

Prisoners and Captives

By H. S. MERRIMAN

CHAPTER I.

One afternoon, some years ago, the copper-bright rays of a cruel sun burned the surface of the tepid ocean. The stillness of the atmosphere was phenomenal, even in the latitudes where a great calm reigns from month to month. It is almost impossible to present to northern eyes this picture of a southern sea gleaming beneath a sun which had known no cloud for weeks; impossible to portray the brilliant monotony of it all with any degree of reality. The sun rises day by day, weak in and weak out, unclouded from the straight horizon, sails right overhead, and at last sinks westward undimmed by thinnest vapor. Month after month, year after year, century after century, this day's work is performed. The searching orb of light rises at the same monotonous hour and sets, just as he did when the world was one vast ocean, with but one ship sailing on it.

Firm the dark, mysterious depths of the ocean, wavering ripples mounting in radiation to the surface, broke at times the blue uniformity of its moon. Occasionally from a distant horizon floated along before some unappreciated breath, presently to fold its sails and disappear. Long trailers of seaweed floating idly almost seemed to be endowed with a sinuous life and movement.

No bird in the air, no fish in the sea! Nothing to break the awful silence! A wreck might float or drift here or there upon these aimless waters for years together and never be found.

But Chance, the fickle, ruled that two vessels should break the monotony of sea and sky on this particular afternoon. One, a mighty structure, with tall tapering masts, perfect in itself, an ideal merchantman. The other, small, of exquisite yacht-like form, and with every outward sign of a great speed obtainable.

There was obviously something amiss with the larger vessel. Instead of sails aloft on every spar, bare poles and slack ropes stood nakedly against the blue ether.

In contrast, the other carried every foot of canvas. Carried it literally; for the white cloth hung mostly idle, only at times flapping softly to a breeze. The air that was not felt on deck since dawn the smaller vessel had been steadily, though very slowly, decreasing the distance between them, and now there were signs of activity on her deck, as though a boat were about to be lowered. Across the silent waters trailed the call of a boatwain's whistle. The vessel was plainly a man-of-war. As a matter of fact, she was one of the quick-sailing schooners built and designed by the British government for the suppression of the slave trade on the west coast of Africa.

Every knob of brass gleamed in the sun, every inch of deck was holly-stoned as white as milk. Aloft no rope was frayed, no sailing trim. It was easy to see that this trim vessel carried a large crew under strict discipline.

And now the melodious song of sailors hauling together through the glittering air to the great vessel of the dead. No answering cry was heard—no expectant faces peered over the black bulwarks. The signal flag, "Do you want help?" hung unnoticed. The vessel was suggestive of that fabled tell-tale of a monster proffering aid to a lion; the huge, still merchantman could have taken the slave catcher upon its broad decks.

Presently a boat left the smaller vessel and skimmed over the water, impelled by sharp, regular strokes. The sound of the oars alone broke the silence of Nature.

In the stern of the boat sat a square-shouldered little man, whose brown face and glistening chestnut beard, pleasantly suggestive of cleanly refinement, combined with readiness of resource. His pleasant eyes were scarcely hazel, and yet could not be described as gray, but the cause of the two colors were mixed. As the boat approached the great merchantman, this officer formed his two hands into a circle and raised his practiced voice:

"Alas—there!"
There was no reply; and a moment or two later the boat swung in beneath the high bulwarks. There was a rope hanging almost to the water, and with a quick jerk the young fellow scrambled up the ship's side like a monkey. Three of the boat's crew prepared to follow him.

He sat for a moment balanced on the bilge-roped rail, and then leaped lightly on to the deck. Between the planks the pitch had oozed up and glistened like jet, in some places the seasoned wood had warped. He stood for a moment alone amid the tangled ropes, and there were beads of perspiration on his forehead. It was no pleasant duty to board a derelict ship, for somewhere or other a mercenary probably was an unpleasant sight, such as is remembered through the remainder of the beholder's life.

