

DOLEFUL BALLAD OF A HERMIT.

BY A. B. S.

There was a Hermit wild and good,
Who owned a modest little cot
Close to the borders of a wood,
And happy was his lot.

So kind he was to bird and beast,
They loved him as their dearest friend;
They often shared his frugal feast,
And he the sick would tend.

One night upon his cottage door
There came a most emphatic knock,
And still another one, before
His hand could reach the lock.

He opened, and to his amazement
There stood a little brownish bird
With head aslant and jaunty gaze,
Who said, "At last you've heard!"

"I'll take a shelter for the night,"
Said he, exclaiming bold,
"There is no other hut in sight,
Besides, it's rather cold."

The gentle Hermit stared aghast,
So saucy was his little guest,
But spread an adequate repast,
And bade him take his rest.

The bird just winked his beady eye,
Said he, "My friend, I've come to stay;
I'll build a nest or two near by,
And never move away."

And so it was. Before you'd think
Some hundreds of his cousins mustered;
The Hermit could not sleep a wink,
So loud they screamed and husted.

Until at last they drove him out,
Which grieved his neighbors to the marrow,
And long ere this you've guessed, no doubt,
This person was an English Sparrow.

—I. F. B.

When Pa Kicked Over the Traces

By GERTRUDE G. BLAISDELL

Ma looks out of the window, fanning herself vigorously with her blue checked gingham apron.

"It beat the Dutch," she says to Arvylia, the younger daughter. "It does beat the Dutch how your Pa tramps over to the neighbor's for water. Here's our cistern full and all we need is drinking water brought, and by actual count that's the eleventh time he has fetched a pail today."

"Why, Ma," says Arvylia, as she drops the pea pods in the wide basket, and glances down the path at her father as he plods along between the banks of blossoming roses. "Why, Ma, we don't drink no eleven pails of water a day."

"Land sakes alive, Arvylia, of course we don't; he jest pours it out and says he thinks he'll get some fresh water. I'm afraid, I'm afraid, Arvylia, that something dreadful ails your pa. Now his cousin, Sallie Brown, her that was Sallie Perkins, died with some such an ailment, and that is just the way she acted, was always thinkin' about fresh water, would drink a hull pail at a time, so they said."

The tears were coursing down Ma's placid face and Arvylia looked up scared and white. "Oh, Ma," she gasps, "Don't."

Meanwhile, Pa, the object of their concern, plods along the path and into the yard of their neighbor. Thoughts and impulses to which he had always before been stranger surge through Pa's gentle breast. Heretofore life has held for him: only his "wimmenfolks." Ma and the girls have been the sum and substance of his existence. When a few years before they had decreed that the old farm should be sold and a home made in town, Pa had not demurred. "Ma knows best," he said. What if out behind the barn with no one to see but old Rover, a few tears had trickled down the withered old cheeks. The "wimmenfolks" had never known. He had said good-by to the dear old farm where his whole life had been spent, to the cows and horses, the lambs and calves. No one had known the cost to the poor old man. No one unless it was Rover who looked up in his eyes in such a sympathetic way that Pa felt he understood, even if Ma and the girls did not. Poor Rover, town had been too much for the farm dog and the syringa bush had blossomed over his grave now for two seasons.

Four weeks ago when Pa had gone to the neighbor's for a pail of water, there, in the woodshed, curled up beside their savage little mother, were six of the plumpest, most winning fox terrier puppies possible to imagine. That was the beginning. The puppies were very friendly and soon would scamper to meet him, growling and barking and jumping about him in delight and Pa enjoyed the frolic even better than they.

"Better take one, Mr. Perkins," said the neighbor pleasantly. But Ma and the girls had instantly vetoed such a possibility when Pa had timidly suggested it.

"What a puppy trackin' over my clean floors, well, I guess not," gasped Ma.

