

**BILL'S IN TROUBLE.**

I've got a letter, parson, from my son away out West. An' my heart is heavy as an anvil in my breast. To think the boy whose futur' I had once so proudly planned should wander from the path o' right an' come to sich an' end! I told him when he left us only three short years ago. He'd find himself a plowin' in a mighty crooked row— He'd miss his father's counsels, an' his mother's prayers, too. But he said the farm was hateful, an' he guessed he'd have to go.

I know thar's big temptation for a youngster in the West. But I believed our Billy had the courage to resist. An' when he left I warned him o' the ever-waitin' snares. That lie like hidden sarapints in life's pathway everwhere. But Bill he promised faithful to be keefin', an' allowed He'd build a reputation that'd make us mighty proud. But it seems as how my counsel sort o' faded from his mind. An' now the boy's in trouble o' the very wustest kind!

His letters came so seldom that I somehow sort o' knowed That Billy was a trampin' on a mighty rocky road. But never once imagined he would bow my head in shame. An' in the dust'd waller his o' daddy's honored name. He writes from out in Denver, an' the story's mighty short; I just can't tell his mother; it'll crush her poor o' heart! An' so I reckoned, parson, you might break the news to her— Bill's in the Legislat', but he doesn't say what fur.

—Denver Post.

**THE POISONED SPEAR**

"It is rather a bad hole, boys, sure enough, and the Lord bless you, it was nip and tuck between me and the devil for a little while, I tell you. I can't even think of the thing now without feeling my blood run cold.

"Does it ever hurt me? Well, I should say it does. I can feel the blamed stuff rankin' in my bones this very minute.

"Eh, what stuff? Why the poison, of course.

"Well, if you must have the story, I'll tell it, seeing as I'd have to anyhow; but as it's getting late and I'm as sleepy as a 3-weeks-old cub, I'll warrant it'll not be very long and strung out.

"So you want to know how I come to have that big ugly hole in my arm there, do you?

"All right, boys, all right; you shall know; you shall know. Give me a match, somebody. This tobacco must be wet, or green, or something. It's forever and eternally going out on a fellow.

"Early in the fall of the year 1808 or 1809, I'm not sure which, there were some ten or twelve of us hunting wild horses on the Upper Rio Grande, in the northern part of the Territory of New Mexico. The Indians were quiet enough at the time and game wasn't scarce, so what with plenty of eat, tobacco galore, a cask of rum and pretty fair luck with the lasso, we watched our corral getting full with contented hearts.

"We had been some six or seven weeks in camp when one of the boys, an Irishman named Mike Moriarity, came in from an antelope trail that he had been following two whole days, with the startling intelligence that there were Indians on the creek about three miles above camp.

"He hadn't stopped to get close sight of them, but from the fact that they were mounted and that they numbered

**The Mosquito.**

The female mosquito, after she has filled herself with blood—the male insect is not a blood sucker—seeks out some dark and sheltered spot near stagnant water.

At the end of about six days she quits her shelter, and, alighting on the surface of the water, deposits her eggs thereon. She then dies, and, as a rule, falls into the water beside her eggs. The eggs float about for a time, and then, in due course, give birth to tiny swimming larvae. These larvae, in virtue of a voracious appetite, grow apace, casting their skins several times to admit of growth.

Later, they pass into the nymph stage, during which, after a time, they float on the surface of the water. Finally, the shell of the nymph cracks along its dorsal surface and a young mosquito floats on the surface of the water while its wings are drying and acquiring rigidity. When this is complete it flies away.

The young mosquito larvae, to satisfy their prodigious appetites, devour everything eatable they come across; and one of the first things they eat, if they get the chance, is the dead body of their parent, now soft and sodden from decomposition and long immersion.

They even devour their own cast-off skins. In examining mosquito larvae one often comes across specimens whose alimentary canals are stuffed with the scales, fragments of limbs, and other remains of the maternal insect.



**Jubal's Call.**

The daughter of Dr. Edward Hodges, the organist, says that her father had a delightful way of calling all the children musically. One Sunday morning, when he was playing in St. John's Chapel, New York, he said to her: "I am going to call Jubal. Watch him."

