

France is the only European country which has to-day fewer able men than it had thirty years ago.

There have been no train or stage robberies in California since that State declared those offenses to be capital.

The San Francisco Examiner thinks that the tendency of the ministers of the Gospel to find their text in the daily paper is not to be censured.

A correspondent who has made a study of the subject, says there are 61,000 breweries in the world, and that Germany heads the list with 26,240.

In India the work of Christian Endeavor is being vigorously pushed and the constitution, which is now translated into six of the languages of India, is being largely circulated.

The New York Observer remarks: It is a well known fact that child life in the city is at a disadvantage as compared with a rural environment, but we were hardly prepared for the statement that "the 'expectation of life' at the birth of a child in central Manchester is twelve years less than that of a child in the whole of England and Wales." The statement is appalling.

The late Lucy Stone was the eighth of nine children, and the night before her birth her mother milked eight cows. When she learned the child's sex she said: "Oh, dear, I'm sorry it's a girl—a woman's life is so hard!" Lucy, even when yet a child, adds the Detroit Free Press, became indignant at the injustice done to women by the world and resolved with infantile spirit to remedy the matter when she grew up.

The opening of the Manchester ship canal, which has been arranged for the 1st of January, is a very important matter in the South, declares the Atlanta Constitution. Three-fourths of the cotton consumed in Great Britain is taken in the Manchester district, and within carting distance of the Manchester docks. The cotton spinners of that district have signed, or are signing, a circular informing the growers and shippers of the United States that in purchasing they will give preference to cotton shipped direct to Manchester. In addition to this the saving in charges, as compared with Liverpool, will amount to thirty cents a bale. Two steamships have already been placed to sail from New Orleans and arrangements are making for a steamship to leave Galveston. Later there will be steamships placed at Savannah and Charleston for the shipment of cotton direct to Manchester.

Mr. O. Chanute, formerly President of the American Society of Civil Engineers, who has devoted much attention to arial navigation, thinks that the chief problem that still remains to be solved is the mastery of the practical art of managing flying machines—the art of starting, balancing, navigating and alighting. There is much reason in this view, comments the San Francisco Examiner. If nobody in the world had ever sailed even a canoe, and an inventor, by native ingenuity and the application of sound mathematical principles, should design a full-rigged ship, he might have trouble the first time he put to sea in her. Yet his situation would be less precarious than that of the first adventurer to launch himself into the uncertain air. Probably the labors of the engineers will have to be supplemented by a good many broken necks of practical navigators before we sail the blue as comfortably as the birds.

Says the Washington Star: Warburton Pike, an Englishman and an explorer, has just returned to civilization after a lengthy sojourn in Central Alaska, which, by the way, is more of an uncertain land than was Central Africa prior to the advent of Stanley on the dark continent. Mr. Pike is satisfied that except as a game preserve the interior of Alaska is worthless, and at present anything like a dispute over that allegation is not possible because there is no one who can argue with Mr. Pike, but it will be well to remember that English opinion as to a country's value is not always reliable. Great Britain might still have possessed much of the northwestern territory now belonging to the United States—the States of Washington, Idaho and Montana—had not the brother of the then Premier of England been traveling in the disputed region. He was a sportsman, and because the salmon in the Columbia River would not rise to a fly he said that the country was not worth quarreling over. His testimony was accepted, but in view of later developments seemed to be rather ridiculous.

The public and private indebtedness of the world is estimated to be \$100,000,000,000.

The Swiss Government has ordered that hereafter all slaughtered cattle must be made insensible before the knife is used.

A sage complains that while it is true that "man wants but little here below," the trouble is that that little is usually in someone else's possession.

An European mathematician of world-wide celebrity claims that from a single potato a careful cultivator could raise 10,000,000,000 tubers within a period of ten years.

The San Francisco Chronicle estimates that at the present rate of conquest and colonization savage Africa will be a thing of the past before the first quarter of the twentieth century is rounded out.

A correspondent of the Baltimore Sun asserts that "there is no such thing in all this world as sewer gas," and, further, that "there is no evidence whatever in fact and no ground for believing in the theory that the emanations from a sewer are in any wise unwholesome."

