

### A LOVE LETTER.

A letter, love, a letter, love,  
I send to you a letter,  
And every line a link, my love,  
And every word a fetter,  
To bind your heart, by love's own art,  
To one who loves you better  
Than all the world. Although between  
Your city and my prairie  
A thousand miles do intervene,  
Fair fancy proves a fairy,  
To bring your face, your tender grace,  
Your truth that cannot vary.

A letter, love, a letter, love,  
I meant to write a letter,  
And every line a link should be,  
And every word a fetter,  
To bind your heart, by love's own art,  
To one who loves you better  
Than all the world. But still I pause,  
With precious moments palling,  
And fear to tell you all because  
I fear to fail and falter,  
Like one who lays, with humble gaze,  
His tribute on an altar.

So take the few poor words I send,  
And read the lines between, dear,  
And like a leonid lady lend  
Your love to make them mean, dear,  
All lips would speak to brow and cheek  
Could heart behold its queen, dear!  
—Kate M. Cleary in New York Ledger.

### THE CAPTAIN'S GRIP.

An old California friend—John Wilson, let us call him for convenience—had been strolling about New York, refreshing his memory, visiting new points of interest and generally "taking in" the sights. In piloting him round the city I naturally stumbled upon the Eden Musee, and took him in to see the grisly groups and tableaux in the crypt. He was very much interested in them and repeatedly expressed surprise and admiration at the skill of the workmanship and the artistic and realistic effects of the grouping and attitudes. Having worn the blue during the civil war he was especially attracted by the representation of Custer's last fight; but I observed that he could hardly take his eyes off a group of figures in oriental costumes, and that for some minutes after examining that group he continued grave and absent minded. Presently, at luncheon, I asked Jack what particular memory that oriental tableau had stimulated. I put the question advisedly, because I knew that my friend had seen men and cities and experienced many and strange adventures, and all his stories were good, while most of them were apt to be new. So I deliberately angled for a yarn, feeling that it would harmonize better with a cigar than a fresh descent into the streets. Jack, on being questioned, fell once more into his abstracted mood, and after a minute of silence, said slowly:

"I was thinking of a group I once saw, not composed of wax figures, yet as rigid and motionless, in which an Oriental bore a conspicuous part."

After this beginning, of course, I did not let Jack go until he had told his story, and what he said is now reproduced here:

"After the close of the war I found it impossible to settle down again to humdrum work, but I soon found that if I was in search of adventure it would be necessary to try some other country than my own. The United States was at that time bound to make up for lost time. All the business and money making tendencies of the nation seemed stimulated to the uttermost. Speculation was booming; the war spirit had put unheard of audacity into all kinds of commercial enterprises, and, generally, the hour of the capable had come. I did not happen to be of these. I had a little money, enough to live upon comfortably, and I felt no inclination to go a-grubbing for more. Action, excitement, picturesqueness, the unexpected were what I desired, and I began looking over the world for some situation containing a promise."

"At last I got tired of waiting and tried to compromise with myself by a course of drifting. I drifted to the Pacific coast; then to the Sandwich Islands; from there to Japan, and after a stay of several months in one of the most interesting countries and among the most delightful people I know I found my way to Canton. This was some time after Horatio E. Lay's fiasco. You remember about that? No? Well, this Lay was a blue blooded English diplomatic fellow, who thought he could do a stroke of business for himself by undertaking to organize a fleet for the Chinese government wherewith to put down piracy, at that time very troublesome, especially in and about Kwangtung. Lay obtained some sort of authority, went to England, bought or built a lot of gunboats, fitted them out for service and engaged Capt. Sherard Osborne, a gallant naval officer, to command the squadron."

"But this was not what the Chinese wanted. Their idea was to man the vessels with their own people, and give them native officers, too. Of course, this would have resulted in one of two ways; either the pirates would have captured the gunboats promptly, or the commanders of the gunboats would have gone into partnership with the pirates. That, however, was nobody's business but that of the government, whose subjects were cutting one another's throats. Lay was repudiated; the contracts made by him were rejected, and, finally, Sir F. Bruce solved the difficulty by taking Osborne's flotilla off the hands of the Chinese government. Most of the gunboats were sent back to England, but one at least remained, and the understanding was that the government would buy her if she proved up to her guarantees."