Jubal was sitting in his accustomed place near the middle aisle. Doctor Hodges' voluntary began thoughtfully and smoothly, but in the course of it, a significant phrase of two notes was twice repeated. It was distinct, and yet so truly a part of the improvisation that no stranger would have noticed it at all.

The first time, Jubal's attention was arrested; the second, he turned and looked up, but saw no sign. At the third call, he deliberately took up his hat, left the pew, walked straight up to his father, and said: "Do you want me, sir?" "Yes," said Doctor Hodges. "Go home and get my gold snuffbox." The errand was speedily executed, for the house stood near. Jubal handed the snuffbox to his father, and returned to his seat.

**Fund for Injured Railroad Men.**

In ten years \$1,000,000 has been paid out by the casualty fund of the British Benevolent Institution to injured railway men and their families.

There is one thing about a crop of wild oats: It harvests itself.

**ORIGIN OF MAY DAY.**

**FESTIVAL OF THE FLOWERS AND ITS ANTIQUITY.**

**May Day 4,000 Years Ago—The Day in Egypt, China, Mexico and Peru—Old English Customs in Connection with the Floral Holiday.**

**First Day of May.**

For the origin of May Day with its joyous associations, we are compelled to go back to a time when men personified the powers of nature and called them gods and goddesses. How far



**QUEEN OF MAY IN FRANCE.**

back the goddess of the flowers was adored at the season when the earth put on her green mantle with its floral splendor of every hue, we do not know, for the earliest records speak of a spring festival as an institution already



**MAY DAY IN THE TIME OF CÆSAR.**

well established and even then known more from ancient times. The Egyptians made pictures of everything, so it is not surprising that among the paintings on the walls of their catacombs there should be found some which, from the accompaniments of flowers, garlands and wreaths, are judged by the antiquarians to be of a spring festival, a feast of flowers. May Day is therefore at least 4,500 years old, and it is quite possible that Adam and Eve celebrated May Day in the garden of Paradise if they stayed there over one season.

When traces of May Day are discovered in the earliest ages of Egypt and at the dawn of history in Greece, among the Etruscans, among the Celts of the Rhine and the Germans of the Rhine, in Scandinavia and Wales and Ireland, among the natives of the Indian Peninsula and among the Aborigines of America and Australia and New Guinea, the conclusion is safe that such a custom is of universal observance and remotest antiquity. So it may be that the Chinese are not as extravagant as they seem when they claim that May Day originated in the Celestial Empire 90,000 years before the flood, being instituted by the never-to-be-enough-praised Emperor Chi-Whee, who was fond of flowers and employed exactly 1,000,000 men to take care of his garden.

Leaving, however, the claims of the glorious Chi-Whee to be defended by his own people, it is worth remembering that a festival, in many particulars bearing a close resemblance to our May Day, was celebrated all over Italy and the south of Europe at the beginning of the Christian era, when every one who could spare the time went into the woods and fields for a day's outing,



**MAY DAY DANCE OF LONDON FOOTLACKS.**

gathered flowers and returning laid them on the altars of Flora. It is also interesting to know that on these occasions the goddess of flowers was personated by a young girl, the prettiest who could be found, who, during the day, received the homage of her friends

and was crowned with the spoils of the fields, a genuine Queen of the May. As cities grew, it became inconvenient to go far into the country, for the excursion steamers and railroad trains packed full of pleasure seekers were not, and a substitute was found by bringing a tree into town, setting it in the ground in a public place, decorating it with flowers, which the country people, in the hope of gaining shekels, or oboli, or denarii, or whatever other coin was legal tender for debts public and private in the neighborhood, were easily induced to bring in. Thus, in the May pole is seen the descendant of the green tree, and the dancing about it in circles is explained by the fact that the only way to dance round it at all is in a circle, and also, perhaps, the circle has always had a mystic significance, being much used in charms and incantations. Having learned this much from the antiquarians, these dignified folk may be told to go about their business, for the rest of our knowledge of May Day and its festivities may easily be had from other sources than their ponderous and almost unreadable tomes.