There was something crude and hard in the entire picture. In the merchantman, almost shadowless light of a midday sun every detail stood out in hard outline. The perfect ship, with its foremast, bedraggled deck, the clean spars towering up into the heavens, with their loose cordage, their clanking sails, and upon the moss-green deck this square-shouldered little officer—trim, woman-like, prompt, amid the universal sleekness—the sun gleaming on his white cap and gilt buttons.

While he stood for a moment heeding, he heard a strange, unknown sound. It was more like the rattle in a choking man's throat than anything else that he could think of. He turned quickly, and stood gazing upon the saddest sight he had yet seen in all his life. Over the tangled ropes the ghoulish figure of a white dog was creeping toward him. This poor dumb brute was most pitious and heart-rending, for the very dumbness of its tongue endowed its bloodshot, staring eyes with a heaven-born eloquence.

As it approached there came from its throat a repetition of the sickening crackle. The young officer stooped over it with kindly words and caresses. Then, and then only, did he realize that the black and shriveled object hanging from its open lips was naught else but the poor brute's tongue. This was more like a piece of dried-up leather than living flesh.

"Water!" said the officer quickly to the man climbing over the rail behind him. Some moments elapsed before the small beaker was handed up from the boat, and during those the officer moistened his finger at his own lips, touching the dog's tongue tenderly and skillfully.

"Look after the poor brute," he said to the man, who at length brought the water. "Don't give him too much at first."

With a lighter step he walked aft, and climbed the brass-bound companion lead-

der, while two of the boat's crew followed upon his heels.

Upon the upper deck he stopped suddenly, and the color left his lips. There, at the wheel, upon an ordinary kitchen chair, sat a man. His two hands clutched the brass-bound spokes; his head lay prone upon his arms. A large Panama hat completely hid his features, and the wide, graceful brim touched his bent shoulders.

As the stately vessel slowly rocked up on the glassy swell of rolling waves, the great wheel perked from side to side, swaying the man's body with it. From one muscular arm the shirt sleeve had fallen back, displaying sinews like cords beneath the skin. Here was Death awaiting a dead ship through lifeless waters.

And yet in the dramatic picture there was a strange sense of purpose. The man was lashed to the chair. If life had left him this lonely mariner had at least fought a good fight. Beneath the old Panama hat an unusual brain had at one time throbbed and planned and conceived a purpose. This was visible in the very stolidity of his environment, for he was at least comfortable. Some biscuits lay upon the grating beside him—there was bunting on the seat and back of the chair—while the rope loosely knotted around his person seemed to indicate that sleep, and perhaps death, had been provided for foreseen.

CHAPTER II.

Gently and with excusable hesitation the naval officer raised the brim of the large hat and displayed the face of a living man. There could be no doubt about it. The strong face bore the signs of perfect health—the brown hair and closely cropped beard were glossy with life.

"He's asleep!" whispered one of the sailors—a young man who had not known discipline long.

"Halloo, my man! Wake up!" called out the young officer, clapping the sleeper on the back.

The effect was instantaneous. The sleeper opened his eyes and rose to his feet simultaneously, releasing himself from the rope which was hitched over the back of his chair. Despite ragged shirt and trousers, despite the old Panama hat with its limp brim, despite bare feet and tarry hands, there was something about this sailor which placed him on a par with the officer. These social distinctions are too subtle for most of us. We can feel them, but to explain is beyond us. We recognize a gentleman, but we can in no wise define one. This sailor's action was perfectly spontaneous and natural as he faced the officer. It was an unconscious assertion of social equality.

"An English officer!" he exclaimed, holding out his hand. "I am glad to see the uniform again."

The small man nodded his head without speaking, but he grasped the brown hand somewhat ceremoniously. The form of greeting was also extended to the two seamen by the ragged sailor.

"Are you in command of this vessel?" inquired Lieut. Grace, looking round critically.

"I am—at present. I shipped as second mate, but have now the honor of being captain, and bottle washes."

"You are moving away, looking about there curiously. The younger made for the deck house, seeking the companion way below.

"Halloo!" exclaimed the solitary mariner, "where are you men going to? Hold hard, there, you fellows! Let me go down first."

The stoutly built little officer held up a warning hand to his men. Then he turned and looked keenly into his companion's face. The glance was returned with the calm speculation of a man who had not yet found his normal match.

