



THE people have fought a good fight. The town is reeking with the fumes of carbolic acid, and the gutters are white with lime. For days the preparations to resist the incoming of yellow fever have been in progress. All the time it has been creeping nearer, nearer. The papers told of the quarantining of the many towns, one against the other. At first, train loads of wildly frightened people rushed by with closed doors and windows. At last the trains ceased to run. Nowhere could an asylum of refuge be found. Every door was closed to the wretched wanderers, and every man's hand was against them. The lines were drawn tighter and tighter. The trains were discontinued. With them ceased news from the outside world.

There had been no mail for several days. Then came a paper—and it bore the news that the elusive disease had gradually been spreading and was coming closer. The strain was beginning to tell upon the people. The quarantine guards were doubled and no person was allowed to enter. In the town the inhabitants congregated upon the corners and talked fearfully. Each tried to be brave and to show his companions that he was not afraid, but each knew what the other was thinking.

The town was strangely quiet. People spoke in awed tones of voice. A few of the stores were open—the majority of them were locked. Ever should the fever come there was no place to which the people might go. On every side were determined men guarding the roads, and they were armed with shotguns, which they would use without hesitancy should one attempt to pass the lines. Every person viewed the other with suspicion. They were afraid of each other—of themselves. It was worth as much as a man's life for him to say he felt badly. He would be hustled off to the pesthouse to die like a stricken dog.

The weekly paper, in a spirit of enterprise, had undertaken to get out a daily issue during the excitement. It was a "yellow journal," for the fever was its sole topic. It got one or two short telegrams a day from more or less authentic sources, and these were industriously padded out.

One morning the telegraph boy emerged from the depot office and ran down the middle of the street toward the Gazette office. He had a message for the paper. As he passed the crowd of men congregated on the street corner he held the large envelope conspicuously. The men shuddered as they caught sight of it.

The Mayor came up and joined the crowd. He was the leading citizen and had the largest store in the place. He began to joke with them in a jovial manner, but he too had a hunted look. Each minute the scourge was coming nearer. It slipped through the cordons of determined men drawn about the towns. It seemed to be in the very air, invincible in its onward march. Men are brave when they have a foe they can fight, but in the presence of an unseen enemy they are cowards.

The sun mounted higher and higher. The noon hour passed, yet the men did not think of dinner. They are hungry for news. At last from down the street two small boys bolted out from the Gazette office holding in their arms a dozen or so copies of the "extra."

"Extra!" they bawled, "all about the yaller fever. Twenty died yesterday—sixty new cases!" The men bought papers, and devoured their contents in nervous haste. It was the same old tale, of the onward march of the yellow death. There was not a rift of hope in sight. It was spreading, and was beyond human control.

"Wall," said the town drunkard—he had just had a drink. "I hain't skeered, fer cole weather er comin' soon, en thet'll fix Mister Yaller Jack."

"Bill," remarked the Mayor, solemnly, "you're a fool. It's two months till frost, and in two months the fever'll be all over the face of the earth. And we'll be, God knows where."

The Mayor came hurriedly out of his store. He held a small sheet of yellow paper in his hand—and it trembled till the paper rattled. He was an ashy color, and his eyes had a strained look about them. He walked rapidly to the corner where the idle men congregated. They saw him coming, and a sort of nervous tremor went over them.

"Boys," he said, "it's coming; I just got this telegram from the Mayor of Carlie—you know that's only fifteen miles away. It says there are five cases there."

There was a silence for a moment or two, and then someone ejaculated slowly and solemnly: "God have mercy on us!"

The others could hardly comprehend it. They expected it, yet they could not realize that it was actually so.

"It can't get in here," said one, reflectively; "it ain't possible for it to get past the lines. Then, it can't live here—there's too much of this carbolic acid and stuff. No, fever can't live here."

"Well," remarked one more energetically, "you folks are a set of fools. I'm going to get out of here. You can stay and have it if you want to, but I'm goin' out in the piney woods, me'n the old woman'n the kids. Good-by, I'm gone." And he strode rapidly down the street.

The sun shone with a brassy tinge; the heat radiated from the sides of the buildings.

The man hastened on to his home. He passed an acquaintance, an old inhabitant, and the patriarch remarked dolefully:

"Hi! fine weather fer yaller fever. Now I remember when it wuz so bad in '78, we had jest this yer sort of weather, en hit spread like—"

He looked around, and found himself alone. The man was going on up the street rapidly. The old inhabitant chuckled like some old fiend.

