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The Baby's Stocking.

Hang up the baby's stocking;
Be sure you don't forget—
The dear little dimpled darling!
She never saw Christmas yet;
But I've told her all about it,
And she opened her big blue eyes,
And I'm sure she understands it,
She looked so funny and wise.

Dear! what a tiny stocking!
It doesn't take much to hold
Such little pink toes as baby's
Away from the frost and cold;
But then for the baby's Christmas
It never would do at all;
Why, Santa wouldn't be looking
For anything half so small!

A Christmas Song.

The oak is a strong and stalwart tree,
And it lifts its branches up,
And catches the dew right gallantly
In many a dainty cup.
And the world is brighter, and better made,
Because of the woodman's stroke,
Descending in sun, or falling in shade,
On the sturdy form of the oak.
But stronger, I ween, in apparel green,
And trappings so fair to see,
With its precious freight, for small and great,
Is the beautiful Christmas tree.

The elm is a kind and goodly tree,
With its branches bending low;
The heart is glad when its form we see,
As we list to the river's flow.
Aye! the heart is glad, and the pulses bound,
And joy illumines the face,
Whenever a goodly elm is found,
Because of its beauty and grace.
But kinder, I ween, more goodly in mien,
With branches more drooping and free,
The tints of whose leaves, fidelity weaves,
Is the beautiful Christmas tree.

The maple is supple, and lithe, and strong,
And claimeth our love anew,
When the days are listless, and quiet, and long
And the world is fair to view.
And later—as beauties and graces unfold—
A monarch right regally drest,
With streamers aflame, and pennons of gold,
It seemeth of all the best.
More lissome, I ween, the brightness and sheen,
And the coloring, sunny and free,
And the banners soft, that are held aloft,
By the beautiful Christmas tree.

—*St. Nicholas for December.*

THE SECRET DOOR.

A Christmas Story of Two Hundred Years Ago.

Knowle, in Kent, is an ancient manor house. It stands knee-deep in rich garden and pasture lands, with hayfields and apple orchards stretching beyond, and solemn oak woods which whisper and shake their wise heads when the winds blow, as though possessed of secrets which must not be spoken.

Very much as it looks to-day, it looked two hundred and thirty years ago, when Charles the First was king of England. That was the Charles who had his head cut off, you may remember. Blue Christmas smokes curled from the twisted chimneys in 1645 just as this year. The same dinnery fragrance filled the air, for good cheer smells pretty much alike in all ages and the world over. A few changes there may be—thicker trees, beds of gay flowers which were not known in that day; and where once the moat—a ditch-like stream of green water covered with weeds and scum—ran round the walls, is now a trimly cut border of verdant turf. But these changes are improvements, and in all important respects the house keeps its old look, undisturbed by modern times and ways.

In the same nursery where modern boys and girls eat, sleep and learn their A, B, C to-day, two children lived—little Ralph Tresham and his sister Henrietta. Quaint, old fashioned creatures they would look to us now; but, in spite of their formal dresses and speech, they were bright and merry and happy as any children you can find among your acquaintances. Ralph's name was pronounced "Rafe," and he always called his sister "Hexie."

Christmas did not come to Knowle in its usual bright shape in 1645. Gloom and sadness and anxiety overshadowed the house; and though the little ones did not understand what the cause of the anxiety was, they felt something wrong, and went about quietly whispering to each other in corners, instead of whooping and laughing, as had been their wont. They had eaten their Christmas beef, and toasted the king as usual, but their mother cried when they did so; and Joyce, the old butler, had carried off the pudding with a face like a funeral. So, after dinner, they crept away to the nursery, and there, by the window, begun a long whispering talk. Hexie had something very exciting to tell.

"Nurse thought I was asleep," she said, "but I wasn't quite; and when they began to talk I woke up. That wasn't wrong, was it, Rafe? I couldn't sleep when I couldn't, could I?"

"I suppose not; but you needn't have listened," said Rafe, whose notions about honor were very strict.

"I did pull the pillow over my ear, but the words would get in," went on Henrietta, piteously. "And it was so interesting. Did you know that there were such creatures as Bogies, Rafe? Dorothy thinks that we have got one in our house, and that its hole is in the great gallery, because once when she was there dusting the armor, she heard a queer noise in the wall, and what else could it be? It eats a great deal, does the Bogie. That's the reason nurse is sure we have got one. It ate all the cold sheep's head yesterday, and the day before half the big pastry. No victual is safe in the larder, the Bogie has such a big appetite, nurse says."

"I remember about the sheep's head," said Rafe, meditatively. "Almost all of it was left, and I looked to see it come in cold; but when I asked, Joyce said there was none. Cold sheep's head is very good. Do you remember how much Humphrey used to like it?"

"I don't remember exactly, it is so long ago," replied Hexie. "How long is it, brother?—since Humphrey went away, I mean. Won't he ever come back?"