One day when Pa went over there were only five bright-eyed, frisky puppies left. The next day Fatty was gone. To-day there is only one, but the brightest and best of the lot thinks Pa as he grabs little Spotty up. "Oh, Spotty, Spotty, I can't let you go, I can't," he groaned. Then something very like a twinkle gleamed in the old man's eyes, and he muttered tremulously: "I'll do it, I will, I'll kick over the traces this once."

If the "wimmenfolks" had worried over him before they were in agony about him now. His peculiar desire for fresh water gives place to many new but equally startling vagaries. It is a usual thing now when they sit down to an unusually good dinner and the old man has prepared the

meat and vegetables for eating to suddenly push back his plate, declaring that he feels "porely" and cannot eat unless he carries his dinner out of doors. "Seems like the smell of the roses and sich makes things more tasty," he murmurs.

"Why, sure, father, dear," says Arvylia the first time this happens. "We'll set the table out under the apple tree to-morrow if you can eat better there." Her father shakes his head, "I want to eat alone," he says, shortly.

So they watch him nearly every day as he potters toward the barn with his plate. "And he don't even take a fork," sobs Ma. "He must eat with his jack knife."

As fall draws near the old man grows frailer and thinner, and one morning does not get up as usual, but lies so still that Ma, with a great catch at her heart, thinks he must be dead. But he is only ill, so ill that for days and weeks he lies as one already beyond the borderland. The devoted nursing of the "wimmenfolks" wins in the end, however, and one clear, crisp day in November, Pa opens his eyes and knows them. Knows that Ma is holding his hand just as tenderly as she did so long ago when they were first wedded; knows that it is Arvylia who drops the soft kiss on his forehead. Even as the peace of it all soothes him a wild fear and horror seizes him. Spotty! Just at that moment something wriggles at the foot of the bed and Pa glances down—there curled up, fatter, saucier, more irresistible than ever, on Ma's best white counterpane lies Spotty, and as though he understands, he opens his eyes and with a little yelp of joy wriggles up to Pa and snuggles against him.

"Ma," quavers Pa, "I hadn't ought to a done it."

"You keep still," sobs Ma, one hand holding fast to Pa's poor bony one, the other patting Spotty's sleek back.

"You jist keep still. Oh, Pa, to think of your starvin' of yourself and a makin' of yourself sick, jist because I didn't want to be bothered by a dog. Oh, Pa, you was out of your head that first day, and you talked so strange. We never knew how lonesome you was without the critters before and that you wanted a dog so. That very day I went out to the barn and found this rascal and I brought him in, and he has lived on the fat of the land ever since. Oh Pa," and Ma's head fell down on the bed in an agony of repentance, and Spotty, wriggling his soft little body over in his most insinuating way, gave Ma's shining gray head a few loving little licks.—Boston Post.

Equal to the Emergency.

By TOM P. MORGAN.

"Maw'nin', sah!" saluted a ramshackle looking negro, addressing the cashier of a certain small town bank.

"Maw'nin'—dat is, sah, if yo' isn't too busy. An' does yo' need a nigger 'round de place yuh—nigger wid a rec-command, sah; 'dustrious, hon'able cullud man—to wash winders an' po'tah 'round. Uh-kaze, if so, I's de pusson, sah, an' dis yuh docky-munt am de obseques dat Cuhnel White done writ 'bout muh 'chievements."

"Ah-h'm!" commented the banker, as he scanned the proffered paper.

"So your name is Hilsondigger?"

"Yassah; dat's muh 'dentification."

"And the Colonel writes here—"

"He sho' does, sah!"

"He says— Look here! Can you read?"

"Who, me? Nussah. Dat is to say, I kain't read writin'."

"I thought not. Well, the Colonel says: 'The bearer hereof, Gabe Hilsondigger, is personally known to me—'

"Desso, sah! Aw, de Cuhnel knows me!"

"—as a liar and a thief, and too utterly worthless to set a good dog on." Well—ha! ha!—it appears that the Colonel does know you. Ha! ha! ha!"

