The League of the Old Men

By JACK LONDON

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At the barracks a man was being tried for his life. He was an old man, a native from the Whitefish river, which empties into the Yukon below Lake Le Barge. All Dawson was wrought up over the affair and likewise the Yukon dwellers for a thousand miles up and down. It has been the custom of the land robbing and sea robbing Anglo-Saxon to give the law to conquered peoples, and ofttimes this law is harsh. But in the case of Imber the law for once seemed inadequate and weak. In the mathematical nature of things equity did not reside in the punishment to be accorded him. The punishment was a foregone conclusion. there could be no doubt of that, and though it was capital, Imber had but one life, while the tale against him was one of scores.

In fact, the blood of so many was upon his hands that the killings attributed to him did not permit of precise enumeration. Smoking a pipe by the trail side or lounging around the stove, men made rough estimates of the numbers that had perished at his hand. They had been whites, all of them, these poor murdered people, and they had been slain singly, in pairs and in parties. And so purposeless and wanton had been these killings that they had long been a mystery to the mounted police, even in the time of the captains, and later, when the creeks realized and a governor came from the Dominion to make the land pay for its prosperity.

But more mysterious still was the coming of Imber to Dawson to give himself up. In was in the late spring, when the Yukon was growling and writhing under its ice, that the old Indian climbed painfully up the bank from the river trail and stood blinking on the main street. Men who had witnessed his advent noted that he was weak and tottery and that he staggered over to a heap of cabin logs and sat down. He sat there a full day staring straight before him at the unceasing tide of white men that flooded past. Many a head jerked curiously to the side to meet his stare, and more than one remark was dropped anent the old Siwash with so strange a look upon his face.

But it remained for Dickensen—Little Dickensen—to be the hero of the occasion. Little Dickensen had come into the land with great dreams and a pocketful of cash, but with the cash the dreams vanished, and to earn his passage back to the States he had accepted a clerical position with the brokerage firm of Holbrook & Mason. Across the street from the office of Holbrook & Mason was the heap of cabin logs upon which Imber sat. Dickensen looked out of the window at him before he went to lunch, and when he came back from lunch he looked out of the window, and the old Siwash was still there.

Dickensen was a romantic little chap, and he likened the immobile old heathen to the genius of the Siwash race, gazing calm eyed upon the hosts of the invading Saxon. The hours swept along, but Imber did not vary his posture, did not move a muscle, and Dickensen remembered a man who once sat upright on a sled in the main street where men passed to and fro. They thought the man was resting, but later they found him stiff and cold, frozen to death in the midst of the busy street. To undouble him, that he might fit into a coffin, they had been forced to lug him to a fire and thaw him out a bit. Dickensen shivered at the recollection.

Later on Dickensen went out on the sidewalk to smoke a cigar and cool off, and a little later Emily Travis happened along. Emily Travis was dainty and delicate and rare, and whether in London or Klondike she gowned herself as befitted the daughter of a millionaire mining engineer. Little Dickensen deposited his cigar on an outside window ledge, where he could find it again, and lifted his hat.

They chatted for ten minutes or so, when Emily Travis, glancing past Dickensen's shoulder, gave a startled little scream. Dickensen turned about to see and was startled too. Imber had crossed the street and was standing there, a gaunt and hungry looking shadow, his gaze riveted upon the girl.

"What do you want?" Little Dickensen demanded, tremulously plucky.

Imber grunted and stalked up to Emily Travis. He looked her over keenly and carefully. Especially did he appear interested in her silky brown hair and in the color of her cheek, faintly sprayed and soft, like the downy bloom of a butterfly wing. He walked around her, surveying her with the calculating eye of a man who studies the lines upon which a horse or a boat is built. In the course of his circuit the pink shell of her ear came between his eye and the westering sun, and he stopped to study its rosy transparency. Then he returned to her face and looked long and intently into her blue eyes. He grunted and laid a hand on her arm midway between the shoulder and elbow. With his other hand he lifted her forearm and doubled it back. Disgust and wonder showed in his face, and he dropped her arm with a contemptuous grunt. Then he muttered a few guttural syllables, turned his back on her and addressed himself to Dickensen.

