

WINTER.

The sky is drear, The woods are bare, At each uprising gust, By road and brake...

THE COLONEL AND THE MAJOR.

BY JOHN KEARNS WHITE.

The colonel was born on the 10th day of December, and the major followed promptly the next day. At least this was the tradition in the old Virginia town which was the place of their nativity.

now?" For, having lost the inherited property which had been ample for all their wants, they knew it would be necessary to turn their hands to something to earn at least a meagre living.

thought began to occupy their minds so largely that the first ardor was very much dampened; but still the preparations went on, and they said nothing to each other about doubts and fears—the major, because he had a secret project in his mind by which he hoped to have the major with him again soon.

ST. LOUIS, Mo., 18— "My Dear Cousin—You have probably forgotten if you ever knew of my existence. I am the grandson of your father's brother who went to Kentucky so many years ago.

Such was the letter, and the colonel's eyes fairly sparkled as he handed it to the major, remarking at the same time: "Good news for us, major; good news for us. There is no doubt about it, you are—that is, as near as we are growing old, and I don't mind confessing now that I have been anxious as to my ability to provide properly for us both when you should find it necessary to retire from business.

And from that day forward the major never questioned the propriety of yielding his allegiance to the colonel.

And the colonel in turn appreciated this devotion, so that when he raised a company to enter the Mexican war, and they elected him captain, and Fred Collins first lieutenant, he refused to accept the honor unless they made the major first lieutenant, and so they got together again and nullified the election of Fred Collins and elected the major in his stead.

And then when the great Civil war broke out and their regiment held a meeting to elect officers, the foremost local orator arose after Major Jett had been elected full colonel, and said: "Gentlemen of the—th Virginia, it gives me great pleasure to put in nomination for the lieutenant-colonelcy of this regiment the name of that modest gentleman, that brave soldier, another veteran of the Mexican war, Lieutenant—"

And they went through this war as they had gone through the other, and when it was over they returned to their native town and looked each other in the face, and by that look inquired: "What shall we do

At last the day arrived. The colonel said good-by to Miss Sallie and the boarders. They noticed that his hand trembled and his lips quivered as the grasp was given and the word spoken. They went to the station. The major had attended to the baggage, so the remaining time was theirs.

Major, it is needless to say I shall miss you, be the time of our separation long or short. "Don't speak of it, colonel; we should not become unmann'd at a moment like this."

And, major, our little office, our habitation for 20 years, and the tree, and the game of checkers—you don't know how I shall miss them. Mere trifles I know, but—just somehow they seem to have taken hold upon me; they have become part of me, or I have become part of them, I don't know which.

But it was not needed. "All aboard, there!" But the train moved off without the colonel. Not a word had been spoken, but it was silently decided between them, during that last embrace, that he should not go.

The funeral was well attended. The camp of veterans turned out, the "Dead March" was played, the service read, the coffin was covered with earth.

Another cherished delusion is gone. Ever since Robert Bruce became a character in historical literature, we have heard and believed the story of the spider, whose persistent industry before his eyes gave him the courage to renew the struggle for liberty against the English foe.

William Tell and the apple might be nothing but a sun myth, but we feel we could cling to Bruce and the spider; there was something human and likely about that, while the exploit of shooting an apple from a boy's head with a cross bow was a little unmanly.

A new life of Robert Bruce is about to be published, written by one of those pestiferous fellows whose thirst for realism is sufficient to wreck all that is romantic in twenty literatures if he have the opportunity. This historical Growler has discovered that there is no foundation for the story of Bruce and the spider, that the plucky fellow never watched the little insect triumph over obstacles, was never encouraged thereby to fresh efforts against his foes, and that really the only fact in the whole business was the fighting, but that is so remote and so common that no one is interested.

Starving on the Street. A Young Man Falls in Chester from Exhaustion. David Rins, 19 years old, of New York, who was walking to that city fell on the street of Chester Saturday night from exhaustion, due to the want of something to eat.

While hauling hay, Thursday, David Miller met with an accident at the Wauholter crossing at Manor. He was hauling with a horse team, when the lead horse frightened at a passing train and wheeled upsetting the load, Mr. Miller, who was on top of the load, was badly injured about the face and back, as the entire load fell upon him.

Kentucky is the first state in the Union for raising hemp and also for raising things with hemp.—Chicago Times-Herald.

Playing Ghost Made a Maniac.

The Victim of a Practical Joke Has Become Insane—Father Suing the Joker for \$15,000 Damages.

