

No subscriptions received for a shorter period than three months. Correspondence solicited from all parts of the country. No notice will be taken of anonymous communications.

A noted mind reader is said to have left Washington without paying a \$50 bill for advertising. Any one can probably read the creditor's mind as regards his opinion of that particular mind reader.

According to President Hitchcock, of Union Theological Seminary, there are now 142 theological seminaries in this country. In the eighteenth century there were but three. Within fifty years 111 have been founded, an annual average of over two.

A man in Kansas City has what is thought to be the largest lemon in the world. It is about the shape of a huge Irish potato, and weighs six pounds, twelve and one-quarter ounces. The Chicago Times wickedly suggests, if the lemon keeps until next summer, the proprietor might lend it out to picnics and church festivals.

In the United States there are 2,209 breweries, which produce annually 460,832,400 gallons, or over seven gallons per head. Germany has 23,940 breweries which produce annually 900,000,000 gallons, or over twenty gallons per head. Great Britain has 26,214 breweries, which produce annually 1,030,000,000 gallons, or over thirty per head.

They have a very effective way of recruiting the army in Mexico. A colonel, being short of men, sent fifty troopers into a Sonora town, and they ran down thirty or forty citizens, locked them up on a bogus charge of drunkenness, and had them "sentenced" to serve in the army for one year. All this took less than half a day, but there was more or less fun while it lasted.

The barrel cranks have not abandoned Niagara Falls. A Buffalo newspaper says that a Troy man proposes to go over the great cataract on April 15, in a barrel similar in shape to the one Graham had when he went through the rapids. There is to be a manhole and two airholes, and all around the outside will be a covering of rubber six inches thick, so that if the barrel strikes the rocks while going over the falls it will bound off.

The Chinese public school in San Francisco has now thirty-eight pupils, although it started a year and a half ago with only six. It is under the charge of Miss Thayer, who finds the young Celestial very bright in learning English and the common branches. Her hardest task is to enforce silence; the little fellows like to chatter in Chinese about their lessons. Three of the pupils are girls, all wear the Chinese costume, and all take a two weeks' holiday at the Chinese New Year.

There is a sexton in West Springfield, Mass., who deserves a notice because he knows the value of ventilation and how to secure it. The other evening, when the prayer meeting room was well filled and the air became bad, he waited for a pause in the services, and then said if the congregation would all arise for a few moments he would ventilate the room. They arose, and he opened windows and doors, let bad air out and good air in, and then the congregation sat down, feeling better, and the services went on briskly.

The New Orleans Times-Democrat says that the largest cash transaction ever made in the South was consummated at Anniston, Alabama, recently, being no less than the purchase by a syndicate of the property of the Woodstock Iron and Steel Company, for the sum of \$6,000,000. This property includes the celebrated Woodstock iron furnace, with its thousands of acres of mineral and timbered lands, the renowned Anniston Inn, the perfect system of water-works and electric lights and all other property owned by these companies. The Woodstock Iron and Steel Company will at once erect two large coke furnaces, costing about \$500,000.

A well at Yakutsk, in Siberia, has been a standing puzzle to scientists for many years. It was begun in 1828, but given up at thirty feet because it was still in frozen earth. Then the Russian Academy of Sciences continued for some months the work of deepening the well, but stopped when it had reached to the extent of some 382 feet, when the ground was still frozen as hard as a rock. In 1844 the Academy had the temperature of the excavation carefully taken at various depths, and from the data thus obtained the ground was estimated to be frozen to a depth of 612 feet. As external cold could not freeze the earth to such a depth, even in Siberia, geologists have concluded that the well has penetrated a frozen formation of the glacial period which has never thawed out.

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AFTERWARD.

I heedlessly opened the cage. And suffered my bird to go free; And, though I besought it with tears to return, It nevermore came back to me. It nests in the wildwood, and needs not my call, O the bird once at liberty, who can enthral! I hastily opened my lips, And uttered a word of disdain That wounded a friend, and forever estranged A heart I would die to regain. But the bird once at liberty, who can enthral! And the word that's once spoken, O who can recall! —Virginia B. Harrison, in Independent.

THE CASHIER'S STORY.