"What is your name?" interrogated Grace.

"Yellow fever," answered the other, with a short nod. "I will go first."

Suiting the action to the word, he led the way, and the young officer followed closely. At the head of the companion ladder the sailor stopped.

"What is to-day?" he inquired, abruptly.

"Thursday."

"It was Tuesday when I lashed myself to that chair. I must have been sleeping forty-eight hours."

"And you have had no food since then?"

"I don't know. I really cannot tell you. I remember taking the wheel at midday on Tuesday; since then I don't exactly know what I have done."

He had descended the brass-bound steps, and as he spoke the last words he led the way into the saloon. A sail had been cast over the open skylight, so that the full glare of day failed to penetrate into the roomy cabin. Upon the oilcloth-covered table lay a rolled sheet of brown paper in the rough form of a torch, and beside it a box of matches.

"I burn brown paper," said the sailor, quietly, as he struck a light and ignited the paper—"it is the only disinfectant I have left."

"You need it!" exclaimed the officer. In the meantime the other had advanced further into the cabin. Upon the floor, beyond the table, with their heads resting upon the edge of the lazarette, lay two men whose forms were distinguishable beneath the dusky sheets cast over them.

"Those are the last of nineteen," said the ragged man, waving aside the acrid smoke. "I have buried seventeen myself, and nursed nineteen. That is the story of this first mate. They quarreled when they were—alive. It seems to be made up now—oh? I did my best, but the more I got to know of yellow fever the greater was my respect for it. I nursed them to the best of my knowledge, and then I—played parson."

He pointed to an open Bible lying on the floor. The little officer was watching him with peculiar and continuous scrutiny. He barely glanced at the Bible or at the still forms beneath the unwashed sheet. All his attention was concentrated upon the survivor.

"And now," he said, deliberately, "if you will kindly go on board the Foam I shall take charge of this ship."

"Eh?"

They stood looking at each other. It is rather a difficult task for a small man to look up into a face that is considerably above him, with a continued dignity.

"I'll take command of the ship," he said, soothingly; "you are only fit for the sick list."

Across the long and sunken face there gleamed again an unpleasant smile—a mere contraction of the features, for the eyes remained terribly solemn. Then he looked round the cabin in a dreamy way, and moved toward the base of the lazarette.

"I have navigated her almost single-handed for a fortnight," he said; "I am glad you came."

Then the officer led him away from the cabin.

CHAPTER III.

From the moment that the ragged steersman opened his mournful gray eyes and looked upon the sunburned face of Lieut. Grace he had felt himself insolently drawn toward his rescuer. This feeling was not the mere sense of gratitude which was naturally awakened, but something stronger. It was almost a conviction that this chance meeting on the deck of a fever-stricken ship was something more than an incident. It was a beginning—the beginning of a new influence upon his life.

When Grace laid his sunburned hand upon the sleeper's shoulder he had felt pleasantly conscious of a contact which had further import than mere warm flesh and living muscle. It was distinctly sympathetic in its influence, for there it emerged from the deck the officer turned toward his companion.

"In another hour," he said, "that small dog would have been dead."

"Ah! you've saved him?" exclaimed the other.

"Yes. He will recover. I know dogs."

"He has no water since Tuesday. This feeling of gratitude rather like I come. We will go on board my ship and report to the old man, while you get a meal—some soup I should think will be the best. You will have to be careful."

He led the way aft, toward the rail where the men having found a rope ladder, were lowering it over the side. Before reaching the water he turned.

"By the way," he said, quietly, "what is your name?"

"Tyars—Claud Tyars."

"Claud Tyars," repeated the little officer, musingly, as if searching in his mind for some recollection of the name. Tyars in the Cambridge boat two years ago—a Trinity man."

"Yes—there was."

Lieut. Grace looked up in his singular, searching way.

"You are the man?"

"I am the man?"

With a little nod the young officer continued his way. They did not speak again until they were seated in the gig on the way toward the Foam.

"I had a cousin," the officer remarked then in a cheerfully conversational manner, "at Cambridge. He would be a contemporary of yours. My name is Grace."

