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THE STRENGTH OF THE HILLS.

My thoughts go home to that old brown house,
With its low roof sloping down to the east,
And its garden fragrant with roses and thyme,
That blossom no longer, except in rhyme,
Where the honey-bees used to feast.

Afar in the west the great hills rose,
Silent and steadfast and gloomy and gray,
I thought they were giants, and doomed to keep
Their watch, while the world should wake or sleep,
Till the trumpet should sound on the judgment day.

I used to wonder of what they dreamed
As they brooded there in their silent might,
While March winds smote them, or June rains fell,
Or the snows of winter their ghostly spell
Wrought in the long and lonesome night.

They remembered a younger world than ours,
Before the trees on their top were born,
When the old brown house was itself a tree,
And waste were the fields where now you see
The winds astir in the tasselled corn.

And I was as young as the hills were old,
And the world was warm with the breath of spring,
And the roses red and the lilies white
Budded and bloomed for my heart's delight,
And the birds in my heart began to sing.

But calm in the distance the great hills rose,
Deaf unto ruptures and dumb unto pain,
Since they knew that Joy is the mother of Grief,
And remembered a butterfly's life is brief,
And the sun sets only to rise again.

They will brood, and dream, and be silent, as now,
When the youngest children alive to-day
Have grown to be women and men, grown old,
And gone from the world like a tale that is told,
And even those echo forgets to-day.

—*Louise Chandler Moulton, in Harper.*

AN UNMASKED SHARPER.

A STORY FROM THE FRENCH.

They were discussing the latest scandal. A young man of good connections had been ignominiously expelled from a club. Playing in collusion with a professional gambler, he had cheated at cards and in a few months had won a considerable sum.

"And has he killed himself?" asked some one.

"Bah!" replied another. "Do men kill themselves for so little nowadays? It was different in the good old times."

"In the good old times, as you call them," said old General Roy, "those who adopted the card-sharper's profession killed themselves no more than do those of the present time. A few exceptions there may have been among those who were detected at the outset. But if the first attempt succeeded, they did as they do to-day, they quickly accustom themselves to their degradation. Ah, it is so easy! When respect for his own good name will not restrain a man at the first step, it is entirely dead within him, and even a scandal will not revive it. By the way, I can tell you of a curious case in point, where the hero blew out his brains, but it was not a suicide. No, strange as it may sound, it was not a suicide. Listen:

"It was some fifty years ago. The press of that time was not the terrible gossip that it is to-day, and sensational news never passed certain bounds. There were not fewer scandals, but the scandals were less known. In fact, I think there were rather more. Not that we are more virtuous, but the fear of publicity is certainly a great check.

"Among the elegant young fellows, the gilded youth of those days, who furnished the greater part of the scandalous gossip by their eccentricities and duels, was a young gentleman attached to the King's household. I shall call him the Vicomte Roland. The name was not an illustrious one; in fact, the vicomte was the fruit of one of those mixed marriages introduced by Napoleon I. General Comte Roland, whose heavy cavalry charges are matters of history, had married the daughter of the Marquis de Bransac, a member of one of the wealthiest and most powerful families of France. His son was then about twenty-six years of age. He had not the robust, plebeian beauty of his father, who had been one of the handsomest men in the army. His was rather the delicate and distinguished grace of his mother, whose idol he was. Having loved her husband passionately, the countess was now wrapped up in her son.

"The extravagant life led by the son had caused a quarrel between the parents. The countess lived in the Bransac Hotel, one of the finest in the Faubourg Saint Germain, while the general, secluding himself in a little chateau in the forest of Senart, passed his time in the pleasures of the chase. They say he had ill-treated his wife, but it was utterly untrue. The fact is that there had been between the general and his wife two terrible scenes.

"The first was caused by an idea which took possession of the countess. She found this name 'Roland' too plebian for her son, and tormented her husband to obtain the king's authority to add to it that of DeBransac. The general energetically refused.

"'My name has sufficed for me,' said he, 'for me who have made it famous. It will do for this fine gentleman, my son. If he does not find it brilliant enough, let him try to add to its luster.'

"The second scene was brought about by the vicomte abducting a ballet dancer, and by a duel and a debt which were the consequences of this little affair. The general brought the son before his mother and roughly reproved him for his folly. Instead of supporting her husband, the countess made excuses for her son. Women always are indulgent toward the man in a love scrape.

