MR. BELL IS PRODIGAL.

An Eccentric Man Trying to Waste a Fortune of $4,000,000.

He Wants to Die Poor—Has Gotten Rid of $3,600,000 and Has Only $400,000 Left—Drives His Two Sons from Home—One Is Dead.

James A. H. Bell, formerly known as the "Monte Cristo of Brooklyn," is an eccentric individual, whose main object in life is to spend every dollar of his money before he dies.

Mr. Bell is doing this to spite his sons. He made a will once, cutting them off with $1 apiece, but a lawyer told him such an instrument would not stand in court, and he determined to get rid of his fortune in his own way.

There was a time, and only a few years ago, when James A. H. Bell was worth fully $4,000,000. Today he may have $400,000. He has spent and given the rest away, principal, interest and all. Now he has gone to Europe to get rid of the $400,000.

Mr. Bell's troubles began in a quarrel with his wife over the marriage of their eldest son, Charles A. Bell. The mother sided with the boy, and said he had married a good girl. This angered Mr. Bell, who didn't like the young bride. He drove his son away, and from then on Mr. and Mrs. Bell seldom spoke. The broken-hearted mother died a few years later.

John Graham Bell, another son, did not "take to business." He wanted to be a teacher of music. This angered his father.

After a day of reading and meditation in his library the millionaire decided to disinherit both of his sons.

"They shall have a share of my fortune," he said grimly. "It shall not be as large as they expect. It shall be exactly $1 apiece."

He sent for his lawyer and made his will. It provided that his fortune, with the exception of the said $2, should be divided among charitable institutions in Brooklyn. The trustees of an orphan asylum had made him many offers for the old mansion on Sands street. He had refused them all. "Because," he said to the lawyer, "I want to give it to them when I am dead."

John Graham Bell never prospered. Ill health and an enfeebled will made of him driftwood in life's stream. One day three months ago the stream carried him to St. Peter's hospital. He had no money. He told the superintendent of the hospital that he was a son of the eccentric millionaire of No. 45 Sands street, the "Monte Cristo of Brooklyn." The superintendent sent bill after bill to the Sands street mansion. There was never any reply. The superintendent engaged a lawyer. At first the lawyer was diplomatic.

"Your son is too ill to be removed from St. Peter's to a charity hospital," he wrote. "We would spare you the disgrace of sending him to such an institution. We are sure this—to you—trifling bill has escaped your attention. We are sure that with this reminder it will be promptly met."

It was not. The aged father read it in a cafe on the Champs Elysse. He lit a cigar with it and laughed.

It was only when his housekeeper warned him that a suit was impending that he returned from Paris.

He arrived on Friday, June 30th. "I will settle this matter and go back tomorrow," he said. And, though his son died that night, he kept his word.

"I am shaking the dust of America off my feet forever," he said, as he boarded the steamer.

A man watched the shrunken old figure mount the gang-plank of the ocean liner. He was a middle-aged man, with a curious likeness to the old man who had just gone aboard. He frowned. Then he set his lips firmly under his thick, gray mustache, and went on with his work as dock agent at pier No. 37, North river. The old man could have seen him had he looked that way, but he did not. The dock agent was Charles A. Bell, the only surviving son of the old millionaire, who was leaving America forever.

Mr. Bell's main hobby has been to dissipate his fortune as quickly as possible.

He gave a friend his yacht, one of the finest ever anchored in the sound.

His home was a great gallery of valuable paintings from abroad. He has given some of them to the Brooklyn institute. More have gone to friends and many to strangers. He has met several men on the street or in Prospect park whom he has taken home and presented with a painting worth double their own fortunes.

He threw gold and silver coins to children in the park, as George Francis Train does.

He called passers-by into the house if their faces or manners catch his fancy and gives them pieces of the gold and silver family plate.

If casual visitors admired any article of furniture or vertu in the house he sent it around to their homes next day.

He gave a Stradivarius violin to a little girl in London whose brother he met aboard ship.

He met persons when he was shopping and invited them to his home to look over his curios, the relics of travel, more than worth their weight in gold, and asked them to accept their choice of the collection.

He presented Brooklyn institute his library, one of the finest in America. It comprised 15,000 volumes.

