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The railroads in this country kill about 2500 and wound about 25,000 persons a year.

Sixty years ago the aggregate wealth of the United States was only \$1,000,000,000; now it is \$55,200,000,000.

It is a fact worthy of note that although a woman may be elected school commissioner in Missouri, she cannot vote for one.

The Italian press is still indignant at the report of the New Orleans grand jury. The *Popolo Romano* says that it will be impossible hereafter for any civilized country to make a treaty with the United States based upon reciprocal protection of the lives of citizens of either country.

Fruit growing is destined to be one of the most profitable farm industries in New England, predicts the Boston *Cultivator*. It must receive equal attention with our garden crops and our grain fields. Neglected, our orchards and vineyards will be the refuge of insect pests. Intelligently cared for they will reward the patient and skillful husbandman.

It is said, laments *Munsey's Weekly*, that the snake charming industry is on the decline. It no longer affords an opening to girls who feel within them the promptings of a lofty ambition to earn two hundred dollars a week and their traveling expenses by dexterously toying with lethargic pythons, comatose boas, and cute, little spotted garter snakes. The public is wearying of an exhibition which, it has discovered, does not require a superhuman amount of bravery. It wants to see something really remarkable, entirely new, and absolutely unprecedented—such as, for instance, a female mouse tamer.

To those persons who believe in the doctrine of retribution, muses the Philadelphia *Record*, the death from hydrophobia in the city of Mexico of Colonel Miguel Lopez, the betrayer of the Emperor Maximilian, will furnish a text. Lopez was Maximilian's trusted friend, and the godfather of his child. For a bribe of \$30,000 he gave the password to the troops of Juarez, so that they could enter the city of Queretaro; and the capture and execution of Maximilian followed. The wife and children of Lopez left him; he was hissed on the streets; even beggars refused his charity and cursed him, and for twenty-five years he lived shunned and despised, dying at last in a paroxysm of madness. Poor Carlotta and the misguided Maximilian have been amply avenged.

The difficulty of obtaining a sufficient number of recruits of the requisite size has obliged both the French and the Italian Governments to reduce the minimum of their former standard by half an inch. A similar reduction became necessary in 1796, and again after the Napoleonic wars, that devoured the tallest men of France at the rate of 35,000 a year. The incessant wars of the Roman Republic were, however, not followed by any analogous results, observes the New York *Voice*, and the luxury and intemperance of the Empire did more to hasten the progress of physical degeneration than the slaughter of a thousand battles. In France absinthe alone has, in that respect, probably done more mischief than gunpowder.

The *Manufacturers' Record* publishes a full history of the development of the phosphate mining interests of Florida and South Carolina. Since 1889, when one company commenced to mine phosphate rock in Florida on a small scale, this industry has developed with wonderful rapidity, and the investments in phosphate lands have been on an enormous scale. The *Manufacturers' Record's* list of companies now operating there shows that over \$12,000,000 has been invested within two years, and that these companies now have a daily capacity of 2000 tons of phosphate rock which will be increased shortly to 8000 tons by the completion of mining plants now under construction. In addition to these companies fifty-one others, with an aggregate capital stock of over \$21,000,000, have been incorporated to develop phosphate lands, but are not yet at work. In South Carolina there are twenty-eight phosphate mining companies, with an aggregate capital of \$4,510,000, and the production last year was 537,149 tons. There are also eighteen fertilizer manufacturing companies in that State, having a capital of nearly \$5,000,000.

THE PLOWMAN.

When the tired plowman his plow-stock leaves
In the growing corn, as the sun goes down,
And the sky is as rich as a gleaner's sheaves
In flowers of crimson and purple and brown,
I will wait in the rare and wondrous eves
And watch, as the loom of the sunset weaves
Its fabric of gold over country and town.
And I think of the springs that have come
And gone
Since we saw the shuttle across the blue
That wrought in colors of dusk and dawn,
When the musk of the sleeping roses flew
On the breath of the southwind over the lawn,
And the evening shadows were longer drawn,
And the sun was low, and the stars were few.
And youth was fair in the lives we led,
Its memories linger in this latter spring,
And live in the flowers, the books we read,
The kiss she gave me in the grapevine swing,
In words and works, to be filled and fed
On the wasted honey and wasted bread,
And sung in the songs she used to sing.
Though the lily and rose have lost their leaves
In the ashes of summers of long ago,
They come, through the rare and wondrous eves,
In the crop of love we used to sow,
As rich as the garlands the sunset weaves
When the tired plowman his labor leaves
In the fragrant corn, and the sun is low.
—M. A. Candler, in *Atlanta Constitution*.

