

'Tis scandal time!
'Tis candle time; the day has grayed
To dusk; the low tea table's laid,
And Flo and Phyllis cosily
Discuss their world, and sip their
tea
From curious cups of priceless jade.
'Tis now each calls a spade a spade,
For, if there is one hour made
For gossip most especially,
'Tis candle time!
"Mabella's gown's a horrid shade;
Whatever made her choose brocade?"
"Gwen's flirting just outrageously—
She'll soon win Jack from poor
Marie!"
Alas! I'm very much afraid
'Tis scandal time!
Caroline Mischka Roberts, in The
Smart Set.

Under a Cake of Ice.

It was three o'clock on a clear March afternoon when Henry Duncan, ax on shoulder, walked whistling out of the village of Winterport on the Penobscot River. He followed the main road for about a hundred rods, and then took a by-path through the fields that led him down to the water, nearly a half-mile north of the town.
His goal was a dock between two old wharves, where lay his coasting schooner, the Elsie, tied up the previous December, when the Penobscot froze over, and now, although the river had been open a fortnight, still thickly ice-clad from the lapping of the water against her sides. It was his mission that afternoon to cut off this winter coat, and begin to get his vessel ready for the season's business.
Duncan sprang lightly down the slippery bank, and stood on the old wharf, with its sudden log-ends and brown, rotting corks covered with masses of clinging rockweed. The tide has just begun to rise, but was still some distance below the schooner's rudder; the hard mud bottom of the dock was bare, except for a few stranded ice-cakes.
It had been a cold winter, and the coating on the Elsie was in some places more than a foot in thickness. The melting warmth of the March sun had set the water flowing between the outside planks and their covering, so that the ice had started away a little from the side. If it were crased into sections with an ax and then cut more deeply, it would fall off in great slabs.
Descending a short ladder at the head of the dock, he took off his coat, laid it upon an ice-cake behind him, and began chopping away at the mass that concealed the outlines of his vessel near the stern. At first he worked with considerable caution; but as the ice was unexpectedly hard and came off in very small pieces, he grew a little impatient and struck more vigorously.
There was a sharp crackling, and a section more than ten feet long and nearly as high as the schooner's side split off bodily.
Duncan saw it coming, but so quickly did it drop that he had no time to get out of the way. It fell across his body, bearing him backward and pinning him down upon the mud.
The plight in which the young owner so unexpectedly found himself was both painful and dangerous. There he lay, flat on his back, covered from the tips of his toes almost to his shoulders by a slab of ice weighing several hundred pounds.
The under side was rough with irregular bosses, and these, pressing down upon the mud, held up the cake from his body; otherwise his life would surely have been crushed out in a short time.
So far as he could tell, no bones had been broken, but his body and lower limbs were fastened into absolute immobility. His arms, however, were free, and he could breathe with no great difficulty. Pressing his hands strongly against the edge of the slab, he attempted to drag himself from under it. But struggle as hard as he might, he found to his great alarm that he could not work himself backward the fraction of an inch. He began to shout for aid:
"Hi! Hi! Hi! Help!"
The narrow dock resounded with his cries. From the opposite shore of the river a faint echo rolled back. How could they help hearing him in the village, half a mile below? He became silent and waited. Surely rescue would soon come. But at the end of ten minutes no approaching footstep had gladdened his ears. Again he sent forth shout after shout; but still there was no response. The dock was in an unfrequented spot, under a high bank, and the wharves that hemmed it in prevented his voice from being heard. Evidently it was useless to count on assistance from others.
Duncan turned his head and looked out across the level river. It was a beautiful afternoon. The Penobscot seemed rejoicing in its freedom from the chains of winter. No breeze rippled the surface visible between the wharves. An occasional ice-cake, drifting slowly by, was the only thing that broke the monotony of the smooth, blue current.
The pressure upon the prisoner's body was becoming heavier and more painful, chilling it and checking the circulation. He could just breathe, and that was all. Pull and strain as he might, he could not extricate him-