Many lakes have been formed along the banks of the South Canadian River in Oklahoma, some of which are many square miles in extent. They are caused, explains the New York Post, by the sand blowing out of the river until a high embankment is formed along the shores, and behind the bank are formed the lakes.

An elderly gentleman of wide travel and close observation remarked recently, after reading the story in the New York Times of a cruel murder, that he had long been of the opinion that the greatest calamity that has befallen the human race in modern times was the invention of the revolver. It is too easily carried, and too handy.

The report from South Africa that the British recently slaughtered the Matabeles like sheep is probably well founded, says the San Francisco Chronicle. The English have never been noted for their tender regard of the aborigine. The pioneers of South Africa, like those of Australia, regard the natives as hindrance to the development of the country, and any pretext which can be used to justify killing or driving them out of a district is eagerly welcomed.

The St. Louis Star-Sayings thinks that "one of the most gratifying signs of the times is the operation of the law requiring all navy ships to be built at home, from materials of domestic production; American ships in American bottoms and the establishment of ship yards capable of turning out vessels of war of the highest speed and capacity. It is a growing enterprise and gives employment to thousands of American laborers, and soon we may anticipate that instead of going to other countries for ideas and methods in ship armor and gun construction we shall have the foreigners coming to us to learn."

America holds the record in many natural wonders and artificial triumphs, boasts the Washington Star. The largest lake in the world (Superior), the longest river (Missouri), the largest park (Yellowstone), the finest cave (the Mammoth), the greatest waterfall (Niagara) and the only natural bridge (in Virginia) are all to be found within the borders of the United States, and here the biggest fortunes are made, the most energetic commercial enterprises undertaken, the largest deals are effected, and the most wonderful inventions are perfected, while the country produces a greater amount of raw material than any other.

The zone system of railroad rates which is so successfully operated in Hungary, has made a deep impression upon James L. Cowles, well known in railroad circles. He says: "Distance costs practically nothing in the transportation of freight or of passengers, and, therefore, distance should be disregarded in the discrimination of rates. The rate now charged for the shortest distance for any particular service is the rate that should be adopted for all distances. When once a train starts from Boston to San Francisco, there isn't a man living that can tell the difference in cost of running that train, whether a passenger leaves the train at the first station out of Boston or goes through from the Atlantic to the Pacific Coast." Mr. Cowles further says that there is not ten dollars' difference between running a train from Chicago to New York, full of passengers or empty.

IN THE VALLEY.

To-day, when the sun was lighting my house on the pine-plant hill,
The breast of a bird was ruffled as it perched on my window sill,
And a leaf was chased by the kitten on the broom-swept garden walk,
And the dainty head
Of a dahlia red
Was stirred on its slender stalk.

Oh, happy the bird at the rose tree, unheeding the threatening storm!
And happy the blithe leaf-chaser, rejoicing in sunshine warm!
They take no thought for the morrow—they know no cares to-day,
And the thousand things
That the future brings
Are a blank to such as they.

But I, by the household ingle, can interpret the looming clouds,
For the wind "soo-hoo" through the key-hole, and a shadow the house enshrouds;
And I know I must quit my mountain, and go down to the vale below,
For my house is chill
On the windy hill,
When the autumn tempests blow.

My mind is forever drawing an instructive parallel
'Twixt temporal things that perish and eternal things that dwell—
When billows and waves surround me, and waters my soul o'erflow,
I descend in hope
From the mountain top
To the sheltering vale below.

I go down to the Valley of Silence, where the worldly are never met;
I know there is "balm and healing" there for eyes that with tears are wet;
And I find, in its sweet seclusion, gentle solace for all my care,
For that valley pure,
With its shaltes sure,
Is the beautiful Vale of Prayer.

—Chambers's Journal.

—Chambers's Journal.

—Chambers's Journal.

HINCKLEY'S OBJECTIONS.

BY EMMA A. OFFER.

WOULDN'T have nothing to do with Andrew Wilkerson," said Mr. Hinckley—"no more'n I would with a six-foot rattler!" He was washing his hands at the sink. Jean Carson, his niece, was ringing clothes out of the bluing water.