"As the general told his son that his fortune was not sufficient to maintain such scandalous absurdities, the countess unhappily interjected:

"'Oh, the fortune of the De Bransacs will amply suffice for him.'

"She had not calculated the effect of her speech. An hour later the general left the hotel and went to his chateau; at the end of a week the family notary informed the countess that her entire personal fortune was at her disposal. The separation was complete, and the general lived alone on the fifteen thousand francs which constituted the revenue he received from his own fortune.

"The son made ducks and drakes of her fortune. At the end of six months the countess was half ruined, and the energy of the notary alone saved her from her son's extravagances.

"All at once it became known that the Vicomte Roland no longer belonged to the king's household, and that he had handed in his resignation as lieutenant in a cavalry regiment. That is what was given out, but rumors of a different character were afloat. The countess no longer appeared in public, but confined herself to her hotel. In a few weeks she seemed ten years older.

"The vicomte, after a voyage of some weeks in Italy, returned to Paris, took apartments in the Rue de la Chaussee d'Antin, and lived the life of an idler on the pension of a thousand francs a month allowed him by his mother. It would be little to day; but at that time it enabled a man to make quite a figure in the fashionable world. He passed his time between love adventures, the theatres, and the green table. Then little by little his elegance and his eccentricities began to be talked about. Clubs were not as plentiful as they are now, but the gilded youth and the gamesters had a few of them where lovers of the green cloth could amuse themselves.

"One evening when the Vicomte Roland, after having won a considerable sum from one of his friends, offered him his revenge, his opponent rose, and, pushing away the cards, looked at him in a singular manner.

"'Well, no, Roland,' said he; 'what with your luck with women and your luck with cards, you have too much luck for one man.'

"Roland, though somewhat choleric, demanded no explanation, and contented himself with laughing.

"Some days after, the prefect of police announced himself to the general at his chateau. What passed between them I do not know. All that is known of the affair is that they returned together to Paris.

"At 11 o'clock of the evening following that interview, the vicomte was seated at a table playing ecarte. He had just won ten successive games from an Englishman, who, passing through Paris on his way home, had been introduced at the club by one of the members. Roland had a considerable sum before him. The loser had just risen, and before leaving the table had bowed thrice, when an elderly gentleman approached the table.

"'Will the Vicomte Roland permit me to take the gentleman's revenge?'

"The young man paled. It was his father.

"'As you are a bold player, I offer you a bold game. It will be useless for you to say that it is too high. Read.' And the general handed him a note folded twice.

"The vicomte glanced over it and shuddered visibly.

"'Do you accept?'

"He bowed. The general seated himself opposite his son, cut a king, and dealt the cards. He won the first hand. When it was the vicomte's deal, he trembled slightly and a strange light shone in his eyes; nevertheless he played on. The general won again.

"The vicomte rose, pale as a ghost, and in a smothered voice said:

"'In an hour, sir, I shall have acquitted myself.'

"He left the room without another word.

"On the following morning the guardians of the Bois de Boulogne brought in the body of the Vicomte Roland. His head was blown to pieces, his hand still grasping the pistol. In a portfolio was found an unsigned scrap of paper, on which were the words:

: The loser will blow out his brains. :

"The pretended Englishman was an accomplished card sharper, sent by the prefect of police. The three bows had been the sign agreed upon between him and the general to indicate that the vicomte had cheated.

"The game was one for life and death between father and son. Both were dishonored—the son by his own act, the father by the son's. But this dishonor was a secret, which threatened to become an open shame. Death could stifle it—the son's death or the father's, for the stern old soldier would himself have disgraced his son had that son not kept their pact. The price of the general's secresy was his son's life."—*Argonaut.*

Terrible Scene at a Bull Fight.

