

The perpetual lamp invented by a Chicago man will perhaps enable variable people always to see things in the same light.

When the Anglo-Boer war began South Africa was sending gold in large quantities to England. Ever since England has been sending large quantities of gold to South Africa.

The 10 principal items in the agricultural export trade of the United States are: Breadstuffs, cotton, meat products, live animals, tobacco, oil cake and oil cake meal, vegetable oils, fruits and nuts, dairy products and seeds.

The reindeer problem is to again be taken up by the government. Twelve thousand of the animals are to be shipped from Siberia to Alaska. Climatic conditions are so similar that it does seem that success ought to attend the effort.

An international scientific clearing-house has been established in Switzerland for receiving new ideas in every branch of zoological and physiological research. But the institution has been burdened with the jawbreaking name of Bibliographicum Concilium.

The late drouth has brought irrigation to the front as one of the live and vital issues of the day. Nebraska gives an exemption of the cost and benefits: \$4,775,984 has provided water with which to irrigate 2,000,000 acres, and the land itself has already been enhanced \$17,000,000 in value.

The old tradition that the Eskimos are a people of small stature is without foundation. On the contrary, in Labrador, Baffin's Land, and all around Hudson Bay, the height of the men is probably above, rather than below the average of the human race, but, as a rule, the women, although very strong, are considerably shorter than the men.

A strike instituted by the boy caddies in a Chicago golf club recently was promptly settled by the employment of a lot of girls, who are said to be giving good satisfaction. The striking boys would have promptly boycotted or fought other boys had they been appointed to fill the vacancies created by the abandonment of their bags; but as the girls are unassailable the strike has proved a miserable failure.

There are cities which give themselves more aesthetic airs than Chicago, though none has dealt as effectively as the windy city with that chromatic indecency, the billboard. An anti-billboard ordinance of the city named has been sustained in a report made by a master in chancery to the superior court. This ordinance provides that "no billboard shall be more than 10 feet high or 100 square feet in area, and that none shall be placed within five feet of another similar board nor within 25 feet of the lot line."

The physicians and the surgeons have thrown floods of light upon many things in the causes and the treatment of the maladies which attack mankind, and have cleared up many a mystery. Their self-sacrifice and zeal for the benefit of the race are worthy of the heartiest praise. And in what age were there so many heroic men and women who were willing and even eager to brave death in submitting to experiments with the virus of yellow fever and other diseases? What higher and nobler types of courage and devotion can be taught of than those whose lives have been cut short in the course of the infection tests in Cuba? No forlorn hopes were ever made up of braver souls, observes the New York Tribune.

Perhaps the most curious result of a popular health fad is the sharp conflict of opinion which it has excited among the physicians. Some members of the profession, adopting the popular theory, maintain that the barefoot habit not only is healthful, but insures the proper development and consequent beauty of the exposed member; while others hold that it is a dangerous and needlessly risky experiment, which, in any event, must produce large, ungainly, splay feet. In support of their theory they argue that the feet of savage races are generally of vast and awfully proportions. This is a question for the anthropologists; but any one with eyes in his head may be convinced that there are plenty of well formed feet among the shoeless urchins of the cities. The point is not at all likely that the world in general will desert the shoemakers; but it may be asserted very confidently that it is better to wear no shoe at all than one that is too tight or too narrow.

Canada has 2200 miles of navigable waters. That is, from the Atlantic ocean to the head of Lake Superior, a vessel may sail that many miles within her own territory.

"Bread and butter state" is the way Minnesota will be known hereafter. This is a name that she is rightly entitled to. Last year she ground out 26,650,500 barrels of flour and churned 60,000,000 pounds of butter.

Before leaving for the North Pole in a balloon two years ago Andrew said: "If you have no news of me by the end of July, 1901, you may give me up for dead." And it begins to look like we would have to take his word for it.

The census of Norway, which has just been completed, gives it a population of 2,200,000 against 2,110,000 in 1891. This is an average of 16.80 inhabitants to the square mile, making Norway the most thinly settled country in Europe.