"I asked Winifred once, but she only said, 'God knew,' that nothing had been heard of him since the battle when the king was taken. He might be dead, or he might be escaped into foreign parts—and then she cried, oh, so hard, Hexie! Poor Humphrey! I hope he isn't dead. But, about the Bogie, how curious it must be to meet one! Oh, I say, let us go to the gallery now, and see if we hear any strange noises there. Will you?"

"Oh, Rafe! I'm afraid. I don't quite like"—

"But you can't be afraid if I'm there," said Rafe, valiantly; "besides, I'll put on Humphrey's old sword which he left behind. Then if the Bogie comes—we shall see!"

Rafe spoke like a conquering hero, Hexie thought; so, though she trembled, she made no further objection, but stood by while he lifted down the sword, helped to fasten its belt over his shoulder, and followed along the passage which led to the gallery. The heavy sword clattered and rattled as it dragged on the floor, and the sound was echoed in a ghostly way, which renewed Hexie's fears.

"Rafe! Rafe! let us go back!" she cried.

"Go back yourself if you are afraid," replied Ralph, stoutly; and as going back alone through the dim passage seemed just then worse than staying where she was, Hexie stayed with her valiant brother.

Very softly they unlatched the gallery door, and stole in. It was a long, lofty apartment, paneled with cedar wood, to which time had given a beautiful light brown color. The ceiling, of the same wood, was carved, here and there, with shields, coats of arms, and other devices. There was little furniture: one tall cabinet, a few high backed chairs, and some portraits hanging on the walls. The sun, not yet quite set, poured a stream of red light across the polished floor, leaving the far corners and the empty spaces formidably dusk. The children had seldom been in the gallery at this hour, and it looked to them almost like a strange place, not at all as it did at noonday when they came to jump up and down the slippery floor, and play hide-and-seek in the corners which now seemed so dark and dismal.

Even Rafe felt the difference, and shivered in spite of his bold heart and the big sword by his side. Timidly they went forward, hushing their footsteps and peering furtively into the shadows. Suddenly Hexie stopped with a little scream.

Close to them stood a large suit of armor, larger and taller than a man. The empty eye holes of the helmet glared out quite like real eyes, and the whole figure was terrible enough to frighten any little girl. But it was not at the armor that Hexie screamed; the iron man was an old friend of the children's. Many a game of hide-and-seek had they played around, and behind, and even inside him; for Humphrey had contrived a cunning way by which the figure could be taken to pieces and put together again; and more than once Rafe had been popped inside, and had lain shaking with laughter while Hexie vainly searched for him all through the gallery. This had not happened lately, for Rafe was hardly strong enough to manage by himself the screws and hinges which opened the armor; but he knew the iron man too well to scream at him, and so did Hexie. The object which excited her terror was something different, and so strange and surprising that it is no wonder she screamed.

Close by the armor, half hidden by a curtain of heavy tapestry, was an open door, where never door had been known to be. It stood ajar, and dimly visible inside was a narrow staircase winding upward.

"The hole of the Bogie!" gasped Hexie, clutching at Rafe's arm. He started and felt for the sword. It rattled fearfully, and the sound completed Hexie's terror. She burst away, flew like a scared lapwing down the gallery, along the passages, and never stopped till she reached the nursery and her own bed, where, with two pillows and the quilt drawn over her head, she lay sobbing bitterly at the thought of Ralph left behind, to be eaten perhaps by the Bogie! Poor little Hexie!

Ralph, meanwhile, stood his ground. His heart beat very fast, but he would not run away—that was for girls. It must be owned, however, that when a moment later the sound of muffled voices became audible down stairs, he trembled extremely, and was guilty of the unmanlike act of hiding behind the curtain. He was only ten years old, which must plead his excuse with bigger boys who are confident that they could never, under any circumstances, hide themselves or be afraid.

The voices drew nearer, steps sounded, and two figures came out of the narrow doorway. Could there be two Bogies? No wonder they ate so much. But in another minute all thought of Bogies vanished from Ralph's mind, for in one of the figures he recognized his own sister Winifred.

Her companion was a man. There was something familiar in his form. It moved forward, and Ralph jumped so that the big sword rattled again. Bogie number two was his brother Humphrey, mourned as dead ever since the summer before, when so many brave gentlemen gave up their lives for King Charles at the battle of Naseby.

"What noise was that?" whispered Winifred, fearfully.

"Some sound from below," replied Humphrey, after listening a moment. "Must you go, Winnie?"

"I must, dear Humphrey. I dare not absent myself longer lest I be missed and suspected. Oh, if to-morrow were but over, and you safe on the French lugger and over the sea! I cannot breathe while this hiding and danger go on."

"I suppose I ought to be glad also," said Humphrey, ruefully; "but to me that French lugger means exile and loneliness and poverty, for the rest of my life, perhaps. Better have laid down my life with the rest at Naseby, in striking one last blow for the king."

"Don't you speak so!" protested Winifred, tearfully. "You are alive, thank God; and once these wars are over we may rejoin you, and have a happy home somewhere, if not in the land of our fathers. Now, dear Humphrey, have you all you need for the night?"