Like most wealthy widowers, Mr. Bell has had trouble in the form of breach of promise suits. So great and so frequent has been this trouble that the Brooklyn Monte Cristo made his last housekeeper sign a contract promising that she would not sue him for breach of promise before he would engage her.

Two housekeepers successively sued him for damages to their affections. He acted as his own attorney and escaped conviction in both cases.

Then came a suit that tried his legal skill to the utmost. Gossips whispered that his legal mind was not so nimble on this occasion, because his heart was enlisted for the plaintiff; that, indeed, if the plaintiff had not been so hasty, he, the defendant, would have married her. The plaintiff in this breach of promise suit was a beautiful young girl, an organist, whom Mr. Bell had engaged to play for him. He got out of the case with nominal costs.

Mr. Bell is a member of a suicide club. Among his possessions is a letter from one of his friends who was weary of the world and killed himself.

In the library there is a tiny silver urn containing the ashes of a favorite servant of his whose body he had ordered cremated.

He keeps there, too, a yellowed letter, worn thin and ink-pale by time. It is written in a delicate, old-fashioned hand. Sometimes the strange old man reads a portion of this letter to his chance visitors. It is always the same portion.

"You have always been generous so far as wealth is concerned," the time-faded letter says. The millionaire never reads more than that. It is the last letter from his wife. He received it while abroad. The next news of her came by cable. It was brief. "She is dead."

He folds the letter carefully and puts it away in a quaint mahogany box. If the box has not been given away, it may, when the old man dies, yield its secret.

The world may know then why this strange man hated his beautiful wife and their children.—Chicago Inter Ocean.

TO COMPRESS AIR CHEAPLY.

Boston Inventor Thinks He Has Solved a Difficult Problem.

Applies the Law of Gravity by Running a Heavy Wheel Over Pistons of a Series of Diametrically Paired Cylinders—Results at One-Eighth the Present Cost.

Boston, July 25.—By the new application of a principle in mechanics a young Swede in this city believes he will revolutionize existing methods of compressing air. The inventor is K. O. B. Textorius, a graduate of the University of Stockholm, and a mechanical draughtsman by profession. For seven years the machine has been developed until now it is almost ready to be put upon the market at a moment when air power is one of the most absorbing subjects of study by engineers and capitalists. Patent rights covering every point have been secured in this country and are pending abroad.

The experimental machine is in a room up under the skylight of a tall office building on Tremont street, and very few, outside the inventor and a friend who has a financial interest, have seen it. The model is small. Its size was fixed by the limited dimensions of what spare room there was in a little hall bedroom in a South End lodging house, where the machine was started some years ago. If the room had been larger, so would the machine have been. In this little lodging room Mr. Textorius filed and pounded and fitted until the first machine was ready to be started. As he was employed by day, all this work had to be done at night. Just at the moment when the generator demonstrated its success by blowing the weight off the safety valve, letting it fall on the floor with a bang, the other lodgers and the landlady insisted that Mr. Textorius was a disturbing element, and he had to leave the house. Then he went to the Tremont street room, into which he put the machine and his friends put a folding bed. The inventor had little use for the latter, however, and traded it for a desk, at which he could work out his plans undisturbed by any desire to sleep. Here the boarding-house product was trimmed and pruned and grafted upon until the machine as it stands today was finished. Then Mr. Textorius went abroad to study foreign methods of air compression, and, after several months of careful investigation, returned last December fully convinced of the superiority of his invention.

Mr. Textorius was employed by a company making a specialty of heating and ventilating to draw plans for furnishing fresh air in stated amounts and temperatures to large numbers of people. The study of this problem in its many phases naturally led him to the study of air compression, and one thing that impressed him at the outset was the great cost of existing methods. To compress the air slowly in order to heat it as little as possible, to keep it cold and then heat it as quickly as possible when wanted for use, are simply phases of the great problem of producing the best possible results at the air motor from the expenditure of a given amount of coal. An expert who has examined Mr. Textorius's model says that a large machine built on the same lines would obtain given results with one-eighth the power used by the ordinary method. If the theory is borne out in practice, the great value of the invention can be seen at once in these days of compressed-air street cars, automobiles and liquid air for refrigerating and other purposes. Compression is the first stage in the production of liquid air, and an economical method of compression will be hailed with delight by the manufacturers.

