THE TIVERTON BANK MYSTERY.

I'VE come, judge, to ask if you'll let me tell you what no one on earth don't know but me, 'bout that bank mystery.

Yes, thank you, I will sit down. A fire feels good on a night like this. 'Tain't often such as I have a chance at this kind of comfort and luxury.

What do I know about the bank mystery? Land sakes, judge, time they opened the bank that day ten years ago and found the bank vault broke into and the safe blowed up and not a dollar gone, I could have told it all. The people of Tiverton ain't done talking and wondering 'bout it yet, and there ain't never been no one livin' as could tell what it all meant but me.

I brought some papers—here they are, judge—where it's all writken down and I can swear to it if you like. I don't want them never used, though, unless I die and something comes up as would make it best for my family to know, though there's this in it I'd ruther die than have 'em know. If it's all the same to you, judge, I'd like to tell it to you. Seems like I'd get rid of a load and would be happier and die easier feelin' I'd spoken it all out to one livin' human.

You'll be glad to listen? That's good of you. I knowed you was a kind man and a just one; that's why I come to you. No, thank you, I don't smoke; I put all that money away for my wife and children.

Do you hear that storm? Outside seems like all the evil powers was let loose. You can't judge 'bout it here. It comes kind of muffled like through those thick curtains and it don't shake this great house like it does some.

It's this kind of night that makes men huddle together, judge, and plan how to get rich and have fine things such as the likes of you. I've been through it all; I know. I've felt as if I had as good a right to 'em as anyone and I was bound to have 'em, too. I warn't brought up to no trade nor nothin' and fair means seemin' to fail, I took to the other.

Yes, judge, I started out in life a thief and a robber. I prospered fairly in a small way and no one didn't catch up with me for some time. Then I joined a gang in for everything. Lord, but it was fascinating! It was like drink; I couldn't give it up and I couldn't get enough of it. I was in prison and out then, the old story, till I married and begun to have little ones.

Then, Lord knows what helped me—something did—and for the sake of my wife and children, I broke loose from everything and came here, where no one didn't know me, to start over again. I had some money and opened the restaurant just opposite the bank.

Long as I didn't read the papers I got on well; but let me see them and I'd hunt through 'em for the robberies, and I'd be crazy, plumb crazy for a while, aching to be in it all again. Seein' 'bout my old pals gettin' in trouble didn't make no difference.

Time come, though, when I begun to enjoy life differently, and to feel myself more respectable. The love for the old life begun ter go till I could read about it without gettin' all fired up. I thought then I was all right.

Then they come here, part of the gang I'd belonged to. First I knowed of it was seein' 'em in the restaurant. I 'spicioned they warn't here for no good and it most took my breath away. They knowed me quick enough, too, and nothin' wouldn't do but I must join 'em. I was the very man they wanted, I could help 'em and I was bound to 'em. 'Twas the biggest thing they'd undertaken yet; the bank. They'd come on to examine the situation, knowing that Mr. Durkee, the new mill owner, would make a big payment soon and the money for it would be in the bank here. If there weren't anything else, that would be a big haul, worth havin' and me bein' here decided 'em.

I do think the devil brought all his friends and relations with him that night to tempt me. I forgot how to sleep and just couldn't stay in bed. I wonder I warn't in tatters by mornin', with the devil tuggin' at me as he did and tryin' to keep me out of the room where my sleepin' children lay.

Lord, it makes me creep and perspire all over now to think of it.

Yer see them bank people come over to my place for lunch best part of the time, and they all knowed my little people, and the mill people knowed 'em, too. My oldest boy worked in the mill and they'd been as kind as could be when he's sick. Christmas time they's good to him, too, and there warn't a bank officer but what had remembered my little people, even to the watchman. Seemed like robbing my own people, somehow. I's bound not to inform on the gang, and they's bound ter rob ther bank, but I cursed 'em in my heart for comin' just when I was gettin' rid of the old life for good and all. 'Twas awful!

Well, judge, you know how them rooms over the bank was rented to start a new daily paper. I made 'em swear solemn as my name warn't to appear nowhere. I'd plan it all out and give 'em points and be on hand at the last, but I had to be cautious.

They found out when the money was to be paid and 'greed on the night before for the robbery. I had all mapped out for 'em where and how they were to loosen up the boards of the floor in their room above, so we could break through and lower ourselves into the vault when the time came. Then you see we'd only have the safe to get into and the great iron door between us and the watchman.

Everything was ready, and we was pretty sure the money was paid.

Do you hear that storm now, judge? 'Twas like that ten years ago to-night, dark as Egypt, with the rain and wind a perfect hurricane; a terrible night; the kind of night for any sort of crime. The men chuckled to themselves. 'Twas a fortune sure this time, and they'd all be on the way to comfort and safety before day. I ain't never seen 'em so excited. Nothin' hadn't gone wrong and nothin' couldn't now.

We had sentinels stationed round to give the alarm, but there wasn't much danger on a night like that.

