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ABSENCE OF MIND.

[Scene: A sleeping-car. An absent-minded passenger suddenly arises from his seat and looks aimlessly around him.]

"A heavy weight is on my mind!
I know I've left something behind!
It cannot be the brazen check,
For trunks which baggage-masters
wreck,
For here it is! My hat-box? No!
It safely rests the seat below!
It must be, then, my new umbrella;
My wife will taunt me when I tell her,
'Your fifteenth since the glad New Year!'
Why, bless me, no! How very queer!
'Tis in the rack there, plain in sight!
My purse and ticket are all right!
What fancies crowd an added head!
'There's naught amiss! I'll go to bed!'

Full peacefully he sank to rest,
If snores a peaceful sleep attest.
A tenebrous hour had scarce slipped by,
When loud arose an anguished cry—
A crazed man's moan of lamentation—
'I've left the baby at the station!'

A STRONG COUPLE.

Some philosophical individual has declared that the reason why a few persons are gifted with extraordinary mental or physical power is, that we may be able to see, by contrast, how puny the rest of mankind really are. Whether this is true or not, we may not say, but certain it is that once in a century or so there appears upon the stage of life a man with powers of mind or body so vastly superior to the majority of the race that, to us, he seems almost superhuman.

It is not often that two such persons live at the same time, and in the same community—surely not that they bear to each other such relations as husband and wife. And yet I have now to relate some exploits of two such people.

In that part of the State of Maine, close bordering on the province of New Brunswick, there lived, a century ago, a man named C—, who was noted for his prodigious physical strength, and whose wife was scarcely less powerful than himself.

Neither of the twain was above the average in stature, nor was there anything very marked in the general build of either one.

There is no record that any of the ancestors of either the man or the woman had been known to possess unusual physical power, nor among all their descendants (from one of whom I have learned what I relate) have there been any of such strength as to make them famous.

But this man and woman were famous throughout that section of the State in which they lived, as well as in the adjoining province, and had the facilities for extending the knowledge of any fact been such as they now are, doubtless their fame would have been co-extensive with the continent.

Of course, the stories of their exploits would have become somewhat exaggerated with the passage of years, as is always the case where there is no written account of them, and yet, after all due allowance has been made, there remains sufficient basis for believing that they were indeed a brace of giants.

I will give only a few of the stories still current regarding them—stories which are recited in the traveler's ear by the present inhabitants of the little village where they once lived. And the first concerning the husband.

He was one afternoon returning homeward from some journey, when he saw a farmer in trouble near the highway. With a couple of boys to assist him, the man had been getting in hay from a field so newly cleaned of trees that some of the stumps were yet remaining. There were indications of rain, and in their haste to reach the barn, a heavily laden cart had been driven against an unseen stump which struck the axle close up to one of the wheels.

The situation was such that it was impossible to move the load, either forward or backward, and the angry farmer stood, goad in hand, swearing at his luck.

Mr. C— saw the condition of things, and springing over the fence, he told the farmer to start up his team when he should give the word. Then, dropping on all fours, he crept under the laden cart, placed his shoulder beneath the axle, and actually raised the load so that it was drawn over the stump. He then walked quietly away, leaving the farmer so dumb with amazement that he forgot to thank him for his assistance.

On one occasion he attended a cattle-show in a distant part of the State. Among the prizes offered was one for the yoke of oxen that should draw the heaviest load of stone on a flat-bottomed drag.

One after another the farmers had brought their teams, but after much "going and hawing," and a most merciless application of the goad stick, they had all given up the attempt, and declared that no single pair of cattle could move it.

Thereupon, C—, who had been looking on quietly, affirmed that he could draw it without any oxen, and stepping forward he threw the chain across his shoulder, and, with one gigantic effort, drew the load several feet to the infinite amazement of a large number of spectators, who rent the air with their cheers.

He was as daring as he was strong, and at one time found use for both of these qualities. He had been engaged by one of the traveling cattle-merchants of that period to accompany him on a business trip through New Brunswick.

