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WHY NOT?

I sometimes wonder (if it be a sin
I pray our gracious Lord to pardon me)
Of that strange creed the people harbor in
An eastern country, if it may not be
As true as strange. There are so many creeds,
So many "I believes;" yet who dare say
There are too many, if each fit the needs
Of some poor soul to help it on the way?

Or claim that one, and one alone, is right?
They are all bound in one great brotherhood,
And in two words, it seems to me, each might
Its teaching to the world express: Be good!
But this belief is strangest of them all,
That when the chief of angels downward fell
From his high seat above, and by that fall
Became a monarch of the souls in hell;

That, though God cast him from his lofty place,
In awful justice for his punishment,
Yet is he bending from his throne of grace
In tender patience till the fiend repent;
Until his angel nature come again,
Then will the gracious words of "I forgive,"
Fall on the fires of hell, a cooling rain,
And every tortured soul shall drink and live.

Then hell and earth and heaven shall be as one
In love and peace and holy blessedness,
Each warmed and lighted by the shining sun
Of endless day, the sun of righteousness;
Such is their creed. What think you, ye who hear,
That they blaspheme? Perhaps; but, tell me, who
Can know these things? However it appear
I sometimes wonder if it is not true.

—Harriet F. Blodgett in New York Sun.

ALMOST OUTLAWED.

Hartman was by no means a bad man. Youth, love and opportunity made him a criminal. That pocketbook full of bank bills had been left in the counting room. There was no one present, and the young man had thoughtlessly seized it.

All that had happened more than four years ago.

Strange that no suspicion had fallen on him! It is true, he enjoyed the confidence and favor of his employer, but also a happy chance had a good deal to do with it. It happened that just at that time an office boy had been detected in some misdemeanor and forced to leave.

Naturally, of course, he was suspected of having committed the theft likewise. An able young lawyer had been retained to investigate the case, and he was not a little chagrined at his failure to discover the perpetrator.

Hartman experienced a moment of relief, but only a moment, as a burden as of lead seemed to weigh on him.

Might not some new clew be found, some unforeseen occurrence throw light on the matter? The torture lasted for four horrible years. The very thought of it made the perspiration start on his forehead in the coldest days.

Why did he not invent some pretext for going abroad? He was often on the point of doing so, but the fear of arousing suspicion by any singularity of conduct prevented him from putting this idea into execution. So he lived on with this threatening specter ever before his eyes, unable to dispel it or to hide himself from it.

"The others"—he would not even to himself use a more definite expression—"are in jail for their wrong doing—do they suffer more? They are deprived of freedom indeed; the blow has fallen heavily upon them with the sentence of the court; but afterwards there is peace around and within them."

To accuse himself? That would be foolish. Chance had favored him hitherto; why should it not continue to do so? So more hoping, more trembling.

Hartman had become by his misdemeanor, strange to say—a dilettante in matters of law. He had furnished himself with a book on the criminal code and the criminal procedure, together with various commentaries. These books formed his favorite reading after shutting his door at night. With a hasty eagerness he devoured their contents.

As a chess player would treat an interesting problem, so he treated his case. Mitigating circumstances, the chances in a trial, everything possible and impossible that a layman could extract from this juristic material, were brought into action. More than once he caught himself declaiming a brilliant defense in a loud tone, and then he would listen anxiously; somebody might have heard him.

Hartman had also his favorite chapter, which treated of the statute of limitation. There he read: "The prosecution for crimes that are punishable with no more than three months' imprisonment must begin within five years, etc."

Although he knew the passage by heart, yet he read it again every day, as if its contents might have changed in one night.

Four years and a half have passed; six months more, and he will be free, legally free. The voice of conscience would soon learn to be silent when the pressure of anxiety should be removed. Six months—why should they not pass as a moment; why might not a miracle happen, and time for once, just once, make a leap?

The almanac became, from that time on, his best friend. He could sit bent over it for hours, counting first the months, then the weeks, then the days again and again. In the middle of the night the thought would strike him that he had made a mistake in counting; the lamp was quickly lighted, and his work began anew.

