

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.

The test of Spanish statesmanship is ability to reconcile the people to bad news.

Returns for 1898 show an increase in Canada's trade of \$44,000,000 over that for the corresponding period of last year.

The Government has decided to quit using black powder and has ordered a million pounds of the smokeless article. In the years to come those who read our war poetry will wonder what is meant by such expressions as "the battle's smoke."

A sarcastic writer in the Washington Star observes: Russia wants peace—until the trans-Siberian railroad is completed. France wants disarmament—immediately after she has recovered Alsace-Lorraine. England favors disarmament—of the land forces alone, her warships being, she explains, the harmless, necessary policemen to frighten off pirates from attacking her extensive commerce. The United States yearns for universal peace—but would not permit that abstract desire to interfere with the completion of her new navy.

Quite an industry is now carried on in the production of green gutta percha from the leaves of the coutechou tree, a product which is said to possess not only all the advantages of the article procured by incision into the stem, but even to excel it in durability, thus promising to enter largely into use industrially and commercially in a hitherto unknown way. It is not only readily prepared, but is also cheap, and does not require the expensive purification which has hitherto increased the price of the substance some fifteen to twenty-five per cent. It is highly plastic, very strong, can be divided into the thinnest leaves, and receives the most delicate and, at the same time, most distinct impressions by moulding and pressing. In addition to these advantages there is the important one of perfectly withstanding action of water and the strongest acids, and even in a worn and broken-up condition is still worth one-fourth its cost of production.

Park Commissioners in Baltimore are worried over the blighting of trees, which is ascribed to the presence of the electric lights and wires. The popular impression is that the ill effect comes from the bright light, under the influence of which the trees grow at night, as well as during the day, and thus soon exhaust their vitality. Electricians dispute this, however, while acknowledging the possible deteriorating influence of electricity. They deny that the electric light is sufficient for the growth of vegetation, inasmuch as it lacks the heat present in the light of the sun. Their theory is that the evil effect seen is due to electrolysis. Much electricity, they explain, escapes from the circuits. This, passing into the body of the tree, as the readiest conductor, decomposes the sap by taking out of it the oxygen which is its life-giving part. The fact that young trees show the injury from electricity more than the older ones, far from supporting the assumption that the injury is due to the light goes to prove the other theory, the electricians say, because the younger tree, more tender and full of sap, is more susceptible to the electric influence.

Library work for children is comparatively in its infancy, and in a majority of libraries the age limit regarding the withdrawal of books is maintained. This is, of course, wise in libraries where a separate classification of books for children has not been made. But many libraries have such classifications, and some have even gone to the extent of providing children's rooms or "corners." A chapter of a recent report by the Wisconsin Free Library Commission is devoted to this interesting phase of library work. Progress therein is facilitated by the supervision of the State Commission, and by a natural rivalry which is not so likely of development among isolated libraries. The Wisconsin report speaks enthusiastically of results. There are no more constant patrons than the children, and none who show a greater appreciation of the advantages offered by their behavior in the library and by their care of the books. Some libraries have gone to the extent of permitting the children to select the books desired from the shelves, and to replace them there after their return has been noted at the receiving desk. The children thus trusted have mastered the Cutter system of library indexing, with its mysterious symbols, and rarely is there occasion to rearrange any of the books in the children's section.

RATES OF ADVERTISING:

Table with advertising rates: One Square, one inch, one insertion... \$ 0.00; One Square, one inch, three months... \$ 3.00; One Square, one inch, one year... \$ 10.00; 1/2 Square, one year... \$ 15.00; Quarter Column, one year... \$ 20.00; Half Column, one year... \$ 30.00; One Column, one year... \$ 100.00; Local advertisements ten cents per line each insertion.

SONG AFTER VICTORY. We have given our best, oh Lord! We gave without stint or measure Our sons to the ruthless sword. The best of our men and treasure; We heeded the cry of distress, Lord God! We trusted the cause to Thee. We leaned on Thy right arm while we fought for the right— Fought upon land and sea. To Thee the praise, Lord God! That hails the horrors cease, That led this land with Thy tender hand To Victory and Peace.

