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The Conscience Fund.

The first record of money received by this Government from repentant defrauders was in 1863. When General Spinner was treasurer he kept the account separately, but the practice was discontinued. The money now, as it has been for the greater number of years since 1863, when the contributions began, is turned into the treasury as miscellaneous receipts. Repeated attempts have been made by members of Congress to secure appropriations to be paid out of the conscience fund. If the money goes into the treasury as miscellaneous receipts, it ceases to be a separate fund, and cannot be drawn upon. It is not known how much the conscience money now amounts to. The total amount from Dec. 1, 1863, to June 30, 1874, as given in the treasurer's report for the latter year was $162,914. Since then no account of the contributions has been kept. Treasurer Gilfillan, however, estimates that the money now foots up $250,000. The contributions, as a rule, come through the mail with a note saying for what purpose the money is forwarded. Very frequently a penitential explanation is included. Some of these explanations are very curious and some very laughable. The ladies contribute a good deal. They repent principally over false returns made under the income tax and for having evaded the duties upon articles of dress. A lady visited this country in 1864 from England. She smuggled in while here a silk dress pattern. A short time ago she wrote confessing the evasion of customs duties and sending $15 to clear her conscience. She gave the value of the dress and wanted the balance sent back to her if the duties did not amount to $15. The customs division of the treasury made a computation based upon the duties charged in 1864, and found that the lady owed exactly $7,50. The balance was remitted. Ministers of the gospel are very frequently the medium through which the money is refunded. While administering spiritual consolation, the confession of defrauding the Government is made, and a restitution follows. The clergy transmit the money without mentioning names. The largest amount ever received as one contribution was $15,000 in United States 7-30 notes. This contribution was announced in the newspapers. Many and ingenious attempts were made to get this money out of the treasury. One man said his father made the contribution, and that he was crazy. The contributor of it had carefully cut out the numbers of the notes so as to make it impossible to discover from the books who had sent them.

JUST ONE LITTLE SONG, LOVE.

JOAQUIN MILLER.

Come, sing that song I loved, love,
When all life seemed one song;
For I am stricken now, love,
My strong arm is not strong.
Then sing the song I loved love,
You know that one sweet song.

Aye, sing that one sweet song, love;
Love, just that one sweet song.
For life is none too long, love—
Ah, love is none too long.
Then just one little song, love;
Love, just one little song.

I know you love the world, love;
Nor would I deem you wrong.
But, when above my grave, love,
Next year the grass grows strong,
Then sing that song I loved, love;
Love, just one little song.

No tears or sable garb, love;
No sigh to break your song.
But when they bid you sing, love,
And thrill the joyous throng,
Then sing the song I loved, love;
Love, just one little song.

A Sarcasm of Fate.

A very elegant looking letter lay in little Minnie Velsor's hands—a letter that bore a delicious perfume of violets—a letter addressed in a fine flowing hand and the envelope of which was stamped with an intricate monogram, that unless Minnie had known, she could never have deciphered as Mrs. Paul St. Eustace Carriscourt's initials.

The girl's small, pretty hands grew just a trifle cold and trembling as she took up the letter to open it, because so much, oh, so much, depended upon what was in the letter; because it either meant a new, independent life, in which she would not only earn her own living, but very materially assist in taking care of the dear boys of five and seven, or it doomed her to the old tiresome routine, out of which Minnie felt at times she must fly.

Mrs. Velsor looked up from a stocking she was darning, and said nothing, seeing the nervous glow in Minnie's eyes. Then with a little, half-desperate laugh, the girl tore open the thick satin envelope.

"It's almost like an ice-cold plunge bath, but here goes, mamma!"

She hurriedly read the short, friendly note, and from the quick tears that gathered in her eyes, and the smiles that parted her lips, and the flush that bloomed like fresh roses on her cheeks, it was quite plain that the news was good news.

Then she dashed the letter on the floor and rushed over to her mother, and kissed her, laughing and crying at the same time.

"Oh! mamma! Mrs. Carriscourt has given me the position, and she wants me to come immediately—to-morrow! Just think! Five hundred dollars a year, and she assures me I must make myself perfectly at home in her house; and she says I am to have a room to myself, and to eat with Pauline and Pauletta, in the nursery. Oh, mamma, it will be just glorious! Aren't you glad, delighted?"

