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Where Corruption Flourishes.

Walter Wellman, the famous correspondent, has shown in the Chicago *Times-Herald* the true source of the deficit in the postal department, which Congressman Loud recently sought to make up by increased charges on second-class matter. The trouble is in the enormous increase in the amount paid railroads for mail transportation—not only absolutely, but relatively—in cost per mile. Mr. Wellman gives figures showing the rapidity with which this burden is increasing. Since 1880 the item of transportation has increased from \$8,200,000 to \$27,955,000. He then goes to show how the railroad companies steal a good share of this money. Once in four years the government attempts to obtain the average number of pounds carried daily, and uses this as a basis of settlement. At such times the railroads send thousands of tons of "dummy mail" over their lines. They send their annual supplies at this time, and in a hundred ways swell the "average." An original expense of \$5,600 in this way netted one road \$233,000. After explaining several such schemes, Mr. Wellman continues:

"Mr. Armour, or the Standard Oil Company, or others of the big shippers own their own cars. They pay the roads for hauling them, and get a drawback paid by the roads for the use of their cars. But Uncle Sam rents his cars from the railroads, and pays for the hauling of them besides. A first-class railroad postoffice car, sixty feet long, the finest built, costs a maximum of \$8,000 to construct. For this the United States pays \$50 per mile per annum rental in addition to the rate per pound of the mails. Such a car running between Chicago and New York for a year earns in rentals alone nearly \$25,000. And it cost only \$8,000 to build."

Considering the effective support given by the railroads to the present administration in the campaign resulting in its selection, can any one hope that it will abolish this robbery? A few years ago, the manager of a railway running out of Des Moines was indicted for defrauding the government by sending an enormous amount of dummy mail over his line during the weighing period. The evidence of fraudulent intent seemed indubitable; but he escaped on a technicality—as the big thieves so often do. It was a good deal more than suspected too from the evidence presented at the time, that the U. S. congressman from the district helped on the swindle by "franking" an enormous amount of public documents to constituents along this and other lines, just at the time when it would do the railroads the most good.

Comparing the crookedness everywhere developing where private corporations are performing public services come into contact with public officers, with the honesty and efficiency manifested in the departments of the postal system directly conducted by the government, the argument against government ownership of railroads because of fear of official corruption seems ridiculous.

When last heard of Governor Hastings was tramping through the mud of Mount Gretna thanking heaven that he had Irish blood in his veins. The way the Irish enlisted and showed a desire to rush into the cannon's mouth made a hit with his governor, and he boasted of his ancestry. Be it remembered that many men who will not go to the front will vote against the governor just because he has in him the blood of the race that is always ready to fight and die for the stars and stripes.—W. B. Leader.

The Richmond *Dispatch* states some wholesome truths in a nutshell when it says: "We must either whip the Spanish or let them whip us. No sensible American ought to have any difficulty in making up his mind as to his duty in this crisis; but if there is any one who really wishes to see Spain punished he ought to offer his services to Blanco or to the Queen Regent. Morally speaking, there isn't a very wide difference between lifting one's voice and lifting one's hand against his country."

Watch the date on your paper.

SHADOWS ON THE WALL

When the room is tidy,
Toys are put away,
Eyes are growing sleepy,
Skies are turning gray;
Comes the children's clamor
As they round me throng—
Fairy lore's exhausted,
Sung each nursery song;
In the mellow lamplight
Hushed their voices all,
Whilst they watch me making
Shadows on the wall!

Through the happy silence
Rings their laughter low
As upon the wall, there,
Shadows come and go.
Nurse, unseen, unheeded,
Watches from the door,
Whilst the children's voices
Plead for just one more!

One by one they leave me,
Till I sit alone,
Seeing in the twilight,
Shadows of my own,
Long forgotten fancies,
Dreams in golden gleams;
Till from heart to eyelids
Tears, unbidden, rise—
Happy, happy children!
Time has joys for all—
Only some are fleeting
Shadows on the wall!

