

LAST WINTER'S OVERCOAT.

When the stormy breezes blow,
Through the shade trees, lank and bare,
And the tiny frost flakes sparkle
In the chilly morning air,
Then we take an inventory
And find useful things we gloat;
Naught can wake our tender interest
Like last winter's overcoat.

Tenderly we pick the mothballs
From the pockets where they've lain,
And with sponge and brush we labor
To remove each spot and stain;
Mourning o'er the frequent tokens
Of our hungry friend the moth,
Where he foraged at his leisure
On the sleek imported cloth.

But at length, with some misgivings,
We pronounce it fit to wear;
Yet we shun our dude companions
And resent their haughty stare.
And we're apt to lose some slumber
And some eury we devote
To the man who need not worry
O'er last winter's overcoat.
—Peter Grant.

The Little Lacemaker.

MADAME NOEMI VERDIER, a lacemaker of Valenciennes, was as good as she was pretty, and her modesty and simplicity commanded the respect of all.

Left an orphan at thirteen years of age she lived with her brother, three years her senior, who, having suddenly become the head of the house, labored for his little sister and himself at cabinet making.

The two lived happily together; but the years passed and the time of military service came. Louis was obliged to go. The separation was terrible to those two children, who loved each other so much.

Left alone in the little lodgings, thus suddenly become too large for her, Noemi with bleeding heart applied herself to her work and wrought marvels from the flax fields.

Each Saturday she carried back her work and when she returned home divided her earnings in two parts. Must she not send a small subsidy to her soldier, who was thinking of her there in his far-away garrison?

On his side Louis behaved in his regiment as he did in Valenciennes; that is to say, like an honest man, and so, at the end of the second year of his absence he was able to announce one beautiful morning that he had been promoted to be sergeant.

You can imagine how happy Noemi was! How her heart throbbed with joy! How proud she was of her dear brother! But her happiness was short. In a few weeks came a letter. The war-cloud had burst all at once; armed France rushed to the frontier of the East.

The dreadful war began. From the letters of her beloved Louis she learned the successive defeats of the French army, Woerth, Rozenville, Saint-Privat, Gravelotte, Sedan. Then silence followed—no more letters, no more news, nothing.

Noemi, who never read the papers, hastened now to the office of the Gueurt de Valenciennes and of the Echo de la Frontiere, seeking there some little ray of hope. She listened to the talk on the street, she mingled with the groups of people commenting on the news, she gave ear to the painful accounts of the war and she learned, with a sinking heart, that her brother's regiment had met with severe losses.

Meanwhile the wounded soldiers were sent, through Hirsan and Avesnes, to the towns and cities on the northern frontier. Every day fresh convoys arrived in Valenciennes.

All the hospitals were full, and still they came. Then private ambulances were organized everywhere, churches and factories opened their doors to the unfortunate wounded soldiers.

One morning the report was circulated that a convoy of wounded from her brother's regiment had arrived during the night.

To the poor girl a glimmer of hope returned.

She ran from one to the other, asking of the nurses, bending over every cot, but the hope of the morning vanished.

All at once she remembered that the day before they had opened in Saint-Sauve a hospital intended especially for the officers. Was there any possibility that an unknown sergeant might have been brought there? Surely not! Yet, notwithstanding, she found strength to go thither.

An army surgeon came toward her. "What do you wish, mademoiselle?" "Oh, monsieur! Pardon! I am looking for my brother, Sergeant Louis Verdier."

"You mean Lieutenant Louis Verdier?" And pointing with his finger down the long row of mattresses on the floor, "there he is in the sixth bed."

To the poor girl it seemed as if the earth vanished from beneath her feet. She choked back an exclamation of joy, tottered forward a few steps and with an outburst of infinite happiness knelt before the bed of Lieutenant Verdier who, with his head wrapped in linen was lying in a heavy stupor.

"Louis! Louis! It is I," she

EVOLUTION OF A SIGNATURE.