Her blue eyes were dancing, and her cheeks glowing like a rose leaf.

Mrs. Velsor's sweet, sad voice was in such odd contrast to her child's eager, animated tones.

"How can I be delighted to have you go away from me, dear? Besides, I am so afraid you will not realize your vivid anticipations. The outside world, which seems to you so rose colored and golden, will not be what you think."

"Oh, mamma, what a Job's comforter you would be! But how can I help being happy—perfectly happy, except being away from you—in New York, in a magnificent house, among people of wealth and distinction, and with these two sweet children my only care? Mamma, I will ride with them, and I am to make myself perfectly at home, the letter says, and you remember what a charming lady we thought Mrs. Carriscourt was, when she was visiting Doctor Mansfield last summer."

Mrs. Velsor sighed softly. It seemed so cruel to pour the chill water of disappointment on Minnie's bright hopes.

"Well, dear, perhaps I am growing cynical as I grow older. Certainly you deserved a fair fate, and now, to descend to matters of earth earthy suppose you see if the beans are boiling dry."

The third day thereafter—a day fragrant with the smell of frost in the air—a day when the leaves sailed slowly, stately down through the tender, golden atmosphere, and the hush of mid October was over all the earth and sky, Minnie Velsor went away from the little cottage where she was born and had lived, into the world waiting to receive her—all her girlish hopes on gladdest wings, all her rosiest dreams bursting in fondest realization.

It was a splendid place, Mrs. Paul St. Eustace Carriscourt's palatial residence on Fifth avenue—a house that seemed to Minnie's fancy like a translated bit of a fairy story, with its profusion of flowers and lace draperies, its luxuries and elegance, of which she had never dreamed, and of whose uses she was equally ignorant.

Mrs. Carriscourt received her with a charming graciousness and patted her on the shoulder, and told her she hoped she would not let herself get homesick and installed her in her beautiful little room, with its pink and drab ingrain carpet and chestnut suit, and dimity curtains at the windows.

Then Minnie made some trifling little alterations in her toilette, and proceeded to take literal advantage of Mrs. Carriscourt's invitation to make herself at home in the great, beautiful parlors below, where she made a charmingly sweet, quaint little pictures, as she sat nestled in a huge silken chair, the color of the roses on her cheeks, and at which Miss Cleona Carriscourt looked in astonished, imperious disdain, and Mr. Geoffrey Fletcher in undisguised admiration, as the two entered the room at the farthest entrance.

"By Jove, what a lovely girl! Who is she, Miss Carriscourt?" he asked in a tone of unusual interest.

Cleona's black eyes looked unutterable anger from Minnie to Mrs. Carriscourt.

"What on earth is she doing here, mamma, is she crazy?"

Her sharp, cutting tone was distinctly heard, as she intended it should be, by Minnie, who flushed painfully as she rose, venturing just one glance at the haughty beauty's face, and Mr. Fletcher's eager, admiring eyes, whose boldness startled her.

"I am sorry to have made such a mistake. I thought that Mrs. Carriscourt meant that I was to sit here a little while. Please excuse me; I will not come again."

Her voice was sweet, and just a little nervous, and she instantly crossed the room, followed by Cleona's cold, cutting words, every one of which brought a sharp thrill of mortification and pain to her.

"Be careful you make no more such mistakes, girl. Your place is among the hired help, and not in the parlor. Be good enough to remember that."

And even Geoffrey Fletcher's callous heart gave a thrill of sympathy at sight of the scarlet pain on the sweet, young face.

Once safe in her room, poor little Minnie fought and conquered her first battle with fate.

"I'll not be crushed by my first experience," she decided, resolutely, an hour or so after, when her breast yet heaved with convulsive sighs, and her eyes were all swollen from crying. "I will not give it up and rush home to mamma—my first impulse. I will endeaver to construe people less literally, and keep my place."

But there came a flush to her cheeks that all her brave philosophizing could not control, at the memory of Cleona Carriscourt's cool insolence.

