

A Christmas Carol.
All this night shrill chattering,
Day's proclaiming trumpet,
Claps his wings and loudly cries,
Mortals, mortals, wake and rise,
See a wonder,
Heaven is under;
From the earth is risen a Sun
Shines all night, though day be done.

Wake, oh, earth! wake everything,
Wake and hear the joy I bring;
Wake and joy for all this night,
Heaven and every twinkling light;
All amazing
Still stand gazing;
Angels, powers, and all that be,
Wake and joy this Sun to see.

Hail, oh, Sun! Oh, blessed Light,
Sent unto the world by night,
Let Thy rays and heavenly powers
Shine in this dark soul of ours;
For most truly
Thou art surely
God and man, we do confess:
Hail, oh, Sun of Righteousness.

A Tale of Three Yuletides ;

BEING A BACHELOR'S CHRISTMAS REVELATIONS TO A VERY YOUNG LADY.

Tell you a story? I believe, little Amy, you could coax a Christmas story from even the giant Blunderbore, who, as you know, was rather a cheerless and unskillful fellow. So settle yourself in my lap—don't be afraid to hug me too close—and listen.

Being by this time well aware of the exact number of watch charms in my possession, you are surely much troubled to find out why of late I carry about a many-dinted old Roman coin, in preference to a large stone mounted in gold, or a little Chinese idol, or even a gold dollar, with the whole Declaration of Independence stamped on one side. You must understand, as you are a sad little flirt, that ornaments of the latter sort are much affected by your many gentleman acquaintances. Let me account for my strange behavior. As the coin hangs from my watch chain, so by the coin hangs a tale, which runs after this fashion:

It is now some fourteen years since I was living in Rome. I was only a very young and inexperienced artist then, you know; and I didn't wear such an immense beard and whiskers as are now coquetting with your dear golden curls. And, what is more, I was not so extravagantly wealthy in those days as you suppose me to be, now that I am your Uncle Coventry and am able to daily extract a few pennies from my pocket, to be instantly converted by you into tartar at the nearest baker's shop. You will believe, then, that I was rather well pleased than otherwise when a beautiful lady, all dressed in silks and satins and blazing with jewels, rustled into my humble studio, one fine September morning. Was she a fairy princess? Oh, no; not quite. But she did there and then inquire whether I would be willing to paint a portrait of her four-year-old daughter, Bianca, which she intended as a Christmas present for the little dear's grandmother. I should have informed you that Bianca was present also, and had quickly interested herself among my brightest pictures. What sort of a little girl was she? Well, in due gallantry and with allowances for the difference of climate, I must not say that she was prettier than you or that her hair was a trifle more shining. I took her offer immediately, and it was arranged that Bianca should visit my studio three or four times a week, in company with her mother or nurse or uncle, and sit as still as a church mouse for ten minutes, which latter was a matter of dreadful vexation to her, as it would be to you also, Miss Amy. Bianca and myself became firm friends, although she would pout and pretend to be awfully mad with me when I would insist upon her keeping a sober face for a second together, or stop tormenting the whiskers and soul of an ancient cat, who was the partner of my joys and sorrows. She was born in Venice, where most of the golden-haired, blue-eyed children of Italy come from. Her mother owned a whole village in the province of Venice, and her father, who had been a very great man at Rome, was long since dead.

One day my lovely little model, "my Bianca," as I used to call her—"don't pull my beard so hard, I verily believe you are jealous, little Amy"—one day Bianca came to my studio with her uncle, Count Luigi, whom I then beheld for the first time. He was the brother-in-law of the contessa. Was he much like me? I hope not. You shouldn't like him for an uncle at all; and I am certain Bianca did not. He was tall and dark and mysterious, and his yellow face was decorated by a pair of black, fiery eyes, that were entirely too near to be honest; likewise by a hooked nose, and a coal-black moustache, the ends of which were continually finding their way between his beautiful white teeth. Uncle Luigi seemed to me vastly like one of the ogres, magicians, or wicked knights addicted to sealing pretty maids from their castle bondirs, of whom you have read a good deal in your books. I did not admire this gentleman from the first; and our meeting was pretty much the same as the distant acquaintance of two icebergs. I am not quite sure that Bianca's mother liked him; but she appeared to be too weak and easily managed to express her want of affection for him.