Dickensen could not understand his speech, and Emily Travis laughed. Imber turned from one to the other, frowning, but both shook their heads. He was about to go away when she called out:

"Oh, Jimmy, come here!"

Jimmy came from the other side of the street. He was a big, hulking Indian, clad in approved white man style, with an El Dorado king's sombrero on his head. He talked with Imber haltingly, with throaty spasms. Jimmy was a Sitkan, possessed of no more than a passing knowledge of the interior dialects.

"Him Whitefish man," he said to Emily Travis. "Me savvee um talk no very much. Him want to look see chief white man."

"The governor," suggested Dickensen.

Jimmy talked some more with the Whitefish man, and his face became grave and puzzled.

"I t'ink um want Cap'n Alexander," he explained. "Him say um kill white man, white woman, white boy, plenty kill um white people. Him want to die."

"Insane, I guess," said Dickensen.

"What you call dat?"

Dickensen thrust a finger figuratively inside his head and imparted a rotary motion thereto.

"Mebbe so, mebbe so," said Jimmy, returning to Imber, who still demanded the chief man of the white men.

A mounted policeman (unmounted for Klondike service) joined the group and heard Imber's wish repeated. He was a stalwart young fellow, broad shouldered, deep chested, legs clean built and stretched wide apart, and, tall though Imber was, he towered above him by a head. His eyes were cool and gray and steady, and he carried himself with the peculiar confidence of power that is bred of blood and tradition. His splendid masculinity was emphasized by his excessive boyishness—he was a mere lad—and his smooth cheek promised a blush as willingly as the cheek of a maid.

Imber was drawn to him at once. The fire leaped into his eyes at sight of a saber slash that scarred his cheek. He ran a withered hand down the young fellow's leg and caressed the swelling thew. He smote the broad chest with his knuckles and pressed and prodded the thick muscle pads that covered the shoulders like a cuirass. The group had been added to by curious passersby—husky miners, mountaineers and frontiersmen, sons of the long legged and broad shouldered generations. Imber glanced from one to another. Then he spoke aloud in the Whitefish tongue.

"What did he say?" asked Dickensen.

"Him say um all the same one man, dat p'liceman," Jimmy interpreted.

Little Dickensen was little, and because of Miss Travis he felt sorry for having asked the question. The policeman was sorry for him and stepped into the breach.

"I fancy there may be something in his story. I'll take him up to the captain for examination. Tell him to come along with me, Jimmy."

Jimmy indulged in more throaty spasms, and Imber grunted and looked satisfied.

"But ask him what he said, Jimmy, and what he meant when he took hold of my arm." So spoke Emily Travis, and Jimmy put the question and received the answer.

"Him say you no afraid," said Jimmy.

Emily Travis looked pleased.

"Him say you no skookum, no strong, all the same very soft like little baby. Him break you, in um two hands, to little pieces. Him t'ink much funny, very strange, how you can be mother of men so big, so strong, like dat p'liceman."

Emily Travis kept her eyes up and unfaltering, but her cheeks were sprayed with scarlet. Little Dickensen blushed and was quite embarrassed. The policeman's face blazed with his boy's blood.

"Come along, you," he said gruffly, setting his shoulder to the crowd and forcing a way.

Thus it was that Imber found his way to the barracks, where he made full and voluntary confession and from the precincts of which he never emerged.

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Imber looked very tired. The fatigue of hopelessness and age was in his face. His shoulders drooped depressingly, and his eyes were lackluster. His mop of hair should have been white, but sun and weatherbeat had burned and bitten it so that it hung limp and lifeless and colorless. He took no interest in what went on around him. The court room was jammed with the men of the creeks and trails, and there was an ominous note in the rumble and grumble of their low pitched voices which came to his ears like the growl of the sea from deep caverns.