A Madrid correspondent says: At the bull fight which took place in Vittoria a few days ago a scene occurred which is seldom witnessed on these occasions. The first bull having been dispatched by the primer espada Lagartijo, the carcasses of bull and horses dragged away, and the blood marks covered with fresh sand, the signal was given for the second bull. The beast appeared at the entrance, looking suspiciously around him, and as a torero ran past him, he rushed out, more like a tiger than a bull, and with such impetus that clearing the barrier by a flying leap he alighted in the midst of the terrified crowd. Those nearest to the barrier jumped or fell headlong into the arena, while others were tossed into the air. Ladies in the palcos screamed and fainted, while the bull kept driving furiously into confused crowds of men women and children, killing some, and wounding others very severely. A company of civil guards, which were drawn up in line to keep order during the bull fight, ran off. When the bull had cleared half the plaza of its occupants, he paused to take breath and look at the arena, which was full of spectators. Finding at last a gate open, he trotted out to the promenade, sending several men, women and children flying in the air. At last he was brought down by three shots fired at him by a civil guard. When calm had been restored, the people very deservedly hissed the civil guards and toreros for their cowardice.

Cremation in Paris will soon be available for the general public, at the small cost of $3 for each operation.

NEWS AND NOTES FOR WOMEN.

Fine brocaded alpacas are both pretty and inexpensive.

The wraps worn this summer are short, dressy visites of lace.

Fringes are made with pendents simulating various kinds of nuts.

Fine silk bolting cloth is one of the latest freaks as a dress material.

Black is much worn, brightened by dashes of yellow, red or violet.

Velvet is a popular material for facing hat brims and should be of some color becoming to the wearer.

The fashionable corsage bouquet is of natural flowers with long stems, tied with a ribbon to match the dress.

Classed under round pins are gold knots showing three, four and sometimes more rings studded with gems.

The beaded lace gauze and grenadine of this season is made to wear; the beads do not rub off, as those of last summer.

The great banking house of the Rothschilds, at London, employ many women, claiming that they are more reliable and accurate in their work than men.

Silk and satin are no longer correctly worn on the street, the tailor-made cloth or novelty wool frock having completely superseded everything else for walking.

Handsome silk, satin, crepe, or wide ribbon sashes painted in water colors and signed by well known artists, are the latest extravagance of fashionable Parisians.

A popular design for bracelets is that of a whip, the braided lash of which encircles the arm and knots around the jeweled handle, forming the top of the ornament.

A Miss Helen Taylor has consented to stand for North Camberwell, England, at the next election, there being no law against a woman sitting and voting in the house of commons.

There are no plain skirts this season. Even the polonaise has the skirt plaited or gathered to the edge of the waist, which may be round or bodice-shaped, as one's form will admit.

A few of the newest tailor dresses have a large fan-shaped plait inserted in the front of the skirt. It is narrowest at the waist and broadens in width as it goes toward the end of the skirt.

LOVELY WOMEN.

Her voice's music has been sung
By poets not a few,
But if there's music in her tongue
There's often discord, too.

—*Boston Courier.*

Little square pins, arranged to fasten with a short pin and catch, for ladies' use, have followed close in the wake of neck buckles, and are designed to wear on a neck ribbon, bonnet tie or elsewhere, as the wearer may prefer.

A style for a summer flannel dress for a girl from eight to fifteen years old has its lower skirt made in a series of folds four inches in width. Plain overskirt with three rows of stitching as a finish; blouse waist, with belt of the same.

The correspondent of a Western paper claims that in a thousand New York working girls there are to be observed as many beautiful faces of the Lady Clara Vere de Vere type as in the same number of young ladies attending the fashionable Fifth avenue churches.

The Duchess of Edinburgh is a most curious eater. Her appetite is simply ravenous, and when she dines out she eats so much more than everyone else that she is always the last, only that people pretend to go on and humbug with the food on their plates till she is done.

Dust cloaks are made in brocaded canvas lined with thin silk; these are long enough to reach to the hem of the dress, are full at the back and shaped, and have either sling sleeves or short ones, forming part of the mantle; the back sleeves are outlined with trimming.

A wealthy widower of Green Valley, Sonoma county, between seventy and eighty years of age, recently offered a neighbor $500 if he would find him a wife. The bargain was concluded, a young lady was brought out from the East and was married to the aged widower, and all hands seemed satisfied.

Frau Emile Hirsch, the target queen of Germany, is dead at the age of thirty-four years. She carried off a first prize at a grand shooting festival held at Vienna in 1880, and thereafter was so universally successful that not a few societies paid her the honor, unprecedented in the case of a woman, of excluding her from their competitions.