Wm McKinley
1864

William McKinley
1896

Signature of Lieut. McKinley in 1864.

Signature of President of United States in 1896

Those fond of studying character in handwriting will find much of interest in the signatures of First Lieut. William McKinley, Jr., of the Twenty-third Ohio volunteer infantry, and William McKinley, President of the United States. Unless one looks closely at the signatures it may seem hard to trace much similarity. Still, it is there, and can be found in a number of places.

When the older of the signatures was written the father of the boy lieutenant was alive, and the future President was William Jr. This signature was written across the face of a small photograph, and there was not room to spell the "William" out in full, even if the lieutenant had wished to do so. The photograph was taken and the signature written when President McKinley was 21 years old, and when he had not had occasion to sign the name more than a few times, comparatively. The other signature is thirty-five years older, being that of the President of the nation. For all the changes that time made in the signature and in the man who wrote it, there are interesting similarities in the two fac-similes.

claimed, trembling, with clasped hands, ready to fall.

At this appeal the wounded man recovered his consciousness, opened his eyes and perceived his sister, but not being able to raise his head he stretched forth both his hands, which she seized in hers and covered with tears. In the meantime the surgeon approached, and, half unwillingly, led her away.

"You must not cause him any emotion, or we cannot guarantee anything, sir! Your brother's wound is doing well; he will recover, that is certain. If you do not undo our work."

"Oh, monsieur le docteur—"
"Never mind monsieur le docteur. This is enough for to-day. Come back to-morrow morning, but now go home."

"Do you see, my dear Louis," said the happy Noemi to him a few days later, sitting by the bedside of her brother, "yesterday the merchant for whom I work ordered of me a piece of magnificent lace for a wealthy English house. I began to work on it last night and I hope to finish it in ten days. For this work they will pay me a very high price. Do you know what I am going to do with the money?"

"Speak, my darling," answered the young officer.

"The surgeon says that you will soon be able to get up. I am going to take you home to our little nest and take care of you day and night. You shall see how happy we will be, and how quickly you will be well."

"Dear, dear sister! Oh, what a good idea, and how I shall hasten to get strong, so as to be able to go with you."

One morning, when she came in, radiant with gladness, her brother bade her speak low and pointed with his eyes to a new wounded officer, whom they had brought in and placed on a mattress beside his own. The wounded man was M. de Lauterac d'Ambrose, lieutenant "aux chasseurs a pied" and had been struck in the shoulder by a bombshell.

"Poor young man!" said Noemi, compassionately. "He has no sister to take care of him." And she became interested in this man, whose death seemed certain.

In the meantime the days went by and Louis' convalescence progressed rapidly. Had he not promised to hurry? On the morning of the tenth day Noemi arrived, joy in her face, bringing a precious package wrapped in tissue paper.

She, too, had kept her word; her marvelous work was finished and she brought it to show her brother before carrying it to the merchant who ordered it, and in her joy at being able to take her brother home she forgot about the poor, wounded man lying beside her.

"See how beautiful it is!" she said, displaying the delicate masterpiece upon the bed—proud of it, not because of its overwhelming difficulties, but because it enabled her to realize her most ardent wish, to bring her dear convalescent into their little nest in the little street, into the small lodgings where happiness would come back at the return of her beloved brother.

And they were both happy. With hands clasped, they contemplated the delicate lace.

All at once a piercing shriek drew them from their ecstasy.

In making an effort to rise M. de Lauterac d'Ambrose had disarranged his bandages, the wound reopened, and the unfortunate man fell back on his bed covered with blood.

At the scream the surgeon was on the spot and in a twinkling had removed the bandage.

"Quick, quick! Some lint!" he cried.

"Hurry, hurry!"

And while the nurses, beside themselves at the cries of the patient, searched everywhere for what was at hand, the stream of blood kept on flowing and the anxious surgeon multiplied his appeals.

