

# OUR STORY TELLER

## STORY OF A KLEPTOMANIAC.

ter, with an awful look of terror in her eyes.

"General Register is not well," I replied. "Here are the ear-drops."

The poor woman went scarlet. She knew what I meant, and I was deeply grieved for her. From the first she must have had a faint suspicion of the truth, and was anxious to save him from public disgrace and scandal.

She was thoroughly unnerved. Miss Benton showed signs of returning consciousness.

"Now," I said, "put the ear-drops back into her ears. She won't know what has happened."

Mrs. Register replaced them with trembling fingers.

"Send someone to look after this girl. I'll stop with her till help comes. But you must go and find your husband. Make haste," I added, significantly, "or you will be too late."

My work was not quite over. When Mrs. Register found her husband in his dressing-room he was, as I feared, on the point of committing suicide. She saved him. A number of trinkets, some of great value, were found in his safe. There is, of course, only one explanation. On that point the General was mad. There was no object in his stealing ladies' ornaments, as he is a very wealthy man, and had not put them to any use.

There was not much difficulty in finding their respective owners. I returned them myself, asking each one as a matter of courtesy to make no inquiries as to how they fell into my possession.

—Buffalo Times.

**TRAPPING THE CUNNING RAT**

**A Novel Plan for Making Them Destroy One Another.**

The following novel plan of trapping rats was described by a writer in Cornhill (June, 1890): "The cunning of rats makes attempts to catch them in traps almost futile, their keen scent recognizing the places where a hand has been, and warning them to avoid so dangerous a locality. The use of gloves smeared with aniseed may lull the suspicions of the animal; but traps will never be the means of greatly diminishing their numbers where it has fairly established itself. The best course to take where the extermination of a colony of rats becomes a necessity is to make them help to destroy one another in the following manner: A number of rats, proportionate to the number of rats in the place from which it is desired to rid them, should be placed about the middle of each occupied by a brick standing on end. The bottom of these tubs should be covered with water to such a depth that about an inch of brick projects above it. The top of the tub should be covered with stout brown paper, upon which a dainty meal of bacon rind and other scraps dear to the rat palate figures, a sloping board giving the rodent facilities for partaking of it. The feast should be renewed for several nights, so that all the rats in the neighborhood may get to know of the good food which is placed within such easy reach. When it is judged that this policy has been pursued long enough, the center of the brown paper should be cut in such a manner that any rat venturing on it will be precipitated into the cold water below. It might be thought that the result of this would be the capture of a rat, or at the most two, for each tub prepared, but no such meager result for the trouble that has been taken need be feared. The rat, finding his trust abused and himself struggling in the water at the bottom of the tub, soon recovers sufficiently from the shock to discover that there is an island of refuge, on to which he clambers, and squeals his loudest for help. Now the squeal of a rat in trouble attracts every one of his kind within hearing, and very few moments will elapse before the victim of misplaced confidence is joined by one of his friends. The newcomer is as quick to discover the chance of escape from a watery grave as was the original victim, but when he attempts to avail himself of its presence, it becomes apparent that there is no room for more than one upon it. The first comer resists with tooth and nail the efforts of his companion in trouble to dispossess him of his island of vantage, and the squeals which form an accompaniment to the fight for a footing upon the brick, attract more rats to the scene of the tragedy. The conflict waxing more and more furious as rat after rat topples into the water, and by morning bedraggled corpses in plenty will gladden the eyes of the man whose losses at the teeth of the rats have induced him to adopt this means of thinning their numbers. Some years ago the plan described above was tried in a city warehouse, with the result that 3,000 rats were destroyed in a single night.—Hoard's Dairyman.

**The Man and His House.**

The ordinary polite inquiry, "How do you do?" calls for nothing but a conventionally polite response; but if a man is past "the allotted age," and a philosopher besides, it may elicit a reply full of meaning and worthy of record.

When John Quincy Adams was eighty years old he met in the streets of Boston an old friend who shook his trembling hand and said:

"Good morning! And how is John Quincy Adams to-day?"

"Thank you," was the ex-President's answer, "John Quincy Adams himself is well, sir; quite well. I thank you. But the house in which he lives at is present is becoming dilapidated. It is tottering upon its foundation. Time and seasons have nearly destroyed it. Its roof is pretty well worn out. Its walls are much shattered, and it trembles with every wind. The old tenement is becoming almost uninhabitable, and I think John Quincy Adams will have to move out of it soon; but he himself is quite well, sir, quite well."

With that the venerable sixth President of the United States moved on, with the aid of his staff.

It was not long afterward that he had his second and fatal stroke of paralysis, in the Capitol at Washington. "This is the last of earth," he said, "I am content."

