

### A SONG OF CHOICE.

When up the valleys Spring  
Comes laughing lovingly,  
And gold and tawny wing  
Make melody,  
Then hey for meadow air,  
With my love there!

When Summer's haze and heat  
The dreamy landscape blur,  
And drowsing in the wheat  
The crickets chirr,  
Then hey for mountain air,  
With my love there!

When largest from her urn  
The lavish Autumn spills,  
And sunset splendors burn  
On all the hills,  
Then hey for woodland air,  
With my love there!

When Winter grips the land,  
And chains the long blue lakes,  
And snows with open hand  
The fleece-white flakes,  
Then hey for ingle air,  
With my love there!

—Delineator.

### STORY OF A CORRESPONDENCE.

Dear Mr. Miller—I promised you once—it was quite a while ago, to be sure, but then it was a promise—that some day I would write a letter to you. To-day seems a good time to do it. I am in very blue spirits, and decidedly irritated against life in general. The thermometer is 10 below zero, and the avenue is filled with racing clouds of dust. Here, in Colorado Springs, when the wind blows, everybody quarrels with life, and I am no exception. And as you used to be a very bracing person to quarrel with, the idea of writing to you seems a happy one, even after four years.

I take for granted that you are still in Philadelphia. Philadelphia is so unlike Colorado Springs! People live in Philadelphia—they spend whole existences there, and are buried there when they die. Here, in Colorado Springs, people visit; they don't live. In four years everybody changes; one's whole visiting list fades away like a dream, and changes, like a kaleidoscope, into an entirely new set of acquaintances and intimates. I have had thirteen intimate friends in four years, and all lost to me now forever—is not that a striking reminder of the transitoriness of life? One is in Mexico, one in Rome, one in a convent at Paris, two in New York, one in India, one in Louisiana, one on the Nile, two in Chicago, and three have died. Everybody who does not die here goes away, before long, to the ends of the earth, as you see. In comparison, Philadelphia must be a place of solid and enduring social relations. I am in the mood to-day to envy the rooted security of a Philadelphian!

"Do you remember how you used to laugh at my father's investments in mining stocks out here, four years ago? Well, they have turned out a stroke of financial genius after all, and made our fortunes. It is rather exciting being rich—and rather dull, too. And now, having kept my promise most generously, to the extent of six pages, it is time to stop. I hear you echo the sentiment—but I am, notwithstanding, cordially yours,

"ISABEL BROWN."

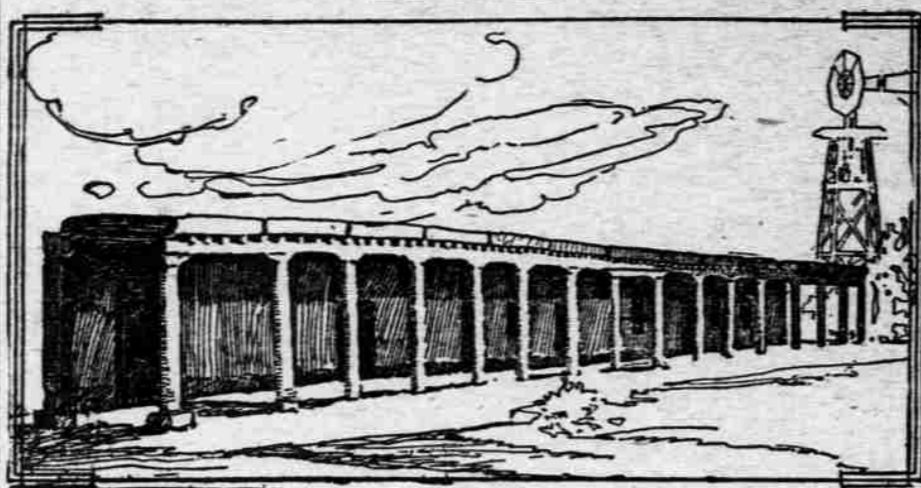
The young man smiled as he laid down the letter on his desk, amid the business papers that crowded it.

"She was a bright girl," he said to himself, "but I never thought she would write that sort of a letter. Too impersonal, somehow. She writes a very pretty hand, though."

Perhaps it was the four years' perspective into which the attractive maintenance of a summer at Mackinac had revealed, that gave this effect to his mind. At any rate, he remembered her as she was that last afternoon, when they stood in the old fort, looking over the houses of the picturesque, gay colored little town, to the blue lake water beyond. They had not been impersonal at all that day but very much the opposite—and he had realized since, more than at the time, how very near he had been to being in love with her, and how much one week more of intimacy might have meant to them both. How he had hoped that she would write, though she had only smiled at his request, and promised that some day she might. He had not forgotten, and he had really never liked any other woman so well. And now she had written. Why? Was it just one of those incoherent little impulses of hers that he had found so charming four years ago—or did it mean more? The only answer to that question, manifestly, was to answer the letter at once. And though the business correspondence was attended to promptly that day, yet a summer afternoon, and a speaking note of dark eyes, were more in the writer's thoughts than was at all necessary.