The brother and sister, motionless, pale with fright, exchanged one glance. Noemi seized her precious lace, tore it in pieces, and gave it to the major, who applied it to the wound.

The hemorrhage was stopped. Louis and Noemi, trembling with emotion, looked at each other.

"Dear sister, thanks—." That was all that Louis could say.

"It will make but a few days' delay," flapped the young girl, keeping

back the tears just ready to flow. "I will begin my work again."

Lieutenant de Lauterac l'Ambrose is to-day colonel; he is the father of three children: one a big, pretty girl, almost as beautiful and sweet as her mother, whose name she wears, Noemi; and two fine-looking boys, who are "terrors," as their uncle assures us, the brave commandant Louis Vernier.

LINIMENTS MADE AT HOME.

They Are Frequently of Great Value for the Cure of Lacerations.

It is difficult to find a liniment that will be of more general usefulness than simple camphorated oil or camphor liniment, as it is often called. It is valuable for rubbing on the outside of the throat or on the chest as a gentle stimulant, or it may be used in case of chronic rheumatism, where it must be applied with friction to give any relief. It may be purchased of the druggist or it may be prepared at home by dissolving one ounce of gum camphor in four fluid ounces of olive oil. In case of a severe cold a piece of flannel dipped in camphor liniment and heated and laid over the chest under a layer of cotton batting will seldom fail to bring relief to a little child or even to an older person.

A compound liniment which is recommended for rheumatism and "numbness" is made of two and a half ounces of gum camphor and one drachm of oil of lavender dissolved in seventeen fluid ounces of alcohol. After this add three fluid ounces of strong solution of ammonia and shake the ingredients thoroughly together in a bottle. Keep it closely corked when not in use. A good liniment for bruises and strains is made of two fluid ounces of alcohol, two fluid ounces of ammonia and two tablespoonfuls of salt. Put these ingredients in a quart bottle every time this liniment is used. Apply it with friction, using the palm of the hand, as the massage nurse does. The efficacy of almost any of the liniments depends considerably on the care and seal with which it is applied. In all cases the skin should be covered with flannel and often with cotton batting after the liniment has been applied, as it is desirable to keep in the heat of the rubbing. A good healing liniment for chafed skins, burns or scalds is made of three ounces of spermaceti and one ounce of white wax melted into a pint of olive oil by setting them in a bottle uncorked in a pan of warm water and repeatedly shaking the bottle, returning it to the warm water until the ingredients are all melted together.—New York Tribune.

To England in Two Days.

"Fast electric ships crossing the ocean at more than a mile a minute, will go from New York to Liverpool in two days," writes John Elfreth Watkins, Jr., of "What May Happen in the Next Hundred Years," in the Ladies' Home Journal. "The bodies of these ships will be built above the waves. They will be supported upon runners, somewhat like those of the sleigh. These runners will be very buoyant. Upon their under sides will be apertures expelling jets of air. In this way a film of air will be kept between them and the water's surface. This film, together with the small surface of the runners, will reduce friction against the waves to the smallest possible degree. Propellers turned by electricity will screw themselves through both the water beneath and the air above. Ships with cabins artificially cooled will be entirely fireproof. In storm they will dive below the water and there await fair weather."

Next Century Will Bring Longer Life.

The American will be taller by from one to two inches in the next hundred years. His increase of stature will result from better health, due to vast reforms in medicine, sanitation, food and athletics. He will live fifty years instead of thirty-five as at present—for he will reside in the suburbs. The city house will practically be no more. Building in blocks will be illegal. The trip from suburban home to office will require a few minutes only. A penny will pay the fare.—Ladies' Home Journal.

A good many people didn't vote as they smoked at the late election.

Science AND INVENTION

Recent improvements in telephoto cameras are said to have obviated the old difficulty which required long exposures, and have rendered it possible to take pictures with such cameras as quickly as with those of ordinary construction. The improvement has been effected by placing a tube, containing a positive lens at one end and a negative at the other, in front of the ordinary lens of the camera.