THE BARLOW BLOCKADE. A Recruiting Incident.

HE war had been in progress several weeks when one warm evening Billy Barlow came shuffling into the kitchen where his wife was busy washing up the supper dishes, and there was such a new energy in his step that she turned involuntarily to see what it meant.

"Well, mother, said he, 'The President has called for troops, and I'm going to enlist.' 'Oh, ye be, ye be?' returned Miss Barlow, dryly. 'A hot flush burnt on her face, and she felt once more the sinking of heart she had known so well during the years of the Civil War, when Billy had been doing active service in the field. No wonder she hated the very mention of war and fighting. Her strong young husband had come back to her a broken wreck from a long imprisonment to be watched and tended like a child for the rest of his life. People tapped their foreheads significantly to the mention of Miss Barlow's Bill, and said he wasn't all there, but the most imaginative of them were far from suspecting how much of him wasn't there.'

"Down to the town hall I'm going to-morrow mornin', sure's a gun. Sho, I won't be long, mother! You don't mind my goin'?" He spoke almost pleadingly, stepping round where he could steal a glance at the face bent over the dishpan, working fiercely in the press of many emotions. "You're too old," she said. "It's the young fellows they want to have shot down in battle or murdered in other ways that's even worse."

"There was a lump in her throat. 'But I'm a veteran, don't ye see? Makes a sight o' difference. I guess there'll be no doubt about my gettin' in. I'm sound enough, if I am fifty-five,' and Billy, shoudering an imaginary gun, went through the manual of arms with a precision which would, indeed, have delighted the captain of his company. 'You'll see about gettin' my things ready, won't ye, Liza?' he asked presently, pausing in the march he had begun up and down the room, while the clattering of dishes in the sink might have represented the rattle of a hostile musketry. It was astonishing to see how the old, mainly occupation seemed to bring back some of the old, manly spirit. For the first time in years there was the ring of decision in his voice, and it struck deep into the poor wife's soul. He should never go back again to that cruel army. She had given up enough to her country already, and she turned upon him sharply.

"No, I won't. You ain't going to no war, William Barlow, and you might as well make up your mind to it first as last. So stop your nonsense and go put up them plates in the closet." Bill quailed from mere force of habit. He mechanically picked up the pile of plates, still damp and warm—from the excited hands of the washer, and carried them into the buttery. On ordinary occasions he would have returned with a feeble smile and some meek acquiescent jest in the face of opposition, but to-night he lingered, straightening the bowls and platters on the shelves, out of sight of his wife, trying very hard to collect his scattered wits with one great effort of resistance.

Mrs. Barlow, wiping her hands on her big blue gingham apron, followed him in a few minutes. He looked up at her, and there was something in his manner that filled her with sudden anxiety. "I've give way to ye in everything else, Liza, like a lamb, now haven't I? But this ain't for you to decide, and I'm goin' to enlist to-morrow mornin'." There, he won't say no more about it. Mebbe I shouldn't be called on to go to Cuba, anyhow. I'll make a new man o' me to see the old flag float in the wind again." His dull eyes kindled, and a host of recollections rushed into his befogged mind. It was useless for the disturbed wife to try to lure him away to other topics of conversation. When he declared from time to time that he meant to enlist next day, she no longer contradicted him, but heard his plans in silence, and even reminded him of the particular corner in the attic where his battered knapsack had been stored away, so that he had ceased to suspect her of opposing his designs when the clock struck nine, and they prepared to shut up the house for the night. "I want you should sleep in the spare room to-night, William," said she. "Why, 'tain't house cleaning time, is it?" asked Billy, good-naturedly,

o bed in her own room on the opposite side of the landing with a smile playing round her lips as she said to herself—"Another day of it will fix him. He'll have to give in." But at the end of another day he was still unconquered. It had grown very dull and wearisome in the low-ceiled room, which had not so much as a picture on the wall to relieve its dreariness. Billy took exercise by pacing up and down in his blanket. It seemed to him more dignified not to bandy words with his wife. So he maintained a stately silence when she demanded, as she brought in his meals, "Ain't you about tired o' bein' a fool, William?" which alarmed and then nettled her. The heroine who cried "Scissors!" with her last breath was a woman after Eliza Barlow's own heart. She never had abandoned a position when she once had taken it up, and this time a serious question was involved, for, with his suddenly developed strength of mind and purpose, she did not doubt that if he escaped he would carry out his object of enlisting. That he might be rejected because he was what the neighbors called "a little tetch'd" never occurred to her, and it seemed to her that her only chance of saving him and herself from a repetition of those terrible experiences of the sixties was to keep him under lock and key until the company had filled its ranks and departed to join the distant army. Mrs. Barlow shook her gray head when she took away the scarcely tasted supper tray on the evening of the third day.