The rescued man acknowledged this neat introduction with a grave nod.

"I remember him well," he replied. "A great mathematician."

"I believe he was," answered Grace. He was looking toward his ship, which was near at hand. The crew there grouped and snatched, peering over the rail, while a tall old man on the quarter deck, stopping in his meditative promenade occasionally, watched their approach with the aid of a pair of marine glasses.

"The shipper is on the lookout for us," continued the young officer in a low tone of voice requiring no reply.

"A slaver?" inquired Tyars, following the direction of his companion's eyes.

"Yes, a slaver, and the quickest ship upon the coast."

Propelled by strong and willing arms, the boat soon reached the gig-like vessel, and in a few minutes Claud Tyars was repeating his story to her captain—a genial, white-haired, red-faced sailor.

(To be continued.)

PRESENTATION AT COURT.

Some Points That Are Much Changed in Recent Years.

A crowd had assembled to see us start, says a writer in Harper's Bazar. I fondly imagined it was an admiring crowd; but I soon knew better. Evening twilight on St. James' Park and fell into line among the miles of carriages that stretched along the broad street known as the Mall, which leads up to the palace. Here, too, crowds were assembled, and for over an hour we were entirely at the mercy of the people who gazed in at the windows and criticised us most cruelly, considering our entire helplessness. Indeed, we were not sorry when our carriage dashed through the gates of the palace and drew up before the main entrance.

To my terror, we were invited into a side room where the royal dressers inspected us as a last precaution. We passed muster, fortunately, and then trooped with the crowd up the grand staircase. Half-way up we passed one of the queen's pages, who took from me one of my pink cards, at the same time shooting a keen glance at me to see if I were dressed "according to regulations."

The necessary wardrobe is no small matter. A simple court dress by Paquin will cost anything from \$500 to \$750—not including lace, which may be a family heirloom above price. The debutante's bouquet may include \$100 worth of costly orchids and lily-of-the-valley blooms. As to gloves, the regulation twenty-four button court gloves will cost \$5 or \$10 a pair at least, in a Bond street store; and for shoes, the correct ones are to be bought at a little store high up Bond street near the Oxford street end. These people make shoes for the queen and princesses, and the price is \$25 a pair. It is embarrassing to find that almost every detail of one's attire is laid down by law and has endured for centuries.

Some points about the presentation at court are much changed since Queen Victoria's day. The "courts," as they are now called, are held at 10 o'clock at night—an hour much more becoming to one's costume and complexion than the erstwhile afternoon session. Also, there are beautiful bands in attendance, a most excellent buffet supper; and last, but by no means least, the king and queen sit on gorgeous thrones at the end of a huge and sumptuous saloon, in all the glory of ermine and purple and jewels beyond price.

World Wish Him Luck.

"How would you feel if I should try to kiss you?" he asked.

"You know I have always been desirous of seeing you successful in all your undertakings," replied the girl demurely.—Louisville Courier-Journal.

An Expert.

Boss—My chief requirement in a stenographer is extraordinary speed. Applicant—I can write letters almost as fast as they do on the stage.

Boss—Name your wages.—Cleveland Leader.

Degradation for Woman Spy.

A Russian woman named Zanzaida Smolniamoff, who had moved in the highest circles in the German capital, has been sentenced at Leipzig to nine months' imprisonment for espionage.

A Warning.

"Never marry an architect, my dear." "Why not, mamma?" "Because he is sure to be a designing creature."—Baltimore American.

EDITORIALS

OPINIONS OF GREAT PAPERS ON IMPORTANT SUBJECTS

PROTEST AGAINST SIMPLIFIED SPELLING.

