

PRESIDENT ASKS CO-OPERATION

Spirit of War in Time of Peace Urged by Executive.

Wilson Predicts Shortage of Food and Urges Farmers to Grow Larger Grain Supply.

Washington, D. C. — Co-operation between business and the government in framing laws for the benefit of all the people was urged by President Wilson Thursday night in an address before several hundred representative business men, here attending the annual convention of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States. He declared that "we must all pool our interests" in order to discover the best means for handling public problems.

The creation in the United States in time of peace of the same kind of united spirit which moves nations during wars was advocated by the President, who remarked that "when peace is as handsome as war there will be no wars."

"When men engage in the pursuits of peace in the same spirit of self-sacrifice as they engage in wars, wars will disappear."

The President predicted that while there is a shortage of food in the world now the shortage will be much greater later. He pointed out that under the guidance of the department of Agriculture efforts must be made by farmers in the United States to grow more grain, in order that the world may be fed.

Speaking of the foreign trade of the United States, the President asked that business men devise some way of allowing exporters in the United States to combine to secure common selling agencies, and to give long-time credits in such a way that these co-operative devices may be open to the use of all.

He declared that apparently the anti-trust laws prohibited such combinations now, but he would favor a change if a method fair to all could be found.

He spoke of the work being done by the bureau of foreign and domestic commerce in "surveying the world" for the benefit of all business men. Business men themselves are to blame if intelligent laws affecting them are not framed, the President asserted. He added that they should come out in to the open and use their knowledge of conditions to bring about fair laws to prevent business evils.

Embargo Argument Has Attention of U. S. Senate

Washington, D. C. — Senator Hitchcock's bill to empower the President to forbid exports of war supplies was urged before the senate foreign relations committee by Horace L. Brand and Michael English, of Chicago, and Representative Bartholdt, of Missouri.

Mr. Bartholdt said England had enacted a similar law in 1853, just before the Crimean War, and regarded it as a domestic matter. Under questioning by Senator Sutherland, he thought the effect of the Hitchcock bill would be to weaken the allies.

He cited the biography of Ambassador White at Berlin in 1898, during the Spanish-American war, showing Germany's attitude. It was said there, he said, that a shipload of war materials had left Hamburg for a Spanish port when Mr. White protested and the German government, although it had a clear right to permit such traffic, ordered the ship back to Hamburg to be unloaded.

Canada Asks U. S. for Bridge Dynamiter

Washington, D. C. — Formal application for the extradition to Canada of Werner Van Horn, charged with "attempted destruction of human life," was made at the State department by Sir Cecil Spring-Rice, the British ambassador.

The ambassador called personally at the department and presented a brief note to Secretary Bryan based on communications from the Canadian Minister of Justice at Ottawa, informing the embassy that Van Horn was wanted on the charge of attempting to destroy human life, through the willful and unlawful destruction of the St. Croix river bridge.

Turks Defeat Russians. Solons Fear Smallpox.

Berlin — A Turkish victory over the Russian army of the Caucasus is reported from Constantinople, as given by the Overseas News Agency. The Turkish military headquarters at Constantinople announced a Russian detachment had made an attack on the Turkish forces at Arthin, in the Trans-Caucasus, 34 miles southeast of Tiflis. This attack is said to have been repulsed, with heavy losses in men and war material for the Russians. The Turkish troops then made a successful attack on two Russian battalions.

Three Bosnians Executed. 4500 Men Go to Work.

Amsterdam — A Berlin dispatch received here says that the execution of three of the conspirators in the assassination of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, took place on Wednesday in the prison of the court fortress at Sarajevo, Bosnia. Gavrijo Princip, the Serbian student who actually slew the archduke and his morganatic wife while they were visiting Sarajevo, is undergoing a sentence of 20 years' imprisonment, a death sentence being illegal on account of his youth.

West Coast Is Stormed. 4500 Men Go to Work.

San Diego — A radiogram to Rear Admiral Howard, on board the flagship San Diego here, received from Mazatlan, reported that General Iturbe, a Villa partisan, stormed Acaponeta last Monday, after several hours of fighting, and captured 60 prisoners. His own wounded are being transported to Mazatlan. The cruiser San Diego left here for Ensenada to investigate conditions there.