My picture progressed famously, and—(paint a picture of you? Certainly, my love. We will have it ready for your next birthday)—and when the first week of December closed I had delivered my picture to the Contessa di Casabianca, receiving in exchange a check on a Roman bank for a most agreeable sum of money. The portrait was to be taken to Venice, and duly presented to the grandmother on Christmas day. It represented Bianca smiling, and dressed in a low-necked silk gown, with a necklace of pearls round her throat. From the necklace hung this same old Roman coin, which her papa had picked up under the walls of Rome. Some Roman,

maybe Julius Cæsar, had dropped it there two thousand years ago.

The contessa had promised to pay me a farewell visit before departing for the north of Italy. The appointed day had arrived, and I had gone to the extravagance of donning an entirely new suit of clothes to receive and entertain my guests. I waited and fidgeted; but no visitors. No kind, tender contessa; no angelic Bianca; no perfidious-looking uncle appeared. When the night set in, I felt angry and disgusted, little Amy, because I thought my Venetian acquaintances had left Rome, forgetful of me. The following morning I went to the dwelling of the contessa, to discover whatever I could concerning her departure. Judge of my surprise on learning that the lady had not yet departed. I was shown into the drawing-room by a servant, on whose face I detected the signs of some trouble; and I waited for the rustle of the contessa's dress in the doorway. But this was not to be. In her place came Bianca's nurse, pale and with eyes but newly-dried from weeping. Sinking into a chair, she almost sobbed to me the following words:

"Oh! Signor Pembroke, the contessa is in an agony. We were going to see you yesterday, when the contessa asked for Bianca. She had been playing on the steps but a minute before, and then it was impossible to find her. The house, the garden, the streets, all have been searched; but in vain. We cannot find my little Bianca. Some one has stolen her away. And my mistress!—she will surely die!"

Nothing beyond this could I discover from any one. Bianca had disappeared as completely and hopelessly as though the earth had opened and swallowed her. It was not proper for me to intrude my presence upon the great grief of the contessa's household. I sadly withdrew, full of anxiety for the sweet child, whom I had learned to love.

No effort was spared by the contessa and the Roman police, and apparently by Count Luigi, to recover the lost Bianca. But the attempts were utterly useless; and the mother, sick at heart, returned to her home, taking with her my picture, which cruel fate seemed to have transformed from a Christmas present to a sacred memento of an angel forever flown.

Now don't interrupt me. I have not finished yet. I am going to relate a rather odd incident that happened before the time of Bianca's disappearance. Late one night I was crossing the bridge of Sant' Angelo, which spans the Tiber. I was thinking over the finishing touches to my child picture, when I suddenly became aware of a boat passing under me. Prompted by curiosity, I leaned over the battlement of the bridge and listened. A man was standing in the boat, speaking and gesticulating to the rowers. I saw him clearly in the full moonlight, and I was almost sure he was the Count Luigi. Only a few words could I catch from the speakers, and they were these, spoken by the rough voice of some low rascal of the Roman populace:

"In tre settimane la bambina sarà"
(in three weeks the little girl shall be—)

The rest of the sentence I could not hear; but the words were enough to excite a strong suspicion in my mind, when I connected them with Bianca's disappearance. Could the man have really been the Count Luigi? I dared not reveal to any one what my mind suggested—namely, that Bianca had actually been made away with by her uncle, bargained into the hands of a parcel of scoundrels. How could I prove it? What reason could I give for his committing such a crime? Moreover, he was a powerful man at Rome, and could make the place exceedingly uncomfortable for me if his anger were once raised against me. Confident that our Divine Father would in the end unravel the terrible mystery, I betook myself to my painting again. The generous contessa had not only paid me far beyond what my toil deserved, but had recommended me to the great families at Rome. I suppose I could paint tolerably well then, and my patronage increased daily.

Seven years passed on, my Amy, and your uncle had in that time become such a grand artist and earned so much money that he thought he would come over the water to his old home in New York. Accordingly, I hired my little studio down town and commenced business at once. I did not have very long to wait for patrons. A gentleman called in one October day and conversed with me about a picture he wanted painted to order for his art gallery.

