

THE OLD READING CLASS.

Carleton in Harper's Magazine. I saw a shadow fading out. Where light sought light in greeting; A veil consumed between two worlds. Where this and that were meeting.

MADAME MOJESKA'S POEM.

The madame is a poetess as well as an actress, is she not, count? asked the reporter. "If you mean, by that, the verses credited to her in the Denver Tribune some time ago, no. She never wrote them, and has never written any poetry in English."

LOST HIS WAGER.

A railroad conductor bet Gorman, of Quincy, Ill., that he could not pick up 100 eggs laid on the ground a yard apart inside of thirty-five minutes. The eggs were to be picked up and deposited in a basket, one at a time, and the basket was to remain stationary at the spot where the first egg was placed.

THE QUEEN'S STOCKINGS.

Some months ago Queen Margherita asked a little girl to knit her a pair of silk stockings as a birthday gift, and gave 20 lire to buy the material. The queen forgot the circumstance till her birthday came, when she was reminded of it by the arrival of a pair of well-knit stockings and the maker's best wishes.

THE DEACON'S VISIT.

[Pipsey Potts in Arthur's Magazine.] Suddenly we heard the gate-latch click, a bustling step along the walk, an "Ahem!" a stamping on the porch, and then a long, pecking sort of rapping—a noise like old Tabitha lapping her milk. Lily opened the door and in bobbed Deacon Skiles. We had not seen him since the day his wife was buried. He looked no older than in the times when he did a-wooing go.

TRUTH AND TRADE.

A Worldly-Wise View of Every-Day Business Methods. Truthfulness lacks something of being the Best Policy. [New York Times.] "If a storekeeper wants to starve in business, let him sell the truth." This sentence, overheard as it dropped from the lips of a man apparently well versed in business methods, led to an attempt to discover to what extent the business code of honesty has been deliberately adopted among shopkeepers.

GEORGE PECK WANTS A DOG.

George W. Peck, The Sun man, advertises in The Tuffing Letter and Farm for a dog. The following letter accompanies the advertisement: "MILWAUKEE, Nov. 17.—My Dear Frank: I know you to be a well posted sportsman (I do not use the word in any John L. Sullivan or faro chip manner). I know that you like to shoot, and are well posted on all that belongs to shooting. I am also a 'shooter'—spare my blushes! I am a chap who had rather stand up to my arm-pits in mud and shoot ducks than to get drunk on champagne cider, and I had rather eat fried pork and eggs, after a hard day's work duck-shooting, than to dine with Oscar Wilde at Delmonico's. Well, I have got everything except a dog. I want to get a setter that is broke; a ready-made, lock-stitch, stem-winding dog that has a nose that understands all about quail, chickens, woodcock, and snipe, and is perfect at retrieving ducks. I don't want such a dog to freeze to death on late ducks, but one I can treat like a human being, and use when the water is warm. I do not care particularly for a long pedigree on a dog that isn't worth a continental darn except to look at. I don't want a dog broke by a dude that I don't know anything but to 'to-ho!' I want a dog that has been brought up by one of our kind of fellows, that is as good as they make, young enough to have several years of service in him. You know what I want, and you may know where he can be found. Think it over at your leisure and let me know. I am going to put a steam yacht, fitted up with berths, kitchen, etc., on the waters of the Wolf and Fox rivers, and lakes Winnebago and Poyvan, about sixty miles north of here, next season, for myself and friends, of whom I want you to consider yourself which. I had rather take a few fellows out and make them have a good time hunting than to go to congress. Yours, "GEO. W. PECK."

DIPHTEHRIC POETRY.

