

Tooting and whistling and blowing off steam,
The evening express for the valley of dream
Whirl round the room in a revel of glee
Till it stops at the station beside my old knee;
"All aboard, people!" and then with a yell,
A toot, and a choo, and a jingle of bell,
The train that is loaded with laughter and joy
Moves off on the two little feet of a boy!

Over the meadows and into the night,
With two little red cheeks for semaphore light,
Bounding and leaping, the train swings away
Into the childhood of laughter and play;
Look out for the engine, get off of the track—
Smoke rolling out from the make-believe stack,
Steam blowing by as his little cheeks glow
When off on the limited lightning we go!

Here's the sweet captain to take up your fare,
Weary old people with bundles of care!
Lean, as you pay, with a heart throb of bliss
To the little conductor who asks for a kiss!
What is your station? Ah, take us to rest,
Dear little train, from the vales of the best;
Stopping at sunrise ten minutes to drink
The dew of dead youth at the fountain's clear brink!

Tooting and panting and puffing it flies
Off to the twinkle of two little eyes;
Ever and ever so far is the line
Where little green signals of will-o'-wisp shine;
Ringing and jingling it comes to my side
With a dear little: "All aboard, now, for a ride."
And a screeching and shouting, as out of the room
It roars through the make-believe tunnels of gloom!

Under the sofa and over the rug,
With a ting-a-ling-ling and a chug-a-chug-chug,
The evening express goes by with a roar,
And stops at my chair, and jumps up from the floor,
And sinks into silence—ah, strangest of trains,
With little eyes closed at the by-lo refrains,
As over the road of heart's love in the gleam
It rides in my arm to the City of Dream!

—The Baltimore Sun.

A MATTER OF NATIONALITY

By E. MIRRICLEES.

Lafe and I began persecuting the Norwegian almost as soon as he settled on the opposite side of the creek—only we did not call it persecution in those days.

Nearly all children are provincials at heart, and neither of us was lacking in our fair share of prejudice. When distant observations showed us that the newcomer was unmistakably Scandinavian in type, we turned to look into each other's faces in disgust too deep for words.

"Well—if that isn't the limit!" Lafe burst forth, at last. "If we had to have neighbors, we needn't have had a foreigner! If father just had taken up that bottom the way he meant to—"

A brilliant idea broke off the speech, and he clapped his hand suddenly upon his horse's neck. "I tell you, Jim, let's run him off!"

I was Lafe's guest that summer, and a year or two his junior, and I was aching for excitement.

"Let's!" I agreed, without second thought, and we rode home, planning our ways and means.

Naturally we said nothing to the rest of the household regarding our intentions. Mr. Bradley, Lafe's father, seemed, after a single outburst of disappointment, to forget the very existence of the newcomer; and as for Mrs. Bradley, a woman who objected even to such innocent amusements as the riding of calves and the roping of chickens could not possibly have sound views on the subject of neighbors. Indeed, we had a shrewd suspicion that I and not the Norwegian would be banished if our product came to light.

We needed no outside help, however, in devising means of annoyance. The Norwegian's gates came open and the wires came down from his fences with surprising frequency; the water at the head of his ditch was continually choked by driftwood, and his cows, turned out to graze in the morning, by night were miles away.

For a long time the victim of these outrages seemed to lay them entirely to natural causes. Then he must have observed that the days we rode through the hills surrounding his claim were always the days of accident, for he accused us heatedly once or twice of interference with his cattle, and the interference continuing, complained to Mr. Bradley, with the result that we received orders to remain strictly on our own side of the creek.

"Though I know you haven't intentionally harmed anything of Olson's," Mr. Bradley assured us. "I told him you were a thoughtless pair, but you were honest, and I want him to see he's no better off with you away."

That was what we wished also. We echoed the last clause with genuine sincerity, and were scarcely out of hearing before we began scheming for ways to make it come true.

"Old meddler!" Lafe growled, unjustifiably. "He'd like to keep us shut up in the barn-yard." Then he flushed a little. "But I suppose he's got a right to play back," he added, urged by a late-born sense of justice.

"But he hasn't any right to drag your father in," I pointed out. "We don't go finding fault to his wife," and both of us seized eagerly upon this new reason for indignation.