A court in Iowa will decide soon whether a practical joker can be mulcted in heavy damages. A little more than a year ago Thomas Ready, Ralph Reynolds and other young men aged from 18 to 24 years, residing in the southeast part of Calhoun county, Iowa, were assembled, and were talking after the manner of young men. The conversation turned upon the subject of ghosts, and Reynolds is said to have expressed himself in a very positive terms as having no fear whatever of spooks. It appears that Ready and others were skeptical upon this point, and determined to test Reynolds. One of the boys introduced a story to the effect that a man had been killed at or near a bridge known to them all; that his ghost stalked about the bridge every night, frightening passersby and terrifying the neighbors. Another proposed that they go that night and investigate the matter and incidentally determine whether or not there was any such thing as a ghost. Reynolds readily agreed to this suggestion and the boys made preparations for the expedition.

In the meantime, it is alleged, the others, of the party, without the knowledge of Reynolds, arranged with one of their number to go ahead and secretly himself in a sheet. When the crowd came up Reynolds was to be permitted to lead, and the alleged ghost was to suddenly appear in an unobtrusive manner as possible, with a view of ascertaining whether or not Reynolds was ghost proof. The boys started for the bridge, Reynolds leading, and at the agreed time the man clothed in a sheet appeared, wailing and screeching, walking rapidly in the direction of Reynolds. Reynolds stood his ground for a moment, and then broke and fled in the direction of his home. When his companions saw how terribly frightened he was they called to him to come back, but he only ran the faster. So thoroughly was he beside himself with fear that his reason appears to have given way to a physical nervousness almost beyond belief. Reynolds ran six miles to his home, and fell upon the threshold of his father's house insensible.

He was placed in bed, and for six weeks hovered between life and death. Finally, however, from a physical view, he appeared to regain his former health, but his reason was gone. He labored under the hallucination that some one was after him, and no amount of explanation or persuasion on the part of his parents was able to dispel the delusion. After a time Reynolds became so violent that he was sent to the insane asylum. After several months he was cured, but within a few days the old delusion seized him, and he was again sent to the asylum, where he is at the present time.

The father of the young man has brought suit for \$15,000 against Thomas Ready, who it is alleged, was one of the prime movers in the plot. Ready is the son of a very farmer, and it is said that a judgment against him would be collectible.—Chicago Record.

The Bubonic Plague.

The plague which has been raging for six months in Bombay, and to some extent at other places in India, is conceded to be "the true plague." In its general character it is identical with "the black death," which in the fourteenth century destroyed it is said, 100,000 lives in London, the lives of seven eighths of the population of England and 25,000,000 persons, or one-fourth of the population of Europe, but sanitary science is supposed to have mitigated its virulence or lessened its opportunities in Bombay, with 750,000 inhabitants, the mortality is kept down to about 1,000 per cent. The steps taken to purify the cities of India, in order to protect them, consist chiefly in cleansing them by a liberal use of water. As in fighting the plague, so in fighting the plague, Hindus are indebted to the arts and sciences of Europe. But for the foreign government, with its railroads and advanced ideas, the mortality of famine and plague would be increased doubtless by many millions. The plague is a grandeur fever, attended with a swelling of the groin. It seems to be unknown whether it is due to a microbe or to insanitary conditions. It ravaged Hong Kong a few years ago, destroying many thousands there. It was epidemic in China and the Euphrates valley, just as cholera has its home in the delta of the Ganges. London suffered from it in 1665 and again in 1720. During the present century Asia has been the chief scene of its activity. In 1830 at Bagdad the death rate from it was 3,000 a day, and on April 51 of that year as many as 30,000 dead bodies were carried to the sea in the city of Bombay. In 1877, 1873 and 1877. Its ravages in China have been enormous, but little was known in Europe of the extent of the losses it caused.—From the Baltimore Sun.

About two weeks ago a Hungarian was killed on the railroad near Portage, Cambria county. On his person was found 65 cents in money, but no papers that would identify him. Preparations were being made to have his remains interred at the cost of the county, says the Gallitzin Times, when a butcher turned up and said he would give the body burial, and the body was interred by him. About a week after he came back and said that he had received a letter written by his brother before his death, and that the letter stated that in an inside pocket on the person of the dead man was \$80 in money. He got permission to disinter the body, and sure enough, in a pocket in the inside of his shirt four \$20 bills were found. This makes it look as if death was contemplated, and was likely one of suicide.

Woman's Superiority.

The Central Presbyterian church has set a proper example by the election of three competent women of the congregation on the board of trustees. As it is the duty of the trustees to see that the funds of the church are kept sufficient for its support and as the women are the mainstay in a financial way, the propriety of their being on the board of trustees is unquestionable. What a woman can do better than a man can do, and the reverse, ought not to be a very deep problem.—Meadville Tribune.

There is some danger that Speaker Reed is turning Democrat on the tariff question and is having a great deal to do with the preparation of the coming tariff bill. He opposes the extravagant claims of the McKinleyites and insists that as the troubles of the country come from a lack of revenue in the new bill greater attention should be paid to getting revenue than granting protection. He does not favor the McKinley idea of a tariff for protection, with incidental revenue, but rather the Democratic policy of a tariff for revenue, with the assured incident of protection by revenue rates.