He sat close by a window, and his apathetic eyes rested now and again on the dreary scene without. The sky was overcast, and a gray drizzle was falling. It was floodtime on the Yukon. The ice was gone, and the river was up in the town. Back and forth on the main street, in canoes and poling boats, passed the people that never rested. Often he saw these boats turn aside from the street and enter the flooded square that marked the barracks parade ground. Sometimes they disappeared beneath him, and he heard them jar against the house logs and their occupants scramble in through the window. After that came the slush of water against men's legs as they waded across the lower room and mounted the stairs. Then they appeared in the doorway with doffed hats and dripping sea boots and added themselves to the waiting crowd.

And while they centered their looks on him, and in grim anticipation enjoyed the penalty he was to pay, Imber looked at them and mused on their ways and on their law, which never slept, but went on unceasing in good times and bad, in flood and famine, through trouble and terror and death, and which would go on unceasing, it seemed to him, to the end of time.

A man rapped sharply on a table, and the conversation droned away into silence. Imber looked at the man. He seemed one in authority, yet Imber divined the square browed man who sat by a desk farther back to be the one chief over them all and over the man who had rapped. Another man by the same table uprose and began to read aloud from many fine sheets of paper. At the top of each sheet he cleared his throat, at the bottom moistened his fingers. Imber did not understand his speech, but the others did, and he knew that it made them angry. Sometimes it made them very angry, and once a man cursed him in single syllables, stinging and tense, till the man at the table rapped him mouth shut.

For an interminable period the man read. His monotonous singsong utterance lured Imber to dreaming, and he was dreaming deeply when the man ceased. A voice spoke to him in his own Whitefish tongue, and he roused up, without surprise, to look upon the face of his sister's son, a young man who had wandered away years agone to make his dwelling with the whites.

"Thou dost not remember me," he said, by way of greeting.

"Nay," Imber answered. "Thou art Howkan, who went away. Thy mother be dead."

"She was an old woman," said Howkan.

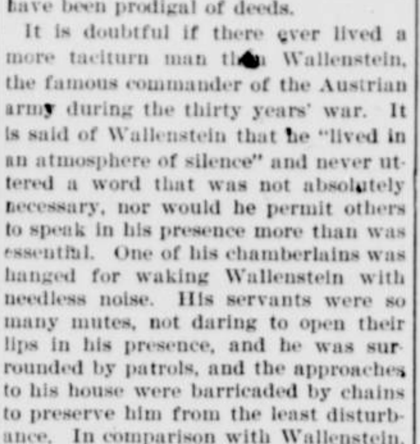
But Imber did not hear, and Howkan, with hand upon his shoulder, roused him again.

"I shall speak to thee what the man has spoken, which is the tale of the troubles thou hast done and which thou hast told, O fool, to the Captain Alexander. And thou shalt understand and say if it be true talk or talk not true. It is so commanded."

Howkan had fallen among the mission folk and been taught by them to read and write. In his hands he held the many fine sheets from which the man had read aloud and which had been taken down by a clerk when Imber first made confession, through the mouth of Jimmy, to Captain Alexander. Howkan began to read. Imber listened for a space, when a wonderment rose up in his face, and he broke in abruptly:

"That be my talk, Howkan. Yet from thy lips it comes when thy ears have not heard."

Howkan smirked with self appreciation. His hair was parted in the middle. "Nay, from the paper it comes, O Imber! Never have my ears heard.



Disgust and wonder showed in his face.

From the paper it comes, through my eyes, into my head and out of my mouth to thee. Thus it comes."

"Thus it comes? It be there in the paper?" Imber's voice sank in whispered awe as he crackled the sheets between thumb and finger and stared at the characters scrawled thereon. "It be great medicine, Howkan, and thou art a worker of wonders."

