’ noiseless powder, and then slipped away without leavin’ his card, or you might say you don’t know nothin’ at all about it, as I do.”

“Do you think—” began the young man.

“No, I don’t think,” said the sheep man, rather shortly. “I said I’d tell you about the mi-ridge I seen, and I told you just as it happened. Is there any coffee left in that pot?”

(Houston Daily Post, Sunday morning, April 19, 1896.)

A Tragedy

“By the beard of the Prophet. Oh, Scheherezade, right well hast thou done,” said the Caliph, leaning back and biting off the end of a three-for.

For one thousand nights Scheherezade No. 2, daughter of the Grand Vizier, had sat at the feet of the mighty Caliph of the Indies relating tales that held the court entranced and breathless.

The soft, melodious sound of falling water from the fountain tinkled pleasantly upon the ear. Slaves sprinkled attar of roses upon the tessellated floor, and waved jeweled fans of peacock’s feathers in the air. Outside, in the palace gardens the bulbul warbled in the date trees, the hoodoo flitted among the banyan branches, and the dying song of the goo-goo floated in upon the breeze from New York.

“And, now, oh, Scheherezade,” continued the Caliph, “your contract calls for one more tale. One thousand have you told unto us, and we have rejoiced exceedingly at your narrative powers. Your stories are all new and do not weary us as do the chestnuts of Marshall P. Wilder. You are quite a peach. But, listen, oh, Daughter of the Moon, and first cousin to a phonograph, there is one more yet to come. Let it be one that has never before been related in the Kingdom. If it be thus, thou shalt have 10,000 gold pieces and a hundred slaves at thy command, but if it bear whiskers, then shall thy head pay the forfeit.”

The Caliph made a sign, and Mesrour, the executioner, stepped to the side of Scheherezade. In his dark hand he held a glittering scimeter. He folded his arms and stood like a statue as the Caliph spoke again.

“Now, oh, Scheherezade, let her go. If it be that thou givest us something like that tale No. 475, where the Bagdad merchant was found by his favorite wife at the roof-garden concert, with his typewriter, or No. 684, where the Cadi of a certain town came home late from the lodge with his shoes off and stepped upon a tack, all will be well, but if you work off a Joe Miller on us, verily you get it in the neck.”

Scheherezade took a fresh chew of gum, sat down on one foot and began.

“Oh, mighty Caliph, I have one story that would hold you spellbound. I call it

my 288 story. But I really can not tell it. I—”

“And why not, oh, Scheherezade?”

“Oh, Brother to the Sun, and Private Secretary to the Milky Way, I am a modest woman, it is too gross, too gross to relate.”

Scheherezade covered her face in confusion.

“Speak, I command you,” said the Caliph, drawing nearer. “You need not mind me. I have read Laura Lean Jibbey and Isben. Go on with 288.”

“I have said it, oh, Caliph. It is too gross.”

The Caliph made a sign: Mesrour, the executioner, whirled his scimeter through the air and the head of Scheherezade rolled upon the floor. The Caliph pulled his beard and muttered softly to himself:

“I knew all the time that 288 is two gross, but puns don’t go anywhere in my jurisdiction at present.”

(Houston Daily Post, Friday morning, November 8, 1895.)

Sufficient Provocation

“He hit me fust.”

“He gimme de probumcation, judge.”

“Nebber touched dat nigger tell he up en hit me wid er cheer.”

They were two Houston negroes, and they were up before the recorder for fighting.

“What did you strike this man with a chair for?” asked the recorder.

“I wuz playin’ de French hahp, judge, to de ball ob de Sebem ’Mancipated Sons ob de Lebem Virgins, en Sam Hobson he wuz playin’ de guitar fur de niggers to dance by. Dis here coon what I hit thinks he kin play de French hahp, too, but he kaint.”

“Dat’s a lie, I kin play—”

“Keep still,” said the recorder sternly. “Go on with your statement.”

“I wuz playin’ en up comes dis here coon what I hit. He am pow’ful jealous ob my playin’ en he wuz mad ’coz de flo’ committee selected me to puhfahm. While I wuz playin’ dis obstrepelous coon came right close up to me en he say: ‘Watermillions be gittin’ ripe now in nudder mont’. I keeps on playin’. He says: ‘Sposin’ you had a great big ripe watermillion, wid red meat en black seeds.’ I keeps on playin’. He says: ‘You take him en bus him open on a rock, en you scoop up a big han’ful ob de heart, en you look all roun’ en nobody come.’ I keeps on playin. He says: ‘You cram de heart in yo’ mouf, en crunch down on hit, en de juice hit run down yo’ ahm en hit run down yo’ chin to yo’ neck, en de sweetness run down you’ th’oat.’ Den my mouf water so it fill dat French hahp plum full, en de music stop, en de flo’ committee look aroun’. Den I up wit a chair en bus’ dis coon ober de head, en I flings myself on de mussy ob dis co’t, kase, Mars Judge, you knows what dese here sandy lan’ watermillions is yo’sef.”

“Get out of here, both of you,” said the recorder. “Next case.”

(*Houston Daily Post*, Sunday morning, May 17, 1896.)

The Bruised Reed

The popular preacher sat in his study before a glowing grate, and a satisfied smile stole over his features, as he remembered his sermon of that morning. He had struck strong blows at sin; relating to his breathless congregation in plain and burning words, tales of the wickedness, debauchery, drunkenness and depravity that was going on in their very midst.

Following the prominent example of a certain pureminded and original servant of the Lord, he had gone down himself among the lowest haunts of vice and iniquity, and there sketched in his mind those flaming and accusive portraits that he had painted before the astonished eyes of his congregation, with a broad brush and vivid colors. He had heard blasphemies from lips that were once as pure as his sisters'; he had stood in the midst of unbridled vice, where wine flowed like water and amidst songs, curses, laughing and revelry, the chink of money, earned by dripping hearts' blood, could be heard as it fell into the coffers of the devil. Oh, he had astonished his flock! He had hurled at them fiery words of blame that these things were allowed to exist. It had been a new departure for him, but he expected grand results. And now he sat by his anthracite fire, and thought over the success of his labors, and smiled with satisfaction. The latch of his study door clicked and a being entered. He was grizzly, rum-soaked, dirty, ragged, disreputable, bleary-eyed and of uncertain step. Once, he might have been a man.

Across his forehead stretched a long strip of dingy court plaster; on the bridge of his nose an unhealed wound showed scarlet against the milder red of his face. He brought with him an odor of disrespectability, rum and unsanctification.

The preacher rose; a slight distension visible in his delicate nostril; a little shiver of repulsion rippling through his broadcloth-vestured figure. "What is it, my good man?" he asked.

The being spoke, and the preacher still standing, followed him through the husky labyrinth of his speech.

"Don't yer know me? I lives in 'Hell's Delight.' I knows you. You come down, you did, and wants ter take in ther sights. You asks Tony, the Dago, fer a guide and he sends ver to Creenv Lake. That's me. I takes ver through the dives, one

and he sends yer to Sleepy Jake. That's me. I takes yer through the dives, one and all. I knows yer a preacher from the way yer did. Yer buys the wine like a gent, though—like a real, high roller gent; anybody would 'a took yer fer a gent."

"Excuse me," said the preacher, "that wound on your forehead—the blood seems to be dripping on those engravings—allow me—"

"Keep your hankcher, reverend," said the being, as he raised a ragged coat tail and wiped the drops from his brow. "I won't spile yer pictures. I'll git off en yer carpet, and let some fresh air in in a minute. One time I could 'a told yer all about them pictures—dat's Una and de lion—dat one's the Venus of Milo—de other one's the disc thrower—you wouldn't believe, reverend, that I knowed de names, would you? One time I set in cheers like dat—I allus liked dat Spanish leather upholstering, but your wainscotin' ain't right. De carvin's allegorical and it don't suit de modern panels—'scuse me, reverend, dat ain't what I come to say. After you took in de Tenderloin, I got to tinkin' bout somethin' you said one night after I went wid you to de tough dance at Gilligan's. Dey was a cove dere dat twigged you as a parson and was about to biff you one on de ear, but he see'd my gun showin' down in my pocket, and den he see'd my eye, and changed his mind—but dat's all right. You says to yerself dat night, but I heard yer: 'De bruised reed he shall not quench, and de smokin' flax he will not put out,' or somethin' like dat, and I got ter studyin' over what a low down bum I've been, and I says, 'I'm goin' to de big bug church, and hear de bloke preach.'"

"De boys an' de tinorns gimme de laugh and called me 'Pious Jake,' but today I went to der big church where you preaches, reverend. I says to myself dat I showed you round de Tenderloin, and stood by you when de rounders guded you, and never let de coves work de flimflam on yer, and when I heard tell of the big sermons yer was preachin' and de hot shot yer was shootin' into de tough gang, I was real proud, and I felt like I kinder had a share in de business fer havin' gone de rounds with yer. I says I'll hear dat cove preach, and maybe de bruised reed'll git a chance to straighten up—'scuse me, reverend, don't git skeared, I ain't goin' to fall and spile yer carpet. I'm a little groggy. That cut on my head is bled a heap, but I ain't drunk."

"Perhaps you would like—possibly, if you would sit—just for a moment—"

"Thanks, reverend, I won't sit down. I've jest about finished shootin' in my dye stuff. I goes to dat church and I goes in. I hears music playin' and I suppose

stuff. I goes to dat church and I goes in. I hears music playin', and I suppose them was angels singin' up in de peanut gallery, an' I smelt—such a smell ov violets and stuff like de hay when we used to cut it in de meaders when I wuz a kid. Dey wuz fine people in welvets and folde-rols, and way over at de oder end was you, reverend, standin' in de gran' stan', lookin' carm and fur away like, jest as yer did at Gilligan's ball when de duck tried to guy yer, and I went in fur to hear yer preach.”

A flattering sentence from the report of his sermon in the morning paper came to the preacher's mind:

“His wonderful, magnetic influence is as powerful to move the hearts of his roughest, most unlettered hearer, as it is to touch a responsive chord in the cultured brain of the man of refinement and taste.”

“And my sermon,” said the preacher, laying his delicate finger tips one against the other, and allowing the adulation even of this being to run with a slight exhilaration through his veins. “Did it awaken in you any remorse for the life of sin you have led, or bring any light of Divine pity and pardon to your soul, as He promises even unto the most degraded and wicked of creation?”

“Yer sermon, reverend?” asked the being, carrying a trembling hand to the disfiguring wounds upon his face. “Do you see them cuts and them bruises? Do you know where I got 'em? I never heard yer sermon. I got dese cuts on de rocks outside when de cop and yer usher fired me out de church. De bruised reed He will not quench, an' de smokin' flax He will not 'stinguish. Has you anything to say, reverend?”

(*Houston Daily Post*, Sunday morning, December 1, 1895.)

Paderewski's Hair

The Post Man had the pleasure of meeting Colonel Warburton Pollock yesterday in the rotunda of the New Hutchins.

Colonel Pollock is one of the most widely known men in this country, and has probably a more extended acquaintance with distinguished men of the times than any other living man. He is a wit, a raconteur of rare gifts, a born diplomat, and a man of worldwide travel and experience. Nothing pleases him so well as to relate his extremely interesting reminiscences of men and events to some congenial circle of listeners. His recollections of his associations with famous men and women would fill volumes.

Colonel Pollock has a suite of rooms permanently engaged in a Washington City hotel, where he passes, however, only a small portion of his time. He always spends his summers in Europe, principally in Naples and Florence, but he rarely stays in one place more than a few weeks or months.

Colonel Pollock is now on his way to South America to look after his interests in some valuable mahogany forests there.

The colonel chatted freely and most interestingly about his experiences, and told to an admiring and attentive group of listeners some excellent stories about well known people.

“Did I ever tell you?” he asked, as he puffed at his long black Principe, “about an adventure I had in Africa a few years ago? No? Well, I see Paderewski is coming to Houston soon, and the story may not be inapropos. You have all heard Paderewski’s wonderful hair spoken of, of course. Well, very few people know how he came by it. This is how it was. A few years ago, some of us made up a party to go lion hunting in Africa. There was Nat Goodwin, Paderewski, John L. Sullivan, Joe Pulitzer, and myself. That was before any of us had acquired fame, but we were all ambitious, and everyone of us needed the rest and recreation we were taking. We were a congenial, jolly crowd, and had a rattling good time on the trip. When we landed we hired guides, and stocked up with provisions and ammunition for a month’s trip into the Zambesi country.

“We were all anxious to kill a lion, and we penetrated into quite a wild and unexplored region.

“We had great times at night over our camp fire, chatting and chaffing one another, and thoroughly enjoying ourselves.

“Paderewski was the only member of our party who had been making money. It was just about the time there was such a furor about his playing, and he had plied up quite a neat sum from his piano recitals.

“One day Goodwin, Sullivan, Paderewski and I were loafing around camp just before dinner. We had been out hunting all the morning without success. Pulitzer had not yet shown up. Goodwin and Sullivan got into a dispute about the proper way to dodge and counter a certain upper cut made famous by Heenan. You know Nat Goodwin is quite an athlete himself, and handles his hands like a professional. Paderewski was always a quiet sort of fellow, but amiable and well liked by everyone. He was sitting on the stump of a banyan tree gazing into the distance with a dreamy look in his magnetic eyes. I was loading some cartridges, and not paying much attention until I heard Sullivan and Goodwin raise their voices in quite an angry dispute.

“‘If I had a pair of gloves, I’d soon prove I am right,’ said Nat.

“‘I wish you had,’ said John. ‘In a minute you wouldn’t know anything.’

“‘You couldn’t stand up two minutes before a man who knew the first principles of boxing,’ said Goodwin. ‘Your weight and your rush are the only points in your favor.’

“‘If we just had some gloves!’ said John, grinding his teeth.

“They both turned and looked at Paderewski as if by common consent.

“Paderewski at that time had coal black hair, as smooth and straight as an Indian’s, that hung down his back in a thick mass.

“Sullivan and Goodwin sprang upon him at the same time. I don’t know which of them did it, but there was the flash of a knife, and in two seconds Paderewski was scalped as neatly as a Comanche Indian could have done it.

“They divided the mass of hair in two parts, each stuffed his portion into two

leather cartridge pouches, wound the straps around his wrists, and they went at each other in regular prize ring style with their extemporized boxing gloves.

“Paderewski gave a yell of pain and dismay, and clasped his hands to his bald head in horror.

“‘I am ruined,’ he said. ‘My professional career is at an end. What shall I do?’

“I tried to separate John and Nat, but I got a backhander from one of those Paderewski boxing gloves that stretched me out into a big cactus.

“Just then Joe Pulitzer came into camp, dragging a big lion by the tail he had just shot in a canebrake on the river.

“‘Vat’s dis?’ he asked, gazing through his spectacles at the two boxers who were hitting at each other and dodging around and at Paderewski, who was wailing and moaning at the loss of his scalp.

“‘I wouldn’t have taken \$5,000 for that hair,’ he groaned.

“‘Vat vill you gif,’ said Pulitzer, ‘for another head of hair yoost as good?’

“He went up close to Paderewski and they whispered together for a few minutes. Then Joe got out a tape line and measured Paderewski’s head. Then he took a knife and cut out a piece the exact size from the back of the lion’s head and fitted it on Paderewski’s. He pressed it down close, and bound it with light bandages.

“It seems almost incredible, but in three days the skin had grown fast, the pain was gone, and Paderewski had the loveliest head of thick, tawny, flowing hair you ever laid your eyes on.

“I saw Paderewski give Pulitzer a check that evening behind the tent, and you can bet it was a stiff one. I don’t know the exact figure, but Joe bought out the *World* as soon as we got back to New York and has since done well.

“It simply made Paderewski’s fortune. That head of hair he wears will make him a millionaire yet. I never hear him bang down hard on the bass keys of a piano, but I think of a lion roaring in a South African forest, and I’ll bet he does, too.”

“I like stage people,” continued Colonel Pollock. “They are, as a rule, the jolliest companions in the world and the most entertaining. Hardly a year passes that I do not make up a congenial party for a pleasure trip of some kind, and I always have two or three actors in the crowd. Now, a year or two ago, some of us got together and took a three months’ voyage to see the sights. There were DeWolf Hopper, Dr. Parkhurst, Buffalo Bill, Eugene Field, Steve Brodie, Senator Sherman, General Coxey, and Hermann, the great magician, among the party.

“We were guests of the Prince of Wales, and went in his steam yacht, the *Albion*. None of us had been to Australia, and the prince wanted to show us around that country. We had a lovely trip. We were all congenial souls, and our time on shipboard was one long banquet and frolic during the whole journey.

“We landed at Melbourne and were met by the governor of Victoria and only a few dignitaries of the place, as the prince had sent word that he wished to pass his visit there strictly incog. In a day or two our entertainers took us on a little tour through New South Wales to show us the country, and give us some idea of the great mining and sheep raising industries of the country. We went through Wagga Wagga, Jumbo Junction, and Narraudera, and from there went on horseback through the great pasture country near Cudduldury.

“When we reached a little town named Cobar in the center of the sheep raising district, some loyal Englishmen living there recognized the prince, and in an hour the whole town was at our heels, following us about, huzzaring and singing ‘God save the Queen.’

“‘It’s annoying, Pollock,’ says the prince to me, ‘but it can’t be helped now.’

“Our party rode out into the country to have a look at the sheep ranches, and at least two hundred citizens followed us on foot, staring at us in the deepest admiration and wonder.

“It seemed that it had been a mighty bad year on the sheep men, and they were feeling gloomy and disheartened over the prospects. The great trouble in Australia is this: The whole continent is overrun with a prolific breed of rabbits that feed upon the grass and shrubs, sometimes completely destroying all vegetation within large areas. The government has a standing offer of something like 50,000 pounds for a plan by which these rabbits can be destroyed, but nothing has ever been discovered that will do the work.

“During years when these rabbits are unusually destructive, the sheep men suffer great losses by not having sufficient range for their sheep. At the time of our visit the rabbits had almost ruined the country. A few herds of sheep were trying to subsist by nibbling the higher branches that the rabbits could not reach, but many of the flocks had to be driven far into the interior. The people were feeling very sore and blue, and it made them angry to even hear anybody mention a rabbit.

“About noon we stopped for lunch near the outskirts of a little village, and the prince’s servants spread a fine cold dinner of potted game, *pâté de foie gras*, and cold fowls. The prince had ordered a large lot of wines to be sent along, and we had a merry repast.

“The villagers and sheep raisers loafed around by the hundred, watching us; and a hungry-looking, starved-out lot they were.

“Now, there isn’t a more vivacious, genial and convivial man in the world than Hermann, the great prestidigitateur. He was the life of the party, and as soon as the prince’s wine began to mellow him up, he began to show off his tricks. He threw things in the air that disappeared from sight, changed water into liquids of all colors, cooked an omelet in a hat; and pretty soon we were surrounded by a gaping, awestruck lot of bushmen, both natives and English born.

“Hermann was pleased with the open-mouthed attention he was creating, so he walked out into an open space where he could face them all, and began drawing rabbits out of his sleeves, his coat collar, his pockets by the half dozen. He threw them down, and as fast as they could scamper away the great magician kept on pulling out more rabbits to the view of the astonished natives.

“Suddenly, with a loud yell, the sheep raisers seized clubs and stones and drawing their long sheath knives, rushed upon our party.

“The prince seized my arm.

“‘Run for it, Pollock,’ he cried, ‘this rabbit business has set them wild. They’ll kill us all if we don’t cut our sticks.’”

“I believe,” said Colonel Pollock, “that that was the closest shave I ever had. I

struck out as hard as I could run, with about forty natives after me, some of them throwing spears and boomerangs at me every jump. When I was going over a little hill I turned my head and looked back just in time to see Steve Brodie jump off a bridge into the Murrumbidgee river at least 200 feet high. All our party escaped, and came straggling back within two or three days, but they had some tough experiences. Senator Sherman was out two nights in the bush and was severely frostbitten.

“I understand DeWolf Hopper is going to dramatize the incident, and will produce it next season, appearing as a kangaroo.

“Coxey was caught on the edge of a little stream which he refused to enter, and the natives dragged him before an English justice of the peace who released him the next day. The prince took the whole thing as a good joke. He is an all round good fellow and no mistake.

“Sometime,” said Colonel Pollock, as he rose to receipt for a telegram, “I will tell you about an adventure I had among the Catacombs of Rome, along with Ralph Waldo Emerson, Barney Gibbs and the Shah of Persia.” Colonel Pollock leaves on the night train for San Antonio on his way to the City of Mexico.

(Houston Daily Post, Sunday morning, January 26, 1896.)

A Mystery of Many Centuries

Up to a few years ago man regarded the means of locomotion possessed by the fair sex as a sacred areanum into which it were desecration to inquire.

The bicycle costume has developed the fact that there are two—well, that there are two. Whereas man bowed down and worshipped what he could not understand nor see, when the veil of mystery was rent, his reverence departed. For generations woman has been supposed in moving from one place to another to simply get there. Whether borne like Venus in an invisible car drawn by two milk white doves, or wafted imperceptibly by the force of her own sweet will, admiring man did not pause to consider. He only knew that there was a soft rustle of unseen drapery, an entrancing frou-frou of something agitated but unknown and the lovely beings would be standing on another spot. Whereat he wondered, adoring, but uninquisitive. At times beneath the lace-hemmed snowy skirts might be seen the toe of a tiny slipper, and perhaps the gleam of a silver buckle upon the arch of an instep, but thence imagination retired, baffled, but enthralled. In olden times the sweetest singers among the poets sang to their lutes of those Lilliputian members, and romance struck a lofty note when it wove the deathless legend of Cinderella and the slipper of glass. Courtiers have held aloft the silken slipper of the adored one filled with champagne and drank her health. Where is the bicyclist hero who would undertake the task of draining to the good health of his lady love her bicycle gaiter filled with beer?

The mysterious and lovelorn damosel no longer chucks roses at us from her latticed window and sighs to us from afar. She has descended, borrowed our clothes, and is our good friend and demands equal rights. We no longer express our admiration by midnight serenades and sonnets. We slap her on the back and feel we have gained a good comrade.

But we feel like inserting the following want ad in every paper in the land:

Lost—A maiden dressed in long skirts: blushes sometimes, and wears a placard round her neck, which says, “hands off.” A liberal reward will be paid for her return.

The other, day the Post Man saw a nice, clean-minded old gentleman, who is of the old school of cavaliers and who is loath to see woman come down from the

the old school of cavaliers, and who is loath to see woman come down from the pedestal on which he has always viewed her.

He was watching a lady bicycle rider go by. The Post Man asked him what he thought.

“I never see a lady on a bicycle,” said he, “but I am reminded of God, for they certainly move in a mysterious way their wonders to perform.”

(Houston Daily Post, Sunday morning, May 10, 1896.)

A Strange Case

A *Post* reporter met a young Houston physician the other afternoon, with whom he is well acquainted, and suggested that they go into a neighboring café and partake of a cooling lemonade. The physician agreed, and they were soon seated at a little table in a quiet corner, under an electric fan. After the physician had paid for the lemonade, the reporter turned the conversation upon his practice, and asked if he did not meet with some strange cases in his experience.

“Yes, indeed,” said the doctor, “many that professional etiquette will not allow me to mention, and others that involve no especial secrecy, but are quite as curious in their way. I had one case only a few weeks ago that I considered very unusual, and without giving names, I think I can relate it to you.”

“By all means do so,” said the reporter, “and while you are telling it, let us have another lemonade.” The young physician looked serious at this proposition, but after searching in his pocket and finding another quarter he assented.

“About a week ago,” he began, “I was sitting in my office, hoping for a patient to come in, when I heard footsteps, and looking up, saw a beautiful young lady enter the room. She advanced at the most curious gait I ever beheld in one so charming. She staggered from side to side and lurched one way and another, succeeding only by a supreme effort in reaching the chair I placed for her. Her face was very lovely, but showed signs of sadness and melancholy.

“‘Doctor,’ she said, in a very sweet, but sorrowful voice, ‘I want to consult you about my condition, and as it is a most unusual affection, I will have to trouble you to listen to a no doubt tedious discourse upon my family history.’

“‘Madam,’ said I, ‘my time is yours. Anything you have to say that will throw light upon your trouble will, of course, benefit me in my diagnosis.’

“She thanked me with a smile that for a moment erased the sad lines from her face.

“‘My father,’ she said, ‘was one of the Adamses of Eastern Texas. You have doubtless heard of the family.’

“‘Perhaps so,’ I replied, ‘but there are so many families by the name of Adams

that—’

“‘It is of no consequence,’ she continued with a little wave of her hand. ‘Fifty years ago a violent feud broke out between my grandfather’s family and another family of old Texas settlers named Redmond. The bloodshed and inhumanities exchanged between the people of each side would fill volumes. The horrors of the old Kentucky and West Virginia feuds were repeated by them. An Adams would shoot a Redmond from behind a fence, at his table while eating, in a church, or anywhere; and a Redmond would murder an Adams in like manner. The most violent hatred imaginable existed between them. They poisoned each other’s wells, they killed each other’s stock, and if an Adams met a Redmond, only one would leave the spot. The children of each family were taught to hate the others from the time they could speak, and so the legacy of antipathy was handed down from father to son and from mother to daughter. For thirty years this battle raged between them, and one by one the death-dealing rifle and revolver thinned the families until one day just twenty years ago there remained but a single representative of each family, Lemuel Adams and Louisa Redmond. They were both young and handsome, and at their first meeting forgot the ancient feud of their families and loved each other. They married at once, and thus ended the great Adams-Redmond feud. But, alas, sir, the inherited discord and hatred of so many years’ standing was destined to rebound upon an innocent victim.’

“‘I was the child of that marriage, and the Adams and Redmond blood would not mingle. As a babe I was like any other, and was even considered unusually prepossessing.’

“‘I can well believe that, madam,’ I interrupted.

“The lady colored slightly and went on: ‘As I grew older a strange warring and many adverse impulses began to sway me. Every thought or movement I made was met by a contradictory one. It was the result of hereditary antagonism. Half of me was Adams and the other half Redmond. If I attempted to look at an object, one of my eyes would gaze in another direction. If I tried to salt a potato while eating, the other hand would involuntarily reach out and sprinkle it with sugar.

“‘Hundreds of times while playing the piano, while one hand would strike the notes of a lovely Beethoven sonata, I could not keep the other from pounding out

“Over the Garden Wall,” or “The Skidmore Guards.” The Adams and the Redmond blood would not flow in harmony. If I went into an ice cream saloon, I would order a vanilla cream in spite of myself, when my very soul was clamoring for lemon. Many a time I would strive with every nerve to disrobe for the night, and the opposing influence would be so strong that I have instead put on my finest and most elaborate clothing and retired with my shoes on. Have you ever met with a similar case, doctor?’

“‘Never,’ I said. ‘It is indeed remarkable. And you have never succeeded in overcoming the adverse tendency?’

“Oh, yes. By constant efforts and daily exercise I have succeeded so far that it troubles me now in one respect only. With one exception I am now entirely released from its influence. It is my locomotion that is affected. My l-lower limbs refuse to coincide in their movements. If I try to walk in a certain direction, one—one of them will take the step I desire, and the other tries to go by an entirely different route. It seems that one l—one of them is Adams, and the other Redmond. Absolutely the only time when they agree is when I ride a bicycle, and as one goes up when the other is going down, their opposite movements of course facilitate my progress; but when endeavoring to walk I find them utterly unmanageable. You observed my entrance into this room. Is there anything you can do for me, doctor?’

“‘Your case is indeed a strange one,’ I said. ‘I will consider the situation, and if you will call tomorrow at 10 o’clock I will prescribe for you.’

“She rose from her chair, and I assisted her down the stairs to her carriage, which waited below. Such a sprawling, ungainly, mixed up walk I never saw before.

“I meditated over her case for a long time that night and consulted all the authorities on locomotor ataxia, and diseases of the muscles, that I could find. I found nothing covering her case, and about midnight I wandered out along the streets for a breath of cool air. I passed a store kept by an old German whom I knew, and dropped in to speak a word with him. I had noticed some time before two tame deer he kept running about in a paddock in his yard. I asked him about them. He told me that they had been fighting, and had not been able to agree, so he had separated them, placing each one in a separate yard. Of a sudden an idea came to me.

“The next day at ten the young lady came to my office. I had a prescription ready for her. I gave it to her, she read it, flushed and was inclined to be angry.

“‘Try it, madam,’ I said.

“She agreed to do so, and only yesterday I saw her on the street, walking as gracefully and easily as any lady in the city.”

“What was your prescription?” asked the reporter.