"I'd not have spoken so to a dog," Minnie said, as she repressed the bitter tears that sprang in wounded indignation to her blue eyes.

After that there was no shadow of an opportunity given by Minnie for Mrs. Carriscourt or Cleona to lay any blame to her charge.

She performed her duties as no governess had ever performed them, and the twins progressed to their mother's complete satisfaction.

Minnie never was seen in the rooms of the family, but lived entirely to herself, taking her solitary little walks when the day's duties were ended, and disciplining herself into an unconsciously unselfish, brave, patient woman.

Her letters home were bright and cheerful—until one day Mrs. Velsor was horrified to learn that her darling was dangerously ill, that the fever had come suddenly upon her, and that in fear and selfishness, Mrs. Paul St. Eustace Carriscourt had insisted that the raving girl be taken from her house to the hospital.

"It will kill her to move her," Dr. Lethbridge had remonstrated indignantly.

"What nonsense, mamma!" Cleona retorted, looking fiercely at the physician. "It will not hurt her to be moved nearly as much as it will for us to keep her here. She is nothing but the children's governess; she had better die, even, than to risk all our lives any longer. You will please superintend her removal to-day," she added, imperiously, to Dr. Lethbridge.

He looked coldly, almost furiously, at Miss Carriscourt's face as she spoke. Then he bowed, and answered quietly:

"I beg to agree with you. This poor, suffering child had better die than remain among such inhuman people."

And Dr. Leithbridge personally superintended Minnie's transfer—not to the hospital, but to his own house, where his lovely, white-haired mother and his sister opened their hearts to the girl, and nursed her back to health and strength, and—the sweetest happiness that ever came to a girl's heart, for Hugh Lethbridge asked her to be his wife.

And the memory of those brief days was hidden away beneath the glad sunshine of her beautiful new life, and Minnie in her new home was proud and honored and beloved as a queen.

The years passed—as years have a trick of passing—bringing their burdens of joy and sorrow, and to Hugh Lethbridge and his wife there were only landmarks of content to mark their flight.

Three dear children had come to them, and matron Minnie was even fairer and sweeter than the maiden had been, for she had been benefitted by the stern discipline of earlier days.

And as the years went by Dr. Lethbridge grew famous and rich, until there were no comforts or luxuries he was obliged to refuse to his wife or family—and one of those coveted luxuries was a resident governess at the home of the children.

"I remember my own governess days so well, dear," Minnie said one day to her husband, when they were discussing the feasibility of securing one. "I feel as if I never could be kind enough to any one in such a position in my house. And yet all the happiness of my life resulted from my position in Mrs. Carriscourt's family,"

And she looked the great unutterable love she had for him, and Dr. Lethbridge kissed her lovely upturned face tenderly.

"Then I will take this widow lady, whom Allison recommended, shall I, Minnie? He says she is of good family, and in very reduced circumstances. Her husband was a miserable, drunken fellow, and she has to support both herself and her invalid mother. It would be a charity, I suppose; but, of course, we must also look to our own interests."

But the decision was to employ the widow lady Allison, so confidently recommended, and a day or so afterward an interview was arranged.

It was just at the dusk of a winter's afternoon that the servant announced to Dr. Lethbridge and his wife that a lady wished to see them in the parlor—the lady whom Mr. Allison had sent—and Minnie and her husband went down to meet her—tall, pale, bearing the unmistakably traces of misery and sorrow on her face—Cleona Carriscourt.

Minnie gave a little exclamation of astonishment.

"Is it possible? Miss Carriscourt—"

She interrupted, quietly:

"Mrs. Fletcher—Mrs. Geoffrey Fletcher. And you are little Minnie Velsor. I had no idea—I had forgotten Doctor Lethbridge's name—of course, I cannot have the position. It would hardly be natural that you should wish to befriend me."

Mrs. Fletcher turned toward the door, her pale face piteous, her voice bitter and wailing.

Doctor Lethbridge looked sternly after her; but Minnie shot him an appealing glance before she stepped toward the departing woman.

"Wait—just a moment, please! I was so surprised, Mrs. Fletcher. Pray sit down, you are in trouble, and if we can be of any service, I know the doctor will be glad to assist you."

