

TAKE MEAN!

The little pin that sharply pricks, A mountain, seems, of woe; The little thread that ticks Seems indolent and slow. But time outwits our little pain— The second hand moves on; And ere we note its pace again The weary hour is gone. —New York Recorder.

THE VOICE OF SCIENCE.

Mrs. Edalie, of the Lindens, Birchespool, was a lady of quite remarkable scientific attainments. As honorary secretary of the ladies' branch of the local Eclectic society she shone with a never falling brilliance. It was even whispered that on the occasion of the delivery of Professor Tomlinson's suggestive lecture on the "Perigeneity of the Plastidius" she was the only woman in the room who could follow the lecturer even as far as the end of his title. It would have been a strange thing had Mrs. Edalie not been popular among local scientists, for her pretty home, her charming grounds, and all the hospitality which an income of £2,000 a year will admit of, were always at their command. On her pleasant lawn in the summer, and around her drawing room fire in the winter, there was much high talk of microbes and leucocytes and sterilized bacteria, where thin, astatic materialists from the university upheld the importance of this life against round, comfortable companions of orthodoxy from the cathedral close. And in the heat of thrust and parry, when scientific proof ran full till against inflexible faith, a word from the clever widow, or an opportune rattle over the keys by her pretty daughter, Rose, would bring all back to harmony once more.

Rose Edalie had just passed her twentieth year, and was looked upon as one of the beauties of Birchespool. Her face was, perhaps, a trifle long for perfect symmetry, but her eyes were fine, her expression kindly and her complexion beautiful. It was an open secret, too, that she had under her father's will £2000 a year in her own right. With such advantages a far plainer girl than Rose Edalie might create a stir in the society of a provincial town.

A scientific conversation in a private house is an onerous thing to organize, yet mother and daughter had not shrunk from the task. On the morning of which I write they sat together surveying their accomplished labors, with the pleasant feeling that nothing remained to be done save to receive the congratulations of their friends.

With the assistance of Rupert, the son of the house, they had assembled from all parts of Birchespool objects of scientific interest, which now adorned the long tables in the drawing room. Indeed, the full tide of curiosities of every sort which had swelled into the house had overflowed the rooms devoted to the meeting, and had surged down the broad stairs to invade the dining room and the passage. The whole villa had become a museum. Specimens of the flora and fauna of the Philippine islands, a 10-foot turtle carapace from the Gallapagos, the os frontis of the Pos montis as shot by Captain Charles Bessy in the Thibetan Himalayas, the bacillus of Koch cultivated on gelatine—these and a thousand other such trophies adorned the tables upon which the two ladies gazed that morning.

"You're really managed it splendidly, ma," said the young lady, craning her neck up to give her mother a congratulatory kiss. "It was so brave of you to undertake it."

"I think that will do," purred Mrs. Edalie complacently. "But I do hope that the phonograph will work without a hitch. You know at the last meeting of the British association I got Professor Standerton to repeat into it his remarks on the life history of Medusina Gouphore."

"How funny it seems," exclaimed Rose, gazing at the square, boxlike apparatus which stood in the post of honor on the central table, "to think that this wood and metal will begin to speak just like a human being."

"Hardly that, dear. Of course the poor thing can say nothing except what is said to it. You always know exactly what is coming. But I do hope that it will work all right."

"Rupert will see to it when he comes up from the garden. He understands all about them. Oh, ma, I feel so nervous."

said he, with his hands buried deeply in his trousers pockets and an uneasy expression on his face. "There's one thing that I wanted to speak to you about. Look here, Rosie, a bit of fun is all very well, but you wouldn't be such a little donkey to think seriously of this fellow Bessy?"

"My dear Rupert, do try to be a little less abrupt," said Mrs. Edalie, with a deprecating hand outstretched. "I can't help seeing how they have been thrown together. I don't want to be unkind, Rosie, but I can't stand by and see you wreck your life for a man who has nothing to recommend him but his eyes and moustache. Do be a sensible girl and have nothing to say to him."