MY MAGAZINE FUND.

BY E. G. RICE.

Four months before I was graduated from Wellesley College, some years ago, I was troubled with the perplexing problem of how to get a very nice graduating dress at a very low cost; for my father, a village merchant in Maine, could ill afford to spend more money than was absolutely necessary for my regular expenses.

"I do wish I could think of some way to earn the money for my dress," I said one day to my inseparable friend, Madge Bennett.

"Why don't you write stories for the papers?" she asked, impulsively.

"What papers?" said I with surprise.

"Why, any papers—all papers—magazines, quarterlies, literary syndicates—anything or anybody," she answered, springing to her idea in her usual enthusiastic way.

"But I've no talent for writing," I protested.

"Yes, dear, you must have," she urged, effusively. "You don't know how often I've stood enraptured to hear you go on telling some yarn that I knew" (kissing me fervently; "hadn't a word of truth in it. Oh, I know you could be a great novelist. Think of being pointed out by strangers on the street as the celebrated Millicent Warner, of Warner's Falls! What rapture!"

"But what could I write a story about?" said I, ignoring her little reflection on my veracity at times.

"Write a love story. Everybody likes them," she answered.

"But I've never had a love affair, and I never can have," I added, mournfully, "for there isn't a man in my town that I'd look at for a lover, and you know I've got to stay at home while the other girls take their turn away at school. I know it's predestinated that I shall be an old maid, but I don't like the outlook," said I, telling a literal truth for once at least.

"Tisn't of the least consequence," Madge said, encouragingly. "People never need to know about the subjects they write about. Why, all the books about the management of children are written by old maids; and do you suppose that the people who write about Lord This and Lady That ever saw a real lord, even with an opera-glass?"

"I don't know," said I with simplicity.

"Why, of course not," she rattled on; "half the stories of travel and adventure are made up by men who have never been outside of Coney Island. Indeed, the less you really know about a subject the better off you are, you see, because you're not hampered by facts and your imagination can have full scope."

"I'm afraid I couldn't succeed that way," I said, mustily.

"Indeed you could," she still asserted. "Last year my cousin, Joe Schuyler, who always has lived in New York and was just graduated at Columbia—not even a country college, like Harvard—took charge of the agricultural department of a city paper while the regular editor went to Europe for three months, and he got along finely. He just hunted over the rural exchanges and re-wrote their articles, using a little different wording, that was all."

"Didn't he make any blunders?" I asked.

"No, not in the paper," she said; "but he did get into a bit of a scrape, for a farmer wrote him asking for some explicit directions for using a new remedy for pip in chickens, and as Joe is full of fun, he wrote the farmer a private letter sending him a prescription about like this:

Stumpus woodus, regular size.
Hatchetus, one application.
Shake well before using.
This is an absolute and instantaneous cure.

So the farmer drove off five miles to the nearest town, to the drug store, where the clerk assured him he'd been trifled with and that it was all a joke. That enraged the farmer and he took it

in to the county paper, which happened to be published in that town, and the editor made the most of poor Joe's joke and all the county stopped their subscriptions in consequence. But Joe didn't care."

"Didn't the city head-editor care?" I asked.

"Dear me! I don't know. Joe didn't tell me what he said. But, Millicent, do try. I know you could write a sweet love story, or a yachting adventure."

"Why, I never was on a yacht in my life," I remonstrated.

"But I assure you, dear, it isn't of any consequence if you never were. Now, if you'll never divulge my secret, I'll tell you that I am writing a story myself, and am doing just what I've advised you to do, for my story is named 'A Night with Gamblers,' and I've located it on the Mississippi River steamer. It's a thrilling tale, and I've got to a place where one man is just going to stab another."

