THE HOTEL CLERK ON THE MANLY ART

BY IRVING S. COBB.

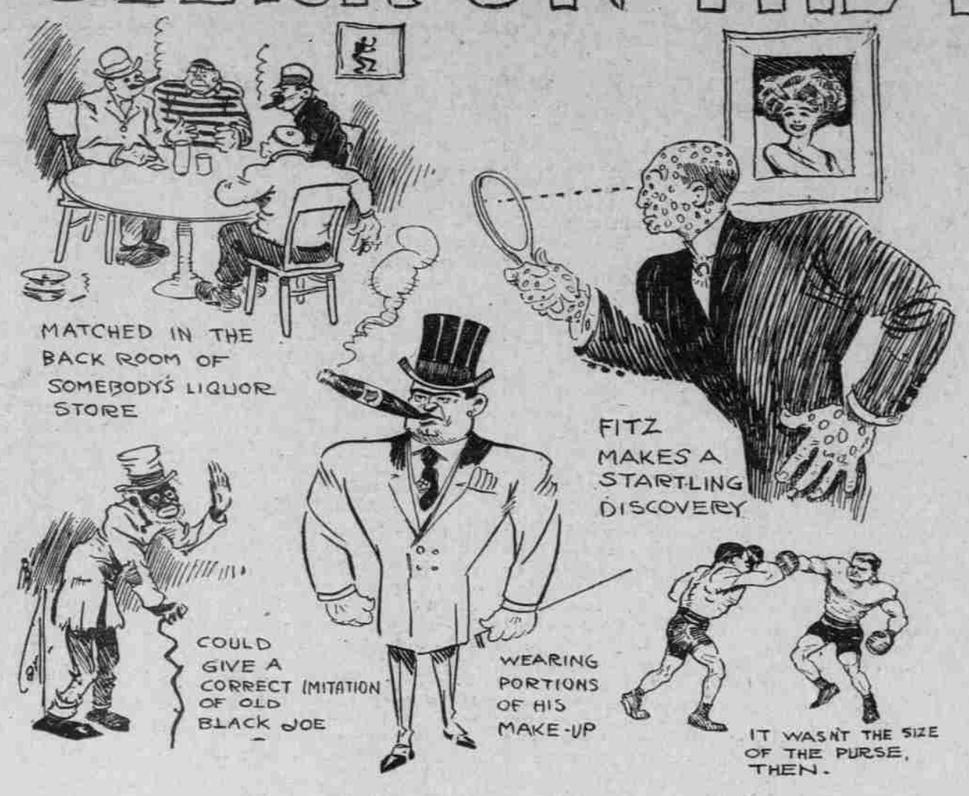
"I SEE by the paper they're 'fraid Jim Jeffries ain't goin' to be able to get down to weight for his fight with the Big Smoky," lamented the House Detective of the St. Reckless. "It sure is too bad."

"It is, indeed," agreed the Hotel Clerk. "It's a terrible thing that the momentous issue of race supremacy in this fair land should be dependent on the champion of the Caucasian or white bunch having a figure like a family group, with the twins sitting in front in their perambulator. I saw Jeff when he was here in vaudeville last month. When he first came on it looked from the back of the house as if he was carrying one of those roll-top file cabinets in his arms. A near-sighted man sitting next to me thought Jeff was going to do a pianologue and was bringing the instrument out of the wings himself. It certainly was a most distressful sight, Larry. It almost brought the tears unbidden to my eyes when I thought to myself that this here stout matinee idol with the baby grand development and the centerboard tummy was the same stalwart young giant from the glittering sands of the Golden West, that once mowed a majestic swath across this country from west to east and back again from east to west, leaving in his wake, all neatly laid by and corded up, many aspiring young men such as Jack Monroe, who didn't quit bearing the roaring of pleasant waters going over the old mill dam for days and days. When you met up, somewhere on your travels, with a young mid-continental favorite with most of his features shifted around to make more room for his nose, and only a recent site where his front teeth used to be and an air about him of having met with a great crushing shock which had left him more or less numbed in the head, you knew you were crossing the trail of James J. Jeffries, esquire, defender of the title and holder of the belt, as he journeyed along through pastoral scenes and peaceful vales, meeting all comers and discouraging most of them from coming any further. And now, by heaven, to see him leaning up against the scenery of the two-a-day house with a figure like his own Pacific Slope, only more sloped, was enough to make angels weep.