When a couple are engaged in Russia a betrothal feast is held, and the bride elect has a lock of hair cut off in the presence of witnesses and given to the bridegroom, who, in return, presents a silver ring set with turquoise, an almond cake, and a gift of bread and salt. Among poor people who cannot afford silver and turquoise, tin and a bit of bluestone are substituted.

A fashion writer in a leading society journal, of London, states that velvet ribbon is used to excess as a garniture for dresses, hats and bonnets; the deep or the vivid shades of red, green, blue or brown for day wear, and upon delicate, rich fabrics for full-dress occasions velvet of the more exquisitely soft and lovely tints of prawn pink, ciel blue, Persian mauve and the like, are used with handsome effect. This same garniture, arranged in straight rows in cream or snow white, is taking the place of lace as a finish of toilets of the albatross, nun's veiling and other light wool costumes.

Sensations Way Up.

A writer in the Denver *Tribune-Republican* tells of his sensations on reaching the top of Gray's Peak, the highest point of the Rocky mountains:

At this point one's feelings and impressions are very strange and peculiar indeed. He actually feels very much as if he were rising above and passing away from the world, and as if it were sinking away and receding from him; and as if he were taking his final farewell to this beautiful world of ours, and which looks a thousand times more grand and beautiful as one rises higher and higher above it, and it seems to sink down and recede farther and farther from him. This feeling and impression was so strong at the time that it led me to think of the departure of the human soul from its body; and the beauty and grandeur of the final farewell to earth, while, perhaps, at the same time, the still grander and more beautiful opening scenes of the spirit world are breaking upon its view.

MANY TONS OF LETTERS.

MISSIVES SENT TO AND FROM THE WASHINGTON OFFICIALS.

Fifty Thousand a Day to the President Alone—How an Immense Daily Mail is Handled.

The President of the United States receives daily an average of 50,000 letters, which, as a rule, are answered, or their receipt acknowledged on the day of delivery. To enable him to cope with this vast correspondence, much of which requires not simply a formal reply, but considerable research and special knowledge, the executive is furnished with about ten thousand clerks, who, for convenience, are divided into seven departments, according as their work has to do with our foreign relations, the army or navy, the fiscal machinery of the government, its internal relations, the postal service, or the administration of justice. The heads of these seven principal departments are asked by the President to meet him once or twice a week at the White House, and form what is known as his cabinet. At these conferences the more important business of the departments is discussed, so that the work may be done promptly and harmoniously; and so well regulated is the system that it is not necessary for the President to see personally but a very small part of the executive correspondence. Two or three sacks only, out of the tons of mail matter that is dumped every morning on the floor of the Washington city postoffice, goes to the White House.

This postoffice is the third in the country in volume of business, though Washington is only the fourteenth city in population. This is on account of the enormous official mail that passes through Postmaster Conger's hands. During the fiscal year which ended June 30, 1885, the letters received were in excess of 25,000,000, or about 70,000 daily, and of this total it is estimated about seventy per cent. goes to the departments.

The refluent tide is even larger for the outgoing delivery includes all the publications of the government. Statistics in this field would be staggering. They would be on such a huge scale that the figures would lose their meaning. On some days, for instance, during the busy days of Congress, 2,000 large sacks, mostly of executive documents, will pass through the office, and the average for the summer months is 20,000 sacks a month. Much of this is registered, for greater safety, so that the work thrown on the city force is prodigious.

Evidently, then, the Washington postoffice is a busy place. The busiest time of the day for the incoming mail is early in the morning, when the great night mails arrive. From 7 till 9 o'clock the office seethes with activity. Shortly before 9 o'clock the mail wagons for the departments and the outlying bureaus are hauled up in the rear of the office, and the mail is handed out to them for distribution. These vehicles are of every description, from heavy, red, circus-like vans to neat covered carriages, which have a strong suspicion of wilight and Sunday excursions about them. The heaviest mail generally goes to the postoffice department, due to the routine correspondence between the department and the 50,000 postmasters of the country. Each postmaster has occasion to write at least four letters each quarter to the department, thus involving a mass of 200,000 letters every ninety days, or more than 2,000 a day from this cause alone. Then there is an equal volume of business in the dead letter bureau, where all uncalled for, misdirected, or unintelligible letters are sent. The other two departments that receive enormous mails are the interior and the treasury. The mail for the pension bureau of the interior alone often mounts into the thousands.