AND then, as part of the vast conspiracy which urges all men to interfere in the business of others, we find Mr. Carnegie offering some thousands of dollars in order to debase the spelling of the English language. How he intends to purchase bad spelling as he might purchase pig iron is uncertain. But in any case it would be better for him to stick to his ledger and leave the spelling book alone. Nor is it easy to discern his motive. Malice might suggest that being unable to spell himself, he wishes to reduce all men to his own level of doubt. But perhaps he does not entertain the same dislike for the English tongue as is once professed for the literature already he has made great sacrifices for the literature which he prizes, and for the learning which he is said to despise. There are few towns in England upon which he has not thrust a superfluous library, and he must find it not a little humiliating that the contents of these libraries bear the indelible mark of traditional orthography. Happily a long purse does not make a dictator of letters, and not all Mr. Carnegie's moneybags will persuade the world to renounce its habit of correct spelling. But his folly is to have interferred in what does not concern him. He is neither a philologist nor a man of letters, and he would be wiser if he left alone an intricate subject which he clearly does not understand. We believe that at Pittsburgh iron or steel engrosses his mind. Why is he not content to be an expert in them? And what would he think of us if without so much as his own leave we undertook to explain the smelting of iron or the making of steel?—Blackwood's Magazine.

REWARDS OF THE COUNTRY.

THOSE who have tried the harsh experiences of the city, and in whose memories there lingers, perhaps as faint, idealized pictures, some vision of the old home in the country, the cry of "Back to the farm" represents a hope. The tendency to rush to the city betrays the amazement even of the one who at an earlier day had answered the same call. The city offers to a certain mentality a reward more glittering than the country holds, a political and social power of which the country had no knowledge. Nor does the country need to regret this. It has its own rewards and they are more than gold. Moreover, the personal failure in the city is a tragedy. Beggary haunts the crowded street. Vice beckons into the shadows. The city offers, to rise above a dead level where his fellows abide, to be of extraordinary force of character; in application, untrusting, in deals, perhaps unscrupulous, and he must be attended by the goddess of good fortune. The usual life of the city laborer or wage earner is the barest. He cannot save money. There are few innocent pleasures upon which he can expend the little he may have to spare above the price of rent and bread. Even fresh air and the clear light of the sun are luxuries denied. He may look upon spendors, but have no part in them; be aware of wealth, with small chance of attaining it.

In the country there is no need to be rich in order to be independent. There is no limit to the sunlight and the pure air. There is no danger of starving. The smallest farmer, if he exercises thrift, may live on food that the poor man in the city would dream about. The funny men of the newspapers joke grimly concerning

LAYING BARE the LAIR of HIPPOCRATES SACRED SERPENTS

Discovery of the Health Temple of Cos where touch of Snakes Healed the Sick

On the island of Cos, in the Aegean Sea, there has recently been discovered the interesting remains of an Asklepeion, or temple devoted to the worship of Asklepios (Aesculapius), the god of health of the ancient Greeks. The site of the temple, about two miles from the modern town of Cos, has been so changed by earthquakes, by the growth of vegetation, by the destruc-



RESTORATION OF THE HEALTH TEMPLE.

tive work of the blue burner, and by the erection in medieval times of churches and mosques that all trace of



THE SACRED SNAKE. The magnificent sanctuary had disappeared, and the association of the place with Aesculapius had remained un-

the long hours the farmer must work, although they themselves are drudges. It is only at certain seasons that he needs to work longer than the creature of wages sweating in the city, and he has the satisfaction of knowing that he is working for himself. No man, in city or country, lives by himself alone. Each must maintain relations toward the rest of the world. But there is no other man, rich or poor, who is so nearly his own master as the farmer.—Philadelphia Ledger.

MAKING NEW STATES.

IT takes a long time to make a new State. That Congress has already considered the latest statehood propositions for four years is not unprecedented. The first bill to make Colorado a State was introduced in 1864. When Congress passed the second or third bill, in 1868, President Johnson vetoed it, and Colorado was not finally admitted till 1876. Missouri came into the Union after a shorter campaign; but the House passed two bills, neither of which the Senate approved, and the act as it was finally passed, which admitted both Missouri and Maine, contained the famous compromise which divided slave territory on the south side from free territory on the north of an imaginary line.

The fight over Kansas lasted from the organization of the territory in 1854 till its admission in 1861. Agitation over Dakota began early in the seventies, and in 1870 one branch of Congress passed a bill dividing the territory. In succeeding Congresses other bills were introduced, providing for the admission of the whole or part of the territory as a State, but for years nothing was done. Political considerations in Congress and the absence of agreement on the part of the people of Dakota combined to prevent action. In 1887, however, the division plan was adopted by a majority vote of the people, and two years later Congress admitted the two States carved out of the territory.