"Christmas cheer," said Humphrey, in a would-be cheerful voice. "Beef and ale—what better fare could be? You are a gallant provider, my Winnie, and there is need, for since I have lain in that hole with nothing else to do, my appetite has raged like a wolf. That sheep's head was wondrous savory. I say though, Winxie, what do the servants think of the famine I create in the larder?"

"Oh, the stupid creatures fancy that a Bogie has taken up his residence here. A very hungry Bogie, Joyce calls the creature!"

The brother and sister laughed; then they kissed each other.

"Good-night, dearest Winifred."

"Good-night, brother," and Humphrey vanished up the stairs. Winifred lingered a moment; then, as if remembering something, opened the door again and ran after him. Ralph marked that she laid her hand on a particular boss in the carved wainscot and pressed it in hard, whereon the door sprung open. He stole out, laid his hand on the same boss, and felt the spring give way under his touch. Some undefined idea of stealing in later, to make Humphrey a visit, was in his head; but he heard Winifred returning, and hurried out of the gallery. Putting back the sword in its place, he entered the nursery. No Hexie was visible, but a sobbing sound drew his attention to a tumbled heap on the bed.

"Is that you, Hexie? Why, what are you crying about?" pulling away the pillow which she held tight.

"Oh, Rafe! Then the Bogie didn't eat you, after all!" And Hexie buried her tear-stained face on his shoulder.

"Bogie! Nonsense! There are no such things as Bogies!"

"What was it, then, that lived up that dreadful stairs?"

"I can't tell you, only it was nothing at all dreadful. And, Hexie, don't say a word about that door to any one, will you? It might make great trouble if you did."

"I did tell Deborah, when she fetched the candle and asked why I cried, that I saw a strange door in the gallery," faltered Hexie, truthful, though penitent.

"Oh! Hexie, how could you? I don't like Deborah, and her father is a knave. Humphrey said so one day. How could you talk to her about the door, Hexie?"

"I—don't know. I was frightened, and she asked me," sobbed Hexie. "Will it do any harm, Rafe?"

"It may," said Rafe, gloomily. "But don't cry, Hexie. You meant no harm, as all events."

"Oh, don't speak so gravely and so like Joyce," said Hexie, much troubled. She cried herself to sleep that night. Deborah, who undressed her, asked many questions about the gallery and the door.

"It was very dark, and perhaps she mistook"—that was all Hexie could be made to say. Ralph was disturbed and wakeful, and slept later than usual next morning. He jumped up in a hurry and made what haste he could with dressing and breakfast, but it seemed as though they never took so much time before; and all the while he ate he was conscious of a stir and bustle in the house, which excited his curiosity very much. Knocking—the sound of feet—something unusual was going on.

As soon as possible he slipped away from nurse and ran to the gallery. The door was half open. He looked in, and stood still with terror. Men, in brown uniforms and steel caps, were there sounding the walls and tapping the floor boards with staves. The gallery seemed full of them, though when Rafe counted there were but five.

"This man of iron was, in all likelihood, a Malignant also," he heard one of them say, striking the armor with his fist.

"He is somewhat old for that. Methinks that is armor of the time of that man of blood, Harry the Eighth. Move it aside, Jotham, that we may search the further panel."

So the heavy figure was thrust into a corner, and the men went on tapping with their wands. Rafe groaned within himself when he heard them declare that the wall sounded hollow, and saw them searching for a spring. Twenty times it seemed as though they must have lighted on the right place. Twenty times they just missed it.

"We were ill advised to come without tools," declared the man who seemed leader of the party. "Come thou to my shop, Peter Kettle, and thou, Bartimeus and Zerrubabel, and we will fetch such things as are needful. Jotham, stay thou here, to see that no men escapeth from the concealment behind the wall."

So four of the men went away, leaving Jotham striding up and down as on guard. Presently came a shout from beneath the window:

"Jotham! our leader hath dropped his pouch in which are the keys of the smithy. Hasten and bring it to the outer door."

"Aye, aye!" answered Jotham, and, pouch in hand, he ran down the stairs. Now was Rafe's opportunity. Like a flash he was across the gallery, his hand on the boss. The door flew open, and he fell into the arms of Humphrey, who, sword in hand and teeth set, stood on the lower step of the staircase, prepared to sell his liberty as dearly as possible.

"Rafe! little Rafe!" he exclaimed.

"Hush! The man will come back," panted Rafe. "Come away—hide—oh, where?" Then with a sudden inspiration he dragged his brother toward the iron man. "Get inside," he cried. "They will never think of searching there! Oh, Humphrey—make haste! Get inside!"

There was no time to be lost. With the speed of desperation, Humphrey unscrewed, lifted, stepped inside the armor. Rafe slipped the fastenings together, whispered "shut your eyes," and flew back to his hiding place. Just in time, for Jotham's step was on the stair, and next moment he entered the gallery, and resumed his march up and down, little dreaming that the man sought for was peeping through the helmet holes at him, not three feet away.

