

What a foolish idea China has got! It really imagines it should be consulted whenever a foreign power wants to clip off a few hundred square miles of its territory.

American soldiers in the Philippines are fighting with superb courage and fortitude. The fact occasions great satisfaction, but not the slightest respect. American soldiers have never learned to fight in any other way.

Americans have been so confident from the beginning that affairs in Samoa would be rationally adjusted that they have had no great interest in the means employed. A commission with plenipotentiary powers, sitting on the ground, is as good a way as any.

The organization of a naval reserve in Honolulu, which is about to be undertaken with the full approval of Secretary Long, is a thoroughly commendable movement. The organization of such a body at that port along the lines which have been followed by the reserves in this country will provide an emergency force at one of the most important of all our naval outposts, and there may be times when it will prove of almost incalculable usefulness to National interests in the Pacific ocean. The project is an unmistakable sign that the process of Americanizing Hawaii is making rapid headway.

Bronze monuments in London have a hard time of it, and so have those whose duty it is to keep such bronzes in good order. Boehm's statue of Carlyle stands on the Chelsea Embankment, where with smoke, acid exhalations and dampness Carlyle was soon coated with oxides. Chelsea officials did not understand the fine effects of a patine. They scrubbed Carlyle and got him clean, and next painted him black, following Froude's ways. There came much fault-finding. Then the Chelsea authorities removed the paint, re-scrubbed Carlyle over again, and he now appears as a mottled philosopher.

The Prince of Wales has organized a "League of Mercy," with the immediate object of promoting the London hospital fund which bears his name, and to organize all workers in this and similar causes. In this connection an "Order of Mercy" has been established, which will be conferred as a reward for gratuitous personal services rendered in the relief of sickness and suffering. None can be admitted to the order without the sanction of the queen, and the decoration of the order may be worn on all occasions, but gives no rank. It is distinctly stated that personal service only and not gifts of money will receive merit from this order.

Anglo-Saxon bluejackets in Samoa are doing the work of the international police of civilization, says the New York Commercial Advertiser. British sailors have been doing this work all over the world for generations. In the last generation German sailors have enlisted in the international police. Though they have good will, the Germans have made some blunders from lack of experience. Now the American navy is doing its share of the work, as part of the regular international force, after some brilliant volunteer service with the British in China and Japan. The union is happy. The work is fit for the Teutonic temper, and the union of the three nations in it is the best guaranty for the maintenance of order, in these parts of the world that have not learned to organize their own police and command order for themselves.

The Connecticut savings banks increased their deposits last year by \$7,512,700, and of this sum \$7,164,082 came in deposits of \$1000 and more. Only \$348,618, in other words, came from deposits of less than \$1000. How much of this came from deposits of over \$500? The statistics do not follow the matter down to that point. Enough is shown, however, to indicate that the savings banks of Connecticut are existing today largely for the accommodation of the wealthy classes. Of the total deposits of \$163,482,498, only \$63,544,098 stands to the account of persons whose deposits are less than \$1000. More than \$54,000,000 is to the account of individual deposits above \$2000. The Norwich Dime Savings society has one individual deposit of \$54,507, and the Norwich Dime Savings bank has one deposit of \$42,991. Several other banks carry single deposits in excess of \$20,000. There are not less than 271 individual deposits in the savings banks of Connecticut above \$10,000, and 15,142 between \$2000 and \$10,000. There are as many as 33,928 individual accounts of from \$1000 to \$2000.

Some girls in Greater New York have formed a trust against young men who drink. A young men's trust determined to purchase no more chocolate creams would soon drive the girls' syndicate to the wall.

The sea serpent has been caught once more. He has two heads, one at each end, probably, but is only sixty feet long. He went ashore in a tidal wave on one of the Solomon islands. So the waiting public is foiled again. Solomon's islands are too far for a view of the sea serpent.

Canada has preserved the famous Plains of Abraham by paying the nominal rent of \$100 a year, but this arrangement is now broken, and the field has been surveyed for building lots. Hosts of Americans will join the Canadians in protesting against the transformation of the historic battlefield into a thickly settled suburb of Quebec.