All the departments have a mail room where the letters are received and sorted. In the larger departments these rooms have quite a postoffice look of their own, and exceed in the volume of business transacted the figures of many towns of considerable size. Here the sacks are opened and the contents distributed into trays or boxes which represent the office of the secretary and the different bureaus. When thus sorted the letters go to the chief clerks, who go through the pile, whether "confidential" or not. Heads of departments are not supposed to have any guilty secrets, and they certainly have not the time to read all the missives which come to them as confidential matter. So the clerk rips open everything and many "confidential" letters drop into his waste basket. Communications on business matters the clerk tosses into wicker trays, and these are borne by messengers to the chiefs of division and the heads of rooms having special supervision of the matter. If, however, the letter is seen to be important, it is sent up instead of down, and eventually may find its way to the desk of the secretary, or even to the President. In the ordinary routine, however, a letter goes first to the city postoffice, then to the department, and then, step by step, to the chief clerk of the bureau, the chief clerk of division, and the particular clerk who is assigned to attend to its subject matter.

Then, in due progress, the reply goes back, on thick white letter paper of official size, elaborately headed, and gathering endorsements as it proceeds—red marks and blue marks, numbers and dates, circles, squares, and crosses—till it is finally signed, folded, and mailed again. Necessarily there is some red tape, for unless a rigid system was followed there would be fatal confusion in a week in all the large departments. These mysterious marks all have a meaning, as the careless or stupid clerk finds out soon enough, for by them every step is registered and a blunder traced back to its source.

The last hour or two of each office day in the departments is devoted to finishing up the correspondence and signing it. The latter means great drudgery to the secretaries and their responsible subordinates. Some days these officers sign their names for two hours as rapidly as they can write, with a messenger at their elbow to pass them sheet after sheet, and blot the signature as fast as it is scratched off. Rarely are the contents of the letter noticed. It comes to the desk through the proper channels, and is assumed to be correct. If not, the one who suffers by the error will be pretty likely to complain. Of course, the more important correspondence is treated more carefully.

And now the reply begins its travels. Again the department wagons, from the heavy red vans to the neat carriages, convey the sacks to the city postoffice, where they are emptied and the letters hurried from clerk to clerk. One arranges them in piles, then the canceling stamp and post mark are put on, and then the first rough distribution by States and chief cities begins. At the city postoffice, also, a further distribution takes place to ease the strain on the railway postal clerks. About 20,000 postoffices are located by the most direct railway lines, and letters are distributed for these lines, thus saving the railway clerks from a vast task that would have to be done very quickly.

The great official mail goes out to the North and West at 10 o'clock at night, but as much matter as possible is sent at 4 o'clock to help the railway clerks. There are few busier spots than the postal cars on the 10 o'clock train between Washington and Baltimore.

The government mail consists almost entirely of sealed packages, so that little need be said of the methods of handling the lower grades of mail matter. Some packets go open, however, and these are handled in connection with newspapers, samples, books, shoes, horned toads, and other bulky articles. The size of these parcels does not admit a pigeon-hole basis of distribution. The clerks therefore stand in the arena of a mimic amphitheatre of labeled pouches rising about them in over-lapping tiers, and toss the bundles into the gaping mouths of the sacks. It looks easy but it is a special art. One calm elderly clerk, who has spent a life shooting pouches, has a perfect aim.—*New York Sun.*

Some Weather Signs.

Cats—The cardinal point to which a cat turns and washes her face after a rain shows the direction from which the wind will blow. Cats with their tails up and hair apparently electrified indicate approaching wind. If sparks are seen when stroking a cat's back, expect a change of weather soon. When a cat washes her face with her back to the fire, expect a thaw in winter.

Buzzards—A solitary turkey buzzard at a distance indicates rain. Buzzards flying high indicates fair weather.

Crows—One crow flying alone is a sign of foul weather; but if crows fly in pairs, expect fine weather.

Geese—If the breastbone of a goose is red or has many red spots, expect a cold and stormy winter; but if only a few spots are visible the winter will be mild. If domestic geese walk east and fly west expect cold weather. When geese or ducks stand on one leg expect cold weather.

Roosters—When the roosters go crowing to bed they will rise with watery head.

Spiders—When they are seen crawling on the walls more than usual indicates that rain will probably ensue. This prognostic seldom fails. It has been observed for many years, particularly in winter, but more or less at all times of the year.

