

THE PATH TO VICTORY.

Though off your star of hope has faded, Waste not your breath in sighing; Remember, friend, you have not failed So long as you keep trying.

TIM, CREDITOR.

BY RAYMOND WESTHILL.

He was a newsboy, and one of two creditors who formed an acquaintance at a debtor's door—the other creditor was the landlord.

"Is there no one in?" inquired that person as he discovered Tim there. "Now, she's never in when I want me money," said Tim. "She took der papers alright."

"I would come here every week until she gave me the rest, if I were you."

"Yer wouldn't git it den, for I went ter her house in Gardner street twen'y three times in two months an' all I got was 50 cents."

"Some people haven't any hearts," remarked the landlord as Tim paused.

"Dat was sixty-six flignts er stairs more. Den she moved ter Cook avenger, but I wusn't gonner give it up an' I found out where she moved. She lived dare seven months an' I never got nothin' from her. It was two flignts dare, and went up sixty-six times an' dat makes a hund'ed an' thirty-eight more flignts er stairs. Den she moved ter Wilton street an' der firs' t'ree months I didn't get nothin'."

"An," he continued, getting quite in a rage; "some of her excusis was fierce. She tol' me firs' dat der firm didn't pay her husban' yet for two months, an' dat she was ter law about it. Den dat gag wore out, an' when Mr. Braid'd come ter der door an' see me he'd say 'Mrs. Braid jist went out, boy; she's got all der money wid her; come 'round tomorrow,' and when Mrs. Braid'd come ter der door she'd say 'Why Mr. Braid jist went out. Didn't yer meet him? I haven't a penny in der house. Sorry; yer'll have ter come in tomorrow.'"

"Such mean proceedings," interposed the landlord with disgust. "Oh, dat ain't all. One day I got dem mixed up. Mr. Braid said dat Mrs. Braid was sleepin' an' because she had neuralgia he didn't want ter wake her up. I went der nex' day an' she says 'Why didn't yer call er little earlier yesterday?' I jist went out when yer came. Nothin' but 'er big lie.'"

"Did you tell her you caught her?" "Naw—wouldn't be no use." During the last of the conversation the landlord had taken a tub that had stood against the front door of Mrs. Braid's apartment and placed it against the rear door.

"She'll know who put that there," he said assuringly. "She'll be down to my office tonight without fail to pay the rent. She doesn't fool with me."

The next time Tim found Mrs. Braid in, and she promised to pay "every cent on Wednesday afternoon at three o'clock, four weeks from now."

That afternoon Mrs. Braid was preparing to make a "call," and thereby evade the newsboy, when the landlord came. She had appeared at his office thrice with excuses, but no money. He must have his money. She found subterfuge in: "I have only a ten dollar bill. He insisted upon getting change, while she argued that she had an important engagement and could not tarry a moment. He threatened to put her and her possessions on the sidewalk if she did not settle. She finally handed him the ten dollar bill, though not before she had gotten rid of the detaining dilemma. That was disposed of by her careless nature when she said:

"Put the change under the mat. It'll be a dollar and a half—eight fifty for the rent."

"It will not be safe there."

"Oh yes it will. I've placed things there loads of times."

About twenty minutes after Mrs. Braid had sauntered out of the house Tim, fifteen minutes later, was rapping at her door; but, of course, it remained closed. He made up his mind to fool her "jist onst" in his life, so he placed the tub where the landlord had put it.

"Now," he said to himself with a giggle, "she'll go down ter his office ter nothin'! Dat'll be a wild-goose chase fer her."

But somehow the tub would roll away from the door, and he felt for the supposed disturbing piece of coal.

It was not on top of the mat, so he felt under. His hand struck some paper and he picked it up and took it to the light. To his astonishment the paper contained a dollar and a half! and written across it was the word "change."

"Alright," said Tim out loud, "I'll give her der change, an' I'm mighty glad yer honest at las'." He placed three cents change in the paper and put it under the mat.

He joyously rushed out of the house and off to a fruit store, where he purchased a large bag of fruit—"Now," he said, as he came out, "Mom'll have fruit like everybody else."

In front of the landlord's office a crowd had gathered, for within an unconscious little form was stretched on a desk. It was none other than Tim's. While caring for his fruit he had slipped, and fell, striking his head on the sidewalk. When he did open his eyes the first thing he said was:

"It's me own fault. I got it because I was goin' ter give her a wild-goose chase. Dat's why I got it."

"What woman, Tim?" quickly interrogated the landlord.

"Mrs. Braid. She left der money what she owed me under der mat, an' I bought der fruits wid it."

The landlord said nothing; but a few minutes later, when the lad appeared to have recovered enough to go home, the landlord started for Mrs. Braid's apartment.