We had planned so as to have the door of the safe ready to blow open when the watchman went down cellar to see to his fires. I knowed time of night he did so, seein' him often from my house across the way through the window of the bank, but to make sure we stationed a man where he could give the signal at the proper time. With the watchman downstairs and we shut in that vault, with solid masonry below us, 'twarn't in the range of possibilities for no human to hear us.

'Twas planned that when we broke through the ceiling me and one of the others was to go down first with the lanterns and tools and get the door ready for Jim Groogan, the leader of the gang, to come down and use the dynamite and be on hand to take out the money.

Lord, but it was just the night for such a piece of work, and after I had examined to see if all was safe, knowing the dangers better than the others, we broke through the floor and lowered the ladder, and there we was—right in the vault. 'Twas well for me I'd hit it right, for my life warn't worth much if any o' my plannin' failed to work.

Tom Doolan in a hurry went down first and when I was half way down he started back, saying in a hoarse kind of whisper:

"Who called me?"

"No one, you fool," said Jim.

"Then," he said, and he ran past me on the ledder, "someone is down there. Twict I heard someone say: 'Go back, go back.'"

"We'll gag him," said Jim, and me and him went down tnd turned our lanterns round lookin' everywhere, but there warn't no one there.

"What's the matter with the fool?" growled Jim, and went back and tried to send him down again, but he just wouldn't go, so Jim cursed him and come himself, and he and me begun to get the safe door ready to blow up.

That's a thing that takes time and care, judge, but we went at it with a will, and never a word. It was so still you could almost hear your heart beat, when all of a sudden came a smothered cry, loud and clear, like a woman's. We stopped work and looked at each other, Jim's face white and scared.

"Lord, what was that?" he said.

"I often hears 'em on the street like that," I said.

"That warn't on the street; it sounded close by," said Jim. "We couldn't hear nothin' outside in this place."

"Nonsense," I said, "don't you make a fool of yourself, too, and spoil it," and I went to work again.

I could see his hand trembled for a while and then got steady again.

"That must have come through the room upstairs," he said presently. "Queer, though, it sounded so close."

Then we worked on and there warn't nothing more to be heard. Rest of the gang might all have been dead men, for all the sound they made and we didn't say nothin', and so the night went on.

At last we had it all ready and were only waiting for the signal to blow it up and then—money enough to make us all rich. 'Tain't such as you can realize the excitement and the strain of such a moment. To know it's all there, ready, and then to have to wait! It's easier walkin' over red hot coals. It's all right to go on and work, but to stay still and only breathe and listen gives a man the shivers.

Presently Jim caught my arm.

"Say, I thought I heard voices, did you?" he whispered.

"The men upstairs," I said.

"Sounded down here. Have your pistol ready."

I took my lantern and went round the vault again carefully, and then held it up to examine the walls. Then I shook my head. There warn't no way we could hear no one.

"It's the queerest place I ever was in," said Jim, "and by Jove I'll be glad when we are out of it. Why don't that signal come? Suppose there's any hitch? I swear I hear voices again."

Just then came the signal and Jim began to apply the dynamite, but his hands trembled so and his eyes looked so wild and excited, his own wife wouldn't know him.

"The money, the money," he whispered, "we must have it now."

We got out of the way just in time and then out came the door.

"The inside door, quick," said Jim, but the explosion had made that fall inside and we just could lift it out.

"Have the bag ready," said Jim, as he leaned forward to haul out the great piles of bank notes and silver we could see by the light of the lanterns.

"Hands off, or you are a dead man."

It was a voice that would most have waked the dead. I dropped my bag and Jim drew back his hand and caught hold of me with a grip like iron, and we began to go slowly back to the ladder.

"The combination is all right; we have them now; they can't escape us."

We were half way up the ladder when we heard the click, click of the lock, and as we drew the ladder after us we could hear the rasping of the hinges of the iron door.

"Fly, fly for your lives; we are discovered," said Jim, as he went around to warn the men; and in the darkness and the wind and the rain they went away and I ain't never seen none of 'em since. I heard, though, as when they found there warn't no one there and the bank people didn't know nothin' 'bout it till the next morning, they just believed the bank was haunted, sure.

Do I know what it was, judge? There ain't no one else as does know, that's sure. 'Tain't much, after all.

Yer see, playin' 'round with my little ones, I found as I could make 'em hear all kinds of noises anywhere I wanted, and people cryin' and laughin'. It was fun fur them and I often done it; ventriloquizin', I believe you call it; but that night's the last time. Yer see, none of the gang didn't know 'bout that, and I don't keer ever to have 'em know it now. It saved the bank without my informin', and that's all I care for.

Oh, no, judge, the bank don't owe me nothin'. You'll take care of the papers? Thank you. I'm obliged to you for listening, too. It kind of makes me feel easier.

No, no, thank you, I won't stay and take no more of your time. Don't get up; I can find my way out.