"No, Larry, speaking as one who would like to see victory perching on our own perch, exclusively, I say to you I'm sorely afraid Jeff will never get down to weight again, unless they use an adze on him. I don't think a plain draw-knife would do; 'twould take too long. And even if he ever did reach the point where he could weigh in at 4 o'clock on the afternoon of the fight at 284 pounds or whatever weight he fought at, when he was doing so, there'd still be the financial end of it to arrange, and that would take, I should say, anywhere from 12 to 14 years. By the time all the papers were signed and the purse properly split, and the gate receipts arranged for, and the picture privileges disposed of, Jeff would be ready to enter the ring in a rolling-chair accompanied by a delegation of his fellow inmates from the California State Home for Aged and Decayed Gents, while his present challenger wouldn't need any makeup on to give a correct imitation of Old Black Joe at the age of 82.

"It wasn't like this in the middle ages, when I was a boy. In that medieval period old John L. was going around packing an abrupt sleeping potion in each hand. It wouldn't have been necessary for him to take off weight to meet a colored person of the name of Johnson. If he felt like taking off any weight he'd take it off Johnson. He'd catch this Johnson party some pleasant evening in the middle of a 24-foot ring, with none of his friends at his side and the police barred out, and in five minutes that ring would look like somebody'd been putting in a ton of soft coal. Those who met his late Afro-American opponent on his coming out of the hospital would be able to notice the sad ravages at a glance.

"They were noble old Romans in those days, Larry, Turks by nationality mostly, men that knew 'The Harps That Once Thro' Tarrier Halls' off by heart, but old Romans by breeding and disposition. For an ambitious but reckless lightweight to risk his map within reach of Mr. Kid Lavigne amounted practically to the same thing as climbing up on the operating table, putting the nose under the chloroform funnel and inhaling deeply. No matter how Camembert a burlesque comedian was, he could be sure of a friendly hand by coming down to the footlights at the finish of his turn, and saying, 'But, after all, gents, there never wuz one of 'em ekil to old Nonparelled Jack Dempsey.' Loud cheers. And sturdy Tom Sharkey was there with his full-rigged chest and his burglar-proof jaw and the umlaut over the eye. And honest Peter Maher, with



the family entrance, side-door ear and the subway nose. And stalwart Jake Kilrain, with the blueprint face and the time-exposure mind. A hardy bunch of plasterers and lathers, all of them, Larry, take it from me, they were. There was many a coming champion that those fellows detained for quite some time.

"The Human Side of Meat and the Living Bar of Pig would be matched up this morning in the back room of somebody's liquor store; they'd train this afternoon on mixed ale and the second joint of the cow and by 10 o'clock tonight there'd be beef, wine and iron, but mostly wine, scattered all over the ring; the victorious gladiator would be leaning negligently on the ropes responding to the glad acclaims of his admiring constituents and the defeated man would come to about this time day after tomorrow with most of his plans and specifications materially altered. His eyes would be black so far down you'd think his whole face was in mourning for the Johnstown flood. Those were good old days when no accurate fight story was complete without the final statement that, at this juncture, One-Eyed Connolly leaped through the ropes, challenged the winner and was thrown out by the police. Cops in those days got so they could put One-Eyed Connolly almost as far as a Harvard field day athlete can put the 16-pound hammer, which is seven feet, four and one-half inches.

"It wasn't the size of the purse then. A real champ would fight a man for glory or to settle an election bet, or for a pair of red suspenders, or because his folks were suspected of being Presbyterians from the North of Ireland, or just for the main reason that fighting was his business anyhow, and he hated to miss a whole day away from work.

