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RATES OF ADVERTISING.

One Square, one inch, one insertion.....\$ 1 00 One Square, one inch, one month..... 3 00 One Square, one inch, three months..... 8 00 One Square, one inch, one year..... 25 00 Two Squares, one year..... 45 00 Quarter Column, one year..... 20 00 Half Column, one year..... 30 00 One Column, one year..... 35 00 Legal advertisements ten cents per line, each day extra. Marriage and death notices gratis. All bills for yearly advertisements collected quarterly. Temporary advertisements must be paid in advance. Job work—cash on delivery.

A statistically-inclined sportsman has figured out that there were in the United States, last season, 1,934 flat, 411 heat and 195 steeplechases and hurdle races, and that the different jockey clubs put up \$973,013.50 in purse and stake money. Those who dance must pay the fiddler.

An "anti-plumage league" has been formed in England to check the destruction of birds, caused by the present fashion of wearing bird and feather ornaments. The league receives additional strength from the fact that Queen Victoria is in strong sympathy with its objects.

Justice Field, of the supreme court, takes deep interest in the electrical inventions of Mr. Edison. "I would not," he is reported as saying, "be surprised any day to hear that he had discovered the secret that the alchemists searched for so long, and invented some method of keeping the vital spark alive forever. The vital spark is nothing but electricity, after all."

A farmer of Kimbles, Penn., put strychnine into the carcass of an old horse that had died, and placed the body in a spot where foxes, who have been overrunning the vicinity, would get at it. The result was that fifty-eight dead foxes and fourteen worthless dogs were found near the house of the farmer. Two Italian quarrymen also partook of the poisoned horse, and had a narrow escape from death.

The Old World's watches are no longer what they used to be in the estimation of the American public. The absolutely accurate and unvarying work of machinery which has attained almost to perfection here has crowded out the foreign made watches, no two of which are alike. There are various reasons for this, one being that the American watches are better, and another that they are much easier and less expensive to repair.

Dr. Edson, of the New York Health department, has had the dye of some bright red stockings, which were made in Saxony, examined, and the analysis discovered that it contained arsenic and antimony. Both poison the skin, and what is known as antimony rash is produced by underclothing the dye of which is fixed with antimony. Children are the worst sufferers from antimony rash, as they are the most likely to wear the bright colors which contain the poison.

High-priced singers are out of favor this year, observes a writer in New York Times. Even dear Madame Patti is having hard work to barter her exquisite voice for the fabulous sums of former seasons. Heretofore, when she found the effete audiences of Covent Garden reluctant in pouring their shekels at her shrine, she simply packed up and came to the outstretched arms of enthusiastic America, or went to Russia. This year she decided to hazard a less remote continental tour. She was recently announced to sing in Amsterdam, and in order to reimburse her manager for the large sum he was to pay her, the price of tickets was placed at a figure which evidently shocked the prudent and economical Hollanders, for when the hour arrived only two tickets had been sold. It is needless to say that she did not sing, and that the first train bore away a very indignant and probably wiser prima donna.

The startling decrease in the numbers of many of our birds, brought about of late years by the unceasing persecution waged for the sake of fashion, has aroused the Ornithologists' union to a recognition of the necessity for instant and decided effort in behalf of our birds. The objects of the committee are as follows: 1. The gathering of all possible information bearing on the subjects of the destruction and protection of North American birds. 2. The diffusion of information among the people in respect to the extent of the slaughter of birds for millinery and other mercenary purposes; the wanton killing of birds in sport by men and boys; the robbing of birds' nests; the destruction of the eggs of rails, terns, gulls and other birds for food; and the marked recent decrease of many species resulting from this general destruction; the spreading of information, also, in respect to the utility of birds as a natural check upon the increase of insects injurious to vegetation, and with reference to their interest and value from an aesthetic point of view. This with the object of developing a public sentiment in favor of the rigid protection of our native birds, a sentiment that will naturally spring up strongly and widely as soon as attention is called to the subject. The headquarters of the committee are at the American Museum of Natural History, Central Park, New York city, where the officers or any of the members may be addressed.

OH, SILVER CLOUD.