We were beginning to find it rather difficult to keep up an active dislike for the newcomer. He was a quiet, hard-working man, somewhat past youth, and except for a slight lengthening of the sibilant sounds in his speech, with no mark of foreign origin. Then, too, he was poor.

His poverty tugged at our sympathies more than once when we saw him dragging wearily home at the end of a day's work, or patching up his ancient farm machinery to fit it for fresh service. His house was in view from the edge of the creek, and most of the fields where he worked. After our prohibition we used to spend hours wandering up and down the creek bank, watching him and inciting each other to extraordinary

revenge, which somehow never were brought to pass.

He noticed us one day, and came smiling down to the creek bank. "My fence is staying up nicely now, thank you!" he called across to us.

"But your ditch isn't staying open any better!" Lafe taunted back, furiously.

We had found a point on our side of the stream from which we could float down brush against the opposite head-gate. By one impulse we sprang up to go to it. Then I halted.

"He'll know it's us for sure if it fills up to-day," I suggested.

We were devoting ourselves to our supper that night when a speech from Mrs. Bradley caught our attention.

"I drove over to Mrs. Olson's to-day," she remarked to her husband. "She's going into town to-morrow. I told her Mr. Olson was to use our telephone any time he wanted to get word to her."

"He's not going to stay with her, then?" Mr. Bradley questioned. "I suppose he can't at this time of year."

"He feels he can't. He's just going to take her in," Mrs. Bradley sighed a little over the words, and fell into so serious a silence that Lafe's indignant interrogation went unspoken.

We observed the next day that no smoke rose from the Olson chimney, and for the three days of the owner's absence we turned our attention entirely away from the adjoining ranch. After our fashion we were honorable adversaries.

On the day of Olson's return, Mr. Bradley departed to his mountain ranch for the second cutting of alfalfa, and Lafe and I, left with the burden of the ranch chores on our shoulders, found ourselves at first pretty closely occupied. Olson was spending much time in his own single alfalfa-field, bordering the creek. He kept his riding horse picketed outside the field, and every evening, when work was finished, forded the stream and came up to telephone to his wife. Somehow his anxious face made us glad to use our added duties as an excuse for leaving him alone.

It was about ten days after his return that Mrs. Bradley came running out to the corral, where we were doing the morning milking.

"Lafe, get your horse and go for Mr. Olson!" she called through the bars. "Tell him they want him. His wife's worse."

"Oh, send Gert!" Lafe protested; and then, with sudden inspiration, "Pa won't let us go across the creek."

Mrs. Bradley made no answer, but ten minutes later we saw Lafe's nine-year-old-sister galloping up the slope which led to Olson's house.

I think neither of us wanted to observe the man's movements, but against our wills we slunk down to our point of vantage on the creek bank. From there we saw Olson run out to meet the messenger, saw him dash back into the stable, and almost at once emerge on horseback and disappear at a pace which meant a fresh horse or a breakdown before the thirty miles to town were covered.

"Bet he left his gates down and his fire burning," I derided. "He never thought of his stock." But the jeering came hard, and we went back to our milking in silence.

Not for the world would we have acknowledged an interest in the deserted place, but all the same, I was

at the river bank a dozen times during the morning; and when, a little after noon, I saw a stranger ride in through the pasture and lead his horse to the sheds, I was conscious of distinct relief.

"Olson's sent somebody to stay on his ranch," I ventured, indiscreetly. "Any of our business?" Lafe scorched me into silence. "He could, easy enough. Plenty of Norwegians along the creek."

Apparently the new man was for household service only; that is, he may have milked the cows and fed the chickens and attended to turning out and gathering in the stock, but his industry did not extend as far as the hay-field. Lafe commented on the fact a day or two after his arrival.

"They're going to lose their second crop over there," he pointed out. "You'd think Olson'd get back and tend to it."

"Of course his wife's sick," I excused him. "Serve him right, anyhow." I hastened, to cover up my weakness.

By another day there was no question as to the need of immediate cutting if the alfalfa were to yield a good grade of hay. From end to end of the field the feathery purple blossoms waved above the green. I was less at home than Lafe in ranch matters, but even I could see that the strength needed in the stalk was rapidly being spent upon flowers. Secretly each of us sent many anxious glances along the road by which Olson must return.