"But after awhile an insidious change began to creep into the game. Mr. Philadelphia John Hagan, hailing from the city above named, changed himself to O'Brien, and began using a heliotrope accent that had been very highly recommended to him by James Hazen Hyde. James J. Corbett bought a dress suit and went on the stage as trainer and owner of a performing searchlight that was remarkable for its accuracy and fidelity. Mr. Kid McCoy got married from time to time, and took to wearing so many diamonds that he looked like the Venetian Glass Blowers Troupe taking home their samples. Even rugged Old Roberto, the Fitz, made the painful discovery that while freckles didn't seriously interfere with the calling of being champion of the world unless driven so far into the system as to bring on blood poison, still at the same time it was almost impossible to be a successful leading man with a complexion like the back end of a shooting gallery. He got knocked out and began writing on in regard to face lotions the same week. I don't know what's become of John L.; I don't read the Clipper.

"And just let us contemplate the scene that is presented, Larry, when two of the leading opponents of the manly art of self-pretense, as the poet puts it, get together these times to complete the necessary preliminaries for a battle for the championship to take place at some suitable date, 10 or 20 years from now, unless postponed on account of the weather being unfavorable to the picture films. Let us just contemplate that scene, I ask you, and then burst into muffled sobs. When Sullivan was in his prime, they could frame all the details while the fighter was getting his undershirt off over his head and have the papers ready as he was spitting on his hands before drawing on the gloves. But now it's in the nature of rites and ceremonials. It may take weeks or months; it's bound to take days.

"Each principal is accompanied to the place of consultation by his official household staff, including managers, assistant managers, deputy assistant managers, librettists, several kinds of agents, including press, purchasing, booking and wine, private secretaries, nearest friends, financial backers, diamond brokers, chauffeurs, dressers, valets, gem polishers and stuff and things and truck. One of the valiant battlers can readily be recognized by reason of him wearing portions of his make-up, a high hat with a nap on it like a Persian kitty cat, and a pair of buckskin gloves with the fingers sticking out of the upper breast pocket so as to look like a bunch of bananas. The other is equally distinctive in a green velvet waistcoat with ice water, towels and porter, designed by the Pullman Sleeping Car Company, a cigar about as big around as a little colored boy's leg and a diamond horseshoe pin that makes his chest look like the entrance to the Fairy Grotto in the third act.

"It is customary for the principals to spend the first few hours calling each other hard names and speaking well of themselves. After these opening devotional exercises, the two interested parties settle back in dignity, one stroking his high hat to hear it purr, and the other occasionally taking out a silk handkerchief and rubbing off the front of his show case, while the lesser satellites attend to the rough stuff. 'Has your man ever licked anybody since his younger brother moved West on account of his lungs?' inquired one manager. 'No,' says the other manager, 'but he has 55 weeks booked solid in vaudeville at a thousand a week. What can your man show?' 'Three divorces, four supplementary proceedings, one knock-out of a Swiss waiter, and a signed letter from Theodore Roosevelt,' says the first manager with pride and promptness.

"But they don't waste much time with past performances. It's present bank accounts that figure most prominently in their deliberations—that and cutting up the purse and making the side bet, which is mostly mental arithmetic, and dividing the gate receipts and figuring out the gross and net on the picture privilege. By this time Autumn has passed and Winter has come and it's time to go to Palm Beach, and so they postpone the other minor details until next Summer."

"And then wot?" asked the house detective, "or is that all?"

"Oh, by no means," said the Hotel Clerk, "and then the match falls through because one of the brawny brutes discovers that the other has deceived him regarding his rating in Bradstreet's."

DIGGING IN THE SAND AT SEASIDE

Some Work for Profit, but More Labor for the Pleasure of the Exercise.

SEASIDE, Or., June 15.—(Special Correspondence.)—It isn't given to every one to visit the ocean. It isn't given to every one to even visit it for a few hours. But to those who can catch a glimpse of it the memory lingers with them forever. How delightful, then, to the person fortunate to spend some days or maybe a whole long Summer within the sound of the ocean, and be free to visit it at any time he chooses—at low tide, when it is tranquil and flat, or when the waves come dashing in at full flood tide; to get the benefit of the fresh, clear air that comes at all times from the beach, no matter how hot and sultry it is inland. We will go down to the beach this morning. An early start will bring us down there while the tide is out, away out beyond the pier. We will watch the clam-digger. He is an expert. How quick he digs and how dexterously he picks them from the sand. He rarely misses or mashes one with his spade, while he who tries his luck the first time misses the first half dozen, smashes the next half dozen, and if he has good luck brings up the 13th.