self. Then a sudden fear struck him as he noted the progress of the tide. It had already crept up several inches!
He was near the lower end of the slab. The bottom of the dock sloped sharply downward, and he saw that before the tide could rise high enough to float the entire mass and remove the pressure from his body, his face would be covered and he would assuredly be drowned.
The young navigator had a strong, active body and a clear brain. He fully appreciated his peril, but saw that it was idle to waste his energies in frantic and unavailing efforts. He looked about for his ax, hoping to cut himself free. A few feet to his right the handle protruded from beneath the ice-cake. A single trial showed him that it was out of his reach, and he at once dismissed it from his thoughts.
But one resource remained. In the pocket of his coat, a few feet behind him, was a small jack-knife. Stretching his arms backward at full length he touched a sleeve and very carefully drew it toward him. In a moment the open knife was in his grasp, and he mustered all his powers for the coming struggle. With so small an instrument he would have no more than time to cut himself clear before the tide should reach him. Every stroke must tell.
To gain his liberty he set out to cut three sides of an ice-cake sixteen inches long, sixteen wide, and from six to ten thick. The fourth side was the edge directly before his face. This would allow him to sit upright, with his head above the slab, and when the rising tide lifted the ice, he could easily pull his legs out.
With freedom of motion and a suitable instrument, his task would have been a trifling one. But handicapped as he was by being held down in a cramped position, armed only with a short, slender steel blade, and unable to lift his head high enough to see the surface he must attack, he did not underrate the difficulty of the achievement.
Stretching his arms forward above the edge of the slab, he began with strong, cautious strokes to draw his knife across the cracking fragments, which sprinkled his face and cheeks, and fell in heaps on each side. Desperately and deeper grew the rifts; before many minutes he would be free!
He struck a hard spot, and bore down a little too heavily. Snap! The brittle steel, chilled by constant contact with the ice, broke short off. As the blade gave way his hand came heavily down upon the surface, and the knife flew from his grasp.
For an instant this catastrophe, coming so unexpectedly, paralyzed Duncan. Then he remembered that the tool had another blade, and swept his fingers over the ice in the hope of grasping the horn handle. To his horror he could nowhere discover it. He tried again, straining and stretching forward with all his might, but again failed.
Sick with disappointment, he let his head drop back upon the mud, and lay for a moment with closed eyes, then turned his face to note the progress of the tide. It was rising quietly, more terrifying to him than if it had come with a sound and tumult. Already it washed the foot of the splines across the dock.
Resignation now would be cowardice. Duncan breathed a short prayer for strength, and again faced the situation.
A rushing far up the river broke the stillness of the afternoon. The Boston boat! Perhaps some one on board might see or hear him.
But he was doomed to disappointment. Just as the steamer came opposite the dock she whistled for the Winterport landing, and the hoarse hollow of escaping steam drowned the shouts he raised. And so swiftly did she speed by the narrow opening between the wharves that not one among her scores of passengers perceived the frantic waving of his arms. The beating of the paddle wheels fled away and he was again left to himself.
It was not far from four o'clock. The sun was declining toward the west, and the banks were beginning to cast their shadows toward the river and it was growing colder. Duncan's body was stiff and numb from the fearful weight that was grinding him down into the mud. The sharp edge of the ice seemed to cut his flesh.
All the while his brain was busy with schemes to get the knife that he knew must lie not far away on the ice above his head. If he only had a short stick, it might be possible to pull the tool within his reach; but nothing of the sort was at hand. Then it came to him that he might make a noose with his handkerchief, and perhaps fling it over the knife.
A few minutes' careful angling on the unseen surface, to his great joy he regained possession of the precious instrument.
Duncan now addressed himself to his task with renewed energy, tempered with caution. Never in his life had he done any harder work than with that little penknife.
Now he would strike a shelly place, and his progress would be rapid. Then the ice would grow hard and blue again, rendering his advance slower. All the time there grew upon him an increasing terror of the tide. He had never known that it could rise so fast. Often in summer, when he had been waiting for it to float his vessel, it had barely crept up the beach. Now every minute showed a steady gain.
There was a patter of feet, a scra-