Snakes are out before rain, and are, therefore, more easily killed.

Electricity—Increasing atmospheric electricity oxidized ammonia in the air and forms nitric acid, which affects milk, thus accounting for souring of milk by thunder.

Lamp wicks:

The nightly virgin, while her wheel she plies,
Foresees the storm impending in the skies;
When sparkling lamps their sputtering lights advance,
And in their sockets oily bubbles dance.

Corns giving trouble indicate bad weather. When corns ache rain follows.

Logs—An easy splitting log indicates rain.

Milk makes cream most freely with a north wind.

Rheumatic diseases:

Therefore the moon, the governor of floods,
Pale in her anger, washes all the air
That rheumatic diseases do abound.

A Ride in a Chinese Rickshaw.

Trot, trot, trot, along the smooth, sunny, but bamboo shaded high road, I have a little leasure now to observe these astonishing rickshaw coolies. They wear the enormous traditional mushroom Chinese hat, suitable in case either of beating rain or fierce sun, under which are tucked their hard, plaited pigtails—for even a coolie would feel himself disgraced were he minus a pigtail. They are bare-footed, bare-legged, bare-armed, and wear just sufficient rags to save themselves from the charge of indelicacy. Their skins are sallow, their Mongolian faces are pinched, their stature is small, their limbs seem attenuated and loosely put together. And yet these demoniacal-looking wretches, to call whom, "brethren" is, indeed, a heavy demand on our charity, throw themselves forward into the shafts and drag their carriages with its passengers, who may be ten or may be twenty stone, not at a walk, or a shuffle, or an amble, but a good round trot of about six miles an hour. They neither flag, pant, nor perspire, but keep up this pace for two or three miles at a stretch. Would not the most renowned European athlete or pedestrian be but a feeble coney in comparison? Moreover, these coolies have to content themselves at the end of their journey with five cents—a cent is a fraction less than a half-penny. They exult if they receive ten cents, and consider the donor an utter fool if he gives them fifteen cents.

The first sensations at being conveyed in a rickshaw are those of mingled amusement and shame. One likens oneself to a drunken masquerader or to an unostentatious buffoon. Then habit begets indifference. Dignitaries of the church, dignitaries of the government, dignitaries of the law, soldiers, sailors, and even the well-to do Chinese, all have recourse to them: and the sergeant in his rickshaw salutes the colonel in his rickshaw with precisely the same gravity as though both were on parade. Perhaps the full absurdity can be best realized by considering what would be the effect produced were the dean of Westminster to be trundled in a wheelbarrow down Picadilly by a dirty, ragged little London Arab.—*Cornhill Magazine.*

Dr. Bowman says that from experiments made in washing bright haired wool in different temperatures he found that wool which looked bright when washed with tepid water was duller when kept for some time in water at 160 degrees Fahrenheit.

SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL.

Continued investigation confirms the belief that the English sparrow destroys vegetation instead of protecting it from insects. One observer has reported to Miss E. A. Ormerod, the English entomologist, that the crops of fifty sparrows, killed in one summer, contained but two insects.

Angle-worms, fish, etc., are often caught up into the clouds by revolving storms, and then dropped again many miles from the place where they were taken up. Small fish have often been found in puddles of water in village streets, to the astonishment of people who were unacquainted with the phenomenon.

The simplest and best test for glucose in sugar is to place a little of it under the low power of a microscope. Magnifying forty times is quite sufficient, and less will do. Cane-sugar under this power is distinctly and beautifully crystalline, and each crystal looks like rock candy. They are clear, bright and beautiful. Glucose, on the other hand, has a dull, opaque appearance, like a lump of tallow. Once seen, it will be easily known ever after.

Narcolepsy is a name that has been applied to a rare and curious malady, the main feature of which is an irresistible desire to sleep, coming on suddenly at irregular intervals—the spell lasting but a short time. It may be due to a spasm or fit-like action in the nerves controlling the circulation of blood in the brain, producing in that one organ an effect similar to the loss of consciousness in epilepsy, but not affecting the remainder of the body as the latter disease does.