"I hear you are from Rome," said he. "You must be a great painter. I want you to make me a picture of a child who has woke up on Christmas morning and found her stocking crammed with good things. And mind you, the child must be very beautiful."

"All right," said I. "Call on Monday next and I shall have my sketch ready for you."

You know artists most generally have models for such pictures. Hence I set myself to work to secure one; but I found this was a difficult job. Now, if you had been a young lady then, I should have certainly had you sit for my painting. But my model came from an entirely unexpected quarter. I had left my studio one evening, and was walking up town through an out-of-the-way street, when I heard the music of a harp and violin, just as they sound when the Italian players come under your windows to drive you crazy with their awful performances. On drawing nearer, I discovered a dark-complexioned and handsome Italian boy twanging an accompaniment on his harp to an outlandish song, and near him a young girl sitting and delicately drawing her bow across a battered fiddle. Seeing me, she stopped, approached, and, holding out her hand piteously, said:

"Oh! mister, gif a poor girl a few pennies. The padrone will be beat us if we go back without money; and we have had nothing to eat. Oh! mister, do, please!"

I was touched, and the pennies so dearly needed quickly came forth. The girl was uncommonly beautiful. I thought for a street-wait. She had yellow hair, partly hidden in an old pink muffler, and sweet wide blue eyes, and such a nose, mouth, and dimpled chin—all like yours, my love. Her face was tanned a little by the sun of many days in the pitiless streets. Her attire was a many-patched cotton dress, of no

particular color; and her feet were covered by great clumsy shoes, such as our grocery boy wears. How old was she? I should say about ten or eleven, and her male escort was certainly not much older. As I stood looking at her, the thought struck me that I ought to take her as my model.

"Come here," said I to her. "Why do you live with the padrone (don't interrupt me again, miss. I will tell you shortly what a padrone is), when he beats you?"

"I have no other home," the poor girl replied. "The police would take me if I slept in the streets, and maybe shut me up forever."

"Wouldn't you like to go to a nicer home, and have plenty to eat and decent clothes, and get paid for easy work?"

"Oh! sir, she almost sobbed, as if the happiness I spoke of were too good for her to think of."

"Listen," I continued. "If you will leave the padrone, I will get you a comfortable place to live in, with a nice old lady to take care of you."

Unacquainted as the child was to kindness from strangers, she clearly regarded me with doubt, and, looking at the harp-player, who was observing me with considerable interest, answered:

"But I won't leave Giacomo. He is good to me. He gives me half his bread when I am very hungry."

"Will you come with me if Giacomo comes?" I asked.

"Yes, sir."

"Then step this way, Giacomo," I said to him. "How would you like to leave the padrone, and to live with people who will take care of you? You will have work to do and be well paid."

Giacomo took off his hat, and, smiling, looking me in the face with good-natured, honest eyes, replied: "You are too good, sir. I would like to go, if she may come with me; but if the padrone ever catches us he will kill us both."

"Have no fear of the padrone," I said. "If he makes any trouble, we will have him arrested and put into prison."

This bold declaration of mine settled the matter, and I had little further trouble in persuading them to accompany me to my studio, where I intended to have them stay for the time being. They must have thought that I was the city governor, or at least a police captain. Fancy your grave and decorous Uncle Coventry marching down Broadway at nightfall, followed by a couple of delighted mountebanks. The janitor of the building in which my studio was located must have thought I had gone raving mad, and he greeted me with a look of blank surprise when I appeared at his doorway, with my extraordinary companions. "Now, then, sir," said I to him, "be spry, and run up-stairs and build a roaring fire in my grate; and then, sir, prepare a hearty supper for these famished children." The musical instruments of my two friends were deposited in one corner of my studio, and in a very short time the children were seated before such a supper as they had conceived of only in blissful dreams. I next bade the janitor's wife provide them with comfortable beds. When I was preparing to leave, the happy children wished to kiss me; and I graciously agreed, promising them they should see me early in the morning.