New Styles Reflect War in Submarine Petticoats

Chicago — Submarine and spiral petticoats have arrived. You may take your choice.

The fashion show has opened at the First Regiment armory.

In several booths are fascinating exhibits of silk threads, the spools arranged primly in prismatic colors. Another booth has petticoats and negligees that have attracted a great deal of attention by reason of their novelty.

The submarine petticoat and negligee is the oddest of them all. The petticoat is of bluish green silk, the bottom wired out into a hoop. Decorating the bottom and half way up to the top are submarine scenes. One large under-water boat drifted placidly through a marvelous deep-sea garden of gilt and silver flowers, while bizarre gilded fish swam around it, peering with evident curiosity.

The whole is cleverly portrayed, especially considering the canvas and the materials.

The spiral petticoat is a maze of ruffles, which run spirally up the skirt from the hem to the waist band. It sticks out like an antebellum skirt, and the negligee above it is quaintly fashioned to carry out the fish idea.

The lampshade petticoat also holds its quota of admirers.

An innovation in a tailored suit is one which may be transformed into a peace or a war suit. If your tendencies are toward militarism, the suit is worn buttoned up tightly to the neck with martial-looking buttons. Then it is a most soldierly in appearance. But if you are peaceful, then it is allowed to fall back unfastened into soft lines.

A clever style of the popular suit dress is shown. It is of linen and so deceptively fashioned that it would seem to be a separate coat and skirt, but it isn't, it fools you. It is a dress.

World Police Idea Advocated by Earl Grey

London — Earl Grey, foreign secretary, presiding at a meeting held to advocate an agreement among the nations for the enforcement of international law, said that the present conflict probably never would have taken place had the policy of American pacifists, that the signatory nations to the Hague conventions should undertake collective responsibility for the enforcement, been adopted.

"It is almost certain," said Earl Grey, "that this logical and necessary complement of the Hague tribunal will be adopted when the nations again meet in consultation."

"The neutral powers who signed the Hague conventions missed a great opportunity by not protesting against the violations of international regulations that occurred in this war, which undoubtedly would have led to a diminution of its horrors."

A resolution was adopted declaring it to be "imperative that a peace be established which shall secure collective responsibility by all civilized nations for the maintenance and enforcement of international law."

To Blockade Is Not Idea, Says Germany

Berlin — The naval measures of Germany against British commerce are in no sense a blockade. No hostile action against neutral shipping is contemplated. German warships and submarines will endeavor by every means in their power to avoid sinking American or other neutral ships and will take every precaution to avoid a mistake.

The above may be taken as the correct interpretation placed upon the German proclamation in Berlin.

The proclamation declaring the waters around Great Britain to be a war zone like similar British measures which were taken as a precedent, is designed, it is asserted, to warn neutrals that a ship venturing into the naval field of operations exposes itself to the risk of being struck by a chance shot.

It was said that it might be safely asserted that the Germans have no intention of sinking an American ship unless she is carrying contraband of war, and that only if her crew can be given the possibility of escape.

The warning to neutral shipping, it was asserted, was considered as particularly needed in view of the reported order to British ships to hoist a neutral flag whenever they are in danger, an order which, if adhered to, it was stated, would make it difficult for a German warship to discriminate between hostile and neutral shipping.

Trading-Stamp Tax Asked. Need of Chaplain Debated.

State Capitol, Salem — A bill which, it is believed, would end the trading-stamp industry in this state if passed was introduced by Senator La Follette. It provides that all persons and corporations furnishing trading stamps to patrons must pay to the state annually 5 per cent of the gross receipts of their businesses. It shall be the duty of the State Tax commissioner to obtain the names of persons or corporations using trading stamps and file lists with the State Treasurer not later than February 1 every year.

State Capitol, Salem — What is a chaplain worth to penal institutions? The joint house and senate committees on ways and means debated that question at length and brought into question the advisability of paying \$50 a month for such services. Tentatively, however, the appropriation for chaplains at the State Training School for Boys was allowed to remain in the budget. An aggregate of \$2620 was eliminated from the budget of that institution, leaving approximately \$66,000 for the next biennium.