Time never passes slower than when one counts the minutes. It seemed to Hartman sometimes as if it stood still, or as if the minutes grew maliciously to hours, the hours to days.

If he only could spend a few hours in sleep! The thought led him to buy opium, and now many a day and almost every night was passed in artificial slumber. A moment of relief came, when he awoke and realized that so and so many hours had passed.

The continual excitement could not fail to undermine even such a powerful constitution as Hartman possessed. With every day that brought him nearer to the longed for goal, he grew feebler and paler. It seemed to him as if his limbs were lead, as if his head were too heavy to bear. He dragged himself heavily from the sofa to the chair, from the chair to the sofa. When pain in the back seized him he called a physician.

"I am alone in the world, and must make my arrangements."

"Well, the symptoms look like typhus."

Hartman's face became even paler than before; his eyes stared with the expression of horror upon the speaker.

"A slow fever, in which one does not lose consciousness; is it not so, doctor? Certainly so?"

"If my fears are likely to be realized, I could wish the contrary. The fever begins violently, you are delirious at the crisis, and the worst is over, when you recover consciousness."

To be delirious! Hartman shuddered. To be delirious, not to be master of his thoughts and words, to betray his secret motives, in spite of himself to reveal that with which his mind had incessantly occupied itself—no, for heaven's sake, anything but that!—"I want no sister of mercy, no attendant; look after me at intervals of several hours," he said, turning to the physician.

He smiled at the notion.

Hartman determined not to fall sick; he struggled terribly, and fought with all the strength he had left against the approaching foe.

There he lay shaken by the fever, but still conscious.

"That's the nurse, that's the chair, now I am stretching out my hand, I know exactly what I am doing," he repeated ten times every hour.

"And if it turns out otherwise, would they give any weight to feverish dreams? Nurses, who have to hear so many things, will not notice it at all.

"I have not committed the theft; I know nothing about it. That I will keep repeating to myself continually; perhaps that will influence the delirium. They say the mind runs usually on things that are the farthest removed from the normal thinking, but my thoughts are still perfectly clear."

Then a veil fell over the reality. Instead of the Sister of Mercy, the attorney in his black gown and cap stepped into the room, took a chair and sat down before the bed. Through the sharp glasses the still sharper looks were incessantly directed upon him. Like glowing steel, they bored themselves into his brain.

"You will be delirious, my boy," said the attorney, and nodded his head.

"I shall not," thought the sick youth and clung to his bed.

Day after day the tormentor sat there, staring at him, and listened. Then more and more of his colleagues came, also judges in their robes, and all seated themselves in long rows before his bed. Breathless they listened; one gentleman, old and hard of hearing, always kept his hand at his ear. "Now he will be delirious," they whispered at times. There was a deafening ringing in Hartman's ears.

He felt a terrible rage against the black assembly.

He had a mind to put out his tongue at them and to call: "Wait, if you will, you fools, you will not hear one syllable from me; I shall remain mute as the grave." But he controlled himself and remained quietly lying.

The faces, in close array, drew nearer and nearer to him. Now the nearest were already sitting on the edge of the bed, and now even on his body. They put heavy ice cold law books on his head, heaping them up to a crushing burden. One kept striking him with an invisible hammer on his forehead and crying out madly: "Won't you rave now, won't you?"

It became insupportable. He struck out and shrieked so that the landlord came hurrying up the stairs and looked through the chink of the door, and the attendant drew back in terror, and the physician stood helpless for a moment.

With the greatest effort the feverish patient raised himself and cried loudly and distinctly: "Wretches, you think I would rave and betray myself. Now, just to defy you I shall not do it. See, with a clear mind, to spoil your pleasure, I say it frankly: I stole the money from the merchant Hellwig in his office the twenty-fifth of March, I, Conrad Hartman."

As if relieved, he sank on his pillow. From this moment a sensible improvement was noticed.

The nurse told incidentally about the strange occurrence, the landlord spoke of it, and so it happened that the young attorney had the satisfaction, before the expiration of the period of limitation, of redeeming his previous failure.

The first caller which the convalescent received was the attorney. Without surprise, cold and quiet, he received him and made his confession.