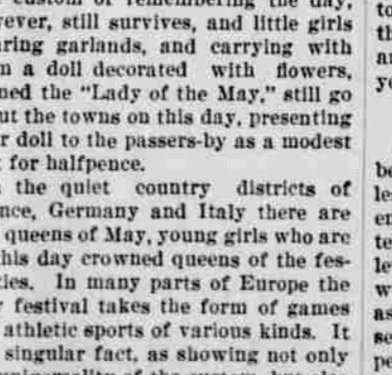
From authors of our own tongue we may glean almost innumerable references and allusions to the pretty custom of hallowing the May Day, and we also learn that less than 200 years ago the May pole was as indispensable in every English village as the stocks or the pillory. When the Puritans, who were not afraid either of the name of traitor, or of deserting it, by beholding their King, came into power, the idea of any one presuming to enjoy himself while he groveled here upon the earth in the humble capacity of a worm of the dust, was intolerable to them; so, with bell ringing and carol singing, and other vicious indulgences, the May Day dancing and flower gathering were tabooed and May poles were all cut down. But after grim old Oliver passed away, the night of the storm that shook all Europe, the people began to amuse themselves again, erected taller May poles than were ever known before, and danced



**THE SLANGY GIRL.**

The use of slang is the easiest of all habits to acquire, yet so hard to break. It vitiates our speech, and especially marks a woman as ordinary, though she may be of eminently refined birth and education. To converse well, even elegantly, is only a matter of cultivation. Study the selection of your words, and after a while it will be second nature to use only such as are essentially above criticism. All cannot be fluent conversationalists, but all can speak correctly, using only such language as expresses what you wish to say, but not in the slangy fashion that too many young people think chic and convincing. It may sound smart and cute in some ears to be fluently familiar with all the up-to-date slang phrases, but the best people, the refined and cultivated members of society, will never be able to discover any beauty in this knowledge.

Many girls use slang as they puff cigarettes, thinking to make an impression upon men by their worldly ways, the little "fast" touch in its dangerous proximity to the extreme edge of the border line of decorum possessing that strange fascination that has belonged to forbidden fruit since the days of Eve. The men whose good opinion is worth having, however, do not cultivate the society of slangy girls. Its use may be only a habit, but slang will impress the hearer with a feeling that the nature of the woman employing it is in touch with its brusquerie and its unconventional idioms.



**THE JACK IN THE BOX.**

May pole to be found in all England. The custom of remembering the day, however, still survives, and little girls wearing garlands, and carrying with them a doll decorated with flowers, termed the "Lady of the May," still go about the towns on this day, presenting their doll to the passers-by as a modest hint for halfpence.

In the quiet country districts of France, Germany and Italy there are still queens of May, young girls who are on this day crowned queens of the festivities. In many parts of Europe the May festival takes the form of games and athletic sports of various kinds. It is a singular fact, as showing not only the universality of the custom, but also the fact that all the varieties probably had one origin, that many of the features of the celebration in countries very widely separated, are almost identical. The Chinese, as well as the English, had a queen of the May, while in Mexico and Peru, the crowning of a young girl with flowers at this season is a hint of the same thing.

While there seems nothing so transient as a jovial custom like this, nothing is, in reality, more permanent, and the manner in which apparently frivolous and meaningless celebrations are handed down from parents to children, from race to race, constitutes one of the bonds which unite us to remote ages and countries far distant from our own.



**TOO MUCH SKIN DOCTORING.**

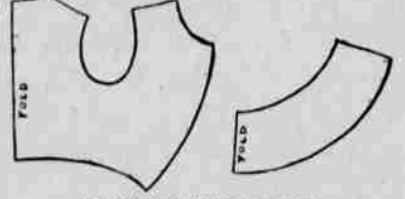
A SPECIALIST says too many women do their complexions to death. At a recent lecture, one woman declared that she was 30 years of age, and "I've been taking care of my complexion steadily for ten years, and I just wish you'd notice what a fright it is. I've tried tincture of benzoin, glycerin and rose water, a face mask, steaming and massage, and if there's a tougher, uglier, rougher, more shriveled-looking face on any woman of my age in this city, then she can have the blue ribbon for downright homeliness."