Oh, silver cloud, a moment white Thou gleamest fair within my sight, Then off beyond the mountain's blue I lose thee in the darkening hue Of comrade-clouds whose ranks unite. Are thou a snow-clad neophyte, Attendant on the Queen of night, Hurrying to join her retinue, Oh, silver cloud? Mayhap, oh, truant, by her might Eos demands thy service-right To bind her golden locks, or woo Her rosy face to smile anew— Or dost thou follow Phœbus' flight, Oh, silver cloud? —Edgar Irving Brenner, in the Current.

THE MISSING LETTER.

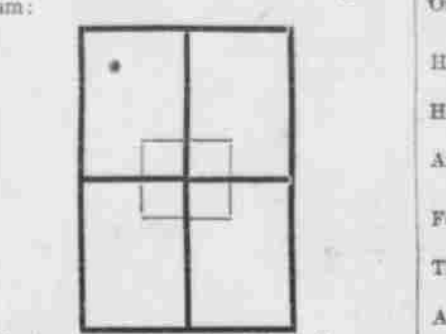
BY MRS. MILES H. MACNAMARA. Ten-year-old Phœbe Conry pounded with all the concentrated power of her two clenched little fists, but the iron-barred door continued unimpressed and unmoved. Phœbe added a few savage knocks with extra force, accompanied by an extremely wicked squeal of fury, which proved our Phœbe was not an angelic visitant but of purely human and sorely tried flesh. She retreated a step at last, and gazed anxiously up at the windows, then began on a tear-mixed solo wail: "Mr. Alcot! Oh, Mr. Alcot! Please let me in!" "Hi, hi! What do you want, Phœbe; is any one sick at your house?" The window above the door had been raised and a very pillow-fried head craned far over the sill to view the small personage who replied, with reproachful intreaty. "You sleep mighty hard, and oh, please, Mr. Alcot, is Willie here?" "Bill! Why, of course not. Just bide there a bit. I'll be down in a whiff-stitch." Phœbe now attended to the great blanket shawl which had slipped from her head and was trailing on the ground. She muffled herself closely in its comforting embrace; for the thermometer was toying with a very chill-inspiring mercury, and the dawn was making a last struggle with obstinate night, which made the air doubly frosty to the child whose tiny nose was uplifted and eyes squinted to read through the gray atmosphere the letters on a sign overhead, which gave information to inquiring humanity that here was the "postoffice," while a larger sign above this proclaimed of "dry goods and groceries" also to be had within. After considerable growling and blistering a light gleamed through the window grating, and a brusque but not unkindly welcome opened to the waiting child. "You don't mean to say that Bill's been out all night?" "His bed ain't been tumbled. Ma woke up and found the lamp burning at one o'clock, so she looked in his room, but he hadn't got in. She is 'most wild by this time, and sent me over to see if maybe you had kept him." "Taint likely I'd keep the boy out all night without lettin' your mother know. Here, Hattie, Hattie!" he called, going to a door leading upstairs from the rear of the store. "What is it, father?" a feminine voice responded. "Slip on your clothes and run over to Mrs. Lester's with Phœbe. The poor woman's 'most distracted!" "In a marvelous brief time a startled young girl hastened down, pale and apprehensive. "What did you do with Bill, last night?" queried her father, jesting to disguise his uneasiness. "Why, is not Will at home?" "Phœbe says his bed isn't mussed." "He ain't been home since he changed his clothes to go to Centreville farm after you," the child explained. "For mercy's sake! Where can he be?" cried Hattie, in growing anxiety. "Westwood in the kitchen talking a few minutes after he had put the horse up—" she hesitated, and a painful blush spread over her face and neck, then hastily added: "He said he was going home; at least he did not say he was going anywhere else!" "It's odd, to say the least of it," Mr. Alcot remarked. "If this town was not pretty free from resorts to attract young men. I'd think—" "Nonsense, father!" testily exclaimed Hattie. "Willie is above temptation! Come Phœbe, perhaps he is at home by this time." The two ran quickly to the little, one-story, frame house, situated in the center of a small tract of land that was cultivated by the Widow Lester in "garden truck." From this slender traffic the family of four was maintained until Willie, the eldest of the three children, began to realize a small salary assisting in Mr. Alcot's store. His usefulness developed with his years, until two years previous, at the age of twenty-one, he began to realize that his future was promising beyond his mother's fondest expectations, when his employer not only gave him what may, for a village ambition, be termed a living wage, but hinted that as there was no junior Alcot rival him, Willie Lester might hope for succession, when he, Mr. Alcot, felt disposed to retire from active business and live at ease with his one "chick," his idol, his motherless daughter, Hattie. It was now daylight. The woman who was employed to assist with the housework and clean the store came down from her attic chamber and began to clean up behind the counter of the postoffice department, as the portion reserved for that purpose was called, while Mr. Alcot removed the blinds and prepared for business, gossiping in his usual familiar tone with the trusted "servant," who was not by any means treated as such. Will gave one joyous bound toward her