Now, while they are supposed to be asleep, I shall tell you what you seem dying to know—namely, what a padrone is. He is an old curmudgeon, who receives stolen children from Italy, and makes them go out into the street to beg, or play, or steal—usually all three. And if they do not obtain money in some way, he beats them and packs them off to bed supperless. What do you think of that, little girl?

But about my street acquaintances: It was decided upon next day that Giacomo should keep my studio in order, while his companion would sit for his Christmas picture. The pair were placed in charge of my janitor's wife, with the strictest commands that due care should be taken, lest they might again fall into the hands of the padrone. In order to make my model as happy-looking as possible, I provided her with a box of bonbons, and seated her on a beautiful rug, amidst the rare and curious little objects of my studio. Yes, I shall bring you to my studio some day; only you must promise not to put things into a too hopeless confusion. I was showing her how to pose, when, suddenly, as if some long-forgotten thought flitted across her mind, she said quietly:

"Oh! I know how to sit, sir. I had my picture taken before—many, many years ago."

"Indeed!" I replied. "How was that?"

"In—in Roma; when I was a bambina, and my mamma died. The men said she was dead. Then I came to live with the padrone. It was many days before I came here. We had to sail on the water in a ship. Oh! ever so large a ship!"

"And what is your name?" I asked.

"The padrone calls me Carmen—Carmen Tortolant."

It was the common story, I thought, of a child, an orphan, taken from Italy to a hard life in America. I could not gather any more knowledge of her earlier life from Giacomo, who was standing by. I turned to my paper, to commence sketching her, when it occurred to me that a necklace would look pretty on little Carmen. I stepped to a cabinet, saying:

"I am going to give you a necklace, Carmen. One of bright beads."

"Oh! How nice! But, see, I have an old one. Only an ugly penny tied to a string."

She removed it from her neck. I had not noticed it before, and carelessly took it in my hand. Never was I so surprised in my life. The penny, as she called it, was actually the same coin that now hangs from my watch-chain, Bianca di Casabianca had worn.

"Where on earth did you get this?" I cried, hardly able to stand still with excitement.

"I always wore it, sir."

"What did you say your name was?"

"Carmen. But I know they used to call me Bianca when I was a baby."

"And do you recollect your mamma's name?"

"I only called her mamma, sir. I don't know that she had any other name."

"Do you, perhaps, remember the

name of the artist who painted your picture?"

"I don't think I do. It was—like—Pom"—

"Pembroke, perhaps?"

"Yes! yes! Pembroke! Signor Pembroke!"

My street-wait then was none other than Bianca di Casabianca! I caught the little girl to my heart and kissed her, saying: "I am Signor Pembroke. Do you know me?"

"I think I have heard your voice long ago; but your whiskers are so great."

I asked her a few more questions, and her answers more clearly proved her to be the Bianca of my first artist days. But I could extract nothing from her to verify my suspicions of her Uncle Luigi. Although overjoyed to be the means of rescuing her from the cruelest of lives, I was now seriously troubled by the thought that Bianca's mother had, perhaps, died in the seven years that had elapsed since the beginning of my story. At any rate, I determined to write to her address in Lombardy and take the steps necessary to have Bianca returned to her family. I bade my modeling play to her heart's content, and rummaging in my desk for the contessa's address, I found it, and before nighfall I had dispatched a long letter to Italy.

I did not explain matters fully to Bianca, preferring to await the results of my letter to her mother. Weeks passed quickly by and my picture was on the verge of being completed. Bianca's face was losing more and more of its tan and Giacomo had become quite a fashionable young gentleman and was showing a marvelous taste for drawing. One morning, a few days before Christmas, there was a great commotion on my stairway. I opened the door, and, as I live, there was Bianca in her mother's arms, and the pair hugging and kissing each other and crying as though they would never stop! I retreated very quickly, my Amy and your Uncle Coventry was actually weeping too. Just think of it! Coventry Pembroke, artist, in tears! And I believe there wasn't a dry eye in the whole building when all the artists knew what had transpired.

In a little while the contessa came into my studio. I kissed her hand and bore myself like a hero. Never was three people so happy.

Many explanations followed. I inquired after the health of Count Luigi—out of pure friendliness, you know.

"Luigi is in prison," said the contessa.

"Indeed!" I burst out. "I thought he would arrive there some time."