FOR OLD SAKE'S SAKE

It is a commonplace of speech that there is no changing the leopard's spots. The keen observer of his kind, who has not twelve axioms wherewith to work the theorems of life, but twelve hundred, accepts it as gospel. Raymond, who was not a keen observer, but a man with faith in his heart, did not accept it. In the face of advice, and caution, and good counsel, he decided to reduce it to the absurd and marry Cicely G'anville. Success crowned him, as even those who warned him know now, but it was a desperate risk.

Far back in the days which it were heresy to doubt were as good as they were old, when Alas was just the stolid small son of Captain Raymond, and Cicely was but the angel-faced little daughter of Captain Raymond's first lieutenant, Marlitt, the boy and girl had been fond of one another. They had made mud-pies and hunted the first wild-flowers of the plains, and had ridden burrcrs and bronchos together. They had wintered and summered, in each other's company, the mountains and prairies of the South-West, while the land was yet given over to the never-ending disturbances of the hostiles. They had learned what it was to have only one another for playmates for months at a time. And because of the hardships of long marches and the joys of a half-savage freedom shared together, they came to think themselves inseparable. And then they were separated. Cicely was to be civilized. She was sent East and abroad to school. Alan Raymond went through West Point and got his commission. Thereupon Fate—which at times does what might be expected of her—sent him to the same post where the Marlitts were stationed, and he saw Cicely again. He looked into the placed depths of her long, gray eyes, and remembered the past. He looked at the curving red lips and the thick brown hair, and guessed the future. She had changed for the worse and for the better. She had been civilized, and was less frank; she had learned to attain her ends by indirect means, yet, as women go, she was honest. But the saintly face was more beautiful and the child was grown to one of those women who to love is to worship. And in due time Raymond loved her.

There are men who take their love as simply as they do the breath of their life. It is necessary to them, but they do not go mad with the ecstasy of its possession. When Raymond had told Cicely that he loved her, and when she had laid her head upon his shoulder and had put her slender clinging hands in his, and, turning up the beautiful, deep eyes to his face, had said, "I love you," he was satisfied. His fault, if such it were, was that he was unromantic, and Cicely's—though some count it a virtue in woman—that she was jealous. Of all vices, jealousy carries with it its own swiftest punishment. It realizes its unreason, but is powerless—like a dreamer who suffers and can not awake, though he knows, the while, that he is dreaming. She knew in her heart that her lover's word was worth more than most men's vows; she knew that his purpose was direct and honest, and yet she doubted. The tiny stone of suspicion began to roll. A question which Cicely was too proud to ask would have checked it, but it rushed on and became an avalanche that buried and crushed their happiness under its mass. Raymond looked on dazed. He could not understand.

When it was too late, it was made plain. Cicely sat before her own fire, in the dusk, and looked quietly at the blazing logs. The light shone on her fair face and on her gleaming hair. Raymond stood and looked down at her, resting his arm on the mantelpiece. He was an honest man. He had no intention of speaking of even the love of the past to another man's wife, but beside the bank reality rose up in front of him the might-have-been of his life, and he cried out from the depths:

"Cicely, why did you do it?" he asked. She started back and looked up at him. For one long minute the deep eyes gazed into his and saw there the futility of an irrevocable mistake

The curved lips grew white, and parted and closed again. She turned and hid her face in her tight-clasped hands, and bowed her head against the back of the chair. There is tragedy of the fiercest sort that enters, once, at least, into most lives—tragedy which seems to rend the veil of one's universe in twain and to open up the graves where one's hopes and sorrows have lain sleeping. Yet we jeer at melodrama when we are shown bits from the play of existence that are as nothing to the truth. We say it is over-acted. It is because it has been mercifully given to us to forget. In the past, Raymond, first of all, would have scoffed; in the future, he would come to doubt the horror of the present moment. But it caught him and held him then with a mighty strength. The primitive creature comes out when it is lashed with the whip of real pain; all the bars of custom and convention can not restrain it. He forgot the honor of his sane moments. He snatched away the hands, and dragged her to him and turned her face up again to his.

"Why did you do it, Cicely?" he repeated. She clenched her teeth and steadied her voice, and then she told him. "But you were utterly wrong," he said. He was dazed to have been so misunderstood, and he offered no explanation. But she did not need one now. She had seen the full measure of her folly.