Mrs. Fletcher's lips quivered a second, as she turned her pitiful eyes on Minnie's sweet face.

"I am in need of work, but I do not expect it of you. You can only despise me and hold me in hatred and contempt for what I did to you. But that or something else has come home to me."

"I do not hate or despise you Mrs. Fletcher. God has been too good to me for that. Stay! Doctor Lethbridge will indorse my forgiveness, I am sure, and we will make you as happy as we can. We will forget all that was unpleasant and start anew. Do stay and teach my little girls, dear Mrs. Fletcher."

And Cleona sat down, overcome with passionate tears, while the doctor, with an indulgent smile, and a nod of the head to Minnie, left the two women alone under the strange circumstances into which the sarcasm of fate had led them.

A Bachelors' League.

Many highly respected unmarried men in London about thirty years ago, had become thoroughly impressed with the idea that something ought to be done to relieve themselves from certain social duties which had been gradually growing more and more onerous. After some canvassing among the interested persons it was finally decided to form a League of Bachelors, and as the members of that league were endeavoring to escape from responsibilities which are notoriously shirked by the young men of to-day, we shall perhaps interest our feminine readers by transcribing a few of the rules which were laid down for a London society almost a generation ago and which are likely to be revived before long on this side of the water."

1. Every bachelor joining the league is to cancel all previous engagements.

2. Every bachelor having subscribed for five years to the League, and who, by misfortune, shall have incurred a matrimonial engagement, shall be defended against any action for breach of promise, and thus saved from the shame and misery of going through the Court of Hymen, which is too frequently another name for the Insolvent Court.

3. Connected with the League it is intended to establish a Bachelors' Insurance Office, to insure single men against marriage and flirtation, on the same principles as are usually applied to death and fire. Any member having visited willfully a house with more than two marriageable daughters will, in the event of the calamity of marriage befalling him, be regarded in the same light as *felo de se*, and his policy will be vitiated on account of the very bad policy that will have guided him. Any bachelor falling—into matrimony—by his own hand, as in the case of a written promise to wed, will be deprived of all the benefits of his insurance, and every applicant proposing to be insured must answer the following questions, among others that will be proposed to him: What is your age next birthday? At what age had your father the misfortune to marry your mother? Have you been afflicted with the German or other mania? Are you subject to sentimental fits? Have you been addicted to the writing of sonnets? Or have you ever suffered from the *cacoethes scribendi* in any shape [illegible] time in your life been a victim to the flute, or any other deadly-lively instrument? Have any of your near relations fallen in love at any time, and if so have they recovered, or have their cases ended fatally?

If these questions are all answered in a satisfactory manner, any member, of the Bachelor's League may insure any amount under £5,000, to be paid within three months of the melancholy termination of proof of wedlock having actually overtaken him. The insurance against fliration or fire cannot be effected where the applicant is more than ordinarily inflammable, and watering-places in the season, balls, and picnic parties must be considered as doubly or trebly hazardous, and charged accordingly. A great moral engine will be kept on the premises, so that in case of alarm of fire, any member may have cold water thrown upon him without extra premium.

The Kerosene Lamp.

Kerosene has been in general use so many years that we naturally suppose that people are familiar with its qualities, and understand perfectly well how to handle it safely and economically. This impression is, however, hastily formed, and it seems that a lamentable ignorance prevails on the subject. Much damage results from turning the light of these lamps low. The presence of glass chimney on every kerosene lamp is as plain a direction to keep the flame bright as though it were printed in so many words, "Don't let me smoke." Kerosene is a concentrated hydro-carbon. With an insufficient supply of oxygen, it gives off dydrogen and carbonic acid gases, both inimical to health and in sufficient amounts fatal to life. With an ordinary open lamp the burning of kerosene is not successful. A chimney is added, and extends several inches above the flame, which rests on the perforated base below it. On lighting the lamp, the glass chimney is almost instantly heated, inducing an upward current of air, which rushes in through the network of perforations, feeds the flame with oxygen, and passes off at the top of the chimney. If the chimney is sufficiently high, and the perforations sufficiently large, the intensity of the light may be considerably increased, of course at the expense of a larger amount of oil and a greater supply of oxygen. Thus the table lamps, with cylindrical or Argand works, give a larger amount of light than those which are fed by a flat wick; the chimney much higher, and the atmosphere is fed to the center as well as to the outside of the flame. When a kerosene lamp is turned down low, from mistaken idea of economy, there is insufficient combustion, and if the lamp does not visibly smoke, the invisible gases of carbonic acid and hydrogen are evolved, and may be detected instantly by the smell, especially by a person who comes in from out doors or from a room with a purer atmosphere. The presence of these dangerous gases means headache and vertigo, and at length insensibility and death. No ordinarily sized living room in a house is safe half an hour, or fifteen minutes, even, after a lamp has been put into this improper condition. All saving of oil by such means is at the risk of loss of health, and possibly of life. Such niggardliness is suicidal.