The experimental plant of Mr. Textorius is interesting in many ways. On a little platform are three machines—the air-power engine, the air-power generator and a little electric motor driven from the incandescent-light circuit. Note the procession of forces: First, the air-power engine; back of that, in an evolutionary sense, is the air generator; back of that the electric motor; then the dynamo, miles away, driven by the engine, and that in turn driven, through the medium of steam, by the primal power stored in the coal for countless centuries. To reduce the cost of this process of evolution, from the power in the coal to the air power in pipes or in steel bottles, is one of the great mechanical problems of the day.

The revolutionary principle in Mr. Textorius's machine is the application of the law of gravity by the use of a big wheel called an actuator. But the method of application is almost equally revolutionary, in that it acts upon a multiple series of cylinders arranged in a circle and tied together in pairs on the walking-beam principle. There are many little niceties of adjustment and application that, in theory at least, do much to perfect the machine. Some of them can be appreciated by even the layman at a glance. The cylinders are long and small in diameter. That means slow compression and the maintenance of a low temperature of the air during compression. The actuator is so controlled by balances that the low point is always just ahead of it, and the two big balance wheels help by their forward trend as well as their momentum.

To be brief and not too technical, the Textorius-Howard air-power generator consists of a series of pumps, eight, ten, twelve, sixteen, twenty-four or more, mounted on a bed-plate arranged in a circle and coupled in diametrically opposite pairs. Thus, as one piston is at its low point its mate is at its high point and all the others are at work, either admitting free air or compressing the air admitted at a former point of the stroke. Free air is admitted through an aperture to each cylinder and the compressed air is delivered into a common pipe, through which passes a constant current of compressed air.

In the centre of the circle of pumps is a shaft driven by the prime mover, which may, of course, be a steam engine, water wheel or electric motor. To the top of this shaft is attached, for power for compression, a heavy wheel, to which the inventor has given the name "actuator." This rotates around the circle of pumps, running upon a flat ring, to the lower side of which are attached the tops of the piston rods in the pumps. The weight of the actuator transmits the necessary power of compression to the pistons in a very uniform and economical manner.

For the governing device there is an outside circular track on which run two wheels, and on shafts to which these two are connected there are two large and heavy wheels situated diametrically opposite, each moving at high speed and in opposite directions. These large wheels act as governing devices, and also assist by their momentum in the work of rotating the shaft to which is connected the actuator.

The use of a multiple series of small pumps instead of a single larger one will, it is said by the inventor, compress a large volume of free air to a given pressure with the expenditure of less primal power. According to the inventor, it would require eight times as much power to compress air to a given pressure in one cylinder 3.84 inches in diameter with a 5½-inch stroke as with a series of eight pumps 1¼ inches in diameter and the same stroke, the capacity of the one being as great as the capacity of the eight.

Mr. Textorius has given full consideration to intercooling, re-heating, and other practical phases of air compression, and his plans as a whole, though many of them are not incorporated in this first crude machine, are approved by one of the most prominent mechanical experts in this city.

Spain's Greatest Need.

Mr. R. P. Olivia, of Barcelona, Spain, spends his winters at Aiken, S. C. Weak nerves had caused severe pains in the back of his head. On using Electric Bitters, America's greatest Blood and Nerve Remedy, all pain soon left him. He says this grand medicine is what his country needs. All America knows that it cures liver and kidney trouble, purifies the blood, tones up the stomach, strengthens the nerves, puts vim and vigor and new life into every muscle, nerve and organ of the body. If weak, tired or ailing you need it. Every bottle guaranteed, only 50 cents. Sold by I. I. Stone, druggist.

LABOR-SAVING SHEARS.

A German who believes in labor-saving devices has patented a pair of shears with a spring attachment. When a cut has been made and the shears are closed, the spring opens the blades slightly. When they are wide open, ready for cutting, the arrangement acts in the reverse way and assists in closing the. Both actions lighten the work of the cutter.

Racking headaches, bleary eyes, weakness, noises in head. Hudyan cures. All druggists, 50 cents.

IN BLACKBERRY TIME.

