

Of all men in the world, drug clerks and railroad engineers should not be so overworked as to imperil their presence of mind, observes the New York Tribune.

Science having demonstrated that the stomach is superfluous, dyspeptic gentlemen who contemplate a trip to the Klondike region this spring should be careful to check all unnecessary baggage at home.

The loosening of white doves at the launching of the Japanese cruiser prompts the Philadelphia Press to suggest the appropriateness of setting free a young eagle when a United States war vessel first meets the water.

Philatelists are protesting against the proposed new issue of stamps commemorative of the Omaha (Neb.) exhibition. They say the issue will serve no good purpose, and speculators will buy the stamps and hold them for a high price.

The pastor of a London church, in order to popularize his service, permits the male members of his congregation to smoke, and furnishes the tobacco. New Jersey is bound to keep pace, Rector Stoddard of Jersey City having started a dancing class in his church.

Prussia's paternal government has ordered two private schools in a little town near Potsdam to be closed because they interfere with a rival establishment. One may be kept open a year longer provided the proprietor engages to take in only twenty pupils and to teach them no foreign languages.

Early morning exercise is denounced nowadays by the majority of hygienic teachers. At that time, they say, vitality is at its lowest ebb, and needs the stimulation of food. About mid-afternoon is the best time for gentle outdoor exercise. At this time, too, it is most desirable that mental labor should cease.

A great improvement has been made in Parisian duels. The seconds in an affair of honor between a dramatic author and one of his critics made a mistake in the place of meeting, thereby sending their principals to opposite ends of Paris. This made a subsequent meeting at close quarters unnecessary.

A recent writer on the Chinese cotton industry states, as a remarkable fact, that in China cotton yarn can be produced for ten cents per pound. In our southern mills cotton undershirts can be produced for a fraction over ten cents apiece. There is hope for our cotton manufacturers, even in competition with the Chinese.

The chief aid-de-camp of Don Carlos is quoted as saying that all his master wants to enable him to get the crown of Spain is the help of "God and His Vicar-General." Being interrogated as to the individuality of the latter, without whose aid even Divine help is vain, he frankly explains that the Vicar-General is no other than—money! A potent vicar truly! exclaims the New York Tribune.

England's scheme to get China heavily in her debt is shrewd in more ways than one. By that course China can be made to leave her customs in British hands, which implies that the great trade ports are not to be ceded away, nor territorial relations changed. Then by insisting that part of the loan shall be used to pay off Japan, the latter power is given the means to buy more ships and guns in the British market. The thrifty side of British diplomacy was never more apparent than it is in this Chinese undertaking, which sufficiently accounts, thinks the San Francisco Chronicle, for the alarm in other quarters.

The present year will not be lacking in political interest. In twenty-five states of the Union elections for governor will be held, and these elections will serve to throw much light upon national issues. Governors and statehouse officers are to be elected in Alabama, Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Georgia, Idaho, Kansas, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Wisconsin and Wyoming. In the above list of states every section of the country is represented. Rhode Island's state election will occur in April, Alabama's in August, Arkansas's in September and Georgia's in October. The remaining ones will all occur in November. With this outlook ahead, there is not apt to be much idleness among the politicians.

The number of school children in Connecticut showed a greater increase last year than in any other year in the history of the state. The census gave a total of 184,355.

Men who are thinking of going to China for the purpose of seeking railway employment are warned by United States Consul-General Goodnow to keep away, as there are only 235 miles of road in the whole empire.

A ton of American flax straw, raised in the state of Washington, was recently sent to Ireland, and was found to be worth \$150 more per ton than the Irish article. The soil of many other states is just as well adapted to flax raising as that of Washington. Why shouldn't the farmers give flax a trial?

According to the Chicago Tribune, the legal hangings in the United States for the year 1897 aggregated 128—an increase of six over 1886. The executions were distributed as follows: In the South, 82; in the North, 46; whites, 72; colored, 51; Indians, 3; Chinese, 2.