The greatest evils in life have had their rise from something which was thought of too little importance to be attended to.

If you would relish food, labor for it before you take it; if enjoy clothing, pay for it before you wear it; if you would sleep soundly, take a clear conscience to bed with you.

Concentration of Mind.

Dr. Potter, a few days ago, before the Sanitary Reform Association, of New York, when explaining the difficulties a child had in concentrating its mind on its studies, when surroundings were uncomfortable, as in a badly built or ill-ventilated schoolroom, made use of a singularly happy expression. He spoke of those physical "adjustments," the exact meaning of which most people who work with their brains and pens can most thoroughly understand. It is quite certain that the surroundings of a literary man, when he is at his work, have something to do with the facility or difficulty with which his labor is accomplished. A spluttering pen, viscid ink, greasy paper, a rickety table, an uncomfortable chair, are often clogs to successful composition. They are mechanical obstructions, physical interruptions, which, constantly recurring, check the free flow of thought. The absolute work to be done, even when successfully accomplished, is at the expense of a certain amount of extra labor. It has often been told, what are the peculiar surroundings under which some distinguished men have accomplished their literary work. One author never could write unless a brass candlestick, the candle in which never was lit was on his table; another had to have a dish of wafers, though he never was known to use any; a third never could pen a line unless a pot with geraniums was placed on or near his writing desk. As to the material to be used, it is said that one of the most famous of modern French novelists never would have written a romance if a maker of a peculiar paper with blue lines had stopped manufacturing. These are, of course, mental idiosyncrasies to be laughed at, and might be called special adjustments. Taking, however, Dr. Potter's broader idea, and applying it to the lower creation, we all know the method employed in training canary birds to sing a stave of music. They are enclosed in a dark cage and piped to. All outside disturbing influences are withheld. It is absolutely certain that in teaching children, in drawing to a point the focal powers of their brains, all extraneous disturbances, as far as possible should be removed. With the adult, however; it is a misfortune when these physical adjustments are such necessities that no serious continued work can be accomplished when he is not in harmony with them. A man becomes then the slave of his surroundings. No one is idiotic enough to despise the quiet library, the baize-covered table, the morocco-covered chair, the silver standish, the pet pen, the hand-made paper, the pleasant warmth of the cannel-coal fire, and the carefully adjusted light. But such delightful adjuncts we do not all enjoy. Perhaps the newspaper office, with its thousands of interruptions, its usual discomforting surroundings, would be the best place in the world to teach a man that these physical adjustments can be at times entirely dispensed with.

Menhaden.

