

HAVING FUN IS VERY PAINFUL TO THE RIGHT, SAYS THE HOTEL CLERK BY IRVIN S. COBB.

"I SWEET prosperity has been restored," said the Hotel Clerk of the St. Rockless.

"You must have the good eyesight," said the House Detective. "I ain't noticed it."

"Oh, but it has," said the Hotel Clerk. "Sweetest thing you know. Did you read about the dinner that young Mr. F. Augustus Helms gave and about the dinner that other members of the smart set, not to mention the smart set, are giving from time to time. Yes, sir, prosperity has certainly been restored. True she suffered a few injuries and got dented up some during her absence and she's come back to us looking like the Venus de Milo, who was a Grecian lady that passed through a sawmill disaster, Larry, but just you leave F. Augustus and the rest of them alone a little while and they'll have her not only restored but walking the high wire in the main tent and doubling in a song and dance turn for the concert performance on the elevated stage; persons remaining to be allowed to sit in the reserved seat section and see the animals feed afterwards. Keep your eye on F. Augustus."

"Wot wuz it you said he done?" said the House Detective. "Seems like to me the last time I read about Helms a Federal grand jury was only about a lap and a half behind him."

"That was some time back," said the Hotel Clerk. "You see, it was like this. A year or so ago young Mr. Helms came out of the West, in a private car with his feet up on the cushions, smoking a yellow cigar that looked like a paste-board mailing tube, his purpose being to introduce a few desirable innovations into our financial system. There was nothing revolutionary or spectacular about his way of introducing himself to Wall Street. He merely appeared there very quietly one morning about the time the boys in the Stock Exchange were mixing the mint sauce for the Spring lamb that would be along in a little while. He came riding on a steam callopie, with his pants tucked into a pair of hip boots like the villain wears at the beginning of the second act, waving a self-cooking copper combine in one hand and an automatic rapid-fire National bank in the other, and followed by a full brass band of 16 pieces, mainly tubas and bass drums. In a low, soft, purring tone that sounded a good deal like Wallace the Untamable, when they rub the raw meat across the bars of his cage, he stated his name and intentions, and then opened up for business."

"Well, for a while all went well. But there were a lot of gentlemen of serious demeanor and settled habits down there that didn't seem to care for the display of Mr. Helms's boisterous Butte ways. They thought he was too much to the Mary McLane, and they'd always leaned rather toward Henry James. They were

accustomed to wear gossamers during business hours, and they'd been dodging the Department of Justice so long that sidestepping was their natural gait. It was only to be expected that they'd feel a natural distrust for a young man who opened up for business a mere half page about it like somebody shooting an oil well, even though he had dark curling hair and winning ways. But in accordance with the kindly customs of their kind, they managed to conceal their true feeling from him all the time that they were undermining his subterfuge and slipping the ground-up lamp chimney into his flour barrel and disconnecting the burglar system on his pantry window. Then one sunny afternoon, when everything was ready, they backed him up against the railing and took all his marbles away from him, and along about the same time the Federal grand jury clubbed in and made him a present of quite a batch of indictments.

"I won't deny that Mr. Helms was depressed for a while. This wasn't like the vaunted Eastern hospitality of which he'd heard out in his primitive Montana cot, or when he was down deep in his line sinking his sturdy pick into the virgin copper and Senator Clark. Nobody ever exactly caught him in the act of hating himself, but even so, he was quite put out for a while. But here the other day he noticed that the clouds of depression were lifting. Prosperity was peering over the horizon, with a golden smile on her face, as if she'd been eating a custard pie and forgot to wipe her mouth. So says F. Augustus to himself, 'Wot Tell, Bill, wot Tell, or words to that effect; after all, he reflected, the only thing they can do with an indictment is to try you on it; an indictment is not like one of those combination jack-knives that pulls a cork and opens a can of oysters and trims a corn all at once; its uses are limited to just the one thing. So let us be heart-free and gay and blithesome, says Helms; let us sing with a fol-de-rol-day or a hey-diddy-diddy or whatever is proper to sing with under these circumstances. Let us act as if we'd gone to Harlem River bridge with 175,000 plurality. And then, just to show he meant it, he up and took and went and gave a little dinner party that made the best efforts of the late Lucullus look like a hobo sitting on a brakebeam of a furniture car eating Springfield, Mo., soda biscuit and cold boiled rice out of a copy of the War Cry. Anyway, that's what the papers said about it the next day."

