

What Became of Mary Ellen

By SAMUEL MINTURN PECK

At this remark Mrs. Hamlin began to weep, and Aunt Hattie, catching the fearful contagion, followed her example. Tom looked from one to the other in astonishment. "Aunt Sarah, aren't you willing Jennie should marry Jim?" "Yes, Tom." "Then why are you crying?" "I can't explain it, Tom. If you were a mother you would understand." When his aunts had put by their handkerchiefs Tom took out his watch. "Now what are you crying for, you young scapegrace?" laughed Aunt Hattie. "I'm weeping for poor Jim. Nobody's shedding any tears for him." So they laughed and wept around the table, for at weddings it is ever a trifling and wavering line that divides the smile from the tears, so attenuated, indeed, that the heart often mixes them and sends forth one to answer for the other. But there was no more sentimental boudoir at Jennie's wedding. In the middle of Tom's gay mimicry a carriage drove rapidly to the gate, and hurried steps were heard in the hall below. A moment later Dick Hamlin appeared at the door with a strange look in his eyes and beckoned to his mother. A brief, whispered colloquy ensued, and Mrs. Hamlin returned to the room looking white and troubled. "What is it, mother?" said Jennie. "Has Jim come?" "No, my child; it was only Dick. He had forgotten something," replied Mrs. Hamlin, with apparent composure, but behind Jennie's back she gave Miss Harriet Hamlin a telegraphic look which sent her from the room, and Tom, whose keen eyes intercepted the flash of alarm, followed her. Mrs. Hamlin, the Presbyterian minister, who was to officiate, and the last wedding guest, had arrived some moments before, and when the carriage dashed up and Dick Hamlin entered the house alone an expectant flutter was followed by a bewildered silence. There was something in the sound of the young man's feet that excited a perceptible anxiety at the chill wail of autumn notes and shatters the full blown rose.

No sound and word was the change from gay to grave throughout the house it seemed as if the mental affliction of four, like many like of the body, had also its germ, a germ of swift and subtle contagion, capable of traveling in a moment even closed doors and solid walls. "Oh, mother, what is the matter?" exclaimed the bride. "I'm frightened!" Half past eight a convulsion of Jennie's male blood assailed in a little back room. Dick was telling of his misadventure to the minister, who was standing in the parlor, and it was agreed that I should call for Evans at his room, and I went at the appointed hour. He was not there. My first thought was that, as he had not mentioned his change of quarters, he might have supposed I would go to his former room. I drove rapidly to the place. He was not there. It was too late, I went back over my course, looking into the hotel and barber shop on the way. Then I thought, of course, we had missed each other in some manner, and I came back home as fast as I could. The young fellow spoke rapidly and was much excited. "Did you go to the Chronicle office?" asked old Jefferson Hamlin, Jennie's eldest uncle. "No, for the place was deadly dark." "Did you ask any one if he had seen Evans?" "I was so bitter cold I met no one. And if I had, Uncle Jeff," added the young man, breathing heavily, "I could not have got the answer for the man who had promised to marry my sister. If it turns out that Jim Evans has jilted Jennie I'll shoot him on sight." "And if you don't, I will," muttered old Jeff Hamlin. "Who is this man Evans?" asked a newly arrived cousin from Georgia, breaking the ominous hush that reigned. "Does any one know anything about the fellow or his family?" "I know him—I know all about him, and if anybody says he has jilted Jennie the man lies!" exclaimed Tom Wilson, who had kept silent till now in the presence of his elders, springing forward indignantly. As Jim Evans doesn't come here tonight it will be because— But the sentence was never finished, for the family council was abruptly dissolved by a violent slamming of the front door, which reverberated through the house from cellar to garret, followed immediately by a hoarse voice calling excitedly: "Jim Evans! Jim Evans! Where is Jim Evans?" Before the Hamlin men could reach the front hall the house was in confusion. Upon the tense and hopeful calm, broken only by anxious whispers here and there like the ominous breezes which presage the tempest, burst a storm of excitement in which all etiquette and all social reserve were swept away. Women scarcely had time rushed forward eager to learn the cause of the uproar and to offer assistance if it were needed, for all were convinced by the strange wedding prelude that something dreadful had occurred or was imminent. So hoarse and wild had been the voice that the ears of none had recognized the speaker, and so changed was his appearance the eyes of the startled wedding guests hardly assured them that it was Colonel Badham who stood before them.