Afterwards he tried several times to drink off his medicine with one draught, but he was prevented from doing so.

So he was able, after a few weeks, to exchange the sick chamber for the prison cell.—C. Shotler in Five Stories a Week.

Behind the Times.

Miss Choteau (from St. Louis, examining Cleverton's Ascot)—Did you tie that yourself, Mr. Cleverton?

Cleverton—Certainly.

Miss Choteau—That's just like you slow New Yorkers. If you lived in St. Louis you could buy your neckties already made.—Cloak and Suit Review.

She Was Ready for Him.

Mr. Winks (solemnly)—A noted physician says that deadly bacteria lurk in bank notes, and that many diseases, especially smallpox, are spread in that way.

Mrs. Winks—Then, dear, you had better give me all you have at once. I've been vaccinated, you know.—Chatter.

A Bad Habit.

He attempts to kiss her and she jumps away.

"Oh, Matilda!" he cries, reproachfully.

"Forgive me, Gregory. I hoped that I had got over that bad habit of seeming to shrink at such times—with you, at least."—Philadelphia Times.

Insulation Perfect.

Smith (in a terrific storm of thunder and lightning)—Jones, this is getting dangerous. Have you any metal about

JUICY BEEFSTEAKS.

A CLUB THAT EATS MEAT WITH ITS FINGERS ONCE A MONTH.

The Peculiar Fad of the Old Curiosity Club, of New York—A Dingy Place of Meeting for Wealthy Bohemians—Contrast with Another Club.

Within hearing of the continuous clatter of the east side elevated road, in the rear room of a shop crowded, from the stand of old books at the door to the back windows, with the dusty, rusty, musty and curious odds and ends that have won for it the title of the Old Curiosity Shop, a man sat before a sheet iron stove cooking beefsteaks. He was a big, powerful man, with large, strong hands, a large and massive head and a determined face. Yet he handled the savory segments of meat as delicately as a woman might have done.

Sitting around the room on stools, chairs, trunks, piles of books and tables loaded with prints, playbills and autograph letters were a dozen men or so, all of more or less local notoriety. There were a couple of politicians among them, a prominent up town builder, a famous contractor and house raiser and mover, a composer whose music is played throughout the world, a bronze founder, a sculptor, several painters, the art editor of a great magazine, and a sprinkling of literary men, brokers, physicians and men of business—all of whom supervised the culinary preparations in progress at the stove with grave interest.

The rattle of conversation was as incessant as the hissing and spitting of the steaks over the fire.

The method employed by the large man in preparing the meat was peculiar. The steaks, which were cut in thick slices, were piled on a platter. A sharp faced, shrewd eyed, small boy cut the slices into generous pieces. These were put in a pan, which, filled with boiling fat, sizzled at red heat on the top of the stove. The surface of the meat was hardened in a moment, and then it was extracted from the pan with a long fork and broiled over the glowing coals in the body of the stove. As each piece of steak was deposited upon a thick slice of bread in a monstrous trencher, part of a set of priceless old English china from the stock, the rich juices confined in it commenced to leak out of the perforations made by the tines of the fork, and to soak into the bread in a gravy, whose perfume filled the air. The process of cookery was rapid, for the meat was not allowed to remain long enough on the fire to lose its tenderness and its juiciness. The pile upon the trencher grew quickly; but when, at a given signal, which consisted in a rap of the chief's fork on the stove, the company fell to, its diminution was even more rapid. Each man ate with his fingers for a fork and the gravy soaked slice of bread for a dish.

The Old Curiosity club is an organization composed of men who collect something. One is a collector of old masters and another a collector of modern pictures. One gathers up bronzes, another ivories, another books. There are in the club collectors of pistols, playbills, porcelains, photographs, armor, atlases, autographs and a great many other collectible things. It was from their casual meetings in the shop in the course of their prowlings in quest of the curious that the club took its origin. It has a regular weekly meeting on Saturdays from October until June, when members drop in and drop out again informally, and once a month treats itself and such guests as it may choose to invite to a feed on beefsteak cooked upon the plan invented by mine host Fullerton years ago when he was a gold hunter in the mines of eastern Venezuela.