The Salvation Army proposes to celebrate the close of the century in a characteristic way. In honor of General Booth, who is 70 next April, Mr. Bramwell Booth is asking, among other things, for 70,000 new soldiers, an increase of 70,000 in the circulation of the army's newspapers, and 350,000 to be placed in the general's hands, "to be used in such work and fashion as he may in his wisdom think desirable."

The state of Nebraska has marked an epoch in its history by repealing the state bounty law on tree-planting, passed only twenty years ago. In the interval Nebraska has been transformed from a desert to a garden, and the necessity for timber cultivation no longer exists. The course of this western state in this matter is in marked contrast with the policy which in the state of New York has permitted wholesale forest destruction. A treeless state is necessarily a desert, and New York can afford to learn a lesson from Nebraska.

The English language belongs to the Teutonic branch of the Aryan speaking peoples. Its additions of French, Latin, Greek and other foreign elements, though they have made its grammar somewhat irregular, also have made it the most forcible and most flexible of modern tongues. Yes, it is "fast becoming a popular talk." Mulhall, in his Dictionary of Statistics, states that in 1801 it was spoken by 29,520,000 persons, and in 1891 by 111,100,000 persons. His estimate for 1891 probably is far too low. There are about 500 languages, using the word "language" to mean widely separated dialects of the same family or division.

Experts agree that two of the most important engineering enterprises now under way are the building, in Africa, of the railway up the Nile to Kartoum, possibly of later extension to the African lakes still further south, where the Nile takes its rise, and the Uganda railway in British East Africa, running from the Indian ocean to Victoria lake. These two lines will, beyond a doubt, sometime meet in mid-Africa and complete an all-British route south from the Mediterranean across the equator to the Indian ocean, leaving connections with Bulawayo and the Cape for a later date. The Uganda railway has its eastern terminus at Mombasa, a British base just north of Zanzibar. The place is about four degrees south of the equator, and work on the line was originally begun two or three years ago. There has been an aggregate advance of about 96 miles in seven months.

It seems reasonable to argue, from the late extraordinary agitation over the illness of Mr. Kipling, that the writer's trade is in a better case than it used to be, thinks Life. What a first-class literary success means in money under the present international copyright arrangements is yet to be tested, and it is possible that Mr. Kipling will be the first to test it. As yet no writer has come to the big new market with such a line of wares as Walter Scott or Dickens sold. Stevenson had only half a chance. The man who in these days can go on for, say thirty years, producing annually one volume of fiction, which is indispensable to the comfort of the average English reading family, is liable, if he keeps out of the publishing business and eschews real estate speculations, to accumulate a very comfortable estate. And besides the money, there is fame; and besides fame, there is the opportunity to make an important impression on the contemporary mind. When the recovery of a popular writer from an illness is matter for world-wide rejoicing, we must consider that the literary business is pretty good.

NATURE'S REPROOF.

"There hain't no summer comin'," said the grumbler in dismay. And he trudged through the woodlands where the leafless trees stood guard, Where the scene around him darkened and all Nature's grace was marred, By the blasts of cold midwinter that had sternly held their sway. But above a ruffled red-breast thrilled a happy little song, And a sparrow chirped with pleasure as he winged his way along.

"There hain't no summer comin'." Why, since now the sky is dark, Must the sun forever leave us just because it rests awhile? Can't the frowns of bleak December be replaced by Maytime's smile?

Why, the songsters are in training, and we'll soon hear from the lark. Buds are peeping out o'er billocks; trees are smiling through the rain, That will make them love the sunshine when it comes to them again.

"There hain't no summer comin'," but adown one storm-strawn dell Romped a playful squirrel, happy in the knowledge of a day That was soon to bring its blessings and the violets of May.

While some stream in gurgling protest, as upon the moss it fell, Mingled music of the sunshine with the music of the rain, And roused up a sleeping flower that for months had lifeless lain.

—W. Livingston Larned.

THE SILENCE OF SIMEON SAYLES.

BY J. L. HARBOUR.