**Two-Cent Pieces.**

The bronze cent piece was first coined in 1854, being authorized by act of Congress in the same year. The issuance of this coin was discontinued Feb. 12, 1873.

No one works hard enough if he has any time left to talk.

### PICTURESQUE ATHENS.

The Streets Are Made Brilliant by Marble Houses.

Of the three mountains including the plain of Athens, Mount Parnes is the highest (4,540 feet); Mount Pentelion 3,544 feet, with its regular triangular shape suggesting the pediment of a temple, is the most imposing; but the thymus-covered, honey-producing Hymettus (3,008 feet) has always been most intimately associated with Athens. It lies nearer to the city, and from almost all the streets and all the windows looking eastward can be seen its curved line marking the blue sky above, except on the rare gray days, when clouds resting on its top are an infallible sign of rain. The various lines of the mountains and the smaller hills forming an inner circle around Athens, combined with the view of the sea, lend an additional effect of airiness and buoyancy to the aspect. In the long, straight streets of the new town from end to end, nothing impedes the view on either side.

In praising Athens, we must not draw a veil over her defects. Such improvements as are indispensable to a modern city have not kept pace with her growth in extent and affluence. The stages of this progress can be seen in the structural inequalities even of continuous dwellings. These dwellings may be chronologically divided into three categories: those of the first settlers, who all were poor, and the main necessity was at any rate to be housed; those of the thrifty citizens, who felt the want of more space and greater convenience, but had little regard for external appearance or interior comfort, and considered carpets and plate-glass a luxury, and even chimneys of small consequence; and those of the wealthy immigrants, who gave an impulse to the building of elegant houses among all who, thanks to increasing prosperity, could afford to imitate them.

The proximity of the quarries of Hymettus and Pentelion enables Athens to supply herself with a building material which no other city could have at equal cost. Marble, in itself an embellishment, is profusely used, and loses none of its brilliancy in the dry atmosphere, whose transparency makes pleasant to the eye even the light colors spread on the stone walls, which in other latitudes would hardly be bearable. The agreeable effect thus obtained is increased by the trees in some of the streets and squares, as well as in the gardens of the better class of houses. But Athens might and would be more verdant still were it not for the lack of abundant water. This want was felt in antiquity as well; to it may be ascribed the epidemics recorded by ancient historians in times of war, when the number of inhabitants was increased by those of the surrounding country seeking refuge within the walls.

Antoninus Pius endowed Athens with a perfect system of water works. They consisted of subterranean galleries collecting the waters of the neighboring mountains. To these old Roman aqueducts, successively discovered, repaired, and utilized, Athens still owes her scanty supply of water. Projects for increasing the supply are ever talked of, but will be deferred so long as the municipal finances remain no better than the national. Meanwhile, the macadamized roads between the fine sidewalks are hardly watered. This fact and the nature of the soil, notorious for its thinness since the days of Thucydides, account for the dust, which is the greatest blemish of Athens. An English lady was heard to admire the picturesqueness of its whirling clouds; but even were that single representative of an optimistic minority on a fine day, succeeding one of rain, to see the town and the clear outline of the distant mountains through a dustless atmosphere, she could not help regretting that the same effects are not artificially attainable.

On the whole, Athens will show to best advantage if visited after Constantinople and other towns in Turkey, as the standard of comparisons will be fairer than that afforded by the great capitals of the West. It must not be forgotten that, if one of the most ancient, she is at the same time one of the newest among European towns; nor ought the long period of her decline ever to be lost sight of when comparing her with other towns. The traveler who, remembering that long period of Turkish slavery, counts on receiving an Oriental impression from the aspect of Athens is doomed to disappointment. Even the national garb is fast disappearing. It may still be worn by a few elderly Athenians. There, and a peasant here and there selling milk or cheese, recall the day when their dress was the national one. It is, however, the uniform of certain soldiers of light the streets or mounting guard at the palace, in all the white splendor of fustanella. The wide blue trousers of the Aegian islanders are not less rare; nor is there much chance of seeing them at the Piræus, among the craft from the various islands moored along the quays. The uglier and cheaper product of the slop-shop has replaced the picturesque drapery of the modern time. The monotony of the modern costume is broken only by the prisons with their long black robes and their peculiar hats.—"Public Spirit in Modern Athens," by D. Bikinos, in Century.

### NOW ELECTRIC CABS.

AN ENGLISH COMPANY TO PUT THEM IN USE IN LONDON.

Claimed that Electrical Automobile Has Been Solved by the Patents Held by the Company—Three Hundred and Fifty Cabs Purchased.

Fast, Cheap, Noiseless.