After several days, spent in collecting a "drove," they turned their steps back along the route they had come, and stopped one night at a rough-looking tavern.

During the evening a large crowd assembled in the yard and about the building, and declared that the Yankees had cheated one of their number, and must now make it right by paying over a certain sum of money and treating the whole company to liquor.

The drover very properly refused to yield to their demands, and, with Mr. C—, retired to his room, leaving them to themselves. But they were not so easily to be turned aside from their purpose, and, after placing some of their number to guard against his escape from the tavern, they began throwing stones through the drover's window.

In an instant the strong man's blood was up, and he prepared for war. He was totally unarmed, but, despite his employer's protest leaped from the window directly into the front ranks of the mob. Then, with his clinched fists, he attacked them.

No man could stand up against his terrific blows, and in less time than it takes to tell it he had knocked above a score of them senseless, while the remainder fled like chickens before the swoop of an eagle.

They had no further annoyance while they remained there, and it was not until several years had flown that the people of that section ceased to talk of the terrible Yankee.

But, giant though he was, his exploits were not more remarkable than were those of his wife. It was commonly believed of her that she would take up a barrel of cider by the chimes and, holding it before her, march up a flight of stairs as easily as an ordinary person would carry a basket of eggs.

On one occasion a traveling mopeddler called at the house, and found her busily engaged in washing her kitchen-floor. She declined to purchase, or even examine, his goods; but, despite her remonstrance, he crowded into the room, and began to urge her to buy.

Placing his bundle on the floor, he was in the act of stooping to open it, when the irate woman dropped her mop, seized him by the collar and the seat of his trousers, and pitched him head first through an open window, and, before he could regain his feet, threw his bundle of mops after him. The astonished fellow picked himself up and fled from the house without a word.

But the most remarkable thing she did I have yet to tell. It seems that her husband was a man proud of showing his strength, and that this vanity led him too often to neglect his work. As a consequence, he was frequently in trouble from not being able to pay his bills. The sheriff was not an unfrequent visitor at their home, and as the same person held that office year after year, they were always in trepidation when they saw him approaching.

C— had long owed a sum of money to the keeper of the country store a few miles away, and had made a good many promises to pay it; but he had failed so many times to keep his agreement that the storekeeper lost all patience, and determined to attach whatever property he could find on the premises.

It so happened that just then C— had in his possession a fine cow. The law of the State was such that the last cow could be seized for debt, though if the creature had just been killed, it was exempt from taxation. Both C— and his wife knew this fact, though they had no intention of killing the cow. But one morning, when her husband was away, Mrs. C— saw the sheriff approaching the house.

As he drew rein at the door, she stepped out, and he met her with the only remark, "I am sorry, Mrs. C—, but I must perform my duty as an officer of the law."

She well knew what that meant, and before he had time to take any legal measures, she asked him to excuse her for a moment, and, going into the barn where the cow was, she laid hold of the creature by the nostrils and by one horn, and with a gigantic effort, twisted the head around and broke the cow's neck.

Returning to the house, she inquired of the sheriff what he wanted. He replied that he had come to put an attachment on their cow; thereupon she told him that they had no living cow in their possession, but that they had a dead one in the barn, and she didn't suppose that he was fool enough to attach that.

The officer went to the barn, saw the body of the creature, now out of his power, learned how it had been killed, and, without a word, left the place, fearing that, if the woman should get angry, she might treat him in the same way as she had dealt with her cow.

The jester attached to the court of Peter the Great of Russia was remarkable for his ingenuity in extricating himself and others from trouble. A cousin of his, on one occasion, had fallen under the czar's displeasure, and was about to be executed. The jester presented himself at court to petition for a reprieve. On seeing him enter the chamber of state, and divining his errand, the monarch shouted to him:

"It's of no use coming here; I swear I will not grant what you are going to ask."

Quick as thought the fool dropped on his knees and exclaimed:

"I beseech your imperial highness to put that scamp of a cousin of mine to death."

Peter, thus caught in his own trap, had no choice but to laugh, and sent a pardon to the offender.