Straightway the glances of all sought old Jeff Hamlin. He was the oldest man present. Moreover, he and Jennie's father had been comrades of Colonel Badham in the Mexican war. It was natural that he should be spokesman. "Mortimer Badham," said the old

son of the house, a search was begun, to radiate from the Chronicle office and embrace the town, through which the discovery of the anecdote by Tom Wilson and the disappearance of Jim Evans had spread like wildfire. Hardly a minute later a cry was raised that a hat had been discovered within fifty yards of the Chronicle door, and all rushed to the spot to ascertain if it were the hat of Colonel Badham or of the missing bridegroom. The hat was crushed in and had evidently suffered rough treatment, but Tom Wilson, with a fearful heart, identified it as the property of Jim Evans. But the uncertainty was nearly ended, for before he had gone another black Tom's young and anxious eyes spied something dark beneath a large water oak, and the boy sprang forward with a cry and bent over Jim, lying on his face in the snow, unconscious. A large, half decayed limb of the oak lying near solved the mystery. Dislodged by the fierce wind, it had fallen upon his head. The throng waited breathless while Dr. Seyton examined Evans, and a great cheer went up when the good doctor pronounced Jim alive and his injury but a slight concussion of the brain. "But there will be no wedding tonight," added the doctor. So it came about that a month later, on the 14th of March, when all the land was below, there was a daffodil wedding after the fashion of the olden time, clothed in his right mind and a wedding garment to greet the daffodil bride. And Tom scooped the Argus and got \$500 reward, for the morning after Jim's accident he found the anecdote under a heap of snow covered jimson wood in a corner of the Chronicle yard, half frozen. Jim had promptly on delivery of the snake at New Orleans, and for weeks afterward Tom had the pleasure of seeing the escape and recapture of Mary Ellen republished in all the exchanges.

ODD BURIAL CUSTOMS.

Some Strange Observances Among Australian Tribes.

There are some queer customs observed by the native Australians, the modes of disposing of the dead being noticeable and varied. When a mother loses a favorite child she carries the dead body about with her in a box of cedar or bark until decomposition forces her to dispose of it either by burial or fire.

In the case of some prominent person of the tribe dying his nearest relatives cut off his hands and keep them as sacred remembrances, only parting with them after the odor from the dead members has become unendurable. Then they are thrown into a stream hidden in a hollow tree or burned.

Women are held in such contempt among the Australian tribes that after they receive no burial at all, and it is a rare thing to see one mourned for by family and friends. But at the funeral of a man or boy the lamentations are loud and long, the female mourners being the most demonstrative.

With some of the tribes the practice of throwing the bodies of the dead over the branches of trees and leaving them for nature to dispose of is observed.

SLUGGISH RIVERS.

The Volga Falls Only About Three Inches Per Mile.

Considering its length the Volga is the most sluggish river. In 2,325 miles it falls only 695 feet, or slightly over three inches per mile, while at one point about the middle of its course the bed is fully fifty feet below sea level. Thus all the water to that height above the bottom must be still, save when stirred by floods.

The Volga also is singular among great rivers in having no mountainous courses, and is so sluggish even then that a dam has been erected, which makes it navigable from its sixty-fifth mile onward. Almost within the historic period it must have been an offshoot from the Caspian, which then stretched far into the interior of Russia, drying up into a series of river connected lakes. The Volga has taken the place of these, along with many of their characteristics, including a general sluggishness.

The Scheldt is proverbially a slow river and is practically lost in a maze of canals, but its fall from source to sea is about fourteen inches in its total length of 249 miles.

THE NAME BLACKGUARD.

It Was Originally Applied to King David and His Sons.

The earliest record of the term blackguard is in the churchwarden's account of St. Mary-at-Hill, London, where, under date 1532, is, "item, received for the Black Guard 10d." This and the following old lines seem to show that the name was then applied to highwaymen:

Her Cupid is a blackguard boy
That rubs his ink ball in your face.