"What is it now?" she asked, looking straight at him, with a keen twinkle in her big, brown, heavy-fringed eyes. Her cheeks were as pink as wild roses. "It's his new thrashing machine, ain't it? Wal, I have heard 'twas a regular daisy!"

Jean disapproved of slang, but a Kansas ranch is a favorable place for the cultivation of it.

"I don't know nothing about his thrashing machine. What I know is, I knew Andrew Wilkerson, when I was livin' in the south part of 'Indianny, twenty years ago, and I ain't going to have nothing at all to do with a man that was celebrated all over the country for being a cheating, lying, on-principled, no-account scoundrel!"

"Well," said Jean, squeezing out a tablecloth, "you've b'en saying that, pappy, ever since they moved here, and I ain't even disputed you." He was all the "pappy" she had ever known.

"I won't neighbor with 'em!" "Wal, you needn't. Only, seems to me you have these spells of swearing you won't have nothing to do with him just when he's got something new, or b'en elected town trustee, or raised an extra big crop of something. I believe it riles you to think he's getting along so good," a mischievous dimple developing itself at the corner of her ripe mouth. "I really believe, pappy—"

Mr. Hinckley rattled the wash-basin. He could never scold Jean, however great her gay impertinence. But he spoke with sternness.

"I don't want nothin' to do with 'em," he repeated. "Ner I don't want you to have! There's a young feller in the family; I've seen him once or twice. I wouldn't have you have no truck with him, ner know him, ner fer all I got in the world—not the son of a man like Andrew Wilkerson. Blood tells. If you ever see him, to any of the corn-huskers or merry-makings, you give him the solid-goby. Now, I mean it!"

"You've b'en saying that for thirteen months, too, pappy," said Jean, laughing.

But her laugh was odd. She faced her uncle bravely, but her cheeks had lost their pinkness suddenly, and her breath came for a moment in little gasps.

Mr. Hinckley wore spectacles, and was not particularly observant, anyhow.

When Jean carried a basketful of clothes out to the line, he gazed after her, proudly and securely.

"The smartest gal in the country and the handsomest!" he reflected, with commendable moderation. "It's got to be a fine feller that gits her away from 'pappy!'"

Mr. Hinckley was bending forward, with a strong grasp upon the lines, and one of the protruding poles of the rack struck him forcibly on the forehead. The lines fell from his hands, and he felt of his head in a daze of pain and alarm, and fell forward just as Seth Simpson reached and caught him.

A volunuous voice was sounding in his confused ears when his senses returned to him.

"No, sir; get Doctor Collins," it said, decisively. "He's the only feller around here that knows the difference between a toothache and a case of cholery morbus."

"Goodness, Andrew, quit your joking!" a woman's pleasant voice beseeched. "Tain't no time for jokes. But you had better get Doctor Collins, Mr. Simpson. Andrew, here, put another pillow under his head. He's coming to."

Mr. Hinckley felt the breeze produced by a palm-leaf fan; he smelled arnica and camphor and ammonia.

He was on a lounge, with his collar loosened and his face and hands wet. A big heavy bearded man stood over him—Andrew Wilkerson.

"Wal, you're a master-hand, Sary!" he ejaculated—"bringin' him 'round like that. I don't believe we'll need Collins when he gets here. I guess it's just a big bump that he'll get over without—"

"Andrews," said his wife, "if you can't talk any lower, you'll have to go out in the kitchen. He ain't jest the man to have round anybody that's sick, Mr. Hinckley," she said to the sufferer, "but he means well."

Thereupon Andrew gave a loud laugh. Mr. Hinckley raised himself and leaned on his elbow. He felt ill at ease, disturbed, half angry.

"Andrew sent up for your niece, Mr. Hinckley," said Mrs. Wilkerson. "We didn't know just when you could be moved, and we thought she'd want to know—"

"Um! yes. I'm much obliged. I guess I can be moved; guess there ain't do bones broke," Mr. Hinckley responded. He was eyeing Andrew Wilkerson without warmth. "You've changed consider'ble since we knew each other up in 'Indianny, hain't you?" he queried.

