

SONG OR SIGH.

When bright skies seem far away, Smile, and think December's May!

A Matrimonial Venture.



It was the old, old story. But, as a matter of introductory fact, this tale throughout is of a character very commonplace.

In seeking, however, for a partner with whom to share his name, liberty and other hereditaryments, he resorted to the not unprecedented but somewhat unconventional method of publishing his craving in the newspapers of San Francisco.

"I want a wife. I am a thirty-five-year-old, a thoroughbred and square, I own 4000 cattle, 600 horses, have 200,000 sows, and, barring blizzards, northerners and other visitations of a glorious climate, shall never get the oven strap for hunger. That's all. Who's the woman? She must be under twenty-five and show up a registered pedigree. JACOB WITHAM, Quemadura Flat, California."

But Mr. Witham's aspiration, proclaimed beyond all misinterpretation, was destined to be considered by an individual manifestly unsuited to its requirements. In a cozy parlor within the aristocratic limits of San Francisco it had caught the eye of one Frederick Weldon, and to that gentleman's handsome features it brought a smile of amusement.

But his assumption of tender deprecation elicited only a light, rippling laugh. It is to be feared that the young girl deemed all such courteous platitudes her just tribute.

Meanwhile, however, Fred retained the newspaper, and after a brief interval he again asked: "Why not answer it? I'll write the letter and you copy it. Then we'll enclose the photo. of an actress—if you can find one consistent with his idea of a 'registered pedigree'—and await results."

Again Miss Halsted laughed, but it was only a musical murmur, manifesting little appreciation; she even appeared somewhat bored by his persistency. Nevertheless she rose and procured the materials requisite for correspondence.

"But what name will I sign?" she asked, when at last it had been copied.

"You might use a composite," was the reply. "Yes, that's it; make it Dorothy Weldon."

The young girl colored and lowered her eyes. But she accepted the suggestion, and over such pseudonym was the letter sent.

As an epistolary precursor of future hymenial joys it was a masterpiece—or, so, at least, Fred averred. It was to be presumed that the unknown Mr. Witham was a cattle baron—i. e., a cowboy on whom fortune had smiled—therefore, all stilted elegance of phraseology was avoided.

Her face was slightly paler as she looked up.

accord her communication that confidence befitting her own sincerity. Fred contemplated this last bit of flattery with a smile of complacency. "He'll not swear at his cattle for a week after that," he observed. Then he assigned the letter to his pocket.

"My Dear Miss Weldon," it began. "Thanks for your letter. Thanks, too, for your picture. I also thank God that I have been permitted to receive them. Perhaps that sounds like a stampede of fervency, but I'm more accustomed to stampedes than to writing letters. Therefore, when I tell you that I like your points you can back my words."

And thus launched upon the sea of correspondence—involved in four pages of very "unfashionable" paper—he continued. He reiterated all he had previously published, and added considerably unimportant details, of which reference to certain bankers in Los Angeles comprised no small part.

"As to your own right to your brand, no further remarks are necessary. I have seen your face (on paper), and I have heard you talk—I know the yelping of a sneaking coyote, and I never yet failed to recognize the jeweled hide of a rattlesnake. That's all."

With this, however, Miss Halsted appeared less agreeably diverted.

"There's a rough, Quixotic credence about it that approaches pathos," was her amusing comment.

"He does put it rather neatly," he vouchsafed, "but he's only a cowboy, Dolly; and, besides, this is only his first; who knows what a mind of loving tenderness he may yet develop?"

Nevertheless another letter was written, and in Dolly's delicate chirography. Nor did Fred's subsequent expression of satisfaction arise wholly from the epistle itself, rather from the young girl's subservience to his wishes.

Five minutes later a speaking tube wheezed, and he watched the clerk. But the suspense was of brief duration. Yes; Mr. Witham was in and would be pleased to see Mr. Weldon at once.

"Mr. Witham," he said, tersely.

The bellboy, too, seemed as if bent upon hastening the calamitous work, for he at once conducted him to the door of Mr. Witham's room and tapped loudly on the panel.

But he was not with him that Fred was now concerned—Dorothy Halsted was seated on his knee.