“It was simply to wear a pair of bloomers,” said the young physician. “You see by separating the opposing factions harmony was restored. The Adams and the Redmond divisions no longer clashed, and the cure of the patient was complete. Let me see,” continued the physician, “it is nearly half past seven, and I have an engagement to call upon her at eight. In confidence, I may say that she has consented to change her name to mine at an early date. I would not have you repeat what I have told you, of course.”

“To be sure, I will not,” said the reporter. “But won’t you take another lemo—”

“No, no, thank you,” said the doctor, rising hurriedly, “I must go. Good evening. I will see you again in a few days.”

(Houston Daily Post, Sunday morning, May 3, 1896.)

Simmon's Saturday Night

How a Guileless Cattle Man Saw the Sights in Houston

One fine Saturday afternoon a young man got off the 9:10 p.m. Katy train at the Houston depot, and looked about him in rather a bewildered way. He was deliriously pastoral in his appearance, and presented an aspect almost as rural as that of the young countryman upon the stage as depicted by our leading comedians. He wore a very long black coat of the cut that has perpetuated the name of the late Prince Albert, such as is seen on Sundays at country churches, a pair of pantaloons too short for his somewhat lengthy limbs, and a wondrously tied scarf of deep crimson spotted with green. His face was smoothly shaven, and wore a look of deep wonder, if not apprehension, and his blue eyes were stretched to their widest as he viewed the sights about him. In his hand he carried a long carpet bag of the old style, made of some shiny substance resembling black oil cloth.

This young gentleman climbed nervously upon an electric car that was pointed out to him as going into the center of the city, and held his carpet bag upon his knees, clasping it with both hands, as if he distrusted the other people upon the car.

As the car started again with a loud hum and scattering of sparks, he grasped the arm of the seat in such a startled way that the conductor could not repress a smile.

When the young man was approached for his fare, he opened the carpet bag, pulling out a lot of socks and handkerchiefs, and after searching for some time drew forth an old-fashioned beaded purse from which he drew a nickel and handed it to the conductor.

When the car arrived at Main Street the young man requested that it be stopped, and climbed off. He wandered up the side walk, stopping to look with awe and admiration in the jewelers' windows, and his long boot heels and awkward, mincing gait caused much amusement to passersby.

Then it was that a well-dressed gentleman wearing a handsome light Melton overcoat happened to pass, and his beautiful Malacca gold-headed cane accidentally touched the elbow of the verdant-looking young man.

“I beg a thousand pardons,” said the well-dressed gentleman.

“It’s all right, pardner,” said the young man with a friendly smile. “You ain’t done no damage. You can’t faze a Texas cow man with no plaything like that. Don’t mention it.”

The well-dressed man bowed, and went leisurely on his way. The young man stumbled on up Main Street to a corner, then turned in an aimless way to the right and walked another block. There he looked up and saw the illuminated clock in the market house tower, and drawing from his vest pocket an immense silver watch fully as large as a saucer, he wound it up with a key and set its hands with the clock in the tower. While he was doing this a well-dressed gentleman carrying a gold-headed Malacca cane slipped past and walked softly down the shady side of the street, stopped in a deep shadow and seemed to be waiting for someone.

About fifteen minutes later the young man entered a restaurant on Congress Street and took his seat timidly at a table. He drew another chair close to his side and deposited carefully therein his carpet bag. Five minutes later a well-dressed man with a gold-headed Malacca cane entered in a great hurry and after hanging up his silk hat, seated himself, almost out of breath, at the same table. Then, looking up, he recognized the young man whom he had seen gazing in the jeweler’s window, and smiling pleasantly remarked:

“Ah, we meet again, sir. I have just had a most exhausting race to catch a train. You see, I am the paymaster of the Southern Pacific Railway Company, and am on my way to pay off the hands down the road. I missed my train by about three minutes. It’s very awkward, too, as I have nearly two thousand dollars on my person, and I am entirely unacquainted in Houston.”

“Dod gast it, colonel,” said the young man, “I’m in the same fix. I’m just getting back from Kansas City, where I sold a drove of two-year-olds, and I haven’t had time to do anything with the money. You beat me on the amount, though; I ain’t got but \$900.”

The well-dressed gentleman took a large roll of bills from his pocket, skinned off one with which to pay for his supper, and returned the rest carefully to the inside pocket of his coat.

“We seem to be about in the same situation, indeed,” he said. “I very much dislike to carry so much money on my person all night. Suppose we form a mutual protection society, and in the meantime walk about and see what sights there are to be seen in town.”

At first the young man appeared suddenly suspicious at this proposition, and became coldly reserved, but gradually thawed under the frank and unassuming politeness of the well-dressed man, and when that gentleman insisted upon paying for both suppers, his doubts seemed to vanish, and he became not only confidential, but actually loquacious. He informed the well-dressed man that his name was Simmons, that he owned a nice little ranch in Encinal County, and that this was his first trip out of Texas. The well-dressed man said his name was Clancy, called “Captain” by his friends, that he lived in Dallas, and was a member of the Young Men’s Christian Association at that place. He handed Mr. Simmons a card on which was printed “Captain Richard Saxon Clancy,” and below was scribbled somewhat hastily in pencil, “With M. K. & T. Ry. Co.”

“Now,” said Mr. Simmons, when they had finished supper, “I’m sorter shy about proposin’ it, you bein’ a stranger, but I’m in for havin’ a glass of beer. If you don’t like the scheme, why, excuse me, and don’t think hard of me for suggestin’ it.”

Captain Chancy smiled indulgently. “Have a care,” he said, in a sprightly bantering tone. “Remember, you and I must take care of ourselves tonight. I am responsible to the railroad company for the funds I have, and besides, I rarely ever touch beer—well, I guess one glass won’t hurt me.”

Mr. Simmons opened the carpet bag and after some search found the bead purse, from which he drew a dime, and suggested the immediate investment of it. Captain Clancy remembered to have heard a friend say that there was a quiet saloon on—let’s see, what street was it?

After some hesitation and search they came upon a place with swinging doors where a light was hanging outside, and the captain suggested that they could probably get a glass of beer within. They entered and found themselves before a gorgeous bar, ablaze with lights and mirrors, at which lounged five or six men of a rather rough and night-owlish appearance.

Mr. Simmons called for two glasses of beer, and when they had drunk it he laid his dime upon the counter.

“Wot’s eatin’ you?” said the bartender. “They is two for. Cough up some more right away once.”

“See here,” said Mr. Simmons, “beer is 5 cents a glass everywheres. Don’t you take me for no country jay.”

Captain Clancy whispered that they had better pay what was asked than get into a difficulty. “It seems a rough sort of place,” he said, “and you must remember it won’t do to endanger ourselves while we have our money about us. Let me pay the 15 cents additional.”

“No, you don’t,” said Mr. Simmons. “I guess when I treat I foot the whole bill.” He went down into the carpet bag again and brought forth three more nickels.

Just then an orchestra near at hand struck up in a lively air, and Mr. Simmons turned to look whence it came.

The bartender winked at Captain Clancy and said softly:

“Struck it rich, eh, Jimmy, old boy?”

“Think it will pay,” said the captain, as softly, closing his left eye at the bartender.

“Say,” said Mr. Simmons, “whatever have you got in there?” pointing in the direction of the music.

“Finest high-class musical and dramatic entertainment in the South,” said the bartender. “Refined and elevatin’ specialties by distinguished artists. Walk in, gents.”

“It’s a play show, by gum,” said Mr. Simmons. “Shall we go in?”

“I don’t like the looks of the place much,” said Captain Clancy, “but let’s have a look at it, anyhow, to pass away the time; let’s see, it’s just half past ten; we can look on a while and then go up to the hotel and get to bed by eleven-thirty. Let me pay for tickets.”

“All right,” said Mr. Simmons, “I paid for the beer.”

The bartender pointed out the way through a little hallway, where they entered another door and found a very glib gentleman who persuaded them to buy tickets that admitted them upstairs. They ascended and found themselves in the family circle of a little theater. There were about twenty or thirty men and boys scattered about among the seats, and the performance seemed quite well under way. On the stage a very exaggerated Irishman was chasing a very exaggerated negro with an ax, while a soubrettish young lady dressed in a ruffle and blue tights stood upon a barrel and screamed something in a high, cracked voice.

“I shouldn’t like it if there should happen to be anyone downstairs that knows me,” said the captain. “Suppose we take one of these boxes.” They went into a little box, screened from view by soiled cheap lace curtains, containing four or five chairs and a little table with little rings all over it made by the bottoms of wet glasses.

Mr. Simmons was delighted with the performance. He laughed unrestrainedly at the jokes of the comedian, and leaned half out of the box to applaud when the De Vere sisters did their song and dance and split specialty. Captain Clancy leaned back in his chair and hardly looked at the stage, but on his face was an expression of large content, and a tranquil smile. Mr. Simmons kept the carpet bag in both hands all this time. Presently, while he was listening with apparent rapture to a topical song by Mlle. Fanchon, the Parisian nightingale, he felt a hand laid on his shoulder. He turned about and beheld a vision that seemed to take away his breath. Two radiant beings in white, with blue ribbons, and showing quite a stretch of black ribbed stockings were in the box. Mr. Simmons hugged his carpet bag to his breast and started up in embarrassed alarm.

“Don’t shy, old man,” said one of them. “Sit down and buy some beer.”

Mr. Simmons seemed so full of blushes and perturbation for a while that he scarcely knew what he was doing, but Captain Clancy seemed so cool and easy, and began to chat so companionably with the ladies that he presently took courage, and the next quarter of an hour found the four seated opposite one another at the little table, and a colored waiter was kept busy bringing bottles of beer from the bar and carrying away empty glasses. Mr. Simmons grew absolutely hilarious. He told funny stories about ranch life, and spoke quite

boastingly about the gay times he had had in Kansas City during the three days he was there.

“Oh, you’re a bold, bad man,” said one of the young ladies, called Violet. “If Lillie and Jim—I mean your friend, wasn’t in here I’d be real ’fraid of you.”

“Go way, now,” said Mr. Simmons; “you know I ain’t nothin’ of that sort. Bring some more beer there, you colored feller!”

The party certainly were enjoying themselves. Presently Violet leaned over the railing and called Mr. Simmons’ attention to a lady that was singing on the stage. Mr. Simmons turned his back, and as he did so Captain Clancy quickly drew from his pocket a small vial and poured the contents into the glass of beer on Mr. Simmons’ side of the waiter that had just been brought in.

“Here, you all,” called the lady addressed as Lillie, “the beer’s getting cold.” Mr. Simmons and Violet turned back to the table, and Mr. Simmons accidentally stumbled over his carpet bag, which he had actually set down for a moment upon the floor. He fell sprawling across the table, striking the edge of the waiter with his hand and nearly turning Captain Clancy over in his chair, but spilling none of the beer.

“Excuse me,” he said, turning very red. “Got my foot caught. I’m as awkward as a cowboy at a dance. Well, here’s luck.”

Everybody drank the beer, and Lillie began to hum a little song. In about a minute Violet reeled around in her chair and tumbled off on the floor in a confused heap of white muslin, blondined hair and black stockings.

Captain Clancy seemed much vexed. He shot a steel blue flash from his eyes at Lillie and said something very much like “d——n it” to himself.

“Great heavens!” cried Mr. Simmons, “this lady has fainted. Call a doctor, or get some water or somethin’ quick.”

“Say,” said Lillie, lighting a cigarette, “don’t get woozy. She’ll sleep it off. You gents get out for a while. Say, J-Mister, tell the bartender to send Sam up as you go out. Good night.”

“We had better go,” said the captain.

Mr. Simmons, with many protestations of sympathy and anxiety, was led away by Captain Clancy downstairs, where he delivered the message, and thence out into the cool night air.

He was feeling pretty strongly the effects of the beer he had drunk, and leaned heavily upon the captain's arm. Captain Clancy assured him that the lady would be all right in a little while, that she had merely drunk a little too much beer, which had affected her rather suddenly, and succeeded in restoring Mr. Simmons to his former cheerful spirits.

"It is not yet half past eleven," said the captain. "How would you like to go up into one of the gambling rooms just to look on a while? It is a very interesting sight."

"Just the thing," said Mr. Simmons. "They are not new things to me at all. Twice I have been in 'em in San Antone. Saw a feller win \$18 one night in this game you play with little buttons on little boards."

"Keno, I believe," said the captain. "Yes, that's it—keno."

I shall not undertake to describe the locality of the apartments to which our visitors next went. Gambling houses are almost unknown in Houston, and as this is a true story, the attempt to give a definite location to such an institution in a city of the well known morality of Houston would meet with incredulity. Neither is it clear how they managed to find such a place, both of them being strangers, but by some accidental blunder, Captain Clancy led Mr. Simmons up a brightly lighted and carpeted stair into a large apartment, where a goodly crowd of men were gathered, trying their luck at the different games usually found in a well appointed gambling house.

The stairway opened into the room nearly at the end farthest from the street. Immediately in front of the two gentlemen when they entered was a room in which were two or three round tables and chairs, at that time unoccupied.

Captain Clancy and Mr. Simmons walked about the larger room for a while, gazing upon the players as they won or lost in the vicissitudes and fortunes of the games. The men in the room viewed Mr. Simmons with ill-concealed hilarity. His carpet bag seemed to create a vast deal of merriment, and every man in the room, while betraying much amusement, still gazed upon him with

longing and hungry eyes, as upon some choice tit-bit upon which they fain would feast.

One fat man with a dyed mustache nudged Captain Clancy in the side and said:

“Gad! Jimmy, can’t you let me in on it?”

The captain frowned and the fat man moved away with a sigh. Mr. Simmons was interested almost to excitement. Presently he said:

“Say, I don’t know how it will strike you, cap’n, but I guess I must have some sportin’ blood in me. Now, I don’t gamble, but I’m the darnedest checker player in Southwest Texas. Let’s go in that other room, and I’ll play you some checkers and the man what loses buys a glass of beer for both of us.”

“Now, Mr. Simmons,” said the captain, raising a warning finger and smiling. “Remember our mutual protection society. I don’t like this place at all. We had better be out of it. However, I used to be the crack checker and croquet player in our Young Men’s Christian Association—just a game or two, now.”

They played a game or two, and then they played half a dozen more. The captain won every game. Mr. Simmons was much vexed. He grew very red in the face as his reputation as a checker player began to vanish.

“Confound it,” he said, “I’m out 70 cents. Gimmie a chance to get even. I’d give it to you if I was ahead.”

“Why, certainly,” said the captain, “but checkers is rather tiresome. Some other way suit you? Let’s have in a deck of cards and play a few hands until you get even.”

“Any way,” said Mr. Simmons. His hat was on the back of his head; his light-blue eyes were blinking and somewhat unsteady. His red and green spotted tie was almost under one ear. He sat with the black carpet bag in his lap, and his checked trousers had drawn half way up to his knees.

“What, oh, what,” said the captain softly, to himself, “have I done to deserve this manna descending to me in the wilderness; this good thing dropping into my hands as if it were greased; this great big soft snap coming my way without a ripple. It’s too good to be true.”

The captain struck a little bell and a waiter brought a deck of cards.

“Let’s call it poker,” said the captain. Mr. Simmons rose to his feet.

“That’s a gambling game,” he said severely. “I ain’t no gambler.”

“Neither am I, Mr. Simmons,” said the captain with a sudden dignity and a trifle of a frown. “A game of poker for insignificant stakes between gentlemen is entirely allowable in the circles in which I have moved, and any institution—”

“Oh, dang it all,” said Mr. Simmons, “I didn’t mean anything. I’ve played some on the ranch with the boys of nights for grains of corn. Deal ’em out.”

The old story of the hawk and the pigeon has been told so often that the details are apt to weary. From a stake of 10 cents they rose to 50 cents and a dollar. Mr. Simmons won, of course. He had taken the bead purse out of his bag and therefrom abstracted certain silver dollars, and later on, \$25 in bills. Once he held up a package from the carpet bag tied with a string and winked at the captain.

“That’s the nine hundred,” he said.

The captain won a pot occasionally, but the bulk of the money was going to Mr. Simmons, who was jubilant but sympathetic.

“You’re out of luck,” he said jollily, but thickly. He was considerably under the influence of the beer he had drunk, to all appearances. The captain looked worried and anxious.

“That’s nearly all my expense money,” he said moodily. “I say, Simmons, take off the limit and give a feller a chance to get even.”

“What’s that?” asked Mr. Simmons. “You mean bet any amount we please?”

“Yes.”

“Let ’er go,” said Mr. Simmons. “Shay, zis beer (hic) make’m me shorter shick.”

Mr. Simmons seemed to play a very loose game, and his luck began to desert

him. He lost a large portion of his winnings on an ace full, and had several fine hands beaten. In a little while his velvet was gone and the next hand lost him all his little capital. He grew more deeply flushed, and his round light eyes shone with an excited stare. He once more opened the black carpet bag, took out his pocket knife and put both hands inside. The captain heard him cut the string of the package and out came the hands grasping a mass of fives, tens and twenties. The carpet bag still kept its place in his lap.

“Bring ’sh s’m beer,” said Mr. Simmons, loudly. “Jolly f’ler ze captain. Play’m all night ’f wanten. ’M a little full, but bes’ checker ’n poker player ’n Encinal County. Deal ’em.”

Captain Richard Saxon Clancy, paymaster (?) of the M. K. & T. Railway Company, drew himself together, his time had come. The manna was about to descend. The pigeon was already fluttering in his talons. The victim was in exactly the right stage of drunkenness; enough to be reckless and not too observant, but not too much so to prevent his playing the game.

The captain coughed rather loudly. One or two men strolled in from the other room and watched the game silently. The captain coughed again. A pale young man with gloomy eyes and an unhealthy-looking face lounged around somewhat back of Mr. Simmons’ chair, and listlessly looked on. Every time a hand was dealt or a draw made, he would scratch his ear, touch his nose, pull his mustache or play with a button on his vest. It was strange to see how much the captain watched this young man, who certainly had nothing to do with the game.

Still the captain won. When Mr. Simmons won a pot it was sure to be a small one.

The captain thought the time ripe for his *coup de grâce*. He struck the bell, and the waiter came.

“Bring a fresh deck, Mike,” he said, “these are getting worn.” Mr. Simmons was too confused to notice that the captain, a stranger in the city, called the waiter familiarly by his given name.

The captain dealt the cards, and Mr. Simmons cut them in an awkward and bungling way. Then the fatal hand was dealt. It was the captain’s favorite. Four kings and the seven of spades to his opponent, four aces and the deuce of

diamonds to himself. Any other cards would do as well as the spade and the diamond, but the captain had a weakness for those two cards.

He noticed the ill-concealed pleasure on the face of Mr. Simmons as he gazed at his hand. Mr. Simmons stood pat; the captain drew one card. The young man behind Mr. Simmons' chair had moved away. It was no longer necessary for him to scratch his ear and touch his vest button. He knew the captain's *coup de grâce* as well as he himself.

Mr. Simmons clutched his cards tightly in his hand and tried in vain to conceal his eagerness. The captain examined the new card he had drawn with exaggerated anxiety, and heaved a sigh that intended to convey to Mr. Simmons the information that he had made his hand good.

The betting began. Mr. Simmons threw in his money feverishly and quickly; the captain saw each bet, and raised only after affected deep deliberation. Mr. Simmons raised back gleefully, drunkenly and confidently. When the pot contained about \$200 the captain's brows went together, and two faint lines traced themselves from his nostrils to the corners of his mouth, and he made a raise of a hundred. Mr. Simmons laid his hand down carefully on the table and went down in his carpet bag again. This time he drew out two \$500 bills and laid them on top of the pot.

"I'm goin' busted on this hand," said Mr. Simmons. "'F I didn't zhe boys 'n Encinal County 'd run me out for a coward. Whoop 'em up, cap'n."

"Send Charlie over here," said Captain Clancy to one of the bystanders. The fat man with the dyed mustache came over and whispered with the captain. Then he went away and came back with a stack of gold and bills and counted out the thousand dollars to call Mr. Simmons' bet.

"I call," said the captain.

Then a queer thing happened.

Mr. Simmons rose lightly to his feet, spread his hand face upward upon the table, and with the same arm movement swept the pile of money into his capacious carpet bag.

With bulging eyes and a sulphurous oath the captain looked for the four kings

and the seven of spades he had dealt Mr. Simmons. What he saw was a queen high straight heart flush.

The captain made a spring, and the pale gentlemen standing about each took one cat-like step towards Mr. Simmons and then stopped. As the money went into the carpet bag there came out a blue-barreled six-shooter that now shone ominously in Mr. Simmons' hand, and they looked into its barrel.

Mr. Simmons gave one lightning glance to his rear and then backed towards the door.

"Don't make any mistake," he said. There was a blue gleam in his eyes exactly the color of the shining metal of his weapon.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I invite you all when in New York to call at my joint, at 2508 Bowery. Ask for Diamond Joe, and you'll see me. I'm going into Mexico for two weeks to see after my mining plants and I'll be at home any time after then. Upstairs, 2508 Bowery; don't forget the number. I generally make my traveling expenses as I go. Good night."

Mr. Simmons backed quickly out and disappeared.

Five minutes later Captain Richard Saxon Clancy, paymaster (?) for the M. K. & T. Railway Company, and member (?) of the Dallas Young Men's Christian Association, alias "Jimmy," stood at a corner bar and said: "Whiskey, old man, and—say get a bigger glass than that, will you? I need it."

(Houston Daily Post, Sunday morning, April 12, 1896.)

An Unknown Romance

The first pale star peeped down the gorge. Above, to illimitable heights reached the Alps, snow-white above, shadowy around, and black in the depths of the gorge.

A young and stalwart man, clad in the garb of a chamois hunter, passed up the path. His face was bronzed with sun and wind, his eye was frank and clear, his step agile and firm. He was singing fragments of a Bavarian hunting song, and in his hand he held a white blossom of the edelweiss he had plucked from the cliff. Suddenly he paused, and the song broke, and dropped from his lips. A girl, costumed as the Swiss peasants are, crossed the path along one that bisected his, carrying a small stone pitcher full of water. Her hair was of the lightest gold and hung far below her trim waist in a heavy braid. Her eyes shone through the gathering twilight, and her lips, slightly parted, showed a faint gleam of the whitest teeth.

As if impelled by a common impulse, the hunter and the maiden paused, each with their eyes fixed upon the other. Then the man advanced, and doffing his feathered hat, bowed low and spake some words in the German language. The maiden answered, speaking haltingly and low.

Then a door opened in a cottage almost hidden among the trees, and a babble of voices was heard. The maiden's cheeks turned crimson, and she started to go, but as she went, she turned her eyes and looked at the hunter still. He took a step after her, and stretched out his hand as if to stay her. She tore a bunch of blue gentians from her bosom and threw them towards him. He caught them as they fell, then ran lightly and gave into her hand the edelweiss bloom that he carried. She thrust it into her bosom, then ran like a mountain sprite into the cottage, where the voices were.

The hunter stopped for a while, then went his way more slowly up the mountain path, and he sang no more. As he went he pressed the flowers frequently to his lips.

The wedding was to be one of the showiest, and the society of the metropolis was almost begging for invitations.

The groom-elect brought the ancient lineage of the Van Winklers and a position at the top notch of society for his portion. The bride brought a beauty that was flawless, and five million dollars. The arrangement had been made in a businesslike manner. There had been no question of love. He had been courteous, and politely attentive, and she had acquiesced listlessly. They had first met at a fashionable summer resort. The family of the Van Winklers and the money of the Vances were about to unite.

The wedding was to be at high noon.

Pelham Van Winkler had had a fire built in the ancient tiled fireplace of one of his rooms, although the weather was warm. He sat on the edge of a writing table, and tossed handfuls of square-shaped letters, some tied with ribbons, into the fire. He smiled a little ironically as they flamed up, or as here and there among them he would find a withered flower, a scented glove or a lock of beribboned hair.

The last sacrifice to the flames was a dried and pressed cluster of blue gentians.

Van Winkler sighed, and the smile left his face. He recalled the twilight scene among the Alps mountains, where he was wandering with three or four companions on a summer tour, gay and careless, and dressed in the picturesque garb of chamois hunters. He recalled the picture of a lovely peasant girl with eyes that held him with a charm of power, crossing the mountain road, and pausing for a moment to toss him the bunch of gentian flowers. Had he not been a Van Winkler and owed a duty to the name, he would have sought her out and married her, for her image had never left his eyes or his heart since that twilight eve. But society and the family name claimed him, and today, at high noon, he was to marry Miss Vance, the daughter of the millionaire iron founder.

Pelham Van Winkler tossed the bunch of blue gentians into the fire and rang for his valet.

Miss Augusta Vance had flown from the irritating presence of fussy female friends and hysterical relatives to her boudoir for a few moments' quiet. She had no letters to burn; no past to bury. Her mother was in an ecstasy of delight, for the family millions had brought them places in the front row of Vanity Fair.

Her marriage to Pelham Van Winkler was to be at high noon. Miss Vance fell

suddenly into a dreamy reverie. She recalled a trip she had taken with her family a year before, to Europe, and her mind dwelt lingeringly upon a week they had spent among the foothills of the Alps in the cottage of a Swiss mountaineer. One evening at twilight she had gone with a pitcher across the road and filled it from a spring. She had fancied to put on that day the peasant costume of Babette, the daughter of their host. It had become her well, with her long braid of light-gold hair and blue eyes. A hunter had crossed the road as she was returning—an Alpine chamois hunter, strong, stalwart, bronzed and free. She had looked up and caught his eyes, and his held hers. She went on, and still those magnetic eyes claimed her own. The door of the cottage had opened and voices called. She started and obeyed the impulse to tear a bunch of gentians from her bosom and throw them to him. He had caught them, and springing forward gave her an edelweiss flower. Not since that evening had the image of that chamois hunter left her. Surely fate had led him to her, and he seemed a man among men. But Miss Augusta Vance, with a dowry of five millions, could not commit the folly of thinking of a common hunter of the Alps mountains.

Miss Vance arose and opened a gold locket that lay upon her dressing case. She took from it a faded edelweiss flower and slowly crumpled it to dust between her fingers. Then she rang for her maid, as the church bells began to chime outside for the marriage.

(Houston Daily Post, Sunday morning, May 17, 1896.)

Jack the Giant Killer

The other day a lady canvasser came up into the *Post* editorial room with a book she was selling. She went into the editor-in-chief's office, and her little five-year-old girl, who came up with her, remained in the outer rooms, doubtless attracted by the brilliant and engaging appearance of the staff, which was lolling about at its various desks during one of its frequent intervals of leisure.

She was a bright, curly-haired maiden, of a friendly disposition, so she singled out the literary editor for attack, no doubt fascinated by his aristocratic air, and his peculiarity of writing with his gloves on.

"Tell me a 'tory," she demanded, shaking her curls at him, and gazing up with eyes of commanding brown.

"A story, little one?" said the literary editor, with a sweet smile, as he stroked her shining curls.

"Most assuredly. What shall it be?"

"Tell me Dack, de Diant Killer."

"Jack, the Giant Killer? little sunbeam; with all my heart."

The literary editor helped the little lady upon a stool and began:

"Once upon a time, in immediate proximity to a primeval forest, in an humble abode, where pleasures of a bucolic existence were profitably mingled with the more laborious task of agricultural pursuits, dwelt Jack, the hero of my tale, with his widowed maternal progenitor. Scarcely of a parsimonious nature, yet perforce of economic character, the widow was compelled to resort to numerous expedients in order to prolong existence. She was the possessor of a bovine quadruped of most excellent virtues. Her generous store of lacteal fluid, her amicable and pacific nature, and her gentleness of demeanor had endeared her to both Jack and his mother. But, alas, the exigencies of the situation soon demanded that they part with their four-footed friend, and to Jack the sorrowful duty was delegated to lead with lacerated bosom and audible lamentations their bovine benefactor to the market, to be bartered for the more indispensable necessities of life. So Jack—"

“It’s not likely she would be able to flag down your cockpit dialect,” said the railroad editor with fine scorn. “Clear the track and let me show you how to interest the youthful mind.”

“Will ’ou tell me dat ’tory?” said the little maiden with a hopeful look in her eyes.

“I will that,” said the railroad editor, seating himself on a pile of exchanges. “You fellows waste too much steam in pulling out of the station. You want to get right into the exciting part from the first.”

“Now, little one,” said the railroad editor, “you see Jack woke up one morning and looked out of the window, and the right of way was blockaded by a bean stalk that had run a grand trunk air line that went clear up out of sight. Jack took on coal and water, and, without waiting to see if he had the track, grabbed hold and steamed off up grade without even whistling at way stations. When he got to the end of the run he found a castle as big as a union depot. So he put on brakes and—”

“Tan ’ou tell me de ’tory about Dack de Diant Killer?” asked the little girl.