The name was also given to menial servants in the king's kitchen. In the "Chronicle of State Papers" is the following entry: "Aug. 17, 1535, Sir William Fitzwilliam to Mr. Secretary Cromwell—Refusal of the workmen to work for less than sixpence a day. Two of the ringleaders of the king's kitchen." These "blackguards" were responsible for all cooking utensils and coals.

According to Miss Strickland, the historian, the scullions of the royal kitchen were for many centuries clad in black and were called the blackguards of England.

A CITY WITHOUT TAXES.

All its Expenses Are Paid by the Income From its Property.

In the Black forest of Germany is the little city of Freudenstadt, with about 7,000 inhabitants, a busy industrial place with iron and chemical works of some importance.

Small as it is, Freudenstadt is a full fledged city, with a mayor, aldermen, half a dozen policemen and a fire engine. The public business is conducted on an economical basis, and the total expenses do not exceed \$5,000 in a year.

Freudenstadt has the distinction of being the only city in Germany and perhaps in the world which does not tax the citizens a shilling for municipal expenses. The yearly net revenue from the public property covers all the expenditures.

This property consists of about 600 acres of the forest, which, being managed under the best forestry methods, is a permanent source of income. One or more trees are planted for every one that is cut down. No tree is cut till it can yield the maximum profit.

After deducting all the expenses of the industry the annual profit to the acre is about \$1.—Pearson's Weekly.

BRIEF TWILIGHT.

As the Eggator It Lasts Only a Little Over an Hour.

Twilight is caused by the refraction of the atmosphere, without which we should be instantly in darkness at sunset, all parts of the earth have twilight, though of varying duration. When the sun has sunk eight degrees below the horizon no more light can be reflected anywhere, but the path of the sun at the equator is so nearly vertical that its disappearance is proportionally rapid.

The shortest twilight at the equator is one hour and twelve minutes at the equinoxes in March and September; the longest is one hour and nineteen minutes at the solstices in June and December.

If London from May 22 to July 21 it is twilight all through the night. No wonder, with a disparity so great, people speak of night in the tropics as coming on almost suddenly. Farther north still, in the Shetlands and Norway, we speak of the midnight sun, where men never lose sight of the orb of day and twilight is unknown.—London Spectator.

Now They Are Strangers.

Edyth-Jack proposed last night, and after I accepted him I thought he would never stop kissing me. Maybe—How nice of him! But, then, that's the way he always does.

RAW FISH AND WASABI.

An Appetizing Dish That Is a Favorite in Japan.

Not so well known among the occidentals as soy sauce, but of equal merit as an appetizer, is wasabi. Its use is universal in Japan. It serves the same purpose that horseradish does on occidental tables, but is less acrid.

My own introduction to wasabi was unique. I count among my most pleasing experiences in this sunrise land my meeting with Tomo Yano, novelist and diplomat. And not the least item in my debt of gratitude to him is that he taught me to appreciate my raw fish and wasabi. Mr. Yano has been the mikado's ambassador to China and other lands. One night at the Nippon club he led up to a delicate subject on the menu with much diplomacy. He finally got my assent to the statement that a cosmopolitan appetite is one of the distinguishing marks of cultivated travel. Then he passed me raw fish!

I confessed that I was willing to be a stick in the mud or any other variety of slurian rather than take place with the international elect by eating such a dish. My host, however, was painfully insistent, finally adding that with raw fish they, of course, ate wasabi. Now, I did not have even a vague notion of what this might be, but with that raw proposition before me it was comforting to know that at least it was to be diluted with something. I conjured up an experience in taking castor oil ambushed under sherry and champagne, which, while not a beverage one would grow to crave, might have been worse. I figured out also that with my gaudieries with chopsticks I might manage without exciting suspicion to drop the fish before the fatal moment, and eat only the mysterious wasabi. But whether through cowardice or outrage I cannot say, fish and relish made quick and simultaneous journey to my reluctant palate, and in the never to be forgotten instant there flashed into my consciousness the undeniable truth that in all my occidental years I had been denied one of the most savory dishes in the world. Charles Lamb's Chinaman had jubilated delight over his first taste of roast pig, but that is a degraded baseness compared with an Anglo-Saxon's initial ecstasy over an oriental morsel of raw namasu garnished with the appetizing roots of Extrema wasabi. All honor to triumphant agricultural Japan, and may this far eastern member of the mustard family take deep root and spread and flourish in my native land.—Harold Bode in Booklovers' Magazine.