"Do read it to me!" I urged; but Madge would not unless I would agree to write one with her;—and so this was the way my first attempt to write for the press came about.

I took her advice. I not only wrote a love story, but I placed the lovers on a yacht and set them afloat in Georgian Bay—probably because I knew less of that sheet of water than of most others.

"That's all right," said Madge cheerfully. "Send it to some inland newspaper. The editor himself won't know any more about it than you do. If he sends you fifty dollars—which I think would be a fair price—for your story, you won't care whether the yacht sails bow on or stern first, and if you do happen to get it wrong, folks will think the boat has got some new kind of a rig on her."

So I got a fresh block of paper, wrote my title, "Love in Georgian Bay," and began my story. By night I had two pages written, and couldn't seem to think of anything to say next. Madge, too, still had her gambler "standing with uplifted hand ready to plunge his dagger," but some way she couldn't seem to end the situation as she wished.

Day after day we wrestled with these imaginary men. The girl of my tale was all ready and willing—I had no trouble with her; but I wanted my hero to suffer some severe heart experiences, and I found it no easy task to pull him into and out of his various difficulties. I wrote and wrote, and then would tear up my writing and try again.

Madge, too, had her trials. Some days she shot her gambler and then she would revive him and stab him, and once she poisoned him, but his style of death never seemed to satisfy her. "It must not seem melodramatic," she said; "it must be a tale indicating great reserved power."

Each day we asked each other with our first waking breath:

"Will he propose to-day?" and "Will he be dead by night?"

Finally a day came when we each resolved to end the suspense before night, and in the recreation hour we took our writing blocks and wandered off to a quiet place under the Wellesley trees, agreeing to make some sort of an ending before we went back; but the gambler was still alive, and the willing maid was still trying to lure on the reluctant lover, when the sound of distant thunder came to our ears and a dark cloud rising in the west warned us to return to a shelter.

It gave us both a new idea, however, and we each resolved to work a thunder storm into our tales.

The result was better than our hopes. The gambler was made to rush on deck just as a flash of lightning struck the smoke stack of his steamer, and he was knocked senseless and then robbed by his fiendish companions and cast overboard, where "he sunk to rise no more."

Madge laid her tale aside with a sigh. "It will save sending for an undertaker, anyhow," she said, "if I drown him instead of stabbing him; so, on the whole, I think it's the better way."

As for my couple, they are idly drifting on an ebbing tide (I didn't know then that there was no tide in Georgian Bay), when dark clouds began to roll up, and the muttering thunder began to reverberate among the darkly wooded hills. They hastily rowed to the shore, tied their yacht to a tree, and began climbing a rugged precipice, while the maid clung in terror to the soul-tossed lover. It was too suggestive. He begged to defend her through all life's pathway, and in well-feigned surprise she murmured her assent just as the first drops of the bursting storm fell and they reached a shelter. "It was a happy omen of future days," were my closing words.

"My maiden is ready to don her solitaire diamond ring," I declared triumphantly to Madge, and we kissed each other ecstatically.

"I knew you could do it, Milly," she said. "Now, shall you sign your name to it?"

"No, indeed," I replied; "I've decided to use a man's name, for I think it would be more in accordance with my style of composition. I shall be known as George Warner."

Madge said she did not shrink from the public gaze. She would use her own name.

We copied our stories carefully and sent them each to one of the two best-known magazines, and then began to watch the daily mail for an answer.

While we continually asserted to each other that we hadn't the least idea they would be accepted, we each were, in our own minds, as continually planning as to how we would spend the fifty dollars that we duly expected to receive.

Having heard from neither story at the end of a fortnight, we concluded that the stories had been accepted and were waiting to be published before being paid for, and settled back quite composedly in that conviction. Each day I planned a new way to spend my money.

"Since we've been so successful in these articles, let us write some more," said Madge; and we did.