"Now, to test such a boat, it was clearly useless to send her to sea with Chinese officers; and even a Chinese crew could hardly do her justice. So it was determined to make a trial trip with a scratch crew of white men; and when I heard that they were looking about for somebody to command her I jumped at the opportunity, and hastened to offer my services. You know I was in the navy before the war, and I had passed a good examination in steam, so felt myself competent to manage this gunboat, which was only a small craft, calculated for shallow waters, and carrying a crew

of one hundred men. Well, I had friends, and got the command; and after the usual trouble in scraping a ship's company together, and then drilling them into something like working order, I was ready for sea."

"The Chinese authorities had considered that it would be as well to make the trial trip pay expenses, if possible, by extending the tests so as to ascertain what the gunboat was good for in action. At that time the mouth of Pearl river was infested by piratical junks, which found shelter and easy means of escape in the numerous small islands and estuaries into which the delta of that stream is divided. The pirates usually confined their attentions to the craft of their own countrymen, but occasionally, when the grist was very short or the opportunity very tempting, they would attack some small foreign merchantman; and, in these cases, they made it a rule to kill every soul on board, as the simplest way of preventing those awkward foreign protests which were sure to stir the mandarins up to a serious crusade against them."

"You, of course, understand that piracy in China is not regarded as a heinous crime. The Mongolian view of the business is pretty much that which all the western nations held in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries; only there is less romance and more practicability about the pignails. Very respectable Chinese business men interest themselves in piracy along the Kwangtung coast, just as staid old English merchants used to interest themselves in smuggling a hundred years ago, and nobody thinks the worse of a man for having been a pirate, provided he has been lucky at it. As to the taking of life, there is so much superstitious humanity in China, and life there is so little worth living for the majority, that public opinion is quite indifferent on the subject."

"While I had been drumming up my crew in Canton I had fallen in with an American skipper who had for some time been sailing a good sized coaster for a wealthy Chinese house. He had his wife with him, and they were both very pleasant people. He was a Cape Cod man, not pretty to look at, for he had the leanest frame and the biggest hands and feet I ever saw. His hands, especially, would have attracted attention anywhere, not only for their size, but for the look of the latent muscular power in them. He was not one of those disagreeable big fisted men who think it a good joke to crush your fingers in shaking hands with you, but when he did shake hands with a restrained, friendly grip you felt the possibilities of his squeeze plainly enough. You will see later on why I dwell upon this physical peculiarity of Capt. Winsar, for that was his name. His wife, I fancy, must have come from the south. At all events she had a southern complexion—a clear pallor—with black eyes and hair and a southern suppleness and grace of bearing. She was not exactly a pretty woman, but decidedly pleasing, and her composure and quiet, gentle manners won upon you steadily. Both of them spoke Chinese fluently, and they gave a favorable account of the people."

"They had a special pet in a Chinese steward named Tin-Ling, a burly, round faced fellow, who would have passed muster anywhere for an honest man but for his eyes. They struck me as treacherous from the first. He never looked anybody squarely in the face, or encountered a steady glance without squirming. I concluded, however, that his employers understood him, and, anyhow, it was no affair of mine. My acquaintance with the Winsars lasted until the captain's vessel, a small bark named the So Kiang, was ready to sail on one of her regular coasting cruises. She would be away some three months, and would visit a number of little ports. I expected to get away about forty-eight hours after her, and the evening before she left I took supper aboard her with the skipper and we drank a farewell glass. As I was going away I happened to see Tin-Ling leaning over the side talking in a low tone to some rough looking men in a sampan alongside, and in a half joking way I said:

"Winsar, don't you think you trust that fellow too much? If I were in your place, with nobody about me but Chinese, I should keep a pretty sharp eye upon a fellow with eyes as shifty as his."

"The captain laughed carelessly, and merely said something about Tin-Ling being all right, and so we parted."

"In due time I got away on my gunboat, and down the river we went, the machinery working smoothly and the boat answering her helm smartly. We were armed with two Armstrong guns of small caliber and a couple of Gatlings for close quarters, besides the usual small arms, rockets, etc.—quite enough to keep off any number of Chinese pirates, or to give a good account of them in a square set-to. It was my intention to begin by exploring the nooks and crannies of the Pearl river delta, and I had taken a pilot (an old pirate) who knew those intricate waters thoroughly."