It is a little hard, after all the pictures and all the panegyric in England on the brave piper at Dargal ridge, to have it come out that the man who played "Cock o' the North" and stimulated the Highlanders to deeds of valor was a German. His nationality should have been fixed up before the reports were sent out.

Dr. Sheldon Jackson, the Alaska expert, says that there is so much gold in Alaska that persons who go there ten years hence will have as good a chance as those who go next spring. He advises every gold-seeker to take his wife along with him, as he can do much better work with the aid of a good woman than without it.

Some of the younger Wall street operators seem determined to retire Russell Sage. The old man has \$50,000,000 in cold cash and wears a \$2 overcoat. The combination, in the opinion of the St. Louis Star, is a difficult one to overthrow, and perhaps before they get through with it they will wish they hadn't undertaken it.

That the Swedes are preparing for serious trouble is shown by the budget just submitted, which asks for nearly 10,000,000 kroner for fortifications and warships. The Norwegians having reduced their contributions to the Crown Prince's allowance by 50,000 kroner, the Riksdag has been asked to increase its grant accordingly. This will undoubtedly be done, but it increases popular irritation in Sweden against Norway.

According to the New York Herald, the "social promoter" is carrying things with a high hand in Washington. For a cash consideration it is quite possible for anybody to become "introduced." The only requisite is sufficient money to make your entry worth while to some Washington society woman who will take you under her wing. Women of national repute have adopted the profession, and one of them has even gone so far as to advertise in the newspapers for "clients."

The formation of a labor union in Tokio, Japan, and the issuance of a single tax paper there accent the change that has come over the country since the war. The fifteen-cent wage rate appears to be a thing of the past and a seventy-cent rate is enforced at some of the treaty ports. There are, however, too many laborers in Japan to sustain western wage scales, and any great general organization of workers would probably be frowned down by the authorities. Nevertheless the movement is an interesting sign of the times.

Representative Johnson of North Dakota does not favor the proposition of Senator Jones of Arkansas, to appropriate \$150 for a portrait of Sitting Bull. Mr. Johnson says: "His fame rests on the reputation got without merit in connection with the Custer massacre in June, 1876. He was a medicine man and not a warrior. During the fight he was with the squaws, out of harm's way, in the rear, cooking mysterious herbs, dancing and chanting incantations to the devil. Call Grass, Running Antelope and Rain-in-the-Face did the fighting and Sitting Bull got the glory." Mr. Johnson thinks a portrait of Custer or Porter would be preferable. Dr. Porter carried the wounded of Reno's command twenty-five miles on stretchers to the steamboats and a thousand miles to Bismarck, the nearest place that shelter and medicine were procurable.

Three travelers met at the Brandon pass, By the bubbling Brandon spring; They shared their cake and venison, And talked of many a thing; Of books and songs and foreign lands, Of strange and wandering lives; And by and by, in softer tones, They spoke of their homes and wives.

"I married the lady of Logan Brae," Said one, with a lofty air; "And there isn't in all the north country A house with a better share Of gold and gear and hill and loch, Of houses and farms to rent; There's many a man has envied me, And I'm more than well content."

The Privilege of the Day.

"It's perfectly ridiculous," said Miss Daffodil, "for you girls to be thinking of getting married all the time; I never do. Now just look how this bias fold is puckered! If you young women weren't cackling and chattering all the time, these things wouldn't happen. Valentine's day, indeed! Who was that talking about St. Valentine's day? And what is St. Valentine's day to you working girls, I'd like to know? It's only ladies that have time to think of such things."

Miss Deborah Daffodil, a somewhat faded maiden of five-and-thirty frosted autumns, was the Burnville dressmaker, and the four girls in her dingy back parlor were her assistants, whom she paid as little and scolded as much as possible.

"But, Miss Daffodil," reasoned Amabel Archer, a rosy, dark-browed brunette, with limpid brown eyes and a rich crimson flush on her cheek, "why shouldn't we talk about St. Valentine's day? It's always a lucky day in our family. Uncle Job sent mamma a cheque for \$20 a year ago St. Valentine's day, and two years ago, on that very anniversary, my sister Effie met the man that she afterward married. And who knows what dawn of good fortune it may bring for me?"