State Capitol, Salem — A meeting of the joint committees from the house and senate with a similar committee from the Washington State legislature will be held at the Benson Hotel in Portland next Saturday morning to consider proposed changes in the fishing laws on the Columbia river. It is probable that both houses will adjourn Saturday to give members of the committees opportunity to attend this meeting without absenting themselves from the regular sessions.

John D. Jr., Buys Vases. 4500 Men Go to Work.

New York — In the wake of an announcement by J. Pierpont Morgan that he had disposed of his father's set of Chinese porcelains, which, since the death of his father, have been on exhibition at the Metropolitan museum, it was learned that John D. Rockefeller, Jr., had purchased them. Morgan's father spent money lavishly collecting rare porcelains and had expended something like \$4,000,000. The price paid for them is estimated slightly below that figure. In the collection there are more than 1000 pieces.

Elizabeth, N. J. — The assembling department, one of the largest at the Singer Sewing Machine Works, has announced a return of all men on a full time schedule. At the office of the management, it was said the entire plant will be back on the old schedule within another month. Early last fall about 50 per cent of the 9000 employed there were laid off.

DOINGS OF OREGON'S LEGISLATURE

A Brief Resume of Proceedings of the People's Representatives at the State Capital, Bills Introduced, Passed, Rejected, Etc.

House Passes Its Compensation Bill

State Capitol, Salem — By a vote of 55 to 2 the house passed house bill 222, providing a series of amendments to the workmen's compensation act that are expected to remedy defects in the law that have been discovered in the few months it has been in effect.

The principal change contemplated is to reclassify the industries and make their rates of insurance under the act commensurate with the risk involved.

The measure requires the industrial accident commission to investigate all cases where it has reason to believe that employers subject to the act have failed to install or maintain safety appliances required by statute, and to report cases of failure to a prosecuting attorney and request criminal proceedings.

It further offers inducements to employers to remove the hazard from their shops and factories by reducing their rates in proportion to the reduction of the number of accidents.

It was openly charged on the floor of the house that the casualty companies are eager to have the bill defeated and that they would benefit by enactment of a law similar to the Michigan law.

A dozen members spoke in favor of the bill, including Representative Scheibel, its author, and Sam Brown, Mr. Smith, of Multnomah, Horne, Hare, Lewis, Jeffries and Wentworth. It was pointed out that the bill had the endorsement of both employers and employees, and Dr. Smith declared that the best argument in favor of it was the charge that the casualty companies were against it.

The ways and means committee has not decreased the per capita allowances for any institution, but has kept the proposed expenditures at a minimum by eliminating from the budget estimates all unnecessary improvement work and by allowing no new work except the building at the Pendleton institution.

Ardent Appeal Made for Irrigation Appropriation

State Capitol, Salem — Leading business men of Portland, Eastern Oregon and other sections of the state at a meeting here urged the joint ways and means committee to report favorably upon the house bill providing an appropriation of \$450,000 for irrigation work the next two years. All declared that the proposed work would constitute an investment the state could ill-afford to decline to make, inasmuch as the Federal government had guaranteed to give a similar amount in the reclamation of the arid lands of the state.

Joseph T. Hinkle, representative in the legislature from Umatilla county, and chairman of the house irrigation committee, said the progressive business men of the state wanted the appropriation as was evidenced by its advocacy by the Portland Commercial club, the Portland Chamber of Commerce, the Progressive Business Men's club, the lumber, railroad and other interests.

J. N. Teal, of the conservation committee, said the legislature faced a question of economy, not parsimony. The day of large irrigation projects being carried to a successful conclusion by private capital, he said, had passed. It was purely a governmental function, he declared, for individuals would want profits, but the government, working in the interest of the people, would have no such motive to be done, he declared, either by the state or the National government or by them working in co-operation. Declaring that a considerable part of the eastern section of the state was a desert and would remain so until it was supplied with water, Mr. Teal said, it is in the interest of good business to improve the land as soon as possible. He urged that continuous plan of work be adopted until all arid land was reclaimed.

Interstate Bridge Bill In.