WOMAN AND FASHION.

A Washable Costume.

White soieaine is an ideal material for summer wear, since it offers all the fashionable effects of silk—in appearance it is remarkably like a dulling flannel, and in the enduring qualities of the finest French flannels, added to which it launders like linen.



MODERELY SIMPLE GOWNS.

and does not yellow in the process. In the frock it is shown in conjunction with Italian guipure, the lace forming the deep collar and cuff on the blouse corsage and appearing in detached motifs appliques on the skirt. The blouse is tucked vertically below the lace collar and goes softly into the deep feathered girdle, while the sleeve is a simple puff with the lace cuff. The skirt is tucked in yoke design halfway to the knee, and the appliques are posed in reverse direction above the hem. The design is one that can pass through the hands of the average laundress without sacrificing one little bit of its distinctness or style.

Cost Fasteners.

Instead of the old time fasteners black velvet bows made very flat and stiff louver will be used on autumn coats, and where buttons are displayed they will be little works of art, antique shops supplying the different dress-making establishments with rare old clasps and buttons. The touch of gold fluted at its spring fashions will reappear after its summer vacation, but the craze for gold trimming of a few years ago has taught the gown makers what to avoid, and it will be used quite sparingly. Fringe, lace, all the heavy varieties and ribbon boux or knots will be used in abundance.

Noticeable on Hats.

Bows.
Ribbon fallage.
Straw bands.
Rose wreaths.
Rows of stitching.
Rich ostrich plumes.
Half quills that look broken.
Emerald green veils on blue.
Smartness rather than fussiness.
An occasional shaded veil from white to a color, the ends being colored, the center white.

Repairing a Damaged Gown.

One may sometimes redeem a handsome blouse which has been accidentally spoiled by cutting out the damaged parts and inserting medallions of lace or embroidery. Of course one must have some taste and artistic ideas about arranging the medallions, as two or three places may have to be cut, and the garment must not have a patchy appearance.

Fashionable Blouse.

Cream lace with white silk makes an exceedingly effective as well as fashionable combination both for separate blouses and entire gowns. The very charming waist illustrated is adapted to both purposes and is made of white Korean crape, with yoke and cuffs made of motifs of cream point lace, nicely connected by bands of taffeta on brodered with French knots. The yoke is becomingly shaped and can be made over a foundation or transparent, as may be liked, while the blouse below is laid in fine tucks which are attached for a short distance only and provide the soft fullness below that point. To make the waist for a woman of medium size will be required four and a quarter yards of material twenty-one, three and three-quarter yards twenty-seven or two and a half yards forty-four inches wide, with a yard of all over lace.

Corelli and Caine.

Marie Corelli's first story, "A Romance of Two Worlds," which made her name, was sent to the London publishing house of Bentley. Hall Caine was the principal reader of that house, and his report commended the book so strenuously that it was rejected. Miss Corelli was deeply discouraged, but after some time she was persuaded to send the manuscript to another publisher. He accepted it eagerly and made a big fortune out of it and out of her later novels.

Practical Financier.

Raynor—There's a dangerous new counterfeit five dollar bill announced. Better look through your roll and see if you have one of 'em. Shyne—Not much! I'll look at 'em five dollar bill like in 'em, though, you can bet.—Chicago Tribune.

LOST IN THE WOODS.

In Such a Case Fear Is One's Most Dangerous Enemy.

Every woodsman—yes, every Indian—gets lost at some time—that is, loses his bearings and has difficulty in getting to camp. As a matter of fact, the wild birds and beasts will sometimes get lost, although they are wonderfully equipped for finding their way home.

The worst thing a person lost in the woods can do is to get frightened. The truly dangerous enemy is not the cold or the hunger so much as the fear. It is fear that robs the wanderer of his judgment and of his limb power; it is fear that turns the passing experience into a final tragedy. Only keep cool and all will be well.