In Western country towns such distinctions are not tolerated by the employed. "And who's been fussing with the mails, I wonder?" suddenly exclaimed the woman, handing Mr. Alcot two letters she had found on the floor. "That's Farmer Slayback's mail," rejoined the postmaster, as he stepped quickly to the section of pigeon holes and examined the Slayback "box." "How on earth did they get on the floor? Look, Martha, there ought to be another one. It's 'not in the box! It's a registered money letter!" With increasing uneasiness he began nervously to hunt. The floor was searched thoroughly, every letter-box scrutinized and each superscription read, as if there might be a possibility that the letter had been misplaced. "Although I know positively the three letters were together in the right box—the now exceedingly anxious man exclaimed. "Maybe Willie put it away," suggested the woman. "No, I had the letters in my hands after he drove away to bring Hat home." A frightful thought suddenly assailed him: his ruddy face turned white. He clutched his beard in a tremulous fashion, as if to steady and repel the painful idea developing in his mind. "Impossible!" he muttered. "Bill wouldn't do a thing like that! But what's become of that letter, registered containing two one hundred dollar bills? And where's Bill?" As if in answer to his cogitations two quite tranquil young people entered the store. "Thank God!" was Mr. Alcot's mental ejaculation. "Bill's not lit out with that letter, anyway!" "Where do you think he was, father?" laughingly exclaimed Hattie. Mr. Alcot looked sharply at his clerk and replied shortly: "It's to be hoped he can explain to his mother's satisfaction." The young man responded with a deprecating smile. "I am sorry I have occasioned you all such uneasiness," then added jestingly. "I hope you did not imagine that I had eloped with Mr. Slayback's money letter!" "Somebody did, for it's gone!" was the terse reply. "Oh, father! You are joking!" cried Hattie. Willie stared in amazement, then ran to the letter-box, followed by the young girl. "It's not there, I tell you! Martha picked those two up from the floor; the registered letter is not to be found, high or low. Give an account of yourself, young man!" "Why, Mr. Alcot, can you—do you suspect me?" "Give an account of yourself, I say!" was the wrathful reply. "Tell father all about it," tenderly entreated Hattie, gazing compassionately at the young man, who turned pale and red by turns, tears of indignation and mortification welling to his flashing blue eyes. Mr. Alcot turned angrily upon his daughter. "What do you know about it, Miss? Have you two fools conspired to give me a shock? A wretched joke, I swear!" "Oh, father! You are unjust. I'm sure Willie knows as little about the disappearance of that letter as I do. I want him to tell you about his patent." "I don't want any foolery. Where have you spent the night, Bill?" "In our barn—" "In your barn?" sneered Mr. Alcot. "A likely story!" The young man bit his lips to keep down rising anger, when Hattie interposed. "Please, father, listen. Willie has been at work a long time on a patent stopper—his own invention. At night, after he leaves here, he works at it in the barn, so that his mother won't be disturbed. Last night, although it was late when he left here after bringing me home, he said he felt just like work. He has secured patent rights on a crude design and was anxious to get the perfected model done and sent away and everything all secure before he said anything to anyone. This morning the finishing touches were put on it, and after it was packed he sat over it thinking"—Hattie looked at him with a loving smile at this point—"and then he fell asleep. That's where I found him—" "You! How did you know?" "Oh, I knew all about it from the very first!" "Oh, indeed! If you know so much, just tell me what has become of that letter," was the sarcastic reply. "Perhaps the rats have got in the house again," she suggested. "Rats! Oh, yes; no doubt. Two-legged rats, who need money to secure patent rights and make models," sneered the troubled man, with irritation. "Mr. Alcot! Dare you—" Hattie ran to the affronted and angry young man, quickly placed one hand on his mouth, and the other crept around his arm, upon which she carelessly pressed her cheek, saying: "Darling, don't mind father; he cannot mean it so; he is anxious—" "What do you mean, my girl! What is there between you two? Heaven be good to me! Such dishonesty and deceit right under my nose!" "Mr. Alcot, hear me—" "I won't hear. Restore that letter and clear up this mystery. Harriet, go into the kitchen and see to breakfast." Hattie pressed the unhappy Will's hand lovingly and obeyed her father's command. "Now, young man, you and I will have a talk." At this moment the door leading to the second floor opened, and Martha, who had gone up stairs to attend to the chamber work, entered the store again. In her hand she held that missing letter. Will gave one joyous bound toward her