"We reached the mouth of the river, anchored for the night, and next morning at daybreak hove up and began to thread the creeks and estuaries of that region, of course with due caution and the lead always going. The first day brought no grist to my mill, and that evening I brought up between two islets, and, being doubtful of the neighborhood, I kept a boat's crew rowing guard all night, for it was so dark in there that the pirates might have surrounded us without being seen, provided they were quiet enough. However, we were not disturbed, and the second day opened without much prospect of excitement. Probably the pirates had got wind of our expedition and had made themselves scarce. In any case there was nothing to do but to go on, and on we went. The scenery was interesting enough if I had cared for that, but I was fidgeting to try the grist on a mob of pirate junks, and the idea of being fooled was not soothing."

"We were steaming slowly along, dodging and turning to avoid the numerous shoals, when suddenly a peculiar ripping, creaking sound broke the silence. I at once recognized the noise. It was the report of a match lock volley, and it

of course indicated a fight somewhere and in all probability an attack by the pirates on some vessel. I waited for the smoke to rise, and thus ascertained the scene of the difficulty, whatever it was. The white smoke showed above the trees about four miles off in a straight line as nearly as I could judge, but how far that meant by water it was quite impossible to tell. My delta pilot, who had pricked up his ears like an old charger on hearing the firing, told me he knew where the fighting was going on and could take me to it, but it would require a full hour to get there. There was no help for it, of course. We could not straighten or shorten the winding channel, nor could we clap on full speed. The firing meantime continued in a queer spasmodic way, and at intervals the rattle of the matchlocks was punctuated by a much clearer, sharper sound, which I felt sure was that of a rifle or a revolver. This made the case more serious, for it looked as though the pirates were attacking a foreign (that is, European) vessel."

"It was tiresome work crawling through these passages, and I was afraid we should be too late for help in rescue after all. But at last we rounded a bluff point and came suddenly into a sort of lagoon, three times as wide as the average passages, and then we saw what all the fuss meant. There lay my friend Winsar's bark the So-Kiang, fairly surrounded, at a distance of a hundred yards, by vicious looking junks, which were peppering her at leisure, but not yet venturing to board her. Probably they had suffered from Winsar's fire and concluded to keep on shooting from a distance until they had killed or wounded him and the boat-swain, they being the only white men on the trader. Winsar's Chinese crew seemed to have taken no part in the fight; at all events they were not visible. The attacking junks were so occupied in baiting poor Winsar that they did not see the gunboat for a few moments, and I had time to give them one smashing discharge from both the Armstrongs and both the gatlings before they recovered their scattered wits and sprang to sweep and sail in desperate hurry."

"I suppose I ought to have armed my boats and chased the ruffians, but I was feeling uneasy about Winsar, whose rifle I had not heard for several minutes, and I remembered, too, with fresh misgiving, the sinister looks of the pet steward, Tin-Ling. So after driving half a dozen junks ashore I drew alongside of the So-Kiang, piped away the cutter and went aboard her. The first thing I noticed was that the deck was deserted. The next sign I looked for was marks of blood, but there were none. This seemed to indicate that the crew had not risen upon the captain, and perhaps also that he had not been wounded. But, if alive, where was he? Silence reigned throughout the vessel. I went down the companionway into the cabin. There was no sign of life there. I of course knew the position of the captain's cabin and hastened toward it. Coming out of the glare of the sun my eyes could not instantly adjust themselves to the semi-darkness of the cabin, but by the time I reached the door I could see well enough, and the scene that met me on the threshold brought me to a dead halt."

"This is the tableau I there saw: On the standing bed place lay the body of Mrs. Winsar, the face white, still, fixed with horror in the wide open eyes. A thin stream of blood had trickled down her breast. Over her, in the act of striking, leaned Tin-Ling, his right arm extended, with a long knife in the hand, and the point of the blade suspended not two inches above Mrs. Winsar's heart. Holding the assassin in an iron grip, one tremendous hand enveloping his throat, the other clasped about the wrist of his knife arm, stood Capt. Winsar. His form was drawn to its full height; his eyes literally blazed from a face white as death, and he stood as if turned to stone. His steward was as motionless. There were the three actors in this frightful scene, apparently all paralyzed or petrified; and I seemed myself to be stiffening into the same ghastly rigidity as I stood there looking on."

