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The State of Massachusetts in 1899 collected \$3,330,036.21 from franchise taxes on corporations.

Doctors declare that grip is caused by flying dust. It is sometimes cheaper to keep streets clean than to pay influenza bills.

It may turn out that the only great and memorable military reputation to rise out of the South African war on either side will be that of De Wet, the crown and flower of Free State chivalry, and a Roland for any Oliver which the invading empire over seas can send against him.

At a recent card party in Washington it was announced a dollar had been found. Four women came forward to claim it, each declaring that she had lost a silver dollar. Strange to say the lone dollar found was a paper one. And yet they say women are not financiers.

The cost of maintaining the life-saving service during the past year was \$1,525,936. The amount of property it saved was, in round numbers, \$7,500,000, in addition to 2507 lives. Such a record as that would seem to justify better pay and better care for the men engaged in such difficult and dangerous work.

Learned women as university lecturers in science and literature have been known from old times in Italy. Now a woman renews the tradition of Portia. Signorina Labriola, daughter of the Socialist Professor Antonio Labriola, through her appointment as docent in the philosophy of law, becomes the first woman to serve on the faculty of the University of Rome, and the first to lecture on jurisprudence in Italy.

Paris has a municipal debt of \$350,000,000, nearly half that of all the cities of France, twice as great as that of London, and one-third of the local debts of all England. Every Parisian owes \$100 more than every Londoner. In Paris government costs \$25 a head, the highest rate in any city in the world. As an offset, it claims to be the best governed, and, while the contention may be disputed, it is certainly second to none, affording an example of administrative efficiency never surpassed in the urban history of any period. But Berlin is not far behind, and government there only costs \$6 a head, while in St. Petersburg the job is done in tolerable fashion at \$2.50 a head.

America's commercial rivalry has been forming the basis for long analytical articles in the London Daily Express and the London Daily Mail, written by engineering and other experts, which retail the results of recent trips to the United States under the headlines "Wake Up, England!" "Why Are We Falling Behind?" etc. The authors reiterate that the British manufacturers' lack initiative and are absurd in their conservatism. Their argument is summed up in the following paragraph in one of the articles: "If the foregoing facts are unpalatable, it is better they should be known than that the nation should continue to dream on in a fool's paradise until the next cycle of bad trade, when we may find our markets in the possession of others."

The traveling men of Kansas have succeeded, after several years, in raising funds sufficient to erect a suitable monument over the grave of Captain J. H. Barr, of Humboldt, who kept a hotel there and was a friend of all the drummers. He was affectionately known as "Beefsteak Barr."

The new French stamps are subjected to much unfavorable criticism in France.

## THE DESPERATE CASE OF PERCIVAL.

Percival felt that the world was coming to an end for him and he was trying to convince himself that he didn't care a continental if it was. He sat in a chair that seemed incompatible with any sort of discomfort, his pipe was between his teeth and he had been notified of a raise in his salary that very week; nevertheless the chair could not hold him in its padded embrace, and he got up and paced about the room in the regulation style of the caged panther; his pipe had gone out long ago, and as for the salary, what to him was salary.

He felt in the breast pocket of his coat and drew out a letter, or rather a note, which he read with a scowl corrugating his brow. Then with a succession of angry jerks, he tore it across and across and dropped the pieces, fluttering on the hearth. A moment later he gathered the pieces in a heap, and, striking a match, set fire to them. As the flame gradually died out from the rustling tinder a thought seemed to strike him and he felt in his breast pocket again. This time he took out a pocket book and extracted a small package wrapped in tissue paper from a special compartment; this also he laid on the hearth, and, with the same expression of angry determination on his face, struck another match and held it to the paper. It did not burn as freely as the other for a minute, but suddenly it flared up so that he had to start back to avoid the flame. The next instant there was nothing on the hearth but ashes and a particularly unpleasant smell permeated the room.

Percival drew a deep breath and remained staring moodily at the blackened fragments on the hearth for several minutes. Then, with what seemed to be an effort, he rose and began to whistle. What did it matter, after all? What did anything matter? No girl was worth a moment's worry.

In accordance with this decision he sat down again and struck a third match with which he lit his pipe. He puffed away with preternatural calm for a little while and then took the evening paper from the table and turned to the theatrical advertisements.