"And since then others of our younger set have been following suit until there's hardly an evening that doesn't have a unique and attractive dinner-party the next morning. Owing to the habit which the sun has of coming up



IT WAS A FEAST OF REASON AND FLOW OF JOUL.

along about 7 o'clock, even in mid-Winter, it's often necessary to start these truly delightful functions as early as 1:30 A. M., but as they always continue through to a more reasonable hour there's usually no complaint on

Loss by Drought in New England States

Second Crop of Hay a Failure—Farmers Recklessly Sell Cattle—Stoppage of Paper-Mill Machinery Along Connecticut River Valley—Deforestation Object-Lessons.

"THIS is the worst drought I ever saw in all my life." The above remark was overheard by the writer the other day as he was walking along a country road in northern Vermont. The speaker was a man of about 45 years of age, who was addressing a white-haired citizen, bent and very aged, who leaned upon a garden gate in the sunshine. "In all your life!" sneered the old man. "Why, you ain't been a livin' very long. If you'd been around here about 10 years ago you would have seen a dry spell that 'd make the here one look like a flood. Why, they ain't no hay crop 't all to speak of, and folks as was lucky enough to own any timber cut down trees so's the cattle could browse on the leaves. Cattle was mighty cheap, then days—some folks couldn't give 'em away. I bought a horse for a dollar—a good horse. We had a little old hay laid by and managed to keep him. I sold him next Spring for a hundred and twenty-five."

With due respect to the old gentleman, and the "dry spell," which harassed New England about the middle of last century, it is submitted that this present drought is extraordinary and severe. It has not been a local matter, this scarcity of water; it has been felt not only throughout New England, but in the middle and central states as well, and it is not unlikely that later on the greater part of the country will be indirectly affected by it.

In the meantime most of our springs and wells have dried up, streams and ponds have become so shallow that fish have perished in great numbers, pastures have been literally burned up, crops have been destroyed, manufacture has been delayed, and men and beast generally have been put to vast inconvenience in a great variety of ways.

Fortunate Boston.

Boston has been peculiarly fortunate in that she suffered comparatively little—that is, directly—from the effects of the recent drought. Although the rainfall has been the lightest since the United States Weather Bureau was established here thirty-seven years ago, there has been an abundant supply of water for all purposes, and it is estimated that in the reservoirs of the metropolitan water system there is enough to last for at least a year, even if we don't get another drop of rain during that time.

Not so with other parts of New England. The writer had been in the West all summer and autumn, and although he had heard many reports of the drought, he, like many another, failed to appreciate the gravity of the situation until he returned to his home in Meriden, N. H., about the 1st of November. Both the wells, which usually supplied the house, neither of which had ever been known to fail, had gone dry months before, and water for drinking and bathing had to be brought a few pints at a time from a shallow spring a quarter of a mile from the house. The development of seven or eight hundred photographic plates brought back from the West was a sheer impossibility under the circumstances, and after vainly awaiting the needed rain until the last possible moment the first person singular fled to this city.

As Seen in a Series of Trips.

Since then on a recent lecture trip I have visited four parts of New England, where the conditions were as bad or worse. In journeying from point to point there would be seen every now and then a stream, or, rather, the bed of a stream, with a thin trickle of water snaking in and out among the stones, as if afraid of being detected. At another point would

be a dam, the stained boards dry and warped, and many a slight mill. Or, sometimes it was a lake, the water of which had shrunk and crept far down from the shore, leaving a wide stretch of baked mud in its wake. Sometimes for many miles at a time the air would be hazy with the smoke of distant forest fires—fires made possible, even probable, by the dry condition of the country. Excesses for the unseasonable season taken by intelligent people everywhere the forest fires in New England last autumn would have been incalculably disastrous. As an example of such precaution might be mentioned the action of the Governor of Vermont, who right in the hunting season put the law on all game for two weeks, thus keeping the gunners out of the woods and greatly reducing the danger from forest fires.

