

The railroads of the United States have cost nearly ten billions of dollars.

Some of the largest ocean steamers can be converted into armed cruisers in thirty hours.

There are four natives of Georgia and seven of Kentucky in the United States Senate. New York furnishes eight and Ohio six.

The report that the Panama syndicate has been rehabilitated is not borne out by the facts. Employes and merchants are leaving the Isthmus and everything is at a standstill.

Miss Kate Hilliard, in a paper read before the New York Theosophists, speaking of hypnotism, says that no one while under the influence has ever been induced to surrender a vital secret. Many experiments have been tried with this intent, but without success.

A New York confidence man says that he and his fellows victimize more city men than hayseeds. The rural visitor, when he comes to town, is suspicious and on his guard, while the city man, who thinks he knows it all, is a much easier victim. Besides he does not run to the police when he is "pinched."

A writer in Harper's Weekly, in eulogizing James M. Bailey, of Danbury, Mass., tells us that the Danbury News man would never allow an article reflecting upon the private life of any individual or likely to wound any person's sensibilities, to be published. He preferred that his journal should chronicle the good deeds of his townspeople, rather than record their weaknesses and failures.

Canada promises to offer notable treasures to future historians of this continent. The Archives Department at Ottawa new presents for reference 1200 volumes of original correspondence, and many hundreds of copies of documents bearing upon the history of the New England colonies, Acadia, French Canada and the more western regions. The British War Office handed over to the Department some time ago eight tons of valuable historical material, comprising 400,000 official documents.

All Europe seems to the New York Times to have the exhibition fever, and some sort of world's fair is to be held in every European capital during this year. And the epidemic is spreading farther afield. Alexandria is preparing a national exhibition of ancient and modern Egypt, to be open in that city during the coming summer. It is to be a complete exposition of the modern life, social, industrial, and artistic of the land of the Pharaohs, and also of much of the country's wondrous past.

Chemistry seems likely to furnish substitutes for the expensive perfumes now made from flowers, predicts the New York Sun. It has long been known that the exact odor of the banana is produced in the laboratory. There seems a possibility, however, that even when some fragrant plants cease to be cultivated for the perfumes many may become of importance in surgery. It has been discovered that some such plants are free from the attacks of insects and from fungus growths, and this may be due to the fact that their essential oils have antiseptic qualities. The eucalyptus yields an antiseptic, and so do other familiar plants.

Says the New York Observer: We do not know how many hundred thousand times the old adage that "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing," has been repeated, but we think it is about time that some one should give us a condensed suggestion of the possible evil effects of great knowledge. It is not at all certain that the wonderful knowledge achieved in the scientific world, which enables men to make such deadly munitions of war as are now produced, is a blessing to mankind. The London Spectator calls attention to the fact that the new explosive of anarchy could not have been created without the diffusion of chemical knowledge. A burglar can use chloroform in his nefarious pursuit quite as successfully as a surgeon can relieve pain with it. Much of the crime of the day is committed by persons of education, whose resources in that respect aid them in their operations. The conclusion to be reached in the matter is, that knowledge, like all other good thing, needs to be sanctified, in order to be put to the highest use for the blessing of mankind and to prevent its perversion. Knowledge is power for good or evil, if good then only because of the existence of something better that holds it by the reins.

One student out of every sixteen in America is studying for the ministry.

An insurance company in Philadelphia declines to insure the lives of football players.

The Rome papers comment favorably upon the United States Government's proposal to establish emigration agents in Italian ports.

In spite of the fact that New York's requirements for a medical license are the highest in the Union, it is the boast of the Mail and Express that the Empire State heads the list of doctors with 11,171 licensed practitioners.

The President not unfrequently makes his appointments at large to the military and naval academies from among the sons of army and navy officers. Much as the officers of the two services grumble at grievances real and imaginary it commonly happens, notes the Detroit Free Press, that they are glad to see their sons appointed to the academies.