"He's skeered," he mumbled, "he's skeered plumb to death. I hain't; I had it in '78. Lawd, Lawd, how skeered th' folkses is! If I hadn't ter had hit, I'd be skeered, too. Yaller Jack's er a bad ole boy, er mighty savigerous ole cuss!" And chuckling and croaking gleefully he ambled slowly down to where the stores were, that he might play upon the fears of the men there.

The houses were all closed. It seemed as though there was a death in every one. Even the children on the galleries were too frightened to play. The town was strangely silent.

The man hurried on. In his imaginations, the grisly specter of yellow fever was right behind him, with its skinny claws outstretched. Although the day was fearfully hot, a sort of nervous rigor came over him. He stopped and mopped the drops of cold perspiration from his brow, and his heart throbbed violently. He had heard it said that yellow fever always commenced with a chill and a pain in the head. He put his hands to his head nervously. It already pained him. He thought of his wife and children, and whether he ought to go to them or not. His eyes were bloodshot and wild. He leaned against a fence and tried to think. No—there was no way for him to have become infected. He tried to calm himself, and then continued on his journey.

He entered the house. His wife was cowering in one room, with the children, gray with fear, clinging to her.

She had packed the trunks and in a large goods box was piled an assortment of provisions and cooking utensils. In a few moments the wagon was ready. A pile of bedding and the trunks and provisions were placed in it. In a cloud of dust it vanished up the road leading to the pine forests that loomed up vast and dark and mysterious in the distance.

The fever had come. Insidiously, stealthily, it had crept in. There were at first only a few cases. They didn't know it was fever at first and the contagion spread. Then one patient died, and the old doctor, after deliberating among the cobwebs and iodoform-fumes of his dusty and weather-beaten office announced it as yellow fever.

There was a wild rush to get out of town. Men with blanched faces and staring eyes rushed aimlessly about, each avoiding the other as far as possible. People were leaving the place on foot, on horseback, in wagons. The fright added to the danger, and some were stricken as they endeavored to leave and were carried back to die.

The church bell tolled constantly, and day after day the town hearse could be seen wending its way to the lonely little burying ground up on the red hill, where the pines whispered sadly. And the buzzards sat upon the house tops and waited, waited.

There were few houses occupied. Most of them were closed, while some owners had left without shutting doors or windows, so great was their hurry.

The frost had come. For three nights in succession the ground was white. The weeds were blackened and drear, and the leaves were falling fast. The fever could live no longer.

One by one the stragglers came back. Where whole families had gone away, one or two members would return. Some were never heard of again. A few skeletons lying under the magnolias and bay trees in the lowlands, and the buzzards sailing placidly above in the deep blue sky could have told the tale.

Some of the stores reopened and some remained closed, for there was no one to undo the rusty locks. Some of the houses were the same. The people who returned were saddened and cowed. They had passed through the Valley of the Shadow.

Down the street came a wagon filled with children. A happy-looking man, unkempt and rough-looking sat upon the seat driving, and by him was his wife.

The old inhabitant was shuffling along, when he looked up in surprise. Then he tottered to the wagon and shook hands vigorously.

"How air ye, Bob? I swanny, I'm glad ter see yer 'n the old lady 'n th' chullens all lookin' so well. I lowed Yaller Jack had cotched ye shore."

The man did not reply. He was looking longingly at a house down the street.

"You wuz purty bad skeered that day I saw you, wuzn't you?" cackled the old inhabitant.

"Yes," said the man; "thank God, I was." And he looked at his children and his wife and smiled. A moment later they were speeding on down the street and stopped in front of a home-like looking house. The man leaned over and kissed the woman beside him. —St. Louis Republic.

Gnat Silenced His Voice.

J. Russell Powell, the basso at Central Avenue M. E. Church, was to have made his farewell appearance at the services Sunday morning, says the Indianapolis Journal, and a large number of the friends of the promising young singer had come to hear him sing his last song there. Mr. Powell had two of the best numbers in his repertoire for that morning and was in excellent voice when he reached the church, but a most curious circumstance silenced his voice temporarily. Just as Mr. Powell stepped into the church doorway a small gnat flew into his nose and caused him to sneeze violently, and the sneeze brought on a severe cough, which in turn ruptured one of the small blood vessels near the vocal cords. He took his place in the choir, but soon found that he could not utter a sound audible five feet away. Mr. Powell left the choir, and a doctor, who was in the audience, was summoned to attend him.