The Menhaden fishery of this country is the largest of its kind in the world, and is only exceeded in importance by the cod fisheries. The herring family is represented on the Atlantic coast by ten species, all of which swim in immense schools, and several, such as the sea herring and the shad, are of great economical importance. In abundance and value these are all surpassed by the menhaden. This fish has thirty distinct names, limited in their use within narrow geographical boundaries. North of Cape Cod the name pogy is universally used while in southern New England the fish is called the mendaden. The names are derived from two Indian words of the same meaning. About Cape Cod the pogy is replaced by hard head shad, and in eastern Connecticut by bony fish. In western Connecticut the species is commonly known as the white fish, while in New York the familiar name is mossbunker, a relic of the Dutch colony of New Amsterdam. The other names are alewife, bay alewife, pilcher and green tail. Virginia gives it the name of the bug fish, bug shad and bug head. Professor Goode says that sixty or eighty per cent. of the menhaden taken in the Chesapeake contain parasitic crustaceans in their mouths. The parasites do not live on the fish, but taking possession of every open mouth, devour the food as it passes through the fish's gills. In North Carolina the name is fat back, which prevails as far south as Florida, and where are also heard the names, yellow tail and yellow tailed shad, while in southern Florida the fish is called shiner and herring. It is deemed impossible to indicate the movements of the menhaden with certainty. With settled warm weather they make their appearance in the inshore water, usually preceding the shad and the blue fish a week or so. The first schools usually appear in Chesapeake Bay, in March or April; on the coast of New Jersey, in April or early May; on the south coast of New England, in late April and May; off Cape Ann, about the middle of May, and in the Gulf of Maine, the latter part of May and the first of June. Returning, they leave Maine late in September and October; Massachusetts in October, November and December; Long Island Sound and vicinity, in November and December; Chesapeake Bay, in December and Cape Hatteras, in January. Further to the south they remain more or less constantly throughout the year. Their northern range has become restricted within twenty years. Forty years ago they were caught in immense schools in St. John's Bay, N. B., and sometimes in great numbers in the Bay of Fundy. They are now seldom seen there. In 1879 there was a great change in the limits of their northern range. In July more than forty steamers resorted to the usual fishing grounds north of Cape Cod, where the catch for the season did not exceed one hundred barrels. The theory of the absence of the fish from this old haunt is that the fish usually resorting there were killed off, or sought other haunts, probably the latter, as no one advances the theory that the menhaden are being exterminated, and they are vastly more abundant on this coast. The absence of food, the presence of an enemy in their old haunts, or the distasteful atmosphere of the water, would drive them to new ones. It has been suggested that the presence of considerable numbers of blue fish north of Cape Cod may be the cause of the menhaden's absence, but Professor Goode disputes it, on the ground that the presence of great schools of blue fish among menhaden does not have the effect of driving them away. At the time that blue fish were most abundant, there was no perceptible diminution in the number of menhaden. The change of temperature is accepted as the most plausible theory, and the Professor is of the opinion that they go off into the sea, under the Gulf Stream, where they find the right temperature. There seems to be a doubt as to what the food of the menhaden is. Hundreds of specimens have been dissected, and every stomach has been found to contain dark greenish or brownish mud or silt, such as occurs near the mouths of rivers and on the bottom of still bays. When this mud is allowed to stand for a time in clear water, it becomes slightly tinged with green, indicating the presence of chloroplyl, perhaps derived from the algæ, so common in muddy bottoms. In addition to the particles of fine mud, the microscope reveals a few common forms of diatoms. If the menhaden had teeth it might be supposed that they feed on other fish, as the blue fish feed on them; but in place of teeth their mouths are supplied with about fifteen hundred thread-like bristles, from a third to three-quarters of an inch long, which are attached to the gill arches and resemble a sieve. Below this is the stomach, which resembles the gizzard of a chicken, and further down is a coiled intestine about five times the length of the fish, all of which would point to the fact that the menhaden feed on vegetable matter. Professor Goode's opinion is that the fish goes down to the mud, sifts out the unnutritious matter and swallows the remainder. With regard to their breeding habits some mystery exists. Thousands of specimens have been dissected since 1871, without the discovery of mature ova. Young menhaden, from one to three inches in length and upward, are common in Summer and Autumn in the southern part of New England. These are in schools, and make their appearance suddenly from the open ocean, like adult fish. Menhaden have never been known to spawn on the southern coast, and the egg bearing ones, when observed, are always heading out to sea. The strong possibility is that their breeding grounds are on the off shore shoals which skirt the coast from George's Banks to the Florida Keys. The menhaden has come to be regarded as the most prolific of fish, far exceeding the shad and herring. An examination of one fish revealed one hundred and fifty thousand eggs. The business of rendering menhaden into oil and scrap, the latter for fertilizing purposes, has grown rapidly on Long Island within a few years. Over forty millions of fish were caught and rendered last year. Three new steamers are being constructed for next year's crusade, and three new factories are going up. Over a million dollars are now invested, and it is safe to assume that half a million of capital will be added within the next year. The profits of the business are immense.