"It is surely a point, Rupert, upon which I am more fitted to decide than you can be," remarked Mrs. Edalie with dignity. "No matter, for I have been able to make some inquiries. Young Chelington, of the gunners, knew him in India. He says—"

But his sister broke in upon his revelations. "I won't stay here, ma, to hear him slandered behind his back," she cried with spirit. "He has never said anything that was not kind of you, Rupert, and I don't know why you should attack him so. It is cruel, unbrotherly." With a sweep and a whisk she was at the door, her cheeks flushed, her eyes sparkling, her bosom heaving with this little spurt of indignation, while close at her heels walked her mother with soothing words, and an angry glance thrown back over her shoulder. Rupert Edalie stood with his hands burrowing deeper and deeper into his pockets and his shoulders rising higher and higher to his ears, feeling intensely guilty, and yet not certain whether he should blame himself for having said too much or for not having said enough.

Just in front of him stood the table on which the phonograph, with wires, batteries and all complete, stood ready for the guests whom it was to amuse. Slowly his hands emerged from his pockets as his eye fell upon the apparatus, and with languid curiosity he completed the connection and started the machine. A pompous, husky sound, as of a man clearing his throat, proceeded from the instrument, and then in high, piping tones, thin but distinct, the commencement of the celebrated scientist's lecture. "Of all the interesting problems," remarked the box, "which are offered to us by recent researches in the lower orders of marine life there is none to exceed the retrograde metamorphosis which characterizes the common barnacle. The differentiation of an amorphous protoplasmic mass"—here Rupert Edalie broke the connection again, and the funny little stinking voice ceased as suddenly as it began.

The young man stood smiling, looking down at this garrulous piece of wood and metal, when suddenly the smile broadened and a light of mischief danced up into his eyes. He slipped his thigh, and danced round in the ecstasy of one who has stumbled on a brand new brilliant idea. Very carefully he drew forth the slips of metal which recorded the learned professor's remarks, and laid them aside for future use. Into the slots he thrust virgin plates, all ready to receive an impression, and then, bearing the phonograph under his arm, he vanished into his own sanctum. Five minutes before the first guests had arrived the machine was laced upon the table, and all ready for use.

There could be no question of the success of Mrs. Edalie's conversation. From first to last everything went admirably. People stared through microscopes, and linked hands for electric shocks, and marvelled at the Gallapagos turtle, the os frontis of the Bos montis and all the other curiosities which Mrs. Edalie had taken such pains to collect. Groups formed and chatted round the various cases. The dean of Birchespool listened with a protesting lip while Professor Maunders held forth upon a square of triangle rock, with side threads occasionally at the six days of orthodox creation; a knot of specialists disputed over a stuffed orthorhynchus in a corner while Mrs. Edalie swept from group to group, introducing, congratulating, laughing, with the ready, graceful tact of a clever woman of the world. By the window sat the heavily mustached Captain Bessy, with the daughter of the house, and they discussed a problem of their own, as old as the triassic rock and perhaps as little understood.

"But I must really go and help my mother to entertain, Captain Bessy," said Rose, at last, with a movement as if to rise.

"Don't go, Rose. And don't call me Captain Bessy; call me Charles."

"Well, then, Charles."

"How prettily it sounds from your lips! No, now, don't go. I can't bear to be away from you. I had heard of love, Rose; but how strange it seems that I, after spending my life amid all that is sparkling and gay, should only find out now, in this little provincial town, what love really is!"

"How about little Martha Hovedean, of the Kennal Choir union?" cried the piping voice.

Louder still rose the titters. Mrs. Edalie stared about her in bewilderment, Rose burst out laughing, and the captain's jaw dropped lower still, with a tinge of green upon the cheese-like face.

"Who was it who hid the ace in the artillery cardroom at Pashawur? Who was it who was broke in consequence? Who was it?"

"Good gracious," cried Mrs. Edalie, "what nonsense is this? The machine is out of order. Stop it, Rupert. These are not the professor's remarks. But, dear me, where is our friend Captain Bessy gone?"

"I am afraid that he is not very well, ma," said Rose. "He rushed out of the room."

"There can't be much the matter," quoth Rupert. "There he goes, cutting down the avenue as fast as his legs will carry him. I do not think, somehow, that we shall see the captain again. But I must really apologize. I have put in the wrong slips. These, I fancy, are those which belong to Professor Standerton's lecture."

Rose Edalie has become Rose Stares now, and her husband is one of the most rising scientists in the provinces. No doubt she is proud of his intellect and of his growing fame, but there are times when she still gives a thought to the blue-eyed captain, and marvels at the strange and sudden manner in which he deserted her.—Strand Magazine.

"I maintain," said a shrewd observer recently, "that the American people are becoming frivolous."