Just then the lady came out, and the little girl jumped down and ran to her. They had a little consultation, and as they went out the door the staff heard the lady say:

“B’ess urn’s heart, muzzer will tell ums all about Jack when us gets home.”

(*Houston Daily Post*, Sunday morning, January 19, 1896.)

The Pint Flask

A prominent Houston colonel, who is also a leading church member, started for church last Sunday morning with his family, as was his custom. He was serene and solid-looking, and his black frock coat and light gray trousers fitted him snugly and stylishly. They passed along Main Street on the way to church, and the colonel happened to think of a letter on his desk that he wanted, so he told his family to wait at the door a moment while he stopped in his office to get it. He went in and got the letter, and, to his surprise, there was a disreputable-looking pint whisky flask with about an ounce of whisky left in it standing on his desk. The colonel abominates whisky and never touches a drop of anything strong. He supposed that someone, knowing this, had passed his desk, and set the flask there by way of a mild joke.

He looked about for a place to throw the bottle, but the back door was locked, and he tried unsuccessfully to raise the window that overlooked the alley. The colonel's wife, wondering why he was so long in coming, opened the door and surprised him, so that scarcely thinking what he was doing he thrust the flask under his coat tail into his hip pocket.

"Why don't you come on?" asked his wife. "Didn't you find the letter?"

He couldn't do anything but go with her. He should have produced the bottle right there, and explained the situation, but he neglected his opportunity. He went on down Main Street with his family, with the pint flask feeling as big as a keg in his pocket. He was afraid some of them would notice it bulging under his coat, so he lagged somewhat in the rear. When he entered his pew at church and sat down there was a sharp crack, and the odor of mean whisky began to work its way around the church. The colonel saw several people elevate their noses and look inquiringly around, and he turned as red as a beet. He heard a female voice in the pew behind him whisper loudly:

"Old Colonel J is drunk again. They say he is hardly ever sober now, and some people say he beats his wife nearly every day."

The colonel recognized the voice of one of the most notorious female gossipers in Houston. He turned around and glared at her. She then whispered a little louder:

“Look at him. He really looks dangerous. And to come to church that way, too!”

The colonel knew that the bottle had cracked and he was afraid to move, but a piece of it fell out on the floor. He usually knelt during prayer, but today he sat bolt upright on the seat. His wife noticed his unusual behavior and whispered:

“James, you don’t know how you pain me. You don’t pray any more. I knew what the result would be when I let you go to hear Ingersoll lecture. You are an infidel. And—what is that I smell? Oh, James, you have been drinking, and on Sunday, too!”

The colonel’s wife put her handkerchief to her eyes, and he ground his teeth in rage.

After the services were over, and they had reached home, his wife took her seat on the back porch and began to cap some strawberries for dinner. This prevented his going out in the back yard and throwing the bottle over the fence, as he had intended. His two little boys hung close around him, as they always did on Sunday, and he found it impossible to get rid of it. He took them out for a stroll in the front yard. Finally, he sent them both in the house on some pretext, and drawing out the bottle hurled it into the street. The crack in it had been only a slight one, and as it struck a soft heap of trash when it fell, it did not break.

The colonel felt immediately relieved, but just as the little boys ran back he heard a voice in the street say:

“See here, sir, law’s against throwing glass in the street. I saw you do it, but take it back, and it’ll be all right this time.”

The colonel turned and saw a big policeman handing the terrible bottle towards him over the fence. He took it and thrust it back into his pocket with a low but expressive remark. His little boys ran up and shouted:

“Oh, papa, what was that the policeman gave you? Let’s see it!”

They clutched at his coat tails, and grabbed for his pockets, and the colonel backed against the fence.

“Go away from here, you little devils,” he yelled. “Go in the house or I’ll thrash you both.”

you don't.

The colonel went into the house and put on his hat. He resolved to get rid of the bottle if he had to walk a mile to do it.

"Where are you going?" asked his wife in astonishment. "Dinner is almost ready. Why don't you pull off your coat and cool off, James, as you usually do?"

She gazed at him with the deepest suspicion, and that irritated him.

"Confound the dinner," he said, angrily. "I'm hungry—no, I mean I'm sick; I don't want any dinner—I'm going to take a walk."

"Papa, please show us what the policeman gave you," said one of his little boys.

"Policeman!" echoed the colonel's wife. "Oh, James, to think that you would act this way! I know you haven't been drinking, but what is the matter with you? Come in and lie down. Let me pull off your coat."

She tried to pull off the colonel's Prince Albert, as she generally did, but he got furiously angry and danced away from her.

"Take your hands off me, woman," he cried. "I've got a headache, and I'm going for a walk. I'll throw the blamed thing away if I have to go to the North Pole to do it."

The colonel's wife shook her head as he went out the gate.

"He's working too hard," she said. "Maybe a walk will do him good."

The colonel went down several blocks watching for an opportunity to dispose of the flask. There were a good many people on the streets, and there seemed to be always somebody looking at him.

Two or three of the colonel's friends met him, and stared at him curiously. His face was much flushed, his hat was on the back of his head and there was a wild glare in his eyes. Some of them passed without speaking, and the colonel laughed bitterly. He was getting desperate. Whenever he would get to a vacant lot, he would stop and gaze searchingly in every direction to see if the coast was clear, so that he could pull out the flask and drop it. People began to watch him

from windows, and two or three little boys began to follow him. The colonel turned around and spoke sharply to them, and they replied:

“Look at the old guy with a jag on lookin’ for a place to lie down. W’y don’t yer go to de calaboose and snooze it off, mister?”

The colonel finally dodged the boys, and his spirits rose as he saw before him a vacant square covered with weeds, in some places as high as his head.

Here was a place where he could get rid of the bottle. The minister of his church lived on the opposite side of the vacant square, but the weeds were so high that the house was completely hidden.

The colonel looked guiltily around and seeing no one, plunged into a path that led through the weeds. When he reached the center, where they were highest, he stopped and drew the whisky flask from his pocket. He looked at it a moment; smiled grimly, and said aloud:

“Well, you’ve given me lots of trouble that nobody knows anything about but me.”

He was about to drop the flask when he heard a noise, and looking up he saw his minister standing in the path before him, gazing at him with horrified eyes.

“My dear Colonel J——,” said the good man. “You distress me beyond measure. I never knew that you drank. I am indeed deeply grieved to see you here in this condition.”

The colonel was infuriated beyond control. “Don’t give a d—— if you are,” he shouted. “I’m drunk as a biled owl, and I don’t care who knows it. I’m always drunk. I’ve drunk 15,000 gallons of whisky in the last two weeks. I’m a bad man about this time every Sunday. Here goes the bottle once more for luck.”

He hurled the flask at the minister and it struck him on the ear and broke into twenty pieces. The minister let out a yell and turned and ran back to his house.

The colonel gathered a pile of stones and hid among the tall weeds, resolved to fight the whole town as long as his ammunition held out. His hard luck had made him desperate. An hour later three mounted policemen got into the weeds, and the colonel surrendered. He had cooled off by that time enough to explain

the colonel surrendered. He had cooled off by that time enough to explain matters, and as he was well known to be a perfectly sober and temperate citizen, he was allowed to go home.

But you can't get him to pick up a bottle now, empty or full.

(*Houston Daily Post*, Sunday morning, May 17, 1896.)

An Odd Character

A *Post* Reporter stood on the San Jacinto Street bridge last night. Half of a May moon swam in a sea of buttermilky clouds high in the east. Below, the bayou gleamed dully in the semi-darkness, merging into inky blackness farther down. A steam tug glided noiselessly down the sluggish waters, leaving a shattered trail of molten silver. Foot passengers across the bridge were scarce. A few belated Fifth-Warders straggled past, clattering along the uneven planks of the footway. The reporter took off his hat and allowed a cool breath of a great city to fan his brow. A mellow voice, with, however, too much dramatic inflection, murmured at his elbow, and quoted incorrectly from Byron:

“Oh, moon, and darkening river, ye are wondrous strong;
Yet lovely in your strength as is the light of a dark eye in woman.”

The reporter turned and saw a magnificent specimen of the genus tramp. He was attired in a garb to be viewed with wonder, and even awe. His coat was a black frock, fallen into decay some years ago. Under it he wore a jaunty striped blazer, too tight to button, and the ghost of a collar peered above its intricacies. His trousers were patched, and torn, and frayed, and faded away at the bottom into ghostly, indescribable feet shod in shapeless leather and dust.

His face, however, was the face of a hilarious faun. His eyes were brilliant and piercing, and a godlike smile lit up a face that owed little to art or soap.

His nose was classic, and his nostrils thin and nervous, betokening either race or fever. His brow was high and smooth, and his regard lofty and superior, though a bristly beard of uncertain cut and grisly effect covered the lower part of his countenance.

“Do you know what I am, sir?” asked this strange being. The reporter gazed at his weird form and shook his head.

“Your reply reassures me,” said the wanderer. “It convinces me that I have not made a mistake in addressing you. You have some of the instincts of a gentleman, because you forbore to say what you know well, namely, that I am a tramp. I look like a tramp and I am one, but no ordinary one. I have a university education, I am a Greek and Latin scholar, and I have held the chair of English literature in a college known all over the world. I am a biologist. and more than

all, I am a student of the wonderful book, man. The last accomplishment is the only one I still practice. If I am not grown unskilled, I can read you.”

He bent a discriminating look upon the reporter. The reporter puffed at his cigar and submitted to the scrutiny.

“You are a newspaper man,” said the tramp. “I will tell you how I reached the conclusion. I have been watching you for ten minutes. I knew you were not a man of leisure, for you walked upon the bridge with a somewhat rapid step. You stopped and began to watch the effect of the moon upon the water. A business man would have been hurrying along to supper. When you got your cigar out you had to feel in three or four pockets before you found one. A newspaper man has many cigars forced upon him in the course of a day, and he has to distribute them among several pockets. Again, you have no pencil sticking out of your pocket. No newspaper man ever has. Am I right in my conjecture?”

The reporter made a shrewd guess.

“You are right,” he said, “and your having seen me going into a newspaper office some time ago no doubt assisted you in your diagnosis.”

The tramp laughed.

“You are wrong,” he said. “You were coming out when I saw you yesterday. I like a man like you. You can give and take. I have been in Houston now for three months, and you are the first man to whom I have spoken of myself. You have not offered me money, and by that have won my esteem. I am a tramp, but I never accept money from anyone. Why should I? The richest man in your town is a pauper compared with me. I see you smile. Come, sir, indulge me for a while. I am afflicted at times with *cacoethes loquendi*, and rarely do I meet a gentleman who will give me an ear.”

The Post Man had seen so many people with the corners rubbed off, so many men who always say and do what they are expected to, that he fell into the humor of listening to this man who said unexpected things. And then he was so strange to look upon.

The tramp was not drunk, and his appearance was not that of a drinking man. His features were refined and clear-cut in the moonlight; and his voice—well, his voice was queer. It sounded like a man talking plainly in his sleep.

The Post Man concluded that his mind was unbalanced.

The tramp spoke again.

“I said I had plenty of money,” he continued, “and I have. I will show a few—a very few of the wonders that you respectable, plodding, well-dressed people do not imagine to exist. Look at this ring.”

He took from his finger a curious carved ring of beaten copper, wrought into a design that the moonlight did not suffer to be deciphered, and handed it to the reporter.

“Rub that ring thrice with the thumb of your left hand,” said the tramp.

The reporter did so, with a creepy feeling that made him smile to himself. The tramp’s eyes beamed, and he pointed into the air, following with his finger the movements of some invisible object.

“It is Artamela,” he said, “the slave of the ring—catch!”

He swept his hollowed hand into space, scooping up something, and handed it to the reporter.

“See!” he said, “golden coins. I can bring them at will in unlimited numbers. Why should I beg?”

He held his empty hand with a gesture toward the reporter, who pretended to accept its visionary contents.

The tramp took off his hat and let the breeze sift through his tangled hair.

“What would you think,” he said, “if I should tell you that I am 241 years old?”

“Knock off a couple of centuries,” said the reporter, “and it will go all right.”

“This ring,” said the tramp, “was given me by a Buddhist priest in Benares, India, a hundred years before America was discovered. It is an inexhaustible source of wealth, life and good luck. It has brought me every blessing that man can enjoy. With such fortune as that there is no one on earth that I envy. I am blissfully happy and I lead the only ideal life.”

The tramp leaned on the railing and gazed down the bayou for a long time without speaking. The reporter made a movement as if to go, and he started violently and faced around. A change had come over him. His brow was lowering and his manner cringing. He shivered and pulled his coat tight about him.

“Wot wuz I sayin’?” he said in a gruff, husky voice. “Wuz I a talkin’? Hello, there, mister, can’t you give a feller a dime to get him some supper?”

The reporter, struck by the transformation, gazed at him in silence.

The tramp muttered to himself, and with shaking hands drew from his pocket something wrapped in paper.

He unrolled it, took something from it between his thumb and finger and thrust it into his mouth.

The sickly, faint, sweet odor of gum opium reached the reporter.

The mystery about the tramp was solved.

(*Houston Daily Post*, Sunday morning, May 24, 1896.)

A Houston Romance

About two years ago one of the most popular young society men in Houston mysteriously disappeared. He had been the glass of fashion and the mold of form of the Magnolia City for several years. Especially was he noted for his exquisite and fashionable dress, and he was regarded as the leader in bringing out the latest and correct styles of clothing. No one in Houston ever saw a wrinkle in his elegantly fitting clothes, or a spot upon his snowy linen. He possessed sufficient means to enable him to devote his whole time to society and the art of dress, and in his whole bearing and manners was well nigh equal to the famous Beau Brummel.

About a year ago it was noticed that he was beginning to grow preoccupied and reserved. His gay and gallant manner was as Chesterfieldian as ever, but he was becoming more silent and moody, and there seemed to be something weighing upon his mind. Suddenly, without a word of farewell, he disappeared, and no traces of him could be discovered. He left a good balance in the bank to his credit, and society racked its brains to conjecture some reason for his mysterious disappearance. He had no relatives in Houston, and with proverbial fickleness his acquaintances and butterfly friends soon allowed him to pass from their minds.

The mystery has at length been cleared up. A young Houston merchant who was an intimate associate with the young society man took a trip to Europe in September.

While in Italy he had a desire to visit one of the old monasteries among the Alps; so one day he ascended the *Passo di San Giacomo*, a road little wider than a bridle path that led up for 7000 feet among the glaciers of the Leopontine Alps. Far up, perched upon a snow-covered crag, he could see the monastery of the Franciscan monks—the Minorite Friars of the Cismontana group of the Franciscans.

He picked his cautious way up the narrow way, pausing now and then to admire the rainbow hues that flashed from frozen glaciers, or the vast drifts of snow packed among the crevasses high above his head.

After six hours' arduous toil he stood before the massive iron gates of the

AFTER SIX HOURS' arduous toil he stood before the massive iron gates of the monastery. He rang the bell, and a grim warden bade him enter and partake of the hospitality of the brothers. He was ushered into a vast dim hall, with walls and floors of cold gray stone. The monk who admitted him bade him wait, as the brothers were about to pass through on their way to their cells from evening prayer. A deep-toned bell clanged once; a great door softly opened, and a procession of shaved monks filed slowly and noiselessly past. Their heads were bowed and, as they told their beads, their lips moved in silent prayer.

As they came past the visitor he was astounded to see among the devout monks the form of the man who had once been the curled darling and pattern of elegance in Houston.

He called his name and the monk, startled by his voice, raised his head and stepped from the ranks of his brother penitents. The others continued their silent march until another great door had closed behind them.

The Houston man gazed at the friar in wonder.

He wore a long black robe, slightly confined at the waist by a hempen cord, that hung to his feet in classic, shapely folds. The crown of his head was shaven and his face was as smooth as a maiden's. But the most noticeable thing was the expression of absolute peace and serene happiness that shone from his features. There was no trace of the worried and absent look that his friends had noticed before he disappeared.

A calm and holy beatitude beamed from his face like a benison.

"In heaven's name," said his friend, "what brought you here to bury yourself forever from the world; why did you leave your friends and pleasures to pass your days in this dreary place?"

"Listen," said the monk, "and I will tell you. I am now supremely and ecstatically happy. I have attained the goal of my desires. Look at this robe." He glanced proudly at the dark, severe robe that swept downward from his waist in graceful folds.

"I am one man," he continued, "who has arrived at the fruition of his dearest earthly hopes. I have got something on at least that will not bag at the knees."

(*Houston Daily Post*, Sunday morning, November 24, 1895.)

The Legend of San Jacinto

The Hermit of the Battle Ground Relates an Ancient Tradition to a Post Man

The battle ground of San Jacinto is a historic spot, very dear to those who make the past reputation of Texas a personal matter. A Texan who does not thrill at the mention of the locality where General Sam Houston and other gentlemen named after the counties of Texas, captured Santa Anna and his portable bar and side arms, is a baseborn slave.

A few days ago a *Hoodoo Jane* went down the bayou to the battle ground with the intention of gathering from some of the old inhabitants a few of the stories and legends that are so plentiful concerning the events that occurred on that memorable spot.

The *Hoodoo Jane* let the reporter off at the battle ground, which is on the bank of the bayou, and he wandered about under the thick grove of trees and then out upon the low flat country where the famous battle is said to have raged. Down under a little bunch of elm trees was a little cabin, and the reporter wandered thither in the hope of finding an old inhabitant.

A venerable man emerged from the cabin, apparently between 15 and 80 years of age, with long white hair and silvery beard.

“Come hither, youth,” he said. “Would’st know the legend of this place? Then cross my palm with silver, and I’ll tell it thee.”

“Good father,” said the reporter, “Gramercy, and by my halidome, and Got wot, as you love me, ask me not for silver, but even fire away with your old legend.”

“Then sit you here,” said the hermit, “and I will tell you the legend of the battle ground of San Jacinto.

“A great many years ago, when these silver locks of mine were dark and my step as quick and blithe as thine, my mother told me this tale. How well I remember the day. It was twilight, and the evening shadows were growing long under the trees. She laid her hand upon my head and said:

“‘My boy, I will tell you the legend of San Jacinto. It is a beautiful story, and was told to me by my father, who was one of the earliest settlers in the State. Ah! what a man he was—six feet in height, sinewy as an oaken withe, and as bold as a lion. One day, I remember, he came home after a long, hard fight with the Indians. He took me on his knee as gently as a woman would, this great strong father of mine, and said:

“‘“Listen, little Sunbeam, and I will tell you the grand old story of San Jacinto. It is a legend known to few. It will make your bright eyes dance in your head with wonder. I heard it from my uncle, who was a strange man, and held in dread by all who knew him. One night when the moon was going down in the west and the big owls were hooting mournfully in the woods, he pointed out to me that great grove of trees on the bayou’s bank, and taking me by the arm whispered: ‘Do you see them, lad, do you see them?’

“‘“It was almost dark where we stood alone in the deep grass, and the wind made strange sounds as it swept across the flat.

“‘“‘I have never breathed to a mortal a word of this story, lad,’ said my uncle, ‘but it must out. Listen; when I was a child my grandmother told me the legend of San Jacinto. The next day she died. She told it to me at midnight on this very spot. There was a storm raging, and the furious wind beat us under this old oak for shelter. My grandmother’s eyes, ordinarily so dim and weak, blazed like stars. She seemed fifty years younger as she raised her trembling hand towards the old battle ground and said:

“‘“““Child, for the first time in many years a human tongue is about to reveal the secret that this silent spot holds in its eternal bosom. I will now tell you the legend of San Jacinto as told me by my father’s half-brother. He was a silent, moody man, fond of reading and solitary walks. One day I found him weeping. When he saw me he brushed the tears away from his eyes and said gently:

“‘“““‘Is that you, little one? Come and I will tell you something that I have kept locked in my breast for many a year. There is a mournful legend connected with this spot that must be told. Sit by my side, and I will tell it you. I had it from my grandmother’s sister, who was a well known character in her day. How well I remember her words. She was a gentle and lovely woman, and her sweet and

musical tones added interest to the quaint and beautiful legend.

““““““Once upon a time,” she said, “I was riding with my uncle’s stepfather across this valley, when he gazed upon that grove of trees and said:

““““““‘Have you ever heard the legend of San Jacinto?’

““““““‘Nay,’ I said.

““““““‘I will tell it thee,’ he said. ‘Many years ago when I was a lad, my father and I stopped in the shade there to rest. The sun was just setting, and he pointed to the spot and said:

““““““““My son, I am growing old and will not be with you long. There is an old legend connected with this ground, and I feel that it should be told you. A long time ago, before you were born my grandfather one day—””””””””””

“See here, you old blatherskite,” said the *Post* reporter, “you’ve got this story back about 600 years before the Pontius Pilate’s time now. Don’t you know a news item from an inscription on the pyramids? Our paper doesn’t use plate matter. Why don’t you work this gag of yours off on the syndicates?”

The aged hermit then frowned and reached under his coat tail, and the reporter ran swiftly, but in a dignified manner, to the *Hoodoo Jane* and embarked. But there is a legend about the San Jacinto battle ground somewhere in the neighborhood, if one could only get at it.

(*Houston Daily Post*, Sunday morning, April 19, 1896.)

Binkley's Practical School of Journalism

Last Tuesday afternoon a ragged and disreputable-looking man was noticed standing on a corner of Main Street. Several persons who had occasion to pass a second time along the street saw him still standing there on their return.

He seemed to be waiting for someone. Finally a young man came down the sidewalk, and the ragged man sprang upon him without saying a word and engaged him in fierce combat.

The young man defended himself as well as he could, but he had been severely handled before the bystanders could separate them. Of course no policeman was in sight, and the affair ended with as little noise and confusion as it began with. The young man slunk away with a black eye and a bruised cheek, and the ragged man with a look of intense satisfaction on his face turned off' down a side street.

A Post Man who had viewed the occurrence was struck with something extraordinary in the man's appearance, and, satisfied that there was more in the situation than appeared on the face of it, followed the aggressor. As he came up behind him, the disreputable-looking man said aloud to himself in a voice that expressed a deep and triumphant joy:

"That's the last of the lot. After all, the pursuit of revenge gives more pleasure than its attainment. I have robbed my existence of its aim."

The man continued his course, turning corners in a hesitating way, with the manner of one unfamiliar with the town, and after a time entered an obscure saloon on Congress Street.

The Post Man also entered, and sipping a glass of water, which he begged of the saloon man, he saw the ragged man seat himself at a small table. Although his attire was mean and torn, and his hair disheveled and uncared for, his face showed evidence of much intelligence that rather belied his uncouth dress.

Spurred by curiosity, the Post Man also took a chair at the table. With the tact and enterprise of his craft he soon engaged the mysterious stranger in conversation and found him, as he had expected, to be a man of education and manners.

“When you tell me you are a newspaper man,” said he with a graceful wave of his hand, “you compel my confidence. I shall tell you my story. I once ran a newspaper myself.”

He rapped on the table, and when the waiter came he fished up from the depths of his rags a lean pocketbook, from which he shook upon the table a single dollar. Handing this to the waiter, he said:

“A bottle of your best wine and some good cigars.”

“Really,” said the Post Man, as he placed two fingers in his vest pocket, “I can not allow you—you must let me—”

“Not at all,” said the ragged man with dignity, “I have ordered.”

The Post Man awaited with impatience the narrative of his strange entertainer.

“My name is Binkley,” said the ragged man. “I am the founder of Binkley’s Practical School of Journalism: the dollar I have just spent is the last dollar I have in the world, and the man I licked up town is the last one of the editorial and reportorial staff of my newspaper that I have treated in the same manner.

“About a year ago I had \$15,000 in cash to invest. I could have invested it in many things that would have been safe and paid a fair percent, but I unluckily conceived an original idea for making a good deal more.

“I understood the newspaper business, as I had served eight or ten years on a first-class journal before I fell heir to the \$15,000 on the death of an aunt. I had noticed that every newspaper in the country is besieged with ambitious youths who desire a position in order that they may learn journalism. They are for the most part college graduates, and a great many of them care little for the salaries connected with the positions. They are after experience.

“The idea struck me that they would be willing to pay handsomely for situations where they could imbibe the art of practical journalism as found in a first-class newspaper office. Several Schools of Journalism had already been started in the country and were succeeding well. I believed that a school of this nature, combined with a live, prospering newspaper that had a good circulation would prove a gold mine to its originator. In a school they could only learn a theory, in

my school both theory and practice would walk hand in hand.

“It was a great idea.

“I found a newspaper that would sell out. It was in a large Southern city: I don’t care to give its name. The proprietor was in ill health and wanted to leave the country. It was a good plant, and it was clearing \$3,000 a year above expenses. I got it for \$12,000 cash, put \$3,000 in bank and sat down and wrote out a neat little advertisement to catch the young would-be journalists. I sent these advertisements to some big Northern and Eastern papers and waited for responses.

“My paper was well known, and the idea of getting a place on it to learn journalism seemed to strike the people just right. I advertised that as there were only a limited number of places to be filled, I would have to consider applications in the form of bids, and the one bidding highest for each position got it.

“You wouldn’t believe it if I told the number of answers I got. I filed everything for about a week, and then I looked over the references they sent me, sized up the bids and selected my force. I ordered them to report on a certain day, and they were on time, eager to go to work. I got \$50 per week from my editorial writer; \$40 from my city editor; \$25 each from three reporters; \$20 from a dramatic critic; \$35 from a literary editor, and \$30 each from night and telegraph editors. I also accepted three special writers, who paid me \$15 per week each for doing special assignments. I was managing editor and was to direct, criticize and instruct the staff.

“I discharged the old force, and after an hour’s course of instruction I turned my new staff loose upon their duties. Most of them had graduated with high honors at college and were of wealthy families, who could afford to pay well for the splendid advantage of entering them in Binkley’s Practical School of Journalism.

“When the staff dispersed, eager and anxious, to their several duties, I leaned back in my revolving chair with a smile of satisfaction. Here was an income of \$1,400 per month coming from and not paid to my staff, besides the \$3,000 yearly profit from the paper. Oh, it was a good thing.

“Of course, I expected a little crudeness and stiffness about the work of my staff at first, but I calculated that they would grow on the side of fine writing rather than

at first, but I calculated that they would err on the side of time writing rather than otherwise. I lit a cigar and strolled through the editorial rooms. The leader writer was at his desk working away, his high, intellectual forehead and broadcloth clothes presenting a fine appearance. The literary editor was consulting an encyclopedia with a knitted brow, and the dramatic critic was pasting a picture of Shakespeare above his desk. The city force were out news gathering.

“I began to feel sorry for people who were unable to think up such a fine scheme as I had. Everything was working as smooth as you please. I went downstairs and, rendered reckless by success, I hunted up an old friend and confided to him my wonderful scheme. He was impressed, and we hied ourselves to a caravansary and opened bottle after bottle in honor of the idea.

“When I returned to the office, the entire staff was there with their day’s work turned in. The truth is I was so exhilarated by what I had taken that I hardly knew what I was reading when I looked over their copy, but with a mistaken confidence in the ability of my scholars, I let the stuff all go on the file, and shortly afterward the foreman carried it away. I instructed the night editor as to his duties and went home, to dream of my good fortune.

“The next morning I came down town about 9 o’clock, and it seemed to me I couldn’t see anything but newsboys. The town was full of them, and people were buying my paper as fast as the boys could hand them out. I fairly swelled with satisfaction and pride. As I neared the office I saw five men with shotguns standing on the sidewalk.

“One of them caught sight of me, and took a snap shot at me as I turned the corner. A buckshot went through my ear and several through my hat. I didn’t wait for explanation, as the other four men also tried to get a shot at me, and I cut around the corner and dodged into a back lot full of empty dry goods boxes.

“A newsboy went by, calling the paper, and I whistled him up to a crack in the fence and bought one. I thought perhaps there might be something in the paper that had offended somebody.

“I crawled into a big box and opened the paper. The more I read the wilder I became. Excuse me for changing the subject,” continued the ragged man, “but you said something a while ago in reference to this liquid refreshment, which I perceive is already finished.”

The Best Man stammered, hesitated, felt in his vest pocket once more and then

The Post man stammered, hesitated, felt in his vest pocket once more and then arose, and taking the saloon man aside, whispered with him for about fifteen minutes. The result was that the saloon man brought another bottle of wine, but with a very bad grace, slamming the bottle and glasses upon the table in an ill-bred and ungracious manner.

The ragged man smiled, filled the glasses, and then, his face taking on a deep frown as his mind reverted to his story, he continued.

“I turned first to the local page. The first item that met my eyes was this:

“‘Colonel J. Henry Gwinn, the administrator of the Perkins estate, has robbed the family of the deceased of over \$75,000. The heirs will bring suit for that amount at an early date.’