BY ALFRED B. TOZER. "I have tried time and again to reason myself out of it. I don't like the idea of going through life acknowledging that I am indebted to the supernatural for my very existence. I have never believed in the supernatural. I am not going to believe in it now if I can find any other way of accounting for my being here, instead of at the foot of a gravestone out on the hill yonder."

We had been discussing spiritualism before the open fire in Charley's room, and had drifted from arguments on the condition of the dead to the relation of incidents of a mysterious character influencing the lives of the living. "I don't like to figure as a creature of the mysterious," Charley continued, "because it seems to commit me to a belief in all sorts of outlandish and unnatural things—to inclose me in an atmosphere altogether unearthly; but my only relief seems to lie in an utter repudiation of an occurrence too real and too productive of practical results to be repudiated, so you see I am in a good deal of a mess over it."

Now, Charley is one of the most matter-of-fact of men. At the downtown bank where he holds the position of cashier, such an admission on his part would have produced a sensation. In the familiar circle where he sat that night it only provoked curiosity. This curiosity he at once proceeded to satisfy, beginning with an abrupt question: "Do you remember the night of the 15th of March?"

No one seemed to remember, for no one answered. "That's singular," he said, after a moment's silence. "At the same time you all took a great interest in at least one of the occurrences of that night. I refer to the attempted bank-robbery."

Certainly, we all remembered that. We had simply failed to locate it on the date given—the night of the 15th of March. "Well, when I left the bank that evening," Charley continued, "I was accompanied by Dick Munson, the paying-teller—a pale, nervous little fellow, with a memory for faces and signatures almost phenomenal, and an instinctive ability to detect fraud. We stopped on the bank-steps for a moment to speak to a customer, and then passed on up the street together. His rooms are about half a mile further out than mine, and when we were kept at the bank later than usual, as on that occasion, we frequently dined together at a neat little restaurant not far from my chambers. We did so that night, occupying a table alone in a small alcove from which a window looked out upon a side street."

"We were well through the meal, when Dick called my attention to the figure of a man standing on the outer edge of the walk, and facing across the sidewalk. "Do you remember having seen that person before this evening?" he asked. "I glanced up carelessly, and replied that, to the best of my recollection, I then saw the man for the first time."

"Then," he added, nervously, "note some peculiarity in dress or attitude, so you will know if you see him again. Wait; the face is the best index. He may turn this way in a moment."

"As though influenced by our rigid scrutiny, the man on the walk turned almost before Dick had done speaking, and faced the window where we sat. "Don't look now," Dick said, turning his own eyes away. "He is watching us. When you do look, notice the upper portion of his face. People of his kind usually point out their peculiarities by trying to hide them. Look sharp under the rim of the slouch hat he wears for some distinguishing mark."

"While the teller was speaking, I caught a full view of the man's face. The eyebrows were very thick and black, and came close together. There was no arch to speak of, and the general effect was that of a straight, unbroken line crossing the lower forehead. It was a face not easily forgotten. It was a face not easily forgotten."

"I thought you would find something there," Dick said, when I told him what I had seen. "I was not quick enough to see the fellow's face, but I should have known him anywhere. He stood in front of the bank-steps when we stopped there to-night, and has kept you in sight nearly all the way up. Unless he is frightened off we shall hear from him before long."

"I laughed heartily at Dick's view of the matter, and nothing more was said on the subject until we reached my rooms. Then, placing his hand on my arm, he exclaimed: "I can't get over what we were talking about at the restaurant. I can't get that slouching figure on the edge of the walk out of my mind. Let me remind you once more to look sharp for that face wherever you go. Good-night."

"He was off before I could make any reply, and I went on up-stairs, laughing quietly at what I considered the nervous fears of a tired-out and naturally suspicious man. "On my sitting-room table I found a note reminding me of an important en-

agement in another part of the city, and left hurriedly. To this day the janitor insists that I left my door unlocked, but I am positive that I did not. Not long after my departure, however, he found it ajar, looked carelessly through the rooms, saw that I was not there, and locked it. Had he been more thorough in his search he would doubtless have saved me a very strange experience. "It was midnight when I returned to my rooms. The gas was burning dimly in the sitting-room, but the sleeping-room beyond it was in total darkness. Opening from the sleeping-room was a large bathroom, and adjoining this was a large clothes-closet. I locked the door as usual, turned off the gas, and went to bed, as I frequently did, without striking a light in the sleeping-room or opening the doors leading to the bathroom and closet. I was tired, and fell asleep immediately.