"Married!" shrilly repeated Miss Daffodil, tapping her thimble-finger on the table. "There it is, again! I believe you girls think of nothing else."

"Well," said Amabel, thoughtfully, "it does mean a good deal in a girl's life. If I supposed that I had got to sit here and sew always—"

"I only hope no worse lot will ever befall you," said Miss Daffodil, sourly. "But I never knew a girl who was always curling her hair and thinking of her complexion who came to any good end."

Amabel crimsoned.

"Do you mean me, Miss Daffodil?" said she.

The spinster tossed her head. "Then as the cap fits, let 'em wear it," said she. "And I'll trouble you all, young women, to leave off chattering silly, superstitious nonsense about heathenish old saints that never existed at all—"

At this there was a general outcry. Not even from the lips of their vine-gar-tongued employer would the girls listen to any derogation from the darling patron saint of girlhood—the good saint to whom all maidens render loving homage—St. Valentine!

"Well, if he did exist, it was a long time ago," said Miss Daffodil; "and you've none of you nothing to do with him now. And Miss Chickering's bridal outfit is to be packed on Monday, and here it isn't half finished. What's that, Amabel Archer? You want to get away early this evening? You're going for a moonlight sleigh ride with Captain Juniper? Let me tell you, miss, that you will do nothing of the kind," said Miss Daffodil, speaking with added rancor. "It isn't decent nor proper for a young girl like you to go cutter riding around the country with every gentleman in town."

"You went riding with Captain Juniper yourself, last week, Miss Daffodil," said Amabel, all else forgotten in her rising indignation.

"That's quite a different thing," said the dressmaker, simpering. "Captain Juniper and I are very particular friends."

"Oh, Miss Daffodil!" cried out Barbara Dayton. "You're not engaged to him? Oh, do tell us!" "Barbara, will you attend to your work?" said Miss Daffodil. "Though, all the same, if such reports do get abroad, I consider it my duty neither to deny nor confirm them."

But Miss Daffodil did not consider it her duty to tell the girls that she had run half a dozen yards through the deep snow after Captain Juniper's cutter, to ask him "if he would just as lief as not take her as far as the village to match some lapis-lazuli buttons for Mrs. Gregg's dress," and that the gallant captain was too chivalrous to refuse to aid a lady in distress.

And thereupon Miss Deborah Daffodil had based great hopes.

"He's a few years younger than I am, to be sure," said she; "but if ever devotion was expressed in a human eye, it was in his when he handed me out the card of buttons that I wanted to match and told me to be careful not to slip down on the frosted curbstone. And when I invited him to call he thanked me and said he should be very happy. And I don't see how any man could have said more than that!"

So that, when she heard of Amabel Archer's invitation, a very natural jealousy stirred her heart.

"That minx," said she, "shall stay home and mind her business, or I'll know the reason why! Sleigh riding, indeed! By moonlight! Not if I know it!"

"No, Miss Archer," she said, firmly; "I have promised Miss Waterson that she shall have her plum-colored silk tomorrow morning."

"Can't Barbara Dayton finish it?"

LOVE IS BEST.

"Dream of a woman as bright as day," The second traveler said; "Dream of a form of perfect grace, Of a noble face and head; Of eyes that are of heaven's own blue, Of flowing golden hair. That is my wife, and although not rich, 'Oh, she is wondrous fair!'"

"I have a wife," the third man said, "But she's neither rich nor fair; She has not gold or gear or land, No wealth of golden hair. But, ah! she loves me, and her love Has stood through every test; Beauty is good, and gold is good, But my friends, love is best."

—Mrs. James Nicoli, in Buffalo News.

The Privilege of the Day.

Amabel asked with wistful eyes. "I'll do as much for her some time." "I'll do it," said cheerful Barbara. "I'd as soon stay after hours as not."

"Excuse me," said the dressmaker, with a awful stiffness of demeanor, "but I prefer to manage my business for myself. Amabel Archer must finish the dress as she has begun it. Two or three different hands on a job are sure to ruin it, and I don't desire to lose Miss Waterson's custom."