What's that you say, judge? You honor and respect me—me—? And the bank—land, judge, 'twarn't me; 'twas my wife and children saved the bank, and I'm proud of 'em—proud of 'em, judge. Good night.—Philadelphia Times.

FASHIONS OF LONG AGO.

The Style of Clothes Worn by Young Women Early in the Century.

"A Group of American Girls Early in the Century" is the title of an article by Helen Evertson Smith in the Century. After describing the visit of two cousins of Chancellor Livingston to New York, the writer says:

In general all was rose-colored to the two young country girls launched into society with every advantage which youth, cultivation, beauty, and high connections could bestow. Riches they did not possess, but they were too happy to care for that. Their wardrobe strikes one as having been decidedly limited, but at that time it was held that simplicity should rule the attire of all young girls, so they did not feel abashed in the fresh, sheer white India-muslin gowns, relieved with broad sashes, which were their only evening wear. These were made with low, square-cut necks and full sleeves gathered into a puff a little above the elbow.

The so-called Empire styles were then prevalent, and probably in an exaggerated form, as is apt to be the case when fashions have to be copied at a distance not only of thousands of miles, but also of a year or more of time. The skirts were short, showing not only the thin slipper, but the clocked silk stockings well above the ankle, and were so very scant that it required skill to dance in them without rending the slight fabric. Neither of the sisters had a silk dress. Gowns of that material were hardly considered suitable for unmarried women under 25 years of age.

Gowns of pretty flowered chintz were worn at home, except in extremely cold weather, when a heavy but soft material known as "stuff" was permitted. For driving or walking each sister had a gown of dark crimson broadcloth. These were made with close sleeves coming a little below the elbow, where, as well as around the neck and the bottom of the skirt, was an edging of swansdown, changed later in the season for a border of marten fur. Long pelisses of crimson cloth, lined and trimmed with the marten fur, and great muffs and tippets of the same were worn in all suitable weather. The crimson velvet bonnets were large and scoop-like things, adorned with an abundance of white ostrich plumes, but not by any means as exaggerated in size as those worn a few years later.

Americans as Musicians.

Madame Emma Calve contributes a paper on the "Conquering Race in Music" to the Ladies' Home Journal, in which she specially addresses students of vocal music. She tells of the training required for the operatic and the concert stage, the impersonation of character, the value of suggestions, etc., and pays this trubute to Americans: "The Americans have, it seems to me, in the field of music, and especially in the field of vocal music, all the characteristics of the conquering race. They are possessed naturally of the most exquisite voices, which, when properly cultivated and trained, are almost unrivaled; they have indomitable energy, perseverance and pluck; they stop at nothing, are deterred by no trouble and prevented by no obstacle. Poverty, weariness, exertion, hard work—none of these living spectres which affright and terrify the average art worker has terrors for them. Their physique and their temperament seem made for toil and to surmount discouragement, and the success which they are daily achieving, in the field of both operatic and concert singing, is testimony to their natural fitness for accomplishment, and to their ability to excel. They seem, in fact, to be most lavishly fitted by nature for the parts they are assuming. To these gifts of voice, energy, pluck and perseverance they frequently add a beauty of face and grace of form and movement which the public recognizes as most important factors in the success of the singer's career. They have, too, the temperament which makes great artists and great actresses, the artistic feeling which has for its standard, perfection, and which is satisfied with nothing less."

Storks.

The chief places to which the storks, so numerous in Belgium and Holland, migrate for the severe winter generally experienced in those countries, has been discovered by a Belgian nobleman. He succeeded in catching two hundred of the birds and attached to each, either round the neck or on one of its legs, a label upon which was written his own address, together with a request that anyone who caught or killed the bird during the winter season would send the label back to him, indicating the locality in which it was found. The next spring, one of the labels arrived from Western Algeria, and two years later another came from the mouth of the Senegal river. More labels have been received by the experimenter, all coming from the northern parts of the African continent, which clearly shows that storks follow the course of the swallows when the leaves begin to fall in Europe.

One Way to Break Glass.

It is scarcely credible, but it is a fact, that a glass can be broken by the voice. If you strike a thin wine glass while you hold it by the stem it will emit a certain note—in most cases a pretty deep one. On approaching the glass rapidly to your mouth, and shouting into it the same note as loudly as possible, the vibrations of the glass being thereby extended, it will be shivered into fragments. This used to be a favorite experiment of Lablache, the renowned singer, who would thus break, one after the other, as many glasses as were handed to him.

When women oppose a candidate, it is usually because of some grudge they feel against the women folks.

Swedes believe that the devil has power over a child until it is baptized.

DEAD TO THE WORLD.

They Looked Like Suicides, but They Knew Their Business.

Suicides have been so numerous of late that a Star reporter was not very much surprised the other night when he almost stumbled over a man who lay on the flat of his back at full length on the pavement at the corner of Massachusetts Avenue and 16th Street. He lay in the shade of a tree, but the moonlight falling through the branches not only clearly defined the form, but gave a weird and uncanny effect.

