

IF KNOCKING PAID.

If knocking paid, how easily
We might win freedom from our cares!
The problems that are hard for me
Would soon be trivial affairs;
I'd live in luxury and own
An auto of the highest grade;
With all my troubles overthrown,
I'd shout for joy, if knocking paid.

Of all the things that people do
I know the easiest, by far,
Is finding that the world's askew.
And knocking at the things that are.
The lazy man who turns his gaze
A thousand times upon the clock
And dawdles meanly through the days
Is never too inert to knock.

The one who labors all day long
Finds that so very much is wrong.
And, oh! so little, that is right!
If knocking paid, his wife could wear
Fine gems upon her soft, white hands,
And there would be a palace where
His poor, unpainted cottage stands.

Alas! that what is must be so,
That all things are not otherwise!
This world is but a vale of woe.
Where man must languish till he dies.
The easy things are not the kind
That cause the heart to beat to fade,
I do not doubt, that we should find
It hard to knock, if knocking paid.
—Chicago Record-Herald.

An Amateur Snake-Charmer

By BRADLEY GILMAN.

The native band was playing on queer, uncouth instruments—both reed and string—in front of the Casino in Helwan, near Cairo. Several wandering showmen were giving exhibitions with trained monkeys, snakes and other animals; and the plasters were pouring into their upheld tambourines.

One swarthy showman, quick and cruel of hand, was putting a tired mongoos through his tricks close by the kiosk in which I was seated, nursing my rheumatic knee. The little creature seemed intelligent enough, but was evidently exhausted. Presently he balked altogether, and lay panting on the hot, yellow sand.

The owner, eager for more plasters, at once gave him a sharp blow with a stick, and was about to repeat the blow, when a young American girl of about fourteen, fair, clear-eyed, sprang forward from the circle of spectators, leaping over a squirming cobra that lay in her path, and caught the man's upraised arm.

Her eyes sparkled with indignation; and she spoke at first in her mother tongue: "Stop that! Stop it, you cruel!"

Then she remembered that the Egyptian fellah probably could not understand her, and she turned to the few native words she knew: "La, la! (No, no!) Moosh gwas! (Not right!) Matdrasch, matdrasch! (Don't strike, don't strike!)"

The showman may or may not have understood her exact words, but he could not mistake her determined action and her indignant blue eyes. His lips parted, and I thought I detected a gleam of defiance in his face; but that quickly yielded to a mechanical grin, his crafty eyes blinked, and he nodded obedience to her command. He was equally ready to beat the helpless little creature or to refrain from beating him, according as his hope of bakshish turned.

He now stepped over the panting mongoos, stroked him with his lean, sinewy hand, and gabbed, "Poo' li'l beast! Poo' li'l beast!" words which he had probably caught, without any very clear sense of their meaning, from pitying tourists. The girl released her hold on the stick, dived into her pocket, and drew out a little harmonica, several fragments of doubtful native candy, a scarab, and several copper and silver coins. As if completing a bargain, she counted out four or five pieces of money, and gave them to the showman.

"There!" she exclaimed. "Take that! But don't let me see you striking that poor little thing again! If I do, I'll have you arrested, and—try before the American consul; he's my uncle."

This happened in the forenoon. The donkey-races were just beginning, and I hobbled away to watch them.

In the afternoon, as the glare of the midday sun sensibly diminished, I went out for one of my somewhat infirm promenades. Coming around the corner of the Cheriah Mohammed Ali, just outside the now deserted Casino garden, I saw several of the showmen and their trained animals and "properties," sitting or lying in the warm sun, against the white wall of the Hotel des Bains.

An Arab with a cobra lay at the end of the line. I recognized him by the ox-skin bag in which such as he carried their reptiles. A few people, natives or tourists, were walking along the shady side of the street, which I found myself instinctively seeking.

One of these tourists was opposite the cobra-Arab, when I saw him stop and look across the street with some intentness. As I came near him, my gaze followed his; and I felt a tremor of uneasiness and fear as I saw the horrid brown head of the cobra projecting from the bag, and thrusting this way and that in restless curiosity.