“I remembered that the man who fired at me looked a good deal like Colonel J. Henry Gwinn. The next item was as follows:

“‘A certain city alderman residing not many miles from No. 1204 West Thirty-Second Street, has recently built a \$10,000 residence. Votes in the city council must be getting higher.’

“There were about fifteen items of the same kind and every one of them was a dead shot for big damages. I glanced at the society columns and saw a few harmless little squibs like the following:

‘Mrs. General Crowder gave a big ball last night on Johnson Avenue. It does seem like she would get a divorce from that ticket agent in Kansas City before she tried to cut such a swell as old Crowder’s wife.’

“‘Henry Baumgarten beat his wife again last night.’

“‘The Ladies’ Histrionic Society met last evening over Klein’s music store. Miss Sadie Dodson was overcome by the heat and was taken home in a hack. Heat! That’s a new name for it.’

“These are some of the least objectionable items. There were some that made my hair rise slowly on my head as I read them.

“Mechanically I turned to the editorial page, thinking it hardly possible there

could be anything wrong with it. The first article charged every city and county official with corruption in office, calling them by name, and wound up by offering to give \$10,000 to any charity fund if the paper did not prove every charge within ten days.

“I crept through the lot, knocked a board off the next fence and made my way to the back stairway of the office. I found two of my reporters cursing and kicking in the back yard. One of them was in a heap of soft coal dust and the other was hanging by his coat tail on a picket fence. Somebody had thrown them out the window.

“Sick at heart I crept upstairs to the editorial rooms. There was considerable noise going on. I went in easy as I could and looked around. My \$50 editorial writer was in a corner with half a chair in his hands defending himself manfully against a quorum of the city council. He had laid out three of them and was putting up a great fight. The city editor was lying on the floor with four men sitting on him, and a large, angry German was trying to punch the dramatic editor off the top of the book case with a piece of gas pipe.

“It is enough to discourage any man to have a staff that is paying him \$1,400 per month treated that way.

“I went into my private office, and the enraged public followed me there. I knew it was no use to argue with them, so I pulled out my checkbook and tried to compromise. When all the money I had in the bank was exhausted, and another batch of infuriated citizens came in, I gave up in despair.

“At 11 o’clock the business office force came up in a body and resigned. At 12 o’clock damage suits were filed against the paper to the amount of \$200,000, and I knew every one of them was good for a judgment. I went downstairs and got about nine drinks and came back. I met the editorial writer on the stairs, and I hit him on the point of the chin without saying a word. He still held one leg of the chair in his hand, and he swiped me over the head with it and ran. When I got inside I found that the dramatic critic was about to win the day. He was a college man and a great football player. He had thrashed the big German and had pulled the four citizens off the city editor, and they were waging great battle with the foe. Just then the society editor dashed into the room barefooted, in his shirt and trousers, and I heard a tremendous screeching and chattering, as if a thousand parrots were talking at once.

“‘Run!’ he gasped out. ‘The women are coming.’

“I looked out the window and saw that the sidewalk was full of them. I made a break for a back window, jumped off onto a shed, and never stopped until I was a mile out of town. That was the end of Binkley’s Practical School of Journalism. I have been tramping about the country ever since.

“The fellow I attacked on the street today was a special Houston correspondent I had engaged. I had a little grudge against him on account of the first communication he sent the paper. I gave him *carte blanche* to send in what he thought best, and he wired us 40,000 words the first day about the mockingbirds singing in the trees by the courthouse, while the snow was three feet deep in Dakota. Do you not think I have had some hard luck?”

“I must tell you,” said the Post Man, “that I don’t believe your story at all.”

The ragged man replied sadly and reproachfully: “Did I not pay my last dollar for refreshments while telling it to you? Have I asked you for anything?”

“Well,” said the Post Man, after reflecting a while, “it may be true, but—”

(*Houston Daily Post*, Sunday morning, February 16, 1896.)

A New Microbe

There is a Houston man who is a great lover of science and an ardent student of her mysteries. He has a small laboratory fitted up at home and spends a great deal of his time in experimenting with chemicals and analyzing different substances.

Of late he has been much interested in various germ theories, and has somewhat neglected his business to read Pasteur's and Koch's writings, and everything he could procure relating to sundry kinds of bacilli.

He has bought a new 900-power magnifying instrument, and hopes before long to add his quota to the number of valuable discoveries concerning germ life.

Last Tuesday night there was a sociable and supper given at one of the churches.

The man's wife wanted him to go, but he begged off, saying that he would much rather stay at home and have a good quiet time with his microscope, while she went and took the children.

He had been reading ex-State Geologist Dumble's report of his analysis of Houston bayou water, and he was anxious to verify that gentleman's statements by an examination of his own.

So, immediately after supper he went through the kitchen and found a tin bucket full of water sitting on a bench by the hydrant and carried it at once to his laboratory and, fastening himself in, went to work.

After a time he heard his wife and children leave the house on their way to the supper at the church, which was only a block or two away, and he congratulated himself on the nice quiet time he was going to have.

He worked away for nearly three hours, repeatedly examining through the powerful microscope samples of the bayou water from the bucket.

At last he slapped his hand on his knee in triumph.

"Dumble's wrong!" he exclaimed. "He says it's the *hybadid cystallis*, and I'm

certain he's mistaken. The inhabitants of this water are schizomycetic bacteria, but they are neither macrocci of roseopersicina, nor have they iso-diametric cells.

"Can it be that I have discovered a new germ? Is scientific fame within my grasp?"

He seized his pen and began to write. In a little while his family came home and his wife came up to the laboratory. He generally refused to let her in, but on that occasion he opened the door and welcomed her enthusiastically.

"Ellen," he cried, "since you have been gone I have won fame and perhaps fortune. I have discovered a new bacterium in the bayou water. Science describes nothing like it. I shall call it after you and your name will pass into eternal fame. Just take a look through the microscope."

His wife shut one eye and looked into the cylinder.

"Funny little round things, ain't they?" she said. "Are they injurious to the system?"

"Sure death. Get one of 'em in your alimentary canal and you're a goner. I'm going to write to the London *Lancet* and the New York Academy of Sciences tonight. What shall we call 'em, Ellen? Let's see—Ellenobes, or Ellenites, or what?"

"Oh, John, you wretch!" shrieked his wife, as she caught sight of the tin bucket on the table. "You've got my bucket of Galveston oysters that I bought to take to the church supper! Microbes, indeed!"

(*Houston Daily Post*, Sunday morning, November 15, 1895.)

Vereton Villa

The following story of Southern life and manners won a prize offered by a Boston newspaper, and was written by a young lady in Boston, a teacher in one of the advanced schools of that city. She has never visited the South, but the faithful local color and character drawing shows an intimate acquaintance with the works of Mrs. H. B. Stowe, Albion W. Tourgee and other well known chroniclers of Southern life. Everyone living in the South will recognize the accurate portraits of Southern types of character and realistic description of life among the Southern planters.

Will you go, Penelope?" asked Cyrus.

"It is my duty," I said. "It is a grand mission to go to Texas and carry what light I can to its benighted inhabitants. The school I am offered will pay me well, and if I can teach the savage people of that region something of our culture and refinement, I shall be happy."

"Well, then, goodbye," said Cyrus, offering me his hand.

I had never seen him so passionately aroused.

I took his hand for a second and then got upon the train that was to bear me to my new field of duty.

Cyrus and I had been engaged to be married for fifteen years. He was professor of chemistry in the Massachusetts State University. I had received an offer of \$40 a month to teach a private school in a little town in Texas, and had accepted it. Cyrus received \$20 per month from his chair in the university. He had waited for fifteen years for me to save up enough money for us to get married. I seized this chance in Texas, resolved to live economically, and in fifteen more years, if I kept the school that long, we could marry.

My board was to cost me nothing, as the DeVeres, one of the oldest and most aristocratic families anywhere in the South, offered me a place in their home. There were several children in the family, and they were anxious to secure a competent teacher for the little school which they attended.

The station where I got off was called Houston, and I found there a team waiting

to convey me to Vereton, the little town six miles away, which was my destination.

The driver was a colored man, who approached me and asked respectfully if I was Miss Cook. My trunk was placed in the vehicle, which was an old rickety ambulance drawn by a pair of wretched mules, and I mounted beside the driver, whose name, he said, was Pete.

While we were driving along a shady road, Pete suddenly burst into tears and sobbed as if his heart were breaking.

“My friend,” said I, “will you not tell me what is the matter?”

“Ah, missie,” he said between sobs, “I happen to look at dat busted link hangin’ down from dat trace chain en it remind me of Massa Linkum what am in heb’n, what gib us po’ slaves freedom.”

“Pete,” said I, “do not weep. In the mansions of the blessed above, your godlike liberator awaits you. Singing among the hosts of heaven, Abraham Lincoln wears the brightest crown of glory.”

I laid my arm gently across Pete’s shoulder.

The poor, softhearted, grateful man, whose dark skin covered a heart as pure as snow, still sobbed at the remembrance of the martyred Lincoln, and I made him lay his head upon my breast, where he sobbed unrestrainedly as I drove the mules myself the rest of the way to Vereton.

Vereton was a typical Southern home. I had been informed that the DeVere family were still very wealthy, in spite of having lost a great deal during the rebellion, and that they still lived in the true aristocratic planter style.

The house was two-storied and square, with big white pillars in front. Large verandahs ran entirely around the house, about which climbed dense masses of ivy and honeysuckle.

As I alighted from the ambulance, I heard a chattering and saw a large mule run out the front door, driven by a lady with a broom. The mule lay down on the verandah and the lady advanced to meet me.

“Ah you Miss Cook?” she asked, in the soft slurring accent.

I bowed.

“Ah am Mrs. DeVere,” she said. “Come in, and look out for that dam mule. I can’t keep him out of the house.”

I went in the parlor and looked about me in amazement. The room was magnificently furnished, but I could see the Southern sloth and carelessness visible everywhere. A wheelbarrow full of dried mortar stood in one corner that had been left there when the masons built the house. Five or six chickens were roosting on the piano and a pair of pants were hanging on the chandelier.

Mrs. DeVere had a pale, aristocratic face, with Grecian features, and snowy hair arranged carefully in becoming ringlets. She was dressed in black satin and wore flashing diamonds on her hands and at her throat. Her eyes were black and piercing and her eyebrows dark. As I took my seat, she drew a long piece of plug tobacco from a silver card receiver, and bit off a chew.

“Do you indulge?” she asked smilingly.

I shook my head.

“The h——l you don’t!” she replied.

Just then a horse dashed up to the verandah—or gallery, as they call it in Texas—and someone dismounted and entered the room.

I shall never forget my first sight of Aubrey DeVere.

He was fully seven feet in height, and his face was perfect. It was the absolute image of Andrea del Sarto’s painting of the young Saint John. His eyes were immense, dark, and filled with a haunting sadness, and his pale, patrician features and air of *haut monde* stamped him at once as the descendant of a long line of aristocrats.

He wore a dress suit of the latest cut, but I noticed that he was barefooted, and down from each side of his mouth trickled a dark brown stream of tobacco juice.

On his head was an enormous Mexican sombrero. He wore no shirt. but his dress

coat, thrown back from his broad chest, revealed an enormous scintillating diamond tied with a piece of twine strung into the meshes of his gauze undershirt.

“My son, Aubrey; Miss Cook,” said Mrs. DeVere languidly.

Mr. DeVere took a chew of tobacco from his mouth and tossed it behind the piano.

“The lady who has kindly consented to assume our scholastic duties, I presume,” he said, in a deep musical baritone.

I inclined my head.

“I know your countrymen,” he said with a dark frown upon his handsome face. “They still grope among their benighted traditions of ignorance and prejudice. What do you think of Jefferson Davis?”

I looked into his flashing eye without flinching.

“He was a traitor,” I said.

Mr. DeVere laughed musically, and stooping down drew a pine splinter from one of his toes. Then he approached his mother and saluted her with that chivalrous reverence and courtesy that still lingers among sons of the South.

“What shall we have for supper, mammy?” he said.

“Whatever you d—— please,” said Mrs. DeVere.

Aubrey DeVere reached out his hand and seized one of the chickens that roosted upon the piano. He wrung its neck and threw its quivering and fluttering body upon the delicate Brussels carpet. He took a long stride and stood before me, towering like an avenging god, with one arm upraised, the other pointing to the fowl, struggling in its death agonies.

“That is the South,” he cried, in a voice of thunder; “the bleeding and dying South after Gettysburg. Tonight you will feast upon its carcass, as your countrymen have been doing for the last thirty years.”

He hurled the head of the chicken into my face with a terrible oath, and then

HE BANGED THE HEAD OF THE CHICKEN INTO MY FACE WITH A TERRIBLE OATH, and then dropped on one knee and bowed his kingly head.

“Pardon me, Miss Cook,” he said, “I do not mean to offend you. Twenty-eight years ago today, my father was killed at the battle of Shiloh.”

When the supper bell rang I was invited into a long, lofty room, wainscoted with dark oak and lighted by paraffine candles.

Aubrey DeVere sat at the foot of the table and carved. He had taken off his coat, and his clinging undershirt revealed every muscle of a torso as grand as that of the Dying Gladiator in the Vatican at Rome. The supper was truly a Southern one. At one end was an enormous grinning opossum and sweet potatoes, while the table was covered with dishes of cabbage, fried chicken, fruit cake, persimmons, hot raw biscuits, blackhaws, Maypops, fried catfish, maple syrup, hominy, ice cream, sausages, bananas, crackling bread, pineapples, squashes, wild grapes and apple pies.

Pete, the colored man, waited upon us, and once in handing Mr. DeVere the gravy he spilled a little of it upon the tablecloth. With a yell like a tiger, Aubrey DeVere sprang to his feet and hurled his carving knife to the handle in Pete’s breast. The poor colored man fell to the floor, and I ran and lifted his head.

“Goodbye, missie,” he whispered. “I hear de angels singing, and I sees de bressed Mars Abraham Linkum smilin’ at me from near de great white th’one. Goodbye missie, Ol’ Pete am goin’ home.’>

I rose and faced Mr. DeVere.

“Inhuman monster!” I cried. “You have killed him!”

He touched a silver bell and another servant appeared.

“Take this body out and bring me a clean knife,” he commanded. “Resume your seat, Miss Cook. Like all your countrymen, you evince a penchant for dark meat. Mammy, dear, can I send you a choice bit of the ’possum?”

The next day I met the four DeVere children, and found them very bright and lovable. Two were boys and two girls, ranging from 10 to 16 years of age. The

little school house was half a mile away down a beautiful country lane, full of grass and flowers. I had fifteen scholars in my school, and except for a few things my life at Vereton would have been like Paradise. The first month I saved up \$42. My salary was \$40, and I made the other two by loaning small sums to my scholars for a few days at a time, for which they paid me from 10 to 25 cents interest.

I took a curious interest in studying the character of Aubrey De Vere. His was one of the noblest and grandest natures I had ever known, but it was so far influenced by the traditions and customs of the people with whom he had lived, that scarcely a vestige of its natural good remained.

He had been splendidly educated at the University of Virginia, and was an accomplished orator, musician and painter, but from his early childhood he had been allowed to give way to every impulse and desire, and his manhood showed sadly his lack of self-control.

One evening I was in the music room in the second story of the De Vere mansion, playing over that loveliest of Schubert's Leider, "Hark, Hark, the Lark," when Aubrey De Vere entered. Of late, on account of some strange whim, he had become more careful in his dress.

This evening he wore a shirt, thrown open in front, exhibiting his massive collar bone, and a black velvet smoking jacket, trimmed with gold braid in a fanciful design. On his hands were white kid gloves, and I noticed that his feet, on which he absolutely refused to wear shoes, had been recently washed at the pump. He was in one of his most bitter and sneering moods, and launched forth into a most acrimonious tirade against Grant, Lincoln, George Francis Train and other heroes of the Union. He sat down upon the center table and began scratching one of his ankles with the toe of the other foot in a manner that he knew always irritated me.

Resolved not to become angry, I continued playing. Suddenly he said:

"Pardon me, Miss Cook, but you struck a wrong note in effecting the run in that diminished seventh."

"I think not," I answered.

"You are a liar!" he replied. "You struck a natural, when it should have been a

sharp. 'This is the note you should have played."

I heard something swish through the air. From where he sat on the center table, he shot between his teeth a solid stream of tobacco juice with deadly aim full upon the black key of A-sharp on the piano. I rose from the stool, somewhat nettled, but smiling.

"You are offended," he said, sarcastically. "You do not like our Southern ways. You think me a *mauvais sujet*. You think we lack aplomb and *savoir-vivre*. With your Boston culture, you think you can detect a false note in our courtesy, a certain lack of fineness and refinement in our manners. Do not deny it."

"Mr. DeVere," I said coldly, "your taunts are nothing to me. I am here to do my duty. In your own house you are at liberty to act as you choose. Will you move one of your feet and allow me to pass?"

Mr. DeVere suddenly sprang from the table and clasped me fiercely in his arms.

"Penelope," he cried, in a terrible voice. "I love you! You miserable little dried-up, washed-out, white-eyed, sallow-cheeked, prim, angular Yankee schoolma'am. I loved you from the moment I laid eyes on you. Will you marry me?"

I struggled to get free.

"Put me down," I cried. "Oh, if Cyrus were only here!"

"Cyrus!" shouted Mr. DeVere. "Who is Cyrus? Cyrus shall never have you, I swear."

He raised me above his head with one hand and hurled me through the plate glass window into the yard below. Then he threw the furniture down upon me, piece by piece, the piano last of all. I then heard him rush down the stairs, and in a moment felt a stream of liquid trickling down among the broken furniture. I recognized the acrid smell of petroleum, heard the scratch of a match, and the fierce roaring of flames; felt a sudden scorching heat, and remembered no more.

When I regained consciousness I was lying in my own bed, and Mrs. DeVere was sitting beside me, fanning me.

I tried to rise, but was too weak.

“You must keep still,” said Mrs. DeVere gently. “You have been ill with fever for two weeks. You must excuse my son; I am afraid he startled you. He loves you very much, but he is so impulsive.”

“Where is he?” I asked.

“He has gone to bring Cyrus, and it is time he had returned.”

“How did I escape from that dreadful fire?”

“Aubrey rescued you. After his fit of passion had passed he dashed aside the burning furniture and carried you back upstairs.”

A few minutes later I heard the sound of footsteps, and looking up saw Aubrey DeVere and Cyrus Potts standing by my bedside.

“Cyrus,” I cried.

“How de do, Penelope,” said Cyrus.

Before I could reply there was a loud and fiendish yell outside. The front door was broken down and a dozen masked men dashed into the room.

“We hear there is a d—— Yankee in here,” they cried. “Lynch him!”

Aubrey DeVere seized a table by the leg and killed every man of the lynching party.

“Cyrus Potts,” he thundered, “kiss that schoolma’am, or I’ll brain you as I did those other fellows.”

Cyrus dabbed an icy kiss in my direction.

A week later Cyrus and I left for Boston. His salary has been raised to \$25 per month and I had saved \$210.

Aubrey DeVere accompanied us to the train. Under his arm he carried a keg of blasting powder. As our train rolled out he sat down upon this keg and touched a lighted match to it.

One of his great toes fell through the car window and fell in my lap.

Cyrus is not of a jealous disposition, and I now have that great toe in a bottle of alcohol on my writing desk. We are married now, and I will never taken another trip to the South.

The Southern people are too impulsive.

(*Houston Daily Post*, Sunday morning, May 10, 1896.)

Whiskey Did It

A solemn philanthropist was standing at a corner of the Market House square yesterday making a calculation in his head as to how long it would take a man to save enough beer money to build Solomon's temple. While he was musing, a small, slender policeman with a fiery eye came along, dragging by the wrist a big negro man about twice as large as himself.

The policeman stopped for a moment on the steps to rest, and the philanthropist, with a pitying glance, said to the negro:

"My colored friend, what has been the cause of your coming to such a sorry plight? To what do you attribute your downfall into the clutches of the law?"

"Whisky, boss," said the negro, rolling his eyes wildly at the officer.

"Ah, I thought so," said the philanthropist, taking out his note book. "I am making a memorandum of your case for the benefit of some other poor wretch who is also struggling with the demon. Now, how did whisky bring you to this condition?"

"It done it in dis way," said the negro, ducking his head as the policeman raised his hand to brush a fly off his nose. "I is one ob de wust niggers in dis town, en dey don't no policeman got sand 'nuff to try en 'rest me fo' de last two years. Dis mawnin' dis here mis'able little dried-up ossifer what's got me, goes out an' fills hisse'f up wid mean whisky till he ain't know what danger he am in, an' he come an' scoop me up. Dis little runt wid brass buttons wouldn't er tetch me ef he ain't plum full er whisky. Yes, boss, de whisky am done it, an' nuffin' else."

The philanthropist put up his note book and walked away, while the officer whacked the negro over the head a couple of times with his club and dragged him down the steps, exclaiming:

"Come along 'n shuzzer mouse, you blacksh rascal. Strongarm e'r law gossher zis time, 'n no mistake."

(*Houston Daily Post*, Sunday morning, April 26, 1896.)

Nothing New Under the Sun

The wind tears at the shingles that poorly cover the attic at the top of seven flights of stairs. The snow crystals, blown as fine as frost by the force of the tempest, buzz through crannies and sift upon the mean bed. Some shutters outside slam and creak with every frequent gale, and the snow clouds sweeping southward suffer a splendid blue-tinged star to turn a radiant eye downward upon the world.

Through a rift in the roof of the attic the star alone sees what transpires there that night. On the bare floor stands some rickety furniture, and in the center is a table on which lie paper, pens and ink, and stands a lighted candle.

The man who sits in the wooden chair with his elbows on the table, and a hand clenched beneath his chin, does not feel the bitter cold, albeit he is shivering in every limb. His hair is tossed back confusedly from a high brow, and in his eyes there shines a light that the star knows as it twinkles down a brotherly greeting. Genius is heaven-born and its light comes from a height on a level with the source of the star's rays.

Suddenly the man seizes the pen and writes. He bends over the paper and his hand flies. He does not heed the howling wind or the deadly snow mist that falls around him. He writes and writes. The clock strikes, and when the hour has passed, and it clangs again, he dashes down the pen, starts to his feet and raises a hand with the fine gesture of a conqueror. It is a natural movement, for there is no one to see him but the star. "By Heaven!" he mutters, "I have won. I am the first in the field. The thought is mine and mine alone. It will live forever. There is nothing like it in literature; but why, oh, why, have I been made to follow such rugged, weary paths to have it come upon me in a moment as easily as falls a moulting feather from the breast of the eagle?"

He sits down again and reads what he has written. Then he lays it lovingly down. He does not alter a letter or erase a word. He knows it is perfect, and so tells himself; for true genius knows no mock humility.

The man's eyes soften. The fire dies from them, leaving a warm glow that the star does not respond to. About his lips plays a lingering, thin smile that shows half pleasure, half contempt. He is artist enough to know that he has created an original idea and he knows its value

original idea, and he knows its value.

His far-focused gaze sees warmth, love, pleasure, wine, crystal, mirth, and living beauty—things that he is hungering for with a wolf-like hunger that adds self-contempt to his starved soul's gnawings.

Suddenly the sharp whip of the present cracks in his ear and the cold strikes to his marrow and rouses him to action. He rises, dons a ragged overcoat, goes out the door, and down the seven flights of stairs. He returns directly with bread and cheese, wrapped in an old newspaper. He sits again, gulping down the food, which tastes like nectar of the gods. The star looks down through the crack and twinkles with heavenly sympathy, for the man has fought a long and very dreary fight to the end that he is now eating cheese crumbs, with drifting snow falling upon his shoulders. For the first time in many years the man wears the look of success.

He has gained in an hour what others have strived for during a life time without success. As the man eats he glances idly at the old newspaper that contains his food. The star sees him suddenly grip the paper convulsively with both hands, stare with burning eyes among its columns, and then, with a hoarse choking oath, stumble to his feet, whirl, and fall upon the bare floor.

In the morning, since he does not appear as usual, two men break open the attic door and find him there.

“Suicide?” says one.

“Starvation, more likely,” says the other.

“No, here's bread and cheese. Case for the coroner, anyway. Cheerful sort of a den he lived in. Hullo, what's this he's been writing?”

One of them reads what the dead man has written, and says:

“It's peculiar stuff. I can't just make it out. Look at his hand; he's got an old newspaper in it gripped like a vise.”

He stoops and forces the old paper from the cold fingers. He examines it from curiosity and dully stumbles upon the truth.

“Say, Bill,” he says, “here’s a funny thing. This old newspaper’s got an article in it very near exactly the same as that thing the gent wrote himself.”

(*Houston Daily Post*, Friday morning, November 29, 1895.)

Led Astray

There was no happier family in all Houston than the O'Malleys. Mr. O'Malley held a responsible position in one of our large breweries, and was a thrifty citizen and an indulgent husband and father. His son Pat was part owner of a flourishing little grocery, and also played the E-flat horn in the band that discourses sweet music Sunday afternoons in a building on one of our quietest unpaved avenues.

The light and hope of the family was the youngest daughter, Kathleen, an ebon-haired girl of 19, with Madonna-like features, and eyes as black as the wings of the crow. They lived in a little rose-embowered cottage near the corner where the street car turns.

Kathleen was engaged to be married to Fergus O'Hollihan, a stalwart and handsome young man, who came to see her every night, with exquisitely washed hands and face, and wet hair, brushed down low upon a forehead that did not exactly retreat, but seemed to rather fall back for reinforcements. On Sunday nights Kathleen and Fergus would wander arm in arm over to the *Gesundheit Bier Garten*, and while the string band in the pavilion played the dear old Fatherland melodies they would sit at a little round table in some dark corner and click glasses in the most friendly and lover-like manner. The marriage was to come off in June, and Kathleen, after the custom of her people, had already prepared her bridal trousseau and housekeeping effects. In her wardrobe were great piles of beautifully embroidered things in fine linen and damask; heaps of table cloths, napkins and towels, and in the big drawers of her bureau were piles of dainty, lace-trimmed garments that Kathleen, being a modest Irish maiden and not a New York millionairess, kept shyly hidden from view, instead of having their description printed in the *Post*. Kathleen had made these garments herself, working with loving care and patience, and they were intended as a guarantee of good faith, and not for publication. The girls in the neighborhood all envied Kathleen her good luck, for Fergus was a fine-looking young man, and his business was prospering. He could drink more whiskey, tell funnier jokes and sing "The Wearin' of the Green" so you could hear it farther on a still night than could any other young man of their acquaintance.

So, dark-haired Kathleen was happy, bending over her work with rosy cheeks and smiling lips, while, alas! already the serpent was at work that was to enter

ner Eden.

One day Kathleen was sitting at her window, half hidden by the climbing honeysuckle vines, when she saw Fergus pass down the street with another man, a low-browed, treacherous-looking person, with shifty eyes and a snakelike manner.

It was with a deep foreboding and a strange sinking of the heart that she recognized Fergus' companion as a notorious member of the Young Men's Christian Association of Houston. From that moment Kathleen's peace of mind fled. When Fergus came to see her that night he seemed abstracted and different. His hand trembled when he took the glass of rye she handed him, and when he sang for her

“Let the huntsman graze his hounds
As the farmer does his grounds,”

that sad and melancholy old song that Irishmen always sing when they feel particularly jolly, his voice sounded plaintive and full of pathos.

Kathleen was far too wise to chide him. She tried to be gay and cheerful, though the change in Fergus made her heart very sad. Again the next day, and once more the following day but one, did she see him with the low-browed tempter that had wrought the change.

Day by day Fergus grew morose and pale. His once jolly and laughing face grew stern and thoughtful. He rarely spoke to anyone, and once when Mr. O'Malley handed him a big schooner from a keg fresh from the brewery, he heaved such a deep and mournful sigh that the foam flew half across the room.

“Kathleen,” said her papa one day, “what's the matter wid that long-legged omadhaun Fergus? He looks like he was walking over his own grave.”

“Oh, papa,” said Kathleen, bursting into tears, “I do not know, he seems to be full of bayou water.”

Let us follow Fergus and the sinister stranger, and see what spell is upon our hero.

William K. Meeks was a member of the notorious Young Men's Christian Association. His parents were honest and reputable citizens of Houston, and they had tried to inculcate in him the best principles, and train him to be a good and useful citizen. When about 18 years of age he met a man on the street one night who persuaded him to visit the rooms of the association.

After taking a bath and joining in the singing of a hymn, he was led into a game of checkers by some smooth talking young man, and finally threw all reserve to the winds and without a thought of his mother or his home, sank back into an arm chair and began to read the editorials in a religious newspaper.