"Well-uh, well-uh—now, now—if dat ain't s'prisin'! But—uck!—dat's de way I likes to heah a white pusson laugh, sah; I sho' does! Takes away dier troubles, sah—makes 'em fuhgit dier tribbylations. Dat's muh pumission in dis world, makin' de white folks happy. Kain't be much fun in dis yuh bank-bidness—desh'uh chinkin' de money an' uh-shavin' off de ten pub-cent. An' dea, when yo's all wo' uot, sah, I comes 'long, an' yo' has a big laugh dat makes yo' feel fine all day; des as fine as a dram er peach an' honey done make yo' feel. Don't yo' reggin, sah, dat yo' could spar 'bout haffer-dollah for de good joke yo' has on me, an'—T'anky, sah; 't'anky! Gwine on muh way uh-'joicin', sah! Gwine now!"

—From Puck.

Use of Magnets in Flour Mills.

Explosions are often caused in flour mills and breweries by nails or other iron particles that find their way in the grain and which when they strike the steel rolls of the mills produce sparks and ignite the finely pulverized material about them.

Recently a large malting concern that had been troubled by many such explosions installed a set of electro-magnets over which the grain is passed before being prepared for shipment to the breweries. All iron particles in the grain are picked up by the magnets and 500 to 1000 bushels of grain are cleaned an hour.

When the magnets have collected a large amount of metal they are swung to one side, degenerated and swept clean of any particles adhering to them by residual magnetism. Since the installation of these magnets there have been no explosions in the mills.—Scientific American.

THE PEOPLE'S FORUM

No Back Door for A Country House

By E. P. Powell.

HERE should be no back side to a house. It should front always, only with a different outlook; for there is no direction in which you will not find the beautiful, and the most beautiful very often lies right in the rear of a country house, where there are stop holes and shiftlessness which spoil everything. You ought to be able to walk around a house in the country without distress, or catching a bad odor, and there ought to be an equally cheerful welcome for you with porches and balconies, on all sides. Around the kitchen door particularly there should be neatness and sweetness.

Keep clean on all sides, and do not indulge yourself in slovenliness out of sight of the street. This is one reason for building back from the highway; it puts you on your honor to be decent, and to develop the beautiful. Besides this you will feel that your home is not built for others to look at, but for yourself to see, and to smell. Flower beds are preferable to ash heaps and decaying refuse.—Outing.

It Is Not Always Possible to Save

By Walter Weyl.

THE majority of the old ask nothing of society, but this very fact should make the support of society, to those who do need its aid, more immediate and willing. There are many who through misfortune are left in age bereft of money and of their natural supporters. A bank may fail, an employee abscond, a business panic arrive, an error of judgment, or an unwise act of generosity may strip a man or woman of the savings of a lifetime. The wife of such a man may lie ill and the savings of years go in a month's doctor's bills. The sudden slaying of a husband in an industrial accident may leave the wife deprived of expected support.

And not all men can save. Some are honest and hard-working, but have not the knack of getting and holding. They are marble to receive and wax to retain. Others do not marry, or marry and have no children, or they lose their children in early infancy. Family bonds are mortal. There are always men who through no fault of their own are left naked and alone in their old age.—Success.

The Fate of Second-hand Autos

By R. D. Heintz.

THE price of a rebuilt car ranges from \$300 to \$3,500. One firm reported that the average selling price of its second-hand cars was \$2,000. Good standard chassis converted into delivery wagons are selling at \$1,800. Touring cars, which last year sold for \$1,250 and \$2,000, may now be bought for from \$500 to \$800. A limousine which only saw a few months' service last year was sold from a second-hand shop this year for \$3,000. The owner originally paid \$4,200 for the car.

Tuxedo Park Association, the exclusive residence colony club of New York, recently bought four three-year-old cars, saving fifty per cent. on the original cost. These were formerly touring cars, but they have been rebuilt into station wagons to carry the members of the colony to and from trains. The Adirondack League Club, of New York, has also purchased second-hand cars for the same purpose.

A greater market for second-hand machines is found out of New York. A second-hand automobile firm, possibly the largest in this country, last year sold eight thousand cars. Ninety-five per cent. of these vehicles went to farmers.—Leslie's.