How far the national idea has developed since the Missouri compromise, when influential statesmen insisted that Congress had no power to fix conditions for the admission of States, is shown by the fact that no one has questioned the right of Congress to provide that no liquor shall be sold in that part of the proposed State of Oklahoma known as the Indian Territory, and by the further fact that when Utah was admitted it was required, no one objecting, that the State constitution must prohibit polygamy.—Youth's Companion.

FIRES ARE NOT CHECKED BY DYNAMITE.

THE superstition which should be well cured by the records of the San Francisco fire is that dynamiting buildings will stop the progress of a conflagration. Yet it is a superstition that dies hard. In theory it is good, as it seems to parallel the practice of setting a fire a little ahead of a prairie or forest fire to leave the flames nothing to feed on. But in practice it doesn't work. Chicago, Boston and Baltimore all gave costly evidence to this fact, and San Francisco has come now with the clincher. Piles of ruins not only invite the progress of the flames, but when live wires are twisted in them become centers of conflagration themselves. The building makes a better barrier when in its normal state. Yet it is doubtful if anything could have checked such furious onslaughts of flames as the four cities mentioned saw.—Chicago Examiner.

therefore complained to Jupiter, who slew the physician by a thunderbolt. After this he was raised to the ranks of the gods by the gratitude of man kind, and was especially worshipped at Epidaurus, on the coast of Laconia. Here oriental elements, especially serpent-worship, seem to have been mingled with the rites and ceremonies. The temples of Aesculapius usually stood outside of the cities in healthy situations, on hillsides and near fountains. Patients that were cured of their ailments offered a cock or a goat to the god, and hung up a tablet in his temple, recording the name, the disease, and the manner of the cure. Many of these tablets are still extant.

The Temple of Aesculapius at Cos, which it is believed has now been unearthed, was the scene of the labors of Hippocrates, who was one of the most celebrated physicians of antiquity. He was born at Cos, probably about 400 B. C.

A Dog's Yawn.

Did you ever see a dog yawn? For thoroughness and entire absence of affectation and mock shamefacedness there is nothing like it. When he yawns he doesn't screw his face into all sorts of unnatural shapes in an endeavor to keep his mouth shut with his jaws wide open. Neither does he put his paw up to his face in an apologetic way while yawning in ambush, as it were. No. When he yawns he is perfectly willing that the whole world shall come to the show. He stretches himself firmly on his fore feet, braces up his neck, depresses his head, and his jaws open with graceful moderation. At first it is but an exaggerated accomplished the dog turns out his elbows, opens his jaws another forty-five degrees, swallows an imaginary bone by a sudden and convulsive movement, curls up his tongue like the petal of a tiger lily and shuts his jaws together with a snap. Then he assumes a grave and contented visage, as is eminently becoming to one who has performed a duty successfully and conscientiously.—Peterson's Weekly.

Geographies to Blame.

Ask any hundred English men, women or children what is the name of the capital of Russia, and every one of them will reply, "St. Petersburg." It may be a small matter, but in point of fact the proper name is "Petersburg." The English are the only folk who insist upon the "Saint." The city was founded by Peter the Great and is named after him. It is quite true that Peter was one of the most extraordinary men that ever filled a throne, but no one would have been more astounded than himself at being dubbed a saint. He neither lived nor died in the odor of sanctity, and it is hard to find out how it became the English fashion to mislead the splendid town he founded.—London Mail.

If you contemplate getting into the hand wagon get into it before it is crowded. Let a man make a good resolution, and his wife will make fun of him for doing it.

HOW HEART AFFECTS WATCH.

Timepiece Uncertain if That Organ Is Irregular, Says a Jeweler.

Nobody would ever think that something the matter with him would cause something to be with the matter with his watch, but a watchmaker is the cause of much uneasiness in an east end family, and all because he insists that he does his best with a certain watch, and that the reason it does not keep good time is because the man who carries it must have an irregular heart beat.