"It be nothing, it be nothing," the young man responded carelessly and pridefully. He read at random from the document: "'In that year, before the break of the ice, came an old man and a boy who was lame of one foot. These also did I kill, and the old man made much noise'"—

"It be true," Imber interrupted breathlessly. "He made much noise and would not die for a long time. But how dost thou know, Howkan? The chief man of the white men told thee, mayhap? No one beheld me, and him alone have I told."

Howkan shook his head with impatience. "Have I not told thee it be there in the paper, O fool?"

Imber stared hard at the ink scrawled surface. "As the hunter looks upon the snow and says, 'Here but yesterday there passed a rabbit, and here by the willow scrub it stood and listened and heard and was afraid, and here it turned upon its trail, and here it went with great swiftness, leaping wide; and here, with greater swiftness and wider leapings, came a lynx; and here, where the claws cut deep into the snow, the lynx made a very great leap; and here it struck, with the rabbit under and rolling belly up; and here leads off the trail of the lynx alone, and there is no more rabbit'—as the hunter looks upon the markings of the snow and says thus and so and here, dost thou, too, look upon the paper and say thus and so and here be the things old Imber hath done?"

"Even so," said Howkan. "And now do thou listen and keep thy woman's tongue between thy teeth till thou art called upon for speech."

Thereafter and for a long time Howkan read to him the confession, and Imber remained musing and silent. At the end he said:

"It be my talk and true talk, but I am grown old, Howkan, and forgotten things come back to me which were well for the headman there to know. First, there was the man who came over the Ice mountains with cunning traps made of iron, who sought the beaver of the Whitefish. Him I slew. And there were three men seeking gold on the Whitefish long ago. Them also I slew and left them to the wolverenes. And at the Five Fingers there was a man with a raft and much meat."

At the moments when Imber paused to remember Howkan translated and a clerk reduced to writing. The court room listened stolidly to each unadorned little tragedy till Imber told of a red haired man whose eyes were crossed and whom he had killed with a remarkably long shot.

Imber's head drooped once more, and his eyes grew dull, as though a film rose up and covered them from the world. And he dreamed as only age can dream upon the colossal futility of youth.

Later Howkan roused him again, saying: "Stand up, O Imber. It be commanded that thou tell why didst these troubles and slew these people and at the end journeyed here seeking the law."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

A NERVOUS WAIT.

Weird Sensation When the Church Became Totally Dark.

"I went to a Fifth avenue church last Sunday night," said a man who is good once a week, "and quite unexpectedly got a new sensation. The church was brilliantly lighted, but something went wrong with the electrical apparatus, and all of a sudden most of the lights went out. Midway in the building two or three bunches of bulbs continued to shed a sepulchral twilight, but the pulpit was shrouded in darkness, and various members of the congregation began to fidget.

"This condition of affairs lasted for some minutes until the choir had finished an anthem. Then the preacher arose and requested the people to remain quietly seated for half a minute in total darkness, when the church would be fully illuminated again. With the words the few remaining lights went out, and for a space darkness like that of a coal hole prevailed.

"It was the weirdest, most uncanny wait I ever had. Every man and woman of the 800 or 1,000 in that church was as still as death almost. I suppose the darkness did not last a minute, but it seemed to me to be an hour. When the lights again leaped out there was a sigh of relief from every person in the church. I guess they all felt as queer about it as I did."—New York Press.

HORSEHAIR FOR BOWS.

Only Black or White From Russia or Germany Is Used.

There is a vast amount of horsehair annually used in the United States for making and repairing violin, violoncello and bass viol bows. All of the hair comes from Germany and Russia, in which countries the tails of horses are generally allowed to grow much longer than here. The foreign hair is also coarser in texture and tougher than that which grows on the American horse, and these qualities make the imported article more valuable than the domestic product.