"I wish to goodness, Simeon Sayles, that you would shut up and keep shut up!" said Myra Sayles in a weary tone and speaking as if the words were forced from her against her will.

"You do, hey?" replied her brother Simeon, sharply and irritably. He had been scolding about some trifling matter for nearly half an hour, and his sister Myra had listened in patient silence. Now she spoke because he had said something peculiarly annoying, and when he had replied so sharply she said:

"Yes, I mean it, Simeon Sayles. I get so sick and tired of your eternal scolding and blaming that I just wish sometimes you'd shut your mouth and never open it again while you live."

"You do, hey?" "Yes, I do."

There was a sullen silence in the room for three or four minutes; the wrinkles on Simeon's brow deepened, and his lips were pressed more and more tightly together. Suddenly he opened them with a snap and a defiant toss of his head.

"Very well, Myra Sayles, I will 'shut up,' and I'll stay 'shut up,' and you'll see how you like it."

"I'll have some peace, then," replied Myra, shortly. Yet she looked at her brother curiously.

The Sayleses were noted in the country roundabout for rigidly adhering to every resolution they made. The thought now came into Myra's mind, "Will he do it?" She had not meant him to take her remark literally.

Simeon was as iron-willed as any of the family, and yet Myra felt that he could not keep such a vow long. It was necessary for him to talk. So she said:

Whether he grew tired of it or not, Simeon Sayles said all he had to say in writing from that time forth. His only reply to his sister's ridicule and remonstrances was written in these words:

"You see you wish I'd shut up my mouth and keep it shut, and I'm a-going to do it."

He bought a little blank book, in which he kept a pencil, and all his communications to the world and to individuals were made through the medium of this book and pencil.

The neighbors said that "the Sayleses always were a queer lot, anyhow"; that some of Simeon's ancestors had been rather eccentric, and that Simeon himself had never seemed quite like other men. No matter how true this may have been, his sister Myra was a thoroughly well-balanced woman, with a large fund of strong common sense, and her brother's freak caused her great secret mortification and distress, although she had declared at the beginning of it: "It will be an actual rest to me to get rid of your eternal scolding!"

But Simeon had not scolded "eternally," as Myra felt obliged to confess to herself in her reflective moments. He was, indeed, somewhat infirm of temper and sometimes gave himself up to prolonged fits of petulance, but there had been days and even weeks at a time when Simeon had been as serene of mind and as companionable as any man.

"This freak of his is harder to put up with at the table than at any other place or time," his sister confessed to a sympathetic neighbor. "Sometimes it just seems as if I'd fly. There he sits as merrily as a grindstone. Sometimes I try to rattle away just as if nothing was the matter, but I can never keep it up very long. I've tried all sorts of little tricks to catch him unawares and make him speak once, but he won't be caught. One day, just when he'd come in from the field, I smelt something burning so strong that I said, 'I do believe the house is on fire,' and he opened his mouth as if to speak and then clapped it shut again and whipped out that abominable little book and wrote, 'Where?'"

"I was so put out that I flung the book clear out into the gooseberry bushes. I really doubt if he ever does speak again in this world, and the prospect is pleasant for me, isn't it?"

The two lived alone in the old red farmhouse in which they had been born 50 years before. They were without kith or kin in the world with the exception of a much younger sister named Hope, who had married a prosperous young farmer and had gone out west to live. It had been a time of great sorrow to them when this pretty, young sister had married Henry Norton and gone from the old house. They rejoiced in her happiness, of course, and were quite sure that Hope had "done well," but it was none the less hard to give her up.

She was only 21 years old at the time and so much younger than her brother and sister that their affection for her was much like that of a father and a mother for an only child. They had lavished the tenderest love of their lives on Hope, and their affection had not lessened by her absence. In the years since they had seen Hope's pretty face and heard her cheery voice they often talked of her.

Myra had always stood as a strong wall between Hope and harm or trouble of any kind, and this loving thoughtfulness had kept her from writing a word to her sister about their brother's strange silence.

"I wouldn't have Hope know it for anything," Myra had said; "it would worry the child so. And there's no danger of Simeon writing it. He'd be ashamed to."