What has got into the animal kingdom? The Texas steer is prepared to supply pneumonia and consumption at short notice. The frisky pig is ready to help us out with an early worm. Milk is liable to bring us scarlet fever. So the scientists say. And now here comes the innocent chicken with a whole coopful of diphtheria. Surely this is our coup de grace. The London Times is responsible for this new scare, but it charges it back to Germany, where the scientific imagination runs free and is glorified. Behold the record of fate! In 1881 2,000 fowls were sent from the neighborhood of Verona to Nesselhausen, and in the end 1,400 of them died of diphtheria. Last year 1,000 chickens were hatched from eggs collected from many different places, and in a short time they all died of diphtheria. Five cats took it and died, as also did a parrot which hung in a cage in the house. Last November an Italian hen bit a man's wrist, and he also died of diphtheria. The hen died an accidental death just after inflicting the bite. In short, all Nesselhausen, where these things happened, believes that chickens are the original owners of the diphtheria germs. This science is winding up all animated nature in her evolutionary embrace. Either there's a deal of human nature in almost any kind of beast or bird, or else there's a deal of humbug in modern science.

SOJOURNER TRUTH.

Wendell Phillips, speaking the other day of Sojourner Truth, said: "Her Meg Merrilies figure added much to the effect of her speech. Her natural wit and happiness in re-ort I have hardly ever seen equaled. Her eloquence was at times marvelous. I once heard her describe the captain of a slave ship going up to judgment followed by his victims as they gathered from the depth of the sea in a strain that reminded me of Clarence's dream in Shakespeare and equaled it. The anecdotes of her ready wit and quick, striking replies are numberless. She used to say to us: 'You read books; God himself talks to me.' Her home in late years has been in a plain story-and-a-half house, in the outskirts of Battle Creek, Mich. Two well-worn hitching posts and numerous wheel tracks at the side of the unpaved street showed that she had many visitors. She was cared for in her helplessness by her two daughters, Elizabeth and Diana. The house was Sojourner's own property, and her income was derived from the sale of her books and pictures."

THE BARBARIANS' MILKMAN.

A Chinese paper contains the following: "In the barbarian cities of America, where everything is the reverse of what it is in our cities, there is a man who goes about in a covered wagon, with large tin cans filled with water. He carries a hideous bell, which he clangs at every house until a girl with large feet comes out with a pitcher, and then he fills it with the water. He is allowed to talk to the girl. When there is a sick person on the square, this water-man rings his bell very loudly. Strange to say, the barbarians do not call him a water-man. They call him the milkman."

FASCINATED BY FUNERALS.

PEOPLE WHO ARE MOURNERS REGULARLY, AND FIND COMFORT IN SO BEING. New York Sun. "Do you see that nice looking little old lady over by the stained window?" asked a fashionable undertaker of the reporter. "I mean the quaint, respectable looking little personage, with the black satin dress and black crape shawl." The reporter saw her. "Well, continued the undertaker, with an appreciative smile, 'she's as fine a regular attendant as any establishment in this city can produce. I send her an invitation to all my nice funerals, and I have sometimes sent a carriage for her when I knew mourners would be scarce. She is never really happy unless she is at a funeral. She won't touch weddings, as most women will; her sole amusement, so to speak, is a first-class funeral; and the undertaker looked over to the old lady with a tender professional interest. "I have some other nice people on my list," he went on. "One of my most graceful mourners lives in Forty-eighth street, and seldom gets down this way, but she hardly ever passes a day without a funeral, and I never saw her at one she couldn't shed tears with the best of them. She's one of the heart-broken ladies I ever had for a 'regular.' Does she really feel badly? Well, I should say she did, most decidedly. She always has a word to say to the family, if she thinks they need comforting, and is very careful to learn all the particulars. Why, she can tell me all the details about some of my own funerals that I had forgotten years ago. She's as good as a set of books. "Oh, no, there's nothing hysterical about these cases at all. I've got some that do just the same thing. There is one now. He's a curious customer. I sometimes lose sight of him for six months, and then all of a sudden he'll turn up and not miss a funeral. Of course, I couldn't ask the women folks why they came, but I asked him one day. He said he couldn't describe exactly the kind of feeling it gave him, but he thought it sort of quieted his mind and soothed his feelings like. He made one remark about it that I could not quite get the hang of, though I dare say it had a certain sort of meaning for him. He said, 'I haven't got any friends at all myself, and so I like to go to funerals.' A lady volunteered almost the same kind of remark to me once after she had been to four or five of my best funerals. She said, 'It makes me feel kind of friendly, you know, and then they are so kind to me; and, besides, I feel afraid and solemn, and it always does me good.'"