"I know," she answered, "I was wrong, and I am punished." She threw her arms about his neck and sobbed, and he held her close. It was only for a little time. Then she drew away and her arms fell at her sides. "It can not be helped," she said; and she turned and went away. There was no change in Raymond, either then or as the years went on. He was a good officer and a good man, and unembittered. But Cicely G'anville changed. The world loves nothing better than to find an explanation for what has mystified it. It does not trouble to verify its belief. "It is plain," it said now, "why Cicely Marlitt married G'anville. Raymond was not the man to have allowed her to indulge her propensities."

The propensities were toward flirtations that scandalized that conservative and respectable institution, the army. Even the men of the regiment resented that it should be given fame through Mrs. G'anville. And the women feared and hated her; but they also admired. Popular superstition to the contrary notwithstanding, most women see the charms of a rival. Envy is as keen-sighted as love is blind. And the clever ones admit them.

Being isolated from the small circle of feminine wit, Mrs. G'anville added to her attractions much masculine clear-sightedness and wide range of interests. She was as good to talk to as to look upon. She spoke with the tongue of a wisdom that was more—no less—than womanly, and she sang with the voice of a siren, and men fell down before her and worshipped her, and, throwing the cloak of their infatuation over the clay feet of their idol, came finally to forget them and believe it all spotless alabaster. They held her up to wives, and daughters, and sisters whom they would have disowned for following in her path. And they ruined the peace of their lives and of their homes for her—all, too, without the hope of even a capricious fancy for reward. She brought them low and laughed at them, but they still had faith, as had her husband, though the heavens should fall. She was known to the borders of the service, and beyond, as a creature of no heart who had caused disaster and even death, and had shown neither remorse nor pity.

Yet when she was free once more, Raymond went to her. His old faith was unshaken. It was a better sort of faith than any other she had inspired. Years had gone since she had seen him. She sat once again before the fire—this time in her father's home. And Raymond stood looking down at her. The face above the black dress of her mourning, was as saint-like as of old, and seemed as young and unscarred. The long, gray eyes were as placid, but more deep. He did not ask now why she had done these things. Perhaps he knew. But he said to her, as though the time between had never been:

"Cicely, do you love me still?" And the sweet lips parted to say the words that he had never framed saved for him: "I love you still." He reached out his hand and took hers. She tried to draw it away. "But you do not want me—now?" she said. He held her fast and answered: "I want you now." There was no doubt in his firm voice. "You do not know," she tried to tell him.

"Yes, I know," he said; "and yet—and yet I want the Cicely who was my honest little playmate years ago; who was my trusted love in the past; who will be my faithful wife in the time to come. For old sake's sake, I want her, dear."

She laid her tired head upon his shoulder and closed her tear-filled eyes. "And for old sake's sake," she said, "you shall have her."

350 Volumes in 50 Years. Although Maurice Jokai, the Hungarian novelist is seventy-two years old, he has undertaken another work which cannot be completed within four years. In fifty years he has written 350 novels.

Earth's People Since Adam. The number of people who lived upon this earth since the time of Adam is calculated to be somewhere about 35,627,844,000,000.

A VALUABLE EXPERIENCE.

Spanish Bullets Had No Terrors For the Trolley Dodger.

The American had been arrested in Cuba as a spy, and had been condemned to be shot. At the hour fixed for the execution he was taken to the Campo Weylero and nine soldiers leveled their muskets at him. He refused the offer of a handkerchief with which to cover his eyes, and glanced calmly, even smilingly, at the glittering, death-dealing weapons. "Fire!" shouted the Spanish sergeant. The nine explosions were as one, and as the smoke cleared away the sergeant stepped forward, expecting to see the prisoner riddled with bullets. But the American still stood there, calm and smiling, and apparently unharmed.

"Your muskets were not loaded!" cried the sergeant with a great oath turning to his men. "I will have every one of you shot as traitors at sunrise to-morrow. I will!"

"No, no; don't blame those fellows," interrupted the American. "They did their duty all right. Nine bullets came out of those guns. I simply dodged them."