"I might as well enjoy myself," he said. "That's probably what she's doing. I'll simply devote the rest of my existence to having a good time. If she ever hears of me at all it will be as a light-hearted man about town. Let's see what is on. No, I'm not going to afford her the satisfaction of seeing me drop into an early grave. My harp doesn't hang on any weeping willow tree. I'll tune her up and pick out rag-time tunes."

The paper dropped to the floor and he continued with a melancholy eye on the engraving of Napoleon at St. Helena, which hung on the wall: "I'll dissipate; that's what I'll do—fill the cup that clears today of past regrets and future fears—woop'er up Eliza Jane. I believe I'll drink a bottle of beer before I go to bed tonight, just as a starter. They will go to her and tell her what I'm doing, and then maybe she will be sorry. I don't know, though, why I should care whether she is sorry or not. I don't suppose I really do. My mind is naturally disturbed now, just as it would be if I suddenly broke myself of any other habit. In a week I shall be wondering what I ever saw in her and I shall be ahead so much experience. I suppose every man has to go through it once, just as puppies get the distemper, and I ought to be thankful that I found out in time how callous and frivolous women can be. I've had all I want of them, that's one thing sure."

He got up and walked about the room and then suddenly sat down again with an impatient exclamation. "I don't see why I can't simply dismiss the matter from my mind and let it go at that," he said. "I won't go out; that's one thing dead certain. It would be a confession of weakness to seek distraction. I wonder if she won't write and ask me to come again. I guess it's too soon for a letter, but she might send a messenger. Then I could coldly express my regret that I was unable to see her and suggest that it would perhaps be better that our correspondence should cease. That would settle the matter and it would be a satisfaction to know that it was actually settled. I guess it's settled, anyway."

"I wonder how that trial balance is coming out. Mosier is going to get fooled on this guess. They want to get some ink that won't clog on the pens the way the last did. I don't believe in the economy of buying cheap ink. There's going to be plenty for us to do between this and Christmas with the annuals and the holiday shipments, and it won't let up with the new year. Well, I shall be glad to have plenty of work to take my mind off this business. Work! That's what there is before me now. God's honest, hard work and no fooling. Not that I wouldn't have worked just as hard for her. There was our home to work for then. Now it will be just money grubbing. Well, I'll grub to beat the band."

He laughed a harsh, sardonic and dissyllable laugh, the sound of which reminded him of a villain in a black cloak whom in happier days he had gazed from a gallery seat. He felt that he had misjudged that villain's art, but at the same time he ceased his soliloquy and lit his pipe again.

It was easier to stop talking than to keep from thinking, and his thoughts went wandering off to the little home

they two had planned. There probably never had been a house built just exactly like it, and there probably never would have been, but it had grown very familiar to him in the first half-waking hours of morning—particularly the room where they would sit together. Her face! Castles in Spain! Money grubbing now; a deadening of human feeling, a self-contained, self-sufficing existence that would harden his heart and set his face in lines that would scare children. He took a savage satisfaction in the contemplation of his future self, but caught himself softening at the picture of this adamant millionaire, yielding to the appeal of the love of his youth and raising her from poverty to affluence; so he picked up the newspaper again and tried to interest himself in the partition of China.

The door bell below suddenly rang and Percival started to his feet. Could it be the messenger? He half opened his door and listened. He heard his landlady say, "I think he's upstairs in his room now. You can go up and see; it's right at the head of the stairs," and then he retreated to his chair, choked with emotion.

It was the laundryman with his weekly bill. Would she have written that note, after all? Suppose she could have explained. And would it not be better to give her the opportunity to explain? Of course she could. She could make him look like a fool in one sentence, but he was not the man to allow any girl to twist him around her little finger. He would show her that. A trivial cause, perhaps, as some people might look at it, but what could there be trivial in their intercourse. Looking back he could remember other instances, slight in themselves, but were they not as floating straws showing the ebbing tide of love?