pling of claws on the wharf across the dock. Then on its capill appeared the head and shoulders of a hound outlined against the clear sky. Duncan recognized him as a dog belonging to a neighbor, and the wild hope flashed into his head that here was a messenger that might summon assistance. Oh, if he could only be made by voice to understand!
With moan and gesture he tried to coax the hound down into the dock. The animal evidently appreciated the fact that something was wanted of him, for he ran whinnying back and forth on the edge of the wharf, as if seeking a place to descend. Finally, however, to Duncan's bitter disappointment he turned and bounded off.
Two sides of the ice-cake parallel to his body were now cut through, but the hardest of the three, that across his thighs, had hardly been touched. And the water had already laid its icy clutch on his hair. How freezing cold it was! It had crept under the cake, and was chilling his whole body. It was flowing into his ears. The back of his head and neck seemed to be turning into ice.
Then came ten minutes of painful, desperate effort. The shipmaster's body was almost destitute of feeling because of the fearful numbness that had crept over it. About him the rising water eddied and gurgled. His whole life depended upon that little sharp piece of steel set in the horn handle. The cake was cut half through; a few more strokes would do the work.
Again that slight snapping sound! The brittle blade had broken like the other!
With a mighty effort Duncan flung both arms powerfully down on the tongue that still held to the slab by its half-severed end, preventing his escape; but the firm mass showed no sign of yielding. Again, and still again, with the strength of despair he dashed his elbows against the unfeeling ice, bruising them cruelly. But his second and third attempts proved as the first.
"You never can do it! You never can do it!" a voice seemed to keep saying over and over in his ear.
"I will do it!" he shouted. And for the fourth time his muscles hard as steel and his energies doubled and trebled by the deadly peril, he hurled his tense forearm upon the mass that held him down.
Crack! The cake split off, and lay loosely across his chest.
He had succeeded at last, but not a moment too soon, for the water was lapping his cheeks. With a final endeavor he pushed the severed cake aside, and putting his arms behind him, lifted his stiffened frame to an upright position. The long chilling pressure had almost numbed his body and he was weak as a reed from the struggle he had won.
A few minutes more, and the rising tide floated the slab sufficiently to allow him to draw his legs from under it, and he crept slowly up out of the water.
It was hard work to climb the ladder at the head of the dock; but grit and resolution conquered, and Duncan found himself at last on the moldering timbers of the wharf. It would not do to remain there, however, so slowly and painfully, he started to drag himself homeward.
The effort he was obliged to make hard though it seemed, was of the greatest benefit to him, for it gradually set the blood circulating once more through his benumbed body. By the time he had gone two hundred yards he was able to rise to his feet and begin a slow, hobbling walk. On reaching home he said nothing of his adventure, although he felt its effects for weeks afterward.
Duncan is now captain of a three-masted schooner, well-known in the coasting trade. In one of the drawers of the desk in his cabin is a horn-handled jack-knife with both blades broken. This he preserves as carefully as a veteran of a war might treasure some object that had stopped the bullet aimed at his heart.—Youth's Companion.

A Tame Butterfly.
A Chicago woman had all winter a tame butterfly that has just died. It did not cost much to keep this butterfly, for all it ate was one drop of honey every three days.
The butterfly blundered into the woman's house one day last fall. It was numb with cold. For a little while it fluttered feebly. Then it sank to the carpet and lay as though dead.
The woman took it in her hands and warmed it, whereupon it became active and gay. But once released from the warmth of her hands it grew cold again—it fell into a stupor. Thereupon she gave it another warming. Thus, before many days had gone by, the butterfly learned the restorative value of a woman's hands, and it would fly to them and nestle in them as a little child nestles on the breast of its mother.
It learned to feed from her hand, too; but all it desired was a drop of honey every three or four days. She would place the honey on her finger and the butterfly, uncurling its delicate sucker, would sip it slowly and daintily, as a young lady sips soda water through a straw.—Chicago Inter-Ocean.