It is with some surprise that one reads in a recent report of the director of the National Observatory at Athens that, taking area into account, earthquakes are about twice as frequent in Greece as they are in Japan. The latter country has usually been looked upon as par excellence the land of earthquakes. It would appear that its earthquakes are, upon the whole, more severe than those in Greece, although the great architectural monuments of Greece have suffered much from seismic disturbances.

The commercial value of tobacco depends not upon its nicotine, but upon certain compounds, the chemical nature of which is said to be wholly unknown, that impart the flavor or aroma which consumers like. These compounds differ in quality and quantity in different grades of the leaf. There is no apparent relation between the color of the aroma and the amount of nicotine. Nicotine diminishes during the processes of curing, while the flavor and aroma are developed. It has been suggested that the latter are due to the action of bacteria.

Sir Norman Lockyer points out that the statues and plaques carved in stone and wood to be seen in Gizeh Museum prove that the priest-mummifiers of Memphis, 6,000 years ago, had a profound knowledge of anatomy. Science, he therefore thinks, is as old as art, and they have advanced together. Another remarkable fact is that the excavations in Italy have brought to light scores of finely finished surgical instruments for certain operations, which are, in almost every particular of form, precisely like those reinvented in modern times and used by the most advanced surgeons of to-day.

The hollow bones of birds are frequently cited as beautiful instances of providential mechanics in building the strongest and largest possible limb with the least expenditure of material, and this is largely true. And yet birds like ducks, which cleave the air with the speed of an express train, have the long bones filled with marrow or saturated with fat, while the lumbering hornbill, that fairly hurtles over the treetops, has one of the most completely pneumatic skeletons imaginable, permeated with air to the very toe tips, and the ungainly pelican is nearly as well off. Still it is but fair to say that the frigate bird and turkey buzzards, creatures which are most at ease when on the wing, have extremely light and hollow bones, but comparing one bird with another the paramount importance of a pneumatic skeleton to a bird is not as evident as that of a pneumatic tire to a bicycle.

TERRACES OF NEW ZEALAND.

Pink and White Cliffs Are Again Making Their Appearance.

Henry M. Cadell, a Scotchman who some years ago wrote one of the best condensed accounts of our Yellowstone Park, has been visiting the volcanic zone in North Island, New Zealand, where he caught glimpses of the pink and white terraces that were buried out of sight fourteen years ago. This region is a land of wonders. No part of the world, except the Yellowstone Park, is so conspicuous for hot springs and geysers. They burst from the ground endlessly diversified in form, size and chemical composition. Long before European settlers saw New Zealand the thermal and mineral waters attracted the natives who had discovered their curative properties. Mr. Cadell says that some sanatoriums have now been erected here and are visited by many New Zealanders and foreigners.

Mount Tarawera, about 3,000 feet high, was supposed to be extinct till 1886, when one winter's night it suddenly awoke. The natives who live around the shores of the beautiful lake of the same name at the foot of the volcano told Mr. Cadell that eleven days before the catastrophe they saw a spectral canoe floating in the heavens above the lake. They had never seen anything like it before and they believe the spectacle was a forewarning that some terrible event would occur. Mirages are sometimes seen in that region. The canoe may have been merely a phenomenon of this sort or perhaps only a curiously shaped cloud.

The explosion came with scarcely a moment's warning. A tremendous shock disturbed the entire region and the ash-covered summit of the volcano was blown into the air to a height of 20,000 feet, visible for 150 miles. Flaming scoriae and a deluge of ashes fell in dense showers on the surrounding district. Many villages were crushed beneath the weight of dry ashes or buried under heaps of mud. Many

places were buried deep under layers of volcanic dust.