When he was asked what evidence he could bring to prove his assertion true, he replied: "I want no better evidence than their indifference to serious public affairs. Our political system has developed certain defects, but no effort is made to get rid of them. The people of some of our largest states submit to 'boss rule' which they could crush forever by giving attendance at caucus and the polls for three consecutive years."

"See, too, how a system of frequent and prolonged holidays has developed. We work fewer days and fewer hours in the day than our fathers or even our elder brothers did. Every one seems to be forever looking forward to vacation like a schoolboy."

"And what do they read? What do you read? When you open your paper in the morning, to what do you turn first? To the proceedings of congress, or the great happenings at home or abroad? I trow not. You look at the score of the baseball games, or the discoveries of reporters relative to the latest sensational murder, or at some other personal stuff about people of whom you never heard before, and who are dragged before the public by circumstances in which the public ought not to have the smallest interest."

This is a harsh judgment, but it cannot be denied that there is enough truth in it to cause us to pause and remember with the poet that "life is real, life is earnest."—Youth's Companion.

When James Monroe was president and John Quincy Adams secretary of state, an ingenious English engraver obtained permission of the two dignitaries mentioned to take the Declaration of Independence and engrave it in facsimile on copper. He carried the precious document to the printing office of one Peter Force. When everything was in readiness, he placed it upon the imposing stone and laid a sheet of india paper of the same size upon it. This india paper was next moistened with water in which gum arabic had been dissolved. A heavy proof roller with a weight hanging from each end was then rolled several times over the historic document. When the india paper was removed from the face of the instrument, it took with it at least one-half of the ink used in writing and signing the document.

The document is less than a century and a quarter years old, and with proper care should be almost as legible as it was on the 5th day of July, 1776. As it is, only 11 signatures out of the 53 can be read without a glass, and some of them have disappeared beyond recall, all on account of the thieving trick of a government which when they found that they could not keep the colonies dependent, stole the very ink from the document which declares our independence.—St. Louis Republic.

THE BREECHES BUOY.

An Apparatus That Has Saved Many Lives on the Atlantic Coast.

Wonderful are the appliances now used on the Atlantic coast for rescuing people from wrecks, and an optimist might find a world of argument in the contrast between these times and those when the wreckers thought only of their booty or, farther back, when shipwrecked men were seized and held to ransom. The array of lifeboats, ropes and other outfitting for the life saving station is extensive, and one of the latest and best is the so called breeches buoy.

When a vessel goes ashore on the sands of a shelving coast of New Jersey, for instance, where wrecks are most numerous, the condition nearly always allows the surfmen of the life saving stations to launch a lifeboat. If not, they bring out the Lyle gun. This is a small brass cannon, which has a projectile fitting over the barrel like a sheath over a sword. To the projectile is fastened one end of a stout cord. The gun is aimed to throw the projectile over the ship and thus bring the cord within the reach of the men on the wreck. It seldom requires more than two shots to land the



HOW THE BREECHES BUOY WORKS.

cord. The surfmen then pull it in and get hold of the rope to which it is fastened. When the end of the rope is hauled aboard, it is made fast to one of the masts. Meanwhile the surfmen are burying a sand anchor. This is a great square of plank, whose surface grips the sand in which it is sunk. To it the shags end of the rope is securely fastened.

With the rope goes a loose trolley line, by which the men on the wreck haul out the breeches buoy—an ungainly pair of canvas trousers hung to a circular life preserver. Into this one of the shipwrecked gets, sticking a leg through each capacious hole and grasping the life preserver, which comes just under his armpits. He does not need to be tied in, for his seat is secure. All being ready, the surfmen ashore begin to haul in. The breeches buoy rolls rapidly shoreward, suspended from its hempen track. For most of the distance the man in the breeches is dangling above the water. When he reaches the surf, though, he is bound to get a ducking. He holds his breath as the wild waves go over him, and the next minute a dozen strong hands are pulling him up the sand beach and out of his canvas breeches.

When there are women aboard, there is a suggestion of the ludicrous. "Wearing the breeches" may be repugnant to a woman, but she does not hesitate a second. Pulling her dress up around her, in she steps as unhesitatingly as though she were born to trousers. All she asks at that moment is to get ashore. The breeches buoy is voted the best thing in the business and has already saved many lives.

