Ancient Courtship.

Lovers, in the classical age, went after dinner to the vestibules or doors of their mistresses, and whistled or coughed in order to be heard. When this did not succeed they sung amorous ditties, or wrote them on the door, or fixed upon it tablets on which they wrote. If the girls were inflexible, they supplicated the gate, poured libations on it, perfumed it, kissed it amorously, and if unsuccessful, broke that, the windows, &c. There also occurred serenades, weeping at the door, lying there all night, hanging crowns on it, especially those which they had worn on festivals; throwing upon the threshold the torches lit for their return from supper, and threatening to burn the house; even scribbling libelous and indecent verses on the door. The omens of success were drawn from a leaf if it cracked upon the hand; from striking the room with apple kernels; and the cottabus, a simple mode of vaticination by the fall of liquor.

How courtship was conducted in the days of chivalry is known to everybody; as wearing the sleeve of a lady, leading her horse by the bridle; making ridiculous vows, such as wearing a black patch over the eye, mentioned in Froissart, all which, as to matrimonial concerns, were more romantic than real; for in all great families they are affianced at seven or eight years of age, and married at the age of puberty, to prevent improper attachments. In the reign of Elizabeth the following practices prevailed: Playing with the little finger in amorous dalliance; sitting or lying at the feet of their mistresses in ball rooms, gazing closely in each other's eyes, so as to see the figures represented in them. They also exhibited their passion publicly. A pendant lock of hair, plaited and tied with a ribbon, and hanging to the ear, was fashionable in the age of Shakspeare, and afterwards that of Charles I., and many of his courtiers wore them. This lock was worn on the left side and hung down by the shoulder, considerably longer than the rest of the hair, sometimes even to the girdle. It was supposed to have the effect of causing violent love, and was originally a French custom. Wigs were made to imitate it. Curton adds to the love-lock a flower worn in the ear. Kissing the eyes was a mark of extraordinary tenderness. In the fore part of the stays was anciently a pocket, where women not only carried love letters and tokens, but even money and materials for needlework. When prominent stays were worn, lovers dropped their literary favors into them. If a woman puts a love letter into the bosom pocket, it was a token of her affection. Willow garlands were worn by persons disappointed in love, supposed from the tree's promoting chastity, or the famous passage in the Psalms. The liberties allowed to lovers, and even to intimate acquaintances, in the times of Elizabeth and James, were very indecorous. These were to handle them roughly, put their hands on their necks, kiss them by surprise, &c.; indeed, when courtship ensued in inferior rank, it was conducted in the coarsest manner.—*Saturday Evening Gazette.*

A Brave Woman and a Poltroon.

A thrilling incident occurred on the stage route between Ellenville, Ulster county, and Summitville, on the New York and Oswego Midland Railway, on Friday afternoon last, when the courage and extraordinary nerve of a woman saved the lives of herself and her two children. Just this side of Ellenville there is a long and steep declivity in this road, known as Budd's Hill. The Summitville stage had just began the descent of the hill, when the pole of the stage slipped through the neckyoke, and let vehicle, with considerable force, against the horses. They began plunging and running, and the driver, a strong fellow named Lord, instead of putting on the brake and stopping the stage, as he might have done, became frightened, threw down the reins and jumped from his seat to the ground, and was thrown violently several feet down an embankment. Another man who sat on the seat with him jumped also, and was thrown down the bank. The other passengers in the stage were Mrs. Hollingsworth and her two small children. As soon as the horses were free from the restraint of a driver they dashed furiously down the hill, threatening momentary death to the inmates of the coach. Mrs. Hollingsworth saw that they must meet with certain destruction at a sharp curve there was in the hill some distance ahead, unless the horses could be checked in some way. Her children were clinging to her and screaming in terror, but she hastily tore herself away from them and clambered over the three seats that were between her and the driver's. On reaching that seat she saw with horror that the reins were trailing in the road, out of her reach.