Half an hour afterward Mrs. Braid took from under her mat a dollar and a half, and remarked:

"I knew it would be safe."—The Criterion.

AN EASTERN NATIONAL PARK.

A Project for One in New England, to Embrace Parts of Three States. There is talk of a national park in New England, including part of Maine, as a forest reservation. The entire area of forest reservations and parks approximates fifty million acres.

The parks differ from the forest reserves in that no lumbering can be carried on within them, and their game animals are protected. The mining laws do not apply within their territory, except in Mount Mansfield Park, and they are in care of government troops. The forest reservations, on the other hand, are administered by the secretary of the interior, through the general land office. Maine and New Hampshire already have state and forestry commissions, and it might be practicable to secure their cooperation in the control and direction of such a reservation as is suggested.

While several states have acquired forest reservations or have taken measures to protect such areas, the Federal government possesses the facilities for controlling such reservations in a broad way, unaffected by local or private interests, upon plans that will permit the use of private forests that remain, directing with intelligence such cutting as is proper, and promoting new growth on the denuded areas.

The subject is exceedingly important in its relation to the prosperity of the farmer, who is largely dependent on climate and rainfall; to the great manufacturing interests, more or less dependent on the water power furnished by our rivers; to the rapidly growing cities and towns whose water supply is drawn from our northern lakes, and to the health and pleasure of thousands who annually visit the mountains and uplands of northern Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine.

The White Mountain region of New Hampshire covers an area of more than 1200 square miles, between the lake country of New Hampshire on the south and the valleys of the Ammonoosuc and Androscoggin on the north. Connected with it easterly are the great forest areas of Maine, extending to the Canadian frontier, and on the west are the contiguous mountain districts of Vermont.

This whole section, including parts of the three states named, is of the highest scenic interest, comprising mountain, lake and river. Dominated by Mount Washington and the Presidential range, flanked by the Franconia and Sandwich ranges, it includes also groups of lesser peaks covered by forests, inclosing mountain-walled lakes of surpassing beauty, feeding the Connecticut and Merrimac rivers, the Saco, the Androscoggin, the Kennebec, the Penobscot, and many tributary streams, the source of the water power of hundreds of manufacturing villages and cities, to which the growth and prosperity of New England are so largely due.

THE GREATEST HAIR-CUT

IMPROVEMENTS IN THE METHODS OF SHEARING THE SHEEP.

Professional Cutters Begin Shearing the Locks in the Northwest in Early Spring—Working Westward and Reeling Their Season in California—Wages Are Good.

Man is not the only animal that has his hair cut at regular intervals, and it might be interesting to note that the most extensive hair cut in this or any other country has no reference whatever to the human biped, writes G. E. W. in the Country Gentleman. Up in the northwest professional hair cutters begin shearing the flocks early in spring, and as the season advances they work their way westward and end up in Nevada and California, when it is about time to return to the original starting point and repeat the operation. In the course of the year they cut something like 500,000,000 pounds of hair.

The present consumption of wool in the United States is estimated at about 600,000,000 pounds, and, though the statisticians of the department of agriculture say that we have about 41,883,065 sheep on the farms and ranches of the United States, these are unable to supply the full demand for wool, and we import some million pounds every year. But the task of shearing over 40,000,000 sheep is not one to consider lightly, and as the wool piles up, new wheels of commerce are started in their revolution.

Sheep-shearing time in the earlier days of our country's history was a season of justification, and the farmer and his hired help would go down to the sheep pasture to make merry with the frightened animals. One by one they would be caught, and while one held the animal securely the other would proceed to clip off the wool with a huge pair of hand shears. Sheep-shearing time would often occupy weeks on the large farms, and when it was over, the great mass of soft fluffy wool was piled up in the sheds to be cleaned and worked over or shipped to the market in its rough state. Not a little of it was woven into cloth on the farm by the wife and daughters of the owner.

But with the multiplication of the sheep, the necessity of better and quicker methods of shearing was felt. In the northwest and on the Pacific coast there are farms and ranches with from 50,000 to 300,000 sheep, and to shear such flocks in the old way would be an almost impossible task. It is these new conditions that have brought the professional hair cutters into existence, and they move from farm to farm in a regular circuit every season. These professional shearers are experts in their line, and they have demonstrated that it pays better to be a tonsorial artist for sheep than for man. A good shearer will make from \$7 to \$10 per day, but that represents payment for his skill and labor and interest on his machines and general outfit.