While French enterprise is expectantly awaiting the perfection of the horseless carriage on the gasoline or gas engine principle before embarking extensive capital in so new a field, the English have found practicable automobilism by the use of electricity as a motive power and have already put it to a practical application. A company has already been formed, known as the London Electrical Cab Company, with a capital of \$750,000, and in the course of a few weeks 350 cabs, most of which are already built, will be started in the streets of London.

It is claimed by the projectors of this company that electrical automobilism has been practically solved by the mechanism whose patents they hold, and the amount of the capital these men have invested in the enterprise is certainly the guarantee of the good faith of their claim. The statement will pass without contradiction that, whether or not it really has solved the great problem of the times, the company certainly believes that it has.

Parliament recently passed the road locomotives act, which authorized mechanically driven wheels to pass along the Queen's highways at a rate of speed not to exceed fourteen miles an hour. It was the passage of this act that started the company some months ago upon the quest for a thoroughly practicable automobile cab. They engaged Mr. W. C. Hersey, the well-known Eng-



LONDON'S NEW ELECTRIC CAB.

lish electrical engineer, as their electrical manager, securing with him the right to use his electric vehicles and the sole use of the important horseless carriage patents belonging to the British royal syndicate.

Previous to taking this step the company thoroughly investigated all the automobile inventions in the field. By turn they studied gasoline, petroleum, benzoline, and the various explosive oil and spirit powers, with the result that they discarded them all as powers for use in such crowded thoroughfares as those of London. No choice was then left but electricity, and when the investigators examined the contrivances whose rights they have since purchased they unhesitatingly decided that they had the solution of the vexed problem.

### HATFIELDS OF WEST VIRGINIA.

Notorious Family that Has Long Been a Terror in Its Locality.

The pictures herewith presented are reproduced from large photographs which are the first ever taken of a group of Hatfields, of Hatfield-McCoy vendetta notoriety. In the large print here reproduced will be seen Mitchell Hatfield and family, babies included, with one exception, the youngest being too far in front of the baby carriage to be seen. The reader will notice that one of Mitchell's hands has been partly shot away. This was done not far from where the photograph was taken. Seven men attempted to capture him and wounded him thus, as he was dodging along Mate Creek. Mitchell returned their fire and killed one and wounded three. He has not slept in a house in over six years. In the first place, he said, he enjoyed the open air better; secondly, it was not always healthy for a Hatfield to sleep with seven of seven enemies liable to come prowling about. Mitchell said all a Hatfield had to do was to blow a horn and he would be able to muster three hundred Mingo County men at any moment. They have a system of signals that are well understood. That part of West Virginia is very rough, it being impossible to travel it except over certain well-worn paths. The Hatfields live well enough, and always go armed. They are a sober people and all they want, they say, is to be alone. The three Hatfield youths seen in the illustration are of another family, and like all other Hatfields, each had a good gun and knows how to use it. The



MITCHELL HATFIELD AND FAMILY—HATFIELD SHARPshooters.

boys were found to be bright young chaps and when requested they gave some very clever exhibitions of sharp shooting. When asked if they slept with their weapons within easy reach one of the boys replied: "Well, I reckon." The correspondent also encountered some of the McCoy's while en route to Georgia. "Bud" McCoy proved to be a former acquaintance. He used to teach school in Macon County, Kentucky. He had little to say about the war with the Hatfields being again resumed. He had not heard of it. He hoped it was not so, as enough blood had been spilled.

**One of Nelson's Captains.**

The fifth ship of the Theseeus, Captain Ralph Wilbert Miller, this gentleman, whom after his premature death

### NEW GARB FOR OHIO STATE PRISON CONVICTS.



To the Ohio penitentiary system, which the National Prison Congress has characterized as the "model system of America," is about to be added a new feature that is well worthy the study of reformers in other States. It is the novelty of distinguishing good-conduct prisoners from the others by their dress. Under the new plan the convicts are graded according to their conduct and, accordingly, their dress, confirmed by their conduct, to do right. It makes provisions for giving convicts who are of honest inclination an opportunity to begin life anew outside the prison walls under favorable auspices.