Presently the other soldiers came back with hammers and wrenches, and in a short time the beautiful wainscot, split into pieces, lay on the floor. Suddenly there was a shout. The secret door had flown open, and the staircase stood revealed. Four of the men, with picks and pistols, prepared to ascend, while the fifth guarded the opening below.

At that moment Winifred entered the gallery from the further end. She turned deadly pale when she saw the open door and the men.

"Oh! Heaven have mercy!" she cried, and dropped half fainting into a chair.

Rafe darted across the floor and seized her hand.

"Hush," he whispered. "Don't say a word, sister. He is safe."

"He! Who?" cried the amazed Winifred.

But now voices sounded from above. The men were coming down. Winifred rallied her courage, rose and went forward. She was very white still, but she spoke in a steady voice. Her two brothers, Humphrey in his hiding place and little Rafe by her side, both admired her greatly.

"What is the meaning of this, Jotham Green?" she demanded. "By what warrant do you enter and spoil our house?"

"By the warrant which all true men have to search for traitors," said Jotham.

"You will find none such here," responded Winifred, firmly.

"We find the lurking place in which one such has doubtless lain," said Zerrubabel. "Where holes exist, look out for vermin."

"You are less than civil, neighbor. An old house like this has many strange nooks and corners of which the inhabitants may have neither use nor knowledge. If your search is done, I will beg you to make good the damage you have caused as best you may, and with as little noise as possible, that my mother be not alarmed. Jotham Green, you are a good workman, I know. I recollect how deftly you once repaired that cabinet for us."

All the men knew Winifred, and her calm and decided manner made its impression. Jotham slowly picked up the fragments of the paneling and began to fit them together. The rest consulted, and at last rather sheepishly, and with a muttered half apology about "wrong information," went away, taking with them the injured woodwork, which Jotham undertook to repair. Rafe's first words after they disappeared were:

"Winifred, you must dismiss Deborah. It is she that has betrayed us."

"How do you know that, Rafe?"

Then it all came out. Winifred listened to the tale with streaming tears.

"Oh, Rafe, my darling, how brave you were! You played the man for us to-day, and have saved—I trust you have saved—our Humphrey. The men will not return to-day, and to-night the lugger sails."

And Humphrey was saved. Before morning, well disguised, he had made his way across country to a little fishing port, embarked and reached France without further accident.

So that strange Christmas adventure ended happily. It was all long, long ago. Humphrey and Winifred and Rafe lived their lives out, and lay down to rest a century and a half since under the daisy sprinkled English sod. Little Hexie died an aged woman, before any of us were born. But still the beautiful old manor house stands amid its gardens and pasture lands, with the silvery look of time on its gray walls. Still the armed figure keeps guard beside the secret staircase, the tapestry hangs in the old heavy folds, evening reddens the cedar walls and the polished floor, and everything occupies the same place and wears the same look that it did when little Rafe played the man in that gallery, and saved his brother Humphrey, more than two hundred years ago.—*St. Nicholas.*

An Humble Hero's Death.

The Chicago *Tribune* has the following account of the loss of four lives at a fire in that city: It was in the Eastern House that the loss of life took place. The flames seemed to have enveloped the buildings in a whiff, for when the firemen came on the spot all the buildings were ablaze. Captain Bullwinkle and his men, who were first on the ground, rescued all they could, and in this work, as soon as they arrived, the firemen bravely assisted. Kaiser's family, Cella's and Geewe's, as well as the Cockells, had a narrow escape. Mr. Cockell employed considerable help in his restaurant. They slept in the rear part of the second story, over the kitchen. The fire burned fiercely here, and when the inmates were awakened escape was almost cut off. Cockell and his family were awakened by a man named James Allen, who boarded at the house, and their lives were thus undoubtedly saved. He was a tailor by trade, thirty-seven years of age, and had recently come home from Boston, where he left a wife and five children. This man Allen proved himself a hero, and met his death like a martyr in trying to save human life. After he had awakened nearly every one in the house, he took his overcoat upon his arm and got out upon the sidewalk. Finding that there were yet persons in the building he managed to get back. A poor girl named Agnes Healy, aged seventeen, who had been a waiter at the restaurant, was half crazed, suffocating with smoke, and crying to be saved. He seized her around the waist, and was about to carry her to a window, but escape was cut off, and the two perished together, and in this way they were found charred and lifeless, clasped in each other's embrace. A little way from them were found the bodies of Emma Burt, or Bradley, a dining-room girl, and George Broad. The woman was about twenty-four years of age and married, and her home was in Columbus, Ohio. Broad was an Englishman, twenty-six years of age, and a clerk for Cockell. The bodies were not burned so badly as to be unrecognizable, and their appearance seemed to indicate rather that they were suffocated, the *debris* covering and in a manner preserving the remains.

Women and War.