Her extraordinary presence of mind and courage never forsook her, however, for she climbed over the dash-board to the whiffle-trees, and thence walked along the pole of the stage, between the plunging horses, until she could reach the reins as they lay on their backs. Securing them, she made her way back to the driver's seat, and put forth all her strength in attempting to get some control over the team. She succeeded far enough to prevent the capsizing of the coach at the curve. A hundred yards or so beyond the curve the high bank at the lawn side eased off in a gentler slope. Here Mrs. Hollingsworth succeeded in turning the horses, and ran them into a fence. They could not get another start, and several men who had seen the runaway were soon on the spot and secured them. The children and their courageous mother were taken to a house near by, where they all soon recovered. Mrs. Hollingsworth was able to proceed on her journey in a short time. The driver and his companion in cowardice were both badly hurt. They were received with shouts of derision and great indignation when they were found, however, and received sympathy in no quarter. Lord is an experienced driver, and his codardly action on this occasion is inexplicable.—*N. Y. Times.*

DEVOTED WOMEN.—It is stated that a great number of Russian ladies in St. Petersburg have pledged themselves mutually neither to wear silk nor satin nor costly ornaments, nor to give balls, nor to indulge in other luxuries during the present war; but to devote the money which they would otherwise have spent upon such objects, to the nursing of the sick and wounded of their country. This is just what a good many women did in this country during our war, and what women have done in all countries under similar conditions.

"How many children have you?" asked one friend of an old acquaintance. "Well, I have five, but they were eating cucumbers when I left home and they may all be doubled up now."—*Oil City Call.*

The Opposition of Mars.

Astronomers are now waiting with great interest for a phenomenon which is to occur in a few weeks, and is to be observed with the utmost care and assiduity, and with all the appliances at the disposal of science. On September 5 the planet Mars will be "in opposition"—that is, he will then be at that point of the sky which is just opposite the sun, so that he will rise at sunset, and come to the meridian at midnight. Since both the planet and the earth sweep in orbits around the sun, it follows also that at that time they make their nearest approach to each other, and the planet is then most favorably situated for observation and examination. In the early autumn Mars will be by far the most conspicuous object in the eastern sky, blazing with a red fire hardly inferior to the brightness of Venus, which by that time will begin to adorn the western twilight, and quit outshining Jupiter. Saturn, close by Mars, will seem comparatively of no account.

Oppositions of Mars are not specially rare. They occur once in about two years and fifty days, and if the orbits of this planet and the earth were perfect circles the circumstances of all oppositions would be essentially alike, and no peculiar interest would attach to one rather than another. But this is by no means the case; the orbits are not quite circular. The earth, about the 1st of July, is nearly three million miles from the sun than at New Year's; and in the case of Mars the difference between its greatest and least distance from the sun is larger yet, amounting to almost twenty-eight millions of miles. The *average* distance between Mars and the earth at the moment of opposition is about forty-nine millions of miles; if, however, the opposition happens when the planet is as far from the sun as possible and the earth as near the sun as it can be, they will be separated by a space of sixty-four million miles; and if, on the contrary, the event occurs when the conditions are reversed, the distance between them will be only thirty-four million, and the opportunity for observation will be exceptionally favorable. These close oppositions are rare, the motions of the planet and the earth being so related that they recur only at intervals of seventy-nine years, though some of the intermediate oppositions, separated by periods of fifteen and seventeen years, are not very greatly inferior. The opposition of next September will be one of the best possible, both earth and planet being nearly in their most favorable positions, and the distance between them less than at any time since the summer of 1708. The observations to be made are of two classes—one intended to determine the distance, position and motions of the planet; the other relating to its magnitude, form, rotation, surface-markings, and physical constitutions.

One subject which deserves, and will probably receive special attention during the coming opposition, is that of the planet's form. According to some of the best observers, notably Dawes and Bessel, the planet is not sensibly flattened at its poles; according to others, and decidedly the numerical majority of observers, it is flattened very considerably, its polar diameter being nearly 100 miles less than its equatorial. If, as our text-books generally assume, this latter result is correct, it presents a mechanical difficulty of the gravest character. It is quite impossible to explain how a planet so much smaller than the earth and with a longer day than ours, can have such a form. It is hardly too much to say that (on this assumption) theory and fact are hopelessly at odds.

Probably the measures to be made during the coming months will explain the matter; and most likely by showing that a result obtained by one or two observers of the first quality is worth more than that of the multitude.—*N. Y. Times.*

How She Fixed Him.