In an article on windmills, the *Scientific American* says: "An 8.5-foot wheel will raise 3,000 gallons of water daily a distance of twenty-five feet. Its first cost, including the pump and a plain tower, is about $150. A 10-foot wheel will raise about 9,000 gallons of water a day a like distance, and cost $180, including the appurtenances above mentioned. A 12-foot wheel will raise 16,000 gallons of water a day the above distance, and cost, with the same appurtenances, $210. So up, from 14 to 16, 18 to 20-feet diameter of wheel, which costs about $1,200 and will raise about 100,000 gallons of water daily the specified distance."

Minnis Haden, a colored blacksmith of Montgomery, Va., has lately invented a piece of very simple machinery by which the striking hammer is easily and effectively worked by his foot, while he has both hands free to hold his iron and use the small hammer. To a listener the blows come as naturally and as rapidly as if there were two men handling the hammers in the old-fashioned way, but there is a difference. The machine, by an easy motion of the foot on the treadle, strikes a harder blow than any man can strike, and can be made, at will, to strike as light a blow as may be needed. But the use of this simple and cheap device in the blacksmith shop is not half. It can be just as easily used, and will find a large field of usefulness, in driving a drill or blasting rock.

Is the Air Colorless?

The Challenger has dredged from the bottom of the ocean fishes which live habitually in great depths, and whose enormous eyes tell of the correspondingly faint light which must have descended to them through the seemingly transparent water. It will not be as futile a speculation as it may at first seem, to put ourselves in imagination in the condition of creatures under the sea, and ask what the sun may appear to be to them, for, if the fish who had never risen above the ocean-floor were an intelligent being, might he not plausibly reason that the dim greenish light of his heaven—which is all he has ever known—was the full splendor of the sun shining through a medium which all his experience shows is transparent.

We ourselves are in very fact, living at the floor of a great aerial sea, whose billows roll hundreds of miles above our heads. Is it not at any rate conceivable that we may have been led into a like fallacy from judging only from what we see at the bottom? May we not, that is, have been led into the fallacy of assuming that the intervening medium above us is colorless because the light which comes through it is so?

I freely admit that all men, educated or ignorant, appear to have the evidence of their senses that the air is colorless, and that pure sunlight is white, so that if I venture to ask you to listen to considerations which have lately been brought forward to show that it is the sun which is blue, and the air really acts like an orange veil or like a seive which picks out the blue and leaves the white, I do so in the confidence that I may appeal to you on other grounds than those I could submit to the primitive man who has his senses alone to trust to; for the educated intelligence possesses those senses equally, and in addition the ability to interpret them by the light of reason, and before this audience it is to that interpretation that I address myself.—*Prof. Langley, in Popular Science Monthly.*

A Strong Cigar.

"Don't care if I do, stranger. Thanks. Strong? Yes; to lable. Strongest cigar I ever smoked? (Puff, puff.) No, 'tain't (puff, puff.) Not by a long shot. What was the strongest cigar I ever smoked? Well, I'll tell you. It was so strong that it knocked some of my teeth out. You don't believe it? Wait till you hear the particulars. It was way back in 1865. I was with the Army of the Potomac, and we we were closin' up on Lee in Richmond. I was on picket duty one night when I got to hankerin' for a cigar.

"It was against orders to smoke on the picket line, but I couldn't stand it, and so I dove into the trench and lit my weed. Then I returned to my beat, happy as could be. It was a very dark night, an' everything quiet, an' I was just flatterin' myself that there was no danger in a smoke, when whish! bang! and that cigar of mine went to pieces as I felt a prickly pain in my mouth. I felt, an' a couple o' teeth were gone. Pretty strong cigar, that. Eh? Loaded? No; but the rifle of that 'ere Johnny Reb sharpshooter was, and right here on my cheek is where the ball cum out. If the ash hadn't fell off that cigar I would have two more teeth in my head to-day.'

Experiments made in Paris show that the crocodile can bring its jaws together with the force of 300 pounds.

THE BEAUTIFUL LIFE AND DEATH.

Beautiful faces are those that wear—
It matters little if dark or fair—
Whole-souled honesty printed there.

Beautiful eyes are those that show,
Like crystal panes where hearth fires glow,
Beautiful thoughts that burn below.

Beautiful lips are those whose words
Leap from the heart like the hearts of birds
Yet whose utterance prudence girds.

Beautiful hands are those that do
Work that is earnest, and brave, and true,
Moment by moment a long life through.