"How long I slept soundly I cannot tell. I am utterly unable to describe the first sensations I experienced. Dimly, and afar off, I heard Dick Munson's voice, speaking as though in terrible fear or from out an overpowering nightmare. "At first the sounds came to me like a voice muffled by the walls of a close room, and conveyed to my mind no distinct form of words. But the tone was one of warning, and told me as plainly as words could have done that I was in deadly peril of some kind.

"After a time the voice ceased, and I heard, as plainly as I now hear the rumbling of wheels outside, the rapping of a private signal known only to Dick and myself, and used only in the bank when he desired to attract my attention to any face or suspicious circumstance in front of his window. This was repeated several times. Then I heard the voice again, clear and distinct this time, as though a door or window had been opened in the room from which it proceeded.

"There was no mistaking the words this time. I heard them over and over again, as one hears words in vivid dreams: 'Lock the bathroom door! I can't get that slouching figure out of my mind!' With the words came a feeling which I cannot describe, but which you have, doubtless, all experienced—a sensation of immediate personal danger coupled with a physical inability to control a muscle to meet it.

"The words and the private signal alternated many times, and then I heard a crash—such a crash as would follow the falling of a heavy window-sash. "Absolute silence followed, and with the silence came a sense of physical depression, as though a current of electricity which had wrought my nerves to their utmost tension had suddenly been withdrawn.

"I awoke instantly. When I say I awoke, I mean that I awoke to a consciousness of the things immediately about me, for it is my belief that my mental condition previous to that time cannot be expressed or described by the word sleep. "I heard the City Hall clock strike one, and tried to sleep again, but could not do so. I could think of nothing but the slouching figure I had seen early in the evening on the outer edge of the walk; I found it impossible to forget the mysterious words warning me to lock the bathroom door!

"I should have got out of bed and made a tour of the bathroom and closet, only it occurred to me it would be a rather ridiculous thing to do. Men who pride themselves on a practical turn of mind dislike to do ridiculous things, even when alone. Besides, notwithstanding the effect produced upon me by what I had heard, I regarded the matter as an unusually clear-cut dream, and was not in the least alarmed. The longer I lay awake the more thoroughly did I become convinced that the nervous suspicions of the paying-teller were alone responsible for my losing a good hour of sleep, and I resolved to make up for lost time as soon as possible by turning over for another nap.

"If I had not, as a preliminary step to the resolve so formed, raised myself in bed and made a great noise beating up and rearranging my pillows, perhaps the most trying portion of that night's experience would have been spared me. Be that as it may, the fact remains that before I had arranged my pillows to my liking my attention was diverted from my task by three rather startling objects. "The first was a dark lantern pouring its round red rays full in my face. The second was an unusually long and unaturally bright self-cocking revolver located within six inches of my nose. The third was a particularly villainous face, with thick, black eyebrows running together above the nose, forming no arch to speak of, and producing the general effect of a straight, unbroken line crossing the lower forehead!

"Was I frightened? Yes; but I scarcely think my fright took the usual form. I knew in an instant, as well as I know now, that it was not my life, nor the trifling amount of money he might find in my room, that the intruder wanted. I recognized his presence there as part of a well-laid plan to rob the bank. The intruder's first words confirmed my suspicions. "Get up and dress yourself," he said, in a whisper. "We want you at the bank. If you value your life, be quick about it, and make no noise."

"The man's arguments were unanswerable, and I obeyed. "You are to go with me to the bank," he said, holding his weapon close to my head as I dressed, and open the vault. The first movement you make to escape or call assistance will be your last. My mates are below. If I miss my aim, they will not. If we meet an officer at the bank, or on the way there, and you are questioned, you are to say that you want important papers left on your desk, and pass on. You will not be harmed. We want money, and not human life. Do you understand?"