The Star man, startled for a moment, stopped to examine, and when he saw five or more silent outstretched forms near the curbstone, although they looked like so many ghosts, and made the locality look like a miniature battlefield, the whole thing was easy. They were only sleeping, and although their beds were hard, some of them were lying on their coats and several lay in the gutter with the curbstone for a pillow. Three or four of the familiar street-sweeping carts stood like sentinels near by under the shadow of the trees, and the horses in the shafts were sleeping, too. Just then a street sweeper came along dragging his big broom, and The Star man asked, pointing to the silent forms, "What are they doing, uncle?"

"W'y, boss, dey is jes' sleepin'."

"Tired out?"

"No, indeedy. It's too early ter git tiahed. But yo' see no 'mount er daylight sleepin' is as good as er little night sleep, an' so w'en de boys gits a chance 'tween sweeps, dey jes' draps right down an' take a nap. Mebbe dis is de onliest one dey'll git till tomorrer. It happens dis yer way. De machines has come down 16th and gone up one side er Massachusetts and jes' now dey is up around Dupon'. Now we done sweep 16th and we has to wait till dey come back. Den de sweepers will get in line and de cyarts will foller along jes' like er percession."

"But these carts won't hold much more. One of them is full to overflowing already," said the Star man.

"Dat's all right, boss, dey all belongs to de gang and dey all sticks togedder, kase dey all goes to de 19th street dump. Now dat full cyaht belongs to de leader, and de heaviest sweepin's was on his side of 16th, and he filled fust. But dey all keeps togedder.

"Heah comes de machines now," he exclaimed, and the familiar swish of the horse sweepers could be heard coming nearer. They were preceded by the inspector in a light buggy. His quick eye detected the sidewalk sleepers, and his method of calling them to duty was to drive his horse on to the curbstone among them. The men arose one after another and picked up their coats and brooms. One called out familiarly: "Say, fling us a half so's we kin git a pint."

After the horse sweepers had passed they fell into line in the gutter and began sweeping the dirt into little piles. Then the carts came along and the night's work was continued. As The Star reporter stood watching, a driver stopped his horse at the first little pile of sweepings. He bent down and picked up a piece of paper and carefully wiped off his big shovel, which already shone like burnished steel in the moonlight. Then with one swoop he shoveled the entire pile into his cart.

"Do you ever find anything worth keeping?" asked The Star man.

"Deed I ain't nebber foun' nothin' on dis job. Some of de gang does. One of de boys picked up $85 one night. What did he do with it? 'Deed you'h too hard fer me. I doan' know what he done wif it, cep'n ter keep it. G'long! whoa!"

After every "whoa" and before every "g'long" came that metallic ring of the shovel as it came in contact with the asphalt. These are the familiar sounds that strike the ear of the pedestrian every night as he passes through the streets of the national capital, and just such unique scenes as the one described are enacted nightly, but they are peculiar to Washington and cannot be found in every large city.

A Letter from Dr Holmes.

Isabella Graham Murdock contributes to St. Nicholas an experience of her school-day life, in which she quotes the following interesting letter that she received from Oliver Wendell Holmes:

Boston, March 15th, 1880.

My Dear Miss Isabella: Here is one little incident of my life which I have never told in print:

When I was a little boy I got upon a raft one day—a few boards laid together—which floated about in a pond—a very small pond, but rather bigger round than a dinner table. It was big enough, anyhow, to drown a little boy, and came pretty near doing it; for, while I was stooping over the edge of the raft, I slipped and went souse into the water.

I remember a great sound in my ears—"guggle, guggle," I said it was, when they asked me about it—and a desperate struggle, feeling that I was going to be drowned, just as little Sam Childs had been; and then—all at once my whole past life seemed to flash before me as a train of cars going a thousand miles an hour, if such a speed were possible, would pass in one long crowded streak before the eyes of a person standing by the railroad.

I had never heard that this was a common experience with persons who are near drowning, but I have since heard of many cases where the same flash of their past lives has come before drowning people who have been rescued and have told about it.

You may put this story in your essay, if you like.

I get a great many letters from young persons, and it takes a great deal of my time to answer them—so I think I am quite good-natured this evening to tell you all this—don't you think so, dear Miss Isabella? Very truly yours,

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

Song of May.

In Sweden a pretty custom is prevalent on the first of May. At 12 o'clock at night on the 30th of April a band of young people in every town and village begin visiting each house in the neighborhood, singing the "Song of May" until each resident gives them either money or food for the benefit of the May Ball which takes place two days later, its expenses being entirely paid by the proceeds of this midnight singing. Over each door the party leaves a branch of red or white may to bring luck to the household during the coming year.

Glue.

To make an impermeable glue soak ordinary glue in water, until it softens, and remove it before it has lost its form. After this, dissolve it in linseed oil over a slight fire until it is brought to the consistence of a jelly. This glass may be used for joining any kinds of material. In addition to strength and hardness, it has the advantage of resisting the action of water.