Meanwhile, however, there arrived a day when the newspapers again had occasion to publish Jake Witham's name. It was only a brief notice, telegraphic, and recounting the destruction by fire of Quemadura Flat, the settlement wherein that gentleman received his man. He had been present at the time—presumably awaiting the customary letter—and had generously donated \$500 to those rendered homeless.

"It's the dollar, not the sentiment, with you, Fred," she astutely returned.

"Well, that lets us out," he returned. "To tell you the truth, Dolly, I was beginning to wonder how we could extricate ourselves gracefully."

But Fred erred, and that gravely, in believing he was to escape thus easily from the correspondence which he had begun. Three days later he was again

summoned into Miss Halsted's presence, and that young lady met him with a look of blank dismay. She had received another letter from Mr. Witham, and of a character vastly dissimilar to those of earlier date. Moreover, a small package accompanied the letter. Within reposed a ring whose glistening stone was worthy to grace even Dolly's taper fingers, and the sender was following the ring.

"Here!" the young girl ejaculated, almost tearfully. "He's coming here!"

"We!" the young girl exclaimed. "I'm not Miss Weldon."

"Well, I will, then," Fred returned. "But what will I tell him—that you're sick, dead, or have left the city?"

"Do—do you suppose he'll fight?" he queried, half absently.

But words are not actions. The following day was nearly at an end when Fred entered the Palace Hotel and glanced over the register.

Five minutes later a speaking tube wheezed, and he watched the clerk. But the suspense was of brief duration. Yes; Mr. Witham was in and would be pleased to see Mr. Weldon at once.

Mr. Witham, the "cowboy"—was seated within, and of exterior he was not at all formidable. His features, albeit bearded, were boyish, pleasant and rather handsome, and his attire was that affected by a man of the world.

"Come!" was the cheery response that floated through the transom, and Fred shuddered. Then he pulled himself together and turned the knob.

But on the threshold he paused. Mr. Witham—the "cowboy"—was seated within, and of exterior he was not at all formidable. His features, albeit bearded, were boyish, pleasant and rather handsome, and his attire was that affected by a man of the world.

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FOR LITTLE FOLKS.

A COLUMN OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO THEM.

Something that will interest the juvenile members of every household—quaint actions and bright sayings of many cats and cunning children.

My Big Brother.

I wish that my big brother's here; He comes home jes' 'bout once a year. For where he lives 's an awful ways; An' cars can't come in free whole days; But when he's here I laugh an' laugh Till I'm 'bout dead—more'n half.

Last year, soon's he unpacked his trunk, I found a pillow right kepunk; N'en he frowned back an' nen us boys All frowned an' made the biggest noise Until we made him say 'enough' An' tell us we were jes' the stuff.

We played some he's our big horse Jack An' nen he rided us on his back; But onst I falled off on my head, 'Cause he scared at the cat, he said— I jes' got straps down off the shelf An' tied him to below himself.

One day we played that we was bears, An' rained in jes' 'bout down the stairs Till ma said she'd jes' punish us. For making such an awful fuss, An' nen she tooked him 'cross her knee, An' laughed an' spanked him—jes, siree!

Onst ma gived us some dough to bake On top the stove, jes' like a cake, An' nen she said that we could try To make ourselves an apple pie; N'en when it cooked, we runned away An' et it all up in the hay.

He wished he's small again like me So he could climb our cherry tree. I's pose he's sorry he's so old, An' could do things 'bout being told. For lots of times when he was here He looked that way—he was so queer.

He'd stand an' talk to our old cow An' ask her how she's tended now; He'd look at everything he'd made— The places where the chickens laid, The pigeon coop, the old wood box, That somehow shuts itself and locks.

N'en every place he used to play, He'd go to see 'bout every day. Down to the ice house, by the stairs He'd go there lots—more'n any where— An' there he'd stand an' look an' look, Jes' like he's readin' in a book.

I's pose he's thinking, for you know, He used to play there wif his bear— An' making pios an' lettin' on. They's keepin' him 'bout any one. He used to say she was his wife, An' cut her name there wif his knife.

When they'd come slow-like up the walk Ma said they'd catch their hands an' talk 'Bout what they'd do when they got growd An' had a big house of their own; But nen, it never did come true, Jes' like they said—'he's sorry, too!