State Capitol, Salem — All profits derived from the operation of the Interstate bridge, between Portland and Vancouver, Wash., are to be turned over to the state to apply on the interest charges on the bridge bonds, if the action taken by the house is carried to its ultimate conclusion. The bill was up for adoption and referred back to the committee on revision of laws for the purpose of having the provision to give the state the surplus tolls inserted. The measure provides that the county commissioners and the governor shall have charge of the bridge.

Fish Measures Continued.

State Capitol, Salem — To give all members opportunity to inform themselves regarding the measures the senate has postponed action on the Gill bill to close the Willamette river to net fishing and bills relating to fishing in the Rogue river next week.

Senator Dimick, who is leading the fight for the Oregon City fishermen in the senate, promised if the continuance were granted he would make an effort to obtain another one with the object of delaying action and imperiling the Gill measure the last days of the session.

Hospital Fees Guarded.

State Capitol, Salem — Contracting firms, industrial concerns, mercantile institutions and other large employers of labor that collect funds from their employees for hospital service will be required to give an accounting of the money paid to give the workmen a bill in its expenditure, by the terms of a bill that was passed by the house. Representative Horne, author of the measure, declared that the system now in vogue among some of the "fly-by-night" railroad contractors constitutes nothing but an "organized graft."

House Carpet Causes Talk.

State Capitol, Salem — New carpet for the floor of the house chamber has in the last few days become a subject of discussion at the state capital. The old carpet in the house shows much wear. Secretary of State Olcott reports that the carpet was put down about 23 years ago. In 1911 the floor of the senate chamber was covered with battiseph linoleum. Out of money left over from the 1913 appropriation for remodeling work on the capitol, the visitors' part of the house also was covered with linoleum.

Jitney Query Propounded.

State Capitol, Salem — Is a jitney bus a public conveyance? That is a question that Harvey Wells, State insurance commissioner, must answer within the next few days. A man in Portland was injured while riding in a jitney. He carried an accident policy which had the usual provision of double indemnity in case of injury in a public conveyance. The insurance company doesn't want to pay the double rate. The policyholder has appealed the case to the commissioner.

Anti-Loan Shark Bill Filed.

State Capitol, Salem — A bill introduced by Senator Smith prohibits the assignment of wages by married men unless the written consent of the wives are obtained. The senator introduced the bill by request.

House Votes Appropriations Aggregating \$1,185,627

State Capitol, Salem — Four big appropriation bills, providing expenditures for many big state departments and aggregating \$1,185,627, were passed by the house.

The several departments and the amount provided for each for the next biennium are: Capitol and Supreme Court buildings and grounds, \$58,560; state hospital for the insane, \$676,166; institution for the feeble-minded, \$144,961; Eastern Oregon hospital for the insane, \$305,860.

The bill providing \$174,700 for the state penitentiary and that appropriating \$28,215 for the blind school were laid on the table temporarily to give Governor Withycombe further opportunity to study them.

None of the measures passed provides for any permanent improvements, excepting the Eastern Oregon asylum bill which carries \$100,000 for a new building.

In the 1913-1914 biennium, these same four institutions and departments had appropriations aggregating \$1,376,946.61, which included \$139,000 for completion of the Supreme Court building, \$41,000 for new buildings at the feeble-minded institution, \$45,000 for new buildings at the Eastern Oregon hospital and approximately \$45,000 for work on the new receiving ward at the state insane hospital at Salem.

The ways and means committee has not decreased the per capita allowances for any institution, but has kept the proposed expenditures at a minimum by eliminating from the budget estimates all unnecessary improvement work and by allowing no new work except the building at the Pendleton institution.

Non-Partisan Judiciary Is Object of New Bill

State Capitol, Salem — A bill to place the state judiciary on a non-partisan basis, similar to that proposed and defeated at the November election, is one of the measures pending before the judiciary committee in the house.

The measure was introduced by Representative Handley, of Tillamook, and is endorsed by some of the leading attorneys in the state. The committee has taken no action, and may be governed by what the people selected at a similar plan at the polls, although by a narrow margin.

Before the committee is a bill by Hinkle providing a state system of annuities. It virtually empowers the state to go into the life insurance business, the money to be invested in irrigation projects and other public works.