This time she took a love story, and had a West Point cadet elope with a Southern heiress, and then both of them went to the President to ask pardon, and he reinstated the cadet in the military academy, at the same time allowing him to board at the hotel with his bride, to the envy of the whole corps.

I told a true story about a French-Canadian boy from Three Rivers who came to our own town to earn money for his widowed mother, and was crushed in a jam of logs, and how kind the rough men were to him, and how they sent him home to die because he longed so to see his mother once more.

We wrote these stories rapidly and sent them to the two next best magazines of our choice. Madge said we might just as well become known at once to the world of readers as to limit our scope to the circle reached by any one periodical. In our imaginations we now had each earned fifty dollars more, and as the proceeds seemed to accumulate so well we decided to write all that we could find time for.

It made a serious inroad in my pocket money to obtain the needed stamps to send the articles away and also to provide for their being returned, and Madge suggested that we save this last expense, as it was evidently uncalled for. Then graduation time came, and we had to leave each other and the place we loved so much.

We debated whether to write to all the various editors about our articles, and notify them of our change of address, but finally decided to leave word with the postmaster at Wellesley and await results: I had been sorely tempted to run in debt for some graduating extravagances, being sure I could pay for them out of my "magazine fund," as I now called my expected fifty dollar payments, but had bravely resisted the temptation, as it was contrary to all my home training, by thinking how happy I would be later to repay my father for some of his generous outlay on my pleasure.

When I got back to Maine I took our village postmaster into my confidence enough to persuade him to retain any letters addressed to George Warner, for delivery to myself alone.

One after another, in the course of the next six months, those various rejected manuscripts found their way back to Warner's Falls, and time after time my "magazine fund" diminished correspondingly. Daily I was more and more thankful that I had not left any debts to be met from that prospective income.

A formal printed blank, stating with courtesy that my article was not available, accompanied each one but the one of the Canadian boy, to which the editor added in a foot-note the words, "If written with more care this would probably be accepted somewhere. Try your local paper."

Madge wrote me that all of her productions had been used in due time to light her grate fires, but she was convinced that editors were time-servers and could not recognize genius unless a big name were signed to an article.

I now felt very humble, but re-wrote the story suggested and sent it to our county paper with many misgivings. The editor wrote me a kind note saying that he could not afford to pay for contributions, but he would be glad to publish any good short articles sent him on those terms, and I soon had the inexpressible pleasure of seeing my story in print, and of sending a copy of the paper to Madge, who unselfishly satisfied my longing with her ready and effusive, though truly genuine, sympathy and praise.

Then I sent my first story, "Love in Georgian Bay," and another entitled, "The Bride of Castle Chalheur," but the editor returned them both with a note saying that they were not adapted to his paper, and suggesting that I send him several brief letters about college-girl life at Wellesley; and he added; "Write simply about things you know about."

I re-read all my silly, stilted stories, and recognizing their utter trashiness, put them into the kitchen fire. I could not help letting a tear fall as I thought of the "magazine fund" with which I could never surprise my father's emptied purse. Some time afterward, however, I wrote Madge a long and true tale. The unexpected man had come to pass, even in our town that I had scorned, and the subject of my true tale was "Love in Warner's Falls."—*Frank Leslie's Illustrated*.

Biggest Fresh Water Fish.

The biggest of fresh water fishes, the "arapaima," of the Amazon, in South America, which grows to six feet in length, has teeth on his tongue, so that the latter resembles the file and is used as such. Some kinds of trout also have the same peculiarity. Fishes that swallow their prey entire have their teeth supported on flexible bases as to bend backward, but not forward, in order that their victims shall not escape after they have been seized.—*Boston Cultivator*.

"What is the deepest depth of ignorance?" asked the philosopher, musingly, and the man of the world made haste to answer: "It is the ignorance displayed by a railway official when there has been a wreck on his road."—*St. Joseph's News*.

HOW TRAINS ARE ROBBED.

MILLIONS LOST THROUGH SYSTEMATIC PLUNDERING.

The Men Who Commit the Robberies—How a Big Gang of Thieves Was Broken Up.