A man who comes to the front as a man is always a little to the front as a boy

Prairie Pimples.

Southwestern Louisiana is bordered along the coast with broad sandy and gravelly plains to which the name of "pimpled prairies" has been given. This curious title comes from the circular mounds, arranged in zones and along intersecting lines, with which large areas of the plains are covered. Formerly these mounds, which average fifty feet in diameter and attain occasionally a height of ten feet, were supposed to have been made by ants, with whose nests they abound. But recently Professor Clendenin, of the Louisiana State University, has found reason for thinking that the mounds were formed through the blowing up of mud by gas escaping from vents in the ground. The arrangement of the mounds in zones and lines is accounted for by supposing that the gas vents existed along the fractures radiating from an earthquake center.

Ancient Insects.

Recent discoveries in the coal mines of Central France have furnished by far the greatest advance that has ever been made in our knowledge of the insects which inhabited the world millions of years, as geologists believe, before the time when man made his appearance upon the earth. In that wonderful age when the carboniferous plants, whose remains constitute the coal beds of to-day, were alive and flourishing, the air and the soil were animated by the presence of flies, grasshoppers, cockroaches, dragon-flies, spiders, locusts and scores of other species which exist but slightly changed at the present day. But the insects of those remote times attained a gigantic size, some of the dragon-flies measuring more than two feet from tip to tip of their expanded wings! The remains of these insects have been marvelously preserved in the strata of coal and rock.

A Kite a Mile High.

Since an account was given in this column of the high kite-flying experiments at the Blue Hill Observatory, near Boston, all previous records have been eclipsed there. In 1895 the greatest elevation reached by a kite was 2,500 feet above sea-level, or 1,960 feet above the summit of the hill. During the past summer half a dozen times a kite was sent up more than a mile above sea-level, and on one occasion the height attained was 7,333 feet above the sea, being 1,500 feet more than a mile above the hilltop. The experiments are made with the so-called "tailless" or Eddy kites, and the "box" or Hargrave kites. The highest flight was made by an Eddy kite. The purpose is scientific, as the kites carry self-recording instruments by means of which the temperature and humidity of the air at great elevations can be measured. Sometimes the kites pass through clouds, the thickness of which is revealed by the record of the instruments.

The Wonderful Phagocytes.

When a drop of human blood is placed between two plates of glass and examined with a microscope it is seen to contain, beside the minute disks which give it its red color, little whitish grains called "white corpuscles." If the glass is warmed to a temperature equal to that of the human body these corpuscles, or phagocytes, as they are otherwise called, will be seen to put out and retract minute processes, which, as if acting the part of feet, enable the phagocytes to crawl over the surface of the glass. The Russian naturalist, Metchnikoff, has discovered that the phagocytes in our blood feed upon the microbes of infectious diseases, when such microbes are introduced into the system. Sir Joseph Lister, president of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, believes that this action of the phagocytes, which is scientifically named "phagocytosis," "is the main defensive means possessed by the living body against its microscopic foes." Whenever a wound is made in any part of the body the phagocytes, like well-trained soldiers, rush to the breach and make war upon the putrefactive microbes endeavoring to enter the system.

Iron Quarries.

Very interesting facts, not generally known, about the iron mines of Spain, were discussed at a recent meeting of the Iron and Steel Institute of Great Britain. It is from Northern Spain, in the neighborhood of Bilboa, that the greater part of the iron ore imported for the use of British steel-makers is obtained. Steel is made by the basic process from iron ore containing phosphorus; but for the best qualities of steel, which is made by the open hearth process, a purer ore must be used, and it is that which England imports from Spain. "Nature," says the English scientific journal Nature, "seems to have designed the hills of Northern Spain especially for the use of the steelmaker." Until recently practically no effort has been made to manufacture steel in Spain, and most of the ore has been exported to England. The iron mines of Northern Spain are described as being rather quarries than mines in the ordinary sense of the word. "The mountains themselves are just heaps of iron ore covered naturally with but a thin layer of earth. This is removed, and it only remains to break up the ore and load it into fitting receptacles, when it is conveyed down to the water's edge by its own gravity."

The Great Gas Industry.

The artificial gas interest of this country is an exceedingly important and extensive one. There are in the neighborhood of 1,200 cities and towns of the United States lighted in large part by manufactured gas. In addition there are thousands of homes in which gas is being largely, if not wholly, employed for cooking and heating purposes. About $600,000,000 is invested in gas works property in this country, and the gas interest is perhaps second in importance only to the investment in railroad properties.

The gas industries propose to hold an exposition at Madison Square Garden, New York City, opening on Jan. 27, 1897, and holding for two weeks. At this exposition will be shown every practical apparatus and appliance which enters into the manufacture or distribution of gas as an illuminating or heating agent.

One of the features of the exposition will be cooking demonstrations both afternoon and evening, two competent demonstrators having been secured for this work.