Most wars of the last century, says the New York *Times*, have resulted in little less than waste of money and waste of life. Nothing has been gained either materially or morally; they have ended nearly where they began, plus countless graves, invalids, shattered hopes and broken hearts. There have been a few contests—contests for ideas, for human rights, for higher civilization, but when such have been, women have taken up their great burdens, mournfully, though patiently and resignedly, and have accepted what fortune brought, not without poignant grief, but with the consoling thought that they had suffered and made sacrifice in a holy cause. It has been urged against women, sometimes, that they are incapable of bearing arms, of performing military duty in the field. There have been many exceptions to this rule, which no doubt, however, holds generally good. If this incapacity be a fault, it is certainly a good fault, one to which progress and humanity should be lenient. It might be said in women's favor that, should she have the arrangement of affairs, wars would be far less frequent, if they did not cease altogether. She is not so strong, physically, nor so fierce as her brother man, but she is undeniably more moral and more civilized; and where high morality and civilization are, war, often as it may happen, is always an anachronism. In any strict gynocracy—should there ever be such a thing—the question of women bearing arms will not be discussed, for war will be ranked, as in most cases it deserves to be, as a relic of barbarism. The days of trial by battle on a grand scale would assuredly be numbered, if statesmen and leaders who declare war, not soldiers who conduct it, were capable of feeling for any length of time the distress of mind, the agony of heart, the torture of soul, which every battle, all over the civilized world, naturally and necessarily brings to women. To them men owe much more than they ever think or concede; and if men were more in the habit of looking through women's eyes, before they imperil women's happiness in military ventures for no good or wise end, they might give themselves such wholesale pause as would turn the almost equally balanced scales on the side of beloved and blessed peace.

The Electoral Vote.

Ex-Senators Carl Schurz and John B. Henderson, and other prominent men of St. Louis, have forwarded a petition to Congress relative to the counting of the electoral vote. They say in the petition that the present condition of the country calls for some action which shall settle the political disquietude. The clause in the Constitution respecting the canvassing of the electoral vote is quoted, and pronounced inadequate and liable to diverse construction. The attempt to canvass the vote in joint session of Congress is deprecated as certain to raise partisan issues, and develop a strife which may prove most disastrous to the country. The petition then proposes as the remedy that the whole matter shall be transferred to the supreme court of the United States. It is urged that that is the only tribunal from which a fair and unpartisan decision, one which will satisfy the whole people, can be obtained. To effect this the petition proposes that the two Houses shall improve the three weeks preceding Christmas in forming and agreeing upon a Constitutional amendment placing in the supreme court the duty of canvassing the electoral vote. Most of the State Legislatures meet immediately after the holidays, when the amendment could be submitted; and the latter holds to the opinion that the amendment could be ratified without delay, so that it could be made part of the Constitution and apply to the present election. Both of the Presidential candidates, it is urged, would recognize the wisdom of this course, and both the Republican and Democratic legislatures would ratify it. The petition dwells at length upon the wisdom of removing this important matter from a tribunal that is likely to be affected by party strife.

Who's Elected.

One of the teachers in a Sunday-school was "stumped" badly during the services of the hour. He was teaching the infant class, and, after explaining the lesson as well as he knew how, he threw open the question box, figuratively speaking, and told the children they might ask him any questions that suggested themselves. He was gratified by a seven-year-old girl, who immediately piped out: "Who's 'lected?" He couldn't tell.

HIS THINKING.—When a witness was testifying the other day he replied to a question: "I think not, sir." "I don't want to know what you think," thundered the lawyer. "Well," said the witness, "I'm thinking under oath, and that's as near as I can tell you." That was something new, and the smile went round, and then somebody suggested that possibly it might be a good thing for lawyers, stump speakers and some editors to do their thinking under oath.

LONG AWAY.—A traveler, who rode up to a wayside tavern in Wisconsin, being told by a boy, who pointed to an elderly woman standing in the door, that "that ere woman is the landlady," politely bowed to her and asked: "Madam, where is your husband?" "Gone to Milwaukee for a stock of liquor and lemons," said she. "Has he been gone long?" "Only twenty-three years." The traveler rode on.

A CASE OF CREMATION.

The Burning of the Body of Baron de Palm

In the United States, the only recorded instances of cremation, except the burning alive of prisoners at the stake by savages, are those of the burning of Henry Laurens, about 1816, of Henry Berry, in Marion county, S. C., last July and that of Joseph Henry Louis, Baron de Palm, Grand Cross Commander of the Sovereign Order of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, Knight of St. John at Malta, Prince of the Roman Empire, late Chamberlain to his Majesty the King of Bavaria, Fellow of the Theosophical Society of New York, etc., which has just taken place.