"At last I roused myself and stepped into the cabin. My movement broke the captain's trance of horror. He gave a deep sigh, recognized me and said wearily: 'Take this devil, Mr. Wilson; he has killed my wife.' With that he relaxed his hold upon Tin-Ling's throat. I looked at the Chinaman, whose head fell limply on his shoulder, and saw at once that he was dead. His neck was broken, and, in all probability, in the very moment Winsar set his grip upon it. How long the captain had stood there, holding the corpse, we never knew, but it was at least ten minutes. As we raised our eyes from the blackened features of the traitor a faint sigh caught my ear, and, turning to the bed, I saw that Mrs. Winsar's eyelids were quivering. 'Captain!' I cried excitedly, 'I don't think your wife is dead, after all!'"

"And, to cut a long story short, she was not dead; she was not even dangerously hurt. She had caught Tin-Ling rushing in upon her with his knife, perhaps bent only upon plunder at the moment; but she shrieked, and the steward sprang upon her. Her husband had heard her scream, and rushed below at the very instant Tin-Ling's knife was descending. Its point had cut just deep enough into the flesh to draw blood, when those iron hands gripped him; and I am inclined to think that the death of Tin-Ling could not have been more sudden and painless had the agent been electricity, instead of bone and muscle."

"This was the tableau the figures in the crypt of the Eden Musee recalled to my mind," said Jack Wilson, as we passed out into Broadway again.—G. F. Parsons in New York Ledger.

**The Widow Would Be Able to Pay.**  
Young Doctor to Old Doctor—Doctor, I have told you how I am treating that patient. Do you think I should change the course of treatment any?  
"Has he got any money?"  
"No, but his life is insured."  
"Well, just continue your present treatment."—Epoch.

### TAKING GRAVE CHANCES.

#### CARELESS RAILWAY EMPLOYEES WHO ENDANGERED HUMAN LIFE.

Running on Another Train's Time—How the Sleepy Headed Operator Got Into Trouble and Out of It—The Confessions of a Telegrapher.

I was formerly agent for the West Shore road at a little station a few miles east of Amsterdam, N. Y. A work train, consisting of an engine and a number of flat cars, was employed on the section near my station. Each night they were expected to drop the flat cars on some of the sidings in that vicinity and lay the engine up for the night at Amsterdam. On the day in question the train had been working longer than usual, and when the time came to quit they found that they were trespassing on the time of a passenger train. Instead of flagging those cars to my siding according to rules, they took chances and one flying down at the rate of forty miles an hour, shoved two cars on the siding, and rushed off to Amsterdam in front of the passenger train, only seven minutes ahead of her time, when their limit was ten.

**RIDING TO DEATH.**  
The engine was going backward and in order to get to Amsterdam ten minutes ahead of the passenger they would have to make the run three minutes quicker than she did. By the time they got out of sight they were fairly flying. Eye witnesses of the occurrence told me it took them just six minutes to come from the place where they were working, throw in the two flats, and get back—a distance for the round trip of seven miles.

When the engine reached a curve about half way between my station and Amsterdam the tender left the track, and both were thrown into a ditch bottom upward. The engineer was killed and the conductor so badly scalded that for a long time his life was in danger; but, there being a strain of heroism mixed with his recklessness, he crawled on his hands and knees back to a curve and with a red light signalled the oncoming passenger train to stop. He was found insensible from his injuries when the train pulled up. The track was torn up for a distance of twenty yards, and but for the fact that I had notified the passenger engineer to be on the lookout, and the conductor's heroism, an appalling catastrophe would have resulted.

I don't suppose the passengers ever realized how near their lives came to meeting their God that day, and I was informed that the company did not even compliment the conductor for his bravery, to say nothing of paying his doctor bills.

**THE OPERATOR SLEPT.**  
One of my telegraph friends worked on a Missouri railroad a few years ago. He was 16 years old at that time. There were only three stations on his division, where the passenger trains stopped, and at Booneville, where he was operator, the conductors registered their trains as they passed. He had received an order to flag and hold the east-bound passenger for orders, but after repeating the order he forgot to put out his flag and afterward fell asleep. The train arrived, was registered by the conductor, and departed. The west-bound train had orders to run from Fayette, the next station east, to Booneville, regardless of No. 4 (the eastbound train). Their orders were already signed, and so far as the dispatcher knew, they were on their way to Booneville. He called Booneville, but got no response. He called again and again, and finally my friend, the operator, awoke and answered:

"Is No. 4 in sight?" he inquired.