The man who revenges every wrong that is done him has no time for anything else. If you make your life a success you can afford to let the dogs bark as you go by.

THE USE OF DRUGS.

A Physician's Observations on the Habit of Self-Doctoring.

IGNORANT AND RECKLESS USE OF MORPHINE.

"The extensive use of patent medicines and the enormous quantity of drugs sold without prescriptions indicate how widespread is the habit of self-doctoring," said a popular physician to a Six reporter. "To those who know how carelessly and ignorantly these drugs are used, the thought of the harm they do is absolutely appalling. There is no telling how long a prescription once given will be used, or with what foolish risk it will be applied in a case where it will not only not do good, but is certain to work harm."

"Do you think this habit of self-doctoring decreases the practice of physicians?"

"By no means. The effect is rather to increase our work. People who think to do without the services of a physician will not only do themselves harm by the delay, but also with the medicines which they do not know how to use. It is like a man trying to mend a leak in a water pipe by soldering it with the poker. He generally makes the hole bigger. It is, of course, the most difficult part of the physician's duty to diagnose the disease, to tell what is the real trouble with the patient. It is not uncommon for even educated physicians to make mistakes in this respect. The science of medicine has progressed so far that every part of the human body has been pretty thoroughly studied, and the treatment of the ailments of each part is a specialty. It is impossible for one physician to know all these diseases as well as the specialists; and it is a common practice among honest physicians to refer patients to those who have made a special study of the diseases which afflict them. It is not uncommon for a man to go from one physician to another in the vain effort to discover his ailment. Sometimes a patient will be treated by successive physicians for the wrong ailment, because some of the symptoms of different diseases are similar. How unlikely is it, therefore, that persons who have not studied medicine can find what ails them!"

"Which do you think do the most self-doctoring, women or men?"

"Women decidedly, especially mothers and old women. The reckless temerity of some women in this respect is wonderful. They rush in where angels fear to tread. Hastily judging from a few symptoms that a case resembles one which the family doctor has treated, they will hunt up an old prescription and administer the dose to some confiding or helpless child. I could tell you some amusing stories of the mistakes that are made in this way, as well as some instances where more serious consequences resulted. Take, for illustration, a headache. It may come from a dozen different causes—from hunger, from indigestion, from over-excitement of the brain, from eating too much, from inhaling foul air. The remedy for a headache varies with its cause. Yet you will find women who have a universal panacea for headache, regardless of the cause. Beware of such women."

"With what medicines is the most harm done?"

"Opium and aperients. The heedlessness with which morphine in various forms is now administered in families is alarming. The doctor comes to attend a patient who is in pain. He prescribes morphia, and directs its use, and the patient is relieved. This is enough to start the average matron on a course of fell destruction with morphia. The next patient may be of a different temperament, or sex, or age, requiring a different kind or quantity of the opiate, but the old prescription will be used, or worse than all, will be revived from memory. Some drug stores watch carefully, and refuse to dispense such drugs without a prescription in each case, but there are many too eager to make money to care much whether the patient is being treated by a doctor. The same is true of the use of bromide, of chloroform and of ether. The bottle that is left partly filled in a family after one patient has been treated is pretty sure to be used for another without the doctor's knowledge. As for paragon and laudanum, the amount of stupefaction that is practiced upon children by their use is so common as almost to cease to attract attention. Perhaps the child is naturally peevish, or is cutting teeth, or has some infantile ailment; out comes the paragon or soothing syrup bottle, and before long the small dose ceases to have effect. Then larger doses are given, until the unfortunate youngster's system is saturated with the drug and totally deranged. Sometimes the lazy and dishonest nurse, to relieve herself from trouble, administers the anodyne on her own responsibility, and the hapless child shows a dulness and stupidity for which nobody can account."