* * *

We wonder at the expertness of the clam-digger, but you do not appreciate this until you have tried and tried in vain to dig one yourself. Why is it the cunning bivalve stays just beyond the reach of your fingers when you try to get him? You know you saw him when you flopped down on your knees and plunged your hands deep into the hole dug by your companion, and why, if you are fortunate to grab him, does he hang so infernally? Who ever imagined a clam could have any strength at all? But there you pull and tug, and he sticks all the tighter. What to? There is nothing but liquid sand where he is. Didn't get him? Oh, well, who wants to dig clams, anyway? Go to the clam-digger further down the beach and get them for 10 cents per dozen. Your friends will never know. Nine out of every ten of them you can count on never even saw one dug; but beware of that tenth one; he may have tried the same game himself. You'll go away with a greater respect for the clam. You will know he is no egotist. He knows his strength, but keeps his mouth shut.

* * *

Watch the little ones wading barefooted in the puddles left by the outgoing tide. They are catching shrimps by hand and it takes a nimbleness of finger to get them, as they sink and burrow themselves in the sand at the first sign of danger. When cooked they are a bright red, but while in the ocean are almost transparent, and the same color of the sand in the pools they inhabit. A small net is the proper thing to catch them with, as several can be caught at once. Besides shrimp these children find many other curious little fish or mollusks. One little boy was made happy by digging up a small crab with his spade. Another found a tiny flounder with both eyes on one side its head. There are barnacles and mussels on the piles, while teredoes and strange-looking bugs and worms creep about among them.

* * *

And now the tide is returning, forcing back the clam-diggers, forcing the children out of the shrimp puddles, filling and leveling the clam holes, tearing down castles and fences and forts built by the little ones. Each succeeding wave a little higher than the last, and then one that comes spreading 20 feet or more past its last brother, catching stray shoes, stockings, pails and baskets and sending them further up on the beach. There! One little boy has dropped his pail of shrimps in that last big wave and they go merrily out to sea again. Never mind; there will be more in the morning, and all time is yours.

All along the beach one can see children digging in the sand with shovels and spades. One of the fastest selling articles in Seaside is these little spades. You can buy them in all sizes, from a few inches long for babies to a good, substantial size for boys and girls of 10 or 12. They dig great wells, make big mounds, and build castles and fences galore. This is essentially a children's beach, for it stretches for miles and comprises acres and acres of the finest playground for children ever made, and no matter how many people visit this beach there is plenty of room for all, and each child has all the room it wishes to command. Their only rival to this pleasure ground is old ocean itself, which comes demanding this playground every day almost as regular as clockwork; but while the tide is coming in they can roll and tumble in its waters to their hearts' content.

* * *

If one takes a trip to Seaside within two weeks he will be treated to the rare sight of seeing the broom in blossom. It gets more conspicuous the nearer the ocean you come. It grows in clumps, in hedges and singly. It is a pleasing sight among the dark green of its surroundings. There is one place where the trains stop for a brief time, close beside a large hedge. It is so close, so soft, so feathery and closely flowered that an exclamation of delight escapes from the passenger. To see it so close, those big, ostrich-like plumes of soft, bright yellow, is to wish to reach from the car window and fill one's arms.

But the train pulls out all too soon. At the stops, which here are about one mile apart, one can hear the pounding of the ocean and get a whiff of the pure, fresh air.

* * *

What more delightful place could one find than Seaside? The shore is thickly covered with a growth of scrub pine which breaks the breeze from the ocean, making it the ideal Summer resort. One is surprised to see the many cottages, some very fine ones, scattered among this pine grove for two miles or more along the ocean. In most instances the yards are left in their wild state, a real change and rest from the toil and cares of the city. A ride of less than 125 miles from Portland brings one into an entirely different atmosphere, climate and surroundings. Everything here bespeaks of the ocean, of the Summer resort, of rest and recreation. Cottages are fast filling up, and in a little while there will be nothing here for rent. Besides being a Summer resort, Seaside is a live, progressive city. Many improvements are under way. A new bridge is being built across the Necanicum on Bridge street to replace the old one. This runs straight with the shell road, making an almost straight road from the depot to the ocean. A wide cement walk is laid on one side the shell road from the bridge to the ocean, and another is just commenced from the depot to Dresser's store. This makes a cement walk entirely from the depot to the bridge.