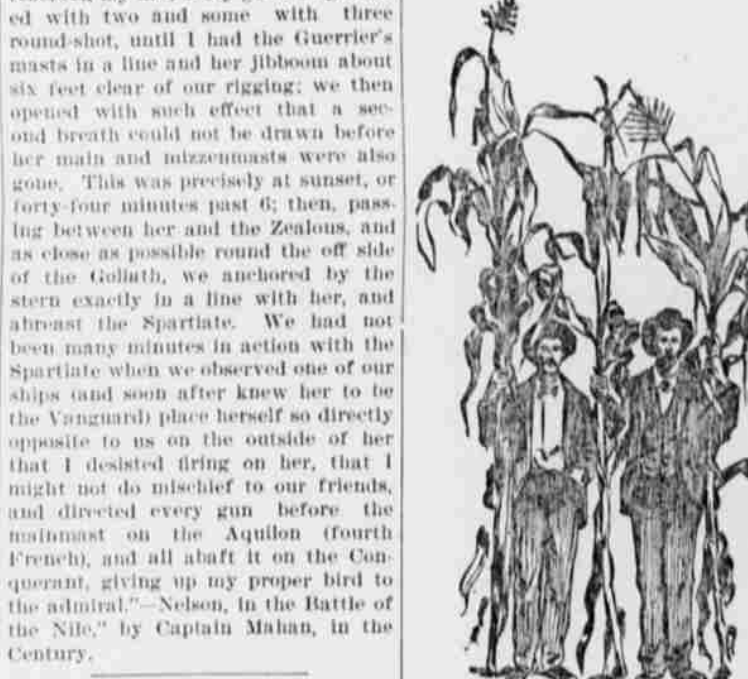
There are three grades of the new prison uniform, and they are pictured in the New York Journal as above. The dress of the best or first grade does not differ greatly from the ordinary dress of working mechanics in the outside world. Every prisoner desirous of mending his life considers it a distinction to wear this superior dress of merit, as it may be called. Reformation is thus encouraged within the prison walls. The second grade uniform is a loud check, and is supposed to act as a check on the prisoner's conduct. It is a very distinguishing badge of the prisoner's behavior, and very few there are who will remain in this class when it is possible to obtain a civilian's suit which carries with it a certificate of a clear prison record. The regulation suit of stripes is worn by the third grade prisoners. In this class the wearer's punishment is ever conspicuous and constantly reminds him of his disgrace and the fact that he is classed among the worst of the prison's inmates.

### ORIGIN OF A PHRASE.

**How "I Acknowledge the Corn" First Came to Be Used.**

Indian corn, the chief product of the Middle West, sometimes attains a great height. The stalks pictured herewith were grown on the farm of D. S. Harper in Henry County, Iowa. They remind a recent writer of the origin of the phrase, "I acknowledge the corn," so much in use by people generally.

A Western man and a son of New England fell into conversation on a railway train. They passed some sturdy-looking corn, and the New England man remarked: "That is fine corn." Whereat the Westerner replied: "That? We don't think much of corn no higher



SOME IOWA CORN.

than that out where I live. It may be good corn for New England, but not for the West."

The Eastern man could not believe that corn grew to be more than six feet high in the West. His companion took his name and address and promised to send him a few stalks of big Western corn. A few weeks passed away. The New England man received a long box by express; in it were several stalks of corn more than seven feet high. He wrote to his traveling companion this concise sentence: "I acknowledge the corn."

### A Jury Cajoled by Beautiful Women.

The jury in the "Martha Washington" case, a famous trial of forty years ago wherein the captain of the steamboat "Martha Washington" and others were charged with burning the boat to secure insurance) was chosen with difficulty. During their five weeks' service the members of it were assailed on every side by the zealous feminine sympathizers of the accused. By every art possible to youth, beauty, and wit, and the reckless abandon of lives largely spent in the companionship of adventurers, were they approached. "If you do not go into that jury-room and vote 'not guilty,' in an hour you will be a dead man," said the wife of Captain Cummings, confronting an aged juror on the staircase. Sprung from an old and respected Massachusetts family, she was a singularly beautiful, brilliant, dashing woman. As Olive Chapin she had gone in early girlhood to the West, and become enamored of the picturesque river captain. Cummings did not see fit to marry her, and went off to Mexico and opened his gambling-house on the Rio Grande. One day as he sat dealing faro there, his affianced present-father, disguised in mans attire and armed with a brace of pistols, she had made her way without detection to the Rio Grande. She was a skilled shot, and could hit a dollar across a room. Leveling a pistol at the recreant lover's head, she said in a short, sharp voice: "Captain Cummings, marry me, or take this in your head." The astonished captain replied, "Why, Olive, my dear, is that you?" The marriage ceremony was performed that day.—McClure's Magazine.

She—Are you lucky at cards? He—Very lucky. I always win. She (archly)—How about love? He (promptly)—Just as lucky. I always lose.—Puck.

cards, calendar pictures, etc., punch tiny holes in each upper corner and tie to the foundation. Place each top of under card beneath the upper one and tie. Nail to the fireplace, window or corner, wherever you wish to put it, and, if wanted out of the way, fold both arms back to the wall. It requires very little work to make a screen like this.

Edith—He told me I was so interesting and so beautiful. Maude—And yet you will trust yourself for life with a man who begins deceiving you even at the commencement of his courtship.—Boston Transcript.

A new volcano, which is emitting immense quantities of smoke, lava and fire, has been discovered at Jalcoatan, Mexico.