Lumber Report.

The annual lumber report of the Gazette and Bulletin shows that there was shipped from Williamsport 195,270,000 feet of sawed lumber, 101,100,000 being carried by the Philadelphia & Erie railroad and 94,170,000 by the Philadelphia & Reading. There were afloat out of the boom 175,483,428 feet, board measure, 154,261,119 being hemlock and the balance pine and hard wood.

Hill Gets the Gold Cake.

ALBANY, N. Y., January 18.—The democratic members of the legislature met in caucus to-night and gave David B. Hill the empty honor of a nomination for the office of United States senator, and nominated Henry P. O'Neill, of New York, for the office of regent of the university. Forty-one votes were cast, of which Hill received thirty-six. Three senators and two assemblymen bolted the caucus.

Mills to Close Down.

Notice has been given to the employees of the Illinois Steel company of Milwaukee, Wis., that all the mills will close next Monday. This announcement affects about 600 men.

Mexico Under Diaz.

Perhaps the two things which most impressed me in this fairly thorough review of Mexico were the fever of municipal improvement and the sheer epidemic of public schools. There are but logical features of the Diaz administration; probably no more remarkable than the other methods of the digestion which has assimilated so chaotic a meal, but less familiar, since they are but now ripening to the harvest. Peace had first to be secured; and that cannot be had until it is no longer possible for rebels to combine and drill by the month before the government even hears of it. Commerce comes after railroads and harbors, and political reform after commerce. And only now is the country ripe for the other development which has loomed logical but late in the statesmanship of a decade.

General Diaz came up by a revolution; and that means debt as well as inheritance, not of his choosing. There were accidental allies to be considered, and hold-overs who could not be all at once swept away—for stability is the first need and the first duty of any government. But both these facts are now practically eliminated. Diaz has outlived nearly all his associates; and in one of the most extraordinary games of chess ever played in statecraft he has shifted, cornered, or jumped the hold-over impossibles. There is left to-day in Mexico not one important figure that could by any reasonable probability set face against the government, nor one that is to its serious present discredit. The long era of dishonest officials, little and big, is past. There are no more big game politicians, no more customs collectors wanted to "fix the accounts to suit themselves"—as a President once told a friend of mine to do. There is probably no other country in the New World whose whole public service is to-day so scrupulously clean; and this large assertion is made neither carelessly nor ignorantly. One has not to remember long to a time when even the presidency of Mexico was a den of robbery; nor half so far to thievish governors and petty officials. But the Diaz administration has never had a stain; and it has kept up its steady pressure until now not a state in the republic is spotted as to its government.

Even to one as familiar with the swift development of parts of our West as with the more conservative growth of our East, it is surprising to watch the gait of almost every Mexican city in municipal improvements. Modern water works to replace the fine old Spanish aqueducts; modern sewerage to replace the street sinks of centuries; modern lighting, modern transit, modern health departments; public buildings better than our average towns of the like population think they can afford; splendid prisons, markets, hospitals, asylums, training-schools—these are some of the things the "despotism" of Diaz is planting through the length and breadth of the country. As for schools, it sometimes made me smile, but oftener turned my eyes to note the perfect mania for every radical change. Hitherto the schools of the republic had been in charge of the municipalities, the federal government aiding in their support with about a \$1,000,000 a year. In July the central government took direct charge of every public school in Mexico. This is to secure homogeneity in the system. For the men and women now in charge of the schools of Mexico, I must admit that I have never met a more faithful and enthusiastic corps; and they are on the average, very fairly fitted for their work. In every state there are normal schools, generously endowed by the government, for the fit training of these teachers; and the attendance is encouragingly large. There are also countless industrial schools, art schools, professional schools, and the like, not to mention the host of private schools, of which some are entirely admirable. The teaching of religion in public schools is absolutely prohibited. "That," President Diaz said to me, is for the family to do." The attitude of Mexico on this point is curious.

Catholics have far less rope in Catholic Mexico than in the Protestant United States. Church processions are impossible—even a priest dare not walk the streets in his churchly garments.—From "The Awakening of a Nation," by Charles F. Lummis, in Harper's for February.

Nothing keeps the hands in such good order as rubbing a little drop of glycerine and water into them after washing. This is especially necessary in winter, and for those who have to do much household work. Nurses, milliners and seamstresses, whose hands are very apt to have rough hands; a little glycerine will keep them in good order. If the hands have been much neglected and the skin is chapped, the glycerine may cause a little smarting; this shows the healing property of the glycerine is at work. Its use should be persisted in, and in a few days the hands will be quite smooth. When glycerine is rubbed in, the hands should be rubbed dry with a soft towel. Glycerine should always be diluted with a little water before being applied to the skin. Glycerine and rose-water is a delightful mixture for softening and perfuming the hands, and for curing chapped lips.