J. A. H.

Elephants Most Intelligent.

Dumb Animals Magazine.

"What animal has the highest degree of intelligence?" was the question recently put to Dr. William T. Hornaday, the director of the New York Zoological Park. Without hesitation he replied:

"The elephant, first of all, and then the orang-outang and his brother ape, the chimpanzee. An adult elephant soon perceives that it is folly to obstruct the march of human events. In six months a wild elephant becomes a domestic animal. He will haul wood and do other work with all the steadiness of an ox or horse. He understands right off that mind is superior to matter; that his captor is stronger than himself, and that peace, security, the good things of earth, and longevity are the certain rewards of the fellow who obeys the law and settles down into habits of industry. The natives discovered long ago that it is cheaper to catch elephants than to breed them. 'Gunda' was taught in two days to ring a bell and to drop pennies in a bank nailed to the wall. I should be afraid to say how many different things an elephant can learn to do one after another, either at command or out of his memory with no word from his keeper—30 at least, I am sure."

Animals as Swimmers.

Exchange.

Although all reptiles and most animals and insects are able to swim in varying degrees, few possess the swimming power of human beings. A man has been known to swim 30 miles without a pause, and the only land animal who approaches this performance is the American black bear.

The American deer, however, will occasionally swim 12 or 14 miles at a stretch. It is noteworthy that, whereas the hare is a proficient swimmer, the rabbit cannot swim at all. The common mouse and the field mouse can swim only a few yards, and often drown in the act, yet rats can swim splendidly. Lions and tigers swim well, although only from necessity, to cross a river, for example. The horse can swim for miles without becoming exhausted, and shows a wonderful instinct in choosing the best available landing place. Bears and moles swim well, but bats and monkeys are helpless in the water.

ON SEEING THE OLD FIRS IN THE FORESTRY BUILDING.

With heavy-lidded eyes, with breath held low,
I gaze with wonder on this wondrous thing.
I hear the voice of silenced Nature sing
Her paeons of a thousand years ago.
I watch the wraith of ancient color glow
Down through the dusky aisle—where shadows fling
Semblance of Egypt's greatness; conjuring
The Druid in his hidden wood. Below
Those rough-hewn capitals the giants stand
At rest. Past is their strife with storm and stress.
The wild world past, on which their youth looked down
While staunchly sought Columbus that new land
Which now is old. Not lost their stateliness
—This tranquil dignity a fitting crown.

—ELIZABETH N. BARROW.

The Wallpaper Man.

Kansas City Times.

Oh, I'd sing you a song of the wallpaper man,
Who's with us once again,
Who comes with the flies and who everywhere hies
With his ladders and buckets ten;
I'd sing of the ease with which bric-a-brac breaks
At the soft, gentle touch of his hand,
I'd sing of the joy which it seems that he takes
In upsetting a jardiniere stand;
I'd sing how he figures the cost of a job
To a dot (except extras worth ten),
Of his tracks in the hall and paste buckets that fall,
And the way the new rug appears then;
Oh, I'd sing of the wonderful litter he leaves
And the household he puts in a fuss—
Yes I'd sing of him now if I didn't, somehow,
Have to pass up all singing to cuss.

BRIDGE UNDER CONSTRUCTION ACROSS THE NECANICUM RIVER AT SEASIDE, OR. —By Montag (On the Pier).

OBADIAH AT THE ROSE FESTIVAL

Hoaxville's Philosopher Writes His Impressions of a Joyous Week in Portland.

HOAXVILLE, Or., June 15., 1909.—(Mr. Editor)—Shakespeare says, "When a woman will, she will, and there's a end on't." That's gospel truth and no gettin' around it. Women is women the world over, be they white or nigger, and Hanner is just like the rest, only more so.