"He was convicted of being concerned in a conspiracy against the government. At the time of his trial three Roman desperadoes, who were being tried for heavy crimes in the same court, testified to a previous crime which he had hired them to perform. And you would not think what this crime was."

I had my idea, but remained silent.

"He had contracted with them," continued the contessa, "to steal Bianca from me and hide her forever from the world. My husband's will declared that, if I died childless and without marrying again, my brother-in-law, Luigi, would come into my whole fortune. Bianca being my sole heir, the count calculated upon acquiring my wealth when he should have removed her from his path."

Here was the mystery solved at last. I straightway confessed my early opinions of the Count Luigi to the contessa, and likewise the story of the incident at the bridge of Sant' Angelo. From thoughts of the perfidy of this man, we turned to thank heaven for having thus marvellously outwitted his schemes. Had it not been for this ancient coin, whose seeming uselessness had preserved it from the greediness of Bianca's captors, a mother and daughter had died unhappy and far from each other's arms. So ends the story of the second Christmas, which brings us up to the present.

And what became of Bianca and Giacomo? Well, I have a letter in my desk from Bianca, who returned with her mother to Venice, informing me that the contessa had blessed her marriage engagement with Giacomo. She inclosed the coin, saying that, as it was the cause of all her happiness, it was the dearest souvenir she could give me. Giacomo went to Rome some years ago, and is rapidly turning out to be a great artist—greater even than your Uncle Coventry. I believe the contessa defrayed the expense of his preparatory education, and she is doubtless even now helping him on. And he deserves it; for he is a real genius, and has noble blood in his veins.

Now, don't ask me to detail the private history of the padrone and the desperadoes. You are positively drowsy, and I want to smoke. I think you had better go to bed, as Santa Claus has insurmountable objections to filling young people's stockings while they are yet awake.

The Trap Door Spider.

This spider, found in Jamaica, digs a burrow in the earth and lines it with a silken web. The burrow is closed by a trap door, having a hinge that permits it to be opened and closed with admirable accuracy. The door is circular, and is made of alternate layers of earth and web, and is hinged to the lining of the tube that leads to the burrow by a band of the same silken secretion. The door exactly fits the entrance to the burrow, and when closed, so precisely corresponds with the surrounding earth that it can hardly be distinguished, even when its position is known. It is a strange sight to see the earth open, a little lid raised, some hairy legs protrude, and gradually the whole form of the spider show itself.

The mode in which these spiders procure food seems to be by hunting at night, and in some cases by catching insects that are entangled in the threads that the creature spins by the side of its house.

In the day time they are very chary of opening the door of their domicile, and if the trap is raised from the outside, they run to the spot, hitch the claws of their fore feet in the silken webbing of the door, and those of the hind feet in the lining of the burrow, and so resist with all their might. The strength of the spider is wonderfully great in proportion to its size.—Scientific American.

Keeping Christmas in the Olden Time.

In England, in the olden time, a few days before Christmas, when the bustle of preparation was at its height in the houses of the rich, some of the serving-men would be sent out into the woods to cut an enormous log for the back of the Christmas fire. The fireplace was so large sometimes that the log, which took several men to lift, could be placed in it. When it was selected, it was drawn to the kitchen door with songs and much merriment, and on Christmas eve it was placed at the back of the wide chimney and a great roaring fire made in front of it. This was called the "Yule Log," and as long as it burned, the men and maids were entitled to keep holiday. Sometimes they were cunning enough to wet it well in the brook, so that it might last the longer.