Down Hill in a Stage Coach.

A moment's halt on the summit and the downward trip begins. The horses relieved of the weight which has dragged so heavily from the beginning, set into a strong gallop, evincing a confidence in the brake block which occasions do not always justify. The road is frightfully steep, and so sinuous that oftentimes the way in front seems barred beyond passage. The coach dips and careens from side to side and a strong grasp upon the seat is necessary to prevent being discharged into the depths below. The dropping into and out of rocky ruts lends additional interest to the ride. Thenceforth wheelers and leaders are launched into a terrific race for life. With dilated nostrils and ears well back, the frightened beasts know that flight is their only safety, and strongly they plant their feet into the hard and often icy road. Jehu keeps them well in hand, holds the wheel horses up to their work and plies the vigorous lash to the leaders. So long as his steeds keep their feet, he knows he can control the movements of his stage, but if one goes down, a frightful disaster is almost certain. Down the rugged road the coach plunges—now grazing the solid wall of the mountain and anon trembling on the very verge of the brink—that appalling evidence of the narrow line between life with all its hopes and aspirations and death with its cheerless uncertainty. A few moments and the studded growth of hardy evergreens struggling for life amid the chaos of loosened rock appears, announcing the approach to fairer lands; the road gradually loses its perpendicularity, corduroy bridges threaten to demolish the quaking vehicle; the horses slacken their pace; the way widens; vegetation assumes a larger growth; birds of broader wing, more varied plumage and wider range of song dart from tree to tree; stunted grass sere and yellow and late autumnal flowers give a happier face to the landscape; the austerity of the heights above disappears, the driver slowly and carefully draws rein, and one passenger, at least, indulges in silent thanksgiving. But it is a grand, exciting, magnificent ride anyway, and everybody should take it once, at least, in a life time.

An Inseparable Pair.

A Duke of Savoy, who made some pretensions to the city of Geneva, sought to gain it by surprise; he scaled the walls in the night, but his success was not equal to his wishes. The alarm being given that a great number of besiegers had mounted the walls, the citizens ran to arms and repulsed their enemies, who were too weak to resist them. Those who fell into their hands were led to an ignominious death. Among the number of the prisoners was an officer who had particularly distinguished himself for his valor. The news of his misfortune being carried to his wife, she flew to the place where her husband was to perish, and demanded to embrace him for the last time. They refused this favor, and the officer was hung without her being permitted to approach him. She, nevertheless, followed the body of her husband to the place where it was exposed. She there seated herself by the melancholy spectacle, and remained without taking any nourishment or suffering her eyes to be abstracted for a moment from the object of her affection. Death, which she had waited for with impatience, came at last, and closed her eyes while she was stretched over the dead body of her husband.

"The proof of the pudding is in the eating," says an old proverb, but it almost takes away our appetite when we see a "proof" of the waiter's thumb on the edge of the dish.

Duty is the little blue sky over every heart and soul—over every life—large enough for a star to look between the clouds, and for the skylark Happiness to rise heavenward through and sing in.

Beautiful things are suggestive of a purer and higher life, and fill us with mingled love and fear. They have a graciousness that wins us, and an excellence to which we involuntarily do reverence.

A Big Mustard Plaster.

Dr. Henry C. Chapman, Coroner's Physician in Philadelphia, Pa., whose genial nature age has not withered, and whose infinite variety of cheerful speech custom, has anything but staled, rushed excitedly into the drug store at the northwest corner of Twelfth and Chesnut streets and cried in peremptory tones:

"Give me three feet of mustard plaster; and give it to me right away!"

The apothecary "with overwhelming brows" looked up from amidst his "green earthen pots, bladders and musty seeds" and said in a dazed sort of way;

"Sir?"

In this single word was expressed both interogation and surprise.

"I say," replied Dr. Chapman, "I want three yards of mustard plaster, and I want it just as quick as you can make it. Patient is in imminent danger. Delay may mean death."

"Three feet of mustard plaster? Good heavens, Doctor, what are—"

"I said three *yards*, not three feet; at least, when I said three feet I meant to say three yards and I immediately corrected myself. And I think that I mentioned the fact that this was a case in which there was no time to be lost." The Doctor was growing testy.