This nobleman's life was a romance of which his death, embalming, preliminary funeral in New York and cremation in Pennsylvania are strange sequences. He was a member of that diplomatic corps which includes in every European capital the brightest, the best educated, the most accomplished of men, but he wearied of courts, possibly because the expenses of German diplomatists could not keep pace with those of English ambassadors. With a failing income and a stout heart he immigrated to America, and landed in New York in 1858, a bachelor of some fifty years. He pushed on to Chicago, and there from time to time, in company with associates who are well known among merchants, he engaged in various business enterprises and real estate operations. They proved unfortunate. Toward the close of the year 1875 he returned to New York where he died, and his funeral services took place in May last, at the Masonic Temple. By the will the Baron requested that his remains be burned. It being impracticable to burn the corpse as he desired it to be burned, it was embalmed and laid in a receiving vault to await the completion of the present crematory by Dr. Le Moyne, of Washington, Pa., and to that place the remains were taken.

The furnace is a cheap affair. Coarse bricks and firebricks form the walls; the furnace door below and the door of the fireclay oven above it are of unornamented iron. The front of the furnace resembles that of any common furnace for melting iron or reducing ores. A sooty feeder of the fire stood in front of it, rather fatigued by a vigil of thirty-six hours since the fire began to burn.

Before any guests were admitted, the body had been taken from the coffin, completely wrapped in a white sheet, and laid upon an iron crate which stood on wooden trestles in the center of the reception room, according to the old Greek and Roman custom. It was injected and surrounded with cinnamon, cassia, frankincense and myrrh. A large number of scientific gentlemen were present to witness the affair. The body was placed in the furnace about eight o'clock, and the fire was kept burning about three hours, when nothing remained but a confused mass of ashes in the bottom of the retort. When the retort was cooled the ashes were gathered in a Hindoo urn and will be preserved.

Patrick Henry's Prophecy.

Patrick Henry, in the Virginia convention on the adoption of the Constitution of 1788, spoke as follows:

"Your President may easily become king. Your Senate is so imperfectly constructed that your dearest rights may be sacrificed by what may be a small majority; and a very small minority may continue forever unchangeably this government although horribly defective. Where are your checks in this government? Your strongholds will be in the hands of your enemies. It is on the supposition that your American governor shall be honest that all the good qualities of this government are founded, but its perfect and imperfect construction puts it in their power to perpetrate the worst of mischiefs should they be bad men. And, sir, would not all the world blame our distracted folly in resting our rights upon the contingency of our rulers being good or bad? Show me that age and country, where the rights and liberties of the people were placed on the chance of their rulers being good men, without a consequent loss of liberty. I say that the loss of that dearest privilege has ever followed, with absolute certainty, every such mad attempt. If your American chief be a man of ambition and abilities, how easy will it be for him to render himself absolute! The army is in his hands, and if he be a man of address it will be attached to him, and it will be the subject of long meditation with him to seize the first auspicious moment to accomplish his design. And, sir, will the American spirit solely relieve you when this happens? I would rather have a king, lords and commons, than a government so replete with such insupportable evils. If we make a king, we may prescribe the rules by which he shall rule his people; but the President in the field, at the head of his army, can prescribe the terms on which he shall reign master, so far that it will puzzle any American even to get his neck from under the galling yoke!"

They Were Homesick.

A letter from Hutisford, Wis., says: About the first week in October last about a dozen families and a few single young men left this town and neighborhood, expecting to make their future home in Oregon. We were, therefore, a good deal surprised about ten days ago to see most of them back again. Some of them, on being questioned, declared that the country was a miserable region, where a man would find it difficult to live and anything but pleasant to die. Careful inquiry, however, disclosed the true state of the case. They had gone too late in the fall. It rained almost constantly after they left Wisconsin, and incessantly during their stay in Oregon. Several of the children fell sick on the way; nearly the whole party were utterly homesick before they landed at Portland.

Freaks of the Registry.

The Columbus (Ga.) *Enquirer* has the following: We have a file of the city registration since 1863. It is queer how some people grow. In 1863 a leading manufacturer gave his age as forty-four, in 1876 he is only forty-six years old. He grows slowly. A shoe merchant in 1863 was thirty-seven, but in 1876 he claims to be only forty-seven. But it is the old bachelors and widowers who grow old slowly. One widower, a merchant, in 1863, was fifty-four. In thirteen years he has only reached sixty-four. One old bachelor registered himself in 1863 as thirty-two, but we find in 1876 he has only reached forty-one. Another of the same species was thirty-six in 1863, but has allowed the hair to grow so as to cover the bald spot and he now registers forty-five.

ONE OF DICKENS' CONVICTS.

Spending a Lifetime in Solitary Confinement—Decorating a Cell Under Difficulties—A Singular Character.

Over thirty years ago, says a Philadelphia letter, when Charles Dickens made the tour of this country that resulted in his "American Notes," he devoted much of his time to the inspection of our prison system. Our principal prison, then as now, was the Eastern penitentiary, in which the system of solitary confinement prevailed. Mr. Dickens in a few graphic sentences pictured the miserable condition of the unhappy convicts to whom the sound of a human voice is almost unknown for year after year.

