

THE MAN THAT OWNS THE TOWN.

He loafs around the corner With airs that make one tired, And glibly talks of wealth as if By Mammon he's been sired;

He tells you what "my greaser" said Last Sunday to the flock And interjects a word about "My fine imported stock."

He's always here to himself And ne'er he forgets To tell about the things he's done, Or hopes to finish yet.

His wife, she knows him pretty well For when she needs a dress, He's always sure to growl about "Financial distress."

Though puffed with self importance, he Will ne'er take wings and fly; He'll find himself almighty small The day he comes to die.

That good St. Peter never knew "The man that owns the town."

THE CITY EDITOR'S STORY.

BY WILLARD HOLCOMB.

The hour was about 3 a. m., and we were sitting in the city room, smoking and chatting together before wending our several ways homeward.

There was the sporting editor, who had recently returned from a sub rosa prize fight down the river, of which he had been both referee and reporter.

"What the devil are you doing here to-night, Jim?" inquired the sporting editor, between puffs at his brain-wood.

"Working," was the laconic response.

"I was short of men and called him into take charge of that shooting affair," explained the city editor.

"And you were fool enough to come," said the sporting editor, still addressing the police reporter.

"That's right," continued the sporting editor, in a tone of well-feigned disgust; "there's no fool like an old fool, and we're a pair of 'em. It would have been money in my pocket if I had stayed in that poker game the boys started after the fight, but just for the sake of getting a 'scop on the other papers, I threw away a good thing."

"I did not see him again that evening. About midnight I began to wonder why I had not heard from him, but only speculated on the possibility of something having happened to him, for the idea never occurred to me that he could possibly fail. Finally, after an hour had gone by, I telephoned to the police station. Word came back that there were no new developments in the case, and that Jones has not been there. Sending two men out to hunt him up, I set to work myself to make up a story of the murder from the afternoon papers. Just then Jones came in. His step was unsteady and his face flushed. He had evidently been drinking heavily—something I never knew him to do before—but he was not drunk; rather he seemed at high nervous tension, although outwardly as calm as ever.

"I decided to let this breach of discipline pass, and merely asked him for his murder story. He replied that he hadn't written it.

"I looked here, you," turning to a "cut" reporter who was sitting out the dog watch, "the newspaper business is very well to break a young fellow in for some other line of work, but do you get out of it before you are as old as Jim and me, or you will become a regular slave and can't stop if you want to. Ain't that so, Charlie?"

"I certainly become a strong habit," responded the city editor, quietly.

"Habit!" exclaimed the sporting editor, warming up to the subject; "it's worse than gambling. Didn't I quit a good game to-night to come up here and write my story? And there's Jim—he's too old to be taking orders from anybody, even you Charlie—but you say 'come, and he comes. Think of any other business man calling an employe out at midnight to wait on a customer?"

"That's true," said the city editor, thoughtfully. "I know of no division of the great army of labor where the service is so voluntary or the discipline so strict."

"And it ain't all money that makes us go," pursued the sporting editor. "Lots of us could make more in some other business, but we stick to until we are literally kicked out! Why, your newspaper man will go without eating or sleeping, not always without drinking, and he will forsake home, family and friends, and go through everything himself merely to serve his paper."

"Why, the only thing a confirmed newspaper man will not do," exclaimed the sporting editor, warming up to an oratorical climax, "is to write up his own funeral—and that's only because he can't."

"Yet I knew a man once who wrote

his own death warrant," said the city editor quietly.

"I was in a western city some years ago," remarked the city editor, "that I was holding down the city desk on a daily for the first time. We had a man on the paper who was simply a crank on homicides; and he was more than a mere reporter, for he had detective talent of the highest order. He didn't care for common crimes—burglars, larcenies and such—but give him a good, mysterious murder, and he was splendid. Not only did he have the history of all the famous murders at his fingers' ends, but he delighted in ferreting out the most mysterious crimes that came within our province. In every case except the one I am telling about—and there were many killings in that town—he traced out the murderer before the detectives even dreamed of his identity.