"But," cried Amabel, piteously, "I promised Captain Juniper—I must go!"

"If you go," said Miss Daffodil, "you don't come back into my employment again."

And poor Amabel thought of her invalid mother and the three apple-cheeked little sisters who were clothed and kept at school by her toil, and she dared not remonstrate further.

"But I shall hear the sleigh bells," she comforted herself; "and I can just run out a moment and beg him to believe that it was not my fault."

And she sat down by the window, after the other hands were gone—she was the only one who boarded with Miss Daffodil—to sew and sigh and listen.

But she heard no silver-chiming sleigh bells. How slowly she, when Miss Daffodil had quietly crept down the lane and intercepted the captain's gay little equipage just where the old finger-post raised its skeleton form in the air?

"Oh," said the captain, a frank, handsome young fellow, with laughing blue eyes and a golden beard, "is it you, Miss Daffodil? I thought perhaps—"

"Yes, it's me," said Miss Daffodil, sweetly. "I just came to tell you that Miss Archer is very sorry, but she can't go cutter riding with you this evening. She's got a bad sore throat; besides, she's dreadfully hurried with her work."

Captain Juniper's countenance fell. He played with the handle of his whip, while the horse pawed the ground and flecked his jetty breast with specks of foam, all impatience to be gone.

"I am so sorry!" he said, with such genuine disappointment that Miss Daffodil could have boxed his ears. "But, Miss Daffodil, may I confide in you?"

"Oh, certainly!" said the dressmaker, graciously.

"Do you believe in St. Valentine?" he asked.

"Dear me!" giggled Miss Daffodil—"what a very strange question! He's supposed to be the patron saint of lovers, isn't he?"

"That's the reason I asked you," said Captain Juniper, leaning his head still closer toward the spinster's worsted hood. "Do you believe in him?"

"Of course I do," smiled the lady, with a curious flutter in the region of her heart.

"Then I am sure I may trust you," said he, fervently. "I shall be under the easement at daybreak on St. Valentine's day to claim Miss Archer as my valentine for the year. Tell her so, from me. Beg her not to disappoint me again."

"Yes," said Miss Daffodil, turning a dull yellow with rage and vexation—"yes, captain, I will."

"I shall be so much obliged to you!" said the unsuspecting lover.

"Oh, not at all!" said Miss Daffodil. "You're quite sure she didn't send me any message?" said Captain Juniper, wistfully.

"No message," said Miss Daffodil, smoothly.

Poor Amabel could hardly see to finish Miss Waterson's dress, through her tears, and it was midnight when she had laid it aside and went to bed, crying herself to sleep.

"He has forgotten all about me," she thought.

St. Valentine's eve was full of still, wintry splendor, with a golden line along the west and great stars beginning to glisten in the sky above, when Miss Daffodil put a preposterous splint-basket into Amabel Archer's hands.

"I try to be a Dorcas in all good works," said she, "and I've put these jams and jellies up for the Widow Bethiah Hull. She's dreadful poorly, they say, and needs watchers every night; so I told her daughter-in-law you'd come there and stay tonight."

Amabel looked up, with a sudden flush dying her cheek. She had not forgotten that it was St. Valentine's eve.

"Won't tomorrow night do as well?" said she, pleadingly.

"No, it won't!" said Miss Daffodil, tartly.

Amabel said no more. After all, what did it matter? If David Juniper had ceased to think about her, what meaning could the soft glow of St. Valentine's morn have for her?

So she took the basket and spiritlessly departed, almost wishing that she, too, were passing out of life's cheerless confines like poor Bethiah Hull.

"Because," she thought, "it don't seem as if life was worth living, after all."

And when the rosy dawn began to kindle its soft fires along the edge of the gray east, Miss Daffodil dressed herself in her prettiest and most youthful dress, curled her stiff, gray-sprinkled head with a hot-iron, washed her face in cream of roses and posted herself behind the lattice of Amabel Archer's window. For she had been "reading up" on the subject and knew all the observances of the day.