The Bible as a Substitute for Bridge

By Frances Frear.

WHEN women in the whirl of New York society come together for a week-end study of the Bible, it is of more than passing interest. Mrs. Martin W. Littleton felt that a more thorough knowledge of the Bible would have a steady influence in the exciting times which just now exist in the feminine world, and so despite the cold water thrown on her suggestion, friends were invited to her home to hear Dr. C. I. Scofield, secretary of the Oxford Revision Society, make clear some points in regard to a better understanding of the Scriptures. Enthusiastic was the response, and preparations are now under way for a longer course of study next winter. A movement of this kind seems to some of us to indicate even better than the suffrage agitation that women are really interested in trying to solve the problems which are peculiarly theirs to solve. Respect for women will increase in proportion as they concern themselves with serious occupations, like the study of the Bible or the proper training of children, thus showing that all their interests are not compassed by bridge whist, the theatre and receptions.—Leslie's.

Knowledge That Is Power

By Orison Swett Marsden.

THE world is full of people who know a great deal but cannot use their knowledge. They are weighted down with unavailing facts and theories. They have often met people who seem to know so much, who are so encyclopedic in their greedy absorption of facts that their general knowledge is like an enormous pack on a soldier's back, which exhausts his vitality and impedes his march. It makes them heavy of foot and clumsy in everything they do. They impress you as not being large enough to swing their loads or to carry them with ease. They are like children tugging away at great pieces of furniture which they can scarcely lift.

It is not the ability, the education, the knowledge that one has that makes the difference between men. The mere possession of knowledge is not always the possession of power; knowledge which has not been digested and assimilated and become a part of yourself, knowledge which can not swing into line in an emergency, is of little use, and will not save you at the critical moment.

To be effective, a man's education must become part of himself, as he goes along. All of it must be worked up into power. A little practical education that has become a part of one's being and is always available, will accomplish more in the world than knowledge far more extensive that cannot be utilized.—Success Magazine.

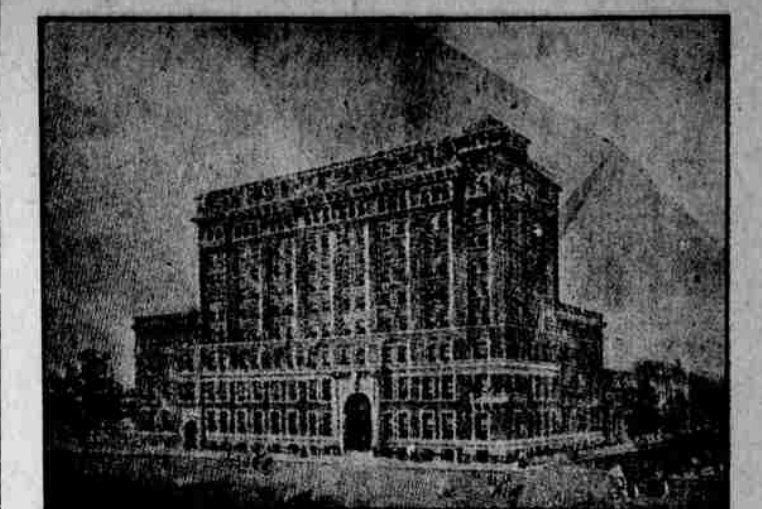
Domestic Life.

It was the poet Cowper who sang of domestic happiness as the only bliss that has survived the fall. One of the burning and unsolved questions of today is, Will it survive the twentieth century? Will it survive rapid transit and bridge and woman's rights, the modern novel and modern drama, automobiles, flying machines and intelligence offices? Hotel, apartment and suburban life, or four homes or none at all? Is it a weed that will grow anywhere in a crevice between two stones in the city? Or is it a plant that requires tender care and the water of self-sacrifice? Above all, is it desirable.

Both Italy and Switzerland are fortifying the entrances of the Simplon tunnel, while in the tunnel itself engineers are engaged in constructing mines and strengthening those already in place, in order to blow up the tunnel at a moment's notice in the event of war.