But to return to the Chinese question. Oh, hang the Chinese question! Yet it should be a matter of human interest. Great nations were playing a great game there; armies were gathering. How would it be to enlist. Here was a subject worthy of serious consideration. What could life offer him here but the prospect of a dreary slaving over account books. Was that a career for a man with blood in his veins and strength in his sinews? On the other hand, strenuous activity, the joy of conflict, the thrill of danger—and then a glorious death. She would hear of it and perhaps her blinding tears would fall fast upon the printed page where his name would appear in capital letters in the list of the slain. They might perhaps bring his mortal remains back in a metal casket. They have done that for the boys who fell in Cuba, and while Percival thought at the time it was a piece of idiotic sentimental extravagance, now it seemed only the proper and decent thing to do. The services would be held at the church, of course, and there would be pathetic allusions to the young hero, who animated by sentiments of the loftiest patriotism, responded gladly to his country's call and laid down his life on the sacred altar of—of that country. The chances were good for a swooning at that.

But after all it would not be well to go away with bitterness in his heart. She must understand that though Fate had spoken and an eternal separation must be—that it was his unalterable determination that it should be—yet he would be faithful to her memory. He would release her formally from her engagement—very formally. She should understand, yet he would place an icy barrier before her—and then he would bid her farewell forever. Perhaps a letter would be the best way.

No. Letters were only letters, liable to misconstruction, and there should be no mistaking his firm intention. Yet it might be put better in writing. But then there was always the danger of a letter falling into the hands of a third party. The old man might open it. Just as well to call tomorrow evening.

Where was the sense of putting it off? If it had to be done it might just as well be done at once.

Percival put on his coat and went out. Perhaps ten minutes had elapsed since the eternal farewell had been spoken and the young man and the girl were seated on the sofa talking it over. They were not yet separated—far from it.

"You might just as well have given me another," he said, plaintively. "Then all this misery would have been avoided."

"I had given you enough—more than enough," she answered. "Enough for you, perhaps."

"Now don't begin again, Percival. You know papa was getting awfully impatient. And one wouldn't have satisfied you anyway. I don't want to give you so many that you won't care for them."

"Try. Give me one now." She gave it to him. Presently he said: "And you'll give me another look of your hair?" "You don't deserve it," she replied. "but I suppose I'll have to."—Chicago Record.

Transitory. "Your wife's book is a success, isn't it?" "It was. It has been out over three months."—Brooklyn Life.



**The New Pocketbooks.**  
The newest pocketbooks are oblong in shape and only about four inches broad. They fasten deep down on one side, with a jeweled stud, and much resemble card cases.

**Duke's American Grandmother.**  
Mrs. Yznaga, grandmother of the Duke of Manchester, lives, it is said, on a plantation of two thousand or three thousand acres in Louisiana, about eighteen miles from Natchez. Her unpretentious home is a frame structure about two miles from the Mississippi river. In appearance she is a brunette and very tall, being nearly six feet in height. She lives alone, except for her superintendent and servants.

**The Charming Woman.**  
Is tactful, because she says the right thing in the right place, at the right time to the right person.  
Is thoughtful, because she anticipates what might be agreeable and keeps in mind the Golden Rule.  
Is low-voiced, because there is a certain magnet of refinement about her, which is brought unobtrusively into evidence by her tones.  
Is intelligent, because she attracts her hearers because of her discourses being those of common sense.  
Is agreeable, because one feels at ease with her.—Philadelphia Record.

**Getting Rid of a Double Chin.**  
A woman who had more flesh than she ought to have for health persevered in diet and exercise for a year and a half and was rewarded by becoming much thinner. She found the assurance of her physician to be true that the slow process of reducing flesh is the only one that neither injures digestion nor wrinkles the skin. She says that the reason nine-tenths of the stout women fail in their endeavors to remove their flesh is because they demand immediate reward for their efforts, and finding they do not become appreciably thinner in a month or six weeks relapse to a normal diet or grasp at some new device for reduction.

**Successful Women Inventors.**  
There were 574 women patentees of the 26,000 applicants at the patent offices during the last year, and the inventions of these women proved most successful. The main reason for this success is that the women inventors have called in the aid of a practical man whose business it is to make the invention go. They were wise enough to realize that they had not the commercial capacity or opportunity to pull off the thing unaided. Most of the inventions were for the improvement of small niceties that add to the luxury or comfort of life. The great question or dress prompted 149 inventions, and there were 40 patents for cycling improvements.—London Express.