When he had been gone a week, Lafe, staring at the brilliant field, suddenly announced his intention.

"I'm going to cut it!" he declared, and at once flung round to forestall my protest. "I suppose you think it's all right to let good hay spoil, but I tell you it isn't only Olson it hurts. If that hay's spoiled, there's that much less hay in the valley, and everybody's cattle—"

"How'll you cut it? Your father's got the mowers," I interposed, practically.

"Olson's mowers here. Come on, let's get a start on it."

With Lafe to decide was to act—especially when his father was absent. Our own chores were but half done, but in twenty minutes we were hitching our horses outside Olson's wagonshed.

The man in charge came up from the calf-pen as we finished harnessing, and stood about, watching us. He was a boy only a year or two older than Lafe, and a Norwegian in good earnest, without a word of English to his credit. He did not object to our taking out the mower, but when we turned it in the direction of the hay-field, he suddenly became vocal with protests.

"I expect Olson told him to look out for us," Lafe interpreted. He swung his whip in a wide circle.

"It's all right!" he shouted back. "Good work! Amigo!"

The Spanish word did not seem to clear the mazes of the Norwegian mind to any extent. The boy followed, calling out after us until Lafe whipped up the horses and left him breathless in the background.

The field was fairly level and the cutting not hard work. Lafe rode the first swath, I the second, and so on, and at the end of every row we stopped to exchange comments on our progress.

We had covered perhaps a quarter of the field when suddenly we heard behind us a sound like the explosion of many little closed buckets of boiling water. We turned, and Olson was standing at the gate, just dismounted, watching us. His mouth was open and his face brick-red.

"What—what—" he began, stammering.

Lafe faced him in the strength of conscious virtue.

"We're cutting your hay for you. You let it stand so long it'd been spoiled by the end of the week."

He picked up a stalk, on which the blossom was already beginning to brown, and handed it to the owner. Olson took it. He crumbled the top between his fingers for a moment. Then the power of speech came to him.

"You were cutting my hay, were you? And I was raising alfalfa for seed."

He picked up his horse's bridle and started out of the field. We followed—slowly. We were nearly at the sheds before any one of us spoke. Then, "I—I should think you would be mad!" Lafe gulped forth.

"Was it your father sent you?" the owner asked, without turning his head.

"He's up the creek. We just saw your hay was going to spoil, and we knew your wife—is she better?" Lafe thought to ask.

"Much better," said Olson. He turned round toward us, beginning to smile.

"I cannot stay angry to-day. Tell your mother it is a boy."

"A—boy!" we gasped, in concert. Then Lafe rose superbly to the situation.

"Say—call him after me!" he

begged. "I don't mind if he is a Norwegian."

This time there was no doubt about Olson's smile; it was almost a grin. "But he is named already," he explained. "We call him for my father, who came to Minnesota before the war, and was killed at Chattanooga."

It was not till we were in bed and in the dark that any comment on the day's events occurred to us. Then Lafe spoke from under the quilts:

"Jim, did anybody in your family get killed in the war?"

"No," I admitted. "My father hadn't come over from Scotland then."

"And my grandfather was up in Canada. Say, I guess Olson stays on that place. I guess he can call himself an American just about whenever he likes."—Youth's Companion.

SCIENCE & MECHANICS

Prof. Julius Kikendorfer, who is said to be a member of many European scientific and geological societies, decided to lay before the King of Italy plans for the extinction of Vesuvius by gigantic tunnels bored below the sea level from the Mediterranean to the crater.

A remarkable bird found in Mexico is the bee martin, which has a trick of ruffling up the feathers on the top of its head into the exact semblance of a beautiful flower, and when a bee comes along to sip honey from the supposed flower it is snapped up by the bird.

In human history a great river has sometimes formed a dividing line between peoples possessing quite different characteristics. Dr. W. M. Lyon, Jr., has discovered a similar phenomenon affecting squirrels in Borneo. He found eight different forms of squirrels inhabiting the northern and western parts of that great island, and observed that a large river proved an effectual barrier in separating two distinct races.