After that his progress in the same direction was easy. He cultivated side whiskers and white ties and fell so swiftly into the alluring ways of his companions that no ice cream and strawberry sociable or Evening of Song in the hall of the association was complete without Mr. Meeks. He became what is known as a "capper" for the hall, and many poor wandering young fellows strolling aimlessly about the streets of Houston have good cause to remember the sly, suave, plausible voice of the low-browed William Meeks, as he addressed them in insinuating tones, and invited them to the gorgeously lighted rooms of the Young Men's Christian Association.

William Meeks had for a long time had his eye upon Fergus O'Hollihan. The innocent straightforwardness of the young Irishman seemed to mark him as an easy prey.

One day he entered Fergus' store, made some trifling purchase, and then invited him to the hall.

"All right," said Fergus, "I'll walk up with you, as trade is a little dull. Hadn't we better take along a bottle of whiskey to help pass away the time?"

"No," said William, with a sly smile. "There is no need. We have plenty to drink up there."

They passed down the street together, and then it was that Kathleen saw them, and the cloud began to gather over her happy young life.

William led Fergus to the door of the steps leading up to the hall, gave a sharp glance around to see whether they were observed, and they ascended the stairs.

“And then, as they went up the stairs, William Meeks looked back over his shoulder at Fergus O'Hollihan, and saw that he was looking at him with a curious expression on his face.”

“What do you fellows do up there?” asked Fergus, gazing around the hall in wonder.

“We read and sing and pray,” said William. “Now, come over here, Mr. O’Hollihan, I have something to show you.”

William went to a large water cooler in the corner, drew a brimming glass of ice water, and with a cold and cruel smile curling his lips, handed it to Fergus.

Ah, little Kathleen, in thy rose-twined cottage, thy dark eyes have many a tear in waiting. Could love be omnipresent, that sparkling glass of water would be dashed to the floor ere it touched thy lover’s lips!

Fergus took the glass and gazed with wonder at its transparent contents; then seized with some sudden impulse he drained the glass of water to the last drop. As he drank, William Meeks, with a diabolical look of triumph on his face, rubbed his clammy hands together and exulted.

“What is this stuff?” asked Fergus; “this cold, refreshing liquid that with such exquisite freshness thrills through my heated frame? What nectar is this, tasteless, colorless and sweet as the morning air that quenches thirst, and does not excite the senses? Speak, Mr. Meeks, is it to be found elsewhere?”

“It is water,” said William, softly, “and it can be had in plenty.”

“I have often sailed on the bayou,” said Fergus, “and have washed my hands at the hydrant at home, but I have never before seen any water.”

Fergus drank glass after glass from the cooler, and finally suffered William to lead him, reluctant, from the hall.

They parted at the door, and as Fergus went down the street like one in some happy dream, saying softly to himself at intervals: “Water!” “Water!” William Meeks looked after him with a smile of devilish satisfaction upon his dark face.

That evening after he closed the store Fergus started home and suddenly felt an imperious thirst come upon him. He was already a slave to this wonderful new liquid that refreshed him so.

He entered a little corner saloon, where he had been in the habit of stopping to

get a drink. The bartender seized a mug and reached for the bottle under the counter.

“Hold on,” said Fergus; “don’t be so fast. Give me a glass of water, please.”

“You owe me ein dollar und five cents,” he said. “Blease, Mr. Hollihan, bay me now pefore you go py yourself too much grazzy to him remember, und I pe mooch obliged.”

Fergus then threw the money upon the counter and staggered out of the saloon.

He did not go to see Kathleen that night—he was feeling too badly. He was wandering about in an agony of thirst, when he saw a piece of ice as large as a coconut fall from an ice wagon. He seized it in both hands, and hiding himself behind a pile of lumber sucked the ice greedily, with bloodshot eyes and trembling hands.

After that he kept a jug of water in the store behind some barrels under the counter, and when no one was looking he would stoop down, and holding up the jug, let the cursed stuff that was driving the light from Kathleen’s dark eyes trickle down his burning throat.

It was Kathleen’s wedding night. The parlor of the little cottage was brilliantly lit, and roses and evergreens were draped upon the walls. Cape jessamines filled the house with their delicious perfume and wreaths of white lilies were hung upon picture frames and the backs of chairs. The ceremony was to take place at 9 p.m. , and by 7 o’clock the guests had begun to assemble, for the smell of the good things Mrs. O’Malley was cooking pervaded the whole neighborhood.

In the parlor, standing on a trestle decorated with violets and evergreens, stood a keg of whiskey as cold as ice, and on the center table were several beautifully decorated imported glasses, with quite a wedding-like polish upon their shining sides.

Kathleen’s heart grew lighter as the hour approached. “When Fergus is mine,” she said to herself, “I will be so loving and sweet to him that this strange melancholy will leave him. If it doesn’t, I will pull his hair out.”

The minutes crept by, and at half past eight, Kathleen, blushing and timid-eyed,

and looking like the Lorelei that charmed men's souls from their bodies on the purple heights of the Rhine, took her stand by the keg, and shyly drew for her father's guests glass after glass of the ruby liquid, scarcely less red than the glow upon her own fair cheek.

At a quarter to nine Fergus had not come, and all hands began to grow anxious.

At ten minutes to nine, Mr. O'Malley brought in his shotgun and carefully loaded it. Kathleen burst into tears.

Where was Fergus O'Hollihan?

In the garish halls of the Young Men's Christian Association were gathered a group of gay young men.

Little do the majority of our citizens know what scenes go on in places of this kind. Our police well know that these resorts exist, but such is our system of city government that rarely do the guardians of peace set foot in establishments of the kind. Two or three young men were playing checkers, feverishly crowning the kings of their opponents, and watching the board with that hollow-eyed absorption and compressed lips so often noted in men of that class. Another played upon the guitar, while in a corner harsh ribald laughter broke from the lips of a man who was reading the *Austin Statesman*.

At a little table at one side of the room sat Fergus O'Hollihan and William Meeks. Before them, on a waiter, were two large glasses of ice water. William Meeks was speaking in a low, treacherous voice, and Fergus was listening with an abandoned and reckless look upon his face.

"Sobriety," said William, insinuatingly, as his snaky eyes were fixed upon the open and ingenious countenance of Fergus, "sobriety is one of our cardinal virtues. Why should a man debase himself, destroy his brain, deaden his conscience and forge chains that eventually will clog his best efforts and ruin his fondest hopes? Let us be men and live temperate and cleanly lives. Believe me, Mr. O'Hollihan, it is the better plan."

Fergus' unsteady hand went out to the glass of water and he tossed it down his throat. "More," he gasped, gazing with feverish eyes. A member of the association in passing by stopped and laid his hand on William's shoulder.

“Old man,” he said in a whisper, “the boys know you’ve struck a soft thing, but don’t carry it too far. We don’t want to have to bore another artesian well.”

William shot a glance of displeasure at the young man, and he went away.

Just then a quartette began to sing “Come, Thou Fount,” and Fergus, forgetting all his associations and best impulses, joined in with his strong tenor, and William Meeks’ face wore a look of fiendish gloating.

At this moment Kathleen was weeping in her mother’s arms. Mr. O’Malley was just ramming down the wad on the buckshot in his gun, and the beautiful wedding supper was growing cold upon the banquet table.

Suddenly in the street before the hall a brass band began to play an air that was Kathleen’s favorite. It brought Fergus to his senses. He sprang to his feet and overturned the table and William Meeks. William sprang to his feet, rushed to the cooler and drawing a glass of water thrust it into Fergus’ hands. Fergus hurled the glass to the floor and made a dash for the door. The secretary of the association met him there with the water hose and turned it full in his face. Fergus shut his mouth tightly, put the secretary to sleep with one on the point of his chin, and dashed down the stairs into the street.

As the clock struck nine, Mr. O’Malley placed two caps on his gun and one upon his head and started to find his son-in-law elect. The door burst open and Fergus rushed in. Kathleen ran to meet him with open arms, but he waved her sternly aside.

“I have first,” he said, “a duty to perform.” He knelt before the whiskey keg, closed his mouth over the faucet and turned on the handle.

Sing, happy birds, in the green trees, but your songs make not half the melody that ripples in the glad heart of little Kathleen.

When Fergus arose from the keg, he was the same old Fergus once more. He gathered his bride to his heart, and Mr. O’Malley fired both barrels of his gun into the ceiling with joy. Fergus was rescued.

(Houston Daily Post, Sunday morning, April 19, 1896.)

A Story for Men

This little story will be a disappointment to women who read it. They will all say: "I don't see anything in that." Probably there isn't much.

Mrs. Jessamine lives in Houston. You can meet any number of ladies every day out walking on Main Street that resemble her very much. She is not famous or extraordinary in any way. She has a nice family, is in moderate circumstances and lives in her own house. I would call her an average woman if that did not imply that some were below the average, which would be an ungallant insinuation. Mrs. Jessamine is a genuine woman. She always steps on a street car with her left foot first, wears her snowiest lace-trimmed sub-skirts on muddy days, and can cut a magazine, wind a clock, pick walnuts, open a trunk and clean out an inkstand, all with a hairpin. She can take twenty dollars worth of trimming and make over an old dress so you couldn't tell it from a brand new fifteen dollar one. She is intelligent, reads the newspapers regularly and once cut a cooking recipe out of an old magazine that took the prize offered by a newspaper for the best original directions for making a green tomato pie. Her husband has such confidence in her household management that he trusts her with the entire housekeeping, sometimes leaving her in charge until a late hour of the night.

Mrs. Jessamine is thoughtful, kindhearted and an excellent manager. She has two children, a little boy of 7 and a little girl of 4, of whom she is extravagantly fond. The Jessamines are going to keep a cook as soon as Mr. Jessamine's salary is raised, but just at present Mrs. Jessamine is doing her own work.

While she is attending to her duties she gives the children a paper of needles, the scissors, some sample packages of aniline dyes and a box of safety matches to play with, and during the intervals of baking and sweeping the rooms she rushes in, kisses and cuddles them and then flies back to her work singing merrily.

One afternoon last week Mrs. Jessamine was lying on the bed reading a Sunday paper. The children were blowing soap bubbles with some old pipestems of Mr. Jessamine's that he had discarded because they were full of nicotine.

Mrs. Jessamine was reading an account of some cruel treatment of children that

had been unearthed by the Gerry Society, and the tears came to her eyes as she thought of the heartless and criminally careless mothers of the land who are the cause of so much suffering to their innocent little ones.

Presently she fell asleep and dreamed this dream:

She was all alone in a great room. She heard the doorbell snap and footsteps leaving and dying away in the hall outside. The room was a strange one, and she went about to examine it. She paused in front of a mirror and saw her reflection, and lo, she was a little child, in a white pinafore, with wide-open, wondering eyes and tangled dark curls.

She heard the front door below stairs close and the gate open and shut. She began to play around the room with some dolls and pictures, and for a while was quite happy.

She undressed and dressed her doll and talked to it soothingly and put it to bed. She could see out the window, but there were some big trees growing in the yard and the wind blew a branch against the corner of the house, making a queer noise that rather frightened her. Then she saw the closet door standing open and a lot of different shaped bottles on a low shelf. She dragged a chair in front of the shelf and climbed into it. The bottles had all kinds of pretty colored liquids in them and she found some that she could pull the corks from quite easily. She tasted one or two of the corks. Some of them were sweet and nice and one was bitter and badtasting. One bottle was full of something clear like water, so she got that one and pulled out the cork, but the bottle slipped from her hand, fell to the floor and broke. Where the liquid spilled it fumed and sputtered and turned green, and a kind of hot, biting vapor arose. She climbed down and began to feel lonesome and scared. She called "Mamma," three or four times loudly, but all the house was still. Then she began to cry and ran to the door. Just then she thought she heard something scratch behind the bed, and she screamed and beat upon the door with her hands, crying for her mamma to come. Nobody answered her.

Then she listened fearfully for a little and crept over and got her dolly from its bed and crouched in a corner whimpering and hugging her doll tightly, with her heart beating wildly, and watching the dark place under the bed with frightened eyes.

Presently she saw a pretty red box on a table and curiosity for the moment

overcame her fear. She opened the box and saw a lot of funny little sticks, with little round heads on them. She played with them on the floor, building little pigpens and fences and houses.

In changing her position her heel fell upon the little sticks and the next moment a big blaze flared up, caught her dress, and with a loud scream she ran to the locked door, wrapped in burning, stinging flames, in an agony of pain and horror.

Mrs. Jessamine awoke with a start and sprang wildly from the bed. The children were playing merrily on the floor, and she ran to them and caught them in her arms in thankfulness that the terrible dream was over. How she wished for someone to whom she could relate it and gain sympathy. Three blocks away lived Mrs. Flutter, her best friend and confidante. Not for a long time had Mrs. Jessamine had a dream that made such an impression upon her mind.

She hastily put on her hat and cloak and said:

“Now, be good children till I come back.” Then she went out, locked the door and hurried away to Mrs. Flutter’s.

That is all.

(*Houston Daily Post*, Sunday morning, December 15, 1895.)

How She Got in the Swim

There was no happier couple in all Houston than George W. St. Bibbs and his wife before the shadow of the tempter crossed their path. It is remarkable how the tempter always comes up so his shadow will fall across one's path, isn't it? It seems as if a tempter who knew his business would either approach on the other side or select a cloudy day for crossing people's paths. But, we digress.

The St. Bibbses lived in a cosy and elegantly furnished cottage, and had everything that could be procured on credit. They had two charming little girls named Dolly and Polly.

George St. Bibbs loved fashionable society and his wife was domestic in her ways, so she had made him move to Houston, so that he would not have a chance to gratify his tastes. However, George still went to functions, and things of that kind, and left his wife at home.

One night there was to be a very high-toned blowout by society people, gotten up by the Business League and the Daughters of the Survivors of the Confederate Reunion.

After George had left, his wife looked into her little hand mirror and said to herself:

"I'll bet a dollar there isn't a lady at that ball that stacks up half as well as I do when I fix up."

Then an idea struck her.

She rang for her maid and told her to bring a cup of hot tea, and then she dressed in a magnificent evening dress, left the maid to look after Dolly and Polly and got on the street car and went to the ball.

George was at the ball enjoying himself very much. All the tony people were there, and music's voluptuous swell rose like everything, and soft eyes looked love to eyes that spake again, and all that sort of thing.

Among the guests was the Vicomte Carolus de Villiers, a distinguished French nobleman, who had been forced to leave Paris on account of some political

intrigue, and who now worked on a large strawberry farm near Alvin.

The viscount stood near a portière picking his teeth, when he saw Mrs. St. Bibbs enter.

He was at her side in a moment, and had written his name opposite hers for every dance.

George looked over and saw them, and gasped in surprise: “Jerusalem, that’s Molly!”

He leaned against a velvet cul-de-sac near the doorway and watched them. Mrs. St. Bibbs was the belle of the evening. Everybody crowded about her, and the viscount leaned over her and talked in his most engaging manner, fanning her with an old newspaper, as she smiled brightly upon him, a brilliant stream of wit, persiflage and repartee falling from her lips.

“*Mon dieu!*” said the viscount to himself, as his ardent gaze rested upon her, “I wish I knew who she is.”

At supper Mrs. St. Bibbs was the life of the gang. She engaged in a witty discussion with the brightest intellects around the table, completely overwhelming the boss joshers of the town. She conversed readily with gents from the wards, speaking their own dialect, and even answered without hesitation a question put to her by a man who had a sister attending the State University.

George could scarcely believe that this fascinating, brilliant woman of the world was the quiet little wife he had left at home that evening.

When the ball was over and the musicians had been stood off, George went up to his wife, feeling ashamed and repentant.

“Molly,” he said, “forgive me. I didn’t know how beautiful and gay you could be in swell society. The next time our Longfellow Literary Coterie gives a fish fry at the Hook and Ladder Company Hall I’ll take you along.”

Mrs. St. Bibbs took her husband’s arm with a sweet smile.

“All right, George,” she said, “I just wanted you to see that this town can’t put up no society shindies that are too high up for me to tackle. I once spent two

up the society buildings that are too high up for me to reach. I once spent two weeks in Galveston, and I generally catch on to what's proper as quick as anybody."

At present there are no two society people in town more sought after and admired than George St. Bibbs and his accomplished wife.

(*Houston Daily Post*, Monday morning, May 18, 1896.)

The Barber Talks

The Post Man slid into the chair with an apologetic manner, for the barber's gaze was superior and scornful. He was so devilish, cool and selfpossessed, and held the public in such infinite contempt.

The Post Man's hair had been cut close with the clippers on the day before.

"Haircut?" asked the barber in a quiet but thoroughly dangerous tone.

"Shave," said the Post Man.

The barber raised his eyebrows, gave his victim a look of deep disdain, and hurled the chair with a loud rattle and crash back to a reclining position.

Then he seized a mug and brush and, after bestowing upon the Post Man a look of undying contumely, turned with a sneer to the water faucet. Thence he returned, enveloped the passive victim in a voluminous cloth, and with a pitiless hand daubed a great brushful of sweetish tasting lather across his mouth.

Then he began to talk.

"Ever been in Seattle, Washington Territory?" he asked.

"Blub-a-lub-blub," said the Post Man, struggling against the soap, and then he shook his head feebly.

"Neither have I," said the barber, "but I have a brother named Bill who runs an orange orchard nine miles from St. John, Fla. That's only a split hair on your neck; it's growing the wrong way. They are caused by shaving the neck in the wrong direction. Sometimes whiskey will make them do that way. Whisky is a terrible thing. Do you drink it?"

The Post Man only had one eye of all his features uncovered by lather and he tried to throw an appealing expression implying negation into this optic, but the barber was too quick for him and filled the eye with soap by a dextrous flap of his brush.

"My brother Bill used to drink," continued the barber. "He could drink more
-which than anyone in Houston but he never got drunk. He had a chain in his

whiskey than any man in Houston, but he never got drunk. He had a chair in my shop, but I had to let him go. Bill had a wonderful constitution. When he got all he could hold he would quit drinking. The only way he showed it was in his eyes. They would get kind of glazed and fishy and wouldn't turn in his head. When Bill wanted to look to one side he used to take his fingers and turn his eyeballs a little the way he wanted to see. His eyes looked exactly like those little round windows you see in the dome of the postoffice. You could hear Bill breathe across the street when he was full. He could shave people when he was drunk as well as he could sober.—Razor hurt you?"

The Post Man tried to wave one of his hands to disclaim any sense of pain, but the barber's quick eye caught the motion and he leaned his weight against the hand, crushing it against the chair.

"I kept noticing," went on the barber, "that Bill was getting about four customers to my one, even if he did drink so much. People would come in three or four at a time and sit down and wait their turns with Bill when my chair was vacant. I didn't know what to make of it. Bill had all he could do, and he was so crowded that he didn't have time to go out to a saloon, but he kept a big jug in the back room, and every few minutes he would slip in there and take a drink.

"One day I noticed a man that got out of Bill's chair acting queer and he staggered as he went out. A day or two afterwards the shop was full of customers from morning till night, and one man came back and had a shave three different times in the forenoon. In a couple of days more there was a crowd of men in the shop, and they had a line formed outside two or three doors down the sidewalk. Bill made \$9.00 that day. That evening a policeman came in and jerked me up for running a saloon without a license. It seems that Bill's breath was so full of whiskey that every man he shaved went out feeling pretty hilarious and sent his friends there to be shaved. It cost me \$300 to get out of it, and I shipped Bill to Florida pretty soon afterward."

"I was sent for once," went on the barber, as he seized his victim by the ear and slammed his head over on the other side, "to go out on Piney Street and shave a dead man. Barbers don't much like a job of that kind, although they get from \$5 to \$10 for the work. It was 1908 Piney Street. I started about 11 o'clock at night. I found the street all right and I counted from the corner until I found 1908. I had my razors, soap and mug in a little case I use for such purposes. I went in and knocked at the door. An old man opened it and his eye fell on my case.

“‘You’ve come, have you?’ he asked. ‘Well, go upstairs; he’s in the front room to your right. There’s nobody with him. He hasn’t any friends or relatives in town; he’s only been boarding here about a week.’

“‘How long since he—since it occurred?’ I asked.

“‘About an hour, I guess,’ says the old man. I was glad of that because corpses always shave better before they get good and cold. I went in the room and turned up the lamp. The man was laid out on the bed. He was warm yet and he had about a week’s growth of beard on. I got to work and in half an hour I had given him a nice clean shave that would have done his heart good if he had been alive. Then I went downstairs and saw the old man.

“‘What success?’ he asked.

“‘Good,’ says I. ‘He’s fixed up all right. Who’s to pay?’

“‘He gave me \$30 to send his folks in Alabama yesterday,’ says the old man. ‘I guess your fee will have to come out of it.’

“‘It’ll be five,’ I said.

“‘The old man handed me a five dollar bill and I went home very well satisfied.’

Here the barber seized the chair, hurled it upright, snatched off the cloth, buried his hands in the Post Man’s hair and tore out a handful, bumped and thumped his head, shook it violently and hissed sarcastically: “Bay rum?”

The Post Man nodded stupidly, closed his eyes and tried unsuccessfully to recall a prayer.

“Next day,” said the barber, “I heard some news. It seems that a man had died at 1908 Piney Street and just a little while before a man in the next house had taken poison. The folks in one house sent for a doctor and the ones in the other sent for a barber. The funny part is the doctor and I both made a mistake and got into the wrong house. He went in to see the dead man and found the family doctor just getting ready to leave. The doctor didn’t waste any time asking questions, but got out his stomach pump, stuck it into the dead man and went to work pumping the poison out. All this time I was busy shaving the man who had taken poison. And the funniest part of it all is that after the doctor had pumped all the other doctor’s medicine out of the dead man, he opened his eyes, raised up in bed and

doctor's medicine out of the dead man, he opened his eyes, raised up in bed and asked for a steak and potatoes.

“This made the family doctor mad, and he and the doctor with a stomach pump got into a fight and fell down the stairs and broke the hat rack all to pieces.”

“And how about your man who had taken poison?” asked the Post Man timidly.

“Him?” said the barber, “why he died, of course, but he died with one of the beautifulest shaves that ever a man had.—Brush!”

An African of terrible aspect bore down upon the Post Man, struck him violently with the stub of a whisk broom, seized his coat at the back and ripped it loose from its collar.

“Call again,” growled the barber in a voice of the deepest menace, as the scribe made a rush for the door and escaped.

(*Houston Daily Post*, Sunday morning, May 31, 1896.)

Barbershop Adventure

When the Post Man entered the shop yesterday the chairs were full of customers, and for a brief moment he felt a thrill of hope that he might escape, but the barber's eye, deadly and gloomy fixed itself upon him.

"You're next," he said, with a look of diabolical malevolence, and the Post Man sank into a hard chair nailed to the wall, with a feeling of hopeless despair.

In a few moments there was a rattle and a bang, the customer in the chair was thrown violently on his feet, and fled out of the shop pursued by the African who was making vicious dabs at him with a whisk broom full of tacks and splinters.

The Post Man took a long look at the sunlight, pinned a little note to his tie with his scarf pin, giving his address, in case the worst should happen, and settled into the chair.

He informed the barber, in answer to a stern inquiry, that he did not want his hair cut, and in turn received a look of cold incredulity and contempt.

The chair was hurled to a reclining position, the lather was mixed, and as the deadly brush successively stopped all sense of hearing, sight and smell, the Post Man's shirt sleeve.

"Everybody's riding bicycles now," said the barber, "and it's going to be very difficult for the fashionable people to keep it an exclusive exercise. You see, you can't prevent anybody from riding a bicycle that wants to, and the streets are free for everyone. I don't see any harm in the sport, myself, and it's getting more popular every day. After a while, riding will become so general that a lady on a wheel will not create any more notice than she would walking. It's good exercise for the ladies, and that makes up for their looking like a bag full of fighting cats slung over a clothes line when they ride.

"But the pains they do take to make themselves mannish! Why can't a lady go in for athletics without trying to look and dress tough? If I should tell you what one of them did the other day you wouldn't believe it."

The barber here glared so fiercely at the Post Man that he struggled up to the top

of the lather by a superhuman effort and assured the artist that anything he said would be received with implicit faith.

“I was sent for,” continued the barber, “to go up on McKinney Avenue and was to bring my razor and shaving outfit. I went up and found the house.

“A good-looking young lady was riding a bicycle up and down in front of the gate. She had on a short skirt, leggings, and a sack coat, cut like a man’s.

“I went in and knocked and they showed me into a side room. In a few minutes the young lady came in, sat down on a chair and an old lady whom I took to be her ma dropped in.

“‘Shave,’ said the young lady. ‘Twice over, and be in a hurry; I’ve an engagement.’

“I was nearly knocked down with surprise, but I managed to get my outfit in shape. It was evident that that young lady ruled the house. The old lady said to me in a whisper that her daughter was one of the leaders among the girls who believed in the emancipation of women, and she had resolved to raise a moustache and thus get ahead of her young lady companions.

“The young lady leaned back in the chair and closed her eyes.

“I dipped my brush in the lather and ran it across her upper lip. As soon as I did so she sprang to her feet, her eyes flashing with rage.

“‘How dare you insult me!’ she stormed, looking as if she would like to eat me up. ‘Leave the house, immediately,’ she went on.

“I was dumbfounded. I thought perhaps she was a trifle flighty, so I put up my utensils and started for the door. When I got there, I recovered my presence of mind enough to say:

“Miss, I am sure I have done nothing to offend you. I always try to act a gentleman whenever it is convenient. In what way have I insulted you?

“‘Take your departure,’ she said angrily. ‘I guess I know when a man kisses me.’

“And so I left. Now, what do you think of that?” asked the barber, as he rushed

...and he took from it, what do you think of that?—washed the razor, as he pushed about an ounce of soap into the Post Man's mouth with his thumb.

"I think that's a pretty tough story to believe," said the Post Man, summoning up his courage.

The barber stopped shaving and bent a gaze of such malignant and cool ferocity upon his victim that the Post Man hastened to say:

"But no doubt it occurred as you have stated."

"It did," said the barber. "I don't ask you to take my word for it. I can prove it. Do you see that blue mug on the shelf, the third from the right? Well, that's the mug I carried with me that day. I guess you'll believe it now."

"Speaking of bald heads," went on the barber, although no one had said a word about bald heads, "reminds me of how a man worked a game on me once right here in Houston. You know there's nothing in the world that will make hair grow on a bald head. Lots of things are sold for that purpose, but if the roots are dead nothing can bring them to life. A man came into my shop one day last fall and had a shave. His head was as bald and smooth as a tea cup. All the tonics in the world couldn't have started one hair growing there. The man was a stranger to me, but said he ran a truck garden out on the edge of town. He came in about three times and got shaved and then he struck me to fix him up something to make his hair grow."

The barber here reached back upon a shelf and got a strip of sticking plaster. Then he cut a gash along the Post Man's chin and stuck the plaster over it.

"When a man asks for a hair tonic," continued the barber, "in a barbershop he always gets it. You can fix up a mixture that a man may use on his head for a long time before he finds it is doing him no good. In the meantime he continues to shave in your shop.

"I told my customer that I had invented a hair tonic that if its use were persisted in would certainly cause the hair to grow on the smoothest head. I sat down and wrote him out a formula and told him to have it prepared at a drug store and not to give away the information, as I intended after a while to have it patented and sell it on a large scale. The recipe contained a lot of harmless stuff, some salts of tartar, oil of almonds, bay rum, rose water, tincture of myrrh and some other ingredients. I wrote them down at random just as they came into my head, and

half an hour afterwards I couldn't have told what it was composed of myself. The man took it, paid me a dollar for the formula and went off to get it filled at a drug store.

"He came back twice that week to get shaved, and he said he was using it faithfully. Then he didn't come any more for about two weeks. He dropped in one afternoon and hung his hat up, and it nearly knocked me down when I saw that the finest kind of a suit of hair had started on his head. It was growing splendidly, and only two weeks before his head had been as bald as a door knob.

"He said he was awfully pleased with my tonic, and well he might be. While I was shaving him I tried to think what the ingredients were that I had written down for him to use, but I couldn't remember the quantities or half the things I had used. I knew that I had accidentally struck upon a tonic that would make the hair grow, and I knew furthermore that that formula was worth a million dollars to any man if it would do the work. Making hair grow on bald heads, if it could be done, would be better than any gold mine ever worked. I made up my mind to have that formula. When he was about to start away I said carelessly:

"'By the way, Mr. Plunket, I have mislaid my memorandum book that has the formula of my tonic in it and I want to have a bottle or two prepared this morning. If you have the one I gave you I'd like to make a copy of it while you are here.'