There are only two kinds of horsehair suitable for making bows, and they are of white and black varieties. The former is used for violin bows, and the latter, which is heavier and stronger, is the best material for making bows for cello and bass viols, because it bites the larger strings better. The imported hair is put up in hanks of thirty-six inches long, which is five or six inches longer than the standard violin bow. A hank is sufficient for one violin bow, while two hanks are required to hair a cello or bass viol bow. There are about one and a half ounces of hair in a hank, which is worth from 20 to 30 cents, according to the quality of the hair.—Philadelphia Record.

THE ART OF BOXING.

Fistic Combats Were Highly Esteemed in Ancient Times.

Pugilism, the practice of boxing or fighting with the fists, was a manly art and exercise highly esteemed among the ancients. In those days the hands of the pugilist were armed with the cestus, leather thongs loaded with lead or iron. This form of athletic sport was at first only permitted to freemen among the Greeks, but gradually it was taken up as a profession and lost much of its prestige.

As an illustration of its early use we find in Virgil's fifth Æneid the record of a match between Dares, "with nimble feet and confident in youth," and Entellus, the veteran champion, "strong and weighty limbed," when "the combatants—

Their arms uplift in air, their heads withdraw
Back from the blows, and, mingling hand with hand,
Provoke the conflict.

Pugilism has been a typical English sport from the days of King Alfred, but its golden age as a profession dates from the accession of the house of Hanover.—London Standard.

Living and Working.

Few people outside of hobos and Indians not taxed really live without working.

Those who work without really living are much more numerous, including, as they do, billionaires and seamstresses with more than six small children.

In the perfect day, when the lion and the lamb shall walk together and the rich shall go down to the college settlements and play bridge with the poor, we shall all doubtless both live and work.—Life.

Phil May's Habits.

The all night and next day habits of Phil May, the artist, have furnished material for many a story. Joe Tapley, the singer, said that he came across May one night and heard that the latter had not been to bed for four nights and days. He remonstrated, and May said: "Never mind, Joe; we'll make a bargain. Don't you lose any sleep on my account, and I promise that as soon as I feel tired I'll go to bed!"

The Boston Girl.

"Will you marry me?" he asked bluntly.

"No," replied the Boston maiden. But she added coyly: "I am not endowed with sacerdotal power. Put your question properly and I'll consent to become your wife."—Philadelphia Press.

An Eloquent Objection.

Mrs. Newlyblessed—But you certainly don't object to such a wee little baby as that? Janitor—Oh, it isn't the wee that's the trouble; it's the principle o' the thing!—Exchange.

Parental Solicitude.

The Mother—Don't you think the baby had better go to kindergarten, dear? Father—Isn't he too young? The Mother—Yes. But he never sees either of us, and I thought he ought to know how.—Town Topics.

SILENT FAMOUS MEN

CELEBRITIES THAT HAVE BEEN NOTED AS MISERS OF WORDS.

Some of the World's Greatest Characters Have Been as Sparing of Language as They Have Been Prodigal of Deeds of Renown.

It is a curious and interesting fact that many of the world's greatest men have been as sparing of words as they have been prodigal of deeds.

It is doubtful if there ever lived a more taciturn man than Wallenstein, the famous commander of the Austrian army during the thirty years' war. It was said of Wallenstein that he "lived in an atmosphere of silence" and never uttered a word that was not absolutely necessary, nor would he permit others to speak in his presence more than was essential. One of his chamberlains was hanged for waking Wallenstein with needless noise. His servants were so many mutes, not daring to open their lips in his presence, and the approaches to his house were barricaded by chains to preserve him from the least disturbance. In comparison with Wallenstein it has been recorded, Diogenes would have been a chatterbox and William the Silent a brawler.

But silence is a characteristic of many of the world's most famous soldiers. Napoleon boasted that in his dealings with men he never wasted a word and made monosyllables answer most purposes. But nothing escaped his eyes, and he could compress more within a sentence than most men could convey in a quarter of an hour.