Another moment and the creature glided quite out of the bag, and his brownish-gray body extended its five feet of length along the dusty sidewalk. His owner was all unconscious of passing events—probably too drunk, even if he had been awakened, to recover his reptile.

The man beside me exclaimed, "I don't like the appearance of that! What had we better do?" But I had no plan to offer. The creature's fangs might have been drawn, and again they might not have been. In either case, I did not care to go near him.

By this time several other people had noticed us, and stood watching the now excited and active serpent.

power which these strange animals show.

The mongoos is not a native of Egypt, but of India. You see a few of them, however, in the possession of the fellahs. It is possible that this one had never seen a cobra, possibly also that the cobra had never seen a mongoos; but between the two species is fixed a mortal antipathy. And the superiority is in favor of the mongoos, which does not move, ordinarily, with much speed, but on occasion, like the rat-tail snake, can spring with astonishing rapidity.

The mongoos was pacing slowly back and forth, at the full length of his tether, his long, tapering tail, like that of a kangaroo, drooped and trailing in the dust. Suddenly the tail stiffened and the small, ferret-like head rose. He had seen his enemy. His strong hind legs gathered themselves, and with no apparent pause, he sprang straight at the oscillating, hooded head some eight feet away.

His powerful leap parted the cord which held him to his master's hand, but he overturned himself in his effort and sprawled in the dust. Before I could exactly discover how it was done the confused fury heap and again gathered itself, and I saw the now elongated form of the mongoos launched again at his hated enemy, just as the young girl waved her hand with the harmonica dropping at her side, and she fell, unconscious, upon her side in the dusty street.

With unerring aim the mongoos struck the cobra in the neck, his teeth closing on the scaly, oscillating body like a vise.

Instantly there was a fierce struggle. All that I could distinguish was a confused writhing and twisting; then the dust of the dry roadway enveloped and obscured the combatants and the prostrate form of the girl.

All Classes Have Play Time.

Of course, I know that somebody really does work, but when? At midday, in the afternoon, in the evening, at any hour of the day or night you go to places of amusement, you sit in the restaurants—at luncheon, breakfast, tea, dinner, supper. It certainly does seem to me that there are no three meals a day here, for there are so many persons who have nothing else to do but to eat at their leisure at all hours and to look out upon the streets, where thousands come and go, just as though they were intended to run up and down that way forever and ever.

Do you know that there is something fascinating about this city of yours? Of course you must know it, or you would not stay here and keep settling here year after year. I wonder how it is possible for so many to find a place to live on this little, rocky island, all clamped down with steel and weighted down with big masses of stone as though you were afraid that the very ground would hurry away from under your feet and go galloping out to sea, playing to death at work.

But you don't labor in this town as they do down South—as far as length of time is concerned, at least. In New York, the people squeeze all their work into a few hours, and then away they go in their cars and automobiles, hastening to the country, hurrying to the theatres and running toward the beaches. All classes have time to play, for in the parks I see laborers and their families taking life as easy as a New York man can and having such a good time. It isn't any wonder that the first thing that a stranger asks of New York is, "When do you work?"

New York Men Chivalrous.

Do you know that before I came here I heard much about the coldness and exclusiveness of New York people, and I was not prepared to like them at all. Well, they do have that constrained air about them, but it is all an affection. They don't mean it. At heart they are kindly, polite and attentive.

And the men! Oh, I do like the New York men. They are the very soul of chivalry; they are courteous; they never presume; they take the greatest pleasure in doing any service. They are always so respectful and attentive, yet when there is any

IN OLD WAR DAYS.

How the Great Struggle Made Business For the Bucksport Stage.

If one wants to hear marvelous tales concerning stage driving in old times he should go to Bucksport and secure talks with some of the old chaps who can remember back to the days of the Civil War. Then, as now, Bucksport was eighteen miles from everywhere—from Bangor, Belfast, Castine, Ellsworth and several other smaller places. Stages left the old Robinson House in processions every day.

Some of those old drivers were remarkable men, skilled in handling the "ribbons," very popular with their patrons and heroic in their labors to be on time under every condition of weather. The names of these men would fill considerable space in a newspaper. Most of them are dead now, but they are not forgotten.