When the shearers come to the ranch or farm, the trusting sheep are driven into a narrow pen, where they are easily caught when needed. The shearers receive their pay according to the number of sheep handled, and consequently they proceed with all expedition. On large ranches, a score of shearers operate together. The power instruments are set up, and the shearers take their positions in rows, while the sheep are brought to them by assistants. The cutting instrument is an enlarged and improved sort of barber's clipper, which takes huge swaths of wool off at once. An expert operator will handle the machine so dexterously that the wool will come off almost in a solid mass, and it looks for all the world as if the animal was being actually skinned alive. But when the operation is finished, it will be found that not a bruise or scratch has been made on the skin, and the animal scampers away shorn and shaved within a small fraction of an inch of its skin. The wool is gathered up by another operator and carted to the packing house, where it is tramped into huge burlap bags, each weighing when filled about 35 pounds.

The shearers receive from seven to ten cents per head for shearing the sheep, and a day's work for one professional is from 125 to 250 head. That is an inconceivable operation for a barber who cuts the hair of his human patients; but then, while the latter is operating on one person, the skilled sheep shearer would cut the wool from the backs of half a dozen sheep. The sheep sheared by a dozen professional operators in the course of a week quickly mount up into thousands, and the modern ranch, with its hundred thousand and more sheep ready for the hair cut, does not present such a formidable problem as formerly.

The revival of the wool industry in the past few years has added materially to the number of sheep on the farms in the United States. The actual amount of wool can only be estimated from year to year until the shearing season has ended. The number of sheep in the country does not accurately forecast the wool supply. Some of the moderate high-class wool sheep give two and three times as much as the old common animals, and an estimate of the wool can be made only approximately unless the breed of the animals is known also. There are over 75 grades and breeds of sheep in this country, and they vary as much in the quantity of wool they give as they do in price and general valuation.

Humorous Editor—You have carried this joke a little too far. Sad Humorist—Yes, sir; that is why I wish to leave it with you.—Boston Courier.

ODD COSTUMES IN SWEDEN.

Garments Worn by the Old and the Young Differ Very Slightly.

The costumes of the Dalecarlian women in Sweden are unique, a dark blue woolen skirt, very full and gathered in tufts at the waist; a white blouse, a vest of red or green cloth, beautifully embroidered in colors and often with gold and silver threads; a broad red belt of knitted wool; a long apron of red woolen, with stripes of black, white and green; a kerchief folded three corners about the neck and fastened with a gold or silver pin, with many glistening pendants, and a headdress in the shape of a cornucopia made of black felt with red trimmings and streamers. Long earrings of gold or silver and bracelets of curious forms are common.

The men wear long blue frock coats with full skirts, faced with red broadcloth and edged with red cord. Hooks and eyes are used instead of buttons and the collar is cut similar to that of a Church of England parson. The vest is made of the same material and is also edged and faced with red. The knee breeches are of yellow buckskin, ornamented with red cord and tassels at the garter, which holds up thick woolen stockings. Broad silver buckles are worn upon the shoes. The hat is of black felt, with a low crown and broad brim resembling those worn by Quakers in the United States.

Small boys are dressed exactly like their fathers. A coat with a long skirt is the ambition of every youngster, like the first pair of trousers of American boys, and he usually attains that honor when he is ten years old. The little chaps you see going about in long-trailed coats and buckskin breeches look as if they were dressed for the stage. Little girls in the same way imitate their mothers with skirts reaching to their ankles and quaint, homemade jewelry of silver and gold. Every little girl hopes to have a brooch with jingling pendants. The jewelry is of simple pattern, the gold or silver being hammered into thin sheets, cut into squares and diamonds and fastened together with rings.

The costumes of the Dalecarlian women differ according to locality. In some of the parishes red is the prevailing color and in others green and blue. Their hats are shaped and trimmed differently also, and in one of the parishes a sort of "tam o' shanter" is worn, with a band fitting closely around the head and a broad top. In the Mora country the men wear jackets of white felt cut square at the corners and fitting closely to the neck, with white buckskin knickerbockers and leather aprons to keep them clean. The ordinary overcoat is made of sheepskin with the wool on the inside, like Bryan o' Lynn's held to the waist with a belt and with long skirts reaching to the heels—a very comfortable garment for this climate and not unbecoming.—Chicago Record-Herald.

Pearl Lore.

The most beautiful pearl in existence is in the crown of one of the former czars of Russia and is on exhibition in the Kremlin at Moscow. It is a perfect sphere, and so pure as to appear almost transparent. It weighs 30 grains. The next finest in the world is known as the Hope pearl and is owned by an English nobleman. There is a remarkable pearl in the crown of an image of the Virgin at Saragossa, Spain, and another of equal value in a cross in the cathedral at Seville, which is said to have been brought from America by one of the early conquistadores.

A few years ago an American traveler purchased for 100 marks an antique gold brooch that he found in a brick-bath shop in a small town in the interior of Germany. In the centre of the setting was a spherical jewel that was supposed to be hematite, a species of iron ore, but when the brooch was brought to the United States and sent to Tiffany's to be cleaned the piece of iron turned out to be one of the most beautiful gems ever exposed to view. It was a black pearl valued at \$12,000. An attempt was made to trace the ownership of the brooch, but it could only be learned that the pawnbroker had received it from a stranger some years before as security for a small loan and that the owner apparently had no knowledge of its value.