Paper Mills Especially Suffer.

Many manufacturing businesses depending on water for any purpose have been seriously crippled. Perhaps the paper business has suffered as much as any, since in the manufacture of paper, particularly the finer grades, large quantities of water are used. The low water in the Connecticut River has worked considerable injury to the paper companies whose factories are established on its banks. At Holyoke recently the mills have been running only two-thirds time, and the manufacturers at Windsor Locks have been having similar trouble. In the case of the Woronoco, Milneburg, Southworth, Crane and American Writing Paper Companies, the mud banks are visible

FRENCH AMBASSADOR TO ITALY ACCUSED OF SMUGGLING.

NEW YORK, Jan. 9.—(Special.) A savage attack on the French Ambassador to Italy, M. Barrere, is made by Maximilian Harden in the Corriere d'Italia, an Italian newspaper of the highest repute. Harden flatly accuses Barrere of using his Ambassadorial privileges to carry on an extensive trade in smuggling. He accuses him of being a French spy, and even suggests that Barrere receives no salary from France in consideration of being allowed to trade in antiquities.

M. Barrere, French Ambassador to Italy, is a man of about 50 years of age, with a high forehead, a large nose, and a serious expression. He is dressed in a dark suit and a white shirt with a high collar. He is standing in a room with a large chandelier and a table set for a meal. He is looking towards the right.

and the stream may be crossed by wading. During the early days of the drought, the scarcity of water was hardly felt, for orders were coming in slowly. But now that business is normal the orders are coming in fast, and the scarcity of water is becoming serious. Where it is simply a matter of getting power, the mills can be run by steam, but in the paper business large quantities of water are needed for the filters. Thousands of paper mill hands are losing at least two to three days each week owing to lack of water to work with. Prices, particularly of the quality papers, are high, and are going higher.

At Lewiston, Me., while comparatively little time has been lost so far, the water in the Androscoggin River is so low the owners fear that they will soon have to shut down. It is now so late that there is little hope for rain, and any precipitation in the form of snow will hardly bring relief before Spring.

Vermont Farmers Carrying Water.

In the vicinity of Newport, Vt., the writer heard many complaints. The water of Lake Champlain was lower than it had ever been recorded before; the streams were either dried up altogether or greatly reduced in volume, and most of the wells and springs for many miles around had long since failed.

Fully half the farmers of Newport, Cheshire and Franklin were unable to water for their stock. In some cases hauling as much as 100 pails a day for long distances and often up heart-breaking hills. Some times they hauled it in barrels, but as a rule in the metal tanks which they use for collecting maple sap in the Spring. And they had been doing this for two months.

E. R. Watson, superintendent of schools at Newport, told me that there had been much difficulty in obtaining water for ordinary use in the school, and that in some cases special men had been engaged to do nothing else but carry water to the schoolhouse.

Some farmers were driving their animals many miles each day to water, but in many cases this could not be done, as the springs were used to supply the family drinking water, and the owners would not permit them to be muddy by the feet of cattle.

In the surrounding towns and villages conditions were much the same. At Derby, Vt., a farmer who owns one of the only living springs for miles around, sold the water at a few cents a pail, not because he wanted to make money out of his less fortunate neighbors, but in an effort to check any tendency to wastefulness and to limit the amount used by each family. Lindenville is fortunate enough to have a water system, but it is reported that the supply had for some time been so limited that the water was turned on for only 20 minutes each day.

St. Albans, too, has found the drought expensive. For a time it looked as if several of the factories would have to shut down, but the city came to the rescue by installing a pumping apparatus and thus saved the loss to business. The Central Vermont Railroad is obliged to draw water from Alburg, where it is pumped out of Lake Champlain.