"Will you do something to oblige me?" shyly asked a beautiful young woman of a timid young gentleman whose acquaintance she had just made at a small social gathering.

"Anything that I can in honor, miss," he replied, blushing.

"Well," said she, "come into the back parlor, where it is dark, and sit on the sofa with me, and let me rest my head on your shoulder, and you pretend to whisper in my ear—only don't blow, because that tickles, and I can't laugh, for this new dress is very tight—and when anybody looks you can draw your arm away—I forgot to say I wanted you to put it round my waist—and I'll pretend to blush."

"But, my gracious, honored miss," stammered the young man, after hastily dividing four into 1877 and finding that it wasn't leap year; "my goodness, before all these people—and I am already engaged—and your father must weigh—"

"Hush, I know what I'm up to," replied the artless girl. "I'm engaged, too, to that young man talking to the waxen-faced thing with somebody's hair over there. I want to stir him up—bring him down to business—make him come up to his milk, that's all."

The young man said that a load had been lifted from his bosom, and aided her to the best of his ability, so well, indeed, that in three-quarters of an hour the true betrothed got his girl into the library, demanded an explanation of her shameless conduct, was softened by her tears, called himself a brute, asked if she could ever forgive him, and promised to behave better in future. And how did the young girl reward the young man who had helped her to this happiness? Why, she never said a word to him all the evening, in fact, never mentioned him, except to say to her reconciled lover, "Alonzo, *could* you have been so stupid as to think I could see anything to admire in such a mutton-headed clam as that?" "O woman, in our hours of ease."

WE must measure a man's strength by the power of the feelings he subdues, not by the power of those which subdue him. And hence, composure is often the highest result of strength. Did we ever see a man receive a flagrant injury, and then reply calmly? This is a man spiritually strong. Or did we ever see a man in anguish, stand as if carved out of solid rock, as if mastering himself? Or one bearing a hopeless daily trial remain silent, and never tell the world what cankered his home peace? That is strength. We too often mistake strong feelings for strong character. A man who bears all before him, before whose frown domestics tremble, and whose bursts of fury make the children of the household quake because he has his way in all things, we call him a strong man. The truth is, that he is a weak man; it is his passions that are strong—he, mastered by them, is weak.

CHEMISETTES are growing in favor.

Literary Ambition.

Stage-struck young men and women are well-understood incidents of modern society. They are impressible young people who have acquired a fondness for the theater, and perhaps cherish a belief that they resemble some popular actor. Nowadays it is Booth whose style is most affected. You may have seen several young men who, it might be said, look more like Booth than he does himself, especially since he has been wearing his hair shorter. Or perhaps the stage-maniac is the product of private theatricals, or of the declamation class, or of the debating society. These amiable youths sometimes hire a hall or a provincial theater, and come out as Hamlet, for one night only. Sometimes they go on the regular stage in a subordinate capacity, and soon become disillusionized, as it is called.

The stage-struck youth is more easily cured of his folly than the youth who is, as you may say, stage-struck for literature or for painting. I wonder whether leading actors are not more frank with amateur aspirants for theatrical honors than leading authors are with amateur aspirants for literary honors. This may partly arise from the fact that so many notable mistakes have been made in the case of budding authors. Nobody wants to go down to history, as the man told young Longfellow he would never make a poet. Young people, who desire to be "literary," are moreover easily deceived as to their abilities by the ease with which a certain sort of notoriety may be obtained. In the case of young painters, the fact that a boy is called an "artist" the moment he takes a brush in his hand is itself enough to turn one's head.