Beautiful feet are those that go
On kindly ministries to and fro—
Down lowliest ways, if God wills it so.

Beautiful shoulders are those that bear
Ceaseless burdens of home's care
With patient grace and daily prayer.

Beautiful lives are those that bless—
Silent rivers of happiness,
Whose hidden fountains but few may guess.

Beautiful twilight at set of sun,
Beautiful goal with race well won,
Beautiful rest with work well done.

Beautiful graves where grasses creep,
Where brown leaves fall, where drifts lie deep
Over worn-out hands—oh, beautiful sleep!

HUMOR OF THE DAY.

Should a kite be made of fly-paper?

"I take the pledge and keep it," says the pawnbroker.

The fruit most frequently to be observed at picnics—the pear.

You cannot call a sailor a slugger because he boxes the compass.—*Derrick.*

"Can any one suggest a sure preventive of sea-sickness?" asks an exchange. Certainly; stay on shore.—*Puck.*

Only eight American poets have lived beyond the age of sixty years. This shows the power of the press.—*Merchant-Traveler.*

The Father of his Country could not tell a lie, but the children of the country have been industriously making up for it ever since.—*Derrick.*

It is said that it is almost impossible for an old maid to learn to play the violin. She can't get the hang of the beau.—*Boston Commonwealth.*

THE LATEST CRAZE.

Now the maiden sits in her easy chair
And drives away melancholy
By plying her needles and knitting a pair
Of scarlet silk hose for her "Cholly."

—*Boston Courier.*

The planets have been weighed and the moon blocked out into election precincts, but the heft and capacity of a boy's pocket still remain unknown.—*Chicago Ledger.*

When a cold wave comes
Then business hums.

—*New York Morning Journal.*

But when it thaws
There is a pause.

—*Gorham Mountaineer.*

Can't you give us some war reminiscences?" asked a citizen of an old fellow in a party of ex soldiers telling stories. "No, I believe not," he answered promptly, "you see I've only been married six months."—*Merchant-Traveler.*

They were walking on the beach, and as Claude held her little hand he murmured: "I love to be with you, Claribel, it seems so bright and I feel so much fresher." "Do you, dear? I should not think that possible." And then he dropped her hand and turned sadly away, his sighs keeping time to the surges as they lashed themselves to foam on the pebbly beach.—*Boston Transcript.*

He met her in the garden,
An' she was all alone,
[illegible] round her waist,
For in that soft white hand she held
An egg, that now was smashed.

—*Boston Gazette.*

Coffee Drunkards.

"What a bright-eyed man," said a reporter who leaned against the cashier's desk of a restaurant near the public buildings one day last week. The man in question had just paid a ten-cent check and slipped out of the door with a jerky movement and a swinging of the cane he carried which decidedly endangered the people's peace.

"Bright-eyed? Yes," said the cashier; "he's a coffee drunkard."

"What's a coffee drunkard?"

"A man who comes in here four times in two hours, as that man has done this morning and does every morning, and takes a half pint of coffee every time, is a coffee drunkard. Bright eyes! Well I should say so. That man's condition all the time is the same as that of a man who is getting over a big 'batter.' I mean his nerves are up in 'G,' his muscles are all a quiver, and his mental vision is abnormally clear. He is living at a 2:08 3-4 rate."

"Why does he do it?"

"Has to. Must have a brace. Used to drink rum. Had to quit that, and now does worse. He never sleeps, they tell me."

"Do you know many such men?"

"At least half a dozen."—*Philadelphia Press.*

"O. K."

The *American Magazine of History* gives the following account of the origin of the expression "O. K.": "In the language of the Choctaw Indians one of the most frequently-recurring expressions is the emphatic oke, with which an affirmation or denial is concluded. This oke (pronounced with strong accent on the last syllable) is one of the substitutes for the copulative verb to be, which is wanting in Choctaw. Oke, as pronounced in Choctaw, has exactly the same sound as the alphabetic pronunciation of the letters O K in English. * * * To General Andrew Jackson is attributed the introduction of the Choctaw word into our Anglo-American speech. Before the war of 1812, in voyages up and down the Mississippi and in trading expeditions overland from Nashville, Tenn., to Natchez, Miss., through the Choctaw nation, he was brought into frequent communication with the Choctaws."

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