That Mr. Dickens' notion of the system was a fair one, the experience of many years and the testimony of some of the best minds of the age have shown; but many men are still living—some of them now within the walls of the prison itself—who are ready to testify that the institution was as light and airy thirty years ago as it is now, and a recent personal visit convince me that it is as pleasant and wholesome a place as is compatible with massive stone walls and unyielding bars of iron. Possibly Mr. Dickens' imagination, as is apt to be the case with men of such high strung sensibilities, was wrought upon by his surroundings. At all events, those who read his vivid description will shudder more at the picture so powerfully brought before them, than they would be apt to at the original.

The building covers a square, and branches off from a circular hall in the center into seven long corridors, all well lighted and excellently ventilated. Everything is as clean as soap and water can make it, and within the cells, which are ranged along the corridors in two tiers, there is neatness and cleanliness which would shame many model housewives.

In Dickens' time there was a prisoner of forty years or thereabouts, whose dejected appearance especially attracted the attention of the novelist. He was in the corridor fronting the entrance, and had devoted all the time allowed him from his work to painting and ornamenting his cell and cultivating his little garden—a patch of ground about eight feet long and five or six feet wide. Dickens describes the cell and the garden briefly, but devotes a long paragraph to the downcast expression and demeanor of the prisoner.

It was the arrest of this man—Charles Langheimer by name—that suggested this letter. Langheimer was discharged from the penitentiary in September last, and lately was brought up before a magistrate charged with stealing an overcoat. He is seventy-four years old, with bushy gray whiskers and grizzled hair, and has all the appearance of a well-to-do mechanic. As far as I can ascertain, he is not a hard drinker, but the police and the prison authorities say that his long life has been one constant series of larcenies. In prison he loves to work, and shows great taste and ingenuity; but, once at large, his itching of the fingers returns, and he is soon in trouble again. When Dickens saw him, he was serving his third term for grand larceny. Since then he has "done" three terms of five years each, and five others of a year or two each, returning to the prison with the regularity of the seasons.

The cell he occupied in 1842 is one of the side shows of the prison, but the garden is not as well kept as it was then. The walls and ceiling of the cell are elaborately painted in red, blue, and green. Every time he comes back he tries to get his old cell; but failing in this, he goes to a new one, and contentedly begins the work of embellishment. When I saw him, just before his release, he had spent nearly a year in a cell in the southern tier, and had painted and arranged it so thoroughly that it looked almost inviting. The paint he obtained by soaking colored yarns in which he worked in water, and extracting the dye. Such trifles as he could obtain from the chaplain or the warden he utilized with wonderful ingenuity. His garden bed, like that described by Dickens, was coffin shaped, but his flowers were the brightest and most blooming in the prison. He sat at his wheel as the warden ushered me into the cell, looking up with a pleased expression at the sound of our voices, but never stopping his work for a second. An expression of surprise at his wonderful ingenuity drew forth a faint, flickering smile which was painful to see, but after the first glance he did not look up again, although I could see that he heard every word we said, and watched our motions sharply out of one corner of his eye.

He will take up his old quarters for a year or two more, and I am glad to say that his comfortable cell has been reserved for him. He is a standing argument for the authorities of the prison in favor of the silent system. "Why," they say, "if this man wanted to, he could get out of this State and into New York as soon as he is released, for our prisoners seldom go away empty handed, and there he could serve his time in Sing Sing or on Blackwell's island and herd with his fellows. This system may not work the same with all men, but the stories of insanity arising from solitary confinement are all bosh. Invariably we find that our insane prisoners were mentally unsound when they came to us.

The Esquimaux Dog.

An Esquimaux dog seems to be an expensive luxury. On the return of the Pandora from the Franklin search expedition, Captain Allen Young brought back with him a fine specimen of the Esquimaux dog, on which he set great value. The animal one day got loose, and for a long time was at large in the neighborhood of Southampton. The Hampshire farmers, taking it for a wolf, turned out *en masse* with guns and sticks, and killed the poor brute. A long bill for depredations committed by the animal was also handed to Captain Young, who had to recompense the suffering agriculturists. On the recent return of the Pandora from the Arctic regions, Lieut. Arbuthnot brought home a fine Esquimaux dog, the "king of the pack." On November 20 the animal got away, and caused much alarm, being mistaken, as in the case of Captain Young's dog, for a wolf. It paid a visit to a farm at Broomhurst, gobbling up four ducks and killing a fifth, but was soon after recaptured.

The Lion Sermon.

Over two hundred years ago there lived in London Sir John Gayer, merchant and lord mayor in the time of Charles I., and distinguished for his loyalty to that unfortunate monarch. During his traveling in Africa he was wonderfully delivered—in answer to his earnest prayer—from a lion, and on his return home commemorated his escape by endowing an annual sermon in his parish church, accompanied by a contribution of gifts to the poor. This sermon, from that day to this, has been called "The Lion Sermon." For more than two hundred years this sermon has been preached regularly, and descendants of the Gayer family are frequently to be seen among the congregation on these occasions.

HARD TIMES.

THE CAUSE AND CURE.