Railroad managers have two grades of losses to contend with which involve not only a heavy expenditure of money but the constant patrolling of the lines by a corps of well-trained detectives and experts. Lost or astray cars, sometimes side-tracked and left to the exposure of the weather as a temporary abode for tramps, and oftener run off for other purposes, keep a body of men busy all the time. A regular department has been created, with a chief and a corps of experts, whose duty it is to follow up these astrays and return them to the companies to whom they belong. The second and more serious trouble to railroad corporations is the constant and systematic plunder of freight cars, the removal of valuable cargoes and the hiding of the plunder. The latter is an adjunct of the astray cars, which the robbers run into the woods or other desolate places that darkness and secrecy may cover up their nefarious transactions.

During a period covering fifteen years the larger corporations—like the Pennsylvania, Pan Handle, New York and New Haven, New York Central and Erie roads—have been sufferers to the extent of millions of dollars from this grade of thefts, and frequently the shrewdest and most expert detectives have been baffled for weeks and months in running down the thieves, recovering their plunder and safely housing the perpetrators in State prisons.

"Three grades of men commit the robberies on freight trains," said Private Detective J. A. Newcome. "They are tramps, who secrete themselves in the cars and steal anything they can pick up; railroad employees, who band together for the purposes of plunder, and organized gangs of professional thieves, who reside in the big cities and make trips into the country, led by a local pal, who ascertains when a car-load of valuable freight is to pass over a designated line."

Perhaps the most extensive haul of plunder in freight-cars extended during a period of years in the sixties, and was checked through the exertions of the late railroad detective, Gilkinson. There had been wholesale and systematic robberies of freight-cars on the Pittsburg, Cincinnati and St. Louis Road, better known as the Pan Handle route of the Pennsylvania system, extending over a period of three years and involving a total loss to the Company of nearly or quite half a million dollars. Chief Detective Rue, of the Pennsylvania Company, aided by Gilkinson and his corps of well-trained detectives, set at work and labored day and night in search of the miscreants. It required two months of persistent labor to run down the gang, and it unearthed the most extensive scheme of train robbery ever known. A local train was robbed and some of the detectives had the good fortune to be in hiding when the gang was operating. They were railroad employes, and subsequent developments showed that seventy-five or eighty crews practically were engaged in the scheme of plunder. The work was performed skillfully. The secreted detective saw the wire pulled out of the seal, the door thrown back, the car entered and the plunder removed to a caboose, while the conductor pulled back the door, run the wire through the seal and then by a blow with a board the lock looked as if it had been tampered with.

The plunder consisted of liquors, cigars, organs, pianos, silks, ribbons, and other valuable packages. In one instance a freight car was converted into a temporary concert room. A conductor sat all night playing on a piano while his companions danced, drank, sang and smoked at intervals, and ate their supper from the polished top of the valuable Grand. When this musical employe was arrested he was thumping a piano in a Pittsburg dive. The robberies included everything except an anvil and a coffin. The plunder was sold to well-known Philadelphia and Pittsburg "fence-houses," and wives, sisters and sweethearts were decked out with the stolen silks, gloves, laces and jewelry.

When all the details were prepared and the time for action arrived, the arrests began in Pittsburg in April, 1887. As the trains rolled into the big yards detectives stepped forward, revolvers in hand, and the crews were handcuffed. The same course was pursued all along the line between Pittsburg and Columbus. Over four hundred warrants were issued. Over one-fourth of the men arrested were railroad employes and keepers of "fences." One of the men who was arrested, a brakeman by the name of Baker, made a desperate attempt to murder an engineer. The engineers and firemen were not in the plot of robbery. Brakeman Young called at the jail to visit some of the prisoners and was arrested. He protested his innocence at first, but finally confessed, and a large amount of the plunder was found in his house. J. R. Dunlop, one of the gang, made a full confession and seventy-three of the men were implicated. Scores of the fellows were sent to prison.—*New York World*.

The culture of oranges in California dates back to the time of the old Mission fathers, who, it is stated, brought the seed from Spain.

TO-DAY.

Be swift to love your own, dears,
Your own who need you so;
Say to the speeding hour, dears,
"I will not let thee go
Except thou give a blessing!"
Force it to bide and stay;
Love has no sure to-morrow,
It only has to-day.