The romantic story of Cleopatra's pearls dissolved in wine was written by one who was not familiar with their composition. Pearls cannot be dissolved in wine or vinegar, but they can be eaten by certain powerful acids, which would have burned the beautiful throat of Cleopatra so that she would have died instantly.—William E. Curtiss in the Chicago Record-Herald.

Two Sufficient Reasons.

The senior partner did not make his appearance at the office until about 2 o'clock, and then the junior partner was not there.

"Where is Mr. Tenthook?" he asked of the bookkeeper.

"He left the office awhile ago, sir," replied the man of daybook and ledger, "and he said he wouldn't be back today."

"I hope nothing is the matter with him," the senior partner added. "I'm afraid he isn't very well, for he complained of a pain in his stomach yesterday."

"Well," the bookkeeper explained, "he said something about having eaten some fish at lunch that didn't agree with him, and he added that there was a football game this afternoon that he wanted to see, anyhow."—Pittsburg Commercial-Gazette.

FREAKS OF THE MISSOURI.

Has Left Part of Omaha in Iowa and Part of Iowa in Nebraska.

Spring is always a dangerous season along the Missouri river, and much money has been expended for the improvement of that stream, which has almost been so much money thrown away, so erratic is it. The fickle Missouri, when full to its banks in the spring, has a habit of cutting across lots in any and every direction, demolishing whole farms in a day.

This eccentric habit, which the Missouri river has so sedulously cultivated, has resulted in some strange situations. Thus, a portion of the incorporated limits of the city of Omaha is over in the state of Iowa, and dwellers therein pay taxes to the sister state. On the other hand, as if to even things up, Lake Manawa, a fashionable summer resort in the suburbs of Council Bluffs, Ia., belongs to Sarpy county, Nebraska. Both of these incongruities were caused by the cutting of new channels during the spring freshets and have been the cause of numerous litigations.

Recently the supreme court was called upon to render a decision with regard to that portion of Omaha which is over in Iowa. North of the business part of the city lies what is known as "Cut-off" Lake, so named from the fact that it originally was the bed of the river until a sudden whim of that stream sent the channel in another direction and left this body of water in the form of a crescent lake.

Some enterprising adventurers established a saloon in a boat anchored in the middle of the lake and attempted to defy the law. This brought the matter before the supreme court, which decided that the middle of the river was the boundary line between the two states and that the boundary changed with the changing channel.

Then, by a peculiar wrinkle of the judicial mind, the same supreme court was able to formulate an addition to this decision by which the changing boundary clause was not effective in cases of "cut-offs," which has left the matter in such condition that no one, not even the lawyers, has been able to understand it. According to the supreme court, a portion of Omaha still remains in Iowa, although the boundary between the two states, by this same decision, is a mile or more to the eastward.

The settlement of this boundary dispute will require an enactment by Congress.—New York Times.

Abandoned Farms.

Liberty H. Bailey, in Country Life in America, takes a hopeful view of "abandoned farms." He also sees the beautiful in them and has illustrated his article with superb photographs of his own making.

"Viewed as an economic question," says Mr. Bailey, the abandonment of New England farms should not disturb us more than other shifting population. In the present day, most of the lands that are now abandoned would not have been settled. They would remain in timber; and now by the inexorable power of economic forces, they are returning into forest. The first flush of the settlement of the west has passed. Manufacturing industries have attained stable conditions. People are looking again to the country. The better farms are being farmed. On the hills of western Massachusetts I found a cow puncher from Oklahoma settling on an abandoned farm, to make his living by farming. Farmers are buying up adjacent lands and extending their business. Near the railroads, city people are building cottages and retreats on the sites of old farms, to find respite and peace. The remoter places are passing into forests, and lumbering is again an industry in old New England. Where once were 'moxings' and 'plowings' are now wild and free stretches of woodland. Dilapidated stone walls ramble through the woods and are heaved by the roots of great trees. Here and there is the ruin of a foundation, with trees growing inside and the tiger lilies still persisting at the border. Now and then only a clump of tany marks a spot where people lived. Roads that once were clean from wall to wall, are now narrowed to mere wagon trails, where strawberries ripen in June, and goldenrods bloom in September. There are abandoned roads, silent avenues of a rural life that has sunken into the past. There are school-houses on these old highways where the wild growth is stealing into the playgrounds. There are schoolhouses where no children go to school. One can follow these narrow roads over the hills until he loses all contact with human effort, and is overcome with the feeling that he is far and far away."

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