"I must have looked too anxious, for he looked at me for a few minutes and then broke out into a laugh.

"'By Jiminy,' he said, 'I don't believe you've got a copy of it anywheres. I believe you just happend to hit on the right thing and you don't remember what it was. I ain't half as green as I look. That hair grower is worth a fortune, and a big one, too. I think I'll just keep my recipe and get somebody to put the stuff up and sell it.'

"He started out, and I called him into the back room and talked to him half an hour.

"I finally made a trade with him and bought the formula back for \$250 cash. I went up to the bank and got the money which I had there saving up to build a house. He then gave me back the recipe I had given him and signed a paper relinquishing all rights to it. He also agreed to sign a testimonial about the stuff

having made his hair grow out in two weeks.”

The barber began to look gloomy and ran his fingers inside the Post Man’s shirt collar, tearing out the button hole, and the collar button flew out the door across the sidewalk into the gutter.

“I went to work next day,” said the barber, “and filed application at Washington for a patent on my tonic and arranged with a big drug firm in Houston to put it on the market for me. I had a million dollars in sight. I fixed up a room where I mixed the tonic—for I wouldn’t let the druggists or anybody else know what was in it—and then the druggists bottled and labeled it.

“I quit working in the shop and put all my time into my tonic.

“Mr. Plunket came into the shop once or twice within the next two weeks and his hair was still growing finely. Pretty soon I had about \$200 worth of the tonic ready for the market, and Mr. Plunket was to come in town on Saturday and give me his testimonial to print on advertising dodgers and circulars with which I was going to flood the country.

“I was waiting in the room where I mixed my tonic about 11 o’clock Saturday when the door opened and Mr. Plunket came in. He was very much excited and very angry.

“‘Look here,’ he cried, ‘what’s the matter with your infernal stuff?’

“He pulled off his hat, and his head was as shiny and bare as a china egg.

“‘It all came out,’ he said roughly. ‘It was growing all right until yesterday morning, when it commenced to fall out, and this morning there wasn’t a hair left.’

“I examined his head and there wasn’t the ghost of a hair to be found anywhere.

“‘What’s the good of your stuff,’ he asked angrily, ‘if it makes your hair grow and then all fall out again?’

“‘For heaven’s sake, Mr. Plunket,’ I said, ‘don’t say anything about it or you’ll ruin me. I’ve got every cent I’ve got in the world invested in this hair tonic, and I’ve got to get my money back. It made your hair grow, give me the testimonial

and let me sell what I've got put up, anyway. You are \$250 ahead on it and you ought to help me out of it.'

"He was very mad and cut up quite roughly and said he had been swindled and would expose the tonic as a fraud and a lot of things like that. Finally he agreed that if I would pay him \$100 more he would give me the testimonial to the effect that the tonic had made his hair grow and say nothing about its having fallen out again. If I could sell what I had put up at \$1.00 per bottle I would come out about even.

"I went out and borrowed the money and paid it to him and he signed the testimonial and left."

"Did you sell your tonic out?" asked the Post Man, trying to speak in a tone calculated not to give offense.

The barber gave him a look of derisive contempt and then said in a tone of the utmost sarcasm:

"Oh, yes, I sold it out. I sold exactly five bottles, and the purchasers, after using the mixture faithfully for a month, came back and demanded their money. Not one of them that used it ever had a new hair to start on his head."

"How do you account for its having made the hair grow on Mr. Plunket's head?" asked the Post Man.

"How do I account for it?" repeated the barber in so dangerous a tone that the Post Man shuddered. "How do I account for it? I'll tell you how I account for it. I went out one day to where Mr. Plunket lived on the edge of town and asked for him.

"Which Mr. Plunket?" asked a man who came out to the gate?

"Come off,' I said, 'the Plunket that lives here.'

"They've both moved,' said the man.

"What do you mean by 'both?'" I said, and then I began to think, and I said to the man:

“‘What kind of looking men were the Plunkets?’

“‘As much like as two peas,’ said the man. ‘They were twins, and nobody could tell ’em apart from their faces or their talk. The only difference between ’em was that one of ’em was as bald-headed as a hen egg and the other had plenty of hair.’”

“Now,” said the barber as he poured about two ounces of bay rum down the Post Man’s shirt front, “that’s how I account for it. The bald-headed Plunket would come in my shop one time and the one with hair would come in another, and I never knew the difference.”

When the barber finished the Post Man saw the African with the whisk broom waiting for him near the front door, so he fled by the back entrance, climbed a brick wall and escaped by a side street.

(*Houston Daily Post*, Sunday morning, June 7, 1896.)

Part Two

Sketches

Did You See the Circus?

Some Twenty Thousand Other People Were There

WONDERS OF THE STREET PARADE

The Good People Came Out to Show
the Children the Animals
A Good Parade

If some man had cornered the children market day before yesterday, he could have made a fortune.

Yesterday was circus day, and every deacon and elder and staid business man in Houston who wanted to see Mademoiselle Marie Meers ride barebacked and walk the tight rope, and had no kids of his own, was out offering love and money for somebody's else to take along as an excuse for going to the circus. In some New England towns large families make a living by renting out their children to church members for this purpose.

When a man tells you that he doesn't believe in the Old Testament, just ask him what made him follow the band wagon and the steam piano and the animal cages when he was a boy, and what makes him still sneak into the circus and feed the elephant peanuts and stare the monkeys out of countenance. It's nothing in the world but a feeling we all inherited from Noah when he put on the greatest show on water for a run of forty nights and as many matinees all over the world. The smell of the gas jets and sawdust, the crack of the ring-master's whip, the ancient jokes of the clown, and the wonderful linguistic performances of the lemonade man are temptations that most of us strive to resist in vain.

For many weeks Houston has been posted with the bills and banners of Barnum and Bailey's show, and as the time drew nigh the small boy developed insomnia and an unusual affection for indulgent uncles and big brothers with money.

When the day came, the pleasure of anticipation developed into the rapture of

attainment.

All men think of their boyhood days with fond remembrance when the circus comes. Even Susan B. Anthony falls into dreamy retrospection when she sees the animals walking in the parade two by two, and she recalls the time long, long ago when she first saw them go in out of the wet during that dreadful forty days and nights' rain.

The street parade at 10 o'clock was the best ever seen in Houston.

The procession was nearly twenty minutes passing a given point. The cages were new, and the horses, especially, were magnificent specimens of their kind. The animals exhibited were in good condition as a rule and some of them assumed to perfection their role of wild beasts. The lions, however, appeared to be old, and were mere wrecks of the king of beasts. The man who was in the cage with them cowing them down with his eagle eye deserves the attention of the S. P. C. A. This show has twenty elephants and but four tigers, but this should not discourage good democrats. It is a long time yet before the election. The pageant of the world's nations was immense. England, France, Germany, Turkey, Belgium, and other nations were represented by cavalry attired in the national uniform. America was properly represented by a float containing the Goddess of Liberty on a throne, Uncle Sam in front, sailors on the four corners, Jesse James and Richard Croker in the middle. Some Roman chariots came next. We admire the enterprise of Barnum and Bailey in this line, but we think they are carrying realism a little too far when they procure Roman matrons of the time of Marcus Aurelius to drive these chariots in our streets. Is the cigarette girl exhausted or Newport society all engaged, that they cannot furnish us with something better to look upon?

It is estimated by a level citizen that fully 15,000 human beings witnessed the street parade, and probably 800 or 900 populists.

The crowd awaiting the parade was the same old circus crowd. The streets were lined with pretty girls, dudes, merchants, clerks and country folks. The woman chewing gum and dragging around a howling kid was there; the woman with a baby carriage, receiving the curses and reviling of the crowd with her usual complacent smile, was there; the girl who ate popcorn and shrieked at every bite was there; the man who said it was the same old thing he had seen forty years ago was there.

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A chilly wind was blowing, and a cold, drizzling rain falling, and one of the shivering Egyptians riding a camel bethought him of his sunny native home and said to one of his countrymen, “Bedad, and Oi wish Oi was in Donnegan’s joint on T’irteenth Street long enough to put about half a point of the craythur under me shirt,” and the sad-eyed Oriental at his left replied, “Py Cott, dot cold vint a man’s pack sdrikes like der teyfel, aindt it?”

The Mr. Bailey of this show is not, as some people think, Mr. George Bailey of the *Dallas News*. Mr. George Bailey has nothing to do with the circus, except to write their bill posters.

At 1 o’clock the doors of the Ethnological Congress were thrown open, and the surging crowd went down into its pants pocket and drew forth the price. The performance in the circus tent began at 2.

The animal exhibit was first-class, and many of the boys who had had the d.t.’s recognized some old friends. In the center of the tent was an international bargain counter on which were displayed families of Hindus, Singalese dancers, Fiji Islanders, Ratmaliatmas, Samoans, etc.

The Post Man approached an intelligent-looking Samoan and said:

“Lovely and sad-hearted exile from the wave-kissed beach of Pacific’s coral-stranded isle, dost thou not pine for thy beloved far-off home?”

The large Samoan cast a wistful glance at his questioner and said in his sonorous native tongue: “Cut it short, Cully. Yer can’t razzle-dazzle me. Get a movelet on your joblots, or I’ll give yer a wipe wid dis property battle-axe. See?”

This show has the distinction of carrying the most remarkable dwarf in the world. The owners offer a considerable reward for his equal. He is the largest dwarf now before the public, being nearly six feet in height.

The pious and stately man who takes the children to see the animals was very much in evidence. One of them, very sour-looking, with his coat buttoned up high, said to a small boy he was leading by the hand: “That animal you see, Willie, is the leopard, of which, as you know the Good Book says, ‘he cannot change his spots.’”

“But he can, though, papa,” said Willie. “A minute ago he was way over in that corner of the cage, and now he’s up here in front.”

“Do not be sacrilegious, my son,” said the sour-looking man. “Come, let us go into the tent where Mademoiselle Meers is riding eight horses while in her famous Trilby pose. I wish you to study that noble animal, the horse.”

Another starchy-looking man, with a plug hat and white tie, had four or five children with him. All paused a moment in the animal tent, and he said rapidly: “My dear children, these are lions, tigers, monkeys, elephants, hippopotamuses and camels. You are all familiar with them from the pictures in your story books. Let us now go into the other tent and view the human form, the noblest work of God, as Mademoiselle Matthews does her act upon the flying trapeze.”

In the circus tent there were three performances taking place in as many rings at once. The acrobatic acts, tumbling and balancing were good. The “refined contortion act” by Miss Maude Allington and Mr. H. Wentworth was a revelation. Ladies and gentlemen who had heretofore regarded the contortion act as something low and vulgar were surprised and delighted with delicacy, tact and exquisite diplomatic finesse with which these thorough artists tied their legs behind their necks and did the split.

“Europe’s greatest rider,” Mr. William Walleth, was fine, and divided honors with Rider Haggard, the assistant author of the programme and show bills.

The ladies who were advertised to ride bareback more than fulfilled their promised feats. They were barebacked, and also bare—that is, were dressed something like surf bathers in Galveston.

Evetta, the only lady clown on earth, came into the ring and caused roars of laughter by putting her hands in her bloomer pockets and standing on one foot. She then did the excruciatingly funny thing of sticking out her tongue at the crowd. Then, after convulsing the audience by standing on the other foot, she retired. For that tired feeling, see Evetta, the only lady clown.

A man who had evidently come up the street on the saloon side went into the side show and seemed fascinated with the tattooed man from Borneo, who exhibited upon his person a great variety of ornamental designs, such as roses, landscapes, ballet girls, ships, etc. “Ladies ’n gent’l’men,” he said, “come ’n

shee zhis great phenomenon. Always wanted see livin' picshers. Zis fus' livin' picsher ever shee. Set 'em up all round; z'my treat."

The tattooed man leaned down and hissed in a low tone: "Say, stop dat song and dance and git a move on you, Cully, or I'll tump you one on de smeller. See?"

It must be said of Barnum and Bailey's show that it is orderly and well conducted. The gang of swindlers, toughs and confidence men who generally follow circuses are not allowed to annoy the crowd. The tents are large and the accommodations good. Their immense business is conducted with perfect system and each man in the aggregation fills his place in producing the harmonious working of the whole.

The performance itself was only the average circus performance, with a great deal that was neither new nor remarkable, but with a feature here and there that was far above the ordinary even in that line. The trouble is in attempting to do too much. Had the programme been executed in the old style, in one ring, it might have been too long; but it would have impressed the public far more than when distributed among three rings. The spectator becomes bewildered and catches a good thing only now and then, while he misses possibly two or three other brilliant acts. There could have been no complaint for want of variety. There was a little of everything and all done at least with the usual skill of the circus performer.

Several innovations were introduced, among them a female ring master and a female clown. Trilby on horseback, a skirt dance on horseback, and a serpentine dance on horseback are others. The water carnival, an exhibition of high diving, somersaults into water and other aquatic sports is perhaps the newest circus idea. It is given in a lake of water, to use the fertile press agent's phrase, forty-two feet across and six feet deep. In the menagerie are a number of new animals, notably several new elephants, making the herd now number twenty-four. The Ethnological Congress is all new, and those who have seen the Midway Plaisances at the big fairs will be especially interested in this peripatetic plaisance, which contains a curious assortment of curious peoples. In its acrobatic department, the aerial swinging and leaping and high trapeze work were very fine indeed; and with the equestrian accomplishments of the Meeks sisters, particularly, when the two rode one horse, constituted the most meritorious parts of the performance. A notable feature also was the

performance in the ring of a herd of elephants, among other things going through a quadrille. It is such a performance and, to quote the voluble agent again, such an aggregation of panoramic novelties, with much that is old, that the public generally will leave the big tents fully satisfied that they have received their money's worth.

(*Houston Daily Post*, Wednesday morning, October 30, 1895.)

Thanksgiving Remarks

A great many people who are skeptical on other subjects swallow Thanksgiving Day without questioning the validity of its title.

There are plenty of people in Houston who will sit at the table today, with their mouths so full of turkey and dressing that they will be utterly unable to answer the smallest question about the origin of this National festival.

The United States is the only country in the world that has a day of National thanksgiving in commemoration of one special event. Among the earliest settlers in this country, with the exception of cocktails, were the Pilgrim Fathers. They were a noble band of religious enthusiasts, who sailed from England to America in a ship called the *Mayflower* after a celebrated brand of soap by the same name.

By good fortune and fast sailing they managed to reach America before Thanksgiving Day. They landed at Plymouth Rock, where they were met by Hon. F. R. Lubbock and welcomed with an address. It was a very cold, and not a good day for speeches, either.

This heroic little band of refugees were called Puritans in England, which is French for abolitionists. As they stood upon the bleak inhospitable shore, shivering in the biting blast, Captain Miles Standish, who had the stoutest heart and also the most jovial temper in the party, said: "Say, you fellows, can't you stop chattering your teeth and shaking your knees? There don't any of you look like you wanted to pass resolutions against burning anything just at present. You're a jolly-looking lot of guys."

Among the distinguished members of this band were William Bradford, Edward Winslow, John Alden, John Carver and Marc. Anthony, a nephew of Susan B.

According to the habits of true Americans, they had not been on land half an hour till they went into caucus to elect a governor.

John Carver carried around the hat and collected the ballots, and consequently was elected.

"Now," said Governor Carver, "I hereby announce my proclamation that next

Thursday shall be Thanksgiving Day.”

“What for?” asked Captain Standish.

“Oh, it’s the proper thing,” said the governor. “You’ll find it in all the school books and histories.”

Governor Carver then appointed a committee with Captain Standish as chairman to explore the country around.

Captain Standish set forth at the head of his devoted followers through the deep snow, while the others went to work erecting what rough shelter they could out of logs and pine boughs. Presently Captain Standish and his band returned, making tracks in the snow about ten feet apart and closely pursued by a large, brick-red, passionate Indian, who was remarking, “Waugh-hoo-hoo-hoo!” at every jump. Governor Carver advanced to meet the untutored child of the forest, and said to him in simple words:

“How! Me heap white chief. Gottee big guns. You killee my soldiers, me heap shoot. Sabe?”

“I am charmed to meet you, governor,” said the Indian. “My name is Massasoit. I also am a great chief. My wigwam is down there” (pointing with graceful gesture to the southwest)—“I have just come back from slaying the tribe of the Goo-Goos. You may not have heard, governor, that the cat came back.”

Governor Carver grasped the hand of Massasoit, and said: “Welcome, thrice welcome to our newly discovered continent, sir. Colonel Winthrop, give Mr. Massasoit your hand.”

“I’ll keep mine, and deal him another if it’s all the same to you,” said Colonel Winthrop.

Massasoit took his place at the side of the blanket that was spread on the snow, and the pasteboards were shuffled.

Two hours later the Pilgrim Fathers had won from the Indian chief 200 buffalo robes, 100 pelts of the silver fox, 50 tanned deer hides, 300 otter skins, and 150 hides of the beaver, panther and mink.

This was the original skin game

THIS WAS THE ORIGINAL SKILL GAME.

Later on in the game, Governor Carver called a bet of \$27 worth of wampum made by Massasoit, with his daughter Priscilla, and lost on eights and treys.

Longfellow, in his beautiful poem, describes what followed:

Then from her father's tent,
Tripping with gentle feet,
Priscilla, the Puritan
Maiden, stepped. All that she
Knew was obedience;
Ready to sacrifice
All for her father's word,
Priscilla, the dutiful,
Gentle and meek as the
Dove. As the violet
Modest and drooping-eyed,
Up from his poker game
Gazed Massasoit,
Chief of the Tammanies,
Brave as a lion. Up
Gazed Massasoit.
Then, as a roebuck springs,
Swift as an arrow, or
Leapes Couchee-Couchee, the
Panther, or Buzzy the
Rattlesnake springs from his
Coils in the sumac bush,
So Massasoit got a
Move on his chieftainlets;
Got to his Trilby's and
Fled to the wildness.
Rushing through snowdrifts, and
Breaking down saplings, till
Far in the distance he
Looked back and saw that she
Followed not far behind;
Priscilla the sprinter was
Not very far behind;

Cutting a swath through the
Snow with her number fives;
Right on his trail was she;
Right on his track with a
New-woman look on her;
Longing and hungry look,
Look of a new-born hope,
Hope for a man that might
Be her own tootsicums.
Then Massasoit, the
Chief of the Tammanies,
Gave a loud yell that woke
Wise-Kuss the owl, and woke
Kat-a-Waugh-Kew-is, the
Ring-streaked coon, and woke
Snakes in the forest.
Then Massasoit was
Gone like an arrow that
Speeds from the hunter; he
Only touched ground on the
High elevations; he
Fled from the land of the
Pilgrims and Puritans,
Fled from Priscilla the
Puritan maiden;
Fled from Priscilla who
Wanted to tickle him
Under the chin and call
Him her sweet toodleums.
Thus Massasoit, the
Indian warrior,
Laid down four aces and
Took to the wilderness,
Bluffed by a maiden.
Laid down a jack-pot, and
Lost his percentage.
Lost it to treys and eights,
And to the forty years
Lived by Priscilla;

Priscilla, the maiden.

(*Houston Daily Post*, Thursday morning, November 28, 1895.)

When the Train Comes In

Outline Sketches at the Grand Central Depot

Next to a poker game for a place to contemplate human nature in its most aggravated form, comes a great railway passenger station. Statistics show that nine-tenths of the human race lose their senses when traveling on the cars, and give free demonstrations of the fact at every station. Traveling by rail brings out all a man's latent characteristics and propensities. There is something in the rush of the train, the smell of the engine smoke, the yell of the butcher, the volapuk cries of the brakeman and the whizzing scenery visible from the windows that causes the average human being to shake off the trammels of convention and custom, and act accordingly.

When the train stops at the depot and unloads its passengers, they proceed at once to adopt for their style of procedure the idea expressed by the French phrase *sauve qui peut*, or in polite language—"the devil take the hindmost."

An observer, unless he is of the "casual" variety, can find much entertainment in watching the throng of travelers and bystanders at any metropolitan depot. The scene presented belongs to the spectacular comedy. There are no stage waits; no changing of scenery; no forgetting of lines or casting about for applause. The mimes play their part and vanish; the hero with his valise is jostled by the heavy villain from the baggage room; leading ladies scramble, kiss, weep and sigh without bouquets or applause; marionettes wriggle and dance through the crowd, putted by the strings of chance, and the comedian plays his part unabashed by the disapproving hiss of the engines and the groans of the grinding wheels.

At the Houston Grand Central Depot when the trains come in there are to be seen laughter and lanterns, smiles and sandwiches, palavering and popcorn, tears and tamales.

To the student of human nature is presented a feast; a conglomerate hash of the lighter passions and eccentricities of man; a small dish whereof, ye Post Man will endeavor to set before you.

The waiting room is bright with electric lights. The line of omnibuses and hacks line the sidewalk on Washington Street, and the drivers are crowding close to the dead line on the south side of the depot.

Scattered among the benches in the two waiting rooms are prospective travelers awaiting their trains. The drummers and old traveling men sit reading their papers or smoking, while new and unseasoned voyagers are pacing up and down, glancing uneasily at the clock, and firing questions at everybody that passes. The policeman at the door who has told the old man with the cotton umbrella at six different times that the Central arrives at 6:35, makes up his mind that if he inquires once more he will take the chances on getting a verdict of justifiable homicide.

The old lady with the yarn mittens who has been rapping with her spectacle case at the ticket agent's closed window for fifteen minutes says, "Drat the man," and begins to fumble in her traveling bag for licorice lozenges.

In the ladies' waiting room there is the usual contingent of peripatetic public. The bright-eyed, self-possessed young lady who is the traveling agent for a book, or, perhaps, a new silverware polish, has learned the art of traveling. Haste and flurry are unknown to her. A neat traveling cloak and a light hand satchel comprise her accoutrements. She waits patiently, tapping lightly with a patent leather toe, and faintly humming the refrain of a song. Not so the large and copious family who are about to make the journey of their lives—at least fifty miles. Baskets, bags, valises, buckets, paper bundles, pot-plants, babies and dogs cover the benches in their vicinity. The head of the family wears a look as deadly solemn as if he were on his way to execution. His face shows the strain of the terrible journey he is about to undertake. He holds his tickets in his moist hand with a vice-like grip. Traveling is a serious matter with him. His good lady has taken off her bonnet. She drags out articles from boxes and bags and puts them back; she trots the baby and strews aprons, hairpins, knitted gloves and crackers far and wide. She tells John where she has hidden \$13 under a loose board at home; she would never have mentioned it, but she is certain the train is going to run off the track and she may be killed. A few grummy looking men sit with their coat collars turned up, by the side of their weary spouses, who look as if they cared not for accidents, end of the world, or even fashions. A black-veiled woman with a prattling boy of five sits in a corner, disconsolate and lone; some aimless stragglers enter and wander through the room and out again.

In the men's waiting room there is more life. Depot officials in uniform hurry through with lanterns. Travelers loll upon the benches, smoke, read and chat. From the buzz of voices fragments of connected words can be caught that read something like this:

“Got a \$300 order from him, but it cost me \$10 in drinks and theater tickets to get it—yes, I’m going to Galveston; doctor ordered perfect quiet and rest—a daisy, you bet; blond hair, dark eyes and the prettiest—lost \$20 on treys up; wired my house for expense money this morning—ain’t seen Sam for fifteen year; goin’ to stay till Christmas—loan me that paper if you’re through with it—Red flannel scratches me, this is what I wear—wonder if the train’s on time—No, sir, don’t keep the *North American Review*, but here’s *Puck* and *Judge*—came home earlier one night and found her sitting on the front steps with—gimme a light please—Houston is the city of Texas—confound it, I told Maria not to put those cream puffs in my pocket—No, a cat didn’t do it, it’s a fingernail mark; you see I put the letter in the wrong envelope, and—Toot—toot—toot—toot—toot—toot—toot.”

The train is coming. An official opens the north doors. There is a scramble for valises, baskets and overcoats, a mad rush and a struggling, pushing, impolite jam in the doorway by a lot of people who know that the train will wait twenty minutes for them after it arrives.

The bell clangs; the single eye of the coming engine shines with what may be termed—in order not to disappoint the gentle reader—a baleful glare. A disciple of Mr. Howells’ realistic school might describe the arrival of the train as follows: “Clang-clang-chookety chookety—chookety-clang-clackety clack-chook-ety-chook. Che-e-e-e-ew! Bumpety-bump—Houston!”

The baggage men, with yells of rage, throw themselves upon the trunks and dash them furiously to the earth. A Swiss emigrant standing near clasps his hands in ecstasy. “Oh, Gott,” he cries, “dess ees yoost my country like I hear dot avalanch come down like he from dot mountains in Neuchatel fall!”

The passengers are alighting; they scramble down the steps eagerly and leap from the last one into space. When they strike the ground most of them relapse into idiocy, and rush wildly off in the first direction that conveniently presents itself. A couple of brakemen head off a few who are trying to run back under the train and start them off in the right direction.

The conductor stands like a blue-coated tower of strength in the center of the crowd answering questions with an ease and coolness that would drive a hotel clerk wild with envy. Here are a few of the remarks that are fired at him: “Oh, conductor, I left one of my gloves in the car. How long does the train stop? Do you know where Mrs. Tompkins lives? Merciful heaven, I left my baby in the car! Where can I find a good restaurant? Say! Conductor, watch my valise till I get a cup of coffee! Is my hat on straight? Oh, have you seen my husband? He’s a tall man with link cuff-buttons. Conductor, can you change a dollar? What’s the best hotel in town? Which way is town? Oh, where’s mamma gotten to? Oh, find my darling Fido; he has a blue ribbon round his neck,” and so on, *ad noisyam*—as one might say. You can tell old travelers at a glance. They have umbrellas and novels strapped to their satchels and they strike a bee line for the open doors at the depot without creating any disturbance.

But the giggling school girls on their way home for the holidays, the old spectacled lady who punches your ribs with her umbrella, the country family covered with confusion and store clothes, the fat lady with the calla-lily in a pot, the timid man following the lady with the iron jaw and carrying two children, a bird cage and a guitar, and the loud breathing man who has been looking upon the buffet car when it was red, all these have tangled themselves into a struggling, inquiring, tangled Babel of bag, baggage, babies and bluster.

The young lady is there to meet her school-girl friend. The escort stands at one side with his cane in his mouth; nervously fingering in his vest pocket to see if the car fare is ready at hand. The girls grapple each other, catch-as-catch-can, fire a broadside of the opera bouffe brand of kisses, and jabber out something like this: “Oh, you sweet thing, so glad you’ve come—toothache?—no, no, it’s a caramel—such a lovely cape, I want the pattern—dying to see you—that ring—my brother gave it to me—don’t tell me a story—Charlie and Tom and Harry and Bob, and—oh, I forgot—Tom, this is Kitty—real sealskin of course—talk all night when we get home”—“Git out der way dere, gents and ladies”—a truck piled with trunks four-high goes crashing by; a policeman drags an old lady from under the wheels, and she plunges madly at the engine and is rescued by the fireman, whom she abuses as a pickpocket and an oppressor of the defenseless.

A sour-looking man with a big valise comes out of the crowd and is seized upon by a red-nosed man in a silk hat.

“Did you get it old boy?” asks the man with the nose

Did you get it, old boy? — asks the man with the nose.

“Get your grandmother!” growls the sour man.

“That fellow Reed is the biggest liar in America. Feller from Maine got it. I’m a populist from this day on. Got the price of a toddy, Jimmy?”

The engine stands and puffs sullenly. The crowd disperses gradually, stringing by twos, threes and larger through the waiting-room doors. Depot officials hustle along, pushing their way among the people.

A brakeman springs from his car and runs up to a dim female figure lurking in the shadow of the depot.

“How is the kid?” he asks sharply with an uneven breath.

“Bad,” says the woman, in a dry, low voice. “Fever a hundred and four all day. Keeps a-calling of you all the time, Jim. Got to go out again tonight?”

“Orders,” says Jim and then: “No, cussed if I do. The company can go to the devil. Callin’ of me, is he? Come on, Liz.” He takes the woman’s arm and they hurry away into the darkness.

A ragged man with a dreary whine to his voice fastens upon a big stranger in a long overcoat who is hurrying hotel-wards.

“Have you a dime, sir, a man could get something to eat with?” The big man pauses and says kindly, “Certainly. I have more than that. I have at least a dollar for supper, and I’m going up to the Hutchins House and get it. Good night.”

On the other side of the depot the hack drivers are crowding to the dead line, filling the air with cries. A pompous man, who never allows himself to be imposed upon when traveling, steps up to a carriage and slings his valise inside. “Drive me to the Lawlor Hotel,” he says, commandingly.