On the other side of town to the Old Curiosity Shop, and in a vastly more aristocratic neighborhood, let us drop in at a private dining room over the store of a fashionable caterer. It is a spacious room, down the center of which is laid a table shimmering and sparkling with crystal and silver. Tall pillars of piled up plates load the sideboards. Champagne cools in silver tubs, buried to the bottle necks in cracked ice. Waiters in full dress glide about with the noiseless movement of ghosts. On every side magnificent groups of roses load the air with their sensuous perfume. It is that hour of the evening when the theaters disgorge their audiences. A rattle of wheels halts short outside. Steps, voices and the rustle of silks sound on the staircase. The silent waiter at the door opens it, and admits a lady and gentleman in full dress. Others follow in couples, quartets and little parties. Along both curbstones of the dark side street lines of carriages are drawn up. The company make themselves at home. Nearly everybody knows everybody else. Those who do not are speedily introduced.

Some one plays an air brilliantly and boldly, like an expert, on the grand piano in the corner. A few couples whirl a turn or two of a dance. The splendid costumes of the women and the wealth of jewelry they display, the elegance of the men, the opulent appointments of the room itself combine to convey the impression of a private party in a private house. In fact, however, we are looking in on a regular supper of the aristocratic Beefsteak club, an organization composed of the flower of fashion in New York.

The musical chime of a huge Japanese temple bell in the rear of the room calls the club to table. The waiters, headed by the steward, bring in, in procession, charger after charger of noble steaks, of the proper English rump cut, smothered in oyster sauce. There is none of the rude and hearty enjoyment of the Old Curiosity club here. The finest English china replaces the gravy soaked chunk of bread. Knives and forks of silver take the place of fingers, and champagne that of Spanish wine and beer. But, if the truth must be told, one may hear more bright and clever things, more wit and originality in the dusty back room of the east side shop in one evening than during the whole season at the caterer's palace up town.

And when it comes to the business of the meeting, no steak and oyster sauce ever had the savor of those melting morsels that the Old Curiosities eat in their natural juices, tender and fragrant from their journey through the red hot frying pan and the bed of fiercely glowing coals. Still, half a loaf is better than no bread, and a beefsteak prepared for service on a Royal Worcester platter is not to be given the cold shoulder because it has not the picturesque surroundings of one broiled at the end of an iron fork.

Professor Wilson held that the only fit honor mankind could accord to beefsteaks was to cook them properly and eat them, and his ideal of the culinary portion of this ceremony was that which is adopted by the Beefsteak club. Cobbett, on the other hand, favored his steak without sauce, flavored with shalot or tarragon, and with horseradish for a condiment. If both these old time steak experts could eat

HOW THE INDIANS FIGHT.

An Old Major of Cavalry Talks—Reputations of Savage Tribes.

"I have had many years' experience as purchaser of saddle horses," remarked a major of cavalry on his way to Chicago to a reporter in the corridor of the Southern hotel, "having been a member of horse boards for the last thirty years, and having bought cavalry horses for the United States service. I therefore feel that I know whereof I speak when I say that the supply of good saddle horses in the country is smaller than it has been at any time since the war. I do not mean that there are fewer thoroughbreds, for there are probably more, but horses suitable for other purposes than racing and park use are becoming rarer every day, and although the price paid by the government is higher than it has been for the last twenty years, it is very difficult to secure proper mounts for the cavalry, while ten or even five years ago at least three times as many horses able to pass muster were presented as the advertisements called for.

"I have served on the plains nearly continuously for more than thirty-five years," continued the speaker, "and am tolerably familiar with all the features of cavalry life. A cavalryman always has a frontier station, and only sees civilization during his brief leaves. Civilians do not realize the hardships and exposures to which a cavalryman is subjected. He has seasons of idleness, but also long periods of great exertion, and as a proof of the effect of his life it can be safely stated that scarcely one man out of ten reaches the age of 45 without being seriously broken down. Indian campaigns are the cause of this. I have fought and chased Indians from the British lines to the Rio Grande, and know what campaigning means. The Indians always get a tremendous start of the cavalry, and seldom are overtaken. The army has been blamed for its ill success, but when the circumstances are understood it is wonderful that so much has been accomplished.