A 999-year lease expired in London the other day and the property reverted to the original owner, the chapter of Westminster parish. This demonstrates that the church is more stable than man. The officials who signed the lease long since passed away, but the church still lives.

Reports of cases of hydrophobia are current. It is significant that among them is one in which it is admitted that the disease was purely imaginary, and that the victim was simply frightened and worried to death. If the truth could be revealed, such would probably be found to be the fact in many other cases.

A remarkable fact is that only two members of President McKinley's cabinet received a university education. Not one inherited wealth. The secretary of the treasury began life as a bank clerk, the secretary of war as a school master, the postmaster as a compositor, the secretary of the navy as a "chore boy" on a farm, the secretary of agriculture as a plowman, and the secretary of the interior as a salesman.

Experts who have looked into the matter carefully say that the consumption of oatmeal is falling off in Scotland in proportion to the population, and that it is no longer the distinctive national dish in the country of Burns and Scott. But whatever our Scotch friends may be eating in these days, they are holding their own in the world quite as well as their forefathers held theirs. Brains will tell with any diet.

The ease of locomotion and change has probably been the principal cause of the vast herding of human beings in great cities. The human stream has flowed resistlessly toward industrial and distributing centres, and many new varieties of experience have come into being. The rapid social currents set up in all parts of the world are becoming ever more complex and difficult to unravel, and the work of the economist and social scientist is correspondingly difficult, remarks the Christian Register.

In the course of a discussion in the Royal United Service institution of London the point was made that the most dangerous combination in a war against Great Britain would be that of Russia and the United States. A letter from Captain Mahan, of five years ago, was quoted, in which he replied to a question whether war between this country and Great Britain was possible, that "terrible as the fact was, he could not hide from himself the conviction of its possibility." The possibility, even the probability, that in such a war we should have Russia as an ally seemed to be assumed by the speakers in the discussion.

Cemeteries are choked with the graves of men that brought themselves to premature death through worry. And the abodes of the living are densely habited by half wrecks and whole failures that came to this melancholy condition through the same agonizing process. Human records will never show the number and class of the millions that came into the world with goodly prospects and fair opportunities, but that went down to defeat under the weight of woes that were never realized, or through the slaying suspense which was more potent to blast and intimidate than would have been the actual happening of the danger feared. There is very little doubt among medical men and even unskilled laymen that the emotion commonly designated as worry has a power as devastating and much more persistent than those of grief, disease or overwork, reflects a writer in the *Sunday South*.

THE IDLE AMANUENSIS.

BY CHARLES H. WHITE.

There. Now we can be comfortable and free from interruption while I tell you that little story I promised.

It seems good to be sitting with you once again, after so long a separation. Calls to mind the times we used to have in '76, when you were slaving for Boynton & Blackman, and I was learning the rudiments of the business that I followed until about a year ago. Now I am independently situated owing to certain fortuitous circumstances which happened to come my way; yet I feel old and careworn and my hair is tinged with gray. Let me see; it was in '81 that I left Syracuse to take a position in a broker's office located on Broad street, in New York City. The atmosphere of my surroundings was entirely in accord with my heart's desire, which was to become a potent factor in the financial whirlpool that annually whisks away the fortunes of thousands, to place them at the feet of the lucky few.

The room assigned to me by my new employers was a small one, in the rear of the principal offices, and lighted from a court. The solitary window reached to the floor, and opened out upon a balcony which encircled the court, communicating with the elevator shaft at the back of the building. The chief offices had doors which led to this balcony. I was the sole occupant of the little office.

Directly opposite my window was the window of another room, the counterpart of mine, and similarly connected with the other suite on the same floor. It was occupied by a young lady, evidently employed as a stenographer, as her typewriter was visible through the glass. From the first glimpse I got of her she attracted me strongly. She was pretty, and I always possessed a fondness for feminine beauty. In addition to that, she seemed to have almost nothing to do, and that peculiar condition piqued my curiosity. Hour after hour she would sit by the window with a book in her hand. Only on rare occasions would I see her doing any work and then for a few moments at a time. I could not comprehend the reason for this, inasmuch as the concern employing her (the eastern agency of a large beef house), seemed to transact a good business. I marvelled that any man should pay a salary to and reserve a room for a clerk, and then allow her to fritter away nearly all of the time. It was not long before I had privately conferred upon my sweet neighbor the title of "the idle amanuensis."