"I had since thought the secret of his success was that he put himself mentally in the place of the murderer and reasoned it out from motives rather than from the clues of the ordinary detective.

"There is seldom much method in murder," he once said to me, when in a rarely communicative mood. "Most men would commit it in about the same way under the same circumstances. It is only when a murderer goes about it systematically, as do the Thugs of India, that a murder becomes truly mysterious."

"I once asked him why he did not become a regular detective.

"I was born and bred a newspaper man," he said, "and habit is too strong to break." That was literally true in his case, otherwise I might not have to tell this story.

"One morning the body of a fine-looking man was found in an alley adjoining the electric light works, in the very heart of the city. The afternoon papers had a chance on it, but didn't make much of it, so I assigned it to Jones, as we will call him. Although he did not show up at the usual hour I had no doubt that he was already at work on it, as it was as mysterious a case as even he could desire.

"The victim was identified as a traveling man who had just arrived, and as far as known he had no friends or acquaintances in the city. It was not a case of robbery, for all his money and valuables were left on the body. There was a slight contusion on the back of the head and a small, needlelike hole directly through the man's heart. It was especially strange that such a crime could have been committed in a public thoroughfare, while there was absolutely no clue to the murderer or his motive.

"I thought I saw a startled look in his eyes, but he maintained his outward composure, and went out without a word.

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with the very innermost thought of the murder, and under his touch every trivial incident came out with distinctness and conciseness that made the cause and method of the crime perfectly plain.

"First he described the scene with accuracy of detail that would have been impossible for one who had not studied it closely. The selection of the spot he explained by the fact that the bright electric light streaming through the windows of the power house made it impossible for the passerby to see into the shadows. Thus while impenetrable darkness screened the assassin, ample light guided his blow, and, moreover, the rattle and roar of the machinery nearby drowned all sound of the struggle or the falling body.

"The blow on the head, he demonstrated, must have been done from a sandbag, while the wound through the heart could only have been made by one of those fine bladed stilettos of Italian make. Furthermore, the fact that this peculiar weapon was driven home with a firm hand, after the victim had been stunned by a blow on the head, indicated premeditated and deliberate murder, while the theory of robbery was disproved by the fact that the man's valuables had been untouched. The only tenable theory, therefore, was that the motive of the murder was revenge.

"An more masterly analysis of a case I never read, but here he branched off into what I at first supposed to be purely imaginary speculations as to the wrong which had led the murderer to seek the life of an unknown man. These seemed purposely vague at first, but gathered in strength and certainty, until I concluded that he must have some good foundation for them. Starting with hypotheses, he soon began to state them as fact. He described how the dead man, a once trusted friend, had entered the home of another; how, by subtle wiles and deceit, he had stolen the life of the wife; then followed an elopement and the breaking up of that once happy home.

"He told with the bitterness of truth how the scoundrel had deserted the weak and erring woman and had left her to perish alone; how the idea of revenge had filled the mind of the wronged husband; how, himself unseen he had followed every movement of the intended victim for months and carefully plotted his destruction; how he had decoyed the doomed man to the city and to the very spot where the murder was committed; and how he had destroyed the only clues—a couple of letters in the pockets of the dead man—and finally made his own escape, the secret safe in his own heart alone.

"As I read this remarkable tale through the conviction forced itself upon me that this was the absolute truth. If the writer himself had committed the deed he could not have described it more graphically. Suddenly the thought flashed across my mind that I should describe such a crime thus without having, in fact, committed it?

"We were alone in the room. I glanced at Jones apprehensively. He was writing rapidly—fiercely. His eyes were fixed, but he seemed to be looking through and beyond the paper across which his pen flew, at something fascinating—terrible! When he finished it was with a start, as if waking from a trance. I glanced at the last page, where was final confirmation of my fears.