In those days there were great fields of wild blackberies among the hills. But no one supposed it to be the thing to cultivate such thorny bushes in gardens. Of an August day you could see a half dozen families gathering their yearly supply from the same great pasture. Parson Chase was there by special invitation, and some of us knew which was to be his day. We gathered from far and near, in wagons, and every one expected to carry home a full load. There was a code of honor in the field, for one family should not encroach on another, but should leave a reasonable chance for each group. So it was that family life in those days reached out everywhere and good neighborliness was as far as our ideas of sociality went.

"Indeed," said my Uncle George, "I shall go. There is nothing so good for rheumatism as being scratched." "Or for the patience, either," said my little mother. "If one has any at all," said my Uncle Platt. So it was that we all climbed into the spring wagon, and it was a load, without the berries. There were three boys, including our Jim; there were two uncles, two grandmothers and the little mother. Only the father was left out, to keep house and to do what could not be put off in the bean fields.

When we reached the field the horses were tethered by the roadside, with enough to eat, and we climbed the rail fence. "Eight pails," said my Uncle Platt, "would make eight quarts, and that will make eighty pies and puddings." "As for that," said my little mother, "can you never stop counting chickens before they hatch, or pies before they are baked? You may possibly have none at all." Now it was clear that she meant to say, "But you will have no pies till I bake them; and I will be asked. You shall not count my work as nothing." Then my Jim, who was a diplomat by nature, because he had a soul and sympathy, said: "Little mother, blackberies may be fine as they are, but as for a blackberry pie, they do not grow on bushes—that we know. They are not nature only; they are also art." But our little mother drew her hand across her mouth, for it already watered with prevenient pies. "Indeed, you may say what you will of artists, I hold that in this world there is no artist at all like a great cook. Dear me, but how the whole soul goes into a pie, or a pudding! You may see the basic materials come out transfigured. Do not disturb her, for that pie is first born in her brain, and only that is it possible to mix and mingle and to bring to its complete beauty a great idea." So it was clear that the little mother was already baking a batch of blackberry pies that should be more delicious than any we had ever known. My Uncle George looked sidewise at her, but he held his tongue, and he was evidently determined that my Uncle Platt also should mind his own business. I will tell you what came of it by and by.

But I have got there too soon. Ah, but what a ride was that! I have thought of it many a time, how there was no pride of conventionalities to spoil the genuineness of such days. No one was ashamed of simplicity. The grandmother rode in splint-bottomed chairs, placed in the wagon between the seats, and all the way they knitted and told stories. It was plain that it was girlhood over again with them. They saw everything and wanted us to stop to pick all sorts of wild flowers and fruits. Now it was a bunch of scarlet choke cherries, and now it was a bunch of elderberries. "Dear me," said my tall grandmother, "but we must have some elderberry tarts." "And they are also good for vinegar," said the short grandmother. Then we drove through a field of tansy that bordered the road, and gathered a huge armful, for it was good for many things. Down by the bridge, over a meadow brook grew the end of mint. When we had got by we had a bunch of peppermint, and another of spearmint, and another of catnip. Besides, we had gathered a glory of cardinal flowers, such as would put to shame the looms of Damascus. The little mother, who was the most active except our Jim, found a root of forget-me-not, with its blue eyes smiling as if it were in love with the skies. Ah, well, but some things, and some folks, always smile, even in the dark. It is a sweet power. As for myself, I remember that I pulled some ginseng, and then a moccasin plant with its yellow flowers, and with all the rest as many fringed gentians as I cared to gather.

"To be sure!" said my Uncle George, "but with all this rubbish, where shall we carry the berries?" "Fish," said my little mother, "I care not. Let us at least have what the good God gives us of beauty and pleasure, and as for the berries—well, well, but we will see." But my Uncle George loved the flowers, only he felt compelled to be a little grumpy about them; as would any one who had the gout. Do not our souls also go down to our feet as well as to our finger tips, and to our stomachs; and do they not get their manners as well as their theories from all such corners of the body? If one would have pious children let her cook well, and not expect to whip young dyspeptics into loving righteousness. Greasy doughnuts are a friend to the devil. "Yes, yes," said our little mother, "'tis in the kitchen where one should say her prayers, and let it be with the fingers. Did not the Lord teach us to say give us this day our daily bread? And it should be sweet and neither old nor heavy."