"But three yards of mustard plaster; why, bless my soul! You wouldn't want that much if your patient was a hippopotamus with the stomach-ache; surely, Doctor, you don't really mean to say yards; you must mean inches."

Dr. Chapman assumed an air of severity becoming his professional dignity and municipal office. He seemed on the verge of expressing a forcible opinion forcibly. There was a significant pause. Then his severity faded away, his dignity relaxed and he chuckled:

"The fact of the matter is," he said, "one of the giraffes out at the Zoo has an acute attack of bronchitis. His throat's sore all the way down. That's what the plaster's for. Now then, let's have it.

And then the puzzled apothecary saw day-light and set about manufacturing the largest mustard plaster that the world has ever known.

A Spanish Dinner.

We returned to our hotel for another experience—that of a genuine Spanish dinner. This harrowing theme is not to be avoided, since life cannot be supported on cathedrals and curiosities. To describe one is to describe all. The dining room has a bare floor, seldom visited by soap of Castile or of any other region, but the walls try to attract your attention by hideous oil paintings and photographs, and occasionally dingy gilded columns support the ceiling. The table linen is very coarse and rough and the napkins are put in rings for further service. The soup is generally good, because thickened by a sort of pea, which some writers says "tries to become a bean and very nearly succeeds." This, as it does in some form, [illegible] either in the dignity of a separate dish or in [illegible] with another. There are seven or eight courses, the fish loitering in at the third or fourth, and some of them might be good but for the revolting presence of some untranslatable flavor and especially of garlic. If this villainous plant does not positively mix itself with all the viands it can at least boast that it breathes upon them. The young lady of our party ventured to say that she did not really dislike it, whereupon she was assailed with such a storm of scornful incredulity that she went straight over to the enemy's camp forever, much to the disgust of her admiring cavalier. The *vins ordinaires* of Spain are agreeable and pure; the sweet dishes were to us insoluble mysteries, usually to be avoided; the fruits excellent, especially grapes, which in October are abundant, enormous clusters selling for two or three sous. This is the land of chocolate, which nearly usurps the throne of coffee; with it are served long frosty morsels of a mixture of sugar and white of eggs of deadly sweetness. The bread is always good; as to butter, bid it a fond good-bye when you leave France, for here no one eats it, and if you make the attempt once, surely you will never make it again.

Mrs. Oakey's Advice.

A woman chooses for her profession the head of a household. Let her not enter on it lightly. Properly viewed, it is the most elevated of all professions. She has in her hands the welfare and direction of a few or many people, but it is a work which cannot be neglected. It is her duty to see that her home is clean, airy, cheerful, happy, and its various economies attended to.

A mistress should go through her house every morning, praise where praise is due, and quietly find fault with any carelessness or omission, thinking nothing beneath her notice, but with a gentle authority which admits of no question.

Do not live with a fine house over your head and subsist in the basement. Few people out of your family know or care how you live. Let your house, large or small, be kept for the benefit of those who live in it. Warmth and light are better than fine furniture, and good beds better than fine bedsteads.

Live in your drawing-rooms; have books, work, music, fire, all to make it the pleasantest place for the members of the family; a place for rest, comfort, conversation, with nothing too fine to sit upon.

Curtains are not for ornament, but use, drop them, shut out the cold, and have an open fire. It is the best of luxuries, an ornament and a cheerful companion.

Early rising is desirable. I do not mean getting up before daylight. It is useless to begin the day by making every member of the family uncomfortable.

The mother should set an example of being neat and appropriately dressed. She will see no one during the day before whom she should desire to appear so well, or to appear so attractive.

Treat your servants with confidence and consideration, and do not suspect them of doing wrong.

They must have time to do their washing and keep their clothes in order, or they cannot be clean and tidy.

Without wholesome intervals of amusement, uninterrupted work becomes intolerable. There are and must be differences in the modes of enjoyment, but there is a common womanhood.

—The first coffee house was opened in England in the year 1692.

It is more beautiful to overcome injury by kindness than to oppose to it the obstancy of hatred.