I soon discovered that the girl was not a stickler on certain points of etiquette. She did not wait for an introduction, but began to smile and bow to me on the third day of my occupancy of the little office. I responded with alacrity, and soon felt that a personal interview was on the cards. We did meet in the elevator once or twice within the first week, but others were present on each occasion, and I made no advances. Doubtless the girl was of a similar mind, for she offered no active encouragement, merely nodding and bestowing on me one of her charming smiles. These smiles were sufficiently dazzling to captivate any man who was not already happily married or engaged.

It was during my third week that events began to draw in toward a focus. While working at my desk one afternoon, I heard a light tap on the window pane. Looking up I saw that the girl was standing on the balcony. She smiled and pointed to the balcony floor just outside my window. Following the direction with my eyes, I observed a folded paper lying there which I lost no time in securing.

It proved to be a note written by herself. The wording of the communication was brief but to the point and it set my heart to beating wildly. "Dear Sir—Here's to our more intimate acquaintanceship. Shall be at home this evening, at No. — West Forty-second street. Please indicate through the window whether you will call. Sincerely, Ethel Thompson."

Would I call? I gave a series of most emphatic nods and had the satisfaction of seeing that their meaning was evidently understood.

I called on Miss Thompson that very evening. She bore herself in an intelligent and vivacious manner, as her appearance had led me to expect; and her demeanor was characterized by a refinement not in keeping with the unconventional nature of her invitation.

During our conversation she informed me that she was glad her office work was light, as she disliked the duties of an amanuensis.

"I have noticed," I said to her, "that you are not often busily engaged. How is it that so large a concern conducts so small a correspondence?"

This query provoked a laugh. "Why," she exclaimed, "we have another stenographer, who occupies one of the larger rooms. I do only the work dictated by Mr. Blossom, the manager. The regular run of the office mail is dictated by Mr. Pennoyer to the other stenographer. Mr. Blossom is away most of the time, and has very little for me to do. I am really not needed there at all, but Mr. Blossom is aristocratic and wants to have a private secretary." Then she added, in a different tone of voice, "The truth is that my position was created for me personally. I have what some persons denominate a 'pull' with the powers that be."

Toward the latter part of the even-

ing she seemed suddenly to have thought of something.

"By the way," said she, "I was near forgetting a question I wished to ask of you. Your stockbroking business is a sealed book to me, and I am eager to learn something about it. I have been reading a good deal in the papers of late about 'D. K. & E.' stock, and what the bulls and bears are doing with it. There seems to be great interest manifested in that stock, and I wish you would explain to me what it means."

It happened that just at that time "D. K. & E." occupied a peculiar position in the market. It was being manipulated by rival factions in such a manner as to render its future more than ordinarily uncertain. Furthermore there was a wheel within a wheel, "D. K. & E." being merely a speculative centre, around which revolved interests more important still.

The fight going on between the heavy operators was being participated in by many small investors; and, inasmuch as shrewd men with long pocketbooks were pitted against one another, the result would necessarily be that some wealthy operators would lose their fortunes, while the little fellows who happened to be on the winning side would be rewarded in proportion to the size of their investments. It is more or less that way in all stock deals, but this one was of so stupendous a character as to outclass most of those that had preceded it.

I knew very little about the inner history of the affair, but what information I possessed was entirely at Miss Thompson's service. She expressed herself as delighted with my imperfect explanation, and I was so well pleased at finding that I could interest her, that I determined to learn all I could about "D. K. & E.," for her edification.