During all the fall and through one whole long, wretched winter the iron-willed Simeon kept his resolve not to speak, and a decided shake of his head or a written "No" was his reply to Myra's often repeated question, "Don't you ever intend to speak again?"

but no sound came from his lips. His face wore a half-wild, half-frightened look, and his hand trembled as he held it out for the letter.

"Simeon! Simeon!" cried Myra, with quivering voice and tearful eyes, "surely you'll have to speak now!"

He shook his head slowly and sadly as he sat down on the plow to read the letter. He handed it back in silence and turned away his head when he saw the tears streaming down Myra's cheeks, and he bit his lip until it almost bled when he heard her sob as she turned to go back to the house.

When he came to dinner he read the letter again, but he and Myra ate in silence.

Hope came a week from that day. Myra went to the railroad station three miles distant to meet her.

"It'll be better for me to meet her than for you, if you are bound and determined to keep up this nonsense while she's here," said Myra. "She doesn't know a thing about it; you may be sure I haven't written a word of it to the poor child, and I dread to tell her of it now. It's a shame, a burning shame, Simeon Sayles, for you to spoil Hope's first visit home just to carry out a silly vow that it was wicked for you ever to make in the first place. It's a piece of wickedness right straight through!"

A visible pallor had come into Simeon's face at the mention of Hope's little girl. No one knew how much and how tenderly this little girl whom he had never seen had been in his thoughts. He was fond of children, and no child in the world could be as dear to him as this little girl of Hope's.

He and Myra had looked forward so eagerly to the time when Hope should bring her to them, and they read so proudly of all her infantile charms and accomplishments as set forth in Hope's letters!

He stole softly into the seldom-opened parlor when Myra had gone. Several photographs of Hope's little girl, taken at different stages of her infantile career, were in the album on the parlor table. Simeon took up this album and gazed at these photographs, one by one, with unhappy eyes.

He wandered round the house and yard until the time drew near for Myra's return with Hope and little Grace. Then he went down the road to meet them. He had gone perhaps a quarter of a mile when he sat down by the wayside to wait until they should drive around a turn in the road a hundred yards or more distant.

He had waited not more than five minutes when he heard the sound of wheels and voices around the curve in the road. He heard the sudden, sweet laugh of a child and was on his feet in an instant.

At that same instant a man on a bicycle dashed past him. Bicycles were still an almost unheard of thing in that part of the country. Simeon had never seen but three or four of them, and the appearance of this one whirling along at such speed startled him.

Its rider sent it flying on down the road, and it whirled around the curve, to the surprise of Miss Myra and to the terror of old Hector, the horse she was driving. The reins were lying loosely in Myra's hands, and before she could gather them up old Hector jumped aside, rearing and plunging, and the next instant he was racing madly down the road with the reins dragging the ground on either side of him, while Hope clung to little Grace and screamed.

"Whoa! Whoa, Hector!" cried Myra in a voice so awful with terror that it frightened old Hector the more.

"Whoa, Hector, whoa!" This time old Hector pricked up his ears, for the voice that spoke was a firm, commanding one, and the next moment a strong hand grasped his bridle while the voice repeated: "Whoa! Whoa!"

It was a harsh, stern voice, but it sounded like the sweetest music in Myra's ears. It was Simeon's, and Simeon was holding to the bit. He held it until old Hector came to a halt, and then he turned and said calmly: "Don't be scared, Hope, child; you're all right now. Give me the little one."

He held out his arms and Hope put the little girl into them, saying as she did so: "It's your Uncle Simmy, dear! Put your arms around his neck and give him a kiss, and let him hear how well you can say 'Uncle Simmy.'"

GREAT LADY.

This is the Queen of Nonsense Land, She wears her bonnet on her hand; She carpets her ceilings and frescoes her floors. She eats on her windows and sleeps on her doors.

Oh, ho! Oh, ho! to think there could be A lady so silly-down-dilly as she! She goes for a walk on an ocean wave, She fishes for cats in a coral cave; She drinks from an empty glass of milk, And lines her potato trees with silk. I'm sure that forever and never was seen So foolish a thing as the Nonsense Queen!