LADIES' BRASS BAND OF OREGON WHOSE PLAYING IS FAMOUS



Heppner, Oregon, has a unique musical novelty in the character of a ladies' brass band, made up of the maids and matrons of the most prominent families of the town, whose social standing is pitched with the bon-ton. The band was organized a year ago, and was to be a self-supporting organization entirely. As an organization was perfected ways and means were canvassed by which funds could be raised for uniforms and instruments. It was decided to give a concert, which proved a grand success financially, at which the band made its first appearance in public. The audience mildly enthused over their playing—it was so much better than was expected. The Ladies' Band was a success. Then when the presidential campaign opened they were at once in demand. The Ladies' Band became the fashion, and no candidate ever thought of making a speech in their neighborhood without first having secured their services as an attraction. Their popularity led them into church socials, picnics, etc., until now they are famous throughout the entire Northwest.

UNCLE SAM'S FISH COMMISSION

Important Branch of the Government of Which the Public Knows Little.

The work of the United States Fish Commission is perhaps as little understood by the people of the country generally as any branch of the government. While it is not a division of any one of the nine great departments, it is created by the President of the United States, its officers are appointed by him, and the work it is accomplishing is of great importance to several industries of the country.

In order to supply the demand for food, fish culture must be resorted to in every thickly-populated country, for with the utmost protection the demand is always greater than the supply unless nature is aided in its production of fish. Benjamin Franklin and other prominent Americans were strong advocates of fish culture and practiced the transplanting of fish in the closing years of the last century, but it was not until the early '50s that much attention was given to the matter in the United States. At about this time the scientific men of the country began to investigate the American streams, and they were not long in discovering that they were being rapidly cleared out. They expressed grave fears that the coast waters might also become decimated of their finny inhabitants. Steps were very soon taken by the different States to prevent such a catastrophe; in 1865 Massachusetts appointed the first fish commission; in 1868 New York appropriated \$1,000 for the same purpose. Gradually the other States have followed suit until now almost every one has its fish commission, and since its first appropriation New York has spent over \$350,000 for this object. In 1870 Prof. Baird, then of the Smithsonian Institution, fitted up a station at Woods' Hole, on the southern coast of Massachusetts, at his own expense, and maintained it for two years, making many valuable demonstrations of what could be done with a hatchery.



THE PONDS FOR FISH CULTURE AT WASHINGTON.

The matter of a national fish commission was brought to the attention of Congress and the President many times before anything was done about it, but in February, 1871, Congress passed a joint resolution which authorized the appointment of a commission of fish and fisheries. Prof. Baird was appointed and entered at once upon his duties, and his efficient service won for himself the title of the "first fish culturist in the world," and placed the American fisheries in the front of all others. At the present time there are stations located all over the country.

The headquarters of the commission is at Washington; it occupies the old ante-bellum arsenal in that part of the mall which is designated as Armony square and is a plain tall brick building without a suggestion of exterior ornamentation. The basement floor is filled with aquaria in which is running water and growing plants and inhabited with all kinds of fishes; the west part of this floor is finished like a deep grotto and the hanging vines and mosses over the glass cases, in which the fishes are swimming, make the illusion perfect. It often happens that the cars in which fishes for propagation are sent to the stations over the country

are standing on the side tracks near the building and when this is so it is very interesting to see the manner in which the fishes are carried from place to place.

The government owns two steamers, the Albatross and the Fish Hawk, which are fitted up magnificently for the purpose, and which are used exclusively for deep sea exploration. They are manned with men of known scientific attainments who have added immensely to the store of the world's knowledge of the inhabitants of the "briny deep."

The ponds for fish culture at Washington are not far from the Washington monument on the mall, and are one of its most attractive features. Rare specimens of fish are brought and careful experiments are made to acclimate them, and here, too, are hatched vast quantities of the eggs of the fish of commerce, which are sent to the various stations all over the country.

Country Life and Living.

Referring to a fashion or tendency which is certainly worthy of commendation and encouragement, one of the metropolitan dailies suggests that perhaps nothing is more indicative in a small way of our growth as a nation in civilization than the increased liking among our wealthier young people for country living and the broader and more wholesome interests attendant on such an existence. Twenty-five years ago even fashionable people rarely, if ever, quitted the grove in which they all moved. They were content with the town life in a brown stone front in winter, the smaller and less cared-for cottage in Newport, or some other watering place in summer, or the then peculiarly American fashion of herding together in the great hotels at various famous resorts of the day. The rich young men of that generation found their pleasures in dancing and flirting, fast driving, European travels and more or less rapid living. The comparatively recent development

Right in His Line.

"How long," inquired the Eastern potentate, "has the young man been in the treadmill?"

"Two weeks, O conquering king. And he told me yesterday that he was having a fine time, although the scenery was getting monotonous."

"Two weeks? Great Allah! Who is he, anyway?"

"He claims he is an American cycle scorcher; but what that might be I know not."—Puck.

Never punish children by striking them on the head. There are other places.