"'Indianny?' Andrew Wilkerson repeated, in hearty tones. "Oh, yes, yes, to-be-sure! So've you."

"You're thicker set."

"Wal, yes, guess I be. You're holding your years well, Mr. Hinckley—splendid."

"Better lay down ag'in, hadn't you?" said his wife.

"I guess I'm holding my years," Mr. Hinckley rejoined, unmollified. "I've got a good straight, honest life behind me, anyhow. I never done no injury to no man."

"Course not—course not!" said Mr. Wilkerson, in a soothing manner, which nettled his enforced guest.

"I've tried to forget that little transaction we had, Andrew Wilkerson," said Mr. Hinckley. "Since we've been neighbors here I've tried to forget it. But I can't reely forget being cheated out of a hundred and twenty-one dollars and a half clear money."

"Wal, it's fifty-one cents?" Mr. Wilkerson demanded, bursting into a great roar of laughter. "See here, I wanter know what you're driving at. I thought you was loony—out of your head—when you begun, but I see you ain't. What are you trying to get at? I never see you before I came here, in all my born days."

"Ain't you Andrew Wilkerson, of 'Indianny?"

"I'm Andrew Wilkerson, but I ain't of 'Indianny, by a long shot! I come from Michigan—always lived there—ner I ain't ashamed of it."

"Andrew," his wife remonstrated, "if you get him excited—"

"I ain't excited," said Mr. Hinckley, lying down, weakly. "I felt, minute I laid eyes on you, that I'd b'en making a mistake all this time. I've got consider'ble to apologize for, Mr. Wilkerson. I ain't ever had a good square look at you before, and I thought the hull time you was a feller that wa'n't much better 'n a—"

"Coyote," said Mr. Wilkerson. "Wal, seeing I ain't that feller, I ain't going to worry about it. Ner you needn't apologize none. If I'd thought a feller'd clean me out of a hundred and twenty dollars and fifty-one cents—wa'n't it?—I'd b'en mad. Wal, now, we hain't b'en very neighborly, but I kind o' think your gal and my boy've made up for it pretty much—"

"Andrew!" said Mrs. Wilkerson. "But a sudden rush and flutter of a blue gown and incoherent little murmurings interrupted the talk."

Jean bent over her uncle, her arms around him.

"Oh, pappy," she cried, "you ain't killed? Oh, pappy, I was scared to death when Wilbur come and told me!"

"Told you I guessed he wa'n't hurt her," said a tall young man behind her.

Upon this young man Mr. Hinckley's eyes were fixed. He was a fine looking fellow, and Jean had called him Wilbur.

Mr. Hinckley felt that some explanation was due him from somebody, but he made his own explanation first.

"Jean," he said, "he ain't the man. He ain't from 'Indianny, Joan. I've wronged him."

"Oh, pappy!" Jean sobbed. "Ner I hain't done right by you. I've known Wilbur almost ever since he's been here. We got acquainted at the Fisk girls' dance, and we've seen each other lots since, and—and, pappy—"

fore next spring, I reckon," said Wilbur, with a flush of pride and content. His father gave a rolling laugh.

"What, you minx," he cried—"you agreed marry a son of Andrew Wilkerson, of 'Indianny?"

"Yes, I did," said Jean, her bright face hidden on her uncle's arm. "I thought till this minute that you was the man pappy thought you was. But I—I liked Wilbur so, and I trusted him, and I didn't care who his father was, and I wouldn't ask him about it, either, and make him think I cared if his father was a rascal."

"You're the right kind!" said Andrew Wilkerson, almost in a shout. "You're the gal for me—and for my boy!"

"She's the gal for the best man on top of the earth," said Mr. Hinckley, stroking her hair. "No, no, Jean, I ain't hurt much. I'll dance at your wedding, but you don't go 'way after it and leave your pappy. I can't spare you. I guess there's plenty of room on my ranch for you and the man that can make you happy, both of you."

"I'm so glad of that, pappy!" Jean whispered, joyfully.