A NEW FUEL IN MEXICO.

The Mexican Financier gives an account of a new fuel invented by a member of a commercial house in the city of Mexico, and for which a patent was obtained from the Mexican congress in May last. The article is called "turbato," and consists principally of bog peat, of which there are immense quantities in Mexico, mixed with a proper proportion of bitumen or chapopote. The fuel is made in five different classes: For locomotives, stationary engines, smelting purposes, smiths' fires and household purposes. It burns freely and without much smoke, giving a higher dynamic equivalent of heat than the same amount of woods, and very nearly as great as the best English coal. It can be manufactured and sold in Mexico at a price considerably below coal or wood, and looking at the daily increasing demand for fuel, the augmentation in the price of wood and its growing scarcity, it is safe to predict, says The Financier, a large and successful market for "turbato." As all the ingredients necessary for its manufacture are found in inexhaustible quantities in Mexico, it will create a new and important industry in the republic. With a good and cheap fuel, it does not need a wizard to foresee the immense impetus that will be given to Mexican manufactures of every description. Arrangements are said to be making for the manufacture of "turbato" on a large scale, so that it will be shortly brought before the public.

DOMESTIC INFELICITY.

Two negro women met on Austin avenue. "Has yer heard from husband Gale since he done luff yer?" "I got one letter from him outer de postoffice." "I's'pose, after the way he 'bused and beat yer, dat yer sent it back to him widout openin' it?" "You jes bet I didn't open de letter after de way he treated me. No, indeed, I didn't. I'd see him in his coffin fust." "But dar must hab been a \$5 bill in de letter." "No, dar warn't no \$5 bill in de letter—de low, mean, wufless, yaller moke." "How does yer know dat, ef yer didn't open de letter?" "I got my sister to open de letter. He wanted me to send him his razor and his stavepipe hat—de low, mean, wufless nigger."

TRUCKLING TO BOSTON.

Mr. Joaquin Miller says that he sighs for a city where "the cruel civilization of modern empires is unknown," and where there is "rest and quiet and peace to suit the hour of dreams;" a city "hedge'd in from bustle and feverish rush for gain;" a city "plac'd in a moonlit lake and natural as a maiden's blush;" a city where "a poet may seek and find congenial ears and healthful hearts;" a city where "ambition slumbers and nature yields the scepter over all." Mr. Miller is evidently truckling for a pass to Boston. Boston Commercial Bulletin: A vigorous old fellow in Maine who had lately buried his fourth wife, was accosted by an acquaintance who, unaware of his bereavement, asked: "How is your wife, Cap'n Plowjogger?" To which the captain replied, with a perfectly grave face: "Waal, to tell you the truth, I am kinder out of wives just now."

AFTER THAT THE GLORY.

I saw a shadow fading out. Where light sought light in greeting; A veil consumed between two worlds. Where this and that were meeting. My care touched silence where the song Of ocean ceased its moaning; 'Twas only where the sea beyond Began its deep intoning. Thus sings and paints for thee, O soul, Life's sad, exultant story; The veil dissolves, the music dies, But after that the glory.

A GREAT FEAT IN SHORTHAND.