The tea branch offices of the Russo-Chinese Bank located in China have since their establishment no record of a single protested note.
The proportion of divorces to marriages in Japan is one to four.

Gentleness the Quality of Qualities in Woman.

By H. R. R. Hertzberg.
WHEN, a few days ago, I wrote a little harmless extravaganza, with woman's most beautiful physical trait for a theme, and ended it by saying that "the best thing about a beautiful woman is every thing about her," I hadn't the remotest idea that Mr. Casson would describe me as "a little boy who whittles a shingle."
At the same time the editor, who said that character was woman's best quality, received a share of Mr. Casson's philosophic condemnation. Now, Mr. Casson is justified in calling down the editor, because character, as he states truly, is not more feminine than masculine. And I am eminently justified in calling down Mr. Casson because, when he names refinement as woman's best quality, he errs egregiously. Refinement is not a quality. It is a condition, a result.
Take the case of the diamond in the rough. Its quality of brilliancy is there. Polish is needed to bring it out, all right enough, but it has nothing to do with that diamond's ability to shine. The quality of brilliancy is inherent. All qualities are inherent. But polish is not inherent. It comes from the outside. The jeweler produces it. Refinement in a human being is the equivalent of polish in a stone.
Honestly, I had not intended to break into this controversy. However, Mr. Casson's censor has put me on my mettle. Having disposed of him and of the editor, I shall now designate as woman's best quality a real, unmistakable quality—gentleness.
To gentleness must be attributed the various excellences with which Mr. Casson rightly credits woman. It is because she's gentle that woman lacks the thousand and one blemishes man's brutal selfishness reveals. And, mind you, gentleness is not necessarily refined.
Of course refinement adds a special lustre to it. Still, there are many gentlewomen in the rough—like diamonds—with all their possibilities for true beneficence extant, though probably not visible to the unobservant eye.
The unrefined gentlewoman is the uncut gem—the polished jewel is what we call the lady.
In this connection, a few words addressed to one of the Journal's readers who criticizes the closing remark in last Saturday's editorial on "Woman's Best Quality" may not be out of order.
"Learning is good, but that can come later—after marriage," ran the remark.
The author of the criticism objects to this one sentence. "I wonder," says he, "if the writer of that editorial has ever had the misfortune of meeting an uneducated mother!" and he draws a sincere and a pathetic picture of ignorant maternity.
It occurs to me that the critic has misconstrued the line.
Surely learning—deep knowledge—is not essential in a woman. Information, something more than the rudiments of education, she needs to be a good and useful mother, not learning. Such was, I believe, the meaning of the editor.
Let me insist once more that gentleness is the best, the most desirable fundamental quality a woman can possess—the perfume of the flower by which the flower shall be known.—New York Journal.

Korea's Dark Future.

Dominion of Any Nation Can Hardly be Worse Than Present Conditions.
By Rev. Arthur Judson Brown.
UNHAPPY Korea is having a hard time between the conflicting ambitions of powerful Russia and Japan. For the Koreans it is a case of "under which king, Bezonian?" Too weak to be independent, and with subjugation to a foreign nation inevitable, the outlook is not cheering.
Still, the future under either Japanese or Russian domination can hardly be worse than the present. The government lacks the moral fiber needed at such a critical time, and official corruption is well nigh absolute. The people are taxed beyond all reason. Any man suspected of having property is in danger of being thrown into a filthy prison on some trumped-up charge and held or perhaps tortured until he disgorges. Officers are sold to the highest bidder, or given to dissipated favorites, who divide the proceeds. The courts give no redress, for the plunderer himself is usually both judge and jury. So rotten is the entire system that one marvels that the nation has not fallen to pieces before this. Only the stolid apathy of the Asiatic and the rival claims of foreign powers have held it together at all.
The financial problem is as bad as the political. Oppression and robbery destroy all incentive to accumulate property. A man has no motive to toil when he knows that an additional ox or a better house would probably result in a "squeeze" from some lynx-eyed potentate. So he raises only a little rice and devotes the remainder of his time to resting.—The Century.