The youth stage-struck or paint-struck or pen-struck is sometimes a ridiculous, sometimes a pathetic, sometimes a tragic object; he is generally amiable, always interesting, and occasionally it transpires that he is in the first phases of a genuine artistic career. As before remarked, the imitative Booth is apt to find his level before a great while. The youth who has taken up painting merely because he thinks it would be a fine thing to paint, either puts it aside early, or makes a painful failure later on, or persists till he acquires dexterity enough to paint bad and popular pictures. The youth who has taken up literature merely because he thinks it would be a fine thing to be a writer, either goes at something else, or becomes a drudge or a conscious failure; or he makes himself, after a while, an object neither of pity or of interest; wins a cheap notoriety by getting his pieces printed where little or nothing is paid for them; assails editors of periodicals with bewailings and importunities; but as a writer, no matter how much dexterity he may acquire, or how many pieces he may give away of worry into print, he never gets beyond imitation and emptiness. "Why do you not help me? Have you no sympathy with struggling merit? Remember that you yourself, O great and mighty editor, was once at the bottom of the ladder?" It is hard to reply to such an appeal, "My dear fellow, if you were even sincere, though without ability, I would not do one thing to wound you. But you have been at this business now for years; you have not shown one particle of talent; your literature is all echo; your ambition is for notoriety, not for recognition. I would cut off my right hand rather than be unjust to you. If I should help you up the ladder I should be unjust to you, for every step in the direction you desire to go is a false step; and the position you really wish to attain is a false position."—*Scribner's Monthly.*

PROFITS OF AUTHORS.—In the "Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay," published by Harper & Brothers, it is mentioned that 26,500 copies of his history had been sold in ten weeks. Longman, his publisher, one day came to him and said they were overflowing with money, and proposed to pay him £20,000 in the following week. The check is still preserved as a curiosity among the archives of Messrs. Longman's firm. "I went into the city," says Macaulay, "to give instructions, and was warmly congratulated on being a great moneyed man. I said that I had some thoughts of going to the chancellor of the exchequer as a bidder for the next loan." This payment, large as it is, has been exceeded in this country. Harper & Brothers have paid as copyright to Mr. Marcius Wilson, the author of their series of school readers, about $200,000; to the late Prof. Charles Anthon, about $100,000; to Mr. Motley, about $60,000; to Jacob Abbott, about $50,000; to the late Albert Barnes, $75,000; and to English authors, over $300,000. These are among the largest, and are quite sufficient as a hint and incentive to young persons about to enter upon literature as a profession. That mine is as inexhaustable as ever; or, as one might say, there yet remain in the vast oviparous animals as copious in size and as toothsome in quality as any that have hitherto been adroitly captured by the expert angler.—*Harper's Weekly.*

THE SCRAP-BOOK.—Every one who takes a newspaper which he in the least degree appreciates, will often regret to see any one number which contains some interesting and important articles thrown aside for waste paper. A good way to preserve these is by the use of a scrap-book. One who has never been accustomed thus to preserve short articles, can hardly realize the pleasure it affords to sit down and turn over the pleasant, familiar pages. Here a piece of poetry meets the eye, which you would long since have lost had it not been for your scrap-book. There is a witty anecdote—it does you good to laugh over it yet, although it may be for the twentieth time. Next is a valuable recipe you had almost forgotten, and which you found just in time to save much perplexity. There is a sweet little story, the memory of which has cheered and encouraged you when almost ready to despair under the pressure of life's cares. Indeed, you can hardly take up a single paper without re-perusing. Then hoard with care the precious gems, and see at the end of the year what a rich treasure you will have accumulated.

THERE are 21 colleges in the New England States. Maine has 4, with 455 students; New Hampshire 1, with 347; Vermont 3, with 172; Massachusetts 9, with 1,918; Rhode Island 1, with 250; and Connecticut 3, with 1,037; making a total of 4,179. Of these Harvard has 1,370 students. There are 20 women at Harvard in the summer schools of chemistry and botany, and 12 at Yale in the school of fine arts.

AN express train in Russia, carrying 6,000,000 of roubles, has altogether disappeared, without leaving the slightest traces affording a clue as to what has become of it.

NEW YORK city has paid $236,711 to lawyers in the ring suits.

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One of the specialties of the business of the firm being hides, and noticing that their rule for classification seems more favorable for butchers, or other consignors, than the rules of the National Convention of Tanners and Dealers in Hides, Leather, etc., held at Philadelphia about a year since, we sketch from same as follows, viz: Green-salted hides are those which are thoroughly cured by lying hair down, with the flesh covered with plenty of good strong salt, some fifteen days or more. Dry Flint Hides are those which have been thoroughly dried in the shade. Dry Salt Hides are those which have been salted and dried in the shade and are one-third off for the salt, and another one-third off if they have other faults. Green Salted Skins are classified by weight, viz: 10 lbs. and under are calf; 10 to 16 lbs. are veals, and 16 to 26 lbs. are kips. In dry stock 16 lbs. and under are called kips or calf. All hide stock is handled by cull and weight, or usual selection; such as will only make inferior leather are culls and go at two-thirds of weight. The usual faults which constitute culls are bulls, stags, cuts, bad scores, five or more grubs, mutrain, tainted, worm-eaten, weather-beaten loose hair, having been dried so that the hide is in bad shape, etc., etc. Some hides are so far spoiled that they are only glue stock, or worthless.