"My God, Jones, is this true?" I managed to say.

"Every word of it as I live, he replied firmly, if faintly.

"Then you have written the warrant for your own arrest," I said.

"His head dropped on the desk, but he said not a word.

"Jones," said I, finally, shaking him by the shoulder to arouse him to an understanding of my meaning, "enough to hang you is already in type. In an hour the papers will be on the streets; in another hour the police will be after you! Go—make the most of your start!"

"It was as I predicted," said the city editor, after a pause. "Before daylight a detective called on me to ascertain the source of that story. I simply pointed to Jones's name on the assignment book and they went after him."

"Did they catch him?" asked the cub reporter, eagerly.

"They found him in his room with a stiletto through his heart," said the city editor.—San Francisco Argonaut.

A Sufficient Reason.

The admission of a stranger who had moved into the vicinity, but recently bothered Deacon Johnson very much. He disliked the man and felt quite confident he was not worthy to become a member, but he could make no definite charge against him. When the church session had the man's application under consideration the deacon protested against the admission. When pressed to give his reasons he said:

"Well, parson, do fac ob de match is I feels dat he's a wolf in sheep's clothing."

"Dat's a hebbly charge, Brudder Johnson," said the parson. "Why do you think so?"

"I dun'no, but it 'peas to me he don't blest jist like de rest ob de flock."—Harper's Magazine.

Filling an Order.

From Good News. "Say, d'yeh remember them papers you had printed for the Washington Centennial?"

"Clerk. Do you mean the fac-similes of a paper of a hundred years ago?"

"That's it. Funny little paper, with queer letters."

"Yes. Well?"

"I want one."

"What for?"

Woodland and Floods.

There is no truth more incontestable than that a covering of plant life to the earth conserves the water delivered by falling rain and melting snow.

The minor conditions are by no means so well understood by the public. Some facts from my note-book may have an interest.

"Tuesday, April 10, 1894, will long be remembered as the date of the blizzard which was phenomenal for this latitude.

"April 13th was warm and clear. The mass of snow disappeared so rapidly from the exposed places, that by night the Brandywine was bankful. A few hours more of this rapid thaw would have meant a disastrous freshet.

"Where came this water? Mostly from the open grounds; because on the morning of the 14th much of the snow remained in the woods, but the fields were almost wholly bare; in other words, it was a pointed argument for the statement that melting snow coming from the woods is less likely to cause freshets than that from the open grounds, because its delivery is less rapid."

"This is true, but it is a general truth, and like all other such, is liable to special exceptions.

Woodland may be so situated that there will be no melting of snow until the season is well advanced. The whole fall of snow may lie until advanced spring, and in the diffused warmth of a late April or early May day the entire mass may go off in a deluge, long after the open grounds have delivered their water.

Hence in some lands bordering on the Connecticut river, it is a common saying that there is no security against a flood until the snow has gone. But this is the exception to the rule, in our State.

Sod will retain more water than a barren region. But it does not ordinarily conduct water to great depths, nor does it offer any great protection against rapid evaporation. Even the scrub under brush which covers so large a portion of our State after the matured forest has been removed, retains much more moisture than the sod. This is so, because its roots penetrate deeper than those of the sod, and afford highways along which the water seeks the greater depths.

The height of the shaded zone is greater than on the sod, hence evaporation is slower, and the soil, besides all this, the matting of leaves on the earth, which alone is as efficient as the sod. The real trouble comes in when such "scrub lands" are fired, as they are, at least in three years throughout our State, burned over, and roots, leaves, branches and humus wholly, or in part, destroyed. Under such conditions the soil becomes ultimately but little better than a desert, though it nominally is forest land, and is usually so reported on our assessor's lists.