"In a short time I was at the outer door of my sitting-room dressed for the street. Never for an instant, in all my journeys about the room to secure my clothes, had the threatening weapon been removed from the close position of my waking moment. Still, I had not abandoned all hope. Surely, between my rooms and the bank, some opportunity for escape would present itself. Had no intention of unlocking the vault. At the last moment I should have risked a few shots from the robbers' revolvers. "My escort unlocked the sitting-room door and passed with his hand on the knob. At that instant a sound of footsteps was heard on the stairs, the key was quietly turned in the lock, and I felt for the first time the cold rim of a revolver on my temple. The steps passed my door, and the weapon was lowered. You all know what followed. Before the weapon could be raised again, the door fell in with a crash, and the robber, who stood directly in front of it, was clubbed to the floor and handcuffed by a squad of policemen led by the paying-teller!

"Dick did not return to his own chambers that night. We spent the time until daylight in my sitting-room. At first he absolutely refused to explain his sudden appearance with the officers, for Dick is a hard-headed sort of a fellow, who scouts everything that cannot be demonstrated by set rules and figures; but finally he fairly unboomed himself, telling his story before I had even given a hint of my own mysterious experiences. "I slept soundly until nearly 10 o'clock," he said, with the air of a man who expects to be laughed at, and then I passed into a strange trance-like dream. In that dream I saw, as plainly as I ever saw it in my life, the interior of your bath-room, and seated at the foot of the tub, where the opening door would have concealed him from any one looking in, I saw the man we had last seen opposite the window where we dined. I recognized at once the slouching figure and the level line of eyebrows he then attempted to hide beneath the rim of his slouch hat.

"There was no light in the bathroom, or anywhere about the apartment, but I had no difficulty in tracing every line of his face, nor in seeing you sound asleep in your bed. My mind at once became filled with the one idea that you were in danger. In my sleep I called out to you to lock the bathroom-door, and warned you that I could not get the slouching figure we had seen on the edge of the walk out of my mind! I could not make you hear. In my alarm I even gave the private signal we use at the bank. I actually awoke to find myself sounding it on the head of my bed, and repeating over and over again the words I have told you of speaking. "I laughed at myself for a superstitious idiot, and went to sleep again, only to renew the experiences described—to see the slouching figure in the bathroom, and to repeat my cries of warning and the private signal. I awoke again, to find myself standing by my open window (I must have raised it in my sleep, for I closed it on retiring), sounding the private signal on the sash and repeating the warning words. How long I should have remained there I cannot say. My blows on the sash must have loosened the catch, for the window fell with a crash. In a moment I heard the City Hall clock strike one.

"I was now thoroughly awake, but I could not drive from my mind the impressions created by my singular dreams. Perhaps I should have gone to bed again only for the fact that the figure my dream had shown me in your apartment was the same I had warned you against on parting with you for the night. I resolved to dress myself and seek you in your rooms. "I was ashamed to come to your door openly at that time of night, with no excuse to offer for my presence save such a one as any old woman would have laughed at, so I crept up stairs like a spy and listened. I saw the flash of the dark lantern at the threshold. I heard enough to satisfy me that something was wrong. So I went for the police." —Frank Leslie's.

Catching Cold.

We are still greatly at sea as regards the way common colds are induced, says "Family Doctor," in the Practical Farmer. They are caused, I believe, in a great many more ways than we have any idea of. The words, "catching a chill," are to me entirely devoid of meaning. If by a cold we mean a congested state of the mucous membranes that line the passages through which we breathe, with discharge of water therefrom, pain in eyes and nose, tickling in the throat, tenderness and rawness of chest, with secondary symptoms in the shape of general feelings of dulness of mind and body, and aching of limbs, then I say these symptoms may be produced in many ways. Direct cold poured upon the head or face, as in driving against the wind, may produce them, so may the breathing of damp cold air or even of fumes from some melting substances, etc., that evolve irritating gases. Here you have your cold produced in a mechanical way. A cold may be taken through the feet or through the body, if either be insufficiently clad or wet; but this is not caused by the cold striking up through or in through either, but by causing depression of the nervous system, and consequent congestion of the air passages. In those subject to such a complaint, but cold may also be brought about by indigestion or derangement of the liver, or temporary weakness of the heart from any cause. And as for treatment, it seems to me that the less heroic it is the better. Extra warmth, rest of the whole system, the mildest of aperients and abstinence in diet will be found, as a rule, effectual and safe.

Some one asks if the early man was a savage. We can't say very much for the early man, but the man who comes puffing into the station ten minutes after the train has left generally has the appearance of one. —Stetman.

PACIFIC COAST FARMING.

HOW FARMS IN CALIFORNIA ARE OPERATED.