As for the field, and how we wandered about, led by the nose by the berries, I need not tell you. For whenever any one turned the bushes seemed fuller than elsewhere. So we were soon scattered, and every one so absorbed in the harvest that speech was generally too much for us. But I must tell you of the great glen that cut the field in two, and how up and down its vast and fearful sides we climbed, with long blackberry canes dangling far over our heads. Sometimes one might sit down on a stump and draw the bushes gently to himself while he picked as he nested. The little mother and our Uncle George were bid to keep together, and as for the rest of us, we all called now and then to know if these two were safe and well. In the center of the deep gorge ran a wonderful brook, and in it were little islands and waterfalls, and under the mossy logs the fish hid. And we, by and by, gathered there, and sat on the logs and fed the fish with crumbs of our dinners. Ferns and lichens were all about us, and ther were groups of great hemlocks, under which the shade was dense and the air was cool. My Uncle George became so inspired after his dinner that he drew to one side and wrote a poem, and this he afterwards read to us. But I have never got over the notion that poems are mostly private property, and that they should never be given to the world. I do not see why because a man can deal in rhyme he should publish all his whims and emotions. They would be flat enough if put down in plain prose. Life is the only good poem, and such a day as we were living had music and rythm, and more or less of rhyme. It went only too soon, and as the sun dropped west of the big hill we were all on the way homeward.

The homeward way was even more delightful than the outward, for we went down by the creek, and drove along by its mills, and through the rich corn fields that came down close to the driveway. We were so exercised that we could be quiet and not wish to touch everything we saw. The robins had not yet gone south, and even a catbird was here and there, jumping through the bushes. But the real songster of the day was the goldfinch. The thistles were ripe, and these beautiful birds were the incarnation of delight, as they crushed the seed. Conscious of doing a service for man by destroying weed seeds, they were fearless of harm. "Stop," said the little mother, "let the horses rest here in this thistle patch till we can get all that we can carry of the sweet notes. Is it not beautiful that one may carry home one's soul as full as one's hands?" Phebe birds were as busy and as sweet of song, but not so glorious in color. Nature has no gold like that of the goldfinch. And then no one had thought of killing them to wear their plumage. No, I believe it would have caused a popular tumult had a woman appeared in church to worship Jesus with a dead bird in her bonnet.

My Uncle George had once more been penning his brains on paper, and he begged so hard that for once we let him read his lines, which on the whole, you will say were not so bad:

Sweet bird; that, ere the world doth sleep,
S ts softly singing manifold;
Sits swinging toward the golden eve
But hast no need to borrow gold.

Hid in the heart of yonder pine,
Thy heart-mate whispers holy rest.
Thou swingest or wild meadow vine;
Its clusters press against the breast.

Betwixt the waking and the work,
Between the darkness and the day,
This is the hour of native prayer:
To live and love is now to pray.

When he was through the little mother said, "Indeed, but one might do worse." Indeed, but it was true. Yes, it was not false—that is the great thing. And my Uncle George plumed himself, as if he, too, were a goldfinch; and all the way home he was dressing his feathers—which is the way, I believe, with the poets. "It will be too late for pies tonight," said the little mother. "But tomorrow we shall see, yes, we shall see on the morrow."

At last, the pie! That we had not for a moment forgotten. It had nothing to do with cook books, you may be sure. True cookery is a matter of the heart and the head, as I have told you. For did not the little mother have us all in her heart all the time, and did she not resolve to surprise us and to please us and to do us good? And when it was done, it was for us to digest it with love and gratitude. Such a pie never did any harm. It is only the pie that has no soul in it that kills. The little mother drew her hand across her mouth and went about the house abstracted. She was about to invent, she was about to create. In her mind she saw the material, the elements, the chaos. There she would put together with brains. Then they should have order and beauty, and should enter into relation with life. Ah, yes! Ah, yes! Here was art! Here was something worth while! Then she turned her back on us.