The Superintendent of the Philadelphia Mint has informed the National Bank of Savannah that a disfigured or mutilated silver dollar is worth its weight as bullion—forty-three cents, and nothing more. This leads the New Orleans Picayune to remark that "it does not take much of an accident to knock fifty-seven cents out of the dollar of our daddies, and we must be correspondingly careful of it."

Florists are constantly looking for such plants as produce flowers that will live long after being cut from the parent stem, and also for those that flower in early spring before their leaves appear, and thus present masses of unbroken bloom. Students of the subject say that Japan may be depended upon to furnish some shrubs of the latter sort, and there are a few native wild shrubs, notably that popularly known as the spicewood, that seem to promise great possibilities.

The Pennsylvania Railroad has opened a large new warehouse in Jersey City, and is prepared to give exceptional facilities and quick transportation to Southern garden truck sold in New York. The New York Independent is of the opinion that "in the present condition of agricultural depression everywhere the action of the Pennsylvania Railroad, in facilitating the handling of garden truck for city consumption, might be followed with advantage in other parts of the United States."

Now that it is stated that dollar wheat may no longer be expected because of competition of Argentine, Russia and India with the United States, attention is called by the New York Independent to the fact that the average number of bushels per acre raised in the United States is but twelve or thirteen, about half the average in England. Agriculture in Great Britain is more intensive, more careful methods and more fertilizing material being used, with the result of a much larger crop. If American farmers are to meet steady competition hereafter it will be no surprise if by means of improved methods in machinery and in farming they reduce expenses by increasing production.

A writer on the public debts of nations presents an interesting table comparing the figures of 1865 with those of 1890. During that quarter of a century the grand total increased enormously. The only nations showing any decrease were the United States, Great Britain and Denmark. The latter had a debt of \$45,220,000 in 1865, and \$33,004,722 in 1890. This is certainly a highly creditable showing for a country so limited in resources and population. Great Britain had a debt of \$3,848,46,000 at the earlier of these dates, and of \$3,350,719,563 at the latter. But the United States was the only country which made any very great reduction, namely, from \$2,756,431,571 to \$915,962,112, just about two-thirds. Turning now to the continent of Europe, including Russia and Turkey, which are partly in Asia, we find the debt-increasing figures as follows:

Nations	1865	1890
Germany	\$619,470,000	\$1,956,217,017
Austria - Hungary	1,472,220,000	2,805,233,519
France	2,646,569,000	4,446,774,328
Russia	980,980,000	3,421,015,074
Italy	871,030,000	2,324,826,329
Spain	999,600,000	1,251,459,696
Netherlands	414,130,000	430,939,853
Belgium	119,000,000	330,904,099
Sweden	21,420,000	64,220,807
Norway	9,044,000	13,973,752
Portugal	190,400,000	490,493,599
Greece	34,510,000	107,306,518
Turkey	229,432,000	821,000,000
Switzerland	714,000	10,912,925
Totals	\$8,009,650,000	\$18,655,649,611

THE NEW DAWN.

An hour ago we said good-by,
My dream and I!
The golden voice that promised me
Love, light, fruition, ecstasy,
Is silenced quite,
And it is night.

Night, while the rent clouds fret the moon,
And waters croon
Beneath the fateful, running breeze
That wakes a message in the trees;
"Patience—and pray—
Till comes the day."

The day is here, the azure day,
A day in May!
How can I grieve while Nature sings?
The robins' call prophetic rings
The one refrain,
"You'll dream again!"
—Kate Jordan, in Lippincott.

THE OLD STONE BELFRY.

BY FRANCES C. WILLIAMS.

COME here, "Ralph," said Mr. Kline as he wearily dropped into a chair in the kitchen, "you'll have to ring the bell to-night; I'm clean played out. The rheumatism's got me again. I lighted up the belfry and turned the lamps low before I came home, but as for going back again to-night, I can't do it."