"You've doctored your complexion almost to death," answered her friend, quietly. "Many women do. They use preparations, excellent in themselves often, but not suited to their requirements. Tincture of benzoin is very detrimental to oily skins. The familiar rose water and glycerin, in the majority of instances, makes the complexion dry, yellow and leathery. Face masks are dreadful in their effects on not only the skin, but the general health, particularly those made of rubber. They make the face perspire, and the impurities which exude from the pores cling to the rubber for a while, and are reabsorbed. Steaming the face robs the skin of its natural oil, causes wrinkles to appear and makes one sensitive to neuralgia. Under the delusive pretense of facial massage many hundreds of women have had the delicate tissues of their faces pinched and slapped and rubbed and twisted without any regard whatever for the natural condition of the skin. Disappointment generally follows the use of all the things I have mentioned, and also of the methods employed. All of these remedies are enough to ruin a woman's face."

od necessary. All of which is interesting for two reasons, one as showing that the service question is as serious across the water as here, and another that in the opinion of at least one observer the hope of betterment lies in ability and practice of doing one's own work.

**To Make a Corset Cover.**

A quickly made corset cover has only three seams, one on each shoulder and one across the waist line. To cut a pattern, take your waist pattern and a newspaper. On the straight edge lay the piece that comes next, lapping the pieces where they allow for seams; then lap onto this the next under-arm piece, next the front with the seam that joins onto this, and fold over each dart. This will leave your shoulder seams quite away apart. Measure



**CORSET COVER PATTERN.**

across the bottom and be sure you have it large enough around the waist, then cut your papers, allowing an inch in front. The pattern will be straight in the back and bias in front. Lay the pattern so the middle of the back will be on a fold of the cloth, baste the shoulder seams, and try on over your corset and draw the front together so it will fit. Being bias, it will fit perfectly smooth. Mark where you need to trim the front edge, then see if you have the bottom just at the bottom of the waist, allowing the width of a seam. If you have had to change any, put it back on your paper and trim it, then you will have a perfect fitting pattern. For the lower part, cut a circular piece that will fit smoothly around your hips, six inches deep.—Exchange.

**An Ideal Husband.**

The ideal husband is thus described by a bright woman who keeps her eyes open and has a reprehensive habit (her friends say) of "taking notes":

"A temperate, moral, intelligent, energetic, affectionate, truthful, forgiving, Christian man, who chooses a wife for her mind and heart rather than her face, and waits until he finds the right one.

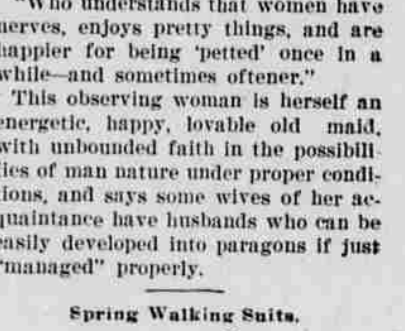
"Who neither scolds nor laughs at his wife, and never contradicts her in public.

"Who loves home and children, and has certain means for making an honest and comfortable living.

"Who is economical, but not stingy; gives his wife a personal allowance to do with as she chooses and, unless wealthy, keeps his life insured in her favor.

"Who understands that women have nerves, enjoys pretty things, and are happier for being 'petted' once in a while—and sometimes oftener."

"This observing woman is herself an energetic, happy, lovable old maid, with unbounded faith in the possibilities of man nature under proper conditions, and says some wives of her acquaintance have husbands who can be easily developed into paragons if just "managed" properly.



**Spring Walking Suits.**

**How to Curl Feathers.**

Feathers may easily be curled, if only a little time and care be devoted to them. A simple process is as follows: Have a large kettle with steam pouring out of the spout. Hold the feathers in this steam for a few moments, and then with a blunt knife (preferably a metal paper cutter) curl each separate plume, and when complete, hold the feather in front of the fire to keep the stiffness in. Professional dressers do little else, but, of course, they are more expert than a mere amateur.

**Chinese Gowns.**

The kinomo is the name of a handsome new lounging robe, which may be made from a discarded opera cloak. Its long, loose folds crossed and confined by a broad sash at the waist, its queer, square-shaped sleeves, the ease with which it may be manufactured, all appeal to comfort loving women. If being made new, it should be of yellow satin, with trimmings of embroidered peacock feathers.

Large families are the rule rather than the exception among the Dutch, but a certain Susanna Joubert, of Klipfontein, in the Free State, has broken all records in that line. She has had four husbands, and her living descendants number 327.