The first week in June I set in to havin' the rheumatiz and was in powerful misery. The doctors, as a general thing, don't know no more about curin' rheumatiz than a hog knows about Sunday, so I didn't ask no advice of any of 'em here. But I was areadin' in the paper one day of a woman doctor down to Portland as cured all such diseases by the use of a simple medicine. Her grandfather was captured by the Injuns when he was a boy, and he got the recipe for makin' it of a old medicine man. Well, he hands it down to his son, and the son hands it down to this daughter, and now she's a-makin' the world happy by sellin' it out to the afflicted. That's what the advertisement said and it looked good to me.

You take a woman like that, as is bent on doin' good, and she won't bleed all the money out of a feller's pocket like them pesky common doctors.

"Hanner," says I, "I'm a-goin' to Portland tomorrow and see this here doctor about my rheumatiz. I believe she can cure me."

"Yes," says she in her most sarcastic manner, "you're a-wantin' to take in the rose show. That's what you are after, Obadiah."

"No such a thing," says I. "I'd be a pretty lookin' spectacle a-hobblin' around down there, a-takin' in the show."

"Oh, you'd soon get over that once you go down there," says she. "I notice you can get around lively enough now when you happen to want to."

"Hanner," says I, "If you knew the misery I endure night and day in silence, you would regret your harsh words. I only hope you won't ever be afflicted as I am."

"Silent fiddlesticks!" says she. "If you ain't sufferin' only when you keep still, you ain't a-growlin' very much, for when you ain't a-growlin' and a-groanin' you're a-snorin'. Howsumever if you go to Portland, I'm a-goin' too. I've been a-wantin' to take in that Rose Show, but you wouldn't hear to it."

How a woman can be so heartless as to think of pleasure when her husband is endurin' of affliction beats me.

The final upshot of it was that we was soon a-gettin' ready to go, and the early mornin' train found us aboard. John, he took us to the depot, and as Hanner kissed him goodby, she says, "Take good care of everything, John, for we may not be back till Sunday."

"We'll be back tomorrow noon, John," says I, but, as usual, Hanner had her way, and we didn't get home till the whole blamed show was over.

"Rheumatiz is like toothache, Hanner," says I, after we'd been travelin' in silence for a spell. "Toothache stops as soon as you go to have it pulled, and my rheumatiz is gettin' better already, so's I feel quite comfortable."

"I don't doubt it," says she. "Now, Obadiah, own straight up to it. Open confession is good for the soul. You just wanted to go to the Rose Show, didn't you."

I give her one witherin' look, but did not reply. Whatever my thoughts was, I wasn't a-goin' to make any damagin' admissions for her to twit me of later on. When a man's married, he has to look out for future comfort, Mr. Editor.

When we got to the city you never seen such a crowd in your born days. The doin's was on and we got to a hotel as quick as we could, for I told Hanner, if we didn't get a room immediately like as anyway, we'd have to walk the streets all night to keep warm. Hanner, she hid her satchel under the bed and we locked the door and took the key with us.

As we went out the bookkeeper of the hotel spoke up. Says he, "Did you lock your door, Uncle?"

"You bet your life," says I.

"Leave the key with me, then, and you can get it when you come back," says he.

"What you givin' me?" says I. "I pay for the room and I take the key with me, and it ain't none of your derned business."

He looked sheepish and had a sickly grin on his face as we left him. I'm too old a man to be caught in such a trap. He was shrewd enough to see that we looked like people who had money, and he had the brass to ask for the key so's he could help himself without breakin' in. Between you and me, there wasn't any money in that satchel. Hanner always wears a underskirt with a pocket when she goes anywhere, and she carries the extra change in it, so Smarty wouldn't have made anything even if I had give up the key.

As we went by your building, I waved my umbrella at your winder, but I reckon you was busy a-turnin' the printin' press and didn't see me.

We seen the big automobile parade. Hanner and me got where we could dodge into a door if one of the derned things should blow up or something. It was mighty pretty, to be sure, and Hanner, she kept a-sayin', "Oh, Obadiah, ain't that sweet? Ain't that just too pretty for anything? Them roses look like they growed in heaven!"

"They growed in California, ma'am," said a dudish-lookin' feller who was a-standin' beside us. "They was shipped here for the show. They can't raise any such roses in Oregon."

