

THE OLD-FASHIONED FIRE.

To steam heat the cities aspire
As they shiver and shake in the cold;
But give me the old-fashioned fire—
The round, rosy backlog of old!

In the darkness the winter wailing
Made the flame take a ruddier glow;
The sparks up the broad chimney flying—
Like witch-eyes that gleamed in the snow!

Far better that friendly old fire
Than billows of shimmering steam,
With never a flame to admire,
And never a beautiful dream!

HIS RARE SKILL.

JACK GREEN was a reporter on a London paper, and in that capacity he solved the riddle of the celebrated Sykes robbery case.

His injury won him a month's vacation, which he resolved to spend at his home in Kent. Ashford was not a very lively place in the winter, but Green was not looking for recreation.

He wanted to see Ethel Watson, who in his opinion, was the sweetest and smartest girl in the world. On the afternoon of his seventh day in Ashford Green drove up to the Watson house to take Ethel for a drive.

"Hello, Sherlock Holmes!" said the lawyer. "Have you heard the news?" "No," answered Green, sourly. "I'm really surprised," said Sawyer. "You should have deducted it from the state of the atmosphere and the price of potatoes."

"I haven't," responded Green. "Justice Hawkins' house has been robbed," said Ethel, "and I think it's positively providential that you're here." Green looked at Ethel and he saw that she expected him to perform great miracles.

They drove to the justice's house. The robbery had been discovered by old Mrs. Gubbins, a lifelong dependent of the judge's family, who went through the house three or four times a week to see that all was well, but did not live there. She had reported the case to the local police—a day and a night watchman—and these functionaries were present, with a dozen of the neighbors, when Green and his companions arrived.

Green consulted his watch, and then he slowly walked into the hall, where the old-fashioned safe built into the wall gaped empty. He glanced around with listless eye, while everybody watched him. Then he walked into the parlor and stood for half a minute by the mantelpiece.

From this room he passed through all the others in the house, a slow procession following him. Finally he led them to the starting point, the broad hall, and there he sat down upon the stairs and looked at his watch, which he had consulted occasionally in the course of his stroll.

"Nineteen minutes and a half," said Green. "Mr. Jones, I believe you are a deputy sheriff of this county as well as a constable of the village. I will make my report to you, sir. This robbery was committed by two men who do not live in Ashford, and who are not here at present. Where they are we will consider later."

"One of them is about six feet tall and rather slender. He has red hair, but is bald on the front part of his cranium. He wore a long black overcoat and heavy rubber overshoes. The little finger of his right hand has been broken and is bent almost double."

"It may interest you to know how I discovered this. The thief is tall because he bumped his head on the swinging lamp in the parlor, and that is about six feet from the floor. He left upon it a small portion of his scalp and one red hair. If he had not been bald in front he would have left more hair and less scalp."

"The prints of his overshoes show in the dust on the floor of the kitchen closet. The print of his little finger is in the dust on top of that table, or was before Joe Sawyer sat down on it."

"There wasn't any dust here—not a speck!" exclaimed Sawyer, jumping off the table. "It depends on the eye," responded Green, calmly. "To continue: The other robber was short, thick-set and dark. He wore a pea jacket and a fur cap. He had a heavy black beard, which may, however, be false. I cannot tell from the single hair which I found upon a piece of bread in the kitchen until I have examined it with a microscope. He was an Irishman."

ITALIAN ALPHABET AND MONOGRAM.



This quaint and interesting alphabet was selected and adapted from Italian Mss. of the sixteenth century. The letters are well adapted for use on table-linen, using this size for napkins and enlarging any one of the letters for table cloths.

"Great Scott!" exclaimed the constable. "How do you know that?" "From his method of knocking out the ashes from his pipe," replied Green. "Irishmen have a peculiar way of doing it. I have not time to explain in detail."

"The tall man walked on this side," said Green. "Mark the longer stride and the prints of the overshoes. Without doubt they walked across the meadows to Chartham and took the 7:10 train for London."