**The Plan of Winter Gowning.**  
The general plan of winter gowning is most attractive, especially in the realm of costumes for every-day wear. The tailor gowns are smart, and as a rule artistic. With but few erratic effects and with great scope for selection, both in fabrics and styles, skirts are either severely plain or they are decorated to suit personal preference, individual forms, and special occasions. They are in circular form or shaped, with from three to seven goss, as the case requires. Regarding waists, there never was a season when a greater variety of equally fashionable styles prevailed. Many show the simple tailor finish, others have picturesque and novel decorations on the sleeves and fronts of the waist; and, again, for demi and full-dress wear, are creations of the Parisian or deft copies of French models—no two of which are alike—that are intricate and fascinating in design and elaborately trimmed.

**The American "Necker."**  
The American saleswoman with ready wit has christened these neck ornaments of all kinds neckers, and if you ask for a "necker" in any shop in New York City they will bring you out an assortment of stocks and other neck trimmings. With the necker generally goes the bow for the hair, for the hair is lightly and prettily trimmed this winter.

A necker that is perfectly charming consists of a band of black velvet, of which there are ten gold cords drawn and fastened. The whole meet in the middle of the front under a gold pin. Below this pin there hang ends of velvet finished with a gold tassel. This style can be carried out with silver cords, upon aluminum satin, with the soft silvery result so much liked. Silver cords are more than excellent upon white satin and afford a very dainty finish to the waist. For second mourning black chenille is knotted around the throat, over a lining of black taffeta, or if the mourning be third mourning, over a band of jetted satin.

**Fashionable Shades.**  
The various shades of blue that are fashionable this winter require to be quite carefully chosen in order to get a becoming shade, for blue is a cold color for winter, and must be just the right tint or otherwise will seem poor and very trying to the skin. The difficulty has been obviated on three or four of the new models for street gowns by introducing some other color—warm red, or a pinkish mauve with a good deal of gold and silver. All this

somehow seems to give the light and warmth that are needed. The stitched velvet revers and fronts, or the collar and revers and fronts of some plain color covered with lines of black and silver, or black and gold braid, make a coat look exceedingly smart, as do also the gold and silver buttons that go with this style of trimming. It is not necessary to introduce the color on the skirt. Indeed, it is a mistake in most instances to trim any skirt with a color, unless some inconspicuous braid be used, for the beauty of a skirt should depend upon its cut and its design.—Harper's Bazar.

**Where the Dress Money Goes.**  
Do you know where goes the money you pay for an expensive gown? It is divided in a manner that may surprise you, unless you are initiated by some one, as I was by a bookkeeper of a large New York establishment which affects all that is extreme in fashion and expense. A six hundred dollar gown was taken as an example. You pay \$600 for the gown, and the money goes into a number of hands. Those who performed the labor in putting the dress together after it left the cutter's hands do not get more than \$15. The material will cost \$150, while the administrative, origination genius at the head of the establishment receives \$100 for imparting his conception to his staff. This staff of men and women, with suavity of manner, business experience, tact and talent that will satisfy the judicious as well as the frivolous, will get \$150. Then about \$40 is for interest on capital and money outstanding, to which must be added \$55 for bad debts. Those who do pay must pay for those who do not pay, and no establishment is too fashionable or too high toned to have unpaying debtors on its books. Now we have a cost of \$510, which, when deducted from the \$600 you paid, leaves \$90 net profit.—New York Herald.

**Flower Fads Are Fleeting.**  
Fads in flowers, as well as in other things, are subject to change, and a blossom which is a prime favorite with fashion's devotees one season may find itself superseded by another in the next," said a Brooklyn florist, authoritatively.  
"There are, however," said he, reflectively, "a few kinds of flowers which are always popular and appropriate for all occasions. Roses, carnations and violets, for example, are always in demand, and may therefore be classed as universal favorites. The call for them is not spasmodic, as it is in the case of most of the other kinds of flowers, and dealers, as a rule, find little difficulty in disposing of all that they can get at good prices. The rose would probably be pre-eminently the most popular hothouse flower were it not for the fact that roses are more expensive than either carnations or violets."