Poor old Billy was sitting listlessly on the side of the bed a little later, when he heard a wagon drive into the yard. Then the cheery voice of his brother-in-law floated in through the open window, inquiring for him. "He ain't been able to get about these few days. Been confined to his room," explained his wife, with a grim regard for the exact truth. "I want to know! Guess I'll run in and see him. Rheumatiz, is it?" said the sympathetic inquirer. Mrs. Barlow's reply was inaudible. Then Billy's quickened ears caught a charmed word, and he listened breathlessly.

"I thought he'd get excited over the war. Didn't know but he'd set out to go. The company's about full. They've got their orders and are expecting to march to-morrow mornin'. Well, I must be off." The wheels rattled away leaving the prisoner in the spare room in desperation. The time had come when he must make a bold dash for liberty if he intended to follow the stars and stripes to the front, and the fog that hung over his brain seemed to lift and clear away for a moment, leaving him to consider a plan as coolly and calmly as he had ever done in his life.

That he would drop from the window without being more than bruised was probable, for the turf underneath was soft and spongy. But the possibility of making his way along the road and down the village street in the blanket, or even the fringed blue and white counterpane of the best bed, without being observed and arrested as an escaped lunatic, was dismissed at once. He looked round the room. A dressing case could not have been better. There was a closet—empty, for he had explored it carefully in the tedious hours of his captivity. Oh, no, not wholly empty, for laid away in a drawer with sprigs of lavender were his wife's Sunday things.

Like a flash he had them out. She was a large woman, and the black silk skirt all but met round his waist. For Billy had never succeeded in putting on much flesh after his career in the army. The sparrow-pinchion was well supplied, and if the belt wouldn't fasten, the garters could and did, by means of many pins. Over his shoulders went the camel's-hair shawl, that sacred garment never before touched by hands profane, and after a little hesitation, he concluded to add the bonnet, laughing at the reflection in the mirror as he perched it on his head and tied the strings under his chin, rough with the silver stubble of a three days' beard. An embroidered veil depended from the brim, and in this lay his safety, for when he drew the capacious shawl about him and kept his great boots under the hem of the skirt, he might easily have been mistaken in the late spring twilight for the figure that sat on Sundays in the Barlow pew.

When his costume was complete he went to the window and again surveyed the scene. All was clear. His wife was in the kitchen at the other side of the house. He let himself slowly down and dropped to the ground under the apple trees without more serious damage than a three-cornered rent torn in his skirt, which caught in the sill. In another minute he was hastening along the turnpike with giant strides towards the square where the town hall reared its white pillared front with the classic superiority of a Parthenon. The recruiting bureau had closed for good and all at six o'clock that day, but a group of the newly enlisted were gathered in its neighborhood discussing the one all-absorbing topic, conscious that the events in which they were about to take part were the making of history. Excitement was in the air. The whole village was charged with it.

All at once the little gathering was startled by the sudden appearance of a woman, tall, uncouth, ill-dressed, who dashed hastily down among them and up the steps of the hall, to beat in vain upon the door that bore the large official placard. When she had convinced herself that her efforts were useless she leaned back against the doorpost with a stifled exclamation of despair. One of the young men in uniform stepped forward and lifted his cap respectfully. "Madame," said he, "the office is

THE MERRY SIDE OF LIFE.

STORIES TOLD BY THE FUNNY MEN OF THE PRESS.