The chief clerk in our office was an approachable fellow, and he seemed to have taken a liking to me. His name was Fenton. Mr. Fisk had asked him to help me all he could, that I might gain a rapid insight into the business. Now, with my mind full of "D. K. & E." I applied to Fenton for information. He seemed pleased with my thirst for knowledge, and gratified it to the extent of his power. Every particle of fact or premise thus obtained was passed over to Miss Thompson. We met frequently; I became a regular visitor at her home, and notes were exchanged by us across the court. She had completely enslaved me, so that I was wondering how soon I might, with consistency, ask her to become my wife. On account of the low condition of my finances, I dared not yet broach the subject. Hence, nothing in the nature of love making was indulged in, though I was eager to advance beyond the stage of friendships, and she seemed willing to acquiesce.

Matters went on in this way for some weeks. We called one another "Ethel" and "Henry." This departure from orthodox formality had been taken at her suggestion.

"We know each other so well now," she had said to me, "that we may as well make use of our Christian names. It will seem more friendly. You are acting in the capacity of a brother to me; and you know," she added archly, "that I stand ready to be a sister to you."

However much I objected, privately, to the manner in which the privilege was granted, the concession itself was delightful, for it seemed to draw me closer to her.

One morning Fenton appeared to be excited over something.

"I tell you what, Walton," he said to me, "I'm in a devil of a quandary. I've just had a glorious tip on your favorite stock, 'D. K. & E.,' but cannot see my way to take advantage of it. If I only had from \$1000 to \$5000 just now, I could make a lucky strike."

"Would you mind telling me about it?" I asked, in as calm a voice as I could command.

"Certainly I will tell you," Fenton replied. "Of course you won't breathe it to a soul." (I made no reply to this observation). "I have it on the best of authority that 'D. K. & E.' is to be heavily unloaded tomorrow—pushed down to zero, in fact. The holders who cannot put up margins will be forced to sell out. Under ordinary circumstances, you know, this would mean that it was time to get from under; but in this case the man who has any 'D. K. & E.' stock would better hang on to it. If he has none, he should place his order to purchase as soon as it reaches 28. I have private information that it will drop rapidly and stop at 24. A man buying at 28, you see would have to put up a 50 per cent margin of four points. Immediately it reaches 24 there will be a rush for it, and it will shoot up like a rocket. As soon as it strikes 26, the holder should sell. All this comes from the fact that 'D. K. & E.' is being used as a blind to cover operations on 'P. T. & Q.' While the struggle is going on over 'D. K. & E.' some quiet work will be done with 'P. T. & Q.' which will result in a grand coup. I am satisfied that my information is correct."

Well, I am ashamed to confess it, but I lost no time in conveying this information to Ethel, by means of an unsigned note. I was so proud of my ability to secure information, that I wanted to deliver it before it was stale. There would be no glory in telling it after it had become public property. Possibly my action in the matter was hastened, however, by a

little note which I received from the girl shortly after my conversation with Fenton. It merely contained the question:

"Anything new today about 'D. K. & E.'?"

My message containing the "glorious tip" which Fenton had communicated to me brought forth a reply. It contained these words:

"Please do not come up tonight. I have another engagement." During the remainder of the day I noticed that Ethel was absent from her office. The next day and for several days thereafter it was the same. I became alarmed. Finally I rushed up to her house, only to be met with the information that Miss Thompson was not at home.

Meanwhile matters had transpired as Fenton had predicted. "D. K. & E." had fallen with great rapidity to 24. A scramble for it had ensued, and it had risen with equal celerity to 27. It was a matter for public comment that a man named Thompson—unknown on the street—had purchased at 28 and sold at 26, thereby reaping a snug fortune.

I saw no more of Ethel, but a letter received from her explained the mystery. I have it here, and will read it to you.

"Dear Brother Henry—You have earned the title I bestow upon you. I felt satisfied you would secure some valuable information for me. Papa made use of it. He is rich now, and we are to start for Europe immediately. I made him promise me a foreign trip when I could find him a way to make the needed money. He supposed it was a joke, but has learned to his entire satisfaction that I was in earnest. You have my blessing. I shall think frequently of you and should I ever marry, I will invite my brother to the wedding. Au revoir. Ethel."

"Blossom has decided to employ but one stenographer hereafter. I have no further use for my 'pull.'—*Waverley Magazine*.

QUAINT AND CURIOUS.