The great Duke of Marlborough when receiving reports from his generals would produce his watch and say, "I will give you a minute." And it was likely to go hard with the officer who did not observe the limitation. To his staff the Duke of Wellington was always more or less a sphinx. A nod or a shake of the head was often the only response they could get from him, and when once he was asked what he considered the best equipment of a commander he answered, "A long head and a silent tongue."

Von Moltke almost rivaled Wallenstein in taciturnity. He never opened his mouth if a gesture would suffice, and when the news was brought to him that the French had declared war he simply said to the aid-de-camp, "Second pigeonhole on the right, first tier," and turned round to sleep again. But he had said all that was necessary, for in the pigeonhole indicated were complete plans for the campaign which closed in brilliant victory. Von Moltke used to say that one verb in the German language was worth all the others put together, and that was "thun"—"to do."

The worst thing his enemies could say of President Grant was, "He won't talk because he has so much to conceal," and yet it was precisely in this silence that Grant's real strength lay. His orders and dispatches were the briefest ever penned, and when once a charming young lady playfully asked him why he would not talk to her he answered, "My dear, don't you know that silence is one of the greatest arts of conversation?"

But it has been the same in all ages. Charlemagne was a perfect miser of words, holding, with Confucius, that "silence is a friend that will never betray;" Hannibal was a "man of monosyllables," and Julius Cæsar was nicknamed by his soldiers "The Oracle."

Even great statesmen and writers who cannot suffer from any lack of words have often been the most reserved of men. Of Addison, Johnson says, "Of his external manners nothing is so often mentioned as that timorous or sullen taciturnity which his friends called modesty by too mild a name." According to Chesterfield, he was "the most timorous and awkward man I ever saw," and Addison himself, speaking of his own deficiency in conversation, used to say, "I can draw bills for a thousand pounds, though I haven't a guinea in my pocket."

Dryden was unutterably dreary as a companion. "My conversation is slow," he once wrote, "my humor saturnine and reserved, and I am none of those who endeavor to break jests in company and make repartees." And Shadwell tells how he once dined with Dryden, and from the beginning to the end of the meal the poet "never opened his lips except to eat."

Thomas Carlyle was a "hoarder of the gold of silence" and would sit for hours, puffing away at his pipe, without uttering more than a grunt or a gruff monosyllable. Leigh Hunt, his neighbor and intimate, once wrote to a friend: "Have just spent a pleasant hour with Carlyle. When I went in he growled, 'Halloa; here again!' and at parting he snapped out, 'Good day!' and that is the sum of the conversation he honored me with. But how eloquent his silence is! I just sat and looked at him and came away strengthened for fresh struggle."

A Blustering King.

Of King George IV. Thomas Creevey, who lived in the early part of the nineteenth century, tells this story:

The king had been ordered by the bishop of Winchester to administer to him the sacrament on one of the Sundays about Easter. The bishop was not punctual to his time, and when he arrived the king, in a great passion at having been kept waiting, abused and even swore at him in the most indecent manner, on which the bishop very coolly said he should be permitted to withdraw, as he perceived his majesty was not then in a fit state of mind to receive the sacrament, and should be ready to attend on his majesty when he might be ordered to do so. The bishop heard no more until his majesty was in a better state of preparation.

Labor Saving Device.

"Yes," said the boarding school teacher, "I think that is a model letter for you to write your fiance. But before you send it you must copy it."

"Oh, dear, no!" replied the girl. "Those are for 'dearest.' I have it on a rubber stamp."—Detroit Free Press.

Excess of Attention.

"Did her father show you the door?" "He did better than that. He showed me the door, the front gate and the corner drug store two blocks away."

WOMAN AND FASHION

A Child's Frock.

In the little princess frock shown here we have an original design that is exceedingly childish. A very pretty result is obtained by the use of tucks in sunburst effect in the upper edge of the sleeve and skirt. This edge just fits the

THE PRINCESS FROCK.

little round yoke in the back and the princess front. There are so few styles for children of this age that any innovation is welcomed. The frock consists of only five pieces, and the little princess front affords a place for a bit of embroidery, although the insertion which outlines the front is really all the trimming necessary. Any material that lends itself to tucks is suitable to the mode.