"I met a man once who was doctoring himself for dyspepsia and indigestion. He told me he wondered why he had not cured himself. He was apparently of muscular development and good constitution, but he had somehow got the idea into his head that he must exercise vigorously after every meal in order to promote digestion. He took long and rapid walks after his meals. Of course his indigestion grew worse. He was apparently a man of ordinary intelligence, yet he was ignorant of the simplest law of health. I told him that if a cow could talk she would teach him more sense than to take any vigorous exercise, either physical or mental, immediately after a hearty meal. Most horses are treated more intelligently than this man was treating himself."

"What puzzles me is the fact that people are not afraid to meddle with such a delicate organism as the human body. Few persons who have watches would attempt to repair them if they should get out of order; yet they tackle the delicate mechanism of their own bodies with the recklessness of a blacksmith attempting to adjust a chronometer. The evil is wide-spread, and reaches not only the cases I have alluded to, but many others more difficult and dangerous than these. I have known of women experimenting with drugs in cases where a simple surgical operation of a minute's duration was all that was necessary. The evil is insidious, and one that it would be difficult to reach by legislation. It is especially common among those who have that little learning which is a very dangerous thing. It is a question which are most to be pitied, those who know nothing whatever of their own bodies, or those who, having the presumption to act on very slight and insufficient knowledge, are perpetually dosing themselves with nostrums, and, with a blind faith equal to the most abject superstition, putting confidence in panaceas."

"FRIGHTENING CHILDREN TO SLEEP."

A lady overheard her nurse girl the other night talking to the little child she was putting to sleep, and among other legends of the nursery in which she indulged was this:

"If you don't go right to sleep this very minute, a big, awful black bear, with eyes like coals of fire, and sharp, white, cruel teeth, will come out from under the bed and eat you—a-a-l-u-p!"

The poor little thing nestled down under the clothes and after a long season of terror fell asleep to dream frightful dreams of horrid bears eating her up.

"That night when the stolid nurse had composed herself in her own comfortable bed and put the light out, there came a sudden rap at the door, and the voice of the mistress called loudly through the panels:

"Maggie! Maggie! for mercy sake get up as quick as you can! There's a fearful burglar under your bed, and as soon as you get asleep he's coming out to rob and murder you!"

At the word burglar she sprang screaming from the bed, tore open the door and fell in hysterics into the hall. The lesson was even more instructive than the mistress had designed; but when the girl's fear was calmed she said to her:

"You did not hesitate to tell my little delicate child, who could not possibly know that it was a lie, a cruel story of a bear under her bed; now, when I treat you to the same kind of slumber-story, you are nearly frightened to death. To-morrow you can go into the kitchen and work—you are not fit to care for little children."

How many children are there who, every night of their lives, are frightened to sleep?

"A DISGUSTED TRAVELER."

A traveler stopped at a Western hotel the other day and called for dinner, and a glass of whisky as an appetizer. The waiter said they had no whisky.

"No whisky! Well, a glass of brandy, then will do."

"No brandy, sir; not allowed to sell any kind of liquors."

"You ain't, eh? I'll go to some other hotel, then."

"But none of the others sell anything, sir."

"The mischief they don't! What's the reason?"

"The Prohibitionists have carried the 'no license' ticket, and they are enforcing it for awhile pretty strictly."

"They are, eh? Well, what you got to eat?"

Roast beef, roast mutton, boiled pork and broiled curlews."

"What's a curlew?"

"It's a bird, sir; something like a snipe."

"Did it have wings? Could it fly?"

"Yes."

"Then I don't want any curlew. Anything that had wings and could fly and didn't leave this d—d country, I don't want for my dinner! Give me some roast mutton."

"A DISCONTENTED WIFE."

"I see," she observed, as she looked up from her paper, "that another woman who was perfectly sane all the time has just been released from a lunatic asylum, after a detention of three years."

"Yes," briefly replied the husband.

"She was incarcerated by her husband."

A GREAT CHANGE.

Dresses that Cost but One Dollar, Worn to "Meeting," Sunday.

OLD-FASHIONED WAY OF TRAVELING TO BOSTON.