and grasped at it as one drowning might grasp at a life-saving car. "Father in heaven! I thank thee!" he cried, fervently, and then—Hattie! Hattie! The letter is found! the letter! the letter!" Hattie came flying in, gave one answering glance and burst out crying: "Oh, Will! And father suspected you?" Mr. Alcot clutched at his beard again, took the letter and asked in a voice hoarse with emotion: "Where did you find it, Martha?" "In your bed, twixt the case and pillow you slept on." "Goodness sakes! Have I taken to walking in my sleep again as I did when I was a youngster?" This was doubtless the case. The last thing before retiring he had gone to see whether that money letter was all right, and in his sleep it haunted him, with the result that caused its removal to safer quarters near his person. The other two were cast aside as unimportant. "Bill—I'm a hasty old fool," began the postmaster in awkward, self-reproachful tones. "Mr. Alcot, don't say a word. Who would not suspect, under like circumstances. To think that I should chance to fall asleep and absent myself—unaccountably—naturally led on to doubts. Beside, I deserve some punishment for returning to rob you of something more precious than money." "It was not the money, boy, altogether. It was betrayed confidence that pained and enraged me. Things did look kinder black, now, didn't they?" "Indeed, father, your suspicions hit right home about the two-legged rats—" "Shut up, you saucy baggage. You sly one, you! I saw you hugging Will awhile ago!" Will caught her as she was retreating, and holding her hand, spoke up like a man. "If I dared to hope for your approval, Mr. Alcot, to make her my wife! My patent is not of great scientific value, but I have secured rights as an inventor, and am already negotiating for profitable privileges from a large bottling establishment for its use; hence I can make an independent beginning and offer your daughter a home." Mr. Alcot embraced his child with pathetic emotion, saying, "I suppose I must submit. The young will mate, as the parents did before them; but Bill—my son—he clasped the young man's hand. "You must share my home, for I cannot be left alone, now that the tricks of boyhood are cropping out in the old man." "You dear, good, best of fathers, do you think I would leave you?" murmured Hattie. "You see, children, I need some one to look after 'two-legged rats.'" Mr. Alcot interpolated with penitent humor, looking into Willie's eyes, then seeking and receiving pardon for the unjust suspicions in connection with that registered letter. The Wild Cossacks. The Cossack dress, the long coat and the hat and knife are so well known in England, from drawings in the illustrated papers, that no description is needed. It is a workmanlike dress undoubtedly, but not what an English cavalry officer would call "smart." The horses, too, are more like rough cobs than horses, but they are said never to tire, and, in fact, they do look stout, useful beasts. Our officers and men may well take a lesson from them. They are, as a Russian officer said, thoroughly "mobile." The Cossack has no tent and his horse no covering, even in the depths of winter when on service, while our horses are not prepared to stand out without three heavy felts, nor are the men prepared to go on service without a servant and a pony to every two of them and tents to cover them. In short, the Cossack is a well-armed, mounted rifleman and scout, and one can well imagine what yeoman's service a cloud of such horse in the front of any army would perform. It has been too much the aim of our native cavalry officers to turn their men into dragoons, and though they would in the open undoubtedly be better mounted and heavier than the Cossacks, one cannot help feeling that the others have on their side many advantages. Ours are more for show, and theirs more for use. A cavalry man would answer by asking to see the hospital rolls after six weeks' campaign in winter, and no doubt that is to us, where men and animals cost money, a powerful retort. For we know how the Russians suffered in the Balkans from sickness. With all that, we have a lesson to learn from the Cossack, and it would be well if officers would think it over, and remember that we cannot always be at peace, and that our next war might carry us further than one hundred and fifty miles from our Indian frontier. One of our officers, at any rate, will remember the Cossacks as long as he lives. He accompanied an officer outside the mess tent to look for something when the latter introduced him as a brother officer of cavalry, and he, in response, drank the health of the Cossacks. Before he well knew what had happened he was picked up by twenty strong arms and played ball with to a chorus accompaniment. I am not sure that he was not embraced before they put him down. This seems to be a Cossack custom, and once a year their own officers get "tossed," and it is the greatest honor they can pay you. But think what would happen, and how splashed they might be, if they let fall a twenty-stone old colonel that they did not like.—London Times. Mr. Yabashi of Tokio has invented and patented a method of weaving carpets with feathers. According to his method feathers are reduced to a silky state by the action of chemicals, and then woven like ordinary cotton stuff.