Charlie.—Well, little wife, got on your thinking cap, eh, instead of welcoming your tired and discouraged husband home after a hard day's work doing nothing in the store?

Maggie.—Yes, Charley, your complaints about hard times have been running in my head ever since dinner, and I have gone into a calculation.

Charlie.—A calculation! well, my sweet, mathematical financier, can you show me how we are going to live this year, with trade fallen off fifty per cent., and twenty per cent. of the bills that we do make gone to the dogs?

Maggie.—Perhaps I can, by-and-bye, but I have just finished a general estimate of what might be done to cure the hard times.

Charlie.—Better yet! Come, lassie, out with the figures, and I will have them posted on the bulletins, and quoted on 'Change before nine o'clock tomorrow morning.

Maggie.—Don't be sarcastic, Charlie; there may be more sense in this "goosie head," as you sometimes call it, than you think.

Charlie.—All right. Proceed to business.

Maggie.—Well, first, I must "preliminate," as Parson B. says, that hard times come from waste.

Charley.—Our Bridget's waste, for example!

Maggie.—Be quiet, please, and do not interrupt the speaker.

Charlie.—Beg pardon. I am all attention.

Maggie.—In the United States, in 1870, $1,500,000,000 worth of intoxicating drinks and $610,000,000 worth of tobacco were consumed; the expenditures for licentiousness were as much more, giving a total of $4,220,000,000 *wasted* in the gratification of three appetites. Suppose this sum was saved. It would give to each of the 8,000,000 families in our land a free rental of $200; four barrels of flour at $7—$28; one barrel of pork, $22; one barrel of beef, $13; six barrels of potatoes at $2—$12; three barrels of apples at $4—$12; 100 pounds of sugar at thirteen cts., $13; forty pounds of butter at thirty-five cts., $14; one suit of clothes for the father, $50; one suit of clothes for the mother, $45; three suits of clothes for the children at $25—$75; annual premium on a life insurance policy of $1,500, $47. Total, $526 for each family, still leaving $8,500,000 surplus unexpended.

Charlie—Maggie, you astound me! You have surely made some great mistake!

Maggie—Well, run over the figures for yourself. You are no more surprised than I was, but I can find no error in the calculation. The amount of liquor and tobacco consumed is as officially reported in the United States census. The estimate of the amount wasted in licentiousness is my own, but certainly far within the truth. Now, if we could have our proportion of those articles given to us this year, I think that we might live comfortably, even with the diminished trade. Certainly if all this amount were saved but for a single year, the hard times would vanish.

Charlie.—You're a jewel, wifey! But if hard times are to remain until men cease their indulgences, I fear that prosperity is very far off. As for myself, I can give up my wine without much self-denial, but my cigars have become a necessity!

Maggie.—Oh, Charlie, don't say that. It makes me shudder; not that smoking is so very distasteful to me, but your plea of necessity looks so like a surrender of manliness to the power of an evil habit.

Charlie.—Well, to my sorrow, I must confess that whenever I have attempted to break off the habit has floored me, and I have come out second best every time.

Maggie.—Perhaps you did not try in the right way.

Charlie.—I just tossed my cigar into the street, and said I wouldn't use another, and didn't until I lost my appetite, trembled all over like a leaf, lost my power of recollection, and really thought I would go crazy, or break down in a general collapse, then I took the weed and was soon all right again.

Maggie.—Did you crave it all that time?

Charlie.—"Crave it!" I was stark mad for it; dying for want of it.

Maggie.—Have you never heard of a method of cure, perfectly painless, instantaneous, and so complete that the craving never is felt.

Charlie,—Bosh! there isn't a medicine on earth that will do all that.

Maggie—But suppose that a number of credible witnesses testify that they have been personally cured in that way?

Charlie.—If they are really credible witnesses, and testify to acts in their own experience, I suppose they must be believed, but I should want to cross-examine them pretty closely first.

Maggie.—They will not object, and, if agreeable to you, we will invite one of them, Mr. B, to tea to-morrow, when you can quiz him all you like.

Charlie.—All right; but now let us have some tea to-night, after which I will enjoy my Havana (if those terrible statistics will keep out of my head), in anticipation of the marvelous revealments of to-morrow.

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(Charlie, Maggie and Mr. B. seated at the table.)

Maggie.—Have your cup filled, Mr. B.?

Mr. B.—No, thank you. Since I was cured of my tobacco habit, I feel less in need of stimulants than formerly, hence rarely take more than a single cup of tea.

Charlie.—That wouldn't serve me at all. My thirst calls for a greater quantity than that.

Mr. B.—Perhaps not so much thirst as the cry of suffering nerves for stimulants under the depressing influence of the narcotic in your cigars.

Charlie.—Well, whatever it be, another cup, Maggie, please; and now, Mr. B., will you have the kindness to tell us about that wonderful cure?

Mr. B.—With pleasure. The story is very short. I had been a slave to tobacco in various forms for many years. Had striven in vain to break off the habit, taken various substitutes, but judging of my condition by the impertinteness of the craving, I was more enth