Professor Joseph L. Hills, director of the Agricultural Experiment Station at Burlington, Vt., proved a cheerful source of information concerning the effects of the drought upon agriculture in New England. In the north and in many other parts there was absolutely no second crop of hay. The corn crop varied greatly with the character of the soil. In heavy soils it grew admirably and matured well. At the station itself, where there was a heavy clay loam, there was a splendid crop of corn—the best for years. In the lighter soils, however, the corn suffered seriously.

The melon crop was literally the best ever known, the unusual amount of dry

weather being just what was needed to bring melons to perfection. Grapes and other fruits did well, too, if in reasonably heavy soil. Fungi of most kinds were comparatively scarce, and people fond of mushrooms and the other edible sorts had to hunt much farther than usual if they found them at all. Fortunately, the drought was just as hard on the harmful and pestiferous kinds, and among other the late potato blight was entirely missing this year. For some years there has been carried on at the station an extensive investigation of this blight, and its absence I was assured had been source of great annoyance to the scientist having the work in charge.

Of course there was a marked effect upon the milk supply throughout the State. The early burning out of the unwatered pastures caused a shortage of grass, which in turn caused a shortage of milk. The August supply of milk was the smallest in ten years at least, and matters were correspondingly bad during the Autumn months. In many places the price of milk and cream has already advanced, and Professor Hills says that it seems to him that the whole situation must inevitably mean higher prices for all dairy products.

The failure of the second hay crop means something more than a temporary shrinkage of milk; it means that the farmers will not have enough food on which to winter their cattle and that they will be forced to sell if they have not already done so.

Rushing Cattle Off to Market.

Already in northern New England and elsewhere there have been large sales of cattle at lower prices than for 10 years or more. In fact, there are so many cattle thrown upon the market that the busy drovers are almost everywhere unable to buy at their own figures. Professor Hills, commenting on this matter, pointed out to me one grimly humorous aspect of it. "A rather odd outcome of the situation," he said, "is seen in the present tremendous call upon the state for the testing of animals for tuberculosis. We have on our statute books a law which says that a very liberal valuation shall be made for a tuberculous animal. At the present juncture of short food supply and high cost of all grains and by-products it is possible that a man who has a tuberculous herd and sell it to the state. I know of cases where men have been seriously disappointed on finding their herds free from disease, because a sale to the state would be likely to be a more satisfactory one than a sale to the market. I know of one man who, on being congratulated by the veterinarian on the fact that his herd was free from tuberculosis, threw up his hands and said: 'Heaven help me; I must take the drovers' prices.'"

It is obvious to the reader that if a study of the weather conditions should give a reasonably early warning of a coming drought, any unscrupulous farmer might inoculate his herd with tuberculous and thus insure himself a good price for his cattle. On inquiry it was learned that this idea had occurred to others and that it was probably the reason why the state has a new law covering the point. But whether they are sold to the drovers or killed and paid for by the state, the fact remains that the farmers in many parts of New England are getting rid of a part or the whole of their cattle. This means a money-making operation of a decrease in dairy products. It is estimated that in Vermont, this decrease will be between one third and one-half.

Even the Artists Are Hard Hit.

A visit to the "amous artist colony at Cornish, N. H., proved that even artists, sculptors and literary folk must have water at times, and I found one great planter journeying bravely over the hills with a little tin can looking eagerly for something to wet it in. Another, an author, was cheerfully hauling his water three miles from the well of a neighbor. When asked what he would do if that well gave out, he answered with a smile: "Well, water is simply one of the material comforts, and when neces-

sary artists and writers are able to get along very nicely with the spiritual."

Perhaps it is not to be wondered at that the difficulty in obtaining water, which is the gradual drying up of the old faith in water wizards and others who are said to have the gift of being able to locate underground springs and streams by means of a forked stick.

The Forked Stick to Detect Water.