"All right, I'll do it," replied Ralph, a sturdy boy of fifteen. "All I'll have to do will be to turn up the lights and ring the bell twice, I suppose."

Mr. Kline had been the sexton and bell-ringer of the old stone church for twenty years, and Ralph Kline had many a time been with him when he opened the church for service, and even had helped him ring the bell. Therefore, though the church was a quarter of a mile from the nearest house, it was with no hesitation that he started out after supper. A bright moon lit up everything and made the snow sparkle as if strewn with diamonds.

Arrived at the church he pulled the big key from his pocket, unlocked and opened the door and walked in. The body of the church, which was not large, was dimly lit by a dozen lamps, which Ralph speedily turned up so that the building was cheerful in a glow of light. Then he walked to the vestry, and opening a small door at one side, glanced at the nickel clock which was suspended on the wall.

"Five minutes of seven!" he exclaimed to himself. "Time I was ringing!"

The bell at the church was always rung twice, with a period between of ten minutes. Most of the congregation lived at a distance—from a quarter of a mile to a mile or more away. So a "warning bell," as it was called, was rung at five minutes of seven, in the evening, when services began at half past seven, and a second bell at ten minutes after seven. Thus everyone within hearing distance of the church had ample time to make ready if they wished to attend.

Ralph closed the door of the tower-room and took off his coat. By lamplight, the bell-rope seemed like some great snake stretching down from above where the darkness hid everything. But Ralph was too accustomed to the interior of the place to think of this. He reached up and took a firm grasp on the rope, threw his weight upon it, and slowly sank toward the floor.

The bell, which was a big one, hung in a cradle, and the bell-rope, passing up into the belfry, was fastened in the groove of a large wheel which, when turned by a pull on the rope, rocked the bell and threw the iron tongue against its sides. The bell was very heavy, and it took a couple of vigorous pulls, even when Mr. Kline himself had hold of the rope, to bring any sound forth.

Twice Ralph pulled and hung upon the rope before the cradle began to move perceptibly. Even then the bell did not ring, and the boy threw all his strength and weight into a third effort.

As he did so, it seemed to him that the rope came toward him much more quickly than it should, and then, before he could let go, it suddenly loosened up above and fell in great spirals to the floor. Fortunately none of the heavy coils struck him; but it gave him a big start, notwithstanding, and he jumped quickly to one side.

There he stood staring up into the darkness, and wondering what could have happened. Then, realizing that the only way to learn was to go up into the belfry and investigate, he picked up a lantern which stood in a corner, and lighting it at the lamp, started up the ladder which led to the tower above.

It was a long ladder and climbing it was no easy task. The lantern, as it hung from his arm, banged against him and cast shifting and uncertain lights. The rungs of the ladder were covered with a thick coating of dust. Yet he toiled slowly on. It seemed as if the ladder never would end. It grew cold, too, for it was freezing outside, and a keen wind blew through the openings in the belfry above.

Presently, however, Ralph struck his head against something, and he knew he had reached the end of his journey. Holding on with one hand, with the other he unfastened the hook which held down the trap door. Pushing this back he drew himself up through the opening, and was in the belfry.

For an instant he rested. Then, shivering as a cold blast of wind swept down upon him, he rose to his feet and took up the lantern.

Immediately before him was the rope, dangling from the bell cradle above. Apparently, it was all right. It seemed to run properly enough through the hole in the flooring on which he stood. He was about to go down the ladder again to discover where the break had occurred when a draft of air stirred the rope, and, as it moved, he saw that it did not go through the hole at all. It came to an end just where it reached the floor.

Ralph placed the lantern beside him and bent down to examine the rope. It seemed to have been severed by some jagged edge, for it was torn and frayed, and bits of hemp strewn the floor near by. He concluded that it must have been worn through by rubbing against the sides of the hole through which it had originally passed.

While he was looking at it he was startled by a sharp squeak at his very elbow. He glanced quickly about, and a bright spark in a dark corner of the belfry caught his eye. He picked up the lantern and swung it in front of him, and a small gray animal darted under a beam. It was a rat.