"Dodged them!" shouted the sergeant, angrily. "Do you dare to play with me?"

"No," answered the American, coolly. "I am telling you the fact. Dodging those bullets was dead easy. Why, man, I lived in Brooklyn, New York, for a couple of months before coming here, and twice a day I dodged the trolley cars at Death Loop. Your bullets aren't in it with the Death Loop fliers."

"On Guard" the Watchword. "Everything is about ready, ain't it, Sister Duncan?" asked the preacher who was going to perform the marriage ceremony in Cabbage Creek Valley.

"No, Sam ain't come to guard the back window yet. Tom's at the front door an' Eli's at the gate, an' as soon as Sam gets to the back window everything will be ready. You see, John Henry is sorter timid like, an' when it comes to the pinch of the game his courage mout fall him an' he mout try to make a dash for the woods. Polly knows this an' she ain't takin' no chances. She's got the boys posted whar they can stop John Henry if anything should happen."

Got His Money Back. A well-known London theatrical manager tells a good story at the expense of a local theater whose "Standing Room Only" sign is no longer needed.

One night, after the curtain was rung up, a small boy was discovered sobbing in front of the box office. The manager of the theater went to the lad and kindly asked him what the trouble was. "I want my money back!" sobbed the boy. In surprise the manager asked his reason for such a request. "Because—because I'm afraid to sit up in the gallery all alone!" he wailed. His money was returned.

Popular Literary Girl. "For a literary girl Miss Plum seems very popular." "Yes, it's her method. She invites a young man to the house to read over her latest sonnet. When she comes to a word like 'miss' for instance, she asks him if he can improve the rhyme. If he has any brightness at all he will suggest 'kiss,' and at the same time illustrate it. If the word is 'tease' he will suggest 'squeeze' and illustrate that. Oh, it's no wonder she's a popular poetess."

The Old, Old Story. "You are the only woman I ever loved," said Adam. "And you," murmured Eve, "are the first man that ever kissed me." Then Satan smiled and said unto himself: "That is equal to burnt-cork repartee, and posterity shall perpetuate it." And it was even so.

Better Than Nothing. Lord Notacent—It cannot tell you how much I love you. Ethel Gilledge—Oh, make a rough guess at it then. How much do you think I'm worth. Rival Cemeteries. In Nowhereville, in Limbo Place, "Mid lurid reeking murk, Two aged jokes met face to face, Who died from overwork. 'Where rest thy bones, since thou hast died?' Each asked him of his brother. 'In the Almanac,' the one replied, 'Farce comedy,' the other. —Indianapolis Journal.

Everybody Says So. Casarets Gandy Cathartic, the most wonderful medical discovery of the age, pleasant and refreshing to the taste, act gently and positively on kidneys, liver and bowels, cleansing the entire system, dispel colds, cure headache, fever, habitual constipation and biliousness. Please buy and try a box of C. C. C. today, 10, 25, 50 cents. Sold and guaranteed to cure by all druggists.

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CHEAP SEWING MACHINES.

Trick Two Sharpers Played on the Gulleable Sioux and Chicago White Men.

Two months ago two young men, giving the names of Paul Ray and John D. Jones, of Chicago, went to Rushville, Neb., as agents for a well-known sewing machine company. They were apparently selling a high-grade machine for \$10. They declared that this was an exclusive offer made to the Sioux Indians and would not apply to the whites. They explained that the scheme was promoted by a religious society in the East, which was paying the difference between the manufacturers' cost and the price demanded of the Indians for the machine.

One hundred and sixty fine sewing machines were sold by the enterprising swindlers. For each machine \$10 was collected. Now a collector of the company has arrived to investigate the situation. He has 160 leases for as many machines, on each of which \$10 has been credited as first payment. Fifty dollars is still due on each.