Representative Lafferty's bill empowering the state to develop idle cement properties and build roads with the cement also is before this committee.

Two measures by Representative Hare aimed to relieve congestion in the courts also are before the judiciary committee. One would prevent appeals to the Supreme court on cases involving less than \$250, and the other would prevent jury trial of cases involving less than \$250.

Among the other judiciary bills is one by Representative Blanchard regulating commission merchants, requiring them to file heavy bonds and pay license, and another by Representative Stott applying the hotel keepers' alien law to apartment houses.

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OLD LADY NUMBER 31

By LOUISE FORSSLUND

AUTHOR OF "THE STORY OF SARAH," "THE SHIP OF DREAMS," ETC. COPYRIGHT BY THE CENTURY CO.

SYNOPSIS.

they must crave their very own fire side; and the thought that they missed the old homestead made her yearn for the home that she might have had—the home that she still might have.

Again she brought her eyes back to the portrait; and now she saw, not the characteristics which she always made it seem impossible for her and Samuel to join together down life's road, but the great truth that the face was honest and wholesome while the eyes looked back into hers with the promise of an unswerving care and affection.

The next morning found Blossy kneeling before a plump, little leather-bound, time-worn trunk which she kept under the eaves of the kitchen chamber. The trunk was packed hard with bundles of old letters. Some her younger fingers had tied with violet ribbon; some they had bound with pink; others she had fastened together with white silk cord, and there were more and more bundles, both slim and stout, which Blossy had distinguished by some special hue of ribbon in the long ago, each tint marking a different suitor's misdeeds.

To her still sentimental eye the colors remained unfaded, and each would bring to her mind instantly the picture of the writer as he had been in the golden days. But save to Blossy's eye alone there were no longer any rainbow tints in the little old trunk;

CHAPTER VI—Continued.

It "plagued" the others, however, to see that none of them could get ahead of Blossy in their noble endeavors to make Abraham feel himself a light and welcome burden. She it was who discovered that Abe's contentment could not be absolute without griddlecakes for breakfast three hundred and sixty-five times a year; she it was who first baked him little saucer cakes and pies because he was partial to edges; and Blossy it was who made out a list of "Don'ts" for the sisters to follow in their treatment of this grown-up young-old boy.

"Don't scold him when he leaves the doors open. Don't tell him to wipe his feet. Don't ever mention gold mines or shiftless husbands," etc., etc.

All these triumphs of Blossy's intuition served naturally to spur the others on to do even more for Brother Abe than they had already done, until the old man began to worry for fear that he should "git spilt." When he lay down for his afternoon nap and the house was dull and quiet without his waking presence, the ladies would gather in groups outside his door as if in a king's antechamber, waiting for him to awaken, saying to one another over and again, "Sh, sh!" He protested to scoff at the attentions he received, would grunt and growl "Humbug!" yet nevertheless he thrived in this latter-day sunlight. His old bones took on flesh. His aged kindly face, all seemed with care as it had been, filled out, the wrinkles turning into twinkles. Abraham had grown young again. With the return of his youth came the spirit of youth to the Old Ladies' home. Verily, verily, as Blossy had avowed from the first, the women in sore need of the masculine presence. The ancient coat and hat, which had hung in the hall so long, had perhaps served its purpose in keeping the burglars away, but this lifeless substitute had not prevented the crabbed gnomes of loneliness and discontent from stealing in. Spinster, wife and widow, they had every one been warped by the teasy jest-sonness of the old maid.

Now, instead of fretful discussions of health and food, recriminations and wrangling, there came to be laughter and good-humored chatter all the day long, each sister striving with all her strength to preserve the new-found harmony of the home. There were musical evenings, when Miss Abigail opened the melodeon and played "Old Hundred," and Abraham was encouraged to pick out with one stiff forefinger "My Grandfather's Clock." "Hymn tunes" were sung in chorus; and in answer to Abe's appeal for something livelier, there came time-tried ditties and old, old love songs. And at last, one night, after leaving the instrument silent, mute in the corner of the parlor for many years, Aunt Nancy Smith dragged out her harp, and, seating herself, reached out her knotted, trembling hands and brought forth what seemed the very echo, so faint and faltering it was, of "Douglas, Douglas, Fender and True."

