

THE INVISIBLE PAINT.

A Fable from the Lark.

At last, after many long and earnest years of research, the Scientist had come suddenly upon the discovery that was to complete his life work and write his name among the most famous benefactors of the race. It was from the reaction of pure cadmium upon certain organic salts of the superhydrated nitrous oxide of hypofenylybrompropionic acid that he wonderful precipitate appeared, and at the advent, his dream focussed and Ambition leaped onto the dry ground of fulfillment. Like an expectant parent he had chosen the name—the commercial name under which the product should be marketed—long before the result was brought forth; and, being less versed in Rhetoric than in Chemistry, he had fancied that Invisible Paint would prove an attractive appellation for the ware that was to remunerate him. For this marvellous substance possessed the unique virtue of rendering permanently invisible any body to which it was applied. He had proved this upon his own laboratory floor, to the eternal consternation of his housekeeper in the room below.

But, as pure Science concerns itself little with the practical application of its discoveries, the Scientist called to him representatives of the various Arts, with a view to confer the boon to mankind upon the most deserving. The Scientist turned first to the artist: "You," he said, "who are continually prating of beauty, and who hold that virtue the sole excuse for woman's existence, buy my invaluable recipe, and erase from the world the features and forms that cannot claim your approval; I grant you the privilege of the first offer!"

"I would gladly avail myself of the right," replied the artist, "yet I have of late suffered so acutely by the unwelcome visits of female intruders in my studio, that I cannot bear the thought that they may be enabled to be present without my knowledge. I have no doubt, however," he continued, "that they would willingly submit to an operation which would permit them to so easily gratify their curiosity."

"You might paint only their faces," suggested the scientist.

The artist shuddered.

"To you, then," said the scientist, turning to the soldier, "submit this remarkable means of revolutionizing the art of war! Your uniforms, coated with this paint, would be invisible to the enemy, and your manoeuvres would be accomplished unseen."

The soldier blushed, and with an apologetic gesture toward the lady replied: "The spectacle of battalions of naked men marching upon the foe does not accord with the accepted traditions of civilized warfare."

"True," said the Scientist, "I had not thought of that! But although I had hoped to promote first the aesthetic or humanitarian development of our people by the use of my Invisible Paint, I now see that its proper field is in a more strictly commercial territory, and I have thought that the Artizan might

simplify architectural construction by the application of the liquid to solid masonry walls, thus avoiding the complications of window-building."

"In that case," said the Artizan, "we should doubtless be liable for damages every time a head was broken in trying to look out the apparent aperture. Even if it was used for aquariums, the impossibility of repairing the walls should render it inexpedient as well as dangerous."

"Do you, also, reject the proffer?" said the Scientist sadly to the Poet.

"It is certainly not consistent with the scheme of things as I understand it," he responded, "and, except for the allegorical value of Invisible Paint, I can see no adequate reason for its existence."

"If you please," interrupted the woman, "I have often wished for invisible hairpins, and if no one else can use the paint, I will gladly buy your invention."

"But you know you are always losing your hairpins," exclaimed the infuriated Scientist, "how then would you ever find them if they were permanently invisible?"

He seized the vial of priceless liquor and walked sadly toward the window. Right across the invisible floor he walked, then stood in the centre of the room, hung in mid-air, lost in thought, overwhelmed by his disappointments. But, as he stood there, the floor gathered form and color; the board began to be dimly shadowed forth and grew more and more visible. And the group of spectators rose and screamed as one man, "Hurrah, the paint is only temporarily invisible, after all! Sell me the stuff!" And they rushed in a mob at the Scientist. At the cry, he awoke from his reverie, and beheld the labors of a lifetime had been as nought, his paint was but a semi-success after all, and conquered by despair, he fell, and the sublime reagent dashing upon the floor, flooded him in an invisible puddle that made his lifeless body seem floating, suspended in space.

"How beautiful is his death, and this victory he called defeat," mused the Poet, "behold, the merest child may understand its Moral Significance."

"But I cannot see that!" said the woman.

"Madam," responded the Poet, "I believe you! It was long ago that your sex first discovered the true Invisible Paint, and to this day Woman guards the secret of its use."

SCHOOL DAYS IN GERMANY.

Long Hours, Domineering Teachers and No Interesting Books.

From the Boston Herald.

The average American boy little realizes in how much pleasanter places his lines are cast than are those of boys of most other nations. A distinguished university professor, who has just returned from prolonged studies abroad, recently relates his experience with the public schools in Germany. He remarked, by the way, that in certain parts of the country there seemed to be no children. There were plenty of

small people, but no evidence of childhood, as we know it.

Wishing to place his own son of 11 years in the public schools, he made a point of visiting the schools extensively and leisurely, and the results, to his mind, were far from happy.

The masters, for the most part, he found to be domineering autocrats, abusing their power in a way to rouse the Fourth of July spirit of the meekest American lad. For the slightest failure of a quick response, a ready answer—there were no such things as misdemeanors, poor little souls—the boys were brutally held up by the chin, lifted by the ears, had hooks hung at their heads or received a sharp blow over the knuckles.

Then they have nearly twice the number of hours a week that the American boy has, going to school at seven in the morning, except in midwinter, when the season begins at eight, and spending a good part of the day there.

In point of discipline the schools are all alike, and the American boy was sent to one of them. Though never molested himself, the acts of injustice and the cruel use of power that he daily witnessed worked upon his sympathies and liberty-loving spirit to such a degree that his parents thought best to finally take him out of the school.