“But, sir,” says the driver. “The Lawlor is—”

“I don’t want any comments,” says the pompous man. “If you don’t want the job, say so.”

“I was just going to say that—”

“I know where I want to go, and if you think you know any better—”

“Jump in,” says the driver. “I’ll take you.”

The pompous man gets into the carriage; the driver mounts to his seat, whips up his horses, drives across the street, fully twenty-five yards away, opens the door and says: “Lawlor Hotel, sir; 50 cents, please.”

He gets a dollar instead, and promises to say nothing about it.

The carriages and omnibuses rattle away with their loads; other travelers straggle in for the next train, and when it arrives the Grand Central will repeat its little farce comedy with new actors, and new specialties and various readings between the lines.

(*Houston Daily Post*, Monday morning, December 16, 1895.)

Christmas Eve

Some Sight and Sounds Caught on Houston Streets and Elsewhere

Houston is a typical Southern town. Although a busy, growing city that is easily holding its place among the half dozen metropolitan cities of the South, it retains most of the old-time Southern customs and traditions.

The all-absorbing haste, the breathless rush, the restless scramble for gain so noticeable in Northern cities is absent here. Houston people are prosperous, and they take things easy, believing that one may gather a few roses of pleasure on the way through life and still keep up with the march of progress. In no city in the South is Christmas more merrily welcomed with social pleasures, the exchanging of friendly offerings, and general rejoicing than in Houston. The immense crowds of people that have lined our streets and stores for the past week testify to the fact.

Yesterday was probably the busiest day among the merchants that the season has witnessed; and there is no question but that it brought to the children anticipations of the brightest nature.

Stand for a few moments on the corner and view the people.

They are moving like a colony of ants, some going, some coming, threading in and out in an endless tangled maze. When the gods lean over the edge of Mount Olympus and gaze down upon this world, while the waiter is out filling their glasses with nectar, they must be highly entertained by the little comedy that is holding the boards on earth. Our world must look to them very much as a great ant bed, over which we crawl and scramble, and run this way and that, apparently without purpose or design.

That light streak across the sky, which we call the Milky Way, is nothing more nor less than the foam spilt from tankards of nectar as the gods quaff and laugh at our strange antics. But it is Christmas eve, and what do we care for their laughter? Turn up the lights; let the curtain rise, and the Christmas crowd is on!

Did you ever watch a young lady buy a Christmas present for her father?

If not, you have missed a good thing.

They all go about it the same way. In fact, young ladies who buy Christmas presents for their fathers are just as sure to perform the operation in exactly the same way, as they are to sit on one foot while reading a novel. She always has just two dollars for this purpose, which is handed her by her mother, who suggests the idea. She goes out late in the afternoon on the day before Christmas. She first goes to a jeweler's and looks at several trays of diamond studded watches, and wonders which one her father would like. Then, after examining about one hundred diamond rings, she suddenly remembers the amount of money she has, sighs and goes off to a clothing store, where she closely scrutinizes an \$18 smoking jacket, and a \$40 overcoat. She says she believes she will think over the matter before buying, and leaves. Next she visits a book store, three dry goods stores, two more jewelers, and a candy shop. When Christmas morning comes, her father finds himself the proud possessor of a new red pen wiper with the fifteen cent cost mark carefully erased, and there are to be observed in a certain young lady's dressing case a new pair of gloves and a box of nice chocolate bonbons.

The fat man who is taking home a red wagon is abroad in the land.

He is generally a pompous man who prides himself on being self-made, and glories in showing his democracy by carrying home his own bundles. He holds the wagon in front of him and pushes his way through the crowd with a sterling-citizen-risen-from-the-ranks air that is quite wonderful to observe.

How the girls in their cloaks with high turned-up collars laugh and chatter and gaze in the show windows with "Oh's" and "Ah's" at everything they see! If you happen to be standing near a group of them you will hear something like this:

"Oh, Mabel, look at that lovely ring—squeezed my hand and said—sealskin, indeed! I guess I know plush when—and five from Papa, so I guess I'll buy that—going to hang them up, of course; I bet they'll hold more than yours, you old slim—good gracious! Belle let me pin your—papa asked him how he wanted his eggs for breakfast, and Charlie got mad and left, and the clock hadn't struck—No, I wear these kind that—sixteen inches around the—Oh! look at that lovely-

forgot to shave, and it scratched all along—I'll trade with you, Lil; Tom said—with lace all round the—come on, girls, let's—"

The noise of a passing street car drowned the rest.

The children are out in full force.

Did you ever reflect that children are the wisest philosophers in the world? They see the wonderful things in the windows for sale; and they listen gravely to the tales told them of Santa Claus; and, without endeavoring to analyze the situation, they rejoice with exceeding joy. They never measure the chimney or calculate the size of Santa's sleigh; they never puzzle themselves by wondering how the old fellow gets his goods out of the stores, or question his stupendous feat of climbing down every chimney in the land on the same night. If grown folks would dissect and analyze less things that are mysteries to them, they would be far happier.

Two men meet on Main Street and one of them says:

“I want you to help me think. I want to get even with my wife this Christmas, and I don’t exactly know how to do it. For the last five years she has been making me ostensible Christmas presents that are not of the slightest possible use to me, but are very convenient for herself. Under the pretense of buying me a present, she simply buys something she wants for herself and uses Christmas for a cloak for her nefarious schemes. Once she gave me a nice wardrobe, in which she hangs her new dresses. Again she gave me a china tea set; at another time a piano; and last Christmas she made me a present of a side-saddle, and I had to buy her a horse. Now I want to get something for her Christmas present this year that I can use, and that will be of no possible service to her.”

“H’m,” said the other man thoughtfully, “it’s going to be a hard thing to do. Let’s see. You want something she can’t make use of. I have it! Have yourself a new pair of trousers made, and present them to her.”

“Won’t do,” says the first man, shaking his head. “She’d have ’em on in ten minutes and be clamoring for a bicycle.”

“Buy her a razor, then; she can’t use that.”

"C'est la loi de la vie," dit-il.

“Can’t she? She has three corns.”

“Say! There ain’t anything you can get that you can use and she can’t.”

“Don’t believe there is. Well, let’s go take something anyhow.”

The lights are beginning to burn in the show windows, and people are gathering in front of them.

To many of the lookers-on this gazing in the windows is all the Christmas pleasure they will have. Many of them are from the country and little towns along the fourteen lines of railroad that run into Houston. A country youth presses through the crowd with open mouth and wondering eyes. Holding fast to his hand, follows Araminta, bedecked in gorgeous colors, beholding with scarce-believing optics the fairy-like splendors of Main Street. When they return to Galveston they will long remember the glories of the great city they visited at Christmas.

A solemn man in a high silk hat, attired in decorous black, edges his way along the sidewalk. One would think him some city magnate making his way home, or a clergyman out studying the idiosyncrasies of human nature. He opens his mouth and yells in a high, singsong voice: “What will mamma say when Willie comes home with a mustache just like papa’s—buy one right now, boys; you can curl ’em, twist ’em, pull ’em, and comb ’em just like real ones—come on boys!” He fixes below his nose a black mustache with a wonderful curl to the ends and goes his way, occasionally selling one to some smooth-faced boy, who shyly makes his purchase. On the edge of the sidewalk a little man is offering “the most wonderful mechanical toy of the century, causing more comment and excitement than any other article exhibited at the great World’s Fair.” The public crowds about him and buys with avidity. Not twenty steps away in a Houston toy shop the same kind of toy has been sold for years.

On a corner stand a group of—well, say young men. They wear new style high turn-down collars and chrysanthemums. Their hats tilt backward and their front hair is brushed down low. They are gazing at the ladies as they pass. How Charles Darwin would have loved to meet these young men! But, alas! he died without completing the chain. Listen at the scraps of alleged conversation that

can be distinguished above their simultaneous jabber:

“Deuced fine girl, but a little too—cigarette? I’ll owe you one—she’s a nice girl, but—the loveliest necktie you ever—would have paid my board, but saw that elegant suit at—kicked me clear out of the parlor without—that girl has certainly got a—haven’t a cent, old man, or I would—old man said I had to go to work, but—look at that blonde with the smiled right at me, and—the little one with the blue—he struck me in the eye, and I won’t speak to him now—no, the brunette in the white—I was real mad, and said, confound it—link buttons, of course.”

At a corner sits a woman with blue goggles, grinding an organ, on which stands a lamp chimney, in which burns a tallow candle.

Why the candle, the observer knoweth not. At her side crouches her pale little boy. A philanthropist bends toward her with a nickel between his fingers. Far away, among the wilds near Alvin, he has a little boy about the same age, and his heart is touched. The little boy springs up. He has a cigarette in his mouth, and he hurls a big fire-cracker between the philanthropist’s feet. It explodes; the boy yells with delight; and the philanthropist says: “Gol darn the kid” and reserves his nickel for beer.

Gazing with far off, longing eyes into a show window that glistens with diamonds and jewelry, stands a woman.

Her black dress and veil proclaim that she is a widow. One year ago the strong arm upon which she leaned with such love and security was her pride and joy. Tonight, beneath the sod of the churchyard, it is turning back to dust. And yet, she is not altogether desolate. She has sweet memories of her loved one to sustain her; and besides that, she is holding to the arm of the man she is engaged to marry when her time of mourning is up, and she is out selecting an engagement ring.

A policeman lurks in the shadow of an awning with his club in his hand ready to strike.

Two doors away there lives an alderman who voted against his being put on the force. It will not be long before the alderman’s little boy will come out on the sidewalk and shoot off a Roman candle, and then the policeman will strike: a

sidewalk and shoot off a Roman candle, and then the policeman will strike, a city ordinance will be carried out, and a little boy carried in.

A man steps up to a salesman in a fancy goods store.

“I want to get something,” he says, “for my wife’s mother. I think—”

“James,” calls the salesman, “show this gentleman the 5-cent counter.”
Merchants who make a study of their customers are quick to know what they want.

A man who is unmistakably a clergyman goes into a grocery store that is next door to a saloon. The salesman attends upon him. He buys 10 cents worth of minced meat for pies, and then lingers, clearing his throat.

“Anything else?” asks the salesman.

The clerical-looking man fumbles with his white cambric tie, and says:

“Tomorrow will be Christmas, you know day of holy thoughts—peace on earth, and—and—and—our hearts should carol forth praises however, we must dine—er—er—mince pie, you know; the little ones in the family enjoy it—have the meat here—thought, perhaps—something to flavor—just a drop of—”

“Here, Jimmy,” yells the salesman, “go in next door and get this gent a pint of whisky.”

Christmas brings pleasure to many; it brightens some lives that hardly ever know sunshine; it is abused by too many and made a season of revelry and sin; but to the little ones it is a joy forever, so let the tin horns blow and the red drums rattle, for those restless little feet and those grimy little hands come first in the making up of Heaven’s kingdom.

Merry Christmas to all.

(*Houston Daily Post*, Wednesday morning, December 25, 1895.)

New Year's Eve and How It Came to Houston

Sketched at Random as the Old Year Passed

We that would properly welcome the new year should view it with the eye of an optimist, and sing its praises with the coated tongue of a penitent.

We should dismiss from our hearts the cold precept that history repeats itself, and strive to believe that the deficiencies of the day will be supplied by the morrow. Since fancy whispers to us that at the stroke of midnight the old order will change, yielding to the new, let us put aside, if possible, all knowledge to the contrary and revel in the fairy tale told by the merry bells.

Man's arbitrary part of the time into hours, days and years causes no perceptible jolt beneath the noiseless pneumatic tire of the cycle of years. No mortal tack can puncture that wheel. Old Father Time is a "scorcher," and he rides without lamp or warning bell. The years that are as mile-stones to us are as gravel spurned beneath him. But to us, of few days and an occasional night off, they serve as warnings to note the hour upon the face of a mighty clock upon which the hands move silently and are never turned back.

The New Year is feminine. There is no question but that the world has become badly mixed as to the gender of time. And again, the New Year is no cherubic debutante with eyes full of prophetic joys, but a grim and ancient spinster who flutters coyly into our presence with a giddy giggle, rejuvenated for the occasion. We have made obeisance to those same charms time out of mind; we have whispered soft nothings into those same ears many moons ago; we have lightly brushed those painted and powdered cheeks in time gone by when they glowed with the damask bloom of youth. But let us hug once more the dear delusion. Let us say that she is fair and fresh as the rising morn, and make unto ourselves a season of mirth and heedless joy.

The fiddles strike up and the hautboys sigh. Your hand, sweet, coy New Year—take care of that rheumatic knee—come, let us foot it as the gladsome bells proclaim your debut—number 1896.

The last day of the year is generally spent in laying in as big a stock as possible of things suitable for use the next day for swearing-off purposes.

It is so much easier to resolve to do without anything when we have just had too much of it. How easy it is on New Year's day, just after dinner, when we are full of good resolutions and turkey, to kneel down and solemnly affirm that we will never touch food again. The man who on the morning of the glad New Year stands trembling with fear on the center table, while snakes and lizards merrily play hide and seek on the floor, finds no difficulty in forswearing the sparkling bowl. The dark brown, copper-riveted taste which accompanies what is known to the medical profession as the New Year tongue, is a great incentive to reform.

The beautiful siren-like, Christmas-present cigar that is so fair to gaze upon, when lit turns like a viper and stings us into abjuring my Lady Nicotine forever.

When we attempt to sit upon the early scarlet runner, hand-embroidered rocking-chair cushion presented to us by our maiden aunt and slide out upon the floor upon our spinal vertebrae, we feel inclined to kneel in our own blood with a dagger between our teeth and swear by heaven never to sit down again.

When we go upon the streets wearing the neckties presented to us by our wife, and the loiterer upon the corner sayeth, "Ha, Ha," and the newsboy inquireth, "What is it?" is it any wonder that we curse the necktie habit as an enemy of man, and on New Year's morning swear to abjure it forever?

When we say farewell, and with clenched teeth wend our way into the shirt made for us by the fair hands of our partner in sorrow, and find the collar tighter than the last one worn by the late lamented Harry Hayward, and the tail thereof more biased than a populist editorial, and the bosom in billowy waves that heave upon our manly chest like a polonaise on a colored cook on Emancipation Day, and the sleeves dragging the floor as we walk about, saying, "It's so nice, my dear—just what I wanted," what wonder that we register an oath with the Lord of Abraham and Jacob as the glad New Year bells peal out, nevermore to wear again a garment made by that portion of the earth's inhabitants that sits on the floor to put on its shoes, and regards the male torso as a waste basket for remnant AA sheeting and misfit Butterick patterns?

There are so many things we take a delight in forswearing on New Year's Day.

While strolling aimlessly about the streets of Houston on the last evening of 1895, little sights and sounds obtrude themselves and reveal the spirit of the time, as little pulse beats indicate the general tone of the human system.

It is nearly 6 o'clock, and there is a lively crowd moving upon the sidewalks. Here comes a lovely little shopgirl, as neat and trim as a fashion plate. Her big hat plumes wave, and her little boot heels beat a merry tictac upon the pavement. Debonaire and full of life and fun, she moves, cheery and happy, on her way to supper. Her bright eyes flash sidelong glances at the jeweler's windows as she passes. Some day she hopes to see upon her white finger one of those sparkling diamonds. Her lips curve in a meaning smile. She is thinking of the handsome, finely-dressed man who comes so often to her counter in the big store, ostensibly to buy her wares. How grand he is, and what eloquent eyes and a lovely mustache he has! She does not know his name; but, well, she knows that he cares a little for the goods she sells. How soft his voice as he asks the price of this and that, and with what romantic feeling he says that we will surely have rain if the clouds gather sufficiently! She wonders where he is now. She trips around a corner and meets him face to face. She gives a little scream, and then her face hardens and a cold glitter comes into her eye.

On his arm is a huge market basket, from which protrudes the cold, despairing legs of a turkey, from which the soul has fled. Two yards of celery trail behind him; turnip greens, cauliflower and the alleged yellow yam nestle against his arm. On his brow is confusion; in his face are hung the scarlet banners of a guilty conscience; in his romantic eyes she reads the tell-tale story of a benedict; by the hand he leads a cold-nosed but indisputable little boy.

She elevates her charming head to a supercilious angle, snaps out to herself the one word "married!" and is gone.

He jerks the limp, sad corpse of the turkey to the other side, snatches the cold-nosed little boy about five feet through the air and vows that never again will he go to market during the joyous year of 1896.

It is New Year's eve.

A citizen is restlessly pacing the floor of his sitting room. There is evidently some crisis near, for his brow is contracted, and his hands are nervously clasped and unclasped behind his back. He is waiting expectantly for something.

Suddenly the door opens and his family physician enters smiling and congratulatory. The citizen turns upon him a look full of inquiry.

“All is well,” says the physician. “Three fine boys, and everybody getting along first rate.”

“Three?” says the citizen in a tone of horror, “Three!” He kneels on the floor and in fervent accents exclaims: “Tomorrow will be the New Year, and I hereby solemnly swear that—”

Breaking in upon his resolutions comes the merry chime of the New Year bells.

The people come and the people go.

In the stores, looking over remnants of Christmas goods, are to be found that class of people who received presents on Christmas Day without giving any, and are now striving to make late and lame amends by returning the compliment on New Year’s Day. The New Year’s present is a delusion and contains about as much warmth and soul as a eulogy on the South by the *New York Sun*.

Two ladies are at a bargain counter, maintaining an animated conversation in low but dangerous tones.

“She sent me,” says one of them, “a little old nickel-plated card receiver on Christmas Day, and I know she bought it at a racket store. Goodness knows, I never would have thought of sending her anything, but now I’ve got to return it, of course—the old deceitful thing and I don’t know what to get for her. Let’s see—oh yes; I have it now. You know they say she used to be a chambermaid in a St. Louis hotel before she was married; I’ll just send her this little silver pin with a broom on it. Wonder if she’s bright enough to understand?”

“I hope so, I’m sure,” says the other lady. “That reminds me that George gave me a nice new opera cloak for a Christmas present, and I just forgot all about him. What are those horn collar-buttons worth?”

“Fifteen cents a dozen,” says the salesman.

“Let me see” says the lady meditatively—“Yes, I will; George has been so good to me. Give me three of those buttons, please.”

Viva el rey; el rey está muerto!

The Spanish phrase looks better than the hackneyed French, and it is correct, having been carefully revised by one of the most reliable tamale dealers on Travis Street. The old year is passing; let us stand in with the new. In happy Houston homes light feet are dancing away the hours 'neath holly and mistletoe, but outside stalk those who inherit want and care and misery, to whom the coming season brings nothing of hope or joy.

Two young men are wending their way up Preston Street. One is holding the other by the arm and guiding his steps. The sidewalk seems to run in laps and curves, twisting itself into hills and hollows and labyrinthine mazes. One of the young men thinks he is dying. The other one is not sure about it, but he hopes he is not mistaken. They are both good friends of the old year, and they hate to see it leave so badly that they have sewed their sorrow up in a sack and tried to drown it.

“Goo’ bye, old frien’,” says the dying one. “Go ’way and leave me to die here on thish boundless prairie. Sands of life’s runnin’ out like everyshing. Zat las’ dish chick’n salad’s done its work. Never see fazzer’n muzzer any more.”

“Bob,” says the other one, “you’re ’fern’l idiot. Never shay die. Zis town Houston can’t be more’n ten miles away. We’re right on Harvey Wilshon’s race track now goin’ round’n round. Whazzer mazzer wiz livin’ for country’n so forth?”

“Can’t do it, old boy; ’stremities gettin’ coldsh now. Light’s fadin’ out of eyes’n worldsh fadin’ from view. Can’t shay ’er prayer, old boy, ’fore vital spark expires! Can’tcher say lay’m down to sleep, Jim?”

“Don’t be a fool, Bob; come on, lesh find city Houston ’n git a drink.”

“Jim, I’ dead man. Been wicked ’n told liesh, ’n played poker. Zhere ain’t no hope for handshome, unscrup’loush shociety man like me. Been giddy butterfly ’n broke senty-five lovin’ creaturesh hearts—jus’ listen Jim, I hear angelsh shingin’ an’ playin’ harpsh, ’n I c’n see beau’ful lights ’n heavensh wiz all kind colors flashin’ from golden gates. Jim, don’t you hear angel throng shingin’ shongs ’n see lights shinin’ in New Jerushalem?”

“Bob, you d’graded lun’tic, don’t you know what that ish? That’s Salvation Army singin’, ’n Ed Kiam’s ’lectric sign you shee. Now I know where we’re at. Zere’s five saloonsh on nex’ block.”

“Jim, you’ve shaved m’ life. Lesh make one more effort ’fore I die, ’n tell barkeep’ put plenty ice in it.”

Midnight draws on apace, and while some welcome with revelry the advent of the New Year, others stray in the land of dreams, and allow it to approach unheralded.

Ladies over 30 years of age take on a grim look about the jaw, and bend with a deadly glitter in their eyes over the article in the Sunday paper that treats of “How to avoid wrinkles,” and sadly shake their heads when they read that Madame Bonjour, the famous French beauty, kept young and lovely until after 110 years of age by using Bunker’s Bunco Balm.

The New Year brings to them sad prospects of another gray hair, or a crow’s foot around the eye.

To the little folks the season is but a prolongation of Christmas, and they welcome the turning over of the new leaf without a misgiving.

Would that we all might trace a record upon it as fair as that their chubby hands will scrawl.

Happy New Year to all.

(*Houston Daily Post*, Wednesday morning, January 1, 1896.)

Watchman, What of the Night?

About the time that Alonzo bids his Melissa the fourteenth farewell at the garden gate, and *pater familias* calls angrily from his noisily raised window, there sets forth into the city a straggling army of toilers whose duties lead them into laborious ways while the great world slumbers more or less sweetly upon its pillow.

Time was when all honest burghers were night-capped and somnolent at an early hour, and the silent streets knew naught but the echoing tread of the watchman who swung his lantern down the lonesome ways and started at his own loud cry of "All's Well." But modern ideas have almost turned the night into day. While we slumber at home, hundreds are toiling that we may have our comforts in the morning. The baker is at work upon our morning rolls; the milkman is at his pump; the butcher is busy choosing his oldest cow to kill; the poor watchman is slumbering in a cold doorway; the fireman is on the alert; the drug clerk sits heavy-eyed, prepared to furnish our paregoric or court plaster; the telephone girl chews gum and reads her novels while the clock chimes wearily on; the printer clicks away at his machine; the reporter prowls through the streets hunting down items to go with our coffee and toast; the policeman lurks at a corner, ready to smash our best hat with his deadly locust.

These night workers form a little world to themselves. They grow to know each other, and there seems to be a sympathy among them on account of their peculiar life. The night policemen, and morning newspaper men, the cab drivers, the street cleaners (not referring to Houston now), the late street car drivers, the all-night restaurant men, the "rounders," the wiernerwurst men and the houseless "bums" come to know and greet one another each night on their several regular or aimless rounds. Only those who are called by business or curiosity to walk into this night world know of the strange sights it presents.

At 12 o'clock the night in the city may be said to begin. By that time the day toilers are at home, and the night shift is on. The street cars have ceased to run, and the last belated citizen, hurrying home from "the lodge" or the political caucus is, or should be, at home. Even the slow-moving couples who have been to the theater and partaken of oysters at the "café for ladies and gents," have bowed to the inevitable and reluctantly turned homeward.

And now come forth things that flourish only in the shade; white-faced things with owl-like eyes who prowl in the night and greet the dawn with sullen faces and the sunlight with barred doors and darkened windows.

Here and there down the streets are arc lights, and swinging doors, and about are grouped a pale and calm-faced gentry with immaculate clothes and white flexible hands. They are soft-voiced and courteous, but their eyes are shifty and their tread light and cruel as a tiger's. They are gamblers, and they will "rob" you as politely and honestly as any stock broker or railroad manipulator in Christendom. Byron says:

"The devil's in the moon for mischief; not the longest day;
The twenty-first of June sees half the mischief in a wicked way
As does three hours on which the moonshine falls."

And still worse; a night when there is no moon to shine. Darkness is the great awakener of latent passions and the chief inciter to evil. When night comes, the drunkard doubles his cups; the roisterer's voice is unrestrained; even the staid and sober citizen, the bulwark of civil and social government looses the checkrein of his demeanor and mingles in the relaxations of the social circle. The tongue of gallantry takes on new license, and even the brow and lip of innocence itself invite admiration with a bolder and a surer charm. What wonder, then, that lawlessness o'erreaches itself, and sin flaunts her flaming skirts in the very face of purity when darkness reigns!

In the all-night saloons there is always someone to be found. At little tables in the corners one can always see two or three worn and shady-looking customers, sitting silent, brooding over the wrongs the world has dealt them, or talking in low, querulous tones to each other of their troubles. A smart policeman, with shining buttons and important step, goes down the street twirling his club. He tries the doors carefully of the big stores, the wholesale houses and the jewelry stores to see if they are securely locked. He never makes a mistake and wastes his time trying the fastenings of the small shops.

A few gay young men stroll by occasionally, with their coat collars turned up, laughing loudly and scattering slang and coarse jests. Down gloomy side streets steal a few dim figures, clinging to the shadows, walking with dragging, shuffling feet down the inclined plane of eternity. These are disreputable, but harmless, creatures, who have stolen out to buy cocaine and opium with which to dull the bite of misery's sharp tooth. In high windows dim lights burn. where

anxious love watches by the bedside of suffering mortality through the long night watches, listening to the moans that it cannot quiet, and wondering at the mysterious Great Plan that so hides its workings toward a beneficent end.

Down by the bayou throb the great arteries of the town, where all night long the puffing of steam and the click of piston rods keep its life streams moving; where men move like demons in the red glow of furnace fires; where snorting engines creep in and out among miles of laden freight cars, and lanterns dance and circle amid a wilderness of tracks and shifting trains like big eccentric fire-flies.

One can always see a few men perched on high stools at the all-night lunch counters. They are for the most part members of the night-working force, telegraph operators, night clerks, railroad men, messenger boys, streetcar conductors, reporters, cab drivers, printers and watchmen, who drop in to drink a cup of coffee or eat a sandwich.

The night clerk at the drug store sees much of the sadness and some of the badness of life. Customers stray into the store at all times of the night. The man with the disarranged attire and impatient manner is a frequent visitor. He has a doctor's prescription for some sick member of his family, and thinks it a greater blessing that he finds a store open and a clerk ready to compound his medicine than to be obliged to tug at a night bell for half an hour to wake up a sleepy clerk, as in times gone by. Desperate-looking men sometimes come in to buy poison—generally morphine—and occasionally a hopeless, wretched woman with eyes big with hope deferred and an unpitying fate, will creep in and beg for something that will stay the pain forever. Often, in the darkest hour that they say comes before dawn, a man will enter in a hurry, buy a few pounds of prepared chalk and slip around the corner and drive away in a wagon containing two big bright tin cans full of pure, rich Jersey milk.

In the infirmaries and hospitals the nurses and genial-faced Sisters of Mercy bend over the beds of sufferers all through the dreary night, and bring to many an aching heart, as well as to pain-racked bodies, consolation and solace. The doctors, too, see much of the seamy side of night life. They are out by day and by night; the telephone rouses them from warm beds at all hours; whenever a knife flashes in a brawl, the doctor must be sent for; if a lady feels a nervous fluttering at the heart, out must come the carriage, and he must be sent for to feel her pulse in the middle of the night. Often he watches at the bedside of some stricken wife or child, while the husband is away roistering in evil company.

On a dry goods box sits a tramp, gently swinging his feet. It is 2 o'clock in the morning, and there he sits chewing a splinter with a frequent side glance toward the policeman on the next corner. What is he doing there? Nothing.

Has he any hopes, fears, dislikes, ambitions, hates, loves or desires? Very few. It may be that his is the true philosophy. John Davidson says of him in a poem:

I hang about the streets all day,
At night I hang about;
I sleep a little when I may,
But rise, betimes, the morning's scout,
For through the year I always hear
Aloud, aloft, a ghostly shout.
My clothes are worn to threads and loops,
My skin shows here and there;
About my face, like seaweed, droops
My tangled beard, my tangled hair,
From cavernous and shaggy brows
My stony eyes untroubled stare.
I know no handicraft, no art,
But I have conquered fate;
For I have chosen the better part,
And neither hope, nor fear, nor hate;
With placid breath, on pain and death,
My certain alms, alone I wait.
And daily, nightly comes the call,
The pale unechoing note,
The faint "Aha" sent from the wall
Of Heaven, but from no ruddy throat
Of human breed or seraph's seed,
A phantom voice that cries by rote.