Hanner, she flew mad in a minute and began to lam him over the head with her parasol. "You lie!" says she, a-beatin' him at every word. "You know you lie! Them roses are growed right here in the Willamette Valley. We can raise roses or anything else in Oregon except such mutton-heads as you, which we ship in from California on the brakebeams of freight trains, and ships out again by way of the gallows!"

There ain't no tellin' what would a-happened if a police hadn't arrove and rescued the feller. He was for takin' them both to jail, but the crowd around explained that Hanner was right, so the police he give the feller warnin' not to be insultin' again if he didn't want to get into trouble, and let him go.

The prettiest automobile I see, had a little girl a-ridin' in it, but I was mortal scared all the time for fear the thing would bust. It was covered so with roses that you couldn't see if anything was wrong with the works or not, and I says to Hanner, says I, "Hanner, it's a-temptin' of Providence to put that little critter in such a dangerous place. Who can tell what minute she'll be blowed to eternity?"

"Shut up, Obadiah," says she. "Look at the roses!"

I liked the procession of horses and wagons better, because I knew there wasn't any danger of anyone gettin' hurt. You'd a-thought them horses would have shied at all that stuff hung on to them, but they didn't. Gosh! wouldn't our old Selim a-kicked if they'd a-tried it on him?

The carriages looked like they'd been drove through a big snow storm of roses, and it had balled up on the wheels. There was one rig that was pretty near the smartest I ever seen. It was a boy a-driving' two dogs hitched to a prairie schooner, and the whole thing trimmed with roses.

One day the school children got out and marched, and I'll bet there was close on to a million of them. It was worth the trip just to see them, let alone the rest of the doin's. Roosevelt ought to have been there. He's a-seen something better than lions and gorillas. I don't see how they ever got them young'uns trained like that. I suppose it must have took as much as two whole days to do it.

I ain't got words to tell how them there electricity contraptions looked, so I ain't a-goin' to try. The poet says there ain't nothin' new under the sun, but he didn't make any remarks as to what might transpire after the sun has set.

Of course, we went to the Pioneers' meetin'. I really enjoyed that the most of anything. But they're a-gettin' thinner and thinner, them pioneers ranks is, and soon we'll all be called to our long home and the walks of life will be haunted by us no more forever. It makes me kind o' homesick and lonesome when I get in one of them gatherin's, for there's next time, and I hanker for a talk with old Joe and 'Lisha as I knowed in the days when there wasn't nobody here but us pioneers, but they has gone and I am left.

* * *

Well, we come home when it was all over, and though I was pretty tired, I felt 10 years younger than when I left home, but Hanner, she can't think, talk or dream of nothin' but roses, roses. She'll be sendin' for every kind of rose she hears of, I suppose.

I didn't go to see that rheumatiz doctor. I didn't have time. I don't suppose she'd a-been in her office if I had gone. Are you a-goin' to the Cherry Fair at Salem? Hanner may take it into her head to go, and I may get to see you there. Yours truly. OBADIAH EVERAT OLDWAY.

P. S.—Say, I'll be goiderned if they didn't charge me 75 cents for a half of a little runty Spring chicken down there in Portland. I'd sell every chicken on the place, old hens, roosters and all at that rate, if I got a chance. I et bacon all the rest of the time I was down there. Chickens is cheaper to home.

O. E. O.

At Our Boarding-House.

Boston Courier.

I think I could stand the store eggs and raw bacon,
And I wouldn't object to the soft pewter spoons;
I could hope, though the platter so seldom has steak on,
And I'd even be cheerful in spite of the prunes,
If the fellow who sits at the head of our table
And owns a low brow with a southerly slant
Did not think himself the most palpably able
And suavely delectable joker extant.

I think I could stand without even complaining
The frayed and soiled linen, the cracked plates and cups,
The moustache the man next to me uses for straining
The tentative soup he auspiciously sups,
If the bride and the groom could be bravely contented
To "baby" each other when they were alone;
If they'd cease to perform as if each were demented,
The scorn I exhibit should never be shown.

I think I could stand the detestable cooking,
And I wouldn't object to the damsel who sings—
In spite of her voice she is pretty good-looking,
Which makes up for many regrettable things—
I could worry along, I believe, without carping
If the landlady'd give up her kittenish ways
And cease now and then to come plaintively harping
On the fact that she once had seen better days.