It has been calculated that the hair of the beard grows at the rate of one and one-half lines a week. This will give a length of six and one-half inches in the course of a year.

Parsnips are supposed by many people to be very nourishing. A pound of parsnips only gives 12 grains of strength, while the same amount of skim milk will give 34 grains and of split pease 250 grains.

The highest telegraph poles in the United States have just been erected in Beaumont, Texas. So far as known they are the highest in the world, their tops being 150 feet from the ground. They carry a Western Union cable across the Neches river—a span 144 feet in length.

A curious custom prevails in Bulgaria. All newly married women are obliged to remain dumb after marriage, except when addressed by their husbands. When it is desirable to remove this restriction permanently the husband presents her with a gift, and then she can talk to her heart's content.

In a Ventura garden in California there is a great Lamarque rose tree which has made remarkable growth since it was planted, more than 25 years ago. Its trunk near the ground is two feet nine inches in circumference, while the main branches are not much smaller. In 1895 the tree produced over 21,000 blooms.

A statistician asserts that when 350 years shall have passed the density of the earth's population will be so great that each person will have only two-thirds of an acre, which space will have to suffice for all purposes—agriculture, roads, houses, parks, railways, etc. He estimates the present population of the earth at 1,600,000,000, and says that in 2250 it will be 52,073,000,000.

The first postage stamp of France was the head of a stern-looking woman, and was meant to represent liberty. The present stamp used in France represents two figures, Commerce and Mercury, clasping hands across the globe. For most of her colonies France issues a special stamp with the eagle of the empire upon it, but there are several exceptions. The island of Reunion has a small stamp with the value alone marked on it.

A certain "common informer," who lived under the Stuarts, died, and left money and lands to one of the great city companies for schools and other charitable purposes. He directed in his will that his body should be kept above ground in such a way that it could be seen through glass, and that the governing body of the company should, each year, under penalty of forfeiting the property, visit his tomb and see the body. This visitation is still carried out every year.

Wheat Stack Twenty-Eight Years Old. In the stock yard of Mr. W. Meen's farm, Stradbroke, Suffolk, says the *London Daily Mail*, there is a stack of wheat which has a remarkable history. It was built in 1873 and the owner made a vow that he would never thrash it until it realized 25 cents a sack—a price which has never been offered. The stack stands on an iron support two feet from the ground, and is in an excellent state of preservation, being free from mice or rats. Recently some of the ears of wheat were pulled out and the grains were found to be quite bright, though reddened by age. It is estimated that the stack contains 250 bushels.

THE GREAT DESTROYER

SOME STARTLING FACTS ABOUT THE VICE OF INTEMPERANCE.

How New York Society Women Drink—The Guzzlers Are What the World Calls Ladies—Girls Sit and Order Drinks Without Food.

Mrs. Ella A. Boole, President of the New York State Women's Christian Temperance Union, has been making some investigations concerning the drinking of intemperate women in public places by the women of Gotham, and furnishes the following significant table of luncheons taken at the places named to the New York World:

| No. | No. of usings | What the place women liquor women drank |
|-----|---------------|---|
| 1 | 20 | Wine or cocktails |
| 2 | 100 | Wine or cocktails |
| 3 | 85 | Wine, coffee, beer, Sherry |
| 4 | 25 | Wine or cocktails |
| 5 | 40 | Wine or cocktails |
| 6 | 5 | Wine or cocktails |
| 7 | 21 | Cocktails or liquor |

The women who furnished the raw material for Mrs. Boole's table were not respectable characters who had straggled in from the streets. The names of the places at which the observations were made are sufficient to indicate that the women were what the world calls ladies. More than that, these were women of position, or help to constitute, that which is known as the highest social circle.

At all the fashionable restaurants in New York the larger part of the receipts are said to be derived from the sales of wine, whiskey and other alcoholic drinks. Even popular early stores of the metropolis now serve champagne, cocktails and highballs. Restaurants in the shopping districts that reach out especially for the patronage of the women who trade in the dry goods stores, and whose men unaccompanied by ladies are seldom seen, serve drinks to at least seventy-five per cent. of their customers. This is a description of the scene witnessed by Mrs. Boole at the *Waldorf-Astoria*:

"There were twenty-six tables in the first room, seating two, four, six or eight persons. In the course of an hour the guests at most of these tables had changed once."