When it was well a-burning, the merry-making of the evening began by a very curious procession. First came a man dressed in a long white robe, made generally by pinning a sheet around him, with white hair and beard, and a crown of holly and mistletoe, representing Father Christmas; then followed a great many singular-looking figures, each personating some Christmas dish, such as mince-pie, boar's head, or plum-pudding; then followed one dressed in priest's robes; he was called the Abbot of Unreason, and after him came a mixed company, dressed in the most fantastic way they could devise, and all with some Christmas decoration. The actors in this "mumming" show, as it was called, were generally servants, farm-hands or poor people who lived in the neighborhood. The "mummers" would go about from house to house, and everywhere they were made welcome, and after acting out their parts they were entertained with all manner of good cheer, in the great hall, where fires were kept blazing, and where finally the evening ended with a dance, which was joined in by all the company in the house. The walls were hung with holly and mistletoe, and the scarlet berries of the one and the pure white of the other made gay garlands that reflected the light of the fire cheerily. A branch of mistletoe hung in the center of the hall, and if by accident a lady happened to stand beneath it—of course it never happened except by accident—any gentleman who caught her there was entitled to a kiss, and somehow there were a good many kisses generally stolen on Christmas eve, probably because in dancing the ladies forgot to look for the mistletoe, and their partners did not. Many games were played at Christmas time then that are now happily almost forgotten. One was that of "snap-dragon," which occasioned a great deal of sport. In a darkened room a bowl of blazing spirits of wine was placed upon the table, and the party gathered around it. This bowl was filled with plums, which were to be snatched from beneath the flame without burning the fingers, and those accustomed to the sport became very adroit in winning the plums without gaining any scars. I think we may be glad that we have plays less rude for our holidays.

In Holland they had a great many pretty customs. In the small towns and villages a man dressed as Santa Claus, and loaded with presents, would go about the town on Christmas eve, and knocking at the door of a house, would inquire whether any good children lived there, and the parents would call the children and tell him how they had behaved, and whether they deserved any presents. When this old man had gone his rounds, and distributed his gifts, mostly among the younger children, the families would assemble round the Christmas tree, the tapers were lighted, and the presents of the parents to the children were taken from the tree, and afterward the children presented theirs to their parents.

In England poor children used to go to the doors of their neighbors and sing carols, sometimes like those now sung in the churches, and people would bring them out fruit and cake, and sometimes money, but always something to make their eyes dance and their hearts beat gladly.

A Curious Petition.

A correspondent who has been rummaging in the room devoted to the filing of congressional documents, in the basement of the Capitol at Washington, says: "But perhaps the most curious, if not the most important, memorial is a very large one, being in fact, three hundred and ninety-six feet long, and containing thirteen thousand five hundred signatures, wishing a congressional appropriation, and the appointment of a scientific commission for the investigation of the alleged phenomena of spiritualism. The petitioners, headed by Mr. N. P. Tallmadge, of Fox du Lac, Wisconsin, urge their memorial on the following grounds, though I cannot transcribe their points in full. They say, in brief, that 'they humbly beg to observe that certain physical and mental phenomena of questionable origin and mysterious import have of late occurred in this country and engendered a large share of public attention.' These phenomena are classified as follows:

First—An occult force exhibited in sliding, raising, arresting, holding, suspending and otherwise disturbing numerous ponderable bodies, apparently in defiance of gravitation. Second—Lights of various forms and colors and of different degrees of intensity, appear in dark rooms. Third—A variety of sounds, extremely frequent in their occurrence, widely diversified in their character and more or less mysterious in their import. There is obviously a disturbance of the sensatory medium of the auditory nerves, occasioned by an undulatory movement of the air, though by what means these atmospheric undulations are produced does not appear to the satisfaction of acute observers. Fourth—All the functions of the human body and mind are often and strangely influenced by what appear to be certain abnormal states of the system, and by causes which are neither adequately defined or understood. They wish, therefore, a scientific commission and appropriation.

But alas for the hopes of N. P. Tallmadge of Fox du Lac and his 396 feet of friends, we find that a gross and materialistic Senate ordered the memorial "to lie upon the table."

A Steam Heating Project.

Referring to the permit giving a company in New York by the authorities, to lay pipes underground for the purpose of heating buildings with steam, the New York Herald says:

It was in June, 1877, that the first test of the Holly scheme was made by laying half a mile of pipes underground in Walnutstreet, Lockport, N. Y., which enabled a company to learn the exact capacity of the pipes to carry steam and the exact rate of loss by condensation. The test was satisfactory, and the company were encouraged to lay a longer line. Three miles were laid in all, there being one continuous length of a mile and one-third; and the system was practically applied along the whole distance to all the purposes for which it was designed. Very little of the piping was larger than four inches diameter; yet after the experience of last winter the system is said to have worked with entire success. The company during this time have been heating about forty dwellings, a large school building (105,000 cubic feet), and the largest hall in the city, besides furnishing steam to run two engines, one of them about half a mile distant from the boiler-house, and are supplying steam for a number of other purposes. Houses a mile away are heated as readily as those near at hand.