Artificial Flower Trimmings.

Artificial flowers are more fashionable this season than for years and are worn for many different occasions, but especially for evening wear. The lovely, graceful sprays of these flowers (and one may have any favorite flower) are charming arranged on low corsages, beginning at the right shoulder and extending across the front of the waist so as to give the desired "long line." Again, a band of small flowers en masse is effective arranged in bertha effect, small buds and dainty foliage or feathery grasses forming a fringe. Changing the flowers for different occasions makes a complete transformation of a single gown, especially if it be white or black.

Coats and Wraps.

There are coats of all styles and lengths for day wear this winter. Some are sack shaped and trimmed with woolen lace and gilt buttons, while others are tight fitting, with long basques, large velvet revers and cuffs. For evening wear a beautiful model is made in black velvet lined with chinchilla and adorned with a collar of rare old lace. In a different style are some little taffeta coats for theaters. These do duty charmingly when accompanied by a plumed picture hat of lace and tulle or a flowered toque of smaller proportions.

Fashionable Party Bags.

The wonderful beauty of the wide sash ribbons has won them a prominent place. The soft, heavy satins brocaded in blurred flower or foliage designs or in velvet garlands are made up into bags of all kinds and into cases for kerchiefs, gloves, veils, etc. The marvelous piece brocades are utilized in the same way, and the most stunning party bags of the season are made of the shadow silks, which are heavy, soft silk, superb in quality and with a solid foliage or flower designs shading from light to dark in one color.

Black Cloth Costumes.

Tailors and dressmakers are turning out more black cloth costumes than ever, and they are for both old and young women. The smooth finished black cloth gown is considered much "smarter" than the rough texture, however fine. These are both plain and elaborately trimmed, short for street wear or long for carriage use. They may be "brightened" if desired by contrasting furs, lace accessories or dashes of color on the hat, in plumes or nice velvet flowers and foliage.

A Dainty Waist.

Blouse of cream louisine, shirred and puffed at the top and bottom. The yoke is of guipure, cut in blocks at the edge

FOR EVENING WEAR.

and bordered with an applique of green velvet ribbon. Six little buttons ornament the front.

The full sleeves are finished with ruffles of guipure. The girdle is of green velvet.

Skirts For Evening.

The short cotillon skirts are trimmed with flounces and some of them look very much like the skirts which were worn by the belles of 1860.

Her Emergency Fund.

"I put $10 in the bank today, George."

"You'll have a tidy little sum there if you keep on. Going to buy something nice with it?"

"Mercy, no! That's my divorce surplus in case I need it."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

It is not what a man earns, not the amount of his income, but the relation of his expenditures to his receipts that determines his poverty or wealth.—Anon.

FISHING IN FORMOSA.

Their Rods Superb, but Their Hooks Are Without Barbs.

Three of us, two Americans and one Japanese, started out in jinrikishas from Taipeh, the modern capital of Formosa, or Taiwan, to go to the house of a wealthy gentleman about eight miles up the river which runs through the valley of Taipeh. The way led through a beautiful and fertile country, the valley covered with the second crop of rice and the hills with the famous Formosa tea shrub. After luncheon and after photographing some head hunting savages we found there we proceeded to fish for salmon trout at an altitude less than 250 feet above sea level and in latitude about 24 degrees 40 minutes north, practically in the tropics. The temperature of the stream was about 70 degrees or higher, and the water was well aerated. This stream, from 60 to 100 yards wide, is clear and full of rapids and riffles.