This is an expensive age. Our richest men began with mere nothing but their brains and hands, and with little education. Chester W. Chapin, one of the richest men in Massachusetts, when he was twenty-one years old let himself out to work twelve to fourteen hours a day for \$12 a month, farming and teaming from the armory to the boat on the Connecticut river; but he laid his money up. Now you would insult a young strippling of eighteen years to offer him such wages. He was the tax collector in 1822 for the town of Springfield. His fees were \$80 for collecting \$8,000—the whole taxes for that town. He pays more taxes now than the whole town did then. It cost more time and travel to collect them, then than now. The people were so scattering and they were so afraid of a tax collector he said, some would run and hide up stairs or down cellar when they saw him coming, and in some instances he hunted them up in their hiding-places after their family said they "wa'n't there!" After finding the delinquent he would get a part of the tax money and go again for the rest or pay it himself. He has paid in this way hundreds of dollars, finding it easier to earn the money than to collect it. Money was scarce and worth something then. I recollect in 1825 or '26, in our town meeting, the proposition was to raise for the coming year \$14,000 for the town of Springfield; Oliver B. Morris arose and objected by saying: "What are we coming to? It is astonishing that pride and ambition, or fashion should demand such a tax." But they overruled the old man, and he lived to see pride, fashion, and ambition rise much higher. A great change surely.

The fashion of those days I recollect. When my mother was going to get a new dress, or gown, as it was called then, the woman that was engaged to come to the house to cut and make it told her she was so tall and large she must get six yards for it. Five yards was the common pattern, and 50 cents for cutting and making and a dinner found. What a change from that day to this! The cloth cost \$1 and the making 50 cents, and the dress was worn to meeting. The fashion and pay of the preachers has changed. The first Methodist preacher in our town got \$100 for one year's salary, and if he had a present of a pair of socks he must report it. The second preacher had a wife and three children, and \$35 was added for each child. Bishop Hadding in our time got less than \$75 a year. Also Priest Clough and Lorenzo Dow less than either. Our old Methodist preachers worked for a living and for God, instead of for reputation and a salary. I was thinking about the fashion in domestic affairs, say music, fifty-five years ago. Governor Trash and I met at Monson for Thanksgiving, with the family where he got his wife, —at old Uncle Saul Squires's, uncle to us both. Their house music was, for treble, the flax spinning-wheel, played or run by one of the girls; for the tenor, the large spinning-wheel, played by another girl; for bass, the old lady whacking away at the old loom, all working to make their music profitable and healthy. The fashion of those days was to have a good healthy family of from eight to ten children, all learnt to work for a living. What a change! Instead of a good, healthy family now, all up in the morning early to work, we see from one to three little pinking children, with a sickly mother, not able to take care of two as easily as our mothers would ten, fifty years ago, without a hired girl. The children now must be in fashion —lie in bed until eight or nine in the morning, no appetite, little vitality. They play on some kind of instrument, and go to school to be crowded with more kinds of lessons than our old school teachers ever knew. But this is the fashion and pretended improvement of the age. Perhaps this generation does not look at these things as I do, but I think that health, economy, and morality are not improved by getting high wages or a fashionable education. This generation will spend what its fathers have earned. Generally it is watching the pulse of the man who has property, longing for the time to come when it will come in possession of what it has not earned. It is a known fact that the rising generation are spendthrifts.

Another great change is in the mode of traveling. Fifty years ago we had to go through the country by stages, at the fast speed of seven miles an hour. This was much faster than the common farmers traveled. It was considered a great treat to take the stage at old Jeremy Warriner's tavern—start at four o'clock in the morning and get to Boston at nine in the evening, if the going was good. When the fare was reduced to \$3, two of us worked two weeks to get money enough to pay our fare to Boston, eighty-eight miles. The young men in these days earn enough in one day to pay their fare, and go in three hours instead of seventeen. Our conductors get for driving their team through to Boston \$3 or \$4, and the old stage-drivers got \$12 a month. This was Chester W. Chapin's standard price in those days. Connecticut River steamboats, started by Blanchard, fifty-five years ago, cut down the fare to Hartford to \$1, which enabled us all to go to Hartford and back in

one day for \$2 and stay four hours in Hartford. This was another great treat for \$2, costing us five days' work. Now young men can earn enough in half a day, and go out and back in the other half—[Springfield Republican.]