"The Indians never attempt to commit outrages in the vicinity of an army post, and news seldom used to arrive until twenty-four hours or more had elapsed and the Indians had a long start. Nearly always they are provided with remounts, the loose horses being driven before the band, and when an animal shows signs of fatigue another is remounted and the flight continued on a fresh animal. Horses are also stolen wherever met with, and the consequence is that the trooper, who is confined to the use of a single animal, has a poor chance of overtaking the Indians. As a general thing they can fight or escape as they please, and never do the former except when in overwhelming numbers. The fatigues of one of these fruitless marches, generally made on short rations to secure celerity of movement by avoiding carrying baggage, can well be imagined, and the condition of man and beast after a two months' campaign is wretched in the extreme.

"Nowadays the active Indian campaigning is confined to Arizona, but when I was a young man the northern Sioux, northern Cheyennes, Piegans and Blackfeet in the north, the southern Sioux and the Cheyennes and Arapahoes on the central plains, and the Comanches and Kiowas south of the Arkansas, kept us busy all the time. Of all these Indians the Kiowas were the best drilled, it being hard to distinguish them from the dragoons at a distance of two or three miles. The Comanches never deserved their great reputation, as they were poor fighters, doing well against the Mexicans, but never standing against United States troops. The Cheyennes were noted far and wide as the most determined and fiercest fighters, but their energies were more constantly directed against their hereditary enemies, the Utes, than against the whites. The Sioux were the largest and most powerful tribe, and gave us more trouble than any others. They were in their way as well drilled as the Kiowas, I myself having seen a single chief direct the movements of 1,000 warriors, scattered over an extent of country five miles in diameter, simply by the flashing of a little mirror held in the hand. The Blackfeet, being foot Indians, were more easily reached, and after one or two lessons never gave any more trouble, although last winter they threatened an outbreak.

"The Crows and Pawnees, being hated by all other tribes, were our allies and made our best trailers. The Utes, while less daring than the plains Indians, from their situation in the mountains were enabled to ambush the troops very easily, and many lives have been lost in this way. Fighting withal was rather a run than a combat, and the troops had for many years little chance against them on account of their great celerity of movement. It was not until the winter of 1876, when Gen. Nelson A. Miles began his series of winter campaigns, that the plain Indians were thoroughly subdued. That officer followed their trail in the coldest weather, drove them from their winter camps, and although unable to overtake them, kept them constantly on the move. The Indians, sensitive to cold, and ill provided with clothing, died like sheep of hardship and exposure and one by one the bands, fairly tired out, came in, surrendered and were disarmed and put on reservations. The winter campaign more than anything else broke the power of the plains tribes, but at terrible expense to the troops, who were exposed to the fury of the western storms in the coldest months of the year. The youngsters in the army regret the disappearance of the Indians, but we old fellows, who know what a winter march is, are most thankful that they are over, probably forever.—St. Louis Post Dispatch.

Great Compliments to America.

Mr. Hubert Herkomer paid America great compliments in a recent lecture. He said that sculpture and architecture flourished here. The Americans had read the old masters better than the English, "particularly through one man—Richardson—who, with real genius, had brought out an almost new kind of work on old lines." On principle, Mr. Herkomer regarded architecture as of the first importance, then sculpture, then painting. The Americans pose naturally and willingly, and without the anxiety shown by English sitters. And finally the

THE LITTLE RAT MULE.

DISAPPEARING FROM THE STREET RAILWAY SERVICE.

Where He Comes from and Whence He Is Going—What He Costs, Broken and Unbroken—A Hardy Little Brute—His Work and Years of Service.

How often one hears the remark, "Just look at those mules drawing that car; they look like rats." They have thus become known very generally as little rat mules, and the description is a good one certainly. Many of them don't look much larger than a good sized billy goat, being so small that they are hidden from the people in the car by the dashboard in front. It certainly does look cruel to make them pull a car loaded down with people, a load that would strain powerful horses on an up grade. It is like a great many other things, however.