Even the holidays are spent in a way few American boys would be likely to choose. The pupils are marshaled in regiments through the cities, taught the topography of the country by the history and significance of all the monuments, are shown points of historic interest, the homes of distinguished men, etc. The American boy is expected to know such information in the course of the play.

On other days they are taken into the woods to gather and analyze flowers, go out on a geographical survey, or for a lesson in natural history. These latter, however, are of such immense service, and may be made so interesting that they are, perhaps, worth the sacrifice of the holiday.

Another enormous advantage that American boys have is the delightful literature that is placed at their disposal. In Germany there is a tremendous dearth of good books for boys. Youth's literature is for the most part exclusively juvenile and weak.

Except for their peerless fairy stories there is almost nothing of value, and but for the fact that some of the best English and American books for youths have been translated into German, the boys and girls of the vaterland would have little but their school books and the most puerile stories for reading of the maturer sort.

Boys are kept absolutely in leading strings until sent to college, when they enjoy full liberty. The result of this system is that a terrible crop of wild oats is sown in the first years of college life.

THE RAINBOW.

Flash, storm, your lightning bolts from their sheath,
While bolt on bolt it hurled;
Of your great wrath God makes a wreath
Of glory round the world.
—F. L. Stanton.

Reward of Merit.
Parent—"How did you get along with your geography lesson today, Johnny?"
Pupil—"Bully. The teacher was so pleased that she had me stay after school and repeat it all over again only just to her."
—Boston Transcript.

Philosophy.
Wallace—"Why is it you always bet on the wrong horse?"
Hargreaves—"It is so much easier to do."
—Cincinnati Enquirer.

IS STEEL OUT OF DATE?

Paper Rails Are Being Used Successfully on Continental Lines.

From the Paper Trade Journal.

The successful introduction of railroad rails entirely of paper material in Germany and Russia has encouraged American manufacturers to experiment. The foreign mode of making the rail consists in the employment of moulds and powerful pressing machines, the former for shaping the rail, and the latter for consolidating purposes. Paper car wheels have been in use for many years, and have given satisfaction. It is not assuming too much to anticipate satisfactory results with paper rails. The iron or steel rails now in use are by no means free from defects. The metal is always more or less affected by the conditions of the atmosphere, and accidents are frequently traced to the warping, contraction or expansion of rails.

Again, there are flaws and similar imperfections in rails of the metallic order, and these often give trouble. The heavy locomotives and other rolling stock of these days require extraordinarily large and heavy rails, consequently the rails cannot be made very long, as the weight would be too much. The paper rails are less than one-half lighter for the same length and size, so that, so far as the light question is concerned, the length of the latter can be twice that of the iron or steel rail. This obviates the use of just so many joints, dispensing with so many bolts and connections and relieving the wheels of the car from just so many shocks.

The process of manufacturing the rails is not difficult when once the necessary compressive apparatus is available, as the solidifying operation is probably the main part of the whole work. The composition of the rail includes several varieties of the paper pulp stock. Wood pulp has not been tried with any marked success as yet, but ordinary pulp from rags, rope stock, etc., answers the purpose. The process of grinding, cooking, digesting and working of the rags into a pulpy condition are accomplished in regular order, care being taken to have the stock uniform in preparation and the fibres as well preserved as possible. When in a pulpy condition the ingredients for stiffening the rail, rendering it tough and efficient, so as to stand an excessive wear and friction from the wheels and for imparting elasticity, smoothness and other needed requirements, are applied. So varied have

these been that no definite proportions of any of the substances are procurable.

Quantities of borax, paraffine wax, tanners' grease, waterproof fish glue, resin and fine cement are employed in necessary proportions, and are added to the pulp while it is yet warm. Mixing follows, and the ingredients are thoroughly combined with the fibre. A quantity of shellac and wood alcohol is next put into the mixture, and the mass is subjected to another stirring and then permitted to settle.

The paper rails are strong, durable, can be bent for curves like other rails and possess the advantage of lightness and increased length, besides being easier for the wheels and cars, and having other points of superiority. Their cost is said to be thirty per cent. less than that of steel. They are adaptable for both paper and iron car wheels.

PROPHECIES WHICH FAILED.

There are a few famous prophecies which failed utterly and became historical on that account. Aristotle, for instance, said that slavery would last forever or until the shuttle would weave of its own accord. This is a double mistake, for slavery is abolished and thanks to invention the shuttle may be said to work of its own accord.

"Before fifty years are over all Europe will be either republican or Cossack," prophesied Napoleon I. in the first decade of this century. At the end of nearly a hundred years Europe is no more republican than ever and the Cossacks have no more power.

"Italy is but a geographical expression and will never be anything else," said Prince Metternich and just before he died he saw what he considered Utopia on the verge of becoming a reality.

"The railroads will never be of any use for the transport of goods," said M. Thiers and he led a large chorus.

"The United States of Europe" was the prediction of all ardent democrats from Victor Hugo to Carlo Cattaneo and its fulfillment was to take place at the downfall of the Napoleonic empire. It is twenty-five years since then and the states of Europe are more disunited than ever.

A Resemblance.
Mrs. Kuddler—"Do you know, George, that everybody says the baby is just like me?"
Mr. Kuddler—"Nonsense, Anne. The baby is now more than six months old, and it has never spoken a word."
—Boston Transcript.

AN OPEN LETTER TO MOTHERS.

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March 8, 1897. Samuel Pitcher, M.D.


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