I take it you are like the rest, with degenerate noses. That is the organ of all others we most need in a household. One who has a good nose may enjoy a pie for two hours before he begins to eat it. Its delightful perfume fills all the house. It comes through the door cracks, and the keyholes, and one who knows how may meet it half way and say, "Blessed be the soul that devised such aroma, such fragrence, to get at the best emotions of a man, and awaken in him kindly thoughts." Pat, alas! what can not bad cooking do? It stirs the devil in us. Its confusing smells, its smudging suggestions, its mes-alliance of rank spices, its singeing, and its generally irritating purgency—what may one say of such things? One may be excused for thoughtful profanity in such an atmosphere. But it was not so where the little mother brought together the elements, and pronounced the bans and declared that the two should be one.

I remember to this day that very blackberry pie! It was in a deep earthen pan, as morally it should have been. The crust itself was a miracle. It was not a no-account paste, nor was it a mere dough-wall, to keep the contents from spilling out. It was light, it was airy, it was fragrant, and, indeed, it was hypnotizing. A bit of it was begged on state occasions to be privately toasted, and carried in a boy's pocket, with nails and tops and marbles and strings, to be nibbled at out in the clover lot, while Rover sniffed intelligently for crumbs. Sir Joshua Reynolds mixed his paints with brains. But I am ready to believe that Reynolds never could have made a perfect blackberry pie as that. It was a divine gift. There must have been inspiration. Just enough flour over those berries, and not one teaspoonful too much, not one teaspoonful too little. Then the pulp shall be——. No, I will not tell you what it shall be. No one can discuss his sensations on eating such a palpitating mass. It is like swallowing a poem, like eating a mocking-bird song. It is like feeling friendship in the throat, and love in the stomach.

But now that I am at it, I must tell you of one other pie. In those days there were love apples, but no tomatoes, and no one dreamed that they were eatable. They were partly for ornament, but held to be both poisonous and disturbing to the smell. "What," said my father, when the discovery was made, "what, eat them? What, cook them? But they are terrible. I shall not touch them!" But our little mother had the courage of a great inventor, and she had pushed several morsels of this new fruit down her throat, and she had pronounced them excellent. She had resolution, and was not to be beaten, and she could see the good in anything. "Yes, indeed," she said to herself, "but he shall not be so foolish yes, indeed, he shall eat it; I will see to that.

I pity Adam if Eve were of this sort—and from my soul I believe she was, so our little mother baked half a dozen pies, every one stuffed full of love apples, and a plenty of sugar and seasoning. Now, it was a rule in that house that a pie with a cut in it might be still farther cut and eaten by whoever found it. Then she cut one of these love-apple pies, and left the knife on the pie, and both of them in the way of our father, on the great, broad shelf. Lunch time came, and the stomach led him into the trap. Ah, but was it not beautiful! What a brown to the crust! And how it melted in the mouth! One piece easily followed another, and there they lay in comfort, in the side of his stomach, next his heart. There was no more left. The little mother was watching, but she could be patient. Then she came upon the scene. "What; a whole pie gone! What one of my new pies, and none left! 'Tis a shame to be so greedy!" But, father, how did you like it?" "Truly, mother, it was of the best; yes, indeed, it was better than apple or custard." "To be sure," said the little mother, "and why not? I told you so. It was made of tomatoes!" And then she took up her apron, and held it before my father's face, as if to say, "You may blush now behind that—or do not blush, now that you have it all down." But he only laughed a quiet, contented laugh, and looked at the empty plate, to see if, indeed, he had not left one piece more. But it was surely not on the plate; no, not even a few crumbs.

So went the autumn days in the olden time. Nature gave us much to store away against the shorter days, and we had no right to complain. No one was rich, and no one was poor—at least, no one need to be. Our homes had less of art and more of nature. We made or we gathered all that we needed. And we thought more of each other for, was not the family a little world by itself? There was a marvelous closeness between our moods and the moods of the seasons about us. When the splashes of color began to decorate the hillsides in autumn, we also began to let go of cares, and colored up our daily lives with games and sports. And I have not told you one-half about that delicious berry which filled our pastures and clambored on our fences, but I have told you enough. There is nothing in the world so good as a bowl of milk well filled with blackberries. My mouth works at this moment with recollections of old-time bliss. And this shall be counted as no slander upon the pie.

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