The writer, who is a hopeless skeptic concerning interesting phenomena vouched for only by inaccurate people, had long scouted all "evidence" on this subject. He was, then, greatly interested when a well-known man of science connected with one of the universities made him decide to dig for water. He was founded upon superstition, but upon fact, and that he had satisfied himself on this point by investigation and experiment. It came about in this way. The professor had, as usual, been spending his Summer vacation on a hilltop in New Hampshire, when the failure of his well made him decide to dig for water. He was a most unpromising one, and he was discussing that point, when someone suggested that he engage old Elias Peenman to come and locate the water. The fee was \$2, and when the professor told some of his friends that night, they said: "Let's get him up here; it'll be worth two dollars just to see the fun."

So Elias came with a forked apple branch, and after zig-zagging over the hill for a little while, the stick was seen to turn over, and the old man calmly announced that if the professor would dig there, he would find water at such and such a depth. And he added that two streams, flowing in such and such directions, would be found crossing one another at that point. Workmen were engaged, and behold it was exactly as old Elias had predicted. The professor tried it himself, but the stick remained passive in his hands. The next to try was his brother, a minister. The stick remained quiet until he came over the hill, but he had already twisted the stick to turn over. He grasped it more tightly, but it continued to turn. He is a powerful man, and the professor says that he kept the muscles of his arms working as he strove to prevent the stick from going over. But over it went in spite of him, but so tight had been his grasp that he had actually twisted the stick from the stem. Still skeptical, the professor continued his experiments, finally taking as his subject an old blind woman who knew nothing of the country about his home.

With a forked apple branch in her hand, she was started out in the direction of the stream, and as she crossed it much to her own astonishment, the stick whirled around in her hand. And this was told me by a careful man with a reputation to sustain—a man whose opinion is entitled to great respect. My own opinion I would reserve yet a little space.

Contrary to reports from New Hampshire there was no suffering among the big game in the Blue Mountain forest, known locally as Corbin Park. In some cases the animals had to travel somewhat farther than usual in order to make their thirst, but they could always find water, either in the pools of the larger trout brooks or in one of the three ponds, none of which went dry. There was some loss of weight, of course, but in other places owing to the fact that most of the brooks run through deep woodland and evaporation is comparatively slow. The birds, squirrels and other small creatures were inconvenienced about as much as their brethren outside. The only possible trouble may be found in the buffaloes, for they are yarded for the winter; only one of the several springs in the buffalo corral was active last week. It was hoped that the others would start up before the animals were driven into permanent winter quarters, but in any case they can be watered at Red Leaf Pond, which is close at hand.

Of all the wild creatures that suffered

this score. The beauty and chivalry of our fair city is being drawn upon heavily to furnish recruits for these prosperity housewarmings.

"I was reading about one of the classiest here only yesterday, Larry. One of the family Newspapers having a large home and fireless circulation of half page about it copiously illustrated with photographs, charts and drawings by a specialist on the spot only ten hours after it ended. It must have been a delightful little affair by all accounts. The table decorations were hundred-dollar bills smothered in orchids, and the favors were shares of Standard Oil stock with deckled edges, hand-tooled by Mr. Archibold personally. The gentlemen wore nightgowns trimmed with baby blue ribbons and the ladies wore hand-painted pajamas. Every recognizable Correspondence School of Dramatic Art in town was represented by one or more of its fair alumnae. Stage favorites who have been prominent in all the large musical comedies and divorces of the last two seasons might have been seen upon every side. An admitted favorite was a young lady who'd just been promoted from the second row to the front row, and given the place on the end nearest the college boys' box on account of having been horse-whipped in the lobby by another lady in the presence of the press agent, who was thereby enabled to get not less than half a column, with pictures on every front page in town the next morning. The fair young debutante of the chorus, who only six months ago was having her mail, mostly sent circulars, sent via R. F. D. Route No. 4, out of Lone Oak, Ark., at right angles to the lobby by another lady in the presence of the press agent, who was thereby enabled to get not less than half a column, with pictures on every front page in town the next morning. The fair young debutante of the chorus, who only six months ago was having her mail, mostly sent circulars, sent via R. F. D. 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