The "high forest"—that is the matured timber, is the most efficient conservator of water. To begin with the leaves; their agency in breaking the force of the rainfall is seldom sufficiently appreciated. The phrase, "pelting of the storm" is not a figure of speech. These who are most frequently exposed to it, know best the actual force of impact of the falling rain drop, and will be most likely to properly estimate the power of falling water to produce important changes in the surface of the earth. Nothing more clearly reveals this to the ordinary observer than the effect of a dashing rainstorm on a freshly cultivated field. Within twenty-four hours I have seen such a surface furrowed throughout its entire length and the soil removed to a lower level, where it covered the growing corn.

Then beneath the living foliage on the trees, and above the decaying vegetable matter on the surface of the soil, there is a belt of moist air which, if itself, is a reservoir of aqueous vapor. The air there, if not constantly saturated with moisture, at least holds it longer than that of the open ground, and this, also, is a most important factor in retarding loss of the water in the soil by evaporation. Every branch that leads to the main trunk and this main stem itself, conducts the water to the ground, where along the diverging roots and rootlets the water is distributed through the soil. This distribution is simply as water borrowed from the surface. Absorbed by the roots, it finds its way through the leaves to the air, or percolating along the sloping strata, it reappears as a flowing spring, possibly a hundred miles from where it entered the earth.

The important point to be emphasized here is that matured forests, more than any other form of plant life, carry with them the conditions of perpetuation. There is no obvious reason why a forest, once established, should not remain in a perpetual succession of trees forever. It makes its own soil, supplies to a large extent its own food, and maintains the requisite moisture in its own growth. More than this, failure to produce seeds for a single year, or for a score of years, induces no change in its growth and perpetuity. The extreme vicissitudes of any half century in the latitude where it grows, hardly ever threaten its existence.

The recent storms (in May), have been full of instruction for me. Along the valleys of the north and west branches of the Susquehanna and also of the Juniata the freshets have been of unusual severity. Open grounds, more or less steep, and on which the drainage is rapid, characterize a large portion of the valleys through which these streams flow. High stages of water have always been common in them, but it is becomingly capable of proof that these have become more frequent, or at least of greater severity, in recent years. The reason seems obvious. Let us look at the absolutely bare hills back of Beach Creek, or those along the Northern Central Railroad between Williamsport and Canton, and the explanation will probably suggest itself. The mere statement that there has been a cloud-burst is no explanation. It is but a new way of expressing a condition of things which was probably as common in the past as now.

At Wilkesbarre the water rose rapidly. On May 22nd, the water on the Kingston Flats was high enough to cut off communication by the electric cars (on the ordinary route) between the east and west sides of the river. It fell as rapidly as it rose. At the very time the North Branch was at its greatest height, the waters of the Bear Creek

region were but moderately swollen. Two days more of almost constant, heavy rain followed, and still there was no inordinate freshet in the latter region. The ground was, in its absorbing capacity one vast sponge. It was well on toward the point of absolute saturation, but there was as yet no excessive discharge of water. Here all the conditions were just what have been expected. It is true that there was hardly more than two million feet of good timber in sight from the highest point, but there was a dense growth of underbrush and beneath this a tangled mass of leaves, ferns or moss as the case happened to be. A recent fire had swept over part of the county and extensive areas were blackened by its visitation. But much of the original debris remained to retard the flow of water. The next, or a still later flood, may sweep it out of the country and leave an impoverished region on which forest restoration will become increasingly difficult.

The open valley of the Susquehanna carried the water out of the country in a destructive deluge. The highlands of Bear Creek region absorbed most of its rainfall for future utilities. It is to be hoped that such facts as these will be more frequently noted and commented upon. Let us have them in all their bearings, for upon them some of the most important practical questions of the next decade depend.—J. L. Rothrock in Forest Leaves.

When She Should Say No.

Advice to the Girl Who Has Received or Expects a Proposal.