Wheat Raised by Contract—Borrowing Money—Qualities of Chinese Farm Hands—Raising Grapes. The great staple product of California is wheat, of which about fifty million bushels, worth more than forty millions of dollars, are raised in a good year, four-fifths of which are exported. This wheat is almost wholly raised on large ranches by contract. The wheat-grower is no more a farmer than he is a miner or a miller. He lets out his plowing and seeding by the acre, and borrows money from the banks to pay the bill, giving securing on the growing crop.

In harvest time a contractor comes on the ground with his harvesters, threshers and separators, an outfit costing as much as five thousand dollars. He brings his own crew of twenty to twenty-five men, who move about from place to place, living like gypsies in the open air. They gather in the broad fields of grain at the rate of more than one thousand bushels per day, and leave the crop neatly piled up in sacks, to which the rancher has not put his hand from first to last. More money is borrowed from the banks at the rate of one and one-half per cent. per month to pay for the harvesting, and some time or any time, before the rainy season begins, the sacks are carted either to the river or railroad, and sent to market.

The rancher is to all intents and purposes a capitalist, or, perhaps, a manufacturer dependent upon the capitalist, and, unless his operations are conducted on a sufficiently extensive scale, the margin of profit is hardly enough to keep him in idleness during the greater part of the year. Every wheat-grower in California is not of this sort, but every well-informed person will recognize the characteristics of a class sufficiently numerous to afford a basis for distinct and peculiar methods of business, both as regards contracts, transportation and finances.

It is to the thrifty wheat-grower that the employment of the Chinamen becomes a necessity if he would vary his husbandry, and avail himself fully of the season's opportunities. In planting, weeding and digging, the Chinaman excels, and the testimony of many a rancher is that without Chinese labor his farming would not be successful. In grape culture the common practice in the State is wasteful. Early in March, the plough is put in among the vines to remove weeds that careful culture would never have permitted to grow. The weeds come out, and so do all the tender roots near the surface.

During the summer the vines are commonly allowed to run until they cover the ground with shoots from ten to fifteen feet long; then there is a spasm of pruning, and they are all cut back just at the time when the whole strength of the foliage is required to mature the juice in the rapidly swelling fruit. The common price for grapes is from twenty to thirty dollars per ton, according to variety and quality, and the grower has so little margin for profit that he can only employ industrious and steady laborers at small wages.

As a consequence, the most successful grape-growers are compelled to employ Chinamen in their vineyards. Generally the more successful the man, the more Chinamen he employs; their wages are from twenty to twenty-five dollars per month without board. The employment of the Chinese becomes more and more of a necessity on account of the high wages demanded by the white laborer. —Youth's Companion.

Clever Escape From a Paris Jail.

An escape has been made from the Mazas Jail in Paris under most extraordinary circumstances. A prisoner named Altmayer, belonging to a well-to-do Jewish family, who was undergoing a term of imprisonment for embezzling a sum of \$10,000 from a Paris banker, forged in his cell a letter of dismissal, and obtained his liberty by showing it to the warders and hall porter. It is supposed that while he was being examined in Judge d'Instruction's office he contrived, while the Judge's back was turned, to stamp and mark a sheet of writing paper. In his cell he imitated with marvelous skill the magistrate's handwriting, which he had leisure to study during his confinement of two months and a half. The letter was an order, signed by the Judge in the name of the procurator, to set free the prisoner. He inclosed this in an official envelope, stolen, no doubt, from the Judge's office, and on leaving this before entering the van he handed it to his warder, with a request to take it to the prison director. Arrived at Mazas the prisoner, after remaining for five minutes with the other few inmates, was called upon and sent away free.

Odd Bits of Natural History.

Mr. Bradley, in his "Treatise on Agriculture," states that "two sparrows, during the time they were feeding their young, carried in one week 3,366 caterpillars from a cabbage garden to their nest."

Caterpillars eat about four times their own weight in food every day. Bats are useful as scavengers. The song of the thrush is remarkable for its mellow intonation and for the variety of its notes, and he is considered by many as the foremost of woodland songsters.

The name nightingale is derived from two words, viz: "night, and gale, to sing." These birds abound in Turkish countries, it having long been a custom of love to keep these birds upon the graves of the dear ones gone before. The male bird has no attractions of personal beauty; he must win purely on the merit of his song.