"Of the persons at these tables thirteen were drinking at one time, and eight waiters with empty cocktail glasses came from tables that were partially hidden by the stone columns in the room."

"With three, possibly four, exceptions, these guests were all women—women with gray hair, fire-loving women of thirty, young girls of eighteen."

"One young girl, of perhaps sixteen or seventeen, drank a cocktail and also a glass of wine."

In the restaurants in the shopping district it is customary, we are told, for women and girls to sit at the tables and order drinks without calling for anything to eat. This may be a little more genteel than leaving against a bar and drinking, but it is probably just as dangerous.

It has been customary for people in general to look upon Chicago as the wickedest place in the world, but it would surely be impossible for anyone to bring such an indictment against the women of this city as Mrs. Boole has brought against the feminine half of New York's smart set. The column which flourishes here indicate that there must be a great deal of drinking by Chicago men, but it has not become necessary to turn candy stores in grocers, as yet, and no first-class hotel in this city has thus far found it necessary to maintain a special department for the use of men and women who may wish to meet by appointment and drink together."

It is hardly surprising, considering all the facts in the case, that Mrs. Boole cries out:

"In the name of womanhood, in the interest of the children yet to be born, we call upon every class of society women and every woman who loves her kind to discourage the custom of social drinking and help save the womanhood of the nation from the curse of drunkards."

But Mrs. Boole must not make the mistake of regarding New York as the nation.—*Chicago Record-Herald*.

Paying Tribute. There was once a man who drank very heavily; in fact, he was known as a drunkard. He lived in a small village, and was generally admitted to be the bum of the town. One morning he started for the hotel for his first drink, and as he entered he saw the landlord's children playing in the yard. They were bright-faced, well-dressed, clean and were children that any father and mother might be proud of. He stopped and looked at them. They were romping, running and having a good time, and he could not help but admire them. As he watched them, he thought of his own children that he had left at home—five ragged looking urchins. They were dirty, barefooted, and their clothes were tattered, and they were really a disgrace to any man. He stopped to think what was the difference between the children, and he came to the rightful conclusion that the difference was that instead of clothing and caring for his own family he was clothing and caring for the family of the rumseller. He stopped. He thought a moment. He turned and went home, and has never drunk a drop since. One of his sons is now superintendent of a division of a large railroad. Another is the confidential clerk in a banking house, and the three daughters are well and respectably married.

Burden of Hereditary Weakness. Dr. A. Baer, royal sanitary councillor, head physician at the penitentiary, plotsence near Berlin, author of "Der Alkoholismus" and other works upon this subject, says: "Not infrequently the children of toper die of hereditary weakness, not only showing a pronounced tendency toward diseases of the brain, epilepsy and idiocy, but they are also frequently subject to vicious inclinations and criminal tendencies. They lack perception for that which is moral and which contributes to a steady, well-ordered career. Weighed with the burden of hereditary mental weakness, they not infrequently take to tramping, fall into crime, or become the victims of drunkenness or insanity. The tendency to drink degenerates not only the existing race, but also the coming generation."

A Serious Evil. It is a most serious evil that idle and worthless parents should lounge in public houses and go on brooding themselves into stupidity or raging brutality till midnight, while their miserable, neglected children are often left to run loose about the corrupt and filthy slums until their parents return, often only to beat and terrify these perishing little ones.

The Crusade in Brief. The Anti-Saloon League has decided to take a new tack in fighting saloons in Ohio, and proposes to make use of the claim that a saloon is a public nuisance, and should be abolished.

The license system proceeds on the plan of sacrificing life for the sake of saving money. It deliberately immolates men by the thousand upon the blood altar of Bacchus in order to relieve taxpayers.

Recently the ten-year-old son of an expressman in New York City was found unconscious in a hallway a few doors from his home. His case was diagnosed ecobolism by an ambulance surgeon.