"Why not the 6:50 for Dover?" asked Sawyer. "Thieves with plunder always strike for the big cities," said Green. "Mr. Jones, if you telegraph to London, giving a description of the men and their plunder, I think the police can catch them for you before to-morrow morning. Now, Ethel, if you're ready, we'll go for a drive."

At 9 o'clock the next morning Jones received this message from Scotland Yard: "Have your men. Description perfect. Most of goods recovered. Will send men in charge of Detective Cuff, 10 o'clock train."

"I'll give it up," said Joe Sawyer. And he gnawed his knuckles till they bled. Green walked away from the station with Ethel, and a cheering mob followed.

He got her into her own house as soon as he could, and there in the parlor he faced her, red with shame. "Ethel," said he, "I love you, and—" "And I love you," she answered, "but I'm only a silly girl, and I'll never be anything else. I haven't the mind your wife should have."

"Don't! Don't!" he groaned. "Ethel, I can't act this lie before you. I have only been a lucky idiot in this affair, as in that other in London."

"Luck!" she cried. "Could luck tell you that the robber carried a black bag instead of a brown one?" "Child! Child! I saw it!" moaned Green. "I was sitting on a rock just at the back of the judge's house when those two thieves came out through the yard. I heard one of them say that they had time to walk to Chartham and catch the 7:10 train to London."

"Jack," she cried, "you're a bigger man than I thought you were. You're a wonder!" and she flung her arms around his neck.—Indianapolis Sun.

MOUNTAINS ON VENUS.

A German Astronomer Claims to Have Discovered Them. We seem to be getting on familiar terms with neighboring worlds. With Mars and its intricate system of canals, if not its actual inhabitants, thanks to the delicate investigations of late years, everybody is pretty well acquainted. Now Herr Arendt, who is a German, and, therefore, not a trifler, announces the discovery of mountains on Venus. To observers hitherto the planet has seemed wrapped in an impenetrable envelope of cloud, which, when near the earth, is the cause of its astonishing brilliancy; but Herr Arendt, who has had the instruments of the Urania observatory at Berlin to work with, considers that he has detected markings on Venus which indicate the presence of great elevations, seen from time to time through the clouds surrounding it.

Novel as the suggestion is, it is but a revival of an old idea. Long ago Schroter fancied he saw evidence of mountains on Venus in the raggedness of the terminator—that is, the line where light and shade meet, such as the inner line of the crescent moon. He went so far as to measure them, and announced that they were twenty-five miles high. But then no one had believed him. Markings have been noticed on the bright planet from very early times, from which it was concluded that it rotated in about twenty-four hours, its day being the same length as our own. Herr Arendt's observations point to the same results, in direct contradiction to Schiaparelli's famous theory that Venus, held by tidal influence, always turns the same face to the sun, as the moon does to the earth.—London Globe.

WAYS OF WOMEN.

No Limit to Tyranny Some Will Stand from Milliners. There does not seem to be a limit to the tyranny which some women will stand from milliners, modistes, beautifiers, and other autocrats of that ilk. It is related of a very grande dame who had just returned from abroad to her New York home that she visited her milliner in a day or two wearing a creation in headgear for which she had paid a fabulous sum in Paris. The milliner saw the situation in a moment, and, being a quick-witted person, resolved on instant action. "Take off that hat and never put it on again," she said imperiously to her visitor, a woman whose social power is almost without limit. "Why do you say that?" she asked, with a weak-kneed attempt to assert her dignity. "I met Mrs. Blank this morning and she told me this hat was very becoming." Quick to seize a point, the milliner answered calmly: "Just so. Mrs. Blank is no friend of yours and would gladly see you wear that hat." This was an idea that had not occurred to madam, but it took root at once, just as the milliner was sure it would. The upshot was that the hat was left to be made over, madam taking a new one home, and the milliner had still more firmly riveted the chain which bound her patron.

The professional beautifier is about equally autocratic. For instance, a noted complexion specialist who is said to have "made over" Mrs. Frederick Vanderbilt accompanied that wealthy woman to Florida last winter and kept her "under repair" there for six weeks. It is understood that Mrs. Vanderbilt saw no necessity for such close attention, but the beautifier thought otherwise and charged \$10,000 for her services. Another specialist, by way of a vacation last summer, sauntered through a few watering places and picked up \$6,000 before returning to her "studio" in New York.—Chicago Chronicle.