This is a state closely bordering upon Nirvana. Tennyson struck another chord that sooner or later most people come to feel, when he said:

"For, not to desire or admire,
If a man could learn it, were more
Than to walk all day like a sultan

Of old in a garden of spice.”

The tramp sits out the weary hours of the night or else wanders in dreary aimlessness about the streets, or crawls into some vestibule or doorway for a few brief hours of unquiet slumber.

His is a pitiful solution of life at its best, for, though he has acquired a numbness in place of what was once a keen pain, it is directly contrary to the plan of the human mind to await in hopeless stolidity the “certain alms” of death.

One of the most important of the world’s industries carried on at night is the making of the great morning daily newspaper. The average reader who unfolds his paper above his coffee cup in the morning rarely reflects that it represents the labor of half a hundred men, a great number of whom bend their lagging steps homeward only when the newsboy has begun to wake the morning echoes with his familiar cry.

When night comes the editorial day-force is ready for home; the Associated Press wire is rattling in its messages from all parts of the world; the telegraph editor is busy putting “heads” on the type-written copy of the telegraph operator, and the night editor has rolled up his sleeves, laid his club handy, and breathes a silent prayer for help to the Goddess of Invective as he begins to wade through his pile of missives from correspondents. The State wires are opened, and the messenger boys are beginning to arrive with specials.

The city editor and his force are in, and are busy writing out the local news from the notes they have taken during the day.

The phone rings, a reporter seizes his hat and is off to get the item—perhaps an affray—someone run over by a wagon—a fire—a hold-up, or burglary—something that the good citizens must not miss as they eat their hash and muffins at breakfast.

The editorial room at night sees many strange characters and scenes. People come up on all kinds of curious missions.

A citizen stumbles up the stairs and nearly falls into the room. The force simply glances at him and keeps on working. His hair is frowzled; his coat is buttoned in the wrong buttonholes; he wears no collar; and in his blinking eyes, a roguish

twinkle strives to overcome the effects of loss of sleep. He is a well-known citizen, and the force marvels slightly at his unusual condition. He staggers over to the telegraph operator and clutches the railing around his desk.

“Shay,” he says in a bibulous voice, “wantscher to telgraph startlin’ news to ze outside world. Cable ’m to Europe ’n spread glad tidings to all shivilized countries. Get shome bull’ tins out at onesh.”

The telegraph operator does not look up, and the gentleman tacks with difficulty and steers against the railroad editor.

“Whatsher doin’?” he says.

“Railroads,” says that gentleman shortly.

“Zat’s ze sing. Gotter bigesht railroad item ever saw. Give you two columns cause tremendoush ’citement railroad shircles.”

The railroad editor writes calmly on, and the visitor gives him a reproachful look and bears down upon the city editor.

“Shay, friend,” he says, “gozzer bigges scoop ’n city news world ever heard. No ozzer paper ’n town knows it.”

“What is it?” says the city editor, without turning his head.

“Appalin’ sensation ’n Firs’ Ward. Shend four, five reporters my house at onesh. I’m goin’ back now. Had *twins* my housh when lef’ home. Goin’ back to shee ’f any more ’rived. Come back ’n let you know if find any. Sho long, gen’lemen. Keep two columns on front page open ’till get back.”

Later on three or four young gentlemen drop in. They speak low, and are courteous and conciliatory. They are well-dressed, carry canes and seem to have been out enjoying themselves. One or two of them have torn coats and disarranged ties. One has a handkerchief bound over his eye. They confer deferentially with the city editor, and certain words and phrases, half-caught, tell the tale of their mission: “Unfortunate affair—police—best families—publicity—not seriously hurt—upper circles too much wine—keep out names—heated argument—very sorry—friends again.”

Comes the hot lunch man with his basket filled with weirnerwurst and mustard.

ham sandwiches, boiled eggs, cold chicken. The staff is too busy, and he lugs his basket upstairs where the printers are at work.

A boy brings in a special telegram. The night editor opens and reads it, and then springs to his feet. He grasps a handful of his hair and kicks his chair ten feet away. “—————” he yells. “Listen to this.”

It is a special by wire from a country correspondent. This is what it says: “Spring has opened here. The birds are singing merrily in the trees and the peach trees are in full bloom. The weather has moderated considerably and the farmers are hopeful. The fruit crop will be assured unless we should have a cold snap sufficient to injure the buds.”

“—————” remarks the night editor again, and then, his vocabulary failing to express his feelings, he bites his cigar in two and sits down again.

A man in a seedy frock coat and a big walking cane saunters in and draws a chair close to the night editor’s desk.

“When I was with Lee in the Valley of Virginia—” he begins.

“I am sorry you are not with him now,” says the night editor.

The visitor sighs, borrows a cigar and a match, and drifts out to see if he can get the ear of someone of a more indulgent temper.

Between 1 and 2 o’clock the city editor and his assistants are through their work, the railroad man turns in “30” and they troop away, leaving the night editor to remain until the last.

In the composing room the printers have been working away since 7 o’clock on their keyboards like so many Paderewskis. They quit about 3:30 a.m. As the night editor leaves, another army has begun its march. These are the people who rise at 2 or 3 o’clock in the morning. The mailing clerks are preparing the papers for the out-of-town mails; the newsboys are crowding around for their papers, and abroad in the land are audible the first faint sounds of the coming day.

Wheels are rattling over the dark streets. The milk man is abroad, and the

butcher's cart is making its rounds. Policemen relax their vigilance, and around the coffee stands is gathered quite a crowd of night workers who drop in for something hot before going home.

It is five hours yet before my lady arouses in her boudoir, and hundreds of her slaves are astir in her service. When she seats herself at ten at the breakfast table arrayed in becoming morning toilet, she never thinks of her loyal vassals that have been toiling during the night to prepare her dainty breakfast. Miles away the milkman and his assistants rise at 2 o'clock to procure the milk for her tea; the baker many hours earlier to furnish her toast and rolls, and the newspaper she so idly glances at represents twenty-four hours' continuous labor of the brainiest, most intelligent, courtly, learned and fascinating set of men in the world.

The night editor stops, perhaps, to eat a light lunch at a stand, and chat a few minutes with the night workers he meets there. As he wends his way homeward, he meets a citizen who has for once for some reason arisen at what seems to him an unholy hour of the morning.

"Good morning," says the citizen, "what in the world are you doing up so early?"

"Oh," says the night editor, "we newspaper men have to rise real early in order to get the paper out by breakfast time."

"To be sure, to be sure," says the citizen. "I never thought of that!"

(*Houston Daily Post*, Sunday morning, March 29, 1896.)

Newspaper Poets

The journalist-poet seems to be a hybrid born of the present day when rapidity and feverish haste are the necessary conditions to success. There is hardly a newspaper of the first class in the land that does not include a jingler in its staff.

A journalist is one thing, and a poet should be another. A combination of the two—or rather a man who tries to do the work of both—is very nearly a union of opposites.

A journalist is a recorder of transient impressions; he seizes whatever is worthy of note from the swiftly-moving stream of current events, and stamping his data with the seal of his own originality—if he possesses any—he flings his paper damp from the press at the heads of the public and is off pursuing fresh quarry. He is a machine—but of admirable efficiency—that threshes the chaff from the million happenings of the day, and delivers the wheat to those who would flounder helplessly among the piled sheaves if left to themselves.

The poet should be of different mold. He should not be vexed with the task of winnowing, but, with the golden grains laid before him by his more active brother of the winged feet, he should be allowed to sit apart and view life in its entirety with calmer, larger, and unobstructed vision. A poet-journalist may rise to be a journalist of renown, but he will never be a great poet. The muse is too shy to appear daily at the bidding of an ink-grimed copy boy. In glancing over the daily papers, we occasionally find a verse of merit, that, though evidently scribbled during the daily grind that must come, whether inspiration impels or not, yet has some touch of the true fire. Indeed, many gems that will long be remembered have thus been dashed off in a few minutes, but these are exceptions.

Some paper mentioned recently that Frank Stanton wrote his exposition ode at his desk amid the confusion of a newspaper office in two hours, fanning himself with one hand and writing with the other. The ode was said to have been a good one, and much commendation was bestowed upon the writer. Now, this is unjust to Mr. Stanton's fame, for he can write poetry, and the people will persist in praising those daily jingles of his in the Atlanta Constitution. No one seems to suggest that he could have written a much better ode by taking a day or two over it, and not overheating himself and having to waste so much vital energy in

fanning.

The idea intended to be advanced is that it is more than likely that newspaper versifiers as a rule do not claim to be poets, and would rather be known as journalists who sometimes drop into rhyming skits as a relaxation and for diversity.

The great public, though, must dub anything poetry that rhymes, and often spoil a good journalist's reputation by insisting on his being passed on to posterity as a poor poet.

A good paragraph on a timely subject often gains a spiciness by being turned in rhyme—especially in the form of parody—but our newspaper poets have not yet learned the fact that an article uninteresting in the form of prose will not gain in merit when written even in the most faultlessly metred verse. Somebody has described poetry as lines of equal length, with rhymes at the end and sense in the middle. The daily column which so many newspaper versifiers now turn out is a mistake, if it is poetic fame they are seeking. The “demnition grind” as the wheel turns will soon exhaust all the water in the Pierian spring, as the grist itself bears witness.

This is said in reference to those who are really ambitious of winning poetic laurels. Those who attach nothing more than ephemeral importance to their topical skits need no criticism, for they will incur no disappointment.

Some of the more serious newspaper rhymesters evidently are making attempts more ambitious than the time occupied in their preparation warrants, and the hasty work and lack of finish and pruning plainly visible in their efforts are to be deplored.

If the truth were known, inspiration has played a small part in the production of the most famous poems of the world.

It is the patient toil, the unremitting and laborious cutting away of inferior parts; the accurate balance and the careful polish that develops the diamond from the rough stone to the perfect gem.

One poem a month from some of our prolific writers might claim our admiration for thirty days, at least, but three in a day have a tendency to force us to save up

a portion of our appreciation for the three more we will have dished up to us in the morning.

Our Southern poets especially are guilty of over-production. Those among them most generally accepted as representative voices among our writers of verse are occupying positions in which they are doing better work in other than poetic lines. A few of them have talent that would bring them fame if allowed space, time and scope for full development and use.

Mr. Will T. Hale, whose poems appear in the *Memphis Commercial-Appeal*, shows a clear and praiseworthy conception of the situation when he says:

“I dare say that Tennessee poets, including among the many, Walter Malone, Howard McGee, R. M. Fields, Leland Rankin, Mrs. Hilliard, Mrs. Boyle, Mrs. Gilchrist, Mrs. Barrow and Mr. Lamb, have written jingles which they never called poetry, never expected to be taken as anything more than ephemeral things to be glanced at and forgotten; written in rhyme because as easily written as a prose paragraph. I, an humble versifier, a toiler in newspaperdom, like my confreres throughout the State, arrogating nothing to myself, but pleased if my writings are copied and complimented beyond their deserts—I have done so. I shall continue to do so. Why should it be insisted that I want to cram it down one’s throat as poetry? Let me jinglify if I want to.”

Mr. Hale realizes the transient nature of such verse as the journalist must needs write to fill space, although he has written in this way some gems that study could scarcely improve upon.

It is doubtful if Mr. Frank Stanton, who has struck some high and abiding chords upon his lyre, could be, or would care to be, remembered by the jingles he turns out daily for his newspaper. Yet, if the popular impression is correct, Mr. Stanton aspires to poetic proficiency and fame.

One poem on which he would spend days of labor would do much more toward gaining him reputation than the wonderful number of rhymes that he turns out within that space of time.

A short time ago he dashed off two or three verses on a Midway dancer, called something like “Papinta,” that had a rhythm and a lilt and swinging grace to it

that were fascinating and truly admirable. The poem was delicate, airy and sprite-like, and one could almost see the form of the dancer and hear the castanets and guitars while reading the musical lines.

But the amount of verse he writes daily will not permit of such a high average, and the moral of it all is that, while he is succeeding as a journalist and an interesting writer upon the day's topics, his future as a poet is not being benefited by his overproduction of poetry at present.

The late Eugene Field might in time have become a poet of considerable ability, but there is little question that his newspaper labors were too onerous to allow of a thorough development of his poetic powers. The verses he wrote have always been popular because they were simple and musical, and addressed themselves to an almost universal sympathy for children, and his poems, charming and lovable as they were, stopped short of being great. It was the subject and the sentiment, rather than the literary proficiency of his poetical work, that made him so widely known. A poem to be great and long-remembered must be erected in the same way that a house is built. The foundation, the superstructure, the architectural proportions, the ornament and finish must be the result of care and labor, or else it abideth not.

Judge Albion W. Tourgee, whose opinions on matters literary deserve respect, however it be concerning his political proclivities, advises poetic as well as other literary aspirants to always work in a room with an open fire—not for the sake of the fire, but in order that he may burn five sheets for every one he sends to the printer.

W. S. Porter.

(*Houston Daily Post*, Sunday morning, November 24, 1895.)

Part Three
Newspaper Poetry

Topical Verse

(Dramatis Personae: One singer, one baritone horn, one bass drum.)

There was a man in our town,
And he was very lazy;
He made his wife do everything,
Till she was almost crazy.
Although he was a Christian man,
He made her come upstairs
And wake him up to say "Amen!"
When she had said his prayers.

One night before he went to sleep
He made her kneel and pray
And when she finished, wake him up;
Then this good man did say:
"Oh, Lord, please answer my wife's prayer."
And then to sleep he fell.
The Lord did, and the man awoke
To find himself in _____.
Baritone horns "Ta-ta-rum."
Bass Drums "Boom."

(*Houston Daily Post*, Sunday morning, May 17, 1896.)

Cape Jessamines

“Cape jessamines! Remove them from my sight!
I can not bear that odor, cloying sweet,
That hangs about them like a heavy sigh.
They bring back to my memory haunting days
Of deep regret, and open all my wounds again.
Fair, dream-like flower, that in this Southern town
Within the dark green copses of thy birth
Hangeth faint and heavy with thine own sweet breath,
To me ye are a mockery, and your odor foul.
Come, sit thee down, Rinaldo, I will tell thee all.
Knewest thou fair Rosamond, the Houston belle,
Who years ago, like some fair Lorelei of old
Upon the hearts of all our gallants set her feet?
I loved her madly and I swore to win
Her from the suing courtiers in her train.
Alas! Rinaldo—this sudden faintness—quick—some wine!
Ah! thanks, it gives me strength to tell the tale.
For years I have not been myself. Since one
Sad night that in my mem’ry burns white-hot
Like some sad bark that washes, derelict
Within the trough of sullen alien tides,
I’ve drifted down the mournful muttering seas;
But at the smell of jessamines, my brain
Quick strikes those aching chords of old,
And all the latest agony revives.
It grasps me now—more wine, Rinaldo—thanks;
I’m better now. ’Twas on one summer’s night
I stood with Rosamond to count the stars.
With downcast eyes and softly heaving breast,
She pledged a kiss for every star that fell.
My pretty, sweet, shy dove. Methinks they fell
Too seldom till, anon, some frolic boys
Sent up a sky rocket, and when it burst
Upon her lips I pressed full seventeen.
But—peace! I wander from my theme.

At last my love o'erpowered, and I spake
In thrilling tones, and wooed her there.
What clogs my heart? More wine, Rinaldo, quick!
Oh, then she fastened on me those dark orbs,
In them illimitable sadness, and such store
Of pity that her face angelic seemed.
More wine, Rinaldo—thanks. I'm better now.
The while the garden there was heavy with
The odor of cape jessamines, and pinned
Upon her breast a cluster of them lay.
And in her hair some snowy buds were twined;
Almost oppressive was the odor of the flower.
And that is why the smell of jessamines
Unto my heart such bitter thoughts recalls.
Rinaldo, quick! A glass of wine! My brain
Is reeling! Another glass! Is there no more?
Well, then, I'll cease. I married Rosamond
And since then I can't stand those blooming
Blarsted cape jessamine flowers. See?"

(*Houston Daily Post*, Sunday morning, April 26, 1896.)

The Cricket

When the moonlight falls from the star-strewn sky;
Comes the tune of the mockingbird;
When the morning dawns and the roses sigh,
Then the lark's sweet voice is heard.
When all things smile
And the hours beguile,
Then the hearts of the singers are stirred.

When the dull, cold nigh makes the heart sink low;
And the death watch ticks in the wall,
And the soul lies crouched like a harried foe,
Comes the cricket's merry call.
In the hour of fear,
With his note of cheer,
Rings his sprightly madrigal.

(Houston Daily Post, Sunday morning, May 17, 1896.)

My Broncho

Yoho! Away o'er the mesquite sward,
With stirruped foot and a slackened rein;
With drumming hoofs, the hills toward.
And our track the boundless grassy plain;
Light in the saddle and ready hand;
Ride in the teeth of the wind and sand,
Wind, and sand, and rain.
Knees pressed tight on the saddle flap
Where the lasso dangles from its string
Over the rifle scabbard strap,
And the canteen and suaderos swing;
The wind sings hollow in my ear,
Nor sail nor wheel could follow near,
Sail, nor wheel, nor wing.

On dusty roads and streets there prowl
Bent riders perched on noiseless wheels;
Misshapen things with mannish scowl;
Strange crafts with unknown bows and keels;
Queer fish enmeshed in Folly's net;
Scare human, flesh, or fowl—scarce yet
Red herring, flesh, or fowl.

Yoho! O'er the hills and far away,
My broncho spurns the gravel slope;
This is the ride for a man alway;
The valleys at gallop, the hills at a lope;
Who would exchange for the senseless wheel
The life and strength that the horsemen feel?
Life, and strength, and hope.

(Houston Daily Post, Sunday morning, April 26, 1896.)

The Modern Venus

The golden apple Paris gave
To the most beautiful,
To the fairest Aphrodite fell,
Although she had no pull.

She did not need to plead her cause,
Nor canvass, sue or beg;
She did not run her rivals down,
Nor pull her best friend's leg.

She stood in beauteous youthfulness,
Incarnate rose of love;
When Paris held the apple forth
She did not scrouge or shove.

Alas! our modern Venuses
Far different methods use
To gain the palm of loveliness
Whenever one we choose.

Towns, churches and societies
Now offer prizes rare
To one among the pretty girls
Who is adjudged most fair.

Our modern Venus hustles forth
And campaigns all the town,
And begs men to buy votes for her;
Smith, Johnson, Jones and Brown.

'Twas not thus Venus Victrix gained
The gift of Priam's son.
By beauty, not by begging, was
The golden apple won.

(Houston Daily Post, Sunday morning, May 3, 1896.)

Celestial Sounds

With three men on the bases,
And one to tie the score,
The batter rubs sand on his hands,
The runners play off more.

He hits a home run o'er the fence,
The air is full of cheers;
The sharp crack of the ball and bat
Is music of the spheres.

(Houston Daily Post, Sunday morning, April 26, 1896.)

The Snow

'Tis thirty miles, you say? Ah, well,
Come, mount! I am no hot-house flower.
I love the cold and the north wind's power;
Rioting, buffeting, rushing pellmell.
Did you think that the colonel's daughter
Was afraid to ride in a little cold
Back to the fort? Why, Travers, you ought to
Do guard duty till you're gray and old.

Come, mount—Ah, this is life again;
Like a mustang in a hunter's pen,
So many months I have fretted sore
For a gallop on Firefly's back once more.
Going to snow?—Well, what do I care?
I told you, Travers, I am not afraid.
There are few things that I would not dare;
You can go back if you'd rather have stayed.

There, now, I was but jesting.
No need for that flush resting
On your cheek at what I said.
Why did they send you to meet me—Oh,
You begged the task as a favor!
There is about your words a savor
Of something that would hardly go
Unrebuked if your colonel heard you.

As I am the colonel's daughter,
You must know that as fire and water
Are things that must be kept asunder;
So I from a common private;
Lest the great big world should wonder;
I must not for a moment connive at
Your treading its dictates under.

Your hand from my bridle rein, sir!

What is it you say?—the snow?
I take no alarm from your answer;
Just a big white flake or so.
Ride for my life?—Why, Travers,
Are you frightened, man? Would you have us
Racing for a stray snowflake?
Ah, you will hat it—off, then;
Though I positively can not take
Alarm, though you tell me so often.

It's no use, Travers, draw rein;
Our wonderful ride has been in vain;
It was glorious though, for a while.
I'm so cold, and the horrid snow
Grows deeper with every mile,
And my heart grows faint, and every blow
Of the icy wind is death,
As it catches my breath
And bears my soul out to the snow.
No, no, I will not ride on.
My strength and my will are gone;
Where is our course, can you tell me?
Backward or forward, or where?
You can not? Then it were well we
Stopped here—for, see, in the air
Comes the snow in eddying waves;
What a pure nice fall for our graves.
What, Travers, your coat?—No, keep it;
I said no! Do I have to repeat it?
Do you forget that you are a private?
And I—Oh, God, and what am I,
To lie—but come; let's arrive at
Some understanding why
I always flout you and scorn you.
I'll speak to the point, and I warn you
I will speak my heart's truth ere I die.
I am so sleepy and cold;
Is this the maiden bold

Who a few hours ago spoke so brave,
And claimed such a deal of courage?
So dauntless and firm (and save
In one thing) quite up to her age.

I'm freezing, Travers, help me down;
Hark! was not that the sound
Of church bells? Travers, come quick
I'm afraid of this horrible whiteness around.
Look up, Travers, into my eyes;
Do you see anything in them to prize?
The drifts are rising fast around us,
Death has come at last and found us.
I am the colonel's daughter, and you
Are only—my Jack and the man I love
And always have, the long years through.
Come, Jack! At last my head finds rest;
Draw me closer upon your breast.
Has it grown dark? I can not see,
But I can feel your dear, strong arm.
I am not cold now; it must be
The snow was a dream, and we
Are at the barracks. Do not keep
Me waiting longer; I must sleep.

—W. S. P.

(*Houston Daily Post*, Sunday morning, February 23, 1896.)

Her Choice

The trump had sounded, and on pinions white
Ascended they who in the grave had lain;
And seraph bands in floods of golden light
Guided before the pure and heavenly train.

And on, past comet and past lurid star
They winged their way unto the throne of grace;
The burning world behind them glowed far,
As low in worship, bowed each angel face.

There was among the chosen of the earth
A woman beautiful and young and fair;
So sweet and chaste, and breathing love and worth,
She stood the loveliest of the angels there.

And then from out the band about the throne,
With eager eyes and outstretched hands, there came
The forms of two. Each once had been her own,
And she on earth of each had borne the name.

(Oh, heaven being love, why should not love be thine,
And heart to heart strayed souls again unite,
And wife to husband there for aye entwine
Their spirit tendrils where is no blight?)

And each had been her husband; and each spoke
Her name and claimed her with fond eyes
And beckoning hands, till from her dream she woke
And gazed. Then spake a Voice kind-toned and wise:

“Choose you between them who your mate shall be;
For heaven were not heaven if it were to lose
The other half of self, the ecstasy
Of loving and of being loved—so choose.”

The woman raised her down-cast eyes, and o’er

The gathered host of spirits swept her gaze.
Twice had her heart gone out in love before;
Twice had she felt its warm, eternal rays.

Wild, sweet and tender to her memory came
Her first love's recollections, like the start
Of mighty breakers. Then the steady flame
Uprising from her second smote her heart.

With pleading eyes, the two stayed on her choice,
Each thinking one must win and one must lose.
And then she spake, uplifting her sweet voice,
And said in tender tones: "And must I choose?"

"Yea, verily," the Voice replied. "Be free
To follow where your heart points out the way.
For love, once kindled, fills eternity;
'Tis heaven, not earth, that lights his brightest ray."

And then the woman, with fond beaming eye,
Spake up and said: "These two are both N. G.
They made me tired. I think I'll try
That nice blond angel by that apple tree."

—W. S. P.

(*Houston Daily Post*, Sunday morning, January 12, 1896.)

“Little Things, but Ain’t They Whizzers?”

The following song was written for the benefit of any theatrical or musical entertainment that desires to use it in Houston. Any company rendering it outside the city is liable to a fine of \$1,000,000, as it has been composed solely for the pleasure of Houston audiences, which it is sure to please.

The person singing the song, if a gent, will dress in loud check trousers, tan shoes, and high white hat, advancing to the footlights, smiling, and carrying a large cane. If sung by a lady, the costume is the same, with smaller checks, and parasol instead of cane.

The following lines are to be spoken:

“Ladies and Gentlemen: You must excuse my hoarseness tonight, as I was up late last night rocking the baby to sleep. (*Laughter.*) I love babies. (*Great laughter.*) When they get molasses on their fingers and use your shirt front for a piano, it makes a man think marriage is a success, now doesn’t it? (*Howls of laughter from the family circle.*) Last night I came home late from the lodge (*applause*); and after I took off my shoes and slipped into the room and commenced rocking the cradle, my wife woke up and said, ‘What are you doing, Charlie?’ ‘I’m getting the baby quiet,’ said I. ‘Come to bed, you fool,’ says she, ‘the baby has been in bed here with me for two hours.’ (*Prolonged yells of laughter.*) Babies are little things, but are very important institutions. That reminds me of a song.” (*Looks at orchestra, which strikes up at once.*)

(*Sings*):

As we wander down life’s pathway
Plucking roses as we go,
Often do we prick our finger
With the little thorns that grow,
Little drops make up the ocean,
Little chips fill up the pot;
Little drinks make great big jaglets,
Little wives can make home hot.

Little things—but ain’t they whizzers!

Little bees have biggest stings;
Little girls are sometimes Tartars—
Look out for the little things.
(*Bass horn—“Ta-ra-rum.”*)

(*Spoken*)—“Yes, ladies and gentlemen, it is not always the biggest things that are the most valuable. I remember a few nights ago I was in a poker game. It was not in this city, of course, for since Charlie Helm was elected marshal there is no gambling in Hooston (*can also be pronounced Howston*). (*Vociferous cheering in gallery.*) I will tell you about it:”

(*Sings*):

Once while I was playing poker,
I hid four kings in my shoe;
And I said, when someone raised me,
“I won’t do a thing to you.”
Then I shoved in all my money,
And I reached out for the pot—
But a fellow shouted, “Drop it!
I’ve four aces, what you got?”

Little things—but ain’t they whizzers!
Little one spots downed the kings,
And my hand it was not in it
When he showed the little things.

(*Deafening applause from the audience; two men fall out of private boxes overcome with laughter, and every man in the audience claps his hands for fear it will be thought he does not understand the game. The singer will please smile indulgently, and when the noise has subsided, continue*)—

I engaged board once in Hooston (or Howston),
At a house not far from here;
They were fashionable people,
And the grub was scarce and dear.
I turned into bed quite early,
But I jumped out with a roar,
And I scratched myself two hours

Then slept upon the floor.

Little things—but ain't they whizzers!
Never felt such bites and stings!
When you go to bed in Howston,
Look out for the little things.

(Plaster falls from the opera-house ceiling, and the audience stand up in their chairs and wave their handkerchiefs. The singer will here do a few steps of a clog dance, and exit r. Whistles, yells, and calls and screams from dress circle. Gallery totters. Enter singer, smiling and bowing, wearing another coat and hat—Sings:)

I have got a girl in Hooston,
And she rides upon a bike;
You should see her when she spins to
Harrisburg upon the pike.
She wears bloomers, though she don't weigh
More than eighty pounds or so;
Now, I wonder how she does it,
When I see her move 'em so.

Little things—but ain't they whizzers!
Pair of bloomers hung on strings;
Wonder they don't break to pieces,
Such hard work for little things.

(The audience goes wild with delight, gentlemen throw their hats at the ceiling, ladies shriek with delight, and the gallery resolves itself into a Republican convention, while the police pound with their clubs on the wall and cry "Encore!")

Curtain.

(Houston Daily Post, Sunday morning, April 26, 1896.)

Last Fall of the Alamo

“I am—
Excuse me, I was—the Alamo.
Ye who have tears to shed,
Shed.
Shades of Crockett, Bowie and the rest
Who in my sacred blood-stained walls were slain!
Shades of the fifty or sixty solitary survivors,
Each of whom alone escaped;
And shades of the dozen or so daughters,
Sisters, cousins and aunts of the Alamo,
Protest!
Against this foul indignity.
Ain’t there enough jobs in the city
That need whitewashing
Without jumping on me?
Did I stand off 5,000 Mexicans in ’36
To be kalsomined and wall-papered
And fixed up with dados and pink mottoes
In ’96?
Why don’t you put bloomers on me at once,
And call me
The New Alamo?—
Tamaleville!
You make me tired.
I can stand a good deal yet,
So don’t have any more chrysanthemum shows
In me.
If you do
I’ll fall on you.
Sabe?”

(Houston Daily Post, Monday morning, April 13, 1896.)

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