It is cruel only in appearance. The little mule is equal to this and much more. If the car would hold more people he and his mate would pull it any place, and on a level would take it skipping along so fast that you would almost begin to think no other motive power was required to realize rapid transit. He has endurance, speed and strength, and thrives where an animal more hardy and stronger in appearance would soon die. In rapid motion he goes by jumps and jerks, but he accomplishes the desired result, and is one of the most serviceable animals to be had in the street railway business.

He is, however, rapidly disappearing, giving way to mechanical motors. As the old darky said when he saw the electric cars, "The Yankees is great people; they wa'nt satisfied ter free de nigga, and now they've done gone and freed de mules." That is about the case. In St. Louis, for instance, the little rat mules—and, for that matter, the larger mule and the horse—are few in number, not one in thirty for those employed as recently as three years ago. With our increase in population, new industries, etc., this is a somewhat remarkable statement, but it is correct.

The little rat mule is a peculiar animal. Born and raised in the southwest, Texas and Mexico, he is now going to the south and southeast for service on the plantations. In the very recent past, when all the street cars were drawn by horses and mules, the demand for them was very great for that purpose, but as things generally equalize themselves, so has the demand for horses and mules. The street railway companies which have changed to cable or electric motor power have generally disposed of their live stock to very fair advantage, though there are still on hand some of the little rat mules that are unused.

This little animal is one of some value, though he does not look it. Twenty dollars would be a very fair valuation, but in fixing that estimate you would be away off the mark. Unbroken he commands considerable more than that. The cheapest lot that ever came to St. Louis, probably, was one of 200, the price paid for them being a few cents less than twenty-six dollars per head, but they were unbroken. He is a stubborn little brute, and there is considerable labor in breaking him so he can be put ahead of a bobtail and trusted to the average driver. Thus broken he has a value of sixty to seventy-five dollars.

One would naturally suppose that his raiser would break him, and get his enhanced price, but, as a rule, he has come to the St. Louis railroads as wild as could be, and also as stubborn, but the employees of the companies have had a great deal of fun in breaking them in and reducing them to tractability. They have also had some exciting experiences, too, as the little fellow has heels quite as serviceable as his larger relative, and he knows how to use them too. You have got to look out for them, and you have got to put some muscle into use when you think you have an easy task to hold them with the lines. This is not at all easy sometimes, as he has strength and frequently a very hard mouth—hard enough to pull a bobtail car by it with the traces slackened.

It has been said that it seems cruel to run these little fellows to a street car loaded down with passengers. To the contrary, there are few animals which have an easier life. The pulling of the car is nothing to them. They can laugh at that and grow fat. Twenty-five to thirty miles a day for them is nothing at all, and that is about what they cover, with rests between trips. Through with their day's work, they are turned into a big yard, where they run and roll as they please. They never die, or at least the employees of the street railways never hear of their dying. When they approach that period of life they are sold or sent off to the farm, where they may still be of some use.

They are aged before that time comes, however. There are, for instance, little rat mules as much as 20 or 25 years old still in service here, and some which have been in the service twelve and fifteen years. And still they are, to all appearances, good for several years yet. They are as strong and active as ever, apparently, and will likely a year from now start in for a second life on a southern plantation. This is a long time for an animal to tramp over granite and other kinds of paving, through mud and in all kinds of weather, but the limit has seemingly never been reached with this hardy little fellow. He might be subjected to twice as much, possibly, and still not fall under it.

In addition to performing service equal to that of the horse or the large mule, the little rat mule is one of the easiest animals known in the care required. It might, in fact, be said that he really does not require any care. He flourishes best when allowed to rough it. He is, of course, fed grain and hay, but he is not in the least fastidious about his food, as is the horse, and in the absence

Things Money Cannot Buy.

How much the happiness of individual lives is made up of priceless things, unsalable in the coin of the land, yet found quickly when the heart of the searcher honestly desires them! Many of these real treasures are qualities that simply diffuse themselves through the moral and mental atmosphere, and are sometimes little valued, because they seem too vaporous and too illusive to be practically grasped; but they are genuine possessions and won by heart service.