A Social Fiction.

By Alice Meynell.
THERE is wreckage and drift of bygone fancy in our daily speech. "All language," said Emerson, "is fossil poetry"; and some most dry and forlorn fossils lie here and there among the once ceremonious forms of our social manner of speech. We—that is, our race—have cleared aside a thousand such incumbrances. But where so many have been thrown away, why have some remained? Perhaps because of their very gracelessness. They are not so pected of compliment, so that an Anglo-Saxon is able to speak them without the disabling consciousness of paying his court. And the most persistent of them all is the pretty fiction whereby he represents himself as leaving an afternoon party at a run: "I am afraid I must be running away."
The form of words—happily not general, but used oftener than one could wish—is infelicitous enough for even the most refined state of social life. It has none of the simple arts of self-depreciation that have been practiced time out of mind by the nations. Its candor is all on the other side. It confesses that the hostess will be sorry at his going. It avows that she would stay him if she could. It makes no secret of the need of an apology, and the apology is lightly inverted, so as to save all danger of a conventional misunderstanding. There shall be no risk of any one's supposing that, as he runs, the guest would rather that fate had suffered him to walk. "I am afraid I must be running away" is poetry that rejects the ways of tradition.—Harper's Bazar.

SHOT A SHAD ON THE WING.
Hawk Got the Fish, Gun Got the Bird, and Brink Got His Dinner.
When Henry Brink of East Belvidere, N. J., arose on a recent day it was suggested to him that as it was the open season for trout and he might do well to spend the morning in replenishing the larder. So Brink, who was suffering from a severe attack of spring fever, took up his rod and fly book and hid him to the woods.
For four miles he followed the windings of the Minniskint in vain. In vain he tried the blue dragon and the scarlet teeter, replacing the purple whirly-gig with the green gaddy—all to no purpose.
So, when Brink heard the old farm-house fishhorn tooting out the dinner call he made tracks for home, disgusted with the flimsy tribe. When nearing the house he saw a monster hawk flying close to the ground and coming in his direction. Having lost several fine pullets through the depredations of the "pirates of the air," he concluded to get even and rushed for the house.
Emerging a moment later with his double barrel hammerless, he let fly with both barrels with such excellent aim that the bird landed in the door yard, its neck and head filled with buckshot.
Rushing over to the prostrate hawk, what was Brink's surprise to see something popping about the ground. Kicking the hawk to one side, he discovered a five pound roe shad, which had evidently just been hauled from the Delaware River, four miles away. It being Friday, the Brinks dined royally.—New York Times.

When Children Won a Victory.
A curious and pretty custom is observed every year in the city of Hamburg to celebrate a famous victory which was won by little children more than four hundred years ago. In one of the numerous sieges Hamburg was reduced to the last extremity, when it was suggested that all the children should be sent out unprotected into the camp of the besiegers as the mute appeal for mercy of the helpless and the innocent. This was done. The rough soldiery of the investing army saw with amazement, and then with pity, a long procession of little ones, clad in white, come out of the city and march boldly into their camp.
The sight melted their hearts. They threw down their arms, and plucking branches of fruit from the neighboring orchards, they gave them to the children to take back to the city as a token of peace. This was a great victory, which has ever since been commemorated at Hamburg by a procession of boys and girls dressed in white and carrying branches of the cherry tree in their hands.—Detroit News-Tribune.

The mineral products of the United States, which reached the billion dollar mark in 1901, were last year \$1,260,639,000.

The difference between torpedo boats and torpedo boat destroyers is one of size only. If over 350 tons a vessel is voted a destroyer. Torpedo boats are usually less than 200 tons.

In Milan there are restaurants run by the Union Co-operative in which a plate of soup costs one cent, a portion of beef six and veal seven cents.

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THINK OVER THIS!