DEATH.

Oh Death, the Consecrator! Nothing so sanctifies a name, As to be written—dead! Nothing so wins a life from blame, So covers it from wrath and shame, As does the burial bed. Oh Death, the Revelator! Our deepest passions never move, Till thou hast bid them wake, We know not half how much we love, Till all below and all above, Is shrouded for our sake.

Oh Death, the great Peacemaker! If enmity have come between, There's naught like death to heal it. And if we love, oh priceless pain, Oh bitter-sweet, when love is vain, There's naught like death to seal it. —Carl Spencer.

HUMOR OF THE DAY.

It is strange, but true, that a woman with a new bonnet always carries her parasol closed. —New Haven News. It is bad enough to break party ties, but it isn't half so embarrassing as to have them work around under your ear. —Burlington Free Press. The rockers on a chair never stick out half so far behind at any other time as when a man is prowling around in the dark barefooted. —Danville Breese. Jailor—"Hello, fellow! I've seen you here three or four times." Prisoner—"Well, what of that? I've seen you here just as often." —Harper's Bazar.

"When does a man weigh most?" is the heading of an article in a health journal. That is an easy one. He weighs most when he steps on a fellow's corn. —Sittings. France makes about 100,000 quarts of champagne every year. One million quarts are shipped to England and the other 3,000,000 come to this country. That's what makes champagne dear. —Philadelphia Call.

Did you ever do some work, sir? At which you did not shrink, sir? And just do it to the letter. But some other fellow came in view, And gravely told to you, That he could do it ten times better! —Goodell's Sun.

A Harvard professor has made the calculation that if men were really as big as they sometimes feel, there would be only two in the United States for only two professors, three lawyers, two doctors, and a reporter on a Philadelphia paper. The rest of us would be crowded into the sea and have to swim for it. —Detroit Free Press.

Severed Fingers.

We have spoken of skin-grafting—the process by which bits of skin from healthy parts of the body, or from the body of some self-sacrificing friend, are transferred to an ugly ulcer, or an extensive and deep burn, and which, becoming centres of healthy growth, promote the healing, otherwise doubtful. We have also spoken of sponge-grafting, in which pieces of sponge are introduced into gaping wounds, and with the blood-clot that fills the interstices, are rapidly organized into flesh with all its proper nerves and vessels.

More lately it has been found that bone-grafting is a possibility for healing and restoration of destroyed bone, bits being used somewhat as bits of skin are used in skin-grafting. In the first instance, the physician was able to employ bone from the severed leg of a child; subsequently he used with equal success bits from a kid killed for the purpose. This method will need further testing. But it has long been known that where a portion of a bone—it may be a large portion—has been lost, the intermediate space will fill up with new bone, and fully rennate the severed parts, provided the flaps is kept fully extended. For this, however, it is necessary that the thin membrane which covers the bone (periosteum) should have remained sound.

In the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, a few months ago, Dr. Souther, of Worcester, told of a young man who brought to him a severed part of his little finger, wrapped up in his handkerchief. The doctor adjusted the piece—it was three-quarters of an inch in length—and, much to his surprise, the parts grew together, and the circulation was renewed. More recently a surgeon of Burdett, New York, has given a still more signal case.

He was called to a boy, three of whose fingers had been cut off by an axe. It was three or four hours before he reached the boy. The fingers were cut clean off from the middle joint of the first finger to the root of the nail of the third. While dressing them, the grandmother, brought in the fingers, which she had just found in the snow. Against his own convictions, he consented to try to save them. He succeeded, and saved all except about one-half the joint of the first finger, in which the blood failed to circulate. The boy regained the free use of the severed fingers. —Youth's Companion.

The Oldest Army Officer.

General Sherman was at the Ebbitt House to get shaved, and when about to leave the barber's room was accosted by a white-haired gentleman who begged to speak with him for a moment. General Sherman looked at him and tried to recall his name. "I think I have met you somewhere," he said. The gentleman who accosted him then introduced himself as Captain King, the oldest living officer of the army, who entered the service in 1818, fourteen years before General Sherman entered the Military Academy as a cadet. Capt. King was in the Mexican war, and his reminiscences naturally go much further back than those of the late General commanding the army. —Washington Casual.