"If he sees me first," said she, "he's bound to be my valentine and no mistake! And I can easily make him believe that I forgot to give the message to that Archer girl."

So Miss Archer waited, her artificially-blooming face looking almost ghastly in the fresh irradiation of the dawning day, her eyes peering restlessly, hither and yon, over the solitary snow.

And Amabel? It had begun to be just a little light, as she sat there by the fire in the Widow Bethiah's room, and Mrs. Hull, the daughter-in-law of the invalid, had risen and was making preparations for breakfast, when there came the merry jingling of sleigh bells, the sudden cessation of sound, the reverberation of knocking at the door.

"Miss Amabel, won't you go and see who's there?" called out Mrs. Hull, Jr. "I ain't got my hair out of the crimps yet!"

So Amabel drew the ponderous bolts, unlocked the front door and saw, standing on the doorstep—Captain Juniper.

"Amabel!" he cried; "my valentine!"

And he caught her in his arms with a kiss.

"Remember the privileges of the day," he exclaimed, laughing. "Remember that you are my valentine for a whole year to come—perhaps forever."

"But," cried Amabel, breathless with amazement, "how came you here?"

"By the merest luck in the world," said Captain Juniper. "My shaft has got itself broken. I was going to ask Mr. Hull for a bit of wire to fasten it together until I could get to Miss Daffodil's. I was going there to see you, Amabel. Didn't you expect me?"

"No," said Amabel, opening her eyes wide.

"Did not Miss Daffodil tell you that I was coming?" he asked.

"Not a word," said Amabel. "She sent me here to stay with Bethiah Hull."

"The cantankerous old vixen!" said Captain Juniper. "So she has been playing me false all along. But St. Valentine's sweet influences have been too strong for her at last. Look here, Amabel, darling. I will drive you home in the cutter. We'll show her that we are valentines after all."

And, half an hour or so afterwards, the little cutter dashed up the snowy road under the very casement where sat Miss Daffodil, blue with cold and already experiencing sundry twinges of rheumatism.

She flung the sash open with a smile, but the expression on her face changed when she perceived that Captain Juniper was not alone.

"Look, Miss Daffodil!" he cried, audaciously exultant. "Look at the sweet gift which St. Valentine has bestowed on me—my valentine—my promised wife!"

Miss Daffodil closed the shutter with a bang.

"The folly of them young people!" she muttered. "I don't care if I never hear the word valentine again. But I declare," she added, after a few minutes' melancholy reflection, "it does seem as if there was some supernatural agency at work!"

QUAINT AND CURIOUS.

Baltimore cans 1,230,000 bushels of oysters per annum.

The kangaroo readily leaps from sixty to seventy feet.

In Ptolemy's time any one who killed a cat was put to death.

Maine factories sold \$250,000 worth of wooden shoe pegs in 1897.

The magnetic clock was invented by Dr. Locke of Cincinnati in 1847-48.

In 1860 the manufactured product of St. Louis only amounted to \$27,000,000. Last year the output was about \$300,000,000.

Canada's imports from the United States increased \$3,000,000 last year, and her imports from England decreased \$3,600,000.

Before 1886 the average number of labor strikes of all kinds in this country was about 500 a year. Since that date the average has been 1500.

Coal mined in China is being exported to California, and it is said that in a few years the Flowery Land will supply the whole Pacific coast.

The postal authorities of Paris are said to be about to introduce motor cars and omnibuses for the use of carriers in the delivery of the mails.

The British soldier has not always worn a red uniform. White was the prevailing color under Henry VIII, and dark green or russet in the time of Elizabeth.

An electric locomotive in a Canadian coal-mine shows a saving over mules of \$258 in 200 days, and an electric pump in the same mine shows a saving over steam-pumps of \$1573 in 970 days.

The thickest known coal seam in the world is the Wyoming, near Twin Creek, in the Green river coal basin, Wyoming. It is eighty feet thick, and upwards of 300 feet of solid coal underlie 4000 acres.