It was surprising, after his answer was sent, and the correspondence began thus tentatively, how soon it grew and thrived, and increased. Miss Isabel Brown's postman, hastening along the wide and dusty avenues of Colorado Springs, brought at shorter and shorter intervals, longer and longer letters from Philadelphia; while Mr. George W. Miller's desk in the large city offices of that wealthy firm of which he was junior partner was never long without a specimen of Miss Isabel Brown's handwriting. It was a revelation, at both ends of the line, how much one could put on paper for a sympathetic reader, and how intimate a knowledge one gains of a special correspondent, from week to week. Mr. Miller soon learned that he had never really known a girl before—that Miss Brown's tastes, Miss Brown's individuality, exactly and continually satisfied and delighted him; while Miss Brown felt that she never could have believed that George Miller could develop such attractive traits and such a thoroughly congenial set of ideas and aspirations. They were a revelation to each other—first a monthly, then a weekly, then almost a daily, revelation. It matters not how often such a discovery is made, in each new case it is equally astonishing and suggestive, and leads inevitably to the further discov-

### MRS. SHERIDAN'S BIRTHPLACE.



Ravages of time and the demand for improvement continues to destroy much that is of historical interest, and one of the buildings soon to be torn down is the birthplace of Mrs. Phil Sheridan, in old Albuquerque, New Mexico. The "palace" is the most pretentious building "Old Town" ever possessed. Built in the seventeenth century, it was the official residence of the local governor until it was burned by the American soldiers. It was then her father, Maj. Rucker, commanded the garrison at Old Albuquerque that Mrs. Sheridan was born.

Aside from the interest attached to this, the building passed through all the turbulence of early Indian warfare, and its thick walls were a refuge from many Indian attacks. The remains of a large adobe corral stand at the rear of the building into which the stock could be driven and in which the refugees could successfully withstand a siege for several days. Its walls are adobe, two feet thick. The pillars are made of pine logs, and the architecture of the veranda is characteristic of the time.

Every letter writing has its limits, and needs the supplement of personal intercourse to perfect its delights. Will anyone be astonished to learn that six months later Mr. George W. Miller himself arrived at Colorado Springs, one September morning, with three of Isabel's last letters in his inside vest pocket, and a pre-occupation so great that he paid no attention to Pike's Peak at all? Isabel, on her side, was not in the least surprised when he was announced at No. — Cascade avenue, for his last letter—well, she was quite ready to welcome him, and prepared to descend the stairs without any symptoms of astonishment, except that her heart was beating with most inconvenient quickness, and her cheeks were as red as the heart of a June rose.

This being the state of the young people's feelings it is somewhat strange to be obliged to chronicle that when Miss Brown entered the drawing room and Mr. Miller rose eagerly at her approach they should have stood looking at each other as if turned to stone. For fully two minutes not a word was interchanged; then the lady, with a gasp, sank down in the nearest chair and covered her face with her hands, while the young man, bending over her, murmured awkwardly:

"I beg your pardon, Miss Brown—is it Miss Brown?"

"Yes, it is!" returned the girl, sitting up defiantly, her blue eyes ablaze and her slender figure full of angry grace. "What right have you, sir, to ask me such a question, when you are masquerading under somebody else's name yourself?"

"I was baptized George Wharton Miller," he returned, "and my name is, of course, interchanged; then the lady, with a gasp, sank down in the nearest chair and covered her face with her hands, while the young man, bending over her, murmured awkwardly:

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### PANAMA ROUTE SAVES TIME.

One-Third as Long to Pass Through It as Through the Nicaragua.

The time required for passing through a transisthmian canal is an important feature of the problem; it is affected by the length, by the number of locks, by the number of curves and by the sharpness of the curvature, for, in general, it is not feasible to run a ship on a curve in a narrow channel with the same speed as on a straight course, unless, indeed, the curvature is very slight.

The speed is also affected by the depth of water under the keel of the ship. It is well known that the same power applied to a ship in deep water of unlimited width will produce a much higher rate of movement than the same power applied to the same ship in a restricted waterway, especially when the draught of the ship is but little less than the depth of the water.

These considerations all have their bearing upon the dimensions of a ship canal, and they have probably never before received such careful consideration in connection with the designing of a waterway as by the isthmian canal commission. The effect of the depth and width of the canal on the time of passage by either route was determined with as great a degree of accuracy as the data at the command of engineers at the present time will permit. Equally careful consideration was given to the effect of curvature and to the time of passing through the locks on each line, the latter including the delay of slowing on approaching the lock and of increasing the speed after passing it, the time of opening and closing the gates and the time of emptying or filling the locks.

The computations based upon all these elements of the question indicate that what may be called an average ship will require thirty-three hours for passing through the Nicaragua canal and twelve hours for the Panama canal. It is thus seen, says a writer in Scribner's, that the time of passage through the Panama canal will not much exceed one-third of the time required by the Nicaragua route.

### BLIND SPOT IN THE EYE.

Phenomenon Not Discovered Till the Time of Charles II.

If I wrote an article about the eye and said nothing about the blind spot, which is where the optic nerve comes through into the retina, about one-tenth of an inch nearer the nose than the center, I suppose my readers would go to the box office and demand their money back.

Just to be different from other people, though, I will not print a cross mark here and dot over there and tell you how to look at it so that the dot will disappear. I could make a big round spot more than three-quarters of an inch in diameter realize that it was only Mortal Mind and had no real entity, but I won't. I know a better scheme. Close your fists with your thumbs out, side and hold against each other. Extend your arms. Shut your left eye and look fixedly with your right eye at your left thumb. Separate your hands, and when they are about six inches apart the right thumb will disappear. I could make a big round spot more than three-quarters of an inch in diameter realize that it was only Mortal Mind and had no real entity, but I won't. I know a better scheme. Close your fists with your thumbs out, side and hold against each other. Extend your arms. Shut your left eye and look fixedly with your right eye at your left thumb. 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