"No."

"Well, you go out on the platform and see if you can hear anything of them."

My friend went out, looked up and down the track, but could see nothing. On his way back to the instrument he glanced at the register, saw that they had left while he was asleep, and hurried to the wire.

"They're gone," was all he had strength to say.

"You better take to the woods," said the dispatcher. "If I can't catch them at Fayette you'll see trouble."

Then he called Fayette hard and fast. "I, I," came the answer.

"Can you catch No. 3?"

"I guess so; I'll try."

Then the wire opened and the dispatcher and the miserable youngsters at Booneville waited for a signal to know the fate of a hundred unsuspecting human beings whose lives they had put in jeopardy. At last it came:

"Yes, I caught them just as they were pulling out."

The dispatcher's hand dropped from his key and his whole body shook with the reaction, while perspiration streamed from every pore. The operator at Booneville nearly fainted away, but quickly recovered, and opening his key, said: "Here's my resignation; I'm going to skip out."

"No; don't say a word about it, and I'll do likewise," was the dispatcher's reply, and no one but the operators ever knew of it.

For ten years I was working as night operator at a small station near the Pennsylvania border. Night after night I would fall asleep and fail to report trains, receiving only a slight reprimand from the dispatcher, which I knew would be repeated ad infinitum without anything more serious coming of it. All sorts of excuses were invented by the operators to account for their attacks of sleepiness, and some (myself among them) didn't even take the trouble to excuse themselves. I know of one operator who made a regular practice of pulling his old mattress up before a hot fire after he ate his lunch, stretching himself out, and going to sleep. When he woke up he would ground the wire, find out from the other operators about what time the train had passed his station, and then report to the dispatcher. This was done night after night and month after month.—F. M. Jones in Buffalo Express.

**The Venerable Masher.**

Two ladies were standing at the corner of Bush and Kearny streets about 9 o'clock waiting for a car. Both were young and pretty. An elderly man, whose mustache was white but curled up at the ends by the barber, and whose tie and clothing were a credit to his hatter and tailor, edged up to the ladies and stared at them. He shifted around, and besides staring made his best effort at a fascinating smile. Then he coughed gently, wiped his lips with a dainty silk handkerchief and smiled again. At last he lifted his hat and bowed. "Louise," said one of the young ladies to the other, calmly, "give the poor old man a nickel. He is evidently too timid to ask for it."—San Francisco Examiner.

**What Invalids Live On.**

Some features of the traffic in meat are indeed remarkable, as the following incident shows: A few days ago an omnibus conductor was imprisoned for overdriving two aged and exhausted horses which he had purchased for next to nothing. In the defense it came out that those worn out animals were not sold with a view to further work, but, according to their former owner, for another purpose. They were intended to furnish fuel for the manufacturer of beef tea.—London Lancet.

### ROMANCE REDUCED TO FIGURES.

There is an English literary man who at the end of each year penetrates into the published fiction and extracts therefrom very often some exceedingly interesting figures. The results of his researches into fiction of 1880 are entertaining. Of the heroines portrayed in novels he finds 372 were described as blondes, while 100 were brunettes. Of the 522 heroines 417 were beautiful, 274 were married to the men of their choice, while 30 were unfortunate enough to be bound in wedlock to the wrong man. The heroines of fiction, this literary statistician claims, are greatly improving in health and do not die as early as in previous years, although consumption is still in the lead among fatal maladies to which they succumb.

Early marriages, however, are on the increase. The personal charms of the heroines included 180 "expressive eyes" and 732 "shell like ears." Of the eyes 543 had a dreamy look, 300 flashed fire, while the remainder had no special attributes. Eyes of brown and blue are in the ascendant. There was found to be a large increase in the number of heroines who possessed dimples, 522 were blessed with sisters and 342 had brothers. In 47 cases, mothers figured as heroines, with 112 children between them. Of these 71 children were rescued from watery graves.—Ladies' Home Journal.

### A Weather Dial.

Probably not one out of ten of the vast number of people who frequent State street ever have noticed the weather dial that is cozily perched within a pediment on the Atlantic bank building.