She should refuse him when she knows his habits to be intemperate, says the New York Advertiser, for there can be no unhappier fate than marriage with a drunkard. She should refuse him when there is any hereditary disease in the family, such as consumption or insanity, which would in all probability show itself and cause infinite misery in after years. She should refuse him when she sees he is in the habit of associating with bad companions, who may lead him into gambling, drinking and card playing. She should refuse him when she knows him to be that despicable thing, a male flirt; she should refuse him if he has treated other girls so he may treat her and no woman cares to lay herself open to such treatment. She should refuse him when she feels she has no love to give him, and not marry as many girls do, for a home. No marriage can be truly happy without love to sweeten the bonds. She should refuse him when he is proposing to her for her money or from pique. A girl can generally distinguish real love from feigned, and even if she cares for him she should not accept him until convinced his motives are disinterested. She should not refuse him when she really cares for him, and knows him to be a steady, faithful man, who will make her happy and not cause heartbreaks, which, perhaps, one of her most brilliant lovers might have done.

A Big Dress Order.

"Women play odd tricks on one another sometimes," said a smart American woman the other day, "but the queerest I ever heard of was perpetrated by one social leader in a western city upon another. They were rivals and hated each other accordingly, though outwardly they preserved the semblance of pleasant relations. Every chance either got to give a dig at the other was eagerly seized.

"But the final and most effective stroke, after which no calls were exchanged, was delivered by Mrs. L—. She sent out cards for a grand entertainment and then took pains to find out what Mrs. F—, her competitor, was going to wear. A gorgeous pink brocaded satin was the material of Mrs. F—'s gown, it was ascertained.

"Accordingly Mrs. L—, whose husband was in the dry goods business, obtained several hundred yards of the same identical stuff and draped the walls of all the rooms on the lower floor of her house with it. You may imagine the feelings of Mrs. F— on arriving in her superb new look, which she expected to make a sensation. Naturally she ordered her carriage and drove away in tears."—London Tid-Bits.

Editor Dana Short on Wheat.

"Any great fall of the price of wheat is no longer possible, as the consumption increases faster than the production."

Mr. Dana is wrong, however, in stating that "the consumption increases faster than the production." There was a surplus of wheat stocks throughout the world larger by 52,000,000 bushels July 1, 1894, than on the same date two years ago, larger by 65,000,000 bushels than three years ago, larger by 80,000,000 bushels than four years ago and larger by 86,000,000 bushels than five years ago, when the area planted to wheat was 5,000,000 acres greater than last season's area. Mr. Dana should not be led away by wheat statistical theorists. He should study facts.

Abolish the Company Store.

The Omaha Bee, in an editorial denouncing the "pluck-me" stores says: "Such a state of things ought not to exist anywhere in the country. It is a reproach to any community or state that tolerates it. A movement has been started in Pennsylvania, originating with 'The Philadelphia Record,' the purpose of which is to bring about such a general enforcement of the law as will result in the abolishing the company store evil, and it should meet with hearty encouragement. The great state of Pennsylvania ought to promptly and thoroughly remove this blot on her reputation as a Commonwealth that accords justice to all classes of her people.

Spanish Sandwich.

A Spanish sandwich is made with two slices of rye bread, cut very thin. Take one and spread first with made mustard, then with cottage cheese, butter the other slice, and when the two are laid together the sandwich is evolved. Olives sliced and spread lightly with mayonnaise, made a good filling for any sandwich, which is acceptably offered at luncheon or tea.

For and About Women.

Miss Sallie Monroe Swift, of Massachusetts, has won distinction in two ways. She is the official reporter of the Middlesex and Barnstable terms of the Supreme Court, being the first woman officially recognized as a Court stenographer; and this summer she made a bicycle record of less than ten hours over the route from Yarmouth to Boston 88½ miles. She is said to be the first woman to make the run.

The full ruffle basque has become too common to be any longer accepted by elegant women; coats of medium length and with back exactly like those of a man's will be worn; the corners are cut like those of a frock coat or a cutaway, similar to a business suit; masculine effects are the aim of the lady's tailor, and waistcoats of figured vesting of ribbed silk or of cloths in plain colors will be used; a plastron of cloth like the suit or a linen shirt is worn with them. Lapped and stitched seams and cutin pockets are the thing on strictly tailor suits.