She ordered a wig for a blue bottle fly, And she wrote a note to a pumpkin pie; She makes all the oysters wear emerald rings, And does dozens of other nonsense things.

Oh! the scatterbrained, shatterbrained lady so grand, Her Royal Skyhighness of Nonsense Land! Carolyn Wells, in Puck.

HUMOROUS.

A boy of 15 thinks he is too old to run errands, but after he is 25 and married he begins again.

"Cousin Josephine hides her deafness with great tact." "How?" "She talks all the time."

"D'yer think Buncker's reached the age of discretion yet?" "Well, hardly! He's getting married for the third time."

Old Gentleman (to convict)—What is the most objectionable feature you find in prison life, my dear friend? Convict—Wisitors.

"Love levels all things," sighed the sad-eyed swain, with a pang of pain, as his sweetheart sat on his new high silk hat and smashed it flat.

"What are you doing, Tommy?" "S'andin' before the lookin' glass," said Tommy; "I wanted to see how I would look if I was twins."

His Daughter—Yes, the story ends in the same old way; they marry and live happily ever after. The Furniture Man—Ah! Antique finish!

He kissed her! She neither drew back nor turned red, And she did not deliver a slap on his ear; He kissed her! No word by the lady was said— She had ceased to be thrilled—they'd been married a year.

Mother—Dear me! The baby has swallowed that piece of worsted. Father—That's nothing to the yarns she'll have to swallow if she lives to grow up.

Teacher—Johnny, you must stay after school and work two examples. Johnny—What, and get fired from the Scholars' union for working overtime? Not much!

Admiring Friend—You may not realize it, Wilson, but your daughter is a poem. Editor (with a sigh)—I do realize it. Hers is one of the few cases where I have to pay for poetry.

Dixon—There goes a young man who is above the average. He's in rather hard luck just now, but he'll come out on top some day. Hixon—Yes; I suppose he will get bald just like the rest of us, in time.

"You surely don't believe that the man really loves you?" "I am sure he does." "What makes you think so?" "He said he'd die for me." "That's what they all say, silly. Don't you believe him until he does it."

Teacher—Once upon a time there were two rich men, one of whom made his fortune by honest industry, while the other made his by fraud. Now, which of these two men would you prefer to be? Tommy (after a moment's hesitation)—Which made the most?

The Caves of Porto Rico.

It is astonishing how little is known about the geology of the island of Porto Rico and the profound manifestations which nature has there made of her power in earth-making. At Ponce, San Juan and Cayez no one knew of caves in the land; the people had all heard rumors of mineral wealth, but could not definitely state the localities. Even at Caguas, six miles away from a great cavern which may develop into as much of a wonder as our own Mammoth cave, few people have ever heard of it, and no one has ever seen the interior of its expansive chambers. At Aguas Buenas, which lies five miles to the westward from Caguas, the people of the little village were aware of great holes in the mountains toward the south, but only two negroes had ever explored them and they only to a limited extent.

The owner of this unknown marvel of Porto Rico is Senor Munoz, a large coffee-planter. He told us that several years ago an Englishman, a member of some British scientific society, had paid a short visit to the cavern and was much interested, and it is quite likely that a report of its wonders has been published in the scientific journals of Great Britain.

The expedition to this cavern, known as the "Dark Cave," is filled with almost as many surprises to the explorer as the actual finish of the journey, an ironed in walls of white and pendent stalactites, a mile beneath the earth's surface.—Harper's Weekly.

Roman Stage Carpentry.

The excavations now going on at the Theatre of Dugga, in Tunis, show that the Romans possessed for their theatres a system of stage carpentry equal if not superior to the appliances now in use. An ingenious contrivance enabled those who stood underneath the stage to see what was proceeding above. A number of trapdoors, placed in the centre of the stage, and covers have been discovered showing the way in which scenery and stage furniture were lowered and raised. Eight large holes led to several deep wells three yards deep under the stage, while a large receptacle served to store the curtain during the performance. The floor of the stage was covered with mosaics.—Rome Correspondence of the London Post.