Pigmy Camels of Persia.

The western part of Persia is inhabited by a species of camel which is the pigmy of its kind. These camels are snow white, and are on that account almost worshipped by the people. The Shah presented the municipality of Berlin with two of these little wonders. The larger is twenty-seven inches high and weighs sixty-one pounds. The other is four inches less, but the weight is not given.

Examinations of the Air.

Regular examinations of the air in New York City are to be made to determine the presence of bacteria, and when dangerous germs are found to be prevalent the public will be warned and steps will be taken to head off the disease.

German Postal Stations.

The multiplication of railways has not diminished the number of postal stages in Germany. On the contrary, the number of stage drivers rose from 5,176 to 1,606 to 5,314 in 1900.



QUIET and the janitor reigned supreme in the big room on the Board of Trade where pandemonium had existed a little while before. Graham swung back and forth before his desk in a side office in the hall below, talking to a friend. "Look here!" he was saying, "if you knew grain as I know it you wouldn't have been sold."

"Do I know grain? Well, I ought to know it. And this year's crop is not what was expected, either. Oh, the market? That's a curious element. Sometimes it is high when things should be low, and again it is the reverse. You can't tell. But you can't fool me about wheat."

"When I was a boy, you see, there was an elevator in my town and I hung around there till the proprietor had to give me a job from sheer desperation. The first thing I knew there was a course in the agricultural college to be given to some one and I thought I would aspire to it. Well, I got it from the Congressman of the district and went away with my summer's earnings in my pocket."

"You see, I was making my way and paying as I went. At least that is what I expected to do. There was to be a reunion of soldiers at another town and I thought I would hurry up a bit before school and get to the encampment, where some one could do an odd job or two for the commanders. The thing worked all right and I counted out \$150 to put in the bank in the agricultural college town. But one night every cent was stolen. When I got up in the morning I slipped my fingers under the pillow, where the purse should have been, and nothing was there. No matter how I looked the wallet could not be found, and at last I went to the hotelkeeper and told him. Of course he was sorry and said if he ever heard of the money he would notify me."

"I was in a quandary. I suppose I could have gone back to the elevator man and told him my troubles. I had every reason to think he would have believed me, but I had a strong aversion to going back at all. My ticket had been bought to the college town and it, too, had disappeared with my pocket book. But the walking was good and I could make it in a day. So the hotel man put up a lunch for me and with that I went my way."

"In the course of time I came to the college. I faced the president with my story. "We can set you to work in the barns," said the president. "Can you sort grain? Could I? It was my trade, as it were. I sorted grain, leaving the small kernels and picking out the big, at the rate of 1 1/2 cents an hour. I worked hard, too. The Congressman came once and stood watching me. Finally he filled his pockets with the packages of wheat and I'll bet every one of the samples made him a vote."

"Wheat gave out after a time and I was given other grain to sort until vacation came, and then I was like the boy who wanted to go to the circus and couldn't. I wanted to go back to the town with the elevator, but didn't have money enough. So I went to the college president with my troubles and as a result I worked while others had a good time. Most all the students went home, but I—well, I sorted beans and did other things throughout the Christmas holidays."

"That is the way I got through school. The next move I made was to get an interest in the elevator and finally I came to Chicago as a grain expert. After that I started an office here in the Board of Trade."

"But all self-made men will tell you much the same story." The self-made man turned to his desk with his letter-opener, for the mail carrier had come in and thrown down a bundle of orders.—Chicago Daily News.

UNPOPULARITY OF HOUSEWORK.