There was a long silence after she finished, her head bowed on her chest, her hands even pressed to her sides. Abraham spoke first, clearing his throat before he could make the words come.

"I wish I could git a husband fer every one of yer," said he.

"And no one was angry, and no one laughed; for they all knew that he was only seeking to express the message conveyed by Nancy's playing—the message of love, love triumphant, which cannot age, which over the years and over death itself always bath the victory."

CHAPTER VII.

Old Letters and New.

Blossy left the room without a word, and went stealing up the stairs to the little cupboard where she now slept, and where was hung on the wall, in a frame of yellow hollyhocks, painted by her own hand, a photograph of Capt. Samuel Darby, the man who had remained obstinately devoted to her since her days of pinafores.

The picture betrayed that Captain Darby wore a wig designed for a larger man, and that the visage beneath was gnarled and weather-beaten, marked with the signs of a stubborn and unreasonable will.

Even now the aged belle could hear his saying: "Here I be, come round here pop agin. Ready ter hitch!"

Samuel's inelegant English had always been a source of distress to Blossy; yet still she stared long at the picture.

Six months had passed since his last visit; tomorrow would be the date of his winter advent.

Should she give the old unvarying answer to his tireless formula?

She glanced around the tiny room. Ashamed though she was to admit it even to herself, she missed that ample and cozy chamber which she had so freely surrendered to Abraham and his wife. She missed it, as she felt



Kneeling Before a Time-Worn Trunk.

for every ribbon and every cord had faded into that musty, yellow brown which is dyed by the passing of many years.

Abraham discovered her there, too engrossed in the perusal of one of the old letters to have heeded his creaking steps upon the stairs.

"Didn't see yer, till I 'most stumbled on yer," he began apologetically. "I come fer the apple-pieker. That's a handful of russets in the orchard yet, that's calc'latin' ter spend Christmas up close ter heaven; but— Say, Blossy," he added more loudly, since she did not raise her head, "yew seen anythin' o' that alricker?"

Blossy glanced up from her ragged-edged, crackly billet-doux with a start, and dropped the envelope to the floor.

For the moment, so deep in reminiscence was she, she thought Captain Darby himself had surprised her; then, recognizing Abe and recalling that Samuel's winter visits were invariably paid in the afternoon, she broke into a shamefaced laugh. "Say, Blossy," he added more loudly, since she did not raise her head, "yew seen anythin' o' that alricker?"

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"Tain't no disgrace ter git married at no time of life. Sam's 't git good vider; why don't yew snap him up terday? We'll miss yew a lot, but—"

"Here's the apple picker right up your head," interrupted Blossy tartly, and Abe felt himself peremptorily dismissed.

Scarcely had he left the attic, however that she, too, hastened down the steep, narrow stairs. She spent the remaining hours before train time in donning her beautiful lace gown, and in making the woman within it as young and ravishing as possible. And lovely, indeed, Blossy looked this day, with a natural flush of excitement on her cheek, a new sparkle in her bright, dark eyes, and with her white hair arranged in a fashion which might have excited a young girl's envy.

The hour for the train came and went, and, lo! for the first time in the history of twenty years Captain Darby did not appear.

Blossy pretended to be relieved, protesting that she was delighted to find that she would now have an extra hour in which to ponder the question. But the second train came and went, and still no Captain Darby.

All the afternoon long Blossy wore her lace gown, thinking although there were no more trains from the eastward that day, that Samuel would still find his way to her. He might drive, as he usually did in June, or he might even walk from his home at Twin Coves, she said.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Found in a Glacier.

Str Martin Conway has recently told this story of finding a lost ax in the Alps: Zurbiggen, one of the celebrated mountain climbers of the world, in scaling a peak of Les Anjalous, near Chamounix, accidentally let his ax fall near the summit of the peak. It fell some thousands of feet in the normal course of things it was buried in snow and swallowed up in the glacier, being covered deeper and deeper each year, and at the same time being carried slowly downward as the ice flowed on. Seven or eight years afterward Hon. C. G. Bruce and Harkbir, a Sepoy chieftain, in descending a peak of the Alps just as night was falling, and a great crevasse barred the way, being unable to find the

Lucky Choice.