For he'd take flowers on the hill N'en go down there an' keep 'em still; Or else he'd look 't album where There's an old faded one of her, Mor'n onst I listened, and he said Out loud: "Why, Annie, are you dead?"

I's pose he thought she'd hear him speak An' see the tears run down his cheek. Say, don't you think it's funny how He jes' remembers 'bout her now? For he's a great big man, you know, An' they were little years ago.

I wish some bird or fairy bright Would bring him while I sleep some night; I wish he'd come right off to-day; I'd hold him tight and make him stay. For all of us jes' feel so good When he comes home—I wish he would. —New York World.

Growing Dirty.

Little 5-year old Arthur was asked if he knew that a penny would grow if it were planted. "Yes," he replied, promptly, "it would grow dirty."

REMAKING OLD HATS.

POPPULAR SCIENCE.

There are more than 500,000 miles of telegraph lines in the United States. Artificial silk is produced by chemical means out of waste wool or cotton.

Every nation of the globe has had its "stone age" at some period of its history.

Vienna, Austria, is to have a novel elevated railway. The cars are to be suspended instead of running on ordinary rails.

A recent invention is the pulsimeter, a watch made especially for doctors to time pulses with. It is made very much on the principle of the stop watch, and indicates the rate on a pulse dial in so many beats per minute.

An authority on hypnotism says that hysterical persons are very difficult to influence. They are so wedded to their own fancies, mental and physical that they prove very obstinate hypnotic patients. Even if an influence is gained, it passes off very quickly.

Dr. Viquerat, of Geneva, Switzerland, is using a new method for tuberculosis. He gives subcutaneous injections of the serum of donkeys, and reports that he has thus cured seemingly hopeless cases. An institute will be founded in Geneva to apply his treatment.

The Thermogen is an appliance for keeping up the temperature of a patient during an operation, doing away with blankets and hot-water bottles. It is in the form of a quilted cushion, with an arrangement of fine wires inside, by which any desired degree of heat may be maintained by electricity. It was exhibited at the last meeting of the Royal Society.

Small incandescent lamps, using secondary batteries weighing about half a pound, are used for night service in the German Army. It has been suggested that they be used with balloons for signalling, and the bicycle corps uses them for reconnoitering. The small accumulators have also been supplied to powder magazines and artillery depots.

The Belgian Government, it is reported, is about to open negotiations with the British Government looking to the establishment of telephone lines between London and Brussels. The authorities at Berlin have signified their willingness to continue the line to Berlin, and the prospect is good that London and Berlin will soon be connected by telephone by way of Ostend and Brussels.

Explosion of a Mountain.

Previous to July 15, 1888, Mount Bandai, a time-cleft peak, 4800 feet in height, was the most conspicuous object in the mountain range lying from 100 to 150 miles north of Tokio, the chief city of Japan. On the day in question it was literally "rent in twain" and "blown off the face of the earth" by the expansive power of steam which had generated within it.

The explosion is said to have been heard a distance of over a thousand miles and to have caused absolute darkness in the vicinity of the exploded peak upwards of three hours, during which time perfect torrents of hot water and mud were poured down from the immense heights to which they had been hurled by the force of the "pent-up furies" which caused the disaster. The debris which fell after the explosion covered an area of 44,000 acres, to a depth varying from ten to 100 feet on an average, and in one place, where a beautiful valley had existed but a few hours before, rocks and mud were piled up to the height of 900 feet. Three villages were engulfed in the ruins and at least 500 inhabitants killed by falling debris or drowned and cooked in the torrents of boiling mud, which flowed down a valley to a distance of nine miles.

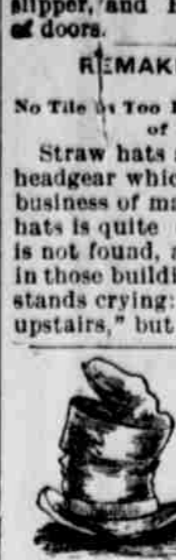
These facts were gleaned from a report made by a visiting committee appointed by the University of Tokio.—St. Louis Republic.

A Valuable Invention for Miners.