A gas tower of large dimensions has been arranged for and will be one of the great curiosities at the fair; consisting of an extremely ornamental and most brilliantly illuminated spectacular piece, the dimensions of which will be twenty feet at the base, and running to a height of fifty-five feet, on which will be artistically arranged about 2,500 gas jets.

Evidently the gas people propose to demonstrate to the public that their product is capable of producing equal, if not superior lighting effects to those claimed for the electric light.

Went In on Their Horns.

Comedian William H. Crane says that the greatest brass band that this country ever knew was an organization in Ottumwa, Iowa, may years ago.

"I've heard Gilmore and Sousa and all the rest," said Mr. Crane recently, "but their bands couldn't be compared with that prairie aggregation for a moment.

"In my theatrical salad days—when I was much younger than I am now—I was trying to pilot a company of thespian bright lights throughout the western provinces. Business was bad and our treasury was low. At Ottumwa the theater orchestra had some sort of grievance against the management and demanded pay in advance. The theater refused and our organization was not financially in a position to discount the future for a single moment. So I started out to find some sort of music, if possible, to tide us over. I finally succeeded in getting the Ottumwa brass band to agree to play three selections in front of the theater before the performance in return for free admission to the show.

"The band showed up on time, carried out its part of the contract and went into the theater. I was on the door that night and by and by I was struck by the fact that the Ottumwa brass band must be one of the most remarkable musical organizations in the country. Every minute or two somebody would come up to the door with a brass horn under his arm, wave it at me and sail on into the theater without a word. After I had passed in fifty or sixty musicians in this way I began to grow a trifle suspicious and stopped an old granger who was carrying in a big tuba.

"'Excuse me, sir,' I remarked, 'but do you play in the band?'

"'Nope,' he answered.

"'What are you doing with that horn, then?' I asked.

"'I'm goin' to go in on it, if I can,' he replied candidly.

"'Whose is it?' I inquired.

"'Blamed if I know,' he said 'A feller outside there gave it to me and said I could get in with it.'

"I left the door and stepped inside just in time to see one of the band boys drop another horn out of a window into the hands of somebody in the crowd outside in the alley.

"As nearly as I can calculate the Ottumwa brass band that night must have had more members than Gilmore or Sousa ever directed at one time."—Chicago Times-Herald.

A Mother's Duties and Claims.

In an article deprecating the tendency of mothers of the present day to escape the care and responsibility of training their children, Edward W. Bok, in the Ladies' Home Journal, emphasizes the distinction between a mother's duties and the claims upon her time: "* * * When a woman is given the sweetest delight that can come to her, motherhood, God gives with that delight a duty; the duty of a personal training of the child. Before that duty, all outside work—I care not by what religious, charitable or philanthropic word you may call it—should fall. No matter what outside work a woman may be engaged in, the best can only be a claim upon her time, and not a duty. And duties never conflict. God gives no more duties to a woman than she has the time or ability to fulfill. The exactions of the world are not duties; they are claims. If there is time it is well to meet them. But claims being man-made and duties being God-made the former must often be ignored and should be put aside where the latter calls. Women should think of this and bear it in mind a little more constantly than they do, especially in these days of organizations."

Quite Plain.

A coroner in Nevada recently reasoned out a verdict that was more sensible than half the verdicts usually found.

A certain Irishman, conceiving that a little powder thrown upon some wood would facilitate its burning, directed a small stream from a keg upon the burning piece, but not possessing a hand sufficiently quick to cut this off he was blown into a million pieces. The following was the verdict, delivered with great gravity by the official:

"Can't be called suicide, bekase he didn't mean to kill himself; it wasn't visitation of God, bekase he wasn't struck by lightning; he didn't die for want of breath, for he didn't have anything whatsomever to breathe with; it's quite plain he didn't know what he was about, and so I shall bring in—died for want of common sense."

How a Town Was Named.

"Until a few years ago a little Wisconsin hamlet was known simply as 'Hog Back,' from the peculiar shape of a hill near there," said a Milwaukee drummer. "Finally the citizens held an indignation meeting to wipe out the plebeian name and choose a better one.

"It was decided to honor the place by giving it the name of the oldest settler, a man named King. Somebody suggested 'King's Mills,' and another 'Kingsville' and so on, but the old man himself objected. Then it was agreed to name the town for one of Mr. King's daughters. But he had seven of them, and jealousies promptly cropped out. At last some genius noticed that all the girls were red-headed, and suggested 'Auburndale.' And Auburndale it is to this day."

Slept a Year.

In Blanchet's curious book, "Comptes Rendus," mention is made of a girl who at the age of 18 had a peculiar "spell," which the physicians pronounced "constitutional lethargic slumber," which lasted for forty days. Again at the age of 20 she slept for fifty days. Her last recorded "long sleep" lasted almost a year—from April 20, 1862, until March, 1863.

Kissing.