Ingenious Girl Squatters.

A woman, unmarried and twenty-one years old, has the right to take up land, and in Dakota many have availed themselves of this privilege by acquiring pre-emption or tree claims. Betrothed couples from the East sometimes take up adjoining claims and then marry and settle down on 480 acres. One of the conditions of the law, however, is that any one taking up a claim shall live on it for six months. Four girl pioneers, who wanted to take up claims, adopted a good plan to meet this requirement. Taking up a section of 640 acres they built a cabin on it containing four corner rooms, the center of the house being just over the point where the four sections met, as shown by the following diagram:



Each woman then moved into the room located on her 160 acres and yet enjoyed the society of her companions. They all provided themselves with revolvers, but as a rule women on the prairies are as safe as those who live in large cities.—Milwaukee Sentinel.

A Signer's Joke.

President Harrison's great-grand-father, who was one of the regicides of Charles I, was convicted of high treason. Peeps, in his diary, October 13, 1660, refers in this comforting way to his execution: "I went out to Charing Cross to see Major-General Harrison hanged, drawn and quartered, which was done there, and he looked as cheerful as any man could do in that condition."

Exactly 116 years after this event, Benjamin Harrison, the father of President Harrison and the great-grandson of the good man who departed this life in such a gentlemanlike manner, according to Peeps, had just signed the Declaration of Independence in Philadelphia. His weight was nearly 300 pounds, while that of Elbridge Gerry, who sat beside him, was hardly more than that of the late Alexander H. Stephens. "Gerry," said Harrison, "you'd better not sign that paper. There's been some hanging in my family, and we are somewhat used to it. Moreover I will have another advantage over you. This ponderosity will crack my neck, while you'll be kicking and squirming about in the air long after I'm gone." But Gerry signed the paper even while he and Harrison roared with laughter.—Ben Perley Poore.

The Lightning's Stroke.

A person struck by lightning does not know it, the fluid being much quicker than thought. The nerves which convey pain are rather slow in their power to convey information. Stick a pin in the tail of an elephant and quite a perceptible interval occurs before the noble animal gives his opinion of the man or boy at the end of the nervous system on trial. Lightning does its work before the victim knows anything. Two men were struck while taking refuge under a tree. Both were carried into the house, and laid out for dead. One of the men revived, and after weeks of suffering and infirmity, he got out again, and is still living. He said he knew no more about having been struck by lightning than he was conscious of having lived before the flood. It was all news to him when told of the fact.

The Destructive Peepal Tree.

A curious destroying of human works in India, according to Dr. R. F. Hutchinson, is the peepal tree. This is a kind of fig, which multiplies beyond the power of man to destroy, its little seeds being sown broadcast over the land in the droppings of the birds and bats which feast on its fruit. The peepal rises everywhere, and its effect is the disintegration of rocks and buildings, the danger being so great that the keepers of large structures are constantly on watch during fig time for bird-droppings. As an illustration of what the tree may do and of its wonderful vitality, it is stated that on the summit of the northern minaret of the great mosque of Bareilly, 150 feet high, a peepal flourishes grandly beyond reach, and its ever active roots are gradually breaking up the cupola of the minaret.

The Ambulance.

This is a modern invention of French origin. In ancient times the wounded were left to die on the battlefield, but war now has the ameliorating influence of surgery. There are two kinds in use. The heavy ambulance is left with the baggage, while the light one moves over the battlefield in order to convey the wounded to the rear. Each ambulance is attended by seven surgeons, and the largest are drawn by four horses. A surgeon on horseback guides the others to some place where a field hospital is established. A yellow flag is then displayed, which protects the spot from the fire of the enemy. Baron Larrey who reached destination in surgery during Napoleon's war, organs ed the ambulance system with a great perfection, and it is now in use all over the civilized world.—Rockeater Chronicle.

A prominent Pennsylvania coal operator has noted that the great majority of coal-mine disasters occur between midnight and 3 p. m.