And Mrs. Wilkerson wiped her eyes, Wilbur looked out of the window, and Andrew Wilkerson went and shook hands with Mr. Hinckley until his wife stopped him.—Saturday Night.

Plenty of Food in Sight.

According to Mr. Urquhart's figures the 4,000,000 tons of cotton seed produced by this country annually, after yielding an unlimited supply of oil, would yield 1,500,000 tons of meal.

No attempt to utilize this tonnage as food for the human race has yet been made except experimentally. At a well-known public institution in Brooklyn the newsboys were fed for several months free of charge on Johnny cake, bread and cookies made of cottonseed flour. It ranks in nutriment next to wheat flour, but it never has been used for food because it has not been needed. There is such an abundance of wheat and corn that the waste cottonseed cake is sold to feed cattle and chickens. Cottonseed flour can be produced at less than half the present cost of wheat flour, and it is calculated that the country is producing sufficient cottonseed cake to fill, if ground, 15,000,000 barrels. Our wheat crop this year approximates 375,000,000 bushels, and figuring four and a half bushels as equivalent to a barrel of flour this would yield about 83,300,000 barrels. If we run short of wheat we need not go hungry, for we can still fall back on our cotton fields. Wonderful is the cotton plant that gives us clothing, oil and food for man and beast.—New York Mail and Express.

The Standing Stones of Peru.

Near the little village of San Jose, Peru, on the bleak and barren shores of Lake Titicaca—the most elevated body of water of any considerable size in the world—are three large pillars of stone. If they were not of unequal height they would resemble gate-posts or piers upon which, at some time in the far past great arches had been erected. To the different tribes of Peruvians they are known by words which signify "standing stones" and "tall stone gods." Upon the north side of each of these huge boulders the rude features of a human face have been deeply carved, the other three sides of each being chiseled with designs of various shapes, kinds and sizes. These carved symbols are all supposed to have some reference to sun worship, which the ancient Peruvians are known to have practiced. Although the ancient inhabitants of that country were highly civilized, and probably had many mechanical appliances, it is believed that they were unequal to the task of placing these gigantic monoliths in their present position. The evidence rather points to their having originally been wandering or erratic boulders deposited by some melting glacier.—Detroit Free Press.

Ways of a Captive Wildcat.

Everybody has heard of Nic Arend's wildcat. The cat was given Nic some months ago, and ever since has been living on the fat of the land. The cook, a colored woman, at Nic's place feeds the cat, which has manifested a great fondness for her. When she approaches the cage he purrs in the most pleasant manner, but if anybody else comes about him he immediately growls and shows his wicked looking fangs. The cat is perfectly satisfied with his home. Two or three times his cage door has been accidentally left open, but he never even walked outside to see what the rest of the world looked like. However, whenever it occurred that the cage door was left open, Nic always missed a chicken. The other day he saw the cat catch one. He simply crouched down by the door and waited until the chicken, oblivious of danger, came along, and then he shot out his paw and had the chicken by the head. After he catches and kills the fowl he picks all the feathers off it almost as carefully as a cook, and uses his mouth in the operation while holding the bird between his paws.—Florida Times-Union.

Honey in a Chimney.

At Wabash, Ind., a few days ago when Trainmaster Courtwright, of the Michigan division of the Big Four Road, built a fire in his residence, he was astonished to discover a thick stream of a strange, sticky liquid run down the stovepipe and over the floor. He cleaned it up, but it continued to flow over the floor and the railroad official made an investigation, which revealed that a swarm of bees had lodged in the chimney during the hot weather and made a large quantity of honey, which, when the natural gas fire was lighted, ran down the flue.—Detroit Free Press.

THE BILL WE NEED, THE MOST.

Folks at the legislature—they come from up an' down;
From old-time human nature, clear down to Bill an' Brown;
An' the last one's got his row to hoe; but one thing bothers still—
The absence, 'mongst the bills they have o' the old five-dollar bill.

There's bills for county bridges, an' bills for new town sites;
An' many bills for mountain stills, where moonlight shines o' nights;
But of all the bills we're after, the one that bothers still,
Is the bill that brings the laughter—the old five-dollar bill!
—Atlanta Constitution.