In Russia cigarettes are used more widely than cigars.

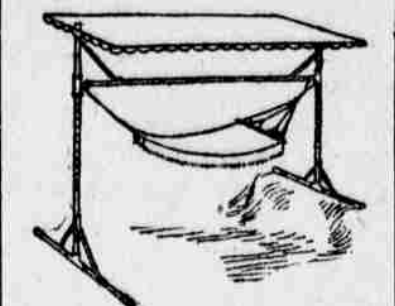
MODEL Y. M. C. A. BUILDING.



Every community that counts itself a city has in its midst a stronghold in the building which houses the Y. M. C. A. and serves as headquarters for its activities. Where once a store or small building answered this purpose, the most modern type of building is now required, equipped with every facility for promoting the work, and sometimes of the dimensions of a skyscraper. The new Y. M. C. A. building at Detroit, shown in this picture, is one of this class.

Hammock Support.

For the present hot weather the hammock support designed by an Indiana man is highly appropriate. It enables the owner to swing his or her hammock wherever desired, on rough or level ground, to be always sure of shade and to have the hammock at any height from the ground that is convenient. The support consists of



a pair of standards with an awning top. The standards are made with sliding rods and either or both can be regulated to any height. If the ground is too uneven the standard on the higher part can be shortened or vice versa. The whole affair is constructed with an eye for stability, and when set up will bear any weight the hammock cords will hold without breaking. The canopy top makes it possible to swing the hammock in open spaces, where there is plenty of breeze, but no other shade. Unfortunately, shade and breeze do not naturally go together, but the owner of one of these supports need not worry about that.—Washington Star.



EDWARD, NEW PRINCE OF WALES, AND HEIR TO THE THRONE.

Ladder of St. Augustine.

Girls who wish to spend the present year well and to develop their good resolutions should always bear in mind the famous ladder of St. Augustine and its five steps, which were, "I am," "I know," "I can," "I ought," "I will," says Home Notes.

Let every girl have confidence in herself and say "I am;" let her develop her intellect and say, "I know;" let her pause before saying "I can;" to any decisive step; above all, let her sense of honor tell her when to say "I ought," and let her make up her mind to surmount all difficulties and say, "I will."

A Hoodoo Locomotive.

A locomotive with probably the bloodiest record in the world cut up capers in the local yards here to-night, was stripped of two side rods and a large piece was broken out of the drive wheel when it jumped the track while pulling a local freight out of the yards.

The engine is Rio Grande No. 506. The hoodoo which goes with this engine is so strong that no experienced engineer can be induced to sit in its cab. The number was recently changed from 512 to 506, but the employees learned this and fight shy of the cab.

The engine has pulled trains which have been in accidents in which many more than 100 persons have been killed.—Grand Junction Correspondence Denver Republican.

The Man of the Hour.

On Wednesday morning of last week a weasel was surprised crossing the public highway leading from Jeddburgh into Oxnam Water. It was observed to be carrying something under its chin and pressed against its slender neck, and when a collie dog belonging to one of the onlookers made a dash at the little creature it dropped its burden—a hen's egg—and gliding under the roadside hedge disappeared in the woodland.

On being picked up the egg was found to be without a crack. The nearest poultry run is about three hundred yards distant from the place where the weasel was intercepted.—Scotsman.



Negroes Own Boat Line.

The steamship Rupert City, which was on the run between Seattle and Prince Rupert last year, will be sold to the Ethiopian-American Steamship Company, of Los Angeles, a corporation of negro capitalists, who will operate a line of two steamers between Los Angeles and Liberia, says the Spokane (Wash.) Spokesman.

Negotiations have been opened between the Mackenzie company, owners of the boat, through Surtess Hope, of Seattle.

When a heavy fall of snow occurs in Valdez, Alaska, the fire department is called out to clear the sidewalks.

A DIFFICULT TASK.



"If you ever dare to deceive me, Algernon, I'll disfigure you!"—La Source.