It came about in this wise: The head of the family has a gold watch that cost him \$200 ten years ago. He has carried it ever since, but a year ago it began to act queerly. For some days it lost time, and then it began to gain time; again it would gain time mysteriously and then strangely lose a minute or two a day. It had been to the watch repairer three times in twelve months, and was still acting irregularly a week ago when the man's wife took it to the watchmaker.

"I think I know what is the matter with this watch," said the craftsman. "I don't believe that your husband's heart beats regularly. Now, don't get alarmed. It is not necessarily diseased. He may be just one of those men who can't have a watch that keeps good time, simply because of their irregular heart beats.

You see, a watch has a regular rhythmic movement," said the watchmaker. "It is carried close to the human heart, which ought to have a regular rhythmic movement, too. Now, while the watch is beating away the heart is beating also. If its pulsations occur regularly, punctuating the rhythm of the watch at specific intervals, the rhythm of the watch movement is undisturbed; but let the heart pulsations occur irregularly, now pulsating with the tick of the watch, again stopping discordantly in between the ticks, the watch is bound to be affected. Leave this watch here, and let your husband carry your watch. Let him wear it a month and see if I am not right."

So the woman handed her husband her watch to note the result. She wanted him to consult a specialist immediately upon her return from the watchmaker, but he compromised to try the test suggested by the watch man.

QUEER STORIES

Asparagus is the oldest plant used for food.

Gibraltar may fairly be called the land of tunnels, there being over seventy miles of burrowed rock.

Spain has greater mineral resources than any other country in Europe, including iron, copper, zinc, silver, antimony, quicksilver, lead and gypsum.

Attempts are being made in France to train oxen for saddle riding, and several races have been organized to test their capacity. They have been trained not only as racers on "the flat," but also as successful jumpers. The bride and saddle used are similar in general design to those for hunters.

For all its beauty, the lily of the valley is denounced by scientists on the ground that both the stalks and the flowers contain a poison. It is risky to put the stalks into one's mouth, as if the sap happens to get into even the tiniest crack in the lips it may produce swelling, often accompanied by pain.

A curious race, which from contact with civilization is disappearing from the face of the earth, is the Agalabos, the "web-footed," short-legged Papuan dwarfs. Captain Barton, an official of New Guinea, describes a visit he paid to them thus: "A rumor having reached Cape Nelson that these interesting folk had found a few of them still living. Six males and four females were seen. They averred that they had no children living, and it seems likely that in a few years the tribe will have wholly died out."

Forgery by phonograph is a new crime discovered in Hungary. The son of a wealthy peasant proved an oral will of his father by testimony of servants who heard a voice from the dying parent's bed, saying, "I leave all my property to my eldest son, Alois, and my other children are to get nothing." Such a statement is valid in Hungary. Subsequently, however, the police were informed that the voice the servants heard was not that of his father, but that of Alois had spoken the words into a phonograph. He had placed the instrument under his father's bed, and when the old man had lost consciousness called the servants in and set it going. The police searched his house and found the phonograph record as described. Alois is now to be charged with fraud.

A woman in a London flat-house was accused of singing hymns to her parrots for the benefit of their souls. This recalls to the London Chronicle the most accomplished parrot in history. It belonged to Col. Dennis O'Kelly, and was famed for his whistling of the 104th Psalm. When the colonel died, in 1787, a large proportion of his obituary notice in the Gentleman's Magazine was devoted to this remarkable bird, which got another considerable notice of its own when it died, fifteen years later, in Half Moon street, Piccadilly. This parrot could also whistle "God Save the King" and "The Banks of the Dee," and would go back and correct itself if it got a note wrong. It could even answer questions, and its master was said to have refused five hundred guineas a year to show it in public.

A Fine Yell.

"That college yell Gladys Timeed wrote is fine; I wonder where she got the inspiration for it?" "She was making fudge one night, and when she reached the paper bag for the chocolate there was a mouse there."—Houston Post.

It frequently happens that a man's meanness isn't noticed until after he suddenly acquires a little money.

It always makes us laugh to see a man drink tea.