There is another aspect of stage driving during the Civil War times, which no one has recorded as yet—the great traffic which was carried on by hackmen and stages in carrying persons who were anxious to get away to New Brunswick as soon and as quietly as possible. The demand for soldiers was urgent, because the needs of the nation were great. Many young men who were physically able to serve in the ranks did not have a liking for the job, and sooner than argue the case, they sought rest and seclusion under her Majesty's flag, even as many vessels owners did for their property, which was exposed to

NEW YORK AS SEEN BY A DIXIE GIRL.

One of "Seventeen Most Popular" of the South Gives Her Impressions—Hurry in Work and Play—Even the Rocky Island is Clamped Down With Steel to Keep It From Running Away to Sea—Says Women Look Hard—Admires Kitchen of Great Hotel, But Yearns For a Little Corn Pone or Beaten Biscuit.

By KATHERINE ROBERTSON.

KEYSTONE STATE GULLINGS

NEW STATE CAPITOL

Building Commission Has Accepted the Building from Contractors—Dedication Will Be in October.

The new state capitol was accepted by the capitol building commission from the contractors, George F. Payne & Company of Philadelphia, and turned over to the board of public grounds and buildings of which Governor Pennypacker is president. The commission announced at the close of its meeting that it would turn back into the state treasury between \$30,000 and \$40,000 out of the \$4,000,000 appropriated. The building is practically finished and is now being cleaned and made ready for the dedication ceremonies on October 4. The acceptance of the building by the commission carries with it the acceptance of the \$60,000 bronze doors containing the heads of members of the commission and other distinguished Pennsylvanians at the main entrance.

State Zoologist Surface has advised Gov. Pennypacker that he will be able to furnish 60,000 specimens for the natural history section of the proposed state museum. These specimens will include insects, reptiles, mammals, and birds which Dr. Surface has gathered and also a fine fish exhibit which he has collected in conjunction with the state department of fisheries. Dr. Surface's collection contains specimens which, he says, are priceless. Most of them were gifts to the state, and to attempt to duplicate some would be almost impossible. In one case there are three specimens of a kind of a weasel of which only six are known to be in existence. Every animal, bird or insect which related to agriculture has been studied and will be included in the collection being made by Dr. Surface.

Hard Look About the Month.

The expression of the faces of New York women, although I cannot exactly describe it, is something which one is not likely to forget. Well—I may as well say it—they have a hard look around the mouth and under the eyes, and I have not seen many of them who looked really happy. I think that one coming from the West or South might learn in two or three months to dress like the women of New York, and probably in a year or so she would get that same expression. It is something that one seems to feel, but it is hard to define or describe. I don't know that I care for it, and would not care to have my friends look that way.

It is very interesting to watch thousands of faces which you have never seen before and will never see again. It is different from some of the little towns in the South that I know, where you know everybody and everybody knows you, and loves you. Is it not a wonderful study in human nature? I rather like it.

Do you know that there is something fascinating about this city of yours? Of course you must know it, or you would not stay here and keep settling here year after year. I wonder how it is possible for so many to find a place to live on this little, rocky island, all clamped down with steel and weighted down with big masses of stone as though you were afraid that the very ground would hurry away from under your feet and go galloping out to sea, playing to death at work.

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No Green Anywhere.

How big and clean and shiny the whole city is with its tall skyscrapers without a speck on them, just as though they were dusted every morning, and the great apartment houses which look as if they were washed over every night!

But how close together you all live! Down South we like to have large lawns and here you haven't anything like that, not even the Vanderbilt's. Even Mr. Morgan has only a tree or two.

You scarcely have anything green around the houses to give your eyes a rest. We girls like to get out in the yard under the trees, where we can have tea and talk.

And the men! Oh, I do like the New York men. They are the very soul of chivalry; they are courteous; they never presume; they take the greatest pleasure in doing any service. They are always so respectful and attentive, yet when there is any

the ravages of Confederate privates.

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Fusing Rubies.

Little rubies, the price of which is