All at once, Ralph recollected that the old belfry was said to be infested with these animals, and, raising himself, he turned to go. As he did so, his foot struck the edge of a floor board and he fell, knocking the lantern over and instantly extinguishing the light.

Somewhat startled now, for the first time, he groped about for the trap door, but could not find it. The moonlight, which came from above, lost itself in the narrow tower, and where he lay it was almost entirely dark. At last, however, his hand came in contact with something which he knew was the trap door; but, even as he touched it, it fell with a bang! He nervously tried to raise it again; but in vain. The door was flush with the floor about it, and there was no ring bolt or projection by which to secure a hold on it.

While Ralph was struggling to get a finger beneath the trap door, the same sharp squeak which had startled him before sounded again, and this time it was almost immediately echoed from half a dozen other places.

As he turned about, in every direction there shone in the darkness tiny sparks of light. Ralph knew that these were the eyes of rats. One, or even a couple of the animals he would not have feared. But a dozen of them, boldly surrounding him in this way in the darkness, sent a shiver down his back. He noted, too, that they did not seem afraid of him, though he banged on the floor and yelled at them. Instead, they grew bolder as their numbers increased, and one of them presently darted across his foot.

Ralph now sprang to his feet and rushed at the enemy. Those in front of him at once retreated, as he could tell by the disappearance of their eyes. But as he moved several jumped at him from behind, and one fastened its teeth in his leg. He kicked wildly at this, and the rat was thrown to one side. Another instantly sprang at him, and then a half-dozen at once, a couple of the vicious little animals fastening themselves in his clothes.

Ralph whirled about, dashing his assailants off for a moment. It was only for a moment, however, for he was attacked again immediately, and this time more fiercely than before.

Thoroughly terrified now, he yelled loudly, and kicked and struck out with fists and feet indiscriminately. But no answer came to his cries. The walls of the tower echoed his voice and the squeaks and squeals of the rats; but that was all.

work, for the rope was thick and heavy, but when it was done, and he held the rope so that it could not slip, he found he had a fairly comfortable seat.

He now hung some three feet below the cross beams, and, though the rope rose and fell gently for a few minutes, as the cradle above slightly rocked with his motions, no sound came from the bell. There were no sudden pulls on the rope, and consequently the tongue of the bell remained motionless against the bell's edge.

Ralph was content to rest in this way for several minutes. Then a blast of icy wind sweeping down upon his shoulders warned him that he could not remain long where he was. Swung in midair, without a coat, he would shortly freeze!

But would any help come? It seemed unlikely, since only his own family knew that he was at the church, and they would not think it strange if he did not return for a couple of hours.

Neither was it likely that anyone would think of coming up into the belfry, unless they should happen to go into the room below and see the fallen rope. Of course there would be curiosity doubtless as to why the bell had failed to ring as usual.

Ralph determined that something must be done to attract attention to his place of imprisonment at once. He knew it was useless to call. His voice, cooped up between the narrow walls of the high belfry, would never be heard outside, yell as loudly as he might.

He looked about wildly, and just then a shaft of moonlight gleamed on the curved side of the bell. The bell!—why had he not thought of it before? He reached up quickly, and, after a little effort, succeeded in grasping one of the beams overhead. Then he began swaying on the rope. He had an insecure hold, but within a few minutes his heart leaped as a deep boom rang out from the bell. Harder and harder he worked, and the notes of alarm followed close upon each other. Soon the old bell was ringing out a wild peal and the timbers under his hand vibrated with its movement.

Suddenly through the clangor of the bell he heard the sound of voices. Then a light shot up from up the opened trap door, and a voice called out to know what was the matter. There was a note of alarm in the question; for, this bell ringing, apparently without hands, was enough to make anyone a bit fearful.

Ralph quickly told them how matters stood. He added in warning: "Look out for the rats!"