Kiss a Miss—Origin of a Popular Term.—An Accurate Calculation—The Author of It—Canoe Racing—Why He Walked—An Abstract Noun, Etc., Etc. "To kiss," said he, "is rapturous bliss, 'is an aggravation.' " "To kiss a miss," protested he, "is an aggravation." "To miss a kiss," responded she, "is poor navigation."

Origin of a Popular Term.—Laplunder to Finlander: "I see your Finnish."

An Accurate Calculation.—She—"How many people were there on the beach yesterday?" He—"One for every two feet."

The Author of It.—"I wonder who originated the phrase, 'A limb o' the law.' " "Oh! Judge Lynch, I suppose." Philadelphia Bulletin.

Canoe Racing.—First Aquatic Youth—"How was the canoe race to-day?" Second Aquatic Youth—"Dull. Awfully dull. Only three upsets." New York Weekly.

An Abstract Noun.—"Why do you call old Skinfint an abstract noun?" "Because he is something you can think of, but cannot touch." Chicago Evening Post.

A Scarce Article.—"Bridget, I told you five times to have muffins for breakfast. Haven't you any intellect?" "No, mum; there's none in the house." Brooklyn Life.

Great Fall.—"And did he fall on his knees when he proposed?" "No, but he was so rattled that he stepped on the cat and fell on his neck." Indianapolis Journal.

Wants Legal Aid.—"He sent her documents giving her control of their child." "Gracious! I wish I knew where to obtain documents that would give us control of our child!" Puck.

Why He Walked.—Witticus—"Here's a funny thing." Criticus—"What is it?" Witticus—"Account of a man who walked in his sleep because he dreamed he had no carfare." Ham's Horn.

Business Lunch.—"Young feller, this soup is seasoned to death." "Yes, sir. Every customer adds a little seasonin' to it, I reckon. You ort to git in earlier." Chicago Tribune.

A Palpable Hit.—Osmond—"Well, thank heaven, you've never seen me run after people who have money." Desmond—"No; but I've seen people run after you because you didn't have money." Life.

Not an Asylum Subject.—Stranger—"That man is evidently crazy. Why is he not put in an asylum?" Native—"His property is so heavily mortgaged that none of his relatives want it." New York Weekly.

Challenged For Cause.—"I object to that man on the jury," shouted the lawyer for the defense. "On what grounds?" inquired the court. "I'm the man that persuaded him to get married." Detroit Free Press.

How She Knew.—"My wife doesn't play chess; but she can always tell when a game is growing interesting." "How?" "Well, she says the more worried I look the more I'm enjoying it." Puck.

The Reformer.—Bobby—"A reformer is somebody who wants to do something for the people, ain't he, popper?" Mr. Ferry—"Sometimes he is, but he is more likely to be a man who wants to do things to people." Cincinnati Enquirer.

L'Enfant Terrible.—Caller (to child whose mother has left the room for a moment)—"Come here to me, my dear." L'Enfant Terrible—"No, I mustn't do that. Mamma told me I must stay sitting in the chair, because there's a hole in the cushion."

Is That It?—Little Edward—"Papa, why do they call those funny-looking, two-wheeled carriages hansom?" Papa—"I think it's because it takes some han'some balancing on the part of the drivers to keep from tipping the horses up in the air." Chicago News.

Banks Not Good Enough.—Kind Old Party—"Do you deposit your savings in the bank every week, my little man?" Ned the Neway—"Naw; de banks ain't safe enough ter suit me. De money I saves every week I packs in barrels and dry goods boxes and stores 'em away."

In Other Days.—"What wheel do you ride now, Bearings?" "The same as always, only this year's make." "And your wife?" "Oh! she is riding some sort of cheap wheel. I forget the name." "But you both used to ride and swear by the same make." "Yes, I know; but that was before we were married." Puck.

PUT TO FLIGHT.

This hero of the conflict was a man of valor rare. He'd face a battleship with trowings guns and never care. He quietly commanded and was instantly obeyed, And the foemen saw him they were utterly dismayed.

His nerves would show no tremor in a shower of shot and shell; He kept his self-possession as he struggled long and well. In all his life it never once occurred to him that they'd signed a protocol and said that war was done.