Japanese girls do not kiss each other, nor do parents ever kiss or embrace their children. They bow, kneel, smile, and utter polite phrases with downcast or averted eyes and bent heads, and are content with this sort of conventional expression of affection.

A lobster's skin when shedding splits down the back and comes off in two equal parts. The tail slips out of the shell like a finger out of a glove.

Our idea of something awful would be to become a great musician with long hair, and then get bald.

JACKETS OR NO JACKETS.

This Is Not a Fashion Article, but Is Interesting to Womankind.

It is rarely in this country that potatoes are boiled before they are peeled, or, in the old-fashioned way of expressing it, in their "jackets," and yet in Ireland the very headquarters of this vegetable, such a thing is scarcely known as pre-peeling them. Those who have never tried them in this way are advised to do so some day, when they can make sure they are brought to the table the moment they are done, and not allowed to stand any length of time before they are eaten. Select those of equal size, allow them, after washing and scrubbing thoroughly, to stand covered with cold water for half an hour, then throw into plenty of boiling water, and after boiling twenty minutes prick to the heart with a two-pronged fork; if not soft, cook a little longer, drain, sprinkle with salt, return to the range, and when the saucepan is hot, toss them, to allow the salt to shake evenly through and to dry well, place in a warm napkin on a red-hot plate and serve with good, sweet butter. The flavor of the snowy, fleecy morsels, taken from the jackets and buttered as they are eaten, will be found to be much better than if peeled before boiling; indeed, epicures declare they can detect the difference at once, and as the most nutritious part of a potato is next to the skin none of this is lost.

Potatoes in their jackets make a suitable adjunct to oysters baked and served in the shell. Wash and scrub the oysters, put them in a large baking pan in a hot oven, and in five minutes or less they will begin to open and must be sent to the table at once, six apiece on hot plates. It is well to have a small red doiley at each plate with which to grasp the oyster while opening. Grilled sardines are also particularly good with these same potatoes; they are very savory, yet easily prepared. Grilling is merely another name for broiling, and unless one possesses a perforated broiler, not expensive, however, shaped like a waffle iron, which comes on purpose to cook articles that would slip through the ordinary gridiron or broiler, they may be cooked easily, quickly and satisfactorily by proceeding as follows: Make the frying pan or chafing dish sizzling hot, drop in a teaspoonful of sweet butter, or use the oil in which the sardines are packed as preferred. The pan must be kept very hot, when the fish will brown almost instantly on one side, then turned, browned on the other, and they are ready to be served on toasted crackers or squares of toast softened with bouillon.

The butcher will supply marrow bones on purpose for grilling, and they, too, fit in excellently with potatoes in their jackets, as would scallops, done to a golden brown in boiling olive oil, fried shrimps, roasted crabs and the like.

People who have an open grate with a glowing fire of hard coal, possess the means, with the addition of a chafing dish, that make possible the most savory suppers imaginable, and may delight their friends by novel invitations to sup, with the words "potatoes in their jackets" added, instead of "dancing," "cards," or what not.

Origin of "Brother Jonathan."

When Washington, after being appointed general commander of the army of the revolutionary war, came to Massachusetts to organize it, and make preparations for the defense of the country, he found a great want of ammunition and other means necessary to meet the powerful foe he had to contend with, and great difficulty to obtain them.

If attacked in such a condition the cause at once might be hopeless. On this occasion, at that anxious period, a consultation of the officers and others was had, when it seemed no way could be devised to make such preparations as were necessary.

Jonathan Trumbull was then Governor of the State of Connecticut, and the general, who placed the greatest reliance on his judgment and aid, remarked:

"We must consult brother Jonathan on the subject."

The general did so, and the Governor was successful in supplying many of the wants of the army.

When difficulties afterwards arose, and the army was spread over the country, it became a by-word, "We must consult Brother Jonathan."

The term Yankee is still applied to a portion; but "Brother Jonathan" has now become a designation of the whole country, as John Bull has for England.

No Idea of Music.

Colonel Burr, of Virginia, was a mighty fox-hunter, and loved the sport beyond words. He owned a fine pack of hounds, and, during the season, thought of nothing but his hunters, his dogs, and the weather. He was once entertaining an army friend from Texas, whose ideas of hunting any animal involved the use of fire-arms, and who had never seen a fox-hound. He had been with difficulty persuaded to go forth one morning with the colonel and some friends to a meet, and they were waiting impatiently for the hounds to take the scent. Presently there burst upon their listening ears the din of thirty canine voices in full cry. The colonel's eyes gleamed, and, as he settled his feet in the stirrups and stretched his arm toward the yelping pack, he cried: "Major, listen to that heavenly music!" The major pricked up his ears for a second or two, and then replied: "I can't hear a thing. Those dogs are making such a noise." The colonel put his spur savagely into his horse's side and dashed away, leaving his guest to his own devices.

For Advertising Purposes.

Experiments have lately been made in Switzerland with a view to putting the beautiful lakes of that country to some practical account.