Buttons, as was predicted, have come to the fore, and they are here to stay. With the exception, naturally, of coats, muffs, etc., for will not be in great demand. It is to be a button season. For both useful and ornamental purposes the button will be largely employed.

Three-quarter "golf capes" are lovely for traveling. These are made of double-faced cloth or homespun mixtures, and are lined with taffeta or Scotch plaid silks. The cross straps that hold the cape on are of the material.

Of course broadcloth capes with overlapped seams are all the rage, but fashion declares jackets will be much more in vogue this season than capes despite the cyclone of the latter that is now sweeping the market. It is well enough for some one has said truthfully no woman ought to masquerade in a cape until after she is fifty.

The tight-fitting jacket, single or double-breasted, is to be the "stylish" garment of the day. These jackets are from 34 inches to 50 inches in length, and are very jaunty. Jersey cloths and covert mixtures are exceedingly serviceable, and make up prettily.

A single-breasted jacket of gray mixed covert cloth has broad revers and roll collar, and fastens with three large smoked-pearl buttons of the handsome design and finish. The neck of the garment is filled in by a collar of brown broadcloth.

The figure which is at present the correct thing has a small round waist and a pronounced "spring" from the waist under the arms. This is rather a tax on the girls who for some years have been training up the straight figure that showed curve only and suddenly at the bust. The French woman still encourages this shape, but the American women ape the English now. How wrong it is when just as Americans they are better than either.

The tendency for draped or double skirts is gaining quite a hold, especially in evening gowns, as a natural consequence the combinations of two materials in the double skirt or drapery. The simplest form of the new skirt is the bell skirt slashed to open on a tablier or panel that simulates an underskirt. For this panel mousseline de sole plaited is a favorite material. Many of the more elaborate toilets are made with a draped overskirt of some soft material like crepe du chine over a plain underskirt of moire or satin in a darker shade than the crepe. The corsage is usually of the same material as the upper skirt and gracefully draped with knots of satin ribbon for the decoration.

The first autumn dresses brought over from Paris and London have fuller skirts and even larger sleeves than those now worn. The skirts are gored rather closely about the hips, but are very full in the back and wide at the foot. They are lined and interlined, but fortunately are of light weight woollens, and are very little trimmed. A bias satin fold an inch wide headed with a narrow band of jet is around the foot of very handsome cloth gowns. Others have merely a fold of the wool, camel's-hair, or basket-cloth below the edge, between the outside and lining, and held there by three or four rows of stitching, which give a neat finish. Three bag pockets, pointed at the top and spreading out in fan pleats to the foot, are on many skirts, some of them completed by the little projecting basque introduced in the spring with silk gowns.

Bias puffed sleeves are enormously wide at the top, and are caught up or draped by choux or bows. They taper to the wrist, but are often left rather large below the elbow and wrinkled around the arm, which adds to the effect of great size.

Round waists re-appear in many ways—box pleated, slashed, with a yoke, or with a gumpie of contrasting material, the lower part carried up above the bust in vandyke points and edged with jet galloon. Pleated waists have two box pleats down the back, starting from the shoulders, where they are two inches and a half wide, and tapering an inch narrower at the waistline. They are folded in one piece, with the middle space between plain. A side form begins under the pleats, so that the only seams shown are those under the arm. The fronts are much fuller than the back, having two similar pleats and a full gathered plastron. The slashing of waists is confined to the front, like those described in the summer.

The latest law of fashion is to have the skirt and sleeves of the same material, with the bodice of another color altogether. For instance, a very stylish combination is a black and white check silk skirt and sleeves, with a magenta silk bodice entirely covered with open-work embroidery on ocre muslin, and the belt and collar of green velvet—direct contrasts in the latter being quite permissible.