We used Japanese tackle—horsehair line and horsehair leader, the latter consisting of one strand only; a bamboo rod and a most delicate palmer tied on a small barbless hook. The rod is decidedly good and its quality of spring is stronger and a better caster than our jointed rod. It rarely weighs over four ounces (mine weighed about two), but the line is practically worthless for casting as we understand the term. The fly is perfect, but the hook lacks strength, and the fish when hooked may easily detach himself in a current or an eddy or by fouling the line. We all know how it is done from our experience with pin hook and thread in the brooks at home.

The Japanese, however, have another method of fishing which may be as new to some of our readers as it was to me. It is quite successful. They catch one fish in any way they can and then fasten the line securely through its upper jaw, passing it through the roof of the mouth and out at the top of the upper jaw well in front of the eyes and then attach through the body of the fish not far in front of the tail a horsehair to which is tied a three pronged barbless hook, which trails in line with the fish and a few inches behind, while it is slowly worked up the stream by the fisherman. The theory is that other fishes, seeing the captive moving along as though feeding or perhaps spawning, will hurry up and become impaled on the hook. In point of fact that does happen, as I saw a Chinaman take two fine trout in this manner.

Our success with the flies was poor. We got thirteen or fourteen fingerlings, but we saw the fish we wished to identify caught in fairly good numbers by the Chinese fishing with decoys.—Forest and Stream.

Woman's Aversion to Indexes.

"Talk about the inclination to study the envelope to discover the sender instead of opening the letter being a trait of womanhood," said a Brooklyn man the other day, "it isn't in it with a woman's aversion to indexes. Give a woman a book of poems like those of Burns, for instance, and she'll turn the pages for twenty minutes or more to find the piece she is really after rather than look in the index. Suggest the index to her and she'll say, 'Oh, I'll find it in a second,' and away she'll go, turning the pages again.

"The other night by actual timing it took my wife twenty-two minutes to find 'Mary In Heaven' in a volume of Burns, for which she lost actual time turning the pages, but she passed the ones she liked, such as 'Holy Willie's Prayer' and 'Polly Stewart,' she'd dally over them awhile. Rarely do men do that. The first thing they go for is the index."—New York Press.

Unique Family Circle.

A small town in Bavaria can boast of what may be described as a unique family circle. A shopkeeper resident there includes among his household three living mothers-in-law, including a mother of her own; his own mother, his third wife and four daughters in their teens. The twelve women are reported to live on terms of the greatest amity, and the shopkeeper himself, who is fortunately in good circumstances, professes to be perfectly contented notwithstanding that he is the only man in this family. The incessant banter to which he is subjected he philosophically welcomes as tending toward the better advertisement of his business.

An Ultra Modern Child.

Margaret's mother numbers among her friends several schoolteachers, and, although she is not yet five, Margaret has observed some things. Not long ago a family of kittens made an entree into Margaret's home, and she was most anxious to keep them all. Her mother objected on the ground that they were all girl pussies and would eventually grow up into mother cats.

"No, they won't, mother," said Margaret very earnestly. "I won't let them be mothers. I'll train them to be teachers."—Brooklyn Life.

A Senatorial Tilt.

Senator Reagan of Texas when he was in the senate was one of the men who strongly objected to being interrupted. On one occasion Henry W. Blair, then a senator from New Hampshire, tried to ask Reagan a question during the latter's speech. "I do not want to be interrupted," said Reagan, "but I will listen to a question."

"It is not exactly a question, but a statement," said Blair.

"Then I refuse to yield," said Reagan.

"Well, the senator has missed an opportunity of greatly improving his speech," remarked Blair as he ambled toward the cloakroom.

A Bad Time to Confess.

"Here," according to the Warrensburg (Mo.) Journal-Democrat, "is the way a Benton county man confessed at a revival: He was requested to repent and tell his sins, and he said, 'Dear friends, I feel the spirit moving in me to talk and tell what a bad man I have been, but I can't do it while the grand jury is in session.' 'The Lord will be your judge,' shouted the preacher. 'I guess that's right,' said the penitent, 'but he ain't on the grand jury.'"

Discontent is the want of self reliance. It is infirmity of will.—Emerson.