Hitherto these waters have been admired merely because of their natural beauty, but now some enterprising business men have devised a scheme by which they may be made useful for advertising purposes.

The plan is to paint the words of the advertisement in big white letters on a black background.

When sunk and securely held at the bottom of the lake, the advertisement is perfectly legible, the reflection of the light on passing through the water bringing the words near the surface.

It is announced that hitherto the experiments that have been made have been very successful.

Eyes.

Artificial eyes were first made in Egypt. They were of gold and silver, and subsequently of copper and ivory. Hundreds of years later, in the sixteenth century, when they were made in Europe, porcelain was the substance used, and the maker usually stamped his address on the white of the eye.

Rain falls in the Andes about once in seven years.

No Good Roads.

The Watertown correspondent of the Waterbury American, in an article on the building of a piece of road in that town, has this scintillating jewel of fact:

"There is hardly a farmer in town but thinks himself capable to make a good piece of road, but, although various ones have carried out their own ideas, which in a number of instances were diametrically opposed to each other, we never were blessed with many good roads."

Nor will the roads of the country ever be classified as "good," to say nothing of "fair" or "tolerable," until the farmers are taken off the roads and regular road-builders employed. For it is as certain as anything can be that hauling mud on the roads, mixing it with clods of turf and sand, will never make a good road. Road-building and road-repairing is a science, a trade. Every Tom, Dick and Harry cannot make a good road. It is a work which requires study and a road must be built on a regular plan. Roads differ in construction as in situation. The matter of location—dry and sandy soil or wet and clayey soil—has everything to do with the permanence of the road. As that well-known advocate of good roads, G. W. Bradley, of Newtown, says: "You can't make a good road by hauling loam onto loam, or sand onto sand," yet that is what many farmers who make roads do, and are surprised because travelers over the roads find fault.

There is just one way, and only one, to build a good road, and that is to hire a man who knows how; who has put some thought into the subject; who has had experience and is not too anxious to "work out his taxes."—Ansonia (Conn.) Sentinel.

Value of Wide Tires.

The farmer strives his utmost to keep up-to-date in his methods of farming, and in order to do so, ofttimes calls on his dealer to "carry" him longer than it is either convenient or profitable to do so, that he may have the latest improved machinery on the farm.

It is all right to keep up with the times, but it should be done in the right manner. The farmer with his experience, ought certainly, by this time, realize that no other one thing enhances the value of farming lands as all the year round good roads to the market. His acres may be fertile; the improvements all that could be desired. The machinery the latest, which all combine to make farming a success, but what does he profit by large yields of grain and grass when he is compelled to rush right off to market with it immediately it is harvested, for fear that the "roads will get bad" and he will be unable to move it till next summer when the new crops need his attention? Prices are, as a rule, at the lowest notch at this season of the year, yet he dare not take the risk of holding, because when the prices advance somewhat, the roads won't permit him to haul.

The manufacturers have done their part in perfecting road-making machinery so well that it brings the cost of good roads within the reach of every community, and the enhanced value of lands lying adjacent to good roads will alone, many times over, make up the outlay to build such roads, to say nothing of the improved social relations in the rural districts, the saving in horse-flesh and vehicles, besides being able to go when you please, winter or summer, and haul good loads.

One of the first moves in the direction of good roads for the dealer to make is to try and persuade every customer who purchases a wagon to use only wide tires. Each farmer who uses wide tires will undertake to convince his neighbor of its advantages, and before very long there will be enough wide tires in the community to speak for themselves in unmistakable terms regarding their value as good roads promoters.

Let the farmer once experience the change, and he will not go back to mud and ruts for winter, and ruts and dust for summer. He will demand that his "district" be supplied with the best road-making machinery. In securing this the dealer must take a hand. He has numerous and able allies in the wheelmen throughout the country, and even though he should decide that he is not blessed with a better trade, he at least can enjoy the consciousness of having assisted in doing a noble work whereby all humanity is benefitted.—Farm Machinery.

An Odd Fish.

In the Sea of Galilee—or Lake Tiberias, as it is often called—there is a strange fish named the Chromis Simonis, which is more careful of its young than fish generally are. The male fish takes the eggs in its mouth and keeps them in his natural side pockets, where they are regularly hatched, and remain until able to shift for themselves. By this ingenious arrangement the brood is comparatively guarded against its natural enemies; it is easily fed, too, but it is a puzzle how the little ones escape being eaten alive.

An Underground City.

There is an underground city in Central Asia, supposed to have been built before the Christian era, as effigies, inscriptions and designs found among the ruins date it back to two centuries before the birth of Christ. The city is composed of long corridors, streets and squares, surrounded by houses and buildings, some two or three stories in height; and by the beautiful symmetry of the streets and squares, and other indications, it is evident that the inhabitants of this old world city had arrived at a high degree of civilization.

The Bible.

An old custom still observed in many households is opening the Bible