Miss Mary E. Trueblood, an instructor in Mount Holyoke College, has recently made an investigation for the Massachusetts bureau of labor in regard to the employment of women in that State, and her report, an abstract of which appears in the New York Independent, contains much that is of interest bearing upon the unpopularity of housework among American working girls. The principal industries which attract girls away from housework are the shoe factories, textile mills, department stores, and restaurants. Of these the department stores contain the highest per cent of American born girls, while the houseworkers who figure in her statistics not one was born in this country. In Massachusetts less than a century ago numerous native American girls not only lived in families as servants, but were regarded as belonging to the family—a relation not possible now. The overcrowding of all departments of work except housework is all the more curious when it is considered that the housework does not wear upon the health, whereas all the other departments of labor do, especially the mills and factories.

The average cash income weekly in the shops is \$7.52; in the shoe factories, \$10.45; in the restaurants, \$5.38; in the textile mills, \$8.35; in household work, \$3.99. The houseworker, however, earns more than the shop and restaurant girl because she does not have to pay for food and lodging, and when lost time in mills and factories is taken into account the household wages compare favorably with those in shop and store. The houseworker's labor is more healthy. The demand for that labor is constant, and girls engaged in it can save more. And yet the supply of intelligent servant girls is constantly diminishing.

Miss Trueblood talked with large numbers of girls engaged in the shops, mills, and factories, and heard the same story everywhere. They objected to the long hours of housework, to Sunday work, to unspecialized work, to the loss of social position, to the loss of independence and free time, and to the irritating relations which nearly always exist between mistress and servant. It was the general opinion that "a girl must necessarily have lost her self-esteem who would sell all her time but half of one afternoon in each week, who would submit to be called a 'servant,' and who, instead of learning her trade and being left to exercise it, must constantly be subjected to the whim of each new employer."

The information secured by Miss Trueblood sets forth in a strong light the difficulties which stand in the way of the solution of the servant girl problem. It will never again be possible to return to the old conditions when servants were treated as a part of the family because domestic relations are no longer the same. It must be acknowledged that there is nothing in household work to attract intelligent

American girls.

The most discouraging feature is that even the untrained foreign born servants are growing more and more insistent in their demands and begin to make them sometimes as soon as they have acquired sufficient knowledge of the language to do so.—Chicago Tribune.

Cows Showed the Charm.

At a recent concert of the hospital music fund, given in Cambridge City Hospital, one of the musicians did a thing which recalls the ancient history of Orpheus and his enchanting lyre.

At the further end of a field opposite the institution two cows were quietly grazing with their backs toward the street. The first violinist asserted that he could speak with those cows by means of his violin at that distance. Being doubted, he played one chord on the two lower strings of his instrument. The animals immediately quit feeding, raised their heads, turned in the direction of the sound and looked interested. The violinist drew his bow on the strings a second time and the animals came directly across the field and put their heads over the rails of the fence, with ears thrown forward, nostrils dilated and eyes inquiring. The third time the chord was played the animals simultaneously answered with a sharp, short lowing and uneasy stamping of forefeet.

A word in cow language was plainly said by the violin and was answered by the cows. The incident was seen by Dr. Dixwell and six or seven others interested in the hospital music charity. Some of the more incredulous members of the party thought that perhaps the animals which answered the sound were looking for another cow hidden from view, but there was no near hiding place and the sunlight was clear.—Boston Transcript.

Baked Apple Dumplings.

Peel and core as many apples as your appetite may wish. Six or eight—perhaps a dozen—That would be a generous dish. Make a dough like cracker biscuit. Roll it thin—with skill and care. Place an apple lightly on it—Take your knife and cut it square—Large enough to fold your fruit in. Then within the vacant place Of the core—a bit of butter. Cinnamon and sugar place. Draw your square up well together, Pinch it gently on the top, So your dough will be protected, Lest the cooking juices pop. When your apples are all covered, Take a fork and prick them through, 'Twill prove better in the baking—Half a dozen times will do. Bake them slowly, and, while cooking, Take of sugar just one cup, And a modest lump of butter—And with light hand cream them up. Adding extract, and your hard sauce Set on ice to harden more; Lift your apples from the oven, And your labors will be o'er. Serve them hot—the juice adds flavor, And each dumpling, firm and brown, Is a practical achievement—Add a jewel to your crown.—Columbus Journal.

A Test of Truth.