Who does not rejoice to have an honorable name—not necessarily a distinguished name, but a clean one? Truly, pride in such an inheritance, which cannot be bought, is justifiable if with it there are mingled a feeling of humility and a desire to do one's own part to transmit the name as unsullied as it has been bestowed. What makes home love dearer and sweeter than all else, and treasured while life lasts? Not the tables and chairs, not the delicacy of porcelain or the æsthetic beauty which the loom achieves.

These minister to the comfort, taste and artistic nature; but beyond these there is something which ministers to the heart and soul, glorifying plain surroundings and homely details—something illusive to measure or weight, yet potent to guide, to comfort and to help. What is this but the sympathy, the trust, the spirit of sacrifice, the gentleness, the faith, the readiness to do and to bear, which, blended together, make the chain that binds us to our homes?—Harper's Bazar.

Where Steel Is Made.

The general aspect of the interior of a converting house at night is at once startling and grandly impressive. Here heat, flame and liquid metal are ever present; locomotives whistle and puff, dragging with clatter and clang huge ladles of molten iron; the lurid light, flashing and flaming, that illuminates the scene, throws shadows so intensely black that they suggest the "black fire" of Milton, for in such a place it is impossible for a shadow to be cool; half naked, muscular men, begrimed with sweat and dust, flit about; clouds of steam arise from attempts to cool in some degree the roasting earth of the floor; converters roar, vibrate and vomit flames mingled with splashes of metal from their white hot throats; at intervals the scorching air is filled with a rain of corruscating burning iron.

Ingot molds lift mouths parched with a thirst that can only be appeased for a short time by streams of liquid steel that run gurgling into them; the stalwart cranes rise, swing and fall, loading scores of tons of red hot steel upon cars of iron; all these conditions and circumstances combine to make an igneous total more suggestive of the realms of Pluto than any other in the whole range of metallurgic arts.—W. F. Durfee in Popular Science Monthly.

When Animals Are "Charmed."

Kalm mentions having seen a rattlesnake "lying at the bottom of a tree on which a squirrel was seated, fixing its eyes on the little animal, which from that moment cannot move or escape, but begins a doleful outcry, comes toward the snake, runs a little bit away, comes nearer, and finally is swallowed." But, as if to show that this result of bewilderment is not all to be put down to the eye alone, Dr. Andrew Smith says: "I have heard of cases in which antelopes and other quadrupeds have been so bewildered by the sudden appearance of crocodiles, by the grimaces and contortions they practiced, as to be unable to fly or move from the spot toward which the crocodiles were approaching to seize them."

This power is in the human animal often developed to a very great extent, and the part that the eye plays in fascinating a fellow creature by mesmerism—thus opening the way to almost infinite psychical results and unveiling unknown depths of possibility—is decidedly great in proportion to the magnetic force of the system, or rather the mind, for which it acts.—Chambers' Journal.

Why a Mosquito Bite Hurts.

Humboldt, who was a firm believer in the poisonous nature of the mosquito bite, considered the sucking out of the poison to be the explanation of the painlessness of some wounds. He affirmed that if the insect were allowed to suck to satiety no swelling took place, and no pain was left behind, and considered that when pain was produced it resulted from the hasty interruption of the process of sucking, since then the last infused poison would not be able to be withdrawn. He experimented with one of the most virulent species, allowing it gently to settle on the back of his hand, and reports of it:

"I observed that the pain, though violent in the beginning, diminishes in proportion as the insect continues to suck, and ceases altogether when it voluntarily flies away."—Knowledge.

Shocking.

A prominent New York theatrical man, who is quite homely but very conceited, went into a photograph gallery to get some photographs he had had taken. The photographer produced them, and the man declared them elegant. Said he: "It is an excellent picture. It is me all over. It is life itself."

"That is so," responded the candid artist, with a dismal expression of countenance, "they are so lifelike that I can't afford to put one of them in the show window, as I intended to. I can't afford to shock the public that way."—Texas Siftings.

His Rage Saved His Life.

A story is related of the celebrated grammarian, Urbain Domergue, who had an abscess on his throat, which broke in a fit of passion with which he fell on his physician for committing a solecism in grammar.—American Notes and Queries.