The firm of A. C. Nichols & Co. dates back to some dozen years, and in all that period have sustained a most enviable reputation for honesty and probity, and have gained the confidence and respect of both buyers and sellers throughout the Pacific States. The members constituting the firm are gentlemen of enterprise and ability, and fully understand the wants of their patrons and the trade. Parties desiring to consign leather, hides, pelts, etc., can do no better than to send them direct to Messrs. A. C. Nichols & Co., Nos. 402 and 404 Battery street (corner of Clay), as we feel sure that they will handle all goods to the best advantage of consignors, and make rapid and larger returns on sales made.—*S. F. Commercial.*

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A WONDERFUL MINERAL AND ITS USES.

Visitors at the Pavilion should be sure and examine the display of H. W. Johns' patent Asbestos materials, which forms an important feature of the present exhibition. Asbestos is a wonderful mineral, *indestructible by fire or acids*, and differs from all other known mineral substances in possessing fibres resembling silk or flax, some varieties of which can be spun, woven and felted, producing cloth, felted sheets, paper, thread, etc. A tissue of Asbestos paper will withstand the hottest flame, and the mineral itself possesses several other valuable properties, being a natural lubricant, a non-conductor of heat, and capable of receiving and retaining the most brilliant colors. Under H. W. Johns' patent, Asbestos is utilized in combination with other materials in the manufacture of articles for structural and mechanical purposes, and at the Pavilion it is exhibited in its crude state and also as manufactured into roofing, house and roof fire-proof paints, pipe and boiler covering, cement felting, steam packing, Asbestos paper, board, etc. *Asbestos roofing*, for steep or flat roofs, has everywhere received the endorsement of the most extensive builders, manufacturers and railroad companies. It forms a light, cool, handsome and yet inexpensive roof, which is air tight, practically fire-proof, and an effective non-conductor of heat. *Asbestos paints* are strictly reliable, first-class paints, second to none in purity, richness and permanency of color, beauty of finish, durability, and all characteristics which are requisite to form a perfect protective covering. They also withstand the action of salt water atmosphere and other severe tests where the best white lead has failed. In fact, the remarkable qualities of all of H. W. Johns' Asbestos goods are becoming generally admitted, and we should suggest to capitalists, property owners and foundrymen, that it would be money saved to adopt Asbestos materials wherever practicable. Messrs. Thompson & Upson, No. 5 First street, are the Pacific Coast agents for the above goods, to whom all orders should be addressed.

The Asbestos goods here alluded to are shown at the right of the main entrance, in the rear of the display of saws.—*S. F. Bulletin.*

An Attractive Display.

At the Mechanics' Fair, now open in San Francisco, one of the most novel features which attract passers-by is exhibited by Johnson, Clark & Co. It is a miniature lady, about two feet high, beautifully dressed in satin. This elegant dress was made on the Home Sewing Machine. Parties who visit the Fair should not fail to examine it, and at the same time procure a free ticket for a sewing machine, as they are about to give away one of them.

Johnson, Clark & Co. have on exhibition four kinds of machines: the *Union*, the *Home Shuttle*, the *Home*, and the *New Home*. The Home Shuttle is sold as low as $25.00, and is adapted to all kinds of family sewing. The Home Sewing Machine is so well known that little need be said of its merits; but the company is just introducing one with new and improved construction called the *New Home*. Its machinery has the advantages of strength, simplicity and durability. The arm is high, thereby giving an abundance of room; and the feed is the best method known. This machine, in its improved form, is one of the most perfect in the market and is adapted to *all kinds* of sewing, from a single sheet of tissue paper to leather a quarter of an inch in thickness. They have on exhibition a great variety of work done by this machine, proving that all they claim is true.

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—*To be continued.*

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