WIT AND HUMOR.

The man who goes into business with the devil soon finds out that his partner is sole proprietor.

The girl who was courted by a spruce young lawyer, said she liked to be protected by the strong arm of the law.

The minister who divides his discourses into too many heads will find it difficult to procure attentive ears for all of them.

"Waiter, these oysters have no taste." "We cannot help it, sir; it has rained so much this year that the sea has become fresh!"

Non Compos—"I see that Smith put in nomination. Is he non-par-tisan?" "No, not exactly; I think they call him non-compos."

Peanuts are so cheap down in Georgia that five cents' worth will make a young man solid with his sweetheart for about a month.

Small boy at dinner table—"What all that for grandpa?" Mamma—"No, darling. It's for you." Small boy—"Ox! what a little bit!"

Overheard in the cloak-room: "Do she marry well?" "Yes, indeed. He worth over a million and drinks hard that he never can go into society, so she's not bothered with him."

Whoever doubts that the new papers have a mission should enter a car and see how useful they are to the men when a fat woman with a basket is looking around for a seat.

Mistress (to applicant for cook position): "Why did you leave your last place?" Applicant: "You're very inquisitive, marm; I didn't you for what your last cook left you."

When they build a railway, the first thing they do is to break the ground. This is often done with great ceremony. Then they break the shareholders. This is done without ceremony.

A bright little girl, noticing among the company at her father's residence on a certain occasion a gentleman whose face was considerably marked, inquired who the "not-eaten gentleman" was.

An old gentleman said to his excited nephew: "John, you should not think so much of yourself." "Why, uncle, the other day, when I saw that old friend of yours, you complained that I forget myself, retorted the youth."

At a hotel in Glasgow, a gentleman finding that the person who he acted as waiter could not give him certain information which he wanted put the question, "Do you belong to the establishment?" to which James replied: "No, sir; I belong to the Kirk."

A lady who is properly very shy sauntages says that when she recently asked for a certain kind which she knew to be of good quality and flavor she was coolly informed by the merchant that all sauntages are of the kind, "if you only make up your mind to think so."

Baby has been forbidden to go for dessert. The other day they got to serve him, and as baby is very obedient, he remained silent, although much affected. "Josephine," said the father, "pass me a plate." "Who you have mine, papa?" cried the baby "it is very clean."

"Ma, haven't I been a real good boy since I've been going to Sunday school?" "Yes, my lamb," answered the maternal parent, fondly. "And you trust me now, don't you, ma?" "Yes, darling, yes." "Then," spoke up the little innocent, "what makes you keep the preserves locked up in the pantry the same as ever?"

A New York doctor has been fighting for the past twenty years, and has reached the conclusion that a small feet on a woman means a temper like cayenne pepper and a tongue which will lie about its best friend. This is a noble effort to combat women with big feet, but it works.

"And what age is it you are near dear?" asked the colonel just before from India of the tall daughter of his friend, Tompkinson Smith. "Well, that is what I can't quite make out," returned the girl, taking care not to meet her mother's eye, "when I go anywhere with papa I'm sixteen; but when I go out with mamma I am never more than two next birthday." The colonel had intended to change the subject.

A Boston man went to a doctor and told him, "Doctor, there is something the matter with my brain. After any severe mental exertion I have a headache. What is the remedy for it?" "The best remedy is get yourself elected to the Legislature, where you will have no occasion to think." The patient replied it wasn't for the sake of his children would make the experiment. He didn't want them to go through with a stigma attached to their names.

A citizen of Des Moines, Iowa, owns a pair of sagacious dogs. One day one of them rapped at the door as if for admission, but when the mistress opened it, instead of going into the house looked up at her repeating and started toward the barn, repeating his actions as some one followed him. When the horse had broken loose and was being closely watched by one while the other had gone to the barn for aid.