His Regard For Himself. The comfortable, well clad citizen was going along Woodward avenue home the other evening when a big, burly tramp stopped him and asked for a dime. The citizen looked him over and asked: "Do you have no more regard for yourself than to beg on the streets?" "That's just it, boss," was the reply. "It's because I have regard for myself that I do. There's too many dogs in the back yards."—Detroit Free Press.

In Politics It Is "Full." From the Hopeful Young Man to the Pastor—As I stand in the broad avenue of life I find so many closed doors I know not which one to open. How can I tell which will lead me to success? From the Practical Pastor to the Young Man—There's only one, and you'll find it labeled "Push."—Exchange.

Saving and Spending. "I saved up \$5.08 last year," said Wallis proudly. "And I suppose you spent it on presents for your papa and mamma?" asked the visitor. "Yes," said Wallis. "That is all but \$3 of it."—Harper's Bazar.

The man who, after studying a hundred women, thought he knew the sex thoroughly, admitted, on intimate acquaintance with the one hundred and first, that he was densely ignorant of the nature of any one of them. The living alumni of the University of Michigan are said to number twice as many as the living alumni of any other educational institution in this country. Harvard is reported to be next, with Yale a good third. It is said that when dressed in the European gowns a Japanese wife precedes her husband in entering a room, while in the eastern dress she must follow him. Richter was fond of pets and at one time kept a great spider in a paper box, carefully feeding and tending the creature for many months. The Japanese say, "A man takes a drink, then the drink takes a drink, and the next drink takes the man."

Seats in the House of Commons.

Members who are not officials or leaders of a party have to come down to the house several hours before it meets in order to get good seats, and those who are not very knowing or very pertinacious, on days when something interesting happens, have often great difficulty to find a place in which to sit. It is not to be wondered at that there are plenty of members who find such a state of things intolerable, and who hold that a member of parliament who wants to assist at a first class debate in comfort should not be forced to adopt the arts which have to be practiced by those who want to hear a prima donna sing in a popular opera. Plenty of worry and inconvenience in other ways have to be faced by the legislators of the United Kingdom, and it is monstrous to add to these the nuisance of not knowing whether they will be able to take part in comfort in the work of parliament.

The fuss and friction caused by the difficulty of getting a seat is an aggravation to which members of parliament ought not to be subjected. That is a proposition to which all reasonable men might be expected to agree. But though we trust that the house will find sitting room for all its members we most devoutly hope that it will not adopt the suggestion that each legislator shall have opposite his seat a desk where he can write his letters. Let the men who want to write do so in the writing rooms, but do not let us make the house of commons look like a colossal counting house. In nothing but in size would we alter the look of the house of commons. Its long green benches must rule the empire in the future as they have ruled it in the past.—London Spectator.

How He Escaped Trouble. "Maria," he said as he entered the house, speaking before his wife had time to say a word, "this house is in an awful condition."

"Why, Henry?"—she began. "Don't try to excuse yourself," he interrupted. "Look at this room! I was going to bring a friend home with me, but I refrained for fear the house would be just in the condition that I find it in."

"If you had sent word, Henry."

"Sent word, Maria! Why should I have to send word? Why should any one who claims to be a housekeeper have to be notified so that she can scurry about and make things look respectable? And that gown, Maria! It's outrageous to be dressed in that fashion at this time of day."

"I could have changed it!"

"Oh, of course. You could have done lots of things, but you didn't. You should be ready to entertain your husband's friends at any time. I suppose the dinner is cold too?"

"It's not so good as it was. You're late, you know."

"Of course, and if I had brought my friend with me he'd have had to sit down to a cold dinner or one that was burned to a cinder, and we should have both felt humiliated and should have had to apologize. It isn't right, Maria! It isn't right at all."

And after he had settled himself in his armchair after dinner he chuckled to himself and muttered: "George! But I should have got a roasting for being late if I hadn't started in first. It's a great scheme."—Boston Globe.

The Habit of Sleeping. "I can sleep through anything," I heard a man exclaim a few days ago during an argument about insomnia, "and in my opinion it is very largely a matter of habit. The reason for my thinking that way," he continued, "is simply this: I used to live in an exceedingly quiet street, where, after 10 o'clock at night, there would scarcely be a sound until 7 or 8 o'clock the next morning. So accustomed did I become to this cemetery-like stillness that the slightest sound would awaken me—the slam of a door, the rattling of a window, or even voices in the street. After a time circumstances changed and I found myself residing near the line of an elevated railroad, so close to it, in fact, that the rumble of the trains seemed to shake the very house.