The man below held a lantern high above his head, and then crawled upon the floor, immediately followed by a companion.

Ralph recognized the men as neighbors, and soon descended stiff and cold from his awkward perch.

No rats were to be seen. Frightened by the light and the presence of so many persons, the vicious little beasts had retreated.

Ralph did not wait to investigate more. Once down the ladder he told his story to the startled congregation, which had nearly all assembled, and then hurried home.

To this day, however, he never looks at the old stone belfry without a shudder.—St. Louis Republic.

Making a School Globe.
A hollow wooden or iron sphere is first formed with wires projecting at opposite ends to indicate the poles. Then strips of damp paper are spread all over it; other strips of paper soaked in paste are laid over them, then other strips and so on, till the total thickness of the layer is about an eighth of an inch. When completely dry the pasteboard envelope is cut in the line of the (future) equator, and is separated from the mold in two hemispheres. These are fastened by nails to the two ends of a wooden rod exactly equal in length to the diameter of the globe, and the edges of the hemispheres are glued together so that we get a pasteboard sphere. Two wires projecting from the two ends of the wooden rod penetrate the pasteboard, and form the poles of the globe. The pasteboard is then coated six or more times over with whitening, glue and oil, until a considerable substance has been laid on, each layer being dried before the next is applied. At this stage of the manufacture any irregularity on the surface of the globe is remedied by working a metal semi-circle round and round the sphere till the surface is made quite smooth. The surface is then marked by means of a beam compass, with lines to represent the circles of latitude and longitude.—Goldthwaite's Geographical Magazine.

THE FLIGHT OF TIME.

He had talked on every subject and
The girl was dreadful tired;
He'd talked and talked and talked until
She wished to see him freed.

And when he had got back again
To whether, she was mad,
Enough you bet to call down stairs'
Her fierce and warlike dad.

"It's been a lovely day," he said:
"I wonder if 'twill be
Like this to-morrow, for I love
These balmy days to see."

She answered him: "I do not know,
And I don't care to guess,
For in such matters, I must say
I'm not a prophetess.

"But if you really want to know
To-morrow's weather's fate,
Possess your soul in patience, for
You'll not have long to wait."
—Detroit Free Press.

HUMOR OF THE DAY.
A summer hit—Slapping a mosquito.
—Boston Courier.

A still alarm—"The revenue officers are coming."
—Truth.

The only really true and steadfast love is love of self.—Hullo.

Every bird pleases us with its lay—especially the hen.—Grip.

A masked ball—A lemonade with a stick in it.—Philadelphia Record.

Don't talk too much. A stiff lower jaw is as useful as a stiff upper lip.—Pack.

Some people are never at home until they are away from home.—Atchison Globe.

A beetle can draw twenty times its own weight. So can a mustard plaster.—Texas Sittings.

You will notice that the man who is spoken of as "superior to clothes" wears mighty poor clothes.—Pack.

Nothing is easier to understand than how we shouldn't have made the mistakes we have seen other people make.—Pack.

The man who is willing to wait for something to turn up is usually too blind to see it when it comes along.—Pack.

Oddly enough the homeliest of old maids are generally girls who were matchless in their youth.—Buffalo Courier.

Uncle George—"Are you good at guessing?" Little Dick—"Yes, indeed. I'm head in the spelling class."
—Good News.

He—"My love will have no ending, dear." She—"Now, I say, George, aren't you going to marry me, after all?"—Tid-Bits.

The long-out overcoat has proved to him the best of boons,
Since underneath it he can wear
His baggy pantaloons.
—New York Herald.

Musical composers should have no trouble about proposing to their sweethearts; they are used to making overtures.—Philadelphia Record.

An offer to bet is not an argument, but it frequently has the effect of silencing your opponent and increasing his respect for your position.—Pack.

"H'm!" said the burglar after he had found that the safe was empty, "this thing lacks a whole lot of what it was cracked up to be."
—Indianapolis Journal.