Three boilers are in position in the steam-house, two of them horizontal, five by sixteen feet, and one upright. In the coldest weather last winter two were fired slowly, but much of the time the steam had been furnished by a single boiler. The fire is, of course, kept up constantly. Two firemen do all the work—one for the day and one for the night. They can do the same work for 300 or 400 dwellings when that number are attached along the line. Experiments are said to demonstrate that with sufficient boiler capacity and pipes of proper size, an area of more than four miles square in any city or village can be warmed from one set of boilers. The Lockport building is intended to contain six boilers; but buildings in larger cities would be provided with a "battery" of ten. If one boiler from any cause should be disabled it would not interfere with the operations of the others. In the coldest weather, if necessary, the whole number can be fired. The arrangement of pipes leading from the boiler building is such that it would be impossible for any district to be deprived of steam at any time, since, in case of accident, any one of the steam mains can be closed without interfering with the general circuit.

How a Man Goes to Bed.

Speaking of how a man goes to bed, an exchange says: "There's where a man has the advantage. He can undress in a cold room, and have his bed warm before a woman has got her hairpins out and her shoes untied." That's how it looks in print, and this is how it is really: "I'm going to bed, my dear. It's half-past ten." No reply. "Now, John, you know you're always late in the morning. Do go to bed!" "Yes, in a minute," he replies, as he turns the paper inside out and begins a lengthy article headed 'The Louisiana Muddle.' Fifteen minutes later she calls from the bedroom: "John, come to bed and don't keep the gas burning there all night!" and murmuring something about 'the bill being big enough now, she creeps between the cold sheets, while John reads placidly on, his feet across the piano-stool and a cigar in his mouth. By-and-by he rises, yawns, stretches himself, throws the paper on the floor, and seizing the shaker, proceeds to that vigorous exercise, shaking the coal stove. Just at this stage a not altogether pleasant voice inquires: "For pity's sake! ain't you ready for bed yet?" "Yes, yes, I'm coming! Why don't you go to sleep and let a fellow alone?" Then he discovers that there is coal needed. When that is supplied and rattled into the stove, he sits down to warm his feet. Next he slowly begins to undress; and as he stands scratching himself, and absentedly gazing on the last garment dangling over the back of the chair, he remembers that the clock is not wound yet. When this is attended to he wants a drink of water, and away he promades to the kitchen. Of course, when he returns his skin remembers that of a picked chicken, and once more he seats himself before the fire for a last 'warm up.' As the clock strikes twelve he turns out the gas, and with a flop of the bedclothes and a few spasmodic shivers he subsides. No, not yet; he forgets to see if the front door was locked, and another flop of the bedclothes brings forth the remark: "Good gracious! if that man ain't enough to try the patience of Job!" Setting her teeth hard, she awaits the final flop, with the accompanying blast of cold air, and then quietly inquires: "Are you settled for the night?" To which he replies by muttering: "If you ain't the provokingest woman."

The Brilliant Randolph.

John Randolph, of Roanoke, is the subject of an entertaining biography just published in Richmond. In it is to be found this picture of the brilliant Southerner at the age of forty-three: "His hair was bright brown, straight, not perceptibly gray, thrown back from his forehead and tied into a queue, neither long nor thick. His complexion was swarthy; his face beardless, full, round and plump; his eyes hazel, brilliant, inquisitive, proud; his mouth was of delicate cast, well suited to a small head and face filled with exquisite teeth, well kept as they could be; his lips painted, as it were, with indigo, indicating days of suffering and nights of torturing pain. His hands were fair and delicate as any girl's. Every part of his dress and person was evidently accustomed to the utmost care. His face was the most beautiful and attractive to me I had almost ever seen. His manner was deliberate, beyond any speaker I have ever heard. " He stood firm in his position, his action and grace seemed to be from the knee up. His voice was that of a well-toned fagot, the key conversational, though swollen to its utmost compass."