"Is he truthful? "Indeed he is! About everything but the prowess of his football team."

PRESCRIPTIONS FOR TROUBLE.

Sensit: Advice Given by a Believer in Work.

Never since the first sick man grumbled have there been so many cures for the body known in the world as now. That man is the exception who has not been cut to pieces and mended up again. There are a dozen schools of healing for every disease. One physician attacks the liver, another the bone, a third the skin. They assail you with drugs, with heat, cold, mud, magnetism and prayer. They lock you up in a box and bake you, or turn a swarm of bees in on you, or bathe you in purple light.

So much do we care for the body. But who cures the hurt soul? What patent medicine will dry tears? You have worked hard and honestly in life, perhaps, and suddenly you are struck down on the road and thrown aside—a failure. Or the being dearest to you, your wife or the boy who was flesh of your flesh, your one care and hope in life, is dead—was put out of your sight, yesterday, in that cut in the muddy ground yonder. Never to come back home—never to speak to you or touch you again. What are you to do? The hours and days and years must creep on and on before you can go to him. Or perhaps the hurt is not a vital stab like that, but some mean, belittling shame, some vulgar disgrace that has fallen on you by no fault of yours. You think that you never shall lift your head or look your friends in the eyes again.

What can you do? You are young and strong; is life over now and dead? No doctor prescribes for these hurts; no drug touches them. Yet there are homely prescriptions which do give relief.

First, don't disguise the wound to yourself. It is there, real; it may never heal. When Pope was an old man he wept bitterly at his mother's grave. Not all of the long years, he said, had healed the hurt of her going away.

Don't touch your wound. But your physical nerves are weakened, your vitality is lessened. Go to work there. Is there any occupation or amusement which you especially relish? Take it up. Be it the theater, or novel-reading, or photography, or cookery—go to it. Don't mind what the neighbors say. You will be surprised and perhaps a little ashamed to find how soon your pulses will grow regular and your thoughts sane.

Next, stiffen yourself to carry your grief alone. Don't drip the black flood hourly on to your neighbors. Be sure each of them has his own load to carry. Look for it. Give him a helping hand with it.

And after a year or two of this common-sense nourishment of yourself you will suddenly see that going through the vale of misery you have made it a straight road to the heights.—Saturday Evening Post.

POST BOXES IN STREET CARS.

Every Car in Washington Is to Be a Moving Letter Box.

A plan for converting every street car in Washington into a moving letter box has been submitted to the first assistant postmaster general from the office of the superintendent of free delivery. The project was advanced to the department by George B. McAllister of Baltimore, who is the inventor, and was referred by Postmaster General Payne to a special commission of his subordinates about October 1st. That commission has now completed its report and transmitted it to Mr. Wynne, who, as first assistant postmaster general, supervises all the features of mail delivery and collection. By a vote of the commission it is proposed that the plan shall first be tried in Washington, where the officials of the department can observe it in practical operation, reports the Washington Star. It is thought this course may be followed within the ensuing six months.

Mr. McAllister's device, as manifested in models submitted to the department, consists of waterproof drop letter contrivances which are to be so built in the sides of the street cars that letters may be readily dropped into them while the car are passing crossings. The mouths of the receptacles will be perfectly open to admit of the free dropping of a letter into them and adequate provision will be made for preventing rain or snow from finding its way into the letter compartments. The plan includes the transferring of the mail from car lines not directly connecting with the post-office to one or more lines making this connection, and a variety of ingenious mechanical arrangements is provided for doing this in periods of time ranging from three and four to five and seven seconds.

What's in a Name?

"She is a Russian countess," said one of two speakers whose conversation is reported in the Yonkers Statesman.

"Indeed!" said the other. "Has she much in her own name?" "Has she? She's got the entire alphabet!"

Confession.

Singleton—How long have you been married? Wederly—Six months. Singleton—And of course you think your wife quite an angel. Wederly—No, not quite—but then I have hopes.

Of course brains count—but they frequently get mixed up in their calculations.

As a physical exerciser, the old-fashioned woodpile never had an equal.