A man of little experience usually sets out at a run when he is lost. He wishes to travel twice as fast as usual, and of course that merely wears him out and sends him farther astray. If he sits down calmly he will not only spare himself, but will help his friends to find him, and this he can do by shouting at intervals and, above all, by getting on as high and open a place as possible and there making two smoke fires, the recognized signal, "I am lost."

—Ernest Thompson Seton in Country Life in America.

ECLIPSE FORECASTS.

The First One Was Made by Thales to the Egyptians.

The eclipse of May 28, 585 B. C. (total in the east of Asia Minor), is the first that can be fixed with certainty. The prediction of it by Thales to the Ionians brought him lasting fame and excited among the Hellenes the love of science. Its occurrence during a great battle ended a five years' war between the Medes and the Lydians and led to a permanent peace.

The Chinese boast of a series of eclipses recorded in their annals extending over 3,558 years. But these are of very doubtful character. The Egyptians served 374 eclipses of the sun and 825 of the moon before the time of Alexander the Great, who died 323 B. C.

An eclipse observed at Nineveh, June 15, 763 B. C., is recorded on an Assyrian tablet now in the British museum. A lunar eclipse, occurring at 8:40 p. m., March 10, 721 B. C., was observed, according to Ptolemy, with much accuracy at Babylon. Each central eclipse visible in our time is one of an unbroken series, extending from the earliest historic times to the present and recurring at regular intervals.

THE FIRST ENVELOPES.

They Were Used in a Private Penny Post in Paris.

The first mention of envelopes occurs in 1653, when M. de Valayer set up, under royal patronage, a private penny post in Paris, and boxes were placed at street corners for the reception of letters wrapped in post paid envelopes.

The earliest uses of the word in English were by Bishop Burnet in 1714 and Dean Swift in 1720. The "little bags called envelopes," as Rowland Hill described them, were nothing but a revival and were in use as a covering for postal purposes long before 1840, when his postal reform was established, is evident from the following: Under date July 21, 1627, Secretary Conway gives an account of his "opening a letter in the presence of the king, which contained a blank sheet." Lamb mentions them in 1825, and in "Harry Lorrequer," published by Charles Lever in 1837, we find, "The waiter entered with a small note in an envelope."

The early covers were probably rude enough, as machine made envelopes were unknown before 1840, and the "click of the gum" did not make its appearance till the succeeding year.

Took the First Tow.

John H. Hamline of Chicago was one of the foremost advocates of civil service reform in that city, says the Outlook, and was instrumental in securing the passage of the law that established the merit system there. Although the mayor who appointed the first civil service commission was notoriously hostile to the measure and planned to render it useless, Mr. Hamline did not hesitate to accept a place on it.

"How can you compromise with the opposition," he was asked, "by getting on a commission like that, which will have no power?"

"When I am going anywhere," he replied, "I do not wait for a star. I hitch my cart to anything which happens to be going my way."

It is worthy of note that, having climbed aboard his cart, he managed, to the mayor's amazement, to keep it straight in the path of municipal reform and in the law effective despite all opposition.

The Armenians.

The Armenians are one of the most ancient races in the world. Their country is mentioned by Xenophon and Ezekiel and in the numerous inscriptions of Babylon and Assyria. All the nations that surrounded them have passed away, but they remain, though their country has been harried with fire and sword for centuries. The speaker ascribed the permanence of the Armenian race to the virtue of their women, and the exceptional purity and stability of their family life. Even in their heathen days polygamy was unknown to them. They have been a Christian nation for more than 1,500 years and have undergone perpetual persecution for their faith from the surrounding oriental peoples.

Route of the Bobolink.

The amount of traveling done by some of our birds is astonishing. Dr. Cooke says that the common night hawk spends the summer in Alaska and the winter in Patagonia. The bobolink, which is the redbird of the middle states and the redbird of the south, winters on the waving pampas of southern Brazil. It covers 700 miles from Cuba to the South American coast in a single flight, following a track not popular with other birds, which might be called the bobolink route.—Saturday Evening Post.

Reversed.

"Mrs. Closely, do you still maintain your rules as to when the servants must be in at night?"

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