Very little progress was made in the study of the phenomena of heat prior to the middle of the eighteenth century. About 1757 Joseph Black put forth this theory of "latent heat." Between Black, in 1757, and Professor John Tyndall's "Heat a Mode of Motion," first published in 1863, the subject was constantly discussed by the philosophers, and is still being studied.

One of the reasons why pneumatic tires gradually become exhausted, even when unpunctured, is that the compressed air within slowly escapes through the rubber, and this process is hastened by the oxidation of the rubber, which causes it to crack. As at least a partial remedy for this, it has been proposed to inflate tires not with ordinary air, but with nitrogen, an inert gas which does not affect the rubber. Tests of nitrogen inflated tires for automobiles have been made in France and the results are said to be encouraging.

In accounting for the rumbling or rolling of thunder, which has heretofore been explained by the echo theory, it is now stated that a flash of lightning is made of innumerable smaller flashes, which go to make up the whole. The rolling thunder is due to the primary sounds of successive discharges or flashes. When we see a relatively prolonged lightning flash we witness, in reality, a number of discontinuous discharges following down the same path, and the sounds of these successive explosions come to us like the rattle of a rapid-fire gun, only less rhythmically. This discontinuity is quite different from oscillation.

Champion Chicken Pickers.

The champion chicken pickers of the world, according to the poultryman, are the Moors. "The Moors used to own Spain," said he, "and some of them think they own a part of it now. I spent a few days in Gibraltar on a recent tour of Europe, and enjoyed the lively and quaint scenes in the market. The chicken pickers are wonders. They have fine, fat fowls, too, which they bring over in small boats from Africa, alive in crates. You step up to a fellow in a white sheet and select two young pullets for dinner. He takes them out of the coop, places one between his knees as he stands erect, and proceeds with amazing speed to dry-pick the other before its body loses the animal heat. By the time the first one is finished Mister Moor's knee pressure has strangled the other, which he denudes in a jiffy. Not a suspicion of a feather is left. He bleeds the chickens after picking, and charges you twenty-five cents for the two."—New York Press.

His Principal Occupation.

The art photographer had visited the farm. "I want to make an exhaustive study of this particular bit of landscape," he said, "and would like to have your hired man retain his present position on the fence there. Can he sit still?" "For days at a time," replied the farmer.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

The Real Sequence.

Mrs. Premiere—"You always get a new gown before you go away on a visit, don't you?" Mrs. Secunde—"No. I always go away on a visit after I get a new gown."—Charles C. Mullin, in Woman's Home Companion.

Why Aliens Will Come Back

And the Cause of Their Exodus at the Present Time.

By T. U. Powderly,

Chief of the Division of Information, Bureau of Immigration.

SEVERAL causes combine to bring about the eastward march of the aliens now leaving us. Every year a great number of aliens return to their homes for the winter. The railroads, particularly in the North, East and West, lay off men engaged in outdoor work and, following this, others are thrown out of employment. These men find it desirable to return to their old homes for the winter. They have the opportunity to visit their friends and relatives, and can live much cheaper there during the winter than here, for food and lodging are cheaper and the climate is not so severe.

In other years the exodus began the latter part of October and continued up to Christmas, but this season the rush was accentuated by the financial flurry. Those who imagine that our aliens do not read are somewhat in error, for those who cannot read have others to read to them, and they keep a sharp eye upon the trend of events in this country, so that when the papers announced under stark headlines that things were going wrong, these men, not trained to analyze the statements made, took alarm and quite a number more went away than would have gone in former years.

Another cause is to be found in the fact that every four years, preceding the Presidential election, there is a tendency eastward on the part of the aliens. They hear so much said about the uncertainty of Presidential year that they prefer to take no chances and go home early.

There is still another cause for the return of Italians to their native land. It is estimated that about \$100,000,000 will be expended in Italy in bringing the railways up to a proper standard of efficiency, and Italy is calling her sons who have learned how to make good railroads in this country back to their old homes.

There is more work to do in this country than ever before; there is a necessity for more men and women to do it, and the first months of next year will see a return of aliens who will be able to find remunerative employment in this country.

How the Sun Has Puzzled Astronomers

By Waldemar Kaempffert.