HUMOR OF THE DAY.

Observed of all observers—The looking-glass.—Hallo.

Struggles with the dentist generally end in a draw.—Hallo.

"He is your closest friend?" "Yes, he never lends a cent."—Harvard Lampoon.

Fly paper is gradually being withdrawn from circulation.—Pittsburg Chronicle.

Yachts take spins to show whether they are tip-top or not.—Boston Transcript.

Nearly every boy determines to whip a certain school teacher when he grows up.—Acheson Globe.

Belle—"I can't bear to think of my thirtieth birthday." Alice—"Why, dear—what happened?"—Vogue.

When you can think of nothing but the weather to talk about it is a good time to keep quiet.—Acheson Globe.

It is noticeable that the man who thinks he is a whole show by himself seldom draws a crowd.—Milwaukee Journal.

There is some consolation in being a bachelor when you hear a woman talk fifteen minutes without taking a full breath.—Hallo.

Money on call is not to had; that is, not on one call. It takes many, and then you don't always get it.—Martha's Vineyard Herald.

Miss Singleton—"I never expect to marry." Miss Sateful—"But you know it is impossible that always happens."—Boston Transcript.

"I guess I'll quit," said the boy who was scraping a perch at a market fish-stand. "I'm tired of doing business on such a small scale."—Washington Star.

The now the heartless woman,
With never the least ado,
Leaves on the steps a piece of ice
That will chill the whole house through.
—Chicago Inter-Ocean.

A boarder has good reason for suspecting his landlady of hypocrisy when she advises him to eat sparingly if he wishes to be healthy.—New York Journal.

"Painter Schmierlein's representations of tropical life are so realistic that any critic who examines them too long is sure to be afflicted with sunstroke."—Schalk.

"My son, if you think it is hard work to get up in the world, just try to raise a mustache and you will find it infinitely more difficult to get down."—Elmira Gazette.

Teacher (to class in addition):—"Now, take two mince pies and four mince pies, what does it make?" Johnny Longhead—"Nightmare, ma'am."—New York Journal.

Young Man—"I want an engagement ring." Jeweler—"Yes, sir. About what size?" "I don't know exactly, but she can twist me round her finger, if that's any guide."—Tit-Bits.

"While the lamp holds out to burn,
Which line an old song does begin,
In these electric days should read:
"While yet the dynamo does spin."
—Buffalo Courier.

"What are you crying for, Fritz?" "Because my brothers have a holiday and I haven't." "But why haven't you a holiday, too?" "Because I'm not old enough to go to school yet."—Fliegende Blaetter.

Bright—"By dividing your detectives into two squads you'd accomplish a great deal more." Burns—"What would I do that for?" Bright—"So one-half could hunt clues while the other went after criminals."—Vogue.

Tommy (who has been studying with but poor success)—"Pop, my teacher says history repeats itself; does it?" Tommy's Father—"Yes, my boy, sometimes." Tommy—"Well, I wish mine would repeat itself, 'cause I can't."—Philadelphia Record.

The Professor's Daughter—"Oh, papa, here is the sweetest little bird, that one of the boys caught in the yard. I would so like to keep it for a pet, if I only knew what it eats." The Absent-minded Professor—"We can find that out easily enough. I'll cut it open and examine its crop."—Indianapolis Journal.

A Puzzling Fact About Woods.

The problem has puzzled many why two pieces of wood sawn from the same section of tree should possess very varied characteristics when used in different positions. For example, a gate post will be found to decay much faster if the butt end of the tree is uppermost than would be the case if the top were placed in this position. The reason is that the moisture of the atmosphere will permeate the pores of the wood much more rapidly the way the trees grow than it would if in the opposite direction. Microscopic examination proves that the pores invite the ascent of moisture, while they repel its descent. Take the familiar case of a wooden bucket. Many have noticed that some of the staves appear to be entirely saturated, while others are apparently quite dry. This arises from the same cause; the dry staves are in the same position in which the tree grew, while the saturated ones are reversed.—Chicago Herald.