The hair is so universally curled, waved and braided in these days, and women feel it so necessary to be constantly ready to see and be seen, that their tresses seldom have a breathing time, as it were, except during the brushing process. It is, as a matter of fact, very much more beneficial to the hair if it is allowed to hang loose occasionally so that light and air may penetrate it. Moreover, a sun bath now and then stimulates its growth and brightens its color. A change of style in its arrangement, by which the weight and heat of it are shifted to a new place, is also desirable now and then. Women who have a neuralgic tendency will find the risk of washing the hair much diminished if alcohol is used in the water instead of soap or ammonia. The alcohol is quite as cleansing, prevents chilliness and causes the hair to dry far more quickly.

While the holly is still fresh in our homes, and even when the Stock King is holding court, our merchants must expose side by side with cold-dressing furs fabrics of almost gauze-like texture for gowns for midsummer wear. The custom once started, the up-to-date woman expects with the advent of the new year an assortment of new cotton materials from which to select her warm-weather frock. The most popular department is that devoted to the advance guard of summer materials. Undoubtedly the most popular fabric will be a silk-warp "barege," the pride and delight of our grandmothers' summer wardrobe. We all know that the texture is that of a closely-woven Brussels net, and the beauty of the old-time material has not been destroyed by modern designs.

FOR AND ABOUT WOMEN.

Two women attorneys, Catharine H. Pier, of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and Alice A. Minick, of Lincoln, Nebraska, were admitted to practice in the United States supreme court at Washington, D. C., on Monday last. The motions for their admission were made by two ladies who had previously attained the privilege.

The fichu is still retaining its hold on the favor of womankind and will be found a valuable adjunct to give a dressy touch to your dark gown for afternoon. The shops are showing some very pretty ones and some very elaborate ones, but the simpler ones can be manufactured at home for a comparatively small cost.

Sleeves protest in their indefinable ugliness against their diminished size. They wrinkle crossly all the length of the shrunken arm, and they stick out like obstinate elbows at the top. These meaningless little tops! They are in butterfly form. They are like the pickers a little girl gets her first doll's dress into with her unskillful hands. In short, they are like everything ungraceful and ugly. But they are the transition between the overlarge sleeve of not long ago and the jersey tight one now coming to us. These jersey sleeves are merciless to the thin woman, while she who has fine arms rejoiceth and is exceeding glad.

Forehairs of spring and summer are numerous enough. As for the shirt waist—that useful garment, whose very usefulness is its excuse for being, it will again, say the fashion prophets, take front rank in summer modes. It has, however, been much modified since its first appearance, and is altogether as trim and chic a little shirt as the most fastidious maiden could desire. The bishop sleeves, which were the marked characteristic last season, will no longer be worn. Instead, the new ones will fit loosely to the arm and be full in at the armholes. Yokes pointed or round will be fashionable again, but, as heretofore, will be only on the back, not the front of the waist, and there will not be so much fullness in front and more slope at the side seams; so that the garment will be much trimmer and neater than that of last season. The band at the neck will be finished so that the detachable collars can be worn, and the collars themselves will not be so wide nor exaggerated. The materials will be legion. The newest are the pretty Madras linens, the cool and serviceable India silks in Persian designs, and fine Indian silks in the fashionable shades of green, violet and red. White bids fair to be the favorite color and the patterns show an infinite variety of pretty designs. Pure white linen of a heavy quality is one of the most stylish materials for a shirt waist, and worn with a white duck skirt, a white belt and a set of studs matching the necktie in color is as chic a morning costume as any woman could desire.

Slowly, but surely, the tendency toward trimmings of all kinds on dress skirts is developing. Recent importations show silk gowns ruffled from the waist to the hem. Skirts grow narrower and narrower, a fashionable modiste tells me, that by summer our skirts will have no stiffening anywhere.

The collar is a conspicuous feature in dress this season, and there seems no limit to the variety of styles it is applied to. Bands of ribbon cut and beginning just in front of the neck, and the flaring collar of battlement shaped pieces, rounded tabs and points of bright velvet with a frill of lace inside is one of the prime favorites. The medial collar and all sorts of devices that give a soft, fluffy effect around the neck are also in vogue. Knife plated frills, colored tulle silk, beginning just in front of the neck and extending across the back, are very becoming with the added frill of lace, and really the special charm of this collar fad is that any decoration which is becoming is admissible. All sorts of fancy stocks in light, delicate colors and pretty combinations of lace, chiffon and feathers are employed.

Miss Lucy E. Andrews, a graduate of the university of Michigan, for six years an instructor in Wellesley College, is now devoting herself to the work of extending the knowledge of scientific cookery.

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