The leaves of a species of fig of Zanzibar are used in that part of Africa for polishing wood, just as we employ sandpaper. They impart a finish, however, which sandpaper does not.

THE GRAY DAY.

Evermore all the days are long, and the cheerless skies are gray, Restlessly wander the baffling winds that scatter the blinding spray. And the drifting currents come and go like serpents across my way. Wearily fades the evening dim, drearily wears the night, The ghostly mists and the hurrying clouds and the breakers' crest of white Have blotted the stars from the desolate skies—have curtained them from my sight. Ebbing alone, my wave-tossed bark encounters no passing sail. Welcoming friend nor challenging foe answers my eager hail—Only the sobbing, unquiet waves and the wind's unceasing wail. Hopefully still my sails are bent, my pilot is faultlessly true. He holds my course as though the seas and the mirrored skies were blue, And the port of peace, where the winds are still, were evermore in view. For over the spray and the rain and the clouds shines the eternal sun; The unchanging stars in the curtained dome still gleam when the day is done; And the mists will be kissed from the laughing skies when the port of rest is won.—Robert J. Burdette, in Brooklyn Eagle.

HUMOR OF THE DAY.

Very "taking" in its way—Smallpox.—Hot Springs News. Shear nonsense—trying to cut the hair of a bald-headed man.—Barbers' Gazette. According to the Darwinian theory our ancestors were all tail-beaters.—Hartford Times. The calcium light is oftentimes the brightest part of theatrical entertainment.—California Maverick. There is one thing to be said in favor of coasters. They don't want the earth.—Burlington Free Press. A turnpike tender down South became enamored of a young woman who often passed over his road, but he never told his love.—Boston Bulletin. Burdette says: "I hold it to be a solemn, self-evident, heaven-born truth that a man who will play chess for amusement would save a cord of wood for a joke." The bicycle rider usually falls forward, when he falls, and stands on his head. The skater falls backward, and doesn't stand on anything. This allows the amateur sport to choose the sport of bumping.—Piquette. A correspondent wants to know if it is proper to urge a young lady to sing at an evening gathering after she has refused once. It is proper to urge a little, but not too much, lest she should change her mind.—Pittsburg Chronicle. Mrs. Lillie Blake raises her voice to inquire: "Who owns the baby?" From what we have seen of that interesting creature, we have no hesitation in replying that the baby owns itself, and the entire household in the bargain.—Boston Transcript. A free translation of the heraldic motto which secretary Manning rented for his recent dinner party, is said to be: "The eagle does not catch flies." Of course not. The American eagle is bald headed. The flies catch him.—Buffalo Express. Well, how do you like him? Come, old man, better the bargain elsewhere, if you can, He's young, and as spry as a goat. "I think," said the farmer, while looking askance At the horse, and then at the owner a glance—"He is old enough to vote."—Judge. Newspaper Advertising. Newspaper advertising is now recognized, by business men having faith in their own wares, as the most effective means for securing for their goods a wide recognition of their merits. Newspaper advertising compels inquiry, and when the article offered is of good quality and at a fair price, the natural result is increased sales. Newspaper advertising is a permanent addition to the reputation of the goods advertised, because it is a permanent influence always at work in their interest. Newspaper advertising is the most energetic and vigilant of salesmen, addressing thousands each day, always in the advertiser's interest, and ceaselessly at work seeking customers from all classes. Newspaper advertising promotes trade, for even in the dull times advertisers secure by far the largest share of what is being done. While the advertiser eats and sleeps, printers, steam-engines and printing-presses are at work for him; trains are bearing his words to thousands of towns and hundreds of thousands of readers, all glancing with more or less interest at the message prepared for them in the solitude of his office. No preacher ever spoke to so large an audience, or with so little effort, or so eloquently as you, reader, may do with the newspaper man's assistance. Definitions of the Day. A taking title—Pick-pocket. A dead imitation—Catalepsy. Within an ace of it—The king. Slaves of the weed—Gardeners. Always on ice—The polar bear. Come to stay—Your poor relations. Badly stumped—The legless veteran. Out on the fly—The escaped convict. Poetical Justice—Killing the bad poets. Old rounders—The hands of the clock. A German count—Eins, zwei, drei, etc. A pair of nippers—A cyclone and a blizzard.—Puck. Krupp's gunworks at Essen have turned out more guns since September than are usually produced in twelve months' time.