"But there is another point which purchasers of flowers are apt to take into consideration, and that is the lasting property. For this reason the carnation is favored by many. A bouquet of carnations which will last for eight days in a vase of water is considered by many buyers to be worth a great deal more than one made up of flowers which under the same conditions will remain fresh only half or less than half that length of time. A rose fades rapidly if worn in a corsage bouquet or held in the hand, but carnations used in a similar manner can be speedily revived by placing them in water."

"Heliotropes, forget-me-nots, japonicas and several other kinds of flowers are grown in the hothouses to meet special demands, but the calls for them are by no means as frequent as for the staples."  
"Violets of all kinds are popular, but those which are perhaps the best known in Brooklyn are the California single and the English double violets."

"Florists do not, as is sometimes believed, ever attempt to augment the odor of the violet by the addition of some artificial perfume. As regards the value of a carnation, it all depends on its size, strength, fragrance and lasting qualities."—Brooklyn Eagle.

**TAKEN BY SURPRISE.**  
How a "Match for a Million" Was Brought About.  
"Had I caught my train that night," laughed the man who has had nothing to do for a quarter of a century but to sit and watch pine trees grow to swell his bank account, "I would probably be a farmer now trying to raise a mortgage and a few other things. I had gone to a little town in lower Wisconsin to see a colt that a man there wanted to sell. I was a good judge of stock and pretty shrewd on a trade, but a greener country had never broke into a town. I would have walked back to the farm after I had found myself too late for the train, but I saw a handbill announcing a show that night and couldn't resist the temptation to see it, though it did cost a quarter."

"In my hilarious appreciation I was more of an entertainment than they had on the stage, especially as I was utterly oblivious of the fact that I did not look like any one else in the audience. Toward the end of the performance a huge fellow came out, tossed cannon balls in the air, held men out at arms' length and lifted heavy weights."

"After this showing of his prowess he offered \$10 to any one whom he could not throw inside of two minutes. I was the crack wrestler in all our section, though none present knew it, and I felt as though the challenge was aimed directly at me. I turned hot and cold during a few seconds of extreme silence. Then I sprang up and as I came out of my old blouse shouted, 'I'll go you, go'eh.' There was a roar of laughter, and then some one of those about me urged me not to go up there and have my neck broken. But one old man told me to go in and do my best. It was a tough job, but I finally threw the giant almost through the floor with a hiplock. There was a little hesitancy about giving me the \$10, but the crowd shouted until I got it."

"The old man took me home with him, and in a week I had charge of all the teams in his lumber camps. In time I became a partner, and he cleared the way to make me rich. That was really a match for a million."—Washington Star.

**She Thought It Was Real Sunshine.**  
It is thought and attention bestowed upon details which give some houses the indescribable charm that others, however superior in decorations and furnishings, can never hope to attain. This was happily illustrated the other day at an informal luncheon party. The day was dark and rainy, but as one the guests stepped into the dining-room she ejaculated, "Why! I didn't know the sun had come out!" Then when she saw her mistake there was a pleasant laugh at her expense. The bright effect had been produced by placing a large bunch of brilliant yellow foliage plants on the sill of the broad English window, and the silken pillows lying on the window seat had caught and held the sunlight in the various golden shades. A large vase of nasturtium vines and flowers served as a centerpiece for the table.—Pittsburgh Dispatch.

**FASHION NOTES**  
Shopping bags of fur, mounted with silver gilt, are one of the novelties.  
Pulley belts of gold have pearl rings and Persian ribbons in red and yellow to draw the belt together.  
Shoulder knots of panne velvet made with the ends finished with gold aguilettes are used on both day and evening gowns.  
The newest turnover collars are of crepe de chine with delicate embroidered edges. They come in white, pale pink, lavender, green and ecru.  
Chinchilla hats continue in fashion favor. One has a crown of the fur and a brim which rolls back from the inevitable soft pompadour. The brim is faced with pink panne, and is caught up high with a bunch of pink roses.  
Various designs in gold effects are made for the hair, and tied prettily at one side with narrow black velvet ribbon. The tendency is toward more rather than less decorations, and for the flat, broad effects.  
Applique trimming on evening gloves is the latest development of fashion. The applique consists of either lace or silk embroidery. White gloves are decorated with black, and black with white, while gloves of pale gray or the most delicate tan, which is really fashionable shade of the hour, have either black or white. The effect is novel and not unpleasant.