How McElhone Reported the Congressional Bedlam of "Counting-in" Days. [New York World.] John J. McElhone, the chief of the official stenographers of the house, has been in the service of that body as an official reporter since 1849. He was an expert stenographer when a mere boy. When he was 18 years old he was reporting the official debates. Mr. McElhone explained the other day his way of working. It will probably be a revelation to the average reporter. He pays no attention to the mechanical part of his work. He writes the Pitman system in its simplest form. When he is reporting a speaker he follows his every sentence, criticising it and taking in fully its sense, while his hand follows his thought like a bit of exquisitely trained mechanism. The result is that he has never yet met a speaker who can talk too fast for him. When he meets a man who can think faster than he can, then only will McElhone be at a loss. He says that in the last house the three hardest men to report were Thompson, of Iowa; Blackburn, of Kentucky, and Ranney, of Massachusetts. The hardest piece of reporting ever done by McElhone was during the exciting incidents of the counting in of Hayes by the house of representatives. When Beebe, of New York, immortalized himself by jumping upon his desk, perfect bedlam appeared to have been let loose. To report what was said, with twenty or thirty members apparently talking at once, must have seemed almost an impossibility. In less than a second McElhone saw that his reputation as one of the greatest of living reporters was at stake. He seized his note-book and dashed right into the centre of the excitement. The voice of every member was familiar to him. Without turning his head he stood erect amid the wildest confusion and caught with rigid accuracy the words of the most distant speaker. He was very nervous over the result, because if any member at that time had by chance been omitted from the page of history of that day McElhone would have been the subject of many a row. None of the members believed that he had been able to get them all, yet when this report came out in The Record the next day not one had a single word of fault to find. In fact, it is the only perfect picture of that exciting period. It was one of the greatest feats of stenographic reporting ever done in congress. When McElhone had finished he was bathed in perspiration from head to foot and was as weak as if he had been running in a ten-mile match.

A New View of It.

[Youth's Companion.] Two gentlemen met in Washington last winter and passed a week together. They had been classmates in college. One was now an obscure farmer, the other is a well-known leader in national affairs, and has been a candidate for the presidency. After observing his friend carefully for some days, the farmer said, "I honestly believe that your fame is only an annoyance to you." "Suppose, G—, was the reply, "you were to enter a street-car full of strangers, vulgar, gossiping folk, and that they should call out your name loudly, and state that you had an idiot brother, and that you had been suspected of stealing in your youth, and that your son was going to the dogs. Should you like it?" "Well, the country is only a big street-car, and fame in it is just such personal gossip from vulgar mouths." "This was a new and startling view of the subject to the farmer that he took home to think over."

Something New in Leather.

[Croft's New York Letter.] I wonder if our fashionable "wall paper" is hereafter to be of leather? A part of William K. Vanderbilt's walls are hung with leather, as is one room in Henry Villard's new mansion. The walls of Victor Hugo's drawing-room, where I attended a reception in June, were hung with leather, heavier than sole-leather. It may have been tanned tiger skins, or the bark of a drove of young elephants. It was not arranged smoothly on the wall, but hung at will, in loose folds and heavy corrugations, as if it grew there, and had just peeled off. I did not inquire, but very likely it represented the tanned trophies sent to the venerable poet by his admirers hunting in India and Africa.

How Walkie Collins Works.

[Chicago Tribune.] Wilkie Collins, when working regularly, writes about 1,200 words a day, covering with them three large pages of letter paper. He writes slowly, and cut and scratches, and rewrites and interlines, and adds sentences in the margin, and sprinkles blots everywhere, until the manuscript looks like a Chinese puzzle in a nightmare. Nearing the end of the book he gets excited and scribbles away like a madman, writing for twelve or fourteen hours at a stretch without stopping save now and then to jump around on the floor and act out the situations.

Near Enough.

[New York Sun.] A Michigan girl told her young man that she would never marry him until he was worth \$100,000. So he started out with a brave heart to make it. "How are you getting on, George?" she asked at the expiration of a couple of months. "Well," George said hopefully, "I have saved up \$22." The girl dropped her eyelashes and blushing remarked: "I reckon that's near enough, George."