At the Cemetery.

She—Dear, what do you think of all

BABY'S FIRST LETTER.

It Broke Up an Interesting Card Party and Turned a Drummer's Course.

The smoking room of the Pullman car held a merry company on Saturday evening, and none was more hilarious than the heavily mustached drummer, who told stories, played cards and laughed loudly with more zest than any. "He's a case," whispered a gray-headed passenger, nodding toward the leader of the fun.

"Another game?" asked a player, as the train drew near an important city.

"No," answered the drummer. "I've got to get off here after mail. I telegraphed ahead to have it brought to the depot."

As the train started after the halt he re-entered the car, holding a half dozen letters in his hand. There was one with his firm's card on the envelope, but he did not open it first as he settled himself in a corner of the compartment. Another was from a leading customer, but the cover remained untorn.

He shuffled the package until he came to a little square envelope, postmarked in an interior town and addressed in a girlish hand.

Quickly came off the wrapper, and an intricately folded epistle appeared. Rapidly his eye read the first page. "Dear husband," it began, and tender words of affection followed. "I am so lonesome," it went on, "and miss you so much."

"I can't be running home every few days," thought the reader. A shade of determination to attend to business instead of yielding to his inclinations passed through his mind, and he read on, "Baby wants you, too, and here is her letter asking if you won't come home next Sunday."

What was this that followed? The tracings of the sheet were not distinctly seen in the jarring light. Ah, now he sees it—the outline of a chubby hand; the pen marks have been drawn around the tiny fingers, and as the father looks he can almost distinguish the pink palm as it lay on the paper. Dimples are in the knuckles and delicate wrinkles mark the joints of the dainty fingers.

Then the little pleading face and sweet blue eyes, with the mother's brown ones bending over, come before him and his own fill with dreamy tears for those most dear to him on earth. It is the sweetest picture man can conceive and portrays the truest and best love possible to human experience.

"Hurry up," comes from the card table. "Don't spoon over your girl's picture all night."

"Go on with your game, boys," says the drummer, half laughing. "Here is the best hand a man ever held," and he shows the party a quick glimpse of the rude outline.

Somehow the game dragged after that, and when a few moments after the drummer started to leave the compartment, some one asked, as if by intuition, "Going home?"

"Yes," was she answer. "I can catch a train in that direction at the next station."

Baby's first letter had proved a powerful one.—Detroit Free Press.

A Blind Spot in the Eye.

It is remarkable that, although the optic nerve is of all parts of the eye the most sensitive to light, yet should an object fall on it as we look around us—and some object must always be thrown on it—it is invisible to us; and in our field of vision there is in reality a gap, though in ordinary sight the surrounding edges of this gap draw up together, and so fill it. But by closing one eye, by practice one may actually force the object which is reflected on to the optic nerve to disappear completely from the field of vision. Bernstein tells us that even the sun itself can be made to disappear if it fall exactly on the blind spot where the optic nerve enters the eye. This may account for the fact that some people can close one eye and stare the summer sun without wincing.—Chambers' Journal.

Influence of Small Courtesies.

The small, sweet courtesies are so potent in their influence upon our daily life, softening its asperities, rounding its angles and insensibly compelling imitation. For who could be churlish, or even cold and indifferent, when surrounded by an atmosphere of genial warmth? The little everyday and all-day thought for others is not hard to some gracious natures imbued with the rare virtue of self forgetfulness; but to those who long for the admiration of their fellow creatures, the practice of the small, sweet courtesies can be recommended as an unfailing means of gaining that approbation. Mr. Browning expresses it thus:

'Twas her thinking of others made you think of her.

—Harper's Weekly.

Not in Stock.

An old lady from way back region came to the city to do some "trading." As she looked around the elegant store with vague wonder a dandy floor walker approached her.

"What can I do for you today, madam?"

"I wanter to go to the place where you sell dry goods."

"It is right here, madam. What kind of dry goods do you want?"

"Dried apples, mister."

And for once a floorwalker was nonplussed.—Detroit Free Press.

He Was Capable.

First Passenger—Can you tell me