"My husband is a most inveterate reader," exclaimed Mrs. Knox with a slight tone of ennui. "He reads untill dawn every morning. Why, last night I found him asleep with his nose in 'V. V.'s Eyes!'"

"Perhaps," commented her husband's bookish friend, "you should be thankful you did not find him with his nose in 'The Inside of the Cup!'"

—Kansas City Star.

time I was on the life-savin' crew over ter Bleak Hill fer a spell—my cap'n he had a flat jest like that. 'Uster make out the spickest, spanner he'll kin. 'Lan kin' the gal him than sheepin' somebod' terday? Law, I ain't saw Cap'n Sam'l for ten year or more. I guess on these here poppin' trips o' his'n he hein't wastin' time on no men-folks. But, Blossy, yew better give me a chance ter talk to him this afternoon, an' mebbe I'll speak a good word fer yer."

Blossy, not always keen to see a joke, and with her vanity now in the ascendant, felt the color rise into her withered cheek.

"Oh, yow needn't take the trouble to speak a good word for me. Any man who could ever write a letter like this doesn't need to be coaxed. Just listen:

The man you take for a mate is the luckiest dog in the whole round world. I'd never be him kin' of all the countries on earth. I'd strike a gold mine, strike a gold mine reaching from here to China. I'd rather be him than master of the finest vessel that ever sailed blue water. That's what I would. Why, the man who couldn't be happy with you would spill tears all over heaven."

Blossy's cheek was still flushed, but no longer with pique. Her voice, quavered and broke; and finally there fell upon the faded page of the letter two sparkling tears.

Abraham shuffled uncomfortably from one foot to the other; then, muttering something about the "pecky apple hook," went scuffling across the floor in the direction of the chimney.

Blossy, however, called him back.

"I was crying, Brother Abe, because the man I did take for a mate once was not happy, and— and neither was I. I was utterly wretched; so that I've always felt I never cared to marry again. And— Samuel's wig is always slipping down over one eye, and I simply cannot endure that trick he has of carrying his head to one side, as if he had a left-handed spell of the mumps. It nearly drives me frantic."

"Brother Abe, now tell me honestly: do you think he would make a good husband?"

Abe cleared his throat. Blossy was in earnest. Blossy could not be laughed at. She was his friend, and Angy's friend; and she had come to him as to a brother for advice. He, too, had known Samuel as man to man, which was more than any of the sisters could say.

Stroking his beard thoughtfully, therefore, he seated himself upon a convenient wooden chest, while Blossy slipped her old love letter in and out of the envelope, with that essentially feminine manner of weighing and considering.

"Naow," began Abe at length, "this is somep'n that requires keertful debatin'. Fust off, haowsomever, yew must remember that wigs an' wigs never made a man yit. Ez I ricollec' Sam'l, he was poody good in em go. I should say he wouldn't be any more of a risk tew yew than I was tew Angy; mebbe less. He's got quite a little laid by, I understand, an' a tidy story-an'-a-half house, an' front stoop, an' y' golly, can't he cook! He's a splendid housekeeper."

"Housewifery," remarked Blossy sagely, as she began to gather her mislives together, "is an accomplishment to be scorned in a young husband, but not in an old one. They say there hasn't been a woman inside Samuel's house since he built it, but it's as clean as soap and sand can make it."

"I bet yew," agreed Abe. "Hain't never been no fly inside it, neither, I warrant yer. Fly can't light arter Sam'l's cleanin' up nohow; he's got ter skate."

"He says he built that little house for me," said the old lady, as she closed down the lid of the trunk. There was a wistful note in Blossy's voice, which made Abraham declare with a burst of sympathy:

"Tain't no disgrace ter git married at no time of life. Sam's 't git good vider; why don't yew snap him up terday? We'll miss yew a lot, but—"

"Here's the apple picker right up your head," interrupted Blossy tartly, and Abe felt himself peremptorily dismissed.

Scarcely had he left the attic,