The swindle was a very smooth one. In each instance the Indian purchasers were required to sign a "testimonial" in order that the religious society might have evidence that the machines had been placed according to the salesmen's statement. These testimonials now prove to be the leases which the investigating agent is looking up. They are the regulation leases that go with all machines throughout the country where they are purchased on time. No title is vested in the holder of the machine under this form of lease. The Indians who secured machines under the deal merely rented them, signing a contract with the company by which they were to secure full title whenever the money paid in rent, from month to month, equalled the full selling price of the machine. Now the agent has the worst contract of his life trying to explain the situation and secure the return of the machines. Under the company's rules the flat \$10 collected on the sale of a "time" machine always goes to the selling agent, so the head-quarters agent shipped the whole carload of machines, the young swindlers delivered them, collected their \$10 on each machine, and immediately disappeared.

The Leaky Missouri River. F. R. Spearman writes of "Queer American Rivers" in St. Nicholas. Mr. Spearman says: "With all its other eccentricities, the Missouri River leaks badly; for you know there are leaky rivers as well as leaky boats. The government engineers once measured the flow of the Missouri away up in Montana, and again some hundred miles further down stream. To their surprise, they found that the Missouri, instead of growing bigger down stream, as every rational river should, was actually 20,000 second-feet smaller at the lower point.

Now, while 20,000 second-feet could be spared from such a tremendous river, that amount of water makes a considerable stream of itself. Many very celebrated rivers never had so much water in their lives. Hence there was great amazement when the discrepancy was discovered. But of late years Dakota farmers away to the south and east of those points on the Missouri, sinking artesian wells, found immense volumes of water where the geologists said there wouldn't be any. So it is believed that the farmers have tapped the water leaking from that big hole in the Missouri River away up in Montana; and from these wells they irrigate large tracts of land, and, naturally, they don't want the river-beds mended. Fancy what a blessing it is, when the weather is dry, to have a river boiling out of your well, ready to flow where you want it over the wheat-fields! For of all manner of work that a river can be put to, irrigation is, I think, the most useful. But isn't that a queer way for the Missouri to wander about underneath the ground?"

Some Common Mistakes. It is a mistake to work when you are not in a fit condition to do so; to take off heavy underclothing because you have become overheated; to think that the more a person eats the healthier and stronger he will become; to believe that children can do as much work as grown people, and that the more they study the more they learn; to go to bed late at night and rise at daybreak and imagine that every hour taken from sleep is an hour gained; to imagine that if a little work or exercise is good, violent or prolonged exercise is better; to conclude that the smallest room in the house is large enough to sleep in.

Confession Arouses Suspicion. "I dunno," remarked Plute Pete. "I'm beginnin' to feel kind o' doubtful about that case." "Ye mean about that hoss thief we jes' tended to?" "Yes." "But he confessed." "I know it. An' it wasn't tell he confessed that I had doubts. There ain't no circumstances whatsoever under which I'd take his word for anything."

Sure Enough Love in Maine. Do you want to know what true love really is? Just interview that Augusta (Me.), young woman who recently called on an Augusta dentist and requested him to extract as fine a set of teeth as one generally sees, explaining this strange request by remarking that her lover wore false teeth and she wanted to do the same.

Rudyard's Name. Mr. Kipling's Christian name, Rudyard, is obtained from the charming Staffordshire lake around which his parents did their courting.

How to Prolong Life

No man or woman can hope to live long if the Kidneys, Bladder, or Urinary Organs are diseased. Disorders of that kind should never be neglected. Don't delay in finding out your condition. You can tell as well as a physician. Put some urine in a glass or bottle, and let it stand a day and night. A sediment at the bottom is a sure sign that you have Kidney disease. Other certain signs are pains in the small of the back—a desire to make water often, especially at night—a scalding sensation in passing it—and if urine stains linen there is no doubt that the disease is present.

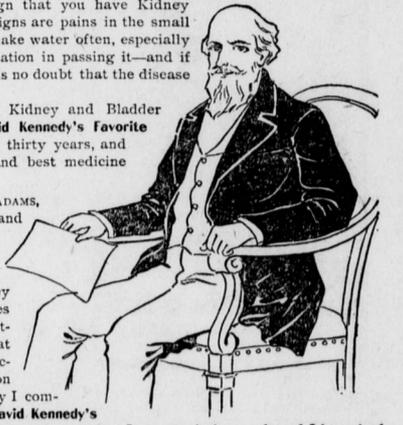
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