Those who do notice the dial naturally inquire how it is that the arrow moves as the wind blows and indicates the direction of the breeze on the clocklike face marked with the letters N. E. S. W.

A careful examination from the street will reveal a big vane stationed several feet behind the pediment. As the wind blows the vane, the vane moves the arrow by means of a cog, one at the bottom of the pole to which the vane is attached, working on another connected with the arrow on the dial. This simple machinery is located in the attic.

This dial has been on the Atlantic bank building about thirteen years, and the occupants of the building say it has given general satisfaction, although the arrow, when the wind is frolicsome, sometimes revolves with such velocity as to indicate a cyclone.

There are said to be about three of these dials in use in this city.—Boston Globe.

### A Mother's Love.

Some years ago the visitor who went on Saturdays to the penitentiary at Fort Madison would see certain times a lady in the office of the warden. She was always veiled and dressed in deep black. By her side there would be a convict, a boy hardly 17 years old, a slight, handsome lad, whose frank face seemed in striking dissonance with the degradation of the stripes he wore.

It was mother and son, and he was, indeed, hard hearted who could witness their meeting and their parting when the allotted time allowed by the prison rules for such interviews had expired. The mother lived at a distance, but every week, rain or shine, brought her to her boy, to claim to see, to cheer and to help her boy, to bring her heart with a fresh agony, for she was a proud woman of high station in society, but to show that there was one friend in all the world to remember and to sympathize.

It has been years since that boy was released from the prison walls, and he is today a prosperous and honest man. The mother's love helped the boy back to better ways.—London Church News.

### For Cold in the Head.

There are a number of ways of aborting a cold in the head, but most of them are by the means of quite powerful drugs, which a person unfamiliar with their use is never justified in taking on his own responsibility. The Swiss method of treatment is one of the simplest and most efficacious. It is applied in this way: Half fill a jug with boiling water, and into that put a teaspoonful of well powdered camphor. Fashion out of writing paper a funnel, with which cap the top of the jug. The camphorated steam should be inhaled through the nose for ten or fifteen minutes, the inhalation being repeated, if required, every four or five hours. If, in spite of its unpleasantness, the inhalation is persisted in, it is said that three repetitions will usually effect a cure, however severe.—St. Paul Globe.

### The National Flower.

A wonderful thing is clover. It means honey and cream; that is to say, industry and contentment; that is to say, the happy bees in perfumed fields, and at the cottage gate old boss, the bountiful, chewing satisfaction's end, in that blessed twilight pause in this way: Half fill a jug with boiling water, and into that put a teaspoonful of well powdered camphor. Fashion out of writing paper a funnel, with which cap the top of the jug. The camphorated steam should be inhaled through the nose for ten or fifteen minutes, the inhalation being repeated, if required, every four or five hours. If, in spite of its unpleasantness, the inhalation is persisted in, it is said that three repetitions will usually effect a cure, however severe.—St. Paul Globe.

### The Hessian Fly.

Uncle Dabney Jones informed the Edgefield (S. C.) Advertiser that its account of the Hessian fly did not correspond with the generally accepted tradition concerning that little pest. He says that his father, who fought in the revolutionary war, told him that when a number of Hessians remained in this country, and, being of a restless, nomadic temperament, distributed themselves pretty generally, some of them drifting down to Carolina. The next year they sent to the Federal land for wheat to plant, and when the wheat came up the fly appeared, so that the larvae of the fly must have been brought over in the wheat. We suppose Uncle Dabney's account is the correct one.

### Beware of These Coins.

The British consul at this port is good enough to warn all those intending to visit Europe that the British government will not redeem English gold coins of a date preceding Queen Victoria, except at their bullion value. Traders and the holders of the bullion value are to receive them, except with a discount of seven pence or fourteen cents on the pound. It will be necessary to avoid receiving any old British sovereigns or half sovereigns when buying money to take aboard ship, unless you are willing to stand the deduction of two or three cents on the dollar.—Boston Transcript.

### Mr. Parnell's Misquotation.

Once, and once only, has Mr. Parnell been known to quote poetry in a speech. Working up toward his peroration, he declared that they would never rest until they had made their country realize the poet's dream: "Gen. gen!" said a friend at his elbow. "Oh, yes," replied Mr. Parnell, "but jewel is a better word."