Oh, hasten to be kind, dears,
Before the time shall come
When you are left behind, dears,
In an all-lonely home;
Before in late contrition
Vainly you weep and pray;
Love has no sure to-morrow,
It only has to-day.

Swifter than sun and shade, dears,
Move the fleet wings of pain;
The chance we have to-day, dears,
May never come again.
Joy is a fickle rover:
He brooketh not delay,
Love has no sure to-morrow,
It only has to-day.

Too late to plead or grieve, dears,
Too late to kiss or sigh,
When death has laid his seal, dears,
On the cold lip and eye,
Too late our gifts to lavish
Upon the burial clay;
Love has no sure to-morrow,
It only has to-day.

—*Congregationalist*.

HUMOR OF THE DAY.

A darkness that may be felt—A black hat.

The disinherited son is punished with a will.

"We meet but to part," as the comb said to the brush.

The royal chef does things to the Queen's taste.—*Pittsburg Post*.

It takes a very prompt man to be a hero to his tailor.—*New York Herald*.

The lobster is not noted for its bashfulness; but it turns red on getting into "hot water."—*Puck*.

It is an odd thing that the temperate zone contains the hardest drinkers on the face of the earth.—*Puck*.

"I say, Bill!" (shouting to another salesman), "got any more of those diamond necklaces for \$1.49?"—*Life*.

The value of a compliment lies in its placing. "Heart of oak" is more pleasantly received than "wooden head."—*Puck*.

"Sweet nothings!" he exclaimed softly, as he looked at the row of ciphers after the figure on the check.—*Washington Post*.

"I'm going to write an immortal poem." "What's your recipe?" "Indelible ink on asbestos paper."—*Munsey's Weekly*.

So many people have the look on their faces as if they had been allowed one last strike at something and missed it.—*Atchison Globe*.

When a tramp is fortunate enough to get hold of the upper portion of a roasted fowl he generally makes a clean breast of it.—*Texas Siftings*.

Parrott—"How many great titles end in 'or'—Emperor, legislator, editor?" Wiggins (who lives in a flat)—"Yes, and janitor."—*Harper's Bazar*.

With the same finger with which she has just dashed a tear from her eye a woman artfully arranges a stray lock of hair on her temple.—*Fliegende Blaetter*.

"Man wants but little here below." "That's all quite true, and yet, I'd like to see the man that won't take all that he can get."—*Life*.

Mr. Jones (as the grizzly draws up on him)—"Oh! why can't I remember whether it's a grizzly or a brown bear that can't climb a tree?"—*Harvard Lampoon*.

"What do you do with that baseball mask?" "Why, Johnny is very bad sometimes, and the only closet I have to shut him up in is where the preserves are safe."—*Harper's Bazar*.

On four seats of a railway car, Amidst his traps, the drummer sat, And wished he had but one seat more In which to place his high silk hat.—*Puck*.

One of England's advantages: "I do so love England," said De Peyster ecstatically. "What do you so like about it?" asked Brouters. "It's so English," returned De Peyster.—*Brooklyn Life*.

"Nature rarely wastes, but sometimes she does," said Mehitabel at the circus. "Look at the elephant, for instance. Two tails practically, and yet with a hide impervious to flies."—*New York Sun*.

The milk of human kindness Is a gift supreme; But our impetuous friend Always wants the cream.—*Puck*.

Aunt Ann—"How can you be content to waste your time reading these trashy novels? Just listen to this: They sat hand in hand, speechless with the sweet intoxication of first love. Intoxication of first love! Bah! Laura—" "But, auntie, it must have been due to their ardent spirits."—*Indianapolis Journal*.

A little five-year-old Irish boy in one of our public schools was reproved by his teacher for some mischief. He was about to deny his fault, when she said: "I saw you, Jerry." "Yes," he replied, as quick as a flash, "I tell thim there ain't much yous don't see wid thim purty black eyes of yours." That was the soft answer that turned away wrath; for what lady could resist so graceful a compliment?—*Harper's Young People*.