But in his quiet office, where he scanned his papers o'er, A fearful palor seized him when a sharp knock shook the door, And the messenger politely handed him a lengthy list Of the fair ones in the hallway who were waiting to be kissed. —Washington Star.

HUMOR OF THE DAY.

Because a man has wheels it does not follow that he is noted for his graceful carriage.—Boston Transcript. "You are not printing much war poetry now," said a caller to the editor. "No; I have erected a trocha." —Judge.

"How does Mrs. Gargoyle come to know so much of the Gummy family affairs?" "Gargoyle bought Gummy's parrot." —Judge.

"How long does it take you to do up a white ruffled skirt?" Laundress—"Generally about two washings, ma'am." —Life.

"Was your parting with George as affecting as you expected?" "No; I had a horrid cold-cure on my lip." —Cleveland Plain Dealer.

"Are the people well bred at your boarding house?" "Don't mention it. We even have to cut up the stale pieces in the forenoon bread pudding." —Lovers my word. It's loss would grieve, I could not bear the sorrow. So fragrant I strive to leave A plenty for the morrow. —Washington Star.

"There are ways and ways of breaking the ice," said the diner-out. "I once took a girl out to dinner whose first remark to me was, 'Do you talk or listen?'" —Tit-Bits.

She couldn't stay but a minute. And she wouldn't sit down, oh, no; But she kept our dinner waiting A long half hour or so. —Chicago Record.

Johnny had been playing around the piano and had had a fall. "What are you bawling about?" asked Bertie, contemptuously. "It was the soft pedal your head hit." —London Tit-Bits.

"Pray—"Have you heard that horrible story about old Stiffe being buried alive?" Dr. Bolus (hastily)—"Buried alive? Impossible! Why, he was one of my patients." Roxbury Gazette.

"This," said Mr. Flitter, "is a picture of the only girl I ever loved." "How cleverly," said Miss Wyse, as she looked at the portrait, "they do get up these composite photographs!" —Truth.

"We are in danger," said one Spanish statesman, "of sinking into oblivion; of being almost forgotten by the rest of the world." "Never!" replied the other proudly. "We still have our debts." —Washington Star.

"I often wonder," said Miss Sprocket, "what becomes of the popular songs. They are so soon forgotten." "They meet with a dreadful fate," replied Mr. Spokes. "How is that?" "Everybody murders them." —Truth.

"Say," remarked the juvenile philosopher to his father, "I've been down watching the ducks in the water to-day, and I've decided that if our ears grew between our toes we could swim just as easily." —Adams Freeman.

"Mother," said Miss Dollie Newrich, "can't father afford a seat in Parliament?" "A seat?" echoed the good lady, scornfully. "My dear, your father is rich enough to have a whole sofa if he desires it." —London Tit-Bits.

"General," exclaimed the subordinate officer in the Spanish army, "what shall we do with these bundles of typewritten victories?" "Hold on to 'em. Maybe Don Carlos will give us a chance to work some of 'em off yet." —Washington Star.

Wouldn't Miss the Chance: "She says that he proposed to her, but that they are not engaged." But they knew her and they laughed long and loud. "The only problem," they said, "is to decide which of the two statements is false." —Chicago Post.

Mrs. Nooritch—"I suppose you have noticed little Johnnie's awful lapses in grammar? I really must keep him from the servants." The Neighbor—"Really? I was of the opinion that he had learned them from his grandfather." —Indianapolis Journal.

As for the beautiful pariah, she merely sneered. "Wretched neighbors!" she exclaimed. "They shall yet come to me! Look, I have wealth! I shall have a telephone put in my house! Ha, ha!" Oh, what a power have riches to compel social recognition. —Detroit Journal.

Coal Burned by Steamships.—The amount of coal consumed by a vessel during a voyage depends very largely upon the speed, for the consumption of coal increases almost in a geometrical ratio to the speed. There are many ships which burn from 100 to 300 tons of coal per day, the lowest consumption being when the vessel is going at a moderate rate. Our men-of-war do not consume so much in proportion as swift passenger steamers which ply between Europe and America, for, unless in an emergency, they are not driven at the highest attainable speed. The ocean passenger steamers often burn from 2500 to 3500 tons during a passage lasting six to seven days.