THE great ball of fire which we call the sun is not really the sun. No one has ever seen the sun. A series of concentric shells envelop a nucleus of which we know absolutely nothing except that it must be almost infinitely hotter than the fiercest furnace, and that it must amount to more than nine-tenths of the solar mass. That nucleus is the real sun, forever hidden from us. The outermost of the enveloping shells is about five thousand miles thick, and is called the "chromosphere." It is a gaseous flood, tinted

with the scarlet glare of hydrogen, and so furiously active that it spurts up great tongues of glowing gas ("prominences") to a height of thousands of miles. Time was when this agitated sea of crimson fire could be seen to advantage only during an eclipse; now special instruments are used which enable astronomers to study it in the full glare of the sun. Beyond the chromosphere, far beyond the prominences even, lies the nebulous pallid "corona," visible only during the vanishing moments of a total eclipse, aggregating not more than seven days in a century. No one has ever satisfactorily explained how the highly attenuated matter composing both the prominences and the corona is supported without falling back into the sun under the pull of solar gravitation. Now that Arrhenius has cosmically applied the effects of light-pressure a solution is presented.

How difficult it is to account for such delicate streamers as the "prominences" on the sun is better comprehended when we fully understand how relentlessly powerful is the grip of solar gravitation. If the sun were a habitable globe and you could transport yourself to its surface, you would find yourself pulled down so forcibly by gravitation that you would weigh two tons, assuming that you are an ordinary human being. Your clothing alone would weigh more than one hundred pounds. Baseball could be played in a solar drawing room; for there would be some difficulty in throwing a ball more than thirty feet. Tennis would be degraded to a form of outdoor ping-pong. From these considerations it is plain that gravitation on the sun would tend to prevent the formation of any lambent streamers and to pull down to its surface masses of any size.—Harper's Magazine.

The American Accent

By Ella Hepworth Dixon.

LAST our good American friends have acknowledged that it is they, and not ourselves, who have the "accent." This is a great step toward improving the American language, for up to now the New Yorker, the Bostonian, and the San Franciscan were at one in assuring the traveling islander that his speech was spoiled by his "English accent." The islander was too well bred, as a rule, to betray any emotion or astonishment at this accusation, but he thought a lot.

Perhaps his thought was communicated to certain pundits on the other side, for an American Speech Reform Association has just been started, with the laudable intention of teaching young America to speak the language of England, instead of the weird and complicated tongue which is the result of the salad of races and nationalities thrown hodge-podge on to the American continent. Already the society has issued a pamphlet imploring its compatriots "not to splash your words one into each other," "not to talk through the nose with your mouth tight shut," and "not to use the same phrase a thousand times a day." Even by employing these simple expedients, the New Yorker might make himself understood by a Londoner without going to the trouble of learning Esperanto. As for the astute American girl, she has long seen the expediency of approximating her speech to our own.—London Sketch.

The Deep Significance of Trifles

By G. K. Chesterton.

SOME small things go down to the depths just as tiny islets may be the peaks of enormous mountains under the sea. It is a small thing to take off one's hat in the drawing-room; it is an even smaller thing to vote. But these things are trivial or tragic according as they stand for certain strong strong desires in men and women. Wear your hat before a lady and you have said that she is not a lady; you have destroyed the whole structure of civilization on which she stands. Tell a man that he must not vote and he will

probably be angry, even if he does not want to. For you are telling him that he is not a man at all; you are turning him out of the club, the coarse and brotherly association which is necessary to males. To sum it up in one awful phrase, you are chucking him out of the public house. That, very rightly, shocks his sensibility. But the sensibilities of the woman are quite different and demand quite different consideration. And no one will ever begin to understand men and women till he understands this fact: That every man must be a man, but every woman must be a lady.

Mix in Some Pleasure as You Go Along.

Mix a little pleasure for the whole family in with the regular work. Go fishing occasionally, or attend a picnic. Mix up with your neighbors, become better friends with them, enjoy the fruits of your labor as you go along and the burdens of life will seem lighter. Even your success may become greater through it. A light spirit makes the body more enduring. Enjoy yourself occasionally and help every other member of the family to do the same. Just for the satisfaction there is in being happy and free minded. A little time given to pleasure may mean more real gain than the same time applied to never ending toil.—Chas. M. Scherer.