One of the most regrettable features of the explosion was the destruction of the "Wonder of Wonders," the famous mineral spring which filled a crater about 650 feet in circumference and, overflowing, its transparent, alabaster-like margin fell in thin azure sheets from basin to basin. As it fell the water, saturated with silica and sulphurous substances, became cooler and gradually changed color from the sapphire tints of the upper basin to turquoise blue lower down and a slightly azure shade where the waters entered the lake. These "white and pink terraces," as they were called, were among the most beautiful of sights and few foreigners going to New Zealand failed to pay them a visit. The terraces were blotted out beneath a heat of scoriae. Mr. Cadell brings the interesting news that here and there these gorgeously colored rocks are again coming into view and it is evident from his description of the region in its present aspects that the phenomena of this wonderland will always continue to rank among the most remarkable of nature's spectacles. —New York Sun.

THE WRONG ENVELOPES.

A Little Mistake that Cost Senator Chandler Some Uneasiness.

Senator Chandler, of New Hampshire, is known as one of the most exact and painstaking of men. He rarely makes mistakes, and has little patience to spare for those of others. But the wily and careful Senator was recently guilty of a blunder which cost him much trouble to rectify. It was nothing more or less than exchanging envelopes upon two letters written about the same matter. The story as related by his very dear friends runneth thus:

Once upon a time Chandler received an invitation from Senator Frye to go up to one of the Maine lakes and enjoy a spell of hunting and fishing. Politics would, of course, come up during the quiet evenings. Senator Chandler had other plans, and thereupon he indited two letters, one to his wife, which ran to this effect:

"My Dear Lucy: I have received an invitation from Frye to go up with him into Maine for a hunting and fishing trip; but I shall not accept. Frye is a temperance crank and never has anything for himself or friends to drink, and therefore I have got out of the thing as diplomatically as I can. There is not much enjoyment under the circumstances."

The letter then ran on to detail other domestic confidences.

The letter received by Mrs. Chandler ran merrily along these lines:

"My Dear Frye: I received your invitation and am very sorry that I cannot accept. You know Mrs. Chandler is very disagreeable about such things, and so I must decline. Some other time, when I can get up a good story to justify the fun."

The first intimation which Senator Chandler had of his error was an indignant missive from the wife of his bosom berating him for his ungallant conduct in holding her up to his friends as a disagreeable woman.

Senator Frye, fortunately for Chandler, held his peace, as he did not know whether or not the epistle was loaded, and fancied that the contretemps might be merely one of Chandler's little jokes, which would have an ending disastrous to intermeddlers. The truth of the matter is that Senator Chandler is just as much of a teetotaler as his confrere from Maine, but the other Senators who have heard of the affair are chaffing him unmercifully.—Success.

Why Did They Miss?

Hunters' tales rarely make mention of poor shots and failures, and a story which depicts the remarkable success of some famous shots in California a few years ago is therefore all the more interesting. The narrator, Frank Marryatt, terms the incident the one marvelous tale in his book, "Mountains and Molehills." In former times it would have passed for a miracle.

Three of us were out at midday in search of venison in the Santa Rosa Valley. The sky was cloudless and the sun blazing hot. Making for a shady thicket, we unexpectedly started a doe in the long grass. She was out of range before we could raise a gun, but there still remained a fawn. The pretty innocent stood perfectly still, gazing at us. Our larder was bare, and we could not afford to be merciful.

The fawn stood motionless as I advanced a few paces and took, as I fancied, deadly aim. I missed, and still it did not move. The others fired, and missed also.

From the same distance—about seventy-five yards—we fired each four bullets without success. Still the fawn moved but a pace or two, and our rifle ammunition was exhausted.

I then crept up to the fawn, and within twenty paces fired twice at it with my pistol. Then, unharmed, it quietly walked away in search of its mother.

We looked at each other in surprise. Fourteen shots within seventy paces of a motionless deer! "Well, I'll be hanged!" was one man's comment. "Crack shots!"

We could not explain it, unless the rarefaction of the air had made the deer seem nearer than it was.