A Berlin inventor has discovered a process for making writing paper that will not burn. He has also invented a peculiar ink that resists the action of fire and remains on the paper as a dark brown sediment.

A TEMPERANCE COLUMN.

THE DRINK EVIL MADE MANIFEST IN MANY WAYS.

The Prophet's Mantle—A Temperance Anomaly—Strong Sentiment Against the Liquor Traffic in Southern California—Land of the Vine—Whisky Revenue

God of right, and God of mercy, As in ages that are past, Thou didst send Thy holy prophets Warning us with trumpet's blast, Still Thou sendest Help to those whom sin holds fast

As Ellsha broke asunder Death's cold hands and said, "Arise," Gave the child back to his mother— So God's own heroes Break the bands which Satan ties.

We have seen neglected hearthstones, Hearts that bleed o'er loved ones slain; Want and crime and desolation, Follow in the wine-cup's train. Lord, deliver Our fair land from the dark stain.

Yes! Our prayers are heard in heaven And the prophet's mantle falls On a host of brave crusaders, Who will follow where He calls. Christ, our Captain! Where He leadeth naught appalls.

—Mrs. F. E. Blackett, Ph. D., in Temperance.

A Temperance Anomaly.

The average tourist in Southern California is surprised at the strong public sentiment against the liquor traffic in the land of the vine and wine press, and, particularly, to find the very unique high license laws in force in dozens of towns for the regulation of saloons and bar-rooms. The Temperance League of Great Britain has sent to Southern California this season a committee of five solely to study the success of the temperance measures devised in this region for temperance purposes.

There is a wide ocean of difference in temperance sentiment in Northern and Central California—the land of *Bread and Butter* theories and the free and easy mining ways in Southern California. The difference has been caused by the immigration of thousands of New Englanders and Iowa people into the southern part of the state in the last two decades. The new comers have brought with them staunch ideas concerning temperance reform and religion, and the old-time Californians of song and story, with his vineyard and olive press, has become the minority in this region. In Pomona Valley, for instance, where New Englanders predominated, but one small winery remained. All the other wineries of ten years ago have gone out of business.

In the San Gabriel Valley the immigration of Iowa and Maine people has been heavy, less than one-fifth the area of vineyards of ten years ago remain. Hundreds of acres formerly devoted to the growing of wine grapes are now occupied by the orange and lemon groves of the Yankees and Iowans.

The atrocious murder of a white woman in Indian territory, the torture and burning of the suspected criminals (one of whom, at least, it is said, is innocent), by the infuriated people of Oklahoma, and the threatened uprising of the Indians, is all traceable to whiskey. So say the newspaper reports. Intoxicants cannot be obtained in the territory, but the liquor saloons marks the line that divides it from the territory of Oklahoma. The Seminole tribe of Indians are, it is stated, the most peaceful, prosperous and progressive people in the territory, and every disturbance which occurs in the territory is attributed to the sale of liquor to the red men, the civilized (?) whites—Trenton (N. Free Press.

Whisky Revenue.

Whisky money has become an important feature of the financial plan of our national and local governments, and we recognize the fact that it could not now be shut off without serious temporary inconvenience. But no man of any standing defends it as a receipt as a means of needed revenue, although thousands say, in effect, "you cannot stop the liquor traffic, and we may as well make it pay large sums of money as a restriction upon the market."

When the average citizen hears of the liquor saloon chukle and pocket five dollars a fit for every dollar they pay out; cheap politicians do the bidding of the liquor sellers in lawmaking, and chukle as they count up their own consequent majorities. Satan chukles as he sees all of the contributions to his kingdom.

Eliminate the money issue and the whole structure falls to the ground, and must be either rebuilt upon new foundation or remain a wreck. There can be no new foundations for the liquor traffic, but a possible strength with the money that is now accepted by governments for this permitted iniquity.

For every dollar accepted by governments in this compromise with iniquity \$20 is, in one form or another, wrung out of the resources of the people, and every day's continuance of this miserable scheme of finance adds to public burdens in proportion as it swells the gains of iniquity.

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