One of the most interesting papers read to the British Association was that by Dr. J. S. Haldane, on "The Causes and Prevention of Suffocation in Mines," says Public Opinion (England). The professor argued that most of the men killed in explosions were not killed at once by the explosion, but that an interval elapsed during which means could be adopted for preservation. He exhibited a small apparatus he had constructed, which could be enclosed in a small tin box, which would keep a miner alive for three hours if he remained in a sitting posture, and for one if he walked about. This would enable anyone to penetrate the layer of after-damp and reach the open air. It consisted of a cylinder containing compressed oxygen and a layer of material for absorbing the carbonic acid given out by the breath, and could be turned on by a tap, the miner breathing through a tube into a bag. It had been given the most thorough tests in the laboratory, and it was physiologically possible. It could be made at present at a cost of about \$2.50, and would not only preserve life in the event of an explosion, but also in the case of fire.

Novelist Barrie Weds the Girl Who Nursed Him When Sick.

The courtship of J. M. Barrie, the novelist, and Miss Mary Ansell was as romantic as any of the clever writer's own creations. Mr. Barrie was very ill and Miss Ansell bravely nursed him through it all. They were married as soon as he was able to travel. Barrie has won great favor in the United States, not only of critics, but the great reading public as well. He was discovered by Dr. Nicol, of the British Weekly, and was connected with that journal a long time. Then he embraced literature in earnest and his rise has been constant and rapid. The young bride is a very pretty girl and a very sweet, gentle and estimable one. Though for some years a successful actress in London, she has always been a girl of simple and retiring tastes. She has led the quietest of lives in the home of a matron friend—a life so quiet that old-fashioned people, it is said, would have called her a "home-bird." She has a special talent for dressmaking and millinery, and all her costumes, professional and private, have been made by her own fingers. She is accomplished, being a skilled musician and a clever artist in oils and water colors. Riding and swimming must be added to the list. She is a member of an old and much-respected family, and has treasures of beautiful old lace and china. No portrait, it is said, has ever done justice to her beauty.



A COLUMN OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO THEM. Straw hats are not the only kind of headgear which is made over. The business of making over silk and felt hats is quite extensive. This trade is not found, as you might suppose, in those buildings before which a man stands crying: "Hats for one dollar upstairs," but is connected with the



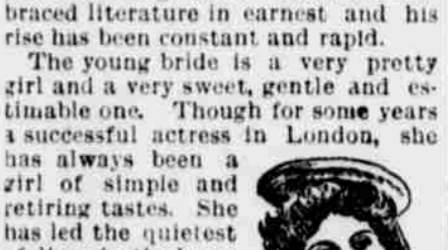
better class of retail hat stores which deal in good hats at a low price. The process for silk hats is very simple. The muslin upon which the hat is built cannot be harmed by crumpling. Heated over blue flame, re-treated with an alcoholic or water solution of shellac, called a wine or



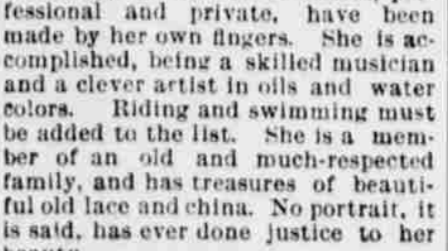
ironed into shape the hat is ready for recovering. The silk cover, which is woven like velvet, is sewn into a bag with the seams inside. The stuff is cut bias at an angle of about 60 deg. in America, 45 deg. in England, and 30 deg. in France. Deft treatment conceals the seam altogether, the nap being brushed over it, unless the hat is held slantwise in a strong light.



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Coffins Have Run Short. Reports from the plague-stricken districts of China show that the disease is still spreading and that the burying of the dead is a most serious problem. Often the pallbearers, who are paid to carry the coffin to the grave, are stricken with the dread disease on the way, and of the four who start out with the bed only one or two return. There are not coffins enough in Canton at present. The giving away of coffins has been undertaken by charitable associations, one of which reports having distributed 2,000 coffins thus far. In some places the babies are not buried at all and the baby towers are full. The baby towers are little buildings with windows near the roof. The babies are laid on the windows and pushed inside to decompose. Many of the dead at Canton have no burial plot and their coffins are left on the top of the ground. It is said that the Pearl river, which flows past the city and upon which hundreds of thousands of people live in boats, contains many floating corpses. One hundred and forty were counted in a few hours the other day.