### CONGRESSMAN GRAIN'S POKER STORY.

Why He Wasn't Shot on the First Night and How He Escaped on the Second. Congressman Grain, who represents the Galveston district of Texas, tells some remarkable stories of poker playing in that state during war time. It was an epoch there of lawlessness and mob rule, and personal bravery was the quality of leadership. One night he was playing in a game with three or four others, one of them a desperado named Boyd. The latter took advantage of the conviviality of the proceedings to hold out a card, and Grain saw him do it. On the spur of the moment Grain said, "Boyd, you are cheating!"

It was a foolish thing to do, unless with pistol in hand, because it meant immediate murder. But, to the surprise of every one, Boyd simply turned very pale, laughed and replied, "Crain boards at my house, you know, and so I can't afford to shoot him."

The next evening Boyd came uninvited into Crain's room, where some other men were, and offered to play Crain a game of two handed "freeze out." The latter assented and they sat down at the table, while the rest drew their chairs back and waited for the tragedy they supposed was coming. A few minutes later Boyd again cheated, so openly that he doubtless intended to be caught, and Crain at once charged him with the offense.

Immediately Boyd leaped to his feet, seized two chairs and threw them into the air. One of them struck Boyd as it fell, and he drew the pistol he had ready, crying, "Crain, you hit me with a chair!"

"Like a flash," says Crain, in telling the story, "my instinct as a criminal lawyer came to my aid. I saw that his purpose was to claim self defense in shooting me. So, without stirring from my seat, I pointed my finger at Boyd, who had me covered with his gun, and said: 'Boyd, you know that isn't true. I haven't touched you. If you want to fight I'll accommodate you anywhere you like and with any weapons within an hour of this time. Let's fight, if need be, but there's no occasion for murder!'"

Crain's coolness of action saved him and the duel never came off, because friends interfered. He lived to secure Boyd's acquittal of murder subsequently. Later on, however, Boyd was killed with his boots on in a row.—Washington Star.

### A Horse's Intelligence.

When Sunday comes my horse knows that I am not proceeding on my professional rounds, but he will put on his best style and proceed to the accustomed church, when, without any guiding on my part, he will land his load at the church door, and woe to the team that may chance to get in ahead of him. On no other day of the week will he make the attempt to turn up into or pay attention to the road leading to the church.

Two weeks ago, on Sunday, I took my wife out for a ride on Bolton mountain, and in going had to pass a church, one to which the horse was not accustomed to go, when to my surprise he was bound to stop. It was only with some difficulty that I got him past the post. About a mile and a half further on he came to another church, one at which he has never been accustomed to stop. To my surprise John made another strong effort to stop. On any week day he will pass that church daily without paying it the least attention.—A Physician in Hartford Times.

### Cultivating the Rubber Tree.

The threatened dearth in the world's supply of rubber has led to the formation of a syndicate to cultivate the rubber tree on a large scale. In Ceylon steps have already been taken to carry out the same idea by sowing the seed of the cerea in patches of jungle, and the supply of rubber from that island promises to be, in a few years, double what it is at present. Encouraged by the apparent success of this experiment, the syndicate proposes to carry on the rubber cultivation on several large estates in the southern part of Mexico not far from the gulf, where the climate will be most favorable for their operations.

The rubber tree grows with great rapidity, and a tree of average size will yield about twenty gallons of milk which is equal to forty pounds of dried rubber. From the testimony of experts it is found that this yield will give a handsome return on the capital to be invested.—New York Telegram.

### Mistook a Snake for a Fence Rail.

Joseph Graham, of Jones district, had fed his hogs the other morning and was leaning on the fence looking at them when he felt something chill fondling and caressing him in a peculiarly earnest way about the head, face and neck. He saw at once that he had placed his elbow about midway on the body of a king snake, several feet long and was holding him fast down on the rail, and, as you would suppose, both ends of the snake being loose, they cut up vigorous and rapid capers about Mr. Graham's countenance. Mr. Graham says he took his elbow off as soon as he found that the snake did not want it to stay on.—Eastman Times-Journal.

### The company formed to construct the Brooklyn bridge was incorporated in 1867, with a capital of \$5,000,000, of which \$3,000,000 was to be contributed by the city of Brooklyn, \$1,500,000 by the city of New York and \$500,000 by private individuals. In 1875 the Brooklyn bridge was made a state work, under direction of the cities of New York and Brooklyn.—New York Sun.